

Right-Wing Preacher's Big Real Estate

By DONALD JANSON

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CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., March 12—The new man in town, the Rev. Carl McIntire, has become this space-center village's most controversial figure in his first few weeks on the scene.

Some residents fear he will turn the Cape Kennedy area into a camp of ultra-conservatism. Others hope he will elevate its moral tone and stimulate revenue-producing tourism.

Last month the fundamentalist, right-wing radio preacher, a defrocked Presbyterian who for the last 35 years has been minister of the separatist Bible Presbyterian Church of Collingswood, N.J., acquired title to a multi-million-dollar realty package here.

Included is the 200-room Hilton motor inn on Astronaut Boulevard, a 2,500-seat convention center, three modern office buildings and a resort complex of more than 200 luxury apartments, all on a total of some 300 acres reaching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Banana River.

Mr. McIntire, who will continue to live in New Jersey and commute to his project here, has already made several changes. The Hilton bar, known as the swingiest in the cape area, is closed now, its stock of liquor auctioned off the night before Mr. McIntire took over. All ashtrays have been removed from the premises.

'Stairway to the Stars'

The gauché dining room has become the eagle room in honor of the aggressive patriotism of the 64-year-old preacher, who gained international attention last fall when he tried to get Vice President Ky of South Vietnam to lead a Washington march for a tougher war policy.

The big sign that announced the "Cape Kennedy Hilton" for three years now proclaims—in red, white and blue—the "Stairway to the Stars, Freedom Center Hotel, Services Daily 10 A.M. and 8 P.M." Hotel employes who have remained call the reconstituted hotel "the heavenly Hilton."

Outside, Martha Van Landingham, a waitress on the picket line for the Hotel, Motel and Club Employes' Union in a pay dispute that started before Mr. McIntire took over, told an interviewer that "people come out now and say they

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Acquisition Leaves Cape

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Canaveral Divided

center will offer "anti-Communist seminars," conferences on foreign and domestic policy, and week-long religious meetings beginning with "America's Premillennial Prophetic Conference" on March 20.

Speakers for the prophetic conference include Gary G. Cohen, professor of New Testament at Mr. McIntire's Faith Theological Seminary in Elkins Park, Pa. Mr. Cohen is to be curator of the Jerusalem museums here and at Cape May, N.J., where Mr. McIntire has a resort, retirement and conference center complex similar to the one planned for Cape Canaveral.

Mr. McIntire announced Feb. 25 in his weekly newspaper, The Christian Beacon, that because his Shelton College at Cape May was stripped of its accreditation by the New Jersey Board of Higher Education in January, Shelton would become part of a three-college "conglomerate" whose Western campus is accredited and can grant degrees.

The Western acquisition, announced in the same issue, is the tiny Linda Vista Baptist Bible College and Seminary at El Cajon, Calif., near San Diego. It has been renamed the Southern California Reformation College.

The third campus of the triumvirate is to be here, in the former Boeing Company office building next to the projected New Jerusalem.

Fund Totals Undisclosed

"The college in Southern California with its degree-granting privileges will be able to cover and protect the studies of the students at Shelton and also at Cape Canaveral," he said. "The three colleges and one fellowship will train Christian warriors."

Mr. McIntire has declined to say how much money his organization is to put up for the Florida property, but he wrote in The Christian Beacon that the money, like the other funds for McIntire causes, would be "provided by God-fearing people who are free to give it because they want to see this country saved from Communism and they want to see the churches returned to faith in the Bible."

All of his operations are supported by contributions, said to total more than \$2-million a year, from listeners to the Twentieth Century Reformation

don't recognize unions but they give us sermons for hours about salvation."

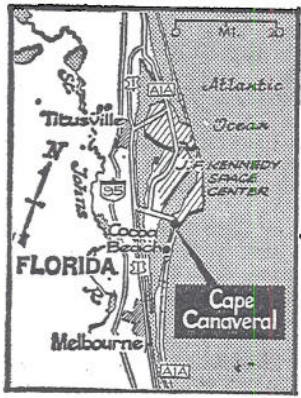
A series of McIntire news conferences to announce plans for the complex have produced such bemused headlines locally as, in big, black, banner-sized type on page 1, "JERUSALEM TO RISE."

The New Jerusalem of Revelations 21:2 is to be depicted in scale model alongside the Jerusalem of 66 A.D. in a building that the Chrysler Corporation once leased as a space-industry contractor before budget cutbacks curtailed moon launchings.

Jerusalem Museum Planned

The Chrysler building will become the Jerusalem Museum as soon as devotees of the McIntire Twentieth Century Reformation Hour radio broadcasts respond sufficiently to appeals to donate funds. Next to it the McIntire enterprises plan to erect a soaring copy of Solomon's temple.

Besides daily church services, often with Mr. McIntire in the pulpit, the McIntire convention



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The Rev. Carl McIntire speaking during a visit to Philadelphia last fall. He will commute to his new center at Cape Canaveral, Fla., but will live in Collingswood, N. J.

Associated Press



Martha Van Landingham, picketing outside hotel taken over by Mr. McIntire because of dispute that arose when it was Cape Kennedy Hilton, hears many "sermons."

The New York Times/Edgar Snod

conference that the McIntire enterprises would mean at least \$500,000 annually to businessmen in the county from retail sales and rentals to thousands of visitors the unorthodox minister is expected to attract.

"I'm proud this man is in this community," Mr. Meldeau said. Since Mr. McIntire's arrival, Mayor Leo Nicholas of Cape Canaveral pointed out in an interview, McIntire followers have moved in, homes long on the market are selling, apartment buildings that had a 30 per cent occupancy rate last year are full, "and our economic situation has been stabilized."

"Those coming in are mostly retired people who want to be near him," said City Manager Albert J. Francis. "He mentions our city in his radio broadcast every day and invites people to come here. We were down to about 4,000 population in the 1970 census from a peak of 7,000 before the space cut-backs. Now we expect the population to double in the next couple of years."

"He will not only bring people and business but strengthen the moral fiber of the area," said Roger W. Dobson, president of the Cape Kennedy Area Chamber of Commerce.

Radio Permit Refused

Many are not sure they want Mr. McIntire to set the moral tone here. Last month the Federal Communications Commission, rejecting his appeal from a previous order, refused to renew his license for radio station WXUR in Media, Pa., citing consistent violations of the fairness doctrine.

That doctrine requires a station to supply persons attacked on the air with time to reply. Clergymen originally led the challenge to WXUR, charging that its programming was "highly racist, anti-Semitic, anti-Negro and anti-Roman Catholic."

Comments on Mr. McIntire in Today, the cape area's daily newspaper, have been scorching.

"How in the world can these older, retired groups, expected here in droves, follow (and swallow) such a line?" a reader asked.

"Is there no way for this beautiful area to attract tourists other than Carl McIntire's business ventures?" asked another. "Now he is moving to Florida because he can hand out his worthless degrees without being accredited. . . . Can we allow a shabby, money-making operation that hides behind the banner of education, religion and patriotism to exist right here at the gates of our Cape Kennedy?"

'Wake Up, Brevard County'

"Here in this place in which mankind produced a scientific feat that captured the imagination of the whole planet," said the Rev. James Dale, minister of the Rockledge United Methodist Church, "we are now witnessing the establishment of a movement that seems to be anti-scientific, anti-modern, anti-peace and in many ways

a throwback to the dark ages." But pro-McIntire sentiment is also strong.

"What's wrong with fighting Communism?" asked Shirley Ann of Rockledge. "If Dr. McIntire chooses to make his headquarters here in Brevard County, I say hurrah. . . . If we want to complain about what someone is doing, why don't we raise a hue and cry over the smut, pornography and vice trade flourishing here? . . . I say wake up, America, wake up, Brevard County, America—love it or leave it."

Topless bars and theaters advertising "fantastic stag excitement plus porn-orama," including one a few blocks from the "Stairway to the Stars," may offer a starting point for any McIntire campaign to elevate the moral atmosphere here.

"It's going to be very interesting," said Mayor Robert Murkshie of adjacent Cocoa Beach. "Cape Canaveral is pretty swinging. And I don't think he's going to convert many people in Cocoa Beach."

Hour, which is carried on stations throughout the country. In addition, solicitations are made in The Beacon for followers to "remember the Lord" in their wills by designating McIntire projects as beneficiaries.

Rusty Fisher, a Cocoa Beach restaurateur, was among numerous Brevard County businessmen who expressed concern in interviews this week that the McIntire arrival as an organization would seek to remove property from the tax rolls with religious and educational exemptions.

"They're going to have to do a lot of qualifying," Clark Maxwell, county assessor, asserted. Some businessmen here see the McIntire arrival as an economic plus regardless of any tax exemptions.

Michael Meldeau, vice president of the First National Bank of Cape Canaveral, told a news-