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How Sahl Is Saving The Country

By John L. Wasserman

One must commend the courage of Mort Sahl, the Los Angeles comedian, for his fearless assaults on the press - CIA conspiracy against him.

Sahl played Friday and Saturday nights at Basin Street West. No covert, behind-the-back sniping for him. He gets right on stage, in public, and lashes out at the Fascist - Communist - Left Wing - Right Wing axis which is so desperately afraid of him and his truth.

"I'm busy saving the country," he said Saturday night. Again.

Sahl strolled on the stage 20 minutes late (he walked out on 36 customers for Friday night's breakfast show) and launched into another session of telling it like it is. He ripped Nixon, Agnew, and Ira Blue. He told about going on radio stations and scaring disc jockies, because he is so forthright. He slammed Barbra Streisand.

He told true stories that vie for veracity with Grimm's fairy tales. He had the Warren Report in front of him on a table but mentioned it little except to suggest that he was the only person ever to have actually read it. He had a



MORT SAHL

The voice has changed

blackboard behind him, presumably for drawing his man-woman and political spectrum diagrams, but didn't use it.

He had three funny lines, and some of the people laughed at other junctures, as well.

Sahl has undergone a fascinating transition. He said, in a manner that he thought was tongue-in-cheek, "I really miss Eisenhower." That is more truth than poetry. The political demise of Eisenhower marked the beginning of the professional demise of Mort Sahl. Oh, he's still alive, all right. There are sufficient nincompoops around to support anybody. Mort Sahl has his following. Jerry Lewis has his following, Robert Welch has his following. Sahl used to have the bright people. Now he's got the Silent Minority.