

"Who Is Robert Rich?"

by Dalton Trumbo  
Following are excerpts from the address by Mr. Trumbo  
at a meeting for Abolition of the Congressional Inquisition, Carnegie  
Hall, New York, September 20, sponsored by ECLC.

As you have noticed, we are being picketed tonight.

The pickets carry placards. On those placards are words which express thought. In this country thought is protected. I have heard it said that those who carry the signs are newcomers to America, that many of them are not even citizens. But this is good. It is good they have so quickly understood and used ~~the~~ those rights that are guaranteed them under the law. I have heard it said many of them can't ~~even~~ speak English, and that others speak it only imperfectly. But there is nothing wrong with this. All languages are holy.

I have heard it said they are being paid by others to carry the placards. But that employment is legal, and it is their right to accept it if they wish. ~~¶~~ Unless every member of this audience is willing to go to court tomorrow ~~morning~~ to protect the rights of those pickets ~~standing~~ <sup>in</sup> this building, then we do not understand the First Amendment to the Constitution, and we cannot logically seek its protection for ourselves.

The stink bomb that has been released in the audience is a different matter. But let us compose ourselves even as to it. It serves to reveal the intellectual level of those who placed it there, and harms us little. We can take heart from the example of the American Negro people, who have dealt with real bombs.

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During the darkest years of the cold war, the district and appellate courts of the federal government have <sup>SUPPORTED</sup> ~~upheld~~ the committee's right to ask the fatal question, rather than the ~~same~~ ~~unlimited~~ First Amendment's clear injunction against any abridgement of freedom of belief and association. In the last year, new conditions within the country and throughout world have caused the Supreme Court to reconsider the freedoms of the First Amendment, and the encroachment of the Committee upon them. In the course of a series of decisions, the Court has <sup>CONFIRMED BY LAW</sup> ~~paralleled~~ in many instances the arguments first invoked in the cases of the Hollywood Ten.

The committee has contended that it's duty is ~~to expose~~. <sup>PUBLIC EXPOSURE.</sup>

The Court has now said "there is no ~~such~~ Congressional power to expose for the sake of exposure." The committee has asserted its duty to investigate ~~especially and particularly~~ in all those areas in which thought is communicated or taught. <sup>THE COURT HAS SAID:</sup> "In the political realm, as in the academic, thought and action are presumptively immune from inquisition by political authority." The committee has ~~now~~ spent vast sums in the investigation of political activity and organization. Now the Court says: "All political parties cannot and should not be channeled into the programs of our two major ~~political~~ political parties. History has amply proved the value of political activity by ~~minority~~ <sup>city</sup> dissident groups . . . Mere unorthodoxy or dissent from the prevailing mores is not to be condemned. The absence of such voices would be a symptom of grave illness in our society."

JUSTICE FRANK FURTER,  
CONCURRING

~~One symptom of that illness is the nation-wide blacklist, sponsored and maintained by the committee and its supporters. Many voices, as the Court puts it, are absent today, and their absence is an illness. That illness must and will be cured. It can only be killed by the First Amendment.~~

<sup>SYMPOMATIC OF</sup>