

Complaints of Arrest On Mayday Flow In

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Shortly after 7:30 on the morning of May 3, a young teaching assistant enroute to work stepped off a bus near Dupont Circle. She was arrested, she said, by a policeman who mistook her for an antiwar demonstrator.

When she explained that she was on her way to work, the policeman said, "You can't tell one from the other." She was in custody more than 24 hours.

Not far away, a lawyer on the way to his office observed a police lieutenant. "Get the one in the Navy

pea jacket, get the one in fatigues," the lawyer remembers the lieutenant ordering his men.

Asked why certain individuals were being singled out for arrest, the lieutenant answered, "Personal judgment, sir," according to the lawyer.

Earlier at the department of State, an Arlington resident was at his desk at 5 a.m. in accordance with directives from his superiors. His two sons are students at George Washington University who usually ride in with him, he said. But because he had to be at work so early on May 3, his two sons drove into town later by themselves.

Both were arrested as they walked to class after parking their car.

"To protect my right to get to work, my two sons are denied their right to attend university classes, apprehended without cause and held incommunicado under woefully inadequate conditions," the man said later.

These accounts are taken from hundreds of affidavits, letters and formal statements from participants, witnesses and bystanders to the Mayday protest events of May 3, 4 and 5 in which more than 12,000 were arrested.

The documents are being collected by the American Civil Liberties Union and were made available on the condition that names be withheld.

The Civil Liberties Union has been soliciting the affidavits in paid advertisements in The Washington Post and other publications.

Many of the approximately 400 statements and affidavits received so far came from persons who said they actually participated or planned to participate in traffic blocking or other protest activities during the

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three days of Mayday. But almost all said they were not, in fact, doing anything illegal when arrested.

Still others insisted they were innocent bystanders unjustly swept up by police during the mass arrests.

More than a month after Mayday, public debate over the police tactics is still raging. On Thursday, Deputy Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst characterized the protest as a "vicious, wanton mob attack." He said there "were probably a few lawful arrests of persons who turned out to be innocent, but these are certainly the exceptions."

Generally, police and Justice Department spokesmen have defended the mass arrest tactics as the best way of coping with an avowed effort to "close the government" by blocking traffic into Washington.

In rebuttal, Ralph Temple of the Civil Liberties Union contends the tactics were illegal and accuses officials of employing a doctrine of "preventive arrests."

Patrick V. Murphy, former director of public safety in Washington who is police commissioner of New York City, also criticized the arrest procedures.

He characterized the protests as "large numbers of people who were making a public display of free speech," and he said that in

such situations mass arrest tactics are not justified.

One of those arrested May

3 was a 56-year-old woman who was taken into custody about 8:15 a.m. near 20th and P Streets NW, while walking to work, according to her sworn affidavit.

"As I was approaching an attractive young couple who were handing out leaflets to persons walking to work, they were suddenly arrested by a young policeman," the woman said.

"I was really stunned; walked along behind them for a short way really unable to believe what I had seen. Finally some little voice inside me made me do something, so I walked up alongside the trio and said very quietly, 'Surely you aren't arresting people for handing out leaflets?' The policeman said, 'Do you want to get arrested too?'"

"It was sort of like a bad dream. I moved along the sidewalk continuing toward my office and the policeman yelled at me, 'I asked you a question. You answer when a policeman speaks to you!' Pulling the others with him, he caught up to me and grabbed my by the shoulder and said, 'All right, you too. Let's go.'"

According to the woman's affidavit, she was held at D.C. jail's exercise yard and later at the police stationhouse at 4135 Benning Rd. NE. She was released at 3:30 a.m. the following day after posting \$10 collateral on a disorderly conduct charge.

When she was released, the woman said in the affidavit, she was not permitted to use a telephone to call a taxi. When she asked a policeman how she was to get home, he answered, "That's your problem, not mine," she said.

"I stood out on the sidewalk and, shaking from head to foot, began to weep. I had been told I could not wait inside the stationhouse and to go outside. But I went back inside and said simply that I was unable to stand outside, and stood in a corner with my back to the room weeping. A kind young woman eventually found me

