

THE BRETHREN CHURCH AND
THE NAVY CHAPLAINCY

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THE BRETHREN CHURCH
AND
THE NAVY CHAPLAINCY

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PREFACE

ETYMOLOGY OF THE TITLE "CHAPLAIN"

St. Martin of Tours, a compassionate fourth century soldier who encountered a shivering beggar on a cold winter night and having no money in his purse, took off his cloak and slashed it with his sword to give half to the beggar. Later that night he had a vision in which he saw Christ wearing the half-cloak. As a result of this experience he was baptized as a Christian. Ultimately he left the army to devote his life to the church. In time he became the patron saint of the French kings of the Middle Ages. St. Martin's cloak (cappella) was carried into battle by the kings as a banner signifying the presence of God. But since the cappella was a sacred relic of the church, a priest went along as custodian. This keeper of the cloak, or cappellanus, also tended the king's religious needs, and from his office was derived that of "chaplain." The depository for the cloak became the "chapel," the place of worship.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

THE BRETHREN CHURCH AND THE NAVY CHAPLAINCY

A clergyman from the evangelical churches seeking a commission in the United States Navy Chaplaincy undergoes a cross-cultural encounter of tension with self and his role in the military ministry. This thesis will cover The Brethren Church's pacifist position, the Navy's needs and the spiritual objectivity in honoring the Great Commission of Jesus Christ. This study is based, to a considerable extent, on personal experience, observation, and reflection of experiences as a Navy chaplain. This research is of the chaplaincy in the Military Organization and its totality as it relates to the Brethren Church and my position as the only military chaplain of my denomination. This paper will offer a definitive analysis of the Navy Chaplaincy as a specialized ministry serving the two institutions of the Church and the United States Navy.

Chapter 1

EUROPEAN BACKGROUND OF THE BRETHREN CHURCH

German origins. The Brethren Church is one of the historic peace churches. The Brethren Church is German in origin. Historically they have not been a protesting people in their relations to government unless great religious and moral issues were at stake affecting their peaceful living and freedom to worship.

The Mennonites and Brethren have a common German heritage and have manifested many similar characteristics. One other church, the Society of Friends, whose religious expression was British oriented, worked together with the Brethren and Mennonites through a united opposition to war.

A history of the Brethren in Germany is a story of persecutions. Martin Grove Brumbaugh, former Governor of Pennsylvania and generally regarded as the greatest historian of the Brethren, gives "no exercise of force in religion"¹ as the fundamental principle in Brethren doctrine. To compel anyone to join or to leave the church of Christ is an exercise of force. To compel an individual by law to take an oath is not only contrary to the teachings

¹Martin Grove Brumbaugh, Two Centuries of the Church of the Brethren (Elgin: Brethren Publishing, 1908), p. 4.

of Jesus, but violates a people's sacred right. War is a violent interference with the right of others and imposes unwilling burdens upon people. The injunction of Christ is one thing, the power of prince or ecclesiastic another and the might of the state has no right to interfere with the religious belief of the individual. At the very outset the church logically opposed state religious, sustained freedom of conscience, and exalted allegiance to God above allegiance to rulers. It is quite a simple matter to see why the early Brethren suffered at the hands of provincial rulers in Germany during the early eighteenth century.

Nonresistance defined. Nonresistance is the act of not resisting, especially, the policy or practice of submitting to force or arbitrary authority without opposition or retaliation. A nonresistant is a person who believes that force and violence should not be used to oppose arbitrary authority however unjust. A nonresistant will refuse to use force even to defend himself. Dr. Herman Hoyt, President of Grace Theological Seminary and College, Winona Lake, Indiana, commented on the distinction between nonresistance and pacifism.

The doctrine of nonresistance is from the Bible and for Christians. But pacifism as a doctrine does not come from the Bible no matter how many Scriptural phrases are turned from their context to support it.²

²Herman A. Hoyt, Then Would My Servants Fight (Winona Lake: The Brethren Missionary Herald, 1956), p. 17.

Early organization. The Brethren Church, which is the subject of this work, is the one which was organized in Schwartzenau, Germany, in 1708. Though some have traced its prehistoric origins as far back as the Waldenses, founded by Peter Waldo, at Lyons, about A.D. 1170, there seems to be little historical evidence for such a claim. It is true that the Waldenses suffered persecution for their religious convictions. They did not retaliate but rather left the scene of persecution and lived in the woods and wilderness. Their practice of the doctrine of nonresistance may have had a great influence on the Pietists and the founders of the Brethren Church. Henry Holsinger, in his history of the Tunkers, as the Brethren were then called, commented, "I believe I have found in the Waldenses the most complete antitype of the Tunkers."³

Pietism. In seventeenth-century Germany, religious reformers known as Pietists, sought to live lives of devotion to Christ. As a religious protest to the moral corruption of the established churches, pietism emerged and was a continuation of the sixteenth-century reformation of doctrine through a reformation of life. The Pietist was a person who studied God's Word and sought to order his life by it and the man generally considered to be the father of Lutheran Pietism was Philip Jacob Spener (1635-1705). He

³Henry R. Holsinger, Holsinger's History of the Tunkers and The Brethren Church (Lathrop: Pacific Press, 1901), p. 30.

wanted more intensive Bible study with lay participation which would create practical Christianity in daily life. These were radical ideas in the seventeenth century.

A more forceful leader of Pietism was August Herman Francke (1613-1727) who was expelled from Leipzig for organizing a Bible study group among fellow graduate students. He was driven from a pastorate in Erfurt, and settled in Halle where he became a pastor and a professor at the university. Because the Pietists opposed the established Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed Churches, they were persecuted and driven from all parts of Germany and Switzerland. Durnbaugh notes,

A number of these exiles found refuge at Wittgenstein, under the government of a friendly count, through whose intercession liberty of conscience was granted.⁴

Most Pietists settled in and around Schwarzenau.

Radical Pietism was a movement which sought to break away from the established churches and eventually these radical Pietists came to be known as separatists. The most influential figure in this group was Gottfried Arnold (1666-1714) whose writings were published and met with instant success. In 1698 he received a professorship at the University of Giessen.

"Arnold's writings greatly influenced the early Brethren, who found there the description of the early

⁴Donald F. Durnbaugh, European Origins of the Brethren (Elgin: Brethren, 1958), p. 35.

church after which they wished to pattern themselves."⁵

Ernst Christoph Hochmann Von Hochenau (1670-1721) was a great Pietist preacher who travelled all over Germany preaching and protesting against the established churches. One of his co-workers was Alexander Mack. Hochmann studied law at several universities.

In Halle he experienced a conversion or awakening which changed his whole life, causing him to abandon a promising career which his older brother, a high imperial official in Vienna, had arranged for him.⁶

Instead, he chose to become an itinerant preacher. He developed a following of sincere seekers throughout the country. "It was Hochmann who 'awakened' most of the early Brethren . . . they originally looked to him as their spiritual guide."⁷

Hochmann was often imprisoned. Once he exhorted a wealthy man to repentance and the man became so angry that, says Brumbaugh,

. . . he ordered his valet to whip Hochmann. The servant obeyed and at the end of the cruel thrashing Hochmann thanked the valet kindly whereupon the servant was so humiliated that he humbly begged Hochmann to forgive him.⁸

One Pietistic characteristic in Hochmann caused him to part company with Mack. He was not in favor of

⁵Durnbaugh, p. 36.

⁶Durnbaugh, p. 36.

⁷Durnbaugh, p. 36.

⁸Martin Grove Brumbaugh, A History of the German Baptist Brethren in Europe and America (Mount Morris: Brethren Publishing, 1899), p. 22.

organizing a church. When Mack started a work in Schwarzenau, Hochmann went his separate way.

Church formation. The desires of Alexander Mack for a church organization were fulfilled in 1708, in Schwarzenau, Province of Wittgenstein, in Hesse-Cassel, Germany. Eight people were baptized by trine immersion. This small group chose Mack as their leader, and thus was formed a new and distinct church, the "Taufers" or "German Baptist Church."

The Schwarzenau congregation became the largest on the European continent. It became a compact, well-organized fellowship under the oversight of Alexander Mack.⁹

In the year 1715, there were sufficient converts to the German Baptist Church in Marienborn area to begin a church.

Persecution. Persecution again was their plight and most of the congregation left Marienborn and collected in Greyfeld, in the county of Cleves, where they found at least toleration under the king of Prussia. One of the chief causes for leaving Marienborn was discovered in a letter from the Administrator of the county to his deputy, Wiszkemann, at Dudelsheim.

The honorable and gracious lord has had made clear and had explained in all earnestness the following to all of the so-called Baptists who reside in this county, when they appeared here today upon summons: His Grace will respect their full

⁹Floyd E. Mallott, Studies in Brethren History (Elgin: Brethren Publishing, 1954), p. 37.

freedom of conscience in the carrying out of their devotions in private meetings in their homes in a quiet way, and will otherwise leave them in peace just as other subjects and those taken under protection. He will, therefore, tolerate their further stay in this county on this condition. However, he positively cannot permit the Baptists to organize a new sect or church congregation and to presume to dare to practice their faith publicly. There is just as little permitted as baptism or rebaptism; it is in fact absolutely forbidden. This with the addition that in case they do not intend to conform to these requirements, it would be best for them to betake themselves out of this territory to avoid further annoyance, etc.

We have wanted to give you, herewith, this report so that you will pay close attention to these Baptists. If they do not conform to the above-mentioned order of his lordship, you are to report it here immediately and await further instructions on the matter. Should they, however, prefer to leave the county, you are to administer speedy and impartial justice, if they have legitimate claims upon the subjects for conversion into cash. We remain herewith, Marienborn, May 24, 1714.¹⁰

At Creyfeld (or Krefeld) the church suffered from problems both external and from within.

It was at Creyfeld that six members of the Reformed Church joined the Brethren and were immersed in the River Wupper. . . . On February 26, 1717, the six were taken to Dusseldorf and imprisoned for four years. . . . They were compelled to work at hard labor and became ill in prison.¹¹

With reference to internal struggles, Holsinger has this to say:

Due to a mass migration to Krefeld, an important manufacturing town of Rhenish Prussia, 12 miles northwest of Dusseldorf, there developed strife in

¹⁰Durnbaugh, p. 185, citing FYBA Budingen, Privilegia und Freyheiten/Der Hochgebohrne Graf und Herr Ernst Casemir/Graf zu Ysenbury und Budingen.

¹¹Mallott, p. 39.

the Krefeld church. There was gossip, on which busy-bodies thrive and multiply.¹²

The same author commented further on the church members at Crefeld.

Their difficulties were augmented by the fact that all of them were entirely inexperienced in church discipline. . . . But the saddest part of the above affair is that it did not end at Krefeld.¹³

By 1720, after the death of Count Henry, the Brethren suffered severe persecution. They were, as Kimmel writes,

. . . made to endure violent persecution. Some were deprived of their property and others were imprisoned and in some cases obliged to perform hard labor. By the payment of fines which were imposed on them they could be released; and Alexander Mack, out of love for his brethren, became poor like his blessed Master, by paying their fines until his property was all, in this way, taken from him.¹⁴

Alexander Mack himself suffered great personal loss during the persecutions. "By paying these fines, his handsome patrimony, five vineyards and profitable mill were all taken from him."¹⁵ The persecution so increased that the Schwarzenau group found it necessary to migrate in a body. They went to Westervain in West Friesland, Holland, where they lived quietly until 1729, when they migrated to America.

¹²Holsinger, p. 121.

¹³Holsinger, p. 122.

¹⁴John M. Kimmel, Chronicles of the Brethren (Covington: The Little Printing, 1951), p. 26.

¹⁵Henry Kurtz, The Brethren's Encyclopedia (Covington: The Little Printing, 1951), p. 26.

In 1722, Elder Christian Libe, while preaching in Switzerland, was arrested and was asked to renounce his faith. This he refused to do whereupon he was ". . . fastened to a galley and had to work the galling oar among criminals for two years and was then released."¹⁶ About the same time recruiting officers for the King of Prussia seized John Naas, the outspoken Brethren Elder in charge of the work at Marienborn. When he refused to enlist they tortured him. According to Brumbaugh's account, these tortures consisted of:

. . . pinching, thumbscrewing, etc. . . . They then hung him up with a heavy cord by his left thumb and a right great toe, in which painful and ignominious position they meant to leave him suspended until he should yield to their demands . . . they cut him down and dragged him by force into the presence of the king.¹⁷

When Naas was asked why he would not serve the king he replied, "My captain is the great Prince Immanuel, our Lord Jesus Christ. I have espoused his cause and cannot and will not forsake Him."¹⁸ The king did not force Naas to join his forces and rewarded him with a gold coin for being true to his cause.

Internal strife reached a new peak in Creyfeld when a young minister named Hacker married a Mennonite young woman.

¹⁶ Kimmel, pp. 26-27.

¹⁷ Brumbaugh, History, pp. 104-5.

¹⁸ Brumbaugh, pp. 104-5.

This marriage raised a storm in the Creyfeld congregation. Some said the members objected because Hacker married out of the church; others, because he married contrary to I Corinthians 7. Whatever the cause, Elder Libe and four single Brethren rose up and excommunicated Hacker.¹⁹

This action was by no means sanctioned by everyone in the church. Some, like John Naas, wished only to suspend Hacker from communion. Naas estimated that over one hundred persons refused to join the church because of this controversy. "Other excommunications followed until the church was so badly wrecked that part came to America and others fell away."²⁰

The testimony of the group was not tarnished in full. Quoting from Gvebel's Christliches Leben, in which the count's administrator wrote to the Imperial Treasurer von Emmerish at Wetzlar, Brumbaugh writes:

That for a while pious people have been living here, of whom we never heard anything evil. They kept themselves very quiet and retired and no man ever made any complaint of them.²¹

Alexander Mack wrote about his own people on the subject of nonresistance. He is quoted by Holsinger with the following statement:

One will not find Tunkers going to war. . . . They are generally in favor of peace. One may safely abide under their roofs without fear of being robbed or murdered. Indeed, it would be a blessing if the world were full of those despised Tunkers.²²

¹⁹Brumbaugh, pp. 48-49. ²⁰Brumbaugh, pp. 48-49.

²¹Brumbaugh, p. 52. ²²Holsinger, pp. 71-72.

And so on the outside, the Brethren appeared to be peaceful. Their reputation among civil rulers was one of peace and charity. It is a sad historical commentary on the Brethren that they were plagued with internal strife. With reference to the Hacker incident, Holsinger said:

The affair did not end at Krefeld. Although persecuted from place to place, some to Friesland, some to Holland, still a disposition of wrangling was maintained, though somewhat modified by their afflictions from without.²³

First group to America. In 1719, the first contingent of Brethren came to America. They were led by Peter Becker.

In 1719, Peter Becker with forty families, many of them Brethren sailed for Pennsylvania. They settled in Germantown, just six miles north of the square of the city of Philadelphia.²⁴

It is Holsinger who sheds some light on this voyage.

About 1719 A.D., twenty or more families fled to America. On board the ship they revived their discussions which resulted in such bitter contentions that some of the families were totally estranged to each other before they landed. Thus they brought with them to the New World the Berman "leaven of malice," as well as the Christian spirit of brotherly love. As a natural result they dispersed to different parts of the country when landing on the shores of America. . . . Thus, again did good come out of evil, for thereby was the Word of God spread abroad.²⁵

In a letter back to Germany from Philadelphia, Johannes Naas gives a vivid description of the voyage which probably furnished a basis for Holsinger's remarks above:

²³Holsinger, p. 121.

²⁴Mallott, p. 39.

²⁵Holsinger, p. 121.

Neighbors accused one another. Husband, wife, children fought bitterly. Instead of helping one another, they only added to the burden of each and made it every hour more unendurable, seeing that such people are obliged to be pent up together for thirteen, fourteen or fifteen weeks, what an amount of trouble must follow with such natures. . . . I must not urge you as the journey is so troublesome for people who are not able to patiently submit to everything, but often in the best there are restless minds. . . .²⁶

It was ten years later that Alexander Mack came to America. In the Pennsylvania Archives, the following entry was made:

Accordingly about thirty families including Alexander Mack, his wife and three sons sailed in the ship Allen, under command of James Craigie, from Rotterdam, via Cowes, and after a tempestuous and perilous voyage of seventy-one days they landed at Philadelphia, September 15, 1729.²⁷

Mallott gives a similar account:

In 1729 the brotherhood at Westervain migrated in a body to Pennsylvania. They sailed on the chartered ship Allen from Rotterdam and proceeded to Cowes, England, whence they sailed on July 7, 1729. They landed at Philadelphia on September 11 and made the required affirmations on September 15, 1729.²⁸

In his memoirs, Alexander Mack reflected upon Germany, and especially on Schwarzenau, while making this observation:

²⁶ Brumbaugh, History, p. 121.

²⁷ Jessie R. Grant, Pennsylvania Archives (Harrisburg: Second Series, Vol. XVIII, 1901), p. 18.

²⁸ Mallott, p. 40.

With all the Christian professions of the times, this community, with its nonresistant principles, with its self-denying doctrines, and with the sole object in view of glorifying God in bringing forth the fruits of obedience to his commandments, was not tolerated.²⁹

²⁹Alexander Mack, A Plain View of the Rites and Ordinances (Mt. Morris, Illinois: Brethren Publishing, 1888), p. v.

Chapter 2

COLONIAL AMERICA

Charter of privileges to the provinces and counties of Pennsylvania.

Because no people can be truly happy, though under the greatest enjoyment of Civil Liberties, if abridged of the freedom of their consciences as to their religious profession and worship; and Almighty God being the only Lord of Conscience, Father of Lights and Spirits, and the author as well as object of all divine knowledge, faith and worship, who only doth enlighten the mind and persuade and convince the understanding of people, I do hereby grant and declare that no person or persons, inhabiting in his Province or Territories, who shall confess and acknowledge One Almighty God, the Creator, Upholder and Ruler of the World, and profess him or themselves obliged to live quietly under the civil government, shall be in any case molested or prejudiced in his or their person or Estate because of his their conscientious persuasion or practice, not to be compelled to frequent or maintain any religious worship, place or ministry contrary to his or their mind, or to do or suffer any other act or thing contrary to their religious persuasion. And that all persons who also profess to believe in Jesus Christ to be the Saviour of the world, shall be capable (notwithstanding their other persuasions and practices in point of conscience and religion) to serve this government in any capacity, both legislatively or executively.¹

The first Quakers to appear in America were two women, Mary Fisher and Ann Austin, who landed in Boston in 1656. They were imprisoned for five weeks, subjected to

¹Theodore H. James, Colonial Records (Harrisburg: 1700-17, Vol. II), p. 57.

indignities, and banished from the colony. Other Quakers faced similar treatment in Massachusetts which resulted in four victims going to the gallows. The first real Quaker experiment in government came in New Jersey following 1664. Several Quakers received the colony from the two friends of the Duke of York in 1664. William Penn's personal interest in America was aroused by this experiment.

It was in 1681 that William Penn was granted Pennsylvania in consideration of a debt from the crown. Penn widely advertised and guaranteed religious freedom for all law-abiding citizens who ". . . acknowledged one Almighty and Eternal God to be the Creator, Upholder and Ruler of the world."²

The first German settlement in America was Germantown, ten miles north of Philadelphia. "The first German settlers were Mennonites who arrived October 6, 1683, on the ship Concord bringing thirteen families from Creyfeld."³ Their first church was erected in 1708. The Mennonites were the direct descendants of the Anabaptists of the Reformation. It was from a young, forty year old Catholic priest, named Menno Simons, that this group took their name. Simons renounced the Catholic faith and accepted the Bible as the only rule of faith. He taught

²William Warren Sweet, Religion in Colonial America (New York: Harper, 1903), pp. 98-99.

³Sweet, p. 102.

that a Christian must be obedient to his rulers and pray for them and pay taxes to support the government. He taught also that a Christian must not take up the sword. Like the Mennonites and Quakers, the Dunkers were fundamentally opposed to war and advocated nonresistance.

Nicholaus Ludwig Zinzendorf was raised amidst Pietistic influences because his parents were followers of Philipp Jakob Spener. In 1771, he offered an asylum to a number of persecuted wanderers from Bohemia and Moravia known as the "Moravians." They traced their origins back to the Hussite movement in Bohemia. The Moravians were particularly active in printing and distributing books. It was Count Zinzendorf's plan that in the Georgia Colony, where his people settled, he would attempt a unification of all German sects in America. Bowman notes:

Altogether seven synods were held within six months, and in the first four every German religious body in Pennsylvania was represented. After the fourth synod almost all withdrew and Zinzendorf's dream of union faded.⁴

Four years after the Brethren landed in America, the first church was organized at Germantown, Pennsylvania, on Christmas Day, 1723. Peter Becker was elder. On September 7, 1724, a new church was organized at Coventry, Pennsylvania, in Chester County. On November 12, 1724, the Conestoga church in Lancaster County was started with Conrad Beissel as minister. The coming of Alexander Mack in 1729 was a great stimulus to the Brethren.⁵

⁴Sweet, p. 107.

⁵Rufus D. Bowman, The Church of the Brethren and War (Elgin: Brethren Publishing, 1944), p. 67.

The most outstanding official statement of the church's position on war during this period was made by the Annual Meeting of 1785, held at Big Conewago, Pennsylvania. The Annual Conference, after due consideration, went on record saying that the words of Peter in I Peter 2:13-14 did not mean submitting to higher powers to do violence, or the shedding of blood. It was Peter who himself exhorted that, "We ought to obey God rather than man." Submission to higher powers meant only insofar as it was the will of God. The Brethren held that they could not "find any liberty to use any carnal weapon . . . that no brother should permit his sons to go to muster ground, much less that a brother go himself."⁶

Revolutionary war. In his chapter on doctrine and growth of the church, Brumbaugh declares that the Brethren Church:

. . . never sanctioned, never encouraged, never participated in war. Peace as a fundamental principle was and always has been honored by the members. Every war that has swept the country was steadfastly opposed by the church. The Revolutionary War was a severe test. Many of the members were anxious to see the new government prosper and succeed. But they could not, they did not fight.⁷

In 1775, the Assembly of Pennsylvania asked that all able-bodied white male inhabitants "associate" for the

⁶James E. Miller, Minutes of the Annual Meetings of the Church of the Brethren, 1778-1909 (Elgin: Brethren Publishing, 1909), p. 10.

⁷Martin Grove Brumbaugh, A History of the German Baptist Brethren in Europe and America (Mount Morris: Brethren Publishing, 1899), p. 121.

common defense. Those who had scruples against these military organizations were called non-associators. On June 30, 1775, the Assembly of Pennsylvania took the following action:

The House taking into consideration that many of the good people of this Province are conscientiously scrupulous of bearing arms, do hereby earnestly recommend to the Associators for the Defense of their Country and others, that they bear a tender and brotherly regard towards this class of their fellow-subjects and Countrymen; and to these conscientious people it is also recommended, that they cheerfully assist, in proportion to their abilities, such associators as cannot spend their time and substance in the public service without great injury to themselves and families.⁸

During the American Revolution, the Brethren position on war brought misunderstanding and persecution. Criticism of the non-associator position reached a new height when, on November 8, 1775, the Assembly voted to require non-associators to pay an equivalent to the time spent by the associators in acquiring military discipline. "The Assembly on April 6, ordered that all arms be collected from them."⁹ The Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania on April 5, 1777, issued this statement:

As the militia has lately been out, and many of them are disgusted that the non-associators of this state have not yet been compelled to contribute anything towards the Association, or in support of

⁸Charles D. Cullmann, Votes of the House of Representatives of Pennsylvania, 1767-76, Series 5, Vol. VI, p. 594.

⁹Marion E. Collier, American Archives, Series 4, Vol. VI, p. 889.

the American Cause, and that some of the associators have screened themselves from the service of the last campaign; and they complain very heavily that the burden lies entirely on those who are willing to go forth; there are also great complaints of some of the militia being obliged to go home without their pay; the opinion of Congress is desired where a Bounty ought not to be given, and how much.¹⁰

In spite of mounting pressures which took the form of the government collecting blankets, shoes and stockings for the use of the army, the seizure and sale of real estate and goods, the Brethren still did not fight. In an intense spirit of patriotism the oath of allegiance was passed, June 13, 1777.

. . . Therefore it is enacted, that all white male inhabitants of the state, except the Counties of Bedford and Westmoreland, above the ages of fifteen years, shall before the first day of the ensuing July, and in the excepted counties before the first day of August, take and subscribe before some justice of the peace an oath in the following form:

I . . . do swear (or affirm) that I renounce and refuse all allegiance to George the Third, king of Great Britain, his heirs and successors, and that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as a free and independent state, and that I will not at any time do or cause to be done any matter or thing that will be prejudicial or injurious to the freedom and independence thereof, as declared by Congress, and also, that I will discover and make known to some justice of the peace of said state all treasons or traitorous conspiracies which I now know or hereafter shall know to be formed against this or any of the United States of America.¹¹

¹⁰Theodore H. James, Colonial Records, 1776-79, Vol. II (Harrisburg: Printed by Thio. Fenn and Company, 1852), p. 198.

¹¹Jessie R. Grant, Pennsylvania Archives, Series 2, Vol. III, pp. 4-5.

Many Brethren lost their property. Some were robbed or beaten, and a few were killed. The name of Christopher Sower appears in the Pennsylvania Archives under the heading, "Persons Gone With Ye Enemy."¹² Sower was held a captive at Valley Forge during the time that he could have cleared himself with the law. When released by the army officials his property was confiscated.

His personal property was sold at public auction on August 15, 24, and 28, 1778, and real estate was sold at the Court House, Germantown, September 18, 1779. The total value of his property was estimated at one hundred fifty thousand dollars.¹³

The loss of the Sower publications took from the Dunkers the leading educational influence among them. The hostility under which these people had lived caused them to develop a greater exclusiveness.

The Brethren did not keep good records. There are no recorded Annual Conference minutes until 1778. The Brethren held it not becoming a follower of Jesus Christ to bear arms, or fight. They believed it wrong to resist evil and they would not swear or take an oath. In the minutes of the 1781 Annual Meeting which was held at Conestoga, Pennsylvania, the Brethren stand against war was clarified.

. . . it has been unanimously concluded that we should not pay the substitute money (substitute for

¹²Jessie R. Grant, Pennsylvania Archives, Series 6, Vol. XIII, p. 546.

¹³Bowman, pp. 97-98.

military duty); therefore we, the assembled brethren, exhort in union all brethren in all places to hold themselves guiltless and take no part in war or blood-shedding, which might take place if we would pay for hiring men voluntarily. . . . In case a brother or his son should be drafted, that he or his son should go to war, and he could buy himself or his son from it, such would not be deemed so sinful. . . .¹⁴

A preacher of unusual eloquence came to Germantown, and many of Mack's members were attending his services. Some of them persuaded Mack to hear him. After the meeting his faithful members gathered around to see what their leader thought. "Oh, he might do very well for an army chaplain but not at all for a minister to a peace-loving people. I advise you not to hear him."¹⁵

The Bill of Rights, dated December 15, 1791, was the greatest guarantee of freedom to nonresistant and non-conformist people. Congress was to make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. They guaranteed the right of peaceable assembly.

Valentine Power, a member of the Brethren Church in the Germantown area, did not agree with the interpretation concerning the paying of substitute money. He was clearly opposed to war and the shedding of men's blood. According to I Peter 2:13-14, Power believed that he should submit to the government, even though it be of the kingdom

¹⁴Minutes, p. 6.

¹⁵Brumbaugh, p. 494.

of this world, in all matters not contrary to the will or command of God. In 1785, he wrote a letter to the Annual Meeting stating his convictions. His actions and teachings were such that the Annual Meeting in 1790, at Coventry, Pennsylvania, considered as their first article of business, an admonition to Power.

Unanimously concluded, that we desire and pray that the brother, Valentine P., would desist from his strange notion . . . and we believe and confess that Christ has forbidden to his followers the swearing of oaths and partaking of war. . . . It is impossible for us to break the bread of communion with such a brother, who pretends the higher powers were requiring such of him.¹⁶

In the years following the Revolutionary War, the Brethren expanded and moved West into the wilderness. They settled in Ohio by 1793, pushed West into Missouri by 1795, Indiana and Illinois by 1809, and reached the Pacific coast in 1850.

As early as 1797, the Brethren asserted that ". . . no brother or sister should have negroes as slaves."¹⁷

Indian wars and relations. The great Brethren publishers, the Christopher Sowers, wanted peace with the Indians. "They advocated a voluntary tax to care for the Indians' needs. They believed that peace with the Indians would come by doing good to them."¹⁸ Elder Adam Paine was the

¹⁶ Minutes, p. 14.

¹⁷ Minutes, p. 18.

¹⁸ Bowman, p. 74.

most famous missionary among the Indians. He was most notorious during the Black Hawk War times. In July, 1830, a great Indian feast was held in Bureau County, Illinois. Black Hawk, the noted Indian warrior, was present. The purpose of the gathering was to form a federation of the different tribes as a preparation for war against white settlers, who had become far too numerous to suit the Indians. Paine and his halfbreed interpreter came to this war council. When the feast was over, "Paine mounted a log and began to preach. . . . He invited attention to the Great Master, a Man of peace, who did not fight, and did not want his people to engage in war. . . ." ¹⁹ As a result, the council declared for peace, and rejected Black Hawk's plea for a war federation.

On Wednesday, May 23, Rev. Adam Paine was shot by Indians. As Moore observes:

One of them severed his head from his body, swung it across his shoulder, supporting it by the long beard, and bore it into camp. Some days later the body and head were recovered and buried. ²⁰

War of 1812. There was a decision of the Annual Meeting covering the War of 1812, found in the Cassel collection, which was recorded for the first time by Brumbaugh. Brumbaugh reinforces this:

¹⁹J. H. Moore, Some Brethren Pathfinders (Elgin: Brethren Publishing, 1929), p. 167.

²⁰Moore, p. 172.

. . . it has been discussed by us concerning the war matter, and it is agreed by all the brethren that if a brother or brother's sons who consider themselves according to the teaching of the brethren "defenseless" and prove themselves to be such and wish to obey the teachings of the Brethren--when these shall be hard oppressed with the payment of fines they shall be assisted by the brethren according to the teaching of the apostle--let one bear the burden of another, thus you will fulfill the law of Jesus Christ.²¹

The significance of this resolution is apparent. The Brethren had, during the Revolutionary War, suffered greatly, because of their nonresistance. In the Revolutionary War the peace principles of the Dunkers were regarded by the enemies of the church as a pretense for loyalty to the King of England and hostility to the government. The charge was, of course, utterly false. The church has in every emergency steadfastly adhered to its primitive faith. This will be especially apparent from what follows. The Minutes as published after 1790 do not again refer to war until the years 1845 (Mexican War) and 1864 (Civil War).

In this interval the second war for Independence was fought (1812-1815). In 1814, the British had invaded Maryland, bombarded Baltimore, burned the public buildings at the National Capital, and forced the President and his Cabinet to flee to the woods for safety. This flight and all its attendant excitement was in the territory most densely populated by the Dunkers.

²¹ Brumbaugh, p. 492.

It is refreshing and comforting to know that in this trying hour, when the peace principle was put to the crucial test, the Annual Conference of 1815 met and calmly and heroically reaffirmed the doctrine so dear to the church from the beginning.²²

²²Brumbaugh, pp. 492-501.

Chapter 3

THE CIVIL WAR

Outstanding leaders. Probably the three most outstanding leaders of the Brethren Church during the Civil War were Elders John Kline of Rockingham County, Virginia, B. J. Moomaw of near Roanoke, Virginia, and D. P. Sayler of Frederick County, Maryland. It was John Kline, who on February 22, 1849, gave his interpretation of patriotism, which represented the best of Brethren thought:

I have a somewhat higher conception of true patriotism than can be represented by the firing of guns which give forth nothing but meaningless sound. . . . My highest conception of patriotism is found in the man who loves the Lord his God with all his heart and his neighbor as himself. Out of these affections spring the subordinate love for one's country; love truly virtuous for one's companion and children, relatives and friends; and in its most comprehensive sense taken in the whole human family. Where this love universal, the word patriotism, and its specific sense, meaning such a love for one's country as makes its possessors ready and willing to take up arms in its defense, might be appropriately expunged from every national vocabulary.¹

As early as 1848, Annual Conference outlined the procedure for receiving members into the church, which required each applicant to indicate his acceptance of the nonresistant principle. Each year at the Annual Meeting

¹Benjamin Funk, Life and Labors of Elder John Kline (Elgin: Brethren Publishing, 1900), p. 246.

during the Civil War, questions were raised regarding the conduct of military-age men. At the Clover Creek Church in Blair County, Pennsylvania, during the 1863 Annual Meeting, the question was raised concerning how to deal with brethren who have enlisted and gone to the army as soldiers, or those who had been drafted, and gone to the Army. The answer was not specific. "We think it not expedient to consider (or discuss) these questions at this time. Still, it is believed, and was expressed, the gospel gave sufficient instruction."²

When Dr. Henry Geiger of Philadelphia decided to enter the medical division of the Army, he felt that he had to resign both his ministry and his membership in the church. Here is his letter to the First Church of Philadelphia, addressed to Elders John Fox and Christian Custer:

Being about to engage in the service of our country and thus violate the rules of our church, I respectfully beg leave to offer my resignation as a member. Be so kind as to receive in behalf of yourselves and the members generally my grateful thanks for the past kindness and allow me to remain--Very truly yours, H. Geiger.³

Article 10 of the Annual Minutes of the 1864 Meeting held at Wayne County, Indiana, aids somewhat in understanding the church position during the Civil War.

²James E. Miller, Minutes of the Annual Meetings of the Church of the Brethren, 1778-1909 (Elgin: Brethren Publishing, 1909), p. 220.

³Rufus D. Bowman, The Church of the Brethren and War (Elgin: Brethren Publishing, 1944), p. 117.

The question was raised as to whether it was right for a minister to wear a soldier's overcoat when in the pulpit, or at other times and if he did, how should he be dealt with.

It is considered not advisable for any brother, whether a minister or private member, to wear any military clothing, and if he is disobedient, he should be dealt with according to Matthew 18. . . .⁴

It was decided during the same Meeting that a candidate for baptism should declare his agreement with the Brethren Church in regard to the principles of non-resistance before the whole church.

Noncombatant status for Brethren. It is important to see the way the federal government regarded the Brethren Church during the Civil War. "The Federal Militia Act of July 17, 1862, gave the President power to muster in the militia between the ages of 18 and 45."⁵

"On August 4, 1862, President Lincoln issued a call for 300,000 men for nine months service."⁶ Neither the Militia Act nor the General Order were specific in the matter of exemption. The General Order provided for the exemption of ". . . all persons exempted by the laws of

⁴Minutes, p. 227.

⁵Leonard E. Burns, U. S. Statutes at Large, 37th Congress, Session II, Chapter 201, Vol. XII, pp. 597-600.

⁶Melvin L. Gratus, Official Records, Series 3, Vol. II, pp. 333-35.

the respective states from military duty, on sufficient evidence."⁷

The Federal Act of March 3, 1863, did not exempt those conscientiously opposed to war, but provided for the hiring of substitutes or the payment of the sum of \$300.00 for the purpose of employing substitutes. Section 13 of this Act reads:

And be it further enacted, that any person drafted not notified to appear as aforesaid, may, on or before the day fixed for his appearance, furnish an acceptable substitute to take his place in the draft; or he may authorize to receive it such sum, not exceeding three hundred dollars, as the Secretary may determine, for the procurement of such substitute, etc.⁸

A most important Federal decision affecting the Brethren Church was made in 1864, and took the form of The Act of February 24, 1864. Section 17 reads as follows:

And be it further enacted, that members of religious denominations who shall by oath or affirmation declare that they are conscientiously opposed to the bearing of arms, and who are prohibited from doing so by the rules and articles of faith and practice of said religious denominations, shall, when drafted into military service, be considered noncombatants, and shall be assigned by the Secretary of War to duty in the hospitals, or to the care of freedmen, or shall pay the sum of three hundred dollars to such person as the Secretary of War shall designate to receive it, to be applied to the benefit of the sick and wounded soldiers: Provided that no person shall be entitled to the benefit of the provisions of this action unless his declaration of conscientious scruples against bearing arms shall be

⁷Official Records, pp. 333-35.

⁸Official Records, pp. 333-35.

supported by satisfactory evidence that his deport-
ment has been uniformly consistent with such
declaration.⁹

Abraham Lincoln's attitude toward Brethren. President
Abraham Lincoln was requested to put force and pressure on
the Friends, Mennonites and Brethren to enter the Army.
His reply was kind and showed that he had given consider-
able thought to the problem.

No, I will not do that. These people do not
believe in war. People who do not believe in war
make poor soldiers. Besides, the attitude of these
people has always been against slavery. If all our
people had held the same views about slavery as these
people hold, there would be no war. These people are
largely a rural people, sturdy and honest. They are
excellent farmers. The country needs good farmers
fully as much as it needs good soldiers. We will
leave them on their farms where they are at home and
where they will make their contribution better than
they would with a gun.¹⁰

Nonresistance stated. It was in the 1864 Annual Meeting
that the most comprehensive statement was drafted concern-
ing nonresistance in over 150 years. The rebellion between
the states had tried and tested the nonresistant princi-
ples, and caused questions to arise about paying bounty-
money for substitutes. The church decided to endure
whatever sufferings and to make whatever sacrifice neces-
sary to maintain the principles of peace and nonresistance.
Article 35 of this Meeting declared,

⁹Official Records, Vol. III, p. 606.

¹⁰J. E. Miller, Stories from Brethren Life (Elgin:
Brethren Publishing, 1942), pp. 137-38.

And we think it more in accordance with our principles, that instead of paying bounty-money, to await the demands of the government, whether general, state, or local, and pay the fines and taxes required of us, as the gospel permits, and indeed requires . . . we hereby declare that it has our sympathies and our prayers, and that it shall have our aid in any way which does not conflict with the principles of the gospel of Christ. But since, in our Christian profession, we regard these gospel principles as superior or paramount to all others, consistency requires that we so regard them in our practices.¹¹

To show the expression of the principle of nonresistance, as held by these early Brethren, the following question, found in the 1865 Minutes, was posed and answered: "Can a brother be held as a member of the church who will, when put into the army, take up arms and aim to shed the blood of his fellowman? Answer: He can not."¹²

Persecution in the South. There was more suffering among the Brethren in the South than in the North. "The North had a more stable government. In the South the Brethren as an antislavery people were classed as Unionists, and thus were often misunderstood."¹³ As President Lincoln recognized, many Brethren were farmers.

Brethren suffered from Sheridan's marches of destruction throughout the Valley of Virginia. Many Brethren were farmers in the path of this army and they experienced great financial loss.¹⁴

¹¹ Minutes, p. 230.

¹² Minutes, p. 237.

¹³ Bowman, p. 151.

¹⁴ Bowman, p. 152.

In Tennessee, John P. Bowman, a minister of unusual power was killed by soldiers when he implored them not to take his horse, which he needed so greatly. Elder John Kline was shot to death on June 15, 1864. He was one of the denomination's greatest leaders. Some have looked upon these men as martyrs for the principles of nonresistance.

In the Annual Meeting of 1865, the military problem was again raised. In Article 19, the question was raised as to whether a brother who was drafted could pay for a substitute.

Since the law has exempted brethren from military duty, by paying a tax in lieu of service, we consider that brethren do wrong to resort to other means unless they are ignorant of the provisions of the law.¹⁵

It is known that some of the Brethren hired substitutes in the early days of the Civil War, but this was not officially endorsed by the church. The church preferred the payment of taxes in lieu of military service.

It was at Limestone, Tennessee, in 1860, that the Annual Meeting wanted to hold a love feast. There was a regiment of Federal soldiers encamped on the church ground. "The army officers advised the church to go on with the feast and assured all that no one would be molested. The feast was held without any disturbance."¹⁶ It was in July, 1861, that Elder B. F. Moomaw gave permission for the

¹⁵Minutes, p. 237.

¹⁶Miller, p. 146.

Fifty-first Regiment of the Confederate Army of Virginia, to locate on his farm. He entertained the officers in his house.

It wasn't long until Moomaw was asked to preach in camp. He gladly accepted the invitation. . . . During the encampment a malignant form of measles broke out. . . . The Moomaws took many of the sick soldiers into their home and helped nurse them. . . . he would not accept any remuneration.¹⁷

The Confederate Law, of October 11, 1862, was severe on the Brethren. Among other things, it provided that ". . . members of the society of Friends, Nazarenes, Mennonites, and Dunkards shall furnish substitutes or pay a tax of five hundred dollars each into the public treasury."¹⁸ Some Brethren were unable to pay for substitutes. "These men forced into the army obeyed all orders but one: They balked when it came to shooting their fellowmen."¹⁹ In quoting T. J. Jackson, Zigler records this statement:

There lives a people in the Valley of Virginia, that are not hard to bring to the army. While there they are obedient to their officers. Nor is it difficult to have them take aim, but it is impossible to get them to take correct aim. I, therefore, think it better to leave them in their homes that they may produce supplies for the army.²⁰

¹⁷Miller, pp. 147-48.

¹⁸Confederate Statutes at Large, First Congress, Session II, Chapter 45, Vol. II, p. 105.

¹⁹Miller, p. 144.

²⁰D. H. Zigler, A History of the Brethren in Virginia (Elgin: Brethren Publishing, 1908), pp. 97-98.

Some persecution of the Brethren in 1863 is explained by Kimmel:

Their horses and other domestic animals were stolen by individuals, and foragers for the armies robbed them of much of their grain and other produce. . . . Some were arrested and their lives threatened for aiding those who were attempting to escape to the North. Many brethren lost much of their property during the war from which losses they never recovered.²¹

On October 8, 1864, all provisions for Brethren exemption were revoked. The situation was so serious for the Brethren that many of them of draft age tried to escape across the lines to Northern Territory. "For the third time--in Germany, the colonial America, and in Virginia during the Civil War--the Brethren answered the severest tests of the war through emigration."²²

²¹John M. Kimmel, Chronicles of the Brethren (Covington: The Little Printing, 1951), p. 149.

²²Bowman, p. 150.

Chapter 4

DIVISIONS IN THE RANKS

The progress and growth of the Brethren Church has been much hindered by internal troubles that have either retarded the progress of evangelistic work, or have resulted in the loss of members who organized new fraternities.

Seventh Day German Baptists 1728-1800. "The Seventh Day German Baptists had their beginning in 1728 with Conrad Beissel as the founder. He drew to his following many members from the early church."¹ They insisted on celibacy, and in dress and customs they resembled in many ways monks and nuns. Beissel died in 1768 and was succeeded by Peter Miller. Upon his death in 1796, the movement declined and faded out around the turn of the century.

Far-Western Brethren 1820-1826. The Far-Western Brethren Church was composed of members from colonial churches who went westward and lost connection with the mother churches. "Whenever they settled in any considerable number new organizations were formed. The main body was disturbed

¹Otho Winger, History and Doctrines of the Church of the Brethren (Elgin: Brethren Publishing, 1919), p. 93.

over the Far-Western Brethren's views on footwashing, slavery and dress."² Very little was done for unity. Several hundred members were lost to the church, and by the Annual Meeting of 1859 the Far-Western Brethren were recognized in full fellowship.

The New Dunkers. The New Dunkers was the name of a body of believers which was organized by dissatisfied members of the Brethren Church in Carroll County, Indiana, in 1848. There was trouble surrounding Peter Eyman of the Bachelor Run congregation and another man. After Peter Replogle was chosen to the ministry in 1829, trouble arose causing a division in the church which resulted in the Bachelor Run and Deer Creek organizations. In the General Conference of 1848, both men were to appear. "The two brethren referred to did not come back, and were disfellowshipped at a council meeting held in the barn of Jacob Flora."³ The new group decided to use the term "Church of God."⁴

Bowman Brethren. The Bowman Brethren caused a division to occur in Tennessee. Elder John A. Bowman was expelled from his church in 1858, because he had been involved in a law suit. "He, however, considered this action altogether unjust and continued his preaching and other usual activities of the ministry. Many were baptized by him."⁵

²Winger, p. 95.

³Winger, p. 98.

⁴Winger, p. 99.

⁵Winger, p. 99.

Following his death at the hands of a Confederate soldier, an 1866 committee from Annual Meeting visited Tennessee, and decided Elder John A. Bowman had been illegally disfellowshipped. They indicated the Bowman Brethren could be restored to full fellowship. Thus reunion was accomplished.

Leedy Brethren. The Leedy Brethren were largely a local and a family organization, existing chiefly in Knox County, Ohio. The Owl Creek church disowned them because they advocated the single mode of feet washing.

An Annual Meeting committee upheld the work of the local church and expelled some other members. They organized a church, established two congregations, and in 1882, united with the Progressive Brethren.⁶

Old Order Brethren. Certainly one of the saddest chapters in Brethren history was that which was written covering the years 1881-1883. Within a period of about two years, the German Baptist Church was divided into three unequal parts. The conservative group withdrew from the main body because they disagreed with such modern practices as higher education, church schools and missions.

On November 25, 1881, a meeting was held in the barn of Abraham Landis, in the Salem church, Montgomery County, Ohio for the purpose of further organization. At this meeting it was decided that the name of the new organization should be the Old

⁶Winger, p. 99.

German Baptist Brethren.⁷

One of the earliest court cases involving Brethren began in the fall of 1882. This case involved property rights in Miami County, Ohio. In the proceedings, the conservative party was the plaintiff and the Old German Baptists were the defendants. The conservatives claimed the Old Order was building next to their lot and that this constituted an infringement. "The decision of the court was that there was no infringement. The building, however, was delayed until winter set in, but was finished the following summer."⁸

Similar suits were brought against Old Order Brethren by the conservatives in Cedar County, Iowa, and Franklin County, Pennsylvania, but the most notorious action that was taken during the transitional period of the church trouble was issued on February 14, 1883, when suit was entered against the Old Order Brethren for preaching and solemnizing marriages in the name of the Old German Baptist Church. "After many charges presented by the plaintiffs, the judge threw the case out of court at the cost of the plaintiffs."⁹

⁷Henry R. Holsinger, Holsinger's History of the Tunkers and the Brethren Church (Lathrop, California: Pacific Press, 1901), p. 455.

⁸Holsinger, p. 457.

⁹Holsinger, p. 458.

German Baptists. This name, until 1908, applied to the main body of the Brethren Church from which the Old German Baptists separated. It is presently known as The Church of The Brethren, and it boasts a membership of four times the number of all the rest of the Brethren combined.

Progressive Brethren. To the opposite position of the Old German Baptist Brethren was Henry R. Holsinger and his followers. Holsinger was a writer and publisher of the weekly paper, Christian Family Companion, which began in 1865. The crises leading up to a division between the German Baptists and the Progressives arose with the publication of the Progressive Christian in 1878. Holsinger, in these publications, called attention to the:

. . . glaring deficiencies in the church in the way of education, incompetent elders, parsimonious giving, undue stress on the matter of dress, the increasing authority being assumed by the Annual Meeting with its Standing Committee, and reticence in forwarding Sunday school and missionary work.¹⁰

The German Baptists appointed a committee to "wait on Elder H. R. Holsinger, and deal with him according to his transgressions."¹¹ They met with the Berlin church on Tuesday, August 9, 1881, and held a lengthy discussion. The congregation of the Berlin church backed Holsinger.

¹⁰Homer A. Kent, Sr., 250 Years Conquering Frontiers (Winona Lake: The Brethren Missionary Herald, 1958), p. 92.

¹¹James E. Miller, Minutes of the Annual Meetings of the Church of the Brethren, 1778-1909 (Elgin: Brethren Publishing, 1909), p. 403.

They issued a statement which read in part:

Inasmuch as Elder H. R. Holsinger has not violated any gospel order of the general brotherhood, and not having had a trial of the charges brought against him at the Annual Meeting of 1881, therefore the Berlin congregation . . . will continue to work together with Brother Holsinger as our bishop. . . .¹²

The committee appointed by the Annual Meeting to investigate and deal with Holsinger was disturbed with several matters at the Berlin church. First, H. R. Holsinger employed a stenographer to take down and publish the proceedings of the council. Secondly, the Berlin church decided, by a resolution, that:

. . . this Council shall be held openly to all members, and persons not members of the Brethren church will be considered present by courtesy only, and none but the members of the Berlin church and the Committee are invited to participate in the business.¹³

Because the Committee decided that its work could not be conducted in harmony with the Gospel, the following was decided by them: ". . . that brother H. R. Holsinger cannot be held in fellowship in the brotherhood, and all who depart with him shall be held responsible to the action of the next Annual Meeting."¹⁴ This committee was composed of Elders John Wise, Enoch Eby, C. Bucher, David Long, and Joseph N. Kauffman.

This report was read at the following Annual Meeting, which convened at Arnold's Grove, near Milford,

¹²Holsinger, p. 508.

¹³Minutes, p. 404.

¹⁴Minutes, p. 404.

Indiana. The report was adopted and Holsinger was expelled. In reference to the Annual Meetings and his problems with the Standing Committee, Holsinger concluded: ". . . and so the warfare was continued from year to year."¹⁵

Holsinger and his progressive group organized a new denomination on June 6, 1883, in Dayton, Ohio. Holsinger was elected moderator. One of the first actions was to merge several different Brethren groups into this denomination. The following resolution was adopted:

Resolved that the Brethren heretofore known as Progressive, those known as Congregational, and those known as Leedy Brethren are all one body in Christ, and that all sectarian titles that heretofore existed shall be forever dropped, and we will hereafter be known religiously and socially and know each other by the gospel name Brethren.¹⁶

On the matter of going to law to maintain interest in church property, the decision was that ". . . we maintain our rights, so far as agreeable with the Gospel, and that the matter of doing so be left to each individual church."¹⁷

Most of the church buildings and property were in the hands of the main body. . . . But a progressive spirit energized these Brethren . . . new buildings were erected and new congregations were organized.¹⁸

Holsinger visited the California church and was favorably received. This caused alarm among the Oregon churches, which ". . . asked the Annual Conference to look

¹⁵Holsinger, p. 478.

¹⁶Kent, pp. 13, 18, 21.

¹⁷Kent, pp. 13, 18, 21.

¹⁸Kent, pp. 13, 18, 21.

after those Brethren. . . ."19 The Annual Conference sent several committees to California in 1883 and 1884. The 1884 committee did not meet with success and recommended that ". . . the brotherhood should withdraw fellowship from all who would not respect nor hear the counsel of the church."20 The result was, says Muir, "that the church of California and Chaparral became Progressive churches."21

Higher education. It is more than irony that the progressive idea of higher education would eventually be a root of another church division. The formation of Ashland Seminary, in 1930, was the most advanced idea in education to that date. The heart of the problem at the Ashland school centered around different standards of conduct between college and seminary students, different interpretations placed upon Scripture by the different faculties, and liberal ideas on the matter of worldliness. Members of the Brethren Church across the nation received conflicting reports from students and faculty of both schools.

The college president established a double standard of conduct for college students. ". . . a stricter standard for the pre-seminary college students and a more lenient standard for the regular college students."22

¹⁹ Gladdys Esther Muir, Settlement of the Brethren on the Pacific Slope (Elgin: Brethren Publishing, 1939), citing minutes 377, pp. 463-64.

²⁰ Muir, pp. 463-64.

²¹ Muir, p. 393.

²² Kent, p. 139.

When the composition of the Board of Directors of the Ashland schools included non-Brethren, non-Christian men, and when it became evident that important doctrines were denied and even ridiculed in college classes, certain action was taken by the seminary dean, Dr. Alva J. McClain, and others to force a return to the Statement of Faith of the school. This met with drastic results. The final outcome was a motion passed by the Board, which read:

That the president of the college be instructed to secure by resignation or dismissal the elimination of Professors Alva J. McClain and Herman Hoyt from the seminary faculty, because of a continual lack of harmony and cooperation between the arts college and seminary which are essential to the success of the institution.²³

This action brought about a division in the denomination. Certain ministers who defended the viewpoint of the dismissed professors met that same evening, June 2, 1937, for prayer. From this group was formed the Brethren Biblical Seminary Association. This group decided that a new seminary should be formed and the name given was Grace Theological Seminary. "The Ashland College group formed an opposing organization which was called the Brethren Loyalty Association, Inc. . . ." ²⁴ The division was clearly seen when, in the fall of 1937, Grace Theological Seminary began operation in Akron, Ohio. "On April 8, 1938, the legal

²³George T. Ronk, The Brethren Evangelist (Ashland: The Brethren Publishing, Vol. LVIII, June 12, 1937.

²⁴Kent, p. 153.

charter under the laws of Ohio had been received and the seminary was thus able to proceed as a fully organized institution."²⁵ The Ashland group, through the writings of Rev. George T. Ronk entitled, "The Antinomian Controversy in the Brethren Church," accused the Grace group of Antinomianism. The Grace group, through Dr. Alva J. McClain, refuted this assertion. Dr. McClain's response was contained in the article entitled, "Brother Ronk's Antinomian Antimony."²⁶ Though there has been no legal denominational split from 1940 to the present, the Brethren supporting Ashland College have held separate Annual Meetings from those supporting Grace Seminary. Because of this separation, there arose several important civil suits over property rights.

Nonresistance and Civil Courts. In a tract on Brethren beliefs, one writer stated that,

. . . the Scripture enjoins that the doctrine of nonresistance must extend to the matter of two or more brethren in Christ appearing in worldly law courts against one another (I Cor. 6:1-7). Disputes between Christians should be settled by the method outlined in the words of Jesus Christ (Matt. 18: 15-17).²⁷

As early as the Revolutionary War, Brethren

²⁵George T. Ronk, The Brethren Evangelist, Vol. LXI, No. 1, April 16, 1939, pp. 6-10.

²⁶Evangelist, May 20, 1939, p. 15.

²⁷Luther L. Grubb, We Believe (Winona Lake: The Brethren Missionary Herald [n.d.]), p. 40.

preached against going to law. Elder Christopher Sower loaned a sum of money to a man in great distress. The man heard him preach against going to law and decided not to repay the debt unless Sower would sue him.

I am sorry, said the pious old elder, but if you say so, I cannot help it. Sue you I will not . . . I will cancel the account now. . . . Years later the man returned the money, with interest, to clear his conscience.²⁸

Some members asked the Annual Meeting, in 1867, for the Brethren position regarding the use of civil law in collecting debts.

We consider it is contrary to the gospel, as understood by the brethren, to use the civil law in collecting debts, or in any other case where it would involve strife or litigation. Friendly suits are admitted, when the case is decided to be such by the Council of the Church. But to advise others to sue, or to publish that we will sue, is inconsistent with our principles, and would subject a brother to the judgment of the church, according to the gospel. (See Matt. 5:40; and Luke 6:29.)²⁹

In 1871, at the Annual Meeting held in Berks County, Pennsylvania, clarification was sought concerning foreclosure of a mortgage when a debt is not paid according to contract. The reply stated that there was ". . . no objection for brethren to secure money by mortgage, but we cannot advise brethren to close a mortgage by a process of

²⁸ Martin Grove Brumbaugh, A History of the German Baptist Brethren in Europe and America (Mount Morris: Brethren Publishing, 1899), pp. 536-37.

²⁹ Minutes, p. 264.

³⁰ Minutes, p. 296.

law. . . ." ³⁰ Just a few years later, someone asked if a Brethren, in light of the Scriptures, could practice law as an attorney. "The Brethren have always considered it not according to the Gospel for a brethren to practice law and act as an attorney. . . ." ³¹

Following the denominational split of the Ashland and Grace groups, four law suits were instigated. In the first case, a group of Ashland College sympathizers entered suit against the trustees and pastor of the First Brethren Church of Dayton, Ohio, for control of the church property. The trial was conducted in the Court of Common Pleas, Montgomery County, Ohio, dated November 6, 1940.

Judge Cecil on February 17, 1941--rendered a decision in favor of the Grace group . . . decision appealed to Appellate Court, Columbus, Ohio, which sustained the decision of the lower court. ³²

The second case centered around property rights of the First Brethren Church of Peru, Indiana, in 1943.

The trial took place in the County courthouse at Peru, Indiana, beginning April 12, 1943, and continued for five and one-half days. The decision . . . under date of October 6, 1944, was in favor of the Ashland group. . . . ³³

The third court litigation took place in Meyersdale, Pennsylvania, in 1947.

³¹ Minutes, p. 379.

³² The Brethren Missionary Herald (Winona Lake: Monthly publication of the National Fellowship of Brethren Churches).

³³ Kent, pp. 207-8.

In April 1948, Judge Norman T. Boose ruled that the Grace group, including about 170 of the 200 member congregation, was not truly Brethren in its teachings, and was therefore not entitled to use the church property.³⁴

The last trial was instigated over church and parsonage rights of the Leon, Iowa, Brethren Church. ". . . H. J. Kittleman, judge of the Third Judicial District of Iowa, after due deliberation, handed down a verdict in favor of the defendants (Grace group)."³⁵

The only other court action between these two groups involved a bequest from the estate of William Johansen. There seem to be no records available of this dispute.

The Ashland Brethren Church considers itself, in a limited sense, an historic peace church. This has been more in theory than in practice, for the vast majority of our young men and women of draft age do serve in the military service and only a few have selected the Conscientious Objector position as allowed by law. In the General Conference in August, 1968, the church passed the following recommendation for the purpose of giving some support to those who do choose the Conscientious Objector position:

That, as a means of continued support to our young men who cannot conscientiously bear arms or

³⁴ Kent, pp. 208-9.

³⁵ Kent, pp. 212-13, citing The Brethren Missionary Herald, March 8, 1941, p. 3.

serve in the armed forces, we again register our opposition to war and carnal conflict--our historic peace position.

Instruction is rendered each year to young men about Alternative Service. The second Sunday of November is designated as Peace Sunday.

As the only career chaplain for the Brethren Church in the armed forces, the Brethren Church never formulated any official statements regarding the military chaplaincy. Thus, Chaplains too make it a matter of individual decision similar to that of young men facing the draft in choosing to serve their country in some branch of the military.

The 88th General Conference of The Brethren Church at Ashland, Ohio, on August 11, 1976, approved the following Peace Committee report recommendation:

1. That, in recognition of our church's historical position of opposition to war and violence and in support of those young people who believe conscientiously that they cannot belong to a branch of the armed services, we acknowledge that God's claim upon a life may lead a man or woman to serve their country in alternative services as a conscientious objector; and that we support such persons with our prayers, friendship, encouragement and understanding.

2. That, since some of our young people do not follow our historical position and choose to serve their country in some branch of the military, we urge that as a church we support these also in our prayers, friendship and understanding.

3. That, we continue to urge our government to play a vital role in a positive and Christian way to bring peaceful approaches and solutions to the many domestic and world tensions.

4. That, we as a church become more actively involved in our peace witness and play a more direct role in applying peace principles to problems and tensions in our own communities.

5. That, the Conference Secretary file a copy of this report with the Department of State and Defense in Washington, D.C., and that copy of his correspondence be filed with the chairman of the Peace Committee.

Number two of the above Peace Committee recommendations indeed offers Chaplains of The Brethren Church a legal, moral and spiritual support for representation to preach the Gospel to men and women of the Armed Forces of the United States.

Chapter 5

ECCLESIASTICAL ENDORSEMENT AND APPROVAL OF THE NAVY CHAPLAINCY

Perhaps that which is most distinctive about the Chaplain Corps is the fact that it is representative of the churches of the United States. The Navy does not define the ministry, the priesthood, or the rabbinate. Nor does it provide or maintain a system or facilities to train candidates for ordination. It is self-evident that each religious body defines for itself the nature of ordination and that it provides a clergy structure which is consistent with its particular doctrine and with its needs. These are its prerogatives. The system of ecclesiastical endorsement has been developed out of an appreciation of these prerogatives.

Basically, an ecclesiastical endorsement verifies the fact of clergy status. The Brethren Church did not have a procedure for granting this endorsing approval. Thus, the Secretary of the General Conference of the Brethren Church sent the Chief of Chaplains the following:

The ecclesiastical endorsement of the General Conference of The Brethren Church is hereby granted to Reverend Thomas A. Schultz, a regularly ordained minister of the Brethren Church and has been granted permission to be a Chaplain in the United States Navy.

However, an interesting legal technicality caused some alarm when the Brethren Chaplain requested augmentation into the Regular Navy. The procurement programs officer informed the Chaplain that he must obtain a Regular Navy endorsement from the Commission on Chaplains of The National Association of Evangelicals. What occurred since the Chaplain came on active duty was that the Brethren Church became a member of the National Association of Evangelicals.

The National Association of Evangelicals was organized in 1942 for the purpose of providing a means of "cooperation without compromise" among Bible-believing Christians. At the present time it represents 35 complete denominations, with individual members from an additional 30 groups, such as Bible schools, colleges, seminaries, ministerial fellowships. Actual membership now numbers more than 3.5 million, with a service constituency of more than ten million through the commissions and affiliated service agencies. These agencies include the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association, servicing 70 mission boards, the World Relief Commission, the Commission on Chaplains, the National Religious Broadcasters, The National Sunday School Association, and many others. Through these agencies, the NAE has been effective in bringing together the various denominational groups which adhere to evangelical faith, creating a unity in spiritual purpose without enforcing or damaging any denominational preference.

Mr. Floyd Robertson is the Executive Secretary and his office is located in Washington, D.C. The Reverend Smith F. Rose, the Brethren Church Executive Secretary works very close with Mr. Robertson on matters concerning the military chaplaincy.

Mr. Robertson sent the Chief of Chaplains the following endorsement:

The Commission on Chaplains of the National Association of Evangelicals takes pleasure in granting ecclesiastical endorsement as Chaplain in the United States Regular Navy to Lieutenant Commander Thomas A. Schultz, CHC, USNR, USS CAMDEN (AOE-2), FPO San Francisco 96601. Chaplain Schultz is a minister of the gospel in good and regular standing of The Brethren Church, Ashland, Ohio. Your attention is invited to the statements regarding augmentation made about Chaplain Schultz by his previous Commanding Officer, Captain Donald A. Smith, USN, and included in his fitness reports. In the last one submitted by Captain Smith he said, "Chaplain Schultz is highly recommended for augmentation." We would like for you to know that both his denomination, The Brethren Church, and the National Association of Evangelicals support Captain Smith's recommendation and believe it would be in the best interest of the Navy for Chaplain Schultz to receive favorable consideration on his application for augmentation.

Thus, on 30 January 1975, Chaplain Schultz acknowledged receipt of notice of appointment in the Regular Navy. The ecclesiastical endorsing agency recognized by the Armed Forces is very important for the military chaplaincy.

Navy chaplains are qualified ministers, priests or rabbis representing their respective faiths to the thousands of men and women in today's Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard. Chaplains are also commissioned officers. They

wear the uniform of the naval service, identifying with and serving today's military personnel, sharing their adventures, their accomplishments, their joys, as well as their hardships, their dangers, their disappointments and their long separations from home.

The vital ministry of a Navy Chaplain is very demanding. It is a ministry of spiritual leadership, religious and personal counseling, individual and group programs, and much else. Many facets of this ministry to military personnel bear a close resemblance to civilian ministries. Others are shaped by the rigors and disciplines of the naval service. The forms of this ministry are as varied as the talents of the men and women who provide them and the rights and needs of those served.

The chaplain comes to the Navy to provide ministry as defined by the religious body which the chaplain represents. The wide community served, however, includes men and women of many faiths and denominations. The Navy chaplain strives to see that the needs of people of varied faiths are met, respecting each individual's personal beliefs. A Protestant chaplain, for example, when serving alone carries a responsibility for arranging for worship opportunities for shipmates of Catholic, Jewish or other faiths. A priest or rabbi in a similar situation has the same responsibility for others of different faiths.

A chaplain conducts divine services in accordance with the customs, traditions and rules of his or her own

faith. The chaplain serves under a commanding officer who is charged by Navy regulations to "Use all proper means to foster high morale, and to develop and strengthen the moral and spiritual well-being of the personnel under his command, and ensure that chaplains are provided the necessary logistic support for carrying out the command's religious program."

The Navy chaplain is available to serve everyone: those who command and those who are commanded. His is a career demanding moral courage, personal integrity and great spiritual strength. There are times when the chaplain will feel very much alone. There are also many times when the spirit and friendship of others in uniform will prove rewarding, supportive and refreshing.

When the Navy chaplain returns to civilian life, he or she returns with the background acquired from ministering to thousands of America's young men and women as well as with the satisfaction of having served God and Country.

Requirements. Eligibility for appointment in the Chaplain Corps, United States Naval Reserve, for active or inactive duty is based on endorsement by an ecclesiastical endorsing agency recognized by the Armed Forces Chaplains Board. This endorsement must certify that the applicant is: (1) A fully ordained or qualified priest, rabbi or minister of religion; (2) Actively engaged in the full-time pursuit of a religious vocation; and (3) Recommended as being qualified

spiritually, morally, intellectually and emotionally to represent his or her church or synagogue in the chaplaincy of the Armed Forces. (4) Is a citizen of the United States; (5) Is between 21 and 39 years of age at the time of actual appointment (upper age limit may be increased for veterans in accordance with their length of service to a maximum of 36 months); (6) Is physically qualified; (7) Possesses 120 semester hours undergraduate credits (or the equivalent) from an accredited college or university; (8) Possesses a Master of Divinity degree or an equivalent theological degree or has received credit for completing 90 semester hours of graduate study in theology or related subjects from a theological school listed in the Directory (Education Directory published by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare), or a theological school listed in the Directory of Catholic Colleges and Schools in the United States, or from a graduate school which is a component part of a college or university listed as accredited on the theological level in the Directory; (9) Completed 90 semester hours graduate credit or earn a graduate theological degree at a nonlisted theological school--but whose accomplishments are acceptable at an accredited, listed theological institution which will honor them with a statement or transcript.

In the Navy you find men and women of all faiths and denominations, and many who have no formal church affiliation. As in civilian life, they need the moral and

spiritual guidance of trained men and women of the clergy. Often their needs are increased by the rigors and disciplines of Navy life.

Ministering to the spiritual needs of these men and women--as a Navy chaplain--given every opportunity to utilize the theological training, applying pastoral knowledge, and to render an invaluable service to God, Church and Country. The popular Navy's recruiting theme is "Navy. It's Not Just A Job, It's An Adventure." This is a great missionary service to win men and women to our Lord Jesus Christ as we fulfill the Great Commission.

Chapter 6

THE MILITARY CLERGYMEN'S DUAL OBLIGATIONS

The Preface tells the story of the etymology of the title "Chaplain." Definitions of the chaplaincy seldom take sufficient account of this fact of institutional duality. Chaplains are unique in the military as the only group of officers whose primary identification is with a non-military institution. But they are also unique in the church, as the only large group of the clergy whose vocational identification is with a nonchurch social institution. An appreciation of the significance of institutional duality--the fact that a chaplain is not just affiliated with, but is fully part of, two major social institutions--is a key to understanding both the problems and the opportunities of the chaplaincy. Part of the difficulty is that it is so obvious. The dual relationship is taken for granted by everyone familiar with the chaplaincy.

Few writers about the chaplaincy have until now given serious attention to institutional duality. George H. Williams, author of the excellent brief history of the military chaplaincy included in the Cox volume, saw clearly

that the ministry of chaplains is "fundamentally different from that of his pastoral colleagues"¹ because of the chaplain's relationship to the non-religious institution in which he serves. But he noted the difference primarily in terms of the procedures by which the chaplain is chosen and installed in his work.

Under ordinary circumstances, the vocational identity of a minister is almost completely established by his church. It is the church that controls his professional education in denominational schools. In ordination it confers his credentials. His career unfolds within its institutional structures. His job assignments, his salary scale, his vocational changes and progression, his continuing education opportunities are all determined by institutional regulation or custom.

To an even greater extent, the professional life of a military officer is governed by his service. Not only are much of his education and training, his commission, his job assignments, his salary and promotions completely under military control, but even the clothes he wears at work and much of his social life are institutionally determined. To say "I am a Naval officer" says it all.

The chaplain is not just half-military and half-church. He is fully a member of both institutions. Though

¹George H. Williams, "The Chaplaincy in the Armed Forces of the United States of America in Historical and Ecclesiastical Perspective," in Military Chaplains, pp. 11-57.

he leaves the job environment of the church, he retains his full institutional status. He is still subject to the authority of his bishop, presbytery or church conference. He is not only expected but probably required to attend periodically meetings of the annual conference or synod to which he belongs or retreats provided by his church. His function in the armed forces is that of a clergyman, and in reality he cannot continue to function without the ordination and endorsement of his church.

But at the same time he is a commissioned officer and fully a part of his military organization. He wears the same uniform, obeys the same regulations, is paid the same salary, and is assigned to duty by the same kind of orders as any other officer. The chaplain participates fully in both institutions at once.

In a group of persons who are simultaneously full members of two social institutions as disparate as the church and the military, the existence of role conflict is not surprising. The surprising thing would be its absence. But the existence of role conflict is not in itself necessarily a negative factor. The chaplaincy is a profession which deliberately makes role conflict a way of life, and the relevant question is not whether it exists, but how useful the results may be.

The chaplain's immediate institutional environment is military. His ministry takes place in the armed forces, and the external characteristics of his life are militarily

determined. He wears the uniform rather than the clerical collar. Authority resides in a commanding officer rather than a bishop, a vestry, a session, or a board of deacons. His parishioners are military people, his church is a military chapel, his laws are military regulations, and he may be out of direct touch with his own church's institutional environment for months or even years at a time. It would be natural to conclude, under these circumstances, that the military influence is dominant, that he has "left the church and entered the military." A closer examination, however, reveals that the institutional environment of the church is also immediately present for the chaplain.

Three elements provide this environment. First, the chapel program in which the work-life of the chaplain is centered, while military in sponsorship, is thoroughly ecclesiastical in character. Its activities--church services, choirs, lay councils, religious education programs, community service activities--parallel the activities of the civilian parish. Most important of all, its goals are religious goals rather than military goals. While the chapel program is a voluntary, off-duty concern of the military laymen who participate, it is the primary, on-duty concern of the chaplain. Its goals are collateral goals for his parishioners, but the central goals of his work-life. So even in military surroundings, he continues to be vocationally in the church.

A second environmental element is provided by his chaplain colleagues. The chaplain is part of a military system, but he is also part of a Chaplain Corps subsystem who are, like him, clergymen. To the extent that there is validity in Williams' hypothesis (not pressed, but repeatedly suggested in his historical essay) that the Army and Navy have taken the place of denominations for chaplains, it is probable that it is the Chaplain Corps of his service, rather than the service itself, which has so operated.

The Chaplain Corps of each armed service does perform some functions analogous to those performed by denominational relationships in civilian life. There are corps-wide administrative structures for facilitation of ministry. Provision is made for continuing education, for spiritual retreats, and for professional development. A chaplain's most significant long-term associations are likely to be within his own corps. The group environment thus provided is an important part of his overall environment. Its norms, like those of the chapel program which is the focal point of his work-life, have their source in the church world rather than the military world.

A third element which extends the institutional environment of the church into the military world is provided by the denominational structures which oversee the chaplaincy. Each denomination has officials who visit, counsel with, and provide ecclesiastical supervision for

chaplains. Each denomination requires reports from its chaplains. Each denomination either encourages or requires periodic attendance at meetings of church courts or conventions. While these denominational relationships are not so pervasive in the everyday life of the chaplain as the chapel program and the Chaplain Corps subsystem, they do serve to keep him continually reminded of the non-military institution which establishes his vocational goals and to which he owes his primary professional allegiance.

The implications of the institutional duality in which the chaplain functions have in the past perhaps been less understood by military commanders than by civilian churchmen. A. B. Aronis, in 1972 research for a doctoral dissertation, compared the role perceptions of chaplains with those of their commanding officers. His research indicated that line commanders, even more consistently than chaplains themselves, give the traditional clergy roles of pastor-counselor and liturgist-preacher-priest primary importance in their expectations of chaplains.²

Yet the nature of the relationship of chaplains to their churches has not always been clearly perceived. Typical was the attitude of a commanding officer at a military base in the Far East. This commander took a paternal interest in the romance between one of the clerks in his office and an Oriental girl of the Buddhist faith.

²A. B. Aronis, "A Comparative Study," pp. 82-90.

When the young man asked the question and was accepted, the commanding officer volunteered to set up the wedding. He called his chaplain in to make the necessary arrangements. The chaplain advised him that he could only perform Christian weddings, and that he would not be able to officiate at a ceremony involving a Buddhist girl. The commanding officer exploded, "What do you mean you can't marry them? You're in the Navy, aren't you? You'll marry who I tell you to marry!" It required personal counseling on the part of the chaplain to convince the commanding officer that he was not only in the Navy, but also in his church, and that his authority to perform marriages was controlled by his church.

Here was a senior military officer of many years' experience, who perceived clearly that a clergyman was required for a certain professional function, but did not understand the institutional duality inherent in the chaplaincy. Because the chaplain was also in the military service and a member of his command, he thought of him as his hired professional, available to do his bidding.

The armed services are accustomed to the use of professionals for those functions that come within their professional province. Physicians, dentists, nurses, lawyers--all have held commissioned officer status in the military services, along with chaplains, for many years. These groups of officers make up the "professional staff corps" of the various services. Against this background

the military establishment is likely to think of a chaplain's ordination as being comparable to a physician's licensure or a lawyer's admission to the bar. It provides him with professional credentials. Similarly, the chaplain's church membership is thought of as comparable to the physician's membership in the American Medical Association or the lawyer's membership in the state bar. Chaplains are the only military group who find it necessary to defend themselves against charges that they are "tools of the military establishment." Chaplains are willing to be regarded as tools only of their churches, pursuing their churches' goals within the military establishment.

Navy officials raised no objection at all to the statements regarding church relationships and responsibilities in the 1974 Chaplains Manual. The ministry of chaplains will be enhanced, however, as military people at every level understand more fully the institutional duality which characterizes all chaplains. The chaplaincy will be most effective when both churches and military services recognize clearly that the chaplain is fully a member of both institutions--a unique kind of officer and a unique kind of clergyman--with clear responsibilities in both directions.

Chapter 7

THE TRANSITION FROM THE CHURCH ENVIRONMENT TO THE MILITARY MINISTRY BY UNDERSTANDING THE MILITARY SERVICE

The transition from the church environment into the institutional duality of the military environment is a critical step for chaplains. Civilian ministers are persons of some standing in their community. They have comfortable churches, secretaries, and then enter into a strange world in which "Attention on deck!" was shouted when an officer entered the room clearly identified as an authority figure. They learn to stand in a rigid brace at morning inspection while someone with more stripes on his sleeve looked them up and down as if they were less than human. Shipboard duty and combat experience in Vietnam describes these experiences as "culture shock."

Some new chaplains are conversing fluently about bulkheads, billets and dogging the watch having thus survived their initial plunge by adapting to the outward customs and conventions of the Navy. Indeed, there are some military chaplains who remain in culture shock for a full twenty-year career. For beneath the superficial level of adaptation to the external symbols and rituals, effective ministry as a military chaplain requires at a deeper

level an understanding of the characteristics of the secular institution in which the ministry is to be offered. These characteristics are different from those of the civilian parish church, and unless the difference is understood, the chaplain may go on for years offering a kind of ministry which neither fits nor bears fruit in the institution he has joined.

The basic spiritual qualification can be taken for granted when a clergyman enters the armed forces as a chaplain. He begins with a mature religious faith, tested by time. He has a well-defined system of beliefs, shaped by his own conscience and experience and by the denomination to which he belongs and refined and strengthened by at least three years of high quality post-graduate education. He has acquired the essential skills--homiletical, liturgical, sacramental and pastoral--required by his ministerial or priestly profession. He comes equipped with an appreciation of and commitment to the spiritual dimension of life, and with the motivating force of a divine calling. The churches have rightly maintained that the priests, ministers, and rabbis endorsed by them to the armed forces are fully qualified for religious ministry.

But religious ministry never takes place in "spiritual" vacuum. It is always in the world and for the world. "As thou didst send me into the world, so I have sent them into the world" (John 17:18 KJV), said Christ of the apostles in his great prayer for the church, and he was

careful to specify that he prayed "not that thou shouldst take them out of the world" (John 17:15 KJV). The ministry is inevitably in the world, and the form of ministry must be appropriate to the particular "world" in which it takes place. The clergyman's tendency is always to think in terms of the parish church. Its institutional presuppositions have so long been taken for granted that they are often treated as if they were an integral part of every ministry.

The ministry-related courses listed in any seminary catalogue--homiletics, liturgics, worship, counseling, religious education, and pastoral care--all are based on parish church presuppositions. But in the ministry of chaplains, which takes place in a secular institution, it becomes necessary to distinguish the essential from the accidental, to separate the inner spirit from the outward shape. Failure to do so means that the form and style of ministry developed in and adapted to one institution will be carried over unwittingly into another, where they may fail to fit. The key to effective ministry as a military chaplain lies here; the secular institution must be understood; the form of ministry must be made relevant to the institution in which it is offered.

Understanding the Military Service

Goffman devoted a great deal of attention to an analysis of the significance of induction procedures, which

mark the transition from the outside world to the insider world of the total institution. A large number of his illustrations came from military recruit training, which is a highly formalized setting for the transition process. He analyzed it in terms of the "mortification of the self"--a process by which the former self is systematically eliminated and replaced by a new institutional self.

The transition takes place in a setting which minimizes or entirely prevents contact with the former world; the new recruit is kept in virtual isolation from the outside world for the first few weeks. Most of his previous bases of self-identification are ignored or denigrated. He is even robbed of his complete name, and is addressed in new ways. The process of photographing, fingerprinting, assigning a number, cutting his hair, issuing him uniforms, instructing him on rules, assigning quarters, all are assaults on the self which prepare the way for a new identity. He suffers the indignity of exposure, both physical and psychological.

Even his informational preserve regarding himself is violated, as he is required to answer questions of a highly personal nature. He suffers forced interpersonal contacts, and forced social relationships. His autonomy is assaulted as he is required to request permission for minor activities that were entirely under his own control on the outside--permission to smoke a cigarette, to use the telephone, to go to the toilet. He is instructed in

elaborate deference patterns, of which the salute is the symbol in military life. His life is governed by detailed regulations covering everything.¹

These elaborate mortifications of the self, Goffman suggested are justified on different grounds by different total institutions.

Officers, in general terms, are less rigidly regimented by the total institution than enlisted persons. However, they pass through the same progression from total institutional control at the beginning to lesser control with seniority. Nowhere are the rigid control, the isolation from the former world, the mortification of the self, the psychological exposure, the enforced interpersonal contacts, the elaborate deference patterns, the detailed regulations, and the creation of a new institutional identity more systematically and professionally carried out than in the service academies at Annapolis, West Point, and Colorado Springs. The more seniority the office acquires, the more freedom from total institutional control he earns.

An understanding from a sociological perspective of the military service as a total institution provides the setting for an examination of several major aspects of the chaplaincy. Military chaplains comprise one of the few

¹Erving Goffman, "On the Characteristics of Total Institutions," Asylums (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, Anchor Books, 1961), pp. 3-124.

groups of clergymen--perhaps the only such group--who can minister as "insiders" to a total institution. The military chaplain who wears the same uniform, obeys the same regulations, participates in the same goal-oriented organization, sails the same ships, lives under the same combat conditions, is clearly an insider in the military total institution.

To share insider status with parishioners in a total institution is a condition of ministry of which the importance would be hard to overemphasize. Every chaplain has had the experience, while sitting in uniform waiting for a plane in an airport or bus in a bus station, of watching a member of his service walk in, look over the crowd, recognize the chaplain and join him to strike up a conversation. The serviceman knows by the uniform that they belong to the same club, that they have something in common.

Shared insider status affects ministry in a number of ways. One way is through the removal of the artificiality, even the elements of hypocrisy, that sometimes get in the way of relationships between a minister and his parishioners. The military chaplain is probably the only minister in Christendom who habitually sees his parishioners in their skivvy drawers. He visits with them more often in their dirty utilities than in their clean dress uniforms. He is accustomed to the earthiness of their everyday language. They may try to clean it up when the chaplain is in

sight, but they know as well as he does that before coming around the corner he heard every profane word. If they get into trouble, he is likely to be standing by at captain's mast or colonel's office hours. The fact that most Christians are not plaster saints, that like St. Paul they often fail to do things they would and do things they would not, is out in the open. As a result, sermons can be more relevant, relationships more direct and honest.

A chaplain knows the boredom of sailors during long periods at sea because he experiences it along with them. He knows the loneliness of separation from family, because he is separated from his family too. He shares with them the moral contradiction of participating in organized killing in the face of the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," of fighting wars while loving peace. A ministry of presence and participation offers a useful stance for counseling and pastoral care.

Another advantage of ministry as an insider in a total institution is a ready-made contact with the unchurched. The young persons in the armed forces are a cross-section of the people of the United States. And from the standpoint of the churches, the most striking thing about them is that most of them are, for all practical purposes, non-Christian. Every chaplain is aware that his status gives him a ready relationship to the unchurched of the military population. There is probably no ministry of the church that offers a better or more natural opportunity

for meaningful encounter with the functionally non-Christian majority of the population.

As a member of the managerial group of the total institution which establishes the conditions of life under which his parishioners live, with a close relationship to top management, he is in a position to minister to them by ministering to the institution itself.

Chapter 8

CONCLUSION

The Brethren Church was born within a political environment which forced upon it an immediate consideration of the doctrine of nonresistance. From its humble beginning in its motherland of Germany, the Brethren Church regarded the exercise of force to be in violation of the teachings of Christ. This conviction caused the Brethren to suffer persecution and to leave Germany. They sailed to America, and settled in Pennsylvania, because of a charter granting freedom of conscience and worship.

It was not long, however, before the thirteen colonies were engaged in a revolutionary war against England. Participation in any form of military exercise was not permitted and so again the Brethren suffered misunderstanding and persecution. Failure to aid the colonial cause brought about suspicion that the church favored the enemy.

Less than a century passed before the Civil War divided the States. Severe persecution fell on the Brethren, especially in the Southern States. The church was considered anti-slavery. Several Brethren ministers were killed because of their nonresistant principles. On

several occasions, however, Brethren ministers conducted worship services for armies of both the Union and the Confederacy. Brethren aided both sides by ministering to the physical needs of wounded troops. The fidelity of the Brethren Church to the doctrine of nonresistance was known and appreciated by President Abraham Lincoln, who allowed Brethren people to refrain from military duty. Often a tax was required of them in lieu of military service.

Within just a few years of the conclusion of the Civil War, the Brethren Church suffered internal strife which divided its membership. To this day there remain four denominations which have a common origin in the Brethren Church. During the 1881-1883 era of dispute, nonresistant principles were violated which saw one Brethren church bring litigation against another in civil courts.

The twentieth century brought about drastic changes in interpretation of the doctrine of nonresistance. World War I, followed a quarter of a century later by World War II, saw many Brethren young men entering active military service. The church no longer expelled men because of this action.

The Brethren Church of Ashland, Ohio, continues to teach the traditional teachings on the doctrine of nonresistance. Young men in the church are afforded the opportunity to claim conscientious objector status. The Brethren Church has changed its position on the doctrine of nonresistance since its beginning in 1708. Those

wishing to join the armed services may do so without facing denominational scorn. Likewise those claiming conscientious objector status are given counseling for this position.

As a Brethren minister and a Navy Chaplain the Brethren Church has entrusted the Love of God for me to herald the Divine Message to a lost world and find my sole source and authority in the Bible. This message is one of Hope for a lost world and speaks with finality and authority. Fidelity to the apostolic injunction to preach the Word demands my utmost endeavor of mind and heart.

As a military chaplain a key role is to be played in helping the military and the nation find this balance. As a force within the total institution standing for human values and the dignity of the individual, the institution can avoid the loss of these qualities. The chaplain can serve as a bridge figure between those in the institution and the outside. As one traditionally associated with families and family life, who performs marriages, offers counseling, and frequently serves as a communication channel between families at home and men in deployed and operational forces, the chaplain can help military persons live with and overcome the fact that families are inevitably outsiders to the total institution. The fact that the chaplain represents the outside institution which has made its way inside--the church of our Lord Jesus Christ--is a further bridge to the outside world. The chaplain's

traditional role as ombudsman when distressed military persons "tell it to the chaplain" provides a bridge to the values of the outside world.

In the quest for proper balance between human values and institutional control, the chaplain must recognize that he has obligations to both the individual and the institution. Sometimes the interests of the two may be contradictory, and because his first allegiance is to God as a representative of the church rather than to the military, the chaplain becomes the individual's advocate before the institution in such situations. People come first with him, and full military recognition of the nature of the chaplain's institutional duality will concede this. But a ministry to individuals without full appreciation of the role of the institution in individual welfare, of the inter-relationships between the person and the organization, becomes fruitless and frustrating. The chaplain stands for human values within the institution, and he has a key role to play in bringing the interests of the two together.

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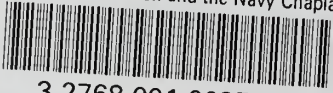
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