

Fundamentalist Gadfly

Carl McIntire

By GEORGE DUGAN

For 35 years, the Rev. Carl McIntire, a deposed Presbyterian minister who is a right-wing Fundamentalist radio preacher, has tirelessly accused the World Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches and most of the major Protestant denominations of "leftish"

tendencies and a softness toward Communism. His latest move was an invitation to Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky of South Vietnam to speak at a "March for Victory" rally in Washington today. Protestantism in general favors a dovish stance and supports withdrawal of United States forces from Southeast Asia.

Until Mr. McIntire extended this invitation, church leaders grimly tended to ignore his charges on the grounds that his followers were few and his theological conservatism was old hat.

But the Ky invitation prompted a respected and influential churchman, the Rev. Dr. Kenneth G. Neigh, to break this silence.

Dr. Neigh, who is a vice president of the National Council and a top mission executive of the United Presbyterian Church, said last month that Mr. McIntire's action "clearly identifies the Saigon regime with radical right-wing groups in the United States."

"The time has come," Dr. Neigh declared, "for clarifying relationships and challenging those who, like McIntire, have a ministry of dissension when the church and the world desperately need reconciliation and unity."

"His theme for 35 years has been that the legally constituted, official church organization have been 'Communist-inspired,' a charge refuted by every investigating group which pursued those claims," Dr. Neigh said.

Pleasant Conversationalist

Despite his reputation for stirring controversy, Mr. McIntire is a personable, pleasant conversationalist. He stands more than 6 feet tall and tends to stoutness.

Mr. McIntire, who has no middle name, was born in Ypsilanti, Mich., May 17, 1906, the son of a Presbyterian minister. He attended colleges in Oklahoma and Missouri and Princeton Theological Seminary.

His friction with Presbyterianism began 40 years ago, when the church was split by Modernist-Fundamentalist quarrels.

In 1935, after a long ecclesiastical trial, he was deposed for refusing to resign from a rump board of foreign missions, for objecting to "modernist" missionaries and for withholding financial support from the national church.



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His targets are not limited to churches.

Now Mr. McIntire directs a Fundamentalist empire from a large office in a converted school on the main street of Collingswood, N.J., just outside Camden.

From there he watches over the operation of two colleges; a resort for churchgoers in Cape May, N. J.; a "separatist" denomination he founded in 1936; the "20th Century Reformation Hour," which spreads the gospel of theological conservatism over an estimated 600 radio stations and his own 1,800-member Bible Presbyterian Church in Collingswood.

Major support for his activities comes from radio appeals for money, which are said to yield more than \$2-million a year.

Mr. McIntire is also president of the International Council of Churches, which he said he founded in 1948 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, to counteract the liberalism and the "apostasy" of the World Council of Churches.

His targets are not limited to churches. Mr. McIntire has also voiced criticism of civil rights demonstrations, Social Security, fair employment legislation, the United Nations and the Roman Catholic Church.

He lives with his wife in Collingswood. They have a son and two daughters. Except for an occasional fishing trip, Mr. McIntire has no hobbies or diversions outside his defense of the literal interpretation of the Bible and his campaign against "modernism, liberalism and Roman Catholicism."

The Fundamentalist preacher has frequently challenged church leaders to debate publicly with him on any subject of their choosing. None have accepted, preferring to stay aloof.