

Churches Must Learn What Interests People, Evangelism Director Declares

New York — (U.P.) — Dr. Robert W. Spike is one minister of the gospel who isn't cowed by tradition. One of the first things he did when he took over a new congregation in Manhattan was to abolish the women's society, the men's club, the adult Sunday school and the "family nights."

The reason was simple: No one was attending any of their meetings.

Church Popular Concern
Today the once-flagging Jud-

son Memorial church is a popular, going concern in Greenwich Village, and Dr. Spike is moving out as pastor to become director of evangelism for the Board of Home Missions of the Congregational Christian churches.

At 32, he is perhaps the youngest man ever to hold such a high post in American Protestant circles.

And what he is now setting out to do in the tradition-bound field of winning souls promises to have churchmen of all faiths

taking notice.

His approach may startle some of the congregational ministers it is his new duty to advise. For one thing, he isn't carried away by statistics indicating a great revival of religion in America.

Type of Religion

"Our churches are faced with carrying on in an expanding luxury economy," he said in an interview at his new office. "This thing called the American way of life is almost a religion in itself. We need to examine it and point up some of the dangers in it."

Dr. Spike mounted the pulpit in the Judson Church for the first time six years ago and

found all of five people waiting to hear him. Today the church counts 125 active members in a neighborhood famous for its fashions, expensive apartments and high-flown art and intellectualism.

"Working in Greenwich Village taught me how far removed most of the pronouncements of the church are from the real problems people face today," he said. "But it also taught me how applicable the gospel is to those problems when it isn't burdened down with churchy talk."

Instead of inviting his congregation to ice cream socials Dr. Spike organized a study group in the novels of Dostoev-

sky, another in the theories of modern theologians Karl Barth and Reinhold Niebuhr.

Packed House

He drew a packed house for a Christmas program featuring poet W. H. Auden reading from his works. Last month the church staged a recital of obscure medieval and renaissance music.

Dr. Spike isn't saying the same type of thing would go over anywhere outside Greenwich Village but he believes the idea is a sound one. The churches should find out what people are interested in, and then become interested in those things, too.

"I'm a bit puzzled about tele-

vision," he said. "I do think the most effective programs from a religious point of view are those that aren't tied up with a church or labeled as religious programs."

He would like to see clergymen encourage writers to tackle theological subjects in their novels and plays. Painters could be stimulated to work on religious themes.

"The idea isn't for the churches to act as judge or censor but to provoke religious thinking," he said. "Artists have to be free to create. The churches have a responsibility to produce live and exciting material for them to work with."

Oats are equal in feed value to corn for fattening hogs as long as they don't make up more than one-fourth the ration, according to a University of Illinois livestock specialist.

The first submarine which actually sank another enemy vessel during wartime was the Confederate Hunley during the Civil War. The Union frigate Housatonic was the victim.

Expedition To Probe Amazon Engravings

New York — (U.P.) — A young fellow who is the grandson of John Jacob Astor and the son of a Russian prince—a blend of cool cash and warm royalty that's hard to match—is mounting a rebellion against the tender bypaths of wealth and society.

He's going to hie himself to the tributary headwaters of the Amazon—by helicopter, if possible, and if not, by burrow and llama—to take a crack at proving the existence of a lost, prehistoric civilization.

Feeling About Symbols

Ivan Obolensky, son of Serge Obolensky and Alice Astor, has an intense feeling about certain carved symbols and inscriptions on granite outcroppings found in the high rugged country of the Aymara tribe in Bolivia and Peru.

"The same undeciphered message recurs and recurs in these stone engravings," he said in an interview. "It's as if there had been a concerted attempt to leave something for posterity—a sort of time capsule thing. We're dealing with a mystery,

and we may break it. Our deciphering program has progressed to a point where we have great hope."

When he says "we," he means the privately financed Amazonia Foundation, Inc., of which he is vice president and which is headed by George Michanowsky, an archeologist who already has charted half a dozen locations of the inscriptions and hopes to find more in an expedition to get under way this spring.

Old Civilization Sought

They hope to find evidence of a civilization much older than anything previously credited to South America. The Aymaras, an Indian tribe, do not write. But they have a word in their language meaning "writing" and that word refers to the stone engravings.

Indeed, there is one river, so deep in the interior fastnesses that it isn't even on the maps, that the Aymaras call "the river of writing." The mysterious writings are said to occur in its valley and the expedition will search there for them.

Around Hollywood

By ALINE MOSBY
United Press Correspondent

Hollywood — (U.P.) — Hollywood's latest organization is called "The Rat Pack," a celebrated group devoted to poking a little fun into this sometimes lifeless community.

Some years, the movie colony appears headed toward being everybody's small town with Tony and Janet posing in aprons in the kitchen and glamour queens claiming they are like the girl next door.

But a handful of senior citizens of the community are keeping some color in the plaster city. They have formed "The Rat Pack."

In some communities a rat pack means a gang of juvenile delinquents, but this gang hangs around an old kidney-shaped swimming pool.

Mansion Turns Clubhouse

Their "clubhouse" may be a member's Palm Springs mansion and they roam around in Bent-

leys and Cadillacs instead of hot rods.

Members of this organization are Frank Sinatra, president; Judy Garland, vice president; Humphrey Bogart, in charge of publicity (an art he knows well); restaurateurs Mike and Gloria Romanoff; composer Jimmy Van Heusen; agent Irving Lazar and Lauren Bacall, the den mother of the pack.

So far the rat pack has roamed in only two directions. Last summer, members chartered a bus (with a bar), and startled the citizens of Long Beach by showing up there to see Judy Garland's stage show.

Club Stresses Fun

"The club is just for fun, sort of a gag," explained Miss Bacall. "You have to breathe a little life into this old burg now and then. We're a jolly group of people and we like us better than anybody."

The club has a coat-of-arms and a charter. Members, however, cannot release this information yet as they can't agree on it. So far the club has one qualification for members: "You must be a true rat."

The club's slogan: "Never rat on a rat."

The club's full name is "The Rat Pack of Holmby Hills," as the Bogarts live in that elegant suburb. Other celebrities wish to join, but so far membership is closed.

ACCUSED — Mrs. Dolores Zeithin, 25, was accused in Los Angeles court by her ex-husband of having engaged in improper conduct with Charles Chaplin Jr. Irving Zeithin, 40, contended she is an unfit mother and asked that he be awarded custody of their adopted son, Barry, 2.

Paratrooper Lands in Prineville Hospital

Prineville — (U.P.) — Barry MacDonald, 21-year-old paratrooper who survived last June when he fell 1300 feet after his parachute failed to open, was in a local hospital today with a broken leg suffered when he fell on an icy street in Bend last week.

His leg was broken last June and in the fall last week he fractured it again in the same spot.

MacDonald was home on a 30-day leave. Earlier he had been a patient at Fort Campbell, Ky., recovering from the jump injuries.

Last June 2, MacDonald jumped out of a plane on a maneuver but his chute failed to open. He struck a tall tree and plunged to the ground.

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