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Protesters Meet Police At the Gates of the CIA

Encounter Proceeds in Orderly Fashion

J By John F. Harris
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If there were doubts, this was the moment they would be resolved. The time for decision had arrived, just as all the protesters had known it would.

Capt. M.L. Barrett of the U.S. Park Police shouted to the crowd: "I'm here to tell you, if you don't leave now you will be subject to arrest."

On the George Washington Parkway ramp to the Central Intelligence Agency's north entrance, about 50 protesters were greeted by Barrett and a handful of police officers.

Just down the road, 100 officers with sticks and helmets awaited those who ignored the warning and continued walking toward the gate.

Many of the protesters had come from across the nation to be arrested.

Others were there to show support, but had no intention of breaking the law.

"We're here—let's do it," a woman implored a group of friends. Others shuffled uncertainly.

Then about 30 protesters decided to walk the final stretch, easily walking through the outstretched arms of the first line of police officers.

When they reached the second line, however, it was a different story, and 20 minutes later, the protesters were sitting on a grassy median strip, their hands cuffed behind them.

Some of yesterday's protesters had long hair and beards and wore ponchos.

There were chants and banners and an occasional whiff of marijuana in the air.

However, some conventional-looking characters also walked on this stage.

Bill Ericson dressed for the protest in a pin-striped suit and a red tie adorned with Republican Party elephants.

"I'm one of those who is conservative about their country and don't want to see a secret CIA," said Ericson, who said he is an electrical engineer.

"The CIA is taking over foreign policy.

"It says in the Constitution that only Congress can declare war."

If most of the protesters had nothing good to say about the CIA yesterday, many found the agency's initials good to lampoon.

Over the CIA exit sign on the parkway, the protesters hung a sheet saying, "Cocaine Import Agency."

Some of the other placards and banners read: "Criminals in Action," "Cutthroats in Angola," and "Covert Illegal Agency."

The protesters cheered when one of their leaders announced that their demonstration had brought traffic to a standstill around the CIA headquarters.

They didn't realize that in just a few minutes they would be victims of their own success.

A bus carrying the first wave of demonstrators from the protest's starting point near the CIA's south gate to the north gate four miles away was mired in traffic.

"Let's go bus driver, MOVE!" one protester yelled to the driver.

They weren't the only ones irritated by the delays. "I think it stinks," said Boris Petro, a construction worker who was delayed by traffic from getting to a CIA building site. "We don't work, we don't eat," he said.

For the most part, the protesters played their part and the police played theirs, and few words were exchanged.

Once in a while, however, a dialogue took place, and as often as not it was strained.

"Maybe this will help people understand . . .," protester Josh Nessen told a mounted park policeman, explaining why he chose to be arrested at the north gate demonstration. "Maybe next time you'll respect what we're trying to say."

"I've got just as much respect for you as you've got for me," responded the officer, looking down from his horse to where Nessen was standing, handcuffed.

The two continued their discussion, trading verbal volleys in a minidebate about the propriety and effectiveness of the protest. Minutes later Nessen was bused away for booking.

The Antenna That Came In From the Cold

Star-Crossed CIA Communications Tower to Be Dismantled

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The CIA's proposed microwave communications tower, rebuffed by Reston last fall, has run into new troubles atop Bull Run Mountain in western Prince William County.

A CIA contractor agreed yesterday to dismantle a 60-foot tower in the midst of construction after county officials issued two notices claiming that the firm built the tower without proper permits.

Overseas Telecommunications Inc., an Alexandria firm, voluntarily sought and later received a county demolition permit after the Prince William officials ordered work stopped on the tower Wednesday. County officials said the firm began construction on the tower

without receiving a building permit or a special-use permit.

John DePodesta, counsel for Overseas, said the firm mistakenly began the construction because of a "misunderstanding."

If the tower is ever built anywhere, it would be part of the Foreign Broadcast Information Service, a branch of the CIA that monitors foreign radio and television broadcasts, according to documents on file with the county.

Construction workers at the remote Bull Run Mountain site near the Prince William-Fauquier county line were incorrectly notified by Overseas' attorney in Manassas that a building permit had been issued, Podesta said. Further, he said, Overseas incorrectly be-

lieved that no special-use permit was required for construction until the tower's height exceeded 35 feet.

Prince William Planning Director Roger D. Snyder spoke with Overseas officials yesterday and said afterward, "They can be described as contrite but very reasonable people."

The first known attempt to build the tower failed in October when Overseas voluntarily withdrew an application for a 197-foot structure in Reston that appeared headed for defeat at the hands of the Fairfax County Planning Commission.

Reston residents near the site complained that the tower would mar the skyline, and some county officials said they were irritated by "the cloak-and-dagger" secrecy surrounding the proposal.

Nonetheless, CIA officials appear eager for Overseas to overcome the governmental obstacles and com-

plete the project at the new Prince William site.

In a letter on file with Prince William County, CIA official Harry R. Wood wrote to Overseas: "In view of the amount of governmental funds already committed, the urgency associated with the successful completion, and the importance of the overall mission to be accomplished, I consider it important that you, as the government's system contractor, pursue this on an absolute priority basis."

In official documents, Overseas said the tower is needed to "connect a satellite earth station at Quantico with facilities at Langley, Va., and ultimately the White House." The CIA's location is often listed as Langley, although its mailing address is Washington.

Because microwave communication requires a "line-of-sight" path from station to station, high towers are often required. A commercial communications tower is already in place near the proposed Bull Run site, county officials said.

Overseas officials told Prince William they hope to continue with the project after receiving the proper permits, according to Snyder.

In addition to a building permit from the county, Overseas also must receive a permit from the Prince William Planning Commission and the county supervisors.