Insurance calls not authorized by MIT

By Moria Davek

"MIT students, particularly seniors are receiving sales calls from insurance company representatives who imply that they have a connection with the Institute," according to a notice issued by Kathleen W. Lombardini, Executive Assistant to the President. "We want the students to know that there is no connection between these companies and MIT," said Lombardini.

One student received a life-insurance sales offer from a firm that claimed to be "here at MIT," implying that that firm was "the only one" that had connections with the Institute," said Lombardini.

Such a connection would be in violation of our policy," said Lombardini. The companies Harvard cleared of blame

By Burton Kaliski

Harvard Medical School is free of blame for allowing Dr. John R. Darsee to continue research after he was convicted of fabricating data, a blue-ribbon committee studying the circumstances stated in its final report.

Darsee had falsified much of the data for a National Institute of Health (NIH) study, according to an earlier Harvard report, before he was dismissed in May 1981. Harvard waited until November to notify NIH, after NIH officials found discrepancies in the study.

William Raub, the head of extramural affairs for NIH was dismissed in 1981 because the committee said that Harvard waited to report the fraud. In a live interview on CBS Morning, Raub denied that Harvard had had an opportunity to notify NIH of the circumstances. He said that NIH was "an obligation to the public to be sure that every case of real or apparent misreading in science is identified and dealt with promptly and forcefully."

Harvard dismissed Darsee in late 1981, but he continued to work on the study privately. Eugene Landau, Darsee's superior in Harvard, allowed him to continue research because "the study was totally dependent on computer procedures and techniques, and a total flux ... might jeopardize the entire study."

The blue-ribbon committee found reasonable Harvard's decision not to notify NIH and to allow Darsee to continue work. The panel, however, felt the committee should have been notified of the fraud. At least one researcher did not learn of the fraud until November.

The blue-ribbon committee is composed of eight members appointed by Harvard Medical School Dean Daniel C. Tostenson. The committee includes five Harvard professors and is chaired by Richard S. Ross, Dean of Johns Hopkins School of Medicine.

A four-member NIH panel met in February to discuss the case. In March the panel will travel to Harvard for a more complete investigation.

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