

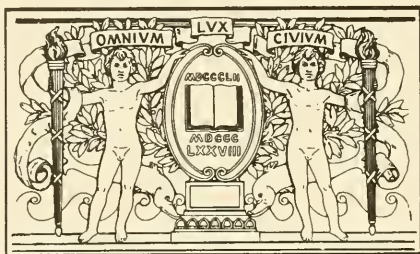


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CONFIDENCE IN BATTLE,
INSPIRATION IN PEACE



THE UNITED STATES
ARMY CHAPLAINCY
1945-1975



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CONFIDENCE IN BATTLE,
INSPIRATION IN PEACE
THE UNITED STATES
ARMY CHAPLAINCY
1945–1975

By

Rodger R. Venzke

Volume V

*OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF CHAPLAINS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 1977*

... to the American Soldier
and the Guardian of his Faith

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FOREWARD

This volume is one of a series of five prepared by various authors, designed to be useful and instructive regarding the long history of the United States Army Chaplaincy. The emphasis throughout is on how chaplains did their ministry in the contexts of both war and peace. The series seeks to present as full and as balanced an account as limitations of space and research time permit. The bibliography in each volume offers opportunities for further research leading to detailed studies, articles, monographs, and perhaps even volumes regarding persons, developments, and events of the periods concerned. No attempt has been made to express any specific point of view or to make policy recommendations. The contents of each volume represent the work of the individual author and do not represent the official view of the United States government.

An effort has been made to make this volume as complete and factual as possible. In the light of new information and developments, there may be modifications required concerning the material, interpretations, and conclusions presented. Such corrections, additions, and suggestions as readers may have are welcome for use in future revisions; they should be addressed to:

Director of Support
US Army Chaplain Center and School
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Fort Wadsworth, Staten Island, NY 10305

The author of this volume is Chaplain Rodger R. Venzke, a Regular Army chaplain of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Chaplain Venzke, a native of Wisconsin, was Pastor of a civilian congregation in Frazee, Minnesota, prior to his entry on active duty in 1963. He has served at Fort Bliss, Texas; Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, D.C.; the Staff and Faculty, US Army Chaplain Center and School, Fort Wadsworth, Staten Island, N.Y. and overseas, in Vietnam and Germany. He has earned and received the Master of Science Degree from Long Island University, New York, and the Master of Sacred Theology Degree from New York Theological Seminary, New York. He has been awarded the Meritorious Service Medal and the Army Commendation Medal.

ORRIS E. KELLY
Chaplain (Major General) US Army
Chief of Chaplains

PREFACE

There are some obvious dangers in writing a history of recent events, not least of which is the great availability of critics. Researching, writing, and evaluating the events of centuries long past, after all, only receive an honest appraisal from others who have done the same, an exercise of scholars matching sources; the recording of recent events, however, pits the author's words against the memories of those who are still alive and well.

Author Ingrid Bengis struggled with that problem in her article "Truth or Honesty" (*New York Times*, 26 November 1973, p. 31). When a woman who appeared in one of her books objected that she should have been portrayed "the way I am," the writer replied; "But I have. I've tried to show the essence of you, according to my own perceptions." "But your perceptions are different from my perceptions," protested the woman. "That's exactly the point," replied the writer.

In a sense, the same could be said of my approach to the past 30 years of the United States Army Chaplaincy. Along with the other four who have labored on volumes covering preceding eras, I was asked to produce an objective, readable account, focusing on the ministry of the Army chaplaincy within an established, limited space. Unquestionably, the most difficult of those guidelines, especially for the period from 2 September 1945 to the "present," was the element of objectivity—attempting to deal with the subject material apart from personal reflections or feelings. For someone not only living in the era, but also working within the institution, this is somewhat like attempting to describe the architecture of a house while sitting in the living room, absorbed with the structure's atmosphere as a home. Others within the "house" will rightfully conclude: "But you didn't mention . . .," "That's not exactly the way it is . . .," saying essentially, "Your perceptions are different from my perceptions." I can only reply also, "That's exactly the point." Future historians will be able to be more coldly objective regarding this period of the chaplaincy, but they, in turn, will be disadvantaged because they were not there and did not personally experience the milieu in which many of the events took place. For them, hopefully, this limited volume may help to recapture

some of that mood as well as the facts of those of us who lived and served during this period as chaplains in the United States Army.

I am particularly grateful to those many individuals who helped to contribute to the following pages. Most of that gratitude goes to the chaplains, both retired and on active duty, who shared their experiences through questionnaires, personal and recorded interviews, and correspondence, including material from their personal files. Appreciation is also extended to the personnel at the National Archives, the West Point Military Academy Library, the U.S. Army Military History Research Center, the U.S. Army War College Library, and the General Commission on Chaplains and Armed Forces Personnel. Various individuals in the Office of the Army Chief of Chaplains were most gracious in answering my persistent questions, as were the personnel at the U.S. Army Reserve Components and Personnel Administration Center.

But special laurels are reserved for those at the U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School, without whose support and work this volume would not have been possible: the Commandant, Chaplain (COL) Chester R. Lindsey, the Librarian, Chaplain (COL) Dick J. Oostenink, USAR, and the proofreaders and “bosses,” Chaplain (COL) William E. Paul, Jr., and Chaplain (LTC) James H. Young. Finally, included among that latter group are those wonderful people who toiled to make it all legible: Patricia L. O’Connell, who transcribed the recorded interviews, and Charlesetta L. Sizemore, Constance C. Hanlon, Anna M. Buther, and Joseph S. De Fazio of the Chaplain School Composing Room.

Fort Wadsworth, New York
15 May 1975

Rodger R. Venzke
Chaplain (MAJ), USA

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CHAPTER I

In the Aftermath of World War

GIVING THANKS FOR PEACE

The second day of September 1945 was a Sunday, and it seemed as if the battleship *Missouri*, anchored in Tokyo Bay, momentarily became the pulpit in a world cathedral. The brief, 20-minute ceremony was like a great liturgy of peace, and the homily was delivered by Douglas MacArthur:

. . . We have had our last chance. If we do not now devise some greater and more equitable system Armageddon will be at our door. The problem basically is theological and involves a spiritual recrudescence and improvement of human character that will synchronize with our almost matchless advance in science, art, literature and all material and cultural developments of the past two thousand years. It must be of the spirit if we are to save the flesh. . . .¹

One reporter mused how, as the surrender document was signed, “the sun burst through low-hanging clouds as a shining symbol to a ravaged world now done with war.”² Unfortunately, it was not our “last chance,” for the world seemed nowhere near being “done with war.”

For that moment in time, however, the slow and agonizing death of world war seemed to awaken again America’s spiritual convictions. Four months earlier, when Colonel General Gustav Jodl, Chief of Staff of the German Army, surrendered to the Allies in a little red schoolhouse in Reims, France, President Truman proclaimed:

. . . For the triumph of spirit and of arms which we have won, and for its promise to peoples everywhere who join us in the love of freedom, it is fitting that we, as a nation, give thanks to Almighty God, who has strengthened us and given us the victory. Now, therefore, I

See footnotes at end of chapter.

Harry S. Truman, President of the United States of America, do hereby appoint Sunday, May 13, 1945, to be a day of prayer. . . .³

Of course, the more than 9,000 Army chaplains who had shared in the sufferings of World War II offered their prayers of thanksgiving for V-E and V-J Days in severely contrasting circumstances. Luther D. Miller, an Episcopalian who had just become the Army's Chief of Chaplains in April, joined his Navy counterpart at a service held in the White House. Shortly afterwards he led the nation in prayer held a world-wide radio network.⁴ On the other hand, Albert G. Wildman, United Presbyterian, had just participated in the burial of 184 victims of the Wöbbelin Concentration Camp at Hagenow, Germany, and simply noted at the end of his diary account for 8 May: "V-E Day! Thanks be to God."⁵ But an account which best exemplified the mixture of great sorrow and joy was noted at the end of one chaplain's monthly report:

The Service of Thanksgiving for final Victory held at this Post was an unforgettable experience. Early that morning we learned that "it was finished" at last, and at the commanding officer's suggestion special devotions were arranged for 10:30 A.M.

At the nine o'clock news broadcast the loss of the U.S.S. *Indianapolis* was announced. My oldest son was an ensign aboard her. I had reason to be grateful that the next hour had to be spent in arranging the details of the service and listing so many things for which we all could offer our deep and joyful gratitude. Something told me at the time that my son's name would not be on the small list of survivors, and at first I feared it would be hard to head a service of thanksgiving. But the very work of preparing the service brought home to me the wonderful realization that the very hour of loss was even more an hour of thanksgiving, for "it is well with the child!"

The news of our bereavement spread through the hospital and I think every officer, nurse, and enlisted man that could be spared from duty, and every patient that could get out of bed, was present at the service. Their unspoken understanding was like a deep, quiet tide bearing me along, and I believe that nowhere that day was God worshipped with fuller hearts or deeper reverence.⁶

"I ain't good enough to pray much," said one soldier to his chaplain. "But tonight I'm not asking for nothing, I'm just saying thanks." Sick and wounded left their beds to kneel in prayer as chapel bells chimed the news. "Arranged for Prayer and Thanksgiving Services every half-hour from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m.," noted one chaplain. "More than 1500 men attended these services." On troop ships and shell-scarred fields, in dis-

See footnotes at end of chapter.

tant and long-since-forgotten places, in humble and great houses of worship, gratitude to God was the keynote.⁷

Emotions at the end of the War ranged from idealism to bitterness. Representative Jennings Randolph of West Virginia, a member of the General Commission on Army and Navy Chaplains (the General Commission), introduced a bill in Congress calling for a new cabinet position for a "Department of Peace."⁸ Others said V-E and V-J Days should be succeeded by "V-W Day—Victory over War."⁹ Some Army chaplains, however, being no less human than those they served, expressed a continuing rage against the former enemies. In his letter to the editor of a periodical, one told the doubtfully humorous story of a Mexican laborer who, after his boss raised a pick handle at him, finally replied, "Me savvy! Me savvy!" Then he continued:

The Jap is neither a Christian nor a gentleman. He interprets our language of the Prince of Peace as stupidity and weakness. . . . The Japs were beginning to understand when we pulverized their homeland with thousands of B-29's. . . . But they really did "savvy" the atomic bomb. . . .¹⁰

Ironically, the previous issue of the same periodical had carried this brief note:

Chaplain Masao Yamada, Congregationalist minister, serving with the 442nd Infantry Regimental Combat Team, has recently been awarded the Legion of Merit. The chaplain is one of three American chaplains of Japanese ancestry in the United States Army.¹¹

RETURNING TO CIVILIAN LIFE

For most chaplains the end of the War was an anxious and traumatic time, not unlike that experienced by other military personnel. The overwhelming desire to go home was mingled with the uncertainty of what, if anything, awaited them. *Time* magazine reported that "many a young ex-chaplain was beset by misgivings. Misgiving No. 1 he shared with mustered out Americans of every sort . . . 'Will I get a job?' . . . Misgiving No. 2 they also had in common with their brother veterans: 'How can I get along with civilians?'"¹²

There was a strange mixture too of the anxiety over acceptance and the conviction that their experiences had been a priceless asset to their ministry. Chaplain Ben W. Sinderson, Disciples of Christ, wrote:

See footnotes at end of chapter.

We chaplains know the future we face. The ministers in civilian pastorates are entrenched; we are outsiders. We have no ill feelings in this matter; it is just one of those things. Our peace-loving public will soon forget everything connected with the war, even the sacrifice of human lives. The chaplain may be looked upon as a militant, dangerous to the Peace. His military career won't count for much in the average church. . . . In some respects we will have been on a detour; we are now back on the main highway, changed, different, wiser—and better able to do a job, if we had to!

In many ways, I have passed 'beyond'—beyond being quizzed about my orthodoxy, beyond denominational bickering and institutional self sufficiency. . . .

So the chaplain's future is non too clear or certain. . . .¹³

The last monthly reports of many of those leaving active duty were filled with phrases that searched for expression of experiences now gone: "Many blessings that cannot be valued in money" . . . "Nothing I would trade for these months and years" . . . "The happiest and most fruitful years of my ministry" . . . "Rich in experience and Christian service" . . . "I depart with keen regret" . . . "My faith in prayer has been confirmed over and over again" . . . "I am grateful to God for every day of my service as a chaplain" . . . "It has been a privilege to be a soldier-minister." ¹⁴

Nevertheless, the Office of the Chief of Chaplains (OCCH) was swamped with so many requests for release from active duty that it somewhat sternly reminded these men that the "point system," which established priorities according to length of service overseas and in combat, applied to them like every other officer.¹⁵ Aware of the drastic effect of a mass exodus, it attempted to encourage waivers of eligibility for release and agreements to continue on duty until at least 30 June 1947.¹⁶

By mid-1946 even General Eisenhower, then the Army's Chief of Staff, was attempting to discourage the rapid departure of chaplains.

. . . today, with the fighting over, the need for their continued service is undiminished. Our soldiers the world over, with more time on their hands, anxious to go home and conscious of the problems facing them on return to civil life, are urgently in need of the counsel of these men who served them so well in battle. . . .

It is my earnest endeavor to release as rapidly as possible every individual not actually required in accomplishing the Army's mission.

In the meantime, I must repeat, the opportunity for service by the Army Chaplain is as great, or greater, than it has ever been.¹⁷

See footnotes at end of chapter.

The statistical reports of separations published by the OCCH indicated the immensity of the problem. From V-J Day to 31 December 1945, 2,106 had returned to civilian life. Within 6 months the figure had grown to 5,807, leaving 2,334 on active duty.¹⁸ The number of Army Chaplains continued to drop until it leveled at exactly 1,100 in service at the end of 1947.¹⁹

A variety of efforts were made to smooth the transition to civilian life. The American Lutheran Church, for example, established a \$50,000 fund for returning chaplains to enjoy either a year's recuperation or study.²⁰ The Army Navy Chaplains' Association (the Chaplains' Association) began publishing a series of articles to assist them in readjustment.²¹ Similarly, the General Commission ran a series on churches' responses to the question: "What has your denomination done to assure its returning chaplains that they shall not have to suffer in civilian life for their sacrifice in the chaplaincy?"²²

For 161 of them, the sacrifice was simply marked by a plain white cross or Star of David and they were not to return at all.²³ For others, even though they remained in service, there was no organization or church to replace what they had lost. Robert P. Taylor, Baptist, destined to become the Air Force's Chief of Chaplains in 1962, survived the Bataan Death March and nearly 4 years in a Japanese prison camp. When he returned, he discovered that his wife, who thought he had died, was remarried.²⁴

CONTINUING THE UNIQUE MINISTRY

During a brief moment immediately following World War II, some Protestant chaplains, returning to civilian life or not, became irate over a public suggestion that most of them had been less than top quality. Brigadier General Harry H. Vaughn, then military aide to President Truman, had been invited to speak to the Women's Auxiliary of the Alexandria (Virginia) Westminster Presbyterian Church in early September 1945. It was apparently as shocking to Vaughn as it was to the chaplains when his remarks appeared in a national magazine.

I don't know why a minister can't be a regular guy, but unfortunately some of them are not. You have to give the Roman Church credit. When the War Department requests a bishop to supply 20 priests for chaplains, he looks over his diocese and picks out the 20 best men. Frequently a Protestant [minister] does not have a

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church at that moment or is willing to go on vacation for about three years.²⁵

The General Commission, registering a protest with General Vaughn as well as the President, labeled the remarks as “highly offensive and prejudicial.”²⁶ The President quickly replied:

. . . The highly controversial remarks attributed to General Vaughn—whether authentic or unauthentic—in nowise represent my views. General Vaughn was speaking in a private capacity in his own church. . . . Any views which he may have expressed were therefore his own, not mine. I completely disassociate myself from them.

No one regrets more than I that misunderstanding and misrepresentation should have occurred. . . .²⁷

While the General’s remarks may have been “offensive,” it is hard to believe that they were totally “prejudicial.” He not only was a member of the church, he had served as an elder and later taught a teenage Bible class; two of his students were influenced by him to enter Protestant ministries. He had probably taught them from his own Bible which bore the following hand-written note on the fly leaf:

To Harry H. Vaughn,
friend, comrade, advisor, military aide: read it, act on it, and you
will be as you always have, fundamentally right.

Harry S. Truman²⁸

For those who remained on active duty, either temporarily during the days of occupation or so long as to endure two more wars in Asia, the immediate tasks were as totally varied as the areas of assignment. Some Army clergymen, like Leigh O. Wright, Presbyterian, made so many ocean crossings as transport chaplains they must have considered themselves more fit for the Navy. Chaplain Wright reported in the fall of 1946 that he had recently made his eighty-sixth trip across the Atlantic. Eighty-two of those were on the *Queen Mary*.²⁹ With those in similar duty on the Pacific was Robert T. Handy, American Baptist. The young men who joined in his Bible study groups on those long voyages must have enjoyed a rare privilege—Chaplain Handy was later to become a professor at Union Theological Seminary.³⁰

Whether destined to become a seminary professor or not, many chaplains during and after the War were apparently heavily engaged in the recruitment of future clergymen. Already in 1944 so many reports of possible candidates for the ministry had arrived at the OCCH that a

See footnotes at end of chapter.

Memorandum was sent out requesting specific information about these men which could be relayed to the various denominations.³¹ At the Army Air Forces' Lowry Field in Denver, for example, 17 future candidates had formed their own "Embryo Ministers' Association."³²

In less than 2 years, responding to the Memorandum from the Chief, chaplains had sent in the names of nearly 4,000 potential clergymen.³³ By 1948, Selective Service reports indicated that 8,973 veterans were studying to become ministers in Protestant colleges, 231 were enrolled in Catholic seminaries, and 16 were in Jewish schools with the intention of becoming rabbis.³⁴

SERVING AMONG THE GERMAN WAR CRIMINALS

One of the most unique ministries performed in the very early days of the occupation was announced rather sensationally by the *New York Times* on V-J Day:

NAZIS GET RELIGION IN WAIT FOR TRIALS

Calls For Bibles and Services by U.S. Chaplains Increase,
America Jailer Says

NUREMBERG, Germany, Sept 1 (AP) about half of the Nazi leaders held here for war crimes trials are professing an interest in religion. . . .

Adolf Hitler's henchmen have Bibles in their cells, many of them say long prayers and they keep United States Army chaplains busy holding church services. . . .³⁵

Chaplain Carl R. Eggers, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry, had initially worked with the prisoners at Nuremberg. On 12 November 1945, he introduced his fellow Missouri Synod Lutheran chaplain, Henry F. Gerecke, newly assigned to the 6850th Internal Security Detachment, to the 21 defendants.³⁶ Chaplain Sixtus R. O'Connor was to be his Roman Catholic counterpart. Together with Dr. G. M. Gilbert, the prison psychologist, they were the only American officers on the staff who could speak German.³⁷ Colonel Burton C. Andrus, Commandant of the Nuremberg Prison from May 1945 to October 1946, commented later: "We had two of the finest chaplains a prison commandant could have been given."³⁸

The names of the prisoners still recall the historic ethical struggle of the Allies to fix the responsibility for the unspeakable atrocities. Chaplain Gerecke was to minister to Goering, von Ribbentrop, Keitel, Frick, Funk, Schacht, Doenitz, Raeder, Schirach, Sauckel, Speer, Neurath and

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Fritzche. Chaplain O'Connor served Kaltenbrunner, Frank, von Papen, and Seyss-Inquart. Prisoners Hess, Rosenberg, Streicher, and Jodl refused to align themselves with a chaplain and never attended worship services.³⁹

Of the three chaplains who became intimately acquainted with these men, Gerecke apparently shared more of his experiences with the public than the others. While his reflections, coupled with those of other writers, give us insights to the spiritual convictions of the famous defendants, his openness in discussing his ministry was not without objection. In turning down a request to print his accounts in a denominational youth magazine, a spokesman for the OCCH explained:

The objection was based on the ground that the manuscript revealed intimate confidences which were deserving of the secrecy of the confessional. The War Department discourages anything that would possibly suggest to men that chaplains did not zealously guard intimate knowledge and confidence.⁴⁰

Nevertheless, Gerecke did publish his experiences in a journal of the Chaplains' Association. He introduced the article by saying:

Remember, friends, this report is unofficial and has no connection with any report that may come from the War Department. These are my personal observations and feelings about the men on trial at Nuremberg.⁴¹

Initially, Chaplain Gerecke apparently had his doubts about the effectiveness of his ministry there. "When I put my request for his services to the Chaplain-General," wrote the Commandant, "Gerecke was told that the decision was completely up to him. 'How,' Gerecke asked himself at the time, 'can a humble preacher from a Missouri farm make any impression on the disciples of Adolph Hitler?'"⁴² Despite this hesitancy, he soon found many of them open to his ministry.

Sauckel, he reported, was his first communicant. He prayed regularly with Chaplain Gerecke, often ending with: "God be merciful to me, a sinner." Fritzche, von Schirach and Speer were given Communion after instruction by Gerecke in Luther's Catechism. Keitel, Gerecke wrote, "asked me to convey his thanks to the Christian people of America for sending a chaplain to them." The former Chief of Staff is quoted as having said to the chaplain after one private Communion service: "You have helped me more than you know. May Christ, my Saviour, stand by me all the way. I shall need him so much." Ribbentrop, who apparently was cool toward the chaplain at first, later became involved in a discussion of how one could be patriotic and a Christian at the same time.⁴³

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In December 1945 Frank shared some of his feeling regarding the Catholic chaplain with the prison psychologist.

I am glad that you and Pater Sixtus, at least, still come to talk to me.—You know, Pater Sixtus is such a wonderful man. If you could say “virgin” about a man, you would say it about him—so delicate, so sympathetic, so maidenly—you know what I mean.—And religion is such a comfort—my only comfort now. I look forward to Christmas now like a little child. . . .⁴⁴

Streicher, among those who rejected the chaplains’ ministry, told the doctor:

The chaplain left some leaflets here for me to read, but I don’t put any stock in that stuff. I’m quite a philosopher myself, you know. I’ve often thought about this business about God creating the universe. I always ask myself, if God made everything, who made God? You see, you can go crazy thinking about that. And all that stuff about Christ—the Jew who was the Son of God—I don’t know. It sounds like propaganda.⁴⁵

Rosenberg, who had once been a Lutheran, told Gerecke he had no need of his services and lightly remarked that he thought it was nice if anyone could be so simple as to accept the story of the Cross as the chaplain spoke of it.⁴⁶

Of all the prisoners, Hermann Goering seemed to trouble Gerecke the most. Goering was always the first to the little chapel, sat in front and sang louder than anyone.⁴⁷ He told the chaplain, however, that he was only doing him a favor “because as ranking man of the group, if I attend the others will follow suit.”⁴⁸ Once, when the psychologist ended a session with Goering because it was time for chapel services, the former leader scoffed, “Prayers, hell! It’s just a chance to get out of this damn cell for a half hour.”⁴⁹ Privately he told Gerecke that, while not an atheist, he rejected Lutheranism. He would only admit a belief in Almighty Power but scoffed at Christianity.⁵⁰

O’Connor and Gerecke convinced the authorities to allow the prisoners’ families to visit while the judges were in closed session. During this time, the chaplains became particularly close to the children.⁵¹ One day, when little Edda Goering was left with Gerecke, he asked her, “Do you ever say your prayers?” “I pray every night,” she replied. “And how do you pray?” the chaplain asked. “I kneel down by my bed and look to heaven and ask God to open my daddy’s heart and let Jesus in.”⁵²

The intensity of the bond which grew between the chaplains and the prisoners was demonstrated in the spring of 1946. A rumor had spread

See footnotes at end of chapter.

that Gerecke, already 54 and away from home 2½ years, was going to be relieved. A letter was written to Mrs. Gerecke in St. Louis, signed by all 21 defendants, asking her to understand how much they benefited from him for 6 months and how deeply they needed him for the future. Gerecke's wife immediately wrote him and told him he must stay.⁵³

For the prisoners who were eventually condemned to death, the time was set for midnight, 15 October 1946. "Fr. O'Connor and Chaplain Gerecke were untiringly moving from condemned cell to condemned cell," reported the Commandant. "Prayers were now taking on a new meaning, a new urgency."⁵⁴ At 2030 hours Gerecke visited Goering who had requested Communion. But since he still refused to make a confession of Christian faith, the chaplain, following his denominational convictions, refused to give him the sacrament. Two hours later Gerecke was quickly summoned again—only to find that Goering had taken a concealed cyanide capsule. The chaplain knelt beside him trying to get some response, but it was too late. In his own way Goering had cheated his enemies out of the final victory.⁵⁵

Gerecke's refusal to give Communion to Goering met with some criticism. One author later wrote:

When Hitler ordered that the men implicated in the plot of the 20th of July, 1944, should be denied the consolations of religion before their execution, the world was horrified at his inhumanity; from the minister of a Christian Church one might reasonably have expected a higher degree of Christian charity.

There are perhaps no lines in the English language more moving than those of the old ballad:

*"Between the stirrup and the ground
He mercy sought and mercy found,—"*

Certainly there are none more expressive of the grace of God freely offered even to the most miserable of sinners. That mercy was refused by the prison chaplain, as far as it lay in his power to refuse it, to Hermann Göring.⁵⁶

Even Chaplain Gerecke struggled with that decision. "If I blundered in my approach to reach this man's heart and soul with the meaning of the Cross of Jesus," he wrote, "then I'm very sorry and I hope a Christian world will forgive me."⁵⁷

The chaplains walked the "last mile" with each of the condemned that night. "I put my trust in Christ," Ribbentrop told Gerecke, "I'll see you again." Keitel said to the chaplain, just before his execution, "I thank you and those who sent you, with all my heart."⁵⁸

See footnotes at end of chapter.

The excutions were finally finished. "It was a little after 3 in the morning. The chaplains went into separate cells for personal prayers and private devotions," wrote Gerecke. "Then we waited for several hours before returning to the execution chamber for prayer."⁵⁹

Apparently the Allies had determined that some additional, symbolic act was necessary. The bodies of the executed were secretly taken to Dachau and incinerated in the ovens of the concentration camp.⁶⁰

Such Nazi-built concentration camps, scattered throughout Germany and Austria, vividly remained in the memories of those who had accompanied the liberating units. By way of example, Chaplain Edward L.R. Elson, Presbyterian, had made an official survey of the imprisoned clergy at Dachau. The results, later included as part of the War Crimes Board material, indicated there had been 2,448 Christian ministers in the camp but that only 1,100 were still living on the day of the camp's liberation.⁶¹ Chaplain Albert Wildman was serving as 8th Infantry Division Chaplain in May of 1945 when that unit opened the gates of two camps near the town of Wobbelin. Along with the 2,500 captives who were found barely alive were several hundred unburied bodies and five common graves containing the remains of 261. Before the bodies were removed, all of the citizens of Wobbelin and ten leading citizens of Schwerin were required to view the horrors. Included among them, under the supervision of the chaplain, was the pastor of St. Paul's Parish in Schwerin. The pastor later dictated a six-page report in which he repeatedly struggled, like the judges at Nuremberg, with the ethical question of the ultimate responsibility for such atrocities.

The citizens of the area were required to dig graves for new cemeteries and reverently transpose the bodies from the camp. Each grave was marked by a Christian Cross or Jewish Star of David constructed by the villagers. The chief magistrates of the towns were then directed to have prepared permanent stone markers for each of the cemeteries with the following inscription, written by Chaplain Wildman:

Here lie the bodies of (number) victims of Nazi atrocity from Poland, Russia, Greece, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Holland, and Germany, who died of starvation and brutality in the Wobbelin Concentration Camp. Buried (date) under supervision of the 8th Infantry Division, U.S. Army, by whom the surviving prisoners of the camp were liberated

God is our Refuge and Strength.⁶²

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MINISTERING TO THE JAPANESE WAR CRIMINALS

General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in the Far East, had issued a charter on 19 January 1946 for an international tribunal to try major war criminals among the former Japanese leaders. The trial of the most prominent opened in Tokyo on 3 May and 28 defendants faced the long and arduous court proceedings that lasted until November 1948. Two of the defendants died during that period and one was declared unfit to stand trial. Of the 25 who remained at the time of sentencing, 7 were executed, 16 received life imprisonment, and 2 were imprisoned for specific periods.⁶³

During the trial the defendants were held in the Sugamo military prison in Tokyo. The most famous of the group, Tojo Hideki, former Prime Minister and Minister of War, had unsuccessfully attempted suicide on the day of his arrest.

To provide a ministry for these men was even more of a challenge than that faced at Nuremberg. Among the many Army chaplains who served in some capacity at Sugamo were DeWitt C. Clemens, Methodist, and Francis P. Scott, Roman Catholic. Obviously, however, there were language and religious barriers that prevented the type of deeply personal ministry experienced by the chaplains at Nuremberg.

Since 90 percent of the prisoners were Buddhist, a request was made to the Japanese government for a Buddhist priest who could be employed as a civilian chaplain. On 14 February 1946, Chaplain Clemens and other prison officials interviewed an application named Shinsho Hanayama. Satisfied that he would be able to provide the ministry they sought for the prisoners, they informed him that he could begin his work the following week. "Thus I became, so to say, a voluntary prisoner at Sugamo," wrote Hanayama in the introduction of his book, *The Way of Deliverance*, in which he later detailed his experiences.⁶⁴

Hanayama admitted that the American request for a chaplain had actually embarrassed Japanese authorities "since they had never before concerned themselves with religion." He noted in contrast the sentiment expressed by President Roosevelt on the first page of a copy of the New Testament and Psalms given him by one of the Army chaplains:

As Commander-in-Chief I take pleasure in commending the reading of the Bible to all who serve in the armed forces of the United States. Throughout the centuries men of many faiths and diverse origins have found in the Sacred Book words of wisdom, counsel and inspiration. It is a fountain of strength and now, as

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always, an aid in attaining the highest aspirations of the human soul.

Reflecting on those words, Hanayama wrote:

The act of the President in officially making this recommendation to think on spiritual things filled me with admiration. And knowing that all Americans serving in the Pacific went to the front with this Bible in their pockets, I felt as though cold perspiration were running down my spine. For how many of *our* supreme commanders had taught their subordinates the importance of having religious faith? In this point alone it can be said that we were beaten before we started. And I thought to myself then how strange that now I should be called upon to preach the truth and the need for faith to these very leaders.⁶⁵

The few Christian prisoners held at Sugamo during the various trials in Tokyo were ministered to by both U.S. Army chaplains via interpreters and Hanayama. Former Captain Masao Nishizawa, who had commanded the Yokohama Prisoner of War (POW) Camp during the War, wrote a stirring letter to his two children just before his execution. In the conclusion he noted:

Lastly, one more thing I want to say to you is that you must always study the words of God well. Those words will be taught you by your mother and other people. Then, you will be able to see a glorious Japan, which though I want to see it I cannot behold. . . .

Praying to God the Father, in Heaven, that you may grow up blessed by the mercy and protection of Jesus Christ, the redeemer of human sins—Amen.⁶⁶

The 64-year-old Tojo, considered the chief war criminal by many Americans, was actually converted from Shintoism to Buddhism largely through the concerned ministry of Hanayama. One of Tojo's cousins, also a Buddhist priest, supplied the customary special name for the former leader's tombstone: *Eishoin shakuji Komyoro Koji*—"By Buddha's Grace, All Sins Committed While Living are Absolved."⁶⁷

Chaplain Carl J. Bergstrom, General Conference Baptist, attended some of the trials of the Japanese War Criminals. His thoughts seemed to reflect the sentiments of many of those who had worked closely with the prisoners. As he listened to the proceedings he began to regret that the United States had not sent them missionaries instead of scrap iron and oil.⁶⁸

Apparently this kind of ministry held a special and perhaps morbid fascination for some chaplains. One, stationed at the Philippine Deten-

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tion and Rehabilitation Center, complained in a letter to the Chief of Chaplains that he had not been allowed to visit Roman Catholic prisoners at Luzon POW Camp No. 1. Responding to the inquiry that resulted, his supervisory chaplain claimed that the writer, whose primary responsibility for ministry was to the prison guards, wanted to attend every execution of a prisoner and anoint every body regardless of faith. The senior chaplain further indicated that the spiritual needs of the prisoners were more than adequately met by the services of a Japanese Roman Catholic priest and the other chaplains assigned.⁶⁹

For the most part, however, the long and extremely trying pastorates of those who served the condemned was a torturous experience which even the memory of the crimes committed could not ease. Thirty years later, retired Chaplain Oscar W. Schoech, Missouri Synod Lutheran, who had also served at Sugamo in Tokyo, reflected succinctly:

There were many things in connection with the numerous executions which I witnessed which I did not care to put into writing and I am grateful that time has erased many of these things from my memory.⁷⁰

SERVING OTHER PRISONERS OF WAR

Although it was less spectacular, the ministry of many U.S. Army chaplains among the thousands of lesser-known captives, both in the United States and abroad, may have been more significant. When Italy surrendered in September 1943, Chaplain Wallace M. Hale, Southern Baptist, was Division Chaplain of the 88th "Blue Devil" Division in the Mediterranean Theater of Operations. Along with four other chaplains, he set out to bring a "rebirth of religion" among the 300,000 German prisoners under the command of the 88th. Although Chaplain Oscar H. Reinboth, Missouri Synod Lutheran, was the only one who spoke German fluently, they managed to locate and enlist the aid of former German clergymen among the prisoners. Attendance at worship services ran as high as 70 percent of those able to attend. "Typical of the new spirit in the German prisoners," Chaplain Hale wrote, "was an incident at the stockade high in the Alps near Merano. An American-appointed chaplain posted the traditional Wehrmacht chaplain's sign outside his tent. It read 'Kriegspfarrer,' or 'War Clergyman.' The next morning he found that the word 'War' had been crossed out and in its place was written 'Peace.' " ⁷¹

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Connie A. DeBruin, Reformed Church of America, and Phillip J. Schroeder, Missouri Synod Lutheran, were among the many chaplains who served German prisoners in the United States. Along with inmate clergymen, DeBruin ministered to 6,400 captives at Fort Custer, Michigan. Schroeder, who later became a professor at Concordia Theological Seminary in St. Louis, had started a "Little POW Seminary" during his 2 years of work with prisoners at Fort Lewis, Washington.⁷²

In the various occupied islands of the Pacific at the end of the War, chaplains were sent into prison camps to supervise the treatment of Japanese soldiers and conduct services for those who were Christian. Among the prisoners in the four large camps covered by Chaplain William V. O'Connor, Roman Catholic, was the Japanese general who formerly commanded the island. "I'm interested in Christianity," he told O'Connor through an interpreter. When asked why, the general speculated that there would have been no war if all men were Christians. Chaplain O'Connor acknowledged that as a possibility but pointed out that Christians also had been known to fight one another. "But if *you* had been good Christians," retorted the general, in reference to Americans who had exploited the Japanese in earlier days, "there would have been no war!"⁷³

In Europe chaplains often were overwhelmed by the response of liberated allies. One Roman Catholic chaplain extended a casual invitation to a Polish-speaking soldier to attend a weekday Mass in the attic of a German farmhouse. When the chaplain arrived he was amazed to find the place jammed. Italians, French, Austrians, Belgians, Hollanders, Ukrainians—nearly 350 of them joined American soldiers and sang their native hymns with great enthusiasm. For some, it had been the first opportunity for public worship in 6 years.⁷⁴

WORKING WITH THE OCCUPATION FORCES IN EUROPE

Chaplain Winfred L. Kingen, Disciples of Christ, with the 862nd Engineer Aviation Battalion, supervised the construction of the first American-type chapel in Germany. Erected on Lechfeld Airfield from a variety of war ruin materials, it was dedicated on 9 December 1945. "This new chapel," he wrote, "stands as a living symbol of one of the cornerstones of any new world of lasting peace which we are striving to build here in the heart of war-torn and ravaged Europe."⁷⁵

The unspeakable sufferings endured from the war in Europe were no more vivid than in the lives of remaining Jews. Chaplain Wolf Gunther

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Plaut, 104th Infantry Division, conducted Germany's first public Jewish service since 1938 in the remains of Cologne's synagogue on Roon Street a little over a month before the Nazi surrender. He described it as "an unforgettable experience. Ragged, half-starved Jews, their spirits barely kindled, stood next to their more fortunate co-religionists from America." All of them cried unashamedly and "were swept up in an immense wave of gratitude that the reign of evil was coming to an end and that even in the land of terror the spirit of the Eternal People would not be quenched forever."⁷⁶ By August, General Eisenhower appointed Rabbi Judah Nadich, the senior Jewish Chaplain at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, as Consultant on Jewish Problems. Nadich, who later wrote about his experiences in his book, *Eisenhower and the Jews*, paved the way for the Office of Jewish Advisor—a position first occupied by Federal Judge Simon Rifkind. The Office coordinated the various efforts to aid Jewish displaced persons from October 1945 to December 1949.⁷⁷

For the most part, Jewish Army chaplains were the first contact between displaced persons and their own people in the outside world. Besides the burial of the "liberated dead," they worked daily among the chaos, confusion and disorganization of the living, attempting to bring some semblance of order along with material and spiritual assistance. "Where is my family?," was a common, anguished plea. Army rabbis worked day and night attempting to reunite loved ones. They established synagogues and organized soldiers to assist with orphans. One group of children from Buchenwald was evacuated immediately to Palestine through the work of Jewish chaplains. By the spring of 1946, ten Jewish chaplains had been recruited and assigned specifically to solve the problems of displaced persons. Actually, it simply meant that the work which was already in full swing now had official status and could be done on a full-time basis.⁷⁸

By the summer of 1946, thousands of refugees poured into Austria attempting to flee persecution in Poland. They had hoped that by passing through the American zone they might move on to Palestine with little difficulty, but the camps in Austria could no longer contain them. They were sent into Germany, by whatever rail transportation was available, accompanied by a chaplain who served as escort, interpreter and liaison officer. The experiences of those men are captured by one who recalled:

How vivid are my recollections of these transports. A thousand people—men, pregnant women, and children, all crowded together in thirty box cars on a miserable, rainy day. Twenty-four hours try-

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ing to bring some measure of comfort and solace to these weary travellers, some of whom were on the road for three months. Whenever the train came to a stop the chaplain . . . would dash from car to car, thus attempting to assure the people that they were not alone. Here was a "pastor" in the true sense of the word, serving a congregation on wheels—a bar of chocolate to a crying child, milk for a pregnant woman, hot coffee for a shivering old man, frantic search at midnight for a doctor to deliver a baby. Twenty-four hours into which were crowded innumerable experiences, even to leading a sunrise worship in a corner of a box-car and joining in the singing of groups of youngsters whose spirits could not be dampened.⁷⁹

Chaplain George Vida took special interest in his Jewish fellowmen who suffered as displaced persons and eventually, because of his involvement and personal expertise in several languages, was assigned to work closely with Bartley C. Crum, head of the Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry on Palestine. In 1967, Vida authored a book which outlined his experiences: *From Doom to Dawn* (Jonathan David Publishers, New York).

For most of the chaplains with the occupation forces in Europe, the keynote seemed to be set by Episcopal Bishop Henry Knox Sherrill, former World War I chaplain and head of the Army-Navy Commission for Episcopal Chaplains as well as Chairman of the General Commission. "The problem the victor in the European war must now face," he said, "is the fact that they must live with the Germans and therefore it is to our interest to establish relations as soon as possible with people who can build a new nation. . . . In my opinion, we must hold out a hand to the churches in Germany."⁸⁰

One of the immediate difficulties faced by chaplains, however, was the existence of non-fraternization regulations. Despite their existence, many chaplains began organizing German youth groups. In September 1945, the Seventh Army gave official direction to chaplains to participate in such activities even though it was in clear violation of the non-fraternization policy.⁸¹ Apparently this confusion resulted in some embarrassing incidents prior to an alteration of the regulations. Early in 1946, the president of the "American Women's Unit for War Relief, Inc.," wrote to the Secretary of War, Robert Patterson, and inclosed a newspaper article that claimed some U.S. Army chaplains had been arrested and threatened with court martial for "collaborating with the enemy." The OCCH replied for the Secretary and explained:

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Similar reports of some unfortunate episodes during the early days of the occupation of Germany by American forces have appeared in a number of publications. However, it is believed that these refer to happenings during the early period of occupation. It seems probable that the same is true of the circumstances referred to in the clipping attached to your letter and that the recent modification of the non-fraternization policy would prevent the repetition of any such incident.⁸²

Despite these difficulties, the youth programs were an apparent success. Chaplains of one division reported that in 3 months 30,000 had attended movies, 25,000 had participated in sports, and 8,000 attended Christmas parties—all sponsored by chaplains and aided by American troops.⁸³ The groups, in some cases, developed into “Youth for Christ” organizations which were particularly strong in Frankfurt, Munich, Berlin, and Nuremberg. Teenage American soldiers, and eventually American dependents, joined with German youth in what was called a “training ground of Christian democracy in Europe.”⁸⁴

As was mentioned earlier, some of the first contacts between American chaplains and German clergymen were made in POW camps. Many German pastors had been drafted during the War and served as regular soldiers or medical assistants. Through the efforts of American chaplains, who provided literature and facilities, these clergy began to resume their original professions. Seminars and seminaries were organized and a variety of welfare activities for hospitals, orphanages, kindergartens and youth-recreational groups became joint efforts of Army chaplains and national clergy.⁸⁵ When American units moved into Austria, an “Ecclesiastical Affairs Branch” was formed and continued until January 1947. Its primary purpose was to restore freedom of religion and public worship by releasing former clergymen who had been in confinement, assisting in the repair of buildings, and supplying materials. It also became an agency to render assistance to Austrian civilians with housing, clothing, fuel, and medical supplies.⁸⁶ One chaplain in Germany established weekly lectures for local pastors on the general topic of American church life. “Realizing that many and drastic changes lie ahead for the Evangelical Church in Germany,” he said, “it is their desire to learn all they can of the workings of American Protestant Churches.”⁸⁷

In the midst of all the activities by chaplains who were attempting to restore religious life in Europe, there was also the lonely duty of tending to those soldiers who had fallen in battle. Chaplain Theodore

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Pfeiffer, Presbyterian USA, was among those who served with the American graves Registration Command. He and his fellow chaplains performed countless committal services and answered the continual flow of mail from the next of kin of many of the 150,000 Americans buried in the 37 military cemeteries throughout Europe. They were moved by the great kindnesses shown by many local civilians in Holland, France and Belgium who visited the graves, adorned them with flowers and knelt to offer prayers. For the most part, however, the task was the lonely vigil described by one chaplain:

One of our principal duties is to go to the cemeteries three or four times a week for prayers for American soldiers, whose bodies have been recovered from various battle grounds throughout Europe. They have been brought from many places to rest among their own. The chaplains stand alone with the Commanding Officer of the cemetery, prayers and requiems are recited by the chaplains, and a final salute is given. There are no mourners. Only God knows that America is giving her final tribute to her heroic dead.⁸⁸

Ironically, one of the great leaders of American soldiers during the War was killed in a vehicle accident only a few months after the War had ended. General George S. Patton joined his fallen comrades whose places were now marked by endless rows of white crosses and Stars of David. Chaplain Edwin R. Carter, Congregationalist, Deputy Staff Chaplain of the European Theater of Operations, and Chaplain Loren T. Jenks, Disciples of Christ, conducted the funeral services in Christ Church, Heidelberg, on 23 December 1945. On the following day, Christmas Eve, Chaplain Carter held the committal service in the American Military cemetery near Luxembourg.⁸⁹

Immediately following the War, the reaction of the German people to the activities of American Army chaplains was generally one of favorable surprise. Chaplain Leslie V. Barnes, Roman Catholic, observed:

The spectacle of churches filled with soldiers on their knees in prayer, the Armies of men in uniform assisting by thousands at colorful field Masses, others assembled in great Cathedrals at services in Thanksgiving—all made profound impressions on people indoctrinated with the gospel of hate.⁹⁰

One chaplain set up his office in a storeroom formerly occupied by the Wehrmacht. He placed a portable altar in the front window with an open Bible and a large card inscribed with John 3: 16 in German. The display attracted a great deal of attention from those who passed by and one individual remarked through an interpreter: "The Nazis told us that

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there was nothing to religion, and here the American Army comes bringing the very words of Jesus.”⁹¹ A Catholic chaplain reported that groups of Germans would watch in amazement as American troops came in large numbers to Confession and Holy Communion. “It seems as though the complete absence of official repression at Divine Services,” he said, “was something they could not entirely grasp.”⁹²

Nevertheless, even chaplains sometimes experienced a reluctance on the part of German citizens to see them in any other way than as former adversaries. When fellow Methodists Alfred M. Ellison and Clovis G. Childers attended a German church service in Bad Kissingen, Chaplain Ellison noted: “During the singing of the choir and the great music of Brahms and Bach and others, I felt the sting of being an enemy. Chaplain Childers and I took our seats but the church members carefully avoided sitting near us until nearly all seats were taken.”⁹³

To provide a type of police force for the U.S. area of occupation in Germany, the United States Constabulary was formed under the command of Major General Ernest Harmon. Comparable to a division with three brigades, they were made up of a variety of units previously involved in the invasion. Dressed in olive-drab uniforms, combat boots, striped helmet liners and yellow scarves, they made regular patrols in jeeps and armored cars painted yellow, blue and red. In February 1946 the chaplain section for the Constabulary was established with Charles P. Malumphy, Roman Catholic, as Staff Chaplain. “I want the best chaplains for this outfit,” General Harmon told Chaplain Malumphy. “I want you to get them and I’ll do all I can to help them in their work, but they must work.”⁹⁴

The Constabulary had to confront the normal problems inherent in occupation forces. With the danger of battle past, chaplains began to notice a slow change in the attitude of American troops. “Interest in chapel has dropped almost to the ‘cold storage’ point,” reported Chaplain Vern A. Slater, General Conference Baptist. “Last month I held 12 worship services with 430 attending. . . . Immorality, drunkenness, and indifference are taking a heavy toll of our young men.”⁹⁵ By the end of 1946, the House Military Affairs Committee of the U.S. Congress was releasing a third draft of a report that sharply criticized the policies of the U.S. Army of occupation in the European Theater. One Army chaplain had given a statement to representatives of the committee complaining that the Army in Europe virtually condoned immorality and gave little stress to recreational and religious activities. The committee, in turn,

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publicly commended the role played by chaplains in their attempt to retain a high standard of morality.⁹⁶

In the spring of 1947, a commission of 14 clergymen was appointed by the War Department to survey the problems and conditions of the American occupation of Germany and Austria. Their report indicated a need for stronger support of chaplains who were trying to change some of the bad examples set by American soldiers who, they believed, were giving discredit to the United States and democracy in general.⁹⁷ Although the introduction of American military dependents to Europe, which began in April 1946, slowly tempered such problems, as late as August 1948 a corporal addressed the following comments to the Chief of Chaplains. His letter hinted that even chaplains were not producing the kind of change he desired:

Today, as never before, we are in need of some real honest to goodness chaplains in the army of occupation that are interested in the men enough to do some good. I have no complaint to make against the chaplains we have in the service and as far as I know they are all men of excellent reputation and are doing all within their power to combat sin and the devil, but when you go to church and there are perhaps a dozen there, then I am wondering if something is not drastically wrong somewhere. . . . Isn't there somehow that all the chaplains can be awakened to the great need of these soldiers? . . . Isn't there somehow that I may help in a greater way? ⁹⁸

Chaplain James B. Murphy, Roman Catholic, answering for the Chief, said in part:

Unfortunately, my young friend, you have had to witness a revolution in the social order and to endure the fears, uncertainty and disappointment so often attendant upon disaster. You can be sure that we, along with other men of good will, are aware of the perils of the day. Our efforts may seem weak and our purposes sometimes uncertain, but confident of God's power we yet press forward in doing His will.⁹⁹

With the relaxation of the non-fraternization policy there came an increase in application for German-American marriages. The resultant counseling and interpretation of regulations fell largely upon the chaplains. Invariably, the delays caused by endless paper work as well as the restrictive quota system for foreign spouses to enter the United States resulted in soldiers being shipped home without their wives. The practical and emotional problems inherent in that situation consumed much of

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the time and energy of the occupation chaplains. By the last half of 1948, since the quota system of the War Brides Act was scheduled to expire on 28 December, the number of marriages increased sharply.¹⁰⁰ Chaplain Charles P. Carlson, Presbyterian, serving with the 7720th European Command Replacement Depot in that year, was particularly impressed by the number of soldiers who returned to Europe with the intention of marrying German girls they had met on their previous tour.

Each shipment brings five to twenty men who convey this to the chaplain. It is believed that these men are sincere for they have had a time of separation to think it over. . . . from three to a dozen men come to the office of the chaplain and inform him that they have come back to locate, provide for, and make permanent arrangements for children they have sired and left behind. . . . These men are to be regarded very highly, for they have come back, oftentimes at a great sacrifice, to right the wrong they committed.¹⁰¹

The continual arrival of more and more dependents in Europe made it necessary to draw many chaplains from troop units to provide spiritual ministries to the American military communities springing up throughout Germany.¹⁰² One of those chaplains arrived to find two American wives valiantly struggling every Sunday morning to clean and organize the main hall of the officers' club for Sunday School. With their help he was able to move the classes to the local community school, establish a Bible Class for teacher-training, and in 5 months build the largest American community Sunday School in Germany.¹⁰³

A vigorous chapel-building program was also initiated for the American communities—some from the ground up and others from rehabilitated buildings. In 8 years approximately 270 such structures were serving as the center of American religious activities in communities now equipped with commissaries, post exchanges, administrative offices, and various other public service buildings.¹⁰⁴ While many of the Army churches conformed to a standard design, some employed uniquely symbolical material. Chaplain Cloma A. Huffman, Christian Congregational, supervised the transformation of an old German artillery stable into a chapel at Heilbronn. Three symbolic stones were mounted in the base of the altar. One, dating back to the 13th century with 400-year-old engravings, came from the badly damaged Saint Kilian's Evangelical Church. The congregation donated the stone in appreciation for the contributions of American soldiers for the reconstruction of their church. Another came from Saint Augustine's Roman Catholic Church;

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together with Saint Kilian's it was virtually destroyed during 1944 bombing raids but had since been rebuilt. The third stone came from the Stuttgart Jewish Synagogue which SS troops had demolished in 1938; the stone was among those for which members of the congregation had risked their lives—hiding and secretly burying fragments as precious symbols of their faith. The three stones uniquely represented the cooperation of the major faiths as well as the new found friendship of the German people.¹⁰⁵

"The community chaplain," wrote Chaplain John B. Youngs, Bible Presbyterian, "enjoys a position much like that of the civilian pastor." As such, those chaplains ministered to soldiers and their families, as well as to civilian workers and local German churches, developing and supervising a variety of organizations and programs.¹⁰⁶ Chaplain Paul J. Maddox, Southern Baptist, Staff Chaplain for the European Command from July 1946 to July 1950, maintained that there was no greater opportunity for ministry in the chaplaincy. By 1948, more than 125 religious schools had been established and more than 2,000,000 people were helped annually through civic action programs. "Chaplains have been a living witness," said Maddox, "that the purpose of the United States is not to exploit the conquered but to help them regain faith in life and in the living God."¹⁰⁷

While the total efforts and effects of what is commonly called "Civic Action" are almost impossible to measure, the contribution of a single chaplain in that area gives some hint of the immensity of the work. When Chaplain Herman H. Heuer, Missouri Synod Lutheran, was reassigned to the Headquarters from one of the brigades in the Constabulary in 1947, a reporter for the unit newspaper wrote: "The only people glad to see him go were the APO clerks." In a matter of a few months, Chaplain Heuer had received and distributed 592 charity parcels representing approximately 20,000 pounds of "warmth and comfort."¹⁰⁸

While the occupation of Europe slowly changed the lives of American soldiers stationed there, as well as the ministry of their chaplains, the memories of the long and agonizing War remained. One chaplain mused:

It was my privilege recently to make a trip by jeep back through the Siegfried line sector where our 76th Infantry Division fought . . . "Death Valley" and Echternach Hill were quiet and peaceful under a bright fall sun. The beauty of God's handiwork already obscured many of the horrible seats of war. But could I ever forget the trails in blood, the whine and roar of shells, the pain and torture of mangled bodies, the weary, miserable soldiers that those

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scenes caused to stir again within my mind? Never! I could only thank God those days were over, and earnestly pray that mankind will tune their hearts to God's message of love and peace.¹⁰⁹

Chaplain Thomas L. Doyle, Methodist, with the 120th Station Hospital in Bayreuth, wrote in 1948:

The continuing ministry of the chaplain will always be needed whether in peace or war. We must have something that goes deeper than peace pacts and societies . . . a religion that will change not only the heart of mankind, but create justice, loyalty and freedom and thus build a happier and better world where truth and righteousness dwell.¹¹⁰

SERVING THE OCCUPATION FORCES IN THE FAR EAST

Army chaplains with the occupation units in Japan entered their work with such fervor that their first chapel, constructed from war wreckage materials, was dedicated a mere 15 days after the signing of the peace treaty.¹¹¹ More significant, however, is the fact that in late November 1945, over 80 Army and Navy chaplains gathered in the Red Cross Building in Tokyo to form an organization for "the discussion of common problems and inspiration." Originally meeting under the leadership of the Eighth Army Chaplain, Yandell S. Beans, Disciples of Christ, they elected Chaplain Hudson B. Phillips, Northern Baptist, as their temporary chairman.¹¹² It was this group—later to become the "Tokyo-Yokohama Chapter of the Army-Navy Chaplains' Association"—which became influential not only in coordinating pastoral activities but also in providing a common voice on the various issues of occupation.

On 17 December 1946, Phillips and two other chaplains—William Nern, Roman Catholic, and Morris Adler, Jewish—met with General MacArthur as representatives of the chaplains' group. Their report on the meeting indicated MacArthur's commitment to a strong western religious influence in Japan.

He expressed conviction earnestly that there can be no hope for the world apart from the teachings of religion and the attitudes it fosters. The collapse of Japan has created a spiritual vacuum which Christian leadership should seek to fill with Christian values and sentiments. Shintoism never struck deep roots in the daily life of the Japanese. In a sense it was no religion at all. It was a political device which the government used for its own purposes. It was artificially stimulated and maintained by deliberate design. That is why it has been abolished. What saved the situation in the Philip-

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pires was the Christianization and Democracy of the inhabitants four centuries ago. . . . His plan and hope was that through Christianity and Democracy the Japanese would be tamed.¹¹³

The determination of MacArthur to bring the combination of Christianity and democracy to Japan was emphasized repeatedly during his command. Early in 1946 he invited four prominent American Christian leaders to Japan—men who had influential positions in organizations representing the missionary activities of U.S. churches. Their assignment was to meet with Japanese Christian leaders, as well as Emperor Hirohito, and determine what the Church at large could do to help rebuild the country.¹¹⁴ By the late 1940's MacArthur encouraged a mass distribution of Bibles in Japan. He referred to efforts in this program as a "demonstration of practical Christianity" which met the "heart-needs" of the Japanese by giving them the Scriptures "which reveal the knowledge of God and His love through Jesus Christ."¹¹⁵ As late as 1950 he commented to a visiting American churchman: "Please send ten missionaries for every one you now have in Japan. We must have ten thousand Christian missionaries and a million Bibles to complete the occupation of this land."¹¹⁶ It's no wonder that one chaplain in Japan referred to the General in a letter by saying, "He has done more than any other man to further Christianity in Japan."¹¹⁷

MacArthur's conviction that democracy and Christianity were inseparable necessities for the rebirth of Japan was readily accepted by many chaplains. The Eight Army Chaplain in late 1946 stressed to the chaplains' organization that foremost in their duties was the presentation of western civilization, American democracy, and the Christian faith to the people of Japan.¹¹⁸

During the early days of occupation, MacArthur was equally concerned with the increasing problems of morale among American troops. He told his chaplains he was convinced that such problems would become more difficult and serious with the passing of time; homesickness would become intensified, and grumbling and complaints would be heard everywhere. Although he felt that such difficulties were to be expected among occupation forces, he bolstered his chaplains by maintaining that during the War "the Command in the Pacific won to an unequalled degree the religious and spiritual interest of the troops. There was six times more religious attendance than in any other theater."¹¹⁹

What troubled the chaplains was the phenomenal increase in houses of prostitution. On 11 January 1946, with the unanimous approval of

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the 88 military clergymen present, the chaplains' organization drafted a lengthy letter to the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Army Forces in the Pacific, under the subject title: "Repression of Prostitution." They stated that they were "strongly of the conviction that prostitution as it relates to the U.S. Occupation Forces in Japan is producing moral degradation that is exceptionally widespread and unusually ruinous to the character of American troops." The letter contained many recommendations. Among them were disciplinary action against officers who advertise houses of prostitution; discontinuance of the practice of labeling "acceptable" houses; emphasis to troops on the moral issues, not just the physical dangers of promiscuity; establishment of lecture and interview periods by chaplains for all in-coming troops; and, above all, the declaration of all houses of prostitution as being "off limits."¹²⁰

The first acknowledgment of the letter came nearly a month later with a restricted communication signed for the Commander-in-Chief by an assistant adjutant. It thanked the chaplains' organization for its "excellent report" and promised action. Interestingly, the reply noted that a Memorandum from the Supreme Commander to the Imperial Japanese Government—dated 10 days after the chaplains' letter—had directed the abolition of licensed prostitution in the country.¹²¹ Then, on 31 March, a two-page letter was published and distributed to "All Army Chaplains on Duty in Japan." On the bottom was the familiar bold autograph without a signature block: "Douglas MacArthur." Whether or not he was personally aware of their January letter is unclear. With no reference to it whatsoever, he wrote in part:

. . . I have . . . received letters from American homes expressing grave concern and deep distress over published reports suggestive of an existing widespread promiscuous relationship between members of the occupying forces and Japanese women of immoral character.

. . . To protect the members of our occupying forces as far as possible from influences of evil, houses of prostitution and of ill repute have been placed off limits . . . Every effort furthermore is being made to increase the opportunities for educational advancement and interesting and healthy recreation for soldiers when off duty. It is not sufficient, however, that we take such diversionary measures in the solution of a problem which has confronted armies of occupation throughout military history. We must, in addition, exert strong and direct moral leadership over the members of the occupying forces, to the end that the underlying moral fiber remain undiminished in strength. Such moral leadership devolves, in large

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measure, upon the corps of chaplains working in close understanding and cooperation with all unit commanders. . . .¹²²

While the chaplains were pleased with the content of the letter, some were disturbed that it had been released to the press without reference to their original correspondence. "The open letter of General MacArthur," protested the Eighth Army Chaplain in a Memorandum to the Chief of Staff, "produces the impression that the chaplains at this late date have to be called upon to fulfill their duty."¹²³

In May 1946 the Chief of Chaplains asked all chaplains in occupation zones to provide publicity about their ministries in an attempt to counteract the emphasis in the press on the issue of promiscuity.¹²⁴ As late as November, however, the Veterans of Foreign Wars complained that servicemen were returning to the States as physical, mental, moral, and social wrecks infected with venereal disease. They called on the President and the War Department to allow chaplains to have a greater voice in the choice of entertainment for those in occupation areas.¹²⁵ Much like the situation in Europe, the issue of immorality seemed to subside only after the influx of American dependents into Japan.¹²⁶

Despite the publicity given to the bad examples of some of the occupation troops, there were contributions and services given by many soldiers that unfortunately received less notice. By mid-1946, reports to the Chief of Chaplains indicated that occupation personnel had contributed thousands of dollars for the repair and, in some cases, construction of churches, seminaries and orphanages. Nippon Union Theological Seminary in Tokyo was one recipient of such help.¹²⁷ "The G.I.s of the Army of Occupation," reported one American-clergy observer, "have won many of the Japanese people." It was his opinion that, for the most part, American soldiers had conducted themselves "with a decent respect for the feelings of others. The situation is so much better than the people of Japan had dared to expect that hatred has largely dissipated."¹²⁸

Establishing a precedent for continuing liaison and cooperation with local churches, the chaplains' organization in Tokyo invited a Japanese Christian minister to their initial meeting. In his address to the group he asked them to publicize the special 1945 Christmas services at which the famous Toyohiko Kagawa was to speak and a choir, composed of both Japanese and Americans, was to present portions of Handel's "Messiah."¹²⁹

In Utsunomiya, occupation troops repaired an old church building, erasing the ugly scars of bombing, installing new windows and replacing

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the flooring. It was filled twice every day with Japanese who came to hear the Christian message. A sign in front bore the unique name in Japanese and English: "GI Gospel Mission."¹³⁰

When Chaplain William J. Reiss, Missouri Synod Lutheran, arrived in Hokkaido in August 1974, a Mr. Kosaku Nao served as his interpreter and Mrs. Nao as his chapel organist. Reiss later discovered, to his surprise, that Nao was in fact a fellow Lutheran minister who had served on the mainland before the War. They became close friends and worked together supporting new missionary efforts in the country. Over 2 decades later, the humble interpreter became the president of the subsequently-formed Japan Lutheran Church.¹³¹

Chaplain Francis L. Sampson, Roman Catholic, also stationed in Japan, commented on the people of the country by writing: "The Japanese are in their way a wonderful people . . . and those who become Christians do not do so by half measure."¹³² That was a sentiment with which most chaplains and American missionaries thoroughly agreed.

There were on occasion, of course, incidents which marred this relationship. In 1948, for example, there was considerable correspondence between the OCCH, the Methodist Board of Missions and the Far East Command chaplains involving a single situation in which a Japanese Christian woman was ridiculed by some Americans for her religious devotion. The incident helped to emphasize the meaning of General MacArthur's warning: "One misdeed may overshadow a thousand good deeds."¹³³

For the most part, however, a cooperative spirit between the occupation forces and the Japanese prevailed. It was a spirit beautifully captured in a letter received by Chaplain Peter E. Cullom, Southern Baptist, in October 1947:

Our most respectable and dear Chaplain Cullom:

It was this spring that you came to this Ashiya as a chaplain of the U.S. occupation forces. About half a year since then, you preached the gospel of merciful Christ earnestly for us stray sheep ever since the defeat. . . .

We firmly believe it is these deeds of yours that will be a corner stone, the ground work of good will between yours and our country. . . .

Yours in Christ
Ashiya Baptist [sic] Church¹³⁴

American religious endeavors among the Japanese continued for some time to be associated with U.S. political ideals. As late as 1950, for

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example, a chaplain with the 25th Division Artillery in Nara, Honshu, Japan, was commenting on his good chapel attendance and added: "I believe we are selling the ideals of democracy to the Japanese people to the degree that we uphold the standards of righteousness."¹³⁵ In the same year, retired Admiral William F. Halsey accepted a position as a regional chairman in a \$10,000 campaign for the international Christian University in Japan. In accepting, the noted former leader wrote: "It is very apparent that the Japanese associate Democracy with Christianity. It is therefore fitting that a nonsectarian Christian college be established to spread this philosophy."¹³⁶

Many of the initial efforts of Army chaplains with occupation units in Japan were directed and guided by Chaplain Frank P. MacKenzie, Presbyterian U.S., Far East Command Chaplain. During his leadership, as in the European occupation, the ministry of chaplains slowly changed from duty with specific units to local parish service within military communities.¹³⁷ The number of Army dependants and American civilian personnel continued to grow after MacKenzie's retirement in 1948 and became even more a part of the chaplains' ministry under his successor, Roy H. Parker, Southern Baptist. Chapel Centers, constructed to provide facilities for all ages in various programs, were credited for vast increases in attendance at chapel activities. A report to the Secretary of the Army in 1951 indicated the Center at the General Headquarters in Tokyo had increased activities from 20 to 234 per month during the previous 2 years. Attendance rates during the same period shot up from 1,800 to over 15,000.¹³⁸ Reflecting on those days, Chaplain Duncan N. Naylor, Presbyterian U.S., recalled:

As Protestant chaplain at Nasugbu Beach Chapel, Yokohama, Japan, I developed the first totally rounded chapel program of my chapel ministry—men, women, youth, benevolent giving and projects, as well as worship and Sunday School. The chapel became the activity center of the housing area.¹³⁹

By 1952, it was reported that Chaplain Alexander J. Turner, Southern Baptist, serving at the Grant Heights Chapel in Tokyo, had the distinction of conducting both the largest Sunday school and largest allied adult worship services in the world. His average Sunday service attendance was nearly 700.¹⁴⁰

Chaplains with the occupation forces in the Far East also made early use of the Armed Forces Radio Network. Shortly after the arrival of U.S. troops, Chaplain Amos P. Bailey, Methodist, presented the first Christian

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broadcast from Tokyo since 1941. A weekly schedule, including daily devotions and Sunday services, was beamed throughout Japan and as far away as China and Okinawa.¹⁴¹

The Commander-in-Chief of the Army Forces in the Pacific had a vast range of responsibility following the War and the great number of men under his command included a group of Philippine Scouts. When authority was granted for the appointment of Philippine soldiers as officers in the Army of the United States, approval was given also, though contrary to a previous provision, for the appointment of not more than ten Philippine chaplains. On 13 November 1946, three national clergymen—Natanéal Depano, Methodist, Eligio B. A. Hernandez, Presbyterian (United Evangelical Church), Eusebio M. Taguined, Roman Catholic—were appointed with the restriction that their ministry would be conducted only among the Scouts.¹⁴²

While the occupation units in Japan received most of the attention, there were also many U.S. troops and their chaplains serving in those Far Eastern places whose names most Americans had forgotten. Among them was a 25,000-square-mile peninsula known as Korea; like Germany, it lay divided by the occupation forces of the Soviet Union and the United States. In the American sector, the U.S. Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK) set out to build a nation for an impoverished people. Besides those serving various occupation units there, twelve Army chaplains, assigned to USAMGIK, worked directly with the Military Provincial Governors in the separate, established provinces. A senior chaplain at the time reported:

I find here a unique opportunity for far-reaching service. A new civilization is being built. The American Military Governor and his key officers are men of serious purpose, high vision and exceptional ability. They seem to have the confidence and support of the Korean people. They are steadily implementing the program of government throughout the southern half of Korea, replacing the machinery of Japanese despotism with democratic processes, and preparing the Korean people for self-government and independence. My work . . . gives me an important part in this great enterprise.¹⁴³

All of the chaplains in Korea, including those with USAMGIK, came under the supervision of the XXIV Corps Chaplain, Vernon P. Jaeger, American Baptist. In late 1947 he was succeeded briefly by George F. Rixey, Methodist, who had served as Deputy Chief of Chaplains during most of World War II, and afterwards as an Assistant Inspector General.

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When Rixey retired in early 1948 to become the Executive Secretary of the Chaplains' Association, he was succeeded by Chaplain Peter C. Schroeder, United Lutheran.¹⁴⁴

Despite optimistic reports on the progress in Korea, there was a growing concern that a conflict might lie ahead. In 1948, Dr. Hyunki Lew, a leading educator and author of the country, warned a world mission conference in Chautaugua, New York, that Korea was a land in which Christianity and Communism were "in a life and death fight." While he praised the hard work of U.S. occupation personnel and American missionaries, he maintained that they were being "out-talked" by the Communists.¹⁴⁵ Border incidents were frequent and some Koreans looked with fear on the announcement of an early withdrawal of all U.S. forces except for a small advisory group. Despite those apprehensions, the exodus took place at the end of June 1949.¹⁴⁶ As if by prophecy, a Communist invasion would return U.S. soldiers to battle a mere 12 months later—less than 5 years after the expressed hope that the world was done with war.

What first came to a head on the battlefields of Korea was a growing antagonism between two political systems, an antagonism that had started decades earlier. Soviet Communism versus Western democracy was always far more than an argument between politicians or a simple disagreement on the more efficient form of government. The deep chasm between them was formed by a variance in their very philosophies of man. Preached with a religious enthusiasm, Soviet Communism made bold advances following World War II. It was not surprising, therefore, that this considered threat to democracy caused concern among many Americans over the defense and continuance of their old ideals. To a certain extent, that concern was instrumental in developing new trends in the United States Army Chaplaincy.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER I

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¹⁴⁰ *The Chaplain*, January–February 1952, p. 48.

¹⁴¹ See *The Chaplain*, January 1946, p. 45; Minutes Chaplains' Meeting, Tokyo, 8 January 1946, USACHCS.

¹⁴² Messages, The Adjutant General (TAG) to Commander in Chief Army Forces Pacific (CINCAFPAC), 16 April 1946; CINCAFPAC to TAG, 5 July 1946; CONCAFPAC to TAG, 14 September 1946; Office Memorandum Col. Atkinson to Col. Ryan, 16 September 1946; War Department Procurement Branch (Col. Atkinson) to CINCAFPAC, 18 September 1946; Memorandum, Roy H. Parker to Col. Atkinson, 13 November 1946, RG 247, file 210.1, NA.

¹⁴³ *Circular Letter*, No. 309, 7 June 1946, p. 3.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 299, 1 August 1945, p. 2.

¹⁴⁵ *The Chaplain*, December 1948, p. 13.

¹⁴⁶ See *Army and Navy Journal*, 25 June 1949, p. 1250; 2 July 1949, p. 1278.

CHAPTER II

Shifting From Guard to the Backfield

REACTING TO THE MOODS OF THE TIMES

"Communism is one of the most acute issues of our day," began a January 1950 article in a chaplain-oriented periodical. "It claims to be the one way of salvation for human society but stands opposed to Christianity at essential points. . . . Christians are called upon not only to set forth the principles of Christ but also to apply them to the whole social life of man."¹ To fully understand some of the developments in the Army Chaplaincy between World War II and the conflict in Korea, one must attempt to recapture some of that ideological mood which permeated America for nearly 2 decades.

On the one hand, Americans desperately wanted to be done with war. They looked with favor on the rapid dismantling of the gigantic military machine. In the 2 years following V-J Day, the U.S. Army dropped in strength by nearly seven million men. By the beginning of 1950 it numbered just 630,000. It continued to drop until only 591,500 remained on the eve of the Korean War.²

On the other hand, fear and mistrust of the Soviet Union and Communism in general kindled a strong animosity in the United States which grew hotter each year. The hostility was fed by Communist advances in 1947 and 1948. American military supplies and advisors were sent to aid Greece in its fight against Communist guerrillas. The 1948 Communist coup in Czechoslovakia gave further credence to the reality of a "Red Threat." The most shocking challenge came, however, with the Soviet blockade of isolated Berlin. The United States and Britain responded with a massive air lift and the Allied Powers formed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in an attempt to discourage the Russian advance. Meanwhile, a Communist take-over in China drove America's wartime friends, Chiang Kai-shek and his followers, to Taiwan (Formosa).

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What came to be known as the "Cold War" grew hotter with the September 1949 announcement that the Russians had exploded their first atomic bomb. President Truman, in laying the cornerstone for the new United Nations building in New York, called on the organization to help control atomic weapons. At the same time, however, the U.S. stepped up its own work on a greater weapon—the hydrogen bomb. Many believed a confrontation was imminent and that it might, in fact, spell the end of human civilization.

Added to this fear was a suspicion of others that grew from the clandestine activities of the Communist Party throughout the world. As a result, patriotism in the United States was no longer simply pro-American. It had become vehemently anti-Communist.

With all their diversity, U.S. citizens held a common respect for religion and stood appalled at the boldness of Communist atheism. The mood of America was reinforced by the 1947 "Freedom Train." Threading its way from Philadelphia through all 48 states in a 1-year, 33,000 mile journey, the train's seven red-white-and-blue cars carried 113 original documents from American history. Thousands of citizens had their first opportunity to see the precious foundations of American democracy and were encouraged to recognize, among other things, "the close relationship between our religious beliefs and our democratic ideals."³

Where was the United States Army Chaplaincy to fit in that kind of national climate? Roy J. Honeywell, in his book *Chaplains of the United States Army*, made an interesting comment on the role of chaplains during the American Revolution:

It has been said that the chaplains were governed by two objectives—to save souls and to defend American liberties. There are many indications that the latter was not considered wholly subordinate in value.⁴

The disputed primacy of those same values was again debated by chaplains following World War II. One chaplain, for example, wrote in October 1945:

. . . Chaplains are not in the Army because government is primarily interested in the saving of men's souls. The chaplain shares the mission of all other arms of the service to strengthen the will to victory. . . . Religion can and does make souls strong for battle. . . .⁵

Another chaplain reacted strongly against that sentiment and declared that "chaplains are not in uniform to preach and teach religious and

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moral values to insure military triumph. I am primarily interested,” he insisted, “in the saving of men’s souls.”⁶

If there was an alignment with either of those opinions, the attitude that the chaplaincy must play a major role in defending American liberties seemed to carry more weight. In 1946, Francis Cardinal Spellman called chaplains: “Soldiers in the midst of war on the homefront.” He told them that all their achievements during World War II would “fade and die unless you continue to preserve and protect America against aggression of enemies within her borders.”⁷ At the 1948 convention of the Chaplains Association of the Army and Navy, men like John Foster Dulles and James Forrestal voiced similar opinions.⁸ At the same convention, “chaplains of every faith” were given “an opportunity to ask for divine guidance for the unfortunate, misled people of Russia.”⁹

In early 1950, President Truman appointed a representative civilian committee to study and promote religion and welfare in the U.S. Armed Forces. At the conclusion of their work, just before the invasion in Korea, a committee staff member declared:

Of the ministerial group, no part of it has a more significant role to play in the struggle for a decent and more tolerable world than those who minister to the moral and spiritual needs of the members of the armed forces and their dependents.¹⁰

Any criticism today against the chaplaincy and its programs of those years, should be tempered with an understanding of that mood. It was amid that kind of developing milieu that its leadership sought new directions.

SEEKING AN INFLUENTIAL ROLE

The nomination of Luther D. Miller, Episcopalian, to the rank of brigadier general and Army Chief of Chaplains was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on 11 April 1945. His predecessor, Chaplain (Major General) William R. Arnold, Roman Catholic, who had led the Army’s chaplains for the previous 8 years—longer than any man to hold the office of Chief of Chaplains—was designated to serve briefly as an Assistant Inspector General in the Office of the Inspector General of the Army. Together with his former Deputy Chief, Chaplain George F. Rixey, Methodist, Arnold assumed the new, temporary task of serving as an inspector of affairs dealing with the Chaplain Corps and religious mat-

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ters.¹¹ Arnold and Rixey had supervised the largest number of Army chaplains ever to serve on active duty and had emphasized, obviously, their pastoral ministry to soldiers on the battlefield. It was a ministry that sought divine protection and comfort for those who faced the horror of war.

Miller, who was promoted to major general 8 months after his appointment as Chief, set a different focus for Army chaplains following the War. In an article for a military periodical in 1947, he described post-War chaplains as influential military instructors in Bible-based morality. He believed that moral training was a prerequisite for a continuing democracy and saw future chaplains as educators who would help build a stronger citizenry. "Consequently," he concluded, "the Army chaplain is no longer playing guard; he is in the backfield."¹² The most immediate and practical element of Chaplain Miller's philosophy appeared in another article of the same issue:

The new weekly Army publication, known as *The Chaplain's Hour* made its debut on 12 Sept. [1947] . . . the eight page first issue of the Chaplain's Hour contains material for a lecture on citizenship and morality. Such lectures are to be given throughout the Army by chaplains as a regular feature wherever troops are stationed.¹³

SUPPORTING UNIVERSAL MILITARY TRAINING

"The Chaplain's Hour," later called "Character Guidance," had evolved in conjunction with another concept known as "Universal Military Training" (UMT). UMT was a long-discussed, theoretical plan to provide military training for all of the nation's youth and thus produce a citizen army ready to fight whenever called. As envisioned by President Truman, however, the military phase was merely incidental. He seemed concerned mainly with an overall improvement of America's young men. The President wanted the program in order "to develop skills that could be used in civilian life, to raise the physical standards of the nation's manpower, to lower the illiteracy rate, to develop citizenship responsibilities, and to foster the moral and spiritual welfare of our young people."¹⁴

Chaplain Miller had appeared before the Post-War Military Policy Committee of the House of Representatives in mid-1945 to endorse the UMT proposal. Apparently receptive to the President's concept, he declared himself "thoroughly convinced" that "the proposed program of universal military training could serve to support and extend the efforts

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of the home, the church, and the community to enrich the character of our youth.”¹⁵

In reality, UMT never got beyond planning and testing stages despite the high-level interest. The hesitation to rebuild a large Army following the War, despite the Communist threat, made it difficult to gain popular support. When the Korean War suddenly required a larger Army, the necessary rapidity of the buildup negated the establishment of such a new concept. It was not until 1951 that Congress finally passed the Universal Military Training and Selective Service Act. Even then, the bill simply endorsed the plan in principle and never implemented it.¹⁶

Early in 1946, however, when high-level politicians supported the theory, the War Department made plans for an experimental UMT unit to be activated at Fort Knox, Kentucky. The initial proposal envisioned a group of roughly 800 men, all under the age of 19, to train for 1 year. Brigadier General John M. Devine was selected as the unit's commander.¹⁷ When the plans for the unit were sent to the OCCH for comment, Chaplain Harold O. Prudell, Roman Catholic, in the Plans and Programs Division, made several suggestions. Among them was the presentation of specially prepared lectures by chaplains on topics related to citizenship and morality.¹⁸ Perhaps because of the fact that chaplains had been making similar presentations to soldiers for years, the suggestion was adopted.¹⁹ Various elements for the experimental unit were passed out for detail work and this new portion of the project was given to the Army Chaplain School. Eventually, in October 1946, the “buck” stopped with Chaplain Martin H. Scharlemann, Missouri Synod Lutheran, an instructor at the School. Along with his normal duties at the Chaplain School, he was assigned the additional task of preparing what was called simply, “Citizenship and Morality Talks.”²⁰

Amazingly, within a matter of weeks Scharlemann prepared an entire outline of a proposed series as well as a few complete sample lectures. His work was staffed back to the OCCH through a relatively new organization called “The U.S. Army Chaplain Board.”²¹

INSTRUCTING THE ARMY IN MORALITY

It was during this same period that the growing concern among the high command about the increase of venereal disease in the Army, especially among occupation troops, was extremely prevalent. Apparently determined to offer some practical solution to the problem,

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Chaplain Miller submitted Scharlemann's work to a VD-control committee chairman in the War Department. The Chief's accompanying letter suggested a broader use of the lectures than originally planned. He said he would make the lectures available to all chaplains, who could present them during unit training periods throughout the Army. "It is believed that these lectures, delivered once a week," he wrote, "will be of inestimable value and benefit to all Regular Army personnel and trainees in the development of a moral and spiritual background upon which to develop the deeper aspects of morale."²²

The suggestion, it appears, received some top level attention. On 24 January 1947, Secretary of War Robert Patterson addressed a five-page, restricted letter to the Chief of Chaplains entitled, "Discipline and Venereal Disease." "Present annual venereal disease incidence rates within the Army are higher than at any time in the past thirty years," it began. Outlining his method of attack, the Secretary described the chaplains' role in the war against social disease by authorizing the new lecture program:

The Corps of Chaplains bears a special responsibility for the moral and spiritual welfare of troops. To aid the chaplain in meeting this responsibility, commanding officers will allocate appropriate periods in the regular training schedule for instruction in citizenship and morality which all personnel will attend. This instruction will be prepared in the Office of the Chief of Chaplains . . .²³

Within a month, Chaplain Miller informed his supervisory chaplains throughout the world of this "significant opportunity" which "contemplates a weekly lecture by the chaplain to all personnel." At the same time, obviously aware that the success or failure of the program now rested with individual unit chaplains who had to give the lectures, Miller strongly directed:

. . . . whenever a chaplain habitually fails to give a reasonably creditable presentation of these lectures, he [is to] be promptly substituted by a chaplain who can do so. Consistent failure to adequately present these lectures should be reason for reclassification.²⁴

For the next 5 years, Chaplain Scharlemann was busy producing discourses on citizenship and morality. He wrote 88 lectures; 60 of them were eventually published in six volumes under the general title, "Duty-Honor-Country."²⁵

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LECTURING FROM FORT KNOX TO THE MARIANAS

The UMT experimental unit came into being at Fort Knox in January 1947. The first group, made up of 664 volunteers, was organized into a four-company battalion and given 6 months of training. Three chaplains joined the unit's staff: Morris E. Eson, Jewish, Charles J. Murphy, Roman Catholic, and Maury Hundley, Jr., Disciples of Christ. At the beginning of the trainees' fifth week, immediately following a series of lectures on "Military Sanitation," the chaplains began delivering Scharlemann's talks on "The Moral and Religious Aspects of Citizenship." The series included such topics as "Purity in Thought, Word and Deed," "Marriage as a Sacred Institution," "The Ten Commandments," and "Grounds for Moral Conduct."²⁶ Before the series went into publication, Scharlemann's manuscripts were sent directly from his typewriter to the UMT chaplains on the platform.²⁷

The extremely heavy emphasis on moral and religious training for the Knox volunteers was quite evident. Although chapel attendance was never mandatory, it was encouraged so strongly that only one of the 664 chose not to attend. Following a practice that became policy for the unit, "an hour's study in general ethics was arranged for his benefit."²⁸ The whole tenor of the chaplains' deep influence is reflected in the remarks of Chaplain Murphy as printed in the post's newspaper on 8 March 1947:

In UMT you are more than a body to be bayoneted or bulleted. You are more than organized flesh to be set in the wake of some rolling barrage. You are more than an animated sandbag. You are first, last and always a religious animal; and UMT will not let you forget it.²⁹

Along with other members of the staff, the chaplains were further involved as publicity agents for the experiment. They escorted high-ranking clergymen, who were regularly invited to inspect the program, and spoke extensively at public gatherings in support of the plan.³⁰

Even though UMT was never implemented on a national scale, the chaplains' heavy involvement as its salesmen during those early days of experimentation became food for later critics of the chaplaincy. Looking at the Fort Knox Experiment 2 decades later, one author maintained that it provided evidence for the conjecture that chaplains were little more than publicity agents for a military establishment.³¹

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Although Universal Military Training did not survive, the chaplain's new task as an instructor in morality throughout the Army was firmly planted. Chaplains Murphy and Hundley had given Scharlemann's first six lectures to the UMT volunteers in 25-minute periods—one period per week for 6 weeks. As others were written, the training was increased to 50 minutes and the cadre were included in the audience. A short time later, the Third Armored Division, also at Fort Knox, began to include the lectures in their training.³² By April 1947, copies of the citizenship and morality talks had been distributed to all chaplains on active duty.³³

With the advent of 1948, the offices of the Chief of Chaplains and the Army Surgeon General cooperated in producing and releasing a 40-minute motion picture entitled, "Miracle of Living." More than 1,400 civilian educators and clergymen in the Washington, D.C. area were invited to view the new training film which emphasized the moral aspects in the fight against venereal disease.³⁴ By the end of the year, a Department of the Army Memorandum directed the establishment of Character Guidance Councils at all commands, to include units of battalion size or larger. The councils were "to aid commanders of all echelons in implementing the character guidance programs."³⁵ They were not only to help enhance the quality of instruction but also to suggest ways to apply the material, in practical terms, to the daily life of the soldier.

In some instances, despite the talented work put into the program, occasional publicity efforts seemed to border on naivete. The following item, for example, was printed in a December 1948 Circular Letter from the OCCH; from the perspective of several decades, it's hard to believe that the item was taken as seriously as intended.

CONVERSATION IN OFFICE CHIEF OF CHAPLAINS

"Good morning, Chaplain," said the infantry colonel, "What are my chances of getting a set of the 'Chaplain's Hour' I heard some of them in Europe and thought they were mighty fine."

"It's good to hear your high opinion of the 'Chaplain's Hour,' Colonel. They represent a tremendous amount of hard work, in fact, the job is still under way at the Chaplain School in Carlisle. What do you want the lectures for,—your files?"

"Yes. I wish to familiarize myself with them. Incidentally, I plan to use some of the material on my kids. You know, Chaplain, there's some mighty good stuff in those lectures."

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“How were the talks received overseas? Did the men like them? Did the chaplains get them across?”

“The men were really interested. And the chaplains did a good job, too, that is, all but one chaplain. He had the reputation of being a ‘ball of fire,’ but he would show up fifteen minutes late and wind up ten minutes ahead of time. He seemed to have the idea that he gained popularity by making the lectures as short as possible. The other chaplains, however, took them seriously and did a swell job. . . .”³⁶

In the spring of 1949, the Chaplain Section of the Marianas—Bonins Command in the Pacific proudly announced that it was the first to complete 52 continuous weeks of Citizenship and Morality lectures with a total attendance of over 190,000.³⁷ Such attendance reports were to become the norm for chaplains for many years to come.

REFINING THE INFLUENTIAL ROLE

The Chaplain’s Hour might appear at first glance to have been a program simply designed to give the chaplain a role in UMT or a voice against the immoral aspects of venereal disease. A closer study, however, reveals its strong anti-Communism flavor in keeping with the mood of that day. Early lectures included such topics as “The Meaning of Citizenship,” “The Citizen and His Religion,” and “The Citizen and His Worship.” In Lecture No. 22, “My Right to the Truth,” the following paragraph appears under “Poisoning the Minds of Men”:

At the present time the philosophy of Communism is “on the loose” in the world, poisoning men’s souls against their own governments and against the truth. According to Communism everything must start with the belief that all other systems of economy are wrong, that the salvation of the world can be effected only by extending the “partnership of workers” to the ends of the earth. Communism is a system of thought with a vicious purpose which denies my right to the truth by insisting that it alone is truth.³⁸

“The Character Guidance Program has deservedly occupied much of the chaplains’ time,” said a 1949 annual report from the Chief of Chaplains to the Secretary of the Army. The report declared that the program was fulfilling the purpose for which it was designed—“to develop the individual’s sense of responsibility and to counteract alien philosophies.”³⁹

Chaplain Miller’s original concept of teaching morality, as based in the Bible, was particularly strong in the early days and throughout the

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1950's when Moody Bible Institute films often supplemented the lectures.⁴⁰ When the task of preparing the material was eventually passed to the Army Chaplain Board, myriads of new techniques, including the proposal for the publication of a comic book, were tested and in some cases sent to the field for actual use.⁴¹ Impossible as it must have been to evaluate the results of those early efforts, chaplains at higher levels of command made various claims, including taking the credit for a "drastic reduction in the Army prison population and the incidence of courts martial."⁴²

During the next 25 years the program took on as many changes as it did various titles. It was known successively as "The Chaplain's Hour," "Character Guidance Instruction," "Our Moral Heritage Series," and "Human Self Development." It progressed from stilted lectures against promiscuity and Communism to open group discussions on such topics as drug abuse and race relations. By the 1970's the program had evolved all the way from its original classroom-lecture atmosphere to an incentive-producing plan for the involvement of soldiers in community action.

The most significant challenge to the Character Guidance Program came in 1968 with a complaint from the Washington, D.C., Office of the American Civil Liberties Union. Maintaining that certain religious elements in the mandatory instruction violated the rights guaranteed soldiers under the First Amendment, the complaint precipitated considerable study, correspondence, and policy statements.⁴³ The dispute resulted in an interesting, official emphasis on the delineation of chaplain duties. On 24 April 1969, the OCCH disseminated technical guidelines which noted, in part:

... acceptable instruction within the Character Guidance Program depends on the instructor's good judgment and the attitude he brings to his role. Since some chaplains have on occasion not clearly distinguished their staff officer/instructor role in the Character Guidance Program from their role as clergymen in the Army's religious programs, it is important to reiterate the necessity for chaplains to avoid 'preaching' in Character Guidance instruction and to avoid any presentation that gives the appearance of a religious indoctrination session. . . .⁴⁴

With the vast change in national attitudes since 1947, there came in 1971 a discontinuance of the program's mandatory instruction for all units except those in Basic and Advanced Individual Training.⁴⁵ The

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most modern Army-wide emphasis is “to confront individual and local social needs” with “actions to enrich the social environment.”⁴⁶ Perhaps as such it is fulfilling even more the original intention of Chaplain Miller—taking the chaplain out of the guard position and placing him in the influential backfield.

DISPOSING OF WAR SURPLUS

In the history of most organizations, the struggle to establish new and influential programs is often accompanied by the daily drudgery of more mundane tasks. While the chaplaincy was concerned about its role in moral and ideological instruction following World War II, for example, it was also forced, along with other branches, into the gigantic post-War activity of property disposal.

A War Department press release in April 1946 announced that agents of the War Assets Administration had been instructed to advertise and sell surplus chapels. The action came as a result of numerous letters to the OCCH regarding the possibility of making such purchases.⁴⁷

There were 1,532 Army chapels in use in the United States at the close of the War. The vast majority of them, resembling wood-frame New England churches, seated roughly 350 people.⁴⁸ By October 1949, nearly half of those chapels had been sold to local civilian congregations. Surprisingly, they netted less than \$930,000 for the War Assets Administration—an average of roughly \$1,400 per chapel.⁴⁹ Within a year, because of the Korean War and the renewed expansion of the Army, nearly 180 chapels, previously boarded-up on inactivated installations, were reconditioned, refurnished and opened once more to military congregations.⁵⁰

At the beginning of 1948, the Chief of Chaplains also announced that over one million Army-issue portions of the Scriptures had been distributed, free of charge, to religious, educational and civic institutions.⁵¹ That disposal, however, had not been without controversy. An April 1946 article in *The Christian Advocate* had claimed that the Army had so many surplus Bibles on hand that it was burning them. The article started a flood of protests and inquiries to the OCCH—many of which came via offices of U.S. senators. An investigation located the source of the rumor with a chaplain’s assistant who had been serving at the Indiantown Gap Military Reservation in Pennsylvania during the process of inactivation. The assistant said that he had asked his chaplain what

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was to be done with the large surplus of Bibles and Testaments on the post. "I think," stated the assistant, "that his reply was, 'I guess we will have to burn them.' I suggested that I could dispose of them in civilian churches. He accepted my proposal and gave me permission to take all I wanted." The Chief of Chaplains was happy to announce that, as far as he was able to determine, no Bibles had been burned during the disposal process; *The Christian Advocate* published a correction of their original article 3 months later.⁵²

At the same time in which the large reduction in America's military strength necessitated concentration on the dismantling process, new directions in organization and administration were changing the configuration of the Army Chaplaincy.

ESTABLISHING THE AIR FORCE CHAPLAINCY

The National Security Act of 1947 provided for a "National Military Establishment" with three military services, the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force, under the general supervision of a new Secretary of Defense—James Forrestal, former Secretary of the Navy. To eliminate some of the confusion in the lines of authority, an amendment to the act was passed in 1949 converting the National Military Establishment into an executive department renamed the "Department of Defense." The separate services were reduced from executive departments to military departments within the Department of Defense and a chairman's position, without vote, was added to the formerly established Joint Chiefs of Staff.⁵³

The significance of the new organization to the Army Chaplaincy was in the transformation of the former Army Air Corps or Army Air Forces (AAF) into a separate, new military service—the United States Air Force. The change became effective on 26 September 1947 with "Transfer Order No. 1," the first official order of Secretary of Defense Forrestal.⁵⁴

When the Army was organized in 1942 into Service Forces, Ground Forces and Air Forces, a chaplain had been assigned as a liaison officer in the OCCH with the title of "Air Chaplain." Chaplain Charles I. Carpenter, Methodist, served as Air Chaplain through most of the War and was succeeded briefly in 1945 by Chaplain Gynther Storaasli, American Lutheran. Carpenter returned to the job at the end of that

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year when Storaasli was appointed Commandant of the Chaplain School.⁵⁵

Chaplains who had served in the AAF hoped to be organized into a separate Air Force Chaplaincy. Since, however, the original "Army-Air Force Agreements" discouraged parallel branches in the two services, Chief of Chaplains Luther Miller opposed the idea. But Carpenter and others pursued the goal, emphasizing the need for identity with the personnel they were to serve. When a concession was made by assigning additional, separate duties to the Air Chaplain, the Air Force suggested that the job at least be accorded the rank of brigadier general. But the Army disapproved that recommendation also.

Finally, in mid-1948, General Carl Spaatz, U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff, asked Chaplain Carpenter to give him a briefing on his recommendation for a separate chaplain service. The immensity of the study had to be summarized on one sheet of paper—a common requirement of General Spaatz in regard to any briefing. Chaplain Daniel B. Jorgensen, author of *Air Force Chaplains 1947–1960*, described what happened:

General Spaatz cordially greeted his Air Chaplain, and he listened attentively to the summary. There was an awkward moment of silence. Then the General said, "Chaplain, it's already been decided. My mind is made up. There will be no separate chaplaincy for the Air Force. In fact, I have a conference at 11 o'clock with Chaplain Miller, of the Army, to work out the details."

Carpenter left with a burning sense of defeat. To Col. Charles Maylon he said, "It looks like we lost this one."

But, at 1:15 that afternoon, he received another call from the office of General Spaatz, "The general wants to see you, and bring that paper with you." He picked up the summary and hurried back.

General Spaatz took the sheet of paper, folded it so that Carpenter's signature would not show, and placed it under the glass on his desk top. "I'll need that," he explained. "Another conference at three with Chaplain Miller. I've changed my mind. The Air Force will have its own chaplains."⁵⁶

Precisely what happened to change the general's mind is only a matter of speculation today. The irony is that the historic decision to have an Air Force Chaplaincy apparently was influenced more by the plan's main opponent than by its principal advocate.

Chaplain Carpenter was designated the first Chief of Air Force Chaplains on 11 June 1948, nearly a year before the branch came into existence. The actual "Transfer Order No. 35," allowing Army chaplains

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to enter the new Air Force Chaplaincy, was issued by Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson on 10 May 1949, and stipulated that all transfers had to be completed by 26 July. By that date, 458 chaplains on active duty and 573 Reserve chaplains on inactive status had transferred from the Army and officially formed the United States Air Force Chaplaincy. The following day Chaplain Carpenter was promoted to the rank of major general.⁵⁷

MINISTERING TO THE VETERAN

Another chaplain service came into existence only a few years prior to that of the Air Force. On 15 June 1945, the Reverend Crawford W. Brown, Episcopalian, a former Army Chaplain, was appointed the first Director of the Chaplaincy Service of the Veterans Administration. Somewhat like his counterpart in the Air Force, Brown was initially made the head of a service that didn't officially exist. A letter from the Administrator of the Veterans Administration announced the establishment of the service 2 months later. Six months passed, however, before another letter authorized the appointment of VA chaplains. By 1947 Brown had guided the growth of the new service from 11 to 226 full-time chaplains, assisted by 115 part-time chaplains.⁵⁸

Although there has never been any official connection between the U.S. VA Chaplaincy Service and that of the Armed Forces, a close liaison has been maintained throughout the years. General Omar Bradley, who was Veterans Administrator at the time, asserted in an October 1946 speech:

The question of getting the veteran back into the church and congregation is one of the most important facing the country today. Religion is the basis upon which we place everything else, and unless we have a solid foundation upon which to work we may go astray as a nation.⁵⁹

The reasoning of many Army chaplains at the end of the War was very similar. One chaplain, who was serving in a convalescent hospital, devised a small card which he sent to the hometown churches of returning veterans:

This is to inform you that the undersigned received an honorable discharge from the Army of the United States, as of this date. We would appreciate your cooperation in helping him in his adjustment to civilian life.⁶⁰

The chaplain received hundreds of replies from churches that were grateful for his personal concern.

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REVIEWING THE MINISTRY AT WEST POINT

While new chaplaincy services were in the making, there was a brief effort by the Army to regain one chaplain position it had lost many years before—Cadet Chaplain for the United States Military Academy at West Point. Apparently encouraged by the Chief of Chaplains, a detailed, eleven-page study of the matter was prepared by the Staff Judge Advocate under the direction of the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, in February 1945. The study concluded that the office of Cadet Chaplain had been occupied by a military chaplain prior to 1896 primarily because the position also required duties performed as a member of the faculty. When the office was opened to all clergy solely for the job as chaplain, however, it was assumed to be a civilian position.

The study recommended that if there was a desire to detail a Regular Army Chaplain as Cadet Chaplain, steps should be taken to change legislation to clearly allow such a change. Chief of Chaplains Miller approved that suggestion but the plan was never implemented. A later, in-house note in the OCCH indicated that it would take at least 4 years to bring about such legislation, and that the change might wrongfully suggest to the public some disfavor of the incumbent civilian appointee.⁶¹

Only 9 months before that study, on 4 June 1944, the Post Chapel at West Point, designed to meet the worship needs of Protestant non-cadet personnel, had been dedicated. Chaplain John P. Fellows, Methodist, who had served as the first “Post Chaplain” starting in August 1943, was succeeded in October 1946 by Chaplain Ralph H. Pugh, Northern Baptist. An additional position as “Assistant Post Chaplain” was opened in 1957.⁶²

Although the Army’s official attempt to regain the influential position of Cadet Chaplain was laid aside, other voices were beginning to be heard regarding West Point. In 1946 military chaplains, line officers, and enlisted men who were members of the denomination influenced the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA to recommend that the curriculum at the academy include training on the responsibility of commanders for the moral and spiritual welfare of their men.⁶³ The overture was based on the charge that a great number of commanding officers had failed to adequately support the work of their chaplains during World War II.⁶⁴

Meanwhile, the fact that the civilian position as Cadet Chaplain had long been dominated by appointees from the Episcopal Church began

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to draw critical comments. By 1954, the United Lutheran Church in America adopted a recommendation calling for Congress to rotate the appointment among other denominations.⁶⁵ Four years later, the Military Chaplains Association charged that there was “calculated and unwarranted discrimination against other denominations” in the appointment of Protestant cadet chaplains, and it recommended Congressional legislation to correct the matter.⁶⁶ The tide was somewhat reduced by the 1959 appointment of Theodore C. Speers, former pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church in New York City, as Cadet Chaplain. Speers, however, was the fourth Presbyterian to have served in the position.⁶⁷ After his death in 1964, he was succeeded by James D. Ford, a minister of the Lutheran Church in America.⁶⁸

ADVISING AND COORDINATING FOR BETTER SERVICE

The United States Army Chaplain Board, referred to in the discussion on Character Guidance, was activated at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, in October 1945, at the U.S. Army Chaplain School. Originally such “boards” were authorized, under a 1944 Army regulation, to advise chiefs of branches on subjects normally referred to them and to make recommendations for improvements in the service of the branch. In June 1945, the Army Chaplain Board became a Class II Installation and separated from the school, which moved to Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. When Fort Oglethorpe was closed in January 1947, the Board also moved, and made its new home at Fort George G. Meade in Maryland.⁶⁹

To many of the chaplains who remained in service following the War, the mere mention of a “board” seemed to be a potential threat to their active duty status. Attempting to clarify the duties of the new Army Chaplain Board to the chaplains in the field, the OCCH somewhat wryly announced in 1947: “Contrary to a misunderstanding, which seems to be rather widespread, the Chaplain Board has nothing to do with the integration of chaplains into the Regular Army.”⁷⁰ The announcement further outlined six sample subject areas normally referred to the Board—such things as testing new items of supply and equipment, determining operating techniques, and providing liaison with other branches.⁷¹ Throughout the years, chaplains assigned to the Board have dealt with a vast diversity of projects ranging all the way from producing training films to making recommendations on the number of bedrooms in military hous-

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ing. Some of their work, such as the production of the motion picture, "The Bridge" (a brief history of the Army Chaplaincy), has been of such high quality that it merited awards from organizations like the Freedoms Foundation of Valley Forge, Pennsylvania.⁷²

Perhaps due in part to the additional formation of chaplain services for the Air Force and the Veterans Administration, in 1949 a Reserve chaplain wrote to General Vaughn, President Truman's military aide. He asked the general's assistance in bringing to the attention of the President a proposal for the appointment of a "Coordinator of Religious Activities in the United States Armed Forces and Federal Agencies." The idea called for one office to supervise and coordinate chaplain services in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Veterans Administration, federal penal institutions, the U.S. military academies, and "others that may be added."

General Vaughn sent the proposal to Chaplain Miller for comment. Miller replied that "all the objectives it aims to accomplish are already satisfied." He further warned that "the establishment of a super-bureau might give the impression of a national regimentation of religious life in all these services."⁷³

An agency was formed later that year, however, to at least assist in coordinating the chaplain branches of the three Armed Forces. Just before the retirement of Chaplain Miller from his position as Army Chief of Chaplains, the Secretary of Defense established the Armed Forces Chaplains Board. Composed of the three Chiefs of Chaplains, who were to rotate annually as chairman, and one additional member from each of the services, the board held its first meeting on 11 August 1949. Its primary responsibilities continue to be in the area of unifying policies on manpower, supply, and relationships with civilian churches. Because the Army is the oldest of the three services, the Chief of Chaplains for that service was appointed the first chairman.⁷⁴ He was Roy H. Parker, Southern Baptist. The former Far East Command Chaplain had been appointed as Chaplain Miller's successor and promoted to major general on 1 August 1949.⁷⁵

DEVELOPING BETTER TRAINING

In July 1945, roughly 2 months before the end of the War, the United States Army Chaplain School had moved to Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia—its fourth new home since the beginning of the conflict. Even then the move proved to be temporary. Exactly 12 months later it was moved

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again. Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, became the eleventh “new home” for the Army Chaplain School since its establishment in 1918.

During The War, clergy students were rushed through a 1 month basic course that attempted to orient them to the Army before they were shipped to various battlefields throughout the world. When peace returned, the pace at the School slowed and the course was extended to 3 months. The new emphasis was to give the fledgling chaplain “a picture of his peacetime job and its many opportunities.”⁷⁶

Among the eight-man faculty—which included the Commandant and his Deputy—was Chaplain Scharlemann, author of the Citizenship and Morality Talks. With his colleagues, Scharlemann helped revamp the curriculum of the School and revitalize its instruction. At the same time he was given the responsibility, along with \$10,000, to establish a library for the school.⁷⁷

The first class to graduate from the 3 month course had 55 students and received their diplomas from Chief of Chaplains Miller on 1 May 1946.⁷⁸ Three days earlier, the School’s Commandant, Chaplain Gynther Storaasli, had delivered his farewell remarks to the class. Storaasli, who had served briefly as Air Chaplain before assuming the job as Commandant, left a deep impression of his spiritual concern on most of those who served with him. The conclusion to his farewell remarks captured some of his philosophy of the chaplaincy:

In bidding you farewell and Godspeed—I would leave just this one thought with you. In my Opening Address, I called to your remembrance the fact that in view of your high calling, God, and not man, is your real Commanding Officer, regardless of what your military position may be.

I would like to carry that thought a little further and make this parting suggestion: In the performance of all the varied duties you henceforth will be called upon to perform, be not primarily concerned about the efficiency rating your military commander may give you, but the efficiency rating God will give you. Make this thought your chief concern: What in God’s opinion is and will be my efficiency index?

With that as your chief worry and concern, you will never need “be dismayed what’ere betide” for “God will take care of you.”⁷⁹

The character Storaasli displayed in public before the students and faculty at the Chaplain School was consistent with that in his private life. It was unknown to most of his colleagues, for example, that he refused an award offered to him by the Chief of Chaplains for the accomplishments

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at the School during the period of transition. Remarks from his letter to Chaplain Miller clearly display the honest approach he took toward his work:

According to the dictates of my own conscience. . . . I have not done anything as Commandant of the School to warrant an award of any kind. When I make the above statement, I am not governed by any false modesty, nor am I setting up any false front. . . .

Much as I might like, for reasons of personal vanity, to claim credit for what has been accomplished in the School during the time I have served as Commandant, honesty forbids my "reaping where I have not sowed."

We endeavor to impress upon all Student Chaplains the necessity to be ruggedly honest with oneself and in one's relations with the personnel one serves. And I would be preaching one rule of life for others and practicing another were I to succumb to the temptation to accept an award which I have honestly not earned.⁸⁰

In the same letter he recommended nine other men—ranging from a lieutenant colonel to a corporal—as individuals who ought to receive awards such as the one offered to him.

Shortly after the School moved to Carlisle Barracks, a resident course of instruction was opened for Reserve and National Guard chaplains. In 1947 approximately 60 Reservists and an equal number of Guard chaplains graduated from the three sessions held for them during the year.⁸¹ At the same time, non-resident training through extension courses was also initiated for Reserve and National Guard chaplains; the Army Chaplain Board assumed responsibility for preparing the material.⁸²

Thirty-seven of the highest-ranking administrative chaplains gathered at the School in November 1947. The meeting, which Storaasli called "the most successful conference of chaplains in my 28 years," provided an opportunity to share methods of operation and study plans for future cooperation between the services.⁸³ The meeting was undoubtedly instrumental in the makeup of the Advanced Conference Course held at the School in the fall of 1948. The single-subject seminar on counseling was the first course at the Army Chaplain School taught by civilian lecturers and the first attended jointly by Army, Army Air Forces, and Navy chaplains. Most of the Advanced Course instruction at the School was under the direction of Chaplain Robert J. Sherry, Roman Catholic, who served as Deputy Commandant from July 1946 to April 1950.⁸⁴

On the occasion of its 30th anniversary in 1948, the Army Chaplain School was referred to by a national news magazine as "one of the service's

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toughest.” Describing the lives of both basic and advanced students, the reporter wrote: “From the time they enter the School’s red-brick building and stack their gear in the single cot-filled dorm, they live under strict military discipline.” The same article announced the School’s plan to soon begin using a relatively new training aid—television.⁸⁵

Chaplain Arthur C. Piepkorn, Missouri Synod Lutheran, succeeded Chaplain Storaasli as Commandant on 1 March 1948. The academic brilliance of Chaplain Piepkorn became obvious to every new student who entered the School. Often they passed on the apocryphal story about one of his four daughters asking Mrs. Peipkorn questions from a homework assignment. When the Commandant’s wife suggested that the girl ask her father, the daughter replied, “I don’t want to know that much about it!”⁸⁶

Piepkorn was transferred to become the Army Chaplain Board’s president in October 1950. Two years later he left active duty to assume a professorship at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis—a position he held until his death in 1973.⁸⁷ Among his various writings was a “Statement of the Legality and Constitutionality of the Chaplaincy,” delivered originally as an address at a conference at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, in 1963. The document became a guideline for others studying in that area.⁸⁸

Even after the establishment of a separate Air Force Chaplaincy, chaplains of that service continued to receive their training at the Army Chaplain School until July 1953. As a matter of fact, recommendations were made in 1950, by both the Armed Forces Chaplains Board and the President’s Committee on Religion and Welfare in the Armed Forces, to establish a unified school for chaplains in all three services under Army administration. The recommendation was disapproved, however, by the Under Secretary of the Navy, who maintained that the primary function of a chaplain school should be to familiarize chaplains with their specific branch of service.⁸⁹ The Navy, consequently, established its own chaplain school in conjunction with the General Line School at Newport, Rhode Island, in 1951.⁹⁰

Economy and interservice understanding were among the arguments for a unified chaplain school. The fact was, however, that even the Army and Air Force had found it difficult to train together for more than 3 years. A certain amount of friction developed between Army traditions and the approaches of the new Air Force Chaplaincy. Similarly, while the Army insisted that the Air Force carry more of the financial load at the School, the Air Force Chief of Chaplains insisted on more of a voice

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in the School's policies. It was largely because agreements could not be reached in such areas that the Air Force pulled out of the Army Chaplain School. On 1 July 1953 they established a USAF Chaplain Training Program as part of the Officer Basic Military Course at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.⁹¹ An official United States Air Force Chaplain School was established at Lackland on 1 June 1960 and moved, 6 years later, to Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama.⁹²

PREPARING QUALIFIED ASSISTANTS

The matter of attempting to secure a special corps of enlisted assistants for chaplains had been debated for many years. Although enlisted assistants had been working with chaplains during and after World War II, they were for the most part clerk-typists who had never received any chaplain-oriented, specialized training. It was no secret that individuals assigned to work with chaplains were often soldiers who suffered problems on other jobs. Many commanders seemed to reason that their chaplains would not only tolerate malcontents—they might even be able to reform them. Any qualified individual assigned to a chaplain would often request a transfer because of the lack of promotion opportunities. As a result, chaplains often found themselves without an assistant or spending an inordinate amount of time on in-house counseling.⁹³

Manpower cuts following the War complicated the matter further. Authorizations were gained to employ civilians in an attempt to fill chaplain assistant vacancies. In some cases, members of the Women's Army Corps (WAC) were used as assistants, Sunday school teachers, and organists.⁹⁴

A study prepared in the OCCH in September 1949 recommended that assistants be secured and assigned on the basis of one or more of the following:

- (1) Completion of a special course of instruction at the Army Chaplain School;
- (2) Demonstrated ability from on-the-job-training (OJT) for a period of not less than 90 days;
- (3) Civilian training or experience in religion or music and OJT for not less than 60 days.⁹⁵

At the same time, however, a letter from the Deputy Chief of Chaplains to the Executive Secretary of the Military Chaplains Association said that, based on studies to that date, the Chief of

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Chaplains was “disinclined to recommend the formation of an Enlisted Corps for Chaplains.” Instead, his approach was to train men already qualified in the Personnel and Administration Career Field and to have the letter “C” added to their MOS (Military Occupational Speciality).⁹⁶ In this way, an individual soldier could at least be designated as a “Qualified Chaplain’s Assistant.”⁹⁷

A program of instruction was instituted at the Army Chaplain School in 1950—the first enlisted training program at the School in its 32-year history. Sixty-nine Air Force students, who were to be designated as “Welfare Specialists,” were the first graduates. As with subsequent classes for Army personnel, the class contained a small percentage of women students.⁹⁸

The Chaplain School continued its training program for Personnel Specialists to qualify them for chaplains’ assistants until 1954. Two years later, the program was reinstated at Fort Dix, New Jersey, and Fort Ord, California. It was not until the early 1960’s, however, that a distinct MOS was granted to chaplains’ assistants. As a consequence, on 11 September 1967, a more complete and detailed course of instruction was re-opened at the Chaplain School and graduates were awarded the special MOS of 71M20.⁹⁹

EVALUATING THE CHAPLAIN’S SIGNIFICANT ROLE

President Truman’s Committee on Religion and Welfare in the Armed Forces was appointed in 1950 to evaluate the military chaplaincy program—but not without some opposition. When the House Appropriations Subcommittee reviewed Defense Department budget requirements, one U.S. Representative questioned the projected need for \$100,000 to finance the President’s special study group. “I thought the Chaplains’ Corps was organized to look after the religious welfare of the Armed Forces,” he protested. “Now we have another committee appointed to look after the Chaplains’ Corps. I have not seen any records of the Chaplains’ Corps to indicate that they were not doing a good job. . . .”¹⁰⁰

Even though the appointment of the Committee was approved, the objection of the Representative was probably correct. There was very little criticism of the chaplaincy following the War. As a matter of fact, the results of the Committee’s study seemed predetermined far before they even went to work. An editorial in a magazine of the General

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Commission on Army and Navy Chaplains, printed 9 months before the Committee submitted their report, said: "All of us who know the fine record and significant role of chaplains in the three branches of the service welcome the recognition this study indicates."¹⁰¹

The Committee obliged such anticipation and their eventual, 43-page report spoke in glowing terms of the past devotion and future significance of military chaplains. "The importance of the work of the chaplain is today recognized as never before in the history of the Armed Forces," it stated. "Because of the world's unprecedented awareness of the need for spiritual vitality, the importance of the work of the chaplaincy has reached an unparalleled peak."¹⁰²

The sentiment of that report, sprinkled with the philosophy that chaplains were defenders of American democracy, was repeated by successive Army Chiefs of Staff:

A good chaplain in the Army is worth more than his weight in gold. . . . The world is experiencing as it always has after a great war, an era of doubt, confusion and fear. We can only travel forward with the guidance of eternal truth. It is the job of chaplains and their civilian counterparts to supply that guidance today.¹⁰³

—Dwight D. Eisenhower

The young men in our Army today must look to their chaplain as a true guide and leader on the road to success and accomplishment. For without the essential strengthening of our basic moral creeds we can never hope to achieve our goal.¹⁰⁴

—Omar Bradley

The Chaplain Corps has always reinforced the spiritual strength of our servicemen and has been one of their greatest sources of confidence in battle and inspiration in peace. In its service to our Army, the Chaplain Corps performs an indispensable role in our Nation's security.¹⁰⁵

—J. Lawton Collins

During the 1947 Easter Sunrise Service at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Chief of Chaplains Luther Miller could look from his pulpit far across the crowd of more than 3,000 people gathered in the Rose Garden and see a lone figure on the balcony atop the Administration Building. There, outside the hospital home he had occupied since 1941, was the venerable leader of the Army's past—86-year-old General of the Army John J. Pershing. One wonders if both these men may have pondered for a moment on what had taken place during the previous 30 years. It was, after all, under Pershing's direction that the Army Chaplaincy had matured—that there even was such an

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office as Chief of Chaplains or an institution called the Army Chaplain School. The aged general, in surveying the chaplains who jointly conducted the service that day, may well have recalled his own words: "Their usefulness in the maintenance of morale, through religious counsel and example, has now become a matter of history. . . ." ¹⁰⁶

Luther Miller retired in 1949 to become Canon Precentor at the Washington Cathedral—his first civilian pulpit since graduating from Chicago Theological Seminary in 1917. During his 31 years in the Army Chaplaincy he had become the personal friend of many officers who, in later years, rose to become the Army's leaders. Even after his complete retirement in 1961, he was a regular visitor at Walter Reed, where he continued his ministry among those with whom he had served. Outliving many of his contemporaries, he not only participated in the funeral service of General Pershing, but also at the internment of such notables as Robert P. Patterson, Charles Summerall, Donald Quarles, and George C. Marshall.¹⁰⁷ At his own death, on 27 April 1972, one reporter said he was best remembered for the moving benediction he delivered at the funeral of Dwight D. Eisenhower: "His battles are all fought and his victories are all won. He lies down to rest a while, awaiting the bugler's call." ¹⁰⁸

A year before his death, Miller's friends cooperated in having a keystone carved in the ceiling of the vesting room of the Washington Cathedral's War Memorial Chapel. Honoring Chaplain Miller, it holds a Bible, chaplain's emblem, a star (representing his rank), his personal flag, and a cross.¹⁰⁹ More lasting still, perhaps, was the tenor he had set for Army chaplains following the great War. His emphasis on their positions as influential instructors of morality and builders of a stronger citizenry was based on his sincere conviction "that as Christ went before His disciples into Galilee, so He is leading us on in the creation of a better world of Christian brotherhood and peace." ¹¹⁰

"If we had a responsibility during the war," Chaplain Miller once wrote, "it is an even greater responsibility during the peace; if we had a duty to end a wrong that was, we have a duty now to start a right that ought to be. Your religious and military mission is to strive to inspire men to live their best. The thrill of being a chaplain is not gone with the silencing of guns." ¹¹¹

Unfortunately, it had been a brief and tension-filled period of peace. Less than a year after his retirement, chaplains again would have to follow their men through the tragic horrors of the battlefield.

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FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER II

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² Russell F. Weigley, *History of the United States Army* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1967), p. 486; *Army and Navy Journal*, 16 August 1947, p. 1330; 29 October 1949, p. 224; 24 June 1950, p. 1168.

³ Publicity on "Freedom Train" as quoted in *Circular Letter*, Army Service Forces, Office of the Chief of Chaplains (hereafter referred to as *Circular Letter*), No. 327, 1 December 1947, p. 3.

⁴ Roy J. Honeywell, *Chaplains of the United States Army* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Chaplains, 1958), p. 71.

⁵ James L. McBride, "The Chaplain's Handicap," *The Chaplain*, October 1945, p. 31.

⁶ Alfred G. Belles to editor, *The Chaplain*, December 1945, p. 43.

⁷ *New York Times*, 25 October 1946, p. 48.

⁸ See *Ibid.*, 12 May 1948, p. 2; *The Chaplain*, August 1948, pp. 7–12.

⁹ *New York Times*, 25 April 1948, p. 17.

¹⁰ Sherwood Gates, "The Strength of America," *The Chaplain*, July–August 1950, pp. 27–28; For information on the Committee see January–February 1950, p. 25; The President's Committee on Religion and Welfare in the Armed Forces made their study during the first half of 1950. While the report was being written, the Korean War was in progress. The report, entitled *The Military Chaplaincy*, was published on 1 October 1950.

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¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

¹⁴ Weigley, *History of Army*, p. 499.

¹⁵ Luther D. Miller, "Moral Effect of Military Service," *Army and Navy Chaplain*, July–August 1945, p. 11.

¹⁶ Weigley, *History of Army*, pp. 497–500.

¹⁷ *Army and Navy Journal*, 30 November 1946, p. 307.

¹⁸ Harold O. Prudell, Historical Questionnaire, 30 October 1973, US Army Chaplain Center and School Archives, Ft. Wadsworth, NY (hereafter referred to as USACHCS).

¹⁹ See entries "Post Schools," and "Morality and Citizenship Lectures," Volume III.

²⁰ Martin H. Scharlemann, Historical Questionnaire, 4 October 1973, USACHCS.

²¹ Charles E. Brown, Jr. to Office of the Chief of Chaplains and inclosures, 8 November 1946, Records of the Army Chief of Chaplains, Record Group 247 (hereafter referred to as RG 247), file 726, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (hereafter referred to as NA).

²² Memorandum, Luther D. Miller to Director of Personnel and Administration, War Department General Staff, Subj: "Supplemental Material for Brochure on VD Control Display," 10 December 1946, *Ibid.*

²³ Robert P. Patterson to Chief of Chaplains, Subj: "Discipline and Venereal Disease," 24 January 1947, *Ibid.*

²⁴ Luther D. Miller to James C. Bean, Subj: "Supervision of Chaplain Lectures Program," 13 February 1947, *Ibid.*

²⁵ Scharlemann, Questionnaire, USACHCS.

²⁶ Matthew H. Imrie, "The Fort Knox Experiment," *Army and Navy Chaplain*, April–May 1947, pp. 2–6, 32.

²⁷ Maury Hundley, Recorded Interview, 8 November 1973, USACHCS.

²⁸ Imrie, "Fort Knox Experiment," p. 4.

²⁹ As quoted in John M. Swomley, Jr. *The Military Establishment* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), p. 200.

³⁰ Hundley, Interview, USACHCS.

³¹ See Swomley, *Military Establishment*, pp. 125, 199–201.

³² Maury Hundley to Rodger R. Venzke, 2 September 1973, USACHCS.

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- ³¹ *Army and Navy Journal*, 28 February 1948, p. 683.
- ³² DA Memorandum, No. 600-900-1, 7 October 1948, *Circular Letter*, file, USACHCS.
- ³³ *Circular Letter*, No. 339, 1 December 1948, pp. 4-5.
- ³⁴ *Army and Navy Journal*, 9 April 1949, p. 931.
- ³⁵ "My Right to the Truth" (Lecture 22), *The Chaplain's Hour*, p. 6, USACHCS.
- ³⁶ "Report of the Chaplain Corps, Department of the Army" (fiscal year 1 July 1948-30 June 1949) to Secretary of the Army, 14 September 1949, RG 247, file 319.1, NA.
- ³⁷ "Chaplains Activities" (Semi-Annual report) to Secretary of the Army, 12 June 1950, *Ibid.*; *The Chaplain*, May-June 1950, pp. 11-14.
- ³⁸ See *Army Information Digest*, October 1959, pp. 3-6; James H. O'Neill to The Chaplain Board, 5 October 1950; James B. Murphy to Philip Copp, 17 August 1951 and 1 October 1951; Philip Copp to James B. Murphy, 29 November 1951; Charles J. Murphy to James B. Murphy, 17 December 1952, RG 247, file 461, NA.
- ³⁹ *Office of the Chief of Chaplains: Summary of Major Events and Problems, 1 July 1959 to 30 June 1960* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army), p. 53.
- ⁴⁰ See *Office of the Chief of Chaplains: Historical Review, 1 July 1968-30 June 1969* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army), pp. 72-87.
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- ⁴² *Monthly Newsletter*, Department of the Army, Office of the Chief of Chaplains, 1 August 1971, p. 3.
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- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.
- ⁵⁵ *The Chaplain*, May-June 1967, p. 30; June 1963, pp. 40-47.
- ⁵⁶ *New York Times*, 24 October 1946, p. 33.
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- ⁵⁸ Memorandum For The Judge Advocate General, Subj: "Appointment or detail of a Regular Army chaplain as chaplain at the United States Military Academy," 3 February 1945; Luther D. Miller to Legislative and Liaison Division, The Pentagon, and inclosures, 7 April 1947; Homer W. Jones to Director, P & A Div., 21 April 1947; John B. Murphy to TJAG thru Chief of Chaplains, 28 April 1947; Patrick J. Ryan to TJAG, 2 May 1947; J. W. Huyssoon to Chief of Chaplains, and inclosures, 8 May 1947; in-house note, n.d., signed "H" attached to above correspondence, RG 247 file 210.1, NA.
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- ⁶³ *Ibid.*, 25 April 1958, p. 15.
- ⁶⁴ See *Ibid.*, 29 April 1959, p. 35; *Frontlines*, October 1959, p. 2.
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- ⁶⁶ *Circular Letter*, No. 320, Addenda, 1 May 1947, p. 1.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

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⁷² *OCCH Historical Review 1 July 1965–31 December 1966*, pp. 285–286; *1 July 1968–30 June 1969*, p. 119.

⁷³ Cecil B. Lawton to Harry H. Vaughn, 22 March 1949; Memorandum, Harry H. Vaughn to Chief of Chaplains, 26 March 1949; Luther D. Miller to Harry H. Vaughn, 1 April 1949, RG 247, file 211, NA.

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⁸⁷ *Army, Navy & Air Force Journal*, 17 November 1951, p. 351.

⁸⁸ Document first distributed by Walter G. McLeod, 11 December 1963, Ft. Leonard Wood, MO, USACHCS.

⁸⁹ Jorgensen, *Air Force Chaplains*, pp. 95–96; *The Military Chaplaincy*, (A Report to the President by the President's Committee on Religion and Welfare in the Armed Forces, 1 October 1950), pp. 40–42.

⁹⁰ *The Chaplain*, July–August 1951, pp. 45–46.

⁹¹ Jorgensen, *Air Force Chaplains*, p. 96.

⁹² Ike C. Barnett, "The United States Air Force Chaplain School," *The Chaplain*, February 1963, pp. 2–6; July–August 1966, p. 48.

⁹³ *Military Chaplaincy*, (President's Committee), p. 26.

⁹⁴ *Circular Letter*, No. 308, 1 May 1946; No. 309, Addenda, 1 May 1946, p. 1; No. 313, 1 October 1946, p. 2.

⁹⁵ Earl D. Compton to J. F. Leiblich (Mil. Pers. Mgt. Grp.), 1 September 1949, RG 247, file 221, NA.

⁹⁶ James H. O'Neill to George F. Rixey, 1 November 1949, *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Military Chaplaincy*, (President's Committee), p. 26.

⁹⁸ Honeywell, *Army Chaplains*, p. 318; *Army, Navy & Air Force Journal*, 21 January 1950, p. 547.

⁹⁹ See Honeywell, *Army Chaplains*, p. 319; *Religious Support Manual: ST 16–159* (Ft. Hamilton, NY: US Army Chaplain School, 15 April 1973), USACHCS; *OCCH Historical Review 1 January 1967–30 June 1968*, p. 115.

¹⁰⁰ Representative Engle (R-Mich) as quoted in *Army, Navy & Air Force Journal*, 28 January 1950, p. 563.

¹⁰¹ *The Chaplain*, January–February 1950, p. 25.

¹⁰² *Military Chaplaincy*, (President's Committee), p. 19.

¹⁰³ *Circular Letter*, No. 310, 1 July 1946, p. 3.

¹⁰⁴ *Army and Navy Journal*, 30 July 1949, p. 1376.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 13 May 1950, p. 988.

¹⁰⁶ *Military Chaplaincy*, (President's Committee), p. 13; See also *Army and Navy Journal*, 19 April 1947, p. 840; See Volume III, index, "Pershing."

¹⁰⁷ Casper Nannes, "A Visit With Chaplain Luther D. Miller," *The Chaplain*, March–April 1969, pp. 9–12; See also references under individual names in B. C. Mossman and M. W. Stark, *The Last Salute: Civil and Military Funerals, 1921–1969* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1971); Personal experience of author while serving at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, 1966–1968.

¹⁰⁸ *Washington Post*, 30 April 1972, p. 14.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ *New York Times*, 20 April 1946, p. 11.

¹¹¹ *The Chaplain*, January 1947, p. 39.

CHAPTER III

Warring Ideologies— The Battle for Korea

RETURNING TO THE BATTLEFIELD

In the morning hours of 5 July 1950, the antagonism of the world-adversaries came to a head near Osan, South Korea. Soviet-supported North Korean troops met face to face with U.S. soldiers—the first contingent of a United Nations' force. Shortly after 0800, as the surrounding hills trembled with the roar of battle, the first American fell dead. Before it would end, 33,628 more would die.¹ "It was a war between two differing ideologies," said one author. "All ethical standards of western civilization were scorned by the Communists."²

For most Army chaplains it would mean an all-too-soon end to the relative comfort of garrison duty and the parish-like ministries in occupation zones or the United States. Again the altar would be the hood of a jeep, a jagged stump, or an ammunition crate; the pews would be sand bags or the simple bare ground. The faces in the congregations would be dirty, weary, fear-filled—many of the chaplains' young charges would die in their arms before they could even learn their names. The well-planned services and intricate counselings would give way to whatever hope and comfort could be gleaned from Holy Writ at the spur of the moment. All this because the philosophy chaplains had warned about in citizenship lectures had suddenly become a living enemy on a battlefield, testing the strength of their spiritual muscles.

Regrettably, there is no way in which the ministry of the hundreds of chaplains who served in Korea could be adequately recounted in this limited space. Hopefully, however, the few examples cited will give some composite picture of how religious convictions, permeating their commonness, led many of them to uncommon deeds and sacrifices.

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Annexed to Japan in 1910, Korea had made various attempts toward independence, generally ignored by the rest of the world. Later independence leaders attempted to establish a government-in-exile with Syngman Rhee as President. Unable to unite the various factions of the group, Rhee moved to the U.S., hoping to gain Korean freedom through diplomacy.

World War II had restored hope to those who sought Korean sovereignty; the Cairo Conference of 1943 and the Potsdam Proclamation of 1945 promised them independence. The promise was complicated, however, by the Russian declaration of war against Japan a mere 25 days before their formal surrender. A hasty Allied agreement set the 38th degree of latitude across Korea as a dividing line between American and Russian areas of responsibility: Japanese forces north of the line surrendered to Soviet units; south of the line, to U.S. units. This seemingly innocent arrangement spelled the beginning of future problems since the Russians considered the 38th Parallel a permanent delineation between occupation zones. The United Nations called for free elections, but because the Soviets would not allow them to be held above the Parallel they were held only in the south. On 15 August 1948 the Republic of Korea was formed with Syngman Rhee as President. The Soviets responded by establishing the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the north less than a month later.

This strange turn of events made the small land a dangerous contact point between the world powers—touching like bare wires in a global circuitry. By the time the Soviet troops left North Korea in the fall of 1948, that country had a formidable army, heavily armed and Russian-equipped. U.S. units, with the exception of 500 advisors, left South Korea in June 1949, but their military influence was far less impressive.³

In May 1950 Senator Tom Connally of Texas, then chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, warned of a possible Communist invasion of South Korea.⁴ Many agreed, but few expected the attempt so soon. One month later, on 25 June, a massive drive by North Korean Army (NKA) units, supported by tanks, rumbled across the 38th Parallel and headed straight for Seoul, the southern capital.

The U.N. Security Council promptly condemned the attack and called on member nations to assist the South. President Truman quickly ordered General MacArthur to use U.S. air and sea power in the Far East in support of the Republic of Korea (ROK) Army.

Despite this response, Seoul fell on 28 June and MacArthur informed the President that the ROK Army could not repel the invasion with air

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and sea support alone. As a consequence, on 30 June 1950, President Truman authorized the use of U.S. Far East ground forces.

Unfortunately, those forces—four divisions in the thinly-populated Eighth Army—were understrength and poorly equipped. Nevertheless, the first organization tapped was Major General William F. Dean's 24th Infantry Division. Dean ordered his units to Korea via available air and sea transportation. Lieutenant Colonel Charles B. Smith and his 1st Battalion of the 21st Regiment were to lead the way. Smith's "battalion" consisted of two understrength infantry companies augmented by a recoilless rifle platoon and a mortar platoon—just over 400 men. This meager group, destined to be the first U.S. ground unit to face battle in Korea, was named after the commander—"Task Force Smith."⁵

MINISTERING TO THE FIRST IN COMBAT

Chaplain Carl R. Hudson, Southern Baptist, had been assigned to the 21st Regiment only a few weeks earlier. He was looking forward to a relaxed tour of garrison duty in Kyushu, Japan, hardly expecting combat duty. When alerted, even the men of Smith's unit anticipated only a brief skirmish and a quick return to Japan. The chaplain, a doctor, and a few aid men were ordered to accompany them.

In the early morning hours of 1 July, they drove through a monsoon rain storm to Itazuke Air Base. Although their first flight to South Korea was aborted because of ground fog, their second attempt landed them safely at Pusan, on the southern end of the peninsula. Later that evening they boarded trains for an uncomfortable ride north—made less enjoyable by the limited rations they had brought with them. Their morale was high, however, as they pulled into Taejon the next morning. There Colonel Smith was briefed by Brigadier General John H. Church, who headed MacArthur's survey party, and representatives of the Korean Military Advisory Group (KMAG). Smith also had a chance to go forward and survey the area near Osan.

Moving on to P'yongt'aek, the unit was joined by a battery of the 52nd Field Artillery Battalion. They commandeered old U.S. Army trucks from some retreating ROK soldiers and finally reached a pre-chosen hill north of Osan in the morning darkness of 5 July. Shell holes and a few burning huts indicated the enemy was near. The men dug in and set up their artillery.

It was raining at daybreak, so Chaplain Hudson wandered with a few men to the foot of the hill, found an abandoned hut, and went in to

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prepare some breakfast. Shortly after they entered, Hudson heard the noise of an approaching vehicle. He innocently glanced out the door and was momentarily stunned—staring directly at him was a North Korean tank. Dashing through the hut and out the back door, he and the others hurled themselves into a ditch as the tank's machine gun riddled the shack. The tank, followed by others, rumbled on south and the chaplain and his companions scrambled for their unit on top of the hill. Even before they reached the top, the U.S. howitzer and mortar crews opened up on the tank column. Their fire power had little effect, however, and most of the tanks continued right past their position. Following the tanks came an incredible convoy of NKA trucks, estimated at nearly 6-miles long. Hordes of enemy soldiers dismounted and began attacking the tiny U.S. group in an attempt to encircle the hill.

As the battle raged, U.S. casualties began to fall by the scores. Chaplain Hudson dashed through the rain and mud consoling the dying, praying with the wounded, and assisting the aid men. With the passing of each hour, however, the situation began to appear hopeless.

By noon, Hudson had worked his way to Colonel Smith. The commander told him he had sent a messenger south for help but that unless aid came quickly they would have to retreat. Meanwhile, the foul weather prevented any hope of air support.

By mid-afternoon, after 7 tortuous and valiant hours of combat, with no relief in sight, communications knocked out, and ammunition nearly gone, Smith decided to lead his remaining men out. The few undamaged vehicles were used to transport some of the wounded. Chaplain Hudson and others walked and ran assisting other wounded, but many of the severely injured and all of the dead had to be abandoned.

Hudson's group rushed south through the night and most of the next day attempting to make contact with the forward element of the 34th Regiment, scheduled to augment them. They waded streams and rice paddies, climbed hills, sloshed through rain and mud, resting only 5 or 10 minutes each hour. Hudson and the doctor circulated among the bedraggled men trying to instill some courage and hope. "Many prayers, both audible and silent, we uttered that night." Sections of the retreating unit met at various points and it became clear that only about 250 of them had escaped. When they finally met the 34th, more vehicles were secured. "We were never so glad to see those men and have rides as on that day," said Hudson.⁶

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Among the early arrivals in the 34th Regiment was Chaplain Elwood L. Temple, Presbyterian USA. Arriving with the rest of the 21st Regiment were Chaplains John L. Gilman, Roman Catholic, and Gerhardt W. Hyatt, Missouri Synod Lutheran. Hyatt, a native of Saskatchewan, Canada, who served as a transport chaplain at the end of World War II, became the Army's Chief of Chaplains more than 20 years later.⁷

These first few men, leading the long line of Army chaplains who were to serve in Korea, encountered the enemy and faced death many more times in the months that followed. After a brief rest and first aid for his blistered and swollen feet, Hudson was returned to 13 months of combat. "I think some of the best times were under extreme disadvantages like these," he said. "I didn't have to hold services then—but I wanted to. The men and officers knew this. They appreciated it and came in large numbers."⁸

Beginning with Hudson, many chaplains felt compelled to instruct their men regarding the ideological conflict. "I was always glad of the opportunity to explain the workings and effects of Communism as compared to the life and blessings of being an American," he later wrote. "We saw all the horrors of war and misery caused by Communism. I am still glad God called me to serve our men in Korea. I would do it again."⁹

RENDERING THE HIGHEST DEVOTION

General Dean did his best to slow the Communist advance while other U.S. and U.N. forces were being readied for shipment to Korea. He sent one unit after another to meet the enemy in their persistent drive south. Meanwhile, responding to a U.N. request, President Truman appointed General MacArthur Commander in Chief of the United Nations Command.¹⁰

"Dean's Delay," as it was called, was nearly suicidal. Every effort was met by seemingly endless streams of the NKA. One of the first heavy battles raged for 5 days (16–20 July 1950) near Tacjon and the Kum River. Among the men involved were those of the 19th Infantry Regiment. Herman G. Felhoelter, Roman Catholic, was one of their chaplains. He had written his mother 4 days earlier:

Don't worry, Mother. God's will be done. I feel so good to know the power of your prayers accompanying me. I am not comfortable

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in Korea (that is impossible here) but I am happy in the thought that I can help some souls who need help. Keep your prayers going upward. . . .¹¹

Felhoelter was just north of Taejon on 16 July, making his way up a hill across the Kum River with roughly 100 other men. They were carrying nearly 30 wounded while attempting to escape the enemy force that overpowered them. Felhoelter, who had been in the Army from 1944 to 1946 and returned in 1948, was now in the unenviable home of a military congregation—the battlefield.

The Korean conflict already contained those physical and psychological elements of every war—deafening noise, rampant confusion, overwhelming fear and fatigue, and indescribable carnage. Intermingled with it also were those inexplicable acts of self-sacrifice by common men who sought no special recognition or personal honor.

By the time Felhoelter's group reached the top of the hill, it was obvious they could not continue carrying the injured and still escape the advancing North Koreans. The chaplain convinced a medical officer to leave with the others while he remained behind with the wounded. Several minutes later from a distance, a sergeant turned and stared through binoculars at the pitiful group they had left behind. He watched in unbelief as enemy soldiers overcame the suffering men and murdered them all—including the chaplain praying over them. Only 11 days after American soldiers had entered the fight, the first Army chaplain lay dead on the battlefield. The next day would have been Herman Felhoelter's 37th Birthday. Posthumously he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.¹²

The bloody battle for Taejon ended on 20 July with North Korean forces attacking the 24th Division on three sides and invading the city. Even General Dean, injured and separated from his men, was eventually captured and subsequently spent nearly 3 years in a North Korean prison camp. His division was eventually relieved by the arriving 25th Infantry and 1st Cavalry Divisions. A few days later, the 24th, supplemented with raw recruits and commanded by General Church, moved to the southwest to meet a sweeping move along the coast by an NKA division.¹³

During the fighting south of Taejon and along the southwest perimeter, Chaplains Carrol G. Chaphe, Methodist, and Edward S. Dorsey, Roman Catholic, were cut off from their units—a harrowing

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experience endured by many chaplains during the course of the War. It took Chaphe 3 days and Dorsey 4 days to get back to friendly ground. Chaplain Chaphe, a veteran of World War II, was wounded in the course of one battle. "We were slapped by one wing of the Red drive on Chinju," he said from his hospital bed in Tokyo. "Our casualties were heavier than the medics could handle, but they kept working and I gave them a hand. . . . A light mortar dropped in ten feet from me, and they're still picking out the metal. When the medics repair this leg I'm going right back to those boys."¹⁴

Also wounded was Chaplain Arthur E. Mills, Advent Christian, with the 8th Regiment of the 1st Cavalry Division. He had overheard the remark of an officer that a group of wounded might have to be abandoned on the field as the unit withdrew from a heavy assault. Mills, who had served in World War II, quickly responded: "This is the way we did it in the last war!" He jumped into a jeep and sped off under enemy fire. Despite the fact that he too was hit, Chaplain Mills returned with a jeep-load of men. Besides the Purple Heart, he was awarded the Silver Star—his second for combat bravery.¹⁵

An occasional lighter moment broke some of the tension in those early days of fighting. With portions of the 25th Division on a train heading toward the front was the Division Chaplain, Mitchell W. Phillips, Disciples of Christ. Phillips was no stranger to Korea since he had served there during the occupation. When his train stopped for fuel, he heard the anguished cries of a refugee whose wife was about to give birth to a child. Phillips jumped from the train and assisted in delivering the baby as the mother lay alongside a road. Even though the father wanted to name the child after the chaplain, Phillips convinced him otherwise and dashed back to the train just as it was leaving.¹⁶

Among the chaplains of the 35th Regiment of the same division, which was attempting to stop a Communist drive near Sangju, was Byron D. Lee, Nazarene. The 33-year-old minister became a chaplain in 1944, a year after graduating from his demonination's Northwest College and Seminary in Nampa, Idaho. He had served in the European Theater in World War II and, prior to that time, had enlisted service in the Minnesota National Guard. As his regiment pulled back from an assault on Hamch'ang, enemy planes spotted the convoy in which Lee was moving, swooped down, and strafed the scattering soldiers. Lee was mortally wounded. It was only the 25th of July and already the second Army chaplain had been killed in action.¹⁷

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Every contact with the enemy seemed to result in catastrophe. What remained of U.S. and ROK units, now designated as the Eighth Army, struggled to hold a daily-decreasing piece of South Korea. Their commander, Lieutenant General Walton H. Walker, designated leader of all U.N. ground forces, announced his intention to hold the line at whatever the cost. Four days after Chaplain Lee's death, General Walker gave his famous "defend or die" speech at the 25th Division's command post.¹⁸ Unfortunately, there were more withdrawals. Ultimately the entire U.N. force, now augmented by units from the United Kingdom, occupied only a small area behind what was called the "Pusan Perimeter." The fragile line stretched a mere 60 miles from Taegu to the eastern coast and 90 miles south, partially along the Naktong River, to the Tsushima Strait. Squeezed into that tiny, southeastern edge of Korea, U.N. troops struggled to hold the North Korean advance.

RECALLING THE RESERVES

The Communist invasion in Korea caught much of the U.S. Army off guard. The Chaplains' Branch was no exception. Roy H. Parker, a Southern Baptist graduate of William Jewell Academy, had been serving as Chief of Chaplains for less than a year. But the 60-year-old major general had been a chaplain since 1918 and both he and his Deputy, James H. O'Neil, Roman Catholic, were combat veterans of World War II. Chaplain Parker was also well versed on the Korean situation, having served as Far East Command Chaplain under General MacArthur before his appointment as Chief of Chaplains.¹⁹

The primary difficulty in facing the emergency was a lack of sufficient manpower. The formation of the Air Force Chaplaincy during the previous year had cut the number of Army chaplains on active duty from over 1,200 to roughly 775. Worse, yet, a Reduction in Force (RIF) went into effect at the end of 1949. A January 1950 Memorandum in the Office of the Chief of Chaplains (OCCH) announced, with inappropriate terminology, that the Branch "was given the opportunity to participate on a voluntary basis" in the separation of non-Regular chaplains.²⁰

Chaplain William J. Reiss, Missouri Synod Lutheran, who had worked for Chaplain Parker in the Far East, was serving in the OCCH at that time. Reiss recalled the pressure from the Department of the Army's Personnel people to reduce chaplain strength to 700 by July. Chaplains with low efficiency reports were encouraged to revert to an inactive

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Reserve status and some were literally forced out under the RIF. The number of chaplains assigned to administrative positions was reduced, the Associate Advance Course at the Chaplain School was eliminated, and the number of chaplains authorized to study at civilian schools was cut by two thirds. Virtually every position considered a luxury was done away with to free the remaining men for troop assignments. Many commanders, for that matter, were encouraged to make use of civilian auxiliary chaplains. But the sudden outbreak of the Korean War and the subsequent buildup of the U.S. Armed Forces required a complete reversal. Overnight the Chaplain Branch was told to raise their strength to roughly 950.²¹

"Parker was so confident that we could get this by volunteers," said Reiss, "that he said we wouldn't force anybody to come into the Service." With obvious embarrassment, personnel in the OCCH began sending letters to many of the men they had just forced off of active duty. "We waited a couple of weeks," recalled Reiss, "and we got one response." In essence, the one Reservist said he would like to return but he was in the midst of a church-building program.²²

There was no recourse but to initiate an involuntary recall. Besides those who were already being activated with Reserve and National Guard units, 240 company grade Chaplain Reservists were individually ordered to active duty. Letters of protest poured into the Chief's Office, but the situation required the recall and virtually no exceptions could be granted. "Those were rough days," said Chaplain Reiss. "But the men who came in did a tremendous job."²³

The call for an increase, however, didn't end there. Try as it might through involuntary recalls and denominational recruitment, the OCCH could never meet the rising authorized ceiling. Within a year of the North Korean invasion, U.S. Army chaplain strength rose from 706 to 1,208. But the authorized strength by then was 1,331. On 9 September 1951 they had 1,398 against 1,464 authorized. A month later the Office reported that 1,448—16 less than the number authorized—were on duty. The report told the Secretary of the Army, "[this is] the closest we have come to attaining full strength."²⁴

Attempting to meet the illusive, constantly growing authorized number, the OCCH started new processing procedures and planned new training programs. Clergymen who applied for appointments were allowed to process centrally with the Department of the Army, rather than through the long chain of Army echelons from their local area to Washington. This cut the time involved from as much as 6 months to no more than

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60 days.²⁵ Plans were also begun, although not implemented until 1954, to allow seminary students to train at the Chaplain School as probationary second lieutenants; an automatic promotion to first lieutenant and eligibility for active duty would follow their ordination.²⁶ Eventually, facing a 1953 authorized strength of 1,618—nearly 200 above the actual strength—the OCCCH convinced the Department of the Army to allow company grade Reserve chaplains to volunteer for a 1-year tour of active duty (as opposed to the normal 3-year period).²⁷

During this time, occasional accusations were being made that American clergymen had become apathetic to the needs of soldiers in battle. In most cases, however, apathy was not the problem. Many former chaplains were bitter after being “Johnsonized”—a term applied to the RIF under Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson. Others, who were veterans of World War II and had volunteered to return to active duty, held Reserve ranks that were too high for the troop-duty vacancies.²⁸ Meanwhile, many religious bodies were making valiant and sacrificial efforts to help. One of the noblest examples was a “self-imposed draft” at various Jewish rabbinical schools from which entire graduating classes volunteered for the chaplaincy.²⁹ Boston’s Roman Catholic Archbishop, Richard J. Cushing, typical of denominational leaders who strongly encouraged their clergy to volunteer, declared: “Mass must be said within the sound of the cannon. From now on, our priests will have less freedom and more work and can no longer afford to be spiritual millionaires while our men are dying in Korea.”³⁰

Whether nobly concerned for American soldiers or unwillingly recalled to active duty, however, few chaplains had a real desire to be in another war—especially one which, at least in the beginning, appeared so hopeless. “When we were getting the pants knocked off us and we got down to that Pusan Perimeter,” said Reiss, “nobody wanted to go to Korea!”³¹

PRAYING WITH THE DEFEATED AND THE VICTORIOUS

The Army Chaplaincy was 175 years old on 29 July 1950. Shaken by the gloomy reports from Korea, a crowd of 3,000 gathered in New York City’s Central Park to attend a special ceremony for the occasion. Following musical tributes, the main speaker, Bernard M. Baruch, extolled the clergymen in uniform. “Although few monuments have been dedicated to the corps,” he said, “its brave men have left their own monu-

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ment in courage on the battlefield.” Referring to Chaplain Felhoelter’s death, he added: “War brings out all the harshest forms of materialism, yet incidents like this prove that men in war can express the noblest forms of spiritualism.”³²

Despite such laudatory phrases, few of the chaplains thousands of miles away considered themselves heroic. Human as the men they served, their spiritual concerns seemed to grow with the desperateness of the situation. Donald F. Carter, Progressive Bretheren, was among the many chaplains in the bleak surroundings of the Pusan Perimeter. He was ministering among the men of the 8th Cavalry Regiment (Infantry), 1st Cavalry Division. “Cooks and clerks were pressed into service as riflemen as the situation became desperate,” he remembered. “There was talk that we might be pushed into the sea. . . . Through fear and uncertainty many men talked to me about spiritual things.”³³

As was often the case in such circumstances, an uncommon brotherhood began to grow and frequently breached long-established walls. A Jewish chaplain, for example, movingly described the breadth of his ministry:

. . . I find most of my work with men of Protestant and Catholic faiths. Moving about clearing stations, mobile hospitals, rest centers, and reserve units, . . . one cannot merely seek his own fellow worshippers. Every boy is equally important—and a smile looks as good on anyone. We forget that we are this faith or another and emphasize the common denominator of fellowship. When they bring them in on a litter covered with mud, blood-soaked, with fear and shock in their faces, you can’t tell what they are until you look at their dog tags. To serve such men is my privilege.³⁴

While General Walker shifted his reserves from one point to another, constantly struggling to hold the fragile line, MacArthur ordered rapid preparations for a bold move—an amphibious assault on Inch’on, 200 miles northwest of Pusan. MacArthur directed that preparations be made in one month and a frantic pace was set toward that goal.

Meanwhile, General Walker attempted an offensive assault on Chinju on his western front. The 1st Provisional Marine Brigade and the 5th Regimental Combat Team were attached to the 25th Infantry Division for the counterattack. The operation was titled “Task Force Kean” after Major General William B. Kean, the Division Commander. Ironically, the planned offensive met headlong with an attack devised by the North Koreans in the same area and at the same time. With the 5th RCT

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were Chaplains Darrell F. Joachim, Disciples of Christ, Francis A. Kapica, Roman Catholic, and Dick J. Oostenink, Christian Reformed.

The Task Force made a brief penetration into the NKA positions, but was forced to withdraw after a week of heavy fighting in stifling summer heat. Chaplains Joachim and Oostenink managed to get back with most of their men, but part of Kapica's battalion was decimated near Pongam-ni. As the battalion commander was trying to make his way to those men, he met Chaplain Kapica returning with his jeep loaded with wounded soldiers. The chaplain told him they were all he was able to find before pulling out himself.³⁵ Although Task Force Kean gained no ground, it had inadvertently stopped a heavy NKA attack. More important, it momentarily boosted the battered morale of U.S. troops who, for the first time, had taken some offensive action.

A short time later, near the end of August, a breakthrough across the Nakdong River by the North Koreans was nearly disastrous for Walker's Eighth Army. In the evening of 31 August, Chaplain Lewis B. Sheen, Episcopalian, had gone forward to hold services for B Company, 9th Regiment, 25th Infantry Division, occupying a hill near the river roughly 15 miles northwest of Masan. In the darkness, Sheen and the other men could hear sounds of people crossing the river below them. Squinting into the night, they made out a long line of enemy troops approaching. A devastating 4-day battle followed. Chaplain Sheen managed to lead one group of soldiers back to friendly ground.³⁶

Adding to the troubles of the rapid preparations for the Inch'on landing, a typhoon roared in from the Sea of Japan during the first days of September. Chaplain John W. Handy, Jr., Methodist, with the 24th Regiment of the 25th Infantry Division, was shipwrecked between Pusan and Sasebo, Japan, for 3 days and nights. For most people, this would have been "the last straw." Handy had previously been cut off from his unit during a front-line engagement—an experience identical to one he had gone through at the Battle of St. Lo in World War II. But Handy described the event as an "opportunity to lean heavily on the 'power of prayer' for my own salvation and in so doing, to strengthen others to face these dangers."³⁷

There were many possibilities that could have made the Inch'on landing a disaster. Fortunately, however, the major offensive movement, beginning on 15 September, was a complete success. Following heavy naval and air bombardment, nearly 70,000 U.S. and ROK troops with

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the 7th Infantry Division, 1st Marine Division, and support units poured into the area in a combined element designated as the X Corps. It was later described as “one of the great strategic strokes of history.”³⁸

The X Corps Chaplain at the time of the invasion was Frank A. Tobey, American Baptist. Tobey, who had both enlisted and commissioned experience before becoming a chaplain in 1938, was assigned as the Eighth Army Chaplain 4 months later. Chaplain Tobey became Chief of Chaplains in 1958.³⁹

The Inch'on landing, breaking the rear positions of the NKA, brought a long-desired relief for Walker's Army and allowed them to make their first successful assaults from the south. Chaplain Carter, with lead elements of the 1st Cavalry Division, remembered the sudden stillness as the enemy pulled back:

. . . men looked at each other with wonder. The enemy was just gone! Then the company was ordered to assemble and the weary soldiers began to tumble into the defile where we were waiting. Such shouting and exultation and laughter followed with men beating each other on the back, hugging and dancing in joy and release from tension. The chaplain was included in this spontaneous demonstration. What an experience this was, and what a revelation of the pent-up emotions that burst into expression at such a time as this.⁴⁰

After regrouping, the units moved north at a rapid pace. Carter was separated from his gear and his assistant for 2 days while moving with the infantry. He described himself as “a vagabond with my beloved men.”

There was walking, talking, sharing “C” rations with whoever had something to spare, rides on tanks, jeeps, and trucks always in the northward movement to catch the enemy. Eventually my faithful assistant “found” me and a more normal way of life was resumed.

Looking back upon that adventure I realize that I had been favored with a glimpse of the real life of that most noble group of men, the combat soldiers. I had experienced just a little bit of their joys and sorrows, victories and frustrations and hopes and fears. I am a better minister of God today because of those days.⁴¹

The Marines, spearheading the drive in the north, liberated Seoul—a victory as important psychologically as it was strategically. Anxious to broadcast the news, MacArthur announced the liberation 2 days before the city was actually secured. Freeing the city, for that matter, had not

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been easy. Total Marines killed, wounded, and missing during the 6-day fight was 1,482.⁴²

INFLUENCING KOREAN RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES

General MacArthur's conviction that the spiritual condition of nations affected their ultimate history again became evident. Returning President Rhee to the National Assembly Hall in the Government House of the capital, the general began his address before a large crowd gathered inside: "Mr. President: By the grace of a merciful Providence our forces . . . have liberated this ancient capital city of Korea." He went on to speak of the U.N.'s "righteous wrath," referred to a "spiritual revulsion against Communism," and concluded by leading the assembly in a recitation of the Lord's Prayer.⁴³

One month later, Chaplain Vernon P. Jaeger, American Baptist, published an article that not only assumed an imminent victory, but also predicted a Christian conversion of the nation:

Just as in Japan, so also in Korea the winning of the war by the Americans and their allies caused the people to realize that their way of life was apparently in error. Now they were interested to inquire into Christianity because it seemed that there was a definite link between the military success of the United States and the religious beliefs that the people of that nation hold.⁴⁴

Actually most Koreans claimed no religious affiliation, but there was still some truth in Jaeger's evaluation. Roman Catholic missionaries had brought Christianity to Korea in the 1700's; Protestant missionaries followed in the late 1800's. The 1950 War, however, brought the first significant impression of western religions on the nation.

Even common citizens recognized the religious aspects attached to the conflict. On the one hand, U.S. forces were regularly accompanied by chaplains and many openly participated in religious worship. American soldiers seemed naturally drawn to civic action projects and charitable causes. On the other hand, Communist forces took pride in denouncing such acts, publicly persecuting missionaries, and degrading houses of worship. When the Roman Catholic Bishop of Seoul returned to his church, for example, he was shocked by the filth inside. Religious pictures had been slashed and obscene drawings covered the walls. The life-size crucifix from above the altar lay smashed on the floor, covered with human waste. In its place hung a picture of Joseph Stalin.⁴⁵

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Obviously, not all American soldiers gave the impression of living saints—far from it. But there were concerted efforts by many of them to impress Koreans with what they considered important. Two American missionaries, Methodist William E. Shaw and Roman Catholic George M. Carroll, attached to the Eighth Army as auxiliary chaplains, began early work to create a ROK Chaplain Corps. One U.S. Army chaplain said regarding that venture: “It is my conviction that out of the present carnage, expensive though it is in both life and money, the cause of Christ will be advanced and that Korea . . . will be a citadel of strength for both democracy and Christianity in the Orient.”⁴⁶

The Army Chaplaincy of the Republic of Korea was officially established on 11 April 1951. For some time, however, ROK chaplains were simply civilian volunteers who served without pay. Only with the supplies given by U.S. military chaplains and the aid from the Cooperative for American Remittance to Everywhere, Inc. (C.A.R.E.), were the chaplains able to survive and perform their duties. Not until 1958, when the ROK Army had become the second largest in the free world, did the first Korean chaplain receive a commission as an army officer.⁴⁷

Despite those shaky beginnings, however, a seed had been planted. Just before the end of the War, the Chief of ROK Chaplains, addressing a graduating class at the Chaplain Training School in Taegu, asserted: “The War has given us a spiritual revival.”⁴⁸

Among the chaplains who came ashore during the Inch'on landing was a Presbyterian named Harold Voelkel—a man whose ministry among the Koreans was to become one of the most remarkable in history. Voelkel was a civilian missionary in Seoul at the time of the Communist invasion. Shortly after his evacuation to Japan, he met Chaplain Ivan L. Bennett, Southern Baptist, the Far East Command Chaplain. Because of Voelkel's knowledge of the Korean language, Bennett invited him to serve as a civilian auxiliary chaplain among ROK troops. As it turned out, however, his most significant ministry was among North Koreans.

Soon after the liberation of Seoul, Chaplain Voelkel learned of a large number of enemy POW's held in a nearby prison and decided to visit them; there his impressive work began. Serving first at Inch'on, later at P'yongyang, and ultimately on the island of Koje-do, over the months Voelkel's work brought him in contact with nearly 150,000 North Koreans. He sought out Christians among them, established Bible

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Institutes (a type of Christian-laymen's school), and conducted hundreds of evangelistic services often attended by thousands. Many considered Voelkel's ministry as one of the influences that ultimately convinced some 60,000 North Korean prisoners not to return to the Communist state following the War. Over 160 of them became Christian ministers and served in the South as pastors, Bible teachers, seminary professors, and chaplains in the armed forces. Years after his somewhat off-hand visit to the prison in Inch'on, Voelkel's name was affixed in honor to a large Christian high school in that city—a school built through the efforts of former North Korean POW's. In 1961, the continued effect of this one chaplain's ministry was recognized by the President of the Republic of Korea who personally decorated Voelkel for his contributions to the welfare of the Korean people.⁴⁹

Among other U.S. civilian clergy who served in various ways as chaplains in the War was Father Patrick O'Connor, a correspondent for the National Catholic Welfare Conference News Service. One author said that O'Connor "very likely celebrated Mass for more soldiers than did any military chaplain in Korea."⁵⁰ Although the priest, like many chaplains, spoke out against Communist efforts to destroy religion, when asked if he considered the conflict a Holy War, he replied: "Hardly as yet. Many of our side are just as materialistic as are [the] Communists. It is futile and fragile to fight one form of materialism with another." Criticizing many U.S. commanders as "noncommittal or merely sentimental about religion," he added: "They encourage well-publicized charities, assistance to orphans, and graveside religious display. It's not enough and it's not all as straightforward as it might be."⁵¹

Nevertheless, threaded as they often were with human error and selfish concerns, that open display of U.S. religious attitudes and those acts of charitable assistance left a mark on "The Land of the Morning Calm."

SERVING THE ARMY ON THE MOVE

Trying to describe briefly the movements of U.N. forces during the months following the Inch'on landing is like trying to describe a yo-yo while in use. Chaplain William E. Paul, Jr., United Lutheran, offloaded at Inch'on on 15 September with the 328th Ordnance Ammunition Battalion. His subsequent travels over the Korean terrain give some picture of the rapid changes in the War's front.

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Chaplain Paul and his unit, providing support to the 7th Infantry Division, moved southeast to hook up with Walker's Eighth Army. He eventually continued all the way to Pusan—over 200 miles away. By the latter part of October, however, he participated in an amphibious landing at Wonsan, 300 miles north on the eastern coast of North Korea. From there he marched to Hamhung but, because of the Chinese intervention, moved south to Hungnam and proceeded, again by sea, nearly to Pusan. Once more he moved north. In the process he was reassigned to the 24th Infantry Division Artillery. Hospitalized with the flu and delayed in locating points along the way, it took him 17 days to get to the unit. Even when he finally left Korea in September 1951, it took him 20 days via Japan, by ship and aircraft, to return to the States.⁵²

The U.N. forces that broke out of the Pusan Perimeter and drove north in the fall of 1950, met heavy resistance before they hooked up with the X Corps north of Osan in late September. Like a hammer meeting an anvil, however, the two forces crushed the NKA units caught in between. One of the fastest drives from the south was made by the ROK 3rd Division which pushed up the east coast and arrived within 5 miles of the 38th Parallel on the last day of the month.

There was some debate whether to cross the Parallel because of concern over possible reactions from China and Russia. After receiving no replies to calls for surrender, however, the U.N. forces pushed on into North Korea. ROK troops, often without adequate supplies and frequently moving on bare feet, made an incredible dash north and captured the port city of Wonsan, 75 miles north of the Parallel, by 10 October. Walker's Eighth Army moved across the border on the west and captured the North Korean capital, P'yongyang, by mid-October. On the 26th of that month, X Corps troops made a mass amphibious landing almost due east, at Wonsan, on the opposite coast.⁵³

Meanwhile, a massive airborne drop was made by the 187th Airborne Regiment near Sukch'on and Such'on, north of P'yongyang. MacArthur had hoped they could rescue American prisoners who it was assumed would be moved northward and, at the same time, cut off North Korean officials and enemy troops. Among the paratrooper-chaplains were Francis L. Sampson, Roman Catholic, and Holland Hope, Methodist. Both were seasoned combat veterans of World War II. Sampson, as a matter of fact, twice survived capture by the Germans following airborne jumps in Europe.

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Chaplain Hope, suffering from a fractured vertebra he incurred from the jump, was accompanying the 187th Regimental Combat Team. Hearing that men of “I” Company in the 3rd Battalion had been cut off, Hope, a recognized marksman, organized a rescue force from “L” Company. Following the chaplain, the men fought their way in to recover the dead and wounded. For this feat, Chaplain Hope was later awarded the Silver Star, the Purple Heart, and one additional, unprecedented award for a chaplain—the Combat Infantryman’s Badge.⁵⁴

Despite MacArthur’s hopes, unfortunately, the major objectives of the airborne operation were lost. Many of the NKA had already retreated farther north. Far more tragic, 73 American prisoners were found murdered in one of the great atrocities of the War.⁵⁵

Sampson and Hope eventually moved south to P’yongyang and, while there, helped minister to POW’s. Sampson collected rosaries from his men for use by the NKA Catholic prisoners. Later he wrote, “I was struck by the strange twist wars can make of things. These Christians had been forced into the Communist army; now here they were using the rosaries belonging to the men they had been shooting at only a few days ago.”⁵⁶

Chaplain Sampson, who became Chief of Chaplains in 1967, was the momentary victim of a common plight in the War—someone stole his jeep. Undaunted by the experience, he announced to some British Catholics, after serving Mass at a neighboring English tank unit: “Now if any of you men can procure a jeep for me, from any source of your choice, I will give that man a jug of soluble coffee, a bottle of wine, and absolution.” In 20 minutes, a British sergeant delivered a new vehicle. It not only had the previous markings painted out, but also a fresh new “Chaplain” sign emblazoned on the front.⁵⁷

Chaplain Joseph A. Dunne, Roman Catholic, replaced Sampson in the 187th Regiment when the latter returned to Japan. While Sampson, an avid tennis player, was temporarily serving at the Tokyo Hospital Annex, he met and became good friends with another player named Yuri Rostovorov. Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) agents soon informed the chaplain that his friend was, in fact, the Chief of the Russian Secret Police in Japan. They wanted Sampson to regularly report his conversations with the Russian, but the chaplain refused such an arrangement as being totally inappropriate for a clergyman. The friendship continued with the CIC’s knowledge and word came one day that Chaplain Dunne, seriously wounded by a land mine in Korea, had

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been brought to the Tokyo hospital. Rostovorov asked to join Sampson in a visit to the wounded priest and, while there, was obviously moved by Dunne's quiet composure to severe pain. "A little over a year later," wrote Sampson, "the Washington department of the CIC arranged a meeting between Rostovorov and myself. He had found his way into the democratic camp, and . . . he told about the deep impression Father Dunne's Christ-like suffering had made upon him."⁵⁸

SUFFERING UNDER THE CHINESE INTERVENTION

Americans had become optimistic about the War when the U.N. forces seemed to be finishing their work. Many U.S. units anticipated withdrawal to Japan. What appeared to be the end of the fighting, however, was actually only the beginning of some of the bloodiest in Korea. The sudden change came with an unexpected intervention by Chinese Communist Forces (CCF), who crossed the Manchurian border and led a new offensive against the U.N. lines.

Initial fighting between the U.S. and CCF forces began near Unsan, roughly 60 miles north of P'yongyang. During the first days of November, the 8th Regiment of the 1st Cavalry Division, especially the 3rd Battalion, suffered heavy losses. Chaplain Emil J. Kapaun, Roman Catholic, a veteran of the Burma-India Theater in World War II, was with them. Years before, Kapaun had confided to a high school friend in Kansas that he wanted more than anything to be a martyr. Asked once why he refused to wear gloves while working in a farming harvest, he replied: "I want to feel some of the pain our Lord felt when he was nailed to the cross."⁵⁹

Kapaun had served in the 1st Cavalry for some time and suffered through early defeats with fellow Chaplains Donald Carter, Arthur Mills, and Julius B. Gonia, Baptist, who replaced the wounded Mills. Carter remembered how Kapaun found a bicycle after losing his jeep in the early days "and covered our units as few other chaplains I know."⁶⁰

The chaplains of the 8th Regiment agreed to rotate among the battalions; near the first of November, Chaplain Carter, living with the 3rd Battalion held in reserve, exchanged places with his friend, Kapaun, in the 1st Battalion. Carter wanted the priest to "enjoy a day or so" away from the tension where the heaviest attack was expected. Ironically, it was the 3rd Battalion that received the full force of the Chinese assault and Kapaun's martyrdom started to be a reality in the evening of 2 November 1950.⁶¹

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The battalion was nearly wiped out during the severe battle. CCF soldiers captured Kapaun while he was with a group of over 50 wounded he had helped gather in an old dugout. Ordered to leave many of those for whom he had risked his life, Kapaun and a few ambulatory wounded were forced to crawl through the battlefield and were later imprisoned. For 6 months, under the most deprived conditions, he fought Communist indoctrination among the men, ministered to sick and dying, and literally stole food from the enemy in trying to keep his fellow soldiers alive. Eventually, suffering from a blood clot, pneumonia, and dysentery, he died there on 23 May 1951.⁶²

Kapaun became one of the popular heroes of the Korean War and was referred to as “the man whose story best sums up the glory of the Chaplain Corps.”⁶³ At a memorial service honoring Kapaun in 1954, Chief of Chaplains Patrick J. Ryan, Roman Catholic, relayed the feelings of former prisoners:

Men said of him that for a few minutes he could invest a seething hut with the grandeur of a cathedral. He was filled with the spirit of Christ. In that spirit he was able to inspire others so that they could go on living—when it would have been easier for them to die.⁶⁴

In the citation for the Legion of Merit, posthumously awarded to Chaplain Kapaun, were references to the “courageous actions” of a man who “considered no menial task beneath him.”⁶⁵

Chaplain Kapaun was the first of several Army chaplains who suffered in captivity. A mere 2 days after his capture, another chaplain fell into the hands of the Chinese. Kenneth C. Hyslop, Northern Baptist, was with the men of the 19th Regiment, 24th Infantry Division, who were attempting to stop the Communist drive south of Unsan near Anju. The 6-year veteran of Army service received the Bronze Star earlier for remaining with wounded who were cut off and eventually leading them back to friendly lines. Hyslop was captured on 4 November. Primarily because of internal injuries as a result of mistreatment by his captors, he died of starvation 38 days later on 12 December.⁶⁶

In November the War’s front became somewhat lopsided. While the Eighth Army was along the Ch’ongch’on River on the west coast, elements of the 7th Infantry Division in the X Corps had penetrated all the way to the Yalu River on the east. The Chinese in the west temporarily drew behind a screen of the NKA. MacArthur, meanwhile, had ordered bomb-

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ing raids on the Yalu bridges in an attempt to prevent Chinese reinforcements from entering Korea from Manchuria.

Despite the entry of Chinese forces into the war, the Eighth Army resumed its advance toward the Yalu on 24 November. The next day, the Chinese opened an offensive of far greater strength than their initial attack, forcing the Eighth Army into a deep withdrawal. The 2nd Infantry Division, last to leave the Ch'ongch'on River, attempted to withdraw over a road that led through a narrow pass bordered by high hills south of the town of Kunu-ri.

Chaplain John J. Murphy, Roman Catholic, was with the 68th AAA Battalion as they passed through the 2nd Division and down the pass—surprisingly without serious incident. Murphy recalled seeing “Oriental soldiers” in the hills as they moved through the defile; he and the others were assured that they were probably ROK troops. Shortly after his unit left the pass, however, the “Oriental soldiers,” actually Chinese forces, opened up with a heavy barrage on their main targets now entering the draw and, on 30 November, one of the worst battles of the War raged in the area. Chaplains John E. Gannon, Baptist, Samuel R. Simpson, Methodist, and James C. Carroll, Roman Catholic, were in the 38th Regiment of the 2nd Division. During the course of the battle the unit lost nearly 50 percent of its men. Simpson was a 44-year-old veteran of World War II. In a convoy trying to rush a Chinese roadblock set up on the 2nd Division's withdrawal route, he was cut down by enemy fire.⁶⁷ On the very same day, Chaplain Wayne H. Burdue, Disciples of Christ, with the 2nd Combat Engineer Battalion, was taken prisoner by the Communist forces. Burdue was 39 years old and had first entered the Army in 1942. Later reports indicated that he died in prison on 31 July 1951.⁶⁸ Chaplains Simpson and Burdue were just two of the nearly 4,000 casualties of the tragic ambush at Kunu-ri.

Twenty-three years later, while Chaplain Carroll was serving as Post Chaplain at Ford Hood, Texas, he received a letter from a retired sergeant. What the sergeant lacked in English grammar and spelling was more than compensated for by his moving message.

Dear Sir:

You are properly the only chaplain in the hold Army that I can remember his name. . . .

To let you know who I am, I was the one that jumped on you when we were ambushed at Conrea Pass. . . .

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You sure did have a great influence on my life that day in Korea. I have never forgot how cool and collective you were when everybody was getting killed all around us. You said “the Lord is with us and will get us out of this mess” which he did. You were the calmest person that I have every known.

After Korea, I started trying to find out in my own mind why you were so cool that day. Well I found it sometime late. I became a Christian. I am a Deacon and Sunday School Superintendant of my Church. Thanks very much . . . ⁶⁹

Three days before the Kunu-ri engagement, other Chinese forces hit the X Corps far to the northeast where sub-zero temperatures covered the land with ice and snow. MacArthur ordered a withdrawal by the Corps to the port at Hungnam for evacuation. Unfortunately, an envelopment by the Chinese forced the units in the Changjin (Chosin) Reservoir area to fight their way out to the evacuation points.

Chaplain Martin C. Hoehn, Roman Catholic, serving with a portion of the 31st Regiment of the 7th Infantry Division, was later awarded the Silver Star for his heroic service and encouragement to the wounded.⁷⁰ In the same unit, Chaplain James W. Conner, Episcopalian, was lost in the fierce fighting. The former priest to churches in Puerto Rico was listed as missing on 1 December 1950—exactly 2 years from the date of his entry on active duty. Chaplain Conner was never found and was eventually declared as “Presumed Dead.”⁷¹

A Navy chaplain, serving the Marines in the area, wrote a magazine article later in which he accused the 31st Regiment of cowardice. He claimed that some 400 soldiers had feigned wounds and frostbite in order to be evacuated—leaving the 1st Marine Division completely cut off. The article gained publicity in other periodicals and the Department of the Army issued a public denial of the story. A personal letter, presumably of protest, was sent to the chaplain from the Secretary of the Navy. Although the accuracy of the chaplain’s accusation may never be known, the reports indicated that the wounded from the 31st continued firing at the enemy while lying on trucks awaiting evacuation.⁷²

In the same action, the day after Chaplain Conner was lost, Chaplain Lawrence F. Brunnert, Roman Catholic, in a sister unit, part of the 32nd Regiment was taken prisoner near the infamous Changjin Reservoir. Repatriated prisoners testified to Brunnert’s devoted, though brief, service after his capture. He was the last U.S. Army chaplain taken prisoner in Korea and, tragically like the three who preceded him, he

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also died in captivity. Returned prisoners indicated that he died of wounds on 20 December 1950.⁷³

For 6 days the 1st Marine Division fought southward from the Reservoir. Finally, on 9 December, a relief column from the 3rd Infantry Division met them outside of Hungnam. The immense evacuation had already begun. The Air Force and Navy moved 110,000 troops, 98,000 refugees, 350,000 tons of cargo, and 18,000 vehicles out of the area by Christmas Eve.⁷⁴

The cost in lives caused by the Chinese intervention had been extremely high. The extent of those casualties can be measured somewhat by the tragic realization that six U.S. Army chaplains nearly half of those who died in Korea, were lost in that 1-month period—four of them within 3 days.

MIXING SWEAT AND BLOOD WITH KOREAN SOIL

When Chaplain Frederick H. Ogilvie, Southern Baptist, reported for duty with the 7th Infantry Division, it appeared as though the Division's Chaplain Section was preparing for the Olympics. Ogilvie was a former Baylor University football star. He joined Chaplains Benton S. Wood, Christian Science, former captain of the Harvard swimming team; James M. Bragan, Baptist, and John W. Betzold, Orthodox Presbyterian, outstanding baseball players; Martin Hoehn, a talented skier, and Division Chaplain Maurice E. Powers, Roman Catholic, a boxer.⁷⁵ For the moment, however, it appeared as if none of them were on a winning team.

Chaplain Betzold, like many others, had once stood on the banks of the Yalu River, but during the bitter 1950 winter he was moving south in the rapid "bug out," as the soldiers called it. A land mine destroyed a communications truck near the head of his column. Betzold rushed forward with the others, fearing the worst for the driver. They spotted him, clothes in tatters, calmly searching the brush by the road. "I've found it!" he suddenly shouted to the stunned observers, as he held up a piece of wood with a few strings hanging limp. They were the shattered remains of his beloved guitar. "His humor saved the day for us," Betzold said; then he added soulfully, "at least that part of it."⁷⁶

The incident seemed characteristic of the winter mood into which scores of chaplains tried to bring the spirit of Hanukkah and Christmas like a smile on the face of tragedy. The victorious had again become the defeated in a sudden twist of events. Somewhat symbolic of the course

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of the War, General Walker was suddenly killed in a freak accident. He died while driving to the front to decorate a group of soldiers—including his own son—when his jeep collided with a ROK Army truck.⁷⁷

U.S. emotions were straining at what some were beginning to call a “pointless war.” It was difficult for many to accept the political expediency of limited action in which thousands of Americans were giving their lives. The “U.S. Fighting Man” was chosen as *Time* magazine’s “Man of the Year.” “It was not a role the American had sought either as an individual or as a nation,” said the periodical. “The U.S. fighting man was not civilization’s crusader, but destiny’s draftee.”⁷⁸ A chaplain working in a replacement depot said that many of the religious conversions at his station were based on fear—“Who would not be scared to face those ruthless and godless communists?”⁷⁹ Meanwhile, General MacArthur’s disagreement with the policy-makers’ conduct of the War was becoming increasingly apparent.

By this time, Chaplain Ivan Bennett, in his dual capacity as Far East and U.N. Command Chaplain, was supervising nearly 270 chaplains representing a variety of nations. Frank Tobey, as Eighth Army Chaplain, was the senior cleric in Korea. Interestingly, 67 of his chaplains were civilians—seven U.S. auxiliary chaplains (former missionaries) and 60 ROK chaplain-volunteers.⁸⁰ Beginning in late January and into the spring of 1951, they joined their men once more in the regaining of formerly occupied ground.

Lieutenant General Matthew Ridgway, Walker’s replacement, launched several attacks and reoccupied Seoul by 16 March. To block an NKA withdrawal route, the 187th Regimental Combat Team made another airborne assault—this time at Munsan, nearly 175 miles below the area they had captured 6 months earlier. It was during this operation that Chaplain Joseph Dunne, whose quiet composure to pain had influenced Chaplain Sampson’s Russian friend, was seriously wounded. Dunne, who was later retired for disability, received the Silver Star for his heroic service in the area.⁸¹

On 5 April near Chunchon, almost due west of Munsan, Chaplain Leo P. Craig, Roman Catholic, was vesting for afternoon Mass at the 99th Field Artillery Battalion of the 1st Cavalry Division. An exploding land mine injured a soldier about 70 yards away and Craig, shedding his vestments, rushed with some others to aid the man. As they knelt beside the soldier, someone stepped on a second mine and Chaplain Craig,

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along with seven others, was killed by the blast. The former Cincinnati priest had died after less than 2 years in the Army. By the next morning, when prayers were being recited over the chaplain's body by the Division Chaplain, Harold Prudell, the story of Craig's death was being filed in a news story by the priest-correspondent, Patrick O'Connor.⁸²

Six days later, despite their knowledge of some of the disagreements involved, many Americans were stunned by a brief announcement released by President Truman through his press secretary. "With deep regret," it began, "I have concluded that General of the Army Douglas MacArthur is unable to give his wholehearted support to the policies of the United States Government and of the United Nations in matters pertaining to his official duties. . . . I have, therefore, relieved General MacArthur of his commands and have designated Lt. Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway as his successor. . . ." ⁸³

Chaplain Francis Sampson described Ridgway as a "soldier's soldier" and compared him to Washington at Valley Forge "who met the supreme test in one of his country's darkest hours." ⁸⁴ Meanwhile, Lieutenant General James A. Van Fleet was rushed from the States to assume Ridgway's former job.

Obviously, many chaplains were becoming increasingly, if not wearily, familiar with the Korean terrain. Because of the constantly changing front and the rapid movement of units, some chaplains had to travel more than 50 miles between the elements of their "congregations." A chaplain reported that to get to one of his units required flying for 1 hour, riding a boat for 1½ hours, and driving a jeep for another ½ hour. The constant traveling, however, brought many of them in contact with the needs of the local people and inspired their involvement in soliciting and distributing supplies from Stateside churches.⁸⁵

Two Communist offensives during the last of April and the middle of May resulted in heavy casualties for both sides along the 38th Parallel. On 18 May, Chaplain Carl P. Oberleiter, American Lutheran, with the 5th Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, had stopped by the Command Post of Lieutenant Colonel Richard L. Irby's 2nd Battalion near Uijongbu. Irby, who was about to confer with the division commander at the time, noticed Oberleiter's jeep move onto the shoulder of a road to by-pass another vehicle when suddenly it detonated a land mine. Shrapnel ripped into the chaplain, severing an arm above the elbow. After evacuation, Oberleiter nearly died but, through the concerted efforts primarily of an Army nurse, he managed to survive. After spending months in military

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hospitals, he was retained on active duty, despite his handicap—due in part to his obvious morale-building influence on other patients. The cheerful chaplain, however, shared a different reason with the soldiers. While dwelling in subconsciousness, he told them, he had presented himself at the gates of heaven and dutifully turned over his “201 File” (Personal Records) for inspection. After the review, unfortunately, he was refused admittance and sent “below.” Once more the file was perused and again the chaplain told that he didn’t qualify for entrance. Asking in frustration where he could possibly go, he was told: “Generally in such cases, we simply retain them on active duty.”⁸⁶

Chaplain Leonard F. Stegman, Roman Catholic, and David M. Reardon, Reformed, were awarded Silver Stars for their brave services on 20 May with the 15th Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division. Both had left an aid station to assist in evacuating the wounded from the field under intense enemy fire. Reardon, who was wounded in the process, refused to leave until the last man was recovered. He commented in a later acceptance of a civilian award: “My thoughts of those days are fresh with memories of splendid and heroic acts of my comrades whose sweat and blood is mixed with the soil of Korea.”⁸⁷

Enemy advances were soon spent and General Van Fleet began pushing back across the Parallel. On 27 May the 19th and 21st Regiments of the 24th Infantry Division flanked a Communist-held hill near the border. Chaplain John J. Murphy, now with the 19th Regiment, had spent some previous time with fellow Catholic Francis X. Coppens of the 21st Regiment. When Murphy attempted to contact his friend by field phone on the 28th, he was shocked to hear that Coppens had been killed the night before. Communist forces had stormed down the hill on the side held by the 21st Regiment; Coppens and Chaplain John B. Youngs, Bible Presbyterian, were occupying the same tent at the time. As machine gun fire riddled the canvas, Youngs dashed out for cover under a vehicle. Coppens, however, who had been quietly reciting his rosary, was cut down by the fire. Although the Massachusetts’ priest had been on active duty from 1945 to 1947, his second tour had just begun in September 30, 1950. Chaplain Coppens was the tenth U.S. Army chaplain-victim of a war that was less than 1-year old.⁸⁸

SERVING IN A STALEMATE

By late June 1951, a Soviet-proposed Cease Fire brought a lull to the fighting and the first negotiations between the sides. Unfortunately, the

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time was primarily spent strengthening positions along the line that snaked roughly along the Imjin River on the west to a point about 40 miles above the parallel on the east. The U.N. particularly fortified its hold near the “Iron Triangle” (Chorwon—Kumhwa—P’yonggang) on the central front. Clashes between the sides broke out regularly even while the talks were being held.

Chaplain John A. DeVaux, Sr., African Methodist, was conducting services for the war dead one day at an Inch’on cemetery during the July–August lull. A South Korean, pointing to the stars above some of the graves, remarked: “I had no idea that you Americans have lost so many generals.” “Those aren’t generals,” replied DeVaux. “They’re soldiers of the Jewish faith—men of all ranks who died for the cause. The Star of David is the symbol of their religion, as the cross is of the Christian faith.”⁸⁹

During the previous months, many U.S. troops had picked up orphan boys who lost their parents in the War. The homeless children were fed and clothed by the soldiers and referred to as their “mascots.” In August, the 1st Cavalry Division Commander, who was concerned about the welfare of these youngsters, asked Chaplain Prudell to see to it that they were properly cared for. Prudell organized “Operation Mascot” by which 43 boys were given medical examinations, fed, and transported to various orphanages. Unfortunately, two of the little fellows “escaped” and hitch-hiked their way—over 100 miles—back to the only home they knew. Once more they had to be transported back to the orphanages for which the 1st Cavalry soldiers alone had contributed more than \$1,600.⁹⁰

Chief of Chaplains Roy Parker, who visited the battle-torn country in August, quoted a letter from a Korea-based chaplain in a report to the Secretary of the Army near the end of the month. “We are all praying that an armistice can be negotiated here,” wrote the chaplain, but added his discouragement over the Communists’ use of the talks for propaganda purposes. “We can ill afford to lose the caliber of men we have lost here,” he continued. “Perhaps this is not quite properly expressed as any price which assures freedom is worthwhile. But at the same time, it hurts to lose such good men.”⁹¹

As the negotiations deteriorated into little more than formal name-calling and completely broke off near the end of August, the fighting rose again to full crescendo. Names like “The Punch Bowl,” “Bloody Ridge,” and “Heartbreak Ridge” became common as the news media tried to

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describe the coveted, rugged terrain commanding the area for which thousands of men gave their lives. Chaplain Parker quoted the 7th Infantry Division Chaplain in his September report to the Secretary of the Army:

We are still engaged against an implacable and staunch foe, but if morale ever won a war our men will win this conflict. We are in excellent shape and the new chaplains . . . have already demonstrated eagerness, cooperation, zeal for the welfare of the men, and a fine cooperative religious interest in everything, notwithstanding the rigors and lack of amenities. . . .⁹²

At about the same time the OCCH received a narrative from Korea entitled, "Diary Notes From the Chaplain," written by Chaplain Wendell F. Byrd, Church of God, 13th Combat Engineer Battalion. Among the pages were comments of thankfulness for the blessings of being an American. He had written that his faith had been increased by his nation's work to keep men free and then, commenting about American soldiers, added:

To me there is something fascinating about the courage of men who can go out through mines facing enemy fire on dangerous missions and raids, then come back to their tents or foxholes and stomach a good meal in a cheerful mood.⁹³

One month later, on 27 October, Chaplain Byrd was enjoying some time off during a new lull in the War—hunting pheasants with a Korean interpreter. With tragic irony, the 10-year veteran of Army service tripped a concealed land mine and was killed instantly.⁹⁴

U.N. forces had managed to inch forward over the difficult ground. The Communists called for a resumption of the armistice negotiations and discussions opened again in late October 1951 at Panmunjom, south-east of Kaesong, near the 38th Parallel. The little village, which rested in "No Man's Land" between the lines, became the center of the world's attention.

By that time, the Korean War had become increasingly unpopular in the U.S. and some chaplains, like the soldiers they served, were emotionally torn by the issues. Adamantly refusing to declare all of the sacrifice of no value, they were frustrated over the little gain that seemed to be resulting from it. As if to remind them of the ideological struggle at stake, however, a Navy chaplain, who had served with the Marines in battle, lashed out at American attitudes. "They ask questions as if it [the war] had no special significance or relationship to themselves or the

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interests of our country and our way of life.” Korea, he insisted, “is a segment of a world-wide struggle for the preservation of our way of life.”⁹⁵

While the talks at Panmunjom dragged on, minor skirmishes between patrols and front-line elements continued. It was, perhaps, easier during this time for chaplains to locate the units they served, but no less difficult or dangerous for them to get there. One chaplain had to use a 2,200-foot cable tramway to transport his field organ and altar kit part of the way up a hill to one group. He and his assistant carried the equipment on their backs the rest of the way. Another estimated that he traveled between 1,500 to 2,000 miles a month to provide counseling and religious services for his men.⁹⁶

Concentrating much of their efforts at aid stations and hospitals, many of them empathized with the suffering of their comrades. Chaplain Paul W. Bare, Methodist, was over 50 years old when he concluded: “The world is in flames, I just couldn’t sit it out as a civilian.”⁹⁷ Quietly he moved through a front-line hospital late one night and grieved over the misery about him. He repeated prayers and Psalms for a young Tennessee boy who had lost both his legs. He bent down to embrace a 17-year-old, wounded for the second time, who clung to him like a child to his father in the dark. He helped another, whose shoulder was ripped and torn, to concentrate on the blessing of life rather than his handicap. He stopped by an old sergeant who wept for his lost men and prayed with him till he was calmed. Hundreds were suffering and dying as the negotiations continued.⁹⁸

Some outside viewers thought the Cease Fire meant that no conflict was taking place. One chaplain was amused by a radio reporter’s efforts to pre-record artillery fire so that he could overlap it as a background on his recording of the chaplain’s worship service. Actual firing was carried on so close during the service that the back blasts from the guns kept blowing out the candles in the chapel tent.⁹⁹

During the stalemate in March 1952, elements of the 40th Infantry Division were occupying positions on the central front. Among the men assigned was Episcopal Chaplain Robert M. Crane. The 40th Division was a National Guard unit that had relieved the 24th Infantry Division little more than a month before. Although Crane, like many of the men he served, had had previous Army experience, his second tour had begun only 12 months earlier. He spent most of that time in Japan where the two National Guard divisions, the 40th and the 45th, trained and provided security while high-level commanders debated over sending

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them into combat. When the units were finally shipped to Korea, however, they quickly demonstrated their effectiveness.¹⁰⁰

On 11 March Chaplain Crane had just concluded a worship service for a unit of the 160th Infantry Regiment near Kumsong, North Korea. As he was leaving the area, an incoming artillery round nearly scored a direct hit on his jeep. The blast beside the road mortally wounded him. Robert Crane was the last U.S. Army chaplain to be killed in action in Korea. Nearly a year later the final Army chaplain casualty was added to the list when fellow Episcopalian Kenneth C. Wilson, 54th Quartermaster Battalion, died of non-battle causes on 23 January 1953. There was tragic similarity between Crane's loss and the sacrifices of the Minutemen-chaplains of the American Revolution—dying among citizen-soldiers who struggled to protect the independence of a tiny and, to many people, unimportant nation.¹⁰¹

The men of the 40th Division collected over \$5,000 during worship services to help build a Robert Crane Memorial Chapel in northern Honshu, Japan, where the chaplain had expressed an interest in serving as a missionary after the War. The same division contributed more than \$29,000 toward relief work in Korea during their service there. Their contributions were typical of thousands of dollars donated by American servicemen around the world for Korean relief, particularly among war orphans, in drives often sponsored by Army chaplains.¹⁰²

In April 1952 Far East Command Chaplain Ivan Bennett left for the States with the intention of retiring. He was succeeded by Chaplain James T. Wilson, Methodist, former Third Army Chaplain. Because of an October 1952 reorganization which made the Far East Command a joint command, Wilson became the first Staff Chaplain of the newly organized Army Forces, Far East. Shortly after Bennett arrived on the west coast, he learned that he had been nominated by the President as the next Chief of Chaplains, to replace retiring Roy Parker. After confirmation by the Senate and promotion to major general, the 60-year-old Bennett assumed the leadership role on 28 May.¹⁰³

Chaplain Bennett's ingenuity for getting things done at high command levels was seldom flashy but generally effective. Early in the Korean conflict, for example, he was determined to publish a combined English-Korean hymnbook for use in the war zone. Chaplain Steve P. Gaskins, Jr., Methodist, serving as the project officer, was frustrated by constant refusals from the responsible officers to grant necessary funds for printing. Bennett, understanding the psychology of staff officers,

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went to General MacArthur and invited him to autograph a pre-written foreword to the book. The general obligingly signed the document. With a clever grin, Bennett visited the man holding the “purse strings” and suggested it would be nice to have a hymnbook to go with the general’s foreword. Chagrined, the officer admitted, “O.K., Chaplain, you’ve got me again.”¹⁰⁴

Some of the chaplain’s talents were obviously inherited by his children—Dr. Ivan L. Bennett, Jr., was appointed Deputy Director of Science and Technology by President Johnson in 1966 and his brother, Major General John C. Bennett, became the commander of Fort Carson, Colorado, and the 4th Infantry Division in 1970.¹⁰⁵

SURVIVING WITH DETERMINATION

Just as General Mark W. Clark arrived in May 1952 to replace General Ridgway as the U.N. Commander, an embarrassing incident took place at the large POW camp on the island of Koje-do. Brigadier General Francis T. Dodd, the camp commander, was captured and held hostage by his own prisoners. Brigadier General Charles F. Colson secured Dodd’s release by making a statement tantamount to an admission of mistreatment of prisoners—providing the Communist negotiators at Panmunjom with a powerful propaganda tool. Clark eventually ordered Brigadier General Haydon Boatner to the scene and order was final restored.

Much of the camp’s disturbance began over discussions by the negotiators regarding the right of POW’s to choose whether or not to be repatriated. When screening processes for that purpose were first attempted, staunch Communist prisoners violently objected, refused to be questioned, and punished those who admitted a desire to remain in South Korea.¹⁰⁶

Civilian Auxiliary Chaplain Harold Voelkel recalled the difficult struggles of the Christian prisoners during this period. Hard-core Communist leaders literally controlled some of the compounds and dealt ruthlessly with those who refused to remain loyal. Many were murdered by their fellow prisoners; a large portion of the victims were faithful attendees at Voelkel’s services and Bible classes. Like the Christians in ancient persecutions, however, their faith only strengthened under the pressure. One group drew up a declaration of their willingness to die rather than return to Communist North Korea, individually signed the

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document with their own blood, and presented it to Chaplain Voelkel. Within days, Christians in every compound presented similar blood petitions to the chaplain. One of these petitions was later given to visiting Evangelist Billy Graham who, in turn, presented it to the President on a subsequent visit to the White House.¹⁰⁷

The fervor with which many Koreans grasped Christianity after conversion amazed American observers. Chaplain Viggo Aronsen, American Lutheran, discovered that six ROK sergeants serving with the 10th Field Artillery Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division, were actually ordained Presbyterian ministers. Aronsen supplied a field altar and other supplies for them and was astounded at the results.

What happened thereafter was a minor miracle. After the initial English-GI service on Sunday, these ROKs (great people) set up for Christian worship in the same location. Believe it or not, the hills emptied and people came in by the hundreds (conservatively, more than 500) Our own worship services in combat were tremendous experiences throughout the 3d Div Arty, but when it came to the Korean Christians we couldn't hold a candle to what they accomplished in the same sector.¹⁰⁸

Attacks and counterattacks continued to take the lives of men as the jagged hills north of the Parallel repeatedly changed hands and the negotiations again deteriorated. The intensity of the fighting was reflected in the medal-citations awarded to many chaplains during the period. Chaplain Peter D. Van Dyke, Episcopalian, was awarded the Silver Star for his services in the 17th Regiment, 7th Infantry Division, on 3 July. During intense enemy fire, he left his position in a rear-area aid station and dashed about the battlefield ministering to wounded and dying, encouraging those still fighting, and aiding the litter bearers. As the unit was forced to withdraw, he remained on the field until all of the wounded were evacuated—personally carrying out the last man.¹⁰⁹

Chaplain Michael T. Morgan, Roman Catholic, with the "Puerto Rico Regiment" (65th) of the 3rd Infantry Division, was in the midst of battle so often that the men jokingly insisted the enemy intensified their fire whenever he arrived. In one inadvertent move he nearly became a chaplain for the NKA. On his way to the front to conduct services, he had stopped to examine a burned-out Communist tank when suddenly he noticed a soldier some distance away waving for him to come back. Glancing in the other direction, he could see enemy soldiers about 100 yards away staring at him incredulously. "You know, Father," said his

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driver, "I think we're on the wrong road." Quickly jumping in their jeep they sped back to the friendly side.¹¹⁰

By October 1952 the Panmunjom talks had broken down again and the whole war issue was the hottest political topic in the U.S. Dwight D. Eisenhower, promising to bring a conclusion to the agony, was elected President in November and visited Korea before his inauguration. But the War continued through its third bitter winter as the new Chief of Chaplains, Ivan Bennett, asked religious leaders for more chaplains. By then, 175 Army chaplains had received 218 decorations in Korea, including 22 Silver Stars.¹¹¹ Chaplain William H. Weitzel, Episcopalian, had even received the Marine Commendation Medal with "V" device for his voluntary work among front-line marines while assigned to an Army ordnance unit.¹¹²

It was obvious by now that the chaplains in Korea were facing a different ministry than those in World War II. While the fearful environment of the battlefield was the same, the attitude and morale of the soldier—deeply affected by the debates over the value of his sacrifice—had slowly changed. Severely wounded on the battlefield with the bodies of his friends lay the idealism of many soldiers. The interminable, on-again, off-again negotiations while blood was continually shed over the same terrain, made many feel like little more than political pawns.¹¹³

Fortunately, perhaps due in part to the death of Joseph Stalin on 5 March 1953, the Communist position softened somewhat. Surprisingly, at the end of that month, they agreed to a previous proposal by General Clark to exchange sick and wounded prisoners while resuming the talks. Operation "Little Switch" in April returned 684 U.N. personnel and 6,670 Communists. With the 149 Americans came the stories of many deaths—including those of the four chaplains who would never return.¹¹⁴

But the political-football aspect continued in a war that seemed to refuse to die. ROK President Syngman Rhee would not agree to a divided Korea and the subsequent discussions among the allies became as difficult as those with the enemy. General Clark later remarked, "Never, it seemed to me, was it more thoroughly demonstrated that winning a satisfactory peace, even a temporary one, is more difficult than winning a war."¹¹⁵

Beginning in April 1953, and reaching its peak in June and July, renewed fighting, mostly against CCF forces, tested the abilities of Lieutenant General Maxwell D. Taylor, who had replaced Van Fleet as Eighth Army Commander in February. Chaplain Parker C. Thompson, Southern Baptist, was among many who would have sworn that the War

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was nowhere near an end. Serving from November 1952 until May 1953 in the 7th Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division, and then in the 10th Combat Engineer Battalion, he was wounded three times and suffered a severe back injury during those 6 months. In one of his awards for combat bravery, he was cited for giving his armored vest to one of the wounded he was helping to evacuate. First used extensively in the latter part of the War, the vest was considered the most important possession of the infantry soldier next to his weapon.¹¹⁶

The intensity of the last 4 months of the War is reflected by the statistics: the combined total of dead, wounded, and missing from both sides was more than 200,000, and the artillery rounds expended by them during the same period totalled an incredible 8½ million.¹¹⁷

For organizing the evacuation of the wounded under withering fire—personally carrying many of them himself—Chaplain Cormac A. Walsh, Roman Catholic, 180th Regiment, 45th Infantry Division, received his third Silver Star. That incident took place only 2 days before the negotiations resumed for the last time, and 9 days before the final Armistice was eventually signed on 27 July 1953.¹¹⁸ Like some horrible monster dying after one final, violent convulsion, the Korean War had come to an end. For a moment, in the tension-filled silence that followed, only the quiet utterances of thanksgiving drifted with the smoke toward heaven.

One author of the period had written:

The man least attuned to what Bernhardt has called “the biological necessity” of war, and than whom there is none deeper enmeshed in it, is the chaplain. By vocation he is committed to an optimism of the spirit which believes and preaches that a man is capable of settling his differences by means other than war. Yet he accepts the commission to walk in the midst of it, to work in the thick of it, and to pray for the successful prosecution of it.¹¹⁹

To many people, perhaps, it was an inconsistent philosophy. To most chaplains it was an inescapable call to instill an ancient conviction: “Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit: or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there.”¹²⁰ To that end, scores of them had shed their blood, 13 had given their lives, and hundreds were committed to a continuing ministry among American soldiers.

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FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER III

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¹⁰¹ Personnel Records of Robert M. Crane, USARCPAC; *New York Times*, 20 March 1952, p. 6; *The Chaplain*, September–October 1952, p. 48; *Military Chaplain*, October 1953, pp. 1–3; Personnel file of Kenneth C. Wilson, OCCH.

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¹⁰³ *Amy, Navy and Air Force Journal*, 12 April 1942, p. 1005; *The Chaplain*, July–August 1952, p. 48; Reiss, Recorded Interview, 27 October 1973, USACHCS.

¹⁰⁴ Steve P. Gaskins to Rodger R. Venzke, 2 July 1974, USACHCS.

¹⁰⁵ *Journal of the Armed Forces*, 19 November 1966, p. 19; *The Chaplain*, May–June 1971, p. 57.

¹⁰⁶ Hermes, *Truce Tent and Fighting Front*, pp. 233–262.

¹⁰⁷ Voelkel, *Behind Barbed Wire*, pp. 27–30; Voelkel to Rodger R. Venzke, 14 April 1973, USACHCS.

¹⁰⁸ Viggo O. Aronsen, Historical Questionnaire, 12 October 1973, USACHCS.

¹⁰⁹ Citation, Award of the Silver Star Medal, Chaplain Peter D. Van Dyke, n.d. (for action on 3 July 1952 with Hq, 17th Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division), RG 247, file 200.6, NA.

¹¹⁰ *Military Chaplain*, October 1952, p. 29.

¹¹¹ *Newsweek*, 3 November 1952, pp. 68–69.

¹¹² *The Chaplain*, November–December 1952, p. 48.

¹¹³ "Are the Churches Failing Our Gi's?" *Military Chaplain*, April 1953, pp. 4–6.

¹¹⁴ Dupuy and Dupuy, *Military History*, p. 1219; Hermes, *Truce Tent and Fighting Front*, p. 514.

¹¹⁵ Mark W. Clark, *From the Danube to the Yalu* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954), p. 257.

¹¹⁶ St. Louis Globe Democrat, 19 January 1954, p. 6; Parker C. Thompson, Personal interview, 29 October 1974, USACHCS; For discussion on armored vests see Hermes, *Truce Tent and Fighting Front*, p. 372.

¹¹⁷ Hermes, *Truce Tent and Fighting Front*, p. 477.

¹¹⁸ *New York Times*, 25 February 1955, p. 3.

¹¹⁹ Timothy J. Mulvey, *These Are Your Sons* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1952) p. 151.

¹²⁰ Psalm 139:7–8, KJV.

CHAPTER IV

Responding to the Strategic Opportunities

LACKING EARLY UNITY AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

In the fall of 1951 Chaplain John F. Orzel, Roman Catholic, officiated at a unique funeral in Arlington National Cemetery for a Korean War casualty. The family of the deceased Sergeant John R. Rice intended to have him buried at Sioux City, Iowa, but they were barred from using a municipal cemetery. The President of the United States directly intervened in the case and ordered Sergeant Rice's committal to be conducted at Arlington. Only one factor of Sergeant Rice's life had been the basis for this unusual situation—he was a Winnebago Indian.¹

Army chaplains had witnessed American racial and ethnic prejudice for years. Unfortunately, like their civilian counterparts, most of them seemed preoccupied with other issues. A group of seminary professors who taught elective courses on ministry in the military labeled the chaplaincy in 1953: "a strategic opportunity for a spiritual ministry." Of course, in the mood of that time, they were speaking of the "ideological and spiritual" struggle with Communism rather than with the festering, indigenous social problems in the United States. It was as if the "strategic opportunity" for chaplains was always thought of in terms of protecting American soldiers from foreign political influence rather than from erroneous U.S. attitudes.²

Army chaplains didn't ignore the issue of prejudice, but they did fail to recognize the "strategic opportunity" to unite and organize their efforts against the problem. Individual "prophets" were common. Just as World War II ground to a halt, Chaplain Jacob W. Beck, Presbyterian, boldly attacked the popular American practice of degrading Japanese and further reprimanded his nation for its attitudes toward blacks.

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Praising the willing sacrifice and the passion to minister to fellowmen in the name of Christ by both Japanese and blacks, Beck wrote that only when he had done the same, "then I shall consider myself their equals in the Faith. But, only when I can measure up to the stature of Jesus Christ, will I dare to presume I am in a position to judge the Negro and the Japanese—and then I shall be so near to the heart of my God and Savior that I will know better!"³

Six months later, Chaplain Charles E. Byrd, Baptist, accused the U.S. of "The World's Biggest Problem"—segregation and discrimination against blacks. The War, he insisted, had in no way been a struggle between the "holy" and the "unholy" but, if anything, between the "bad" and the "worse." "We are aware as never before," he wrote, reminding readers of the Nazi philosophy they had just fought, "that individual and social institutions stand under the judgment of the God of history whose judgment demands the disarding of the doctrine of the 'master race' in any form."⁴

In July 1947 former Chaplain Ira Freeman, Southern Baptist, protested American unwillingness to accept veterans of all races with equal honor. "I Am Intolerant Toward Intolerance," he wrote, challenging his fellow veterans to set an example against discrimination in the country.⁵

Occasionally an individual chaplain not only proclaimed an anti-prejudice philosophy but also sought some practical resolution. Chaplain Melvin J. Friesen, Northern Baptist, wrote to the Army Chief of Staff in January 1947 and detailed what he called "intolerable conditions" for Philippine Scouts augmented into the U.S. Army. Friesen sent copies of his letter to the Chief of Chaplains and his congressman. Unfortunately, his single voice against the alleged wrongs resulted mostly in attacks on his personal effectiveness. "The writer's talent," countered Friesen's commanding general to the chaplain's complaint, "is better developed in the field of crusader than in the more prosaic field of hard work and encouragement of his men in meeting the actualities of life."⁶

Symbolic of these early individual protests is a single sentence found hidden in the minutes of the Tokyo-Yokohama chaplains' meeting for 11 December 1945:

Chaplain Hall raised his voice to object to discrimination against Negro troops.⁷

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No explanatory or resultant discussion was recorded by the group's secretary. In much the same way, the single voices of chaplains against racial prejudice went by largely without notice, further comment, or practical result.

In one case from that period of history, however, involving a former Army chaplain, the issue of discrimination was recognized as a strategic opportunity for ministry. World War II chaplain-veteran Grant Reynolds, Congregational, while serving as a New York official, led a group of black civilians which was organized in 1947 as "The Committee Against Jim Crow in Military Service and Training." In retrospect, some historians have credited the committee with influencing President Truman to issue his executive order on 26 July 1948 for "equality of treatment and opportunity" in the Armed Forces.⁸ Unfortunately, it took more than 3 years for the Department of the Army to completely respond by doing away with all-black units; General Ridgway gained authority to inactivate the last one (24th Regiment, 25th Infantry Division) on the battlefields of Korea in late 1951. Members of the unit, which had been established by law in 1866, were integrated like other blacks into a variety of formerly all-white organizations.⁹

But problems of racial tension and discrimination plagued the Army and the nation for many years to come. A few black chaplains, like John W. Handy, United Methodist, John A. DeVeaux, Sr., African Methodist, and Mitchell C. Johnson, United Church of Christ, managed to rise in rank and position. In many cases, however, it was neither their race nor their prestige but their compassionate, pastoral concern which led to better understanding. In 1951, for example, Chaplain Johnson stood on the hood of a jeep one night facing an angry mob of black soldiers who had commandeered tanks from the motor pool at Fort Polk, Louisiana. They were determined to take by force what had been denied them through discrimination both on and off post. Johnson "delivered an impromptu sermon directed at both offenders and offended," managed to avert what could have been a bloody confrontation, and opened the way for a command policy to "unlock" post facilities to all soldiers.¹⁰

Other Army chaplains were faced with U.S. racial turmoil in similarly vivid circumstances. Chaplain Chester R. Lindsey, American Baptist, for example, accompanied the 327th Airborne Infantry Battle Group, 101st Airborne Division, into Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1957 during the first confrontation over the integration of public schools. Although it took

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nearly 4 weeks, Chaplain Lindsey managed to establish rapport and friendship with local ministers and citizens of the city. More important, Lindsey and the many other chaplains with units quelling the 1950–1960 racial upheavals, became particularly aware of the need to face the moral aspects of the struggle and the needs for equality in the Army as well as the nation. Unfortunately, it was only after those nationally organized civil-rights' protests and violent racial riots of the 1960's that the Army began to make strides toward establishing better race relations.¹¹

As late as March 1974, Chief of Chaplains Gerhard W. Hyatt reminded the Army clerics, many of whom by then had received special training in race relations:

. . . you and I are vital to the present effort and largely responsible for the days ahead. . . . We must do all that we can to reduce the claim which prejudice and racism have on the lives of the people we serve. . . . All human beings must be freed from those personal and institutional abuses which rob life of meaning and fulfillment. As clergymen, we are privileged to share in the humanization of organizations and in the process of social change that can only be achieved when people more perfectly understand the will of God.¹²

The tragedy is that chaplains had been told the same thing a quarter of a century earlier by the president of Howard University. Addressing a convention of the Military Chaplains' Association in 1950, he identified religion as the potential power to change American attitudes toward minorities. "The only people in America who can give that power," he had told the active duty, Reserve, and retired chaplains present, "are represented in this hall . . ." ¹³

In an 1892 report to Congress the Secretary of War encouraged the establishment of a separate corps for chaplains. In rather odd sentence construction, he began: "The soul of an army is organization. Our chaplains have none." ¹⁴ From nearly a century's perspective, those strangely-combined sentences sound like a parody of the chaplaincy's later response to the racial issue.

Although Army chaplains became deeply involved in the struggle for better race relations beginning in the late 1960's, their influence might have been more effective had they recognized the problem of discrimination as a "strategic opportunity" for their ministry decades earlier. Fortunately, they were beginning to see the potential of consolidated efforts in other areas and gave added emphasis to the value of a unified approach to other aspects of their ministry.

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REVITALIZING CHAPEL ORGANIZATIONS

Religious denominations in the United States have historically provided some means of periodic fellowship and community service for their membership. Virtually every church body has at least one lay organization for that purpose. Translating that concept into a military community was not particularly difficult for Roman Catholic and Jewish chaplains who, for the most part, simply adopted civilian organizational guidelines for their military laity. The Roman Catholic “Holy Name Society,” as an example, was well established on Army installations by the beginning of World War II.

But Protestant chaplains found the matter of organizing lay groups far more difficult. Organizations that were specifically denominational met with limited appeal or were, by their very nature, restrictive in their membership requirements. The civilian, interdenominational “Society of Christian Endeavor” was one of the few that had been introduced on military posts with broader appeal. Similarly, the “Young Men’s Christian Association” (YMCA) had been sponsoring social programs for soldiers since the Civil War. For the most part, however, these organizations were outside groups offering services for the soldier. They provided little or no means whereby he could do things for himself or his military community.

The “Service Men’s Christian League” (SMCL) of the 1940’s was a first attempt to create an official Protestant lay organization comprised solely for the members of the U.S. military. Despite difficulties in drafting membership requirements that satisfied the vast range of Protestant convictions, the SMCL became an active and successful organization during World War II. Largely through the combined efforts of that organization and the General Commission on Army and Navy Chaplains, the popular military-oriented periodicals, *The Link* and *The Chaplain*, came into existence.¹⁵

Throughout the history of the U.S. Armed Forces, independent religious lay organizations have also sprouted in various areas. In some cases these groups have continued to this day. The original British “Officers’ Christian Union” (OCU), for example, organized its first group in the U.S. Army in 1943. By the end of World War II OCU groups were established at the two U.S. military academies and shortly thereafter spread to other U.S. installations. The OCU was organized primarily to

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provide opportunities for informal Bible study and generally emphasized lay support of chaplains wherever possible. In recent years the OCU was reorganized and titled the "Officers' Christian Fellowship." Similar organizations, like the "Christian Servicemen's Fellowship," the "Navigators," the "Protestant Religious Education Services, Inc.," and the "Overseas Christian Servicemen's Centers" have contributed immeasurably to the spiritual growth of lay people in the military.¹⁶

Enthusiasm for the chaplain-sponsored SMCL began to wane with its decrease in membership following World War II. A 1949 editorial in *The Chaplain* attempted to renew interest in the group by reporting that some chaplains were using its programs to combat delinquency and vandalism among teenage dependents.¹⁷ It was obvious, however, that a revitalization was needed to make the organization appealing to the young men and women just entering the Army. Consequently, 3 months before the outbreak of the Korean War, the General Commission, together with representative Army, Navy, and Air Force chaplains, began revamping the SMCL. The end result, which was to concentrate on the aspect of fellowship and a Christian use of leisure time, was called the "United Fellowship of Protestants in the Armed Forces."¹⁸ Despite the supposed revamping, however, it is hard to recognize any significant difference between the United Fellowship and the former SMCL. Undoubtedly because the Korean War diverted the attention of the military from garrison life to the battlefield again, little impetus could be given to something designed for the occupation of the soldier's "leisure time."

Following the Korean War, a new attempt at Protestant lay organizations developed among servicemen and their dependents with the U.S. Army, Europe (USAREUR). Originally the movement had no connection with any pre-established group nor was it influenced by civilian organizations trying to be supportive to military communities. Rather, it was a simple case of military congregations forming their own local lay groups for social gatherings, Bible study, or chapel projects. In January 1952, for example, wives of servicemen assigned to the 16th Field Hospital in Germany formed a group called "The Women's Guild." It could be likened to any civilian "ladies aid" group so common in the United States. In the fall of that same year, the American women in Nuremberg organized a similar group and chose the name, "Protestant Women of the Chapel."¹⁹ In a few cases, groups were formed through the combined efforts of members of different faiths. In Ansbach, for instance, Protestant

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and Jewish dependents joined together in an “Association of Church Women.”²⁰ In much the same way, the men and youth formed similar groups that were totally autonomous and had little or no connection with the United Fellowship of Protestants, any civilian church group, or, for that matter, with any neighboring chapel groups.

Chaplain John I. Rhea, Presbyterian U.S., serving as a division chaplain in USAREUR, and Colonel Powell Fraser, a protestant layman assigned to Headquarters, USAREUR, seemed to be the first to recognize the potential for uniting these groups in a European-wide organization.²¹ By 1954 the USAREUR Staff Chaplain, Edwin L. Kirtley, Disciples of Christ, agreed that such a strategic opportunity was available. Consequently, he gave official direction for the unification plans. Members of Kirtley’s staff set out to establish guidelines for garrison and family-oriented groups by gleaning suggestions from the goals and purposes of those already in existence. Kirtley further encouraged all Protestant chaplains in Europe to establish similar groups but asked them to adopt unified goals to provide inter-chapel fellowship under common names: “Protestant Men of the Chapel” (PMCO), “Protestant Women of the Chapel” (PWCO), and “Protestant Youth of the Chapel” (PYOC). Chaplain Kirtley arranged conferences for representatives of the local groups and through them European councils and local area councils, following the lines of Army-area commands, were elected. Within a short time, a complete network of these common organizations tied together Army chapel congregations throughout the entire European command.²²

The Protestant Personnel of the Chapel movement influenced the initiation of similar, although less-organized, lay groups among the USAREUR Catholic and Jewish personnel. Within a matter of a few years, it spread to Protestant chapels in the continental U.S. By 1959 the movement began to receive guidance and encouragement from the OCCH and during the next 4 years coordinated efforts with similar groups in the Navy and the Air Force.²³ During the following decade, the lay-initiated movement matured into three vitally active and effective lay organizations, providing men, women, and youth with religious fellowship and social activities, as well as opportunities for meaningful service projects. Perhaps more important, they built a unity within the religious congregations on U.S. military posts and provided a common bond among the laity throughout the United States Armed Forces.

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ATTEMPTING TO UNIFY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Following World War II, the increase of families on military installations also brought attention to the field of religious education. Dependent children of servicemen flocked to Sunday and Sabbath schools wherever they were organized, usually outnumbering adult attendance at worship services. By 1954 an estimated 85,000 Army, Navy, and Air Force children were enrolled in chaplain-organized Protestant Sunday schools alone. Like the original lay organizations in Europe, however, the schools were completely independent using curriculum materials chosen at the discretion of the particular chaplain assigned and purchased through the local, non-appropriated chaplains' fund. Since the children of servicemen moved so often, there was no continuity to their religious training. In some cases they heard the same lesson over and over again. "I haven't anything against Moses," commented the young son of a sergeant, "but there must be someone else in the Bible for me to learn about."²⁴

Several chaplains had suggested the need for some kind of unified curriculum in the religious schools, but the Chief of Air Force Chaplains, Charles I. Carpenter, was the first to foster the idea as a strategic opportunity. Early in 1952, Carpenter discussed the idea with representatives of the National Council of Churches and the Protestant Church-Owned Publishers' Association. They decided that if such a program were adopted it should include the Army and the Navy as well. Consequently, Protestant chaplain representatives of the three services held an exploratory conference on the subject at Buck Hill Falls, Pennsylvania, in March 1952. They agreed that a unified curriculum was the answer to providing a continuing program of religious instruction for the mobile military dependent and that the courses could be established around three common and basic themes—the Bible, the Church, and the life of Christ.

Chaplain Carpenter carried the suggestion to the Armed Forces Chaplains Board. The Board "bought" the plan and appointed a Religious Education Committee—representative chaplains from the three services and a spokesman from the Protestant Church-Owned Publishers—to work out the details. Chaplain Wayne L. Hunter, Presbyterian U.S., former Deputy Commandant at the Chaplain School, was the first Army representative on the committee. The committee agreed on a basic curriculum by the fall of 1953. Although the materials were to come

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from various denominations, the Publishers' Association agreed to underwrite the project and to provide a central office for ordering in Nashville, Tennessee. The "Unified Protestant Sunday School Curriculum for Armed Forces" was announced in the field by the end of that year. The following spring the Navy produced and distributed a training film for all the services to teach chaplains and Sunday school teachers how to use the material.²⁵

Meanwhile, attempts to establish unified curricula for Catholic and Jewish dependents were also being made. Chaplain Clarence D. White, Roman Catholic, was directed to develop a coordinated program for Catholic dependents in the USAREUR area. White conducted an experimental program of his first development in late 1952 and revamped the curriculum with the suggestions that resulted. His final product was a 3-year series called "The Way, The Truth, The Life." In April 1953 he secured the approval and blessing of Pope Pius XII for his course and by the following year the Armed Forces Chaplain Board obtained the Roman Catholic Military Ordinariate's approval to introduce a similar series throughout the U.S. military. Further revisions resulted in the "Catholic Family Program of Religious Instruction."²⁶

While the Armed Forces Chaplains Board was working on the Protestant curriculum, it sent a request to the National Jewish Welfare Board to devise a similar system for Jewish education. The "Religious School Curriculum for Jews in the Armed Forces" was eventually produced to serve the needs of Orthodox, Reformed, and Conservative members of the military forces and their dependents.²⁷ Jewish guidelines point out, as do the programs for the other faiths, that "periodic revisions are made to keep the curriculum current and updated."²⁸

Religious education in the Army received another boost with the approval for the employment of full-time civilian Directors of Religious Education (DRE's). In 1948 the chaplains' section at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, employed Miss Bryan Johnson, a graduate of the Assembly Training School in Richmond with a degree in religious education. The subsequent employment of DRE's at many stateside and overseas installations freed many chaplains from the administrative details of religious schools and added further quality to both on-post and inter-post religious activities.²⁹

The enrollment figures from Sunday and Sabbath schools on Army posts throughout the world gave a picture of the tremendous

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opportunities for religious education within the military. In 1955 Chaplain Matthew D. Blair, Methodist, reported that the combined attendance of children and adults in the religious schools at the Grant Heights Chapel in Tokyo was 1,250. By 1960 the OCCH knew of at least eight Sunday schools in the continental United States with enrollments of over 1,000. Fort Benning, Georgia, reported 2,090 in attendance.³⁰ In some cases, the special circumstances on Army posts offered challenges beyond the imagination of most civilian clergymen. The yearly rotation of officers and their families at the Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, for example, required the repeated, annual recruitment of 100 to 150 new volunteer Sunday school teachers. Despite this taxing transition, Chaplain Theodore V. Koepke, Missouri Synod Lutheran, serving on the post from 1959 to 1964, reported that the weekly attendance in the Sunday school averaged 1,400. Divided into two sessions and held at three different locations, the school often involved the simultaneous work of four colonels serving as voluntary superintendents.³¹

Although the unified-curriculum approach, which has continued in the Armed Forces to the present day, did help to eliminate the problems caused by the lack of continuity, it also generated some controversy. Protestant chaplains and volunteer teachers associated with theologically fundamental or conservative denominations began to charge that materials in the Unified Curriculum were insufficiently based on Scripture and contained liberal interpretations of the Bible. As a consequence, Sunday schools under their leadership continued to use specially ordered materials either in place of or supplemental to the Curriculum literature. The OCCH saw this as detrimental to the theory of the unified approach and strongly encouraged all Protestant chaplains to use only the Curriculum materials. It further directed that written explanations had to be submitted whenever previous orders for the Unified Curriculum were cancelled. Although it explained that such reports would be used as suggestions for making the literature more acceptable, many chaplains in the field interpreted the directive as having made the Unified Curriculum mandatory.³²

"The volume of criticism of the Unified Curriculum increased markedly over previous fiscal years," noted the OCCH's *Summary of Major Events and Problems* for the 1960 fiscal year. "This is probably accounted for, at least in large part, by the increasing number of using Sunday schools, the aggressive promotion of the Unified Curriculum by

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chaplains at every level, and the explicit solicitation of criticism by the Chief of Chaplains.”³³

Attempting to assuage the criticism from many chaplains that the Curriculum materials were too expensive for local non-appropriated chaplain's funds, the OCCH assumed the financing of the program. The theological problems, however, continued to arise. By 1963 the Chief of Chaplains received a complaint from Lieutenant General William K. Harrison, USA retired, in his capacity as President of the Officers' Christian Union. He questioned "what appears to be the effort of the chiefs of military chaplains to exercise ecclesiastical authority over all chaplains of the different Protestant denominations in matters essentially theological" and referred to "regulations making mandatory" the use of Sunday school material chosen by the chiefs. The Chief of Chaplains quickly replied that no Army regulations or directives enforced the use of the Curriculum and that no chaplain or teacher risked punishment, coercion, or intimidation for refusing to do so. While the Chief pointed out the theory behind the unified approach, he also emphasized that dependents voluntarily attended Protestant "general-type" Sunday schools and that nothing prohibited the establishment of denominational schools wherever the need existed.³⁴

By mid-1964 the National Association of Evangelicals, an organization of conservative Protestants, charged that chaplains were being requested to use Sunday school literature that contained "heresy." Registering their complaint with the Secretary of Defense, they objected to certain Unified Curriculum materials which distinguished between "legendary" and "historical" accounts in the Bible. Again the OCCH defended its position by maintaining that no chaplain was compelled to use the material and that no serviceman or dependent was forced to attend the schools.³⁵

Occasionally the indiscreet enthusiasm of an individual chaplain for the Protestant Unified Curriculum added fuel to the controversy. One chaplain stationed in Germany in 1965, for instance, insisted on using the material even though two-thirds of his volunteer teaching staff opposed it. The dissenting teachers resigned and one complained directly to the President of the United States. That single incident resulted in the OCCH having to prepare a lengthy report on the history of the Curriculum and to emphasize once more the lack of any official mandate to use the material.³⁶

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Despite these difficulties, the unified approach to religious education in the Army survived and has continued to this day. Further support of the program was made through the establishment of religious education libraries and the regular publication of the *Religious Education and Audio Visual Journal* to provide resource materials. While the two decades of work in the area emphasized the difficulty in uniting the efforts of Army chaplains, they also helped to build a mutual understanding and appreciation of their different views and produce an ecumenicity generally unparalleled in civilian communities. Over the years the boards and committees responsible for securing Protestant materials have labored to incorporate suggestions from the complaints and constructive criticisms of those in the field in order to provide a curriculum acceptable to more than 30 major religious denominations.³⁷

ESTABLISHING PROGRAMS FOR RELIGIOUS RETREATS

To members of a military organization the word “retreat” bears the unsavory connotation of fleeing the enemy. At best, it refers to an evening ceremony for lowering the national colors. Because of the influence of Army chaplains, however, U.S. soldiers came to know and regularly use the term according to an alternate definition: “a period of group withdrawal for prayer, meditation, study, and instruction under a director.”³⁸

The value of religious retreats for chaplains was well established by the end of World War II. Within 2 months of the German surrender, 1-day conference retreats for the battle-weary clergymen were held in Italy, France, and England.³⁹ Former Chief of Chaplains William R. Arnold convinced the War Department to allow as many European-based chaplains as possible to visit Palestine before returning home. On 24 July 1945 the first party of 20 arrived in the Holy Land for the rare privilege of visiting the biblically historical sites.⁴⁰ By 1949 arrangements had been made for groups of civilian clergymen to conduct conferences and devotional exercises for U.S. Armed Forces’ chaplains in both the Far East and European Commands. The retreats were arranged to acquaint the military clergy with the latest theological books and ecclesiastical trends in the United States.⁴¹

But the concept of a period of “withdrawal for prayer, meditation, study, and instruction” was not restricted to chaplains. For some time they had individually planned locally sponsored religious-emphasis days

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for the personnel in their own units. In the early 1950's so-called "preaching missions," utilizing notable civilian speakers, became popular on military posts. Usually organized to offer an entire week of religious meetings and worship services for troops on scores of installations, they were often inaugurated with great fanfare and publicity. At the initiation of one of these missions, planned for 82 Army and Navy centers in 1951, President Truman sent a special message of encouragement:

As we build up our military strength to secure the free world from aggression, we must be equally diligent to strengthen the moral and spiritual life of our armed forces.⁴²

Since the very concept of a religious retreat involves the aspect of withdrawal, the ideal situation requires a special place set apart from familiar surroundings. USAREUR Staff Chaplain Edwin L. Kirtley, who had directed the birth of the Protestant Personnel of the Chapel movement, recognized another strategic opportunity—the provision for a special retreat facility for American soldiers in Europe. He was aware of programs sponsored by the British and Dutch forces in Germany and especially admired the British soldiers' retreat house near Hannover. When Chief of Chaplains Ivan Bennett visited the European Command in 1953, Kirtley took him to visit the British facility. Shortly thereafter the USAREUR Chaplain received command approval to establish a similar center for U.S. troops. After surveying the available hotels under American control, Chaplain Kirtley chose the facilities in the magnificent Bavarian Alps near the picturesque village of Berchtesgaden.⁴³

Interestingly, Berchtesgaden had been chosen hundreds of years earlier as the development site for a priory of the Augustinian monks. For Americans and Europeans, however, the name evoked memories of the infamous "Third Reich" because of its specially-constructed sanctuaries for its leader, Adolf Hitler. Uniquely, the first American flag to fly over the former Nazi refuge belonged to a U.S. Army chaplain. Chaplain William J. Reiss, Missouri Synod Lutheran, had used the flag in war-time burial ceremonies for U.S. soldiers. It was the only one available when the 101st Airborne Division rushed to the village at the end of the War in hopes of capturing Hitler. Although the "Führer" was not to be found in his sanctuary, two of his leading commanders, Goering and von Keitel, were: Chaplain Reiss, in fact, served as the interpreter as General Maxwell Taylor received Herman Goering's

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surrender at Berchtesgaden. Today Chaplain Reiss' flag holds a place of honor in the 101st Airborne Division's Museum at Fort Campbell, Kentucky.⁴⁴

General Orders No. 66, Headquarters, USAREUR, dated 17 March 1954, established the American Religious Retreat Center in Berchtesgaden effective 1 June 1954. At 1100 hours on 6 July the retreat facilities were officially dedicated on the site of a former rest hotel for the Nazi Air Force. Chaplains of the three major faiths participated in the ceremony which marked the first time such a project had been officially sponsored by the U.S. Army. By December of the same year a Retreat House Chapel, constructed in accordance with the prevailing Bavarian architecture, was also dedicated. Symbolically, a large cross stands on a 6,000-foot summit overlooking the entire scene. It was erected triumphantly beside the famous "Eagle's Nest"—Adolph Hitler's former Tea House.⁴⁵

The Berchtesgaden Rereat Center was eventually equipped to accommodate several hundred participants at a single retreat and quickly became the popular gathering spot for virtually every major military religious gathering in Europe. PWOC, PMOC, and PYOC groups made it their convention center, Sunday school teachers gathered there for training and inspiration, and denominational leaders used it for their special convocations. But most important, Army chaplains scheduled year-round retreats for Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish servicemen. Within 10 years of its dedication, the Center had been used by 100,000 U.S. Armed Forces' personnel and their dependents.⁴⁶ In its continued existence for over 2 decades it has undoubtedly proven to be one of the most valuable and popular developments by the Army Chaplaincy. Chaplains who have had the opportunity to serve at the Center often reflect on that assignment with such phrases as, "my key ministry," and "the most satisfying and rewarding [period] in my entire ministry."⁴⁷

When John A. Dunn, Roman Catholic, Staff Chaplain of the U.S. Army Forces Far East, visited Germany in 1954, he was so impressed by the new retreat center at Berchtesgaden that he sought approval from the Chief of Chaplains to establish a similar center in Japan. With the "blessing" of the Chief, command approval was obtained near the end of the year. A former Japanese resort, the Sorakaku Hotel on Sagami Bay in Oiso, was chosen for the Far East facility. It was appropriately named "The Kapaun Religious Retreat House" after the Korean War hero, Emil J. Kapaun. Its unofficial name, however, was "*Chokumahan Chonkuk*" ("Little Heaven"). Chaplain Loren T. Jenks, Disciples of Christ, com-

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mented: "Only those who have lived in the conditions of Korea can fully appreciate why it seems like 'Little Heaven' . . ." ⁴⁸

The Japan retreat center was established by General Orders No. 456, Headquarters, Army Forces Far East, on 22 November 1954, and the first group of servicemen entered the facility the following month. Shortly after its dedication, the Eighth Army Religious Retreat Center was opened on Nam San Mountain in Seoul, Korea, and has continued in operation to this day. Although smaller than the center at Berchtesgaden, both the Kapaun Retreat House and the Eighth Army Retreat House remained as active in drawing religious gatherings as the European center. Because of the reduction of U.S. forces in Japan, the Japanese facility was closed in November 1957. ⁴⁹

The concept of setting aside times for religious meditation and study has remained in the U.S. Army to the present day. Thousands of soldiers on U.S. installations and abroad have voluntarily participated in a variety of such programs under the individual or combined guidance of hundreds of Army chaplains. Ranging from a simple "Duty Day With God," to which only the men of a company-sized unit might be invited, to a massive, post-wide "Moral and Religious Training Day," the retreats have been praised as invaluable assets to the religious lives of American soldiers. Similarly, special retreat facilities, either officially established by the Army or temporarily used through the generosity of a loaning civilian organization, are regularly occupied whenever offered. As late as 1971, a religious retreat center was briefly established in the battle-torn Republic of Vietnam at Cam Ranh Bay to allow American servicemen a place for rest and religious reflection even in the midst of war. Nearly every venture in the area of religious retreats has proven to be beneficial and, in a way, provided a *Chokumahan Chonkuk*, "Little Heaven," to many of the participants. ⁵⁰

ENHANCING CHAPLAIN TRAINING

The reestablishment of the Army War College at the outbreak of the Korean War resulted in another move for the Chaplain School. Since Carlisle Barracks was chosen for the home of the War College, the Army and Air Force Chaplain School was forced to relocate. While under the supervision of Chaplain Joseph R. Koch, Roman Catholic, who had succeeded Arthur C. Piepkorn as Commandant in October 1950, the Chaplain School moved to its twelfth new home, Fort Slocum, New York,

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in April 1951. Koch referred to the move as “the first step toward making Fort Slocum the West Point of the Chaplain Corps.”⁵¹

The history of Fort Slocum, located on an island off New Rochelle, dated back to the Civil War. During World War II it had been used as a prison, but in October 1949 it was placed in “moth balls.” Once again the historic post was to become vibrant with the heavy Korean War-time training schedule of the Chaplain School and its co-inhabitant, the Armed Forces Information School.⁵² A 1951 editorial in the *New York Times* welcomed the announcement of the planned move with special praise:

When a need arises a chaplain doesn't ask what a man's belief is; he asks what help he can give him. It is this common duty that draws them together and it is the resulting spirit of brotherhood that makes the Army and the Air Force chaplain school . . . an inspiring place. . . .

It is pleasant to know that the school will be moved to Fort Slocum a few weeks hence—a good and not-so-far-away neighbor.⁵³

Chaplain Koch was convinced that Fort Slocum offered the best facilities the School had had in its 33 years of existence. “We like to think of the Chaplain School as a reservoir of spiritual and moral values for the Army and for the Air Force,” he said.⁵⁴ Concurrent with the anti-Communist mood of the day, the initial Slocum curriculum included lectures on the religious development, philosophy, and literature of the Soviet Union.⁵⁵

Within a year of the Air Force's departure from the School in 1953, the first volunteers under the seminarian training program—originally developed to meet the demands of the Korean War—began to arrive at Fort Slocum. Donald E. Ausland, a student at Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota, was the first to become a Reserve second lieutenant assigned to the Chaplains' Branch, “Staff Specialist.” He was commissioned on 13 August 1953 under the special regulation allowing such appointments which went into effect in April of that year.⁵⁶

Chaplain Luther W. Evans, United Lutheran, succeeded Chaplain Koch as Commandant in April 1954. Evans, in turn, was followed by Chaplain Edward T. Donahue, Baptist, in August 1955, and Chaplain James T. Wilson, Methodist, in March 1957. During this period the Chaplain School faculty produced the first fully integrated program of instruction, meshing many of the smaller subject areas into departments

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with coordinated teaching plans. Courses on subjects like Military Intelligence, Transportation, Medical Service, Command and Staff Organization, Functions and Procedures, etc., were dovetailed with courses on the staff duties of chaplains. As a consequence, students were not only introduced to the intricacies of the service but also taught the relationship of their future duties to the sometimes-baffling maze of military organization.⁵⁷

It was during the 1950's that the Chaplain School also gave its first concerted attention to the history of the Army Chaplaincy. The official U.S. Army Chaplain Museum was established at Fort Slocum on 14 August 1957 and formally dedicated by the Chief of Chaplains on 10 February 1958. Since that time, the Museum's directors have attempted to develop it into a display area for chaplain memorabilia dating back to the American Revolution as well as a repository of chaplain related historical documents for the benefit of researchers. Chaplain Parker C. Thompson, Southern Baptist, who served as the Museum's director while also heading the School's Non-resident Department in the late 1960's, contributed much of his personal time and resources to make the Museum an interesting and useful facility. He was followed in 1972 by Chaplain Wayne C. King, Southern Baptist, the Museum's first full-time director.⁵⁸

During the mid-1950's there were three levels of training offered at the School—the Basic Course, the Company Grade Course, and the Advanced Course. Students on each of the levels attended the courses on a temporary-duty basis since none of the courses exceeded a 3-month period. But the Department of the Army's Education and Training Review Board issued a study in 1958, known as the "Williams Board Report," which recommended the establishment of a "career course" at all service schools, including the Chaplain School. The career-course idea called for a detailed program of study for advanced students offered over a 9-month period.

The Williams Board Report resulted in several years of extensive planning by the Chaplains' Branch. The general mood in the leadership of the Chaplaincy favored the idea and it was recognized, for the most part, as another strategic opportunity—enhancing the training of Army chaplains. Since such an extended course would require a permanent change of station (PCS) for each of the students involved, it necessitated complicated planning in personnel management. The most practical

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deterrent to the plan was the lack of adequate quarters on or near Fort Slocum to accommodate PCS students and their families.⁵⁹

Chaplain Wayne L. Hunter, Presbyterian U.S., who followed Chaplain Wilson as Commandant in June 1959, was involved in much of the struggle with that problem. Tentative plans for a career course to replace the Advanced Course were approved and the Company Grade Course was eliminated. While much of this work was going on, Chaplain Hunter tragically died of a heart attack in September 1960. He was eventually replaced by Chaplain Charles E. Brown, Jr., Methodist, in December of that year. Shortly after Brown's succession as Commandant, a decision by the Department of the Army eliminated the biggest barrier to the establishment of the chaplain career course—the School would be moved again, but to a larger post with available housing. Fort Hamilton in Brooklyn, on the southwestern tip of Long Island, was to become the thirteenth home for the U.S. Army Chaplain School.⁶⁰

Just as preparations for the move from Slocum to Hamilton were being made, President Kennedy announced his nomination of Chaplain Brown as the next Chief of Army Chaplains. Brown, who had also organized and served as the first President of the Army Chaplain Board and been the first chaplain to graduate from the Army War College, assumed the position as Chief of Chaplains on 1 November 1962. Only a few days before, the Chaplain School had completed its move to Fort Hamilton under the direction of Brown's successor as Commandant, Chaplain Gregory R. Kennedy, Roman Catholic.⁶¹

The move to Fort Hamilton was termed "a wondrously appropriate one" by a Brooklyn official who pointed out that the city was known as "the borough of churches."⁶² The General Commission on Chaplains and Armed Forces Personnel agreed and added that "the School has a magnificent location with excellent facilities."⁶³ Fort Hamilton did allow the Chaplain School to expand its activities. Not only did the Career Course become a reality with the first PCS class graduating in 1963, but non-resident training through correspondence courses also expanded to give Reserve and National Guard chaplains more current instruction. Successive Commandants following Chaplain Kennedy were: Ralph H. Pugh, American Baptist (February–July 1965); William J. Reiss, Missouri Synod Lutheran (July 1965–January 1967); Edward J. Saunders, Roman Catholic (February–October 1967); Theodore V. Koepke, Missouri Synod Lutheran (October 1967–January 1971); William V. O'Connor, Roman Catholic (February–July 1971); Chester R. Lindsey,

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American Baptist (August 1971–March 1975); and John J. Murphy, Roman Catholic (since March 1975).⁶⁴

Throughout the last 10 years, the Chaplain School continued to modernize its facilities and update its curriculum for the 9-week Basic and 9-month Career Courses. It also initiated a new resident training program for National Guardsmen and Reservists, greatly expanded its training for chaplain enlisted assistants, and opened a 2-week course for senior chaplains called the “Chaplain Field Grade Officer Refresher Course.” While Chaplains O’Connor and Lindsey served as Commandants, a modified “Indiana Plan,” using a small-group method of instruction, was planned and first used in 1971. The Career Class which entered the School that year was also the first to receive concurrent instruction from Long Island University for master’s degrees in either guidance and counseling or sociology. By then the School had grown to include a staff and faculty of 45 chaplains, 8 officers from other branches, and scores of civilian and enlisted instructors and administrative-support personnel.⁶⁵

Within 3 years of the School’s move to Fort Hamilton, staff personnel at Continental Army Command were recommending that the institution move again. They suggested that, rather than spending money trying to revamp old facilities into classrooms, a permanent installation be built at some other site. But the Chief of Chaplains in 1967 declared himself “firmly committed” to the continued location of the School at Hamilton because of its central location in an area with many educational opportunities. After 12 years at Fort Hamilton, however—the longest time it had remained at one place since 1918—the School took on further responsibilities, was renamed the “United States Army Chaplain Center and School,” and moved again (September 1974) to Fort Wadsworth on Staten Island, New York.⁶⁶

Over the years the Chaplain School has been referred to informally as “The Home of the Chaplaincy.” Because of its constant movement, some chaplains have jested that their “home” ought to be equipped with wheels. Despite its mobility, however, the Chaplain School continued to expand and improve its training program with every change in physical scenery.

DEVELOPING SPECIALIZED SKILLS

Since World War II, training for chaplains has not been restricted to the courses offered at the Chaplain School. Especially in the years

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following the Korean War, the OCCH arranged for specialized education for many chaplains in a diversity of subjects including, among others, religious education, journalism, communication skills, the use of mass media, and financial management. Similarly, as administrative demands increased, more chaplains attended various military schools to build the branch's efficiency in a technological army.

It is impossible to list the variety of educational opportunities given to select chaplains over the past 20 years, but examples can be found to demonstrate both the diversity and the extent of that training. Chaplain William V. O'Connor, Roman Catholic, a scholar in his own right through the private pursuit of education, not only became an expert mountain climber and Master Parachutist through Army training, but also a scholar in Russian language and area studies through an Army-sponsored program at Fordham University. An example of the most prodigious training in a single field for one chaplain, however, is found in the career of Chaplain Clifford E. Keys, Nazarene. A *cum laude* and *magna cum laude* graduate from junior college and seminary, Keys attended the Command and General Staff School, the Army Finance School, the Army Management School, the Army Signal School, the Army Management Engineering and Training Agency, the U.S. Navy Post-graduate School, and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. In addition he received a Master of Science degree in Business Administration through George Washington University and attended the graduate schools in Business Administration of the University of Michigan and the University of California in Los Angeles.⁶⁷

Specialized training for Army chaplains, however, has received more attention during the past decade in the area of counseling than in any other field. "Every experienced chaplain knows," wrote Roy Honeywell in his brief history of the chaplaincy, "that some of his most important duties are not religious or but incidentally so. These may relate to virtually any matter of importance to a soldier or his family and may range from considerations of life or death to those which are ridiculously trivial."⁶⁸

The role of the chaplain as a counselor was readily accepted by the end of World War II. A 1947 article in the *American Journal for Sociology* praised chaplains for having "contributed markedly to the mental health of their troops" and referred to them as "safety valves to many

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soldiers.”⁶⁹ A training film for recruits in 1949—“From Whence Cometh My Help”—virtually advertized the chaplains’ availability as counselors.⁷⁰

Undoubtedly the strategic opportunity for chaplains to increase their skills for ministry through counseling was first recognized by those assigned to medical commands. As early as 1947 hospital chaplains were meeting in regular conferences with doctors, nurses, and welfare officers to learn better techniques in their dealings with patients.⁷¹ Many of them pursued a continuing education at their own expense and used that knowledge, combined with their daily work, to become particularly proficient in dealing with psychological and emotional problems. As they moved on to new assignments, their enthusiasm for better counseling spread to other chaplains who followed their example in enhancing their skills.

When asked to note the most significant events of his military ministry, Chaplain John W. Betzold, Orthodox Presbyterian, listed: “The value of human feelings of warmth, understanding and patience in dealing with a serviceman and his problem(s).” He continued by explaining:

I often felt positive results were achieved by the serviceman when he had a sympathetic ear to pour his troubles into—for the ear was often a throughway to two hearts. My training and theological stance were not compatible with the sort of non-judgmental approach I have described. However, this rationale—of hearing a person out and then assisting him in the healing process—works for the good of both parties and is basic to the application of the healing balm of the Gospel. Over the years, this method of separating the man from his problem, or loving the man and not his problem (“sin?”) and making him see the value of becoming responsible for himself and his acts—really works. I have seen its value in family as well as individual situations. How else does the love of God go from my heart and mind to another?⁷²

While serving on the staff of the Surgeon General from 1963 to 1970, Chaplain Betzold was instrumental in the introduction and establishment of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) for Army chaplains. Started first as a 1-year course at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, CPE training spread to other Army hospitals and eventually was offered through civilian institutions and agencies. More important, the development of counseling skills moved beyond the hospital setting to virtually every aspect of the chaplain’s ministry. During most recent years, scores of chaplains have been trained to deal more effectively with emotional distress, marriage and family problems, human relations, and drug and alcohol abuse.⁷³

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ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGES WITH THE GUIDON

Chief of Chaplains Ivan L. Bennett retired from the Army on 30 April 1954 to become a field secretary for the American Bible Society and the Executive Secretary for the Washington City Bible Society. It was an appropriate post for a man with over 30 years of experience in ministering to soldiers. Within 1 year of its founding in 1817, the American Bible Society has continued to this day in offering free Scriptures to servicemen via chaplains. Its old record for distribution of nearly 3 million Bibles, Testaments, and Scripture-portions during World War II was surmounted during the war in Vietnam. In 1970 alone, chaplains asked for and freely received an incredible 4,272,596 copies. Much of that latter distribution was supervised by another retired Army chaplain, Steve P. Gaskins, Jr., United Methodist.⁷⁴

President Eisenhower nominated Patrick J. Ryan, Roman Catholic, to be Chief of Chaplains as Bennett's successor. The nomination was approved by Congress and Ryan assumed the two-star post on 1 May 1954. Ryan had been an Army chaplain since 1928 and served as the 3rd Infantry Division Chaplain in North Africa and the Fifth Army Chaplain in Italy during World War II. He was the first Roman Catholic to serve as Chief of Chaplains since William Arnold's retirement in 1945 and only the second Catholic-appointee since the establishment of the office in 1920. Even more unique, Ryan was the only man in history who served as Deputy Chief of Chaplains on two separate tours (April 1946–July 1948; August 1952–April 1954).⁷⁵

Patrick Ryan inherited the leadership of the Army chaplaincy at a time of change, both in the military ministry and the military itself. During his service as Chief of Chaplains, chapel organizations, unified curricula for religious schools, and the retreat house programs matured into established practices for the chaplaincy. Serving under Secretaries of the Army Robert Stevens and Wilbur Brucker, and Chiefs of Staff Matthew Ridgway and Maxwell Taylor, Ryan led the chaplains in a steady pace to keep current with an organization that changed its trends along with its uniform. Passed into history with the "brown-shoe Army" was the old chaplains' tendency toward an isolated ministry. One chaplain of the day maintained that Ryan had achieved "the best approach to an all-around religious program we've ever had in the Army."⁷⁶ Even Ryan believed that "the Army's religious program today is in a stronger position

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than at any time I can remember in my twenty-eight years of service.”⁷⁷ Much of that had come about because of his singular philosophy:

The chaplain is not some effete busybody or do-gooder; nor is he a religious recluse who lives in an ivory tower. He is a virile, fully trained specialist who has a vital mission to perform and who, given the opportunity to perform his work with command support, will be a valuable member of the military team.⁷⁸

Chaplain Ryan, who was appointed a Prothonotary Apostolic by Pope Pius XII, retired from active duty on 31 October 1958 and became Executive Vice President of the *Catholic Digest*. He was succeeded as Chief of Chaplains by Frank A. Tobey, American Baptist. Chaplain Tobey exemplified the careers of many chaplains whose background included assignments as enlisted men and line officers in the Army before entering the ministry. Tobey's military experience began as a private in the Massachusetts National Guard in 1922. After advancing to an NCO, he was commissioned a second lieutenant, but his desire to serve as a Christian minister as well as a soldier led to his seminary training and eventual appointment as a chaplain in 1940. In 1941 he was called to active duty with the National Guard's 43rd Infantry Division, later transferred, and served throughout the rest of the War in the Southwest Pacific. After his assignments as X Corps and Eighth Army Chaplains during the Korean War, he held several other leadership roles, including Deputy Chief of Chaplains from July 1954 to October 1958.⁷⁹

Tobey was a chaplain who made little pretense about his position regardless of his rank. When first informed by the Secretary of the Army of his nomination as Chief of Chaplains and asked, “Do you feel that you can do the job?” he swallowed deeply and replied, “I shall do my best.”⁸⁰ He later wrote: “To me it was an unexpected honor and privilege especially as I had served in the Regular Army for only eleven years.”⁸¹

Chaplain Tobey held a passionate concern for the religious faith of the American soldier. During the Korean War, he insisted on setting up an altar in an apple orchard at Panmunjom one Sunday despite being told that few soldiers were in the area because of the resumption of the peace talks. As he welcomed the roughly 10 men who came to worship, he was surprised to see among them General Matthew Ridgway, then Far East Commander. While chatting with the chaplain after the service, Ridgway told Tobey that his Scripture reading had been studied by the general and his wife in Tokyo that very morning. “The thing that impressed me,” commented Tobey, “was that Ridgway, hard-bitten fighting

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soldier that he was, had daily devotions with his wife at home.”⁸² Tobey’s decision to hold the service in the first place was probably influenced by memories of World War II. His most cherished recollection was of a nighttime Communion service in a malaria-infested area of Milne Bay, New Guinea, in 1943:

At least two hundred men came forward out of the jungle night, knelt down on the damp ground, within that small circle of light to receive the elements of Communion—black men, white men, enlisted men, non-coms, and officers. Many were deeply moved as was I—their eyes glistened with tears. It mattered not that the ground was wet, that the bread was leavened, and that the juice was from stewed prunes—for they communed with their Saviour, they experienced the cleansing power of His cross and prepared to meet their God. This experience I will never forget nor did many of them for whom it was “the last supper.”⁸³

Continuing many of the programs established before him, Chief of Chaplains Frank Tobey saw the completion and publication of the new *Armed Forces Hymnal* in March 1959—a revision project of *The Hymnal: Army and Navy* which had taken 7 years to complete.⁸⁴ It was also during his tenure that the special Seal of the Army Chaplaincy was adopted and produced through the guidance of the Army’s Heraldic Division. The blue disc with a white dove, open book, and Christian and Jewish chaplains’ insignia, bears the birth year of the chaplaincy, 1775, and its motto: “*Pro Deo et Patria.*”⁸⁵ But a more lasting tribute to Chaplain Tobey’s service is found in his own reflections more than 10 years after his retirement:

Because of my civilian ministry totaling more than fifteen years I desired and tried to regard all chaplains as my peers, fellow priests of God.

. . . I endeavored to the best of my ability to be a spiritual leader as well as a good administrator and to meet the challenge of my day in the best possible manner.

At the time of this writing I have been retired from the Army for twelve years, ordained for forty-five years and I am seventy-one years of age.

In retrospect, I am grateful that I had the opportunity to serve thus my God, my country and my fellowmen.⁸⁶

When Chaplain Tobey retired from the Army, accepting a pastorate at the Balboa Union Church in the Canal Zone, the Chief of Chaplains’ position was passed to Charles E. Brown, Jr. There were some natural

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evolutions in Brown's life; his father had also been a Methodist minister and had served as a National Guard chaplain in the 1920's. The new Chief originally applied for a National Guard chaplain's commission while serving a church in Denver, Colorado, in 1940. Before his assignment to a Guard unit, however, he was offered and accepted a Reserve commission. Called to active duty with the 30th Infantry Division in early 1941, he served in North Africa and Italy during most of World War II. Besides serving as president of the Army Chaplain Board and Commandant of the Army Chaplain School, he had also held the Seventh Army Chaplain's position in Europe and graduated from the Army's War College, Command and General Staff School, and Command Management School. Interestingly, Brown had been something of a protege under Chaplain Patrick Ryan, with whom he had served throughout much of his career.⁸⁷

Brown's term as Chief of Chaplains (1 November 1962–31 July 1967) could be described as the beginning of the controversial period for the Army Chaplaincy. Criticism of the military ministry, both in regard to its organization and the over-all policy which allowed for the employment of chaplains by the U.S. Government, was virtually nonexistent following World War II. There was a pacifist movement among some American churches prior to the Korean War which called for the replacement of the traditional chaplaincy with a "supra-national ministry to all men, friend and foe alike."⁸⁸ Similarly, in 1955, a professed atheist attempted, through court action, to force the government's discontinuance of the employment of chaplains.⁸⁹ Such isolated attacks, however, had gone by largely without notice or appreciable support. When columnist Drew Pearson renewed some of the criticism in 1957, however, he brought national attention to some of the questions about the chaplaincy never fully considered by many Americans.⁹⁰ By 1962 Rabbi Martin Siegel, a former Navy chaplain, called for a revamping and civilization of the military ministry. Editors of the *Christian Century*, which had published Siegel's controversial work, commented later: "Few articles in recent years have elicited a heavier or more critical mail . . . Volleys of protest were shot in this direction by military chaplains of high rank and low from almost every branch and subdivision of the armed forces. . . ." ⁹¹ Although executives of chaplains' endorsing agencies announced plans to study the chaplaincy, the same periodical suggested that their in-house review could hardly be free or thorough.⁹² By the latter part of 1963, a New Jersey chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union challenged the con-

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stitutionality of the chaplaincy in a letter to the Secretary of Defense, Robert S. McNamara.⁹³ During the following 3 years, a book titled *The Military Establishment* gave further critical views of the chaplaincy and a whole barrage of articles and letters in clergy-oriented periodicals began discussing the legality and philosophy of the special ministry from seemingly every angle.⁹⁴

The criticism of the chaplaincy actually had little connection with Brown's administration or the specific chaplains of that day. Rather, it grew in direct ratio with the increasing unpopularity of the American military involvement in Vietnam. During Brown's nearly 5 years in the chaplain-leadership role, U.S. troops in Vietnam soared from a few hundred advisers to 450,000 combat and combat-support personnel. U.S. losses in the war had leaped, roughly, from 30 to 16,000.⁹⁵ Even though some chaplains bristled at Brown's hard-charging policies, which stressed the number of services they conducted as well as the amount of time they spent in soldiers' work areas, many of them joined him in outspoken defense of the chaplaincy and whole-hearted support of America's Indo-China policy. Brown's personal opinion—"Once this nation has committed itself to a struggle, we are committed to it"—was labeled by one editorialist as "fatalistic stupidity."⁹⁶

The rumblings over the military and the chaplaincy continued long after Chaplain Brown's retirement in July 1967. Despite those disputes, however, he remained firmly committed to the conviction that "there is no greater opportunity for a young minister to reach young men" than in the military chaplaincy. "You wear the same clothing, eat the same food, serve together, live together and in some instances," he added, "you have the privilege of dying together for freedom."⁹⁷

The appointment of Francis L. Sampson, Roman Catholic, as Chaplain Brown's successor, may have appeared to some as a public-relations' attempt to rescue the image of the chaplaincy. Sampson was, after all, a highly-decorated airborne hero of both World War II and the Korean conflict. He wore the Distinguished Service Cross for his bravery in Europe and his exploits had been featured in three national television programs. Besides that, he had authored two books, numerous articles for periodicals, and was an outstanding athlete who had won seven Army regional tennis championships during his career.⁹⁸

But the 55-year-old major general with 25 years of Army experience did not rely on his past prowess to impress the critics of the chaplaincy and the military. His service as Chief of Chaplains from 18 August

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1967 to 31 July 1971 was characterized by a genuinely personal esteem for the chaplain's calling and a deep respect for the soldier's profession. An excerpt from one of his speeches, delivered a few months before his retirement, captures much of the philosophy under which he operated:

In civilian life many people misunderstand the military mission. I have spoken at various universities and have been challenged by this misunderstanding. I have been asked how I can wear the uniform which symbolizes war and also wear the cross upon it symbolizing peace. One would think they should find the answer to the very question they proposed—for such questioners are of lofty academic standards, positions and responsibilities.

It is very easy for me to tell them that, by law and by statute, the mission of the military of the United States is, first, to preserve peace. Second, to provide for the security of our country, its borders and internal security. And third, to implement national policy as it pertains to peace treaties with friendly nations which of themselves cannot repel the aggression of avaricious neighbors.

I see nothing in this mission that does not appeal to the highest ideals of any man—regardless of his religion. Indeed, it was Cardinal O'Neal, the great Churchman, who once said if he had not been a priest he most certainly would have had to be a soldier, because they are both called to the identical things—that is—the preservation of peace, the establishment of justice when it has been lost, and the providing of security with protection for the weak and the innocent.⁹⁹

But neither the logic nor the distinguished career of Chaplain Sampson could quell the storm. The anti-military, anti-chaplain spirit grew more vocal as U.S. casualties and expenditures in Vietnam reached their peak in the late 1960's. A former Jewish chaplain-veteran of World War II charged that a rabbi "is unable to question the premise on which wars are fought, once he dons the uniform."¹⁰⁰ The American Jewish Congress, an advocate of church-state separation, called for the end of the military chaplaincy and a former Jewish Air Force chaplain, teaching at Columbia University, maintained that consecrated and pious men in the military ministry were hampered by the "ambiguity" of being "servants of the military."¹⁰¹ An organization called "Clergy and Laymen Concerned About the War in Vietnam" sponsored Army stockade visits by an anti-chaplain Roman Catholic bishop from Puerto Rico to counter Cardinal Cooke's annual Christmas visit to American military installations.¹⁰² The *Christian Century* claimed that the anti-war spirit was hurting chaplain recruitment and, at the same time, published an article that labeled the chaplain as a

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“front man for the Army” giving “military indoctrination to the religious” rather than “religious indoctrination to the military.”¹⁰³ “Despite widespread church opposition to the Vietnam War,” said the *New York Times*, “support for the United States war effort remains strong among many military chaplains. The chaplaincy, largely as a result, is under renewed fire by critics seeking an end to the institution of clergymen in uniform.”¹⁰⁴ Meanwhile some clergymen, like the president of the Southern Baptist Convention, strongly criticized the participants in the Vietnam Moratorium Day (15 October 1969) and declared their actions “an insult” while “our men are bathing the soil of Vietnam in their own blood.”¹⁰⁵

It is interesting to note that among those who had participated in Sampson’s promotion to Chief of Chaplains were Generals Ralph E. Haines and Harold K. Johnson.¹⁰⁶ Both Haines and Johnson were outspoken men of religious conviction and principle. Ironically, Johnson’s convictions seemed generally ignored by the public and Haines’ religious experience was sometimes ridiculed.¹⁰⁷ It is undoubtedly too early to accurately evaluate the era, but it appears as if the image of the chaplaincy suffered considerably as a result of the emotional turmoil of the time. It was a troubling period in which critics called for a prophetic ministry by chaplains on the one hand, and scoffed at the religious convictions of a military leader on the other.

Although few people probably read it, Representative Floyd Spence of South Carolina submitted for the *Congressional Record* of 30 June 1971 an article by Chaplain Norman C. Miller, Methodist, a member of the Army Reserve. Miller had responded to critics of the day, who labeled him a “warmonger,” in words expressive of the opinions of many of his fellow chaplains:

. . . why are you so selective as to whom you will help and save? . . .

You are saying a man drafted by his country to serve in the Army Forces is not worthy to receive the word of God. You told me you had no words of comfort, no compassion for the wounded and maimed, no benediction for the dying. You tell me, in your action, that you have no consolation for the heartbroken parents, for a shattered dream of a wife and children. . . .

War is horrible and tragic. It is a shame so many are called to die to protect freedom. Yet in the last year America lost over 58,000 in automobile deaths. More than the total lost in the Vietnam war. However, you do not find young men burning their drivers license in protest, or dismantling their autos. Have you ever seen a well-meaning clergyman, solemnly intoning the names of 58,000 auto-

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mobile deaths from the steps of the national or state capitol? . . .

I hate war . . . Yet I will not join the peace moratorium . . . For my Bible tells me there is something worse than war, it is human slavery, human bondage, in which man is no longer man, either in spirit or body.

I shall work for peace, and pray for peace within the framework of my government and I shall hope in God.¹⁰⁸

But a 1969 article in the *Washington Post*, based primarily on interviews with chaplains at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, was typical of those which had received far more national attention. Unfortunately the underlying debate over the relationship between a chaplain's military allegiance and his religious conscience was lost, in some instances, by the overzealous and blatant militarism of chaplains themselves.¹⁰⁹

Chaplain Sampson passed the "guidon" of the Chaplains' Branch to Gerhardt W. Hyatt, Missouri Synod Lutheran, on 1 August 1971. There was no way, however, in which the former Chief could avoid passing the criticism of the chaplaincy along with its leadership. The publication of a book, *Military Chaplains: From a Religious Military to a Military Religion*, and a later, 66-page statement of the American Civil Liberties Union, "The Abuse of the Military Chaplaincy," continued the attack against an institution nearing its bicentennial. While much of the furor in the campaign against the chaplaincy quieted with the cessation of American combat-involvement in Vietnam in 1973, many of the rumblings have continued to this day.¹¹⁰

Hyatt, a soft-spoken, skilled administrator, appeared to weather the severity of the storm with quiet resolution. As a native of Canada, he was the first foreign-born Chief of Chaplains in any of the U.S. military services. Having served in two civilian parishes during most of World War II, he entered the chaplaincy in June 1945. But his ability to handle the complicated intricacies of Army paper work resulted in repeated assignments to the OCCH and, in 1960, to the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel. In 1968 he was the Staff Chaplain, Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV), and in January 1970 became the Deputy Chief of Chaplains.¹¹¹

Whenever Hyatt found himself in an administrative or student role he usually accepted opportunities to assist at local civilian churches. He was instrumental, in fact, in the establishment of two Lutheran churches in Virginia during his Washington-based assignments.¹¹² That personal attention to his own ministerial calling appeared to flavor much of his

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philosophy of leadership. Repeatedly, as Chief of Chaplains, he stressed the pastoral role of military clergy and attempted to foster a spirit of frank discussion and openness between chaplains of varying ranks and experience. After the OCCH had given considerable support to training sessions and pastoral conferences in order to sharpen the chaplains' parish skills, Hyatt emphasized: "The sole purpose for his investment has been to enable chaplains *to be more effective in their basic role as pastors to the Army family*. There is no other legitimate reason for our existence . . ." ¹¹³ "Rather than lead you by the hand," he once wrote his fellow chaplains, "I have tried to lead by climbing with you . . . I insist that when you write or talk to me and members of my staff, that you tell it like it is whether you think I will like it or not! There is too much at stake to do otherwise." ¹¹⁴

During Chaplain Hyatt's assignment as Chief of Chaplains, the U.S. Army went through another one of its sweeping reorganizations. Continental Army Command, Combat Developments Command, and Third U.S. Army were eliminated as a Forces Command (FORSCOM) and a Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) came into existence. The object was decentralization and elimination of unnecessary levels of management. Hyatt welcomed the same goal for the chaplaincy; his many years in administrative positions had not dimmed his vision of the value for open communication and direct access to fellow workers regardless of rank or title. ¹¹⁵

BUILDING NEW HOUSES OF WORSHIP

Actually, it was through much of the earlier work of Chaplain Gerhardt Hyatt that the Army's first major chapel construction program since the beginning of World War II went into effect. He was assigned to the OCCH in 1952 to work in the area of supply. Shortly after his arrival and the succession of Ivan Bennett as Chief of Chaplains, a complaint were received about the extremely inadequate chapel facilities at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey. Not only was the entire building in a poor state of repair, but the chancel ceiling, reported the chaplain, was so low it was difficult to stand beneath it—not to mention the disquieting echoes from an adjacent latrine that were hardly conducive to worship.

Chaplain Bennett sent Hyatt to inspect the chapel, joined by the First Army Engineer and the Staff Chaplain from First Army, Edward ("Big Ed") R. Martin, Roman Catholic. The latter couldn't have been

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a better choice to accentuate the chaplain's complaint. Martin stood over 6½ feet tall and couldn't even get into the chancel without stooping over. As a result, the Engineer directed a remodeling program to give the post a respectable house of worship.

When Hyatt returned to Washington, Chaplain Bennett told him that he had heard of some work being done on a large program for military construction and thought that the chaplains should have some input to it. Actually the program had been going on for several years with virtually no attention either to or from the Chaplains' Branch. Hyatt objected to the suggestion that he was the man for the job, pointing out that construction was not his responsibility and that a civilian in the OCCH was in charge of such matters. "Well, from now on," retorted Bennett, "he isn't—you are!"

Chaplain Hyatt set out through the caverns of the Pentagon to receive a crash program of on-the-job-training in military construction. He met regularly with military and civilian experts in logistics and the Corps of Engineers. Through them Hyatt became educated on the procedures and learned how to incorporate requests for new chapels. More important, he established long-standing friendships that would benefit the Chaplains' Branch for many years to come.

After the submission of a model design, a sample chapel was constructed at Dugway Proving Ground in Utah as a guide for future planning. Studies were made and new drawings submitted for 300 and 600-seat chapels that included adequate facilities for religious education. Sixty-five of these new buildings were planned and authorized during 1953–1954. Fort Ord, California, received the first of the large, modern chapel centers in what had developed into a \$20,000,000 construction program throughout the Army. Chaplain Hyatt had traveled to countless installations, making plans for future positions and layouts of the new chapel centers. On posts not scheduled to receive a new chapel, he helped to convince many commanders to set aside appropriated or welfare funds for the remodeling and beautification of older, contonment chapels.¹¹⁶

Throughout the history of the United States, chaplains have conducted religious services for the men and women of the Army in virtually every conceivable structure known to man. While the shape, size, or history of the buildings were never as important as the faiths that were shared within, the permanent construction of modern chapel facilities beginning in the late 1950's added evidence to America's commitment to support the ministry of chaplains whenever possible.

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But hardly had that construction program been initiated before the rumors of war began to plague the country and the Army once more. Called again to the far corners of the world, chaplains would leave the beauty and solemnity of their new chapels and return to the battlefield. There, amidst man's greatest tragedy, they would call on God for forgiveness, comfort, and eternal peace under the common canopy of heaven.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER IV

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CHAPTER V

Vietnam: The Longest War With Prolonged Effects

GLIDING SLOWLY INTO FURY

Two announcements from the Far East on 2 September 1945 resounded with international effect and left their mark on American history. One was the formal surrender of the Japanese, bringing an end to World War II. The other was a little-noticed declaration of independence by a nationalist leader in a small French colony. Ho Chi Minh, an American ally during the War, and his League of Independence for Vietnam—the “Viet Minh”—were determined to prevent the reestablishment of French colonial rule in Indochina. The French were equally determined to repossess their former holdings. Military conflict resulted, but the average American considered the problem foreign and of no particular consequence to his nation. By the time the 7-year battle between the French and Viet Minh concluded, however, new developments in the matter had drawn the United States into the beginning of the longest war in American history.

U.S. attention focused on Vietnam with the advent of the Cold War and awareness of the Communist leanings of the Viet Minh. In 1949 a journalist noted:

The question arises as to what, if any, action we will take if the Reds, after conquering all China should spill over into neighboring Asiatic countries, including French Indo-China. . . . The Secretary of State strongly intimates that we will not permit such territory to be brought under the Communist regime. However, he is not explicit as to what action we should take to prevent it.¹

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Actually, U.S. economic and military advisory support were sent to aid the French in Indochina as early as 1950, but the eruption of war in Korea diverted the attention of most Americans. In fact, when General Pierre Janson, director of Catholic chaplains in the French Far Eastern forces, and fellow Chaplain Georges Boulard were stabbed to death by Viet Minh troops in June 1951, most U.S. chaplains were not even aware of the incident.²

By mid-1952 France had lost 18,000 soldiers trying to hold on to Indochina. "She would like to let go," wrote one reporter, "but the pressures on Paris to continue the war are strong." He continued with the prophetic insight of an unidentified American observer in Paris who said that a single catastrophe would force the French to "either pull out of Indo-China or go over to full wartime mobilization. If they pull out," he added pointedly, "the question is put to us."³

That catastrophe came in 1954. Desperately trying to regain a stronghold in the Communist-dominated north, a French garrison of 15,000 men had fortified their position at a village 220 miles west of Hanoi—Dien Bien Phu. Viet Minh forces stormed the area continually for nearly 6 months and finally cut off every attempt at French resupply. On 6 May 1954 a final assault overcame the starving defenders and a terse radio message echoed around the world: "C'est fini!" Nearly 5,000 French troops had lost their lives and 10,000 were taken prisoner. Only 73 men escaped.

The disaster essentially spelled the end of French involvement in Vietnam. A 19-nation Conference on Far Eastern Affairs met at Geneva, established a cease fire, and recognized two independent nations in Vietnam, divided by the 17th Parallel. Although the U.S. refused to sign the agreements, they accepted the basic principles; they also reserved the right to intervene in the case of a violation. French forces were withdrawn, except for those directing and training the South Vietnamese Army, and the United States assumed a heavier role in economic aid and military supply.

Ngo Dinh Diem replaced Emperor Bao Dai as the head of government in Saigon and in October 1955 the Republic of Vietnam (RVN) was formed in the south with Diem as President. Nearly 4 years later, in 1959, two U.S. military advisors were killed in a terrorist attack on the military base at Bien Hoa—the first Americans to die in the Vietnam fighting.

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By 1960 Communists in the south organized the National Liberation Front and their military arm, the Viet Cong (VC), became the primary enemy. Subsequent to a report from President Kennedy's special envoy to Vietnam, General Maxwell Taylor, the first U.S. combat-support troops were sent to the country in December 1961. American military personnel in Vietnam had increased over the 6-year period from a few hundred to more than 3,000. Two months later, on 8 February 1962, the U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV), was established. MACV was more than a military headquarters for the administrative control of the increased number of U.S. troops. Psychologically, it was a demonstration of American determination against a Communist take-over in South Vietnam.⁴

The United States glided into the fury with little fanfare. For the American soldier it had been a quiet and unfamiliar way to go to war. No bands announced "The Yanks Are Coming," no headlines called him the savior of democracy and freedom. In fact, there were no beachheads to storm, no conventional invasions to repel, no discernible front lines of combat, and no easily-identified enemy. Silently, slowly at first, through the complicated course of international politics, American soldiers found themselves in a strange land and a bitter conflict. Simply because they were there, they were joined by Army chaplains.

ESTABLISHING A MINISTRY IN AN EMBRYO WAR

Chaplain John A. Lindvall, Assemblies of God, was the first Army chaplain to arrive in Vietnam. He was originally on his way to Okinawa, but when he arrived in Hawaii his orders were changed assigning him to the new MACV Headquarters in Saigon. Two days after his arrival on 26 February 1962, he was joined by Chaplains William S. Staudt, Roman Catholic, and Elmore W. Lester, Episcopalian.⁵

Apparently those assignments had been made so rapidly that there was no immediate arrangement for channels of supply. Informed in Hawaii that his contact for equipment would be the U.S. Army Headquarters in the Ryukyu Islands, Lindvall wrote the senior chaplain there in early March. He indicated he would send a requisition list soon but added, "We are here without much of anything and it looks like it will take some time to obtain these things. I was wondering if you would be able to help supply us on an emergency basis." He asked for such things as hymnals, Communion elements, and chaplain field kits. "One of our

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chaplains,” he noted, “having been in the Army only five months hadn’t even been issued a field kit.”⁶

Chaplain Edward M. Mize, Episcopalian, the Staff Chaplain in the Ryukyu Islands Headquarters replied:

. . . Your letter was the first word that I had that this command would have supply responsibility for your support. . . . No one though is inclined to quibble and we will do everything within our capability to support you. . . .⁷

Although Mize directed the immediate delivery of 17 different items to Vietnam, apparently he had no chaplain field kits to spare since none were included in the shipment.

Meanwhile, three more Army chaplains arrived in Vietnam—Thomas F. Grodavent, Roman Catholic, and Robert B. Howerton, Jr., Methodist, on 2 March; Joel E. Andrews, Methodist, on 23 March. Chaplain Lindvall informed Chaplain Mize in April that a Protestant Air Force chaplain was also there and that, with the anticipated arrival of a Catholic Air Force chaplain, their total would be eight. “Frankly we could use twice that many,” he added, “because we have people in scores of places scattered throughout the 600 mile length of this country. . . . This certainly is a challenge and after reading that Ft. Hood, Texas will have 50 chaplains, my only desire is that a number of these new chaplains could serve in this country where many of our people may only see a chaplain a couple times during their entire tour here.”⁸

Chaplain Andrews had arrived with the 39th Signal Battalion from Fort Gordon, Georgia. He was among the few key staff officers of the unit who were informed of their classified destination before their departure. With many of those men, Andrews studied a world map trying to find the location of the unfamiliar country. It was not until their plane had finished refueling in the Philippines that the battalion commander officially informed the rest of the soldiers they were headed for Vietnam.

Arriving on a typically scorching day, Andrews and the signalmen were directed to their “hotel”—a large tent-city on Tan Son Nhut Air Base. He conducted his first Sunday worship service in the mess tent, the only available shaded place with chairs. Within a short time, however, his unit was deployed throughout the country setting up a communications’ network to assist South Vietnamese military operations. The chaplain was constantly on the move trying to cover roughly 15 different areas, including places as far away as Pleiku, Da Nang, Qui Nhon, and Nha Trang.

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Traveling and life-style were relatively secure and serene at first. Chaplain Andrews visited his units by sedan and aircraft, staying a few days at each place. His time in an area was consumed with worship services, counseling, circulating among the men for informal chats, and occasionally joining in a softball or volleyball game. But an inevitable, traumatic experience stunned the members of the battalion a short time after their arrival. Two soldiers had gone to a little village to set up a small transmitter so the area chief could call for help in case of a VC attack. They were on their way back to their unit in a boat when a group of Viet Cong fired on them, sinking their boat and killing one of the men.⁹

"We had a huge memorial service at the plane site before the body was shipped off," recalled the chaplain, "and it had an unusual, sort of unsettling effect upon everybody. . . . that was the first and it happened within 2 months after we arrived. . . . then we had more, probably from 15 to 25 more during the year that we were there."¹⁰ Unsettling as it undoubtedly was to the men who were there, most Americans were not overly disturbed since the total number of those who were killed throughout the entire conflict was only 42 at the end of 1962.¹¹

Chaplain Andrews remembered that some of his men saw the purpose of their work as an aid to stop Communist aggression, but many of them regarded their assignment only as a military job with little consideration of the international situation. Like many chaplains who followed him, Andrews took it upon himself to emphasize the anti-Communist campaign in his Character Guidance lectures. While the official position was an optimistic view that U.S. aid would be limited and the conflict soon ended, Andrews and his men could see the situation grow with the regular arrival of more and more American troops. "As a matter of fact, when I came back," said the chaplain, "I was convinced it was going to be a long and drawn-out struggle."¹²

Chaplain Lindvall, a junior lieutenant colonel at the time, said in several of his letters that a full colonel chaplain was needed in his position. He was not only attempting to coordinate the work of an increasing number of Army, Air Force, Marine, and Navy chaplains arriving in Vietnam but also working in a headquarters that already had eight general officers. He contacted a variety of people for advice and help, including Chaplain Edwin L. Kirtley, the founder of the Protestant Personnel of the Chapel movement—"How I wish we had someone like you here."¹³ He asked for guidelines to establish a chaplains' section, lay organizations, and religious retreats. He inaugurated a chaplains' fund, sought out lay leaders

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to conduct worship services in isolated units, secured the help of local missionaries, predominately from the Christian Missionary and Alliance, personally conducted three to four field services per week during his constant travels, and actually did organize two religious retreats in Dalat in November.¹⁴ Nevertheless, he was troubled by further problems, such as the lack of organization and coordination of the scattered chaplain activities in Thailand and the demands for religious coverage for the large number of American dependents in the Saigon area. In his mid-tour report to the OCCH, in which he outlined many of his recommendations, he added: "I feel we shall be in South East Asia for a long time and we must plan for larger numbers of Army chaplains to serve our Army personnel here."¹⁵

Despite those convictions, neither the chaplains there nor the OCCH could foresee just how extensive the conflict would become. Lindvall's replacement in February 1963 was Chaplain Robert S. McCarty, Southern Baptist, another lieutenant colonel. McCarty's early correspondence before his arrival demonstrated the relatively calm approach to America's initial involvement; he asked about the availability of housing and schooling, in anticipation of bringing his family, and whether or not he should bring his dress blue uniform.¹⁶

SERVING QUIETLY IN A TIME OF TURMOIL

Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara had visited Vietnam in May 1962 and had expressed the opinion that U.S. aid and personnel in the country would probably level off. By the end of the year, U.S. military forces there numbered 11,000. During the early part of 1963, U.S. Army chaplains (increased to 10) and their counterparts from the other Armed Forces were scattered throughout the four corps areas dividing the country, serving under the Support Command, the Military Advisory Assistance Group (MAAG), and MACV. The approach of Army chaplains to their ministry in Vietnam necessarily varied from that in previous combat situations primarily because of the vast dispersion of U.S. personnel. From the very beginning of American involvement in Vietnam, the chaplains' section in MACV fostered the concept of "area coverage" as opposed to the normal unit coverage. U.S. Army, Navy (Marine), and Air Force chaplains were encouraged to coordinate their ministries by serving all U.S. personnel within their geographical areas, regardless of service or unit connection.

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While offering an obvious practical solution to the unique situation in Vietnam, the area coverage concept was not always easily implemented. Identity with a specific unit, and especially with a particular branch of service, has traditionally been as important to the military chaplain as a civilian clergyman's relationship with his own congregation. Obviously, the rapport which a chaplain was able to build over a period of time with the officers and men of his own unit could not be immediately translated to every neighboring element which happened to pass through his geographical area. Similarly, the possessiveness of a few commanders toward the activities of the chaplains assigned under them occasionally hampered the cooperative attitude being encouraged by higher commands. Necessity, however, ordinarily overruled preference. It was not only impractical but often impossible for a chaplain to serve only the men of his specific unit when elements of that organization were scattered over great distances while elements of another chaplain's unit were immediately adjacent to his home base. The chaplain area coverage concept, consequently, grew out of the demands of the Vietnam conflict and has received study and emphasis since then throughout the U.S. Army.¹⁷

Opinions of officials that the conflict would soon end continued to be heard. In May 1963 a Defense Department spokesman said that the "corner has definitely been turned toward victory" over the Viet Cong. But the political unrest in South Vietnam added complication to the situation. Buddhists objected to the Roman Catholic-dominated government of Diem, led protest riots, and shocked the world with self-immolations by fire. In November a military coup overthrew the government and assassinated Diem.¹⁸

Meanwhile, American attention was diverted by a stunning blow to their own nation. "I was in my office at Ft. Myer on that fateful Friday, 22 November 1963," recalled Chaplain Peter S. Lent, General Conference Baptist, "when I heard a soldier outside the window call, 'have you heard the news, the President's been shot.' I immediately turned on the radio and heard the initial reports from Dallas." Lent, serving as a chaplain with the Army's ceremonial unit, the Third Infantry, was to participate, 4 days later, as an escort officer for VIP clergy in one of the most historic funerals at Arlington National Cemetery. "I remember the schedule of burials that day because the last one on the list was John F. Kennedy and his rank was listed as Commander in Chief."¹⁹ Earlier that day, a last-minute request for a Roman Catholic chaplain had suddenly placed Chaplain Lawrence K. Brady in the solemn procession leading the casket of the fallen President

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through the streets of Washington. Although unplanned and completely unknown to the millions of viewers, it was a uniquely appropriate choice. Chaplain Brady had been the first chaplain to wear the green beret of the Army's Special Forces, a group that received much of the former President's attention and favor.²⁰

Lyndon B. Johnson's sudden ascent to the Presidency was burdened with the question of U.S. involvement in Vietnam. While some U.S. citizens began to regard the issue as a foreign civil war of no rightful concern to their nation, others saw it as another blatant attempt at Communist encroachment that had to be curtailed with military force. Army chaplains, especially those serving in Vietnam, tended to agree with the latter view, although they sought little public attention for their opinions. Their attitudes were influenced, undoubtedly, by a desire to honor the memory of the increasing number of their men who were giving their lives in the conflict. Similarly, many of them seemed far more shaken than the average American citizen by the persecutions and atrocities conducted by the VC, especially against missionaries.²¹

By the end of 1963 U.S. troops in Vietnam numbered 16,500 and 78 of them lost their lives there during that year. Yet total chaplain strength in the Army, reflecting the still somewhat mild approach to the war, was actually nearly 100 less in mid-1963 (1,286) than in the previous year (1,373). Actually, it was not until 1966 that this number began to increase substantially toward the peak level for the war period, reached in October 1968 with 1,924 on active duty.²²

The events of 1964 and early 1965 spelled the beginning of America's deeper involvement in Vietnam. The political turmoil in South Vietnam, often including bitter rivalry between Buddhists and Roman Catholics, continued until June 1965 when Air Vice Marshall Nguyen Cao Ky became Premier of the eighth government for the RVN in 20 months. While American leaders were considering the possibility of bombing attacks on North Vietnam in early 1964, two U.S. Navy destroyers were attacked in August by North Vietnamese torpedo boats in the Gulf of Tonkin. Congress passed the "Tonkin Gulf Resolution" pledging full support for U.S. forces in Vietnam and authorizing the President to take "all necessary measures to repel any armed attack." The number of American personnel, serving in advisory and combat support roles, was continually increased until eventually, in March 1965, a more direct involvement was assumed with the arrival of the first U.S. combat forces (Marines). U.S. Army

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combat units began to arrive in May. By mid-year the total U.S. casualties since 1961 numbered 1,484 killed and 7,337 wounded.²³

Obviously, Army chaplains were also entering the country in increasing numbers. With the consolidation of MAAG and MACV in May 1964, and the establishment of the United States Army, Vietnam (USARV) in July 1965, their task of administrating and coordinating the religious coverage of U.S. troops mushroomed. Included among those in the feverish pace at the MACV Headquarters in late 1964 was the senior Jewish chaplain for the command, Meir Engel. Engel was a 50-year-old native of Tel Aviv, Israel, who had first served on active duty in the U.S. Army chaplaincy (1943 to 1946) after immigrating to the States and being ordained as a rabbi in 1942. Re-entering active duty during the Korean War, he had served in various assignments prior to his arrival in the RVN in August 1964.²⁴

On 9 December 1964 a letter was sent to Chaplain Engel through MACV from the Office of the Adjutant General informing him of his mandatory retirement by 30 November 1967. Less than one month later, a terse, tragic message from MACV was sent in reply: "Chaplain Engel died 16 December 1964 of a heart attack."²⁵ "This command suffered a great loss today," began a letter from General William C. Westmoreland to MACV personnel on the date of Chaplain Engel's death. "His keen sense of humor, religious tolerance, high intellectual acumen, and his friendly spirit had endeared him to the members of this command . . ."²⁶ Although not a battle casualty, Chaplain Engel was the first Army chaplain to die in Vietnam.

With the establishment of USARV in 1965, the natural question of supervisory control of Army chaplains arose. MACV, as a joint command, previously served as the supervisory headquarters for all U.S. personnel in Vietnam. But the establishment of an Army headquarters (USARV) suggested that all Army chaplains would naturally be a part of the new organization. A staff study was prepared by the MACV Command Chaplain in November 1965, however, which concluded that any Army chaplains and their assistants who were serving MACV advisory teams should remain assigned to MACV. One of the reasons listed for this decision was the fact that these chaplains performed advisory functions to RVN Armed Forces chaplains in their areas. In early 1967, as MACV Headquarters prepared a revision for their Organization and Functions Manual, the distinction between Army chaplains under

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USARV and MACV was reiterated. In essence, all Army chaplains in the country came under the supervision of USARV with the exception of those specifically assigned to the MACV headquarters or serving MACV advisory teams.

But on 3 June 1967, a MACV Comptroller staff study asked staff elements to submit a listing of functions which could feasibly be transferred to USARV. Initially, the MACV Command Chaplain submitted a negative reply. A few weeks later, however, the chaplains' section was asked to reconsider its decision and strongly encouraged to identify responsibilities that should more appropriately be under the direction of USARV field operations. The MACV Command Chaplain reversed his decision and, consequently, in October of that year 13 chaplains and 13 chaplain's assistants serving advisory teams in the Corps Tactical Zones were transferred to USARV control. The transfer was made, in part, to help foster the area coverage concept; the "chaplain team" (one chaplain and one chaplain's assistant) could provide religious coverage not only to the advisors but also to Civil Operations and Rural Development Support (CORDS) civilians, as well as to the small isolated Army units within their geographical areas.

The new arrangement remained in effect for 2 years. The only Army chaplains assigned to MACV during that period were those within the headquarters itself. But in February 1969 the MACV Command Chaplain prepared a new staff study which again emphasized the support roles of those chaplains serving advisory teams and recommended their return to MACV control. The staff study maintained that those chaplains provided professional and technical assistance to the RVN Armed Forces chaplains in their areas, kept the senior U.S. advisors informed of the proper courtesies due Vietnamese religious institutions and holidays, and monitored the orientation of newly assigned U.S. advisory personnel to culturally sensitive areas. In light of the emphasis by then on Vietnamization, and since there was no provision for advisory functions under the USARV structure, the recommendation was approved on 15 October 1969. All chaplains and their assistants serving advisory personnel were again placed under MACV control.²⁷

In actuality, the transfer of chaplains from MACV to USARV and back again was primarily a paper-work exercise. The work of the chaplains in the field remained essentially the same regardless of their chain of command. While the technical assistance role of chaplains serving MACV was more strongly emphasized, nearly every U.S. chaplain in Vietnam

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provided guidance to unit personnel regarding the important religious aspects of the country in which they were serving.

STRUGGLING TO MINISTER IN THE FACE OF DEBATE

In February 1965 a Viet Cong attack on the U.S. compound at Pleiku resulted in eight Americans killed and 109 wounded. Subsequently, retaliatory U.S. air raids were directed on North Vietnam. President Johnson made several attempts to negotiate a peace settlement during the year, always precluding his offers with cessations of bombing raids. But each offer was rejected by the North Vietnamese and with each rejection the war dragged on.²⁸

To add to American troubles, dissident elements in the Army of the Dominican Republic mutinied and attempted to overthrow their government in mid-1965. Communist leaders in the area jumped at this new chance to take advantage of what had originally been a democratic revolution. The 82nd Airborne Division and numerous other U.S. Army units were rushed to the area to restore order. Similar to the situation in Vietnam, many Army chaplains accompanied the troops to the Caribbean country and were constantly on the move trying to provide religious coverage to the units scattered throughout the area. There were times, during the 18-month involvement, when U.S. casualties in the Dominican Republic were actually higher than in Vietnam. Among the numerous chaplains who served there, Chaplain Arthur F. Bell, Southern Baptist, recalled that fellow-Chaplain Roger W. Heinz, Missouri Synod Lutheran, seemed to have a knack for ending up in the hottest spots. Returning to his headquarters from conducting a service at an outlying unit one day, Heinz' jeep was stormed by a stone-throwing mob which slashed the vehicle's tires and wounded the driver. Somehow they managed to escape and Heinz' fellow chaplains included a unique, jesting phrase in the day's incident report: "Chaplain stoned."²⁹

By the time U.S. units were withdrawn from the Dominican Republic in late 1966, most Americans had forgotten they had even been there because of the growing debate over U.S. involvement in Vietnam. Mass demonstrations against the U.S. presence in South East Asia had already begun in late 1965 and the military in general became the scapegoat for the anti-war attack. At the same time, other American citizens felt compelled to support their men in combat, wrote thousands of encouraging letters and shipped boxes of gifts addressed to "Any GI in

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Vietnam.” Most of those mailings were sent to military chaplains for distribution among their men. Similarly, President Johnson declared 28 November 1965 as a “Day of Dedication and Prayer for Those Risking Their Lives for Peace in Viet-Nam.”³⁰ Meanwhile, General Harold K. Johnson, the Army’s Chief of Staff, pointed out that “the Army is not a policy making organization” but rather “an instrument of policy.”

Essentially, we are being employed by our government to restore stability or to provide a climate of order in which government, under law, can function effectively in those instances where the United States has been asked for assistance and it is clearly in our national interest to provide assistance.³¹

Since American involvement was attacked by some U.S. citizens on moral grounds, it was only natural that chaplains became the focus of some of that debate. Newspaper articles either glorified them beyond reality or else sarcastically attacked them as hypocritical warmongers. Occasionally, some chaplains began to take public sides on the issue, either supporting or questioning the war-effort. A Jewish chaplain who admitted that he had been opposed to American involvement in Vietnam before his arrival in the country, related the attitude of many chaplains when he later concluded that while “our present policy of continuing the military struggle is not a pleasant one, the prospect of giving in to a brutal, tyrannical aggressor is much less attractive.”³² Most chaplains seemed resolved to minister to their men wherever they were called and to support an attitude of loyalty to one’s conscience and religious convictions in the face of the agonizing questions.

One chaplain made an attempt through humor to awaken some civilian clergymen to the seriousness of the military ministry. Chaplain Frank O. Vavrin, Lutheran Church in America, published a facetious “advertisement” in a denominational paper offering to exchange parsonages with anyone willing. He offered a “‘do-it-yourself’ pup tent or poncho strung between trees,” very wet weather, a congregation in fox-hoi, neighboring VC, as well as a guaranteed salary, C-rations, medical care, and a 30-day annual leave—“if you make it.” Ironically, some civilian pastors took the ad seriously and offered to help out for a 30-day period; the OCCCH replied just as seriously and suggested that they apply for commissions as chaplains.³³

In actuality, South Vietnam was being swamped with visiting clergymen. Like many of the official and semi-official visitors from the States, some of the clerics came on a “special mission” and unfortunately re-

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turned as “experts” on the progress of the conflict. In most cases, each was cordially welcomed and even General Westmoreland expressed his appreciation for their concern and requested their prayers for his soldiers. Nationally-known figures like Francis Cardinal Spellman and Doctor Billy Graham were particularly popular with the troops and many of them anticipated their arrival. But as the war continued, many clergymen, some without any sponsorship at all, poured into the country. The task of escorting these visitors began to hamper the chaplains’ own work. Chaplain Theodore V. Koepke, Missouri Synod Lutheran, MACV Staff Chaplain, and Chaplain Daniel O. Wilson, American Baptist, USARV Staff Chaplain, asked the OCCH for help in reducing the deluge of visiting preachers. Koepke reported that 10 such visits had been made during the last month of 1965 alone. In one case, a clergyman on a “fact-finding mission” spent 4 days in the country and returned to start a huge money-collecting campaign to produce “religious literature” for American soldiers. At the same time he claimed that chaplain coverage in Vietnam was sparse and, in one case, so bad that a chaplain read his sermons from an Army manual. Such incidents eventually resulted in a tightening of the policy governing visiting clergymen in the war zone.³⁴

Occasionally the overzealousness of an Army chaplain to identify with his men and to not be a burden on them while on combat missions produced added problems. Photographed with a .45 caliber pistol and a fragmentation grenade hanging from his belt, one chaplain received particular attention and publicity in January 1966. “I don’t want to be a drag when the going is hot and heavy,” he had been quoted as saying. “I ought to be able to earn my keep with these men. But I would only use these things in self defense—my job is to save souls and not to take lives.” The Chief of Chaplains quickly sent out a policy statement to senior chaplains and major Army commands. Interestingly, he did not insist that chaplains not carry weapons but reminded them of the “serious repercussions caused by unwarranted actions of chaplains who permit themselves to be photographed while carrying weapons.” He also reminded them of the traditional position set forth in the Geneva Convention and Army regulations and suggested that chaplains request the presence of a public information officer during interviews with the press.³⁵

GIVING WITH COMPASSION

Through 1966 U.S. forces in Vietnam grew until 389,000 were in the area by the end of the year. Combat deaths by then totaled over 6,000

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As could be expected, there were Army chaplains included in both figures.

Chaplain William J. Barragy, Roman Catholic, had entered the chaplaincy in 1953 from the Archdiocese of Dubuque, Iowa. Arriving in Vietnam in July 1965, he was assigned to the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division. Near the end of his 12-month tour, on 4 May 1966, he was a passenger on a CH-47 helicopter carrying ammunition and troops into one of the many combat areas. For unknown reasons—there were no witnesses at the time—the aircraft crashed and burned on impact. The 50-year-old priest became the first Army chaplain to be killed in action in Vietnam. Chaplain Barragy was posthumously awarded the Legion of Merit.³⁶

Chaplain William N. Feaster, United Church of Christ, had just been ordained in 1963 and entered the chaplaincy in January 1965. On 19 September 1966, roughly 3 months after his arrival in Vietnam, he was wounded by a short round from friendly artillery while serving with the 196th Light Infantry Brigade. His wife, Lieutenant Judith C. Feaster, an Army nurse stationed in Seoul, Korea, was rushed to his side at an Army hospital in Saigon. Tragically, despite all medical efforts, he died 1 month later on 26 October.³⁷

Chaplain Michael J. Quealy, Roman Catholic, had entered the Army in the same month as Chaplain Feaster. He arrived in Vietnam on 13 June 1966 and was assigned to the 3rd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division. On 8 November a U.S. battalion on “Operation Attleboro” violently engaged two Viet Cong regiments near the Cambodian border. Although not assigned to the unit, Chaplain Quealy heard of the battle and caught a helicopter ride into the area. After checking at the battalion command post to learn where the heaviest fighting was, he dashed to the field and began to assist with the wounded and give last rites to the dying. “Chaplain Quealy appeared to be everywhere,” noted a later citation. He spotted one seriously wounded man some distance away from the main group and crawled to his side under intense fire from three enemy automatic weapons. By the time he arrived, the man had died—but the chaplain knelt, administered last rites, and then noticed still another wounded soldier. While kneeling by that man’s side, Quealy himself was mortally wounded. On 26 January 1967 the Silver Star was posthumously awarded to Chaplain Quealy for his courageous and selfless sacrifice and his inspiration to the men he had served.³⁸

“I like to think of this situation in terms of the parable of the Good Samaritan,” commented Chaplain Emmitt T. Carroll, Disciple of Christ,

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in regard to the American presence in Vietnam.³⁹ With similar philosophies, hundreds of Army chaplains were responsible for guiding and, in some cases, establishing civic action projects by their units throughout Vietnam during the years of U.S. involvement in the country. Even after the appointment of civil affairs officers, chaplains continued to encourage and support innumerable contributions of money and labor for the welfare of the Vietnamese people. Engineers built roads and dug wells, medical personnel provided health care, and thousands of soldiers gave of their own time and money to assist local schools, orphanages, and leprosariums. Many chaplains contacted home-town civic and church organizations in the States and initiated charitable donations of everything from soap to clothing. "Our troops have made a solid contribution toward winning the minds and hearts of the villagers through their civic action programs," commented Lieutenant General John L. Throckmorton, then Chief of the Army's Office of Reserve Components. "While this type of activity is not as dramatic or newsworthy as a military operation, it is nonetheless necessary if the government of South Vietnam is to gain the support of the people."⁴⁰ To most chaplains, however, the strategic value of their civic action to the war effort was secondary. They were moved rather by a common compassion for humans in need. Said a Vietnamese Roman Catholic priest to Chaplain Donald R. Dawson, Presbyterian USA: "Chaplain, the people of my refugee village told me that the Protestant minister has much love for them."⁴¹

Even more intense was the chaplains' love for the men they served. "Ever since Bunker Hill, the man behind the man behind the gun has carried a Bible, comforted the wounded and prayed for the dead," noted *Time* magazine.⁴² Actually, so many Army chaplains were volunteering for duty in Vietnam that the OCCH had to disapprove some of the applications. As of 30 August 1966 there were 219 Army chaplains in the country.⁴³ Following Chaplain Thomas J. Confroy, Roman Catholic, on his dangerous rounds with the 1st Infantry Division, *Look* magazine's senior editor for the Far East, Sam Castan, wrote:

. . . He never pressures anyone into coming to this church [a clearing in the jungle], he never asks why the buddy who came last time has not returned. His sermons are brief and often mention the value of suffering as a means to understanding what Christ Himself endured. He never speaks of the nearness of death—everyone here knows it full well. The hardest part of Father Confroy's work comes after Mass, as he waits at the aid station for those who have received

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Holy Communion, struck into the jungle, and will be soon returning for Extreme Unction, the last rites of his Church.⁴⁴

Castan also reported how the men laughed one day as an incoming mortar round interrupted one of Confroy's services. He jumped in a foxhole atop three other men. As the smoke cleared and the men crawled out, the chaplain remarked, "One good thing about Vietnam is that nobody sleeps during Mass." But the writer was particularly moved by an expression of the chaplain's deep love for his troops: "The men I attend are each day faced with the ultimate reality, the final physical reality of death. I know now what every priest must know: the full meaning of compassion." With tragic irony, the correspondent himself was killed only a few weeks after filing the chaplain's story.⁴⁵

"Usually I move right with the battalion and dig foxholes along with the men," reported Chaplain John H. Herrlinger, Lutheran Church in America. "Our altar is the front of a jeep, our pews Vietnamese soil and our roof the burning Oriental sky. Men grow up in a minute over here."⁴⁶ The feeling between the chaplains and their men was often mutual. "While most of the troops in Vietnam may be indifferent to churchgoing," wrote one reporter, "they nonetheless have a high regard for the churchmen who share the dangers of war with quiet heroism that wins affection and awe rather than medals."⁴⁷ When asked about his chaplain, James M. Hutchens, National Fellowship of Brethren Churches, one soldier replied: "I can't talk about him. You just wouldn't understand. You haven't been with us."⁴⁸

During 1967 U.S. forces and casualties in Vietnam increased sharply. In August President Johnson announced a new ceiling on U.S. troops for the war zone as 525,000. In June they had already reached 463,000. At the end of 1967 U.S. casualty figures (from January 1961) totalled 15,812 killed and 99,305 wounded. Bombing raids on the north were intensified while U.S. and South Vietnamese forces entered the demilitarized zone (DMZ) for the first time. Repeated offers for peace negotiations from the United States were regularly turned down by the North Vietnamese and American demonstrations against the war became even more prevalent.⁴⁹

It would be ludicrous to assert that soldiers were unaffected by the constant debates over the war. It would be equally absurd to say that they all responded positively to the ministry of chaplains. "As long as I've got to kill, I'm not going to church," said one trooper to Chaplain LaVern W. Gardai, American Lutheran. "I'll listen to 'Thou Shalt not

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Kill' when I get home." Others told him to "go over and preach that stuff to the Viet Cong. Maybe we'll win the war." Injured in a helicopter crash while helping to evacuate a wounded soldier, the chaplain still maintained that "we can't let evil rise up and take what it wants anywhere in the world."⁵⁰ "Perhaps not every soldier, bothered by the controversy at home over the war would want to speak to him [a chaplain]," said Chaplain Edward J. Saunders, Roman Catholic, Commandant at the Chaplain School. "That is not the important thing. Just that he's there, available at all times for any help and guidance they may seek, means a great deal to our fighting men. . . . You must remember that a chaplain is not in the army to justify war or to be a cheerleader for hostilities."⁵¹

The more than 300 Army chaplains in Vietnam continued to be scattered throughout the country. Those serving in more "secure" areas set out to build chapels—some so elaborate that they contained electronic organs and stained glass windows, and others nothing more than a specified tent with rough wooden benches. Although the USARV construction program labeled "Chapel/Theater" as number 38 in a list of 46 priorities, most chaplains constructed their churches with voluntary labor and contributions, and frequently named them in honor of members of the unit who had been killed in action.⁵² Chapel construction in Vietnam increased until it reached its peak in November 1970 with 203 permanent or semi-permanent U.S. military chapels in use throughout the country. That number then began to decrease so that by November 1971 there were 150. By the end of the U.S. combat involvement in Vietnam, there were only 16 U.S. military chapels still in use in the country. In most cases, wherever it was feasible, the structures were turned over to the Chaplain Directorates of the RVN Armed Forces.⁵³

Because of the extensive use of the helicopter in Vietnam, most chaplains were not restricted to a specified area. Often using a base camp as "home," they regularly traveled to outlying elements of their units. Even the far-flung, small contingents of advisors, who lived and worked in isolated villages, were able to have some regular contact with a visiting chaplain who flew in with the supplies and mail.⁵⁴ But no matter where they were assigned, chaplains were no more secure than the men they served. In many cases, the streets of Saigon were as dangerous as the jungles far to the north or the Delta region below.

Chaplain James J. L. Johnson, National Baptist, was a 34-year-old native of Marlin, Texas, who entered the Army in 1965 and joined the

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4th Infantry Division in Vietnam 1 year later. He attended a religious retreat at Cam Ranh Bay in early 1967 and boarded a C-47 aircraft on 10 March to return to his unit. For unknown reasons, the plane crashed and burned. The crew and all the passengers, including Chaplain Johnson, were killed.⁵⁵

HONORING THE COMMON FOR UNCOMMON DEEDS

Chaplain Ambrosio Salazar Grandea, Methodist, had moved with his parents from his home in the Philippine Islands to the United States at the age of 18. During postgraduate work at Boston University, he had served a church in New Hampshire before entering the Army in 1960. Arriving in Vietnam in November 1966, he was conducting a worship service for men of the 4th Infantry Division on 25 May 1967 when he was wounded by an enemy mortar round. After treatment in Vietnam, he was evacuated to a hospital at Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines. There, near his birthplace, Chaplain Grandea died only a few days later on 13 June 1967.

The chaplain's wife, Mrs. Jacinta Grandea, working as a nurse in Baltimore, Maryland, had first been informed that his wounds were slight, but each new message carried reports of the growing seriousness of his condition. At her own expense, she left for the Philippines to be with him, but was stopped while changing planes in San Francisco by an officer who informed her of her husband's death. Six months later, 2 days before Christmas, Mrs. Grandea participated in a dual ceremony at Fort Meade, Maryland—after receiving the posthumous awards of her husband's Silver Star and Purple Heart, she was sworn in as an Army nurse. Mrs. Grandea volunteered with the stipulation that she be sent to Vietnam. "We are engaged in a tough war in Vietnam," she said. "All of us have to do our little bit to end the task with success and honor."⁵⁶

On the uniforms of only a handful of soldiers in the United States Army can be seen a distinctive ribbon attached above all the others. That tiny piece of cloth with white stars against a bright blue background indicates that the wearer is a recipient of the nation's highest award—the Medal of Honor. Throughout American history, only three Army chaplains—all serving in the Civil War—had ever received that distinguished tribute to gallantry:⁵⁷ But for their services rendered during the last 2 months of 1967, the Medal of Honor was to be awarded to two Roman Catholic Chaplains: Charles J. Watters and Angelo J. Liteky.

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Chaplain Watters was a 40-year-old native of Jersey City, New Jersey. After his ordination in 1953, he had served parishes in his home town as well as in Rutherford, Paramus, and Cranford, New Jersey. In 1962 he became a chaplain in the Air National Guard and 2 years later entered active duty as an Army chaplain. In July 1967 he had already completed his 12-month tour in Vietnam but had voluntarily extended his service there by 6 months. On 19 November 1967, while assigned to the 173rd Support Battalion, 173rd Airborne Brigade, he was moving with the men of one company on an assault near Dak To. An intense battle broke out and Watters dashed to the front to aid with the wounded and administer last rites to the dying. Spotting a wounded paratrooper standing in shock in the field of fire, Chaplain Watters ran forward, picked up the man on his shoulders, and carried him to safety. As the American unit rushed forward, Watters was again seen in front, caring for another wounded man; when they were pushed back, the chaplain was between the lines recovering two more fallen comrades. The battalion was forced to pull back and form a new perimeter. Despite efforts to restrain him, Watters dashed out three more times to recover wounded men. Finally, while distributing food and water to those still fighting and helping medics bandage the wounded, Chaplain Watters was also killed. For his "conspicuous gallantry . . . unyielding perseverance and selfless devotion to his comrades," the chaplain was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor by Vice President Spiro Agnew on 4 November 1969.⁵⁸

Chaplain Liteky, born in Washington, D.C., in 1931, and educated at colleges and seminaries in Florida, Alabama, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, entered the Army chaplaincy in July 1966. On 6 December 1967, 9 months after his arrival in Vietnam, he found himself in a fierce battle along with the men of Company A, 4th Battalion, 12th Infantry, 199th Light Infantry Brigade. They had engaged the enemy near Phuoc-Lac in the Bien Hoa Province. Initially the men of Liteky's unit were momentarily stunned and hugged the ground under intense enemy fire. But the chaplain noticed two wounded men ahead of them and crawled within 15 meters of an enemy machine gun, placing himself between the men and the hostile fire. During a brief lull, he quickly removed the men from the field to a helicopter landing area for evacuation. His action inspired the others to rally and direct heavy fire against the enemy positions. Liteky, meanwhile, began to move upright through the area, stopping to aid wounded and administer last rites. Since one wounded man was too heavy for him to carry, the chaplain laid down on his back, pulled

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the soldier onto his chest, and forced his way to the landing zone with his elbows and legs. Returning to the battle, he calmly extracted another fallen trooper entangled in dense, thorny underbrush. Again and again he returned to evacuate the wounded from the battle area. By the time the unit was relieved the following morning, it was obvious that Chaplain Liteky, who was also wounded, had personally carried more than 20 men to the evacuation site. On 19 November 1968, Chaplain Liteky stood in the White House with four other soldiers to receive the Medal of Honor from President Johnson.⁵⁹

The political turmoil in South Vietnam eventually led to another change of governments with General Nguyen Van Thieu elected as President in September 1967. Despite the skepticism of some Americans, military leaders were beginning to express optimism about the progress of the war. General Westmoreland said that he had “never been more encouraged in my four years in Vietnam.”⁶⁰ Chief of Staff Harold K. Johnson maintained, “We are definitely winning in Vietnam . . . If my observations are borne out—I recently returned from my eighth visit to Vietnam—then I believe we will see some real evidence of progress in the next few months.”⁶¹ Chaplain John K. Durham, American Baptist, although he had been wounded twice in 4 months, said, “I believe we belong in Vietnam. It would be unthinkable, at this late date, to pull out. . . . There are significant indications that we are winning the war.”⁶² President Johnson, meanwhile, had declared that he would stop the bombing “when this will lead promptly to productive discussions.”⁶³

But the events of early 1968 did not seem as promising as the optimism expressed. Communist forces struck heavily against major cities in the south during the Tet (Lunar New Year) offensive. Viet Cong troops raided the U.S. embassy in Saigon, overran the Chinese quarter of Cholon, and seized the city of Hue.⁶⁴ In Hue at the time was an Army chaplain who, said one reporter, “really had no business being there. But the infantrymen he loved were being killed before the battlements of Hue’s imperial Citadel and the Rev. Aloysius P. McGonigal wanted to go. . . . He practically fought his way to the battlefield.”⁶⁵

Chaplain McGonigal was a Roman Catholic Jesuit who held a graduate degree in physics and was working on his Ph.D when he entered the chaplaincy for the second time in 1966. He arrived in Vietnam in October 1967 and was actually assigned to Advisory Team No. 1, MACV, 1st Aviation Brigade. Apparently, however, in thorough harmony with the area coverage approach, he made a habit of wandering throughout

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the I Corps area to visit the men in the field. He was determined to be with those most in need rather than to be restricted to one unit. Precisely because of his dedication to that philosophy, he was killed at Hue on 17 February 1968 "with a unit that was not his own in a battle he could have missed."⁶⁶

RESPONDING TO ATROCITY

The *News Sheet* of the Americal Division in Vietnam was a mimeographed, in-house "newspaper" that regularly carried items about the weather, an occasional cartoon, and reports of the latest combat assaults by elements of the division. The Sunday, 17 March 1968 edition included the following notes about the previous day's activities:

. . . For the third time in recent weeks 11th Brigade infantrymen in Task Force Barker raided a Viet Cong stronghold known as "Pinkville" six miles northeast of Quang Ngai.

"Jungle Warriors," together with artillery and helicopter support, hit the village of My Lai early yesterday morning. Contacts throughout the morning and early afternoon resulted in 128 enemy killed, 13 suspects detained and three weapons captured. . . .⁶⁷

While some of the men who may have read that account were apparently aware of the more sordid details of what actually happened, it was 13 months later before a former enlisted man, Ronald L. Ridenhour, brought public attention to the matter. Based on information contained in his letter to government officials, the Department of the Army launched an investigation which not only stunned the American people but resulted in 13 officers and enlisted men being charged with various court-martial offenses, including murder and assault to commit murder. The most well-known of the trials concluded with the conviction of First Lieutenant William L. Calley, Jr., on charges of premeditated murder of more than 100 Vietnamese non-combatant men, women, and children. The first witness called by Calley's defense attorneys was a former Army chaplain, Carl E. Creswell, Episcopalian.⁶⁸

Creswell's testimony was considered important because of a brief exchange of words he claimed to have had with Calley's superior officers during a briefing preceding the My Lai incident.

The officers were discussing recent Vietcong outrages, he said, and he heard one officer remark that if American troops received any fire during the impending assault "they'd level the village."

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Father Creswell said he reproached the officer: "I didn't think we made war that way."

He said the officer merely replied: "It's a tough war."⁸⁹

Although no Army chaplains accompanied the men when they entered My Lai that day, ironically Chaplain Creswell was apparently the only chaplain to have received a first-hand report of the incident shortly after it happened. Serving as the Americal Division's Artillery Chaplain, Creswell also covered the unit's aviation battalion. A helicopter pilot, who was flying support for the mission, reported to Chaplain Creswell his conviction that civilians had been unnecessarily and purposefully killed during the operation. Creswell verbally passed the report to the Americal's Division Chaplain, Francis R. Lewis, United Methodist.

The precise sequence of events, let alone the specific conversations, were difficult to reconstruct. A special investigation directed by the Secretary of the Army under Lieutenant General William R. Peers uncovered conflicting reports. Chaplain Lewis, pointing out the difficulty in recalling details of occurrences 1½ years after they had happened, maintained that he had passed Chaplain Creswell's report to at least four of the division's key staff officers. He said that some of them seemed to be aware of the matter and told him that they were looking into it. During later testimony, however, only two staff officers remembered Chaplain Lewis making such a report and one of them said that he thought the chaplain was talking about some other matter.

Lewis said that he was satisfied that the incident had been properly investigated after conversing with the task force commander, Lieutenant Colonel Frank Barker, who had been in charge of the operation. The chaplain remembered that the lieutenant colonel told him he had concluded that civilians had been killed, but that they had died as a result of artillery and aircraft fire and cross fire between U.S. and VC forces. Since Barker was himself killed in subsequent action and no records could be found of such an inquiry, it was impossible to verify this report.

Chaplain Lewis had also concluded that the matter was not as serious as Chaplain Creswell's report had sounded when no similar reports came from the chaplains more closely connected with the unit. Although Task Force Barker was an organization comprised of segments of various units, the specific men involved at My Lai came from a battalion originally covered by Chaplain Harry P. Kissinger, Associated Gospel Churches. Neither Kissinger nor the two brigade chaplains, Ray-

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mond P. Hoffman, Episcopalian, and John C. Carey, Roman Catholic, received reports of any atrocity.⁷⁰

Although Chaplains Lewis, Creswell, Hoffman, and Kissinger were called to testify in various subsequent investigations, nothing more could be determined than what Creswell himself had concluded: "In hindsight, I feel I should have done more."⁷¹ Nearly 5 years after the incident, he further commented:

I felt, at the time of the trials, very much betrayed by the Chaplains [to] whom I had entrusted my knowledge of the My Lai event. If a history of a fumble enables future Chaplains to hang on to the ball, this exercise will be worth . . . our troubles. As Santana [*sic*] said: "Those who do not study history, are condemned to repeat it." God forbid that in a similar situation, any Chaplain should ever be content with the actions I took.⁷²

"Such incidents, along with general frustration about the conduct of the war," commented the *New York Times*, "have served to revive the old 'two masters' problem concerning chaplains in the armed forces."⁷³ The Executive Secretary for Chaplains of the United Church of Christ insisted that chaplains be instructed to support officers and enlisted men who refuse to carry out orders they consider immoral or illegal.⁷⁴ While subsequent classes at the Chaplain School did, in fact, deal with the matter of legal orders and the means of properly reporting alleged atrocities, the highly-publicized My Lai tragedy certainly did not enhance the image of the chaplaincy. Among the reams of material written on the subject, at least one author strongly insinuated that the chaplains' ministry was virtually ineffectual.⁷⁵

While the terrible circumstances at My Lai received more publicity, another situation of a similar, though less complex incident involved the kidnap, rape, and murder of a Vietnamese girl by a small group of U.S. soldiers. Though little credit was given to him for it, Chaplain Claude D. Newby, Latter Day Saints, was the first to properly respond to the report when a troubled soldier related the incident as he had heard it. Newby, a former military and civilian policeman, took the report to the Army's Criminal Investigation Division (CID) and the responsible individuals were eventually arrested and tried.⁷⁶

ACCEPTING NEW CHALLENGES IN COUNSELING

The unpopularity of the Vietnam conflict added further responsibilities to the ministry of chaplains. In 1965 an Army Message revised the

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Army Regulation that provided guidance for the disposition of conscientious objectors. It directed that individuals applying for separation under the provisions of that regulation should attend a counseling interview by a chaplain. The directive, published as a superseding revision of the regulation in 1966, required chaplains to submit a report of such interviews including an opinion of the sincerity of the applicant and whether or not the objection was based on religious convictions. A similar regulation was published for the guidance of Reserve components.⁷⁷

The revisions were apparently not burdensome to many chaplains who already had been giving such counseling without submitting a written report. But the OCCH believed some difficulties would arise if chaplains were not aware of a 1964 Supreme Court decision which defined a religious belief as “a sincere and meaningful belief which occupies in the life of its possessor a place parallel to that filled by the God of those admittedly qualifying for the exemption.” In other words, this implied that a sincere philosophy, not necessarily compatible with orthodox religious doctrines but based on a power, being, or faith to which everything else was subordinate, was also a valid basis for conscientious objection. Consequently, the OCCH directed the Chaplain School to clarify this distinction to students during courses in subject areas dealing with such matters.⁷⁸

By 1967 a request from the Director of Enlisted Personnel, DA Office of Personnel Operations, resulted in the establishment of a Conscientious Objector Review Board to render decisions on cases requesting such classification. A member of the OCCH was detailed as one of the members of this board and the Chief of Chaplains suggested that the policy guidance for the group include references to the Supreme Court decision. But The Judge Advocate General did not agree and pointed out that the Public Law governing the Military Selective Service Act of 1967 did not include in its definition of a religious belief convictions that were essentially political, sociological, or philosophical. Consequently, the OCCH passed out new guidance to the field in its monthly newsletter for January 1968.⁷⁹

Undoubtedly because of these changes in guidance and the growing debates over conscientious objection, some chaplains became thoroughly confused as to precisely what they were to determine during the interviews of such applicants. The Director for Government Relations, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., expressed the concern that chaplains might be inclined to influence the decision of applicants rather than to help them articulate their convictions. Similarly, publicity

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over the contention by a civilian speaker at a chaplains' training conference that chaplains should oppose the nation's draft law, added further perplexity to the matter.⁸⁰ It is not surprising, in light of all this guidance and debate, that in 1969 the Conscientious Objector Review Board complained that many chaplain interview reports were "lengthy and meaningless, incomplete or inadequate." Further instruction was sent to the chaplains in the field entitled "Policy Guidance on Interviewing Conscientious Objector Applicants in the Armed Forces" and "Supplementary Policy Guidance on Conscientious Objectors" and apparently the matter was eventually clarified.⁸¹

During this same period, the infatuation of many American youth with the use of various drugs produced new problems which automatically spilled over into the nation's armed forces. Consequently, added attention had to be given to the counseling of the addict. When Chief of Chaplains Francis Sampson visited the Far East in early 1969, "the major problem brought to his attention was the use of drugs, especially in Korea and Thailand."⁸² As a consequence, workshops for chaplains on "Ministering to the Drug User" were conducted on an Army-wide basis.⁸³ Chaplains also participated in efforts to combat alcoholism and, in some cases, became members of local command councils to devise more efficient means of dealing with the problem in the Army.⁸⁴

Obviously such problems threatened the moral base of the nation and, as an immediate consequence, endangered the combat-effectiveness of U.S. units in Vietnam. A great deal of attention was given to solving these difficulties and in nearly every case, at virtually every level, the opinions and guidance of chaplains were sought. While assigned as a Mobilization Designee in the Medical Command Staff Chaplain's Office, Reserve Chaplain Viggo O. Aronsen, American Lutheran, correlated the results of numerous drug and alcohol abuse clinics held at Medical Command installations. "As a former EM, the one point I put foremost in the document which was bucked up to DA," he noted, "was that no man would turn himself in if he was then going to be court martialed for it!" Whether it was because of his suggestion or not, amnesty for offenders who were seeking help became Army policy and Aronsen added, "to think that a 'week end warrior' had a chance to make a partial contribution is a good feeling."⁸⁵

The struggle to find some effective means of dealing with drug abuse in Vietnam intensified in the late 1960's and early 1970's. Chaplains became integral parts of the "healing teams" at the USARV Drug Treat-

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ment Facility (established first at Long Binh and later moved to the U.S. Army Hospital in Saigon) as well as the anti-drug educational programs in individual units. But even the briefest perusal of the drug treatment appendix to the MACV Command Chaplain's After Action Report, prepared at the end of American combat involvement in Vietnam, catches the note of frustration that permeated many of the attempts at rehabilitation. Some chaplains maintained that every program resulted more in paper work and the compilation of statistics than in actual aid to drug users. Others spoke out against what they believed to be a double standard which virtually ignored alcohol abuse by "lifers" (older NCO's) and concentrated on narcotics abuse by younger soldiers. Nevertheless, considerable time was given by chaplains to personal and group counseling, and to their own training sessions and conferences as part of the concerted effort by the Army to overcome the problem. In fact, several significant ecclesiastical leaders who visited Vietnam in 1970 and 1971 praised the efforts being made. Dr. Robert V. Moss, president of the United Church of Christ, maintained that more innovative and significant means of combating drug abuse were being used by the Army in Vietnam than by domestic organizations in the United States. Dr. Robert C. Marshall, president of the Lutheran Church in America, and Dr. Oswald C. J. Hoffman, speaker on the International Lutheran Hour, made similar assessments.⁸⁶

During the same period, the increasing problems related to race relations were receiving equal attention from chaplains in Vietnam. The Army's determination to foster racial harmony and equality resulted in the assignment of Chaplain Benjamin E. Smith, United Presbyterian, to develop a Human Relations Program for USARV. Smith and his successors, Chaplain Roland F. Day, National Baptist, and Chaplain Paul J. Bailey, United Church of Christ, saw to it that Human Relations Councils were established at all levels, down to and including company-sized units. Human Relations personnel were appointed on orders, unit educational programs were developed, and a system of staff visits and instruction was initiated. By November 1972 Chaplain Bailey had developed the USARV Race Relations/Equal Opportunity Affirmative Plan. The Plan was essentially an educational system to aid personnel in recognizing and changing discriminatory practices within units. Along with the concentrated attack on drug abuse, however, the Human Relations Program in Vietnam came to an abrupt halt with the notification of the

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cease-fire agreements in 1973 and the eventual withdrawal of U.S. military personnel.⁸⁷

Although much of the work of Army chaplains toward solving the problems of drug abuse and racial discord was to continue in other assignments both in the U.S. and overseas, it is interesting to note the unique existence of such programs in a combat zone. In contrast to those who served in World War II and the Korean Conflict, Army chaplains in Vietnam were involved far more in noncombat-related pastoral duties. Undoubtedly, the vast dispersion of troops, the large number of support units in relatively secure areas, the national turmoil over U.S. involvement in Vietnam, and the popularity of the anti-establishment philosophy among many young soldiers all contributed to the necessity for a ministry far beyond the consoling of men in the emergency situations of the battlefield. Conscientious objection, drug abuse, and race relations were among the major concerns. But chaplains in Vietnam were also heavily involved in the day-to-day counseling of soldiers with a myriad of other decisions and problems ranging from marriage to Vietnamese girls to arrangements for compassionate leaves and reassignments. In a sense, it could be said that the chaplains' ministry in Vietnam was among the most challenging ever faced in the history of the branch. More than a salve to soothe the effects of battle, the chaplains' work had begun to penetrate the very depths of human psychology in an attempt to serve the soldier who faced his own inner conflicts.

STRUGGLING TO HELP WITH BODY AND SPIRIT

It took a month of long and arduous fighting to suppress the 1968 Communist Tet offensive, but limited success was gained and Hue was recaptured by U.S. and Vietnamese forces after 26 days. Nearly a year later, while irrigation canals were being dug near the city, mass graves of hundreds of the city's former inhabitants were found—victims of a huge massacre that had been conducted by the Viet Cong during their occupation of the area. President Johnson, facing the turmoil over the war in the U.S. and determined to bring the fighting to an honorable conclusion without political influence, announced his decision to retire at the end of his term, and, at the same time, stopped the bombing once more in an appeal for truce talks. Finally, in May of that year, discussions between the U.S. and North Vietnam were opened in Paris. Whatever brief optimism may have been generated, however, was quelled with the

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end-of-the-year reports that the U.S. had lost 14,592 servicemen in Vietnam during 1968 alone.⁸⁸ Numbered among the final statistics for that year was Jewish Chaplain Morton H. Singer.

Singer had served as a rabbi in New York prior to entering the Army in 1967. After graduating from the Chaplain School, he served at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, for 1 year before being transferred to Vietnam in November 1968. Six weeks later, on 17 December 1968, Chaplain Singer boarded an aircraft at Chu Lai Airfield after visiting units in the northern I Corps area. The plane crashed and burned shortly after take off and the rabbi became the ninth chaplain to lose his life in Vietnam. "Rabbi Singer was an outstanding Chaplain intensely dedicated to his work," wrote Lieutenant General Richard G. Stilwell, Commanding General of the XXIV Corps. "He spared no effort in ministering to the Jewish personnel throughout the entire I Corps Tactical Zone. His death was a great shock to the officers and men of this headquarters and saddened all of us who knew him." At Mrs. Singer's request, the chaplain was buried on the Mountain of Rest, a hilltop that borders Jerusalem in Israel.⁸⁹

Richard M. Nixon, newly elected President of the United States, appointed Henry Cabot Lodge as the chief U.S. negotiator in Paris and warned the North Vietnamese that America would not tolerate continued attacks in the south. In March 1969 the Defense Department announced that U.S. forces in Vietnam numbered 541,500—the peak level during all of their years of involvement there.⁹⁰ Those forces were comprised of a generation of young people who were beginning to be more socially, politically, and philosophically conscious than any group of American youth that had preceded them. There were those who struggled with the spirit to understand and do that which was right and those who struggled in a physical way to serve a nation they believed had to be right. The challenge for chaplains was to relate and minister to them by joining in the same struggles.

Chaplain Orris E. Kelly, United Methodist, who had both enlisted and commissioned service in the Army prior to becoming a chaplain, was the 4th Infantry Division Chaplain from July 1969 to July 1970. When asked later to relate the most significant events of his ministry in a combat situation, Kelly cited his efforts to help men deal with problems of conscience, such as, "How can I kill in a war I don't believe in, to destroy a person I do not have any understanding of?"⁹¹

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I do not believe that the chaplain's position is to uphold or disprove the administration[']s position on war or politics. I considered myself a spiritual advisor to the soldier to help him with questions of conscience. The soldier must make up his own mind as a free agent. Chaplains cannot assist growth and maturation to responsible adulthood by imposing their own viewpoints. The chaplain becomes a facilitator of growth by helping the soldier clarify the issues and make his own decisions.⁹²

Chaplain Thomas J. McInnes, American Baptist, surveyed a typical group gathered for one of his services and wrote :

There they sit tired, bone-tired, dirty, sweaty, and grimed. There they squat, often unshaven, always armed and disarmingly alert. . . .

What an awful responsibility to represent the prince of rebels among young rebels!

Their language may be profane, their habits gross, their stories ribald, their thoughts shocking, their gestures obscene, their motives suspect, their hatreds just at parade rest.

But there they are having come to hear of him who came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.

May they hear and hear well before they meet the horseman death.

God help them—and me—in this brief span! ⁹³

Hundreds of Army chaplains were decorated for acts which were essentially motivated by love and a desire to be of some aid to such men as those. "I think that the most significant part of my ministry was the year spent in Viet Nam," recalled Chaplain Joseph E. Galle, III, Southern Baptist. "It was a year of frustrations, anxieties, and fears. However, being able to share my feelings as well as my faith with fellow chaplains and other Christians, made the year not only memorable but meaningful." ⁹⁴ For his brave determination to assist and comfort the wounded during a June 1969 attack on elements of the 25th Infantry Division, Galle was awarded the Silver Star.⁹⁵ For similar service under nearly identical circumstances, and virtually at the same time, Chaplain Ernest B. Peck, United Methodist, with the 101st Airborne Division, received the same award.⁹⁶ Some chaplains, like Gene M. Little, Southern Baptist, were decorated for courage in unique situations. In September 1969 Chaplain Little calmly entered a building in which a troubled and armed American soldier had isolated himself, threatening to kill anyone who approached. Little remained with him, quietly persuaded him to turn over his weapon, and encouraged him to accept medical help. For his bravery and devotion to his men, Chaplain Little

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received the Soldier's Medal.⁹⁷ By the war's end, Army chaplain awards included not only the two Medals of Honor, but also 719 Bronze Stars, 586 Army Commendation Medals, 318 Air Medals, 82 Purple Hearts, 66 Legions of Merit, 26 Silver Stars, and numerous other decorations.⁹⁸

Chaplain Don L. Bartley, Presbyterian U.S., was one man who received several of those awards. Bartley had studied at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia during the 1950's. One of his professors was Ben L. Rose, Presbyterian U.S., who had served as a chaplain in World War II and considered it a privilege, as a Reserve chaplain, "to open the eyes of many young theologians to the opportunities of ministry as a military chaplain."⁹⁹ After serving a civilian church in Virginia for a few years, Bartley entered the chaplaincy in 1961. Seven years later he arrived in Vietnam to serve with the 196th Infantry Brigade of the Americal Division. During his assignment with the unit, his courageous ministry had earned for him the Silver Star, the Purple Heart, and the Air Medal. Tragically, on 8 June 1969—near the end of his tour in the country—Chaplain Bartley was killed while on a special assignment with MACV when a jeep in which he was riding struck a land mine. Adding to his previous decorations, Chaplain Bartley was posthumously awarded the Legion of Merit, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, and a second Purple Heart.¹⁰⁰

Chaplain Roger W. Heinz, Missouri Synod Lutheran, who had survived the action in the Dominican Republic only a few years before, was also killed in Vietnam in 1969. He had served in a civilian parish in Connecticut for 3 years, entered the Army in 1964, and arrived in Vietnam in August 1969 to serve with the 5th Special Forces Group. On 9 December, after conducting a worship service for a Special Forces' team southwest of Da Nang, Heinz was killed when the helicopter in which he was leaving the area crashed into the side of a mountain and burned. Chaplain Heinz' widow was among the many who received special letters from the White House that year. The President's message said in part:

I pray for the day when this war can be ended, and peace restored. I wish that your husband could have lived to see that day. His courage, his devotion and his sacrifice have brought it closer. When it comes, there will be a special place in the thoughts of his countrymen for him, and for you, and for the others who have borne the burdens of loss.

Mrs. Nixon joins me in extending our deepest sympathy . . . You will be in our prayers, and in our hearts.¹⁰¹

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WEEPING WITH THOSE WHO MOURN

In June 1969 President Nixon began a slow withdrawal of some of the U.S. forces from Vietnam. He insisted that in the future the U.S. would avoid similar involvements and would limit their support to economic and military aid without committing combat personnel. Although by the end of the year over 50,000 troops had been withdrawn and news was broadcast of the death of Ho Chi Minh, the Paris talks had reached a stalemate, Lodge had resigned as the chief U.S. negotiator, and a large moratorium against the war was held in Washington.

1970 was a year of continued tragedy and turmoil. While more U.S. troops were being withdrawn and efforts were made to support a "Vietnamization" program, Prince Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia was overthrown by a coup. U.S. forces were sent briefly into the country, against heavy American protest, to destroy Viet Cong sanctuaries; Congress repealed the Tonkin Gulf Resolution and approved the Cooper-Church amendment barring future operations in Cambodia without specific legislative approval.¹⁰²

The tragedies of the year struck on both sides of the Pacific. One of them was endured by the chaplains of the Republic of Vietnam. The Vietnamese Chaplaincy dated back to 1951 when indigenous Roman Catholic priests were assigned on an informal basis to work with their forces under the French. By 1954 the branch was integrated with the RVN Armed Forces and 4 years later a Protestant element was formed. By 1964 Buddhist chaplains came into the services and the branch was administered by three directorates representing the separate faiths. MACV chaplains had established liaison with the Vietnamese chaplains, guiding and supporting their work wherever possible. In the spring of 1970, 85 RVN chaplains were studying at a training school in Dalat, nearing their graduation from a basic course. A sudden enemy attack was launched against the school. Sixteen of the unarmed chaplains were killed and 13 were wounded in a single, stunning blow. The deaths resulting from that one attack outnumbered the losses of U.S. Army chaplains during the entire course of their 11-year service in the war.¹⁰³

One month later, and thousands of miles away, Ohio National Guardsmen were called to restore order during an anti-war rally at Kent State University. Chaplain William B. Reinhardt, Missouri Synod Lutheran, was called from his parish in Cleveland to join his fellow citizen-soldiers who had just participated in quelling disturbances over a truckers'

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strike. Students at the university had burned the Army Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) building and taunted the guardsmen facing them. "When you have troops with gas masks on, and they disperse their gas, and they have their weapons, with a few thousand students surrounding them and throwing things," said Reinhardt, "—well, it was a very rough situation."¹⁰⁴

Suddenly some of the guardsmen opened fire on the students, killing four and wounding ten. "Stunned. Shocked. I cried," recalled the chaplain. "I talked to many of the men, and they were horror-stricken. Many men cried." Moments later Reinhardt circulated among his men and the students, trying to restore reason. He held a brief devotion for the guardsmen: ". . . we're not as perfect as we would like others to believe we are . . . Father, forgive them." He spent nearly 2 hours among students, sometimes enduring shouted obscenities, trying to remind them that they were a common people attempting to find the best course for their nation. "We have to remember," he insisted, "that the National Guard is made up of citizen soldiers. The guardsman is a student, a father, brother, barber, butcher, dentist, minister, businessman, public relations representative, salesman. He's your neighbor. He's not a monster in a green uniform." At the same time he agonized, "There must be some way in our modern society that we can find better methods as Christians, as Americans, to solve our differences other than inhumane, animalistic behavior."¹⁰⁵

Easter Sunday of 1970 welcomed few crowds as impressive as the more than 8,600 soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division who gathered at one of their camps for a single service. "There were 33 chaplains who participated in the joint service following which nine Catholic chaplains concelebrated Mass and 19 Protestant chaplains conducted a communion service," wrote Chaplain Clifford E. Keys, Nazarene.¹⁰⁶ But as impressive as such gatherings were, few chaplains were unaware of the struggles their ministry was facing in the prolonged effects of the Vietnam war. Chaplain Leonard F. Stegman, Roman Catholic, USARV Staff Chaplain, reminded the military clerics in one of his newsletters:

These are difficult and trying days in Vietnam. The survival of the Army here, and also of our nation as a whole, is becoming more and more dependent on highly viable and morally motivated leaders. The problems faced by our commanders in Vietnam now and in the months to come, will test their patience, ingenuity, and ability to the limit. Deeply involved in these problems are the activities,

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aspirations, and desperations of the men under their care, engendered by the character of today's youth.

From conversation with countless commanders, I know that they are desperately seeking help to fulfill their responsibilities. I also know they are looking to you their chaplains as never before to be their support in the difficult area of human relations and for spiritual and moral leadership. In this crisis we as chaplains can be real "performers" or "duds." We can gain all or lose all for the image of the Chaplaincy for the next generation.¹⁰⁷

One of the "performers" was Chaplain Phillip A. Nichols, Assemblies of God, serving with the Americal Division. Leaving a civilian church in Bonners Ferry, Idaho, to join the Army Chaplaincy in June 1969, his total military career lasted only 16 months. Arriving in Vietnam in March 1970, he was killed on the evening of 13 October while accompanying men of the 198th Infantry Brigade when a concealed enemy explosive device detonated near him. One of those leaders who had to face the challenges referred to by Chaplain Stegman was Nichols' brigade commander. "Phil's absence will be keenly felt by all in the Brigade," wrote Colonel William R. Richardson to Mrs. Nichols. "I admired him for his continuous efforts to go to the field, in spite of inherent dangers, in order to be with the men of his battalion and to provide them spiritual assistance. . . . his compassion for his men endeared him to every soldier, making his death a shocking experience for all of us."¹⁰⁸

ENDING WITH HONOR WHERE HONOR IS DUE

American involvement in Vietnam had continued so long that many soldiers and their chaplains returned for repeated tours in the country. The Chaplain School curriculum included a variety of subject areas and special classes to acquaint incoming chaplains with the country and the types of ministry they would anticipate there.¹⁰⁹ The Chaplain Agency of the Combat Developments Command at Fort Lee, Virginia, had been constantly busy developing and testing new equipment for chaplains in the field—especially for those in Vietnam. The portable altar and worship kits, formerly 25-pound units in metal cases, were replaced with compact, 6-pound kits in easily-carried, waterproof fabric bags. The former portable pump organ gave way to an electric model and finally to a cassette tape recorder with pre-recorded hymns.¹¹⁰

Meanwhile, the chaplains' ministries in Vietnam had become as varied and intricate as in any other theater of operation. They ranged

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from brief devotions in the jungles for isolated combat patrols to elaborate services in beautiful chapels at stabilized camps; from counseling a soldier about his "Dear John" letter between rocket attacks to participating in drug rehabilitation programs; from informal chats with men while they ate "C" rations in the field to well-planned devotional programs at the new religious retreat center at Cam Ranh Bay. It was a coordinated ministry not only involving chaplains from all the branches of the U.S. Armed Forces, but also those in the forces of the Republic of Vietnam and the variety of other nations represented, such as Australia and Korea. While the drawdown continued, morale of the soldiers became one of the chaplains' primary concerns. "One of the most important problems they have to meet today," reported the President of the United Church of Christ on his return from a visit in the war-ravaged land, "is the fear that each man cannot help experience, that he will be 'the last man killed in Vietnam.' " ¹¹¹

Among the Army clerics, Chaplain Merle D. Brown, American Lutheran, was the last. The 31-year-old native of Pennsylvania had entered the Army in 1969 and went to Vietnam in August 1970. Having served first with the 11th Brigade of the Americal Division, he was later assigned to the 198th Infantry Brigade of the 23rd Infantry Division. On Easter Sunday, 11 April 1971, Chaplain Brown died in a helicopter crash. ¹¹²

The statistics of Army-chaplain losses in America's longest war reflected a variety as broad as the duties they performed. Seven were Protestant, four were Roman Catholic, and two were Jewish. Their skins were white, black, and brown. They came from places as distant as Israel and the Philippines, and served in one nation from New York to Idaho. Yet there was a unity in their devotion, a commonness in their sacrifice, and a oneness in their purpose—to minister to the American soldier wherever he was called.

As the withdrawal of American troops continued, chaplain strength in Vietnam dropped rapidly. In November 1970 USARV had 308 chaplains on their roles; one year later they numbered 152. ¹¹³ By then President Nixon had cut the level of U.S. forces in the country to 139,000. ¹¹⁴

But de-escalation proved far more difficult than had escalation. The return of prisoners of war became a primary concern of many Americans while Henry A. Kissinger, representing the U.S., conducted secret negotiations with the North Vietnamese in Paris. Not unlike the situation in Korea 20 years earlier, the talks in 1972 were on-again, off-again, inter-

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rupted regularly with military attacks and counter-attacks. In desperation, President Nixon directed the mining of North Vietnamese ports and the blockade of supply deliveries to the country. On the other hand, by June 1972, U.S. forces had been reduced below 60,000, and their roles reverted back to advisory and combat support positions.

The situation seemed bleak at the end of 1972 when Mr. Kissinger's attempts toward a settlement seemed constantly frustrated and heavy, round-the-clock raids were directed on the north with U.S. B-52 bombers. But the bombing, mining, and shelling of North Vietnam was halted in January 1973 as renewed progress was made in Paris.¹¹⁵ Only 19 Army, 11 Air Force, and 2 Navy chaplains remained in Vietnam in the combined USARV-MACV Headquarters under the supervision of Chaplain Emil F. Kapusta, Roman Catholic, as the final cease-fire document was signed in Paris on the evening of 27 January 1973. Two months later, on 28 March, Chaplain Kapusta took part in the deactivation ceremonies of his headquarters in Saigon and minutes later boarded a plane as the last U.S. chaplain to leave Vietnam.¹¹⁶

"Looking back on all these years—all of the blood and agony—I have to wonder what we accomplished," reminisced retired General Paul D. Harkins who had served as the U.S. commander in Vietnam from 1962 to 1964.¹¹⁷ "Vietnam will haunt this country in a hundred ways for decades to come," wrote an American author.¹¹⁸ Future historians will dissect the war, the nation, the Army and the Chaplaincy during those decades. They will evaluate and re-evaluate the causes, the effects, the blunders, and successes. Hopefully they will not reduce that period of history to statistics and policies, ignoring the sacrifices of the common people who were necessarily involved.

Few recollections from that time captured the emotions of the period as well as those of a civilian minister in Lexington, Kentucky, attending the funeral of a 19-year-old soldier—one of the nearly 46,000 American servicemen who were killed in Vietnam. "This whole business of war disturbs me," he wrote. "I have never felt compelled to enlist as a chaplain. The truth is, I am not eager to see war firsthand." He didn't know the soldier, his family, or anyone at the funeral. In fact, he only attended the service on an impulse.

Surveying the grief-torn family, he could tell they were poor and common people—faceless people who "put gas in your car, or sell you shoes, or fix your gutters, or deliver your mail. . . . nobody to me. Or . . . more to me than I ever could realize." He followed them in his car to a

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country cemetery. “I was going to see the boy buried because I felt indebted to him. He died for me and my kids. He deserved some respect.”

As the procession passed people busy at their daily routines, he thought: “Heroes die so kids can play ball on vacant lots, and women can mow their grass, and students can learn or demonstrate, and disc jockeys can sell soft drinks.” When the quiet and simple service concluded, he walked over to the mother and father and took them by the hand. “I wasn’t acting the preacher,” he wrote. “I was just a man with two youngsters of his own.” “I came because I’m grateful,” he told them. “I didn’t know your boy, nor do I know you, but thanks. Thanks a lot.”¹¹⁹

Thousands of miles away, at virtually the same time, Army Chaplain Wendell E. Danielson, Evangelical Covenant, was standing in the center of a semicircle of dirty and wet soldiers sitting on Vietnamese sand:

In a few moments we would close our services with the hymn, “God Bless America.” This, for us, is difficult to sing. The words are simple enough but they compel a response. I knew the Doc wouldn’t make it past the fourth line. He never finished, “From the mountains, to the prairies.” Tears come to his eyes and he stops singing. Nobody, however, notices. Others would begin looking at the ground, or their hands, or at the sky. “God bless America, my home sweet home.” . . .

During the coming months I will continue to work here. There is much that must be done—instruction to give, an example to set. Who will do this? For my men this is my responsibility. They must be shown faith and love and courage. If my example in living these virtues is not louder than my words I become the tinkling cymbal.

So the responsibility remains the same . . . The opportunity is always here to bring men to God and God to men. This is and will always be the high calling. To do less is to do nothing.

*The Lord of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our refuge.*¹²⁰

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER V

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EPILOGUE

For a few months following World War II, many Americans still tuned in their radios on Sunday mornings to hear the familiar strains of "There's a Long, Long Trail Awinding" and an announcer repeat:

Once again the Blue Network presents "Chaplain Jim— U.S.A.," the story of the problems—spiritual, moral, and emotional—of your men in the Army. . . .

Carried over nearly 50 stations in the United States, "Chaplain Jim" was a weekly, half-hour radio drama loosely based on actual experiences of Army chaplains. Although he was listened to with admiration for more than 300 consecutive weeks, "Chaplain Jim" faded into anonymity along with "Lorenzo Jones," "Front Page Farrell," "Just Plain Bill," and other radio favorites.

So it has been with much of the history of the United States Army Chaplaincy. This brief volume, covering the past 30 years of the 200-year story of that Branch, has only touched on some of the highlights of the ministry to the military. As in any organization, the roles of the chaplaincy have contained the names of individuals whose personal stories alone could fill as many pages as this composite set of volumes.

Since World War II there have been, for example, the normal "firsts" as well as the unusual. The Reverend Alice M. Henderson, African Methodist Episcopal, broke a 2-century tradition when she accepted her commission in July 1974 and became the first woman to enter the Army chaplaincy. More than 20 years earlier, it was just as unusual when Presbyterian minister Percy Ipalook donned the uniform; Chaplain Ipalook, assigned to the First Alaskan Scout Battalion, was an Eskimo.

There were also the career rarities of John J. Allen, who served simultaneously as an Army chaplain and the Chief of Staff of the Salvation Army, and Delbert E. Gremmels, Missouri Synod Lutheran, who entered the chaplaincy while living in Taiwan as a missionary. Or one could turn to the distinguished and confusing careers of the Roman Catholic twin brothers, Chaplains Gerard Joseph Gefell and Joseph Gerard Gefell, and the father-and-son combinations like Methodist Chaplains James A. Connett and Reynold B. Connett. Even Chaplain John T. Axton, Jr., Congregational, son of the Army's first Chief of Chaplains,

probably merited a single book—he served on active duty for nearly 35 years. Then there was Colin P. Kelly, III, son of one of America's first World War II heroes. When Kelly was only 19 months old, President Franklin Roosevelt addressed a letter to whomever would be President in 1956 asking that the former bomber pilot's son be given an automatic appointment to West Point. But Kelly opted to enter the academy through competitive examination, served 4 years as an armor officer after graduation, left active duty to study for the Episcopal ministry, and returned as a chaplain in 1973.

The ancient Apostle John ended his Gospel with a single, captivating sentence:

But there are also many other things which Jesus did; were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

For 2,000 years that sentence has aroused the imaginations of common readers, theologians, and historians alike. Hopefully, if nothing else, these volumes will have done the same regarding the chaplaincy and will result in more extensive research of this unique ministry.

Understandably, some critics may argue that the history of the Army chaplaincy is more than a composite of individual tales. It is true that, as in any institution, there have been significant developments in organization, programs, regulations, and general philosophy. Yet, as some officers from other branches have jested, chaplains have never marched very well. Figuratively, that characteristic brings to mind the words of Henry David Thoreau:

If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away.

More than any other military group, the chaplaincy has always been composed of individuals with a tremendous diversity of backgrounds and beliefs. They represent in one small organization the vast conglomerate of American religious convictions. Perhaps because of that phenomenon, the Army chaplaincy has never been easy to evaluate. Some authors have erroneously painted them as a group of super heroes. While a few of them have indeed been heroic, it has hardly been a characteristic inherent in the entire organization. Others have criticized them as militarists and self-seeking opportunists. But it is equally ludicrous to so label the entire institution. Perhaps the most unfair portrayal has been to show them as bungling comedians, oblivious to human suffering, who piously bless the machines of war before military conflict.

If there has ever been anything truly common in their goals, it has been their compassion for human beings and their simple desire to bring the home-town church or synagogue to the men and women serving in the United States Army. The wondrous thing is that a country preacher from Kentucky, a learned rabbi from New York, and an ethnically-oriented priest from Boston have been able to work together at all, let alone serve in a single organization striving toward common goals. Whatever glory is to be given them must be for their struggle to bring compassion into the military and to enrich the lives of American soldiers, even under circumstances where love has been a rare commodity. Whatever criticism has been leveled against them must be for those times when they lost interest in that struggle, forsook their high callings, and failed to boldly speak of a divine will in what may be termed “ungodly” situations.

The name “chaplain,” as many know, came from a legend of a Fourth Century soldier named Martin of Tours, which related how he severed his own cloak with a sword to provide a shivering beggar with the only gift he was able to give. That night, so the story was told, Martin had a vision in which he saw Christ wearing the half-cloak he had given to the beggar. The experience resulted in Martin’s conversion and the devoting of his life to the service of the Church. In later years Martin became the patron saint of France and his cloak was considered a sacred relic, carried into battle by French kings. The officer in charge of the *cappa* or *capella*, as the cloak was called in Latin, was given the French title “chapelain”—from which was derived the English “chaplain.”

While the story of Martin’s cloak may be legendary, the fact of his compassion was not. Hopefully, in years to come, that same virtue may be regularly attributed to those who assume the title: “Chaplain, United States Army.”

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