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Ministers in Dallas Ask an End of Hate

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DALLAS, Nov. 28—A leading Baptist minister, joined by other clergymen, said today that opinion-makers, including the churches, must share the responsibility for permitting hate to develop in Dallas. Those who worry about the "image" of Dallas, he said, can change it by changing their lives, because "image is but the shadow of what we are."

The minister, Dr. James R. Allen, spoke at a Thanksgiving Day service shared by 14 denominations in a Methodist Church, he said afterwards that the reaction to his sermon was "very gratifying."

"It seemed to hit the notes people were looking for — help to redirect ourselves," he said.

Another minister, the Rev. William A. Holmes, spoke out

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CLERICS IN DALLAS URGE END OF HATE

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earlier in the week about indifference to intolerance in Dallas. Mr. Holmes, a Methodist, drew angry responses, chiefly because he had said that children applauded news of President Kennedy's assassination. Mr. Holmes withdrew his children from school temporarily. The Dallas police are guarding the family at an undisclosed place.

Dr. Allen is secretary of the Christian Life Commission of the Baptist General Convention of Texas. He was raised in Dallas and is 36 years old.

"Those of us who are concerned about the image of Dallas," he said, "are correct in saying that this could have happened in any city."

"The stigma of the deed itself [the assassination of President Kennedy] cannot be laid at the feet of our city as if a collective will of our people could have wished it."

He continued:

"However, something far deeper and more disconcerting is the fact that so many in our nation were not surprised that it happened here. The ugly fact is that an atmosphere of hate had been sensed already by many of us."

Dr. Allen said the principals in the tragic events of last weekend were not representative of Dallas, but that they

were representative of "an element in our city."

"The white heat of a hate-filled atmosphere," he declared, "allowed the necessary warmth for this element to crawl out from under the rocks to be seen."

Dr. Allen said that, to him, the most chilling event of the weekend was "the cheer that came from the crowd cross from the City Hall when word came that Oswald (the accused assassin) had been murdered in the basement of the police station."

"Here is hatred laid bare," he said.

The atmosphere where hate is allowed to grow "is created by opinion-makers," he declared. "Here we must all share our responsibility."

"One of the greatest tragedies," Dr. Allen said, "is that the lack of relevance of our churches in contemporary society has been dramatically demonstrated." "There must be a rejection of the idea that the world of government is out of bounds for Christian concern."

Dr. Allen said "hate is just not a product of social processes and political opinion." "It is the fruit of man's warped and sinful nature. Nothing short of the grace of God moving in with power in his life can provide the right antidote for it."

He went on to say that hate, in its full expression and violence, is usually felt in a community where a permissive atmosphere is created. That, he said, is where the opinion-makers fail.