

UCC MILITARY CHAPLAINS, 20 May 76

Willis Elliott on "Biblical/Christian Reflections on Present Day Scene
and Modern Warfare"

PROPOSITIONS

1. Every American citizen, sometime between ages 18 and 25, should be required to contribute two continuous years to the public welfare in military or civilian service.
2. The arguments for unilateral disarmament are beginning to look stronger.
3. The coming chaplain--as distinguished both from the came chaplain who was in service to fulfill his church's expectations, and the comer chaplain who was in to fulfill the military's expectations--will be expected by those who seek out his/her services to be primarily guru.
4. The best word for your ideal self-image as chaplain is "teacher."
5. The current evangelical revival, which is beginning to swell clergy ranks, is bad news for ecumenism and prophetism in the military chaplaincy.
6. The confluence of civil religion and the human potential movement will soon produce church-connectionless military chaplains competing with church-related chaplains.
7. We have come to the "point where war is so utterly out of hand that it must be unambiguously repudiated."
8. We UCC military chaplains should push harder for our church's positions, such of the last four General Synods' support for unconditional amnesty.
9. We UCC military chaplains should find ways to speak to our UCC constituency more effectively vis-a-vis issues of war and peace, which had very low priority in the most recent General Synod.
10. Individually and collectively, we UCC military chaplains should witness to the need at least to balance the tribal-national militaries with a global military [whether or not within the present UN].
11. Where necessary to impress the powers with an issue we consider both urgent and otherwise unraisable, we military chaplains should use forms of collective demonstration familiar to us in civilian life--the sit-in, the strike, etc. [Possible occasions: severe instances of process injustice, training brutality, and spite decision.]
12. Both as ministers and as officers, we military chaplains should now press, through whatever channels, for "a new Geneva Diplomatic Conference for the purpose of recodifying the international law of war in the light of humanitarian imperatives and the realities of modern warfare." [IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH JUSTICE: A REPORT ON JUSTICE AND THE U.S. MILITARY, UCC 1975 General Synod, p.32.]
13. It's urgent that UCC military chaplains get into action in "exploration and implementation of alternate models of the church's ministry to those in the military services." [THE REPORT OF OCLL ON MINISTRIES TO MILITARY PERSONNEL, UCC 1975 General Synod, p.3.]

14. We military chaplains should join our voices with the civilian cry against America's overfeeding of the Pentagon and underfeeding of short-range and long-range social needs.