

DETROIT REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT RECORDS

BOX 9 OF 16

FOLDER 28

CHARLES RUTLEDGE
CORRESPONDENCE OUTLINE
OF NOVEL 1975

January 15, 1975

Greetings and Salutations,

Let me get right to the point. I intend to finish the manuscript I've been talking about for two years sometime in 1975. I guess, the experiences enjoyed and agonized with in the Detroit working class struggles, as first, an observer and then as a participant left an indelible proletariat consciousness which yearns for expression.

My work at the Defender Office paid the bills and further serves as a slight vent for the frustrations of a frustrated radical, but I now feel a desire to put into writing some of the ideas, viewpoints and feelings I have discreetly maintained.

I want to write a novel about a "millionaire revolutionist". Essentially, I would like to write a story about Edward Clay Williams, a fictional character who hits the million dollar state lottery. The story will deal with his attempt to use his new found fortune, to develop an organization which moves as rapidly as possible towards the seizure of state power by proletariat forces, yet remains within the legal dictates of the case of Dennis v U.S. and its progeny.

I anticipate the development of several major characters and a bunch of minor characters and here is where you come in, I would like to receive your opinion as to the feasibility of developing several characters based upon the lives of real comrades with whom

I came into contact here in Detroit. Of course, I intend to use fictitious names, but I realize that this wouldn't stop anyone truly interested in analyzing my work from speculating and conjecturing with regards to the real life identity of the characters in the story. Let me hasten to add that I don't intend to use this story as an expose of the lives of Detroit radicals. If anything I would attempt to glorify their ideas and real struggles. I would most certainly desire to allude to the organizational thrust of several Detroit political organizations, e.g., The League of Revolutionary Black Workers, The Black Workers Conference and the M.C.L.L.

Most of the references would be in the past tense for my novel is more directed to the future than the past. This past only serves as a foundation for the development of Edward Clay Williams's organization. My story will concentrate on how Eddie uses the 1 million to further the development of a political organization with a fresh perspective on the process for social change in our North American society.

It would seem to me that my concerns about the use of certain materials and the development of certain characters in the novel could be significantly resolved by your response to this letter. I realize that it would be or may be difficult for you to comment on my somewhat amorphous project, but any response which you wish to make would be greatly appreciated.

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Enclosed please find a copy of some material which I intend to amplify in my novel. It should further serve as an example of the direction which my story will take.

Yours in Struggle,

Charles Rutledge

EAGLE-A

TYPE-ERASE

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A MAN OF VALUE, by Chas. Rutledge is a novel to
be available for publishing sometime in the year 1975.

"Idea For A Newspaper Article" is a chapter to be included
in the above entitled novel.

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IDEA FOR A NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

The year, 1975 represents the anniversary (quarter of a century + 2) of the indictment of the 11 defendants in the case of Dennis v. U.S., 341 U.S. 494, 95 L.ed 1137 (1951). It is this writer's opinion that the Dennis case represents one of the most "revolutionary" cases ever decided in the annals of American Jurisprudence. It's at least certain that any organization serious about social change would do well to consider the dictates of this legal decision.

The case of Dennis v. U.S. should be formally entitled the criminal case of Eugene Dennis, John B. Williamson, Jacob Stachel, Robert G. Thompson, Benjamin J. Davis, Jr., Henry Winston, John Gates, Irving Potash, Gilbert Green, Carl Winter and Gus Hall, Petitioners,
v. United States of America.

The Dennis case involves the criminal trials and appeals of the aforementioned petitioners, who were at one time or another officials of the Communist Party during the period laid in the indictment- April 1, 1945 to July 20, 1948.

The courtroom drama took place in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York and the principal participants notwithstanding the defendants were: Harry Sacher of New York, the now Honorable George W.

Crockett, Jr. of Detroit, Abraham J. Isserman of Los Angeles, Richard Gladstein of San Francisco, and Louis J. McCabe of Pennsylvania. The legal representatives of the ruling class of America were Special assistant to the Attorney General Irving S. Shapiro and Solicitor General Perlman, both of Washington, D.C., Attorney General J. Howard McGrath, assistant Attorney General James M. McInerney, special assistants to the Attorney General Robert W. Ginnane, Frank H. Gordon, and Edward C. Wallace, and Lawrence K. Bailey, also of Washington, D.C. and Irving H. Saypol of New York.

The defendants were indicted in July, 1948, for violation of the conspiracy provisions of the Smith Act, that is, for:

"wilfully and knowingly conspiring to organize the Communist Party of the U.S.A. as a group to teach and advocate the overthrow and destruction of the government by force and violence, and knowingly and wilfully to advocate and teach the duty and necessity of overthrowing and destroying the government by force and violence."

The defendants challenged the whole body of jurors summoned to attend court, and the trial of this issue extended from January 20, 1949 to March 1, 1949; the trial of the substantive issues began the following week and went on continuously until September 23, 1949. The jury brought in a verdict against all the defendants on October 14, 1949, and they were sentenced on October 21, 1949.

The trial of the challenge to the array took 23 days; the government's case on the issues took 40 days, and the defendants, 75 days, resulting in a record of 16,000 pages.

The U.S. Court of Appeals found that there was abundant evidence, if believed, to show that the defendants were all engaged in an extensive concerted action to teach what indeed they do not disavow - the doctrines of Marxism-Leninism. The Court of Appeals interpreted the doctrines of Marxism-Leninism in the curiously and lucid following manner:

"... that capitalism inescapably rests upon, and must perpetuate, the oppression of those who do not own the means of production; that to it in time there must and will succeed a 'classless' society, which will finally make unnecessary most of the paraphernalia of government; but that there must be an intermediate and transitional period of the 'dictatorship, of the proletariat,' which can be established only by the violent overthrow of any existing government, if that be capitalistic. No entrenched bourgeoisie, having everything to lose and nothing to gain by the abolition of capitalism, by which alone it can continue to enjoy its privileged position, will ever permit itself to be superseded by the means which it may have it self provided for constitutional change; e.g., by the ballot. No matter how solemnly it may profess its readiness to abide the result, and no matter how honestly and literally the accredited processes of amendment may in fact be followed, it is absurd to expect that a bourgeoisie will yield; and indeed to rely upon such a possibility is to range oneself among the enemies of Marxist-Leninist principles. Therefore, the transition period in-

volves the use of 'force and violence,' temporary it is true, but inescapable; and, although it is impossible to predict when a propitious occasion will arise: as, for example, by financial crisis or other internal division. When the time comes the proletariat will find it necessary to establish its 'dictatorship' by violence.'

It should be noted for the record that the defendants protested against the Court's interpretation of their teaching and advocacy.

The U.S. Supreme Court in ruling on the Dennis case held that the record supported the following broad conclusions:

"By virtue of their control over the political apparatus of the Communist Political Association, petitioners were able to transform that organization into the Communist Party; that the policies of the Association were changed from peaceful cooperation with the United States and its economic and political structure to a policy which had existed before the United States and the Soviet Union were fighting a common enemy, namely, a policy which worked for the overthrow of the Government by force and violence; that the Communist Party is a highly disciplined organization, adept at infiltration into strategic positions, use of aliases, and double-meaning language; that the Party is rigidly controlled; that Communists, unlike other political parties, tolerate no dissension from the policy laid down by the guiding forces, but that the approved program is slavishly followed by the members of the Party; that the literature of the Party and the statements and activities of its leaders, pe-

tioners here, advocate, and the general goal of the Party was, during the period in question, to achieve a successful overthrow of the existing order by force and violence."

It would seem that based upon the foregoing background, a veritable plethora of material is available for exploration and exploitation. I think that the possibilities for presentation of the Dennis case in its fullest logical extension covers all the means of ideological production which American society has at its disposal.

For example, a play dealing with the dissolution of the Communist International in 1943 (Communist Party, U.S.A.) and the reconstituted forces described as the Communist Political Association could be arranged and produced for profitable public consumption. I also think that a newspaper article on the past and present lives of the participants of the Dennis case would be of interest to the general public.

You may kindly treat this humble presentation as sort of a message from an aspiring author to the publisher in search of a writer!