

In IT - Res Strike

DRAFT (February 5, 1969)

TO: Members of the Faculty

The following resolution was adopted by the Faculty Council at its February 5 meeting and is being forwarded to all members of the faculty because of the wide faculty interest in the subject.

Recently, a group of faculty members have made public their plans to initiate a critical examination of central issues of policy related to science and technology. The series of meetings and public discussions which the group has planned for March 4 have gained wide publicity in the press under the label of "Research Strike" or "work stoppage." While members of the group insist that the "strike" label is misleading and that the action is in particular not directed against M. I. T., this label seems too colorful to be abandoned by the communication media.

Other members and groups of members of the M. I. T. faculty, while in fundamental agreement regarding the importance of the questions raised, have expressed dismay over the symbolism of the "strike" or "work stoppage." They believe that concern for and rational inquiry into the social consequences of scientific and technological research have little to gain from

-2-

being associated with an atmosphere of protest and political action. They further point out that the current research activities of many faculty colleagues and students are directed towards the use of science and technology in constructive and responsible solutions to social and environmental problems.

A good many faculty members take issue with the appropriateness or desirability of coupling an inquiry open to the entire academic community with a symbol acceptable to only a fraction among them. They find the symbolism of the "strike" in the context of the meeting without real meaning, especially since the life of the Institute is full of discussions and meetings, and faculty, staff and students arrange their personal schedules as necessary to be able to attend those that are of deep concern to them.

The Faculty Council notes the strong desire of so many faculty members to participate in a broadly based and sponsored series of discussions and convocations on these topics. It supports the proposals that a presidentially-appointed group representing a wide spectrum of views be responsible for the planning of such an Institute-wide series, to be held this spring. It expresses the hope that this cooperative venture will be able to combine professional competence and intense concern into

- 3 -

a productive outcome. It further hopes that this approach will
minimize a possible divisiveness that could easily endanger
the intentions of all groups and be harmful to the Institute.

E. Neal Hartley
Secretary