Homeless took the initiative

To the Editor:

Last Tuesday's Tech "analogy" ("Activists used homeless for their own agenda") and editorial ("MIT justified in removing homeless") about MIT's response to "Tent City" contained pseudop�s and biases against grassroots, coalition leaders and demonstrated a naivete about the Institute's influence on the Cambridge City Council. The idea that the homeless were being "manipulated" is ridiculous and demands a rebuttal.

Kate Schwartz '86 and Thomas T. Huang '88 blame activists for leading the homeless people down a path that they would not otherwise have pursued. However, neither attended any of the joint meetings with the homeless. To view the homeless as objects of manipulation without knowledge of how decisions were actually made is to fall victim to an ideology that homeless people can't think for themselves.

My initial reservations that the homeless people were being led were dispelled when I first met them. The meeting to find the student found support group. The petition to take the empty owned houses was circulat-

ed thereby. It had already been drafted by homeless people with the assistance of the Massachu-

setts Coalition for the Homeless. I asked "Who?" (Daniel Butts) whether he had reservations about making such a controver-

sial demand, given the unlikelihood that MIT developers would back down from their plans to build a large dorm on Blanche Street. He clearly understood that Tent City residents had far more bargaining power because the site was so valuable.

Also, if the homeless were be-

ing "used," activists would not have brought the homeless people to discuss and take a separate vote on their future course of ac-

tion. (The vote was later killed.)

The petition, Tents City residents had far more bargaining power because the site was so valuable. A couple of points of clarifica-

tion: No committed advisees. No committed advisees. No committed advisees.

Mitigating Edward T. Huang, "[Happy Birthday]

THOMAS T. HUANG

Opinion

CLUM applauds Dershowitz ruling

Dear Mr. Jonas:

I have learned that by its deci-

sion of November 17, 1987, the MIT Committee on Discipline has exonerated Adam L. Dershowitz '89 on charges brought against him for violating MIT's Policy Statement on Sexually Explicit Films. We applaud the ruling.

While it is patently obvious to many observers that the MIT policies and policies like it adopt-

ed in a recent wave of well-mean-

ing but wholly inappropriate cen-

sorships at a number of colleges and universities, consti-

tute, as your Committee has put it, "an excessive restraint on free-

dom of expression," for college students, it is equally obvious that not every disciplinary com-

mittee at every college and uni-

versity has the courage to point this out.

The Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts has been following this case with great interest. It has been our fear that if a taste of censorship begins to take root at our colleges and universities, which are among the few bulwarks of freedom of thought and expres-

sion in our society — then the state and federal constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech would be in very serious jeopardy.

Hopefully, your Committee's thoughtful and courageous action in this case will be emulated else-

where, particularly at academic institutions which do not respect the "liberty of expression" as much as your Committee.

I might add that CLUM is in-

terested as well in the concerns that led some powers of MIT to formulate the Policy Statement on Sexual Exploitation. We support the idea that the decision not minimize legitimate concerns with particular emphasis that such films might have upon the morals of many. Such concerns, however, are best dealt with by encouraging free and vigorous debate on the subject within the MIT community and in the large community, as your Committee

The mere fact that the would-

be-"censor" is "liberal" (or "free"

speech) is no excuse for censorship. Indeed, most of the "liberals" do not even know the difference between the two. By refrain-

ning expression becomes the tool of choice to solve perceived problems.

Please accept, on behalf of the CLUM national board of direc-

tors and sponsors thanks of the

MIT Corporation

No faculty or staff shut out of frosh advising

To the Editor:

This is one of points of conflict-

cation concerning Alvin Chin's gen-

erally excellent article on the Un-

undergraduate Academic Support

Office's plans for Freshman Advi-

sor programs to end the out-

dating of the freshman advisory system on "Frosh Advising," Dec. 1.

I propose a way to re-

duce the current number of freshmen advisors by half. The aim is to allocate a small percent of freshman advising un-

its to two hundred or so advi-

sors, each of whom would take charge of five to eight have Freshman Advisor Seminars or equivalent. Then, there will still be plenty of need (the re-

maining 300 freshmen) for the many able advisors who want to

limit themselves to one, two, or three advisors. No committed and capable faculty and students who want to be involved is restricted by sub-

Most of our advisors, facul-

ity and staff people alike, are very effective and dedicated to this critical service.

The Freshman Advisor Seminars involve more than just "informal discussion." Each is a very substantial amount of substantial intellectual content on given topics. By reading the material, the students are provided with a natural and regular introduction to the subject and an opportunity to talk about this and other topics with the advisor and to introduce new topics that interest them. The advisor is responsible for helping the student to become a good researcher and to talk about subject matter.