

Gay student forced to return tuition to ROTC

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have to repay the tuition. Sherer wrote, "Midshipman Bettiker shows strong aptitude . . . since he is not suitable by reason of homosexuality for enlisted service, I recommend he be disenrolled without service obligation or recoupment. His statement justifies this action."

Sherer also checked the part of the recommendation form which indicated that Bettiker should receive a commission "if physical defects are corrected or defects are not disqualifying for other programs." His recommendations were sent to Navy Military Personnel Command.

Naval superiors overrule MIT NROTC's decision

Lieutenant David C. Hovda, who sat on the review board, said that its decision to waive recoupment was unusual. "We had our hands tied. Robb could not serve as an enlisted, so the question was whether we could get our money back."

The board was concerned about the precedent the decision might set, but Commander Jay Watkins, the executive officer, as-

sured its members that future cases would be reviewed individually, according to Hovda. "We weren't trying to send a signal with this decision," he said.

Hovda's initial impression when Bettiker revealed he was gay was that he was trying to avoid enlistment. "People have tried to get out of four years of service for stranger reasons," he explained.

"But after the board began [proceedings], I believed Robb was sincere and forthright," Hovda commented.

Watkins added that the MIT unit cannot appeal the decision of the Navy Military Personnel Command to demand repayment.

"[Bettiker] has no Navy channel to which he can appeal," he concluded.

Rules concerning gays were unclear, Bettiker says

Bettiker said he began to question his sexual orientation in fall 1988, but "at no point" did anyone in NROTC ask him if he was homosexual. "At no point was it made clear in an official way that homosexuality is incompatible with military service," Bettiker

claimed. He speculated that a naval science course offered during the spring term of senior year may be the only time the issue is addressed.

"The course, which prepares you to become a junior officer, refers to homosexuality as a 'problem,'" he noted. One textbook, *Military Law* by Charles Shanor and Timothy Terrell, lists "HOMOSEXUALITY, see *Crimes*" in its index, he added.

As required in cases of homosexuality, Bettiker saw a psychiatrist, who concluded that he "demonstrated no evidence of overt psychosis, overt affective disorder, or organic brain disease."

Reasons of morale, good order, and discipline given

The Nuclear Propulsion Program accepted Bettiker in October 1989, one month before he acknowledged his homosexuality to his commanding officer. "At the end of my senior year, I would have had to sign commissioning papers which stated that I was not homosexual," Bettiker said. "The thought that I would

have to lie, live that lie during my five years of active duty, and live under the threat that I'd be court-martialed if I were discovered was unacceptable to me."

Bettiker said he believes the policy "denying homosexuals the right to serve their country" is discriminatory. He denied that the "presence of [homosexuals] adversely affects the good order, discipline, and morale," as one textbook used by the US Naval Academy for seniors in NROTC and the Academy claims.

"Before they started letting blacks into the service, they said that there were people who could not handle taking orders from blacks and that this tension would lead to morale problems. They are using the same arguments against gays as they did against blacks," Bettiker reasoned.

He did not see how the presence of homosexuals could interfere with "good order," and added that "men and women currently serve side by side, and there have been few problems."

Watkins, however, pointed out that women and men do not "cohabit" on the ships.

"If we don't put men and women together, how could we put homosexual and [straight] people together?" he asked. "I haven't figured out how many separations would have to be made."

Hearing focuses on ROTC student in St. Louis

Similar circumstances have propelled a student at Washington University in St. Louis to the center of a congressional hearing led by US Rep. Gerry Studds (D-MA), who is homosexual.

Cadet James M. Holobaugh was suspended from the Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps at that school after revealing he was gay and has been asked to repay \$25,000.

"We believe that to compel him to repay this money would not only be fundamentally unfair; it would also reflect an appalling mean-spiritedness which has no place in the ROTC," Studds and seven others, including Representatives Patricia Schroeder (D-CO) and Ronald V. Dellums (D-CA), wrote to the commander of the United States Army, Second Region.

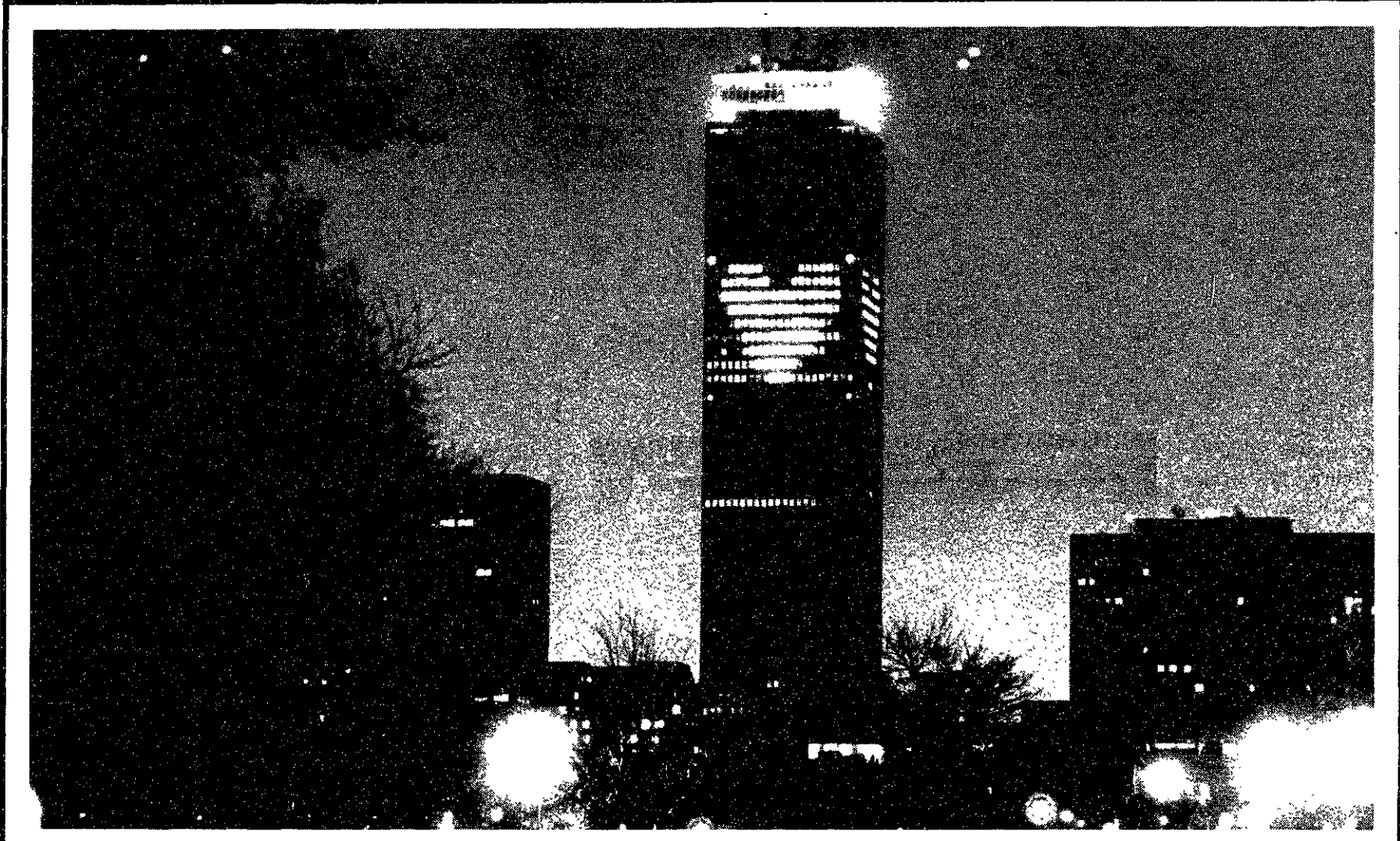
"The ROTC has publicly acknowledged that it seeks retroactive recovery of scholarship grants only from recruits who have in some way deceived the service. There is no evidence of such deceit on Mr. Holobaugh's part," the letter continues.

"We do not understand why an ROTC Investigating Board would recommend that Mr. Holobaugh be ordered to repay his scholarship. What if Mr. Holobaugh had been dismissed due to some other disqualifying factor. Would they recommend he be compelled to repay the Army in that instance?"

The provost of Washington University has written the commander, Gateway Battalion, about the "absence of substantial evidence to support the conclusion reached concerning repayment."

"The action against the cadet . . . is consistent with present Army regulations . . . [but] is clearly inconsistent with the non-discriminatory values of this (and I should think virtually all) universities," his statement continues.

Bettiker is currently trying to find a person at MIT who could issue a similar statement.



William Chu/The Tech

The Prudential Building on St. Patrick's Day.

Antico, Strehle discuss their accomplishments

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"We and the administration were on the same side," Antico said. "We both wanted to see how we could improve the current system."

At the meeting, most faculty opposed the FHC report and sided with the students, Antico claimed, because the UA chose to rationally discuss reasons why they felt alternatives should be sought. "We got a lot of faculty to see that students make sense," he said.

Currently, the housing proposal has been stalled because of significant student and faculty opposition, as well as uncertainty as to what position the next president will take on the issue, Antico said. Approximately 90 percent of the comments received on the housing proposal have been negative, Antico claimed.

The extra time afforded by the current deadlock allows the UA to plan ahead and come up with the appropriate alternatives, according to Antico. "We have some breathing space . . . to look into all of the possibilities," he said.

With long-term planning, the UA will be able to provide ample resistance the next time the housing proposal surfaces, which will

likely be a year or two from now, Antico claimed. "We don't want future UA leaders to start from square one," he said.

Antico and Strehle also noted that restraint paid off in the spring when large numbers of students attended faculty meetings to show their support for freshman-year pass/no-record grading, which had been threatened under an educational reform package released at the beginning of last spring.

Taking office in the middle of the pass/fail battle, Antico admitted his administration took only a peripheral role, but claimed that the decision to oppose the plan without confrontation set the tone for their dealings in the rest of the year.

Before students entered the faculty meetings, they were handed "P/F" signs to hold up and were urged to act "like adults," Strehle said.

An issue dealt with more sternly but with a degree of moderation was student discontent over ARA, MIT's food services caterer. In the fall large numbers of students registered complaints about the issue, Antico said.

"Some students wanted a boycott," he noted. But the UA chose to use the threat of the

boycott rather than the boycott itself to push MIT Food Services and ARA to act, thus easing tensions between students and ARA, Antico said.

"Screaming . . . was not as useful as thinking about the deeper issues," Strehle said.

With regards to short term goals for improvement in food services, there has already been "an immediate impact in food quality and service," Antico claimed. Long term goals such as reassessing food costs and the future of ARA's contract were under negotiation with Housing and Food Services Director Lawrence E. Maguire, Antico added.

Rethinking on activities fee

The centerpiece of the Antico/Strehle administration was the revival of the student activities fee referendum, which had narrowly been defeated in the spring of 1988.

Their efforts to bring the issue back on last week's ballot died at a Feb. 22 UA Council meeting when the referendum was tabled.

At first, Antico expressed disappointment with the council's decision, but he now feels that issues of allocation must be addressed. Specifically, Antico feels

the procedures and structure of the UA Finance Board, which currently allocates money for student activities, need to be readdressed.

One of his goals after he leaves office on April 5 will be to deal with issues of FinBoard reform, Antico said. After questions of FinBoard's credibility have been resolved, Antico said he will personally petition for an activities fee referendum next year. "I'm not leaving until it gets on the ballot," he said.

Antico said the worst mistake of their administration was their inaction on the presidential search. Answering a referendum question, 68.5 percent of voters in last Wednesday's elections felt students did not have enough input into the presidential search process.

But in light of Phillip A. Sharp's withdrawal and the resumption of the search process, Antico said the UA had a "second chance" at providing the search committees with student input.


The UA is currently working on a short report of student concerns about the next presidency of MIT. The report will be presented to the Corporation and faculty search committees.

Erratum

Friday's story on the proposed graduate housing policy ["Grad students oppose proposed housing policy"] incorrectly referred to the Graduate Student Council's Housing and Community Affairs Committee (HCA) as the Housing and Student Affairs Committee (HSA).

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