

Asking for trouble is hardly heroic

I am amazed at the hand wringing and recriminations wrought by the incident at the Concord Naval Weapons Station. You would think they plucked the poor guy from the sidelines and shoved him in harm's way.

In fact, Brian Willson was sitting on the tracks by his own stupid choice. It is unfortunate he was injured, but he is the one who chose to face the danger.

Nobody is suggesting his group doesn't have the right to protest and demonstrate to their little hearts' content, but these guys weren't marching, weren't waving signs or engaging in any other form of rational protest. They deliberately placed themselves in danger, and this time they lost their gamble. Maybe next time they will exercise a bit more common sense.

— Kenneth Rose
Sunnyvale

Your Sept. 4 editorial is the first affirmation, beautifully stated, that Brian Willson was partially responsible for his own tragedy. He may well be 100 percent responsible.

I am truly sorry for Willson, his family, and his people. His cause may be infinitely just, but his action was just plain stupid.

I am also sorry for the train crew and their families. It is horrible to have to bear the guilt, the accusations and condemnations when it all could have been avoided.

— John Martin
San Jose

People who do serious political work concerning the war in Central America do so by lobbying in our nation's capital. Good citizens do not express their concerns by sitting on train tracks. Anyone who sits in front of a moving train and expects it to stop on a dime is an idiot.

If people participated in government instead of bucking the system, their voices could be heard.

— Jim Jernigan
Mountain View

What are they teaching kids these days? When I was a child, I was taught such things as "look both ways before crossing the street" and "never sit on train tracks when a 500-ton locomotive is approaching." What was Brian Willson thinking as he watched the train bearing down on him?



Ron Burda — Mercury News

Peace protester Greg Getty sits on tracks where another peace protester, Brian Willson, was maimed.

Speaking out for an end to war is a noble cause, but I sometimes find these bizarre fanatical efforts a bit hard to understand. A month or two from now when something else is in the headlines, Willson still won't have any legs.

— Herb Syufy
San Jose

Maybe it's another manifestation of the deteriorating quality of education. We used to hear about folks "too dumb to come in out of the rain." Now we've got a guy dumb enough to sit down in front of an oncoming train.

Brian Willson's stupidity at the Concord Naval Weapons Station denied his fellow demonstrators (all 24 of them) the euphoria of feel-goodism.

— Emil W. Baxter
San Jose

The imbecility of man is so infinite that it easily covers everyone involved in the Willson/Concord Naval Weapons Station affair. Most aspects of this incident have been thoroughly thrashed out — except one.

Why didn't Willson's cohorts make any attempt to drag him to safety when they decided on flight to save their

lives?

There are many on both sides who are going to live a MacBethian torment for years to come.

— John P. Beniades
Hayward

Brian Willson could have escaped injury had he so chosen, and therefore, the consequences were of his own doing.

The Ortega-oriented communists wanted a martyr and they got one, even to the extent that the Nicaraguan leader's common law wife came to the United States to be by Willson's side. News certainly does travel fast.

Doesn't this whole thing reek of a deliberately orchestrated (and very well executed) *propaganda* gimmick?

— Dave Stone
San Jose

The train that ran into Brian Willson was on the train track where it was supposed to be.

Anyone who sits on a railroad track when a train is approaching is one of three things: suicidal, brain dead or playing a game of "chicken."

— M. T. Lynch
Cupertino