

Miami trial opens a window on the drug world

By FRANK CERABINO
Herald Staff Writer

After three weeks of testimony and still only in midstream, a drug trial in Miami federal court has showcased allegations of dope peddling and police corruption in South Florida, a rare look at "the trade" told by some of the biggest dealers of their day.

If it was made into a miniseries, it might be called "Drugs and Remembrance."

Already, convicted dealers — some of them testifying for the first time about their business — have produced an embarrassing string of revelations.

The result: Four current Miami police officers have been tied to allegations of bribery, including Deputy Chief Walter Martinez, the second-in-command in the department, and Raul Martinez, a major who once headed the police corruption unit. The testimony brought denials from the officers and action from Police Chief Perry Anderson, who temporarily demoted Walter Martinez and promised to personally investigate the matter.

At the center of the story are a father and son, Guillermo and Mario Tabraue, and a jewelry store at 940 W. Flagler St. in Miami. For years, Guillermo Tabraue's jewelry store was a place that offered bargain-basement prices to cops, and, according to prosecutors, was ground-zero for a successful drug business.

The Tabraue case begins with marijuana smuggling in the '70s and moves into cocaine in the '80s. Along the way, it purports to solve two murders — the gunning down of Mario Tabraue's first wife and the disappearance of federal informant Larry Nash, whose body was never found, but which prosecutors say was hacked with a chain saw and burned with 50 bags of charcoal.

Mario Tabraue's attorney, Richard Sharpstein, has called it a misguided prosecution fueled by the testimony of convicts willing to make up stories about the Ta-

braues to get reduced prison sentences. Said Sharpstein: "It's an environmental case. It's just recycling old garbage from people rotting in jail."

On another level, it's a local history lesson that begins with the so-called "gentlemen smugglers" of the mid-'70s and moves into the cocaine-cowboy era. The trial in U.S. District Judge James Kehoe's courtroom is near the halfway point.

The first witnesses have mostly been convicted marijuana dealers.

"In 1977-78, it was a very friendly group of people," testified marijuana smuggler Tony Fernandez, credited with brokering 1.5 million pounds of the drug. "Everyone was making money then."

"Mario [Tabraue] used to sell jewelry to us and all the guys in the trade," Fernandez testified.

Much of the marijuana was coming through the Keys. U.S. Customs agent Joe Alaimo was asked about a 7,000-pound seizure on Middle Torch Key that prosecutors linked to the Tabraues. How was he sure the plant matter in the van was marijuana?

"We were seizing 10 to 15 tons of marijuana a week," Alaimo testified. "So I would say it was marijuana."

Gustavo "Pepito" Fernandez, a convicted dealer who operated from the Keys during those years, said police officers were routinely bribed hundreds of thousands of dollars.

On cross-examination, defense attorney Douglas Williams asked Fernandez if he realized that by bribing police officers, he was spreading corruption through South Florida.

"No," Fernandez answered. "I knew they were corrupt for quite awhile."

Said Williams: "So you were just making your individual contribution to corruption?"

"That's correct," Fernandez replied.

The marijuana from the Keys was loaded into vans and tractor trailers and shipped to

Miami stash houses, witnesses said.

The Tabraues had a piece of that action, several witnesses have testified. So did Oscar Oliva-Cantu, a convicted dealer who ran a record store across Flagler Street from the Tabraue jewelry store.

Through Oliva-Cantu's testimony, and documents released during his testimony, have come new allegations of Miami police corruption.

Oliva-Cantu said that in May 1978 he learned that Miami detective Raul Martinez was on his trail. Oliva-Cantu said he went to Guillermo Tabraue to see what could be done.

Tabraue, according to Oliva-Cantu, spoke with his friend, Walter Martinez, who was then a sergeant assigned to the beat that included the Tabraue jewelry store.

Oliva-Cantu said he met with Walter Martinez and later bribed Raul Martinez \$50,000 with Walter Martinez's knowledge. The Martinezes are not related.

"Oliva-Cantu advised that when Raul Martinez took the \$50,000 he knew that he would be able to reach an agreement with Raul Martinez and Walter Martinez concerning the investigations," an FBI summary of Oliva-Cantu's statements read.

Both Martinezes as well as defense lawyers in the Tabraue case have called Oliva-Cantu's allegations preposterous.

Walter Martinez said he was friendly with Guillermo Tabraue and visited his store often "to make phone calls and use the bathroom." But he had no idea that drug dealing was going on there and was never approached by Tabraue or Oliva-Cantu concerning police investigations, he said.

"If he paid everybody off, why is he in jail now?" Martinez said about Oliva-Cantu.

Raul Martinez said Oliva-Cantu's allegations of bribery have already been found to be without merit.

Oliva-Cantu did have some connection to Miami police, according to the jury verdict

in a 1983 case. Miami narcotics detective Raul Puig was convicted of aiding Oliva-Cantu by destroying wiretap evidence against the drug dealer. Two weeks ago, Oliva-Cantu testified that it wasn't only Puig who was bribed to destroy the wiretap tapes.

"It has always been four," Oliva-Cantu answered. Raul Martinez and two other officers — Jorge Manresa and Jorge Lopez — also got money to destroy the tapes, he claimed. The officers deny that allegation.

"It puts us in a heck of a spot," Manresa said. "We might have to go in there and call Oliva-Cantu a liar, but what he's saying about Mario Tabraue is probably true."

Guillermo Tabraue's attorney, Williams, said Oliva-Cantu's testimony should be disregarded. "His word has less substance and credibility than denials of a vampire caught with a mouth full of blood in a blood bank."

Yet, after Oliva-Cantu's long-simmering allegations became public two weeks ago, Miami Chief Anderson acted the next day.

Anderson said he knew about the allegations concerning Walter Martinez when he promoted Martinez to deputy chief four months ago, but now that it was public, he would investigate. Meanwhile, he has relieved Martinez of his title as deputy chief, but not his job as one of the department's three assistant chiefs. The net effect is that Martinez is no longer in charge of the department when Anderson is out of town.

The Tabraue name has long been linked to police corruption.

Mario Tabraue, who branched off from his father and started an exotic animal business, was first arrested in May 1981 when more than six tons of marijuana were seized at his South Dade farm. One of those arrested with him was Sam Streiner, a Miami police officer suspected of being his personal bodyguard and courier.

Testifying last week, drug dealer Tony Fernandez said it was unnerving to conduct

his business with Mario Tabraue because of the presence of Streiner, who wore his uniform while counting drug money or making money deliveries for Tabraue.

The 1981 drug case against Mario Tabraue, Streiner and eight others was called Operation Giraffe — named for one of the exotic animals found on Tabraue's property. The case collapsed in 1983 when Dade Circuit Judge Theodore Mastos threw out hundreds of hours of wiretap evidence, ruling that prosecutors lacked an adequate reason to eavesdrop on Tabraue.

Streiner never returned to the department. He could not be reached for comment.

Federal prosecutors also are trying to tie Mario Tabraue to the 1981 murder of his first wife, Maria. They say he ordered her killed after she threatened to divorce him and expose his drug dealing to the government.

Guillermo Tabraue had never been charged with a crime until the current indictment. But state attorney's investigators had questioned him before about jewelry gifts to public officials and about drug dealing in South Florida.

In May 1986, rumors about the Tabraues surfaced again when the FBI subpoenaed the records of 25 Miami police officers.

When one of Mario Tabraue's former employees, James Rickey Brown, was called to appear before a grand jury in 1986, he stopped off to talk to Tabraue. Brown, who was cooperating with the government at the time, wore a body microphone. The tape was played last week in court.

Tabraue told Brown: "What they're doing, they're, uh, opening up all their dirty s---... 'cause they think there's police corruption involved in hiding this, concealing all these, all these problems."

Miamians send aid to Nicaragua for Joan victims

Part of a national drive organized by church groups

By RODRIGO LAZO
Herald Staff Writer

A truck full of toys, medicine and other goods was to leave Miami for Nicaragua this week as a Christmas gift from a group that believes humanitarian aid, not arms, is the best way to alleviate suffering in that country.

The truck is part of the national drive called Pastors for Peace, a caravan of aid for victims of the war and Hurricane Joan. Twenty vehicles, including four buses, will journey to Nicaragua from cities such as Louisville, Chicago and Seattle.

In Miami, the Pastors for Peace are supported by a coalition of religious, labor, political and civic groups.

The truck, purchased with \$3,500 in donations, takes off six weeks after the U.S. government and some local Nicaraguan leaders ruled out hurricane relief aid because of mistrust for Nicaragua's Sandinista government. The hurricane slammed into the country Oct. 21, leaving 116 dead and 187,000 homeless.

"I don't say everything the Sandinistas do is right, but it's important that we don't let disagreements with the government stop us from sending aid to the people who need it most," said Sue Wagner Fields, a pastor at Opa-locka's Church of the Brethren. She was to drive the truck to St. Petersburg.

Chaplain Morrison, a local Quaker leader and organizer of Pastors for Peace, said politics often overshadows human suffering in Nicaragua. "We can't even get the issue discussed here because it's reduced to, are you for the Communists or against the Communists. People are hungry, that's the issue."

The Miami truck will meet other trucks and buses in San Antonio, Texas. Organizers plan to cross the border into Mexico on Dec. 14 and then head for Nicaragua.

The idea for the caravan goes back to last summer when a group of U.S. veterans drove to Nicaragua in 16 small trucks filled with aid. Following that effort, the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization, a group with offices in New York and Detroit, asked religious groups around the country to join the caravan.

The truck contains only part of what was collected in the Miami area. Five other pickups and vans will leave for St. Petersburg with aid that will be shipped by sea to Nicaragua.

"This truck is just a little pickup and it's somewhat symbolic of a larger effort," said Pete Seidman, an airplane machinist. Along with clothes, sheets and toys,



Valerie Williams and Tom Mullen sort clothes at a Quaker activities house in Coral Gables for the caravan to Nicaragua this week.

the local Pastors for Peace collected about \$6,000. "The U.S. government callously turned its back on Nicaragua after the hurricane," Seidman said. "The

U.S. has resources and it has always helped other countries during natural disasters. We want to set an example for our country."

Nicaragua exiles get together in Miami park

By SANDRA DIBBLE
Herald Staff Writer

Out of work and far from home, Josefa Ocampo spent Sunday at a suburban Miami park, searching for familiar Nicaraguan faces.

"I feel very happy," said Ocampo, who moved to Miami six weeks ago after quitting her job at Managua's Manolo Morales Hospital. "I saw two doctors that I knew."

The 31-year-old nursing assistant joined about 4,000 Nicaraguans at Indian Hammock Park for a day of music, picnics, and games. Proclaimed Nicaraguan Community Day by its exile organizers, the event was an ef-

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Emilio Hernandez

fort to draw together Miami's growing Nicaraguan community.

"Viva Nicaragua Libre!" — Long live free Nicaragua — went the crowd's refrain. Clustered around the stage or gathered inside picnic pavilions, they shared painful memories and happy reunions over picnics of pumpkin pie and *rigoron*, a dish of pork, yucca and lettuce.

"We are sure we shall return to Nicaragua," said Emilio Hernandez, president of the Association of Nicaraguan Teachers in Exile. "But now we must unite so that the United States government sees that we need some kind of immigration status."

Bishop Pablo Antonio Vega of Juigalpa, expelled from his country by the Sandinistas, gave a blessing. Los Galos de Dona Gala, a top Nicaraguan musical family now living in Miami, played *Mi Linda Nicaragua* — My Pretty Nicaragua. Local politicians, media personalities, Cuban community supporters and prominent Nicaragua exiles streamed to the stage to receive plaques of appreciation.

"It's a way of making us feel like a community in Miami," said Jose Rivas, a contra veteran who moved to Miami after his left foot was blown off by a land mine.

As the music played in the distance, Rivas sat at a picnic table with a half-dozen former and current contra fighters, sharing a meal prepared by Elsa Bermudez, wife of contra military commander Enrique Bermudez.

"This is very nice for the exile community, but our problems won't be solved here," said Cristobal Mesa, head of the 1,200-man Santiago Mesa Regional Command, now in Honduras. "They are suffering many hardships, without food and without supplies."

Harvard professor resigns after plagiarism is found

BOSTON — (AP) — One of the nation's top psychiatrists resigned from Harvard Medical School's faculty after a student at another school recognized plagiarized passages in the professor's writings dating back 22 years.

Dr. Shervett Frazier, 67, former director of the National Institute of Mental Health, resigned last week as a Harvard professor and head of McLean Hospital, a psychiatric hospital affiliated with the university.

Frazier did not dispute the findings of a faculty committee that investigated the allegations, but said the plagiarism was inadvertent, according to Dr. S. James Adelstein, dean of academic programs at the medical school.

"He has accepted the evidence of the committee," Adelstein said. "But he has ascribed the events to his method of note-taking and composing papers."

Harvard officials said Monday the plagiarism was spotted by Paul Scatena, a graduate student in cognitive sciences at the University of Rochester.

Scatena said in a telephone inter-

view he read several of Frazier's papers while researching phantom pain, a burning sensation that patients sometimes feel from a limb that has been amputated.

Scatena said he found many incorrect citations in the papers and recognized paragraphs that had been lifted from articles by other researchers. He said he sent the passages to Dr. Daniel C. Tosteson, dean of the Harvard Medical School, in August.

Tosteson announced Frazier's resignation in a Nov. 23 letter to the faculty. The letter, made public by the university Monday, says a faculty committee investigated the allegations and concluded that plagiarism occurred in four papers written by Frazier between 1966 and 1975.

Frazier could not be reached for comment. Spokesmen at Harvard and McLean Hospital said he was out of town and unreachable. He did not return messages left at the hospital, and the phone at his home went unanswered.

Three of the discredited papers are about phantom pain. The fourth is on "psychiatric emergency man-

agement."

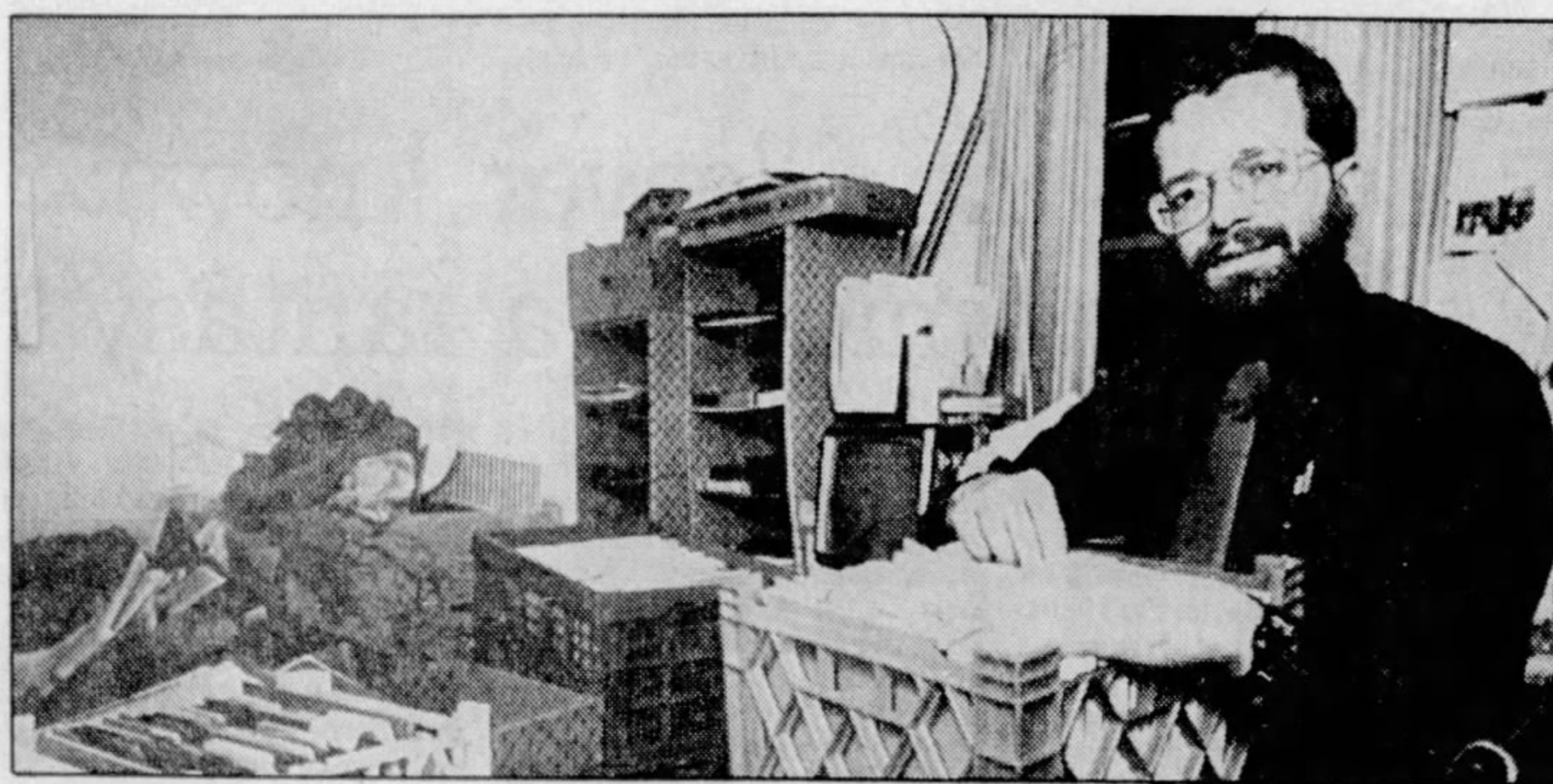
The papers, which were published in medical journals and textbooks, were intended as "teaching instruments" and did not purport to present new research data, Adelstein said.

One of Frazier's colleagues said he thought the forced resignation was an overreaction.

"It's not as if he stole a great idea from someone or published someone else's research as if it was his own," said Dr. Seymour Kety, professor emeritus of psychiatry and senior scientist at the National Institute of Health.

But Dr. Miles Shore, director of the Massachusetts Mental Health Center, said: "Academic institutions have a very important obligation to guarantee the scientific integrity of what goes on within their walls and I think Harvard took the appropriate action."

And Harvard spokesman Peter Costa said: "The university takes very seriously any charges of plagiarism because that's what we're about — the search for truth and



University of Rochester student Paul Scatena, shown with his research material, discovered plagiarized passages that led to the resignation of a Harvard professor.

knowledge."

The university has been hit by other allegations of scientific misconduct in recent years. In 1981, John R. Darsee was stripped of his position as a heart researcher for allegedly falsifying data. This year, Scheffer C.G. Tseng left his post at Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary after he was accused of changing his test methods and violating Harvard's conflict-of-interest rules in promoting an experimental eye

drug.

Also this year, Harvard Medical School issued new guidelines for researchers in an effort to prevent academic fraud. The school also said it would consider appointing professors on the basis of only five to 10 papers, a move aimed at reducing the "publish or perish" pressure that sometimes underlies fraud.

Frazier was a professor of psychiatry at Harvard from 1972 until 1984, when he left to become direc-

tor of the National Institute of Mental Health in Rockville, Md. He returned to Harvard in 1986 to become head of McLean, one of the nation's leading psychiatric hospitals.

He has worked at the Mayo Clinic, Presbyterian Hospital in New York and Baylor University, among other institutions. He is a former commissioner of mental health and mental retardation in Texas.