The marketing approach is most ingenious: the teacher doesn't have to learn anything and the school doesn't have to put up any money or use their computer facilities. The idea is to treat the service just as a supplemental text—and this requires only a single teacher's approval. If the teacher is sold, he tells the school bookstore to order the text—which is a manual on the system for the student. The student then pays—present price is a modest $5.70—and the rest of the service is thrown in without extra charge. The teacher gets a catalog of test questions, from which he can build a suitable test for the material covered in class. The scholars mark their test forms and CSI handles the computer processing.

If the plan goes over, CSI will start in on course testing for math, sociology, anthropology, American history, and health programs.

It looks like a boon for weary teachers—but how it can all be done at $5.70 a head is a mystery.

BELL LABS BACKS OUT OF MULTICS

The Multics project—a three-way cooperative effort to further the art of large-scale time-sharing by GE, MIT, and Bell Labs—has lost the support of Bell. The two GE-645's are being sent back and a 635 is to be installed.

The decision was apparently based on internal political and financial troubles and doesn't imply technical problems. In fact, MIT is planning broad general use of their 645 this fall and a few Bell people may be using it by remote access. But the word is that Bell Labs will generally be de-emphasizing large-scale computer research now and that dropping their share of Multics is one result of this policy.

ACT OFFERS HELP FOR PROGRAMMERS

Advanced Computer Techniques has announced the first commercially available general-purpose natural language macro generator. It's capable of translating any natural language statements into any desired target language. Called HELP (Highly Extendible Languages Processor), it can be used to translate short-hand Fortran, Cobol, etc. into the form required for compilation. Or it allows the writing of Job Control Language and program statements in the same syntactic form. In effect the programmer can create his own JCL. He may add, delete, replace or redefine Cobol statments, for instance. Or it permits the use of natural languages (English, algebra, etc.) to create new languages, applications packages and compilers. Now available for IBM 360 OS configurations, HELP will be sold or leased by ACT as a stand-alone package; they'll also provide custom-tailored HELP packages and applications to their clients.

BOSTON BOYS EYE 1130 DISC MARKET

Lured away from the ivory tower 18 months ago, a bevy of bright, young ex-MITers are ready to market a new IBM 1130 disc controller.

The 28-man company, Intercomp, Inc. (Cambridge, Mass.), is headed up by temp. pres. Dr. John Donovan, an MIT prof. Other key people include vp Joseph Alsop, 25 (son of Stewart), pres. of an insurance firm and director of two banks.

Frederick Watress, MIT treasurer, is on the board of directors. Michael Mark, 22, also from MIT, designed the controller. Marketing is under "old hand" Greg Smith, 32, ex-IBM salesman and