

COMBINED OPERATIONS CHAPLAINS' CONFERENCE.

OPENING.

A Conference of Chaplains was held at Combined Operations Headquarters on Wednesday, the 12th April 1944.

The Conference opened with an Intercession Service, conducted by the Chaplain of the Fleet and the Senior Chaplain. After the Service, Roman Catholic Chaplains joined the assembly and the 2nd Sea Lord addressed those present.

At 1210 hrs. the Chaplains proceeded to the Terrace to be photographed.

At 1230 hrs. they returned to the Cinema and the Reverend Gay spoke on stores and books.

At 1245 the Conference adjourned for lunch.

The Conference re-assembled at 1400 hrs. Addresses were then given by Captain Buxton (D.C.O.P.), and Major General Sturges (G.O.C., S.S. Group).

After Captain Buxton and Major General Sturges left the Conference, the Reverend Barnett and the Reverend Ferguson gave their experiences as Chaplains in Sicily and Italy.

The Conference was then thrown open for questions and discussion.

The Conference ended at 1600 hours.

COMBINED OPERATIONS CHAPLAINS' MEETING
HELD IN C.O.H.Q. CINEMA
AT 1100, ON WEDNESDAY, 12TH APRIL 1944.

Present:

SECOND SEA LORD Admiral Sir Algon Willis, K.C.B., D.S.O.
CHAPLAIN OF THE FLEET Venerable Archdeacon J.K. Wilson, B.A., R.N.
ASSISTANT TO THE CHAPLAIN OF THE FLEET Revd. P. Gay, R.N.V.R.
SENIOR CHAPLAIN, COMBINED OPERATIONS Revd. B.G. Beale, R.N.
ASSISTANT TO THE SENIOR CHAPLAIN, C.O. Revd. E.W.A. Wost, R.N. (Temp.) R.C.
DIRECTOR OF COMBINED OPERATIONS PERSONNEL Capt. R.H.V. Buxton, R.N.
THE GENERAL OFFICER COMBANDING S.S. GROUP Major General R.C. Sturges, R.M.
SENIOR CHAPLAIN S.S. GROUP Revd. John Armstrong, O.B.E., R.N.
STAFF CHAPLAIN, WAR OFFICE Revd. G.W. Battersby, C.F.

CHAPLAINS

Revd. D. Anderson-Black, R.N. (Temp)	United Board
Revd. R.T. Barnett, R.N.V.R.	Church of England
Revd. R.M. Beck, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. J.H. Bloock, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. E.R. Bowdler, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. F.C. Bunch, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. H.P. Chappell, D.S.C., R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. H.W. Coffey, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. T.R. Colman, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. J.A. Corbett, C.F.	Roman Catholic
Revd. G. Costello, R.N. (Temp)	"
Revd. R.B. Crane, R.N.V.R.	Church of England
Revd. R.A. Crawley-Boevey, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. F.W. Crooks, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. E. Crowley, C.F.	Roman Catholic
Revd. J. Chatterton, R.N. (Temp)	"
Revd. C.O.A. Darby, R.N.	Church of England
Revd. C.W. Earle, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. A. Ferguson, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. T.B.M. Fox, C.F.	"
Revd. W.G.H. Gater, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. O.M. Griffiths, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. R. Haw, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. M.W. Hooking, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. J.C. Holmes, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. H. de J. Hunt, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. C. Hughes, R.N. (Temp).	United Board
Revd. L.G. Jones, R.N.V.R.	Church of England
Revd. R.M. Jones, R.N.	"
Revd. W.R. Jones, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. H.A.L. Jukes, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. H. Kennen, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. D.B. Knox, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. E.J. Lewis, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. J.L. Leslie, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. J.S. Long, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. P.C. Magee, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. W.R.F. McChie, C.F.	Church of Scotland
Revd. A.E. Maxwell, R.N. (Temp)	Roman Catholic
Revd. I.F. Paton, R.N.V.R.	Church of England
Revd. C. Pritchard, C.F.	United Board
Revd. T. Quinian, R.N. (Temp).	Roman Catholic

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II. (Contd).

Revd. L.J. Reading, R.N.V.R.	Church of England
Revd. F.H. Riches, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. J.B. Roberts, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. P.S. Rowell, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. W.R.F. Ryan, R.N.	Church of Scotland
Revd. T. Ritchie, C.F.	Church of England
Revd. G.E.S. Short, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. I. Shorland-Ball, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. L.T. Sims-Williams, R.N.V.R.	Roman Catholic
Revd. J.J. Slater, C.F.	Church of England
Revd. A. Spender, R.N.	"
Revd. I.J.W. Sturrock, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. D.I.R. Thomas, C.F.	United Board
Revd. D.L. Vine-Russell, R.N.V.R.	Church of England
Revd. D.L. Williams, C.F.	"
Revd. H.A.P. Wood, R.N.V.R.	"
Revd. A.L. Wilson, C.F.	"
Revd. J.L. Yoo, R.N.V.R.	"

The following Chaplains were not present:-

Revd. N.S. Kodward, R.N. (Temp)	Methodist
(Absent at sea)	
Revd. D.W. MacKenzie, R.N. (Temp)	Church of Scotland
(absent at sea)	
Revd. H.W. Pearson, R.N.V.R.	Church of England
(Sick)	
Revd. I.J.M. Reid, C.F.	Church of Scotland
Revd. K.B. Somerville, R.N.V.R.	Church of England
(Sick)	

III.

ADDRESS BY CHAPLAIN OF THE FLEET.

"My Brothers, I want to take the opportunity which this service has given me, not in any sense to preach you a sermon or give you an address, but simply as Chaplain of the Fleet, to wish you all God Speed and every blessing in the task that lies ahead of you.

You will agree, I think, that it is rather fitting that this service should be held during a week in which Christian people everywhere are giving thanks for the assurance that the powers of God are infinitely greater than any power which the world has ever been able to generate, that the grave is not the end, that good can finally triumph over evil and that might is not the last word. It is, I think, also fitting that, in what we hope and believe will be the final onslaught on this side of the world, at all events, upon those dark powers that have so long enslaved the continent of Europe, the Church should be in the van, and that this is the proud position which many of you are going to occupy. I am not in the least bit troubled about you. I know that you will give of your finest and best, as you have been doing amongst those to whom you have been called upon to minister.

You know it has been a tremendous inspiration to me personally, when I was called to Queen Anne's Mansions to read some of the confidential reports that were sent in by Chaplains' Commanding Officers, counter-signed in many cases by the Flag Officer concerned, and to realise how Chaplains were 'doing their stuff'. There have been others, but the vast majority have come as a real help and inspiration because they have shown that at this time they have realised what a tremendous part they have to play, and by the Grace of God, you are doing a valuable job, so I repeat, I am not worried about you, for I know you will continue to go on giving of your very finest and best. I need not remind you surely of the influence that you and your example are going to have among your men. They will not talk very much at the time, but they will not forget, and over and over again, it will be mentioned - 'and the parson was there too'.

I sat and wondered last night what I could give to inspire and help you and that is why I chose Psalm 91 which sums up all you need. Then, too, that hymn which we have just sung - "Jesus Lives". Could anything be more inspiring and magnificent? Behind all the horror of warfare - behind all the pain and sorrow - behind all the uncertainty which the future holds - Jesus Lives. All seemed rather hopeless on that First Good Friday - good defeated, evil triumphant and God apparently doing just nothing, but Easter showed us that now and during the days that lie ahead - Jesus Lives - there is a living Christ - a living God unchanging and over with you."

ADDRESS BY THE 2ND SEA LORD.

"When my friend, Padre Donle, asked me to come and speak to this Meeting, he was quite correct in saying that I burked a bit, because you are all trained and experienced orators, and I am a very amateur one. I feel that all the more so after hearing the splendid and inspiring address which the Chaplain of the Fleet has just given us. But as a matter of fact, I am very glad to have this opportunity of paying tribute to the work of the Chaplains and of saying a few words to you who are working with and for the Naval and R.M. Units, who are about to take part in these impending operations.

Now there are no members of our service who appreciate the work that is done by the Chaplains more than do the Senior Executive Officers. This, I think, is natural, because as we go through the various stages of command, we see more and more how indispensable this work is. Not only is religion essential to a fighting service, but there are a hundred and one ways in which the Chaplains, without distinction of creed or denomination, assist in the support of discipline, maintenance of morale, and in the welfare of the personnel. I have always received the greatest help in all these matters from the Chaplains who served with me and I am very glad of this opportunity to thank the Chaplains' Branch for their loyal and devoted work, and I do that, not only personally, but also as 2nd Sea Lord responsible for the personnel.

If I may borrow from your technique - perhaps a dangerous thing for a layman to do, but I will risk it - I am going to take a quotation from the Scriptures, on which to hang my remarks to you. It is those words of St. Paul, which I think are in the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, and run like this:-

".....If the trumpet give an uncertain sound
who shall prepare himself to the battle....."

I think that at the present time, these words are very appropriate to the situation in this country. There are a good many discordant notes being sounded; I refer more to the political world and it is more important now than ever before that we in the Navy should all be strictly in tune.

Not only are we on the eve of what is going to be the biggest operation that has ever been launched from this country, but there are hopes, I think, that this year will see the defeat of Germany and when that occurs, this country will relax and, to a great extent, will resume more or less peacetime conditions. But the Navy in particular, will then have to bend all its energies and its resources to the prosecution of the war against Japan and while everybody at home will be easing up, we shall be concentrating our naval strength in the East, where the living conditions for personnel are going to be just as arduous and even more trying than they have been in the war in and around Europe. So, morale and the stimulation and maintenance of morale, are, I feel, just now even more important than they have ever been.

This is a matter that I do want to get the Chaplains to tune in on even more than they are now, but there must be no uncertain notes. Before I expand on this matter of morale, I am going to relate to you two examples of discord which have come to my knowledge recently. I am a bit diffident about relating these two examples to you, but I am going to risk it.

The first example occurred in a port in Sicily which we had just captured, and in which there was a large naval port party, with a young Chaplain attached for looking after their souls. Now the High Command had issued an order, which was agreed by all the Services, that there must be no fraternisation with the local population, for the obvious reasons of security and to guard against disease, particularly V.D. This young Chaplain who had not been in the Navy long and was not tuned in, preached a sermon which rather tilted at this order, which he did not think was at all in line with the Sermon on the Mount and the Brotherhood of Man.

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IV. Contd.

Such an attitude would have been very proper and right on ordinary occasions, but cannot always be maintained in the front line of a war area. This Chaplain had to be told that he must not preach sermons which tilted at authority, but he would not give way. He thought that he was right and rather took exception at the ruling authority, with the result that he had to be removed from the area. This was a pity because he was a hardworking and earnest fellow, good in many respects with personnel, but as he just could not swallow this rebuff, he had to go. I vouch for the truth of the foregoing because I was Flag Officer, Force "H" at Malta at the time.

The other story I want to tell you about I cannot vouch for personally, but I got it from a reputable senior officer, so it should be alright!

This again was a young chaplain, not well tuned in, who was preaching to his Ship's Company and he selected the parable of the good Samaritan, which he thought he would bring up to date as follows:-

A fellow going along one day on his bicycle was knocked down by a car, and left bleeding in the gutter. The first person to pass in a car was a Bishop who was far too occupied with his diocesan affairs to take any notice of the accident. The next man to come along, also in a car, was an Admiral, but he was very busy with Admiralty affairs and looked the other way, leaving the poor fellow without help. The third man to come along was a simple sailor who took pity on him and carried him to the nearest pub. In consequence, he returned late to his ship, broke his leave and was punished. Not very good for discipline!

The types of discord represented by these two stories are isolated cases, for I do believe that the Chaplains do magnificent work in the upholding of discipline and the maintenance of morale, and I have only one suggestion to make. The morale of personnel in this war has been and is, higher than in the last war, and the same thing is true of the other two Services and, to a very great extent, of the civil population. One very important reason for this, I am sure, is that never in the whole of our history, and we have fought a lot of wars in the past, has the cause for a war been clearer cut and more understandable than it has been for this one with Germany. Everybody can understand it. To put it on the jungle plane, it is kill or be killed. But people want it bit more than that to stimulate them to fight a major war like this, and without pretending that we as a nation are by any means perfect, I think it is true to say, as a generalisation, that this war is being fought for good against evil, for freedom of thought, expression and religion against the suppression of all these things, and for the rule of law against the rule of the Gestapo, the concentration camp and the firing squad. These things are very clearly understood by everybody, as regards the war against Germany.

The war against Japan is not by any means so well understood, Japan is a long way away: it cannot attack this country directly by air or do a great deal of damage to our shipping. It is easy for the insidious to make great play about Burma, Malaya and the Dutch East Indies, and say that when we had possessions or concessions in these lands they were exploited by the Capitalist, for the benefit of a few shareholders. This sort of thing can be set against our duty to Australia and New Zealand, who stood by us in our hour of direct need. China is a long way away also, and not many people realise what she has suffered, and for the common cause too.

There are people, and these include some men of the Navy, who think that we should leave this job to the Americans. Incidentally, they are paid more than we are!! I do feel that, without distracting the minds of the people who are getting ready for this tremendous operation from their immediate object, there is much to be done to rouse the Navy, in particular, about the causes of the War with Japan, and the Country too, also those people who think it is not our business.

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IV. Contd.

Therefore, I want to ask the Chaplains to tune in, if I may so express it, even more than they are tuned in now, on this particular line, and this can be done not only in sermons, on the basis of good against evil, but also in the extensive contacts you have with personnel in conversations on the lower deck or on shore, wherever it may be, and if you get the chance, don't forget the families, for they have the greatest influence with sailor men. As I have said, I feel that when this tremendous operation is over and the Germans give in, the post German Armistice period is going to be a severe testing time for the Navy and anything that can be done by the Chaplains' Branch to stimulate morale on these lines in order to get the cause more clearly defined, would be of great assistance. But the call must be clear; there must be no discordant notes.

It only remains for me to wish you all every success in your very important ministrations."

ADDRESSES BY CAPTAIN DUTTON (D.C.O.P.)

"The Senior Chaplain asked if I would explain quite briefly a little about 'Combined Operations Personnel', as my Department in the Admiralty, deals with any matters concerning them.

I am not responsible for how matters concerning them are dealt with in bases and ships, but any problems and any administrative questions that come to Admiralty, or are arranged from the Admiralty, are dealt with in the C.O. Personnel Department.

Practically speaking, the term "Combined Operations Personnel" includes all crews of Landing Craft and men trained as such. There are also certain other small parties like Naval Beach Commandos included. When this fleet of Landing Craft was being built up, they were actually under the Command of the Chief of Combined Operations, and it is only fairly recently that the administration of them has been turned over to the Admiralty, who now look after their interests.

There are broadly two types of Landing Craft; major craft in which crews live on board, and the minor craft, which can be lifted into carriers and the crews are accommodated in bases, or in the landing ships. Landing Barges are mostly similar to minor craft as regards crews living in a base.

The Landing Craft are organised into flotillas of something like 12 - 18 craft with a Flotilla Officer, on whom depends a very great deal the running and welfare of the personnel.

Of course, a lot of these officers are young and have not had much experience and it puts a great deal of responsibility on them.

This system rather borders on the way organisation of the Company Commander, who looks after the interests of his Company in every respect.

Whereas, in the bigger ships you have specialists to refer to, everything in the L.C. Organisation devolves on the Flotilla Officer, who is a Lieutenant or Lieutenant Commander, with only a short experience of naval conditions.

As I said before, the base in the case of Minor Craft is actually the home of the crews until lifted in a carrier for an operation, whilst in the case of Major Craft, it is the home for the maintenance parties who have to look after the running of the craft.

The technical side is to some extent, rather like an aircraft, in that it requires a big maintenance organisation to keep it going; each flotilla therefore, has its own mobile maintenance party which moves about with the flotilla.

Consider what happens when "Forces" are moved down south, the Maintenance Staffs with them, some of whom must actually move forward with their flotillas, when an operation is undertaken.

In the case of Major Craft, which have long endurance, the maintenance staffs can remain at bases some distance from the assault and the craft can return to their base for servicing and maintenance.

Thus I feel I should mention that there will be a stage when the base to which you may be appointed will undergo a change.

It will no longer be a holding place for the flotilla, but one to which the flotilla comes and goes.

I think in some instances there will be Chaplains, now attached to "Forces" and looking after personnel in a base, who may move forward with their "Force".

In some cases this will certainly be so, whilst in others, it may be necessary for Chaplains to remain at their bases.

From what we know of the Anzio Operation, and the long period of unloading after the assault, there will be a big organisation on the beaches on the other side, and it is obvious that a lot of Minor Craft will have to be accommodated by their Parent ships, and looked after over there. So there will be a great deal of work for the chaplains in that area.

The bases in the Portsmouth Command are all really under the Command of Commodore D.C.B. who is situated at Portsmouth and is on the staff of C. in C. Portsmouth.

You have the curious situation of having certain "Forces" in the Portsmouth Command under their own Flag Officer, responsible

/to A.N.C.X.F.

V. Contd.

the A.N.C.X.P., but who are serviced, maintained and generally looked after by the local command with the background of the Commander-in-Chief's authority. This is not an entirely novel situation, for if you get a squadron from the Home Fleet temporarily in the Portsmouth Command, although that squadron is under the command of the C. in C. Home Fleet, while in Portsmouth Command, it is generally administered by C. in C. Portsmouth, and the chain of command is much the same with Landing Craft attached to Forces. Although all naval "Forces" are under the command of A.N.C.X.P. he relies on the organisation and command of the Commander-in-Chief Portsmouth, the Navy, etc. It may be rather confusing at times for a Chaplain to know to whom he is responsible, although appointed to a "Force" and looking after the men of that "Force", I imagine there may be certain appointments which will also embrace looking after the personnel permanently belonging to the base. I have been asked to mention this, because it is a little difficult to understand the two conflicting responsibilities, but this is not anything new, and therefore, I do not think there should be any great difficulties.

I was invited to say a few words about the Chaplains' work, I should like to say that I am most interested in the work of the Chaplains and have always tried to associate myself with it in ships, because I know what immense value it has been in maintaining the morale of the personnel. As I see it, that work entails not only taking a great interest in recreation and physical and mental activities of the men, but also, and this I think is most important not to omit, in spiritual matters which are, of course, your primary concern. I think that in the past the sailor has possibly been regarded as a simple man and not very well educated. After all, in the days of Nelson they went to sea very young, with little education behind them, so could not have had much knowledge of the problems of the world.

Now we have in the Service a cross-cut of the whole population and I imagine in some ways the task of putting forward the spiritual aspect of your work is perhaps more difficult. On the other hand, I am sure in my own mind that simplicity in presenting the Christian message is essential, and it should not be obscured with a mass of detail. As I see it, one needs today an unshakable faith in God and that can I suppose be presented in many ways. Indeed, one can see grounds for it in the orderliness of nature, but I rather feel myself that a knowledge of the Bible and the teaching of the Bible are what have given me the strongest grounds for that faith. If you take the Old Testament, it is full of examples of God's faithfulness to men who trust Him, of the wonderful benefits from a faith in God, and also too, of the failures resulting from a neglect to do so. Coming to the New Testament, we find not only a very real example of how life ought to be lived, but God's provision of a new relationship that can make possible a new purpose and way of life. I feel very diffident about saying anything of this sort to an audience such as this, but I hold most strongly that a simple faith in the Bible and the fundamental truths of the Christian faith are really the backbone of morale. Since from what one hears it appears that there is a profound ignorance of the Scriptures, I feel sure that one of the greatest functions of a padre is to provide simple teaching of the Scriptures, and this is bound to have an immense effect on the country after the war. Now more than ever there seem to be opportunities for Chaplains to put across the fundamental truths of the Christian faith to men in the Services, men who in civil life are much more difficult to reach.

I should like to conclude by saying how grateful I am to have been given this opportunity to tell you how much I appreciate the work of the Chaplains, who I feel, have a great part to play both in the immediate future and also in preserving the general morale of the Services."

ADDRESS BY MAJOR-GENERAL R.C. STURGES, R.M.

"Captain Duxton has told you that the parson's side of life with Landing Craft is untidy". It is also untidy as far as Commandos are concerned. Of course, the ideal would be to have a chaplain for each Commando, but the numbers we have available are insufficient to meet our requirements, with the result that there are postings and cross-postings, which I assure you are not made without a great deal of thought.

The next thing, by virtue of there not being nearly enough parsons, almost every parson will be in the front row of the stalls in the operation. As far as the Chaplain's job in the field is concerned, some of you have already had experience and possibly do not need my thoughts on the subject. The Chaplain's job is difficult because everybody wants the parson at the same time and the tendency of the parson to answer the first call should therefore be resisted. You, as parsons going into battle, will have to be acquainted with your Commanding Officer's plan and accordingly you must make your own plan in advance for yourself. That is, know how long you propose to stop in a certain area, because the parson on the battle-field must be found if he is wanted and badly wounded men, who often think they are dying when they are not, like to know the location of the parson. Assuming that you base yourself at an R.A.P., when you leave the R.A.P. leave word where you can be found.

The Commanding Officer of a unit quarrels with lots of people by virtue of his position. After all, everybody is not perfect, but there are two people who must not quarrel, the Commanding Officer and the Chaplain. On the spiritual side, you are the Commanding Officer to the Commanding Officer, and you can show him how to go to Church to such a degree that he will be ashamed to stay away. The next thing, before you go into action, remember there is a certain percentage of people who like to have Holy Communion, provided that you have the opportunity to do this. There was some acrimonious argument after we landed at Madagascar because there was no Church of England parson to administer Holy Communion. After the battle starts, you have got to balance up the question of service against services; in other words, what service you can give to the troops you are looking after, as opposed to fussing your Commanding Officer or Adjutant to give you an opportunity of holding services. I ask you to appreciate the situation properly before you go to your Commanding Officer under severe active service conditions and ask his permission to hold a service. By your own example, and the service you produce, you will be putting yourself and the Church on a pedestal.

Lastly, yours is a very difficult job, the only other person with an equally difficult one being the Commanding Officer. Remember, men always look to see what their masters are going to do. When things get untidy and noisy and everybody is suffering from some kind of fear or other, the private soldier looks to his Commanding Officer or Chaplain, and judges by their example under fire, and I am afraid that, as a Commanding Officer or Chaplain, you have to appear cool, calm and collected, whatever the Germans choose to throw at you.

We have got three different types of Chaplains, and when a unit gets chewed up, strangely enough, any trouble that arises between sects in peacetime disappears. And so I hope that each one of you, if he happens to find himself with the wrong religion to look after, will remember that we are all doing the something, that is, looking to the future of the human soul, whatever a man's religion may be."

VII.

ADDRESS BY THE SENIOR CHAPLAIN, COMBINED OPERATIONS.

"During the last five months, our constitution has altered considerably this being due to the change over in command of the Chief of Combined Operations. I wished to call you all together so that you might be able to meet each other and exchange views on your work and because it seemed the last possible occasion on which we could meet as a body before the day dawns which will mean so much for our Service, our Country and the World.

From your point of view, I as your Senior Chaplain, have been switched from being "Senior Chaplain to the Chief of Combined Operations", and so responsible directly to him for Chaplains of all Services, to a new Admiralty appointment, which makes me for duty with the Chaplain of the Fleet, as Senior Chaplain for Combined Operations, and so directly responsible to the Chaplain of the Fleet for all Chaplains serving Combined Operations Personnel, and also for duty with the Chief of Combined Operations. The latter, because the Chaplain-General of the Army has asked the Chaplain of the Fleet that I might continue to act for him for Army Chaplains connected with Combined Operations, C.I., S.S. Brigade and indirectly, Combined Training Centres. For convenience, my office remained in C.O.H.Q. and not with the Chaplain of the Fleet.

My duties include visiting wherever Combined Operations Personnel are borne, and discussing with Commanding Officers the need for Chaplains. Looking up Chaplains, and going into problems and difficulties which may have arisen. In fact, to take off the shoulders of the Chaplain of the Fleet this side of his work, except that when and as he can, he will also visit Bases, carrying out Dedications of Chapels, etc. But, generally speaking, he leaves to me the running of the Chaplaincy side of all Combined Operations commitments, the recommendations of appointments and moves; and reports of the work generally as gleaned from visits and monthly reports.

The last conference of Combined Operations Chaplains was held on 28th January 1943, when the number of R.N. Chaplains was twenty-three. Today we number R.N. Chaplains sixty-four, Army Chaplains fifteen and there are also Officiating Ministers dealing with C.O. Personnel.

In this room there are Chaplains from C.I.Cs., Commando Chaplains, Chaplains from bases from Cramarty to Lands End, which house C.O. personnel, Chaplains of the 'Forces' who are going to land the soldiery on the other side and Chaplains of 'Top Secret' parties on very special jobs. As I see it, some of you will be serving in the Bases to which the men will be returning, others will be with the 'Forces' landing the armies, others again will be ashore dealing with all the difficulties of captured Ports and making life bearable for those passing through, and some of you will be Commandos in the forefront of the battle. More than that I cannot say of our future, but it must help us all to know how large a body we are and to know that each of us is being supported in our individual task by the prayers and thoughts of the rest.

I need hardly point out the great importance of our work as Chaplains. I think from a parochial point of view it is two-fold. 1. Preparing men to be true to themselves in time of Battle, so that, inspired by the things of God, they are prepared for whatever the Battle may have in store for them. 2. To imbue them with a true outlook on life, so that they will return to life after the War, filled with high ideals, ready to play their part in seeing that the better world, for which their brothers-in-arms have died, shall be brought about, realising that it is not just the Government of the Day or Political potential that is responsible, but each individual playing his part in Peace as he has played in in War.

/You cannot.....

VII. Contd.

You cannot do too much to win these men to a right way of looking upon life, and their commitments. Many have had little to do with the Church or its Clergy, and it is a unique opportunity for you to impress upon them the true values of all for which, as a priest and Chaplain, you stand. I cannot but say how I hope that each one of you will ever set out to find what there is in the other man to which you can appeal, and which you can use to make him feel a right pride in himself, his work, and the cause which places him where he is, and trusts him, as it does, with its championship. I would ever have you forget self in the furthering of the great cause we have in hand.

God has called us to be his emissaries and given us this peculiar cure, where we are dealing with, not only those who are part and parcel of the great war effort, but who are to form the nucleus of the future Empire. On the shoulders of those who see the maelstrom through will lie the governing of the thinking world of the future. What they have been shown by you in your sincerity of purpose, in your earnest of worship and devotion, and your catholicity of outlook will bear an indelible mark upon their minds and their future activities, both during and after the war.

I expect there are many questions which individuals would like to ask, either of me or of others present, so I will now throw the Meeting open for this purpose."

EXPERIENCES OF LANDINGS AT SICILY AND ITALY
BY THE REV. BARNETT.

The Revd. Barnett said that he was appointed to Force 'V' 14 days before the troops landed in Sicily. After participating in this operation, his main conclusion was that it was essential for the Chaplain always to be in a position where he could be found. He told how he had managed to give a word of encouragement to the men going ashore and in the absence of two M.Os. had assisted Sick Bay Petty Officers in dealing with casualties who had been brought aboard.

As a result of his experience at Anzio, Revd. Barnett again stressed how necessary it was for the Chaplain to be available. As the Naval Authorities in Naples had assured Father Doughty (the R.C. Chaplain) and himself that there were Army Chaplains ashore and the sick were being evacuated to the ships, he found it wise to liaise with the S.M.O. and remain at the main Distributing Station to which casualties were brought.

EXPERIENCES OF THE REV. FERGUSON.

The Revd. Ferguson said that he had been Chaplain to Force 'G' in H.M.S. BULOLO until arrival at Suez where he took charge of ships in the Bay.

Regarding the question of morale and welfare, he wished to tell the 2nd Sea Lord that often more than a word of encouragement was required to help men. He said that he had found that for men in Suez there had been no provision for pay, slops, tobacco etc., and permission to go ashore had been refused by S.N.O.R.S. unless they had No.6s. Such a ruling had meant that the men in many cases had been unable to visit the canteen about 6 miles away to get the weekly allowance of 1 pint of beer to each man.

Prior to the operation, using 1662 Prayer Book, and normal Prayer book services, he had held a service which he felt was singularly inadequate, in view of the fact that a number of men in his congregation either had not been to Holy Communion for a long time or had not been confirmed or were of other denominations. He advocated that a form of service with more strength and meaning might be considered for such occasions. He went on to describe how he had assisted the P.M.O. in H.M.S. BULOLO to evacuate the wounded into ships going home. During operations, he had realised the need for Chaplains to wear some distinguishing marks such as that worn by Army Chaplains, which consisted of a Maltese Cross on a purple band worn on each arm.

In concluding, he asked that consideration might be given to boat routine for chaplains, as this would make an enormous difference to the speed of their movements.

EXPERIENCES OF THE REV. READING.

The Revd. Reading, Senior Chaplain of Force "J", commented on the likely operational activities of L.C. forming a Force, and expressed the view like the preceding chaplains that a Padre should always be available and his whereabouts known. He also recommended the carrying of the reserve sacrament.

QUESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS RAISED BY THE CHAPLAINS

1. The Revd. Barnett recommended that at H Hours - (?) minutes, there should be a One Minute's Silence throughout the Force.

/Organisation

Organisation of Force.

2. The Revd. Beale said that each Force was commanded by an Admiral or Commodore with Group Captains each of whom had a Chaplain and that the Group Captain would place his Chaplain where he could best serve the Group.

Chaplains' Seniority

3. The Naval Chaplain to the Flag Officer was considered the senior Chaplain, if only by the virtue of the fact that the Navy is the Senior Service.

Co-operation in Troopships

4. It was stressed that if on board a Red Ensign Ship, the Naval Chaplain should consult the master of the ship and/or the adjutant before arranging services.

Kit

5. Need for minimum kit to be carried was emphasised. The Revd. Armstrong suggested that Communion sets could be carried in a Bergen Rucksack as assault jerkins were not available.

Burials

6. The Revd. Armstrong said that it was advisable for Chaplains who would be responsible for burials to each Beach Group, to see that these were carried out in units as far as possible, in order to avoid additional work for the Graves Registration Commission later. It was recommended that something should be left on the grave to identify the dead man, however crude the identification mark might be. Where there were two identity discs on the body, one should be left and the other forwarded to the Commanding Officer.

Cyphering - C.A.F.O. 286/44

7. The Revd. Beale recommended that Chaplains should not undertake cyphering, as if they did, in accordance with the terms of the Geneva Convention, they would be treated as ordinary prisoners of war.

Censoring

8. The Revd. Beale recommended that chaplains should assist the Chief Censor in censoring letters, as this would give them a lien on the men and their families.

Welfare and Education

9. Following the suggestion that the Padre should also combine the functions of Education and Welfare Officer with his religious ones, after expressions of opinion by the Revd. Sims-Williams and the Revd. Holmes, it was considered that this should not be done if it proved detrimental to a Chaplain's ecclesiastical duties. It should be noted that in K.R.s and A.I.s. it is stated that a Chaplain when no Instructor is borne, shall supervise the education of a ship's company.

Provision of Games and Wireless Sets.

10. The Revd. Beale said that when L.C. Flotillas were forming they were as a rule supplied with games etc.

QUESTIONS ON BOOKS AND STORES PUT BY CHAPLAINS AND ANSWERED BY REV. GAY.

11. The Revd. Gay said that the £14. grant allowed for the purchase of communion sets, etc., was insufficient and it had therefore, in view of the customs and excise refusal to remit purchase tax, been suggested that portable communion sets should be issued to temporary Chaplains, with a grant of £5 only. He was hoping that an A.F.O. to this effect would be issued shortly.

The Chaplain of the Fleet recommended that each Chaplain should take with him a couple of corks for the cruets in his communion set.

Religious Films.

12. With regard to religious films, information about these can be found in A.F.O. 1346/44. These films can be obtained, free of charge, from any instructional centre throughout the country. These centres are enumerated in A.F.O. 4251/43.

Film Projectors.

13. Application for film projectors should be made to D.S.T., Admiralty.

Gramophone Records.

14. The scheme for producing gramophone records of hymn tunes, for use with hymn cards, 1, 2 and 3, has been turned down owing to the expense involved. E.N.S.A. however, have a selection of similar records which can be used at sea, but not, unfortunately, in this country. Further information regarding these E.N.S.A. records can be obtained from E.N.S.A., Sacred Music Section, Drury Lane Theatre, W.C.2.

Religious Publications.

15. The Revd. Gay brought the following religious publications to the notice of the Chaplains:-

Hymn Cards 1, 2 and 3.

Folding Hymn Card - B.R. 445.
(Containing a few hymns and prayers).

Blue Service Book (B.R.447).
(To be used in conjunction with Hymn Book B.R.449).

My Prayer Book for confirmation candidates, Men. (B.R.446).

My Prayer Book for confirmation candidates, Women. (B.R.446B).

Small Service Book with Services - B.R.450.
(The Revd. Beale considered that this book should be brought to the notice of the Commanding Officers of L.C.T.S.)

IS THERE A PRAYER CARD WITH SEVERAL PRAYERS ON IT?

14. The Revd. Gay said there is at present no such card, but suggested that if Chaplains sent him sample prayers, say three or four in number, for inclusion in such a card, he would endeavour to get some printed.

Roman Catholic Books.

15. These are obtainable from the Naval Store Depot, Elveden Road, Park Royal, N.W.10.

IX. Contd.

Testaments & Pamphlets.

16. These can be obtained from the British and Foreign Bible Society, and/or Naval and Military Bible Society, Eccleston Hall.

COUPONS.

17. Applications for coupons to purchase materials, counter-signed by the Commanding Officer, should be addressed to the Assistant Chaplain of the Fleet, stating that the material is required for a Naval Church and giving coupon value, length, width and kind of material required. Cassocks and surplices if made up require no coupons. Some heavy brocades also require no coupons.