

Rebate check delivery delayed by mis-sorting

By Paul Schindler

Many unsuspecting MIT Coop members were treated to an unpleasant surprise when they went to pick up their rebate checks at the Tech Coop. They were informed that the checks were at Harvard. They were then asked to sign up for the checks to be transferred to Tech for retrieval.

After 8 days, holders of the confused numbers were still being told that none of the problematic checks had been moved yet.

Persons affected are mainly those who signed up for their Coop cards by mail, before the start of the school year. Their numbers were not part of the MIT "Block" and, according to Coop Controller Fred Fox, even some of those who signed up after the start of school might be affected.

"In the fall of 1969, the Harvard Trust Company took over issuance of our membership cards. Prior to that, with few exceptions, the numbers were issued in blocks: a certain number to each location. We had blurred the distinction on occasion, but the Harvard Trust vir-

tually ignored it . . .

"Our checks are printed by computer, and cannot be sorted by location, only by Coop number. As a result, we have to sort them as close to the old numbering system as possible, and hope for minimum disruption . . ."

Fox went on, "Next year, we might try putting all checks in one location for one week, another the next week, and so on, in rotation."

When asked about what snafu had resulted in the nondelivery of checks to the Tech Coop, Fox confessed ignorance of the exact cause, but bemoaned the general labor problem in retail work: "We're pretty far down the wage scale. Most of our people are damn good and conscientious. But send me five good clerks and I'll hire them tomorrow."

No figures are available on the extent of the problem, but observation revealed at least two separate sign-up lists on various occasions, for an estimated minimum of 75-100 members directly affected by the snarl. According to Fox, a simple directive in inter-store mail should result in action within 2 days.

Report urges proxy panel

By Pete Mancuso

An Institute study has recommended the establishment of a special committee to research issues connected with proxy voting.

Entitled "University Investing and Corporate Responsibility," the work is the result of a summer study conducted by Edward H. Bowman, Professor of

Management.

The study project was first announced in a Corporation Executive Committee's subcommittee report last May 7. At that time, Bowman was placed in charge of an investigation into the questions of 'corporate democracy,' public policy, and social responsibility."

The Bowman report recom-

mends the establishment of some "CJAC [Corporation Joint Advisory Committee]-type" committee, or perhaps using CJAC, itself, for the purpose. Between six and ten people, including Corporation Members, faculty, students, and possibly administrators and alumni, are suggested.

The committee would both openly discuss issues and "be available when any of its members, or a member of the Corporation, or any member of the Institute, by way of special office, raises an issue of social responsibility and University Investing." The paper recommends that the committee be ad-hoc in nature at present, due to a lack of formal guidelines.

There are also certain suggestions in the report for initial and continuing investments. Initial investments should be made in industries which provide a "maximum return with an acceptable degree of risk." In exception to this are those "flagrant cases" of industries lacking a mandatory amount of social consciousness. "Low return investments in worthy projects or social benefactors" are also to be avoided.

The rationale presented in the report for these recommendations is that the Institute has a responsibility to take part in "socially useful endeavors" only when they directly pertain to the basic goals of MIT. These, of course, are science and research. Action should be "substantially more limited and circumspect" when the endeavor is independent of these goals.

In the case of a continuing investment, the report suggests that the Institute should not sell stock in any concern due to some disagreement. Proxy voting, however, is recommended only in more simple cases. According to this paper, the more complex an issue, the greater should be MIT's reluctance to vote its proxies.

These recommendations are presented in the fourth section of the Bowman report, titled "Recommended Options for MIT." Preceding sections deal with the role of an institutional investor, the nature of corporate responsibility, and the possible options that exist for all universities. An attempt has been made to examine these problems from economic, moral, pragmatic, and legal standpoints, while presenting the various options available in each case.

The report is available in the Information Center in the lobby of Building 7 and in Walter Milne's office.

Watchdog panel set for pollution controls

The Institute's Ecological Advisory Committee has the responsibility of assuring conformance with Federal and state pollution controls and initiating any other improvements that are feasible.

Composed of only three members, Phillip A. Stoddard, vice president for operations, Donald Whiston, associate director of physical plant, and David Wilson, professor of mechanical engineering, it is not really a committee. Also, the group is not advisory in its capacity; if a problem occurs, appropriate action will be taken.

Some of the conditions which come under the committee's jurisdiction are the recent required change to very low (0.5%) sulfur content oil, checks on the emissions from the power plant stack, the trial recycling project being run by students, and the possibility of composting.

Professor David Wilson acts as the advisor and says, "I've found myself in the position of MIT's official ombudsman." He is presently working on a trash separator that uses several types of sensors, including infra-red and impact, to separate the trash from a few inches to a foot in

size into streams of valuable material. Work is under contract with help from the Environmental Protection Agency and with the help of the EE Department, especially Professor Senturi, it is almost ready to undergo serious testing on a small scale.

Other projects underway include a small trash grinder in Building 56 which turns out compacted material that can be used as wall board or fire fuel. Most incinerators have been closed down, they are now only used to destroy dangerous materials, and the Institute is relying mostly on compactors although this results in the costly necessity of increased towage. No effluent is being released into the Charles River other than a warm clean-water stream which the Magnet Labs use for cooling.

Lastly, composting is being considered, but because of the problem of diseases such as Dutch Elm, vine and grass disease, and danger to some already ailing sycamores, the Waltham Experimental Station is being consulted on the advisability of composting on campus and sterilization of the waste.

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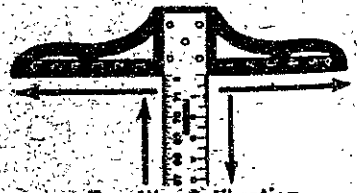
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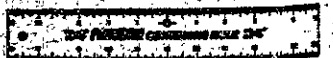
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