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POLISH SOCIETIES GROUPED ABOUT THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS.  
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When the Poles began to collect in this city for work in the early years of this century, other Poles joined them from the old country and the Waterside Colony grew spontaneously. The first organization was a mutual aid society, the King John Sobieski Society of the Polish Roman Catholic union, circa June, 1901, By 1903 the colony had grown large enough to support a church of its own and a priest was called.

I have pointed out in my report of June 30, that the conceptual fondement of this group from its very inception was opposed to the reestablishment of a peasant community similar to that known in the homeland, even had that been possible. What they were after, if indeed they knew at the time what they were after, was the establishment of a parish which would have a much larger social function than it had, or, for that matter, has today in Poland.

The new and therefore, discomposing aspects of this new land demanded a protective union, a solid front to preserve not alone the ideals and hopes of expatriates, but their very identity. To achieve this leadership was indispensable, but it must be the sort of leadership which embraced all aspects of community life, was prepared and able to act successfully not only as a director, advisor and supreme court, but as diplomatic agent between the community and the world outside.

The one individual upon whom these functions might reasonably devolve was the Proboszcz or parish priest. He alone, to the Polish mind, was trustworthy; he alone, from the very nature of his spiritual office, would be able to lead

as well outside the church as in it. How great a responsibility this was to become for one man whose training ended at the church door can be seen from the number of priests who assumed the task and surrendered it up until the arrival of the present Proboszcz on June 22, 1922. It took the Waterside Colony 19 years to find the leader who, in 15 years of untiring effort, has built a Polish commune second to none for progress, assets organizations and civic cooperation in the whole of New England.

Father W/dasz is almost childishly diffident about accepting credit for his monumental achievements. He explained, and I quote verbatim:

"The Polish benefit societies are much more than mutual insurance companies, and so our parish is much more than a religious society for worship under the leadership of a priest. It is, how shall I say, a community of interests made up of all the interests of the parish. Our faith is only one of these interests; I like to think of it as the greatest but it is only one of many after all. We have been successful in grouping all of them about the Holy Name of Jesus Parish. None is outside even of the smallest importance. When I came this was not so. Today we are one whole like the Polish okolica.

"It is true we cannot control the life of our members as well as the parish and the commune did at home in Poland. We have no wish to because it is our task first of all to encourage the freedom of our members in a free country. All we wish to do is to lead those who will be led to a proper understanding of what this country has to offer if they will live like good Americans and not forget to be good Poles."

I did not ask Father W/dasz what he meant about being "good Poles". I think I know. The Polish Societies grouped about the Holy Name of Jesus are evidence enough. Of the 29 organizations there is not one that promotes interests which can in any way be considered un-American. They have, if anything, leaned over backwards in their efforts to prevent any charge by press or public that their attitudes are anything but 100% American.

Poles are patriotic by nature. They have been taught more in the Holy Name Parochial School than in any of the city public schools to revere the flag and all that it stands for. Moreover, this group with its peasant background is fundamentally conservative. They seem unprogressive in so far as they are content to stay where they are and build security from within rather than seek it from the outside.

Witness the flat refusal they gave to the C. I. O. in the Yale & Towne factory recently where they make up over 60% of the working force. Suspicious of all organizations they cannot control, they have no use whatever for radical propaganda or radicals. Indeed, they are inclined to hold so far to the right as to be accused of being reactionary. Nor are they troubled either by "isms" or schisms", with in religion or politics although many with whom I have talked admit to having changed their allegiance in '32 and '36.

These then are the folk who make up the membership of the following organizations:

1. ST. JOSEPH'S BROTHERLY AID SOCIETY (Senior Division) This is the largest numerically and the strongest financially of all the Polish beneficial societies. Its membership to date is well over 700 and its assets above \$50,000, debt free. The special care of the present Proboszcz, membership in St. Joseph is considered not only an honor but a certificate of good