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McIntire's WXP^{Post}
Pirate Radio Ship

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McIntire Challenges FCC

With 'Radio Free America'

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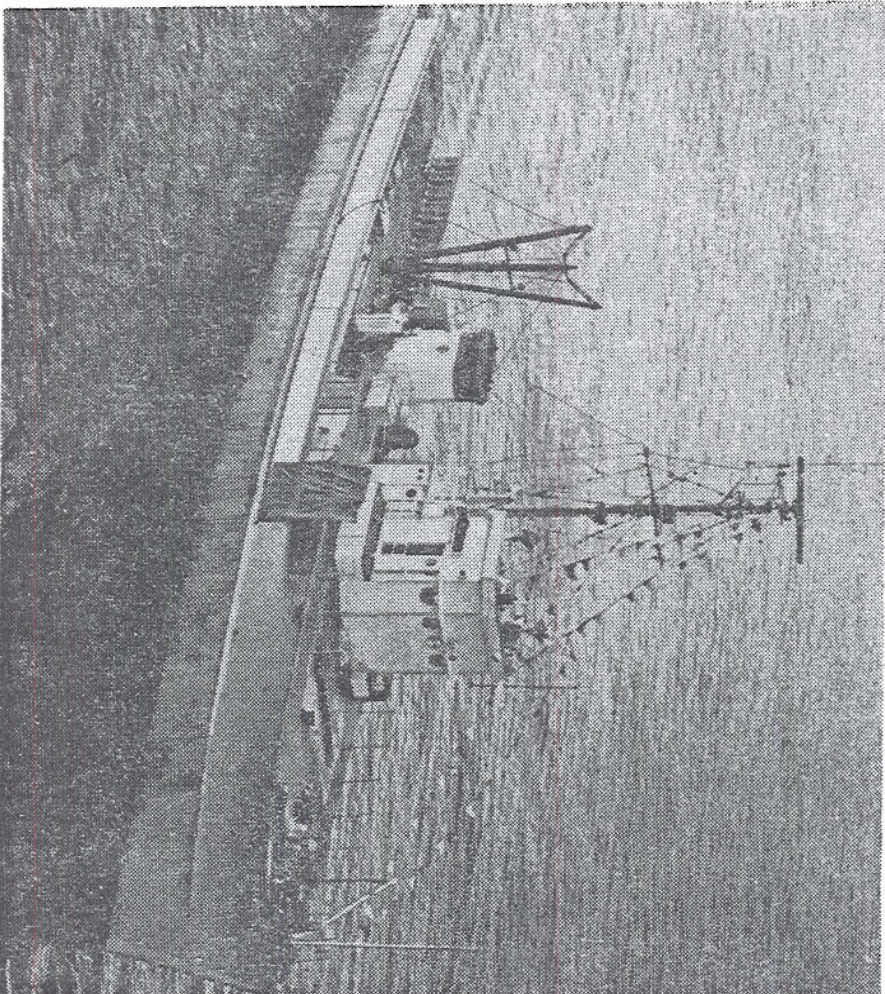
CAPE MAY, N.J., Sept. 6—Just beyond the three-mile international limit, the old World War II mine sweeper sits serenely in the late afternoon sun—a most unlikely looking pirate ship, flying a white church flag where any self-respecting pirate ship ought to have its skull and crossbones.

It is anchored fore and aft, and it rides quietly, a solitary crew member fishing off the bow. In the wardroom on the main deck, a microphone is unused on a table and radio silence is maintained on the ship-to-shore frequency. But most of the kinks in a transmitter below decks are said to be resolved, and all is in near-readiness for the planned attack—probably by this weekend.

On port and starboard sides, large red cloth signs convey the ship's mission. They say "Radio Free America"—the battle cry of this first pirate radio ship in American annals, one man's fight against regulation by the federal bureaucracy.

Back on the mainland, the man who masterminded acquisition and stationing of the unlicensed broadcast ship, fundamentalist preacher Dr. Carl McIntire, oversees the operation from the majestic old Admiral Hotel on the Atlantic shoreline.

See MCINTIRE A14, Col. 1



United Press International

Carl McIntire's pirate radio ship, anchored outside three-mile limit off Cape May, N.J.

McINTIRE, From A1

He is a landlocked skipper pacing a landlocked deck, stalking what he regards as the Moby Dick of free speech—the Federal Communications Commission's fairness doctrine, an alleged violation of which cost him ownership of station WXUR in Media, Pa., last year.

By stationing a transmitter outside the three-mile limit, he says, he will be free of government control, and the 67-year-old pastor of the Bible Presbyterian Church of Collingswood, N.J., vows "I will go to jail" to make the case.

The FCC has had agents here for at least a week, listening for the first squeaks from the ship's transmitter. When it is heard, an FCC spokesman has said, the federal courts will be asked to order the ship—called "The Columbus"—to desist.

For all his firm talk, McIntire emphasizes he has no intention of offering any physical resistance if the FCC or Coast Guard should move to shut down the transmitter. What he is after, he says, is a court test case. There are guns and rifles aboard, but only for self-protection against marauders.

McIntire's headquarters hotel, bought by him 11 years ago and renamed the Christian Admiral, is a relic of the early 1900s—a broad oceanfront porch with white columns and grey-haired men and women making very few knots in rocking chairs.

McIntire, portly and prosperous, strolled out on the porch and peers toward the hazy summer horizon like some latter-day Jay Gatsby. An elderly patron of his church and his works rocks away and searches through a small telescope for McIntire's ship, now the talk of Cape May.

"It's straight out there," McIntire says, looking into the haze. The gray head at the telescope and others on the porch nod at the void they see and smile happily their spiritual leader.

Inside, McIntire roams through high-ceilinged corridors and enters a large dining room. As he passes among the tables, more nods at their spiritual leader, and smiles meet him on either side. He greets each of his elderly paying guests benevolently but at a decorous distance.

At lunch, McIntire insists that he has set up not a pirate ship but a "refugee" ship. "A pirate ship goes in and takes something," he explains with patience.

But by whatever name, McIntire's ship is reminiscent of the floating transmitters that operated off the coast of England in the mid-1960s, beaming popular mu-

sic shows at hip Britishers, complete with American-style souped-up commercials.

These "pop pirates," 12 of them at one point, also used old World War II ships and such names as "Radio London," "Radio Caroline North," and "Radio Scotland." The British Parliament finally outlawed them in 1967, claiming they were interfering with licensed non-commercial signals. The new law created an uproar among the clandestine broadcasts' millions of young fans. The Isle of Man, in whose waters one of the ships operated, even threatened to declare itself an independent state over the issue.

One result of the elimination of the pirate ships was the scheduling of more pop music by the staid British Broadcasting Corp.—called "Auntie" by its non-swinging detractors.

McIntire's project is more politically oriented. His ship, he says, will give American radio listeners, "From Maine to North Carolina and as far west as Ohio" a completely unregulated exhibition of freedom of speech as the founding fathers intended it.

In his war on the FCC's fairness doctrine, which requires that persons criticized be given equal opportunity to reply and that personal attacks be reasonable—the Columbus will be a continuing one-station battlewagon. It will be fueled at sea, never coming to port and crewed by shifts shuttled in and out by small boats.

Six regular crew and two radio technicians are aboard now, awaiting word from McIntire to hoist an American flag and turn on the 10,000-watt transmitter. Some programs will be broadcast live from the ship, with speakers and guests brought aboard by small boats. Among those he intends to invite—to demonstrate fairness without a fairness doctrine—include antiwar activist Jane Fonda, Sens.



DR. CARL McINTIRE
... "I will go to jail"

George McGovern and Barry Goldwater and FCC chairman Dean Burch.

Other programs will be taped on the mainland and brought to the ship, along with news bulletins. McIntire says he is considering installing a laser at the hotel over which he can beam the latest news to the ship.

The Columbus in its most recent previous incarnation had been called "The Oceanic." The name is still painted on the side of the 135-foot vessel, which was being used for scuba diving near Cape Canaveral, Fla., when a McIntire follower saw it and helped negotiate the purchase, for \$40,000. All the money came from contributions of his faithful, McIntire says.

The ship definitely will fly the American flag once it starts transmitting, he said. "We decided since there was no law of Congress relative to this, or any FCC regulation, that if they attack us, our confrontation will be within the American laws of free speech," he said. "If they say a license is required, we're going to say it isn't because licensing is unconstitutional."

In his radio broadcasts over several hundred stations across the country, McIntire acknowledged, he always has been an outspoken critic of civil disobedience. His Media, Pa., station particularly criticized the Berrigan brothers and the draft board raid there, producing accusations that the station excessively courted controversy to the detriment of balanced programming.

But what he is doing now is not civil disobedience, he says, because "I am not destroying anything." His floating station will not transmit on any frequency now being used, he says.

"If the court says I have to stop preaching the gospel," he says, "I'll obey God. As a preacher, I declare the teachings of God's laws. Some call that political."

There has been one incident that McIntire claims is harassment from the government. Last Friday, a Coast Guard ship boarded and searched the Columbus, "alleging there was an oil slick," he said. Cdr. Lawrence Kindhom, commander of the Coast Guard at Cape May, confirms the boarding, but said a helicopter sighted a slick and the inspection was routine, in keeping with the Coast Guard's enforcement responsibilities in the area of water pollution.

While preparing to open combat over the airways by this weekend, McIntire says he is continuing to fight on the bureaucratic and legislative battlefields. He has written Attorney General Elliot L. Richardson and Watergate Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox asking

them what other remedy he may have for rejection of his FCC license renewal bid. And a right-wing congressional ally, John R. Rarick (D-La.), is to introduce a bill Friday that would restore his station's license, McIntire says.

Meanwhile, the begin, landbased commander of the radio ship Columbus prowls through his massive shoreline hotel headquarters, waiting for the ship's transmitter to test out, buoyed by all the national publicity and by the adoring support of his elderly faithful.

One of them, Mrs. James Schwartz, of Belleville, N.J., walks up to him, grabs his hand, hugs it in hers, and says: "I hope this man gets all that's coming to him." And she walks off, with a placid look of confidence that he will.

Uruguay Censorship

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay, Sept. 6 (UPI)—The Communist daily El Popular resumed publication today after 10 days' suspension by the government for violating censorship regulations. It was the newspaper's second 10-day suspension for the same reason.