

COMMUNISTS REJECT

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Mayor Yorty seems to be getting hit from all sides these days. The L.A. Times is persecuting him, City Councilman Bradley and Wilkinson are after his job and, last week, even the L.A. FREE PRESS examined some of his early "pinko dealings." The Mayor is becoming more isolated and, last week, the Communists repudiated him. Dorothy Healey demanded a retraction of last week's story and said that Sam had never been close to her or to the party.

"My only personal acquaintance with Sam came from my post as a representative of the International Cannery and Agricultural Workers. We appeared on the same platform together at two meetings when I was organizing the Walnut Growers Association, and once at a conference of the Labor Non-Partisan League."

Mrs. Healey added that Yorty never tried to court her. At most, she explained, Yorty and the other organizers went out to have a drink after one of the meetings. This was customary among labor organizers at the time, but Dorothy does not remember if Sam even went with them. She said positively: "Sam Yorty never attended a Communist Party meeting that I attended."

"Sam was never that close organizationally to the Party. I was in San Pedro with the Cannery Workers much of the time, but I very strongly doubt that he went to Party meetings. I probably would have heard about it.

"I never heard that he made an application to join the Party and we never considered him a Communist when he would come with us. There was a lot of gossip about Sam—that he was an opportunist and other things. Our people never had much regard or esteem for him. He was not at all on his way to becoming a party leader, I am sure of that."

By "go with us" Dorothy meant go with the whole leftist movement of the time, what with Hitler, the Depression and all. "One of the things we did to get workers to join the union, was to bring a man of prestige to the

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meeting, and he would tell them they had a right to join the union, that they should join the union." Yorty was "part of that group of EPIC assemblymen", and thus had prestige of an elected official. During those early years of the Wagner Act many Democratic politicians were making public speaking appearances to tell workers that they have the right to join a union.

The Mayor's connections with the party, then, were much more tenuous than our "former party spokesman" made out. Dorothy Healey said that Sam must have been aware that she was a Communist when he agreed to appear with her, since "everybody knew I was a Communist." But the informant's tale about Yorty's attendance at Party meetings, the "romance" and his abortive application for party membership turned out to be completely false.

We fell into the same trap that HUAC has fallen into upon occasion, committing the error of exposing Communist connections which were not quite as close as informants alleged. Just because HUAC has sometimes listened to former party spokesmen who tell more than they know about goings on inside the CPUSA does not excuse us from doing so.

Rumors about Mayor Sam's early pinko dealings have been current among the younger leftists for several years, but with nothing very concrete. Mrs. Healey pointed out that there is a lot of basis for these reports, but that in the course of time certain facts have become distorted and romantic gossip has been

introduced. "The youth have fertile minds," she said.

The idea that Yorty once sought romance on the left is no more absurd than the Mayor's own view that local student unrest is masterminded, instigated and sponsored by people like Barbara Nestor. Mrs. Nestor was among those the Mayor named December 12 as "triggering many acts of violence" in the recent student upheavals. Mrs. Nestor is 83 years old and does not go to college. She is Dorothy Healey's mother.