Almost everyone at MIT is in favor of the program outlined by SACC, but a great many hesitate to endorse the related actions. Most often people defer because of a disagreement about tactics. Those whose research does not aid the war reason that the strike and the activities around it are not their concern. But the issues at hand—the war and our scientific policies—are the direct concern of every citizen. It will not do for us to leave the decisions concerning defense to those who build or design weapons, for their interests are frequently different from our own. Professor Feld of MIT, in discussing the development of the Atomic Bomb, addresses part of the problem. Speaking for the scientists involved, he said:

“We worked hard to make it work even if we wished it wouldn’t. The question of employing the bomb arose when the scientists involved were victims of a kind of mass mesmerization. In the future, decisions of this kind should not be made by people on the inside. The last people to ask about deploying the anti-ballistic missile are the people working on it.”

if those of us engaged in ‘good’ research think only of our own work, we will be leaving the decisions concerning scientific policy to those who have the most direct interest in the extension of the military. When a scientist—or any other citizen—claims political detachment, his non-involvement in the decision perpetuates militarism and waste, for that is the thrust of America’s status quo.

the need for dramatic action

Why not a day of discussion instead of a stoppage? Discussions have been held time and again. SACC’s new approach reflects the belief that it is necessary to bring the issues into more widespread focus by engaging in a more dramatic form of action. The strike is a means through which all scientists can show their disaffection with the government’s current policies. Because of the nature of the action their views will reach a wide audience, providing to the public information which is relevant to questions of scientific policy.

Some will argue that while they see the value of the strike, they feel some small disagreement—they feel that some other preparatory work should have been done, some steps added, some statements more nicely put. There are many instances when all the actions open to us are in some way imperfect. In such times we must adopt the actions which lie closest in their goals and effects to the ones we would ideally choose. Surely for anyone who might have chosen a slightly different way to dramatize his dissent, the choice between inaction on March 4th and joining the strike is a simple one. One is caught, in times like these, either as part of the solution or part of the problem.

the next step

The OLD MOLE supports the aims and tactics of March 4th. We predict, however, that even these tactics will not be sufficient. Science is misused by men, but men who function within an institutional framework. These institutions are not about to endorse changes that would go against their interests. The pressures upon the men who make policy flow from deep within the structure of this society. The limits on their actions are not solely the boundaries of pure reason. The men who rule have been screened again and again, at each step of advancement, so that those who agree with the status quo are chosen, while those who might rebel are weeded out. Those who are chosen find that their way of life, their livelihood, their very lives come to depend on the maintenance of the established order. They become spokesmen for the interests of the status quo. In this case the existing order is dominated by the military industrial complex, whose siren song depends on the perpetuation and enlargement of the military. Set against the forces of self interest, acculturation, and other unauthorized persons.

The members of the Corporation are primarily executives with deep ties in the military-industrial establishment. Of the Corporation’s Executive Committee, four have positions at AT&T, two are trustees of the Rand Corporation, and two are trustees of MITRE.
PROPOSALS

The March 4th work stoppage is directed:

1) AGAINST: the pervasive influence of the military in shaping our foreign and domestic policies.

2) AGAINST: the continued use of science to pursue unjust policies and unjust causes (napalm and biological agents for the war in Vietnam, missiles for an escalation of the cold war).

3) TOWARD: the assumption of responsibility by the scientific community for the use of their work.

The protest is not against research in general. It attacks work at the Institute on missile-control systems while reserving support for endeavors to understand health problems. It opposes the existence of ties between the university and the Department of Defense because such an alliance is detrimental to the freedom of the university and the larger community. It asks for scientists to take more responsibility for the applications of their research and knowledge, and to accept the role of responsible critics of government policy.

These are the proposals issued by SACC, the Science Action Coordinating Committee:

1) That the cooperative programs, courses 6A and 16B, be terminated with military related research projects such as:
   a) “re-entry missile defense” (ARM) with AVCO (6A).
   b) “assignments for... military” at Honeywell (6A).
   c) The cooperative program disassociate itself entirely from any institute that is involved extensively in war related research, such as:
      1) Naval Ordnance Laboratory (6A).
      2) Air Force Cambridge Laboratory (6A).
      3) AVCO (6A), which does chemical and biological warfare research under USAF Lab contracts AF-06-(635) 4396 and 4679, “binary biological warfare concepts” and “An investigation and evaluation of concepts for determining and disposition of submarginal biological weapons containing either anti-personnel or antitrop agents.”

from a statement by SACC, the Science Action Coordinating Committee

The research stoppage is a strike in the European sense; a one day strike to dramatize discontent with the conduct of affairs in our country, in our case specifically to protest the misuse of technology and the complicity of the scientific and technological community with the growing power and influence of the military-industrial complex. The research stoppage does not claim to stop production. The work stoppage is a vote of no confidence in the dangerous and inhumane policies of our government.

How It All Began

The research stoppage grew out of opposition to the war in Vietnam, specifically to the use of science in such an unjust cause: the development of napalm, chemical and biological agents, guidance systems and other ordnance.

The graduate students who made up the Science Action Coordinating Committee in its early days broadened the strike’s focus to include the use of science unjustly or unwisely in other areas when the idea was taken up by senior faculty of the Institute. Forty-seven faculty members formed the Union of Concerned Scientists and issued a call for the stoppage. SACC later issued its own statement, and a set of proposals for Institute and government policy. SACC’s initiative has been taken up on other campuses. Students at Columbia University will be on strike, research will be stopped at Johns Hopkins, and the University of Pennsylvania will be closed for the day. Research strikes will also occur at NYU and Yeshiva University, Yale and Brooklyn Polytechnic will hold day-long discussions.

On March 4th at MIT, SACC and UCS will co-sponsor a symposium. Before that date SACC hopes to canvass all graduate and undergraduate students to discuss channeling of science and engineering students into defense-oriented jobs.

Prior to undertaking the current action SACC drafted and circulated an open letter to President Nixon’s science advisor, Dr. Lee Dubridge, attacking the complicity of the universities in the military-industrial complex, and recommending increased emphasis on scientific contributions to socially constructive activities. The letter was signed by 162 faculty and graduate students at MIT.

Edited as a special project of THE OLD MOLE, after consultation with the Science Action Coordinating Committee (SACC) at MIT. Produced at the office of THE OLD MOLE newspapers, 2 Brookline Street, Cambridge, 494-9982. Project staff: Trude Bennett, Nick Egleson. Printed by the New England Free Press.

Schedule: March 4th

Monday evening, March 3rd, 8:00 PM, Rindge Technical High School Auditorium, Irving and Broadway, Cambridge. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF INTELLECTUALS: Profs. Low, Chomsky, and Weingast (MIT), and Prof. Wm. McMillan, UCLA and RAND.

Tuesday, March 4th, Kneige Auditorium, MIT 9:00 – 10:30 Panel: Reconversion and non-military research 10:45 – 12:30 Panel: The academic community and government 1:15 – 3:45 Discussion of student problems

Tuesday evening, March 4th, 8:00 PM, Rindge Tech Auditorium ARMS CONTROL, DISARMAMENT, AND NATIONAL SECURITY: Profs. Alperovitz, Bethke, and Meselstein

Further information from SACC, Room 14 N 218, MIT ext. 4775

March 4th Special

The Old Mole