

IS HE, OR HAS HE EVER BEEN?

YORTY PINKO DEALINGS

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Mayor Sam Yorty has recently ventured into the Looney Tune world of McCarthy type Red-baiting. The mayor's attack on the SDS is the most recent example. However, when one ventures into the realm of the witch-hunt, there is always the danger of the tables being turned. Red skeletons, it seems, are to be found in the most unlikely of closets.

Sam W. Yorty was never a "card-carrying member of the Communist Party" but he came very close and for several years he was a well-known Communist fellow-traveller. Getting in with the reds was a big step up for Sam who was with Technocracy before that. He also took part in the End Poverty in California (EPIC) campaign of Upton Sinclair.

Yorty has been a registered Democrat since 1934, the year before he met the Communists. In 1935 he started going to Communist Party meetings. Young Sam tried hard to make friends with Dorothy Nestor, a comely young commie with hazel eyes, smiling hard at her with his cunning quick grin across the meeting of the CPUSA.

Sam grew quickly as a prospective Party youth leader, but he seemed a little overambitious to certain Communist leaders. A former CP spokesman informed the FREE PRESS that Yorty ap-

plied for membership in the Party while he was courting Dorothy Nestor, who later became Dorothy Healey. Party leaders distrusted Yorty's "opportunism" and therefore required him to undergo a six-month probationary period.

Yorty became a leader in the American League Against War and Fascism, a Communist-supported united front group. He was much in demand at leftist rallies and, thanks to abnormally large vocal chords, Sam never had any trouble being heard even in the largest places. The L.A. Times called him "a violent leftist."

Sam Yorty was first elected to the California State Assembly in a grass-roots peoples' doorbell-pushing campaign supported by the Communist Party in 1936. He was glad of the support and barely won the election, carried in on the coattails of Franklin D. Roosevelt. The romance with Dorothy seemed to be getting nowhere and it was good for Sam to get away to Sacramento.

The new assemblyman loved to swing, and now there were plenty of girls for him to swing with, although, perhaps none of them was as pretty as Dorothy. Somewhere he heard that she was going out with Don Healey, another Communist. Sam never completed his party application.

When the Communist PEOPLE'S WORLD appeared on January 1, 1938, there were congratulations from Sam Yorty,

Harry Bridges, Upton Sinclair and other reds. Sam wrote that it was "...a very wholesome thing to have an official newspaper to present Labor's side of important events."

Yorty walked in picket lines to support the worker's struggle and he toured the state making militant speeches at strike rallies. Time after time he repeated the same demagogic rant against "the princes of plenty and the monarchs of monopoly."

In 1938 Yorty campaigned for renomination in the Democratic Primary. He appeared in the strike picket lines in front of the HOLLYWOOD CITIZEN-NEWS and spoke at a mass rally with Carey McWilliams and other well known "pinko-liberals". Yorty called the CITIZEN-NEWS strike a struggle "of democracy against industrial dictatorship."

As he campaigned that summer in Los Angeles Sam could see that he had lost Dorothy. He felt put down and left out, but felt better about it when he won reelection that November. A few weeks afterwards he met Betty Hensel at the Post Office in Palm Springs.

Then Yorty accused Japanese fishermen of being alien espionage agents and announced intentions to seek legislation against "enemy spies" in the next assembly. When the 1939 legislative session began he introduced his anti-spy law and married Betty Hensel. Everything between him and Dorothy was finished.

When the campaign to recall Mayor Shaw got under way in 1939, Yorty wanted to be the reform party's candidate in the recall election. Reform leaders preferred Fletcher Bowron and Yorty blamed his defeat on the Communists.

Focussing on "them" he soon discovered "disciplined conspiratorial activity". Yorty's exaggerated sense of his own importance gave him a paranoid awareness which "made it possible for

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Mayor Yorty's commie past

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me to understand some past actions and I began to put the pieces together...I could practically identify the Communists and their cohorts by the change in attitudes. The campaign against me was virulent and vicious. It was designed to destroy me and drive me out of the Democratic Party," Yorty said.

Before long Yorty began pushing for an investigation of Communists in the California State Relief Agency. By the Spring of 1940 Yorty was leading the witch hunt of the "Little Dies Committee". The first one he wanted to get was Don Healey.

On February 5, 1940 Yorty got Healey in front of his committee. He asked Healey whether he had ever sought Relief Administration jobs for members of his group. Healey answered:

"You ought to know, Sam, because I saw you at the SRA office headquarters when you were trying to get positions for your own workers."

"That is a lie!" Sam shrieked.

From there Sam went after Communists in the Labor Unions and even Governor Olson, a Democrat. "I feel the governor is playing a dangerous game in failing to rid his administration of Communists...I cannot support his policy of inaction. The governor is not the Democratic party.

His dictatorial demands that his orders be carried out do not make those orders either right or consistent with the platform of the Democratic party. Today only a fearless Legislature which refuses to be browbeaten is protecting California against the establishment of a veritable dictatorship. I won't be driven out of my party by Communists or by a leader with a dictator complex."

But run out of the party he was. Unable to carry his own district now that he had lost his Communist support, Yorty decided to go for broke in 1940. He ran against

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pop designs and French poetry on the walls. At the wedding of another daughter, she and her husband recited poetry that they had written for each other and dispensed with the conventional responses.

My first tour of San Francisco was carried out under the escort of Dr. Grabbe; so young-hearted is he that in addition to taking me to Fisherman's Wharf and the computer conference, we went to San Francisco's Broadway, where I made him laugh by just taking a quick peek at the Bottomless and Topless girls, and then quickly drawing away before the usher could find a table!

With people like that around and about the United States (I hope they are many) IDEAS can go to and fro and take shape and produce a society which can find answers to its problems because its mind is working.

Much of the hullabaloo going on about how colleges should be run, who should teach what when, is just the confrontation of working minds with those that are dead, but kept alive with intravenous feeding; of those who would hear Eldridge Cleaver speak against those who would shoot him even when he is naked and his hands are above his head.

In his book, SOUL ON ICE, Cleaver writes, "I have been ter-

ribly impressed by the youth in America, black and white. I AM PROUD OF THEM BECAUSE THEY HAVE REAFFIRMED MY FAITH IN HUMANITY. I HAVE COME TO FEEL WHAT MUST BE LOVE FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF AMERICA AND I WANT TO BE PART OF THE GOOD AND GREATNESS THAT THEY WANT FOR ALL PEOPLE".

I was struck, as if by a bolt of lightning, when I read that. This Cleaver who had been painted as a racist etc. was saying what I had SEEN myself..

Truth, as they say, is indivisible. More grist to the elbow of the American young people. If they save this country, the blessings will blow across the entire world.

Hiram Johnson for U.S. Senate and was badly defeated in the primary.

Out of politics and out of a job, Yorty still thinks it was the Communists who did it to him. Sam would make much use of this issue on his return to politics and still uses it today. The 19 Communists whom he named last week as being responsible for the Black Student Union demonstrations had among them many of the same people "exposed" by Yorty over and over down through the years. Some of them are getting a little old to be leading student demonstrations, but they will vouch for Yorty's early pinko dealings.