The Chaplain's Evolving Role in Peace and Humanitarian Relief Operations

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Peaceworks

**United States
Institute of Peace**

Contents

List of Acronyms

ARG	Amphibious Response Group
CA	Civil Affairs (unit)
CC	Combatant Commander
CIMIC	Civil-Military Cooperation (unit)
CMOC	Civil-Military Operations Center
COE-DMHA	Center of Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance
COMREL	Community relations
FHA	Foreign humanitarian assistance
HA	Humanitarian assistance
HAST	Humanitarian Assistance Survey Team
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IO	International organization
JCMOTF	Joint Civil-Military Operation Task Force
JFC	Joint Force Commander
JP	Joint Publication
JTF	Joint Task Force
MCRP	Marine Corps Reference Publication
MCWP	Marine Corps Warfighting Publication
MOOTW	Military operations other than war
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
OPNAVINST	Operational Naval Instruction
PVO	Private voluntary organization
SECNAVINST	Secretary of Navy Instruction
UN	United Nations
UNCACK	UN Civil Assistance Commission, Korea
USIP	United States Institute of Peace

Key Points

▶ Chaplains have traditionally served as *professional clergypersons* conducting divine services and providing religious education; *officers* managing the Command Religious Program, facilitating free exercise of religion for all, providing pastoral care, and advising on religious, ethical, and moral issues; *leaders* for the command in areas of faith and moral values, professional ethics, personal growth, and adjustment; and *subject matter experts* providing input on issues affecting morale, values, ethics, suicide, and trauma/stress. Chaplain Corps history from all the services also demonstrates that while the chaplain's role has been clearly defined, there has been a consistent tradition of going outside these defined boundaries.

▶ With the U.S. military's increased involvement in peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance operations, chaplains are now more likely to engage with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), private voluntary organizations (PVOs), and international organizations (IOs). While such involvement will never become the primary role of the military chaplain, possessing the skills to do what the situation at the time requires will prepare and allow chaplains to contribute significantly to the success of the mission beyond their traditional roles. U.S. Navy policy and doctrine should more thoroughly account for these changes. Chaplains' engagement with NGOs—particularly *humanitarian organizations* present during the initial phases of an intervention—depends upon policy and doctrine, the mission commander, and the level of the military organization at which a chaplain works.

▶ Chaplains should be mindful that cultural differences exist in the military-civilian relationship in areas such as decision making, accountability, flexibility, aims and expectations, time perspective, and trust. Further, as a member of the U.S. military, nothing the chaplain endeavors to do will ever be perceived as disconnected from certain political considerations. Both chaplains and NGOs are political beings responsible for the consequences of their actions at all levels.

▶ Chaplains can significantly enhance their effectiveness with NGOs if they are at the appropriate location as the operation unfolds. Participation in Civil-Military Operations Centers (CMOCs), Humanitarian Assistance Survey Teams (HASTs), and Joint Task Force (JTF) Assessment Teams to assist in coordination of NGO-military activities is recommended in JTF doctrine and policy. Later in the operation, Civil Affairs teams may also benefit from chaplain involvement. Chaplains' status as "members of the clergy" or "endorsed religious leaders" provides them with credentials no one else will have. It also gives them access to certain leaders, populations, and locations. The chaplain, as a neutral and noncombatant, may attempt to create or strengthen meaningful relationships with leaders of political factions that will contribute to reducing the conflict and building a foundation for peace.

▶ By virtue of their vocation and training, chaplains possess qualities that potentially make them valuable participants in the military-NGO partnership during a peace or humanitarian relief operation. Both chaplains and NGO personnel possess

invaluable training in humanitarian issues, and both have the desire to bring an end to suffering and disease in people's lives. NGO personnel may give chaplains some degree of trust simply because of their religious authority—and if given, this trust should be conserved and deepened. The chaplain can advance NGO agendas, clarify the NGO point of view when advising the commander, or explain to NGO personnel the perspective and concerns of military leaders. Although a member of the military, the chaplain is the person who has the greatest affinity with NGO players and a natural choice as a working partner and command representative.

◗ Significant obstacles continue to hamper chaplains in the NGO-military relationship. U.S. Navy policy and doctrine should be updated to allow chaplains to become involved in areas outside the strictly "religious." This could also bring about synchronization at the policy and doctrine level between the Navy, Marine Corps, and Joint Task Force—and jump-start subsequent practical training appropriate to both service and multiservice environments. Research projects might help to determine what role a chaplain could play in the civil-military and humanitarian assistance operations centers and teams present in an intervention, and at what point in the intervention a chaplain should be called upon to be an active participant.

Foreword

What image comes to mind when you think of a military chaplain? A priest on a beachhead administering last rites to gravely wounded troops? A minister in a foxhole comforting and praying with a dying soldier? As Captain Paul McLaughlin reveals in this Peaceworks report, the role of the chaplain in today's military goes far beyond such strictly personal religious duties.

In fact, as Captain McLaughlin—a Catholic priest in the United States Navy—details in the following pages, the chaplaincy has changed dramatically, just as the nature of the military's mission in today's conflicts has similarly changed. While chaplains of various denominations will always be responsible for the traditional religious duties in the military unit, Captain McLaughlin reveals a new role for the chaplain, serving as an invaluable liaison between military and nonmilitary actors in peace and humanitarian relief operations.

Chaplains have an advantage in this newly expanded role. They are members of the military, but they have noncombatant status, which often instills a sense of trust among factional leaders in a peace operation. Chaplains also have religious authority obviously, which also may instill trust among these leaders. That authority may also solidify a more cooperative, trustworthy bond with field workers from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)—particularly humanitarian NGOs—which have competed with the military over the years regarding the priorities and management of the postconflict environment following "complex emergencies"—disasters made even more hazardous when warlords or other political groups try to capitalize on the chaos and relief efforts. As Captain McLaughlin points out, in an era when so many conflicts around the world are stoked with ethnoreligious fervor, chaplains' military authority and their special understanding of the confessional dimension of such conflicts may serve as the best combination to mediate with the warring parties for at least a temporarily halt to the warfare, allowing NGOs to minister to the victims.

Captain McLaughlin writes from the perspective of the Navy, so it is no surprise that his experience and recommendations reflect a more active involvement of the chaplaincy in peace and humanitarian relief operations. After all, the Marines and the Navy traditionally have been the first to "go ashore"—literally and, in the case of landlocked states that fall prey to collapsing governments and internal strife, figuratively in most cases; as such, these services are usually the first to encounter "the enemy," whether it is a political faction that is sustaining an internal conflict, or the chaos resulting from a natural or "man-made" disaster. In the crucial days of establishing a peace operation or relief mission, the military relies on vital intelligence to establish stability and minimize death and destruction, and, as Captain McLaughlin argues, it is at this point that the military chaplain can serve as a crucial liaison: between moral and civil authority, between humanitarian concerns and military objectives, and between NGOs and military commanders. Above all, though, chaplains' comparatively "neutral" status allows them to get closer to combatants

and victims and get important information on the topography of the conflict—information to which others may not have access—and how much aid and assistance will be immediately required to try to minimize the deadly aftereffects of mass chaos and violence.

While military chaplains have gradually added these tasks to their repertoire of duties, policy and doctrinal support to officially acknowledge such expanded duties in the services' Chaplain Corps, particularly in the Navy, may not be keeping pace. Captain McLaughlin's recommendations offer some suggestions for officially accommodating chaplains' more active involvement in peace and humanitarian relief operations.

This Peaceworks report is part of the Institute's ongoing effort to highlight the role of new actors in peace operations. Captain McLaughlin was the U.S. Navy fellow in the Institute's Jennings Randolph Program for International Peace during 2001–2002, following several other fellows from the U.S. Army, including Colonel Michael Hardesty, who authored in 1997 the first Peaceworks report on the demands on the military in its new peacekeeping role, *Training for Peace Operations: The U.S. Army Adapts to the Post–Cold War World.*

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Preface

I would like to express my deepest appreciation for all the support provided to me by the United States Institute of Peace's Jennings Randolph Fellowship Program and its staff. Most especially, I would like to thank John Crist, my program officer; Allison Frendak, my research assistant; and Elizabeth Drakulich, the fellowship program's administrative assistant—all of whom helped me in countless ways. I was given the privilege of addressing this topic only through the confidence and farsightedness of the U.S. Navy Chief of Chaplains, and for this I am grateful.

A great deal of the operations-based material for this study came from responses by several chaplains to an informal questionnaire prepared to elicit details about their experiences in peace operations, and I have attributed their questionnaire responses throughout the text. I express my appreciation to all those who took the time and made the effort to help me in completing this project, which I hope will be of value to all chaplains who find themselves in the peace and humanitarian relief operations environments.

This study generally examines the expanded role of chaplains in all branches of the U.S. armed forces, particularly as they encounter the various situations and organizations involved in contemporary peace and humanitarian relief operations. Regarding the conclusions and recommendations, I focus specifically on my experience as a Navy chaplain. Hence, I offer these recommendations as one way the U.S. Navy could officially accommodate Navy chaplains' increased roles and responsibilities in light of future requirements for more integrated and coordinated military responses to these types of operations. If other service branches can benefit from these recommendations for their Chaplains Corps, so much the better.

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Introduction

This paper seeks to explore the changing and emerging role of U.S. Navy chaplains operating in today's military. More particularly, it will focus on the chaplain's interactions with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), private voluntary organizations (PVOs), and other relief agencies involved in the peacekeeping and humanitarian relief operations environment. This topic is significant in that it highlights the fact that historically chaplains have performed outside their perceived traditional roles without guidance from policy, doctrine, or applicable training. Second, an examination of current doctrine and policy reflects new and uncharted areas and responsibilities that require a more detailed response than currently exists for Navy chaplains.

Because peace and humanitarian relief operations appear to be a form of intervention the U.S. military will continue to undertake in the future, it is prudent to acknowledge the possibility that these particular missions may require chaplains to perform nontraditional activities. This paper does not advocate that military chaplains do humanitarian work but, in their capacity as advisers to commanders, that chaplains can become constructive participants in the military/NGO interactions that characterize these kinds of missions. As such, the need to advise and equip chaplains with the knowledge and skills necessary for the successful completion of these types of missions is apparent.

This paper will first examine chaplains' roles in the past century and will draw from the author's experience as a U.S. Navy chaplain to explore Marine Corps and Navy guidelines regarding changing contemporary roles of military chaplains. Second, it will look at changes within the military brought about by increased involvement in the peace and humanitarian relief operations environment in the past two decades. Military policy and doctrine, and chaplains' roles in relation to their position in the chain of command, will be examined. Thereafter, the paper will move into discussions of chaplains' engagement with NGOs—exploring categories of NGOs, contrasts between NGO and military cultures, NGO core values, political implications in the military/NGO relationship, the chaplain's organizational position and effective engagement, and why chaplains and NGOs seem to be a "natural fit." Above all, this paper argues that the role of the Navy chaplain has changed as the mission of the modern military itself has grown but that current Navy doctrine or policy does not thoroughly account for these changes. This paper attempts to fill this policy/doctrine gap and provide a foundation that Navy planners, officers and enlisted personnel, and analysts, as well as other interested parties, may build upon.

The Chaplain in the U.S. Navy Today

Commanding officers in the U.S. Navy or U.S. Marine Corps are given a very clear understanding of the duties of their chaplains prior to assuming command. The foundation for the place of chaplains in the military and the duties they are expected to perform dates back to the American Revolutionary War, wherein citizen-soldiers and sailors "felt the need for the same kind of parochial religious leadership in war to which they were accustomed at peace" and brought their own parsons into battle to provide this leadership.[1] Specific guidance is provided to the commander in written Department of Defense policy and doctrine: Operational Naval Instruction (OPNAVINST) 1730.1C, *Religious Ministries in the Navy;* Secretary of the Navy Instruction (SECNAVINST) 1730.7B, *Religious Ministry Support within the Department of Navy;* SECNAVINST 1730.8A, *Accommodation of Religious Practices;* Marine Corps Order 1730.6D, *Command Religious Programs in the Marine Corps;* Marine Corps Warfighting Publication (MCWP) 6-12, *Religious Ministry Support in the U.S. Marine Corps;* and Marine Corps Reference Publication (MCRP) 6-12A, *Handbook for Operational Religious Ministry with Marine Expeditionary Forces.* This guidance, and that in multiservice documents to be discussed later, therefore finds its way into materials prepared for commanding officers. For instance, the brief summarized below reinforces for prospective commanding officers that their Navy chaplain will be:

1. A professional clergyperson conducting divine services and providing religious education.

2. An officer managing the Command Religious Program, facilitating free exercise of religion for all, providing pastoral care, and advising on religious, ethical, and moral issues.

3. A leader for the command in areas of faith and moral values, professional ethics, personal growth, and adjustment.

4. A subject matter expert providing input on issues affecting morale, Core Values and ethics, suicide and Critical Incident Stress Training (addressing battle and accident trauma).[2]

These elements embody the traditional role of the U.S. Navy chaplain today.

The Chaplain's Role in Historical Perspective

Despite understanding their chaplain's characteristic duties, most experienced commanders would never hesitate to turn to their chaplain for assistance in unexpected or non-traditional situations or circumstances. In fact, whether acting at the command's direction

or on their own initiative, Chaplain Corps history provides many instances of chaplains acting in roles *outside* of these traditional ones. Below are certain examples.

During the Civil War, it became apparent that black people freed from slavery would need education in order to be able to join and flourish in the new society. Army chaplains stood out in terms of strongly supporting this viewpoint and providing education to black soldiers in the Union Army whenever possible. The movement became institutionalized when Chaplain John Eaton Jr. of the 27th Regiment Ohio Volunteers was appointed general superintendent contrabands (ex-slaves) for the Freedmen Department, which later evolved into a school system numbering more than 113,650 students.[3]

With America's westward expansion, Army chaplains manning territorial posts "were often called upon to perform duties as librarian, post gardener, commissary and bakery manager, post treasurer, and defense counsel."[4] They supervised and taught at the post schools for children. Some chaplains ministered to Native Americans, "baptized them and even lobbied in Washington for them."[5]

The Spanish-American War of 1898 was the first war in which chaplains accompanied American troops overseas. During the short conflict, Chaplain William D. McKinnon,

> with the consent of Brigadier General Thomas M. Anderson, attempted to visit the archbishop of Manila and negotiate a peace settlement. Although fired upon, he kept walking, reached the enemy line, and with a Spanish escort, met with the archbishop. Unfortunately, his mission failed. However, hostilities in the Philippines lasted only 14 days and battle casualties were relatively light.[6]

Chaplain McKinnon would later be appointed superintendent of the Manila public schools.

In 1915, the United States established a refugee camp for those fleeing Mexico because of political uncertainties and border violence. "Though food, shelter, and medical care were provided, Chaplain John T. Axton published appeals for clothing and received support from throughout the U.S."[7] Chaplain Axton further set up a "shop where refugees could purchase inexpensive necessities, the profits of which he used to purchase milk for the children, buy school supplies for them, install electric lights and wooden flooring in the hospital, and secure tools for workers in an industrial plant he had established."[8]

Battlefront chaplains serving in World War I were required to collect the dead and provide them with decent burials, ensuring that the graves were marked and information matched unit records for subsequent location and reburial. They drafted sympathy letters to next of kin and served as unit postal officers and censors. Some chaplains conducted religious services for prisoners of war. Others provided citizenship training to foreign troops seeking naturalization.[9]

During World War II, chaplains ministered to U.S. Armed Forces serving in Europe and the Pacific. Again, they tended to the dead and assisted in graves registration. Transport chaplains organized boxing matches, orchestras, and athletic events, showed films, and arranged classes. Some chaplains aided refugees, in one case providing Christmas parties for 3,000 Irish children.[10] Other chaplains worked with German, Italian, and Japanese prisoners of war. Eastern Orthodox chaplains ministered to Russian prisoners of war re-

leased from German labor camps. Still others ministered to those released from concentration camps.

In the Korean conflict, some chaplains worked extensively with orphans. Navy Chaplain Edwin R. Weidler noted there were "3 UNCACK (UN Civil Assistance Commission, Korea) and 1 Catholic orphanage with a total of over 250 children depending on us for fuel, clothing, and food. The chaplains serve as liaison between the Air Group and the UNCACK and civil relief personnel in making assistance available where most needed."[11] Chaplains solicited supplies from their stateside churches and distributed items to the local population. Chaplain Robert M. Schwyhart wrote to Chief of Chaplains S. W. Salisbury on February 16, 1951:

> A portion of this week has been devoted to the distribution of 800 boxes of Marine Corps League gifts of clothing, shoes, and toys given by the children of American Marines to the children of Korea. In cooperation with the civil affairs officer, we made distribution in five cities and villages to an estimated 15,000 children. It was an experience I shall not soon forget.[12]

Chaplains and servicemen also contributed their money and time to help Korean relief work.[13]

These same types of activities were performed in Vietnam. Early on, Chaplain Calvin J. Croston administered a fast-growing humanitarian assistance program by distributing Project Handclasp materials delivered from San Diego by Navy ships. By the end of 1964, materials were being distributed "all over the country to schools, orphanages, leper colonies, military and civilian hospitals, missions, and district penal confinement centers."[14] Chaplain Croston viewed humanitarian efforts among the people of South Vietnam "as a strategic medium for helping to help themselves."[15] He exclusively directed Project Handclasp until the spring of 1965.

Rear Admiral Withers M. Moore, Captain Herbert L. Bergsma, and Lieutenant Timothy J. Demy made two observations regarding the civic actions of chaplains serving in Vietnam. First, they noted it "was not the chaplains' function to assume the position of civic action officer of any unit, but where commands were willing, the chaplain often acted as an advisor in suggesting projects and encouraging them to completion on subsequent visits."[16] Second, they found "wherever chaplains were, they were involved in helping with civic action. The special projects initiated by them far exceeded the number of chaplains present, and through their efforts they broadened their ministry to the servicemen to whom they were assigned."[17]

Considering the breadth of these activities, it is no wonder that people today familiar with Chaplain Corps history from all the services continue to hear anecdotal material about chaplains acting outside their traditional role. The preceding is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to describing military chaplains as women and men who provide, as mandated by Congress, religious support to their troops while at the same time never closing their hearts to the cry of human need wherever it occurs. On a professional level, this history also demonstrates that while the chaplain's role has been clearly defined, there has been a consistent tradition of going outside these defined boundaries. These evolving

roles may best be understood as a consequence of the ever-changing role of the U.S. military of which the chaplain is a part.

A Changing U.S. Military

In the past two decades, the U.S. military has often been called upon to move beyond its warrior role and become heavily involved in peace and humanitarian relief operations. The traditional mandate for the U.S. military has been one of protection, or destroying or capturing the enemy. Today, military commanders and personnel participating in military operations other than war (MOOTW) must develop partnerships and coordinating mechanisms with the civilian sector, noncombatants, humanitarian agencies, multinational forces, and others to successfully complete their mission. This shift in mandate has not left military chaplains untouched. They have not abandoned their traditional functions, but more and more frequently they have been assigned and have accepted responsibilities and roles they have never before executed. Until recently, it was not uncommon to find the chaplain involved only in various community relations (COMREL) projects, but in recent times chaplain humanitarian involvement has become much more extensive.

At the strategic level, U.S. European Command chaplains have been directed to engage chaplains of the newly emerging Eastern European democracies and their militaries in order to assist them in developing a Western-style chaplain corps.[18] Thus, at the operational level, Chaplain Mike Lembke was recently directed to serve as liaison between the U.S. military, local military, and religious leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina. A series of meetings resulted in the convening of the first Armed Forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina Religious Support Conference in 2001. At the same time, another chaplain held a position within the Civil-Military Operations Center (CMOC) in the city of Tuzla, while another served as an adviser in a Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) unit in the capital city of Sarajevo.

Thus it is clear that there is an expanding role for chaplains within the Department of Defense today. A constructive response to this trend would be to prepare and train each chaplain in those skills needed to accomplish effectively whatever the command or situation requires *in the area of operation.* More specifically, with greater military involvement in peace and humanitarian relief operations, chaplains are likely to engage more frequently with NGOs, PVOs, and international organizations (IOs). While involvement with such organizations will never become the primary role of the military chaplain, training chaplains to know how these organizations respond to a humanitarian crisis will prepare and allow chaplains to contribute significantly to the success of the military mission beyond their traditional duties.

Military Policy and Doctrine

When Navy chaplains assume a role and accept responsibility during a MOOTW, official Navy policy and doctrine, and the commander's vision for the mission, direct their initial efforts. Additionally, a number of Joint Publications (JPs) offer guidance to chaplains involved in what are referred to as "Joint Military Operations."[19] Other information and direction can be found in various local instructions, unofficial military publications, research papers, and civilian publications.

SECNAVINST 1730.7B and OPNAVINST 1730.1C provide clear policy regarding the chaplain as adviser to the commander, which can be understood in various ways, but they do not specifically address chaplain involvement in peace or humanitarian relief operations except as regards the traditional chaplain's role regarding religious affairs. It is helpful to keep in mind that higher-echelon military policy is deliberately not specific, allowing for the specificity to rest at the subordinate level and within service doctrine. The following lower-level doctrine publication is a good example of this latter, more specific guidance. In MCWP 6-12, the section entitled "Nongovernmental and Private Voluntary Organizations" states:

> Proactive coordination and positive working relationships with NGOs and PVOs are essential for successful MOOTW. A chaplain's experiences and working relationships with NGOs and PVOs are vital assets for the commander. As principal advisers, chaplains can facilitate support and working relationships with NGOs and PVOs on site and/or in country. However, it is the civil affairs officers, not chaplains, who are trained and prepared to effect this NGO/PVO coordination.[20]

A forthcoming publication, MCRP 6-12A, *Handbook for Operational Religious Ministry with Marine Expeditionary Forces,* repeats similar guidance in the section entitled "Humanitarian Assistance and Noncombatant Evacuation Operations":

> The chaplain's experience and working relationship with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and international organizations are vital assets for the commander during HA [humanitarian assistance] missions. As principal adviser to the commander, the chaplain can facilitate support and working relationships with NGOs and on-site and/or in country. The command's Civil Affairs Officer, not the chaplain, is tasked with coordination of military support to NGOs during Humanitarian Assistance operations, noncombatant evacuation operations (NEOs), and other MOOTW. Chaplains are excellent sources of information about the needs, requirements, organizational structures, and the support NGOs may be able to offer in the cooperative efforts involved in these operations.[21]

JP 3-07.6, *Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Foreign Humanitarian Assistance,* states that along with their traditional duties, "chaplains may serve as liaison with NGOs that have a religious affiliation. Additionally, chaplains can assist in the coordination for distribution of HA supplies arriving from churches and other religious organizations."[22] JP 3-08, *Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations,* also advocates chaplain involvement, indicating that the "HAST [humanitarian assistance survey team] should include representatives from the combatant command intelligence officer (J-2), J-3, J-4, . . . *chaplain section,* and civil affairs section."[23] The same instruction recommends that the chaplain be a member of the Joint Task Force (JTF) assessment team.[24]

JP 3-57, *Joint Doctrine for Civil-Military Operations,* has several references regarding the organizational position of a chaplain. In Chapter II, Section 8, "Organizing for Civil-Military Operations," the chaplain is designated as one of the members of the Joint Civil-Military Operation Task Force (JCMOTF).[25] This task force is established to aid the Joint Force Commander (JFC) in planning, coordinating, and conducting civil-military

operations in support of the overall mission.[26] Chapter III, Section 15 repeats the recommendation for chaplains to conduct liaison with NGOs and international organizations that have religious affiliation. It also adds two other areas for chaplain engagement: "Maintaining liaison with chaplains of international forces and appropriate HN [host nation] civilian religious leaders" and "working with the CMOC in providing advice to the JFC in situations where religious groups want to send representatives to work with detained persons."[27]

Finally, in two doctrine instructions the observation is made that there will be times when a chaplain may be called upon to move outside of the traditional role and become involved in other mission-essential related duties. JP 3-57 notes:

> Because there may be no precise boundary where one condition (military operations other than war and war) ends and another begins, changes in religious ministry support activities will be more a matter of changing intensity and emphasis than of dramatically altered duties. Chaplain and enlisted religious support personnel support the accomplishment of operational objectives through one or more of the following activities: advising, supporting, coordinating, analyzing, planning, writing, training, supervising, and evaluation.[28]

JP 3-07.6 recognizes:

> JTF organization for FHA [foreign humanitarian assistance] is similar to traditional military organizations with a commander, command element, and mission tailored forces. However, the nature of FHA results in combat support and combat service support forces (i.e., engineers, . . . legal, *chaplain,* civil-military affairs, and medical) often serving more significant roles than combat elements.[29]

The material referenced above starting with OPNAVINST 1730.1C and SECNAVINST 1730.7B cites the traditional role a chaplain is expected to fill during peacekeeping or humanitarian operations. The chaplain is also expected to be an adviser to the commander, especially in but not limited to areas related to religion. The traditional role is further expanded in recent Marine Corps and Joint Task Force doctrine publications. Specifically, the chaplain is to serve as liaison with religiously affiliated NGOs, maintain lines of communication with chaplains of international forces and appropriate host nation religious leaders, and be active in such groups as the CMOC or HAST. Leaving open the possibility for broader engagement and accomplishment of operational goals, the chaplain and enlisted religious support personnel are to be prepared for engaging in the activities under JP 3-57 as listed in the excerpt above.

There seems to be an effort in existing military guidance to limit the chaplain's efforts and attention primarily to serving as liaison with religiously oriented NGOs and leaders. Yet there are other sections in the same material that leave open the door for the chaplain to engage with or address other groups as well. The commander who does not maximize the skills that the chaplain may be able to bring to a mission may be leaving out a very valuable tool. In summary, policy and doctrinal guidance for the military chaplain to become engaged along with other military personnel contributes to the possibility of a more efficient military/NGO relationship.

There is tremendous value for all parties if a strong working relationship exists between the military and NGOs operating in a peace or humanitarian relief operation.[30] NGOs, PVOs, and IOs on the scene possess considerable information that may be essential to the success of the military operation. Relief workers have perhaps the most comprehensive understanding of the needs of the threatened population. Working closely with people of the host nation, they have a better understanding of local culture and practices. As a consequence, the relief community is an important source of information regarding the following:

1. Historical perspective and insights into factors contributing to the situation at hand.
2. Local cultural practices that will bear on the relationship of military forces to the populace.
3. Local political structure, the political aims of various parties, and the roles of key leaders.
4. The security situation.
5. The role and capabilities of the host nation government.

Particularly important to the operation is the expertise these actors have in humanitarian assistance and relief and development work. They perform disaster assessments and can calculate more accurate analyses of the assistance needs of the affected population than the military. However, an important caveat directed at military participants is included in the JP 3-08 instruction:

> The manner in which information is treated by military forces and the humanitarian assistance community can be sensitive. Handled properly, NGOs and PVOs will be active participants in the interagency team seeking to resolve the crisis. Handled improperly, the relief community can be alienated by a perception that, contrary to its philosophical ideals, it is considered no more than an intelligence source by the military.[31]

The experience of Chaplain Steve Smith, a U.S. Navy chaplain working with Marines in Somalia, reinforces this point. Chaplain Smith worked with the NGO Irish Concern in Somalia and observed that their meetings enabled him "to get a historical background of the work done, political and social issues, a foundation for understanding cultural values and mores, and making connections with local Somalis of importance."[32] Moreover, chaplains and the military must appreciate that "allowing the NGOs to do what they do best also contributes significantly to a quicker exit for the military."[33]

Similarly, NGO communities may find value in a positive relationship with military elements engaged in a peace or humanitarian relief operation. If a mission area becomes dangerous, an NGO can turn to the military for security services, such as extraction of its personnel. The military provides security briefs, and NGOs accessing this information receive knowledge of safe or unsafe areas on the ground. The military has provided NGOs with convoy support so the latter can move their relief supplies. NGOs have turned to the military for technical assistance, including mine clearing. They also have obtained military assistance to access remote areas, ports, and airfields. As noted previously, JTF doctrine

and policy recognize the value of good relationships and highlight and direct the chaplain to help in their optimization. At the same time, as chaplains join with nonmilitary actors to help them accomplish their individual missions, their presence allows them to be more informed advisers to the commander.

Chaplain Smith's experience in Somalia demonstrates how the military and NGO, while remaining independent of each other, can develop a positive and constructive relationship. The chaplain believed that his awareness of these issues helped to make a difference:

> My work with Irish Concern was established with an open dialogue so Pauline (the NGO representative) could speak frankly about her issues or concerns. One of my first activities was to bring Pauline onto our compound to speak to the Colonel and staff. Next, I arranged for the Colonel to visit the Irish Concern's intensive care feeding center in the same area. This laid the groundwork for mutual trust and respect. Pauline was worried that we'd move in and direct her work—nothing of the sort. Communication and open dialogue was the key.[34]

The Chaplain's Role in the Chain of Command

Chaplains' positions in the military organization are not rigidly defined, but they are a factor that influences the level and type of involvement they are likely to maintain with NGOs and other private and governmental organizations. Thus there are certain similarities and marked differences between the chaplain who has responsibilities on the staff of a CC (Combatant Commander), which is always a Joint Command, and the chaplain who has responsibilities at the battalion level.

Most chaplains have responsibilities at one or more of the three levels:

1. Strategic: where policy is developed (for example, a CC chaplain).
2. Component: where one implements policy and supervises (for example, the JTF staff chaplain).
3. Tactical: where one is engaged in local operations (for example, the regimental chaplain).

In general, chaplains' responsibilities at each level frequently require them to respond "internally" to their command and "externally" to the world outside their command. Thus a chaplain serving on a CC's staff may spend more time and energy providing advice to the commander regarding religious/cultural issues and serving as liaison with religious or NGO leaders (external) and less time addressing the needs of personnel within the command (internal). On the other hand, a chaplain serving in a battalion will likely spend more time and energy leading or facilitating worship, addressing the needs of command personnel, and advising the commander (internal) rather than coordinating COMREL projects or liaising with local religious leaders or NGO personnel (external). It is not uncommon, however, for chaplains, regardless of their place in the command structure, to become heavily engaged with COMREL or HA projects and with the NGOs participating in those projects.

Chaplains should begin with an understanding of the military's mission objectives. Next, taking into consideration their position in the military command structure, they should be clear about their role regarding working with either religious leaders or NGO personnel. Such an approach will help chaplains direct their efforts more efficiently within the context of the entire mission and avoid interfering in areas inappropriate to their level of responsibility or the commander's expectations. This is not to suggest that chaplains who work at the higher levels of the chain of command will have more to do regarding engagement with significant religious or community leaders or NGO personnel than chaplains at the lower levels. The reality is that at each level, the opportunity exists for chaplains to become meaningfully or purposefully engaged with personnel or organizations outside of the command itself who are essential to the operation and success of the mission. Mindful of this, it is incumbent upon chaplains to be prepared to respond to every facet of the operation where they can employ their special skills to contribute to the operation's success.

The Chaplain and the Four Types of NGOs

There is no exact count of the total number of NGOs (international or local) because they are spread throughout the world, come in a variety of forms, and may exist for short periods of time.

A precise definition of NGOs—also known as PVOs, civic associations, nonprofits, and charitable organizations—is difficult to pin down. The common ground of all NGOs is the desire to make the world a better place, a desire that underlies every organization's mission statement. Beyond this, however, NGOs vary enormously.[35]

NGOs fall into four categories, according to their function: humanitarian (a category that encompasses relief and development organizations), human rights, civil society– and democracy-building, and conflict resolution.[36]

Of these four categories, the majority of Navy chaplains operating in peacekeeping and humanitarian support operations—usually JTFs with a duration of six to eighteen months—will most often engage with humanitarian NGOs. Humanitarian NGOs are the agencies most frequently found at the initial phases of an intervention, a time when the military and its chaplains are also present. Once these agencies are able to conduct their mission without the assistance of the military, the latter's level of involvement diminishes, and eventually it leaves. The work conducted by most of the NGOs in the other three categories is often performed over a much longer period of time (ranging up to several years or longer) with significant involvement in the local community.

MOOTWs are a response to an immediate crisis. The military is often called upon to provide on a short-term basis services such as security or logistics that other agencies cannot. Regardless of the time frame of any humanitarian operation, deployed chaplains are in the position to establish liaison and build relationships with NGOs. Navy chaplains— even those serving with Marines—will constantly be "setting the stage," "building the foundation," and beginning the genesis of humanitarian work. Still, the nature of their time-sensitive involvement makes it likely that they will be more involved with humanitarian NGOs than the other types of NGOs.

The chance that chaplains will become involved with other types of NGOs depends on policy and doctrine, the mission commander, and the level within the military organization at which a chaplain works. The chaplain at the strategic level might be called upon to meet with senior leaders of certain humanitarian NGOs at a planning conference, or with members of a conflict-resolution NGO as they plan to deal with religious leaders in an area patrolled by military peacekeeping personnel. In fact, Douglas Johnston, president and founder of the International Center for Religion and Diplomacy, advocates the potential for even broader chaplain involvement at this level. At a recent training for U.S. Navy chaplains, he indicated "with this training and an expanded mission statement, chaplains

can provide an invaluable early warning function for their forward-deployed commands based on personal interactions with local religious communities and selected nongovernmental organizations with which they come in contact."[37] With regard to other levels, the chaplain on the JTF commander's staff, as a member of the CMOC or Crisis Action Team, might be assigned to engage with senior planners and directors of faith-based humanitarian NGOs. The chaplain at the tactical level might serve as liaison on behalf of the commander with NGO personnel who are directly responding to the crisis.

Participants in a recent workshop at the United States Institute of Peace concluded, "faith-based NGOs are increasingly active and increasingly effective in international peace building. Moreover, their efforts are increasingly appreciated by other international actors in zones of conflict."[38] It is especially appropriate for chaplains to deal occasionally with faith-based NGOs. Chaplains will almost always have greater knowledge and credibility with such groups because of their experience and training, as well as their religious and cultural sensitivity. A chaplain's story about the visit of an Amphibious Response Group (ARG) to East Timor demonstrates this point well. While en route to the mission destination, Chaplain Roger Boucher had attended mission briefs based on what he discovered was outdated or inaccurate information that mischaracterized the religious and political situation of the area. The chaplain's religious knowledge and expertise enabled him to inform all the parties involved that the residents of East Timor were not the "enemy" but the victims, and that they deserved the support of outside democracies like the United States. In the chaplain's view, this information brought about a significant change in how the ARG personnel related to the local NGO, the Diocese of East Timor, and the general population.[39]

At the same time, chaplains and those who direct their efforts should always keep in mind that faith-based NGOs exist in all four categories, not just in the humanitarian one. For instance, the NGO Communita Di Sant'Egidio, an organization originally founded to help the poor, has increasingly placed a great deal of effort into mediation and reconciliation. As mentioned previously, the nature of such organizations' missions requires them to remain in the host country for long periods of time. Navy chaplains—as opposed to chaplains in the Army, which typically spends more time in the country in the stabilization phase of an intervention—may want to concentrate their involvement with NGOs that have a shorter operational time frame and that serve immediate humanitarian concerns. Similarly, an organization that includes within its mandate the requirement to evangelize may lack the neutrality that the military is trying to project as it completes its mission; hence, chaplains would best serve the military component of the intervention by working with only those NGOs that provide direct relief services. Thus, it may not always be appropriate for a chaplain to be engaged with *every* faith-based NGO in the area of operation. Resources exist, such as the State Department, that offer guidance regarding those NGOs toward which the military should direct most of its efforts during an intervention. Furthermore, military operation details will heavily influence which NGOs the chaplain chooses to engage.

Contrasts in NGO and Military Culture

Chaplains involved in MOOTW and engaged with an NGO quickly realize that differences exist between their own organization and that of the NGO. Ignoring these differences will only impede the success of the mission. The following words are a somber warning: "With respect to the military-civil disparity, experience indicates that many failures of cooperation and misunderstandings have resulted from the neglect to consider the diverging perspectives of the military and civilian actors." [40]

Five areas of cultural differences viewed as causing difficulties are described in literature drafted by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UN-HCR), as shown in Table 1. Par Ericksson, an analyst and project leader with the Swedish National Defense Research Establishment, provides additional areas of difference that are important to note, as shown in Table 2.

That there are such cultural differences and others does not mean that the military/NGO relationship is inherently flawed or contains the seeds of its own eventual destruction. Inasmuch as the relationship is a human creation, it will always be subject to inadequacies and errors. In his book, *The U.S. Military/NGO Relationship in Humanitarian Interventions,* Chris Seiple offers three precepts that help to ensure that the humanitarian assistance process remains exactly that: "First, the military cannot be in charge. If it is in charge, there is the strong potential for it to provide its own solutions with its own means."[41] Seiple notes that Colonel Steve Riley's admonition must be the basic question of every military activity: "Whom are you there to support, yourself or the humanitarian effort?"[42] Seiple continues:

> If the answer is yourself, two problems result. First the "structure to support the structure" becomes more important. How much to how many for how long will dominate the discussion as the military worries more about proving mission accomplishment—via briefing exercises to senior Pentagon officials—than about considering the effect of its efforts to advance the original humanitarian intent. The second consequence is the implicit encouragement of mission creep. [43]

The second precept is to help the helper, specifically the NGOs. They are usually culturally aware and sensitive to the situational needs of that particular emergency. This awareness generally provides the right information to the military and prevents military infrastructure-based solutions. In the end, it is the NGOs' war to win or lose. The military can only help with one of the more severe battles of the humanitarian continuum.[44]

The third precept is that the CMOC must be the military's operational focus of effort within a humanitarian intervention. Humanitarian intervention is about joint civil-military efforts. If it becomes a liaison center, then it becomes divorced from reality.[45]

When the precepts mentioned above, or other boundaries, are disregarded for whatever reason, it is not surprising to hear the following characterization of the military by an NGO representative responding to a question and reflecting on his experience in a recent military/NGO operation:

Table 1. Organization culture differences between military and civilian components in peace operations

Area	Differences
Decision Making	A great deal of decision-making authority is allocated to [NGO] staff members in the field. Field staff will in general have the greatest amount of information and expertise in carrying out activities in a particular area. It is more sensible and practical for an NGO to operate in this manner. By contrast, policy decisions in the military are generally made higher up the reporting chain.
Generation Gap	NGO counterparts to military officers tend to receive decision-making authority at a younger age than do military decision makers. This generation gap has been known to exacerbate the cultural difference between civilians and the military.
Accountability	Humanitarian agencies in general, particularly those working in emergency relief operations, seek to achieve maximum efficiency in the use of limited resources. Aid workers measure success in utilitarian terms, by promoting the greatest good for the greatest number. To do this, the original and possibly agreed upon agenda may be abandoned—an acceptable response in the eyes of other NGO professionals. The military painstakingly develops a plan of action and adheres to it until it is completed, as it understands it will be held accountable by this one measure.
Flexibility	Many NGOs are emergency-oriented organizations. Operating in rapidly changing environments with limited resources, long-range planning is often difficult. The only NGO personnel who survive are the ones who are flexible. The military approach requires identification of variables, controlling them to the greatest extent possible, and planning contingencies. Civilian flexibility and military precision often conflict in joint operations.
Realistic Expectations	Most civilians underestimate the tremendous resources, time, and energy that are expended to prepare for and complete a military mission. One could conclude that the military's success was due to the fact it is well resourced in human and material terms. Individuals holding this view might therefore be led to hold unrealistic expectations of what can be achieved through military means.

Source: Steven Wolfson and Neill Wright, *A UNHCR Handbook for the Military on Humanitarian Operations* (Geneva: Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 1995), 49–50.

Table 2. Major differences between military and civilian components in peace operations

Area	Differences
Different Hierarchies	Whereas military operations take place on government orders and under national administration, within the framework for a supranational or international body, civilian operations are only carried out to a small extent in this way. Instead, they are often made up of a number of small NGOs acting on a local level. This means that any national control over civil operations is much weaker and a source of concern for some.
Bottom-up or Top-down?	Military and political operations are often carried out with a top-down perspective (starting with an agreement with the leadership then implementing this at a local level). Civil operations, on the other hand, are often carried out with a bottom-up perspective ([provide] food to a village, start a collective of companies, etc.). The differences between a bottom-up and a top-down perspective affect how operations are planned. The former places the priority on individuals and local groups while the latter primarily pays attention to national interests. The former is carried out in the form of smaller, local projects, while the latter generally requires larger and more centralized operations.
Different Aims of Operations	Military and civil operations may not share, or even understand, each other's immediate aims, although this does not mean they do not share the overriding aim—to achieve peace and stability. The military wants to maintain a peaceful environment but this may conflict with the UNHCR's, for instance, desire to move refugees back to their hometown.
Different Time Perspectives	Operations may have different time perspectives, both looking backwards and forwards. NGOs may have been in the area for decades and worked at developing a trusted network, while the military are newcomers, yet wield enormous influence on the situation. NGOs may be prepared to remain in the conflict area for an unlimited amount of time, while the military may have a mandate limited to a year or less. The result may be that the NGO and military fall out of synchronization with each other creating differing opinions concerning, for instance, what is "reasonable" progress during a certain period of time.
Trust and Mistrust between Organizations	It is common for representatives of civil organizations to view the military operation as "militarists and Rambos," while the military views the civilians as badly organized "tree huggers." On the part of NGOs and other civil organizations, there may exist the fear that the military desires to take over a larger amount of the finance available for operations at their expense, and that politicians might well go along with this. There is also a mistrust of the motives for military operations, and a fear that in reality they are a continuation of traditional major power and Western political interest policies. Double standards with respect to military intervention (Why intervention in Bosnia and not Rwanda?) make civilian organizations even more inclined toward suspicion.

Source: Par Ericksson, "Civil-Military Cooperation in Peace Support Operations—An Impossible Necessity" (Stockholm: Swedish National Defense Research Establishment, mimeo., n.d.), 31–34.

> . . . [I]n the end, there is a very basic disconnect between the military and the humanitarian community. This disconnect arises from the fact that the military will attempt to appear to be saving and improving lives for reasons wholly unrelated to humanitarian imperatives (including, but possibly not limited to, impressing the American public, winning the hearts and minds of the beneficiary population, PR [public relations] for allied country consumption, etc.). This is what I mean by seeing humanitarian aid as a means to an end. Sometimes (in fact much of the time) the best thing the military can do in the midst of a humanitarian crisis is butt out, keep a low profile, and let the humanitarian agencies do their work. However, this approach would compromise the military's ability to get on CNN. Hence, they look for things they can do, often disrupting and endangering true humanitarian activities. When we try to explain to them that their activities endanger the lives of aid workers and thereby the beneficiary population, the likely reason behind the blank stare we get in response is that we are not even talking the same language. We hang our arguments on the lives they could be jeopardizing, while they are thinking about the press they can generate. That is the disconnect to which I was referring.[46]
>
> A better strategy, therefore, would be for humanitarians to recognize the driving motivation behind military humanitarian intentions (good press) and try to affect their behavior accordingly. For example, rather than say to the military "your activities might get aid workers killed" (which does not seem to be of considerable concern to military planners), we should argue that if aid workers get killed, aid programs will stop and people will starve, thereby leading to bad press. Perhaps that is an argument they would hear.

Thus differences, cultural and other, are not just window-dressing issues but require serious attention, deliberation, and respect.

NGO Core Values

When one enters into a relationship with either an individual or some other entity, a principle that helps to ensure success in the relationship is respect for the values of the other. The U.S. Navy Chaplain Corps has three core values—courage, honor, and commitment. All Navy chaplains strive to measure themselves against these values and expect that others will do the same. A chaplain, as one member of the military team seeking to engage in and nurture a relationship with an NGO, must be careful not to dismiss NGO core values, of which neutrality, impartiality, and independence seem to be most important. Understanding the meaning of these values, and how they influence NGO behavior, can help the chaplain clarify NGO actions that may otherwise be misinterpreted by others.

Neutrality is one of the most important elements in the rationale of any NGO. If any activity jeopardizes or threatens this highly prized core value, NGOs understandably become concerned and protective. A recent article in the *Washington Post* demonstrates this point well: Members of the U.S. military conducting relief operations in Afghanistan dressed in civilian clothing. In a letter sent to National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, the heads of sixteen organizations asked the administration to reconsider allowing military aid workers in Afghanistan to work out of uniform, a practice that they said "significantly increases the security risks of every humanitarian aid worker in that country." [47] Jim Bishop, InterAction's director of disaster response, remarked:

> If you are working with a population that isn't happy with the U.S. policy of supporting the Afghan government, they may decide to pop off at humanitarian workers, thinking the humanitarian workers are part of the U.S. government. It leads to a suspicion that they are not neutral but agents of the U.S. government.[48]

Further on in the article an explanation was given of the role this principle plays in humanitarian relief operations. Kenneth H. Bacon, chief Pentagon spokesman during the Clinton administration and now president of Refugees International, indicated that civilian aid workers try to maintain neutrality but that "soldiers by definition take sides. . . . So right away they confuse the idea of neutrality, which is the protection of the humanitarian workers." [49]

The concern expressed by these individuals and their willingness to address the highest levels of the U.S. government should leave no doubt as to the importance attached to this principle and the need for military actors such as the chaplain to understand it in the same light.

At first glance, understanding the principle of neutrality seems straightforward—it means one is "not aligned with or supporting any side or position in a controversy."[50] Many NGOs subscribe to the definition of neutrality found among the seven guiding principles of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement. Formalized in 1965, it reads as follows: "In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious, or ideological nature."[51]

Further, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) illustrates two facets of neutrality:

▶ **Military neutrality:** In a situation of conflict or unrest, neutrality implies not acting in a way that could facilitate the conduct of hostilities by any of the parties involved. Thus in an international armed conflict, National Society volunteers working alongside official military or civilian medical services must not support or hinder military operations in any way. This neutrality is the necessary counterpart of the respect due to the enemy's medical personnel, units, and establishments.

▶ **Ideological neutrality:** Neutrality implies standing apart at all times from political, religious, or any other controversies in which the Red Cross or Red Crescent, were it to take a position, would lose the trust of one segment of the population and thus be unable to continue its activities. If a dispensary run by a National Society also displays a religious affiliation in a country in which there is tension between the members of different faiths, many patients will no longer wish or dare to come for treatment.[52]

While the principle of neutrality is significant, a common and agreed-upon understanding and application of the principle remains a much discussed topic even within the NGO community itself. It would be incorrect to presume that for each NGO the meaning is identical with the ICRC's explanation. Some NGOs may conduct themselves according to the principle of neutrality as understood by the ICRC. Others may understand neutrality as they have defined it for themselves. Still others may choose not to conduct their opera-

tion in a neutral manner at all. The military commander or chaplain who seeks to be a partner with an NGO in addressing human needs must respect the principle of neutrality as it is understood by each NGO, and cautious clarification is important. In response to some critics, the ICRC adds one further note of clarification: "Some may interpret strict adherence to this principle as a lack of courage. Nothing could be further from the truth. Volunteers are not asked to be neutral—everyone is entitled to an opinion—but to behave neutrally."[53]

With respect to the principle of impartiality, the ICRC states: "The Movement makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class, or political opinions. It endeavors to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress."[54] The ICRC offers aid indiscriminately and refuses to make any distinctions of an adverse nature regarding human beings because they belong to a specific category. A consistent respect for this principle requires not only the local organization to be impartial but all of its individual workers as well. This principle helps to guard against the human instinct to respond only to those we believe are worthy while assuming that others who suffer are somehow unworthy of assistance.[55]

Concerning the principle of independence, the ICRC believes: "The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement."[56] Red Cross and Red Crescent institutions "must resist any interference, whether political, ideological or economic, capable of diverting them from the course of action laid down by the requirements of humanity, impartiality, and neutrality."[57] For example, a national Red Cross organization cannot accept financial contributions from anyone granted on condition that they be used only for a specific category of persons according to political, ethnic, or religious criteria, to the exclusion of any other group of people who may be in greater need. The Red Cross or Red Crescent institutions may not act as instruments of government foreign policy.[58]

These three principles are part of the foundation upon which most NGOs have been established. They are valued highly by NGOs not because they desire higher moral ground than the military. Rather, these principles serve a very pragmatic purpose—they create the environment that allows an NGO to do its job; they permit the NGO to have access to anyone in need and, in principle (although not always in fact), guarantee protection from attack. There may be situations when an NGO's core values will affect its willingness to work with the military, but such resistance is not necessarily rejection. While the interpretation of each principle may not be identical from one NGO to another, the principles determine in large measure how an NGO will operate. It is the military's role to respect these principles and make adjustments for them as it seeks to coordinate operations with NGOs.

Political Considerations in the Military/NGO Relationship

A chaplain does not become engaged in a peace or humanitarian relief operation as a solitary figure but as part of a larger operational reality—the U.S. military. The Department of Defense directs everything chaplains do, and they are accountable to it. Chaplains must

never forget or consider this reality unimportant because it is the context within which they not only operate but also are perceived and judged by all the other actors in a humanitarian intervention. Likewise, as is true for all members of the U.S. military, nothing the chaplain endeavors to do will ever be perceived as disconnected from certain political considerations. The following briefly addresses these considerations, which play a part in the process of a chaplain engaged with an NGO.

Seiple suggests a metaphor to illustrate how the military and NGO work together and where the political dimension of their relationship emerges. He speaks about each situation as a "protracted game of multidimensional chess" in which "each piece has a contribution to make, primary for a time, yet yielding appropriately to other, equally integral components within a continuum of effort."[59] Put another way, each "actor" has a specific part to play at a particular moment in the "drama," and to behave otherwise would destroy it.

"Coming to grips regarding which chess piece to play within which dimension first requires one to grasp the political context of a situation," Seiple writes. "Political in this context refers to the dynamics, in and among, the domestic (both in the U.S. and in the intervened state), international, and host region players."[60] The movement that every piece makes also includes a political dynamic and effect. For instance, at certain points during the operation, the host nation's sovereignty will be a significant issue; a participating nation such as the United States may allow "the body count" to be the determining factor regarding its level of involvement, or an NGO's support to all suffering parties may severely upset the existing political balance.

The decision to intervene is political. It has significant ramifications for the president, the administration, and Congress. Establishing international support for the effort requires sustained political will and diplomacy. Implicitly, any intervention involves national prestige and security interests. As members of the U.S. military, chaplains perhaps best represent the interface between humanitarian and political concerns. They should be prepared for a variety of reactions from all parties involved, such as citizens of the host country, NGO personnel, and other participating nations.

The world community has judged that a condition of acute human suffering exists that has not been effectively addressed by local authorities and therefore foreign intervention is necessary. This judgment alone will not be accepted by everyone; some of the actors in the drama may not view the military mission as a goodwill effort. Additionally, the presence of a foreign military on "sacred ground" could fuel harmful tensions or create expectations that may go unmet. As a part of the foreign intervention element, the military and in turn the chaplain should expect suspicion or criticism, if not outright rejection, from some quarters.

Aid itself is valuable but also heavily symbolic—hence political. Interveners generally view the provision of aid as a positive response to a humanitarian crisis; however, it can exacerbate an existing crisis. For instance, providing school supplies to the Bosniac community in a small Bosnian town, and not doing the same for the Serbian community, is seen as an endorsement for the Bosniacs and disregard for the Serbs. Also, the person or group that receives the aid inevitably increases the political power and prestige of its local leaders. To the degree they are involved in the process, chaplains must remember to advise

the commander about the importance of providing aid in an impartial manner to all the suffering parties.

NGOs are not always totally neutral in the political arena of the humanitarian operation. Many receive government funding, which can have both positive and negative consequences regarding their agendas, programming, and practices during peace and humanitarian relief operations: "Some NGOs accept money only from private sources, fearing that the acceptance of government funding will lead to a loss of independence and pressure to compromise organizational integrity. Others accept public money but maintain an uneasy relationship with the government that provides those funds. They complain that governments put economic and political considerations ahead of humanitarian ones."[61] Chaplains would be wise to be thoroughly knowledgeable about the NGOs they expect to encounter and the boundaries that should be observed or respected.

These observations can be helpful and at the same time serve as a caveat for those who participate in the military/NGO relationship. Both sets of actors are political beings responsible for the consequences of their actions at all levels. As Seiple demonstrates in his case studies, specifically Operation Provide Comfort in northern Iraq, even where there was a clear political strategy for a humanitarian operation, the "leaders in the field, through their purposeful and/or aggregate action, created and established policy."[62]

Organizational Positions for Effective Chaplain Engagement with NGOs

Chaplains can significantly enhance their effectiveness with NGOs if they are at the appropriate location as the operation unfolds. There are some points designated in the doctrine at which a chaplain should or may have a role. A thorough understanding of the situation will indicate other places chaplains ought to either have access to or find other ways to participate more fully.

Policy and doctrine publications cited earlier clearly direct that a chaplain be involved. JP 3-07.6 states that chaplains may serve as liaison with NGOs that have religious affiliation. JP 3-08 directs the chaplain to be a member of the HAST as well as the JTF assessment team. JP 3-57 has several references regarding the organizational position of the chaplain. In Chapter II, Section 8, the chaplain is designated a member of the JCMOTF and CMOC. In summary, it is clearly recommended that chaplains be members of a CMOC, HAST, and JTF assessment team as one additional element assisting in the coordination of military/NGO activities. MCWP 6-12 directs chaplains to be engaged with NGOs and PVOs to better advise the commander. MCRP 6-12A repeats this directive even more strongly.

In some situations, either for security reasons or because a chaplain is a noncombatant, the chaplain cannot be a participant in certain phases of the military process.[63] However, it may not be inappropriate for the chaplain *to have access to* certain command components of the military operation. For instance, the activity that goes on in the Tactical Operations Center, Combat Operations Center, or Combined Service Support Operations Center is largely "military related," yet there may be questions about a local NGO's facilities or personnel that chaplains could answer without compromising their noncombatant status. In another example, during an operation some military personnel may not see any conflict in a plan that provides for the military to deliver humanitarian aid to a particular location and then ask local NGO personnel to distribute it. A chaplain familiar with the principles of neutrality, impartiality, independence, and with their value to the NGO, would be the most likely person to counsel against this course of action.

Another unit within the military, unlike the three mentioned above, that a chaplain would benefit in having a relationship with is the Civil Affairs (CA) team. Among its many responsibilities, it is to act as a bridge between the military and various other groups in the civilian sector where the operation is taking place. A chaplain who is permitted access to such an element would be a source of helpful information to the unit in addition to its gaining an ally in developing an effective relationship with NGOs in the area of operation. Besides providing information or insight, chaplains can be partners in assisting these units and NGOs to accomplish their respective missions. Assigned to a CIMIC unit

in Sarajevo, Chaplain Lawrence Cripps, in his after-action report, listed several tasks that had been performed, many involving cooperation with nearby NGOs:

◗ Assisted in formalizing and legitimizing refugee relief efforts on behalf of COMSFOR [Commander Stabilization Force], ensuring the continuation of humanitarian support to over 160 families located in the Serb Republic Collection Centers in Pale;

◗ Assisted the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) in contacting displaced persons in Mostar in need of housing and business loans; and

◗ Coordinated financing and distribution of 12,000 Cow Care Manuals for a new breed of cattle introduced into Bosnia by UMCOR.[64]

Chaplain Robert Pipkin, who had been involved in a recent JTF military operation in Albania, reported: "We had two Army Civil Affairs people assigned at all times. The first two, who were active duty enlisted, worked well with me and included me in all their visits to local religious and civil leadership." [65]

Using their position, skills, and relationships effectively, both chaplains believed they contributed to the military/NGO process.

Chaplains engaged in civil affairs activities must be aware of the risk of duplicating the efforts of the CA unit, or vice versa. In fact, when the mission unfolds, there may be some overlap, but there are also distinct elements within the agenda. In many conflict situations today, religion plays a role. Regarding religious issues, the chaplain is more likely to have greater experience and training. It would seem reasonable to request that the chaplain utilize and contribute this expertise in these situations. Chaplains' status as "members of the clergy" or "endorsed religious leaders" provides them with credentials no one else will have; it also gives them access to other leaders and places that CA personnel would be very likely unable to access. The chaplain, as a neutral and a noncombatant, may attempt to create or strengthen meaningful relationships with leaders of political factions that will contribute to reducing the conflict and building a foundation for peace; CA personnel may be more likely to let their "military mission" overshadow their method of operating. Current practice usually results in the chaplain arriving on the mission site well before CA personnel. It would seem that such an individual with "human service" skills would be a valuable asset to the CA personnel when they do become part of the mission. The missions of the chaplain and CA unit are not the same, although there are similarities and overlapping functions; they generally complement each other, enhancing the chances for success in the mission area.

Chaplains and NGOs—A "Natural Fit"

By virtue of their vocation and training, chaplains possess qualities that potentially make them valuable participants in the military/NGO partnership during a peace or humanitarian relief operation. At the center of every chaplain's life is the desire to bring an end to suffering and disease in people's lives. This element is similarly present in civilian NGO personnel. There is the likelihood that chaplains will be given some degree of trust by NGO personnel simply because of their religious authority. This trust factor facilitates greater cooperation of the two groups by significantly reducing certain start-up formalities, such as establishing strong personal relationships, reducing the reluctance of NGOs

regarding possible engagement, and sharing information. The words of Chaplain Vincent Inghilterra, a veteran of the Gulf War and the Somalia peacekeeping mission, echo this point:

> I worked with a number of NGOs—Caritas, GOAL, Save the Children Foundation, UNESCO, etc. I had a great relationship with the in-country leadership of all the organizations. In a way, I became a liaison for them with the military. It is easy many times for a chaplain to fall into this role because of in-built respect and trust accorded him because of who he is.[66]

However, it is important that whatever trust is given be conserved and, if anything, deepened. Chaplains who let themselves become perceived as people who are looking for information, promising too much, failing to keep their word, or playing favorites will soon find themselves unwelcome guests at the NGO table.

A large measure of chaplain training focuses specifically on humanitarian issues. As compared with the line commander, a chaplain is more likely to be sensitive to many nuances that emerge in the military/NGO relationship during a MOOTW. By effectively communicating these nuances to the commander, the chaplain can help to prevent differences in perspective and operation from becoming areas for disagreement or misunderstanding among those who intervene.

As a member of the military and a staff officer, the chaplain can help to advance NGO agendas. In the first few days or weeks of the operation, when connecting and setting direction is so critical, the chaplain's direct access and command credibility provide another avenue of candid reporting to the command. These assets can be immensely helpful in a fast-moving operation.[67] Schooled in military culture, chaplains are also familiar with the perspective and concerns of their military leaders—for example, force protection, rules of engagement, and "mission creep." They are knowledgeable about the members of the commander's staff and the issues they bring to the table. Although a member of the military, the chaplain is the person who has the greatest affinity with the NGO players and is a natural choice as a working partner and command representative.

While chaplains at times may find themselves acting somewhat as spokespeople for the NGO point of view, it is also their responsibility to view each NGO objectively and professionally. NGOs are not without their faults or self-serving agendas, as this observation taken from a case study examining NGOs operating in Kosovo suggests: "Our generally positive reading of the dedication of nongovernmental organizations and personnel was undercut by recurring questions about their numbers, their lack of discipline and professionalism, and, in a few cases, their political agendas."[68]

Conclusions and Key Recommendations

Some might envy the role of chaplains because they believe that they deal only with "eternal truths" that never change. Yet this belief encompasses only part of the chaplain's role in the U.S. military today. As members of the military institution, they are touched by almost everything that is a part of its mission. Navy chaplains still perform their traditional role: They lead, join, and facilitate prayer and worship in the military setting; they minister to the wounded and dying; they bury the dead; they pastor the weary and teach the questioning. At the same time, the military environment itself presents unique challenges that this person of faith and noncombatant status must address. On the battlefield or at sea, chaplains minister to comrades, innocent victims, and enemy alike. Chaplains train and counsel individuals, be they recruits or admirals. Chaplains pastor spouses, children, and parents regarding military issues and personal problems. They stand as role models, prophetic voices, and allies of the silent. They act as adviser to and liaison for the commander, both within and without the command. In short, ministry includes both the eternal truths and numerous elements beyond.

Unless the complexities of military/NGO engagement are fully acknowledged from the beginning, needless problems will constantly haunt the process until they are given the attention they require. One facet that has been addressed above illustrates the issues and elements involved as one of the actors, the chaplain, becomes part of the military/NGO engagement process. Regardless of the history of chaplains working outside their traditional roles, significant obstacles continue to exist. When asked about obstacles to chaplains' working effectively with NGOs in recent humanitarian operations, Chaplain Boucher indicated that the "decision of the government entities, for their own reasons, interfered with the delivery of humanitarian supplies. There was no need for the chaplain due to the conventional view of the chaplain's role." Chaplain Smith noted:

> Joint Task Force constraints sometimes got in the way. . . . [A]ll CAPs [civic action projects] or any humanitarian projects had to go through the proper JTF channels, which were cumbersome and caused excessive time delays. [Also], too many of the O5 and O6 chaplains were worried about producing "stats," which reflected the traditional things chaplains do. They were not interested in "How are your CAPs/HUMs [humanitarian projects] projects going?" and "What are your issues and concerns?"[70]

Similarly, Chaplain Pipkin found:

> There was conflict with the OIC [officer in charge], who was a CEC [Civil Engineering Corps] officer, and some of the Civil Affairs people. Their lack of understanding of a chaplain's role in working with NGOs and religious leaders and the advisory role in religious matters at times hampered effectiveness with the American command structure.[71]

These observations underscore the need for further change within the military itself and more specifically the Navy Chaplain Corps. Current guidance and proposed revisions indicate that the Navy chaplain's role is very much a work in progress, as is so much else in our world today.

Key Recommendations

Navy policy regarding the role of the chaplain should be updated to allow chaplains to become involved in areas outside of the strictly "religious." While it is mandated that the chaplain also be adviser to the commander on religious and other issues, clear guidance directing chaplains to engage in other areas—such as humanitarian-related operations—should be considered. This clarification would officially acknowledge what historically has been and continues to be the case. It would also legitimize for commanders a place for the chaplain early on (from assessment to planning to execution) in the peace and humanitarian relief operations that are becoming more frequent today. At the same time, it would serve to protect chaplains from being "overextended," or used in many more areas in which they have little training or experience.

Another reason to revise current policy is to bring about synchronization at the policy and doctrine level between the Navy, the Marine Corps, and the JTF. Navy chaplains trained to standards based on only Navy or Marine Corps policy or doctrine could find themselves inadequately trained if called upon to operate in a JTF environment. For example, Navy chaplains may be assigned by their JFC to be members of a HAST (a team that makes a preliminary survey of a site for future operations). Training based on only Navy policy or doctrine would not prepare chaplains for such responsibilities.

Similarly, commanders must have adequate and consistent guidance and knowledge of policy and doctrine to be able to utilize chaplains appropriately. JTF and Marine Corps doctrine has evolved to provide a basis for chaplain participation in various types of humanitarian operations. Navy doctrine must also be updated because even chaplains acting as part of a Naval seagoing command such as an ARG may have a role to play in a humanitarian operation. The anecdote regarding East Timor mentioned earlier is a good example. In that situation, U.S. military and political leaders had no Naval policy or doctrinal guidance regarding the chaplain's engaging with NGOs. As a result, the officials directed that the chaplain's efforts remain within their traditional perceptions of a chaplain's role. The obstacles they created unnecessarily hampered the chaplain's efforts. Crafted properly, updated policy, doctrine, and other warfighting or operational guidance would allow for expansion of the chaplain's traditional role and provide an opportunity for the Navy to design and implement appropriate and adequate training.

JTF and Marine Corps doctrine recommends that a chaplain be a member of one or more of the following groups: CMOC, HAST, or JCMOTF. First, further study needs to be conducted to determine what role a chaplain would play in these settings for at least two reasons: (1) legal questions as to the limits and implications of the chaplain's involvement and noncombatant status and (2) questions regarding at what point in the intervention (initiation of mission versus five to six months into the mission) the chaplain should be called upon to be an active participant. Unless chaplains are afforded the opportunity to develop initial liaison and relationships with NGOs early in the operation, they may

quickly become marginalized from the NGOs' point of view. Similar issues must also be considered with respect to Navy doctrine.

Second, both theoretical and practical training (including topics or issues mentioned below) should be provided that would give chaplains the assurance and confidence to assume this complicated role and allow them to become meaningful members of the group. InterAction, an umbrella group representing more than sixteen national and international NGOs, currently participates in military training exercises, most recently at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune. NGO training is conducted to introduce military personnel to NGO methods of operating. This organization could develop training for chaplains as well.

A "stovepipe" mentality can be found in the Chaplain Corps as much as in any other section of the military. There would be great value in directing a research project that examines how each service's Chaplain Corps trains for and executes its mission during peace and humanitarian relief operations. The project could even go beyond national boundaries to see what Chaplain Corps of other nations are doing. Such a project would permit each Chaplain Corps to learn valuable lessons from the others. It would further illustrate to the service chaplain who might be working in a joint environment the expectations or mentality of a commander who comes from a different service or of those chaplains from different services who may be operating in the same area of responsibility. Additional research that would examine chaplain activity and experience in contemporary or recent peace and humanitarian relief operations is also recommended. This research and its conclusions would help to enrich the military's understanding of the chaplain's role and broaden the foundation for policy and doctrine development.

In peacekeeping and humanitarian operations, the military and its chaplains can no longer operate in a unilateral fashion. Success will come about only as a result of team effort. Just as this reality has begun to be understood and accepted by the military line community, chaplains too must be prepared to understand and accept it. For example, the chaplain today is very likely to be called upon to be a "spiritual diplomat" or "ambassador," establishing rapport and conducting activities with host nation and UN or NATO contributing nations' military forces and military chaplains, or host nations' religious leaders.

Additionally, the clear doctrinal guidance calling on chaplains to serve as liaisons with NGOs, religiously affiliated NGOs, or community religious leaders requires training in the skills necessary to perform this sort of function effectively. Such training should include a thorough delineation of all the elements of a peacekeeping or complex humanitarian operation environment:

- ◗ political aspects (host nation, regional, and international)
- ◗ security concerns
- ◗ third-party actors engaged in the mission area (UN, NATO, NGOs, and IOs)
- ◗ priority issues related to population affected by the humanitarian emergency and/or conflict (AIDS, repatriation, shelter, food, health care, and education)
- ◗ matters crucial at the assessment, planning, and execution phases of the intervention

Extensive education and practical training should also include familiarization with the tensions of different organizational cultures that exist between the NGO and military communities and how to manage those tensions. Organizations such as the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) or the Center of Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (COE-DMHA) would be excellent resources to provide this type of training. USIP has already developed one workshop that addresses chaplain and NGO–related issues. COE-DMHA has a one-week workshop that addresses military medical personnel in humanitarian relief and peace operations. COE-DMHA presenters have said that this course could easily be adapted to address chaplain concerns in the same environment.

The Chaplain Corps assumes that chaplains entering military service have a certain level of competence in their knowledge of various world religions and denominations. To ensure quality, chaplains should be expected to measure up to certain standards in this area and training should be offered to address any inadequacies. Additional training opportunities might also be provided to update chaplains regarding areas to which they are less likely to have been exposed in the American environment—such as Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism.

The Navy chaplain cannot function without the support of the Religious Program Specialist. These two people are a team: the Unit Ministry Team and the chaplain's engagement with NGOs will always require the presence and support of the RP. This support goes beyond logistical considerations and could range from "ambassadorial skills" to various practical elements in the military/NGO liaison process. Further study, updating of policy and doctrine, and training are required to precisely guide and direct UMTs to optimize their talent and energy in the military/NGO engagement process.

What has been presented in this study is the initial step necessary to prepare chaplains to do their job in as highly a professional a manner as the author trusts each one desires. The need for further refinement, understanding, and change remains.

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27. Ibid., 94.

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63. The designation "noncombatant" is conferred by several Geneva Conventions and Protocols (1949) and detailed in Frederic De Mulinen, *Handbook on the Law of War for Armed Forces* (Geneva: International Committee of the Red Cross, 1987). Chaplains fall under the category of "specifically protected persons [who] may not participate directly in hostilities and may not be attacked" (p. 48). Further, "they shall be allowed to perform their task, unless the tactical situation does not permit it" (p. 111).

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About the Author

Paul F. McLaughlin is a captain in the U.S. Navy Chaplain Corps and is currently staff chaplain for the United States Southern Command in Miami, Florida. In 1998–2001, he served as the chief religious and moral adviser to the commanding officer of the U.S. Naval Station in Rota, Spain, and as pastor to the Navy community there. McLaughlin's eighteen-year Navy career has included tours of duty in Italy, Japan, the Philippines, and the United States, as well as aboard Naval surface ships. He served as a NATO chaplain in Bosnia for six months in 1998. In the course of his career, McLaughlin has earned numerous awards, including the Defense Meritorious Medal and the Meritorious Service Medal. He was ordained a Roman Catholic priest in 1971 and has served parishes in Connecticut and Florida. He holds a Ph.D. in special education from the University of Connecticut. Chaplain McLaughlin was the U.S. Navy fellow at the U.S. Institute of Peace in 2001–2002.

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