

APPENDIX I

Reprinted Articles

- “Don’t Worry Be Still: The Virtue of Nonchalance.” John Garvey. September 1989. Commonweal Foundation. 475 Riverside Dr. New York, N.Y.
- U. S. Army Chaplain Ministry to German War Criminals at Nuremberg, 1945 – 1946” *THE Army Chaplaincy Journal*. Photos were provided by COL Henry. H. Gerecke, USA, (Ret.).
- “The POW: Ethical Dilemmas and Decisions.” Vol. 25. No. 1. Surface Warfare magazine. Jan/Feb. 2000. (*NRTC chapter 2*).
- “Experiences as a POW in Vietnam” RADM James B. Stockdale, USN. Naval War College Review, Winter. 1998. (*NRTC chapter 3*).
- “A Search for Meaning” DUTY DAYS OF TRIAL AND DECISION. Porter A. Halyburton. Copyright 1989. (*NRTC chapter 4*).
- “An Ethic Without Heros.” LT Lawrence Bauer, USN. PROCEEDINGS. Winner of the Vincent Astor Memorial Leadership Essay Contest (replete with qualities that can enable service members to survive extreme circumstances). This article makes the case that tradition is a formidable element in character development. (*NRTC chapter 4*).

For Further Reading

- Albanian Escape: The True Story of U. S. Army Nurses Behind Enemy Lines*. Agnes Jensen Mangerich, Evelyn Monahan, Rosemary L. Neidel. University Press of Kentucky. May 1999. This book also provides valuable insight into current events in the Balkans. Thrust into a perilous situation and determined to survive, a group of WWII Army flight nurses crash-lands in Albania, finding courage and strength in the kindness of Albanians and guerrillas who hide them from the Germans. The true story of the physical strength, courage and discipline and patriotism of these servicewomen remained steady.
- An Ethic for Enemies: Forgiveness in Politics*. Donald W. Shriver, Jr., New York Oxford Univ Press. 1995. The author expands the concept of forgiveness from the realm of religion and personal ethics. He makes the case that forgiveness is at the heart of reflection about how groups of humans can move to repair the damages they have suffered from their past conflicts with each other. He employs forgiveness as a multidimensional process that is eminently political.
- Beirut Diary*. Sis Levin. Downers Grove, IL. InterVaristy Press. 1989.
- Between Vengeance and Forgiveness: Facing History after Genocide and Mass Violence*. Martha Minow. Boston. Beacon Press. 1998.
- Beyond Survival: Building On the Hard Times – A POW’s Inspiring Story*. CAPT. Gerald Coffee, USN. (Ret.) G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1990. New York, N.Y.
- Bloods: An Oral History of the Vietnam War By Black Veterans*. Wallace Terry. Random House, New York. 1984.
- Bound to Forgive*. Lawrence Jenco. Notre Dame, IN. Ave Maria Press, 1995. Father Martin Jenco suffered 19 months as a hostage in Beirut. He relives his kidnapping, his imprisonment, offers

portraits of the Shiite Muslims who held him captive and describes his pilgrimage to reconciliation.

Chained Eagle. Everett, Alvarez., Jr. and Anthony S. Pitch. Donald I. Fine, Inc. New York 1989. Father Martin Jenco suffered 19 months as a hostage in Beirut. He relives his kidnapping, his imprisonment, offers portraits of the Shiite Muslims who held him captive and describes his pilgrimage to reconciliation.

Destroying the World to Save It. Robert Jay Lifton. Von Holtzbrinck Publ. Oct 1999. Gordonsville, VA. This book provides an examination of cults, specifically as they relate to terrorism and apocalyptic violence. The text explores the idea of cults: how they grow, who joins them, who leads them.

“*Education and Leadership and Survival: The Role of the Pressure Cooker.*” Military Ethics. James B. Stockdale and Joseph Brennan. Washington, D.C. National Defense University Press, 1987. Drawn and developed from the literature of the Middle Ages, the concept of ‘hermetic transformation,’ the idea discussed in this article is that the soul would be ‘hermetically’ sealed, possibly changed, in certain environments – say, captivity.

Evidence Not Seen: A Woman’s Miraculous Faith in the Jungles of World War II. Darlene Deibler Rose. Harper, San Francisco. September 1990. *NRTC chapter 4*.

FORGIVENESS: Breaking the Chain of Hate. Michael Henderson. BookPartners, P. O. Box 922, Wilsonville, OR. 1999.

Gates of Repentance. New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1978.

Honor Bound: American Prisoners of War in Southeast Asia. Stuart Rochester & Frederick Kiley. U.S. Naval Institute Press. 1999.

In Love and War The Story of a Family’s Ordeal and Sacrifice During The Vietnam Years. Naval Institute Press. Annapolis. 1990. James B. Stockdale.

“LOVE YOUR ENEMIES: The Necessity of the Unthinkable.” Robert F. Smylie. Church and Society: May-June, 1998, Vol. 88. The author of this article reviews the book *An Ethic for Enemies* and adds biblical commentary on the context of Christian forgiveness.

Martial Justice: The Last Mass Execution in the United States (Bluejacket Books Series) Richard Whittingham. United States Naval Institute. Oct 1997. Most Americans don’t even know we had hundreds of camps all over the U.S. that housed German POWs. This is a frightening study of some decisions military bureaucracy has made regarding POWs.

She Went to War: The Major Rhonda Cornum Story as told to Peter Copeland. Presidio Press. Novato. CA. 1992.

Preparing for Terrorism: An Emergency Services Guide. George Buck. Delmar Publ. Oct 1997. This book is an excellent resource in gaining an understanding of the phenomenon of terrorism and how best to respond. The book lays out a brief, but adequate, framework of terrorism, and then sketches out how to prepare and respond to a terrorist attack. The author includes valuable resources, such as the Federal Response and Planning Guidelines to Terrorism, information on chemical and biological agents, and several incident management tools.

“The Grievances of Bosnian Religious Groups.” Paul Mojzes. CHURCH AND SOCIETY. May-June, 1998. Vol 88. This article is a transcript of the author’s address to a colloquium presented by the Woodstock Theological Center of Georgetown University. The article is an analysis of the philosophical and historic conflicts among the three primary religious groups in a strife-ridden part of the world where military forces might, in the foreseeable future, be subject to prisoner of war or other captive scenarios. Knowledge of the areas’ religious sensitivities may prove most helpful.

The Gulf Between Us: Love and Terror in Desert Storm. Cynthia B. Acree. This uplifting true story of patriotism, courage and faith is told by a Marine aviator's wife. She chronicles a POW's struggle to stay alive while preserving his honor, and her own struggles on the home front awaiting his return. *NRTC chapter 2.*

The Hanoi Commitment. CAPT James B. Mulligan, USN (Ret). RIF Marketing: Virginia Beach 1981. CAPT Mulligan tells his own story of captivity and survival in a POW camp.

The Heroes Who Fell from Grace: The True Story of Operation Lazarus, the Attempt to Free American POWs from Laos in 1982. Patterson, Charles J., and G. Lee Tippin. Canton, Ohio: Daring Books, 1985.

The Shadow Side of Reality. John A. Sanford. The Crossroads Publishing Co. 370 Lexington Av. New York, NY 1981. The author discusses the nature of evil and it's presence in the world. He looks at the Judeo-Christian faith and their understanding of the nature of evil as it impacts individual lives.

We Band of Angels: The Untold Story of American Nurses Trapped on Bataan by the Japanese. Elizabeth M. Norman. Random House. May 1999. Ruth Marie Straub, an Army nurse, was lucky, but her colleagues were taken to Santo Tomas Internment Camp, where they were to spend almost three years in captivity. Amazingly all the Angels of Bataan, some 99 in number, survived their ordeal- and clearly helped other suffers survive. *NRTC chapter 4*

What's So Amazing About Grace. Philip Yancey. Grand Rapids. Zondervan. 1997.

When Hell Was In Session. Denton, Jeremiah A. and Ed Brandt. Smith-Morley Publisher. September 1998 Anniversary Edition. *NRTC chapter 4.*

With God in a POW Camp. Ralph Gaither. Nashville: Broadman, 1973.

“Don’t Worry, Be Still: The Virtue of Nonchalance”

by John Garvey

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An Orthodox bishop once told me that he receives people into the church only after they have been made part of an Orthodox family’s life for a year, allowed by the family to worship and share meals and time with them freely. This is so that the person interested in entering the church can observe Orthodoxy as it is lived on a daily basis. “But,” he said, “I always make sure that the family has been Orthodox for at least five years.”

I asked what the reason was for that limitation, and he answered, “So that they will have lost all their convert’s enthusiasm.”

A Trappist monastery I once visited has a program which allows some guests to participate in the lives of the monks to a greater than usual degree, sharing their work and common worship. Participants must stay for at least five days, however. The monk in charge told someone who asked why a guest couldn’t stay a shorter length of time and still participate, “They need to have enough time to begin to be bored. Without that, you won’t begin to understand monasticism.”

I’m not sure five days is enough time to get bored with monastic life, but the principle is a sound one. Both of these ideas — waiting for “convert enthusiasm” to die off, and seeing what’s there after boredom — may offer a way into understanding what the earliest monastic writers meant when they spoke of “the fires of apatheia.”

Our word “apathy” doesn’t begin to convey the right sense of the word. A literal translation — away, or apart, from feeling or emotion — sounds a bit chilly, and so does a possible substitute, “detachment.” Perhaps the difficulty with a simple definition lies in the fact that the experience is distant from ordinary consciousness, which many commentators (not all of them gnostics) have compared to drunkenness or dreaming. Any attempt to be still can show how the mind jumps from instant to instant, scattering in every direction but the moment you actually occupy. Memories of the past and worries or fantasies about the future pull the attention away from the present. Simply to be, in the presence of God and others, is not simple at all. Stillness is sometimes a gift, but it is also in part a learned thing.

Which brings us back to the examples at the start of this. What is wrong with a convert’s enthusiasm, or with finding the particulars of the monastic life intriguing? Nothing, of course; nor is there anything wrong with enjoying a piece of music you haven’t heard before. But even this good thing is, in some important circumstances, a distraction. The idea of apatheia calls on us to question the ordinary place of the emotions in our life.

Our culture teaches us to identify our emotional life with the deepest parts of the self. We are taught to rely on feeling and emotion as guides, and the jargon of pop psychology reflects this: one should “be in touch with” one’s feelings, and not repress them. This isn’t without its wisdom. To deny anger, for example — to refuse to acknowledge its presence in us, or the way in which it can determine our behavior — this can lead to the worst forms of self-righteousness and self-deception. And to see nothing good in our feelings, to regard them as essentially unimportant or indifferent, is not Christian. Insofar as they have to do with our humanity, they are good.

They are not, however, guides — not, anyway, as we usually experience them. They can be understood properly only with a certain struggle, an effort at attentiveness which does not come easily to us. I was about to write, “does not come naturally to us” — but one point here is that our true nature is obscured, and must be won. This may be one reading of Jesus’ words, “The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent bear it away.”

There are instructive parallels in other religious traditions, in (for example) the philosophy of the stoics and in Buddhism. Rather than define apatheia abstractly, it is probably a good idea to look at

specific situations, to see what can be negative and limiting out our ordinary approach to feeling, and what is positive about the movement toward apatheia.

If someone insults me at an obvious level (say, by calling me ugly or stupid) or at a less obvious level (by telling me that something I have written is shallow, or by laughing at one of my firmly held opinions), my first reaction is to take offense, to feel anger or at least irritation, and to respond in a way which is a direct and emotional reaction, however well-disguised it might be in many instances, to the feeling of having been insulted or humiliated. Perhaps one of the reasons apatheia began to impress me as an idea which is of genuine practical help was that a number of incidents in my life made it uncomfortably clear to me that my need to be right had little or nothing to do with any love for the truth. That need had to do, instead, with the shoring up of ego; it could pose easily as a concern for truth.

But if truth were really at stake, my response would never involve anger or irritation or triumph (a feeling which is, I am fairly sure, a variety of anger). For instance, if I am in fact ugly, that is the case. No reason to be upset about it. If I am not, the person who has claimed that I am has done so to wound me, in which case I should wonder first how I may have caused such offense as to provoke that response, or I should feel compassion for someone who has some other need to wound; in either case, anger isn't the appropriate response.

Similarly, if something I have written is shallow or stupid, it is; if not, it isn't — but why be angry when this is pointed out? What gets hurt and makes anger arise is the challenge to an image of myself, an image which is never ugly, shallow, or stupid. The need to hold on to that image is the most common form of idolatry, and many of our feelings are tied up in the effort. The image does not need to be obviously foolish; it can also be the image of the self as a humble, responsive and loving person, or a prayerful person, or even a person who is open to correction.

Some Orthodox writers speak of “guarding the heart.” This means attentiveness to what goes in and out of our hearts emotionally, and an alertness to the ways we are accustomed to respond. There are spiritual directors who ask those who come to them to confess everything about the way they live — not only those things which most obviously involve spirituality, but also matters of daily habit and routine, so that the ordinary movements of attentiveness or inattentiveness can be seen more clearly. This has something in common with the Buddhist practice of observing such common and non-moral reactions as revulsion and fear. A Buddhist manual for monks describes revulsion as a kind of anger directed inappropriately toward an object that cannot harm you (for example, a decaying corpse).

Where the idea has gone wrong is not in being applied too strictly, but rather too selectively. There is in some of the stoics and some Christian ascetics too exclusive and negative a concentration on sexual temptation or drunkenness or gluttony — obvious passions, all having to do with the body — and this apparent denial of the goodness of the body has led some people to a rejection of the whole ascetic ideal. That's unfortunate, because finally it is an affirmative, rather than a negative, approach to life. The body and our feelings assume the places they are meant to have before we distort them.

There are a number of prayers in Orthodox prayer books which speak of our passions as deluding influences which make us unhappy. If we react to this language by assuming that the passions in question are the ones preachers have always taken aim at — lust is probably the first choice there — they can look merely quirky and old-fashioned. But the passions in question, when they are identified, are often such emotions as sadness, or our obsession with bitter memories. One prayer to Mary asks for the dispelling of “the dream of despondency,” and another asks for “deliverance from my many cruel memories and deeds.”

The goal of apatheia is stillness. Perhaps the best image of what it means is the one offered in the Gospel, the image of Jesus with his disciples in the storm-tossed boat. They panicked and were afraid — they were at the time very attached to their feelings, driven by them. They were affronted by the fact that he lay at rest, his head on a pillow. It may not be too much to suggest that apatheia is, finally, a kind of divine nonchalance.

U.S. Army Chaplain Ministry to German War Criminals at Nuremberg, 1945-1946

by William J. Hourihan, Ph.D.

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“We had two of the finest chaplains a prison commandant could have been given,”¹ wrote Colonel Burton C. Andrus, the tough Commandant of the Nuremberg Prison, which housed high-ranking German war criminals during their trial for war crimes after World War II. The two chaplains he praised so highly were Henry F. Gerecke and Sixtus R. O’Connor, both part of one of the most singular ministries ever undertaken by U.S. Army chaplains; a ministry to the surviving leadership of the Third Reich who were tried for war crimes at Nuremberg.

For these two chaplains it was a unique, ground-breaking experience.

While the historical record of the Chaplaincy shows that Army chaplains ministered to enemy prisoners of war (POWs) in the past, this was not done in an organized way and was generally carried out by individual chaplains on an temporary, non-official basis.

In the aftermath of World War I, for example, elements of the U.S. Army were engaged in protecting parts of the Trans-Siberian railroad system. The 27th Infantry Regiment found itself at one point guarding and protecting some 2,000 German and Austrian prisoners in the Lake Baikal region deep in central Siberia.

Chaplain Joseph S. Loughran, who was attached to the 27th, found himself not only conducting services for the prisoners, but also acting as the liaison officer between the captives and American military authorities.²

All this changed in World War II when large numbers of Axis prisoners of war were sent to camps in North Africa, in liberated Europe, and in the United States. Fort Slocum, New York, for example, the home of the Chaplain School from 1951 to 1962, served as an Army-run installation for German and Italian POWs during the war.³

After the war, Army Chaplain Norman Adams headed an organization based in Paris, France, which supplied religious coverage to approximately 130 German POW camps with responsibility for about half a million men.⁴ With the total defeat of Germany, Italy and Japan, the question of how to treat the leadership of these nations, which had plunged the world into this terrible conflict, also had to be addressed.

The issue of how to treat the high-ranking leadership of a defeated state was one that had arisen in the United States only once before, and that was in the wake of the Civil War. At that time, there had been



Chaplain Henry F. Gerecke

serious consideration given to bringing to trial certain individuals in the Confederate hierarchy. While Jefferson Davis, the Confederate president, was imprisoned for a time at Fort Monroe, Virginia, and Alexander Stephens, the vice president, incarcerated at Fort Warren in Boston harbor, no Confederate leader was ever tried for treason or war crimes.

After World War I there was an effort to bring Kaiser Wilhelm II to an international court of justice, but he fled to the Netherlands (neutral during World War I) and was granted asylum.

In fact, there had been only one trial and execution in United States history prior to World War II for what conceivably might be defined as a war crime in today's parlance; i.e., Confederate Army Captain Henry Wirz, the commandant of the Andersonville prison camp.⁵

The unimaginable horrors perpetrated during WW II by Germany and Japan however, made their political and military leadership particularly open to legal retribution. At the end on the Yalta Conference on 12 February 1945, the Allied leaders declared: "It is our inflexible purpose to destroy German militarism and Nazism and to ... bring all war criminals to just and swift punishment."⁶

After President Roosevelt's death on 12 April 1945, the new president, Harry Truman:

accepted the wisdom of a trial, based on a model proposed by the War Department, and he convinced the British, the Russians, and the French, who were brought into the discussions. Following agreements in principle at the United Nations founding Conference in San Francisco, experts from the four occupying Powers met in London in June to work out the details. On 8 August 1945, the representatives reached agreement on a charter establishing an International Military Tribunal [IMT] 'for the just and prompt trial and punishment of major war criminals of the European Axis.'⁷



Trial for war criminals at Nuremberg, Germany.

This tribunal was made up of one member and an alternate chosen by each of the four signatory powers. The first session took place in Berlin on 18 October 1945. Beginning on 20 November 1945, the tribunal sessions were held at the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg. This city was chosen as the venue because of its close association with the Nazi party. Originally there were 24 members of the Nazi leadership charged with the perpetration of war crimes. One

defendant, Robert Ley, committed suicide on 23 October; a second defendant, Gustav Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach, was judged incapable of being tried because of his mental and physical condition. A third, Martin Bormann, would be tried and condemned to death in absentia.⁸

Security for the remaining 21 prisoners was provided by the Army's 6850th Internal Security Detachment, under the direction of the commandant of Nuremberg Prison, Colonel Andrus. Initially Chaplain Carl R. Eggers, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry, was assigned to work with the prisoners. Chaplain Eggers, who spoke fluent German and was a Lutheran (Missouri Synod), held this position briefly. On 12 November 1945, as the trial moved from Berlin to Nuremberg, he turned over his duties to Chaplain Henry F. Gerecke, another Lutheran (Missouri Synod). A second Army chaplain was chosen to be his Roman Catholic counterpart, Chaplain Sixtus R. O'Connor. These two chaplains, along with the prison Army psychologist, Dr. G.M. Gilbert, were the only American officers on the prison staff who could speak German.⁹

As a result of the Reformation and the ensuing religious wars of the 16th and 17th centuries, German society was sharply divided between Protestantism (mainly Lutheran), and Roman Catholicism. Nazi leadership mirrored this split. Adolf Hitler and Josef Goebbels, for example, were born, baptized and raised in the Roman Catholic faith.

Of the 21 on trial at Nuremberg, the 13 Protestants would be ministered to by Chaplain Gerecke. They were: Herman Goering (Reichmarschall and Luftwaffe-Chief); Joachim von Ribbentrop (Foreign Minister); Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel (Chief of Staff of the High Command of the Wehrmacht); Hans Frick (Governor-General of Poland); Walter Funk (Minister of Economics); Hjalmar Schacht (Reichbank President and former Minister of Economics); Admiral Karl Doenitz (Grand Admiral of the German Navy); Admiral Erich Raeder (Grand Admiral of the German Navy); Baldur von Schirach (Hitler Youth Leader and Gauleiter of Vienna); Fritz Sauckel (Chief of slave labor recruitment); Albert Speer (Reich minister of Armaments and Munitions); Baron Konstantin von Neurath (former Foreign Minister and later Protector of Bohemia and Moravia); and Hans Fritzsche (Radio Propaganda Chief).¹⁰

Chaplain O'Connor would serve the four professed Catholic prisoners: Ernst Kaltenbrunner (Chief of SS Security HQ); Franz von Papen (Ambassador to Austria and Turkey); Hans Frank (Governor General of Poland); and Artur Seyss-Inquart (Austrian Chancellor and later Reich Commissioner for the Netherlands).

Four of the prisoners refused to align themselves with either chaplain. They were: Rudolf Hess; Alfred Rosenberg (Chief Nazi philosopher and Reich minister for the Eastern Occupied Territories); Julius Streicher (Gauleiter of Franconia); and General Alfred Jodl (Chief of Operations for the High Command).¹¹

The ministry of these two chaplains is mainly seen through the eyes of Chaplain Gerecke. While both he and Chaplain O'Connor worked closely together, only Gerecke has left us a detailed written record of the experience. This was not without controversy. Initially, Chaplain Gerecke's request to publish an account of his ministry was denied by the Office of the Chief of Chaplains:

The objection was based on the ground that the manuscript revealed intimate confidences which were deserving of the secrecy of the confessional. The War Department discourages anything that would possibly suggest to men that chaplains did not zealously guard intimate knowledge and confidence.¹²

When Gerecke did publish his experiences he introduced his story by saying:

Remember, friends, this report is unofficial and has no connection with any report that may come from the War Department. These are my personal observations and feelings about the men on trial at Nuremberg.¹³

Maintaining his silence, Chaplain O'Connor wrote nothing for publication.

Chaplain O'Connor was a former parish priest from Loudonville, New York, who had entered the Army in 1943. Chaplain Gerecke was a 53-year-old pastor from Missouri, who had also entered the Army in 1943. A hospital chaplain, he was serving in Munich with the 98th General Hospital Unit, when he was ordered to report to the 6850th Internal Security Detachment at Nuremberg. He had not seen his wife in two-and-a-half years, and two of his sons had been severely wounded in the war, one during the Battle of the Bulge.

Prior to coming to Munich, he had spent "15 melancholy months in English hospitals, sitting at the bedsides of the wounded and dying." Chaplain Gerecke had many doubts about this new assignment. The Office of the Chief of Chaplains told him that the decision to accept or reject it was up to him.¹⁴

Colonel Andrus wrote that Gerecke told him: “How can a humble preacher from a Missouri farm make any impression on the disciples of Adolph Hitler?”¹⁵ Despite his doubts, Gerecke accepted the assignment.

From November 1945 to October 1946, Chaplains Gerecke and O’Connor ministered to their charges on a daily basis. Gerecke’s first communicant was Fritz Saukel. He regularly prayed with the chaplain, often ending his prayers with: “God be merciful to me, a sinner.” Fritzche, von Schirach, and Speer, were regular takers of Communion. Field Marshal Keitel asked Gerecke, “to convey his thanks to the Christian people of America for sending a chaplain to them.” At one point Keitel told him: “You have helped me more than you know. May Christ, my Saviour, stand by me all the way. I shall need him so much.”¹⁶

On the Catholic side, Hans Frank told Dr. Gilbert, the Army psychologist, in December 1945:

I am glad that you and Pater Sixtus, at least, still come to talk to me. You know, Pater Sixtus is such a wonderful man. If you could say ‘virgin’ about a man you would say it about him — so delicate, so sympathetic, so maidenly — you know what I mean. And religion is such a comfort — my only comfort now. I look forward to Christmas now like a little child.¹⁷

The prisoners who refused to see either chaplain were adamant in their stance.

Hess, of course, was mentally disturbed, and probably, like Krupp, should not have been on trial. Streicher’s response to some religious leaflets left by the chaplain was that: “I don’t put any stock in that stuff ... All that stuff about Christ — the Jew who was the Son of God — I don’t know. It sounds like propaganda.”¹⁸

Rosenberg, the party theoretician, treated Gerecke with a cool disdain. He told him that he had no need of his services, but he thought it was nice that someone could be so simple as to actually accept the story of Christ as Gerecke had done.¹⁹

Hermann Goering, the highest-ranking Nazi on trial, was for Gerecke the most interesting and the most troubling. When Gerecke held services in the little prison chapel, Goering was always the first to arrive, sat in the front, and sang the loudest. His rationale for this was somewhat disconcerting, since he told Gerecke that with his position as the highest-ranking member of the prisoners, it was his duty to set an example. “If I attend,” he maintained, “the others will follow suit.”²⁰

The depth of his faith was questionable. Once, ending a session with the prison psychologist, Dr. Gilbert, he said that he must get to chapel. When Gilbert said that prayer was beneficial, Goering replied: “Prayers, hell! It’s just a chance to get out of this damn cell for a half hour.”²¹ He told Chaplain Gerecke at one point that he was not an atheist, but rejected Lutheranism. He believed in a higher power, but not in Christianity.²²

By the spring of 1946, both chaplains had established strong bonds with the prisoners. When a rumor spread that Gerecke wanted to leave, all 21 defendants signed a letter to Mrs. Gerecke in St. Louis telling her how much they had benefited from his ministry and how much they needed him.²³

After 216 court sessions, on 1 October 1946, the verdict was handed down. Twelve of the defendants (including the absent Bormann) were sentenced to death by hanging. Seven were given prison sentences — Hess, Funk, and Raeder for life. Three — Schacht, von Papen, and Fritzche — were acquitted. The time for the executions was set for midnight, 15 October 1946.²⁴

As the final hour approached, Colonel Andrus reported that “Father O’Connor and Chaplain Gerecke were untiringly moving from condemned cell to condemned cell. Prayers were now taking on a new meaning, a new urgency.”²⁵

At 2030 hours Gerecke saw Goering. He requested communion but refused to make a confession of Christian faith. Chaplain Gerecke in turn refused to give Communion, basing his decision on denominational grounds. Two hours later Gerecke was hurriedly summoned and found that Goering had committed suicide and cheated the hangman by taking a cyanide capsule.²⁶

The chaplain was later criticized for this refusal of the sacrament, and Gerecke himself had struggled with his decision. "If I blundered in my approach to reach this man's heart and soul with the meaning of the Cross of Jesus," he wrote later, "then I'm very sorry and I hope a Christian world will forgive me."²⁷

As the ten remaining condemned prisoners walked the "last mile" that night the chaplains went with them. "I put my trust in Christ," von Ribbentrop confided to Gerecke.²⁸ As the hood was pulled over his head he turned to him and said: "I'll see you again."²⁹ Field Marshall Keitel said: "I thank you and those who sent you, with all my heart."³⁰

The place of execution was located in the gymnasium of the prison. Brightly lit, the room contained three wooden scaffolds painted black. Thirteen steps led up to the platforms on which the gallows were erected. The lower part of the gallows was draped with a curtain. Hands tied behind their backs, a black hood pulled over their heads, one by one each man went to his death. Master Sergeant John C. Woods of San Antonio, Texas, and his two assistants conducted the executions. By 2:45 a.m. it was over.³¹

Kingsbury Smith of the International News Service, who attended the executions as a representative of the American press, remembered that "most of them tried to show courage. None of them broke down."³²

At four o'clock in the morning two Army trucks arrived at the prison. Eleven coffins were loaded and the trucks, protected by vehicles equipped with machine guns, drove off in the direction of Furth, followed by a procession of newspapermen in automobiles. At Erlangen the press contingent was prevented from proceeding any further and the two trucks containing the bodies drove off into the early morning mist. Taken to Munich on a roundabout route, the remains were reduced to ashes in the crematorium of the East Cemetery. These ashes were then scattered in the river Isar.³³

Chaplains Gerecke and O'Connor were soon reassigned, returning to their normal duties as U.S. Army chaplains. Yet, for a year they had played an intimate part in one of the most historically significant episodes of the 20th century special ministry.



Chaplain Henry Gerecke conducts services at Fort Jackson, SC.

Endnotes

1. Burton C. Andrus, *I Was The Nuremberg Jailer* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1969), 108-109.
2. Earl F. Stover, *Up From Handyman: The United States Army Chaplaincy, 1865-1920* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Chaplains, Department of the Army, 1977), 197.
3. Roger R. Venzke, *Confidence In Battle, Inspiration In Peace: The United States Army Chaplaincy, 1945-1975* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Chaplains, Department of the Army, 1977), 117.
4. Roy J. Honeywell, *Chaplains of the United States Army* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Chaplains, Department of the Army, 1958), 283.
5. Shelby Foote, *The Civil War, A Narrative: Red River to Appomattox* (New York: Random House, 1974), 1032-33.
6. As quoted in, G. M. Gilbert, *Nuremberg Diary* (Farrar, Straus and Company: New York, 1947), 460.
7. Michael R. Marrus, "The Nuremberg Trial: Fifty Years Later," *The American Scholar* (Autumn 1997), 564.
8. "War Crimes," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, XXIII (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1972), 206.
9. Venzke, *Confidence*, 7.
10. *Ibid.* 7; Gilbert, *Nuremberg Diary*, 4-7.
11. *Ibid.*; Venzke, *Confidence*, 8.
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The POW: Ethical Dilemmas and Decisions

The Unique Skills of Seaman Doug Hegdahl, USN

Courtesy of SURFACE WARFARE magazine. Jan/Feb 2000, Vol. 25. No.1

The Code of Conduct was designed to govern the behavior of service personnel captured during war. The code arose out of the Korean War experience, where a breakdown of morale occurred, primarily among the enlisted POW community, and widespread collaboration followed. The 1955 code as promulgated by President Eisenhower called for POWs to make every effort to escape, accept no special favors from the enemy, and when questioned, give only one's name, rank, serial number, and date of birth: "the big four and nothing more.

During the Vietnam War, this version of the code quickly became untenable. North Vietnamese camp authorities routinely ignored the Geneva Convention and subjected POWs to severe torture, extortion, and brutality. As a consequence, senior officers at the Hanoi Hilton developed a modified version of the code, known as Plum, which stands for little jewels of knowledge. Plums came out as policy statements, and were meant to augment, expand, or substitute for the Code of Conduct. "As POW's were treated not as POW's but as common criminals, we sailed uncharted waters," explained James Stockdale, one of the leaders who helped develop the Plums. "The Code did not provide for our day to day existence; we wrote the laws we had to live by... We set a line of resistance we thought was within the capability of each POW to hold, and we ruled that no man would cross that line without significant torture. "Plums required a pilot to take physical abuse and torture before acceding to specific demands, but did not expect a man to die or seriously jeopardize his health and safety. They also called for "working with the camp authorities for the improved welfare of all and ignoring petty annoyances."

However, there would be no appearances for propaganda, and any "flexibility or freelancing would be subordinated to the need for unity and discipline." The ethical dilemmas confronted by even the lowest ranking POW in Hanoi are well illustrated by the example by the case of Doug Hegdahl.

Seaman Hegdahl, a modest 19-year old farm boy from South Dakota, had never been east of his uncle's Dairy Queen stand in Glenwood, Minnesota, or west of his aunt's house in Phoenix, Arizona, before enlisting in the Navy in October 1966. On the night before his capture, he was serving as an ammunition handler on the guided missile cruiser *Canberra* in the Gulf of Tonkin.



Seaman Doug Hegdahl, USN

Excited by the prospect of seeing a night bombardment for the first time, he went up to the deck (in violation of orders) and was knocked overboard by the shock of one of the ship's five-inch guns. A skilled swimmer, Hegdahl floated for several hours before being picked up by a North Vietnamese fishing boat, and later turned over to the Vietnamese militia. The fishermen treated Hegdahl well, but the militia nearly clubbed him senseless with their rifles before moving him to the Hanoi Hilton.

Once at the Hilton, Hegdahl understood implicitly that it was to his great advantage to convince the Vietnamese that "he lowly fool," someone not worth worrying about. The Vietnamese interrogators thought he was an agent or a commando, so ridiculous was Hegdahl's tale, but after being grilled and slapped around for several days, Hegdahl finally convinced his captors that he was nothing but an ignorant farm boy. Because of his youth, his "hillbilly" accent, and his bumpkin demeanor, the guards viewed Hegdahl as unthreatening and gave him an almost complete run of the Plantation, a satellite POW camp near the Hilton.

They also decided to “punish” the camp’s SRO, CMDR Richard Stratton, by making Hegdahl, a lowly seaman, his roommate — a serious mistake that both men soon capitalized on.

Rather than resent each other because of differences in rank, education, and social background, the two men bonded immediately: Hegdahl respected Stratton for his accomplishments as an aviator and his Georgetown and Stanford education; and Stratton, in turn, admired Hegdahl for convincing the Vietnamese that he was a simpleton and for his superb memory. The two men soon developed a surprisingly effective intelligence network, with Hegdahl as the courier and Stratton as the case officer. Hegdahl played the ignoramus role to the hilt, and soon became the main link for the POW communications network at the Plantation. Among Hegdahl’s “surprising skills, an uncanny memory enabled him to retain not only the names and shoot-down dates of captives, but also the names of their family members and hometowns and innumerable other bits of information.”

Beginning in August of 1967, conditions within the Plantation improved. Prisoners began receiving more and better food and were allowed to spend more time outdoors. Stratton and others assumed that the improved treatment meant that the Vietnamese were contemplating an early release for some of the POWs. Knowing that Hegdahl represented the perfect courier to deliver comprehensive intelligence about the POWs and their conditions to Washington. Stratton, who by this time was being held in a separate cell, ordered Hegdahl to accept early release if offered to him.

Initially, Hegdahl struggled over the order. Unsure if obeying it would mean breaking Article 3 of the Code of Conduct, he became a more “incorrigible” POW to delay his release. During the fall, he intentionally provoked the Vietnamese by refusing to write an amnesty request to Ho Chi Minh and giving Tom Hayden, a prominent peace activist who visited the Plantation during this period, the “finger.” Hayden retaliated by refusing to carry back a taped message to Doug’s parents, and the Vietnamese did likewise by throwing him into solitary. As he sat in solitary, Hegdahl regretted evading Stratton, a man he respected as much as his father, but on the other hand, viewed the order as a direct violation of the Code of Conduct, and a breach of faith with his fellow POWs.

Ultimately, a new order from LTCOL Hervey Stockman, USAF, temporarily solved his dilemma. A “strict constructionist,” Stockman flatly turned down Stratton’s request to send Hegdahl home. “Nobody goes home,” he tapped, “Not that kid — not anybody.” A persistent man, Stratton gradually convinced Stockman to change his stance, arguing that Hegdahl’s phenomenal memory was the best opportunity the POWs had for getting a complete list of captives to Washington. The news of the change came to Doug via Al Stafford, his cellmate at the time.

“Al, I can’t do that.”
“Why not?”
“I can’t bug out on the guys.”
“It’s not the same with you Doug. You can understand that.”
“I can’t go home while the rest of you guys stay here. If one of us goes, we all go.”
“It’s an order, Doug.”
“I don’t care. I’m not going.”
“All right, Seaman Hegdahl. I am a lieutenant commander and your superior officer, and I order you to go.”
“Aye, aye, sir.”

Seaman Hegdahl did more for the POW cause than provide Washington with intelligence on the North Vietnamese camps; he also brought much needed news about loved ones to POW families and publicized the North’s brutal mistreatment of American captives.

After accepting a position at the Navy’s SERE school near San Diego as a civilian instructor, he met with Sybil Stockdale on numerous occasions to provide her with detailed briefings about her husband. As a civilian, he traveled around the country speaking out against Hanoi; at one point even journeying to Paris to petition the North Vietnamese for a visa to return to Hanoi as part of a Red Cross inspection team. Getting the news out about Hanoi became a crusade for Doug, and in the end, he emerged as the most powerful weapon in Nixon’s campaign to improve POW conditions through full disclosure of war crimes being committed by North Vietnam in Hanoi.

EXPERIENCES AS A POW IN VIETNAM

Rear Admiral James B. Stockdale, U.S. Navy¹

From Naval War College Review, January-February 1974 Issue...

LAST FEBRUARY, WHEN I FIRST TOUCHED foot on American soil, I was asked to make a few remarks on behalf of the ex-POWs who were embarked in the airplane with me. An ancient verse came to mind that best summarized my relief at dropping the mantle of leadership and responsibility I had held during seven and a half years of imprisonment, four of them in solitary. These lines are attributed to Sophocles; I remember them well because of their modern ring: "Nothing is so sweet as to return from sea and listen to the raindrops on the rooftops of home."

Well, I was dreaming. I had forgotten that an old sea captain's job does not end when he anchors in home port.

My wife Sybil and I have a private joke. Before I returned she was advised by a Navy psychiatrist, "The fellow will probably make a quick readjustment to modern society if you will remember one rule for the first few months: Don't put him in decision-making situations." Well, the reality of my post-confinement simply did not allow such an environment. In the past year I have probably made more important decisions than in any like period in my life.

Today I find myself truly back home. I am back with old friends, back in my native Middle West, and I have decided that this is my last public speech as an ex-POW. I have no ambition to become a professional ex-prisoner. As soon as I finish today, I am going down to my farm in Knox County [Illinois] for a couple of days, then to Colorado to spend the weekend with my second son, who is in college there, then back to San Diego. Next week I hope to check out of the hospital, and then, I hope, I will be ready for a good seagoing job.

Incidentally, before we were released by the North Vietnamese, I had occasion to be approached by other prisoners who were thinking about their careers. We were all more or less pessimistic about our future utility to our services. Not with any malice — it was just that we had been used to living that stoic life and faced up to the fact that there was a good chance that our service careers had been overcome by time. We came home to find that the service was devoted to giving us every chance to regain that time. I am informed, as our Navy ex-POWs' duty assignments are made — and their orders are good — that each man has been given the personal attention his devotion to duty deserves.

As a theme for this audience, I will address the subject of how a group of middle Americans — average American guys who have chosen military life as a profession — survived in a POW situation and returned home with honor.

The conditions under which American POWs existed have changed radically since World War II. It is no longer a matter of simply being shot up, coming down in your parachute, going to a reasonably pleasant Hogan's Heroes prison camp, and sweating out the end of the war. At least it was not that way in Vietnam. In Vietnam the American POW did not suddenly find himself on the war's sidelines. Rather, he found himself on one of the major battlefronts — the propaganda battlefront. Our enemy in Vietnam hoped to win his war with propaganda. It was his main weapon. Our captors told us they never expected to defeat us on the battlefield, but did believe they could defeat us on the propaganda front.

Unlike the World War II POW, who was considered a liability, a drain on enemy resources and manpower, the American POW in Vietnam was considered a prime political asset. The enemy believed that sooner or later every one of us could be broken to his will and used as ammunition on the propaganda front. Some of us might take more breaking than others, but all of us could be broken. Thus, for Americans who became POWs in Vietnam, capture meant not that we had been neutralized, but that a different kind of war had begun — a war of extortion.

For the sane man there is always an element of fear involved when he is captured in war. In Vietnam the enemy capitalized on this fear to an extreme degree. We were told we must live by sets of rules and regulations no normal American could possibly live by. When we violated these rules and regulations, we gave our captors what they considered sufficient moral justification for punishing us — binding us in ropes, locking us in stocks for days and weeks on end, locking us in torture cuffs for weeks at a time, and beating us to bloody pulps. As we reached our various breaking points, we were “allowed” to apologize for our transgressions and to atone for them by “confessing our crimes” and condemning our government.

At this point you may be asking the question, Had the POWs received any training to prepare themselves for possible capture? The answer is yes, and it was based on two things that I have come to respect very, very much.

One was on the taking of physical abuse. I think if you were to prepare yourself to be a prisoner of war — and I cannot imagine anybody going about that methodically — one should include a course of familiarization with pain. For what it is worth, I learned the merits of men having taken the physical abuse of body contact in sports. It is a very important experience; you have to practice hurting. There is no question about it.

Second, survival school was based on taking mental harassment. I came out of prison being very happy about the merits of plebe year at the Naval Academy. I hope we do not ever dilute those things. You have to practice being hazed. You have to learn to take a bunch of junk and accept it with a sense of humor.

On the subject of education, beyond the scope of survival school, there is always the question, “Do we need to start giving a sort of counter-propaganda course? Should we go into the political indoctrination business?” I am not very enthusiastic about that. I think the best preparation for an American officer who may be subjected to political imprisonment is a broad, liberal education that gives the man at least enough historical perspective to realize that those who excelled in life before him were, in the last essence, committed to play a role. He learns that though it is interesting to speculate about the heavens and the earth and the areas under the earth and so forth, when it comes right down to it, men are more or less obliged to play certain roles, and they do not necessarily have to commit themselves on issues that do not affect that role.

Now, how does the average American — which is what the POW is — deal with his world? On a day-to-day basis, the POW must somehow communicate with his fellows. Together they must establish a viable set of rules and regulations to live by. We were military men. We knew we were in a combat situation and that the essential element of survival and success in a combat situation is military discipline. That meant, isolated though we were from each other, we could not afford to live in a democracy. We had no choice but to live in a strictly disciplined military organization — if you will, a military dictatorship.

Our captors knew this as well as we did. Several members of Hanoi’s Central Committee had spent long periods in confinement as political prisoners. They felt that we too were political prisoners. They held as their highest priority the prevention of a prisoner organization, because they knew an organized body of prisoners could beat their system. If they were to get what they wanted from us, they had to isolate every American who showed a spark of leadership. They did so. They plunged many of us into a dark, solitary confinement that lasted, in some cases, four full years.

“For what it is worth, I learned the merits of men having taken the physical abuse of body contact in sports. It is a very important experience; you have to practice hurting. There is no question about it.”

For us the Code of Conduct became the ground we walked on. I am not aware that any POW was able, in the face of severe punishment and torture, to adhere strictly to name, rank, and serial number, as the heroes always did in the old-fashioned war movies, but I saw a lot of Americans do better. I saw men scoff at the threats and return to torture 10 and 15 times. I saw men perform in ways no one

would have ever thought to put in a movie; and because they did perform that way, we were able to establish communication, organization, a chain of command, and an effective combat unit. We lost some battles, but I believe we won the war.

In fact, I am not so sure we lost many battles. Unless you have been there, it is difficult to imagine the grievous insult to the spirit that comes from breaking under torture and saying something the torturer wants you to say. For example, “My government is conducting a criminal war. I am a war criminal. I bomb churches, schools, and pagodas.” Does that sound silly to you? It does to me. But I and many others were tortured in ropes for that statement. The reason it was important to take torture for that statement was to establish the credibility of our defiance — for personal credibility — so that the enemy would know that they must pay a high price to get us into public if they ever could. Needless to say, in a POW situation, viable leadership is not possible without example. In a unit with good communication, almost everyone knows what everyone else is doing or not doing most of the time.

In short, what I am saying is that we communicated. Most of the time most of us knew what was happening to those Americans around us. POWs risked military interrogation, pain, and public humiliation to stay in touch with each other, to maintain group integrity, to retain combat effectiveness. We built a successful military organization and in doing so created a counterculture. It was a society of intense loyalty — loyalty of men one to another, of rigid military authoritarianism that would have warmed the cockles of the heart of Frederick the Great; of status — with such unlikely items as years in solitary, number of times tortured, and months in irons, as status symbols.

Most men need some kind of personal philosophy to endure what the Vietnam POWs endured. For many it is religion; for many it is a patriotic cause; for some it is simply a question of doing their jobs even though the result — confinement as a POW — may not seem necessarily fair. For myself it seemed that becoming a POW somewhere, someday, was a risk I accepted when I entered the Naval Academy. I think it is fair to say that most POWs — including, certainly, those who did not attend service academies — felt the same way. They accepted this as a risk they undertook when they took their oath as officers. To be sure, very few sat around bemoaning their fate, asking the heavens, “Why me?”

As POWs who were treated not as POWs but as common criminals, we sailed uncharted waters. The Code of Conduct was the star that guided us, although several of us are making recommendations for its modification, particularly in the area of a prisoner’s legal status. The Code did not provide for our day-to-day existence; we wrote the laws we had to live by. We established means for determining seniority. We wrote criteria and provided mechanisms for relieving men of command for good and sufficient cause — and we used those mechanisms. We set a line of resistance we thought was within the capability of each POW to hold, and we ruled that no man would cross that line without significant torture. Thus, in effect, we ordered men into torture.

From what I have said here today, I think you can realize that as we prison leaders developed this organization, this unity, this mutual trust and confidence, this loyalty that permitted us to ask a guy to give his all sometimes, we acquired a couple of things. We acquired a lot of close friends, but in addition we acquired a constituency.

Now life has to make sense to that constituency. And that constituency comes home and says to itself: You spoke with force of law, and at great personal pain and inconvenience I obeyed that law, and now I come home and no one seems interested in whether everybody obeyed it or not. What kind of a deal is that? We prison leaders have a lifetime obligation to back up our stalwarts.

A couple of final comments. Self-discipline was vital to self-respect, which in turn is vital to survival and meaningful participation in a POW organization. Self-indulgence is fatal. Daily ritual seems essential to mental and spiritual health. I would do 400 pushups a day, even when I had leg irons on, and would feel guilty when I failed to do them. This ritual paid valuable dividends in self-respect, and, incidentally, I learned yesterday at Mayo Clinic that it also paid physical dividends.

I thank God for the other Americans I was imprisoned with. The respect one develops for others in a POW situation is really indescribable. I think it might be best illustrated with a story of something that happened once when I was in solitary and under extremely close surveillance. I was in dire need of a morale boost when two other POWs, Dave Hatcher and Jerry Coffee, sent me a note at great risk to themselves. I opened it and found written the complete poem, “Invictus,” which begins,

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.
William Ernest Henley, 1849-1903

In our effort to survive and return with honor, we drew on the totality of our American heritage. We hope we added something to that heritage. God forbid that it should ever happen to other Americans — to your sons and grandsons, and mine — but if it does, we pray that our experience will be known to them and give them the heart and hope they will need.

¹*Vice Admiral Stockdale graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1946, serving first in destroyers and later as a naval aviator. In 1965, as Commander Air Wing 16 embarked in the carrier USS Oriskany (CVA-34), he was shot down over North Vietnam, becoming the senior U.S. naval prisoner of war until his release in 1973. After his return he became Commander Antisubmarine Warfare Wing Pacific in the grade of rear admiral, then President of the Naval War College in 1977 as a vice admiral.*

Retiring from naval service in 1979, Admiral Stockdale became the president of The Citadel in Charleston, South Carolina; in 1981 he joined the Hoover Institution as a senior research fellow. He is a member of the advisory board of the Naval War College Review. His books include A Vietnam Experience (1985) and Thoughts of a Philosophical Fighter Pilot (1995); he and his wife Sybil wrote In Love and War (2nd ed. 1990). He holds a master’s degree from Stanford, honorary doctorates from Brown University and the University of Rhode Island, nine other honorary degrees, and the Congressional Medal of Honor.

An Ethic Without Heroes

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Proceedings Magazine's —

Leadership Forum Winner:

Vincent Astor Memorial Leadership Essay Contest (June 1993)

By Lieutenant Lawrence Bauer, U.S. Navy

Almost 70 years ago, Rear Admiral Albert Gleaves raised a toast to the Navy's traditions. "Certainly, it is our duty to keep these traditions alive," he said, "and to pass them on untarnished to those who come after us." If Admiral Gleaves were alive today, it is likely he would be concerned with polishing some tarnished traditions. During the past two years, revelations of sexual harassment and other misconduct have brought discredit to the Navy and the reputation of its officers. As a result, professional ethics are — now more than ever — an important factor in the education of an officer. Long after Tailhook becomes a footnote in the history books, our response to it will have a profound effect on the practice of leadership.

For a naval officer, ethics is not academic; it is a discipline applied to every day decision making. It is a source of inspiration, encouraging us to remain faithful to it when the temptation to compromise is great. We rely on our leaders to make wise choices in difficult moments. For an officer, then, devotion to the professional ethic must be equal to his or her devotion to subordinates, because to fail one is to fail them both.

Like the professional ethic of many old institutions, ours has developed over the years and is rich in tradition. Last year (1992), however, the Navy adopted an official set of core values and introduced it into the fleet. For the first time in its history, the Navy codified the qualities it finds most desirable in its personnel and in its leaders: courage, honor, and commitment. Indeed, these are timeless virtues, but what is missing, and what this philosophy will need if it is to accomplish any lasting good, is tradition — heroes and a history of its own.

"Fortune," said Winston Churchill, "is rightly malignant to those who break with the customs of the past." What began in Las Vegas two years ago (at time of writing) has been called a watershed by military and civilian leaders. But watershed is a dangerous word. It places most of our history and tradition on the wrong side of the time line dominated by a single tragic event, and it reinforces the viewpoints of skeptics that ethics is a political expediency in the wake of a scandal. It deprives us of what the past has to offer.

For more than two centuries, officers have been expected to treat others with dignity and respect because they defend and represent a society based on an assumption of individual worth. The crises that plague the Navy are not the result of a flawed standard of conduct, but rather they are the work of a few officers who failed to keep faith with a 200-year old ethic — either by their own actions or by tacit approval of the actions of others. Only an ethic steeped in history provides the means to put these failures in perspective.

The characters and lives of our great leaders dwarf the indiscretions of lesser men. It was, for example, George Washington's reputation for fairness that established him as the preeminent military officer in America even before the Revolution. Historians agree that he gained not merely the obedience, but the respect of the troops he led:

He had it because of his actions, not because he was an officer, nor even because his was a deferential society in which men looked up to their social and economic betters.... Today, officers are entitled to respect because they are officers. Even so, there are varying degrees of

regard, determined by the manner in which superior officers conduct themselves. In contrast, the view in Washington's time was somewhat the reverse: the man by his character and performance gave dignity to the office; the office was less likely to give luster to the man.... Washington implicitly acknowledged the conditions for respect when he cautioned his juniors to "remember that it is the actions and not the commission that make the officer — and that there is more expected of him than the title."¹

By omitting tradition from its official core values, the Navy has robbed its people of what the past has to offer. Naval history is full of leaders — from John Paul Jones, to Admiral Marc Mitscher, to Vice Admiral James Stockdale — who have set the example and the standard, by their actions as well as their words.

This still is true, but not simply because the Navy has adopted a set of abstract words to define an officer's character. Rather, it is true because our history spotlights leaders — from George Washington and John Paul Jones to Vice Admiral James Stockdale — who have set the example and the standard for us, by their actions as well as their words. They provide us with a sense of history, which will help us "avoid the self-indulgent error of seeing [ourselves] in a predicament so unprecedented, so unique, as to justify... making an exception to law, custom, or morality in favor of [ourselves]."²

"To sustain a culture," says Ernest Boyer, president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, "you need points of common memory, tradition, and experience. If we don't have those, it's impossible to intellectually and socially engage with one another."³ The service is a culture unto itself — a reflection of the society from which it draws its people, but with its own unique ethic. To sustain that culture, we must draw on our unique memories, traditions, and experiences — our history.

It is paradoxical that our solution to what the core values instructor guide calls the fragmented experience of American youth⁴ is as devoid of heroes and spirit as that experience itself. Educators partly blame the lack of role models for declining student performance and a dearth of values — yet our adopted ethic makes no reference to men and women who have been such models.

Our earliest leaders — General Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison among them — believed the qualities most desirable in citizens of the republic would flourish only if there were examples to emulate. They purposely and methodically created such examples.⁵ In a nation without a long-established military or political aristocracy, example became the means by which new leaders were developed.

By weaving history into our ethic we put life into it. "Seldom do [soldiers] fight for causes or abstract values," writes Colonel Anthony E. Hartle, "though they will fight for a strong leader whom they know well."⁶ We must ensure that the values we fight for are not abstract.

Some might argue that history is not integral to maintaining an ethic; if it were, it should have prevented the indiscretions of the past two years. But any ethic becomes weakened if it is reduced to platitudes. At the Naval Academy, for example, John Paul Jones' caution that an officer must be more than a "capable mariner" is still grist for memorization by midshipmen. But no parallels are drawn between his words and the development of an officer's character. The words are history, and for many, history has grown irrelevant. While the qualities Jones found necessary in an officer — tact, patience, justice, firmness, and charity — are coincidentally the same qualities lacking among the offenders in all of our recent scandals, we seem to have focused little attention on them. Instead, we have rewritten them and, in the process, stripped away their eloquence and the historical significance of their author. The question we face is whether an institution that has made history by overcoming adversity will now overcome adversity by ignoring its history. And if so, at what price? Admittedly, a doctrinaire emphasis on ethics is better than no emphasis at all. At the very least, unacceptable behavior may be eliminated. But in a profession where leaders accept responsibility for the welfare of others, merely acceptable conduct is not enough. We might eliminate demeaning behavior toward women, for example, or educate officers about racism.

It would be far better, however, to produce leaders who are able to recognize injustice without having to be sensitized to each of its guises, who are able to respect the dignity of others without conscious effort.

To do this, we must first eliminate the notion of statutory ethics, translated into a policy of “get on board with our values or get out.” Laws may be a reflection of the values they uphold, but they are not a substitute for the values themselves. The Navy has a set of regulations in place, to enforce its standards. Those who cannot meet the standards are now, as they have always been, subject to punishment under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Unfortunately, there is a punitive tone to the presentation of our new core values. By preaching a philosophy of life as if we were administering the law, we obscure the purpose and meaning of both. As Colonel Hartle points out:

Some might suggest that these rules are part of the professional military ethic [PME]. The UCMJ, however, applies to all members of the military, not just the most obviously professional component. It is more comparable to the laws of the state in relation to other professionals, which apply to professionals and laymen alike. Nonetheless, the UCMJ defines honorable conduct in a negative sense by establishing what members of the military will not do. The PME, on the other hand, emphasizes ideals and positive aspects of conduct. Without question, the morality that shapes the PME also underlies the UCMJ, but the two guides for conduct are quite different.⁷

Once established as ideals, standards are free to become obligations, imposed not by external forces, but by personal pride. Without heroes, however, ideals are easily reduced to ideology. The second step toward reaffirming a truly effective ethic for ourselves is to ensure that it is seen as part of our history, not a deviation from it. By declaring unconscionable behavior no longer acceptable, we imply that at some time it was — and do a disservice to the countless officers before us who might otherwise serve as examples.

Character development must go hand in hand with an understanding of our history — not simply battles and dates but the trials and personal philosophies of past Navy leaders. Establishing that historical camaraderie increases the sense of obligation to the ethic, since compromise now means becoming a lesser member among greats. It provides examples, and as Admiral Stockdale wrote, the knowledge that there is no situation so unique as to war rant compromise.

Finally, a historical perspective provides a healthy dose of humility. It is humbling to remember many of those past members of the profession whose lives defined the word character. Certainly, humility is, to some small degree at least, a prerequisite for selflessness, and selflessness is at the heart of our profession.

The future of professional ethics in the Navy is not especially bleak, nor is it particularly bright. We have taken the first steps toward reaffirming integrity and respect for human dignity as essential qualities in our leaders. The danger is that now, satisfied with a clear policy, we will stop, and fail to put spirit into the words. Words without the power to inspire cannot provide effective guidance for an ethical way of life. Woodrow Wilson believed that no one can lead who does not act, whether it be consciously or unconsciously, under the impulse of a profound sympathy with those whom he leads — a sympathy which is insight — an insight which is of the heart rather than of the intellect.”⁸

Words and policies appeal to the intellect, but appealing to hearts — and developing them — requires developing a sense of pride and purpose that only other hearts can accomplish.

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⁵ Garry Wills. *Cincinnatus: George Washington & The Enlightenment*. Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1984, pp. 111, 129.

⁶ Anthony E. Hartle. *Moral Issues in Military Decision Making*. University Press of Kansas, 1989, p. 152.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

⁸ Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. *Cycles of American History*. Houghton Mifflin Company, 1986, p. 430.

Lieutenant Bauer, a graduate of Northwestern University, was assigned to the U.S. Naval Academy at the time of this writing. He served earlier as combat information center officer, first lieutenant, and navigator on board the USS *Moinester* (FFT-1097).

APPENDIX II

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