

Tyranny of the minority

It is sickening to once again see the University community subjected to the fascist tactics, childish intimidation, and moral bullying of the radical left. I speak, of course, on the events of past weeks involving the appearance of a CIA recruiter on campus and the subsequent protests he sparked. This is not the first time that the right to freedom of speech has been attacked by the radicals; many will recall the disgusting reception these self-appointed moral watchdogs gave to a representative of the United Nicaraguan Opposition last spring. Radical spokesmen tried to rationalize their rude denial of the Jorge Rosales' rights by claiming he did not "speak the truth." Yes, they are entitled to voice their opinions; but in no way do they have the right to restrict this academic community's right to hear the expression of a differing opinion.

Peter Dow

Now, an issue of more immediate concern than freedom of speech has surfaced. The radical left has carried this protest to a great extreme, bordering on holding the University hostage. When Abbie Hoffman, Amy Carter, and protesters from other colleges have to be imported for takeover attempts of University buildings, it is time for students of all political persuasions to join and voice our outrage. As the anti-CIA protests continue, the "silent majority" of students will become more disgusted with the bullying tactics of self-righteous radicals, many of whom are not even students at this University.

The leaders of the protests claim that their "constitutional rights" have been violated and superseded by the UMass Picketing Code. One can only wonder what "constitutional right" allows protesters to besiege and then occupy a University building. The last protest, for in-

stance, greatly hampered the pre-registration process and violated many students' right to conduct legitimate University business. Such selfishness and disregard for the rights of those who might disagree are typical traits of the radical left.

An additional issue is that of punishment. The Picketing Code is a liberal document that gives students extensive rights of legitimate protest. However, when "civil disobedience" infringes upon the rights of others, the University must take action and prosecute; anything less would be negligence. While the radical left has a right to voice its opinion, we cannot allow them to impose a tyranny of the minority on this campus.

Based upon recent experiences at other campuses, it seems that expulsion of the protest leaders would not be unwarranted. Recall what happened to protesters at Dartmouth who took it upon themselves to destroy an anti-apartheid "shanty." After scrutiny by judicial boards, these students faced expulsion. The seriousness of the violations here deserve at least the same.

Chancellor Joseph D. Duffey and the administration cannot give in to the unreasonable demands of a vocal minority if an atmosphere conducive to respect for the rights of all is to be preserved. This University is an academic institution that many of us take pride in; it is not a battleground for political celebrities and radical leftists from other colleges. Moreover, we must show our support for Duffey on this issue. We cannot stand by and passively allow this University to succumb to a tyrannical minority. Come to the rally Thursday and voice your disapproval. We owe it to ourselves, taxpayers who support this University, and future generations of UMass students.

Editor's note: Peter Dow came out of retirement to offer these thoughts on the recent anti-CIA demonstrations.

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