Student Center lifts unreliable

By Lawrence Belfi

Anyone who ever expounded on the difficulties with the Student Center elevator will agree that there are among the worst of the more than one hundred elevators on campus.

Noting these problems are long waits, occasionally nonfunctioning lights and floor-indicator lights, slow doors, and slow and frequent adhesive, no attempt at gripping, however, will solve these problems.

An article published six years ago in The Tech quoted then-Student Center Manager Ed Emmett as saying that there is no way the two elevators can be put on a central-control system. The lack of a common system is probably the major shortcoming of the elevator. It often results in people calling both elevators and using their own service first. So that the other elevator has to stop for no reason, causing people on other floors to get stuck.

According to Associate Student Center Manager, Ed Emmett, the lack of common control also presents another drawback, it is not unusual for both elevators to be headed in the same direction at the same time. Consequently, one person is tempted to wish that the other elevator be used, even when there are two elevators working.

The explanation for the existence of such control lies in the history of the Student Center, according to archivist Edwina Catalano. The original design included only one elevator; the second was added during construction.

It was thought that the distance between the two would be enough to prevent people from calling both elevators, making installation of common-control unnecessary. Since that prediction has been disproved, the cost of common-control installation has become prohibitive.

Winston mentioned the Student Center Library, as another cause of elevator problems, as the fifth floor library was added after the rest of the Student Center was built. It had not been planned originally, but now, Winnar said, its location is a strain on elevator efficiency since so many people use the elevators to get there.

Winston also mentioned that the Student Center Committee tried to alleviate this problem some years ago by taking a poll on the question of making one of the elevators a permanent first-floor to fifth-floor express. The proposal was turned down, however.

Manager of Electrical Services Paul Blankard pointed out that another common cause of problems are those times when the Coop or the Food Service uses one of the elevators as a freight elevator. For example, the Coop sometimes uses one of the elevators to transferring stock from the basement to the first floor. The Student Center, Blankard said, does have a separate freight elevator, but it is not now in working order.

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Blankard admitted that the elevators were designed to be a part of the Student Center and that those of the Student Center will "never, never, never give in". For those things which can be fixed, such as burnt-out button lights or floor-indicator lights, he said that the only way to get the job done is for students themselves to contact the MIT repair service. He warned, though, that since such repairs involve a fair amount of time, usually the whole set of lights is replaced instead of just the broken ones. Replacements are not made very often. The frequency of repair jobs has been estimated at about two per month. Another costly problem is elevator hacking. This ranges from designing or tampering equipment to what is sometimes called "elevator hacking." It is possible to do, access to a call on another floor by reusing the destination through a combination of button pushing which involves the emergency stop switch. While pushing this switch does not set off an alarm after which there is a separate button, it does cause service call to be refused automatically.

Blankard explained that the costs incurred by such expensive hacking are reflected in the overhead, even in student tuition.

By way of solution, the 1976 article in The Tech offered four suggestions for transit, and one potential solution was appropriate. "1. Walks whenever possible. 2. Have a separate freight elevator. 3. Don't push both buttons. 4. Ignore those elevators which are not working.

What could the cities of this country do

To revise American priorities

More than the election of any President

It would take a change

In the way we solve municipal problems

It would start with a radical concept of community organization

It would have to infuse communities with strength and power,

It would involve a few million individuals

In Cambridge it could start with strong and dependable rent control, zoning and land use planning

It would include expanding the Arts Council, and Food Cooperative

It should include recycling, neighborhood control of budget components, tenant control of public housing, student-teacher-parent control of schools, and the environment through sign & billboard regulation.

And conformity with the U.S. Constitution in hiring practices.

Nicely for the Wylie will be the best shot you get.

In American politics, clear shots don't come often.

Wylie is a group of faculty faculty.