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THE CHURCH AND THE VETERAN

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A Thesis

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To

DR. EMILY J. WERNER

Who Has Helped a  
Veteran Reinterpret a Painful  
Experience

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Gift of Author

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September 15, 1946

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## INTRODUCTION

# THE CHURCH AND THE VETERAN

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## INTRODUCTION

### A. The Statement of the Problem

VJ Day with the sudden cessation of hostilities found a world faced with the greater problem of a lasting peace. Americans celebrated in diverse ways; some with confetti, others with vocal exuberance and minor riots. Throughout the land, however, church groups assembled to express thanks and gratitude. In the majority of these churches, regardless of creed or profession of faith, a plaque, sometimes simple, sometimes ornate, hangs as mute testimony to the sons of the congregation who were called to arms. Some of them have long since laid down their weapons. They have heard "TAPS" for the last time and only God knows whether the future will keep its promise to them. Some of the sons have been baptized, as Vera Brittain would say, with "pus and blood." War has parked on their immediate doorstep and with it has come tragedy and experience totally unknown to the populace at home. There is yet that group in military service which never got be-



yond our shores but fought the war in military "house-keeping" jobs - behind desks, in warehouses, in laboratories and classrooms - where they faced all the loneliness and monotony of the job minus the thrill and fear of combat. For them there has been no Presidential Citation, no Medal of Honor. Perhaps, on the Roll of Service, there appears the name of some soldier in skirts who, first of all, fought for her right to wear the garb of war and then walked in the backwash of battles in Europe and in the Pacific.<sup>1</sup> Should one total the names of the service men and women on all the plaques in all the churches throughout the land, in comparison with the vast total number in service, one would inevitably face the sad reality that far too many sons and daughters are unclaimed. One may well wonder if the church failed in its obligations to them before the seeds of war were actually in growth. One may also wonder if what the church gave those it claimed was adequate in the crisis.

Now, for so many people, the war is over and relegated into the pages of history. Business has girded itself for a peacetime basis and the bullet factory has become a plant for automobile parts. Reconversion of industry is well on the way. "Forget about it!" the soldier is often advised, "We're at peace now." But are

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1. Cf. Appendix A, #4.

we? The war is not over for many. Peace has not come to scores of homes with the gold star in the window, nor to those families who even yet await anxiously a sequel to that first telegram. In so many instances, the Secretary of War regretted to inform them that their sons were among the missing. War is not over for many soldiers, some of whom will spend the rest of their lives in a Veteran's Hospital and countless others who will never adjust to the civilian peacetime world.<sup>1</sup> This writing is not concerned with the first parade of healthy American youth marching off to war. It aims to look at the G I's in the parade of men marching home. Could one by some great miracle of God suddenly call forth some combat unit long since swallowed up at Bataan or Iwo Jima or some other equally bloody spot, the view would wring the heart and torture the mind of the most indifferent church. As the unit passed in review, one would witness a series of white wooden crosses, the symbol of those who will study war no more; of those returning, some would pass by with blank, expressionless faces, some in splints, some in litters, and only a few would march with the tread of idealism, purpose, enthusiasm, and promise.

The primary interest of the writer is in the man or woman who wears a little brass button upon which a

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1. Cf. Appendix A, #6.

mounted eagle appears, the emblem of honorable service, and in his reclamation by the church. The veteran, however, will not be discussed as a problem but as a person with problems magnified by the abnormal experiences of his generation. The task of the church is not to think of the returning service man with fear and trembling nor to look toward him with disgust. Rather, it is to approach him with expectation and love, seeking to help him reinterpret what may be a painful memory into a means of growth and blessing. Said a chaplain in Normandy:

"There are no more tears left in my heart to shed for these men. There is only a dead ache which grows steadily more intense as the days and men pass in review. The faces of men without spiritual hope, as they tramp on and on and out to eternity, make me speechless with amazement."<sup>1</sup>

The church has sent some of its members into a Garden of Gethsemane minus the spiritual armor necessary to overcome the garden. Consequently, some of them are now faced with a series of little Gethsemanes.

The late Ernie Pyle, so loved by American G I's, has said:

"War has its own peculiar sounds. They are not really very much different from sounds in the world of peace. But they clothe themselves in unforgettable fierceness, just because they are born in danger and death. The clank of a starting tank, the scream of a shell through the air, the ever-rising fiendishness as a bomber dives - these sounds have their counterparts in normal life, and a person would be hard put to distinguish them in a blindfold test. But, once

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1. Roy Burkhart: The Church and The Returning Soldier, p. 95.

heard in war, they are never quite forgotten. The memory of them comes back in a thousand ways - in the grind of a truck starting in low gear, in high wind around the eaves, in somebody merely whistling a tune . . . a mere rustling curtain can paralyze a man with memories."<sup>1</sup>

With the soldier then, it is not war one day and peace the next. In a multitude of ways, barely perceptible, the memories will keep pinching his heart. Military service is not an interlude in life which one throws away at will like an old garment which has served its purpose. It is life drawing deeply from the well of the past and shaping a thirst, a drought, or a spring of living water for the future. It is not a matter of the soldier readjusting his future to a civilian world nor vice versa. Instead, an outstretched hand must characterize each but should anyone be asked to go the second mile, the church should not hesitate. This, then, is an attempt to define the outstretched hand, the reaching forth of the church to claim her own. The writer will concentrate on practical techniques and methods of approach to those who are past wearers of the uniform.

#### B. Significance of the Problem

A survey of history is indicative of the far-reaching influence of the veteran. In World War II America has had an unparalleled number of men and women in service. It naturally follows that the veteran's

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1. Ernie Pyle: Here Is Your War, p. 181.

strength will be more powerful than ever. In years past, that power has not always been used wisely. A public that has asked so much of its youth should be conscientious in its approach to them upon return. War has shaped many of their lives for years to come but it is just as important to remember that these early days of homecoming will likewise help to mold the future.

During the months of slow recovery as a result of military disability, Ignatius Loyola, Spanish nobleman, reached a crisis in his life, a crisis precipitated by the reading and thought during his illness. Out of that single crisis came the Order of the Jesuits.<sup>1</sup> Army and Navy hospitals are overflowing with patients wounded in the line of duty. A man or woman in for a long siege of illness needs abundant reserves. Who knows how many "Loyolas" are nearing the crisis, making the decision which will channel the remaining years of life? Has the church no continuing mission to these men and women? Conservative estimates tell us that the peak year for patients in Veterans' Hospitals will be 1970 when some 390,000 beds or more will be occupied.<sup>2</sup> This means that in the days ahead some veterans will enjoy a period of apparent good health with few signs of illness. With outstretched hand, the church may interpret and build up

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1. Lars. P. Qualben: A History of Christian Church, p. 444.  
2. The Church and Returning Service Personnel, #5, p. 13.

sufficient and sorely needed reserves for an uncertain future.

In January, 1776, John Peter Gabriel Muhlenberg, Lutheran minister of Pennsylvania, exchanged his clerical robe for a uniform. Although he made history as a soldier, he never returned to the pulpit.<sup>1</sup> Yet, as a statesman, his influence was widely felt. How many soldiers, like Muhlenberg, will never return to the same civilian role? More important yet, how many will be more effective in the new course they follow?

A young lad, schooled only in the art of war when he was fourteen, Jesse James employed his training against his fellow citizens after peace came.<sup>2</sup> He did not readjust to a peace time world. Again the nation has called many youths directly from the classroom, youths whose training, now that peace has come, is only in the line of battle. Should the church feel no challenge here? How will it approach the returning veteran who marched off an adolescent and came home a man, often aged far beyond his years?

One cannot point to a group of individuals of the past, citing them as specific examples or types and classifications of veterans. There is no one pattern; there are many. Neither can there be one method of approach. The

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1. Qualben, op. cit., p. 339.

2. The Church and Returning Service Personnel, #3, p. 15.

church must be persistent in its effort to work in true love and Christian fellowship. Indeed, the love that fails not and is not easily discouraged alone holds the answer.

Willard Waller reminds us that the veteran may often be destitute but he is never weak. History illustrates that all too well. Mutiny in New Jersey, revolt against political leadership in Philadelphia, a flight of Congress, counter-revolution - these and other incidents prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that the veteran has strength, a strength greatly increased by the percentage of our population which went to war. The challenge to the church is to utilize this power to the greatest extent. Otherwise, as an unbridled force, or as strength harnessed to the wrong team, it becomes troublesome and destructive. With Willard Waller, the church should say:

"We now face the return to civilian society of that one-tenth of the population which the other nine-tenths have used to fight a war. These men will return, if they are like other soldiers, in no easy and comfortable frame of mind; it will be difficult to find the equable, complacent, obedient boys we sent away in the bitter, anger-hard veterans who return. But we have made them what they are, we have used them for war and war has put its curse on them; they are our own boys whom we have delivered to Moloch; our finest and bravest, a whole generation of our men children. We must somehow find the way to win them back."<sup>1</sup>

### C. Delimitation of the Problem

Thinking of the veteran one realizes that the

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1. Willard Waller: The Veteran Comes Back, pp. 13-14.

subject has many different aspects and that volumes might be written on any one of these. An avalanche of materials has already descended upon the public, with an indication of more yet to come. One might delve deeply into the subject of psychoneurotics, war criminals, counseling, or other related topics. Allied with these is the 4-F against whom veterans often have a feeling of antipathy. Unfortunately some thirteen per cent of all rejections are for psychiatric reasons and emotional and nervous disorders are not so commonly apparent as physical ones.<sup>1</sup> In somewhat the same category is the conscientious objector who has often aroused the antagonism of the fighting man. Far too many soldiers are not at all aware that the war was provoked by a failure to recognize the freedoms of others including a right to one's religious beliefs. Recently, the presentation of the Medal of Honor by the President to a conscientious objector has done much psychologically to raise the status of this group. Their work during the war is a complete field of research within itself. Space might well be devoted to two other minority groups - dishonorable discharges and women soldiers. All of these are minority groups which should and do demand the touch of the church. Though recognizing the importance of the church's work among these groups, attention in this study is given primarily to the honorable

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1. Clippings, G I's Are Coming Home, p. 7.



dischargee.

In using the words veteran, dischargee, service personnel, and other general terms, the writer is including all branches of the service as well as both sexes. Unfortunately, there is no true pattern of the veteran. He is as cosmopolitan as the land but of necessity veterans in general have certain basic personality traits. On the basis of this fact the experiences given herein are termed general.

#### D. Data and Resources

During the summer of 1945 the writer sent out a questionnaire of fifty-two questions to every minister in the Evangelical United Lutheran Synod of North Carolina.<sup>1</sup> One hundred thirteen were mailed and of these fifty-nine were returned. Of the total number, however, a few were missent as a result of incorrect information, and yet others were sent to pastors already retired who were in no position to offer information. As a whole, response was very good and some members of the Synod wrote personal letters expressing interest in the subject. An equal number of questionnaires was sent to a random selection of ministers of the same church scattered throughout the forty-eight states. Forty-five pastors responded with answers and others wrote expressing their inability to do so. The writer has drawn freely upon the results of the first group although a casual glance at the second revealed that churches in

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1. Note appendix.

general are a little better prepared for the returning veteran. It must be clearly understood, however, that the survey results were primarily used as a background for the thesis, and as a means of pointing up certain issues in the writer's mind. They were not intended to furnish the main source of data for this study.

The first chapter dealing primarily with the actual war time experience of the soldier has drawn freely from such books as Waller's The Veteran Comes Back, Wecter's When Johnny Comes Marching Home, Pyle's Here Is Your War, Brittain's Testament of Youth, Sperry's Religion of Soldier and Sailor, and Brink's They Found God There. As a general rule ideas set forth have been corroborated by several authoritative persons.

The second chapter has looked toward church organization as it relates to the subject. Additional sources referred to here have included Burkhart's The Church and The Returning Soldier, the pamphlet series of The Federal Council of Churches et. al., The Church and Returning Service Personnel, and The Link, magazine of the Service Men's Christian League. Another book recently published, The Church and Demobilization by J. Gordon Chamberlain, apparently deals with similar materials.

Chapter III in its discussion of the veteran and Religious Education has utilized many sources but the primary one is the June, 1945 issue of The Link in which service men voiced certain definite expectations of the church.

The last chapter has been the outgrowth of conclusions drawn in the preceding ones. Here, the emphasis lies in the realm of the practical and the writer has not relied upon outside sources.

The thesis as a whole has been inspired as the result of the writer's own military experience in the WAC, Army of the United States, an experience including the period November 11, 1942 to June 25, 1944.

The army experience was varied, including the periods of the raw recruit, the Officer Candidate, and the officer on a training staff. Active service was terminated by hospitalization in a large Army General Hospital. In the scene where ninety-five per cent of the patients were from overseas combat, a new opportunity to visualize needs was given. The crystallization of ideas as a skirted soldier plus the perspective view of the civilian have guided the trends of study in this thesis.

In speaking to a Confederate veteran who was complaining of time lost in the army Robert E. Lee once said:

" . . . However long you live and whatever you accomplish you will find that the time you spent in the Confederate Army was the most profitably spent portion of your life. Never again speak of having lost time in the Army."<sup>1</sup>

The writer would agree that the period of military service

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1. Dixon Wecter: When Johnny Comes Marching Home, p. 177.

was profitably spent but to the thought she would add that the wisdom of Christian experience on the part of religious leadership must help to make it so.

CHAPTER I

UNDERSTANDING THE VETERAN AS A BASIS  
FOR FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM

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UNDERSTANDING THE VETERAN AS A BASIS  
FOR FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM

A. Introduction

In His active ministry on earth, Jesus clearly epitomized perfect understanding of individuals and groups. He entered into the sufferings and heartaches of each person but He did exceedingly more than this. He used the experience of the individual as a challenge and a means to growth.

In an unprecedented degree the civilian population of many countries was forced during World War II to enter into the experiences of military personnel, at least in part. But America did not fight on her own soil. Hence, understanding of the soldier's experience will perhaps be more readily achieved by the English, Germans, French, Chinese, Japanese, and others. Their people have first-hand knowledge of the whine of bursting bombs, the roar of planes loaded with destruction and death, the shriek of sirens, the lack of essential food, shelter, and clothing, constant fear gnawing at one's vitals in the depths of a dugout or bomb shelter. Straffed by enemy planes and herded into concentration camps, they are truly akin to their brethren, the soldiers.

In this sense, war did not really come to America. It did come in that it uprooted more than 11,000,000 men and

women in uniform, plus untold numbers of families and defense workers. Yet war, for too many people, has been dramatic, a great adventure. Hero stories have made the headlines time and again and the American public glories in heroes. The "real goods" has too seldom filtered through in print. One correspondent overseas wrote:

"For in the magazine the war seemed romantic and exciting, full of heroics and vitality . . . Was war dramatic or wasn't it? Certainly there were great tragedies, unbelievable heroism, even a constant undertone of comedy. But when I sat down to write, I saw instead: men at the front suffering and wishing they were somewhere else, men in routine jobs just behind the lines bellyaching because they couldn't get to the front, all of them desperately hungry for somebody to talk to besides themselves, no women to be heroes in front of . . . "1

What is the soldier really like? That, then, is the purpose of this chapter - to present him in the light of his experiences, so that the church may best meet him on the basis of his needs.

#### B. Aspects of the Military Experience

Figures may not lie but they do fluctuate. Therefore, definitely to state numbers in connection with the subject is impossible. One can only use approximations and one source of authority is apt to be as reliable as another.

Some 6,000,000 service men have had overseas duty during this war on almost eighty-two fronts. One can safely

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1. Pyle, op. cit., p. 105.

say that every corner of the globe has been invaded by the American soldier. Many of this number have had actual combat experience while others have done picket duty in lonely outposts. Eighty per cent of all in the armed forces are under thirty years of age. The draft bracket, eighteen - twenty-eight, has sent the youngest of all American armies into battle. The significance of this fact cannot be minimized. Thirty-three per cent walked from the classroom into the armory, thirty-six per cent were out of school two years or less, a period of time much too short to ground them in vocational pursuits. Not only was it the youngest army; it has been the best educated one. Fourteen per cent were college men, twenty-five per cent high school graduates, twenty-eight per cent had some high school experience, and thirty-three per cent stopped in grammar school.<sup>1</sup> From these facts certain conclusions become apparent.

1. The New Conception of Geography

A new conception of geography will be one of the heritages of the veteran. England, Australia, Germany, will not merely be countries on a map but places where many have been, and either pleasant or unpleasant experiences will be attached to the names. This heritage, if

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1. Cf. Appendix A, #7.



cultivated fruitfully by the church, may be one of the good things which has come from war.

## 2. The Grimness of the Job

The church must never think, however, that the boys were overseas on a pleasure trip. They were not tourists on a Roman holiday; they were representatives of a grim business, the dealers in death. Many of them lived constantly in the valley of the shadow where they were sobered by the realization that they were paying the penalty for somebody's stupidity.<sup>1</sup> They had little choice in the matter; they were simply forced into it. Meanwhile, the wires were hot with stories of amiable relations between Americans and their hosts in Allied countries. But for every social tea and friendly home, there was a deadly counterpart in the hosts of enemy nations. For many the war was an interruption of plans already conceived for the future. Donning a uniform shattered temporarily many a vision of further scholastic achievements, of marriage and domestic happiness, and of vocational pursuits. The draftee suddenly found himself in a school where the object of every lesson was success in battle. The training was rugged, especially if he were destined for overseas service. Life became a series of

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1. Cf. Appendix A, #7.

orders which must be obeyed, else drastic consequences followed. Privacy was an unknown quantity and regimentation was everything. As has been said, "An army is not a school of character but a machine for fighting."<sup>1</sup> To the soldier, the abnormal became the normal and the unfamiliar the familiar. In this respect, his thinking of life and death was apt to differ in trend from that of the civilian.

### 3. The Esprit de Corps

If it is true that a military regime crushes individual initiative, it is equally true that it produces a solidarity of spirit seldom found elsewhere. Soldiers experience little difficulty in getting acquainted with one another. Regardless of race or clan or creed they have something in common and that bond brings them together. A soldier may, in his own terms, gripe endlessly about his outfit but he seldom accords that privilege to anyone without the organization. To the greater portion of service men, the unit in which they serve is the best in the world. Too often the cleric is apologetic about the "wares" he offers the stranger. Not so the G I. He speaks in glowing terms of the things "we" did in the Pacific or European theatre. The church, from the minis-

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1. Waller, op. cit., p. 24.

ter to the janitor, must develop that same sense of loyalty - not to a flag or a leader - but to their Lord! In other words, the church in its ministry must develop a real sense of mission. A disorganized church program with a series of activities, however good, will smack of little value to a veteran unless it is readily seen that all lead ultimately toward one thing. The soldier who has lived with thousands like himself knows that every course of instruction, every drill, every order, every regulation, is aimed toward victory and will, if he wishes it at all, want to see a church in which every worship service, every sermon, every youth meeting, is aimed toward victory over the forces of evil which inhabit this world. That and only that language will he understand.

C. Consequent Changes Within Individual Personalities

Nowadays, there is much in print about the returning veteran.<sup>1</sup> On few subjects is there unanimity of opinion but on one point the majority are virtually in agreement. War will and does create change within individuals. With some the change may not be noticeable but with others it will be far-reaching and drastic. Wecter, whose opinion lies in the field of military history, a valuable source of information, uses the words, "Whether

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1. Note bibliography.

better or worse, things will not be the same. Spiritually he can't go home again."<sup>1</sup>

Waller would say, "A man who has once been a soldier can never be quite a civilian again. A military experience, especially in time of war, leaves a mark upon a man."<sup>2</sup> Since Waller is a veteran of World War I, his opinion is worthy of consideration. Out of his experience in World War II Ernie Pyle wrote:

"The men over here have changed too. They are too close to themselves to sense the change . . . Our men can't make this change from normal civilians into warriors and remain the same people. Even if they were away from you this long under normal circumstances, the mere process of maturing would change them, and they would not come home just as you knew them. Add to that the abnormal world they have been plunged into, the new philosophies they have had to absorb or perish inwardly, the horrors and delights and strange wonderful things they have experienced, and they are bound to be different people than you knew them."<sup>3</sup>

In the spring of 1945 the writer was en route to a small suburban New York town. In the same car of the train were a number of seasoned soldiers home from the front. There was no hilarity, no boisterousness, on the part of the men. In fact, the silence was somewhat unusual, broken only by the occasional quiet remark of one soldier to another. Action they had seen. The number of Presidential Citations testified to this. The trainman

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1. Wecter, op. cit., p. 3.
2. Waller, op. cit., p. 18.
3. Pyle, op. cit., p. 307.

watching them file out in orderly procedure remarked, "Those men have been somewhere and seen something. You can tell that."

The results of military service upon individual lives are incalculable, but they are there. They may manifest themselves in resentment or bitterness, in quietness and calm on the surface, in more or less enthusiasm for the things of life that really count, but they are there. These men and women have grown in stature, perhaps not always for good, but the growth is not to be discounted. To do so would be an attempt to erase the experiences of days, months, and years, experiences intensified by danger, loneliness, and monotony. The church must begin first of all by recognition of their growth. To think of the veteran in terms of the man as he went away would be just as deadly as not to think of him at all.

#### D. The Religion of the Service Man

A young English woman who served as a volunteer nurse in the first World War, Vera Brittain wrote that she tried prayer not because she actually had faith in an answer but because she wanted to leave no possibility unexplored.<sup>1</sup> Many civilians have been profoundly impressed by the remark coined in the recent conflict, "There are no

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1. Vera Brittain, Testament of Youth, p. 129.

atheists in foxholes." Nevertheless, the church must not be deceived into thinking that the majority of veterans will be returning with a new lease on life as a result of some crucial experience. War has probably helped to break the ground for such a new lease in countless cases but the sowing is yet to be done. One soldier, expressing his viewpoint in The Link, magazine of the Service Men's Christian League, stressed the necessity of finding God without a raft. On the other hand, the church cannot minimize the way in which God has worked with many men and women during the war. To discredit these incidents would be to question God's power to so move these men and women. The strain and duress of battle brings many a man face to face with his Maker. Living constantly with death, a soldier may have every reason and incentive to review his past in the light of the moment, and from that may feel it imperative to seek a source of strength beyond himself. Like Vera Brittain, however, there will be those who turn to God temporarily, hoping as she did to find at least one course of action which worked. Foxhole religion is not to be deplored but the church must be cognizant of the fact that a great horde of men and women did not invade the foxholes. From them there have come few, if any, spectacular accounts of religious experience.

The church must reinterpret these battlefront experiences and translate them into terms of practical, everyday living. Actually, there will be no peace until the same God who moved into a soldier's heart on the front rules the life of the same soldier-turned-civilian and the life of his community at large. Johnny Bartek's story of belief in the Bible has reached thousands through print. Such experiences are definitely in the limelight but are the exception and not the rule.

At no time does modern history indicate that there have been mass conversions of men in uniform. Wecter reports that the Southern soldier found faith in Christ a real anchor after Appomattox. In fact, about the only possession of the Confederate following civil strife was his religion. It was his one ray of hope in a broken world. But to assume that all the rebels were religious is greatly to falsify facts. Looking to the soldiers in blue, Wecter concluded that the north had less spirituality than ever "after a year and a half of the struggle."<sup>1</sup>

As for the doughboys of 1918 many factors helped to discredit the church at large. Among these should be mentioned the disrepute of the Y. M. C. A., the attitude of churches toward war, and the methods of

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1. Wecter, op. cit., p. 227.

evangelists, ministers, and leaders who contacted the camps. Vows were made; some kept, some broken, but the impact of religious enthusiasm was not as great for the soldiers of 1914-18 as for the Confederate veterans who preceded them.<sup>1</sup>

Such churchmen as Dr. Daniel A. Poling and Dr. Bernard Iddings Bell, as well as others, attach little significance to the front page stories of soldier conversion. Their consensus of opinion seems to be that the church will find it difficult to reach the ears of the men who return.

On the other hand, there are chaplains like Eben Cobb Brink who, although admitting that God is often forgotten after zero hour, yet cling firmly to the belief that something of Eternal good has been present on the front. Indeed, Brink's thought is well stated:

"But there are those who, forced to resort to prayer, have found through it the fellowship with God which they had ignored before, a fellowship that once found can never be fully forgotten. A man cannot come into the presence of the Almighty without being impressed with the beauty of the Presence, even though he may turn to sordid things again."<sup>2</sup>

The chaplain's point is well taken and it is only the part of wisdom for the church to help the veteran who once found God on a battlefield to realize His presence in the quietness

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1. Ibid., p. 228.

2. Eben Cobb Brink, And God Was There, p. 58.



of a sanctuary or in the humdrum affairs of life.

Too often in the past in dealing with soldiers, the church has looked askance at some who have returned hardened and embittered. The clergy and laity, for that matter, have found it difficult to associate religious experience of any kind with a man who speaks in exotic oaths and indulges in strong drink, yet claims God for his Saviour. For many a veteran, religion has not yet worked through to controlling his entire being any more than for some civilians. Drinking and swearing are not virtues, it is true; nor are unkindness and hypocrisy. A soldier's weakness has its counterparts in the civilian world. In this connection Paul D. Moody relates an interesting account:

"A friend of mine was sobered and enlightened by an experience he had in speaking to a group of soldiers. He sought from them their ideas as to the cardinal sins. He thought they would say gambling, drinking, impurity, swearing. He was surprised when they laughed at him and answered, cowardice, selfishness, laziness, and carelessness. In other words, sins of the flesh did not shock them as much as sins of the spirit. Well, there was one who expressed more hope for the publican and harlot than for the Scribes and Pharisees."<sup>1</sup>

In this war, the chaplain has received much publicity. The story of Father Callahan's courage aboard the Franklin not only went into print but was also used

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1. Willard Sperry: Religion of Soldier and Sailor, p. 8.

effectively by radio. Even better known is the account of four servants of God who, offering their life belts to their congregation of soldiers, went down with the ship. Others have died just as courageously and followed the men into the thick of the fight but, here again, the spectacular and dramatic have caught the public eye. These incidents deserve thought and consideration but they may not have been prompted by religious motives at all. Many men have served just as valiantly without any professed religion. An attempt by the church to capitalize on such stories in this field is therefore delving into only one aspect of the whole.

#### E. Summary

It should be apparent that one accomplishes most with groups one understands. That has been the motivating theme in this chapter - to grasp a few essentials of the military mind and experience. In order to do this, certain aspects were presented encompassing the numbers employed abroad in the military machine and the age and educational background of these numbers. The writer then proceeded to the veteran's new conception of geography, and the stark reality of the job to be done. Not to be overlooked is the esprit de corps of service personnel unparalleled by any

civilian group. The discussion would not have been complete without portraying the changes wrought by war on individual personalities, and the much talked about subject of the service man's religion. The facts set forth in the chapter do not attempt to portray the total military experience but to concentrate upon certain effects of the training which are primarily vital to a church program. From a careful analysis of these experiences one concludes that the returning veteran will be a man of broadened experience but such experience as will need the touch of God. It is in this realm that the church must move.

CHAPTER II  
THE PREPARATION OF THE CHURCH  
FOR THE RETURNING VETERAN

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## CHAPTER II

### THE PREPARATION OF THE CHURCH FOR THE RETURNING VETERAN

#### A. Introduction

This chapter aims to focus attention upon definite, concentrated preparation of the church. This preparation is discussed and analyzed in terms of concrete need. Under a suggested plan of organization, the writer has first of all considered the role of the minister. This is necessitated by the fact that far too many churches rely solely upon the pastor to handle this phase of church activity. Consequently, the work of the minister has been considered in relation to the work of a suggested post-war committee. In considering the constituency of the post-war committee, thought has been directed to various types of individuals within an average congregation capable of making a vital contribution. The work of the committee has been conceived chiefly in terms of an evaluation of the present program and activities of the church, the impartial handling of evidence in relation to separate groups for veterans, and the formation of public opinion.

#### B. Need for Organization

No program for veterans, however good its

features, will be successful without a workable plan of organization as its basis. Many churches have maintained a service committee during the war, a committee whose membership has been more or less general with little thought to individual qualifications other than a desire to be of service.<sup>1</sup> Other congregations relegated contacts with the armed forces to one agency within the church - a youth group, a missionary society, or a fellowship of men. In some churches, the burden of this responsibility has fallen all too heavily upon the already overburdened shoulders of the minister. Too often one is apt to forget that the preacher, like his fellow citizens, has gone to war, too. Much praise is due those servants of God who, long since retired, have again stepped into the pulpit, but often they have not had previous contacts with the soldiers, contacts which so readily bear fruit. If there is any one certainty which may be used as a guide, it is the fact that it is not the path of wisdom to make the minister the key agent in dealing with veterans or service personnel. This was especially brought home to the writer as a result of the survey of churches.<sup>2</sup> Time and again a pastor wrote that he could not vouchsafe information or pertinent facts because he had just taken over duties in that parish; he was only a

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1. Cf. Appendix A, #26.  
2. Note Appendix.

supply minister; he was a retired minister only assuming temporary duties, or he had no records from which to draw needed facts and figures. In far too many instances, this entire phase of church life has centered in the cleric. No one doubts the capacity of the trained theologian to serve in this aspect of ministry, but he is not always a permanent figure in the congregational life. Subject as he is to transfer, retirement, disability, and death, too often an activity of the church moves or dies with him. Church members are subject to the same things but where there are three or five on a committee, the chances of losing previous contacts are not nearly so great. More important than this, however, it is essential that the church members at home actually share this rich and fruitful experience. This is the bridge between thought and life, the application of that which the church teaches. Through it comes the great opportunity to the laity at home to render vital, joyful service. To deny them this means of growth in Christian experience is definitely a breach of faith.

What, then, one may ask, is the approach of the cleric? By all means, he should be a member of the post-war committee but he should not constitute its sole membership. In fact, through the work and findings of the committee - work and findings which he might never

have time to do himself - his service should be the more effective.

### C. Suggested Plan of Organization

#### 1. The Role of the Minister

In the days ahead, the cleric preaching in the pulpit will look into the faces of many men and women who wear the little bronze button. The results of preaching are immeasurable but no one denies the results. Immeasurable as they may be, they are ever present. In view of this, the minister must, more than ever, answer the questions which puzzle this generation, and they are not vastly different from those of any other generation. He who comes from an environment of death where every word is fraught with meaning will desire in this environment of life equally strong meaningful words. Many of the questions uppermost in his mind will not be easy to answer. Some of them may never be, but evasion and vagueness are a team which must be eliminated from church life. The veteran must feel, above all else, that the cleric is on "the level" in his approach. He has had quite a bit to say about ministers and sermons during this war and wise is he who heeds these comments. Many veterans will be prone to expect from the pulpit what they got from the primitive jungle chapel - a message related to the moment and to life. They are apt to feel that there should be



more "briefing" and less of the long sermons. They may not respond positively to a sermon or a dissertation on pain. What they may respond to is the solution to it.

In a conference at Union Theological Seminary in October, 1945, Dr. John Sutherland Bonnell, pastor of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church of New York City, mentioned the spiritual "therapy of worship." The man who comes from combat or the nurse who comes home from the wards of pain will appreciate beyond words the worship in which there is peace and healing. Paradoxical as it may seem, this worshipful relaxation is a means of girding them for life with its clamor and incessant demands. Further, such worship may enable the veteran to cast off those anxieties which bind him to the past, and thus truly find rest.

Some of these veterans who return will be obsessed with guilt. Herein lies one of the factors which has helped to enlarge the psychiatric service. Conscious of this knowledge, the minister must give God's answer to this whole problem, a problem which is not alone related to armed personnel. Civilians, too, have their portion of guilt and all of it must be laid at the feet of Jesus. Guidance is necessary and, in this respect, the cleric must not be found wanting.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Cf. Appendix A, #10-11.

When all is said and done, the theologian will do his best service as he works with individuals. Jesus concentrated on the one, not the multitude. In counseling service and interviews, the minister has his real opportunity. Understanding, love, sympathy, he must have and a "shock proof" vest he must wear. As nearly as possible he must see through the eyes of the veteran and he must look through God's eyes, not his own, in his approach.

2. The Post-War Committee

a. The Constituency of the Post-War Committee

One can only make suggestions for personnel for a post-war committee. Each church is different and, therefore, must use such materials and persons as it has at its disposal. In the report of the fifty-nine ministers, forty-seven indicated that their churches were established prior to World War I.<sup>1</sup> Of this number forty suggested that there are veterans of that first conflagration in their churches but only fourteen could say definitely how many, and five alone had definite records of that first period. Yet, thirty men admitted the value of such records for church history and as guides for the present. Of the forty who have previous veterans in their parishes, thirty-five recognized some of them as exceptional leaders.<sup>2</sup> Many conclusions may be drawn from

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1. Cf. Appendix A, #31-37.  
2. Ibid.

these facts but, at this point, one is all important.

Part of the membership of the post-war committee might well be these other veterans who returned to their churches. Their experiences are by no means comparable to those entailed in this last war, but they are similar. These men, too, far beyond any other group, are apt to have a sympathy for their fellows. They will know, beyond the limited knowledge of most, the actualities of war and the problems of readjustment. By all means they should be well adjusted, consecrated individuals themselves.

Since a job is one of the primary concerns of the veteran, the committee ought to have an important representative from the business world. Such persons could think in terms of the veterans' opportunities, the availability of jobs, and the suitability of personnel for such jobs as are open. The most important concern of agencies set up for this specific purpose is to find an opening for the man. The church should not try to compete with existing organizations established to offer help along industrial and vocational lines, but the concern here is not to be minimized. A man dissatisfied with his work is so often dissatisfied with everything else and his usefulness to society is greatly impaired.

Of primary concern to all is the veteran's health. Many men and women are being discharged directly

from hospitals; others are still undergoing treatment; and, in the months ahead, many will fall victim to diseases, mental and physical. A man's physical and mental health is assuredly vital to his entire life and is apt to affect his associates. Therefore, someone skilled in the art of medicine and psychiatry is a definite asset to the post-war committee. Plans for the veteran's future, so often good and the outgrowth of a church's abiding interest in her own, need to be looked at with the microscopic eye of the psychologist or psychiatrist. So valuable could such a service be that tensions might be lessened and often avoided as the medic might indicate to the minister those problems which create tensions. In turn, from the pulpit, the classroom, and the interview might come a more realistic approach to the needs of people, a greater spiritual therapy.

Further membership of the committee might include some of the mothers within the congregation. Incalculably great work has been done by women in this war and, as usual, the mother has paid a great price. The viewpoint of a woman in itself would be invaluable but she should not be just any woman in the congregation. She might be one of the mothers whose son did not come back. In this work, perhaps, she would not only help the sons of other women; she would be gaining as a by-product great

good for herself. She might be the wife or the fiancée of a missing soldier. She is in every congregation and must not be overlooked.

In 1942 the writer at times had occasion to visit one of the Protestant churches in the city of Baltimore, Maryland. Within this church was a couple, outstanding church members, whose home had become a Sunday night haven for the youth of the church. And, among those youth, the man and woman in uniform were definitely in evidence. Church was the unwritten order of the day. Here someone saw to it that the service personnel had an invitation - friendly and informal - to "Aunt Minnie's". They cluttered up the living room, the hall way, and the stairs but this gracious lady welcomed every single one. Someone brought a cake, someone candy, someone soft drinks, and, after singing, talking, or just sitting around doing nothing, they moved into the dining room. "Aunt Minnie" was always around and to the soldiers she was a real "trooper". Through this medium, a Christian woman bound the ties between the church and its fighting sons and daughters, and who can measure the joy of the fellowship in that home? Similar incidents probably have occurred throughout the land but there should be many more Christian homes with wide open doors for those who return. Women have their own bit of service to render

and no one else can render it quite the same way. What worked in this instance for soldiers should carry on for veterans, but it is the sort of project which needs the touch of womanhood.

Certainly, the membership of the committee should include a veteran of the present war. Too often, the church errs in that it never gives a voice to those it seeks to serve. The veteran of World War II, already discharged, is one of the most essential links in a chain which reaches out to the army and navy. A circular letter sent to a man still in uniform will have considerable weight if it bears the signature of a combat veteran. To the man now shouldering a gun the message really means that the church has something to give to those who helped preserve its freedom. Preferably, the veteran should not be one from the ranks of the officers. The majority of those whose names are on the service plaques are enlisted personnel and, unfortunately, a number have an understandable antipathy for bars. Too, where the number of women in service warrants it, a skirted soldier on the committee would be advisable. Small in number they may be, but definitely a part of the church's program. It is Waller who says that "the natural beginning is to let the veteran have a share in planning his own future."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Waller, op. cit., p. 262.

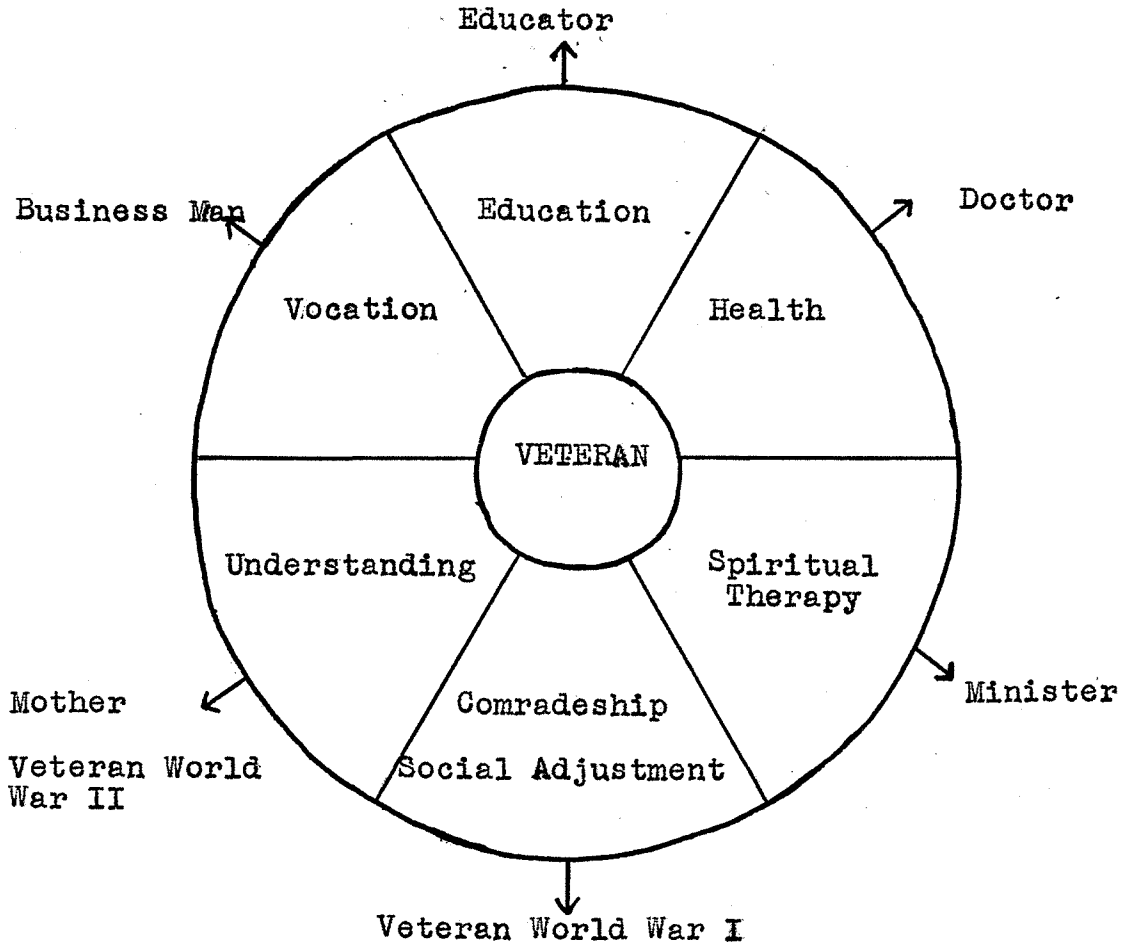
One last suggestion might include an educator who could render service to those who wish to reenter the classroom. Since this is considered one of the best of all ways to readjust, the veteran who is capable and whose circumstances will permit should be encouraged to continue his education. It must be emphasized here that thirty-five of the fifty-nine ministers only were familiar with the G I Bill of Rights, listing among other things educational benefits.<sup>1</sup>

These are only a few of the directions in which one may look for the constituency of a post-war committee. Each church will, as has already been suggested, use such as it has, but by thinking through on this question, the various aspects of the veteran's life can be tied into an integrated whole by the proper selection.

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1. Cf. Appendix A, #24.

SUGGESTED ORGANIZATIONAL SETUP  
OF POST-WAR COMMITTEE





b. The Work of the Committee

(1). Evaluating the program and activities of the church

One of the first jobs of the committee is to evaluate the work of the church in the light of the needs of the day.<sup>1</sup> As Roy Burkhart has said, "The church that really comes alive for the soldier will be alive and inviting for all classes of civilians."<sup>2</sup> This statement is fundamental, in that a church which knows what it is trying to accomplish must work effectively toward that and through those who compose its membership. The committee should ascertain how effectively and how harmoniously the various agencies of the church are working. They must not dissociate past work from present and future plans. During the war estimates show that only about five per cent of the churches have kept in touch with their soldier constituency.<sup>3</sup> This being true, veterans will not as a rule walk to the pews with abounding joy. Herein the church has failed but she must not stop with failure; she must build from it.

In many of our churches, there is a tendency to hang on to certain activities because they have been a part of the church life for many years. Being mellowed with age some of these, long-since outworn and accomplishers of

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1. Cf. Appendix A, #8.  
2. Burkhart, op. cit., p. 24.  
3. Ibid., p. viii.

some forgotten purpose, still drift along. These must be evaluated and where not essential must be dismissed. Not until this is done is the group actually ready to go to work. As a soldier on the front thinks of home, he wants things to be just as they were when he left. When he returns, however, he is apt to be greatly disillusioned if he finds things running along in the same old fashion. What he actually desires and what one should want for him is a better church. If he considered the congregation lifeless and purposeless prior to the war, he is more than ever to see it so after the needs and suffering he has witnessed abroad.

(2). Providing group fellowship

Since many churches have sent such vast numbers of their membership to war, the question is often asked as to whether there should be a separate group for the veterans.<sup>1</sup> At this point the secular and the religious world part company, and each should speak for itself.

"The consensus of church opinion seems to be against any over-all church organization for veterans. Some churchmen are of the opinion, however, that such a fellowship may be wise and needed . . . a few churches are reporting that a service men's club . . . seems to perform a useful function: an accessible room not open to other people, equipped with various kinds of reading materials, having ash trays and an informal air and a general atmosphere of relaxation and retreat."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Cf. Appendix A, #1-4.
2. The Church and Returning Service Personnel, #6, p. 35.

Many ministers would take issue with even this latter suggestion. On the part of the fifty-nine ministers who responded to the questionnaire, there was unanimity on this point. Not one felt a veteran's group was the proper course of action.<sup>1</sup> In response to the question as to why they so felt, they stated that since the men are normal, they should be so treated. In the opinion of the writer, the answer does not hinge on this thought, however.

Actually, the real basis of feeling seems to be that they will not readjust as quickly to the church and community if they are permitted to foster a group of their own.

Each church must consider the basic needs but other factors, too, are involved. For a moment, one should approach the problem from the secular angle. The testimony of doctors is inclined to deviate from the well worn ministerial approach. Dr. Alexander Reid Martin, in speaking of attitudes and problems, has remarked in connection with a soldier of World War I:

"One of the most interesting aspects of his transformation from soldier to civilian was the part that ex-service men's groups played in it. At least twice a week, during this period, he attended these groups. Over and over again he and the other men told one another the same experiences. No one told him to keep still. No one was critical. These group relationships performed a great service for him; and helped him to gain more inner security so

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1. Cf. Appendix A, #50.

that he could participate more satisfactorily in civilian life. In bringing this about, the 'working through' of mutual and similar experiences played a most important part."<sup>1</sup>

This thought is reiterated by Dr. Florence Powdermaker who has said:

"I would underscore the importance of clubs and groups for ex-service men. It is absolutely essential that the men have the real experience of fellowship; and this, at first, and perhaps for a considerable time afterwards, will mean being able to feel that they are in an environment which is not critical of them, where they can tell the story over and over again without anyone's pushing away and saying, 'Now, dear, don't attempt to talk about it; it's all past now.'"<sup>2</sup>

Many realize that the soldier speaks a different language from the civilian and cultivates a sense of humor sometimes foreign to the public. Generally speaking, a man's conversation is in terms of what has most recently happened to him. Military service will be all the experience some will remember for a period of time to come. Their heads and hearts may be full of the front and some medium of expression is needed. From the doctor's standpoint then, as indicated above, the veteran's group is actually a bridge to adjustment, a springboard which enables the veteran to talk as he actually feels. A half-way step in this direction is already being undertaken by some churches. The bulletin of Marble Collegiate Church, Fifth Avenue and 29th Street, New York City, April 22, 1945,

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1. The Church and Returning Service Personnel, #1, p. 18.
2. Ibid., p. 19.

is strikingly significant. Following the church service a general invitation was extended to a luncheon for service men and women of all the Allied forces. More important yet, this invitation included discharged members of the services and the wives of men stationed elsewhere. This program ties the veterans to the soldiers as well as to the civilians and here, indeed, is the true bridge. In the best sense of the word, the veteran should truly link the home and the foreign front.

At another New York Church veterans meet once a week with a Youth Group to plan an entertainment and worship program for men in uniform. Here again is the same link and a most effective one. Utilizing veterans to help in the church's program for those in service is one of the most effective means of aiding both. Dr. Millet, chairman of the Emergency Committee of Neuropsychiatric Societies of New York, says:

"It is also a constructive sign when returning men want to help broaden the civilian understanding of what is happening abroad and on the fighting fronts. Occasionally, this may be done in ill-advised ways, but it is a good thing for those of us at home to have our complacency shattered. Wherever there is a strong desire to assist in the emotional re-education of the civilian front, to bring about a better understanding of what actually happens to the men abroad who have suffered both from wounds and from emotional disability, there is a constructive attitude at work.

"When returning men want to cooperate in plans for the rehabilitation of other returning men, this also is evidence of a constructive outlook. There are probably some things that these men can do for each other that no civilian can do for them. Such success depends on the same principle as that recognized by Alcoholics Anonymous, a group in which ex-alcoholics aid the alcoholics. So many of the men who return with a destructive attitude will talk and listen to another returning man, though they may not care to listen to a civilian. Indeed, it is a general psychological principle that a man who has been through a particular hell will listen better to another man who was with him in this same hell."<sup>1</sup>

(3). Molding public opinion

The church has an important responsibility in the formation of public opinion. Like the press and the radio, the church too has an opportunity to cultivate certain trends of thought. Part of the job of the postwar committee will be to see that reliable information is given the church membership as regards this whole aspect of church life.<sup>2</sup> A great deal of information is being disseminated but it is not always Christian nor always good. A worthwhile project would be the assembling of a library of materials on this subject. This library should include pamphlets, books, and magazines - secular as well as religious. All of them, however, should be thoroughly scanned by some competent person before being made available to the church at large. Materials on counseling

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1. The Church and Returning Service Personnel, #3, p. 10.
2. Cf. Appendix A, #40-41.

would be invaluable, and clippings from newspapers might be preserved in scrapbooks or notebooks. Information relative to the G I Bill of Rights would be particularly valuable. The writer discovered only thirty-five of the fifty-nine ministers had knowledge of this legislation with its implications for the veteran.<sup>1</sup>

Much of the present moment literature is aimed at the psychiatric dischargée, not always for his own good. Unfortunately, much of this disparaging material is read by the veteran himself. It is true that about forty-nine per cent of the dischargées prior to the point system were released for mental causes.<sup>2</sup> A great number of these should never have been exposed to the rigors and privations of military service at all. In many cases, homes and communities share the causes for the breakdowns. Be that as it may, a more normal attitude must be developed by the church, else many of these men and women will never find stability or purpose in life again.

During the summer of 1945 the Columbia Broadcasting System sponsored a series of radio programs each Saturday evening known simply as Assignment Home. One of the most effective of these programs was based upon the story of a psychoneurotic veteran. The story itself was

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1. Cf. Appendix A, #24.

2. Burkhart, op. cit., p. 98. Cf. Clippings, G I's Are Coming Home; also, Appendix A, #5.

not nearly so significant as the introduction which preceded it. The thought behind these words is here worthy of repetition. Actually, the very small spheres in which men and women work and play contain many civilians subject to the same disability. The secretary who is advised by her doctor to rest for a week or so is actually a psychoneurotic. In the civilian as in the military world, death is somewhere always knocking at the door. A normal period of grieving is a natural element but a prolonged period of mourning is a failure to face the facts - to adjust to one of life's situations - a psychoneurotic incident. In the civilian world these tendencies generally escape undue attention. They receive no blaring publicity and are soon forgotten. These are miniature examples of the army psychoneurotics but one fact must be remembered. Life in a uniform is exceedingly more difficult and its dangers more intense. Hence, breakdowns are apt to be more severe. Much unhappiness will be spared thousands of people if the stigma attached to such illnesses is removed.

Dr. Millet, speaking in October, 1945, at Union Theological Seminary, told of a different type of radio program - different in that, although its purpose was good, its result was detrimental. The well-known Frank



Sinatra represented a soldier discharged for "nervous disorders." In desperation he accepted a job from a kindly old lady who put him to work scrubbing floors. This act reminded him of the sergeant who formerly had ordered him to perform menial tasks and for whom he had less than affection. The story, so said Dr. Millet, ends with the veteran ready to kill the well-meaning old lady. No comment is needed to show the tremendous effect this story could have upon those who have been treated for nervous disorders, upon their families and friends, and upon the attitude of the public at large. Can any one wonder in the light of such educational features that the psychoneurotic is approached - if approached at all - with fear and trembling? Public opinion is so antagonistic that some families have been known to dissociate themselves from their own flesh and blood. These persons must be interpreted to the Christian membership in some way, and the public must know that in the civilian world the majority, with patience and understanding, will readjust and make a useful contribution to society. One well-known psychiatrist has said:

"We do well to remember that, when there has been a break-up of some kind in the personality pattern, there is always a chance that the pieces may be brought back together to form a better whole than

they did before."<sup>1</sup>

This, however, is only one of the many facets of public opinion which should be channeled. The church membership must be educated to the true facts of this war - its actual cost in dollars, and in human life. With-holding the truth is avoiding the issue. When people realize the awful realities of this war, they will see the necessity for peace in terms of Jesus the Christ. In this molding of church opinion, however, these truths - though mighty as a two-edged sword - should not be used to encourage pacifism. Pacifism is the negative approach and the church must work positively, practicing brotherhood in such a way that it will be unnecessary to set one's face as flint against the thought of war. To do so would be like a man bracing himself for a blow he is sure to get. The church must seek to eradicate that which motivates the blow, and may discover that in many cases he who receives the hurt motivates it by failure to live up to his obligations to others. From the words of an English clergyman, the church may find a method of approach:

"We have been a pleasure-loving people, dishonoring God's day, picnicking, and bathing - now the seashores are barred, no picnics, no bathing. We have preferred motor travel to church-going - now there is a shortage of motor fuel. We have ignored the ringing of church bells calling us to worship - now the bells cannot

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1. The Church and Returning Service Personnel, #3, p. 16.

ring except to warn us of invasion. We have left the churches half empty when they should have been full of worshippers - now they are in ruins. We would not listen to the ways of peace - now we are forced to listen to the way of war.

"The money we would not give to the Lord's work now is taken in taxes and higher prices. The food for which we forgot to say thanks is unobtainable. The service we refused to give God now is conscripted for the country. Lives we refused to live under God's control now are under the nation's control. Nights we would not spend in watching in prayer now are spent in anxious air-raid precautions. The evils of Modernism we would not fight - now we see what Germany, the seat of this teaching has produced."<sup>1</sup>

#### D. Summary

Much time has been spent discussing the problem of organization to meet the needs of returning veterans. The writer has shown the gravity of a situation which allows one person to carry the burden of responsibility. Thence, a suggested plan was offered combining the role of the minister and the constituency and work of the post-war committee. A number of possibilities were explored in order to see what persons might best compose the membership of a committee. These were suggested with a thought to accomplishing two purposes - aiding the veteran and, at the same time, finding useful creative work for the church membership. Three major aspects of the committee's functions were considered including an evaluation of the

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1. The Link, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 48.

present program of the church, reaching a decision on the subject of a veteran's group, and the molding of public opinion and attitudes.

CHAPTER III

RETHINKING THE CHURCH'S PROGRAM  
OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION  
IN RELATION TO THE VETERAN

### CHAPTER III

#### RETHINKING THE CHURCH'S PROGRAM OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN RELATION TO THE VETERAN

##### A. Introduction

"The World War has become a fact in history and the thousand isolated incidents that once thrilled us may soon be forgotten. But a hundred years from now men will still be seeking to determine the true meaning of this gigantic cataclysm. Especially will this be so with regard to religious education, which, viewed in its largest meaning, includes all education; the allied armies won their great victory as the result of education; and it is to education that we must look for the building of a new world. In the last analysis, social progress is a battle of schoolmasters."<sup>1</sup>

These words belong to that period immediately following the first World War. Education is a potent factor in any era and, it may be added, "the power of education is as amazing as its prostitution to unholy ends is shocking."<sup>2</sup> The aftermath of war challenges the field of religious education to gird itself for a stupendous task. No one questions the enthusiasm of educators for the job and none are more aware than they themselves that it is high time for the church to rethink its educational procedures. This chapter will deal primarily with the

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1. Robert Wells Veach: The Meaning of War for Religious Education, p. 7.

2. Ibid., p. 8.

veterans' conception of the functions of the church in this field, lessons drawn from education in the wider realm of public school and higher education, and suggestions for the church program in education.

B. The Veteran's Background For Religious Education With Implications For the Church

It is a widely accepted principle of religious education that the program should begin with the pupils at the point of their experience. In the light of this principle, to ignore the changes and effects wrought by war is to court disaster. Church education, then, as it plans for the veteran must not begin with the man at the point where relations were severed prior to his entry in service. The threads of war experience must be woven into the entire framework of the program. Burkhart emphasizes this idea when he says:

"This rededicated church must descend to meet the individual man where he now is. To not many of the returning soldiers can we issue a direct invitation to prayer. Some, no doubt, we shall be able to approach in such a frank manner, but with most of them we will have to start on a lower level, interesting them in such activities of the church as dramatics and entertainment. Our rule must be to meet them where they live, and to lead them gradually up the steps of the altar. We shall have to begin at the point where the soldier asks for help: when he plans to get married, or when he is looking for a job, or when he is seeking a fellowship that will sustain him and guide him gradually further on. All our efforts will fail unless he finally reaches the altar and accosts God in the sanctuary of the soul."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Burkhart: op. cit., p. 153.

In another place he says:

"When Jesus called fishermen to be his disciples, he said: 'I'll make you fishers of men.' He started with something they knew and at a point in their experience. If there is a failure with the returning soldier, it may be here."<sup>1</sup>

1. Pre-War Experiences

One of the channels through which Christian teaching is undertaken is the church school. Perhaps, in too many instances, the actual accomplishment of this body is overestimated. A new book edited by William Sperry, Religion and Education, contains a thought-provoking statement to the effect that the church schools have generally been inadequate.<sup>2</sup> Proof of the statement lies in an examination of a cross-section view of service men's knowledge of pertinent facts of the Christian faith. This Sperry reports as follows:

"The average recruit brings with him some admirable traits and qualities. His power to adapt himself to new situations is remarkable. But whatever else the average recruit brings with him into the navy, he brings very little interest in religion and in spiritual values. He brings with him very little knowledge of the Bible and of religious literature, even though he may have attended Sunday School a good part of his life. He may not even know the two main divisions of the Bible. He can name but a few books of the Bible. He may not be able to name any favorite Old Testament character. He may name Samson, or Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David, Daniel, or Job; but he is not always able to say exactly why."<sup>3</sup>

In the same study of service men the author states:

"The average recruit knows that Jesus died on the

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1. Burkhart, op. cit., p. 40.
2. Willard L. Sperry: Religion and Education, p. 107.
3. Ibid., p. 47-48.



cross. He is not sure of his age at the time of his death. He may not know or he may give it as anywhere between thirty and thirty-eight, or seventy. The mere mention of the Sermon on the Mount brings no response. It is even confused with the life of Moses. The parables of Jesus are little known to the average recruit. Mention of miracles draws hardly an answer. The Lord's Prayer is, perhaps, best known. However, there are many who cannot repeat it without help. Words of the Christian faith - sacrament, communion, grace, prayer, baptism, creed, commandments - convey very little meaning to the average raw recruit, and draw no clear statement."<sup>1</sup>

This mass array of facts is clearly an indictment of the church school. Obviously, the religious education program through the school should do more than fill the pupils with a vast accumulation of facts and incidents. But if these minor values are so little accomplished, the greater values are likewise probably lost. The entire religious education program must be reinterpreted if it is to be vital to these veterans - but not to them alone, to all other members of the Christian church. Teachers and leaders must no longer proceed with the assumption that the pertinent facts and issues are known. Theological terms must be abandoned and the simple everyday vital language of the streets must be used - not language of the streets in terms of the vulgar but in the sense that the thoughts are expressed in essentials. The aim should be to teach in such a manner that a child may understand. In so doing, the words will be easily comprehended by all. The facts which compose the groundwork must be grasped and

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1. Ibid.

repetition must still be recognized as one of the laws of learning.

Francis J. Brown, American Council of Education consultant, has stated that Army education has three chief characteristics: functionalism, flexibility, and individualism. The first applies the learning immediately to a given situation, the second connotes that ability to leave the traditional in order to face the new problems, and the third adapts the material to the individual person. Dr. Brown concludes, in the light of these methods, that "religious education falls far short."<sup>1</sup>

## 2. The Chaplain's Work

If the church is to receive the fullest possible benefits from a consideration of the experience of the veteran, a resumé of some of the techniques employed by chaplains is advisable. Dr. Paul Moody, famous World War I chaplain, has stated that in his opinion more than fifty per-cent of the chaplain's effectiveness is determined by his individual contacts. The experiences of this war not only uphold Moody's statement but also raise the percentage of effectiveness through this means of work. Some, in fact, would rate the effectiveness through personal contact as high as ninety-five per cent.<sup>2</sup> Obviously, military service being what it is and entailing all the problems it

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1. The Link, August, 1944, p. 29.
2. Cf. Bulletin, Seminars with Army Chaplains.

does, it is not too surprising that personal conferences mean so much. Too, many of "these conferences are more forthright and realistic than the often illusive and superficial spiritual needs the civilian minister faces."<sup>1</sup> Any program of religious education must be based upon actuality. Certainly, the church must not teach that a man should lay his problems at the feet of Jesus until there are human agents within the church willing to bear one another's burdens.

As a general rule, the chaplain's sermons have been short but well prepared. In the main, they have been characterized by clearness, conciseness, and definiteness. A casual glance at a New York City newspaper listing Sunday morning sermon topics leads one to believe that that which issues from the pulpit is far from clear, concise, and definite. One man remarks of the veterans:

"What they want are the great affirmations of religious faith stated simply and convincingly by a man whose own life and faith speak louder than any mere words."<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps, one of the outstanding characteristics of the chaplain is his interdenominational spirit. Denominationalism is relegated to the rear ranks. Protestant chaplains are not required to hold religious services for those of other faiths but the history of World War II should bear witness of those who do.

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1. Ibid.
2. Sperry, op. cit., p. 77.

In yet other phases, the chaplain has accepted responsibility. Recreational and educational programs for off-duty hours are often a part of his regular schedule. But, above all else, let it be said that the chaplain has lived in the midst of his congregation where he has learned to appreciate the problems and perils of his flock and, then, to base his religious programs upon them.

The latter emphasis is well portrayed in Eakin's Let's Think About Our Religion:

"Churches do not have to limit themselves to preaching, administering sacraments, comforting the saints, helping a little to alleviate misery, and waiting for God to act. They do not have to stand aloof from life, trying to influence it from outside and above. They can take their place inside life, implement their ideals. It is a question of which kind of religiousness and which kind of religion dominates. It is also a question of how deeply concerned we are about getting things done - the things for which enlightened religion stands."<sup>1</sup>

Implications for the church's program are easily drawn from these methods. Counseling will emerge as a dominant element; sermons, talks, and literature must be clothed in language man will understand. At the same time, better spacing and timing is necessary in all three phases. Of great rank, however, is the idea that the religious leadership must move beyond the realm of the pulpit and the pews. If the community is rural, the minister should know the nature of the farmer, the problems which baffle him,

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1. Frank and Mildred Moody Eakin: 'Let's Think About Our Religion, p. 9.

his joys and chief pleasures as well as the habits which may accompany his field of work, and the language of the man himself. An "overall" ministry would be in keeping with the spirit of that soldier of Christ who donned a uniform to contact his charge.

### C. The Veteran's Expectations

#### 1. The Veteran and Secular Education

Today, hundreds of G I's are overcrowding the American schoolroom. Religious education in the past has borrowed freely from secular education and a look to the high school or university would be extremely profitable. From such a view may be developed some new emphasis for the church program. It has already been indicated that the army which fought this war was the best educated one in the history of the United States. The provisions of the G I Bill of Rights are making it possible for the completion or continuance of education for the veteran. Reports so far are inclined to place the "war students" in a higher bracket scholastically than their fellows. The following statement was clipped from the New York Times during the spring of 1945:

"The average grades of student veterans at Indiana University have been seven per cent higher than those of their non-service classmates, a study of 300 ex-service men at the university discloses. The veterans averaged three years and four months above the age of the civilian students. Eighty-six per cent are single. Fifty-four per cent had no previous college work. A quarter of the veterans are in the business school."

The University of Indiana is not isolated in that the veterans average higher grades. Many of these veterans realize that they have lost much time and manifest keen determination to make it up as quickly as possible. Others have grown far beyond their years and the additional maturity is an asset in their studies. Yet, there is another side to this educational issue which must be stressed. Veterans who have been subjected to military training and the rigors of battle are not too pleased with the educational techniques of the American school. One of the most striking examples of this is the story of a young ex-Marine, veteran of Guadalcanal, who was sent home because of combat fatigue. Returning to high school, he was utterly amazed at what he found. He discovered that it was against the rules to talk realistically about his experiences, and some of the girls were forbidden to date him. After his life with the ever-famous Carlson's Raiders, he found the "prim little talks on current events" in the schoolroom more than a little ridiculous. To him the school program was little more than a joke. Of it he wrote:

"This process they call education is not what I want or need; and I represent hundreds of thousands of youths who will soon be streaming back to resume their studies, fellows, who are hardened adventurers before their time."<sup>1</sup>

In general he criticized the school program because it was tradition-bound, inefficient, and a waste of time and

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1. Reader's Digest, February, 1945, p. 33.

talent. This young man who came out of an environment of death naturally was not inspired by prim little talks on anything. The same may well be applied to the religious education program. Outmoded organizations bound to some tradition of the past must be replaced with agencies related to life and the living of it. Inefficiency must be overcome and time must be used wisely and well. As for talent, the church must uncover it, direct it, and move it into the proper channels. If more direct, practical learning is desired in the public school system, more direct, practical living is required in the church.

The young ex-Marine listed what he considered the two major purposes of education: earning a livelihood and preparing for God-fearing citizenship. The latter purpose is especially significant for the church. If veterans expect a secular program to produce God-fearing citizens, their expectations of the church must be exceedingly great.

There are many who say that the church school has too little time to accomplish a great deal. Before one pleads for more time, however, one must be sure that the available minutes are expended to the fullest extent. Of his schooling after the war, the young veteran remarked, "We Marine raiders crowded that much learning into four months and loved it."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Ibid., p. 34.

In the church the general tendency is to fear that we will require too much; hence, too little is achieved and this little more through the effort of leaders than followers. For many, the rigid training of military service has been a real challenge. Demands upon youth are usually met if presented attractively and wisely.

Upon his return to the classroom, the veteran finds himself in the midst of a younger group for whom he has little sympathy. As for the youth Waller says:

"Post war youth is worse than indifferent to the veteran; it resents him and is antagonistic to him. The veteran cannot understand that these younger men are jealous because they have been cheated of their war, or that they are disorganized because they grew to maturity under the confusing conditions of war."<sup>1</sup>

For the program of religious educators, a real problem is posed here. Is it wise to have classes of instruction on a chronological basis? Should these two groups have separate instruction? Will one set of materials work equally well with both groups? In general, Waller concludes his discussion of the veteran and education with the idea that special preparation on the part of schools and colleges is necessary to handle veterans successfully. Curricula must be adapted and teachers and administrators should familiarize themselves with veteran psychology.<sup>2</sup> That being true, the church will be wise to consider special

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1. Waller, op. cit., p. 154.
2. Ibid., p. 158.



techniques and preparations in its program. The writer's survey of churches, however, indicated that very few ministers feel special preparation is demanded by the situation but the actualities outweigh their answers.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. The Veteran and Religious Education

As a result of the perspective view which they have had of the church, a number of service men and women have visualized its task as never before. Interestingly enough, many of their observations have been recorded. The Link has often published such writings of the G I. Unfortunately, few ministers are acquainted with this publication, according to the writer's questionnaire which revealed only twelve of fifty-nine ministers knew anything about it, and this lack of acquaintance is of great loss.<sup>2</sup> A number of expectations as revealed in one report in The Link will now be considered.

On Ascension Island the G I representatives of twenty-five different denominations devoted two months' discussion to the subject of the post-war church. They summarized their findings under a number of positive statements centering in important aspects of the church's program. In order to keep the full significance of these views, selected portions of the report will be given verbatim.

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1. Appendix A, #25, 50, 51.

2. Cf. Appendix A, #24.

a. "Leadership - The task of re-establishing the church in the lives of men will require leaders with the courage to challenge the status quo - men who will not be dismayed by hardships and persecution, men who will not compromise the teachings of Christ for the sake of expediency, comfort or security.

"We expect our seminaries to restore discipline of spirit, mind and body, to prepare ministers who can truly say 'Lo, we have left all and followed Thee.'

"Our youth will accept the sacrifices and prove their worth if only we offer a challenge, one not too easy and purposeless."<sup>1</sup>

Is this, the church has a right to ask, only the opinion of a group of men on Ascension Island? A cursory glance at other writings intensifies the meaningfulness of this soldier opinion. Burkhart reiterates:

"Training for such an undertaking gets little attention in any seminary, and sermons grow more out of books and center in content rather than spring out of the needs of people."<sup>2</sup>

A chaplain states the situation thusly:

"The church of the future will find, too, that she must insist upon a higher caliber of servant to represent her. She must no longer be content to send forth representatives into the world who are half-baked intellectual and spiritual specimens. She needs men: tall, sun-crowned men, men who are not afraid of the world, men who can carry the message of the love and hope of the Church to the teeming millions throughout the world, men whose thinking is clear, whose hearts are on fire with the love of God and the love of humanity, upright men, simple men, God-fearing men, men whom the world cannot crush, men who are harmless as doves and wise as serpents in carrying out her work."<sup>3</sup>

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1. The Link, June, 1945, p. 22.
2. Burkhart, op. cit., p. 39.
3. Newell D. Lindner: The Returning Veteran and the Church of the Future, p. 12.

In many instances, men in uniform have felt called to enter the ministry upon their return home. From their ranks indisputably will come some of the best leaders of the years ahead.

b. "The Message of the Church - Our churches must impress upon their congregations the meaning of Christ's supreme sacrifice. The message must be one the members cannot leave in their pews from Sunday to Sunday but must carry with them into their homes, their offices and to their workbenches.

"The church must inspire them to take up their crosses and follow Him, making religion the center of their lives so that Jesus may not again quote the prophecy of Isaiah, 'This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouths, and honoreth me with their lips; but their hearts are far from me. But in vain they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.'"<sup>1</sup>

There will be those who will be greatly disillusioned upon their return to civilian life. Unfortunately they will discover all too soon that, although they have been willing to die for a cause, many civilians are not willing to live for it. This, then, is involved in the message of the church - that it be presented in such a way that men will long to avail themselves of its power and to live in accordance with its precepts.

c. "Inter-Faith Relations - In diversity there may be health, but in division only weakness. In the churches today there is little diversity and many divisions. Many returning service men find themselves opposed to denominational narrowness simply because in the service they were thrown into a common life with all faiths and came to know them better. Jews, Catholics and Protestants, under such conditions, suddenly discover that they worship the same God.

"Our churches at home must cast off their prejudices

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1. The Link, June, 1945, p. 22.

and smug superiority for the task of learning of one another and of developing mutual understanding. Doctrine must come under close scrutiny to separate the teachings of Christ from mere platitudes and personal opinions.

"We wish to see different faiths co-operate in common community problems. Where necessary, a general pooling of resources (that are not purely devotional) is desired so that communities will have facilities hitherto unavailable to any single church."<sup>1</sup>

As has been well stated here the soldier has come into contact with those of every faith during this war, many of whom he has learned to admire and respect. He will doubtlessly heartily endorse a program of cooperation among the various branches of brotherhood. And, certainly, there are many worthy projects, local and national, which may best be performed when all men work together. There is even yet a more basic element. In many congregations the emphasis underlying America's part in the war has been approached from the standpoint of the preservation of the freedoms - the religious being one of the big four. What great contradiction is this then that having preserved that freedom some religious leaders and educators look askance at those of other faiths? Their mistakes are exploited for propagandizing purposes and often they become the butt of crude stories and jokes. Cooperation does not imply adherence to identical creeds and beliefs. Common sense, if nothing else, should tell one that Protestants, and Catholics, and Jews striking simultaneously at slums

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1. Ibid.

in a concentrated, organized program will accomplish far more than each group working individually - and, as for problems of this type, cooperation can be secured. Further, in the working together may come more understanding and appreciation of each other. In this war the men of all religions have fought side by side for one great purpose. To the veterans, it seems only logical that they should be able to work in a peacetime world for the betterment of it, each in his own way and, yet, cooperatively for the common good. Perhaps the church needs to repeat the words of the hymn, "You go your way and I'll go mine, but let us walk together."

Lieutenant Newell D. Lindner, Chaplain U.S.N.R., has said on this subject:

"The church of the future will find, too, that the old competitive denominationalism is a luxury it can no longer afford. Such men in the service who have been brought to the reality of God have been brought thither by Christian ministers, whose only designation was 'Chaplain'. I doubt very much if any appreciable number of veterans who show any interest in the church of the future will be interested in denominational labels."<sup>1</sup>

More than one writer has echoed the conviction that soldiers have an aversion to organized religion as such. Such aversions will only be intensified by a denomination whose pride is in its label - not in its Lord. In many small communities a number of churches struggle along with many

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1. Lindner, op. cit., p. 12.

pews empty at every service. In such cases, how much better it would be to have one church really alive than a dozen churches half-dead! This idea has been extensively proclaimed by E. Stanley Jones in his Proposal for a Federal Union of the Churches of America.<sup>1</sup>

d. "Missionary Work - The health of a church follows closely upon the strength of its missionary work, both at home and abroad. At home there are many isolated or sparsely-settled communities lacking a church. People in these places need to know more about the present reality of Christ; they sorely need strength and guidance available from God for daily needs; they require his invitation to the personal relationship of children of God.

"Abroad, a still larger field exists. A missionary can do much to provide a solid Christian foundation on which new communities can grow. The crumbs of good that have been cast on the waters already have returned a thousand-fold to our fliers and fighters in strange or enemy jungles. Our people should be made more aware of the work that has been done and the work that still waits for facilities and support. A strengthened missionary policy can do a great deal to promote a future peaceful brotherhood of nations."<sup>2</sup>

One of the greatest challenges to religious education comes through the veteran's new conception of mission fields. The Student Volunteer Movement published a release in 1945 stating that one in every five or six European service men and women had visited a mission station. First-hand information has inculcated a new understanding - often superior to the average layman's conception. First-hand information has been followed by the

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1. Address given by E. Stanley Jones, October 21, 1944, Columbus, Ohio.
2. The Link, June, 1945, p. 22.

equally important first-hand experience. More than a few lives have been salvaged as a result of mission activity and the veteran has been able to see for himself how Christianity elevates the lives of men on all planes. He knows from eyewitnessing that church literature has not always done justice to this cause. Experiences of these men have led to definite reactions. Freely, without pleading and coaching, many have made financial contributions to the fields themselves. More than ever one sees in this deep meaning. Where causes are seen aright giving follows. An analysis of church programs may indicate that offerings are small because that which preceded them in the service was likewise little. Religious education must see to it that projects are not presented in "dollar and cent" lectures. Some of the members taken to the slums would get a better sermon than from the chancel of the church. In other words, the cause must become personal to the churchmen. Only then will the pulsing of the heart move the pursestrings.

Secondly, one notes that in the latter months of 1944 and the earlier ones of 1945, there were requests by service men to the SVM for information relative to full time Christian service. How many of these have been influenced by missions is an unknown factor but one which cannot be discarded. Religious educators should note that

church leaders of tomorrow may often wear the "olive drab" and programs related to this idea will accomplish far more if they come at the hearers and readers from the standpoint of those things seen and heard. They have seen the need; they know far better than others; they must be shown the opening and quickened for the task.

Thirdly, religious education will do exceedingly well to use these men as resource persons. It is not fallacious to say that the better understanding of geography helps one in his approach to others. Not all personnel visiting mission stations are Christian but, at least, they may give a clear-cut picture of the general features. It is also an opportunity for the church to utilize persons in some capacity wherein they possess real knowledge. A veteran would feel less self-conscious and render greater service speaking of that which he knows than of some vague topic in a youth quarterly.

In the last place, there have been some converted by Christians in other lands. That which went forth from the church has in these instances returned to it. The testimony of missions in the lives of American veterans is a chapter worthy of remembrance and use. The church must now proceed from what has been gained here.

e. "Economic Responsibilities - Most of our social ills have economic roots that can be cut by a forward-looking church. Critics who insist the church



has no right to meddle in economic affairs are right insofar as purely economic matters are concerned. However, they must remember, for example, that sweatshops were abolished, not for economic reasons, but on moral grounds. It is along these lines that the church should exercise its moral control, leaving the purely economic work in the hands of those with the requisite technical knowledge. The church has a right to insist that the true privilege of human life be considered in the economic structure."<sup>1</sup>

The thoughtful combat veteran who returns from war may have a new slant on economics, too. He will, in many instances, have discovered that the economic problem is not characteristic of America alone. As Wells puts it:

"His travel and experiences have shown him that the labor problem is not peculiar to the United States. What about those plantation workers in the South Sea Islands, the new industrial centers in India and Africa, or Indian miners in South America? Indeed, a 'global standard of living' and 'world wide rights' are overwhelming phrases. Who, he wonders is concerned about the common people of the earth? Are the members of the Christian churches?"<sup>2</sup>

The Christ the church advocates lifts a man from the gutter, not in terms of great material wealth but in terms of standards and ideas. Somehow, the church must strike at those elements which debase a man's economic level. He must not only subsist; he must live!

f. "Political Conscience - It has been truly said, 'The great function of the Church is to be the conscience of the State.' Our churches should be concerned with the moral side of politics and politicians, not with the making of political policy.

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1. Ibid.
2. Charles A. Wells, A Veteran Came Home Today, p. 9.

Their function is to urge all members to the fullest use of civic rights in the Christian spirit and to remind them of the principles and precepts they must consider in ordering their political lives."<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting to note that although the men do not feel the church should meddle in politics, they are quite sure she should influence them from the standpoint of ideals and principles. Certainly, the impetus of the religious element in the building of this nation was also uppermost in their minds. The church must not sit idly by in the presence of graft and political corruption. She must be interested in the caliber of leadership and religious education is one of the mediums for insuring a wholesome interest. A church which does not raise its voice through its lesser channels - literature, talks, discussions, sermons - will never raise its voice through its best means, man himself. Many churches during the war followed carefully such history-making events as the San Francisco conference, and voiced their sentiments. What was done on a large scale must be accomplished on a smaller one. Every local community should feel the impact of Christian expression. Intelligent discussions of political events would help far more than one realizes in uplifting the political ideal. But the aim must not be purely discussion; there must be some expression of ideas

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1. The Link, June, 1945, p. 22.

formulated.

g. "Racial Feelings - The silence of many churches upon seeing every principle of Christian tolerance and brotherhood smashed by rabble-rousers and race-baiters is not to be condoned or continued.

"Other racial groups are entitled to equality of opportunity to earn a living, as well as to social opportunity and legal justice in every realm. They must not be denied equal educational facilities nor the right to vote in the country for which they are serving and dying. Few people, least of all the Negro, desire unnecessary familiarity and mixing, but discrimination against their rights as human beings has made a mockery of Christian precepts."<sup>1</sup>

When the church acknowledges its debt to those who paid supremely for this war, it will acknowledge the white, the yellow, and the black races. American, Negro, Filipino, Nisei - all have fought gloriously and heroically. Too, the G I has gone far afield to discover that beneath languages and customs, all men are amazingly alike; for each there is suffering, heartache, pain, or joy. The returning soldier may harbor great resentment against those members of the church who are unwilling to share their pews and their bread with these of their fellowmen. Some of the natives in out-of-the-way places may often be designated as uncivilized but many an American soldier gladly acknowledges that he owes his life to the fuzzy-wuzzies.

It is an untruth to give the impression that

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1. Ibid.

every man and woman who has served with the armed forces will be ready to accept other races on an equal basis. There will be some whose impressions will be expressed in resentment and hatred. One group of soldiers in a discussion of race relationships extended the idea that every man, woman, and child over three in the Japanese Empire should be exterminated.

These soldiers, some of whom had witnessed so-called Japanese atrocities, were not mincing words nor apologizing for them. Neither must the church be evasive nor apologetic in its program. Such an attitude on the part of any group is a fertile field ready for cultivation. The idea, if carried through, would result in a race of stooges - a system contrary to everything democratic and Christian. However, before the church can adequately face this situation, it must demonstrate the practice of Christian brotherhood at home. The problem will not be alleviated if it gets no further than discussion. Every church curriculum should have something along this line including a real place in the pews and in the church fellowship for those of other races.

On all of these issues, the important job is to come at them while they are still alive. These problems which are now burning issues should be handled at this

crucial hour, not later when "white heat" has become cold ashes. It is far easier to change attitudes of those antagonistic to a cause than of those who are out-and-out indifferent.

h. "Education - Both secular and religious education has been neglected by many churches. Where secular education is handled by the state, the community should have a composite Jewish and Christian body capable of keeping a check on what is taught, how it is taught, and the fitness of the teachers. Church schools should be encouraged wherever possible to obtain adequate facilities and competent teachers.

"Religious education in the home, by example as well as by precept, should be stressed by our churches. Sunday schools need a complete reorganization. The greatest need is for competent, carefully-trained teachers in a well-organized program, instead of the catch-as-catch-can system now generally in use. More time during the week must be allotted for this purpose. One hour each Sunday is not enough to supply a working knowledge of faith."<sup>1</sup>

Religious education has been discussed from many angles, but, again, three aspects of the veteran's approach should be noted: an expressed need for a check on secular education, better teachers in the public schools and church schools, more education within the home, and a greater expenditure of time for obtaining Christian knowledge. The soldier then looks to three basic cornerstones - the home, the church, and the school, not as three separate units but as one whole with three parts.

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1. Ibid.

i. "Recreation - There are two general ways in which churches may assure wholesome recreation for its people.

"First, by exercising control over existing forms. For example, they can raise the moral standards of motion pictures by eliminating obnoxious materials from them and by forming civic groups to keep the community's facilities free from disreputable and harmful influences.

"Second, by providing their own recreational facilities. Competitive (sic) athletics and social events for young people have a definite place in a well-directed program. Such are especially important during holidays and summer vacations, as well as after school hours. Recreation centers may be set up in conjunction with other groups in order to provide a place of common interests and endeavor.

"We pray that the above statements may be of some help. May all of us keep in mind the words of St. Paul: 'Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and sin which so easily besets us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.' "1

Nowadays, one is hearing much of juvenile delinquency, one of whose sources is the wrong use of leisure time. Some churches have never considered it wise to sponsor a live recreational program. But this one fact is relevant - recreation being a natural pursuit, people will have it in one form or another. The aim of the church should not be to eliminate it but to raise its standards so that it, too, may glorify God. Too much

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1. Ibid.

degrading, commercialized entertainment has replaced that recreation which re-creates. Actually, in this respect, the nation is fast becoming a group of spectators, some modern version of that paganism which impelled people to sit in an arena where human life was coarsened and flesh was cheap. Such recreation eventually degenerates into degradation. Obviously, the church cannot over night reform this feature of modern life. Until it can, however, it will do well to uphold recreation which accomplishes its true purpose. Someone has humorously but truthfully remarked, "Some folks go to the devil because they don't have anywhere else to go." Religious education must be vitally concerned with the anywhere else in the realm of recreation. Fighting the devil with his own weapons is often extremely advantageous. A church offering nothing except sermons on the subject should not be too surprised if its members cater to the world outside. If we begin with a man where he is, we may often have to reach him through his athletic prowess, his dramatic tastes, or his artistic temperament. No group or person could ever offer any man more in his chosen field than the church and Christ.

#### D. Adapting the Program of Religious Education

Dr. Isaac Beckes of the International Council of Religious Education informs the church that only about

twentypper cent of the churches provide meaningful activity for youth other than the Sunday School<sup>1</sup>, and already it has been indicated that the adequacy of the school is questionable. Religious education must more than ever emphasize a program which will be meaningful for every age group. In this way, the church may make a real inroad into the family life.

Every local church should study its own curriculum to see how well the needs are being met by what it offers. In the church of the future, the sermon will no longer be the high light of the program. Rather, it will become the point at which the threads of the pattern are woven together.

In the past, many have thought of religious education in terms of church schools where teachers filled pupils with Biblical facts. Now, religious education must be conceived in terms of an overall program whose every activity is geared to the ultimate objective, and one activity must not overshadow another. A program for veterans within the church should be related to the whole. It is not so much a question of a new activity as it is of better planning and organization.

In this war, as in others, there have been those

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1. Burkhart, op. cit., p. 38.



who are religious but cannot see the value of organized religion. It is not enough for the church to minister to those that occupy the pews; it must minister to those without the doors and this group presents a direct challenge. Vital education must create within men the desire to share what they have with others. Into many communities will come new members of the Kingdom who must be welcomed but also there will come those who thirst for a vital experience. Even the least of these must not be passed by. To accomplish this the church must prove that it is more than a place where a sermon is preached. One can get that from a radio, book, or newspaper. The church must generate that communion of fellowship to such a degree that imitations of it will never satisfy. Harry C. Munro has said:

"The young Adult Fellowship should literally major in fellowship. Several of the transition experiences which form the vestibule to young adulthood have involved the shattering of existing fellowships. Consequently, the greatest hunger of young adulthood is a fellowship hunger. The church which helps rebuild or replace these shattered fellowships within an enriching, congenial Christian group will have laid one important part of the foundation for Christian adulthood. Don't worry too much if all the young Adult Fellowship seems to want is to have a good time."<sup>1</sup>

If transition experiences shatter existing fellowships, this age has excelled in shattering, not for

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1. Harry C. Munro: International Journal of Religious Education, June, 1945, p. 15.

one age level, but all. Fellowship must be carefully and assiduously planned. For the combat veteran who has seen action, it may be quiet but sustaining. For the soldier who strained in vain to get combat duty, it may be recreation and action to compensate for those lonely months of monotony.

The entire program of religious education must no longer emphasize hell as the final stop for those of its members who fail to conform. The veterans "will have confronted such horrors as reduce the threat of hell in some future existence to a joke."<sup>1</sup> The best means of supplanting fear is with faith and love.

#### E. Summary

This chapter has attempted to point up the educational experience of the veteran in light of his inadequate knowledge and preparation through the church school. Secular educational experiences have been shown in relation to the way religious education may profit by advances made therein and much time has been spent in a consideration of the veteran's viewpoints regarding the church. These points have been analyzed and elaborated. From all of them the church, in the light of its own peculiar membership, may greatly profit.

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1. Sperry, op. cit., p. 39.

CHAPTER IV  
GETTING TO WORK

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### GETTING TO WORK

#### A. Introduction

Not only are there relatively few subjects receiving more widespread attention today than that of the veteran, with newspapers, books, and radio programs alert to this pertinent issue, but increasingly there are demands for action. Large industrial concerns have microscopically surveyed their plants with an eye to making room for veterans, especially the disabled. The Veterans' Administration, under the leadership of Omar Bradley, is rethinking its program in terms of crucial needs and reforms. The church, too, must move beyond the realm of talk if it is actually to accomplish. The purpose of this chapter is to find a medium of expression for the church in a practical program. Projects will be considered and analyzed in the light of the contributions they may make to the veteran of World War II, to the church, and to its total membership. While the evils of war are not to be minimized it is to be recognized that the way of God is such that He is able to build from the ashes. It must be the way of the church that she will not let this issue pass until she is blessed by it.

## B. Projects

### 1. A Service File

Of the fifty-nine ministers responding to the writer's survey during the summer of 1945, only fifteen indicated they had a definite file of service personnel. A file is not to be thought of in terms of a drawer in which one haphazardly places correspondence. A file, as defined here for purposes of clarification, is an up-to-date record of a man's experience and progress. It should be a continuous record, and should begin prior to a man's entry in service. At this particular point, one may again profit from the experiences of secular education. Accurate records are kept of a pupil's experience throughout the years, these records often not only containing scholastic markings but a grade or notation relative to attitudes and ideals. Upon graduation, these records are all assembled in one place. A principal utilizes this file when asked to recommend a student for college or job placement. Obviously, such detailed record keeping entails much work and accuracy. The average church could not even begin to approximate this procedure but a simplified plan might be used to great benefit.

Strange as it may seem, the army has been able in untold instances to uncover talent and encourage pursuits undreamed of by the layman at home. An article in the

magazine section of the New York Times, dated March 18, 1945, carries this premise:

"Men who have never been in command in their lives, emerge from military experience as potential executives. Officer Candidate Schools have given opportunities of leadership to many men, who, in civilian life, were clamped in jobs or towns too small for them. The tremendous responsibilities in combat given to non-commissioned officers have developed equally astounding executive qualities in many 'little shots' in civilian life."

Leadership is only one aspect in which resources of an individual have been awakened. The various channels of activity in which each man has engaged in military service is revealing. Does the church need a Sunday School secretary? Some veteran who served as company clerk or first sergeant may have a "knack" for that responsibility. He who has overcome the intricacies of the Army's Morning Report may, without difficulty, accurately keep church records. Does the church need recreational leadership or teachers? Then, she must know the jobs and interests of those men and women who represented her in war. Some mess sergeant may supply a need created by a church dinner or banquet. He has been trained to serve large numbers adequately and without waste.

The church concentrating on needs in Germany or in some mission field could have first-hand information if she knew what veteran was qualified to speak on the subject.

In the light of these issues, a file becomes a live and vital issue. But there is even yet a greater value of such a record. If history repeats itself, and there is every indication that it will, many veterans will never return to the same community. They will set out for new fields and locations. The writer's questionnaire again revealed that eighteen per cent of veterans discharged in churches prior to VE day had left their home communities.<sup>1</sup> The ministry of an individual church to a member should not stop when he withdraws from the community. The effective Christian ministry must link him to a fellowship in his new terminus. Unfortunately, it is at this point the church so sadly neglects her citizenry. The leadership so intent on padding its own rolls has little time to devote to a ministry without its gates. Without too much work a minister or Director of Religious Education, however, could withdraw a record from a file and mail it to an alert church of similar beliefs in a near or distant neighborhood. This would enable the church to move in before a man was enmeshed by other forces.

If the church is to be cognizant of the abilities of her veterans, she must know the sum total of their experience. A failure to recognize a veteran's

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1. Cf. Appendix A, #9.

growth and cultivation of new interests does not do him justice and deprives the church of a more effective acceptance of responsibilities on the part of its membership.

Doubtlessly there will be those who agree that such a system is impractical as vast numbers of veterans have already been discharged. One cannot deny that thousands have long since received civilian status, but no single church will have the entirety of its representatives at one moment. The Army of Occupation still claims G I's by the score and, as yet, no one can say how long these forces will necessarily occupy their various posts. To this number one must add those who compose our large military units at home and still others awaiting the passing of time before they are to be mustered out. The eminence of compulsory military training, too, lies upon the horizon and an affirmative answer to this question would greatly increase the responsibility of the church.

These facts do not strengthen the view of those who feel it is too late. Even where there are many veterans within the congregation, the church will not be the poorer for a greater knowledge of her membership. As yet there is still time to begin but a postponement of plans, an indifferent attitude toward basic helps, may make the work of the church in this sphere forever too late.

## 2. A Permanent History

In almost every phase of life, historical records



have been an asset. Through the pages of history is written a record which enables man to profit by the experiences of others. Forty-three of fifty-nine churches surveyed were established prior to World War I, yet only five of these now have available records of service personnel within the congregation.<sup>1</sup> Of the fifty-nine ministers reporting, it is significant, however, that thirty felt a permanent record would be of great value. Certainly, a church might readily find in this a worthwhile project, one which would capture the imagination of both civilian and veteran. Through such an approach the civilian might see the real cost of the war in terms of the individual congregation, the losses incurred, and the results as a whole. For the veteran, there would be an objective approach to the entire situation. One of the churches in New York City is planning a printed booklet which will carry pictures of veterans, their length and place of service, promotions and decorations, and the program of the church in relation to them. Associated with this might be a live wire scrapbook composed of letters of veterans, snaps and clippings. One might even dare to suggest that a "miniature museum" would be more than possible in some localities. Part of the historical record might well be a series of maps, such as one indicating the many diverse places of the world where service was rendered and,

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1. Cf. Appendix A, #34.

another, the final resting places of those who lost their lives in line of duty. In fact, some committee might be appointed to discover as much as possible about the cemeteries overseas where veterans were buried. This information related to families and friends would be of priceless value.

In wartime, many poems and stories come from the trenches, not always of high literary value but extremely timely in that they often depict a man's inner thoughts and reactions. Where possible, a collection of these might help direct thinking and action.

The purpose of these various things might be misconstrued as a glorification of war. That it must never be; it is only one of the means of picking up the shattered and broken fragments. To many a veteran, a history of such a sort, would not appeal. As yet, the experience is all too recent and fraught with hurt and resentment. But, in days to come, quite naturally as the red glow of sundown follows a stormy day, he will be grateful for a memory whose pain was alleviated and whose joy was permanently kept by the church.

### 3. Resource Personnel.

It has already been indicated that veterans would make very good resource persons. This has been noted in connection with geography, missions, and international friendship, as well as from the standpoint of leadership within the church. A congregation could so easily sponsor

a World Friendship Night in which these veterans could give a bird's eye view of the various countries where they served. On the other hand, with the memory of war still fresh in the veteran's mind, peace forums and discussions would be appropriate. In all of these, the veteran would find his place. One must remember, however, that, at least, for a time the veteran is apt to be shy and sensitive. He will find it easier to stand in the company of his peers, the other veterans, than elsewhere. Consequently, good planning would provide for the use of more than one such person on any program.

#### 4. Opening the Homes

This modern age with its intricate devices and mechanisms has done much to turn the home inside out. More and more women have assumed business and professional positions. Consequently, the cell of the home has been seriously impaired. This is not due chiefly to the changing role of women but to a multiplicity of factors, including the magnetic attraction of commercialized entertainments and the consuming interest in other activities. Of primary concern to the returning veteran is a job and a home. His great interest in the former often is to insure his hope of the latter. The church then must, among other things, help him to build up an adequate conception for the home. Families within the congregation should be encouraged to have more fellowship by their own hearths and to extend this

fellowship to some of these returning men; a fellowship which cannot be wholly supplied within the walls of the church. Herein, a veteran may gain a true picture of the type of home which may best give happiness to all its members. Casual invitations, but friendly ones, to those returning will go a long way toward the establishment of such an emphasis. It should never take the form of an arranged event but should be spontaneous, prompted by a spirit of true service and love.

#### 5. Memorials to the Dead

For some time to come, many a veteran will be haunted by the memories of those comrades-in-arms who died in service. He will be greatly interested in perpetuating the memory of those men as an assurance that they have not been forgotten. Perhaps, the best perpetuation of that memory will be - not in stained glass windows - but in living memorials, memorials which will help to better the life so many died to preserve. When one thinks of the tiny wooden crosses, simple but expressive, which mark the military cemeteries throughout the world, the idea of elaborate monuments of cold marble appears a little grotesque. Already, in this nation, millions of dollars have been expended through the years for such purposes, and to what avail? More specific and practical would be the processing of funds to build a tiny chapel in some remote jungle spot or the establishment of a scholarship to educate men in the ways

of peace. This idea has already caught flame in the hearts of some soldiers. In the Bougainville Jungle a chapel was erected in honor of a nineteen year old Texan, first soldier of the infantry to lose his life on that soil.<sup>1</sup> Parallel to this story is that of a group of Marines in the South Pacific who, under the leadership of a chaplain, gave funds to educate six natives.<sup>2</sup> Actually the cost of such an item is nil when compared with a similar one here.<sup>3</sup>

Churches must also be prepared to advise relatives in regard to bringing home the war dead. The allocation of funds for this specific purpose is even yet a congressional issue. Robert Sherrod, correspondent of Life magazine wrote in connection with this thought:

"I have seen a lot of men die in this war. I talked to some of them within five minutes of their going, to many of them within a few hours. I do not recall that any man told me what he wanted done with his body. But I feel morally certain - as certain as anyone can feel about something to which he does not know the definite answer - that these men would prefer to lie where their comrades buried them."<sup>4</sup>

Memorials dedicated to this end would do far more than cold stone to convince the soldiers that it is the purpose of the church that "these things" shall not happen again. Aside from the actual joy of giving, the soldiers had the task of

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1. Sperry, op. cit., p. 9.
2. The Link, December, 1944.
3. Ibid., Board, Transportation, Education, only \$20.00 a year in the Gilbert Islands.
4. Reader's Digest, September, 1945, p. 75.

deciding the basis upon which the recipients should be selected. These stories are not isolated examples of the magnanimity of the American soldier. They are but typical illustrations of the response received when the proper stimulus is given.

#### 6. A Library

No one denies the value of reading materials in the formation of ideas and ideals. However, despite the relative importance of books, magazines, and newspapers, the church in general has not always been too concerned over the content of these published materials. In an age which is seeking and searching, it becomes more important than ever that the church throw its full strength in the direction of these matters. The astonishing sale of such books as The Robe by Lloyd Douglas and The Apostle by Sholem Asch should convince many a skeptic that the public will still read literature with a religious theme. An assembly of such books in a small church library might pay untold dividends. Too, literature racks containing tracts and pamphlets of social importance could be effectively used. While much free church literature is available on subjects of interest and concern, too many churches labor under the belief that such materials will never be read; thence, they are never supplied. The returning veteran will be deluged with materials of every hue and description. To counteract the bad, the church must offer him something

better, and that immediately. A collection of materials relative to his own problems and confusions would be most helpful, especially if they convinced him that his problems are the common experience of veterans the world over.

#### 7. Community Service Projects

It has been estimated that forty-two per cent of service personnel came from communities with a population of 25,000 or less. In these thinly populated areas, the pooling of resources is much to be desired. Some small towns and villages have organized a ministerial association which often sponsors a Union Service for the entire community - a common worship period where members of the various denominations come together for one great purpose. Certainly, such an organization could easily ascertain the resources of the community - economic, physical, recreational, and spiritual. The group, however, should move beyond the boundaries of church property in surveying available amusements, entertainments, libraries, parks, medicinal facilities for diverse disorders, educational opportunities, and economic problems. In far too many communities the church finds little it can sanction in the way of leisure time pursuits but offers absolutely nothing to compensate for the inferior. This condition must not be tolerated as the status quo. The individual church should see to it that pertinent information is conveniently posted regarding Employment Offices, Veterans' Administration Facilities,

legal advisers, medical aid, and general community and church activities. The fostering of inter-church recreation, discussions, and worship would be a true challenge to the veteran spirit.

In yet one other important sphere should a community church organization reach - into the lives of veterans claiming no religious affiliation. Again, the pooling of resources would make a city wide survey comparatively simple. Where veterans are thus contacted, they should be invited to the church of their choice. But the best way to win them to the church is to have them become a part of some Christian fellowship. Through the use of this medium much will be gained for it satisfies one of the most basic needs of the returning soldier. A survey alone, however, is insufficient. As soon as a veteran becomes a part of the community, contact must be established before detrimental influences begin their work.

In larger communities the basic problem is apt to be somewhat different. Too often there will be duplication of facilities and the veteran may wander through an endless maze of organizations before he stumbles upon that which answers his urgent need. Hence, the duty of the church clearly is to investigate, sift, and recommend for the veteran.

#### 8. Hospital Ministry

No small part of the church's responsibility will



be with reference to the disabled veteran. Of him Waller writes:

"The disabled veteran is the man for whom the war never comes to an end. He is the bittered veteran, and the one whose claim upon society is greatest. More than any other soldier, he is in danger of pauperization. The war never ends for the disabled veteran because he carries a reminder of it in his body. His arm, leg, or eye is gone, and he wages an unceasing struggle to live without it. He must inevitably shape his life and adjust his personality to his disability. In everything he does or thinks or dreams he must remember his handicaps."<sup>1</sup>

Scattered throughout the length and breadth of the land are hospitals of the Veterans' Administration, hospitals whose wards will increase until 1970, the peak year for war casualties. Recently, the Veterans' Administration has been called to task for the deplorable conditions existing in these institutions - overcrowding, inadequate and indifferent care, and disregard for mental patients. Perhaps these conditions as printed in the Reader's Digest were slightly exaggerated, but they were certainly no incentive to a veteran facing permanent hospitalization to make use of these facilities.<sup>2</sup> The writer's survey revealed that six of two hundred twenty-two veterans are faced with this prospect and yet others with a period of temporary invalidism.<sup>3</sup> Too often this group of personnel is forgotten because they compose a distant minority who no

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1. Waller, op. cit., p. 159.
2. Reader's Digest, May, 1945.
3. Cf. Appendix A, #6, 16.

longer occupy the pews. But here again is a challenge to the church with the love of God as its standard. Insofar as is deemed feasible, veterans are hospitalized in the facility nearest their homes. This indicates that many churches will have ready access to these patients who so sorely need hope for the future. It is again the responsibility of the church to bring its weight to bear upon these conditions which may impair, not improve, a man's state. But this is only the beginning of the job. Improved conditions of wards, nourishment, and treatment are but a step in the right direction. The church must make itself felt personally in these hospitals. Visits of a friendly nature would serve as a reminder that the patient is not forgotten. Nor should these merely be "pastoral calls" of the chaplain and family moves of loyalty and devotion. These are the expected; the God of love demands the unexpected - visits from the laity and the local pastor who will lay the ill upon their hearts. In the future when a man invites his neighbor to ride along on such an errand of good will as casually as he does to a football game or a movie, the Kingdom of God will truly be working in men's hearts. Special programs for these men and remembrances other than the usual seasonal ones are in order. A Red Cross package may mean a lot but it can never compare with that wrapped by an individual with the addition of the unspeakable little touches. The program of the church must be such that every

member be prompted to minister in such a capacity. Since the disabled veteran cannot seek fellowship in his church, the church must take the fellowship to him. The contagion of such a spirit in a ward would brighten many a weary, almost unendurable hour.

It may be argued, but not conclusively, that since the government employs chaplains for this particular work, such ministry would be duplication. But this is no encroachment upon the field of the chaplain. Rather, it is the proof of his message - the working of the Spirit in the lives of men who furnish his contact with the world outside. Too, if the duties of the chaplain during war are any indication he will be so everlastingly busy as to find much personal work impossible.

Above all else, the church must not discriminate against the mental hospitals where the need is greatly intensified. In such institutions as these, a patient is prone to need more than ever the continued interest of his fellow citizens. One of the kindest acts the church may do will be to place in common coinage among the laity the term "mental hospital", rather than the stigmatizing words "insane asylum". Especially in these hospitals must the ministry be promoted by true Christian spirit. Morbid curiosity must not be tolerated. Where possible, those who have overcome similar experiences make excellent visitors and the veterans of all hospitals surely would often

welcome a chance to chat with those other veterans who have found it possible to enter the pews and the walks of civilian life.

In 1944 the writer was located at a large Army General Hospital. On one particular occasion a visiting mother brought with her a young son aged nine. He and he alone furnished the one source of enjoyment for several scores of men during the course of the morning. So seldom were children on the grounds that the presence of one was truly a gift to the disabled. The boy, unconscious of their disabilities, quickly won their hearts. With him they were freer and more spontaneous than they might have been with adults. They laughed, teased, romped, and forgot temporarily their handicaps. From this simple illustration a great lesson may be drawn. The psychology of having children visit hospitals is questionable but where men are convalescing or free to congregate without the wards minus, of course, the dangers of infecting youth, a real touch of the outside world may be given. Perhaps, in some instances, a child's chorus might sing or give an occasional program. For many of these patients the dream of a home is forever gone but that sadness may be tempered by occasionally giving them a glimmer of those elements which compose one - and a child is not among the least of these.

Finally, the church must be interested in these men who are so located that visitation is not possible. A

contact might be established with a church in the vicinity of the hospital by giving the name of the veteran patient and related information. Any church should be willing to work on this basis. Jesus met a man's needs before He committed him to a cause. Until the church has done likewise, it has no right to question a man's loyalties. If the hospital is far removed from the church, the congregation should see to it by the giving of financial support that the patient has, at least, an occasional visitor. In passing, it may be added that meeting needs is of great moment but occasionally fulfilling the wishes or desires of a patient is just as much "in line of duty".

#### 9. Prison Ministry

"It is estimated that about one half of one per cent of the veterans of World War I, or about 20,000, served time in prison within four years of the end of the war. Criminologists regard this rate as high for such an age group, although not necessarily high for a group of veterans . . . At the end of World War II the crime rate among our veterans should be expected to exceed that among American veterans of World War I. The war itself has been infinitely worse, and the men have seen much longer periods of service. But if the rate of criminality among our veterans does not exceed that of World War I, we should expect at least 60,000 of the mobilized men to be sent to prison for serious crimes in the years immediately following the war. Past experience tells us that many of this group will be physically handicapped as a result of the war and many will be mentally unbalanced."<sup>1</sup>

Criminality is one of the inevitabilities of war and the above facts are concerned with only one aspect of

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1. Waller, op. cit., p. 127.

the veteran and crime, namely post-war criminals. In addition there are those involved before and during the war. Comparable to the so-called "draft dodgers" who evaded military training are the deserters who escaped it. As civil law punishes the former, military law judges the latter. In reality, crime then walks side by side with the military machine from the ranks of those who refused to wear the uniform to the veterans who are placed behind bars. Widespread attention has been given to enemy prisoners of war in American publicity accounts but there is another prisoner of war - he who wears the uniform of America - who is noteworthy. The soldier is required at stated intervals (every six months according to Army Regulations) to listen to a reading of the Articles of War, a statement of grave offences and the punishment meted out to offenders. On the basis of this procedure, ignorance is not apt to be a man's excuse. The soldier is further governed by the voluminous pages of Army Regulations, and the orientation courses of a soldier stress these two courses. In this nation despite these precautions there are thousands of military prisoners, many of whom will spend the greater portion of their lives from this point on behind bars. This poses an exceedingly important question for the church. What attitude shall be encouraged toward

these men? One cannot condone or compromise when crime is involved. Neither must one forget the man who committed it. History has indicated that many such prisoners may be completely rehabilitated and lead useful lives. Prisons, as a general rule, are apt to have chaplains, but they may not always be able to deal personally with their parishioners. The salvation of many of these men facing life-long terms lies in one direction - the cross and its implications for them. If Jesus could hold out a promise to a thief on a cross, the church must hold out hope to the man in a cell. The availability of Christian literature, materials for worthwhile hobbies, and programs as well as visits where possible become an all-time imperative. The thing many prisoners need is the knowledge that somebody cares - and certainly the Lord of all men does.

#### 10. Recreation That Re-creates

In the past, too often recreation has been conceived in terms of athletic events, and, more often than not, for a limited few. An emphasis on inter-church contests emphasizes this point of view. Intra-mural activities do exceedingly more to enroll the interest of the majority whereas inter-church emphasis relegates the majority into the ranks of spectators. For the returning veteran two vastly different types of recreation are

appropriate: one, the quietness of some non-explosive activity for the combat veteran who has had more than his share of noise, and, secondly, participation in physical activities which will give an outlet for the veteran who faced months of loneliness and monotony minus combat.

Where large groups are participating, the veteran will find it much easier to adjust. In these pursuits one is apt to forget that wartime experience and mingle freely with others.

#### 11. Clubs

During the war many churches have maintained clubs for specific purposes related to uniting the service men and the church. One of these has been the Mothers' Club, the membership consisting of those women having sons and daughters in service. Meeting together they discussed ways and means of contacting those in arms, and their contribution was noteworthy. Such a club, having served its purpose, is no longer perhaps to be considered. But there is another whose work may go forward for some time to come - The Wives' Club. This could easily consist of wives of soldiers and veterans. During this war many men in uniform have married, some within the country, others in distant corners of the globe. Such an organization should immediately contact the new bride and seek, first



of all through correspondence, to link her to the fellowship of the church. The wife in some other land may with good reason desire information relative to the community. She may further feel the need of a friend upon arrival. Such needs would be met through such a group. No such club should exist for its own sake.

#### C. Bible Study For Veterans

As the church visualizes an effectual program, it must not be forgotten that the Bible is still one of its choicest treasures. The Word as a two-edged sword is the weapon for all men. Strikingly enough, many veterans may return with a better knowledge of Scriptures than before departure. Men biding their time in concentration camps, flyers alone on a raft, soldiers enduring the monotony that pervades the atmosphere in many a strange, lonely land - these and any number of others often have turned to the Bible if for no other reason than biding the time. The writer's survey implied that ministers were keenly alert to the need for Biblical knowledge and instruction. Thirty-six ministers listed Bible teaching as of first importance in a program for veterans, ten stated it deserved a prominent place, and ten others indicated the Bible would be given the same emphasis as

usual.<sup>1</sup> When asked what procedure would be used, the ministers were decidedly vague. The greatest number suggested no procedure whatsoever while the second largest group preferred the "same as usual" method.<sup>2</sup> Sooner or later the church must realize that teaching the Bible in the same old routine manner is not nearly good enough. A sword is of no avail to a warrior unless he knows how to use it. Lecturers and commentators who only demonstrate their efficiency in the use of the weapon must yet learn that application is a fundamental principle of learning. The army uses many different types of teaching but the one deplored by trainer and trainee alike is the "lecture" method and this procedure is encouraged only when no other method suffices. Indeed, it would be grim tragedy to conclude that a man's knowledge of a gun was complete after a series of lectures. Not until the man himself has actually demonstrated his ability to use weapons is he ready for combat. Bible teaching will come alive for veterans only if creatively taught and creative teaching requires an active response on the part of the pupil.

#### 1. Utilizing Their Experience

A man in a class demanding an active response desires to be able to make some contribution of his own

. . . . .

1. Cf. Appendix A, #52.  
2. Ibid.

to the group. But, ordinarily, even when the Bible has been an active guide for the soldier, his thinking would not be geared to that of the average congregation which has followed a definite, systematic procedure. A man adrift on an unknown body of water is interested in some message for the occasion, not what the Scriptures say in regard to the scribes and Pharisees.

Many a veteran is hardly able to think further back than his army experience, so filled with the unusual and abnormal that life has compressed more than a few short years into those days. Bible study for these men then must not ignore this life set apart; it must utilize it in a positive manner. Beyond that, it must lead the veteran out of a memory that looks backward into a hope that looks forward - the hope that somehow the "word that became flesh" will not fail in coming days. It would be most interesting for a minister to discover if any of his "armed parishioners" developed Biblical methods of their own while in service. A realistic discovery, too, of the use or abuse of the Bible by this war membership would be helpful.

A teacher facing a group in which there is a number of veterans must remember that for awhile, at least, he thinks best in terms of the military regime. Thence, it is wisdom on the part of the leader occasionally to

weave some element of this into the teaching period. In order to demonstrate this procedure at all one must dip into the Bible.

## 2. Use of Military Terms in the Bible

So far as the writer has been able to discover, little print has ever been given to the subject of military terms in the Bible. But herein is a fascinating study. The Old Testament is replete with stories of warriors. Actually a thread of them may be woven throughout most of the first thirty-nine books of the Bible. Samson, the individualist; Joshua, the strategist; Saul who slew thousands; David, the ten thousands; Barak and his Chief of Staff, Deborah; Gideon and his Commandos (a select few); Jephthah's victory - these are but a few samples of that thread. Aside from actual characters, there is another thread - one of military intrigue and conspiracy and a series of campaigns whose maneuvering is still modern. The Israelites' conquest of Canaan is but an ancient version of what many a modern day soldier has witnessed. Like a precious stone the facets of this subject are many and varied. The tragedy of military might, the oppression of people, the leader's abuse of the soldier (David and Uriah), the ghastly destruction of strife, the birth of an alliance of nations in war, and the prophets with their denouncement of conflicts - all

these flash their tones of somber blacks and challenging reds with a contemporary note that is startling.

The military background is depicted again in the therapeutic psalms. A casual glance at Psalm 91 often referred to as the Soldier's Psalm reveals the words, "His truth is a shield and a buckler." Expressive language, aptly said and conjuring up visions in the reader's mind.

It is interesting to note that in the New Testament the pattern changes somewhat. In the Gospels there are occasional references to guards and watches; in the Acts one sees soldiers and sailors aboard Paul's convoy to Rome, the wreck of that convoy, and activities among barbarians which have had their likenesses recently; one witnesses the teachableness of guards as they are impressed by the Apostles' testimony or one sees an imprisoned Paul observing the movements of various sentries. Out of such observations and experiences came the famous Armor passage in Ephesians 6:10-20, the figures of speech born of reality and capable of capturing thought. In Romans 12, it is the military term "present" which encompasses all involved in coming to God - all in order and readiness, obedient to the commander's will, and, in the exhortation to be "good soldiers of Christ Jesus", one finds embedded

the call to loyalty and devotion.

Looking then at the whole one sees that in the Bible the military has its place and holds unsearchable riches for the returning veteran.

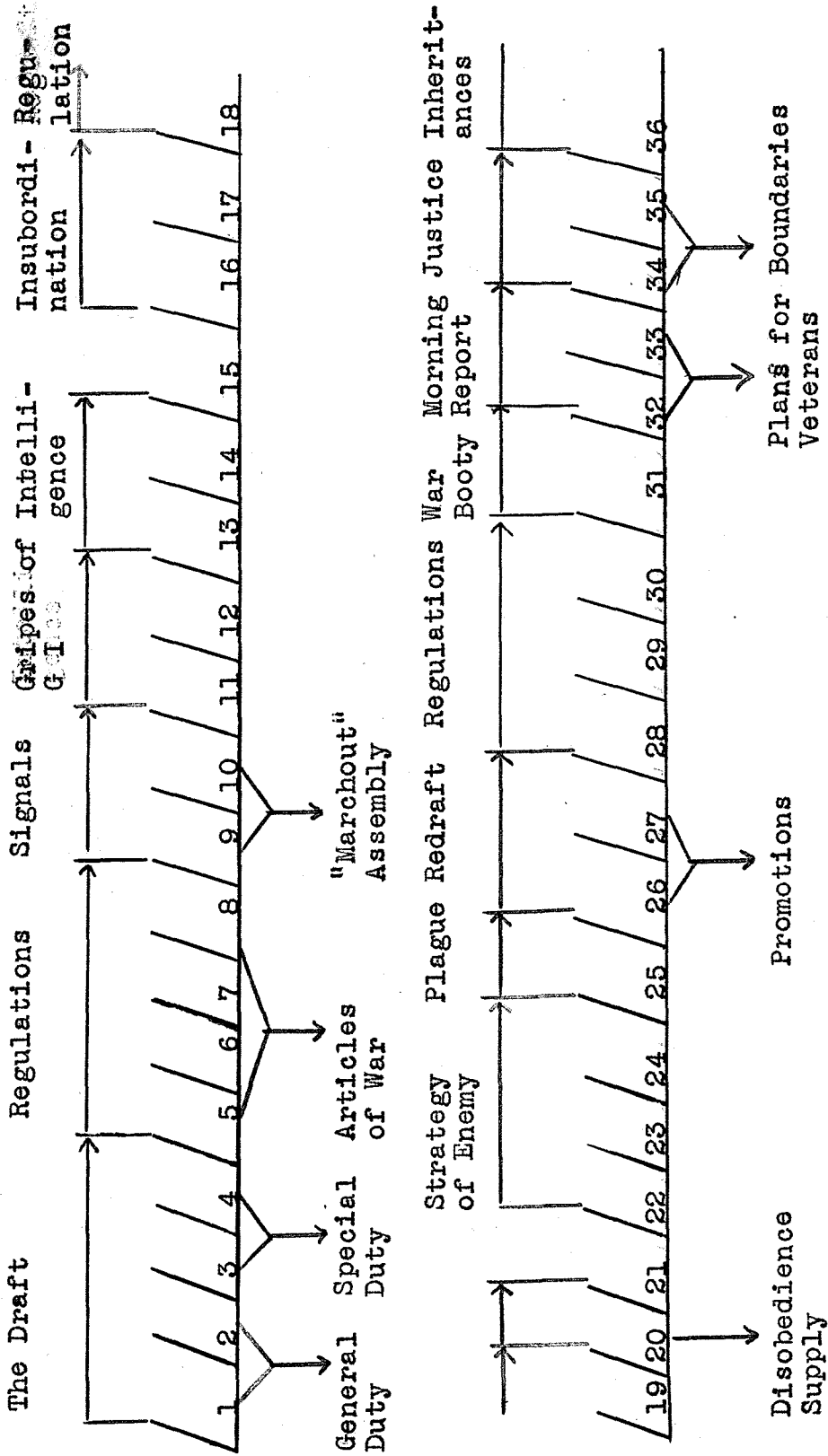
### 3. Making the Bible Come Alive

If a veteran's whole life is mirrored for a time in the past war years, then the Bible should be projected into those experiences. As the preceding analysis reveals there are relatively few Biblical studies in which the soldier may not find some related military meaning. The writer is not suggesting that the Bible class be turned into an Army hour. The purpose is to find that clue which will lead the veteran into a creative use of the Bible bringing him joy and the answer to specific needs. In the use of the military stimulus, the veteran may be encouraged to do concentrated study on the Bible. In this sphere he will not be self-conscious and non-committal before a group because it is the one school in which he is thoroughly grounded. As the same time, he cannot study the Bible in this manner without being made aware of the many other aspects of life it touches. Any one of the topics already mentioned would help captivate his interest and, at the same time, help to lead him out of one experience into another. This is only the starting point and from it the teacher must develop other means of making

the Bible live. They will come quite naturally as the veteran faces his future.

4. The Book of Numbers, a Practical Demonstration

In order to apply what has been set forth, one of the books of the Old Testament will be used as illustrative. In general, such books as Numbers are seldom used. People generally look to the New Testament and the contents of the old are too little known. In assigning this material for study, the teacher might suggest for the benefit of the veterans the military content of the book. The book itself is filled with the military mind. By way of example the following comparative chart is but an example of this.



PRACTICAL DEMONSTRATION CHART: THE BOOK OF NUMBERS



The following questions are among those which will help to arouse the veteran's interest. A few of them might be used to stimulate real concentration on the book as a whole.

1. Discuss the drafting of men in the first four chapters as compared with our present program. Was this a peacetime or wartime measure? Any age limits? Who served for General Duty and who for Special Duty? Make your comparison. How successful was this draft?
2. What section of the Book could you properly classify as Articles of War? List some of the most interesting ones. Any comparison?
3. Did the Israelites have a system of definite commands? If so, illustrate.
4. What section or sections could you properly label "G I Gripe Sessions"?
5. What are the military terms used for the flag that are still in use? Are they the same as today?
6. Any modern names for officers? Chart the rank given and compare.
7. What divisions of troops were made? What one important division still in use?
8. Give examples in insubordination. What punishment was given? More or less severe than today?
9. Was there any problem of supply? Explain. How important today?
10. Any promotions?
11. Does Military Intelligence figure prominently?
12. What provisions were made for veterans?
13. Did things other than wars take toll of lives?
14. Was the Draft Board on its toes?

15. Any regulations for them?
16. When was a task force used and what was its particular assignment?
17. Does anything in this book remind you of the Morning Report? If so, what?
18. Evaluate the arrangement of the forces and the plan for marching.
19. How prominent is the Infantry in comparison with today?
20. Discuss the qualities of Moses and Joshua for officers in command.
21. Any chaplains?
22. Compare the plan of attack with Allies' European plan in World War II (Joshua)?
23. Was their strategy good?
24. Apply as many of above questions as possible and draw up a new list of military elements from this book.

#### D. Summary

In this chapter the writer has tried to come to grips with the practical. A series of church projects have been suggested, some to be carried out within the local church, others to reach out into the community, including both hospitals and prisons. These projects in themselves may lead to other related ones. Some of them may not be practical for every church but a few of them could be utilized by almost any congregation. The use of the Bible has been treated in its particular relation to the moment - that of centering the veteran's interest in

it immediately. The writer has not tried to deal with the many great and incomparable values in themselves. In effect this chapter has been written to reiterate what is and has been known. The real effectiveness of the church lies in its ability to work as well as to speak.

**GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

## GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In the first chapter the veteran was introduced in the light of military facts and experiences which tend to portray his personality. In order to understand the returning dischargee, a glimpse of basic items was related: his nature as conceived in numbers, education, new conception of geography, and an abnormal life. The solidarity of spirit created by the military regime was next discussed with its deeper implications for the church. Then, attention was centered on the change wrought by the war within the individual and the much discussed written-about subject of the service man's religion. The chapter served primarily to point up the succeeding chapters. Actually, herein one might conclude that the veteran is greatly in need of the church and that the church has a vital contribution to make to him.

Chapter II was concerned with the preparation of the church for the returning veteran. The material revolved around the definite need for organization and a suggested plan comprising the role of the minister and the post-war committee. Much space was given the constituency of the committee, the selection and function of this personnel, and the actual work embodied in such a setup.

Chapter III had as its goal an adequate

conception of religious education for the veteran. This was shown in terms of the inadequacy of the veteran's previous educational training by the church, emphases of secular education and implications drawn therefrom from certain features for a church program, the relation of the chaplain's work with soldiers to that of the church with veterans, and the G I's expectations of the church. An elaborated discussion of nine basic points was given. These points were quoted verbatim as set forth by G I representatives of twenty-five different denominations. Each of these nine issues was analyzed and set forth as creative material in the field of religious education.

The last chapter dealt with an actual working program of projects and of Bible study. In relation to the former, eleven definite projects were presented, each on a practical basis. Bible study was projected in the definite relation to the veteran's war time experience, the use of military terms throughout the entire Scriptures, and the Book of Numbers as a practical demonstration.

In view of the whole it may be concluded that the G I is simply a man with problems facing a church with a now inadequate program. Such a conclusion is not complete until one adds that there is every possibility the church may resurrect herself from this inadequacy and stand transformed before her fighting sons symbolizing

through a workable program such fellowship and love as will mirror the greater love of Him who longs to bind up the wounds of all humanity - and the veteran is not among the least of these. Clearly, the man coming home from war must live as nobly as he has fought, and, of the two, it is the latter which is more difficult. One can say with certainty that God may do great things through a man who has suffered much, and the imperative of the church is to draw the veteran into communion with Him under whose command the individual soul will never suffer defeat. Then and only then will the memory of the war torn years be but a stepping stone along the way. Thus, when a church unharnesses a veteran from military gear and issues him the Christian armor, rehabilitation has passed from the realm of a word into the sphere of action. Jesus called fishermen to be fishers of men. The church must call soldiers of the land to become good soldiers of Christ Jesus, clad with the "whole armor" of God.

## APPENDICES



APPENDIX A

A SURVEY OF THE UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE  
NORTH CAROLINA SYNODICAL

1. The Letter

THE BIBLICAL SEMINARY IN NEW YORK  
235 East 49th Street  
New York 17, New York

July, 1945

Dear Pastor:

Last summer I was retired from the WAC, Army of the United States, after a long period of illness. As soon as I was able, I enrolled as a graduate student in The Biblical Seminary. In choosing a thesis topic, I wished in some way to utilize the experiences and incidents of my year and a half in service. Therefore, I selected the subject: THE APPROACH OF THE CHURCH TO RETURNING SERVICE PERSONNEL. Much time has been spent gathering data and doing research on this phase of the problem.

From the very beginning, however, I planned to do a survey of churches in order to ascertain in some small measure what has been done and what is being done to meet this problem realistically. It is with this thought in mind that I am asking you to answer the enclosed questionnaire. Your desk, as many others, must be cluttered with requests of a similar nature, but I earnestly seek your patience and cooperation in this project I am undertaking.

My primary interest will be in the total results and percentages which will give me an overall picture of the church. The validity of the sum total, however, will depend upon the measure of accuracy used in answering the questions. Most of them can be answered briefly, often with a simple negative or positive, but each one should receive careful consideration.

Doubtlessly, many of your members have written of experiences which have inspired them. Should you wish to share any of these, as well as your own, together

with criticisms or suggestions, I would be most appreciative. Please return the questionnaire as soon as possible to me at my summer address; 8 Pine Street, Lincolnton, North Carolina.

Sincerely yours,

Inez Seagle, Applicant  
MRE

2. Questionnaire

THESIS SURVEY

1. Total number church membership \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Total number men and women in service \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Total number men in service \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Total number women in service \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Total number discharges and retirements \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Classify discharged men as to present status:
  - (a). Schooling \_\_\_\_\_
  - (b). Professional jobs \_\_\_\_\_
  - (c). Other Jobs \_\_\_\_\_
  - (d). Nothing \_\_\_\_\_
  - (e). Hospitalization \_\_\_\_\_
7. Total number overseas service \_\_\_\_\_.
8. What percentage of the total could you say were regular in church attendance prior to entry in service? \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Of the discharged veterans, how many have returned to the same community to live? \_\_\_\_\_.
10. How many have you counselled? \_\_\_\_\_.
11. Along what general line have they asked for advice and guidance? \_\_\_\_\_.
12. How many homes of the discharged veterans have you visited? \_\_\_\_\_.
13. Generally speaking, do you try to visit these homes as soon as possible after the discharge is known? \_\_\_\_\_.
14. How many of the discharged veterans attend church fairly regularly? \_\_\_\_\_.
15. How do you account for the others? \_\_\_\_\_.
16. Have any been permanently hospitalized in a Veteran's Hospital? \_\_\_\_\_.
17. Have any accepted positions of leadership in the church? \_\_\_\_\_.
18. Have you asked them to do so? \_\_\_\_\_.

19. If so, what seems to be the typical reaction? \_\_\_\_\_.
20. Has the church contacted service people regularly? \_\_\_\_\_.
21. In what ways? \_\_\_\_\_.
22. Have the service personnel responded? \_\_\_\_\_.
23. What number have written letters commenting on the value of church training and background? \_\_\_\_\_.
24. Underscore publications with which you are familiar: G. I. Bill of Rights, The Link, A Veteran Comes Home by Waller, Demobilization Bulletins (Methodist Publication), When He Returns (Lutheran Series on Service Personnel).
25. What special effort do you feel the church must make to welcome veterans? \_\_\_\_\_.
26. Have you appointed a church committee for this purpose? \_\_\_\_\_.
27. Do you have some system of keeping record of incidents in service mens' lives? \_\_\_\_\_.
28. Will the church have in its history a record of service personnel? \_\_\_\_\_.
29. Have you made it a point to visit service homes regularly? \_\_\_\_\_.
30. To what extent have you found this a way to check on service personnel?  
No information gained \_\_\_\_\_ Some information  
Much information gained \_\_\_\_\_ gained \_\_\_\_\_
31. When was your church established? \_\_\_\_\_.
32. If prior to World War I, do you have available records of its service men and women? \_\_\_\_\_.
33. Total number if possible to obtain \_\_\_\_\_.
34. Do you consider such records valuable? \_\_\_\_\_.  
Why? \_\_\_\_\_.
35. How many veterans of World War I are now in your congregation? \_\_\_\_\_.

36. Are any of them exceptional church leaders? \_\_\_\_.  
Average? \_\_\_\_\_.
37. Have you considered using them on a committee to  
make plans for veterans? \_\_\_\_\_.
38. Do you have such a program already in operation?  
\_\_\_\_\_.
39. If not, do you have one in mind? \_\_\_\_\_.  
Explain \_\_\_\_\_.
40. Have you attended a conference or session which  
has devoted itself to the subject of returning per-  
sonnel? \_\_\_\_\_.
41. Has your church sponsored one? \_\_\_\_\_.
42. Population of community? \_\_\_\_\_. Urban or  
rural? \_\_\_\_\_.
43. Is there a service center or centers? \_\_\_\_\_.
44. How sponsored? \_\_\_\_\_.
45. Does your church have contact with such a center?  
\_\_\_\_\_.
46. Do you have special programs for service per-  
sonnel? \_\_\_\_\_.
47. Is your church open at all times to them? \_\_\_\_\_.
48. Has your church helped to house and feed visitors  
in uniform? \_\_\_\_\_.
49. Are your church homes willing to entertain  
soldiers? \_\_\_\_\_.
50. Would you deem it advisable to put veterans in a  
group by themselves when they return? \_\_\_\_\_. Why? \_\_\_\_.
51. Do you feel special techniques in teaching are  
necessary to catch and maintain their interest? \_\_\_\_\_.  
Why? \_\_\_\_\_.
52. What place would you give to the teaching of the  
Bible in a program for returning veterans? \_\_\_\_\_.  
Procedure? \_\_\_\_\_.

3. Results of Questionnaire - Fifty-nine Ministers Reporting

THESIS SURVEY

1.	Total church membership . . . . .	20,954
2.	Total number in service . . . . .	2,979
3.	Number men in service . . . . .	2,919
4.	Number women in service . . . . .	260
5.	Discharges and retirements . . . . .	222
6.	Present status discharges . . . . .	
	a. Schooling . . . . .	7
	b. Professions . . . . .	236
	c. Other jobs . . . . .	124
	d. Nothing . . . . .	11
	e. Hospitalization . . . . .	5
7.	Number with overseas service . . . . .	1912
8.	Regular church attendance prior to entry in service . . . . .	40%
9.	Number discharges returning to same community . . . . .	184
10.	Number discharges counseled . . . . .	129
11.	Trends of guidance . . . . .	
	a. Schooling . . . . .	3
	b. Community life . . . . .	7
	c. Business . . . . .	19
	d. Marriage . . . . .	4
	e. Religious problems . . . . .	9
	f. General . . . . .	10
	g. Health . . . . .	1
	h. Domestic problems . . . . .	1
12.	Number of discharges' homes visited . . . . .	201
13.	Number ministers visiting as soon as the discharge is known . . . . .	52
14.	Discharges attending church fairly regularly . . . . .	156

15.	Reasons for lack of attendance . . . . .	
	a. Residence . . . . .	13
	b. Family background . . . . .	6
	c. Inactive and indifferent . . . . .	18
	d. Marital and economic difficulties . . . . .	3
	e. Health . . . . .	1
16.	Permanent hospitalizations . . . . .	9
17.	Number accepting jobs of leadership in the church . . . . .	22
18.	Number of ministers asking veterans to accept responsibility . . . . .	27
19.	Typical reactions of veterans . . . . .	
	a. Willingness . . . . .	22
	b. Unsettled . . . . .	4
	c. Conflicting activities . . . . .	1
20.	Regular contacts with veterans . . . . .	59
21.	Means of contact . . . . .	
	a. Letters and bulletins . . . . .	48
	b. Papers and gifts . . . . .	33
	c. Boxes . . . . .	18
	d. Homes and canteens . . . . .	4
	e. Visitation . . . . .	3
22.	General response on part of service personnel - good . . . . .	
23.	Number of soldiers writing letters commenting on the value of church training - almost all . . . . .	
24.	Familiarity with pertinent publications . . . . .	
	a. G I Bill of Rights . . . . .	35
	b. <u>The Link</u> . . . . .	12
	c. A Veteran Comes Home - Waller . . . . .	7
	d. Demobilization Bulletins - Methodist . . . . .	2
	e. When He Returns - Lutheran . . . . .	47
	f. Others . . . . .	2
25.	Efforts to welcome veterans . . . . .	
	a. Friendliness . . . . .	45
	b. Invitation to activities . . . . .	2
	c. Church jobs . . . . .	8

d. Visitation . . . . .	2
e. Social programs . . . . .	7
f. No specials . . . . .	3
g. Rehabilitation . . . . .	3
26. Number of present church committees . . . . .	15
27. Churches keeping records of service experiences . . . . .	29
28. Records kept in church history . . . . .	47
29. Visits to service homes - great regularity.	
30. Benefits of visiting homes . . . . .	
a. No information gained . . . . .	0
b. Much information gained . . . . .	32
c. Some information gained . . . . .	25
31. Churches established prior to World War I .	43
32. Number of these with records of World War I personnel . . . . .	5
33. Known number of veterans of World War I now in congregations . . . . .	14
34. Ministers considering such records valuable	30
a. Historical reference . . . . .	14
b. Future help . . . . .	10
35. Total number of veterans of World War I in congregation(not included in membership during the first war) . . . . .	40
36. Exceptional church leaders in this group. .	35
37. Ministers who have considered using them on a committee . . . . .	25
38. Number with program already in operation. .	13
39. Number with program in mind . . . . .	15
a. Pastor . . . . .	
b. Brotherhood . . . . .	
c. Committee . . . . .	
40. Ministers attending a conference on the subject . . . . .	20



41.	Churches sponsoring such a conference. . .	5
42.	Community population - 80 - 100,000. . . .	
43.	Service centers . . . . .	17
44.	Sponsorship of centers. . . . .	
	a. USO . . . . .	8
	b. Community . . . . .	4
	c. Church. . . . .	1
	d. Church - community. . . . .	4
45.	Churches having contacts with centers. . .	22
46.	Churches with special programs for service personnel . . . . .	18
47.	Churches open at all times to soldiers . .	39
48.	Churches housing and feeding soldiers. . .	36
49.	Homes willing to entertain soldiers. . . .	52
50.	Number favoring separate groups for the veterans. . . . .	0
	a. Hinders adjustment. . . . .	46
	b. Veterans oppose idea. . . . .	6
51.	Number desiring special techniques in teaching. . . . .	18
	Why? . . . . .New horizons and experiences	
52.	Place of Bible in the program . . . . .	
	a. First . . . . .	36
	b. Prominent . . . . .	10
	c. Same as ever. . . . .	10
	d. No answer. . . . .	3
	Procedure . . . . .	
	a. General classes . . . . .	11
	b. No procedure given. . . . .	22
	c. Veterans' group . . . . .	1
	d. Same as ever. . . . .	13
	e. Biblical content. . . . .	1
	f. Sunday School and church. . . . .	6
	g. Devotional. . . . .	2
	h. Realistic. . . . .	1

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE EXCERPTS FROM MINISTERS' LETTERS  
RELATIVE TO THESIS SURVEY

1. Washington, D. C. - July 5, 1945

"I have your letter and questionnaire about the church and returning service personnel. I would be happy to have a talk with you about it as I am anxious to help you in any way I can in addition to my deep interest in the general subject.

"I am glad to send you this in summary of what I would say in detail if we could sit down and talk. We have something over 250 men and women in the service. We have had two gold stars only. Our baptized membership is 2100, which includes 1700 confirmed or adult members. Only 5 or 6 have been discharged from the service so far and without exception, they are deeply interested in the church, as they were before going into the service. My own impression is that service personnel want to stand on their own feet, make their own way, and not be treated as a special group upon discharge. In our church our next leadership is almost entirely in this group, and so the principal thing is simply putting into jobs young men and women who were scheduled for these positions before the war came. The impression I have is that the more interested young people were in the church prior to military service, the deeper is their interest now. My personal observation is that war does not 'convert' people to the church and Christ, but may deepen the interest of those already Christian."

2. Lexington, N. C. - July, 1945

"I am only supply pastor at . . . , and hence don't know much about service personnel."

3. Kansas City, Mo. - August 22, 1945

"The Welch Convalescent Hospital is located here, as you may know. And I have opportunity to talk to many veterans. The consensus of opinion among them seems to be that they do not want to be made 'over' - fussed about. They want most of all to get back into civilian

life as nearly as possible where they left off. In other words they want the rest of us to meet them as we normally would meet anyone. So I think what we should do is to open ways and opportunities for them to get started again. Let them do most of the talking. We must not be over solicitous for them. They resent that and I can't blame them.

"What I plan for our local boys when they come back is to get them into the S. S. and church activities where they left off, and they'll do a good job."

4. Kings Mountain, N. C. - July 5, 1945

"Am returning the blanks which you recently sent me, and regret very much that I have not filled them out as you asked, but I have been here such a short time that my answers would be incomplete and unsatisfactory."

5. Philadelphia, Pa. - July 5, 1945

"As you can see, I am no longer a minister in a church, but am engaged as Executive Secretary of the Philadelphia Council for Conscientious Objectors. I am enclosing a piece of work which will tell you about the Council.

"I imagine that you have your hands full with your present survey, but I do believe it would be worthwhile to consider the matter of the Church's approach to conscientious objectors. I am busily preparing for their return and one of our tasks is to find churches and ministers who are sympathetic to conscientious objectors."

6. Lincoln, Nebraska - July 17, 1945

"Very few of our men have returned. Some of them come to church but not all. We have 170 men in the service and one lady. I am in constant contact with them by sending them a monthly letter, birthday cards, Easter and Christmas letters. This is very much appreciated. For the future we have not done much except having a fund for \$1300 which can be used for that purpose if need should arrive."

7. Charlotte, N. C. - July 9, 1945

"We do not contemplate any serious difficulty in the matter of regathering our service personnel once they get home. Hence, the way in which we have answered certain questions in the matter of classes or groups for them when they return. I definitely feel that many of them will want to lay aside certain traits and accumulations along with their uniforms. Whether they want to, or will do this, I feel definitely they should. So our approach will be from the viewpoint of the family and the local congregation rather than to keep alive a class or group of veterans per se in the Congregation. This is true with other groups, too, for the Congregation is greater than any group, or combinations of groups that may be found among its membership."

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