

Protesters condemn wrong people

My first organized act of disobedience happened when I was six. After being forced to eat peas occasionally during dinner for two years, I decided to resist. The next time my mother cooked peas, I told her I wouldn't eat them. She didn't listen. She cooked them, put them on my plate and said I couldn't leave the table until I ate them. I refused; two hours later, she relented.

Jeffry Bartash

My first organized participation in an act of civil disobedience happened when I was in eighth grade. The blizzard of 1978 forced the cancellation of three weeks of school, resulting in a decision by the school committee to tack on an extra 45 minutes to days remaining that year to make up for time lost. Hundreds of students walked out of classes one day in protest, angry because they were not

consulted.

Although the two examples above are minor compared with the CIA protest last week that ended in the arrests of 51 people, they both evince a necessary ingredient of disobedience — moral right.

The pea incident implies that people should not be forced to do what they do not want to do; the walkout implies that solutions should be reached through negotiation, which the town school committee failed to do with student leaders.

Arguably, those who protested CIA recruitment on campus also have moral right on their side, but the questions that have to be answered are whether morality matters and whether their protests are directed toward the right people.

After World War Two, the CIA was organized as an intelligence-gathering agency. Its job was — and still is — to keep tabs on other countries, especially in the spheres of economy, military and government. The goal of the CIA is to protect and

promote the interests of the United States. Sounds harmless enough, until one realizes that gathering intelligence is usually a nice euphemism for spying. Historically, spies who have been caught have not been treated kindly, often being jailed, tortured or killed by their captors.

Most members of the CIA are dedicated patriots who help preserve the strength of our country. They are engaged in a continuous struggle to defend the US against intelligence agencies far more sinister than many of our campus protesters — who I hope are not as naive as they appear — believe, notably the Soviet Union's KGB and its satellite agencies. In the small and violent world of spies there are neither laws nor morality.

However, a danger exists that has already manifested itself, in which the lawlessness of the world of spies carries over and agents promote or commit immoral acts against innocent people, such as in Chile in 1973 when the CIA over-

threw President Allende, and in Nicaragua recently as US-backed "contras" allegedly raped and killed many peasants (KGB acts are too numerous to count).

But to say that all CIA actions are evil and all CIA members are rapists and murderers is like saying all members of Abbie Hoffman's Yippie Party are druggies because their leader was caught.

The CIA is not an organization unto itself; it is a tool of the highest members of our government, who are responsible for dictating our foreign policy. If, as many people say, the CIA has gotten out of control, then call for our government leaders to restructure the agency.

The overall goals of the CIA and motives of its members deserve respect, as do the convictions of the protesters. The university administration and the CIA itself should not be attacked, but those in our government responsible for its control.

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