

So much, then, for the great Satyricon ``riot."

The grand jury has thrown out all charges against two of the alleged miscreants -- Bruno Berger, the bouncer, and Taki Kapellakis, the cook. And according to informed sources, all other charges have been reduced to misdemeanors.

Back in April, when it hit the papers, you would have thought there'd been a minor war down there. Police with riot guns were called in, and six persons, including the owner of the Old Town night club, were hauled off to jail and charged with felonies such as rioting, resisting arrest and escape.

But the grand jury, which still is hearing evidence on the case, has obviously come to a different conclusion. It's decision to throw out the cases against Berger and Kapellakis is particularly telling.

According to Officer Rocky Balada, the two attacked him as he was attempting to arrest Satyricon owner George Touhouliotis for taking a leak in the vacant lot adjacent to the nightclub.

Now, according to Balada's own report, he had interrupted a heroin bust to do this, but what the hey. Everyone has his own priorities, and those, apparently, were Balada's.

Anyway, according to Balada's version, he came up behind Touhouliotis and asked him what he thought he was doing. When Touhouliotis told him to screw off, one thing led to another, and Balada grabbed him by the shoulder.

At this point, wrote Balada in his official report, Berger and Kapellakis came running out of the nightclub. First, he says, they hit his arms, causing him to lose his grip on Touhouliotis. Then, when he tried to grab Touhouliotis again, Berger pulled him away by grabbing him ``about the neck area." Kapellakis hit his arm again, he said, and Touhouliotis escaped into the club.

At this point, Balada called in reinforcements, and in the ensuing confusion several people were hurt. Berger and Kapellakis were charged, among other things, with rioting and Escape I. The escape charge is particularly heavy, carrying with it a \$100,000 fine and a sentence of up to 10 years.

The only problem being, at least from Bruno Berger's and Taki Kapellakis' point of view, is that it didn't happen that way. Not even close.

According to Berger, he was inside taking tickets when Taki came running up and told him someone was out front, beating the blank out of George.

So, the two of them went running outside and saw a guy in a windbreaker hitting George Touhouliotis with a stick. Bruno says he didn't know it was a cop. At first all he saw was the earring the guy was wearing.

He says he yelled, ``Hey, what's going on here?" And the guy with the earring let go of George, and George walked back inside the club.

It wasn't until then, Bruno says, that he realized the guy was a cop. Indeed it was: Officer Rocky.

So, on one hand, here's this cop saying some guy hit him and then grabbed him around the neck. On the other, there's the guy saying it couldn't have happened for the simple reason that he never touched anyone.

Anyway, Bruno Berger goes before the grand jury and tells his story. And so, presumably, does Officer Rocky. You already know who they believed.

Part of the reason, of course, is that there were at least two witnesses to the confrontation, and both of them said the same thing: He never touched the guy.

So how do you suppose that Balada came up with the rather detailed descriptions he put in his official police report? Good question.

But let's be fair: The fact that the grand jury didn't believe Balada doesn't necessarily mean he's a liar. It just means he's not credible.

So much for Rocky's Riot.

WHO IS THIS MAN? For a while there it looked like Richard Brenneke might end up on ``60 Minutes." After all, he had just been acquitted on federal charges of lying under oath about arms-for-hostage negotiations between Iran and Reagan campaign representatives that (he said) took place in Paris before the 1980 election.

So Mike Wallace's man called and asked him if he would be willing to take a lie-detector test on it.

``Wait a second, pal," Brenneke told him, ``I'm the one who was acquitted." Maybe if they got Donald Gregg, Bush's former national security adviser, to submit to a lie-detector test, too, he'd reconsider. Wallace's guy never called back.

However, you can hear Portland's own man of mystery in person this Friday at St. Ignatius Church on Southeast 43rd Avenue. Brenneke starts talking at 7:30 p.m., and admission is \$10.

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