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# RUR 13



(by George Metzger)

David Rike is the name and 2431 Dwight Way Berkeley 4, California is the address. I don't think I've ever mentioned it before but if you are unaware of it, be warned that all letters sent me are liable for publication in RUR save for those portions marked DNQ. Why, to show you what a Good Guy I am, I even refrain from printing comments on RUR that George W. Fields sends me, marking them DNQ.

As I'm typing this, a news broadcast on the radio said that the French trade unions would go on a general strike if the de Gaullists made any move, just like they did in 1934-36. In 1934 the workers had pitched battles with the French fascists, the Croix du Feu, in the streets of Paris and in 1936 there was a wave of mass sit-in strikes (a classical tactic advocated by revolutionary syndicalists) which has its only historical parallel in the occupation of the factories in northern Italy in August, 1920. Maybe history will repeat itself. I'm keeping my fingers crossed.

There was another H-bomb protest march, this time in San Francisco, on May 3rd, that started at noon. Earlier that day I took off for Oakland and went to the monthly meeting of the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders, Blacksmiths, Forgers, Welders and Helpers, local 10. It was a real fine meeting and I dug the business agent the most with his continual advocacy of Job Action as the most effective way for the workers combat the boss and persons

who don't join the union. There was a lot of business to cover, so the meeting went for 2½ hours and didn't let out until 12:30. I didn't get over to Union Square, where the march was going to be at, until almost 1:30, but all I found there were the usual crowd of loungers and a pregnant woman passing out reprints of a NY Times ad calling for the halting of bomb tests. I asked her where the protest marchers went and she said she didn't know. So, I took off, heading toward Market.

Being a nice warm, sunny Saturday, there were crowds of shoppers and tourists all over the place and more than enough to lose a procession of several hundred marchers therein. Market was packed with people at the Powell and 5th street intersections. I tried following a trail of anti-Bomb test leaflets that were strewn on the sidewalk, but it petered out after a hundred yards.

Giving up on ever finding them, I walked up to McDonald's book store. "Do you have any Kropotkin, Goldman, Berkman, or Trotsky?" I asked him. He started groping around and then I spied a book with a half-illegible title which seemed to be a good bet. "What about that one over there . . ." I said, pointing to it, and sure enough it was a good item: Russian Literature by Peter Kropotkin in fine shape, first American edition, 1905, for \$2.

But, outside of that, my stay in S.F. was an utter drag. Even the Beach was desolated, tho I did enjoy my walk over there, to City Lights Book Shop, going up Grant until Adle and down that to Columbus and then a left turn, and there it was. On the way to the Key Terminal, where I take a bus to go back to Berkeley, thru the business



and financial district, all there was worth look at was a 1936 Pierce-Arrow limo - sine (and, even then, it was a straight-eight instead of a V-12). It could've been a midnight sun pouring down on me and making me so comfortably warm (which I liked, I liked), it was so empty and hollow, like the husk of a dead fly on a spider web.

I have subsequently learned that Terry Carr and Pete Graham were on hand to participate in part of the protest march, having arrived at Union Square just as the pro-cession was departing. Terr and Pete both said that nothing happened of any significance and they were both lacking in inspiration sufficient to spur them to do a write-up for RUR. From a couple of other friends who took part in the march, I learned that the crowd was about 3-500 and that around 75% of the participants were of high school and college age . . . which I consider to be of particular interest. All in all, it was a pretty funky afternoon, maaann. (and that is why, Robin Wood, there has been no article on the march in RUR even tho you did hear a report of it on the radio way up there in Amador City)

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Alright, I'll play your silly game: how do you take life seriously?  
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A nice thing about Berkeley is that, around where I live is a fairly well centralized academic community with a cultural periphery and when something is going on it is but a short walk from your pad to dig the scene there. Thus, when I read in the Daily Cal that William Heikkila and Ernest Besig were going to speak at the university YMCA, I just had to go around the block and go up a couple, toward campus, to attend the meeting with Roger.

Heikkila's case should be familiar to most of you, I imagine, even the overseas fans: he was picked up by Immigration service agents outside the place where he works and sped to the S.F. International Airport (tho the agents' car conked out on them and they had to comander the auto of a passerby to complete the trip) where he was flown over into Canada. There, he spent the night in a Vancouver jail, illegally under a false name given him by the govt. agents and without recourse to a magistrate before detention as is provided for in Canadian law. He was later flown back to Finland. However, due to the mass indignation over/<sup>the</sup> Gestapo-like nature of his deportation, he was brot back to the United States, where his deportation proceedings will continue under the due process of law provisions of the U.S. Constitution, which the Immigration service apparently saw fit to ignore when they apprehended him, no figuring that if they could "get away" with it, that it would be alright. Indictive of this was the official reaction toward the news stories of the deportation: It was a Big Mistake . . . they shouldn't of let the news out so soon; next time they will no doubt do all they can to see to it that it is all hushed up.

One facet of Heikkila's case that I didn't know before hearing him speak was that he had applied for citizenship and was almost up to the point of being administered the oath when the Immigration service wanted to postpone "indefinitely" his case so it could be locked into in further detail. Not having a lawyer with him, nor "knowing the ropes," Heikkila didn't object to it; two years later they instituted deportation proceedings which prevents him from being naturalized until it is over and defeated. These proceedings have been going on now for 11 years and one Immigration service bureaucrat proclaimed that, "And we'll deport him if it takes 11 more years!"

In a case like the Rosenbergs, while feeling that they shouldn't've been executed, there's nevertheless a phoniness about it with their continual insistance of being just simple Peace-loving Progressives. It has a false ring to it. As Kenneth Rexroth commented, "Did Sacco and Vanzetti deny being anarchists and claim to be just liberal-minded La Follette Progressives? No. Did Albert Parsons, August Spies, George Engel, Adolph Fischer and the other Haymarket martyrs claim to be just Bryanites who were for Free Silver? NO." And neither did Heikkila deny being a member of the Communist Party.

"To me," he said, "being a member of the Communist party meant fighting for social security and unemployment insurance. That was what I did when I was a member of the Communist Party. I believed in it when I was a member and I still do. I stopped being a member in 1939 because of ill health -- I was all worn out -- and



and I haven't had anything to do with it since."

Of course, to me, being a member of the CP means something very different : subverting the class struggle to the desires of the overlord national CP leadership and the Kremlin bureaucracy, class collaboration and a general lack principled politics. Nowadays it is primarily a Russian Chamber of Commerce, with the book stores peddling pretty picture books which show healthy, rosy-cheeked peasant girls lugging 100 lb. sacks of grain on some collective farm, in their colorful native costumes.

Ernest Besig is the executive director of the northern California American Civil Liberties Union, the largest local branch in the country and the editor of the branch's monthly paper, the ACLU News, a fine periodical. He gave additional side-lights to Heikkila's case and detailed in various and sundry similar deportation cases.

When it came time for questions, some lady wanted to know if it was possible that Communists in the U.S. government caused Heikkila to be deported in order to embarrass the United States. After the laughter subsided, Besig made what I think is a pretty sharp reply, " 'Communist' is just a label. You find persons with a totalitarian mentality and outlook elsewhere, such as in Nazi Germany. And, you find that the same sort of person gravitates toward low paying government jobs and when he gets that badge pinned on him, he says to the world, 'Look at me, I'm a cop! So you had better do what I tell you, or else . . . ' You find them in the Immigration service, the FBI, and in the San Francisco police department." He then mentioned the senseless mass arrest raids the SF cops made last fall in sections of the city where minority groups lived in a purported drive to "stop crime."

Some person seemed to have the idea, to his "layman's mind" (as he put it) that the Immigration laws were ex-post facto laws, punishing someone for doing something before these laws were passed. However, Besig cleared this person's mind up by explaining that the courts have decided that deportation is a civil case, not criminal, and thus not applicable under the ex post facto provision of the U.S. Constitution (something nobody pays any attention to, nowadays, in this hurly-burly, atomic age with sputniks, chimpanzies that paint, and weapons that can anihlate most of the human race in half an hour) because deportation is not a "punishment."

The meeting broke up with Besig urging us all to writer personal letters to our Congressman asking for his opposition to the Jenner-Butler bill that is calculated to hamstring the Supreme Court and bolster up the Smith Act. He claimed that personal letters were much more effective than signing a petition or just copying or putting one's name at the bottom of a form letter. Rog and myself went up afterwards and had a few words with Besig and then with Heikkila and then took off for 2431 Dwight, unhampered by the evening traffic because we just had to walk a couple of blocks.

Labor Review ("Official publication of Bay Cities Metal Trades and Industrial Union Council; affiliated with the Metal Trades Dept. of the AFL-CIO") a weekly labor paper I get thru my union (publisher by Sheldon Sackett who also owns KROW which has the best jazz show in the bay area) had a fine, full page article on the background of the supporters of the Right-to-Work measure here in California, detailing their anti-labor activities back to 1916, with the main emphasis on the various supporters' roles in the waterfront strike that had the workers of San Francisco harassed by planes, tanks, troops, club swinging cops, and tons of tear gas. This violence reached its peak in Bloody Thursday and touched off "the great '34 General Strike" (to use the language of the paper.) This paper shows its respect of traditions and customs not only by revering the history of the bay area, but also by using, as fillers, the sayings of great men . . . like Eugene V. Debs.

Last Saturday I looked out the window and I was near gassed, since parked out in front of the house was none other than a 1938 57sc Bugatti enclosed coupe! I immediately dressed and dashed out into the afternoon (it was 2 pm) sun to really lamp this fine auto. Maaann, it is not only good, but also real. Vroom-vroom. Beautiful lines, with five exhaust pipes and wonderful interior finish. Stainless steel from Molsheim, France.



I've had a nagging feeling at the back of my mind that perhaps I've over-emphasized radical-stuff like H-bomb marches, security investigations, and union meetings in RUR. "I'll have to balance it out coverage on some patriotic, All-American event," I told myself. And, last week, came the Golden Opportunity: there was going to be a gung-ho ROTC Review Day at Cal and, I ask you, what could be better?

Being busy myself, I asked Roger to go up to the Campus and bring me back a report suitable for publication. Rog, being even lazier than myself, didn't wake up in time to make the RO Review, but he did go up to campus in time to see the 3 pm exodus thru Sather Gate.

Here are these hundreds of students, either fully or partially dressed in ROTC uniforms, outnumbering the civilians, coming out en masse from the campus onto Telegraph Avenue. And, suddenly, up whips this flashy, new convertible, U-ing around in front of Sather Gate, with a snarl from its dual pipes. The car is filled with 8 Air Force ROTCers, in full dress. Emblazoned on the doors are large swastikas, black on a white background and there is a swastika-ed flag on the radio aerial. Sitting in the right, front seat is one of these Air-RO'ers, with shades and smoking a long, thin cigar. As the car pulls around to a halt, he addresses the passing students, most of whom are at least partially dressed in RO uniforms, with a Nazi salute, yelling, "Seig Heil!" and other similar phrases at them, as if he was a commanding officer reviewing troops. Roger figures he's just a punk kid, following the example of his superiors; like the commanding Air RO officers at Cal, maybe?

Ya see, Gem, Berkeley around the University of California isn't a totally "communist environment." There're some fascists around, too. If someone like MacArthur decides to be like de Gaulle and "Save The Nation" by riding out on his White Horse, I guess you can tell on whose side those RO boys will be.

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"Say, did you see that great big hairy wink he gave me?"  
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Those wide-awake readers of RUR (all 5 or 10 of you) will recall that last issue were two letters, from Dick Ellington and Tom Condit, in reply to G.M.Carr's letter that appeared in RUR 10. Ever on her toes, Gem answered these letters almost by return mail and kindly sent me carbons of her replies and the original copies of the letters she received (which I had already received carbon copies of and had published in RUR.) Herewith are her two replies:

May 12, 1958

Dear Dick (Giggle\*) \*(Horrible sound, I know, but that's what I'm doing...):

First of all: As to me, I consider that I AM a "rabid reactionary," inasmuch as I feel strongly opposed to any social philosophy which advocates a strongly paternalistic form of Government. Therefore, from my point of view, anybody that advocates a strong central government which interferes with the private enterprise of the individual citizen "for his own good" is "leftists" -- even so conservative a group as the free hot-lunch faction of the PTA gets a glare when they suggest the School System ought to provide 'em! However, I DO recognize that there is a difference between the "leftist" who genuinely hates and despises the Russian brand of Communism but hopes to see (what he believes to be) a more equitable distribution of wealth via Government interference in our own economy. I also recognize that there are genuine idealists ('crackpots,' to me) who hope to influence the rest of humanity toward a more humane and sensible attitude toward wars and/or nuclear testing by these demonstrations and 'protests.' The only trouble is, that I regard the former group as 'Eggheads' and the latter as 'Screwballs' . . . whose major trouble is that their enthusiastic concentration on the objectives they consider desirable, blinds them to the machinations of their (and my) enemy.

↳ your description of 'Eggheads' seems to pin down a Liberal, if one digs your rightist biases, rather well, but they aren't "leftists" rather they're in the center. Recognizing the essential class nature of the Government, Tom, Dick, and myself realize that desired changes can not be brot about thru it, but rather



inspite of it as the basic interests of the State are against these changes. C.Wright Mills, in The New Men of Power (New York, 1948), gives the best run down on the political publicans that I've seen anywhere. }

Sure, I believe that you are not a Communist. I'm not at all sure that Dave is, either. But I still think that the description he gave of his surroundings DOES describe a "Communist environment" -- and, for that matter, the description you, yourself, give of your own environment describes an environment rendolent of the thinking and propaganda of the Communist party line in this country. As far as I'm concerned, I'm so far to the "right," politically speaking, that many distinction between Communists and Socialists is strictly one of party affiliation. I believe you when you say you are not a card-carrying member of the Communist Party. But when you advocate economic or political philosophies which are similar to (or even identical with) that advocated by the Communists, I don't see any difference at all! (Just as you, for example, would have a devil of a time spotting philosophical differences in my opinion from that of the official Catholic philosophy! I'm so close in my religious philosophy to that of the Catholics, that you you they would no doubt seem identical -- but to the Catholics in a discussion group of Catholic Doctrine to which I belong, the differences are almost mountain-high! They would be the first to say -- that I'm almost completely Protestantly in my attitude on certain points -- just as you say that you'd be the first to be stood up against a wall and shot for your differences from the official CP line! To me, you stand is identical with the Communists'. . . !)

But I certainly do enjoy your exposition of your principles and attitudes. You give me a clear and adequate picture of your mental attitude in this matter. I can understand where you stand, and although I do not agree either with your objectives nor the wisdom of the measures you take to achieve those objectives (Natch! since they are just about opposite from the objectives which I prefer) I feel a certain sense of confidence and assurance with regard to you. At least, you know what you are doing. You're acting as you do out of a genuine intellectual appreciation of the factors involved. . . . I'm still giggling...

GMC

May 12, 1958

Dear Tom:

I received the envelope of material you sent. I agree 100% with the profound sense of compassion which motivated the people who wrote it up... but I can also see that this compelling awareness of the innate 'Brotherhood of Man' has overshadowed it's complimentary concept of the over-all 'Fatherhood of God' to the point where the individuals whose individual conscience impells them into these demonstrations are defeating their own ends. In my opinion, they would have done much better to have assaulted the gates of Heaven with St. Francis' prayer, instead of mailing it out in nevelopes while they, themselves, assaulted the authority of the United States Government!

You see, Tom, to YOU those friends of yours what you mention as being jailed for their beliefs, may seem to be protesting for peace. To me, they are acting like fools. Because, in my eyes, they are not being jailed for their desire for peace -- but because they are defying the lawful authority of their own government, and, by their defiance, giving aid and assistance to the enemies of their government. To me, their actions are not the laudable expression of a conscience which could not stand by and condone evil -- instead, I see it as an act of Treason!

{ but . . . what makes you think that the Government, lawful authority, is for peace in the sense that the pacifists think of the term? If there was peace, there would be no more big, juicy war contracts for General Motors. And you know the old saying, "What's good for G.M. is good for the United States." }

BUT -- and this is the point, Tom. I can see it! I can understand the objectives and motivations involved, even though in my opinion they are woefully mistaken and even harmful to the cause they hope to advance. But I could not see where Dave fits into the picture. Because from my interpretation of his writings, he is not an out- and - out conscientious objector who is willing to suffer martyrdom for the sake



of an ideal. He sounds too detached in his observations. I couldn't tell just what he was getting out of his environment; how much of it he saw and how much he didn't see....

↳ In his chapter on the political publics, Mills, in The New Men of Power fairly well pins me down, in part, in what he calls the Independent Left, except that I'm of working class origin rather than from the upper or middle class milieu and <sup>WHEN</sup> haven't been thru any movement and burned. However, things click right into place it comes to digging the political issue of Partisan Review, like when Dwight MacDonald was on the editorial board and MacDonald's own mag, Politics, which I have a 2/3rds complete file of. MacDonald's Root is Man puts down my general outlook. I was quite surprised to find that our Weltanschauung was so similar. Here's a succulent quote from his essay:

Coercion of the individual, whether by the State or by a revolutionary party, is also wrong in principle, and will be opposed with sabotage, ridicule, evasion, argument, or simple refusal to submit to authority -- as circumstances may require. Our model here would be the old I.W.W. rather than the Marxist Internationals.

(that's from page 119 of the Indian edition)

Now, was is the Industrial Workers of the World? Paul F. Brissenden did the study on it, The IWW: a study of american syndicalism, 2nd prtq of 2nd ed, New York, 1957, \$7.50. Or Ralph Chaplin's Wobbly, the rough and tumble story of an american radical, Chicago, 1948, \$5. Or ask Dick Ellington, after all: he's a member. ↳

As to the rest of your letter: Yes, I know the Communist Party Line when I run across it... but do you? My listening posts may be different from those you use, but that does not mean they are any less accurate. For instance, I note your use of the cliches "political ignorance" and "politically naive" ... Tom, is it possible that you do not recognize these labels for what they are? Like "McCarthyism" or "witch hunters" ↳ or "communist" or "subversive" ↳ or "book burners," these slogans are used to soothe people. Human beings are so constructed that they can be pacified with labels, and the Communist Propagandists take full cognizance of this fact. ↳ and so do the PR men who make up the hand outs the FBI promulgate ↳ If they can tie a label -- preferably a discreditable one -- to an idea, they can render that idea 'hors de combat.' If you are convinced that the disquieting ideas a person advances are the result of "political ignorance" the person is "politically naive," you find it easier to shrug off those disquieting suggestions he advances. But do not underestimate others, Tom -- either these persons who advance ideas you have been told to regard as 'politically naive,' or the sources which suggested the concept of 'political ignorance' as a label for ideas or attitudes you find unpalatable.... an idealist is duck soup for a cold, scheming propagandist. The only defense he can really work up is to recognize that he (or she, as in my case) IS an idealist and develop some cold, scheming cynicism of ones own. If the human race must perish or submit to slavery, I think it is better to die as free people than to live as slaves. To my way of thinking, Communism (whether Russian or US-Socialist \*) is slavery and if humanity is fool enough to destroy itself with Strontium 90 -- WELL LET IT!

...GMC

↳ \* ah, ah Gem, caught you using a label now, didn't I? What's a-matter: are the non-USSR Socialists' ideas too disquieting for you or something? ## What's this about humanity being fool enough to destroy itself with Strontium 90? I'm a bit confused, for didn't you say in your letter of April 17th that, "...the US experts in the field, such as Teller himself, get up and assure the public that the danger has been highly exaggerated and that the tests are necessary." ? Could it be that the unamerican, subversive propaganda that is slyly inserted into HUR is beginning to subvert you ? You had better watch out, in fact quitting the PTA maybe not be a bad idea, since the California branch has recently come out for a legislative study on radiation hazards and that's only the beginning . . . ↳

...May 21, 1958