



# ARE THE Churches FAILING OUR GI's?

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EACH YEAR for the next few years — and as far ahead as we can see — more than a million young men and women will be uprooted from their homes and their communities and drafted or enlisted into the armed forces. Another million annually will be mustered back into civilian life as service alumni.

A generation from now these young men and young women will be expected to provide the political, the social and the economic leadership of the nation. And the manner in which they fulfill these expectations will depend to a large degree on the imprints left upon their characters by their tenure of service in the armed forces.

This very obvious fact is the source of increasing alarm among the chaplains in all echelons of the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force. They believe that the most important factor in building the character of young men and women — their spiritual life and guidance — is being badly neglected as far as those in the armed forces are concerned.

A study of the situation reveals that the armed forces themselves, the Congress, and the public must all share some of the blame. But, in the opinion of the chief chaplains of the services, the major responsibility — and the major failure — is that of the churches themselves.

The grave apprehension of the service chaplains is illustrated by the retirement last month of the Chief Chaplain of the United States Navy, Rear Admiral S. W. Salisbury, a vigorous, active, outspoken man. He announced his retirement at the age of 62, so that he can devote his full time to maintaining contacts with church leaders and seminarians throughout the nation, acquainting them with the seriousness of the situation, and urging them and their churches to develop positive, detailed programs to meet their challenge.

"We are a military state, whether we like it or not — and most of us do not," he said. "Nevertheless, the fact that we have been forced into a military state in time of peace — or semipeace — demands that our

churches develop new techniques and new programs, if they are to fulfill their spiritual responsibilities to our young GI men and women."

THE Chief Chaplains of the Army and the Air Force, Major Generals Ivan Loveridge Bennett and Charles I. Carpenter, are in full agreement with Admiral Salisbury regarding the gravity of the challenge. And with varying degrees of emphasis they concur in Admiral Salisbury's opinion, that, while most of the churches did an excellent job of meeting the spiritual problems of the GI during the two World Wars, they have failed sadly to meet the entirely different, and unprecedented, problem resulting from the mobilization of 3,500,000 men and women in the armed forces in time of troubled peace.

The Armed Forces Chaplains Board, of which these three clergymen are members, was created by the Secretary of Defense to advise him on spiritual and moral problems in the services. It is composed of the three Chiefs of Chaplains, Army, Navy and Air Force, and one additional representative from each service. Its purpose is to make possible a unified approach to the moral and spiritual and other related problems within the services.

"Many denominations have failed miserably to keep pace with the current needs of youth in the service," General Carpenter, who is chairman of the Armed Forces

Chaplains Board, declared. "Their apathetic attitude is illustrated by a recent meeting of the General Assembly of the National Council of Churches, at which I spoke in behalf of the service chaplains.

"Only 25 minutes, of a three-day conference, was devoted to the discussion of the spiritual problems of the men and women of the Army, Navy and Air Force."

Admiral Salisbury, who addressed the conference in 1951, noted that "it was not until two years ago that the conference even acknowledged that the problem existed."

CURIOUSLY enough the three Chief Chaplains, General Carpenter a Methodist, General Bennett a Southern Baptist, and Admiral Salisbury a Presbyterian, agree that the problem is predominantly a Protestant one. They feel that the Catholic Church and the Jewish faiths are fully aware of the needs of their youth in the service, and have taken adequate steps to meet them.

"The Catholic Church, by its very nature, leaves it up to the individual to maintain contact with the church — whether in or out of the service," Admiral Salisbury said. "Members of the Jewish faith, individualistic in nature, are drawn together by the tenets of their religion. Consequently, these two faiths are not beset by the same problems which plague the Protestant churches."

Chaplains in all branches of the service report they receive excellent cooperation from the National Catholic Welfare Conference and the Jewish Welfare Board.

Many Catholic high schools and universities have established excellent pre-induction courses for their students. In these courses, the prospective recruit is advised that military service is a part of life, not a detached period in which the moral standards he adheres to at home can be temporarily suspended. He is counselled to prepare himself mentally, physically and spiritually for his new experience. He is informed of the various programs in the armed forces in which he can participate to the advantage of his chosen career. He is given lectures, illustrated by motion pictures, to guide him in such problems as marriage and his relations with men and women of other races, creeds and nationalities, of other habits and customs.

Similar programs have been adopted by a few nonsectarian schools, Protestant churches and isolated communities. But they are all too few.

WITH a few notable exceptions the Protestant sects have fallen down on the job. They have failed to indoctrinate their young on the spiritual problems and responsibilities they will face on entering the service. They have failed to maintain contact with their members after they have been called to duty.

They have ignored the spiritual and social requirements of members of their faiths stationed in nearby Army, Navy and Air Force installations.

And, probably most important of all, many denominations have refused to make their best young ministers available for chaplain duty. Some faiths have even failed to provide enough ministers to fill the modest quotas of chaplains assigned to them, quotas which are based on the number of men and women of their faith in the services.

"Many of the churches are saying that they cannot give us their best men," said General Carpenter. "Most of them are saying that they can't give us more men because the demand for them in civilian life is too great. Church leaders are giving us all kinds of alibis to evade their obligation of providing an adequate number of competent young ministers for chaplain duty."

One of the paradoxes of the problem is that, while the churches are actively fighting Communism and are a bulwark against this threat to our liberty and freedom, they are overlooking an opportunity to engage this godless enemy directly by ministering to the spiritual needs of their young men and women on military duty.

"All churches deplore the inroads of Communism," General Carpenter said, "yet many of them are shortsighted, failing to realize that, while we are actively fighting Com-

munism overseas, they are indifferent to the influence of godlessness at home.

"We have reached the place, as we approach this entire new concept of militarism in American life, where it isn't enough to sit down and argue about peace and war and what Christ said about military service.

"That isn't our problem. Our problem is — what are we going to do with the kids who are on duty in the service of the Kingdom of God, today?"

ADMIRAL SALISBURY deplored the attitude of many churchmen and educators who put forward the idea that a tour of military duty is something to be "stoically endured," that it is simply two years out of the life of the young men.

"Nonsense," said Admiral Salisbury. "It is a time of growth and development, during which they need proper guidance. These young men can't develop if they have the attitude that they can drop the church for two years, and then go back again when they return home; that they can ignore their moral training until their tour of duty is over; or that after a spiritual vacation they will suddenly become men of character in their own communities, when their military service is ended."

The military spiritual heads were reluctant to discuss recent disclosures of widespread desertions. However, one chaplain remarked that

the record showed that many deserters were unable to adjust themselves to a new mode of life, because of a lack of spiritual and moral discipline at home.

For example, General Carpenter said that, at one Air Force indoctrination center, a recent check showed the startling fact that "religious illiteracy" of young men entering the center ranged between 15 and 28 per cent. He explained that these young men had no background of religious training or spiritual guidance to the extent that it had impressed itself upon their characters.

He feels that it is just as important for the churches to develop programs to reach these young men as it is to maintain their contacts with those who are being separated from their regular church for the first time in their lives.

The Chief Chaplains found considerable irony in a recent statement issued by the Kremlin, expressing alarm at the drift of Russian young people toward the church. Steps would be taken, the Soviet leaders warned ominously, to end this dangerous trend.

"We have warned the heads of the U. S. churches," General Carpenter said, "that continued neglect of their responsibility to the youth now in service is producing the same results that the Kremlin seeks, but without such a frank statement of purpose.

"The future of the churches of America is being sabotaged by their

own apparent unwillingness to meet the spiritual needs of the men and women who are wearing their country's uniform today."

THE chaplains of all ranks and all denominations point out that the problem the nation faces on the spiritual front today is far different from that in World War II, when a total of 22,000,000 young men and women served varying periods in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and Merchant Marine.

"The very existence of war provided a certain spiritual exultation to many young men and women," one young chaplain remarked. "Then, too, the issues were brought into sharper focus, the need for great personal sacrifice more clearly defined. More important, we were a nation united in a single, recognizable purpose, and nearly everybody played his part — the churches, the communities and the individuals.

"The problems of the peacetime army are far different. There is little if any spiritual uplift felt by the young men and women who are drafted, or reluctantly enlisted into the armed forces. Many of them find military life, at its best, an irksome duty; at its worst, an intolerable existence. The issues at stake are no longer so clearly defined. And, most unfortunate, there is division among their elders as to the purpose and need of the sacrifices they are making. Their need for spiritual direc-

tion and strength is even greater than the needs of their elder brothers and sisters a few years ago, or their fathers during World War I."

Yet it is this greater need that is being so sorely neglected by church and community — both of which responded so splendidly to the lesser challenges of two world wars — in the opinions of the chaplains. Within a few years more than 10 million young men and women will have spent an average of two years in service — and spiritual isolation. When they return to civilian life, as Admiral Salisbury pointed out, "they will bring back with them the imprint of their service life, their observations and their experiences in countries in which they have served."

General Bennett, who has served 31 years in the Army, and recently completed a three-year tour of duty as Command Chaplain, Far East Command, put it this way:

"We cannot afford to neglect the problems resulting from the large increase of our military establishment — a situation that has no foreseeable end. It is almost trite, but obviously true, to say that the life of the church of tomorrow depends on the men in the service today."

The same thought was expressed in different words by Capt. E. L. Ackiss, Chief Chaplain, USN, Retired:

"Strong measures by our theological seminaries, our churches and our synagogues, and by our religious

communities to meet this continuing emergency in the lives of our young people, are an absolute necessity for the survival both of our religion and of our nation."

A FEW of the Protestant sects are taking steps in the right direction. The Chief Chaplains agree that the Armed Forces Commission of the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, is doing an outstanding job. The Southern Baptists recently embarked on a comprehensive program to keep in touch with their young men and women in the armed forces. The Presbyterian Church has started a similar program, but on only a limited and experimental basis. The American Bible Society was praised for providing a million and a quarter Bibles to troops in Korea. All these programs are excellent, the chaplains say, but they are too limited in scope, and too few in number.

One particularly vexing problem in maintaining the morale — and the morals — of large armed forces in peacetime is that of providing proper recreational facilities and social activities, particularly to troops away from their posts. Military authorities have little trouble with the GI as long as he is within the confines of the military establishment. There, recreational and social opportunities are provided.

Obviously, however, there is a limit to the time that American young men and women outside the

combat areas can be restricted to the limits of their military posts, without a serious loss of morale. It is when the young GI, man or woman, is "out on the town" that trouble is usually encountered.

And here again, the chaplains believe, the churches must accept a full share of the responsibility. For a substantial proportion of the trouble that members of our armed forces get into would be avoided if the churches in the communities near military posts would develop recreational and social programs for the service people of their faith.

"The opportunity for young servicemen to join in church-sponsored recreational groups is an integral part of their spiritual training," General Carpenter said. "This is particularly true of Protestant youth which has always looked to the church to provide social activities.

"But in community after community the local churches have ignored the recreational needs of the men and women stationed at nearby military and naval installations."

AS A RESULT of this dereliction, hundreds of thousands of unsophisticated young service men and women who might otherwise be attending church socials, are drawn into cheap dance halls, disreputable night clubs, clip-joints and sordid dives. They are subjected to temptations that either did not exist in their own communities, or, if they did exist, they were able to resist

because of the strength of their ties with home and church. Deprived of that strength, they often fall easy victim to the hordes of chiselers, sharpers, professional gamblers and prostitutes who prey on lonely, restless servicemen. The results are frequently a serious undermining of the victim's moral fiber; sometimes sudden tragedy, imprisonment, and even violent death.

Many churches feel they have discharged their obligation to service people when they announce, through the chaplain, the time and place of their services and social functions.

In this attitude the chaplains feel that the church is simply following the pattern of so many communities which regard the serviceman as merely a source of revenue; not as a fellow Christian to be accepted and welcomed into the community's social life. There are relatively few churches, the chaplains say, which have gone directly to the servicemen of their faith, at nearby installations, and invited them to become a part of their congregation, and participate fully in all its activities.

There are some exceptions. Admiral Salisbury noted that "pitifully few" churches in Washington, D. C., conduct sightseeing tours of the nation's capital for servicemen, ending with church or young people's devotions. He mentioned Jacksonville, Florida, as a community which has "Projects for Servicemen" and provides them with maps of various

churches and other points of interest in the city. The San Diego City Federation of Churches has a "Friends Finder Service," which takes servicemen into church homes in the area and arranges for them to attend services in the local churches with these families.

At the top of the list of communities which have recognized the problem and in which the churches and local businessmen have united to meet it, is Belleville, Ill. Admiral Salisbury said this community, which had one of the worst records about a year ago, is now almost a model of what can be done to provide spiritual and recreational guidance for the servicemen stationed near there.

THE Department of Defense feels it has discharged its obligations in the spiritual field by the support it gives through the Corps of Chaplains. The assistance given, however, is in some cases limited. For example, the Navy Chaplains last year requested a \$900,000 appropriation for their work. By the time the Defense Department, the Bureau of the Budget and the Congress got through with this request it was slashed to less than one-third that amount. There are about 900 Navy Chaplains. The funds made available amounted to about \$300 per chaplain and this broken down further shows the ridiculously low figure of between 35 and 40 cents per man per year.

The Navy Chaplain's office sub-

mitted a budget request for \$1,026,000 in the current budget now before the Congress. By the time this request went through the Pentagon and the Bureau of the Budget the amount was reduced to \$300,000. This amounts to about \$333.33 per chaplain, which is an increase of \$33.33 per chaplain over the previous year — if the Congress does not further reduce it. Compare this with the \$46 billion dollars requested in the new budget for the armed services.

In the matter of the construction of chapels, a benevolent government is equally remiss. For example: In the Navy the construction of chapels is under the Bureau of Yards and Docks shore development program. Navy chaplains, who serve the Marine Corps, have been trying since 1940 to obtain funds for a suitable and adequate chapel at Quantico Marine Base. Recently the Chief of Chaplains of the Navy was advised that construction of a chapel had finally made the shore development list. He was exuberant. His exuberance chilled somewhat when he was further advised that the chapel was thirty-third on the list. Thirty-third turned out to be last on the list. What was the thirty-second project on the list? Construction of stables.

WHILE all three services could use more chaplains, the Navy seems to have less difficulty filling its quota than do the Army and the Air Force. General Bennett said that the

Army is presently short about 200 chaplains. The Air Force is having difficulty in filling its quota. The Navy is on the alert for chaplains, but primarily to meet replacement needs.

Admiral Salisbury has pointed out that, while the chaplaincy in the past has been an emergency service, "from here on out for our generation, the military chaplaincy will rank in the church as a regular form of Christian service for ordained ministers of the Gospel."

"It has become a calling as valid and as important as the foreign missionary, or the home pastorate," Admiral Salisbury said. "It represents a great opportunity and challenge and, by the strong support of her chaplains, the church is ultimately contributing to the enriching and strengthening of her own life."

At a recent Pentagon conference for religious leaders, delegates were told by a Chaplains Corps spokesman that "there isn't a church represented here today that isn't throwing into the mission fields of the world everything it can throw. In many instances you are having to overcome the greatest obstacles to bring the gospel into the hearts of men. Here stands an agency of government — the Corps of Chaplains — which opens its arms and says please come and hear our words, and the ear of the church is turned against it and the leadership that is needed of the church is absolutely neglected."



Refuting the alibis of many churches for their failure to provide qualified chaplains, military leaders believe, is the current emphasis given by many denominations to placing student pastors in institutions of higher learning. Military men contend that the armed services today have become the greatest educational institution in the country. Yet one denomination had less than 200 chaplains with the military services, and more than 400 student pastors in colleges and universities.

In one branch of the service, strength is about twice what it was a year ago. In order to obtain chaplains, this branch called every reserve chaplain 48 years of age and under, in the grade of major and below. An official charged with this task said, "It was like pulling teeth to get some of the men who held definite reserve commissions." The chief difficulty was not the refusal of the chaplain himself, but that of religious leaders, church officials, and even politicians who wrote letters insisting that these men be deferred to serve in their home communities.

In discussing the church's relationship with the Army, General Bennett explained: "Of course the local communities cannot be drained of spiritual leadership by the services, with a resulting deterioration of morals and moral standards among the civilian population.

"It is necessary to maintain a balance between the men and

women on the home front and those in the armed services. It takes all these men and women to make up the nation and we must keep in mind the welfare of the country as a whole."

UNDER present procedure the services ask the various churches to provide chaplains, according to the number of men and women under arms. The quotas are allotted among Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish religions on the basis of the number of men of each faith in the services. In addition to certain physical and mental requirements, the chaplains must meet other standards necessitated by the unusual aspects of their missions in the armed forces.

General Bennett pointed out that about 70 per cent of the men studying for the ministry or the priesthood today are former servicemen. A large percentage of the chaplains who served in World War II were reserve officers. Many of these have returned to active duty status, but many more are unavailable because of age and grade limitations.

The Chaplains Corps does not have the responsibility of providing chaplains. The churches do have this responsibility.

"The churches must face the fact that this mission field is the place in which they need to put men," said General Carpenter, "not because someone wants volumes and numbers but because the souls of men depend upon whether there are

enough chaplains to provide adequate spiritual care."

NOT too long ago the very existence of the Corps of Chaplains was threatened by persistent attacks from many churches. In the early thirties, when a wave of pacifism was at its height, a leading nondenominational religious weekly advocated discontinuance of ecclesiastical endorsement of chaplains by the General Commission or any of its affiliated denominations. Many denominational publications joined in the attack. One group, The Disciples of Christ, voted to send no more chaplains to the armed forces, and requested the General Commission to sever its connection with the military chaplaincy. In 1934, several Methodist conferences requested their bishops to refrain from sending any of their members to the chaplaincy. In 1936, the Evangelical and Reformed Church refused further participation. The Methodist Episcopal Church requested the Federal Council to seek a method whereby civilian ministers might render the spiritual ministry to the armed forces.

These efforts resulted in an "attitude survey" by the Federal Council of the armed forces chaplains. They found a strong sense of vocation among the chaplains, and learned that uniform and rank were both important factors in their work.

In due time, the tide of pacifism ebbed with the coming of the shad-

ows of World War II, and the prestige of the chaplain rose again in ecclesiastical circles.

Now, the chaplaincy has the finest opportunities for service; the highest standing in the military scheme; and the best possible equipment for professional performance. But many chaplains fear that some of the churches are showing signs of reverting again to the attitude they held toward the Corps of Chaplains back in the 1930s.

Important as the chaplaincy is, however, the Chief Chaplains agree that without the full support and cooperation of the churches they cannot perform their missions. Admiral Salisbury emphasizes that the churches must bring their influence to bear on their young men and women "before they go into the service, while they are in, and when they get home again."

General Carpenter has suggested that, when an inductee leaves to go into the service, some agency of his church should be informed by his pastor. This agency of the church should be responsible for maintaining contact with the GI throughout his entire period in service. General Carpenter further suggested that the churches name a "contact" pastor from a church of the same denomination located near the military establishment where the man is stationed. The "contact" pastor could then go into the military establishment and get acquainted with the youth and take him into the life of

the church and the community. There the church could substitute its influence for that of the church at home.

THE chaplains agree that the home churches of the men in service, as well as their family and friends, should keep in communication with their servicemen while away. Admiral Salisbury said this touch with home, with associates, and with loved ones, keeps the serviceman conscious of "all those good and fine things which make him a man of character and responsibility."

Admiral Salisbury told the Second Annual Governor's Conference on

Children and Youth, at Providence, R. I., last fall, that, while it is the responsibility of the military to keep alive those vital connections with the home people, "it is the responsibility of the home folks, in the schools, churches, homes and communities, to keep in touch with their service people.

"For within a decade, military service of your young people will reach with strong influence into every institution of our national life. You must have men and women of character in your local communities in the days to come. We all need them if our nation is to survive."



» The less government we have the better — the fewer laws and the less confided power. The antidote to this abuse of formal government is the influence of private character, the growth of the individual. — *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

» Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just.  
— *Thomas Jefferson*

» Life is a foreign language: all men mispronounce it.  
— *Christopher Morley*

» The difference is slight, to the influence of an author, whether he is read by five hundred readers, or by five hundred thousand; if he can select the five hundred, he reaches the five hundred thousand.  
— *Henry Brooks Adams*

# *from* CINEMA *to* CINERAMA

*By Milton Klonsky*



THE French poet Nerval once imagined that Time, in the shape of a giant wolf, would someday pounce upon the Cathedral of Notre Dame and bear it away by the nave, its organ bellowing and its buttresses flying, to be devoured like a fat capon. Notre Dame, of course, is still standing in the center of Paris. But only a short while ago it seemed that this fate would befall, instead, our own American movie palaces — the Alhambras, Majestics, and Taj Mahals across the country. The public was getting bored. Even Hollywood believed the day was coming when all her gaudy temples would either be razed or else condemned to serve meanly as warehouses, garages and supermarkets.

The cry of "wolf," however, was premature. As everybody knows by now, a new technique called Cinerama has arrived, and the whole situation is changed. Cinerama projects an illusion of such depth, a luminous space in which images seem carved out of solid light, that the old "silver screen" is dim and

flat in comparison. The barrier between the real and the unreal, the screen itself, seems dissolved. During one scene, especially, showing a roller-coaster ride, audiences hold on to their seats as though to resist being drawn into the depths. There is a continual giggle of surprise and excitement in the theatre, oohs and ahs, and eyes interviewing other eyes for confirmation of what they have seen.

From the reaction of the first audiences, we can expect that conventional movies will seem as antiquated in a few years as the silent films of a generation past. The gap between them is just as wide. There are other tri-dimensional screen techniques now being demonstrated, but these require patrons to put on large, colored plastic goggles to achieve the stereoscopic effect. Such a bug-eyed audience, wearing these contraptions, like a swarm of science-fiction insects, will be as spectacular as anything on the screen. Cinerama, however, does the work all by itself.

The new process employs three