

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

In the decade of the sixties a highly vocal, intelligent, idealistic generation of young Americans began to challenge our society in a way unparalleled in the history of America. To challenge established institutions became the order of the day. Two institutions which bore the brunt of the challenge were the Church and the Military. All sorts of propaganda was paraded before our eyes, calling for a halt to all war and killing of every kind. The "military-industrial complex" became the whipping-boy for all the ills of society.

Before going any further, let me quickly admit that there were, and are, many things going on in our society which need to be challenged-- and I for one am very grateful to live in a country where such challenge as I have described above can take place. After having said that, however, I would also like to say that I believe there is a dangerous fallacy in the idealistic protest against war and killing. Cardinal Newman has pinpointed that fallacy in the cryptic statement: "It is useless for sheep to pass resolutions in favor of vegetarianism as long as the wolf is present".

We may use all the rhetoric we like about human rights, human dignity, and the worth of the individual, but let us at all points remember one thing--such ideas are a part of our Judaeo-Christian religious heritage. For us to try to apply such ideas in dealing with nations untouched by our religious heritage makes just about as much sense as for a sheep to try to convince a wolf to be a vegetarian. No matter how fervently the sheep might hope for success, The wolf remains a wolf. It might be well to remind ourselves that we "sheep"

who recognize the ultimate futility and wrongness of violence and the value of the life of each individual, are in a minority in the real world in which we live. The "wolves" for whom the life of the individual means nothing, except as a tool of the state, are more numerous than we-- and their power is becoming more formidable with each passing year. We have two choices--we can continue to parade our idealistic slogans, or we can prepare to meet the "wolf" ^{-- or the bear --} on his own terms.

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(Before Training 10 AF)
Article given to me about Feb 82. E