

'We were not made for a Nazi uniform'

Mort Sahl speaks out on the future of America

PAUL EBERLE

Mort Sahl, absent from Los Angeles radio for over eight months, shared the KPFFK microphone with Elliot Mintz Sunday night for four hours. All the station's telephone lines were lit up continually from the beginning of the show to the end, as Sahl rapped with Mintz and with listeners who called in.

Asked about his firing from KLAC last spring, Sahl said, "We had a 17 rating—higher than KHJ. The people were listening!"

"Earlier," he said, "... when they fired me from the television show the first time, I talked about it on the radio show, and we got 31,000 letters."

"When they dropped the radio show," he said, "this time, I got no notice."

"I was in the office, and Garrison called me from New Orleans and said, 'I have an exclusive for you to break on the air. I have eye witnesses placing Ruby, Oswald, and Shaw together in Baton Rouge, Eyeball Witnesses.' So I went on the air and I told that on the air ... They erased the entire tape and sent me a letter the next morning firing me. In mid-contract. At a time when they owed me \$83,000!"

"I tried to call it the way I saw it in Los Angeles. There were many subjects on the program. And, although I want to stay with the assassination, I want to point out that everybody knows who they are. And since God put me in the role of holding the mirror up to Dracula, who knows very well what he looks like anyway ... they didn't stand up to be counted when they were needed. I made the appeal. I stood up there and said, 'You know who you are. And you know the fight we're in, and what's at stake is America.' In essence, that's the reason that when Budd Schulberg went to Watts, and sold a television show off of it, and the articles to Playboy, I pointed out that Budd Schulberg knows better. Before he knew the history of the Negro people, he knew the history of the Jewish people. And he knew the history of the Un-American Activities Committee. And that we must all face ourselves. Now that wasn't pleasant for everybody. But we had to say it on the air."

"I talked about all the ex-left in Hollywood, and what they had become, since they joined the establishment. They hadn't become Left; they hadn't become Right. They hadn't become anything. They had become eunuchs. And I wanted to remind them and ask them if it was worth the price. Because as Garrison says, in the Faust Legend, 'The price is YOU.'"

"I pointed that out. I pointed out that the country is going down the tube because we have no hope, we have no optimism, as we had under Kennedy. And we're trying to rationalize the war. I pointed out, as unpopular as it may sound, that there's a vast store of Jewish people in this city who've turned their backs on their commitment, which is survival. People who have gone the other way, and who will give Ronald Reagan a standing ovation in Hollywood Bowl because he says the right things about Israel."

"But, as hard as it is to point out, the Jewish people, and I know some who even fled from Hitler—come full circle now, and not only rationalize the war in Vietnam,

but make the same error they made in Germany—that if they have enough money, they will buy out. Garrison is showing the picture of a neo-Nazi group, and as Ruby said toward the end, as he was in jail, 'I helped them because it was a money deal, I helped people who will burn my people.'"

"There are Jewish elements, Jewish liberal elements that turned their back on the President. And they know better. I know people out here—they're in the industry—and their answer to me is a large blue pencil drawn through my name, in case I get a job, and imagine that all they can do to a man in America is take away his right to make a living. You have all the liberals with their knees knocking, looking the other way. What happened was that I could not get a job anywhere."

"I'm still the same guy who was

manager. A guy who was a confidante of the President—on a certain recreational level."

Later, speaking about Oswald and the assassination, he said of the liberals, "They were all looking the other way. There wasn't one member of the American Bar Association who said anything about defending Oswald. And there wasn't one member of the ACLU who went in to defend Lee Harvey Oswald. And as Garrison said to me, 'Because we lost an adversary proceeding—because the law wasn't protected by lawmen, we not only lost our President—we lost our justice too.'"

Who killed President Kennedy? "Well," Mort replied, "the scenario points toward a coalition of anti-Castro Cuban exiles, oil-rich psychotics from Texas, according to the District Attorney, retired militarists, various voices of the

anybody in my government wanting to harm the President."

"But somewhere along the line, we gave up. We gave in when the government said, 'We know better what's good for you than you know yourself.' That's why the liberalism of today is puny." He spoke of Lawrence Sherman, Robert Vaughn, Carl Reiner and Eugene McCarthy and the dissenting Democrats thus: "It's twenty years too late, man! They've been drafting people like you for twenty years, so that eventually, 435 honorable men in the Congress don't even object. And nobody votes against the Un-American Activities Committee. And nobody says anything about the war. And nobody says anything about anything. And nobody says anything about murder in the streets. I've been crying, Fascism! Fascism! How much success, how heady was the sensation, and how intoxicated were the Fascists in this country, to get to a point where they thought they could go ahead with as bold a stroke as killing him in the street? What makes them think they can get away with it? The experience of getting away with it! Over the years! They tend to get power-drunk because they've been successful. It gets crazier and crazier. They've extending Fascism for so long in this country—without challenge, a generation! Since 1946! This long night started with Roosevelt's death. You can chart the whole thing from there—and it gets to a point where a whole generation doesn't know any better. Robert Kennedy talks about massive retaliation and Communism and Capitalism and vehicular capability. You can't even tell if somebody is jiving you anymore! Because it's twenty years of madness. As much as my Jewish friends aren't gonna like it, the German people weren't born crazy. They were made crazy by their government. They were made in a form that was most convenient to that government which is Fascistic, which broke the backs of the unions, and used anti-semitism as a dodge. The same thing is happening here—they're trying to drive the American people crazy, and I think they're succeeding. There's great evidence in the barbarism in their day to day life, and in the lack of direction. And in the lack of mental health in this country. And I'm not suggesting they go to a psychiatrist, because most of them are sell-outs too. Sad to say, because they know better, but all they want to do is repair you and get you back on the line. To keep punching out Mustang frames."

"Lood what happens—FDR dies; what was the plan? To make Germany into an occupied agricultural state. But what happens afterwards? Truman goes into office; and he forms the defense department, the Marshall plan, he aids the Fascists in the hills of Greece to STOP COMMUNISM! He founds the CIA in 1947. He gives J. Edgar Hoover a blank check, and they go ahead with the Un-American Activities Committee, and they start the Great Witch Hunts, and McCarthy comes on ... And two bombs—on the Japanese people—in civilian areas. And the Korean War, Anti-Communism, We will not tolerate it anywhere. And Vietnam, and China, and Santo Domingo, You can see it, step by step. Twenty-two years of Fascism. Your

country becomes a colonial power. Now, of course, we're not made for that, because it's not our tradition. So that's the conflict. That's why everybody's hung-up and they say, 'Well, why do the kids look so weird?' Because you're driving their body in one direction and their head in another. They're being pulled apart."

"We're not made for it. We're not made for a Nazi SS uniform. If I was going to form a Fascist state, I would go to the Germans. They're set up for it. It's like Sinatra told me: You don't found a record company, you buy one. He bought one that was set up already. He had a commitment, too, by the way. 'The House I Live In.' I don't hear that from him anymore. I don't hear from anybody anymore. Where are all of you? Or don't you care? Where are you going to live? Where are you going to go? You can't hide in Switzerland. You know, you are an American. You're not gonna feel that good. Everybody says, if you've got enough money, you'll feel good anywhere. It's really not true. There isn't anything quite like America. You're really gonna miss it."

"But to get back to your question, this group of neo-Nazis, who would have brought us Fascism in the name of National Security ... the facts on who shot the President are in the archives because of national security. Everything is national security. The CIA is national security. The FBI. And meanwhile, you don't recognize your own country. Think of America as a body and think of the pressure points in the first aid class. Mark Lane is saying to you, 'I've got this pulse in the left arm, and it's an accelerated pulse, and Jim Garrison's got the right arm and he's saying the same thing and Mario Savio is there by his right temple and he says it, and Stokely Carmichael is at the left ankle and he says it. Everybody tells them. Dylan tells them. Everybody tells them. The patient has a high fever and an accelerated pulse. And I can't find anybody who cares about it.'"

"A lot of good men died so that you could sit out there and decide whether to sell out or not. It may be too late for you to sell in. That's what really terrifies me. I don't know whether we're over the hill or not. Naturally I'm going to get up tomorrow morning and go at it the same way. The bell rings and you come out of your corner swinging. We've got to keep trying. Because this is all we have. But nobody has to be naive about the elements in this country. Why did I indict liberals, the so-called social democrats in this country? Because there are not enough evil men in this country to do it in. They are the generals. But the privates in their army—the vast ranks—are the vast ranks—are the liberals. Because evil men can only do evil because of the indifference of good men. And that's what it is. The road to Fascism is paved with those liberal bricks. Every young man who was headed to the Left was castrated by a good liberal, who wants him to fit in."

"Everytime you meet a guy over forty, you have a right to spit in his face. Because he has cast a shadow over your future."



under contract to all three networks," he said, speaking of his almost total ostracism by the entertainment and broadcast industry. "I'm still the same guy who MC'ed the academy awards. I'm that guy." Yet, he said, when he recently went into an expensive Beverly Hills restaurant, "... Nobody would speak to me. They all averted their heads. There's that much terror."

"And my former manager was there, a guy who still handles the affairs of Peter Lawford, he's the guy who once threatened me with never working again in America. Peter Lawford and his manager—both of them—if I didn't stop kidding President Kennedy. They loved him, you see."

"But they also—these same people—then changed gloves ... from the left hand to the right hand ... and see that you continue not to work, for asking who killed him, I didn't love him. So I can give full time to finding out who did him in," he said sarcastically. "I knew him. And I wrote for him for nineteen months."

"Evans," he said, "used to be my

Right, at the operational level of the conspiracy. And at the planning level, the Cubans were a good setup, because they were disenchanted with the Kennedy administration—and also because they were lawless. You've got to remember that these informants who worked for the CIA along the way, if you have government by hoodlum, what are you spawning? Every cop in L.A. has his contacts, on Main Street or East Fifth Street. He's got junkies, and pimps, and peddlers, etcetera. But he knows what they are, and he keeps them in perspective to work for 'the greater good' as they say. But the CIA keeps them on staff for twenty years. And that's the difference. This undercover thing of doing what you want to and countermanding orders of the President, and writing blank checks, and not being checked by the Congress, spawns a Government-by-Hoodlum. That is not to say that the government subsidized the assassination. We don't know that, Garrison denies it. I asked him, 'Why do you say ex-CIA men?' and he said, 'because I can't conceive of