

Survey reveals views on science

By Michael Gojer

Second of a two-part series.

A majority of MIT undergraduates believe that the lay public generally does not have the right to have input into the way experiments are conducted, according to MIT's Student Pugwash 1984 survey, whose results have just recently been released.

Fifty-one percent of the almost 700 respondents also assert that the general public should not have the right to help define which intellectual problems should be investigated, although nearly three-fourths were willing to grant the lay public a role in implementing the results of scientific research.

Almost half of the students polled thought this right should be limited to those who had some

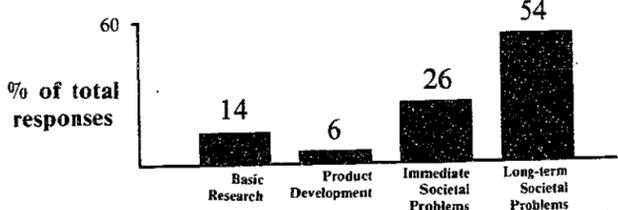
minimal knowledge of the relevant scientific issues. Yet all but seven percent of those polled agreed that basic scientific research has benefits and risks which extend beyond the scientific community.

Technology splits students, public

The survey indicated significant differences between the opinions of MIT undergraduates and the American public on the effects of technology on our society.

Less than a quarter of the US public responding to a 1979 National Science Foundation survey strongly believed that technological knowledge was largely responsible for the American standard of living. Slightly over half of MIT undergraduates, however, would strongly make that claim.

"Choose one area you would most like to see receive science & technology research funding from your tax money."



Source: MIT Student Pugwash's Survey

Graphic by Ezra Peisach

CIS manifests a diversity of views

Feature

By Salman Akhtar

Quietly tucked away on the sixth floor of Building E38 is the MIT Center for International Studies. Yet this very splendid isolation from the Institute is potentially symbolic of the global and far-ranging interests of the Center.

Established in 1951, the CIS is one of the foremost research centers on contemporary policy issues. The primary focus of the Center is on long term programs in which it has been engaged since its inception: arms control, defense policy, and communications. In recent years however, the Center has expanded its field of concern to include issues of topical interest including energy, risk-management, the environment, and Japan.

The Center also enlists a substantial number of students, most of whom are graduate students. One of the primary aims of the Center, according to CIS Director Eugene Skolnikoff, is to "try and give a degree of objectivity to our students." As such, the Center does not represent a uniform point of view and nor does it attempt to instill one. "We try to teach our students that there

are always alternate points of view and shades of gray," Skolnikoff said.

Thus, both the faculty and the student body represent a variety of views and "we are often attacked by both the left and the right, so we must be doing something right," Skolnikoff explained. Further proof of this diversity of beliefs is in the graduate students, who range from proponents of a "nuclear freeze" to employees of the Department of Defense. In trying to maintain its objectivity, "the Center relies on the value-system of the Institute and on a diverse student body," Skolnikoff said.

As recognition of its pioneering work, the Center was awarded a \$750,000 grant last year by the MacArthur Foundation to study international security. The Center is one of the oldest research institutions in the field. Most of the early post-World War academic effort in the field was a joint effort between the CIS and Harvard University.

The MacArthur Grant, however, has been designated an Institute-wide fund because the CIS is already fully funded. Hence, a committee under Provost John M. Deutch '61, co-chaired by Skolnikoff and Carl Kaysen, director of the Science, Technology,

and Society program, was formed to handle funding requests throughout MIT. An attempt was made to integrate the studies funded under international relations dealing with military issues.

Yet international security is so vast a subject that the topics funded range from one on the origins of war in the Middle East to one on arms control in the oceans. As many of the works are speculative and open-ended, the CIS does not expect significant results until the end of the program. However, this very emphasis on the long-term is at the heart of the studies conducted by the CIS.

The majority of the American public blamed new technologies based upon scientific discoveries for making our lives change too quickly, whereas over three-fourths of Pugwash's respondents disagreed with that statement.

The majority of both the American public and undergraduates polled believed that new technologies based on scientific research would likely solve more problems than they would cause. But a much larger percentage of MIT students were that confident in future scientific advances.

Students prefer non-military jobs

Fifty-six percent of Student Pugwash's respondents — including 65 percent of the women surveyed — said they had a strong to mild aversion to working for the defense industry, while 16 percent said they had a mild preference.

Pugwash designed and administered the survey to study students' views on education, science, and technology, according to Robin Wagner, co-founder of Pugwash and coordinator of the survey project. The survey results are still being studied, she said, in preparation for a report of its findings that will hopefully be completed this term.



Isaac Chuang

Steve Penn G, member of the MIT Coalition Against Apartheid, addresses the crowd outside the Alfred P. Sloan '95 Building (E52).

Corporation members explain investment logic

(Continued from page 1)

Saxon replied. People "can oppose apartheid and divestment," he said.

Logic of Corporation

The CAA's demand for a public accounting of the Corporation's logic oversimplified matters, Saxon said. "It is incorrect to assume a single logic" is used by the Corporation, Saxon told the CAA. The Corporation is "a collection of individuals" and their policy represents "the center of gravity," Saxon said.

"We don't know what information the Corporation is using," Parsons argued. He saw value in the Corporation "presenting the various arguments and various logics used to make these decisions."

CAA accused of arson

The meeting came after the CAA marched from 77 Mass. Ave. to the Corporation meeting at the Faculty Club in the Sloan Building.

The sixth floor which houses the faculty club was locked. Students pounded on the door for 20 minutes chanting "Let us in."

Their efforts came to no avail.

The protesters returned to the Sloan lobby where they were informed of the possibility of a meeting with Corporation members.

While discussing their plans, a fire started on the third floor of the building. The protesters initially wanted to confront the Corporation as they left the faculty club but decided it would be prudent to leave the building.

Peck accused the CAA of starting the fire, a charge they vigorously denied. But Campus Police Chief James T. Olivieri said several waste baskets were filled with paper and deliberately set on fire. While not singling out the CAA, Olivieri speculated that the fire was set to "try to disrupt building activity."

The CAA set up a speaker outside the Sloan Building. Soon after members started to speak the speaker's power cord was cut. CAA members charged the cord was cut by Campus Police.

Olivieri asserted that neither the Campus Police officers nor the firemen present at the demonstration cut the protesters' amplifier cord.

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