

# RUR 12

After a week up in the cultural desert of Rodeo, I, David Rike, return to 2431 Dwight Way, Berkeley 4, California and once more commence upon the production of an issue of RUR; which got its name from a stf-ish play by Karel Capek, a Bohemian gardener. I think he did underground work among the plants.



(by George Metzger)

Jim Broschart, "I call you on saying that The Stranger was the first Beat-type novel. How about Gide's The Immoralist?"

I didn't make that assertion, rather I made reference, from memory, to an article I read a few months ago, "About Albert Camus" by Ghita Ionescu that appeared in the November 18, 1957 New Leader. That part of the article I was thinking about went, "Published in 1942, The Stranger is not only one of the earliest but still one of the deepest incursions into the Weltanschauung of the mysterious youth which, since the end of the Second World War, has baffled parents and educators everywhere." When cutting the stencil, I forgot to put "one of" in front of "the first."

"Beat" refers specifically to the current, post-WWII generation that was born during the 30's, but you can find components of the essential outlook as far back as Turgenev. Kropotkin (Rus-

sian Literature, New York, 1905) in discussing Fathers & Sons says that the nihilist in it, "does not believe in the established principles of Church and State, and openly professes a profound contempt for all the established forms of society-life. He does not see that the wearing of a clean collar and a perfect necktie should be described as the performance of a duty. When he speaks, he says what he thinks. Absolute sincerity — not only in what he says, but also towards himself — and a common sense standard of judgments, without old prejudices, are the ruling features of his character." The hostility, in F&S, of the nihilist was directed mainly at the older generation; however, if you alter that slightly to the world as a whole, in general, and one's immediate environment, in particular, -- you arrive at an approximation of the alienation that is held by Beat-types, radicals, and similar sorts. Tho, they tend to express it in varying ways. >

Bill Ruckhardt, "I'm just about fed up with youse guys. You've pulled some nasty little stunts in the past, but printing that letter from GM was just about the meanest yet. Letting her put her foot in her mouth like that -- it's downright shameful. I think I'll form a committee on one and see what I can do about keeping her out of print and thus keep her from making a fool of herself quite so often.

"I've been sharing my RUR's and FANAC's with a couple of friends of mine down at Wayne. Upon reading that letter they have decided that GM deserves something (they wouldn't commit themselves as to just exactly what it was, but I have a feeling it involves a heavy shoe placed forcefully). Also we all decided that along with 40% of the rest of the nation's college students she could class us as communist. Why do you know, Dave, I once even went so far as to read a real communist newspaper! (They called it socialist, but I know better. Anything that disagrees with the American Way of Life has to be communist. Right!)"

Herewith are a couple of letters sent to G.M. Carr, commenting on her letter to me which was sent out along with RUR 10. The writers kindly sent me carbons, which I'm reproducing here as is, save for correction of typos. . .

Dick Ellington

Dear G.M.

I thought I was getting pretty well used to some of the odd ideas you tote around but that letter Rike ran in RUR just do beat all and moves me to some kind of words. If this letter gets a little wordy, please excuse it and attribute it to ire, wrath or what have you, finally boiling over.

It still amazes me that an obviously intelligent person like yourself can continue to remain so ill-informed on so many things. I know -- from 15 years of living there -- that Seattle is somewhat of a backwater but even for Seattle this whole thing is a little soupy.

First, some facts: the demonstration Dave referred to was accompanied by pre-arranged demonstrations, arranged by cooperating groups, in New York (many of the people walked in from Connecticut, Rhode Island and Philadelphia), Chicago and England (a long hike was staged there from London to Aldermaston). This is a long way from being world-wide.

The protest in question was not a "100% Quaker" affair nor did Dave say it was. It was arranged and led by several pacifist groups, including the Friends, Peace-makers, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the War Resister's League, etc. None of these groups are either Communist or Communist-oriented. Sure, a lot of other people participated -- an open invitation was out to anyone that wished to take part.

Were there communists there? Yes. In England a tiny handful, acting only as individuals, took part. Other participants inform me that they were quite sad to find violent opposition to their ideas from the mass of the walkers. In New York I noted (and checked on it) that some of the participants -- particularly in the Midwest delegation -- were what we of the left . . . refer to (derogatorily) as "Stalinoids." That is to say, Marxist socialists who are somewhat sympathetic to the C.P. but still hold themselves apart from the C.P. They were -- again -- in a tiny minority. I did not note, nor did others, any communists taking part -- and believe me Mizz Carr, we can spot communists a lot further away than you can.

Point: The same group that sponsored these demonstrations is trying hard to arrange for a delegation to go to Russia to plead with the Kremlin wheels to halt their tests. That's if (a) our government will let them out of this country and (b) if the Russians will let them in. Both are doubtful.

Please note that I'm not dealing with the efficacy or value of the demonstrations or with whether they are right or wrong in my opinion. I'm merely trying to demonstrate to you that the whole business is not just another Great Communist Plot.

As to Teller -- what leads you to believe he's right? Better physicists than he disagree violently (I say "better" on the opinion of the scientific community). Who are you to say Teller is right and Linus Pauling is wrong? I'd rank Teller below Pauling any day.

Mrs. Carr, do you realize with what howls of glee most of us greet your statement that Dave is "right in the middle of a Communist environment." You see, I live in a very similar environment. My friends are mostly radicals of varying shades and degrees. We read a lot of material I'm sure you'd disapprove of -- yesterday I read Voroshilov's funny little pamphlet about Stalin as a great military hero and right after that I read a University of Syracuse pamphlet on the oppression of the Jews under the Soviet Regime in Eastern Europe. I've read Marx and Lenin and Trotsky, I regularly read Freedom (the anarchist weekly), the Militant, Labor Action (Trotskyist Marxist), the Catholic Worker (Catholic-anarchist-pacifist), Dissent, the Industrial Worker and a whole slew of other shocking publications. We like our films uncut and attend art theatres, we go to parties in Greenwich village and drink cheap wine, we attend folk-music concerts -- even hootnannies (please note that according to the Air Farce "Hootenanny" is a word used by Communists -- see "How to Spot a Communist," a very funny little brochure, now unavailable).

But mainly we engage in political activities. We walk picket lines a lot -- very subversive business, these picket lines. Why, just a couple of weeks ago I

picketed the French Consulate and Tourist office protesting their actions in Algeria -- but the week before that I walked for an hour in the worst rain storm this year -- picketing the Russian Embassy with the Hungarian Freedom Fighters in memory of the Hungarian Revolution. In the first picketing a French woman called us Communists and spit on a friend of mine. At the second one, a Russian Embassy flunky sneered and called us "Bohemians." A little Hungarian, crippled in the revolution a few years ago, spat on him.

What this all boils down to is that there is no such thing as a communist environment. What Dave is describing is a social milieu that is radical and non-conformist -- but not communist.

You see, there are thousands of us around the country -- more, I'm sure, than you'd believe -- who are radicals to the present form of government in one way or another, but just as violently opposed to Russian State Capitalism. As a point of fact most of us consider the U.S. variety of oppression and phoniness preferable to the Russian form but that doesn't mean we'll settle for the lesser of two evils. We know all about communism and communists -- many of my friends, particularly the older ones, were, at one time or another, C.P. members -- but the C.P. then is not the C.P. now. All of us consider ourselves anti-communists and we fight the C.P. on what they consider their own territory. You consider yourself as either "right" or "middle-of-the-road" and condemn the Communist for being a "left-winger." We know better for the Communist is so far right that he is way over on the other side of you -- and Communists don't like to be told that.

Hoover I consider a pompous ass and I disagree with you that he is an expert on communism or qualified to pass on its danger to the U.S. as an ideology. I'd a lot sooner take the word of a few friends of mine who fought through the Revolution (Spanish) -- and I don't mean in the Lincoln Brigade either -- who saw the revolution betrayed by a handful of Moscow butchers and who fought Franco and the Communists. Or maybe a man I'll call Jack F----, who was a young Bolshevik in the Ukraine during the Russian Revolution of 1917, who fought hard for something better for his people and who left Russia in disgust, disillusioned with the Bolsheviks. He has devoted his life since to a historical study of the Revolution and the C.P. and knows them backward and forward. Or maybe Danieluk, a little, white-haired old Russian who's as poor as a churchmouse but who somehow manages to keep putting out a magazine in Russian called Dielos Truda for Russian emigres and who has very fine contacts with the working Russian underground. Their estimate I value -- Hoover's I don't. Take a look around you G.M. Do you really think that Americans are that susceptible to a phoney ideology like communism? Come now.

And please -- don't quote me any talk about real - and - present-danger from the Russian State. If the Russians were to take over this country tomorrow you might find life a lot less easy and comfortable and you might not like it much but it wouldn't bother Dave and me at all -- because we'd be the first ones they'd stand up against a wall and shoot. For examples, check into the histories of what happened to the anarchists and socialists in Russia and the satellite countries. The Russians are not dumb. The Communists know where the ideological danger lies to them. Read the story of the Kronstadt garrison or of Batko Makhno in the Ukraine.

Incidentally, as long as I'm dealing with a seemingly rabid reactionary (tho I somehow doubt you're as rabid as you sound) I guess I should state now that I-am-not-now-nor-have-I-ever-been a member of the Communist Party, nor of any C.P. front group nor have I ever aided the C.P. in any manner except in cases where basic civil liberties were involved and damned seldom then. I am, however, a member of the Libertarian League, a non-Marxist, libertarian socialist (anarchist, if you prefer) group that is thoroughly and completely opposed to Russian State Capitalism -- but equally so to U.S. "Free Enterprise" Capitalism. Our beliefs can best be expressed in the phrase: "There can be no true freedom without socialism; there can be no true socialism without freedom." I am also a member of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), card no. X303659, which is listed on the Attorney General's Subversive List -- though not because it is Communist, because it isn't.

If I sound riled up there it's because I am, but I don't mean any of this spitefully -- only as an honest expression of both fact and opinion. We don't in the least mind you not liking Communism but those of us who are honest left-wingers definitely do resent and consider it an insult to be accused continually of being communists.

By way of information only (not meant to get you mad by any means) I'm sending under separate cover a few little items: a copy of Matusow's False Witness which might prove interesting -- I don't say he's telling the complete truth but he is willing to go to jail to back up his statements this time; a sample copy of the Catholic Worker -- here be honest people who I know personally, respect deeply and disagree with violently and vocally; and a copy of an article by Linus Pauling for information's sake. For further information on atomic and dangers therefrom consult your library file of Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist -- you can check on the editors and writers easily enough with any scientific authority for their standing in the field.

And before you go accusing any honest left-winger or pacifist of being a communist take a walk down to some of the little bookstores on -- is it 3rd or 4th Avenue? -- anyway you'll be able to find them easy enough -- and invest in some of the publications. Read them honestly and tell me if you really think they're communist.

As for my own affiliations -- if you doubt my feelings I'll be happy to provide you with all available issues of Views & Comments which I help edit and which should demonstrate admirably in a lot of places how we feel about Communism.

{ "stalinoid" out here refers to liberals who're soft on Russia. Peace-living progressive-types and like that. They are by no means marxists }

Tom Condit

I have just read your letter . Dave Rike published in RUR 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ , and I'm afraid I must express my shock at what I can only regard as your staggering political ignorance.

Don't misintrepret me -- I don't regard a difference in opinion from my own as evidence of ignorance. I have known for some time of your political views and while I disagree violently with them, I've always assumed you had a fair working knowledge of political realities in this country. I must say that I disappointed.

You say that you don't think there could really be much danger in the bomb tests if Russia is going on with hers. Really, I mean really. Mrs. Carr, you don't regard the Soviet government as being more responsible than the U.S. government do you? That's the way I interpret that statement. . . . Actually, the Soviet government is slightly more responsible than the U.S., which is the same as saying "slightly more coherent than total chaos," and doesn't say much for them. The soviet government can afford to be more effective in its foreign policy because it merely has to consider the state of world opinion, and not the state of the Hearst editorial line -- that is, the Soviets don't have to cater to their lunatic fringe -- but the Soviet government looks only after its own interests, not those of the human race. The soviet and U.S. Governments must bear goinile on the frill for the continuation of these monstrous tests.

So Dave is surrounded by Communist propaganda, eh? May I ask you one simple question, G.M.: Do you have the least idea of what the current CP line is? I don't mean what the Seattle Post-Intelligencer says is "communistic," I mean have you seen any genuine Communist propaganda lately? I didn't think so. Before you go classifying things as "Communist propaganda," I'd advise that you pick up a copy of the People's World and find out what Communist propaganda is. It couldn't be, could it, that you regard everything to the left of Dick Nixon as "Communist"? Believe me, Mrs. Carr, the political views which Dave and I hold are about as popular with the Communists as poison ivy -- they much prefer politically naive people like yourself when it comes to engaging in their machinations.

Today is the sixth of May. 11 of my friends went to jail this morning, 4 are in jail in Honolulu, several more will probably be jailed tomorrow. These are not Communists, Mrs. Carr, nor "dupes," these are intelligent, courageous men and women who have faced the situation and have decided that silence in the face of these murderous tests and the impending suicide of humanity would be complicity -- and who do not choose to be accomplices to murder. It isn't a question of being for America or Russia -- we have chosen our side, and that is the side of humanity against both groups of mad men.

-- May 12, 1958