Cable TV planned: MITV a possibility

By Charlotte Cooper

In the near future, the MIT campus may be wired for cable television.

A report and proposal, "Telecommunications and Education at MIT", has been distributed to interested faculty and staff. A budgetary proposal now being prepared will be submitted to the Sloan Foundation in New York which sponsored the original report and will probably fund cable efforts.

From 1971 to 1972, Professor W.B. Davison, Chairman of the Center for Advanced Engineering Studies, conducted a seminar on cable television. Participants in this and other communications-related seminars formed last summer's Sloan Summer Study Group which, with a $15,000 Sloan Grant, determined to "produce a detailed proposal for a major project at MIT to move ... summer ideas into a developmental effort."

The "detailed proposal" - the telecommunications report - was written by Professor Eliot P. Pool, Visiting Professor Edwin Diamond, Research Associate Lowell Dyett and Professor John Ward. It suggests a five-year plan to cable-connect all of MIT. Some 200 yards of coaxial cable presently link various locations at the Institute. On the west campus, Rockwell Cage, the fields house, Kresge Auditorium and the Student Center are interconnected. Across Massachusetts Avenue, a system links Buildings 5, 6, 10, the Bush Room and the Hayden Library.

The telecommunications report proposes that cable be run across Massachusetts Avenue to link rec and went campuses. Cable would also be run to Magazine and Union halls, the main building and through Building 20 to East Campus and Professor Richard Lewicki's Film Center in Building E21. With the city's consent, Technology Square could be connected to the Washington Flass house or the Medol Cities area for MITV use by community residents.

A fifth step would link the Sloan Foundation complex with the central campus.

The academic needs which cable TV could fill at a university such as MIT are endless. The telecommunications report suggests that lectures by outstanding professors be videotaped and catalogued in a film library for future courses. Lectures could be called to the rooms of sick students, or re-played in section groups for the confused. A cable laid between Harvard and MIT would permit more sharing of courses between the two universities, and link MIT to WGBH (an educational TV station), which is connected to Harvard by a microwave link. Film clips could be shown during classes to demonstrate points.

Opponents of the project; clips could also be pursued by students as supplementary reading materials. The possibility of using thinner, more portable television sets or video cassettes, could also replace expensive equipment in the instruction of teaching assistants. Dangerous or minute experiments could be filmed in the laboratory and replayed in the lecture halls.

Outside of the classroom, (please turn to page 2)

An explosion in Room 18-125 last Sunday resulted in the damage pictured above, and sent Flora Chow '73, Course Y, to Massachusetts General Hospital for treatment of burns and lacerations. Chow was working in the lab alone when the explosion occurred, setting fire to her hair and clothing. Joseph DeGeronimo '74 said the explosion, which occurred during clean-up work, "would not refer to him as a labor leader or the need for adequate supervision in the negotiations with management in order to keep profits at a maximum."

He complained that there is a need for adequate supervision and enforcement of safety precautions, and promised that if the mine safety programs are enforced, "we'll [the union] enforce them for them.

Miller has been referred to as somewhat of a maverick in organized labor since his election over Boyle last year. He con- ceded that he does not get along very well with many other labor leaders, particularly those along the lines of AFL-CIO President George Meany.

Miller dismissed as untrue the contention that union members were following Meany's example of being more sympathetic to President Nixon. He sharply crit- iced Meany, saying that no labor leader should support Nix- on, who is "anti-labor."

In reference to the AFL-CIO president's "stagnation on both your hands" attitude of not openly supporting a candidate in last year's election, Miller said he had no such problem. "A recognized labor leader who does not pick sides," he said, "is a weak labor leader who cannot lead a union.

"When he refuses to take a stand in a presidential election," Miller continued, "the union must support the candidate it needs to take a stand one way or the other."

The recently-elected president of the United Mine Workers Union (UMW) charged earlier this week that labor protector, Tony Boyle, "mistrusted" union membership and was directly re- sponsible for the deaths of farm- ers union official Joseph Yablonski and his family.

Arnold Miller made the re- marks at an address at MIT, promising that his leadership would be more responsive to rank-and-file membership than Boyle's was.

When asked about the still unsolved Yablonski murder case, the UMW leader suggested that Boyle would not only be linked to union members, but would also be linked to the inter- nal union, "the money for the murder came from the inter- national treasury of the union, and said that "the money will finally be resolved and there is a strong possibility that my pre- decessor will be indicted."

"The Yablonski case," Miller stated, "lapped into a fifteen to twenty year period of non-responsiveness, during which time it just touched the mem- bers."

"To end this situation, the one thing Boyle can do," Miller asserted that he would make the UMW "the most responsive union in this country by letting members have a voice in what the union does.

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Legislature considers pot decriminalization

By Mike McMahon

Public hearings will be held soon in the Massachusetts Legisla- ture on two bills which would, in varying degrees, ease the penalties for marijuana use and possession.

The bills, which will come before the Joint Legislative Committee on Social Welfare in an open session on March 7, were presented by Reps. Barnet Frank and Senator Jack Back- man, and have been endorsed by the Committee for a Safe Drug Policy. The Frank bill (H. 3364), also sponsored by the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws, is the most far- reaching. It would repeal all state laws relating to criminnlization of marijuana. Although posses- sion and sale would still be federal crimes, the bill would effectively legalize marijuana in Massachusetts. As Ms. Martha Semmens of Boston CSPI, ex- plained: "The federal govern- ment could still bust people and prosecute them, but they would probably only go for large scale selling operations. To the aver- age user, the Frank bill would almost be the complete legali- zation of marijuana."

The Backman bill (S. 453) is the result of the decision of the Massachusetts Democratic Party to reverse the decriminalization of marijuana during the 1972 campaign. The bill, which fol- lows the recommendations made by President Nixon's National Commission on Marijuana and Drug Abuse, would merely penalize for possession and profits from transactions involving one ounce or less of marijuana. Those who have four pounds for a first offense (five years for a second) for selling or growing marijuana.

"Constitution?"

When The Tech asked Semmens if a contradiction existed between decriminalization of possession but not of sale, she replied, "Not really. Although most people don't realize it, there was exactly the same situation with alcohol during Prohibition. Many people feel that keeping and enforcing penalties for sale would discourage big sales opera- tions, which would allow personal use of marijuana." She added, however, that eight grams of marijuana, which would clearly exceed the legal limit, could not be purchased through the mail, as LSD is.

Another bill to be considered by the committee would not change existing laws but would make it a study to determine the best method for legal dis- tribution of marijuana after state and federal prohibition is lifted. The Black Caucus bill, as it is called, is sponsored by Rep. Roy Balding, Robert Belling, Sandy Mat King, and William Owens. It, too, is endorsed by the CSPI.