Freedom of Expression

Important to MIT
Community

The Tech received a copy of this letter addressed to President Charles M. Vest.

On Wednesday, Feb. 3, we were holding a bake sale in the Student Center lobby to collect money for the benefit of the people of war-torn Lebanon and its civilians. Our booth displayed pictures revealing the acts of human rights violations committed against them and their miserable condition. We were also displaying a poster with the words, "Fifty Thousand Women Refused" a figure reported in the Jan. 4 issue of Newsweek magazine. Next to this declaration on the poster was a quotation from the magazine from which this figure was taken.

In the evening around six, the people manning the booth picked things up and started to move them to the dorm room of one of them. They left some of the things behind, including the poster, intending to get them later. When they returned ten minutes later, only the poster was missing and upon searching, was discovered torn to bits in a garbage can. This is a Howe fad such incident encountered by Muslim students at MIT. Recently, over the Independent Activities Period, Eric was announcing the time and location of a lecture on Islam and the New World Order were repeatedly removed minutes after their posting in the Infinite Corridor and the buildings adjacent to it.

Mr. President, MIT is an institution that students express their opinions freely. This freedom is one of the things that distinguish MIT as one of the great institutions of this country. The occurrence of such events must be a cause of concern for the entire MIT community and goes against the traditions of diversity and tolerance at MIT.

We write this letter in the hope that your privileged position will enable you to stress the importance of freedom of expression better than any other person to the general community of this institution.

Waraj M. Bokhari G
MIT Muslim Students' Association

A Call For Dialogue

Between Shevitz and Thistle

Rabbi Dan Shevitz used his official position as the MIT Jewish Chaplain to publicly mark every member of The Thistle as an "unrepentant anti-Semite." This charge is irresponsible and unsubstantiated. His main line of argument is that since we don't discuss the importance of freedom of expression better than any other person to the general community of this institution.

Wanaj M. Bokhari G
MIT Muslim Students' Association

Letters To the Editor

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Wanaj M. Bokhari G
MIT Muslim Students' Association

Thistle Anti-Semitism

Charges Based on Questionable Evidence

The Tech received a copy of this letter addressed to Rabbi Dan Shevitz.

We were very disturbed by your letter ["Anti-Semitic Thistle Deserves Contempt," Feb. 3] and your allegation that "The Thistle is the product of unrepentant anti-Semites." You have not merely objected to an article or a graphic in our paper. You have instead chosen to make such judgments of the collective based on rather questionable evidence. As you well know, the charge of anti-Semitism is one of the things that distinguish MIT as one of the great institutions of this country.

The occurrence of such events must be a cause of concern for the entire MIT community and goes against the traditions of diversity and tolerance at MIT. We write this letter in the hope that your privileged position will enable you to stress the importance of freedom of expression better than any other person to the general community of this institution.

As Jewish members of The Thistle, we were particularly hurt by those very personal charges. However, we too make such judgments about our character, based only on circumstantial evidence. Given your position in the community and your responsibilities, you should have taken more care before making such charges. Your tactics have not furthered the cause of open intellectual debate to which we should all be committed. We realize that you are deeply concerned about this issue. We welcome a dialogue between us. We are sure that upon closer interaction you will see that we are not the anti-Semites you fear.

We were very disturbed that you chose a public forum in which to air your concerns rather than bringing them personally to us. Unfortunately, because of the defamatory nature of your comments, we found it necessary to respond in public. We hope future discussions on these issues can be carried on more respectfully and hence, more productively.

Jesse M. Stickgold '96
Robert C. Plotkin '93
Abe J. Cohen '90

Opinion Policy

Editorials, printed in a distinctive format, are the official opinion of the editorial board. They are written by editorial board members or by invited guests, are signed by the editors in chief, managing editor, and executive editor, and are signed by editors in chief, executive editor, and editorial editor. Opinion columns and essays, and opinion columns and essays in a distinct format, are the opinions of the signed members of the editorial board choosing to publish their disagreement with the editors.

Letters and columns published by individuals and represent the opinion of the author, not necessarily that of the newspaper.

Letters to the editor are to be typed, double-spaced and addressed to The Tech, P.O. Box 29, MIT Branch, Cambridge, Mass. 02139, or by interdepartmental mail to Room W20-483. Electronic submissions in plain text format may be mailed to letters@thetech.mit.edu. All submissions are due by 4 p.m. two days before the date of publication.

Letters and columns are signed by the author's signatures, addresses, and phone numbers. Unsigned letters will not be accepted. No one will see the manuscript before the express prior approval of The Tech. The Tech reserves the right to edit or condense letters; shorter letters will be given higher priority. Once nature reserves the right to publish the letter. We regret we cannot publish all of the letters we receive.

To Reach Us

Electronic mail is the easiest way to reach any member of our staff. Mail to specific departments may be sent to the following addresses on the Internet: adv@thetech.mit.edu, news@thetech.mit.edu, sports@thetech.mit.edu, arts@thetech.mit.edu, phone@thetech.mit.edu, circ@thetech.mit.edu (circulation department). For other matters, send mail to general@thetech.mit.edu, and it will be directed to the appropriate person.