

CLERICS VEHEMENT ON 'MCARTHYSM'

Protestant Leaders Here Take to Pulpits to Assail 'Absurd' Charge of Red Influence

Protestant leaders spoke out strongly from New York pulpits yesterday against the threat of "McCarthyism" to intellectual freedom.

The burden of their sermons was a general denunciation of alleged attempts to stifle freedom of expression, rather than direct criticism of Senator Joseph R. McCarthy, the junior Republican Senator from Wisconsin, who is chairman of the Senate's Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations.

Some of the speakers, however, were provoked by an article in the July issue of *The American Mercury* in which J. B. Matthews, the executive director of the committee, asserted that "the largest single group supporting the Communist apparatus in the United States today is composed of Protestant clergymen."

The statement, Dean James A. Pike of the New York Cathedral (St. John the Divine) said, "is so absurd on the face of it as to reflect on Mr. Matthews' competence to hold any public office." He added that "if this systematic smearing of our fellow citizens continues to go on, more than the Rosenbergs will have died in our land."

Warning to Church Discerned

The Rev. Adam Clayton Powell Jr. of the Abyssinian Baptist Church declared that Mr. Matthews had "lied" in making the statement and said it should be an example to the church that "this is the hour of antichrist."

Dr. Charles C. Cole Jr., assistant dean of Columbia College, delivering a sermon as a layman, denounced attacks on clergymen by "McCarthyism, blatant exaggeration, half-truth and political demagoguery." He said that "freedom of thought must remain inviolate in the ministry."

The Rev. Joseph D. Huntley, speaking at the Broadway Tabernacle (Congregational) at Fifty-sixth Street, declared that ministers had become "suspect" because "unfortunately we sometimes find Communists espousing some of the same causes that we espouse." De-

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spite such a development, he said, "one of the greatest tasks of the church is social action."

The Rev. Dr. John Paul Jones of the Union Church of Bay Ridge (Presbyterian) stated in a sermon on "The Use of Freedom" that "there are a lot of men in places of authority without sufficient character and discipline to hold to the American ideal."

"They are backed up by a great multitude of people who are timid, selfish and blind to all values except the prosperity of the moment," he said.

Dean Pike's sermon was delivered at morning services in the Whitestone Bridge Drive-in Theatre at Bruckner Boulevard and Hutchinson River Parkway, the Bronx.

He declared that it was "alarming to find that procedures resulting from fear of communism are causing us to lose those very things that most distinguish our way of life from theirs." As an example of such action he noted the article by Mr. Matthews.

Ministers' Vows Recalled

Mr. Matthews had cited as proof that clergymen were tainted by communism, Dean Pike said, the fact that 528 of them had signed a petition opposing the Internal Security Act, which was sponsored by Senator Pat McCarran, Democrat of Nevada.

"I can give Mr. Matthews some more evidence of 'treason,' the Dean said. "The almost 1,000 delegates to the Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of New York voted by a large majority a sharp condemnation of the McCarran Act. If this be evidence of Communist conspiracy, then he can add to his list the clergy and laymen of the convention—mostly vestrymen. Heretofore Episcopal vestrymen have not been principally distinguished for their radical leanings."

Ministers have spoken out on social questions, he said, "because as ministers of God they are under ordination vows to proclaim the gospel of freedom and human dignity against all that would tyrannize the soul—on either side of the Iron Curtain."

"They are the true Americans; their traducers are not," Dean Pike added. "The only conspiracy between us is our common allegiance to the Kingdom of God, which is a higher loyalty than to acts of Congress or the un-American activities of Congressmen or their employes."

The Rev. Mr. Powell in the ser-

mon at his church, 132 West 138th Street, also spoke on the problem of racial discrimination against Negroes in the churches. He praised the action of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Raleigh, N. C., in abolishing segregation in the churches of his diocese and said such action "has shamed the Protestant Church in the South."

If there is any truth in the statements made by Mr. Matthews, he asserted, it lies in this area.

"Communism only succeeds when democracy fails," he said, "and so long as Protestantism continues to ignore democratic principles, then they are communism's greatest strength."

Dr. Cole conducted the services yesterday at the Washington Square Methodist Church, 133 West Fourth Street, and preached on "Our Fight for Freedom."

"To be pastor of a congregation, to be teacher of a class is to have a loyalty higher than that to a state or to a narrow political creed," he said. "To preach or to teach demands loyalty to one's God and to the truth."

The battle against communism should not prevent us from waging

battle against our own economic inequities," he declared, adding: "We must not forget that even in this age one-tenth of all our families still survive somehow on an income of less than \$20 a week."

The Rev. Mr. Huntley's sermon was entitled, "It Can Happen Here" and dealt with "the spirit of McCarthyism," which he called "an insidious threat to the American tradition of freedom."

This spirit, he said, "is a much greater danger than the Senator from Wisconsin or any of his cohorts."

"The sad but certain fact is that the land of the free and the home of the brave has suddenly been seized with hysteria, and freedom of thought and discussion are now viewed with suspicion," he asserted. "We need a new beatitude translated into a modern version which would read, 'Happy are the conformers for they shall not be slandered.'"

"If the spirit of McCarthyism continues to flourish," he said, "men of genuine ability will refuse to serve in the Government" and "our society will become a dog-eat-dog culture."

He recounted how President Ei-

senhower once told newspaper men—who had asked him if he intended to criticize Senator McCarthy in a denunciation of book burning—that he did not deal in personalities.

"The time has come for the President to deal in personalities," the Rev. Mr. Huntley said. "There are things more important in the world today than peace on Capitol Hill."

Dr. Jones, preaching at his home church in Brooklyn, at Ridge Boulevard and Eightieth Street, denounced the use of Congressional investigating committees for a "clever and sinister bypassing of the courts." He declared that as a result:

"Countless individuals have been accused of all sorts of crimes, principally disloyalty, which is the worst of all; and have been tried, condemned and disgraced without due process, and without resort to the courts which have been set up for their protection."

"Some of these have been guilty; the vast majority have been wholly innocent. They have committed only one offense—thinking for themselves, and insisting upon the right to be different."