

TOPIC: Mort Sahl : The Cause is Humanity, interviewed by Alan Farley.

RECORDED: San Francisco Playboy Club.

BROADCAST: KPFA, 30 May 1970.

ALAN FARLEY: I've heard a lot of people say that it's not possible to satirize the administration anymore because it satirizes itself. I don't know. That doesn't seem to stop you.

MORT SAHL: Well you know I'm commuting from Los Angeles and I got on the plane tonight. I commute everyday. A guy sat down next to me, he's in the electronics business, with a button down shirt and a sharp pencil. He showed me the financial page, the paper, and he said, "It must be difficult to kid about these things."

Well you know, if I waited for the times to be good I'm afraid that I wouldn't have a very urgent call toward my career. Because I started going back over it the other day. Here we have rack and ruin and the Vietnamese Cambodian hyphen Laos hyphen ...

FARLEY: Hyphen.

SAHL: Yeah. (laughs) We have all that. Then prior to that, we had Lyndon Johnson and prior to that we had the overthrow of the government in Dallas. Which I heard a man refer to it as "The Opening Shots of World War III." I'm not sure he was far off. Then prior to that of course we had Eisenhower and a mild recession. Prior to that we had the loyalty oath of Senator Joe McCarthy. Prior to that we had World War II and you get to the point where you want to say, "Was it ever good?"

But I take that as a personal challenge. I must say that two things have changed in the approach to the work. Exaggeration is no longer available to me as a weapon because everything is all too credible. And the old comedian's trick of course was exaggeration. The logical extension to the absurd. Well the absurd, of course, is now of course now prime form. And the second thing is my biggest laughs are generally direct quotations rather than personal inventions. (laughs)

FARLEY: That makes me think of, oh I forget how many years ago, I guess it was in the early Kennedy days. When in The New Republic they published this satire, essentially on “Seven Days in May.” This was before Seven Days in May was written about how the government was taken over. A coup in the United States. It was completely incredible. Now you read a rumor that Nixon has asked, is it Rand Corporation? To make a study of what would happen if he cancelled the elections in 1972. And you don’t take that as something untrue.

SAHL: No the people are willing to accept it. I just finished [British Social Critic and Activist] Bertrand Russell’s autobiography. He was always aghast at how people acquiesced to all of this in America. He said, “How could you get 200 million people to acquiesce?” So he was kind of happy at all the rumbles in this generation. And I am too, of course. But the question is ... I think we’re in a race of time and I think the question is: can we hold the line long enough until the younger people get there? I’m not sure that we get there. I’m not sure that we can. I have no insurances. I think if we can, we’re going to be all right. In fact we’re going to be better than we ever were. But oh boy! (laughs)

SAHL: I’m amazed a little bit at the climate. I’m certainly not a guy that’s easily amazed by what I have seen only this year. I’m surprised a lot of people are acting viscerally, especially young people, because they haven’t been given any information. They’ve absolutely no information. For example, people that picket the President of the United States as if he is in charge of the government would be amusing as if the stakes weren’t so high. The day that he drove to the Pentagon, I think he showed great candor.

FARLEY: That’s the one when he called college students bums.

SAHL: Yeah, but he went to the Pentagon! He made no pretense like his predecessor. There is no doubt, I cannot believe. I was on The Dick Cavett Show a few weeks ago. I said on Friday. I picked up The New York Times. I said this is available to everybody. Sihanouk [Head of State of Cambodia] is going to be deposed in 72 hours. As a matter of fact it was about 84. And a puppet will arrive, a General, and he will invite us in. We will have access to Cambodia. It’ll be presented as a fait accompli to the President. It’s his job is to explain it to the people. And it’s a

CIA operation. Anybody who is now blind to the CIA and the Generals, I am quite amazed by that.

By the way, I did two hours, I mean the people don't know or they don't want to, I did two hours in New York with Abbie Hoffman on radio and [Attorney] Gerald Lefcourt. Lefcourt's behavior astonished me. I bring this up because I think we have an audience of some sophistication.

FARLEY: He's an attorney, isn't he?

SAHL: Yes. He was one of the attorneys who were held in contempt originally by Hoffman, Judge Hoffman. Remember?

FARLEY: Along with [Defense Attorney] Mike Tigar.

SAHL: Originally. Right. Then of course he represented himself here as lawyer for the Panthers in New York. But I've never seen anyone behave as he behaved that night, unless that person were either a Trotskyite twenty years ago, or a fink for the CIA today. Because when Abby, who was pretty funny, every time Abby became rational and was at room temperature, Lefcourt, urged him on to excess.

[Radio Host] Barry Gray who was conducting the program, at one point said, "What's gonna happen?" Abby said, "Nothing short of revolution. We're going to take over." And he said, "Are you going to have elected representatives from different districts?" And Abby said, "Well we haven't worked that out. But what do you wanna know for?" And Barry Gray said, "Well, I live on the block, I just want to know the rules." (Laughs)

Lefcourt continually said, I said, "What are the limits of your probation? How much does the judge allow you to express yourself?" "Short of sedition." And Lefcourt says, "Yeah, but we don't know what that means."

Well I'm sure that even if Abby doesn't know what that means, I'm sure that an attorney who was wearing a three or four hundred dollar suit and fashionable sideburns certainly knows the definition of sedition and what will put Abby back behind bars where he will be impotent and mute. And this attorney then went on to tell me, at one point I said that whenever America was generally threatened, young men lined up at recruiting stations. They couldn't handle them they had so many young men. And suddenly young men don't line up. Therefore we might look at this particular threat and analyze it as opposed to condemning youth which Bob Hope has done and other professional patriots. And Lefcourt says, "You're crazy, this society is doomed! They wouldn't fight for anything in America because it's racist!" And I reminded him that I thought the cause was humanity, it was not merely racist. And he went on to say to me, "It can't be saved!" And he went on to develop a resentment, we were on the air for two hours, a resentment of the fact that there might be a solution for the American people.

When I pointed out to him the evidentiary material from the trial of Clay Shaw that Jim Garrison held in New Orleans, he said that I was paranoid about CIA conspiracies and that all I did was depress people with the news about the Kennedys and that they may have died but a lot of people died in that time period, so what?

Now this lawyer who yawned when I presented evidence, grave implications about the Central Intelligence Agency, the FBI, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff having to do with the President's death, not only did not admonish me for being irresponsible, did not rebut me, did not agree with me, but yawned and called me a paranoid. He said, "When Abby Hoffman talks, people march. When you talk, they get depressed."

Well I'm sure there must be other alternatives to marching or being depressed! (Laughs) I'm very suspicious of that man's motives. And I was shocked. I was shocked by what I found. That's one of many experiences.

But as I was saying Alan, you know a lot of the young people don't have the facts and they don't know anything. They're operating viscerally. And they don't really know what's going on. I mean they seemed to be very, very shocked.

I was at the University of Miami recently and a kid told me he thought that Clay Shaw had been persecuted by Garrison for political gain. Garrison has been elected own there by the largest pluralities in the history of the city. And the fact that they don't know that. Or the fact that they picket the President, that they think the President orders Intelligence agencies. They have no idea what the intelligence community is in this country even though it's on their campuses. Is there anyone who doesn't know anything about the CIA in this country? Is there anyone who's so silent and pure. They're in the Panthers. There's three of them I think in the Los Angeles Free Press. That's their style. To embed themselves and change editorial opinion. Influence it that is.

But anyway, to continue.

FARLEY: One of the things i found most interesting, when you were here last time, just your recounting of your experience with the commercial media. And what happened to you here in San Francisco at the stations. And also, I don't know if you saw the review in The Chronicle-

SAHL: Yes I did.

FARLEY: The day after that I did a short thing on the air where I read that review and I said what I thought. Because I couldn't believe that he saw the same show that I did. I saw three of your four shows.

SAHL: Well, I'd like you to know that that fella' is an interesting fella. [Entertainment Critic] John Wasserman, [Jazz Critic] Philip Elwood of course in The Examiner was highly in praise of the show.

FARLEY: Elwood's, he's on our station.

SAHL: Is he?

FARLEY: He has a regular show and he's a good guy.

SAHL: Oh great. He's been very good to me and very fair. Wasserman has been in repeatedly and he's been highly subjective. Interestingly enough, while he sat with me at Enrique's Coffee House or [San Francisco Nightclub] The hungry i, various haunts in the old days, he would sit there and tell me that he thinks I'm marvelous. In other words, he did not allow himself the privilege of disagreeing with me even about a subject we were discussing. Now that's really leading a kind of a cursed life. A man should allow himself that as an adult. He would sit there with me and nod in assent and then walk away and write that I'm insane. He never writes about the show. He never writes about the quality of the show. Because I know what i've been doing. I've been doing it for seventeen years. And I think I know how to get a laugh out of all of it, including the tragedy. I have developed some skills and I am an artist. I've never had that questioned.

However, Wasserman now comes to us for absolution and says, "He's forced to write this by his superior [San Francisco Journalist] Herb Caen at the paper." And, I think this is extremely naive, to have followed such a directive, if it's true. And history tells us it's true. So does Holiday Magazine. Grover Sales's article about Herb Caen. If it's true, I think it's very naive of him to expect absolution for having accepted such an instruction. Because that makes him even less in my eyes. That his job is worth that much ...

It was Adolf Hitler who said, "That the members of the press could all be bought," he used to say gleefully. But then he used to break into laughter and he told [American Journalist] William L. Shirer, he said, "why do you laugh my Führer, if this fact is known to you and it's ingrained?" He said, "because you have no idea how cheap."

You really can. I know some of them are under the thumb of a tyrant for \$135 a week. They're ready to do homicide and to misinform the American people. He referred to me, he said paranoiac ... (Laughs)

FARLEY: What I thought and said at that time, I had actually come to your show with some preconceptions of having seen you on Dick Cavett and Merv Griffin, and I actually thought that it wasn't going to be as good as what you used to do. I was completely wrong. I thought it was

just as good and better than the kind of thing, I shouldn't say then kind of thing because it's essentially the same kind of thing, but you're in good form.

SAHL: A performer has to grow, God knows, it should get better. If you're doing anything it shouldn't be static.

FARLEY: Yeah but paranoia never entered my mind. The fact that you talked about the Warren Commission Report and the fact that you had the Warren Commission Report on the stage was interesting. The fact that you didn't use the blackboard didn't upset me. Or the fact that you were a little bit late coming on didn't upset me since I'd been to other shows on Broadway that didn't start on time.

SAHL: Of course the show starts when the owner thinks that there's a quorum. I don't set the schedule I don't know what all that means.

FARLEY: It was completely irrelevant.

SAHL: Or I guess I do know what it all means. I've had personal differences with Caen. We've had personal differences. He's threatened me with a newspaper while inebriated. He's really foolish to think that a newspaper has any influence anymore in an electronic era.

FARLEY: The one thing that I did say, well, not to try to read the mind of Wasserman. But I did say, that you had a few unkind things to say about The Chronicle.

SAHL: That's quite so.

FARLEY: And that might have something to do with why-

SAHL: Yes, there's a correlation.

FARLEY: And I do remember you saying that thing about Herb Caen and his-

SAHL: Yeah and that the only thing Herb Caen and I agree on is that we're both ashamed of his being Jewish and I think that still stands. (Both laugh)

Herb Caen once said to me there are three stages in the level of man. He quoted [William F.] Buckley. He's a good liberal. A good liberal in the sense that he's extremely tolerant of Buckley, likes to have luncheons with Buckley. Liberals are great, it's all sport. You know, the game is over. Trial is over and perhaps [Black Panther] Bobby Seale's going to be electrocuted but we're attorneys! Why can't we go out and have a drink? I mean we're objective. I don't have to agree with a guy just because I defend him! I think the wonderful thing about our system that these people should be electrocuted but first we give them a trial. Isn't that the way? Well, Liberals!

So Herb Caen said, to return to this, he said that Buckley had pointed out to him there were three levels in the evolution of man and his philosophical nature. The first was narcissism and love of self, the second was love of your fellow man, idealism, and the third would be love of your country. And in my opinion, Herb Caen is arrested at the level of love of his fellow man and people can make of that what they will.

But it's amazing. You know what's amazing, to take it away from him, because he isn't even worth discussing, is that people would think that a guy who writes a column about the fog and the bridge is influential. That people at the clubs would pick up his check. I used to say, you know Herb Caen and I have something else in common: at The hungry i, neither one of us ever got a check! I'm afraid that's true.

For all of that, he's another one. He represents a class in this country. He romanced John Kennedy and he romanced Robert Kennedy. And when they were murdered, assassination is too much of a euphemism, they were murdered. He relegated them to being casualties of World War II, he never mentioned them again and he didn't care. They certainly left him no legacy. Now if they had nothing that was memorable then I don't know why he courted them. Unless he's interested in power.

If you're really interested in power I would go all the way. I've never understood men that go halfway anyway. I would either put my money in a mutual fund in Geneva, in fact I'd move to Geneva. Either go to work for the Nixon administration and make the most of this chaos and profit from death of your fellow man. Or run with the ball and run all the way. I don't know about these goes who go to the fifty yard line and sit there who are professional spectators.

There's an embittered group of people in the Bay Area who are growing old, feeding off each other. I must say to you, the more you maintain your position, humorously enough, the more they accuse you of changing. They're always saying to me, "Gee Mort, you've really changed!" And I haven't changed at all. I still think what I think of Franklin D. Roosevelt. And I think what I think of John F. Kennedy. I guess I miss them a little more. I think I miss the optimism that was around when he was here. And I suppose I miss hope as a factor in our existence. And I would think that if I were one of those older people like Caen, I would miss the fact that my children don't want to speak to me. I'd miss my children. Or I'd miss them if they were in an early grave.

It's quite remarkable what's happened here. Because when I started at The hungry i, there was an ingroup and an outgroup. There were the Eisenhower Republicans in, and the rebels, my audience, the constituency, were people who were out and who were Democrats. And today, it's generational. It really is. The rebellion. I mean, most people you get over twenty, are really locked in. They're programmed to the grave.

FARLEY: What about here? At the Playboy Club? I would think it would be mostly over that-

SAHL: You know, my job is not to assume that everybody in the audience agrees with me. Because in my role I'm often privileged to see material that they don't see. In other words, I see things coming and I sometimes pay the penalty of seeing things first.

When people thought Eisenhower was inoffensive, and a quiet soul, and they even were even fond of him, I was ridiculing him of being inept.

FARLEY: that's an accepted fact now.

SAHL: To say it first you endanger yourself. When they were on a honeymoon with Johnson, I began to go after Johnson, they didn't like that. Of course the most extreme example of this is that I know the names of some of the people who killed President Kennedy, and as a result, to say it first, soon everyone will say it I promise you that, but I said it first and as a result, I was penalized.

So when I go out on the stage, I assume that no one agrees with me. And I'm privileged for that too. I'm penalized, partially. In other words, nobody quite understands the wavelength I'm on. But on the other hand, they do treat me like a prophet and they pay me many thousand dollars a week which frees me, a great deal of time, to do what I want to do.

Now, Playboy opened up The Festival of Stars and I must say, without giving away any trade secrets, bankrupted themselves for eight days here. Asked me to come in here and I did because it's gainful employment and I say what I want to say. But you know, one of the alarming things is that for all the people in the audience with short hair cuts and neckties and probably Nixon buttons, it's a challenge of sorts for me to show them their idol, President Nixon and especially his Vice President, even more so.

FARLEY: The Attorney General?

SAHL: Yeah, right very good. To show them some other sides of these people. Which I want you to know, I've done and, knock wood, successfully. But there isn't as much of a gulf with the audience as you would think.

For instance, when I was up here at The hungry i, I found that my people, so-called, were fragmented and lost. It's as Garrison had pointed out: when it comes to admitting that there's been a military coup in the United States, there are no liberals, there are no open-minded people. Garrison once said, "The wonder of this country is not that they could overthrow the government, but that five of us could surround the Federal government, which we have done

successfully. I don't know what we're gonna do with it, but we did it! He and three assistants and myself. And you know, I see it as one cause. I don't see it as piecemeal.

The other day in Los Angeles, one of the announcers on an AM station asked once of Abernathy's people why there weren't more Black faces in the protests. Well eh said that, "The war is your thing. The white guys. The other thing is our thing."

I'm sorry he feels that way. It's naive of course. I've always felt the cause is humanity and all of these are interconnected. This is all a network. These are all symptoms happening to the same body. I don't believe in spontaneity, especially of construction workers who resent students at this late date. (Laughs) Usually all they resent is the last wage settlement.

FARLEY: When you said that you know the names, are these names of people or you mean names of the organizations? When you mentioned the CIA, The Joint Chiefs-

SAHL: Names of people.

FARLEY: You've mentioned these people already?

SAHL: I don't choose to now.

FARLEY: Oh you haven't?

SAHL: No, I haven't. I'm not free to. By the District Attorney's office. But people say, "Will we ever know?" The irony is that there are people know now. And people in high places and in places of trust. You know the question is: what is a reporter?

When Lyndon Johnson was on the other night with Cronkite-

FARLEY: Oh yeah, I didn't see that. I see that someone has already subpoenaed for the outtakes from that.

SAHL: Yeah, [Private Investigator Sherman] Skolnick. Skolnick has been informed, he's been given some information by a Secret Service agent who has also been in touch with our office in New Orleans and who's a very reputable character. We can tell because he's been thrown out of the Secret Service and because he's also black. The irony is that look at the press here. The program came on, and I'm paraphrasing but I'm very close here this is almost verbatim, they said, "Certain materials has been deleted for purposes of National Security at the President's request."

Now we find out in The Washington Post that Johnson had second thoughts about letting the people know that he doesn't believe Oswald acted alone, if he acted at all, and that he had misgivings about The Warren Report. Now Translate that into English.

Cronkite represents himself as a reporter. He didn't break that story, The Washington Post did! He isn't a reporter at all! He was sent there because we know, and CBS knows, that he will not expose those people. He's in bed with those people! It's quite ironic.

And there's several things I can't explain either. I don't know why is it light and the man is [Broadcast Journalist] David Schoenbrun goes on the air and says, "Gee, Nixon's making the same mistakes Johnson made." I don't know why David Schoenbrun doesn't completely open up and see, and he knows, that the Central Intelligence Agency and that the Pentagon are running the war. And say it. Because what's he got to lose?

The other day in Connecticut, Mark Lane of all people, said, "I never said the CIA killed the President. I merely said that the Warren Report didn't tell who did." Well, Mark Lane has had access to all the files in New Orleans that I have, and he knows very well what agency is deeply implicated in the President's death. I can't believe, even with my immense ego, that I'm the only man in America who knows, that in three years of John Kennedy, 137 men died in Vietnam and now that's a good week. I can't believe that no one else knows that 14,500 men were in Vietnam when John Kennedy died. That Lyndon Johnson stood next to his casket at the Capitol and said to Ambassador Lodge and said, "It's a new ball game now." And eleven months later, 500,050

men were in Vietnam. I can't believe that no one else can connect this scenario. Am I the only one with these gifts? It cannot be in a country of 212 million people! I mean surely someone must see it now.

You know, Martin Luther King was wise when he said, the liberals are saying we're brutalizing the Vietnamese, he said, "we're brutalizing our own people by the act of taking part in this war."

FARLEY: It becomes clearer-

SAHL: Daily. And the people are brutalized. I can remember when you and I would have sat here and said, "Gee, if only the media who show the pictures of the napalm children." Well of course they did, and the people have accepted it. They can explain away my line. They were provoked.

FARLEY: They smoked marijuana.

SAHL: Oh yeah I forgot that one. That's the latest.

They certainly became facile, and you know it's such a shock to see your country bitten by the same virus that bit the Germans. I thought that the Germans were genetically murderers at one time. That's kind of amusing now that I would think that. In fact, during the Six Days War it was my opinion, and generally an unpopular one among liberals again, that the Israelis became militarists when they were victorious. They're making fun of [inaudible] and he became their Aldai Stevenson. And [Israeli General] Moshe Dayan became their Dwight Eisenhower at that moment. That virus of brutality can bite anybody. And it bit America. The direction we're going in we're going to make the German's look like pikers.

FARLEY: When you appear on the mass media, what happens? Are you allowed to say what you want?

SAHL: Yes, you either don't do a program, although that's kind of academic. It's hard to know when you don't do it. To be present when people don't hire you is almost, how can you be? It's like being both the corpse and the detective. It's kind of hard to solve the crime in that sense. In the times that I have appeared, I have appeared it's quite a record. Last year, the calendar year '69, I was on 31 network talk shows. That's Joey Bishop, Dick Cavett et al. That's quite a record. That isn't counting Frost and the other.

No one has ever jumped at anything but there have been some marvelous symptomatic responses around me. For instance, James Earl Jones the black actor, said on one program with Cavett. I said, "American people need information." He said, "Maybe there's a danger in knowing too much too." He thought if you go in that direction, in other words you'll find out who did it then the burden will be upon you to right the ship of state. He also meant, "I waited a long time to be successful and don't tell me the bank is gonna close now." Of course that's the English translation.

A girl named Gloria Steinem who professes to be a worker for George McGovern, but as I understand it, well, I'm getting ahead of myself. This girl said in New York Magazine, I asked her on the air ... what she read. She said, "Well I only read New York. I would no more read Ramparts," she said, "than Time because it has a preconceived bias." And I said, "Do you think Ramparts is penetrated on the basis on the fact that they were the first to point out what the CIA was doing at the universities?" She said, "Oh by now the CIA must be penetrated." And she went on ridicule it and generally draw framework of paranoia and madness about me, successfully.

After the program, driven by guilt, she sent me a wire of apology. But the nine million people that saw the program didn't see the wire. That girl attended The Vienna Peace Festival, the Leftist festival which is what '59 or something, theoretically as a Berkleyite with a guitar but the CIA bought her plane ticket. And I don't know whether she is merely an informant or whether she thinks it's a lark, which is even more dangerous or that it's all funny. But it isn't funny to the bodies floating out of Cambodia certainly, needless to say. She's an acquaintance of mine, I'd hardly call her a friend and I'm amazed. There have been many such experiences on the network when I have talked to people. As I have gone, after the facts, and I tried to take advantage of

limited time, the people have fallen away around me. If not physically, they've become silent. They haven't answered me.

In other words, I took as an almost a guideline, I would say, "No I won't come on and keep saying Jim Garrison every show. I'll only come on if I have new information." And I did have new information, but nobody wouldn't answer me.

FARLEY: So the way they put you down is just to not react?

SAHL: Not to react. And I'm terribly upset by the fact no one debates. No one admonishes me if they don't believe me. And this mute reaction, this no reaction, alarms me in this country. Again it's, "I don't want to get involved, I want to keep my job." And it's coming down around them. And as the man said, "The bomb will kill even the indifferent. The bomb is indiscriminate." Garrison was the man and he's quite correct.

These people don't say anything. They just is there, they don't challenge any of the reports or any of the conclusions. They left me out there. For me to go on the air and say that the CIA is the number one dope dealer. And adventurers within the CIA will bank the money from the imports from Southeast Asia, and not to get a letter to challenge it or ask for documentation. Not to hear from anyone! And to know that went out to over 211 television stations to an audience of between 9 and 14 million. The silence is deafening! How can that be? How can you get nothing? How can you have no reaction? Where are we? What the hell is this? 1984?

I know I'm alone. There must be men of counter-passions perhaps, maybe not the same. Outside of [Comedian] Dick Gregory, the black community is fascinating. I think that [Bill] Cosby is a fraud. He's dancing on the grave of every black guy who wears a green beret. He's standing there and denying that the last 25 years took place. Stands there and talks about his family like nothing ever happened. He's denying all of that struggle, standing there with Mrs. Coretta King as credentials, she's his frequent house guest.

I was in London. I talked to Peter Donat who is the number one detective there. We have evidence that leads us to believe that the man who was tried here is not the man who was apprehended in London. James Earl Ray said in court, "If the government believes in a conspiracy, let the government have a trial!" And there's no trail. Bill Cosby doesn't ask for one. Bill Cosby banks money. He impersonates a negro. I'm more Black than he is!

Where are the men? Where are the men who are going to save this country? Where are the Americans? I know that I risk ridicule and people are gonna say it's hokey and it's flag waving. But we have a very simple mission, although it's somewhat overwhelming, and that is to save America. Because we're altruistic? No! Because we have to live somewhere. I don't know if it's too late. From what I have seen, those are the indications. But as Major Ernesto [Che] Guevara said, "You know they're going to kill you, we'll take that as our basic premise now let's get back on the trail, let's start marching." Or as the Viennese used to say in Freud's time: "Situation hopeless but not serious." (Laughs)

FARLEY: You mentioned Bill Cosby and that made me think of Richard Pryor. Richard Pryor doesn't do really do a lot of stuff about the war but he's certainly pretty honest.

SAHL: You know I have no place to see him Alan. We did a show in Los Angeles recently for ABC called Humor of the Sixties and Richard was on it. I laughed once. I remember when he said, they tried to bait him. They said, "You copied Cosby didn't you?" Instead of denying it he said, in his formative years, he said, "Yes I did but since Cosby never came up with anything new I was forced to be creative." (Laughs)

Which I thought was marvelous! He has a beautiful backhand. He didn't move! He looked him past him and he just ... But I've heard from many quarters which are reputable such as yourself, reputable in my opinion, in my estimate. You know he's on the right side. He cares about something.

FARLEY: He made me think of Lenny Bruce when I saw him.

SAHL: See I had no place to see him.

FARLEY: He appears here pretty frequently.

SAHL: Here in town? Where does he work?

FARLEY: Mason Street also in the showcase in Oakland.

SAHL: The showcase?

FARLEY: The Black-

SAHL: Really? I'd like to get over there. See I have no place to see him, I have no access!

FARLEY: See he's going to be at the showcase next weekend, the weekend after you're gone.

SAHL: Why doesn't Bill Cosby make his program available to Gregory?

FARLEY: When you see him on television, it's really a much different show. He's really much better in the club. He can say what he wants to say he doesn't have to worry about offensive 4, 6, 10, and 12 letter words.

SAHL: What is his outlook, would you say?

FARLEY: A lot of people think he's terribly negative. And hostile.

SAHL: Justifiably.

FARLEY: And hostile. Well that sort of is. That's true.

SAHL: In other words, it's a true picture. It's not Cosby standing there and saying, "I love you all." He doesn't. He doesn't! Cosby went into his office some months ago in Los Angeles and fired all the white people. Which I fail to see as a sign of progress. It's insanity! To alternate the oppressor is hardly an advance.

Pryor is really reflecting a contemporary attitude, honestly. I can't say that about too many performers, can you?

FARLEY: No, that's it!

SAHL: That's what I have against all of them. That's why I think that Johnny Carson and Bob Hope and Frank Sinatra, those people who are prevalent, and Streisand, are completely out of touch with America.

FARLEY: As out of touch as Richard Nixon?

SAHL: Absolutely! So when they tell you they rule you, it's like we should find an antithesis, another term for the overground. We always talk about the underground. We are the top layer of the earth, they don't exist! Barbra Streisand says she's 26, take her at her word, is there anybody in her generation that she's in touch with? I see them everywhere. I either see them at the pleasure fair or I see them getting a haircut, putting on a tie, and going into Washington and talking to legislators, and worrying about being blown up. I don't see anyone like her! What is she doing? I mean singing lyrics that are completely neutral! They're not just in the middle, there's a neutrality there, vanilla!

And Sinatra? Sinatra is merely an intimidated man who poses as a rebel. He's not a rebel. He poses as socially maladaptive. He's not at all. The more insane this atmosphere becomes, the more he fits in. He's perfect.

Carson is really the principal member of the Gestapo. He is instructed, he is an employee, and he is not a marshmallow. Some guys on the air marshmallows. He is not. His handling of Garrison

and the people he chooses to put on the air and off the air and his handling of political issues show very much where he stands. The fact that he thinks Peter Fonda ... he talks to Peter Fonda as if he's Jerry Rubin which will give you an idea. And Jerry Rubin is almost a dated term. Things are moving rapidly!

First of all, the whole idea of leadership begins to worry me. When they say Abbie and Jerry are influences. That's even insane. But I sure hope those young people ... the revolution doesn't get lost in drugs. Boy I hope so.

But to get back to the entertainers, I think that they're a failure. They're not relevant, to use that cliché. They really aren't. I can't-

FARLEY: The fact that the Smothers Brothers were put off television for doing what they were doing-

SAHL: It's laughable.

FARLEY: And what I see, what was in TV Guide this week, Dick's mother saying that they're told by ABC to cool it.

SAHL: You can bet on it. I was on their last show. Because know the last show did not appear so I was literally on their last show. My monologue was edited by them.

FARLEY: Yeah I noticed that it was edited.

SAHL: It wasn't edited by the network, it was edited by them. And nobody in the network called them and told them to edit it. But they don't have to be told.

Now I saw a producer in Los Angeles recently and he said to me, "Going to Washington I've got a political script and I'm going there to get clearance." And upon further discussion I found out no one from Washington knew he was writing anything and nobody had called him. He was

voluntarily ... They've got them conditioned pretty damned well. That's why there are so many unconscious members of the conspiracy. How many members of the press wrote negatively about Garrison because they know that that's the trend? It has nothing to do with anything else it's that American bandwagon stock market opportunism. The broker's approach.

In other words, guys would come to me, this isn't generally known. A very influential producer came to me, because I had access to Garrison, to do a motion picture on Garrison that he knew young people would go to see. He said, "Does he got a chance of winning this case?"

When he lost the case, that producer said to me, he was convinced that Shaw was an innocent man who was wronged. Now both of those were extreme attitudes for a man who didn't read any of the testimony.

You know I brought the testimony back from New Orleans and I made the initial stuff, because you know it's really voluminous, available to the Los Angeles Free Press. And I ask you: what kind of a country do we live in when the only copies of the testimony of a pathologist who admits he didn't give the president an autopsy but swore under oath that he did ... And when a pathologist from the United States Army [Pierre Finck] says The Warren Report is really impossible, it's fraudulent, its analysis ... And the only availability of that is in the Los Angeles Free Press and is delivered by hand by a nightclub comedian, and there's no other report of it ... What can the other members of the Press be? Are all of them bought? I doubt it. But they know which side of the bread is dry and which is buttered. They know what's expected of them by now. I really do think that they're programmed.

FARLEY: Often they wait for someone else to break the story and then they jump on it. In the case Paul Krassner and The Realist with the Kennedy marriage story for one, way back.

SAUL: Gee, you have great recall. Krassner is an example-

FARLEY: They wait for some little "disreputable" paper to print something then they'll step up and do it.

SAUL: They stampede don't they? They stampede. No they didn't jump on it this time and ironically enough, Mark Lane said in a book called *The Citizen's Dissent*, he said, "In another time instead of being fired, I would have won a Pulitzer Prize." It's interesting. [Reporter] Merriman Smith, who recently killed himself, won a Pulitzer Prize for reporting the assassination. He reports in it that he was riding under the underpass when he heard the shots that killed our young president, which is interesting since he was two cars behind Kennedy and Kennedy never reached the underpass. He was killed while ahead of it and possibly from it. So that man was given a Pulitzer Prize.

Now that distortion, and that perversion of our values, that madness of leaking information, and of the intelligence community running hog wild with a blank check ... Of course you know no voice is wholly lost, it's still Jefferson's America. He structured it pretty damn well. Because while it's wobbling and it's creaking, it's still here. I really do believe that if a few young people, and there are very few countries that would be like this, if a few young people hadn't gotten their heads open in Chicago and if [Senator] Bill Fulbright hadn't kept yelling, I think we'd be in Mainland of China by now. I have no doubt. Based on what I've seen and what I know. When we say CIA we're not talking about Sean Connery and attractive people and international intrigue, we're talking about mutual funds in Switzerland and we're talking about-

FARLEY: Who is it that runs the CIA? It's not something that Richard Helms ... He's just a civilian employee.

SAUL: It's the warfare state. Of course not. Overtly he does but there are certain people in the government who have an annuity as a result of what they know and as a result of their complicity in the President's death. In other words, the last guy we had who raised an objection for our side, the human side in America, was killed for his pains. In a sense, Jack Kennedy, the greatest compliment they paid him, was the attention they paid him when they decided to eliminate him.

But we're talking about the Patrice Lumumba, we're talking about shooting people in the street, we're talking about an assassination bureau, and we're talking about the warfare state. People make the mistake, the Liberals out here say to me, "Well you moved to New Orleans, how could

you live in the South? It's racist." Well, I think the military-police type of mentality is anywhere that a factory owns a city. I think it's Los Angeles where Lockheed owns the city, I think Boeing owns Seattle. I think that this country is colonized ... Are you familiar with a book called Pentagonism by [Overthrown President of the Dominican Republic] Juan Bosch?

FARLEY: Familiar ... only to the extent that I've heard of it.

SAHL: It's the Grove Press, it's a small volume. I encourage everybody who can to get it. It'll only take you an hour to read. It's a very concise history of what they did to us and what they're attempting to impose upon us. And we're fighting back feebly because some of this think that it's worth it. And he says we're the colonized people. He says not the other countries, and we'll continue to be because they got to keep crises going. It's the warfare state which he coined the term "Pentagonism."

FARLEY: I guess [Author] Fred Cook wrote a thing about the warfare state a few years back.

SAHL: Yes he did, yes he did. The warfare state. And a few Liberals have talked about the military industrial complex, which I treat as fact.

FARLEY: And Eisenhower is one of the people who put his finger on it ironically.

SAHL: Well isn't it funny? That was an Arthur Larson speech, by the way. I love the fact that we have no Liberal who brought it out. The Liberals are continually quoting Eisenhower and they become reverent when he introduced that about Eisenhower because he served that purpose. He pointed out that danger. Liberals protect themselves from reality usually, you'll note when you're in their company, that they talk about it in the future tense. That it could emerge. Well of course it's emerged and eaten us, it's overwhelmed us.

Garrison said to me once, he showed me some pictures of Cape Kennedy, which figured in our investigation ... although I won't go into that in detail. He said to me, he said, "I once talked to a woman there who works in one of the cafeterias. She gets \$1,000 a month just on the line serving

orange juice.” And someone asked him how he thought the trial would go, he said, “Do you really think they’re going to let me put an end to all that? Little me? Stop all that?”

That’s really true. It’s quite overwhelming. And to think any President elected by the people is going to go to General Wheeler, or Admiral Moore, or Richard Helms, or J. Edgar Hoover and tell them to "get out"... The only one I noticed was Gene McCarthy who said he’d fire Hoover. And by the way, I was on the Joey Bishop show and I said on that show, and for all these things that are said that are lost, I said if McCarthy was elected and he did that he would need a bodyguard of 1,000 men or he’ll be assassinated. I also said if Bob Kennedy wins the California primary, he’s our next president and he will die at a gunman’s hand.

Now all that came out of that is that a reporter said the next day in a paper that I should be blacklisted on the networks. I shouldn’t be allowed on to say things like that. And I think that’s unique in American history that a member of the Press would ask that a blacklist be instituted. I’ve never heard of that before! But in my case of course exceptions are generally made. Remarkable. Remarkable! My phone doesn’t ring in Beverly Hills. Nobody says to me, “Where did you get that? What does it mean?” And even for those have estimated that I’m a dead man, I’ve been a long time dying. About eight years now. And that’s the slowest death since Jimmy Cagney in G Men. Warner Brothers, 1931.

FARLEY: How are the young people gonna save the country?

SAHL: Well, first thing they’ve got to do is preserve their state of mind. They’ve got to be kept from being driven mad. Being driven mad is the paranoia that happened to their parents. Communism. Communism: they did that to us, therefore we can burn up their village. In order to make you Nazis, which is not your heritage, they’ve got to make you crazy first which is what the Germans did to youth.

They’ve taken a bold step so far. They’ve built an army but you don’t want to be in it. That’s the first flaw here. This is a very bad country to try to turn into a fascist nation in that sense. German

kids at least like to march, American kids don't seem to have any predilection toward being in the service. That's a good sign. So you've got to preserve the state of mind and not go nuts.

The second thing that happens is you've got to keep yourself well-informed and you can't audition the truth. When someone comes to you and says, "The president was murdered by the military." You can't say, "Well, I can't accept that." You have to accept the evidence before you and you have to do something about it. And when people warn you ... after all, when I first started blowing the whistle, there were alternatives. And today there are none. They killed all the alternatives.

FARLEY: That's the thing. Maybe it didn't happen to Kennedy's assassination but the next assassination. When people come up and say after the assassination, "Well, they killed the man but they didn't kill the idea." Well, that's a bunch of bull- [censored 47:58] because men are really quite important.

SAHL: When we talk about The Constitution, does President Nixon have the right to wage war? What about the Cooper-Church Amendment? I'm afraid that even Tom Jefferson, and I thought an awful lot of him, could not write a constitution with built-in safeguards because it's the man, not the form. Yes, Adlai Stevenson would not do that do you. Maybe he would, who knows? But Richard Nixon and Lyndon Johnson would.

I think the reason you've have not heard from Gene McCarthy lately is that he didn't believe that the can of worms was so deadly and when he opened it and looked at it, he went into shock. That they had advanced this much into American life. Permeated every branch. Central Intelligence Agency is in every major religious group. It's in the major police departments. It's in the youth groups. It's in the publications. It's at the wire services. It's at the television networks. They are the minions of the Pentagon.

The remarkable part of this is, yeah certain things would have to happen. They've got to go out, what they're gonna have to do is get a man they believe, they're gonna have to elect him, and they're gonna have to get 1,000 man bodyguard around him and they're gonna have to stand in

front of the Central Intelligence Agency and tell everybody in there to come out with his hands up and burn the building to the ground. And then they're gonna have to have trials. I think what they should do is try every member of The Warren Commission as an accessory after the fact. I think they should take Sirhan out of jail. Find out if he was programmed. Find out who sent him. In other words, a real trial. Not a coverup. Not a whitewash. Those people who are so fond of Law and Order, I can give them some good examples. I worked in a police department for three and a half years in New Orleans and I didn't speculate I saw evidentiary material. I don't want to hear anymore about young men with no permanent address and no allies whose mother didn't love then who decided to kill peace candidates. And that's what Martin Luther King was. He wasn't just a Black leader for Civil Rights. He was against the war! And he could have stopped Black people from going, which was his aim, and that's why he was killed. And I say that unequivocally. The preponderance of bodies over there are Black that is that they have a disproportionate contribution that they've made.

I'd like to say in finality here, since I have the opportunity, I'd like to see the people who killed Jack Kennedy, the killers of the dream, and Bob Kennedy, and Martin Luther King, who are the same people and that can be proved ... I would like to see them hanged, and then I'd like to see capital punishment abolished in the United States and I'd like to see my kids to grow up in school and learn from their civics teacher that the last people executed in America were the people who tried to kill the men of peace.

FARLEY: Thank you very much Mort Sahl.