

I DREAM OF POLICE WITH THE LIGHT

BROWN SHIRTS

BY JAN C. ERKENBRACK

I remember it was a voice in my head telling me to get out of the apartment that woke me. It was that instinctual impulse to run I should not have ignored.

I lay in bed trying to force myself to remain asleep as I was very tired and it was very late. Suddenly the door to my bedroom burst open or rather burst apart, as a full half of it sailed to the opposite wall. This rude entry was performed by six strapping men in jackboots and brown shirts. I leapt straight into the air and on gaining my feet charged these invaders only to be turned back by sheer numbers. Pinning me to my bed, a man on each shoulder and leg, I was rendered helpless. One of this horde began brandishing a Luger and ordered me to stop resisting.

"We could have just shot you for resisting arrest but the family values czar has other plans for you," he growled.

Not knowing where to begin I launched into my rhetoric as it came to me. "What do you mean by arresting me? I've committed no crime. You ruffians broke into my home and I'm defending myself against you. Where is your warrant? Ha! You don't have one do you? What do you mean by other plans? And who the hell is this so-called 'family values czar' anyway?"

I heard a familiar voice call out from where my bedroom door had stood. "That would be me."

A couple of the bullies moved aside and I was looking up at Pat Buchanan.

My jaw fell open in utter disbelief. I was startled into action. "Listen here, you pasty-faced, oily-haired fascist," I shouted. "Get these products of inbreeding off of me or it's you who will end up in the hoosegow."

He took up a short black club and bashed my face with it, giving me a bloody nose and considerable pain.

"That was for showing disrespect," he said. "Now I'll fill you in on some realities. Firstly, we don't need a search warrant. When George Bush was re-elected one of the first bills he forced through allowed the courts to overlook errors made by police during the capture of criminals. Secondly, I don't like you. You are critical of me and my president. You're not right-thinking. Just look at the books we've found in your library."

He lifted a small stack of my books and read the titles aloud before tossing them into a heap on my floor.

"Walden!"

"Common Sense!"

"The Manifesto of the Communist Party!..."

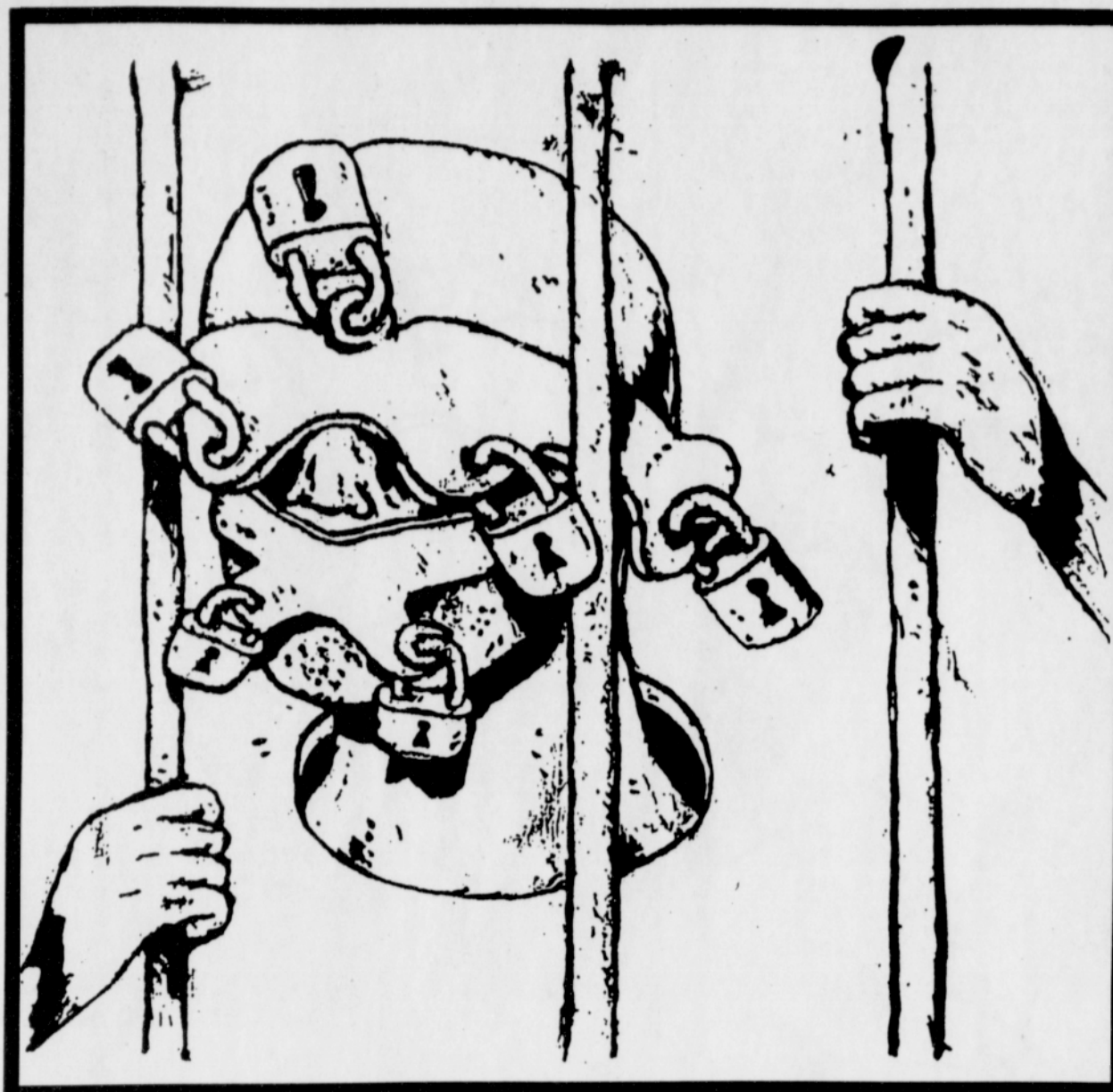
"What in the hell would a law abiding American be doing with this goddamn commie rag?" he said, glaring at me. "And don't try and tell me it was required reading for economics class. I hear that same crap from all you reds."

He pointed to books on a shelf.

"For Christsake you've got books in here by Hunter Thompson! Do you have any idea how subversive this shit is to the morals of our youth?"

He stuck his large beefy red face into mine. "With a name like Erkenbrack you're probably a Jew!"

I could take no more.



JONATHON ROSEN

"Alright, you swine," I retorted. "You'll never get away with this. I'll go to the press. I'll fight you in court. I'll go on Geraldo if I have to."

While I was speaking his goons were planting 'evidence' in my rooms.

"Look what I found, Mr. Czar."

One of the skinheads held up a plastic bag of white powder, a partially burnt American flag and what appeared to be three child porn magazines.

"I'm not a Jew, but I'm ashamed to say so to a bigot like you," I said. "You can be sure I'll mention your anti-semitism when I tell my story."

Buchanan laughed out loud.

"You're soon to be a convicted criminal," he said. "Your credibility is shot. Even if people would listen to you, nothing you say will get past the media czar."

"Excuse me! Did you say 'media czar'?" I shouted. "Who could possibly be media czar?"

Into the room walked the radio prophet of doom and hate, Rush Limbaugh. I started to scream uncontrollably and real panic set in.

Just as suddenly as it had begun it was over. I was now awake for real, lying on sweatsoaked sheets with a pounding head.

The whole of it had been a dream, but I ask you, how far from reality was it? No, George Bush was not re-elected, we don't have a 'family values czar' or a 'media czar' but we did have a drug czar and is that really a step in the right direction?

Pat Buchanan and Rush Limbaugh are just hate mongers without real authority, but they do have influence. Millions of people listen to Rush every day, and didn't Buchanan get about 20% in the Republican primaries last year?

You might not look upon these two as the modern day Himmler and Goebbels, but I ask you to look at a few facts:

While campaigning for re-election Bush asked the American people to allow courts to proceed with cases where police had made technical errors, like illegal search and seizure. He had previously asked that persons critical of the drug czar and the war on drugs be charged with treason.

Former Drug Czar William Bennett said once that drug dealers should have their heads cut off and at the 1992 Republican national convention stood at the podium and declared that certain lifestyles were preferable to others and expressed a desire that the Republican Party promote these lifestyles at the national level.

The police in this country routinely violate the rights of the citizenry and courts frequently overlook these illegal acts in the name of law and order. The police departments of this nation have more power than at any time in our history: I ask you, who's guarding the guards?

If we are to remain a government of, by and for the people we had better step up and take a hand in it. The police, military and government bureaucracies should be reminded that they have authority only through our consent and that they answer to us.

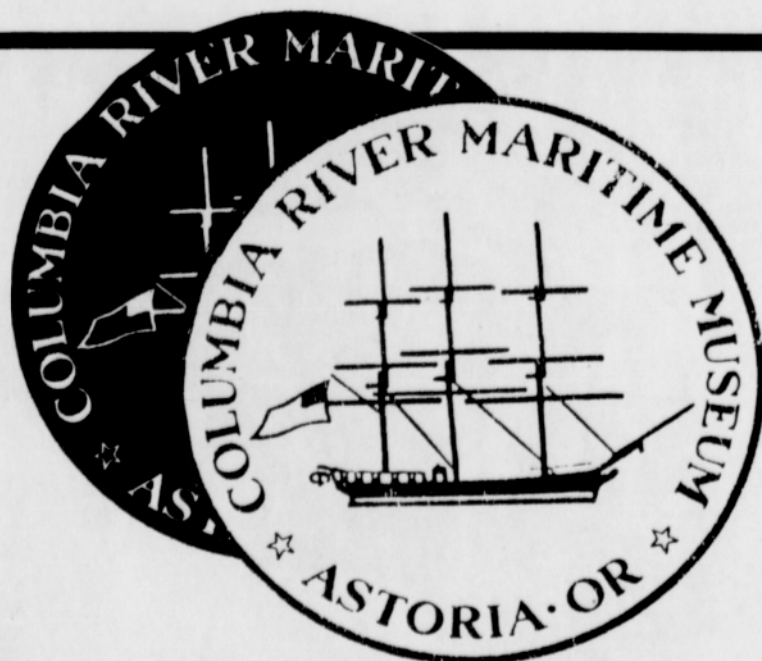
Let us gather our strength so that America stays free, that we citizens enjoy the blessings of liberty, and send this ultra-rightwing hatred back to where we buried it, in a bunker in Berlin in 1945.

Jan Erkenbrack lives in Carmichael, California. He was a member of the crew of the cableship "Long Line," which was temporarily in Astoria.



Imported Beer On Tap
Fish & Chips

WE'RE NO.1 ON 2 ST.
ASTORIA • 325-0033



ROBERT LOBE, MSW, ACSW
Licensed Clinical Social Worker

555 Bond Street
Astoria, OR 97103

(503) 325-8438

PERSONA
VINTAGE
CLOTHING



100 Tenth Street
Astoria, Oregon 97103
(503) 325-3837

Proprietor: Rosetta Hurley