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Civil Liberties

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CIVIL LIBERTIES

The recent meeting of the House of Delegates of the American Bar Association was confronted with a question of policy on civil liberties. The delegates, like all right thinking lawyers, deplored mob rule. The majority, however, overruled the committee, when it decided that the Bar's condemnation should be as applicable to radicals staging a sit-down strike as to conservatives breaking up a Communist meeting. Of course, the illiberal, be he a radical or a conservative, does not believe in freedom of thought or freedom of speech for the other fellow. The liberal, and he may be either a radical or a conservative in his own beliefs, stands with Voltaire in declaring his readiness to defend an opponent's right to speak freely. That is the American spirit. It must be preserved, but it should be preserved free from cynicism and from sickly sentimentality. Freedom to speak and freedom to think does not imply freedom to conspire for the overthrow of the established government. No government worthy of the name can tolerate such conspiracies, particularly when they are fostered by a foreign power.

CLYDE DUFFY, President.