

PRICED AT \$40

Richard Pohl, 23 years old, of Lynbrook, L.I., who acted as a spokesman for the group, said the instrument package consisted of a black bag, a stethoscope, a tuning fork, a percussion hammer and a tape measure that, together, retail for about \$40.

Mr. Pohl said there were about 125 students in his class, some of whom did not choose to accept the instruments when they were distributed last year.

"We want to make this a national issue if possible," Mr. Pohl said, adding that the Harvard group was talking to medical students at Tufts and Boston University in an attempt to have more instruments returned.

Last November, 36 students at the Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine in Cleveland returned similar gifts from a drug company whose name was not announced at the time.

In a letter to the New England Journal of Medicine, the Cleveland students said: "We are returning these gifts because we feel they are not gifts but rather are inappropriate advertisements. Although many of these gifts are useful, all but the most naive realize that your motivation in giving them to us is to influence our future choice of drugs."

Mr. Pohl said in a telephone interview that he and his fellow students had attempted to return the instruments to a Boston branch office of the Indianapolis company yesterday but that "no one in a position of authority was there to accept them." He added that another attempt would be made on Monday.

Attempts by The New York Times to telephone officials of Lilly in Indianapolis for comment were unavailing.

The company is but one of many pharmaceutical corporations that give medical instruments and other materials such as textbooks and sample drugs to doctors and medical students.

Some of the companies also distribute scholarships and grants to medical schools.

Dr. Richard Burack, a specialist in pharmacology at the Harvard Medical School who has been a critic of the prices and quality of drugs, applauded the students' actions.

He said in a telephone interview that "it was about time that something was done to widen the link between the drug industry and the medical profession."

[From the Harvard Crimson, Feb. 3, 1969]

MEDICAL STUDENTS RETURN GIFTS TO DRUG COMPANIES

(By David N. Hollander)

Forty-five second-year students at the Medical School, concerned that an unhealthy relationship exists between the drug industry and the medical profession, are returning doctor's kits given them by a leading pharmaceuticals firm.

Each kit, valued at \$40, contained a black bag, a stethoscope, a percussion hammer, a tuning fork, and a tape measure. Andrew S. Binder and Richard L. Pohl, second-year students who organized the action, said the students felt the kits were inappropriate advertising rather than gifts. The kits were gifts from Eli Lilly and Company.

Binder emphasized that the students were not attacking Lilly or the drug industry in general. "We concentrated on our end of the bargain," he said. "Some students argued that if we turned the gifts back, drug companies would retract their scholarships and gifts to medical schools. That's the way they have us hooked. We have to wean ourselves away," Binder said.

"Gifts to students are just a drop in the bucket," Binder added. "All the houses producing name-brand drugs hold conferences for doctors and sponsor more blatant dinners and trips," he said.

Estimates place the cost of advertising by the companies at more than \$3000 per physician each year, Binder noted. "Even if doctors aren't bribed to prescribe certain drugs, it's still costing the consumers."

The 125 members of the medical school class decided last year to ask the drug companies for the gifts, Binder said. The University will not make arrangements for the gifts with the companies, and in past years Harvard students had been among a minority of the nation's medical students not receiving kits.

A letter in a respected medical journal and a seminar at the Medical School later convinced the 45 protesting students that the gifts were inappropriate.