

Jean Shepherd Plugs His Book, Entertains His Fans

By WALTER L. SHEPARD

Writer, humorist, satirist and story-teller of some skill and imagination — Jean Shepherd might well be a bearded beatnik with a wild gleam in his eye according to the image he conjures up in the minds of many of his WOR listeners. His week-night stint in monologue form deals with a fabulous and fascinating variety of subjects, deftly discussed. Its lighter moments, by contrast, are frequently punctuated with wierd sound effects, some wild kazoo playing or riotous laughter.

As a result, the rather scholarly youngish man who came to the Rutgers University Book Store on Tuesday to autograph copies of his somewhat autobiographical but highly fictionalized novel: "In God We Trust (All Others Pay Cash)" was a pleasant surprise to some of his fans. Shepherd proved to be a completely interesting, sincere, alert and knowledgeable fellow with a lot of poise and presence — the latter, conceivably, a benefit of his experience as an entertainer.

However, when it came to the autographing and the question and answer sessions he conducted, he might have been a slightly balding professor of medium height and build who was completely in command of his "class" — which must have entailed several hundred during the course of the afternoon.

Biting Wit Flashed Forth

He handled the questions — and they were many and varied — in the manner of a man who has a story to tell and enjoys telling it. On the other hand, the sometimes biting wit listeners appreciate flashed forth from time to time to the delight of his audience.

Such was the case with the rather pestiferous young female questioners, whose occasional labored queries drew a comment

(in this general vein) "But you asked that same kind of question in second grade."

Shepherd's genuine good-humored appreciation of a young fan's letter was infectious as he told how the lad confided in him about his sub-rara listening to the moonologist through an ear-phoned transmitter radio when supposed to be asleep.

The punchline ran something like this: "My old man hollers up from time to time, checking up on me. He says I'm wasting my time listening to you (talking about everything from religion and philosophy to your army experiences). And he's down there watching a Fracilla Late movie on TV and drinking beer."

Shepherd admittedly is a part of the entertainment world and proud of it. But he's also obviously pleased he has hurled that barrier — with his book now in its seventh printing.

He admitted to a questioner, that in many people's minds, entertainment and authorship don't mix. But with his yen for telling a story he hasn't let this bother him. What's more, he writes what he enjoys writing, without any particular intention of attracting readers, he added.

Completely at ease, he discussed the mid-Western approach to writing — as compared with Eastern preoccupation with the stage — citing the high volume of book sales in Chicago, also naming a dozen mid-Western authors of note who have "made it" via the printed page.

In fact, one of the admirable features about Shepherd is his abundance of apt references, delivered readily and with complete assurance.

For instance, after discussing briefly and pointedly the difference between reportage and narration in answer to another

question, the author-entertainer-turned-professor momentarily cited their interdependence.

Apt illustrations came readily, possibly best exemplified by a reference to Joseph Conrad's many years before the mast as the basis for his powerful writing, made more powerful by his narrative skills and observations. In subsequent pursuit of his general topic, Shepherd pointed to the need for some departures from fact or, if your prefer, carrying a yarn through to a climax as in the case of "Moby Dick," which would have fallen flat on its face as a story had not Cap'n Ahab and his crew caught up with their quarry.

A random question about Shepherd's military services — three years of it — evoked criticism of those who want to shield themselves from experience. It was a wonderful experience, the writer asserted, as was his work in the steel mills in his home state, his work as a disk jockey and the many other stints that provide such a wealth of material for his oft-amusing, highly diverting and sometimes critical radio ramblings.

As to "In God We Trust," he admitted that much of it was based on his own experience, both as a boy in Hammond, Ind. and subsequently as a city dweller, which by narrative or embellishment contrasts the mores and managements of the two areas. Even when he turned to autographing copies of his book,

American Consulate Hit By Rocks, Viet Protest

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP)

—Five large plate-glass windows at the American consulate here were shattered by bricks early Saturday, and the building later became the object of a protest demonstration against U.S. participation in the Vietnam war.

A consulate deputy officer said only a Marine guard was in the building when five bricks came crashing through the window at 7 a.m. The Marine, who was not injured, saw several figures running from the build-

ing, the officer said.

Hours later, more than 100 young demonstrators assembled outside the building and sang "We Like Mao Tse-tung" and "We Like Ho Chi Minh" to what sounded like the tune of the American civil rights anthem "We Shall Overcome."

At one point, what appeared to be a smoke bomb was set off in the street in front of the consulate.

Police sealed off the building to guard against further attacks.

ignoring the pestiferous young female's "will you sign my notebook," or kidding the lad who wanted his copy dedicated to "Valerie" Shepherd was the showman turned author who to all indications is doing a good job at both professions and enjoying it.



AUTHOR'S PLEASANT JOB—Jean Shepherd, WOR personality turned novelist, autographs copies of his first novel "In God We Trust, (All Others Pay Cash)" during an autographing and question-and-answer session at the Rutgers University Bookstore where he also demonstrated his skill as an entertainer by his deft handling of queries.



SHOWS SERIOUS SIDE—Entertainer turned author, WOR personality Jean Shepherd keeps the gulps to a minimum as he handles questions with professional skill and dedication before an autographing copies of his new book at the Rutgers book store.

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