

Strings of Habit Muffle Gospel

"I'm saved, I'm saved, I know I am, I feel it in my bones!" That was a stirring hymn sung in many Protestant churches a generation ago.

Religious feelings were rated as a sign of the Spirit and ranged from a mellow, warm inside glow to a frenzied twitching and contortion of the whole body.

This eccentric enthusiasm reached such a peak a century and a half ago in the upstate area west of Cayuga Lake that it was called "the infected district" or the "burnt over district."

The old Erie Canal was nick-named the "psychic highway" because along the wide belt of fertile countryside which bordered it, religious life—in both pulpits and pews—took on strange forms.

A David Rathbone of Scipio wrote a friend in 1812, "The Baptists generally in this western country... are of the opinion that ministers should take no thought how or what they should speak... for it is not they that speak, but the Spirit speaketh in them. And one of the ministers told me that 'I must let the Holy Ghost study my sermons for me.'"

The twitching has, in large measure, ceased but there are some who think the area is still "infected." Instead of feeling God in their bones, people now are told that "God is dead."

Rev. William Hamilton, a professor of the Baptist founded Colgate Rochester Divinity School, has gained international fame for his theology of Christian atheism.

His shattering theological ideas have been featured in newspapers and magazines including the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal, Time and Post, Saturday Review and Commonweal, even Playboy and Punch.

His book, co-authored with Thomas J. J. Altizer, "Radical Theology and the Death of God," is likely to be this year's top selling religious book—like Bishop John A. T. Robinson's "Honest to God" book in 1963 or Harvey Cox's "Secular City" last year.

Dr. Hamilton, when you talk to him, reveals characteristics which neither his own writings nor those about him have as yet made clear.

He is not the total iconoclast so many think him to be.

He is trying to speak to that growing segment of people who have neither feelings nor convictions about God. Should the churches simply write these people off? Dr. Hamilton thinks we should accept them as they are and speak to them about Jesus Christ without getting involved in God-talk. He thinks there is more than enough in the incarnate or human aspects of Christ's life and continuing activity today to serve as a contact point with these people who otherwise will vanish from our churches.

Dr. Hamilton would also like to experiment with parallel structures of church life—"parishes" based on professional or cultural camaraderie, according to age groups or interest in current topics of major concern. He emphatically believes a Eucharistic rite, perhaps drastically revised from present ceremonial practices, will continue to be the symbol of parish unity as well as unity with Christ our Lord.

His concern is, therefore, obviously pastoral even more than it is theological.

He admits he may be thinking in a wrong direction and that he may have to retrace his steps—but he is most anxious to keep moving rather than to stagnate.

Catholics need not think that speculation like Dr. Hamilton's will leave all theology in a shambles. We all need an occasional intellectual cathartic and, as Cardinal Ritter of St. Louis recently remarked, the God-is-dead theology at least "makes us think" about our own religious convictions.

Monsignor Romano Guardini, one of this century's great Catholic theologians, once cited the hazards of habit in religious matters.

"Revelation presents twentieth-century believers with a special difficulty," he wrote. "We are latecomers. Our generation has heard the sacred tidings time and time again. Moreover we live in an age that is constantly reading and writing and talking and hearing. There is such a turnover of words that our 'coinage' is worn smooth and thin; its stamp has grown blurred. Instead of truth we have truth's caricatures; instead of knowledge, the illusion of already knowing. Only with great effort can we free ourselves from illusory knowledge to pause, look up and passionately inquire into the clear-cut, genuine truth-of-things.... We must break the strings of habit, must rid ourselves of fateful seeming-knowledge; we must remind our words so that they may again speak—clearly, truthfully."

—Father Henry A. Atwell



REV. WILLIAM HAMILTON
write them off?

As the train waited in the no man's land between Poland and the U.S.S.R., I experienced again and overcame again that very strong temptation to snap a quick picture of the formidable frontier. Such is strictly forbidden. So also is to photograph bridges, tunnels, factories, anything that could be a military objective. The Soviets and our own State Department had warned me of this—and violations sometimes get serious penalties. Yet it would have been so easy; many times it seemed no more than waiting—but you learn to fear a hidden pair of binoculars somewhere focused on you. So play it safe!

Then the handsome soldier brought my passport back, asked about my going to Moscow, seemed so warm to talk (he knew a little English from school). Finally I asked if he'd like to go to America. "My father and mother are here and all."

I offered him a Kennedy half dollar. He recalled the assassination sadly, wanted to accept the coin but refused because "I have no gift for you." The soldiers disembarked; the train pulled into the Russian city of Brest.

Here an Intourist girl came aboard looking for me. (Intourist is the Russian Government Agency through which all travel in the Soviet Union is arranged and paid for before even the visa is granted. And some travelers, like myself, must travel deluxe class.) By this time it was good to hear someone who "knew" of me and who spoke English. She was pleasant but quick.

The train would "change wheels" here, she told me. I could get off, change some money if I wanted to, but be sure to get back on the right train which would leave from the other side of the station. If I needed help, check at the Intourist office. I took advantage of the opportunity.

I entered the station—another world—my first real contact with the Soviet people—language, the signs in this strange alphabet. I was lost. I needed help. I inquired for Intourist, finally got to her, and with her help got rubles for dollars, and had her point out exactly where my train would leave from.

More confident now, I circulated among the people crowding this good size terminal inside and out. (It reminded me of the war time crowds in our own railroad stations.)

And so I diders everywhere, young and old, long coats and boots. A company or two must be carrying transistors. Very many are carrying radios. They and TV are very expensive in Russia—the means of propaganda. Most people are poor, their clothes, especially shoes, very worn—but most have radios and many TV. A low grade chocolate bar cost me 60 kopeks, about 72 cents.

I paroled a little when I boarded the Moskva (Moscow)



Moscow University student, at left, joined Rochester's Father William Amann on visit to Lenin tomb.

By GARY MacEWIN
I do not feel I have anything constructive to add to New York's tempest on a prayer rug over the discursive remarks made by King Feisal of Saudi Arabia, while a guest of the United States, about an important minority of our citizens.

That incident, nevertheless, brought to public attention a basic fact of our world situation which is usually disregarded when statesmen are making their evaluations. I refer to the impact unfortunately often negative, of religious (or religion-related) beliefs on international relations.

The decree of ecumenism of the second Vatican Council has provided for Catholics a new framework within which to project their human—including political—relations with people of other faiths. I hope it is not an oversimplification to say that the decree sees the American cultural attitude as a goal towards which all should strive, namely, to disregard the individual's faith in formulating his civil and political rights, duties and activities.

It is a very good thing that the Catholic Church should have made this prog-

Priest Reports on Visit Behind Iron Curtain

Father William Amann of Our Lady of Mercy parish, Greece, took a springtime tour into Iron Curtain countries, including close to a week in Moscow. This is the second in a series of articles reporting his trip.

bound train at 8:15 and couldn't find my car or anyone to speak English or German. I went through several cars, none was mine—finally found a conductor to speak German, discovered my car at the opposite end of the train—chatted with a girl from the Ukraine who spoke quite good English. She spoke enthusiastically of the Black Sea vacations that she and many Soviet citizens take.

As the train headed for Moscow, we set our watches ahead two more hours to Moscow time, eight hours later than Rochester. In the Russian dining car, another passenger who sat with

and not to intrigue or curtailment of freedom as you might expect.

In the station, huge red banners were hung in several languages welcoming delegates to the Communist Congress. With permission (a railroad depot attendant) I photographed the English one.

Again, Intourist, the government travel agency arranges all your accommodations ahead of time. Long travelers must go deluxe class but you don't know what hotel they've booked you at until you get there. So now I was happy to learn from my transfer man I was to stay at the Metropol, a large hotel centrally located a block from Red Square and the Kremlin.

We entered by a side door (the front was under repair, as it seemed so much was in Moscow). I went to the Service Bureau, an important room in any Moscow hotel. Usually someone speaks English there. I changed my travel vouchers



Youngsters keep pace with Soviet guards in Kremlin Square.

no helped me order: borscht (good but too much—Russians are very big eaters), chicken with a vinegar sauce, giant heart shaped pickles, and the Russian favorite, mineral water, and coffee. It was about 1 a.m. when I crawled into my comfortable berth, and the train continued to barrel through Russia.

I was up at 8:15 the morning of Wednesday, March 30, and while shaving in the train wash-room, I couldn't help thinking of Newcomb Moth, American tourist who supposedly slit his own throat in such a washroom of a Russian train headed for Siberia. I was careful shaving

tory, then remnants dragging themselves back defeated by the Russian winter—and again, the Nazi hordes, tanks and guns over the same plains, and back again; the battlegrounds of Smolensk and Moscow.

Moscow Here we were—the train burrowed through the factory seelion smoking with industry—on (time 10:20 a.m. I was just asking about for the Intourist agent who was to meet me when the train pulled into the Byelorussian station; a man came and asked if I was Mr. Amann. I had made my contact, and it felt good. I chalked such meeting up to Intourist efficiency and courtesy

for meal tickets, gave up my passport and exit papers (always hard to do) and my air-line ticket to Berlin to be confirmed (harder to do because that was my way out); then to my room number 389 through the wide and high halls with their huge paintings and sculptures; it was an old, huge czaristic hotel.

I was surprised to find my suit so elegant and beautiful—red wall to wall carpet, huge red floor drapes, crystal chandelier. I counted the pieces of new but styled furniture in the sitting room: 3 settees, 1 big cabinet, 2 closets, a desk with semi-upholstered chairs, 2 tables, a dining table with 5 chairs, 2 plush chairs, 2 good table-lamps dated 1862, and a phone; in the bedroom: twin beds, huge cabinet, dresser with chair, 2 semi-upholstered chairs, and end tables, and another crystal chandelier and telephone here. The bath had all facilities. — And this—all for me — huge, deluxe, for the American, who had to travel this way. You wanted to see if stories are true about bugging the hotel rooms even — but there were too many places to look for a microphone.

As a deluxe tourist, I was entitled to two tours a day with a private car and an English speaking guide. At first I thought I'd have to go where they took me, but found I could direct them to the tourist sights I wanted to see. I could also travel on my own, and did that too.

I ordered a tour for that afternoon. But first I ordered two tickets for the Bolshoi Ballet for the evening, and asked an English-speaking aide in the Service Bureau to go with me to help me. She said she might be busy, but would try to get someone else. Then I had a light lunch (tea soup, ham, coffee) in the huge hotel dining

room, chandeliers, running fountains, drapes and pillars and all.

I no sooner sat down than a Russian asked if he could join me. There were very many empty tables but I found that Russians don't like to eat alone — almost invariably, the next one in the dining room or restaurant will politely ask to sit at your table. I found this quite pleasant and interesting, because it was the best way to talk with the people as I wanted to. — in German-Russian-English, and combinations of these.

After lunch, I walked through the crowded streets—everybody walks — to Red Square — and stood at the spot from which I had seen many pictures taken, and where I dreamed to stand some day — looking across the huge square at St. Basil's Cathedral with the Kremlin Wall and the Lenin mausoleum and the reviewing stand on the right.

The long line of people was wending its way to view the body of Lenin, embalmed down in the crypt of a stern but beautiful red granite boxbuilding. This is a lifetime ambition of Soviet citizens, I guess, to come to Moscow, and view the body of their "Savior," V. I. Lenin. They wait in this line for hours every day, a line stretching across Red Square through the Kremlin Wall parks.

I had heard that tourists can enter near the front of the line, so I inquired of the cordon of police and soldiers, and finally by my showing my passport a few times, I was shown into line about 20 minutes from the tomb. And the people didn't seem to resent it a bit; it's a customary courtesy to foreigners. While we slowly moved, I struck up a conversation with a Russian girl of 20 who is studying physics at the Moscow University. Every young adult it seems, goes to the University—free, and that state pays them a small stipend besides—but their training seems too specialized.

We circled respectfully around the guarded and dramatically lighted corpse in the glass coffin. I purposely looked at the faces of the Russian peasants in the line, and found little emotional reaction — more curiosity.

Behind the mausoleum we walked and talked (she knew a little German), and saw the graves of other Soviet leaders, that of Stalin conspicuous by the absence of his bust — unlike all the others in his row. The background of the mausoleum is lined with blue spruce trees — native only to North America — "American" trees here, at the national shrine of the Soviet Union. I offered the young student a bright Kennedy half dollar immediately upon leaving the Lenin shrine. She seemed more thrilled at that than at fulfilling her pilgrimage. She said she had been saddened at JFK's death.

She willingly posed for pictures and we exchanged addresses and promises to write.

At 2 p.m. my first tour began. The Intourist guide, a woman, seemed informal enough, but distant, and her line full of propaganda — how much the U.S.S.R. has achieved.

The Muscovites are proud, as evident from the guide, that their living conditions have so improved. She pointed out new apartment buildings, those a few years older, all pre-fabs and some quite shabby already — because so hastily put together. Each citizen, she said, now averaged about 16 square yards of living space, in two, three and four room apartment flats. In the course of the tour I asked her about churches — most are all museums now — "only old people go to church to worship." She seemed hesitant, even afraid, to talk about it.

The Muscovites eat a lot of ice cream, and it is good; corner stalls are very numerous on the streets. I also tried the "pop" from their machines—a watered down fruit drink — everyone uses the same glass that is rinsed by a swirl of water when you put your 3 kopeks piece (about 4 cents) in.

(Next week —
Dinner in Moscow)

It's Not Easy to Talk to King Feisal

will govern the civil and religious life of all the citizens.

Where he has not succeeded in this objective, the Moslem feels himself spiritually unfulfilled. He pays lip service to the United Nations declaration of human rights, but if he is a typical Moslem, it has no meaning for him. He is unable to conceive of a pluralistic state.

Does it follow that there is no hope of a meeting of the minds as long as Islam continues as a living religion? Not necessarily. The concept of the relation of religion and society held by today's Moslem is very similar to that of the medieval Christian, not too far from that of both Catholics and Protestants up to the middle of the seventeenth centuries, and of some Catholics even in the middle of the twentieth.

In so far as there is a significant difference, it is in the philosophic concept of law. The Christian has the advantage of accepting an objective natural law. That notion, which tends today to be divisive of Christians (for example, on the issue of contraceptive means), was earlier valuable in reaching an awareness of human rights.

The Moslem recognizes only positive divine law. For him, God's freedom is so understood that God might have made murder meritorious. An argument based on objective right and wrong has consequently no meaning for him. Believing the prescriptions of the Koran to be unchangeable, as he does, he has thus locked himself into a very tight box indeed.

I know Catholic experts on Islam who regard the dilemma as insoluble, I am less pessimistic. As the recent Vatican Council showed, there is always a way to re-interpret a formula with which it is no longer possible to live. The current catapulting of the less developed world into the twentieth century has begun to force these Islamic nations, which are already most affected to make practical adjustments. There can be expected to adjust gradually to practice.

The process, nevertheless, is going to be painful. We cannot expect from Islam a statement comparable to the Vatican II constitution on the Church in the Modern World before the Islamic society has made giant advances in its social, economic and cultural aspects. In the meantime, we must be patient when Feisal put their feet in their big mouths.



Army Chaplain (MA) Vietnam, receives 12 in the Office of Chief of Staff, wounded in action in the States. The general (Brigadier General) and Chaplain (Colonel) Relations. C Water Reed Army photograph



The paths of four Father Gerard J. Kennedy-Vincennes was also invited sary observance.

Various What do young from college?

Sister Mariana, College of Rochester, keeping track of 160 Ju graduates — this is v discovered:

Approximately two cent of the class will graduate or profes schools, including the cities of Buffalo, Chicago, Michigan, Rochester, Fordham, Catholic City, Tufts University in Naples, Italy, State at Albany, North Massachusetts, Georgetown, Colgate Brook School of Art, University of Arizona.

Most popular field this year is teaching three will reach on the tary level, a few in t san parochial schools of them in the public of New York State; 2 teaching in secondary and 24 in special fe Music, and Speech Th

Fifteen have accep tions in social work a various areas in N State; Monroe County, New York City, while e counselors in the s stems in Rome and Mal

Fifteen will work in and industry, as chemists, programmer visors and public relations. Eastman Kod Rochester Telephone are among panies employing the ates.

An increasing inter demand have attracted cent of the class to go positions.

Three of the gradu be working on college one at the University ester and two at Na the administrative off

Some of the more placements include of Peace Corps in Ethiope the lay apostolate, and one in Oklahoma

Filipino Nu Elect Super

Sister Esther Del the Religious Teacher has been elected Sup eral of her order at chapter held this Rome-Born in Cam she is the first Am members to head he

The order, founde in the seventeenth ce a catechetical scho Mary of the Lake pa kins Glen establish

Sister Esther Del ceods, Rev. Mother Ionats, who is consa foundress of the Teachers Filipin