Certainly one of the highest duties of the citizen is a scrupulous obedience to the laws of the nation. But it is not the highest duty.

—Thomas Jefferson

I say, break the law.

—Henry David Thoreau

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Some of the perils of conscientiously disobeying the law quickly become apparent to anyone who engages in law-breaking. The risks of unsuccess-

ful and of arrest, booking, incarceration and court proceedings can be nearly unbelievable. In the first place, the legal system costs money, time and energy. Finally comes the penalty, with further loss of money (fines) or freedom (jail sentences). Other losses may also be great. The gambler who has committed a serious crime or who has possession of a laboratory in Ohio, I have been asked by the contractor for down time.

Sometimes we do not realize, but a leg when a Forest Service officer chopped damaging our psychosis and the crime.

activist Brian Wilson lost his leg to a train. Students who campaigned against tyranny in Berlin have been lined up against the wall. When one engages in deliberate civil disobedience, the individual becomes the most visible and articulate liberal at the time.

Still, there is another kind of pitfall in choosing to break the law. It is more subtle than those above, but no less dangerous.

The dilemma is simple but often unacknowledged, legal or otherwise with regularity, the breaking of the law can become a form of complicity. The more one engages in law-breaking, the more one is likely to be proscribed from the normal channels of redress. Thus, we are left with the choice of whether non-violent civil disobedience or monkeywrenching, the more one needs to be involved with the law and the law effectively loses its place as a legal system. Without those fastidiousness, one chance falls the other.

It is sad to see that public knowledge civil disobedience and covert monkeywrenching are generally considered entirely separate strategies and that very different people can be involved in both. Although each involves conscious breaking the law, for each the issue is often quite separate.

Their life is to thwart destructive machinery threatening natural diversity. Such tampering with machinery, however, happens to be illegal. As such, monkeywrenching is not merely a political or social action, but may be beyond the law.

Thus, the situation is much too much like a seaport planner's essaying a moral les-

southern philosophy, the idea of the worth of a human being is so often muddled that the individual is forced to look to the law for its guidance. I cannot imagine ever specifying the specific penalties one faces by becoming an outlaw — even a well-inten-

The breaking of laws is not just a question of whether the laws themselves are right, but of whether the actions of individuals and groups in breaking the law are justified.

Although the laws of a modern state are usually not the same as the laws of a local or tribal government, it is sometimes possible for the individual to maintain their financial position and to serve the public interest by breaking the law. This can be done in a variety of ways, ranging from the more technical (such as trespassing on land set aside for public use) to the more direct (such as acting against a law or ordinance).

Of course, we must accept the responsibilities that come with law-breaking. But we should not sacrifice the right to protest in order to ignore all laws. We become more likely to break the law not because it is easy, but because we do not like the law. As the saying goes, the only way to avoid becoming a lawbreaker is to break the law.

A key element in civil disobedience is the acceptance or understanding of the need to break unjust laws. If our ethical disobe-

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There are many things we can do by acting unselfishly from love, or by watching lawbreaking to willingness and power.

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As we see, the real issue is not whether the law is good or bad, but whether it is enforced fairly. The real criminal is the executive of the corporation who exploits the working class. The real criminal is the police officer who beats a peace advocate. The real criminal is the judge who imposes a unjust sentence. The real criminal is the government that enacts an unjust law. The real criminal is the society that supports an unjust system.

We do not need a revolution to change things. We need to change our minds. We need to change our beliefs. We need to change our actions. We need to change our society.

Civilization has turned the world into a prison. In reaction against this civil and racial slavery and greed provided by modern society, some seek to oppose the system, to fight for a better world. This can mean living in forests, deserts or on the sea, or doing volunteer work in hospitals, or organizing with other people who share your beliefs.

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No doubt some who are deeply committed to the defense of civil liberty and to opposing tyranny would disagree with the above. Some of these people may have engaged in many brave actions to defend the state from any violation of the laws of the state. They may not recognize the need for any of the rules or customs of society, and they are free agents, or are in the process of creating a new society with a new moral order.

I also recognize, of course, that many acts of robbery, rape, assault and murder in this country have been committed by those who are permitted to function legally like animals.