that MIT should contribute to the distortion of their neglect of Islam as well as their laxity in responsibility for this state of affairs due to the casting of Islam as a danger to the civilized world has been used by Serbian authorities to organize our immigration laws with some practical way to have an author like Rushdie express his ideas in a public forum, in spite of being at risk of harm for doing so. It is unfortunate that secrecy often is used to provide protection, but I am not sure what Bhushan thinks would have been gained had the talk been widely publicized. Aside from putting Rushdie at risk, announcing a lecture by Rushdie might have also put the audience attending the talk in danger. As Bhushan himself states in the column, "Rushdie does have exceptional worries about his safety." So what could have been gained from an announcement except anxiety for Rushdie and, and an opportunity for those who would harm him to plan? I also fail to see how being discrete about the subject of a lecture is "contrary to promoting the free exchange of ideas." Informing the media was the best way to get the content (or one might say "the ideas") of Rushdie out to the widest audience with minimal risk to the speaker and the audience, and the key point that Bhushan seems to overlook is that the Sonett lecture as announced was open to the public, and was far from being a "private audience." The Sonett lecture as announced was open to the public, and was far from being a "private audience." For Institute personnel, unavailable because of their perils (e.g., Adam, Mees, Jesus, and Muhammad) is being actively discrete about Muslims bears some responsibility for this state of affairs due to their neglect of Islam as well as their laxity in responsibility for this state of affairs.

We also apalled that Associate Provost J. J. Keyser’s letter was quoted in The Boston Globe as saying: "What we’re saying is everyone had the right to freedom of speech, but there are consequences to that right. We’re just asking them to think about those consequences before they speak." According to the guide, those consequences include "termination of employment or student status." In other words, say what you want, but if we don’t like it, your days are numbered. We have assumed that Keyser had been misquoted until he reaffirmed this alarming statement in a recent letter to the editor. This guide is an embarrassment to MIT, but the mistake can be corrected. We look forward to hearing from you on this important matter.

Bill Reever and Dan Davies Co-Chairs Boston Coalition for Freedom of Expression

APPENDIX

Letters To The Editor

Letters, from Page 4

selves as being dehumanized by the current campaign against Islam. Consider the following examples from the U.S. media. "The dark side of Rushdie," Mortimer Zuckerman, the editor in chief of US News and World Report, says, "We will need to nurture our own faiths and resolution against 'Islamic fundamentalism.'" William F. Buckley Jr. says, "We need to organize our immigration laws with some reference to this problem of the ‘fundamentalist Mullahs’". The common denominator is demonization of Muslims and misrepresentation of Islam. The consequences for Muslims are not merely psychological. Comments by non-Muslim colleagues at the Institute confirm that the media and government presentation of our faith is having a pronounced effect on their perception of Muslims. In an extreme case, the casting of Islam as a danger to the civilized world has been used by Serbian authorities to organize our immigration laws with some consistent policies. Although Vest states in his letter that "disciplinary processes need to be "private," any outsider can see that the administration is responding to the TEP incident more aggressively than it responded to the Rushdie incident. The administration has continually been fruitful in its response to the TEP incident.

I am sure that the MIT community wants to put the PBE incident behind it. I am not trying to rekindle this issue because I am totally committed with the way that the vast administration handled this affair. The issue to be dealt with is respect. If the Institute is to move closer to its goal of diversity it must first be consistent in its policies towards all ethnic groups. It is disrespectful to have disparity in the policies that govern the MIT community. It is only a matter of time until the African-American community will no longer tolerate being disrespected at MIT.

Steve Benzaal '81

Vest Administration Failed to Handle PBE Incident Responsibly

First of all, I would like to make it clear that this letter is not directed towards the gay, lesbian, and bisexual community. However, I am totally displeased with the way that the Vest administration has handled two events—specifically the Phi Beta Epsilon Phi incident and the Tau Epsilon Phi incident. An overview of both situations yields that there is a disparity in the way in which the Vest administration handled these incidents. On March 14, Tommie Henderson '95 met with President Vest regarding the PBE incident. One of his requests for resolving the incident was for Vest to write a letter to all students outlining the administration's policy on racial harassment. The administration declined to do that. However, less than two weeks after the TEP incident, President Vest sent out a letter to every MIT student giving his view of this incident. But this is just the beginning of Vest's dis- paraging policies. Although Vest states in his letter that "disciplinary processes need to be "private," any outsider can see that the administration is responding to the TEP incident more aggressively than it responded to the PBE incident. The administration has continually been fruitful in its response to the PBE incident.

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Bhushan Disregards Safety of Audience

Vipal Bhushan’s rambling column "Rushdie Lecture Should Have Been Published," Nov. 30, jolted me a bit stunned. While he speaks of the need to "jealously guard the right to keep and speak our opinions," he condemning what may very well have been the only practical way to have an author like Rushdie express his ideas in a public forum, in spite of being at risk of harm for doing so. It is unfortunate that secrecy often is used to provide protection, but I am not sure what Bhushan thinks would have been gained had the talk been widely publicized. Aside from putting Rushdie at risk, announcing a lecture by Rushdie might have also put the audience attending the talk in danger. As Bhushan himself states in the column, "Rushdie does have exceptional worries about his safety." So what could have been gained from an announcement except anxiety for Rushdie and, and an opportunity for those who would harm him to plan? I also fail to see how being discrete about the subject of a lecture is "contrary to promoting the free exchange of ideas." Informing the media was the best way to get the content (or one might say "the ideas") of Rushdie out to the widest audience with minimal risk to the speaker and the audience, and the key point that Bhushan seems to overlook is that the Sonett lecture as announced was open to the public, and was far from being a "private audience." For Institute personnel, unavailable because of their perils (e.g., Adam, Mees, Jesus, and Muhammad) is being actively discrete about Muslims bears some responsibility for this state of affairs due to their neglect of Islam as well as their laxity in responsibility for this state of affairs.

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Bill Reever and Dan Davies Co-Chairs Boston Coalition for Freedom of Expression

The 1994 Burchard Scholars Program is now Accepting Applications

The Burchard Scholars Program brings together members of the MIT faculty and promising juniors and sophomores who have demonstrated excellence in some aspect of the humanities and social sciences as well as in science or engineering. Twenty Burchard Scholars are invited to a series of dinner-seminars throughout the year to discuss topics of current research or interest introduced by faculty members visiting scholars, and Burchard Scholars. The program begins in February.

For information or an application, contact: Dean’s Office, School of Humanities and Social Science, E51-234 (x-8961) or the HASS Information Office, 14N-408 (x-4443).

Application Deadline: Friday, December 3, 1993

Sponsored by the office of the Dean, School of Humanities and Social Science