Teuber missing, presumed dead

By William Lasser
Professor Hans-Lukas Teuber, head of the Department of Psychology, is missing and presumed dead after apparently suffering heart failure while swimming in waters off the British Virgin Islands last Tuesday. His body has not been recovered.

Teuber, 60, was one of the world's leading authorities on the relationship between behavior and the brain. He was honored last spring by his colleagues on the MIT faculty as the recipient of the 1976-77 James R. Killian, Jr., Faculty Achievement Award and was to deliver the first of his two Killian lectures next Wednesday evening.

In a statement issued yesterday, MIT President Jerome W. Wiesner described Teuber as "an authority and a pioneer in the complex study of the brain," adding that "to us at MIT — faculty and students alike — he was first of all a warm and good friend and colleague." Wiesner called the incident "a most tragic and personal loss for all of us here."

The citation which accompanied the Killian Award to Teuber as "a man who joins the outpost of a penetrating experimenter and the sympathetic experience of a true humanist with the consummate style of a gifted teacher."

Teuber founded the Department of Psychology in 1964, three years after joining the Institute faculty, and served as the head of the department from its inception. He was affiliated with several professional associations, panels and organizations, and was a member of the editorial boards of a number of journals in neuropsychology and neurology.

Born in Berlin, he studied in Europe and later, in 1947, received his doctorate in psychology from Harvard University. He served in the U.S. Navy in World War II; during this time he conducted research into the effects of brain wounds on military casualties. The investigation of behavioral changes in brain-injured patients is still being pursued at the MIT Clinical Research Center.

The Psychology Department, reflecting Teuber's interests, is best known for its work in the areas of brain science, experiential and developmental psychology, and psycholinguistics. Teuber was responsible for the department's growth since 1964, by Mark James

Recombinant DNA research at MIT was delayed at least another 30 days by Wednesday's vote of the Cambridge City Council to extend its moratorium on P3 class experiments. The extension was approved to allow the council more time to study the report of the Cambridge Laboratory Examination Review Board (CLERB), which recommends that such research be permitted in Cambridge under guidelines issued by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and under additional conditions specified by the Board.

The report — and the moratorium — covers only the P3 class of recombinant DNA research, as classified by the NIH guidelines, and does not cover less hazardous work already underway in Cambridge. Recombinant DNA work involves the insertion of segments of DNA from other species into the DNA normally found in the bacterium E. coli, and the insertion of this hybrid molecule into a host cell of E. coli.

This process makes it possible to easily study specific DNA sequences from many sources, a capability which supporters claim may one day be used to escape from many diseases such as cancer. Opponents fear that the newly formed organism might present a health hazard to human beings if it were to escape.

The NAACP will oppose the nomination of Griffin B. Bell as Attorney General, according to Clarence Mitchell, Washington director of the civil rights group, citing as the reason Bell's resistance to desegregation in Georgia in 1959-60. Bell has recently come under criticism for his membership in private clubs which engage in discriminatory practices against blacks and Jews.

Monday, Jan. 10, is the last day to submit nominations for the MIT Alumni Association's Senior Academic Award, which is given annually to the senior woman "displaying the highest degree of academic excellence in her graduating class. Departments, students and faculty are encouraged to send nominations to Professor Cho Kyun Rho, Room 56-137.

Cambridge's Mayor Alfred Vellucci argues against allowing recombinant DNA research to begin immediately in Cambridge.