

COMMUTING ON THE RTD

We live in Pasadena about 13 miles from downtown Los Angeles. We had previously lived in Berkeley where I had been the assistant and later the acting City Attorney. Our stint in Berkeley included the hectic 60's when there were marches, sit-ins and finally violence stemming from activist Cal students and others protesting the Vietnam adventure, ~~The~~ genesis of the "Free Speech Movement". In addition to the protests ~~about~~ ~~AND~~ ANTI-Vietnam rallies, there was the "People's Park" affair. The University of California had purchased property south of the campus. Students (and others) sought to use the property which was unimproved as a rallying point at which their "First Amendment freedoms" could be exercised. They had been banished from Sproul Plaza, an open area on campus; they "sat in" in the campus administration building and were forcibly removed.

An anti Vietnam and "free speech" march from Berkeley to Oakland was held and well-monitored by those participating. To

have such marches in Berkeley, groups were required to obtain "parade permits". As acting City Attorney, I advised the City Council that the group seeking the permit were legally entitled to it despite the protestations from the Police Department that the "Hell's Angels" were rumored to descend on Berkeley and ~~literally~~ "raise hell".

In any event, the permit was issued, the march conducted peacefully in Berkeley. ~~but~~ Upon arrival at the Berkeley-Oakland border they were greeted by a phalanx of County Sheriffs fully armed, ready for battle, and determined that the march would not enter the sacrosanct ^{precincts of} Oakland. The ~~march~~ ^{parade} turned west, marched several blocks, then north for several blocks, finally disbanding at a park across from the city hall. The march was without incident.

The protests concerning People's Park, however, was significant in that violence erupted, windows smashed, guns fired by peace(?) officers resulting in deaths and injuries for which

the State of California; the Regents of the University and local municipalities were held liable to the tune of several million dollars.

Shortly prior to the foregoing events ~~occurred~~, the completion^C_A of the Berkeley Council changed. The so-called radicals dusted the more moderate members with but three exceptions: the mayor; Ron Dellums who became a U.S. Representative^{AND}_A now chairing the House Armed Services Committee and Wilmont Sweeny now a highly respected judge in Alameda County.

The "radicals" were activists, in that they proposed nutty ideas: when I advised them that using municipal funds for a hospital in North Vietnam^{would BE illegal} some members of the audience came to the stage where the council and city functionaries sat. I was jostled a little. The proceeding was being broadcast over the local radio station (KPFA). My wife heard the reporter say that

the City Attorney was being "stormed". I had dropped my books and files.

On reaching home that evening, my wife, instead of the usual greeting, met me with "are you all right?" I assured her I was.

By this time, the city manager, the city attorney who had been such for many years and others had resigned. I, too, was discouraged mainly because the Council thought my advice was too conservative. I, thus sought, as had others, a position elsewhere. In 1972, we finally landed in Southern California, residing in Pasadena, I, working in a prominent "redevelopment law" law firm in downtown Los Angeles. After a few years I became a partner.

While working on a brief May 1, 1980 I was overwhelmed by a severe headache - went into a coma, paramedics summoned, rushed to a hospital in Los Angeles; then to Huntington Memorial in Pasadena.

The diagnosis was a ruptured cranial aneurysm. I'm "out of it". Virginia, my wife, sought and consulted a neurosurgeon in Pasadena. He advised my condition was inoperable. The above and what follows ~~til~~ 1982 is hearsay. Virginia ^{had} finally found, through contacting a physician friend of ours who recommended Dr. Theodore Kurze by phoning New York. Examining me, Virginia was advised that he was a "high risk" surgeon and that he'd operate soon.

He did. I survived with only minor irritating residuals; loss of short term memory; double vision; and a certain testiness. After a pleasant stay at Huntington's rehabilitation unit and some time recuperating at home, I returned to "work". By this time I could not drive.

So, to get from Pasadena to downtown Los Angeles since I no longer drive, the only means was to use the Southern California Rapid Transit system (RTD - a bus system)

Fortunately, we live in ^{a heterogeneous} section of Pasadena, ~~a heterogeneous~~ area within walking distance west from the Rose Bowl. A bus stop is located a few doors from our house. It is convenient.

After deciding that Virginia's transporting me to and from Los Angeles was too much, we decided that my adventures on the RTD should commence.

The round trip takes about one hour each way and involves three line changes to Los Angeles and four from Los Angeles to Pasadena. The additional change to Los Angeles is necessary because it is my habit on the homeward trip to stop at Greg's Deli in downtown Los Angeles for an espresso. The proprietors of Greg's Deli are a charming Armenian family (father, sons and daughters all participate in the enterprise ~~and are enterprising~~ inasmuch as ^T they've opened additional establishments in Beverly Hills and West Los Angeles.

The advantages of commuting by bus(es): no driving hassles; reading; visiting with fellow passengers far outweigh

(The time for the round trip is
the disadvantages, ~~which is~~ more than double that of automobile
commuters); a singing bus driver (who when I enquired whether he
knew "Sweet Lorraine" responded "Do I know 'Sweet Lorraine'? - I
was at a Hollywood nite club when Nat Cole first sung it!" He
thereupon serenaded us with his rendition of it *and other tunes*
ALL THE WAY TO LOS ANGELES.

The trip to Los Angeles is interesting and stimulating
because of the passengers: a secretary to a Federal district
Judge; an attorney who's with a high power Los Angeles law firm;
a number of legal secretaries at big law firms; and just
"ordinary folks". I visit with all of them.

On the return trip to Pasadena my companions are: a broker;
a young lady who works for a financial institution; two employees
of the "Gas Company" who are hep to the latest bad lawyer jokes.
We get along fine - it's kind of "club-like".

On the Pasadena portion of the trip I've met students from
Cal Tech, young men working at pizza places, students going to
Pasadena Community College among others. They're all