

# Why we did it

Most Americans today proudly display their flags and believe that the United States is the icon of principled, open, and true democracy in the world. They point to our constitution which reads that no one can be denied the right to believe, to speak, or to speak out against anything they wish. However, when one considers the actions of the CIA and our university administration in regards to the recent protests against CIA recruiting on campus, the ideal of American democratic process begins to crumble. On Thursday night, we gathered at the UMass Career Center where a scheduled CIA informational session was to be held. Ten of us were inside the building hoping to confront the recruiter, and about 70 more had gathered outside the front door. The recruiter never showed, and the session was cancelled. We were told that our presence inside and outside the building made it impossible for the recruiter to enter. Sounds doubtful to me, yet certainly not beyond the realm of possibility. The CIA, remember, is a highly secretive (or cowardly?) organization by nature.

## Mark Hubbard

The following morning, we went back to the Career Center where this time 8 to 10 students were scheduled for interviews with the CIA recruiter. We found the Career Center, a public building, locked up tight and guarded by 4 police officers. We were told that only employees and students who were scheduled for interviews that day would be allowed to enter. Next we were told that the interviews were not even being conducted at the Career Center. Soon, members of the administration would come outside, shrug their shoulders and say that they didn't have a clue as to the whereabouts of the CIA interviews.

So we proceeded to Chancellor Duffey's and Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs Dennis Madson's respective offices, hoping that perhaps they would know where the interviews were being held. Again, we found the doors locked and guarded during normal operating hours.

Is this how our self-proclaimed "liberal" administration deals with student grievances? Why did both men refuse to meet with core members of the protest group when they had tried to make appointments with the chancellor and vice-chancellor over three weeks ago?

We as human beings have the right to protest when our sisters and brothers in Central America are being destroyed by a federally funded terrorist organization, directed by the White House. We as students have the right to protest when an internationally condemned group uses our university services and facilities to recruit.

If the administration is asking why we occupied the Affirmative Action Office (the only office unlocked on the third floor) last Friday, the answer is that we were given no choice. They refused to hear grievances of justifiably upset students, outraged at the atrocities committed by the CIA in Central America. They refused to allow for serious dialogue between themselves and students regarding these issues. And they refused to allow us our constitutional right to confront the CIA and its presence on campus.

We are not the "moral bullies" engaged in "intellectual terrorism" that the administration accuses us of being. To us, protesting the CIA is not simply a moral judgment made by ourselves. It is a legal judgment by the international community, handed down in tribunals such as the World Court. Their argument that in the name of "free speech" the CIA should be allowed to recruit on campus is extremely tenuous. With this type of attitude, what prevents the KKK or the American Nazi Party from recruiting here? Clearly, a definitive line must be drawn within this clouded issue of "free speech". Last Friday, expressing ours and the international community's outrage over the CIA, we drew that line. Now it's time for the administration to forget its childish display of locked and guarded secrecy, and seriously consider what we as students have to say.

*Mark Hubbard is a UMass student and one of the eleven protesters arrested.*

COLLEGIAN

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