THE DEVELOPMENT OF MILITARY CHAPLAINCY, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SOUTH AFRICA (UP TO 1966)

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1.   INTRODUCTION

The term "chaplain" is derived from the Latin term *capellanus*,[3] and evolved over time to denote different assignments in liturgical, administrative and diplomatic services. During the Middle Ages, one responsibility in this regard was that of ministering to those in the parish who lived inconveniently far from the parish church,[4] and the modern concept of chaplaincy is analogous to this assignment: a ministry to people in unusual circumstances which may preclude normal church services, such as hospital, prison, police or military chaplaincy. A chaplain can therefore be defined as a member of the clergy, or a priest, who is ordained by his/her denomination to minister to a specific community. Today, non-ordained people are also trained in chaplaincy and appointed at institutions, hospitals and prisons to assist or replace ordained chaplains.[5] It should be kept in mind that the modern chaplain does not become an inherent part of the community to which he/she is ministering. In the case of military chaplaincy, the chaplain does not become an active combatant. This in itself is an anomaly, because the chaplain is also a paid military official.

Although military literature covers most aspects of war in depth, publications on military chaplaincy are few in number, with little research having been conducted from a historical perspective. Books on military chaplaincy are almost always written from a theological perspective, dealing with themes such as Christian ethics and war, the conflict inherent in simultaneous obedience to the church and the state, or professional demands. Barbara Brummett mentions the lack of publications on

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[3]   Some also link the name "chaplain" to the relic cloak ("capa") of St Martin of Tours, a pioneer of the monastic movement in Gaul. According to a legend, he tore his cloak in two and shared it with a shivering beggar. This cloak was guarded by clergy ("capellani") and taken to battle by the Frankish kings. JF Potgieter, *Die militêre kapelaan die ontstaan en ontwikkeling van die amp, taak en organisasie van militêre kapelane in die geskiedenis van die Christelike kerk, met besondere verwysing na Suid-Afrika* (unpublished D.Div. thesis, University of Pretoria, 1971), pp. 1-7; Die kapelaansvroue SAW, *Die kapelaansvrou* (Pretoria, 1982), p. 107.

[4]   KS Latourette, *A history of Christianity to AD 1500* (New York, 1975), p. 527.

[5]   See, for example, "Kapelane en hulle werk" in *Die Kerkblad* 84(2622), 21 October 1981, p. 5.

chaplaincy in her thesis[6] – a void that has been pointed out by most writers in all fields of chaplaincy.

The situation is not much better as far as South African literature on military chaplaincy is concerned. PL Moolman complains about the scarcity of sources on chaplaincy in the preface to his dissertation,[7] and the same sentiment is echoed by SG van Niekerk in his doctoral thesis.[8] Conducted in the field of Church History, Van Niekerk's thesis provides a valuable perspective on developments in South African military chaplaincy from 1914 to 2002; and it served as a basis for this article with respect to the given time frame. JF Potgieter's doctoral thesis[9] is regarded as the first research evidence on the history and tasks of chaplains globally,[10] and covers the early history of chaplaincy until 1970. However, it was still written from a theological perspective. Research in fields such as police chaplaincy in South Africa[11] highlights the similarity of ministry, problems and ethics, but does not shed light on the history of military chaplaincy.

This article comprises the first in a series of three, and it provides the broad background to a more detailed history of chaplaincy in the South African Defence Force (SADF) during the Namibian War of Independence (1966-1989). In this introductory article, an overview is given of the ministry of clergy in different religions to determine whether it included functions similar to that of the modern military chaplain in the defence force. The development of military chaplaincy, specifically South African military chaplaincy, is then traced against this background in an effort to ascertain the extent to which chaplaincy in South Africa differed from that in other countries, and what the position of the military chaplain in the SADF was in 1966; that is, on the eve of the outbreak of the war in South West Africa (SWA; today Namibia).

2. A GLOBAL HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON CHAPLAINCY AS A RELIGIOUS VOCATION

Religion is basic to human nature and finds expression in many forms. It would be impossible to cover all religious denominations within the scope of this article to

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6   B Brummett, *The spirited campus the chaplain and the college community* (thesis for the partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Doctorate in Ministry, New York, 1990), p. xvi. Also see RD Shaw, *Chaplain to the imprisoned sharing life with the incarcerated* (New York, 1995), p. 1.

7   PL Moolman, *Eerwaarde John Neethling Murray sy bediening as pioniersendeling van die Waterberg en eerste permanente kapelaan van die Unieverdedigingsmag, 1894-1931* (unpublished M.Th. thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1977), pp. i-ii.

8   SG van Niekerk, *The history, role and influence of the South African military chaplaincy 1914-2002* (unpublished D.Th. thesis, University of South Africa, 2002), p. xi.

9   See note 3, *supra.*

10   "Kapelaan presteer" in *Paratus* 23(10), October 1971, p. 70.

11   See, for example, C Janse van Rensburg, *Die plek en taak van die kapelaan in die Suid-Afrikaanse Polisie* (unpublished M.Th. thesis, University of South Africa, 1984).

determine whether military chaplaincy traditionally formed part of their ministry. The main world religions that are encountered in South Africa were therefore investigated, i.e. Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam and Christianity. Although they are not classified as world religions, brief comments will also be made on the traditional African religions. All these religions have some form of priesthood – the basis from which most ministries, including chaplaincy, evolved.

Priests are ordained to perform rituals linked to the religion, superstitions or beliefs of a community or congregation. They are regarded as specialists and receive formal training, although training in colleges and seminaries is a modern development. Priests usually enjoy a high social standing and are often distinguished by their ceremonial robes while performing rituals. Most religious traditions were male-orientated, but some African tribal societies also ordained women to perform rituals.[12]

The following overview of the profession of priesthood in the different religions will show that there were instances in history when fanatical priests took command on the battlefield, but except for Christianity and the Japanese, their ministry did not involve the modern concept of military chaplaincy. Hindu priests, called Brahmins, unleash the power (Brahma) inherent in prayers, spells, incantations and rituals to manipulate the material and spiritual world. They were traditionally a powerful elitist class, the highest in the caste system, and distinct from the warrior class.[13] Buddhist monks or priests are holy men who cultivate spiritual qualities, ethical virtues and mental wisdom. They do not perform rites other than mediation for others.[14] Although pacifism is inherent to the lifestyle of Buddhist monks, there were times in the history of Japan when fanatical Buddhist priests participated in military actions in a manner reminiscent of the Islamic Jihad (Holy War) or Christian Crusade.[15] The Japanese Imperial Army and Navy, which imitated Western concepts and institutions, maintained Buddhist and Shinto priests until 1945.[16]

There is a tendency among Christian writers to regard the priests of Judaism as the role-models of the modern military chaplain. Priesthood in the Biblical sense ended with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, and rabbis, as scholars and observers of the Torah,[17] took over the communal religious leadership. Their duties included sermons, education, judicial verdicts and serving as cantors and scribes.[18] Although CL Abercrombie regards Moses as the first chaplain when he kept his

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[12]   WG Oxtoby, "Priesthood: an overview" in L Jones (ed.-in-chief), *Encyclopedia of religion* (2nd edition, Detroit, 2005), pp. 7394-7396.

[13]   DM Knipe, "Priesthood: Hindu priesthood" in Jones (ed.-in-chief), pp. 7405-7406.

[14]   JC Holt, "Priesthood: Buddhist priesthood" in Jones (ed.-in-chief), pp. 7407-7409.

[15]   MM Baker, "Militant Buddhists: a look at the Ikko-Ikki", <http://www.samurai-archives.com/ikk.html>, 26 October 2007.

[16]   See, for instance, the article by RJD Braibanti, "State and religion in Japan", <http://www.links.jstor.org>, 7 November 2007.

[17]   Jewish written instructions of religion.

[18]   E Kanarfogel, "Rabbinate: the rabbinate in pre-modern Judaism" in Jones (ed.-in-chief), pp. 7578-7580.

hands raised for the sake of victory in the battle of Israel against the Amalekites,[19] Rabbis did not accompany combat units to minister to them before modern times. It can therefore be concluded that military chaplaincy is not inherent to the religious traditions of Judaism.

Both Islam and Christianity have their roots in Judaism. Islam is based on a revelation that Mohammed[20] believed Allah, the God of Judaism, had given to him, as the last and greatest of the prophets. After Mohammed's death, a dispute arose regarding the question of his successor, as a result of which Islam adherents split into the Shi'a and Sunni Muslims. The secular leader was designated as the caliph (successor to the prophet), while the spiritual leaders became known as imams (leaders). The imamate is a central aspect of Shiite Islam.[21] In the spirit of Mohammed, many imams participated in active combat – not as chaplains, but to give expression to the Jihad instruction that the world should be brought under the rule of Allah; with force if necessary. During the seventh and eighth centuries, Islam expanded militantly, and for the next three centuries Muslims and Christians were embroiled in warfare.[22]

In the early years of Christianity, participation in war was regarded as a sin. It was believed that by disarming Peter, Christ had taken the sword out of the hands of all Christians. The Church of Alexandria did not accept soldiers as members and permitted enlistment in the Roman legions only in exceptional circumstances.[23] By the end of the fourth century, Christianity had become the official imperial religion and it was incorporated into all structures of the empire. Viewpoints on pacifism changed, and some wars were justified as "restraints of evil". The clergy or priests became an important social class and were assimilated into all spheres of life, often performing tasks other than liturgical services, owing to their literacy skills.[24] During the time of the Carolingians in the eighth century, extrinsic responsibilities (such as those of a charter) were added to the chaplain's liturgical functions, and the chapel became an important instrument for Christian rulers. As part of the Papal chancery, chaplains served as scribes to the Pope during his travels.[25] In 742, the Council of

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19   CL Abercrombie III, *The military chaplain* (Beverly Hills, 1977), p. 31. The battle is narrated in Exodus 17: 8-15. Potgieter also views the Biblical history of Israel as the basis of modern military chaplaincy. Potgieter, pp. 21-27.

20   An Arab from Mecca, 570-632. For biographical details, see CJH Hayes *et al.*, *History of western civilization* (New York, 1964), pp. 100-101.

21   R Hooker, "World civilizations: Islam", <http://www.wsu.edu/˜dee/GLOSSARY/IMAM.HTM>, 14 October 2007.

22   For an overview of the rise and expansion of Islam see Hayes *et al.*, pp. 100-106.

23   Latourette, pp. 242-244. These circumstances included times when the army served as a police force. Also see Potgieter, pp. 28-45.

24   Latourette, p. 555; F Cardman, "Priesthood: Christian priesthood" in Jones (ed.-in-chief), p. 7402.

25   H Jedin and J Dolan (eds), *History of the church the church in the age of feudalism* 3 (London, 1980), pp. 19, 158, 435.

Ratisbon officially authorized chaplains for armies, thus initiating an evolutionary process of professional conduct for military chaplains.[26]

With the deterioration of the Roman Empire, feudalism developed and the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) took over the functions of the state. The church's hierarchically structured clergy became involved in warfare and intrigue between rulers, and ordered the Crusades.[27] The dualistic nature of the Church came strongly into play during this time – a controversial issue with which modern military chaplains are still grappling, particularly in terms of the need to justify their ministry in combat circumstances. The clergy were bound by a higher set of moral values than the laity, which included abstinence from combat.[28] The Council of Ratisbon authorized chaplains to minister to armies, but forbade them to bear arms. When William, Duke of Normandy, invaded Britain in 1066, his half-brother, Bishop Odo of Bayeux, fought with a mace because he was not allowed to carry a sword. In 1175 the Synod of Westminster also prohibited clergy from being combatants,[29] but until the fourteenth century feudal warfare was common, and many priests accompanied their aristocratic lieges to war. During the Crusades at the end of the eleventh century, loyal priests participated vigorously in the battles, and military monastic orders were formed.[30]

Military chaplaincy developed according to the customs and traditions of different countries. In Britain, the first military chaplains were priests on board vessels during the eighth century. Chaplains on land were introduced during the reign of King Edward I (1272-1307). In France military chaplaincy commenced in 1248. The tasks of chaplains included duties extrinsic to spiritual ministry, such as performing the functions of paymasters. It was only at the beginning of the twentieth century that military chaplaincy finally shed these additional tasks. With the Renaissance, the concept of warrior-priests was replaced with that of clergy ministering to soldiers, and by the sixteenth century chaplaincy was firmly rooted in the British, French, Spanish and Dutch military traditions. King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden (1611-1632) was the first to accord permanency to chaplain appointments. Oliver Cromwell's New Model Army (1645) regularized the status of chaplains, but it also brought back the concept of warrior-priests. Only after the establishment of the British Army in 1660, were the duties of chaplains specified (in 1662).[31]

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26   WJ Hourihan, "A brief history of the United States Chaplain Corps", Chapter 1, <http://www.usachcs.army.mil/history/brief/chapter1.htm>, 1 August 2007; Potgieter, pp. 67-69. Potgieter regards the presence of Christian soldiers on the battlefield in the fourth century as the starting point of military chaplaincy.

27   Latourette, pp. 262, 336-337, 340, 554-556.

28   GF Hershberger, *War, peace and nonresistance* (Scottdale, 1969), p. 74.

29   Royal Army Chaplains' Department, "History of the Royal Army Chaplains' Department", <http://www.army.mod.uk/chaps/museum/history_of_the_rachd/index.htm>, 1 August 2007.

30   Latourette, pp. 329-330, 365-366, 408-414; Potgieter, pp. 70-74.

31   Royal Army Chaplains' Department; Potgieter, pp. 73-77, 79-82.

The predominant role of the Church and Christianity over so many centuries had secured the ministry to soldiers as part of the Christian state enterprise and, with time, it became more structured. In Britain, the lack of chaplains to accompany Sir Ralph Abercromby's expeditionary force to the West Indies in 1795, led to a Royal Warrant and the establishment of the Army Chaplain's Department (ACD) under a Chaplain General in 1796. Few clergy were willing to face the strains of a military ministry for little compensation and, with the outbreak of the Crimean War (1854), only one chaplain served 26 000 men. Through the endeavours of the Chaplain General an army list of 20 chaplains and 35 assistant chaplains was available in 1856. Chaplains accompanied the British imperial troops to North America, Africa and the East. At first, only clergy from the Church of England served in the ACD, but RCC ministers were admitted in 1836, Presbyterians in 1858, Wesleyans in 1881 and Jews in 1892.[32]

British military chaplaincy had totally abolished the concept of warrior-priests by the seventeenth century, and the only concern of military chaplains from then on was the spiritual welfare of the troops. In America, however, the chaplain was still a "fighting padre" who shaped societal norms and political policies. The American people saw themselves as a chosen Christian Protestant people whose cause was linked to the will of God through the ideology of a just war. During military operations, sermons were often about patriotism to the American cause.[33] A similar type of doctrine also manifested itself in South African military chaplaincy.

The American fighting padres participated in skirmishes with indigenous people, the wars against the French (1689-1763) and the War of Independence (1775-1783). They received official recognition on 29 July 1775. In 1776 Gen. George Washington issued a General Order which allocated a chaplain to each regiment. The guiding principle for their ministry was the religious sentiments of the troops, which were mostly Protestant. RCC chaplaincy was only officialized during the war with Mexico (1846).[34]

During the first half of the nineteenth century, American military chaplaincy was still far from being a professionalized institution. Non-ordained persons conducted liturgical services for the regiments, and chaplains were often rated according to tasks not intrinsic to their ministry. From 1813, education comprised an important part of their assignments. Only during the Civil War (1861-1865), when the spiritual ministry to troops became paramount to the image of the fighting padre, was military chaplaincy restructured. In July 1862 it was declared in an official statement that only ordained persons of religious denominations were permitted to serve as

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[32]   Royal Army Chaplains' Department; Shaw, p. 33. Also see JA Gurney, "The chaplain" in
          Commando 15(6), June 1964, p. 47.
[33]   Shaw, pp. 23, 33-42; Abercrombie, pp. 33-37; Hourihan, chapter 3.
[34]   Potgieter, pp. 82-83; Hourihan, chapters 1 and 2. The appointments had to counter the accusation
          that the war was an Anglo-Saxon Protestant crusade against Catholic Mexico.

chaplains. The rank and uniform of chaplains were standardized and, for the first time, RCC, black, Indian and Jewish chaplains officiated. Their duties included services, counselling, literacy classes and the writing of letters. At the end of the Civil War, black chaplains were appointed to the newly created black regiments. Between 1869 and 1898, 34 chaplains served in the American Army. Some officers disapproved of military chaplains, and their duties still included tasks unconnected to spiritual ministry.[35] During the Spanish-American War (1898) chaplains for the first time served abroad, and as noncombatants. In the aftermath of this war, Pres. Theodore Roosevelt transformed the army and military chaplaincy into a modern professionalized institution. A military chaplains' structure was created and the number of chaplains was increased to 74 in 1916.[36]

Gradually, chaplains in general shed the extrinsic tasks and were thus able to focus on spiritual ministry and pastoral care. With the Geneva Conventions, chaplains officially became noncombatants.[37] The outbreak of World War I (1914-1918) caught most chaplain departments unprepared. As the war progressed, the current form of military chaplaincy was established. At first chaplains were confined to dressing stations, but later their presence in the trenches helped to keep up the morale of the soldiers. In the United Kingdom (UK), King George V officially honoured the work of the ACD, and changed its name to the Royal Army Chaplains' Department (RAChD) in 1919.[38]

At the outbreak of World War II (1939-1945), military chaplaincy was well structured in most countries. Greater mobility and the higher number of prisoners of war (POWs) influenced chaplaincy services. The chaplains' role was expanded and an hour of instruction to the troops – known as the Padre's Hour – was introduced to boost the morale of soldiers.[39] The slogan of chaplains serving the Allied forces was "be there"; and events such as their role during the sinking of the troopship, *Dorchester,* on 3 February 1943, were seen as manifestations of a true chaplains' spirit.[40] Chaplain assistants played a significant role as intermediaries between the

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[35]   Potgieter, p. 83; Hourihan, chapters 2, 3 and 4. A chaplain's duties included the functions of a librarian, bakery manager and treasurer. Officers regarded chaplain appointments as political connections, and they objected to the designation of "Captain" as undeserved.

[36]   Hourihan, chapter 4.

[37]   <http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteengO.nsf/htmlall/genevaconventions>, 2 October 2007. Protocol I, 8 June 1977, section 13.2(a) conceives chaplains as noncombatants, but not as unarmed. The UK and USA require chaplains to be unarmed, but Norway, Denmark and Sweden make it a matter of individual conscience.

[38]   Potgieter, p. 84; Royal Army Chaplains' Department. In 1920 all Protestant denominations were members, but the RCC only joined in 2004.

[39]   Royal Army Chaplains' Department; BBC, "Religion & ethics: history of army chaplains", <http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/christianity/priests/armychaplains>, 2 October 2007.

[40]   Hourihan, chapter 6. The ship was hit by a torpedo and 678 of the 904 men on board died. One Catholic, one Jewish and two Protestant chaplains gave their lifejackets to others, offering prayers and support. They then held hands, prayed together and went down with the ship. They were the only chaplains to be awarded the Chaplain's Medal for Heroism.

troops and the chaplains. During World War II, 8 890 chaplains served in the US Army – the largest number of chaplains ever to wear uniform at a given time.[41]

The year 1945 did not bring peace. Strained relations with the Communist world and different national policies resulted in conflict situations such as the Korean War (1950-1953), the Suez Crisis (1956-1957) and the Vietnam War (1962-1973). Most chaplains served with distinction during these and other military operations. The USA's highest award for valour, the Congressional Medal of Honor, was awarded to chaplains during the Vietnam War – the first time since the Civil War.[42] However, incidents such as My Lai[43] challenged Christian ethics and the morality of being a clergyman and a soldier simultaneously. With the conclusion of the Cold War and the altering of foreign policies after Operation Desert Storm (1991), the principle of a just war became more and more clouded; and this impacted on the ministry of chaplains.

Military chaplaincy in countries like Australia functions on much the same basis as in the case of the UK. In Canada, military chaplaincy took shape during World War I, but full-time military chaplains have only officiated since World War II. From 1939 to 1995, Canada had two chaplaincy branches to represent Protestant denominations and the RCC respectively. In 1993, the Canadian Forces Chaplain School and Centre (CFChSC) opened its doors for the training of national and international military and civilian chaplains, with the emphasis on interoperability and reconciliation.[44] Countries where chaplaincy services are different, owing to historical developments and principles such as the separation of state and church, are France, Germany and Switzerland. In France and Germany, chaplains are appointed for short periods only, and they resort under the different denominational structures and not under the military.[45]

The aftermath of World War II brought a shift in emphasis from war-related matters to ethical and moral concerns, and chaplaincy services had to face new challenges in the form of conscientious objection campaigns, drug addiction, inter-cultural and race relations, homosexuality, ministering to Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) patients and supporting the soldier's family through Family Life Centres. The training of chaplains, which had been neglected for a long time, was upgraded during the 1960s. Their equipment improved and became lighter, and the concept of religious retreats became popular.[46]

The quest for gender equality and the development of a pluralistic society changed the structure and composition of chaplaincy. After the Vietnam War,

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[41]   See Hourihan, chapter 6 for an account of their services during and after the war.
[42]   *Ibid.*, chapter 7.
[43]   US soldiers massacred civilians from My Lai during March 1968, while searching for Viet Cong.
[44]   Canada National Defence, "The Canadian Forces Chaplain Branch", <http://www.dnd.ca/chapgen/engraph/history_e.asp?cat=1>, 1 August 2007.
[45]   Potgieter, pp. 284-298, 306-311.
[46]   Hourihan, chapter 7.

chaplaincy in the USA was restructured to include the Eastern Orthodox faith. In 1974 Alice M Henderson became the first ordained female chaplain to serve in the USA Chaplain Corps.[47] In December 1993, the USA commissioned the first Islam military chaplain and in 2004, the first Buddhist chaplain. The British Army, which had traditionally commissioned only Christian and Jewish chaplains, appointed four civilian chaplains to serve adherents of the Buddhist, Hindu, Islam and Sikh faiths in October 2005. Today (2008), the RAChD has about 280 chaplains. In the USA there are approximately 1 400 chaplains – all Christians, except for 30 rabbis and 15 imams.[48]

Against this brief review of the development of military chaplaincy services in the international context, the history of military chaplaincy in South Africa will now be traced.

3.   MILITARY CHAPLAINCY SERVICES IN SOUTH AFRICA, 1652-1966

Religion and warfare have always been part of the lives of the indigenous people of southern Africa. Rituals conducted by priests or witchdoctors before battles were common, but the concept of military chaplaincy did not exist before the arrival of white people. When the Dutch East-Indian Company (Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie, VOC) established a replenishment station at the Cape in 1652, they brought Christianity with them. In line with European public opinion, which expected imperial commercial enterprises to look after the spiritual welfare of the officials and to Christianize the indigenous people, a curate, WB Wylant, accompanied Jan van Riebeeck to the Cape. He served as an official of the VOC under the direct supervision of the commander.[49] The Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) became the official church at the Cape, to the exclusion of all other denominations. The garrison formed the largest congregational component. In 1670 there were approximately 300 soldiers, 70 officials and 64 citizens. Attendance of services was compulsory.[50] Military chaplaincy as a spiritual ministry to soldiers, though not in its modern form, comprised an integral part of the Western Christian heritage that was instituted at the Cape in 1652.

The first minister to serve at the Cape, J van Arckel, arrived in August 1665. Ministers were officials of the VOC and they were ordained to serve the community at large, including the garrison.[51] This entrenched the custom, established in 1652,

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47   *Ibid.*

48   BBC, "Religion and ethics: multi-faith army chaplains" and "Religion and ethics: army chaplains".

49   BR Krüger, *Die ontstaan van die Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid-Afrika* (Pretoria, 1957), pp. 26-29; TN Hanekom**,** *Ons Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk gedenkboek by ons derde eeufees 1952* (Kaapstad, 1952), p. 28; A Moorees, *Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid-Afrika 1652-1873* (Kaapstad, 1937), pp. 3-4, 11-13.

50   Moorees, pp. 12, 27-29; Hanekom, pp. 29-30; Krüger, p. 28.

51   Potgieter, pp. 109-110, 117. See Krüger, pp. 30-31 and Moorees, pp. 58-61 for information on their ordainment and responsibilities.

in terms of which the spiritual welfare of the military was the responsibility of the congregational ministry; a custom which subsequently influenced perspectives on South African military chaplaincy during the twentieth century. It is reported that the Rev. P Kalden, who served in 1695, diligently ensured that evening prayers were said for the soldiers in the Castle.[52] In 1781 a French fleet was sent to strengthen the Cape garrison against a British attack. The sojourn of the French and the visits of troopships until 1784 introduced prosperity and a cosmopolitan character – but also an element of religious indifference – to the Cape.[53]

During the first British occupation of the Cape in 1795, British chaplains of the RAChD accompanied the troops, but care was taken not to intrude on civilian rights. The interlude of Batavian Rule (1803-1806) brought French revolutionary concepts such as religious tolerance to the Cape.[54] The second British occupation (1806) established military chaplaincy in South Africa according to the traditions of the RAChD and in line with Western Christian ethics, in terms of which soldiers are entitled to spiritual ministry. A distinction was made between imperial and colonial chaplains, although both accompanied the troops during military campaigns on the eastern frontier and in the interior. British chaplains were responsible for the spiritual welfare of the garrison only, and regular services were held by both the Anglican Church and other English denominations.[55]

From 1835 onwards, the Great Trek movement opened up the interior and led to the founding of two Boer republics. Until 1863, when relations with the Cape Synod were severed, the Voortrekkers considered themselves part of the DRC of the Cape Colony. The latter rejected the trek movement and dissuaded congregational members from participating. This inhibited the ordainment of ministers for the interior, and the Voortrekker political and military leader became responsible for religious guidance, although he did not necessarily conduct services. The commando system, used by the Boer republics during military expeditions, functioned with civilians as combatants, while the military leader or a local minister from one of the Afrikaans Reformed Churches served as spiritual leader. Similar to the American padres, many of these ministers participated in combat and the just war principle applied to their ministry.[56]

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[52]   Moorrees , p. 119.

[53]   *Ibid.*, pp. 283-284; Hanekom, pp. 50-52, 62-63.

[54]   Moorrees, pp. 432-433, 448-449; Krüger, pp. 38-43; Potgieter, pp. 115-119.

[55]   Potgieter, pp. 120-133, 136-137.

[56]   Krüger, pp. 106-116; Moorrees, pp. 723-725; PB van der Watt, *Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk 1834-1866* II (Pretoria, 1977), pp. 9-24, 35-49.

During the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), both imperial and colonial chaplains ministered to the British soldiers.[57] Local ministers, known as "veldpredikers",[58] served the Boer forces in combat, as well as those in concentration camps and POW camps.[59] Rev. John Neethling Murray, who later became one of the first two full-time chaplains of the Union of South Africa, was one of the ministers serving the Boer forces. On 2 November 1901 he was taken prisoner and sent to Sialkot, India, where he rendered an invaluable service in consoling and encouraging the POWs by means of services, religious education and personal visits.[60] By the end of the war, historical developments had created two distinct lines of thought on military chaplaincy in South Africa. On the one hand, there was the British model of military chaplains whose duty it was to minister to the troops. On the other hand, the Afrikaans version expected local civilian clergy to take responsibility for the ministry to soldiers.

After the war, Britain retained an army of occupation in South Africa with headquarters at Roberts Heights (subsequently Voortrekkerhoogte; today Thaba Tshwane) in Pretoria. In 1906 the first black chaplain, Sgt (Rev.) Elijah Mdolomba of the Natal Native Horse, served the British forces during the Bambata Rebellion. Officers such as Capt. R Samuelson thought highly of Mdolomba, and he received the Natal Native Rebellion War Medal with the 1906 clasp,[61] but much still needed to be done to secure the position of black military chaplains in South Africa.

3.1   Chaplaincy in the Union Defence Forces, 1910-1939

On 31 May 1910, the Union of South Africa was established and on 1 July 1912, the Minister of Defence, Gen. JC Smuts, combined the colonial military forces into one centralized force, the Union Defence Forces (UDF). No provision was made for chaplains. The official policy was in line with the custom instituted by the Dutch in 1652: local civilian clergy ministered to the military falling within the boundaries of their congregations. Chaplains serving in the Active Citizen Force units were asked to resign, but Bishop M Furse, Anglican chaplain of the Imperial Light Horse, refused and the Anglican Church protested against the disregard for religion on the part of the government.[62]

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[57]   Potgieter, pp. 134-138; Van Niekerk, p. 2.

[58]   Die kapelaansvroue SAW, p. 107; Potgieter, pp. 10-11. The term "veldprediker" (field preacher) was used during the seventeenth century in the Netherlands to indicate preachers in uniform. Potgieter gives an overview of terms used for chaplains.

[59]   See JH Lourens, "Veldpredikers van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog: 1899-1902" in *Commando* 15(10), October 1964, pp. 40-41 and Potgieter, pp. 146-160 for names, statistics and responsibilities of the veldpredikers.

[60]   Moolman, pp. 113-118, 124-135, 143-145; "Die eerste permanente veldprediker" in *Commando* 15(10), October 1964, p. 39.

[61]   Van Niekerk, pp. 2, 87, 317-318.

[62]   *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3; Die kapelaansvroue SAW, pp. 91-92.

With the outbreak of World War I and South Africa's commitment on the side of the Allied forces, various denominations requested the official appointment of chaplains. Gen. Smuts consented, but no formal chaplaincy structures were created and chaplains resorted under the Ministry of Defence.[63] The general terms "chaplain" (English-speaking) and "veldprediker" (Afrikaans-speaking) denoted appointments. Chaplains received the rank of Captain, but were addressed by their clerical titles – a custom still used today. They were subject to the Military Disciplinary Code. This gave rise to protests that chaplains would not be able to minister impartially and in the interest of the Church first and foremost. On 16 August 1914 the first chaplains were appointed to the military community of Simon's Town and their appointment is regarded as the official inception of military chaplaincy in the UDF.[64] Where most military chaplaincies in the Allied forces became professionalized during World War I, South Africa's service only started at that time and a long road to professionalization still lay ahead of it.

South African chaplains served as noncombatants in military camps in the Union, in German South West Africa (GSWA), in East Africa and in France. They were allocated to units, and most South African Christian denominations[65] and the Jewish faith were represented. The Afrikaans Reformed Churches experienced difficulty in filling vacancies. Ministers had moral reservations about serving in a military rank structure and becoming paid officials and a strong anti-British senti-ment, owing to reminiscences of the Anglo-Boer War, prevailed in the congregations. Fighting against Germany, which had formerly sympathized with the Afrikaner cause against Britain, was regarded as treacherous. When these sentiments erupted with the Rebellion of 1914-1915, ministers who joined the UDF were seen as traitors. With Lt Col Manie Maritz's revolt in October 1914, both DRC chaplains serving the Southern Forces in GSWA departed and the Wesleyan chaplain had to serve all Protestant troops. The loyalty of Afrikaans chaplains to the Allied cause was also questioned. At the request of Gen. Louis Botha, Rev. JN Murray served in GSWA and in East Africa, but experienced difficulty in attending to all the needs.[66]

In East Africa and in France, South African chaplains served under the structure of the RAChD, where Senior Chaplains reported to a Principal Chaplain. The Jewish religious authorities and the DRC did not appoint Senior Chaplains (the DRC regarded

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63   Die kapelaansvroue SAW, p. 92; Potgieter, pp. 181-184; Van Niekerk, pp. 2-5, 8. The denomina-tions were the RCC, DRC, Anglican, Wesleyan and Presbyterian Churches. The Secretary of Defence informed denominations of vacancies, and the denominations supplied the Ministry with the names of candidates. Letters of appointment were sent out and a written acceptance was regarded as an employment contract.

64   Potgieter, p. 187; Moolman, pp. 136-137; Van Niekerk, pp. 2-5; Die kapelaansvroue SAW, p. 111. The term "veldprediker" was used until 1967. Also see *The Argus*, 8 November 1983, p. 16.

65   The DRC, RCC, Anglican, Wesleyan, Presbyterian and Baptist (Non-Conformist) Churches.

66   Moolman, pp. 137-140; "Die eerste permanente veldprediker", p. 39; Van Niekerk, pp. 8, 12, 16, 43, 337; Potgieter, pp. 192-193. Rev. JJ Kuhn of the Hervormde (Reformed) Church joined the Brits Commando and served with the 1st Mounted Brigade in GSWA. He was regarded as a government spy and had to resign.

all chaplains as equal). No Anglican chaplains were appointed during the East African campaign, and the DRC chaplains, who were bilingual, had to minister to the English-speaking soldiers as well. This resulted in the appointment of a RAChD chaplain to the 1st Mounted Brigade. It was clear that the South African War Ministry did not regard military chaplains as an integral part of the war effort.[67]

The ministry of South African chaplains was similar to that of most chaplains of the Allied forces and included parades, hospital visits, personal talks, distribution of parcels and literature and the writing of letters. In Africa, chaplains travelled vast distances and in East Africa, many succumbed to tropical diseases. They delivered a valuable service in evacuating the wounded and helping the field ambulances. In Europe, funerals and the evacuation of the wounded were conducted after dark. Funeral liturgy was recited from memory, as any light made the chaplains and those to whom they were ministering a potential target for German fire.[68] The success of their ministry often depended on their cohesion with the unit. Capt. (Rev.) MJM van Coller (Wesleyan Church) believed that enduring the same hardships and dangers as the troops, had a positive influence on his ministry. The responsibility of chaplains with regard to the spiritual welfare of the troops was demonstrated by Capt. (Rev.) GJ du Plessis (DRC) and Capt. (Rev.) WW Rider (Wesleyan), who distributed many pocket Bibles and a large amount of spiritual literature.[69]

In April 1916 the South African troops joined the 9th Division in Europe and subsequently experienced the horror of trench warfare. Many South African chaplains were acknowledged for their ministry under these circumstances. Capt. (Rev.) Eustace St Clair Hill, Anglican chaplain of the 1st SA Infantry, received widespread recognition for his involvement in the days leading up to the Battle of Delville Wood (July 1916). He was taken prisoner at Marrieres Wood in March 1918, but still served in the POW camps in Germany.[70] Rev. Koni G Hlongwana and Rev. Isaac Wauchope Dyobha also received recognition for the role they played when 647 members of the South African Native Labour Corps (SANLC), on board the *Mendi*, drowned in the early hours of 21 February 1917. The clergymen gathered all those who could not swim together on the deck and declared everyone on board to be sons of Africa before the ship went down.[71]

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[67]   Van Niekerk, pp. 38, 43-47. The decision by the War Ministry met with controversy. The Bishop of Pretoria enlisted priests into the South African Medical Corps (SAMC) to serve unofficially as chaplains. Some later became official chaplains of the Anglican Church.

[68]   *Ibid*., pp. 16-23; 25-27, 59, 61-62, 64. Capt. (Rev.) GT Cook (Wesleyan) was killed while serving as a stretcher-bearer and shielding the patient who was being carried with his body. Also see PJ Swart, "In Oos-Afrika as veldprediker: Eerste Wêreldoorlog" in *Commando* 15(11), November 1964, p. 17.

[69]   MJM van Coller, Letter to *Methodist Churchman,* 13 November 1916, p. 2, in Van Niekerk, p. 51; also see Van Niekerk, pp. 27, 29, 44-48, 54 and Moolman, pp. 139-143.

[70]   Van Niekerk, pp. 62-70. He also served during the Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902.

[71]   N Clothier, *Black valour the South African Native Labour Contingent, 1916-1918, and the sinking of the Mendi* (Pietermaritzburg, 1987), pp. 49-73. Also see *Cape Times*, 22 February 2007, p. 6. Squadron Leader (Rev.) C Pugh, a South African-born chaplain, received the George Cross for similar bravery displayed during the sinking of the *Amselm* in July 1941. L Hunt, "A South African chaplain who won the George Cross" in *Commando* 14(12), December 1963, pp. 29, 31.

Controversy surrounds the neglect of spiritual ministry to the SANLC. Only in 1916 were chaplains appointed to minister to the SANLC.[72] In France, the social life of members of the SANLC was greatly restricted, and care was taken to ensure that the appointed black chaplains would promote discipline and good conduct. Many, such as Rev. HD Hlabangane[73] (Wesleyan Church) who ministered at Abencourt, were described as conscientious and devoted. Discussions at SANLC conferences during 1917 highlighted the subordinate position of the black chaplains, but the situation was not rectified. Incidents in SANLC camps tarnished black perceptions of chaplaincy. In one case, a black labourer who was washing his clothes outside the prescribed parameters refused to return to the compound when ordered to do so by the chaplain, Capt. (Rev.) FE Barritt. He was arrested, but the reason for his arrest was not explained. During the violence that erupted when his companions tried to free him, four people were killed.[74]

During World War I approximately 150 South African chaplains served in a full-time capacity and 41 in a part-time capacity. On demobilization, it was decided to retain the DRC and Anglican chaplain posts at Roberts Heights. Subsequently, the decision was reviewed, and Capt. (Rev.) JN Murray and Capt. (Rev.) A Roberts were informed that their services would be terminated on 31 December 1920. The Anglican Church objected and on 9 October 1920, Capt. (Rev.) Murray and Capt. (Rev.) Roberts became the first full-time chaplains of the UDF. Part-time chaplains served at other military bases and no provision was made for the black labour force of the UDF. Local ministers served as relief chaplains.[75] Capt. (Rev.) Murray and his successor, Capt. (Rev.) J Adler, also served as joint ministers to the congregation of Pretoria West. In August 1929 the church council of Roberts Heights asked for a chaplain to be solely appointed to Roberts Heights. Capt. (Rev.) Adler left and Capt. (Rev.) AGO Coertse became the DRC chaplain on 9 April 1930.[76]

Capt. (Rev.) Coertse started the process on the professionalization of South African military chaplaincy, requesting the appointment of chaplains as Permanent Force members. He and Capt. (Rev.) Banfield, who became the Anglican chaplain in December 1928, suggested an imitation of the RAChD system. Capt. (Rev.)

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[72] Van Niekerk, pp. 80, 88-89. White missionaries, fluent in one or more of the black languages, and 14 black chaplains were appointed. White chaplains had the rank of Captain and received £15 a month. Their black counterparts received a special rank of Native Chaplain and £6 a month. Potgieter is of the opinion that adequate provision was made for ministry to blacks. Potgieter, p. 191.

[73] Rev. Hlabangane was also known as HD Hlagbagane. He later became president of the Transvaal Interdenominational African Ministers' Association.

[74] Van Niekerk, pp. 86, 89-94.

[75] Moolman, pp. 143-145; Die kapelaansvroue SAW, p. 110; Van Niekerk, pp. 108-110; Potgieter, pp. 193-197, 199-204.

[76] Moolman, pp. 145-148; "Die eerste permanente veldprediker", pp. 39, 45. A decision of the DRC Synod required all chaplains to also serve in the congregation within whose boundaries they fell. In the case of war, the War Department could, in alliance with the Commission for Chaplaincy, recruit and fill vacancies as required without the provision of ministry to a congregation. The canonical position of ministers and the reasons why they had to remain part of a congregation are discussed in Janse van Rensburg, chapter 2 and Potgieter, pp. 199-204.

Banfield left in May 1935 and was succeeded by Capt. (Rev.) RF Strathern. On 1 November 1933 Capt. (Rev.) Coertse was promoted to Chaplain 3rd Class (Major) in the Active Citizen Force. On 1 September 1935 both Maj. (Rev.) Coertse and Capt. (Rev.) Strathern received three-year contracts as members of the Permanent Force. The short duration of the contracts indicated that chaplaincy was still not regarded as a necessary part of the armed forces. On 1 September 1938 the contracts were extended for another three years, but a few days later the contractual appointments were changed to full Permanent Force appointments. In December 1938 another full-time position was created at Tempe, Bloemfontein.[77]

3.2   Chaplaincy during World War II, 1939-1945

With the outbreak of World War II, South Africa once again participated on the side of the Allied forces. South African chaplaincy, still struggling with the process of professionalization, was ill-prepared to meet the demands. The Chaplains' Office, set up at Roberts Heights, was placed under the command of the Adjutant General of the UDF. A Senior (later Principal) Chaplain was appointed to each of the five major denominations, with Maj. (Rev.) Coertse and Capt. (Rev.) Strathern representing the DRC and the Anglican Church respectively. The other denominations were the RCC, the Free Churches[78] and the Jewish faith.[79] A staff officer liaised with the Senior Chaplains, informing them of developments that might influence their ministry. All Senior Chaplains were equal, with little executive power. They were responsible for appointments and the coordination of the ministry of their denominations, and they advised the Adjutant General on relevant matters. They received the designation of Major (3rd class).[80] The endeavour to retain the balance between the different denominations, as well as an unwillingness to share, led to duplication at a time when manpower and resources were scarce and ministry to the troops inadequate.[81] To alleviate the shortage in manpower, part-time chaplains[82] were appointed to

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[77]   SW Burger, "Veldpredikers in die SA Weermag" in *Commando* 15(10), October 1964, p. 37; Potgieter, pp. 202-206; Van Niekerk, pp. 110-116, 119-120, 122. Rev. Coertse referred to the precarious position of Rev. Murray, who served for 14 years without any increase in rank or salary and who had to retire without medical aid or pension benefits. Chaplain appointments had four ranks: 4th class (Captain), 3rd class (Major), 2nd class (Lieutenant Colonel) and 1st class (Colonel).

[78]   The United Board of Free Churches combined the resources of the Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist and Congregational Churches.

[79]   I Levinson, the Jewish Principal Chaplain, retired in June 1943. His successor, Rabbi W Hirsch, served in a part-time capacity and was assisted by Assistant Principal Chaplains.

[80]   Potgieter, pp. 216-218; Van Niekerk, pp. 123-126, 128. Appointments depended on the number of soldiers in each denomination and new chaplains had to attend a ten-day course.

[81]   Van Niekerk, pp. 125-126, 128, 323. The RCC did not allow combined parade and church services.

[82]   *Ibid.*, p. 133. They were local ministers who did not take the All Africa Oath. Assuming a military rank or uniform was a matter of choice; and the number of soldiers served determined the remuneration.

minister in the military camps in the Union. During the second half of 1940, the UDF approved new chaplain posts and a chaplain's structure became necessary. A system of Camp (later Senior) Chaplains along denominational lines was created.[83]

Initially the RAChD, Royal Navy and RAF chaplains serving in the Union resorted under the UK command. When the UDF had to remunerate local part-time chaplains appointed by RAF chaplains, the Adjutant General requested that all RAF chaplains should resort under the UDF Chaplains' Branch. This was put into effect in October 1942, excluding the Royal Navy chaplains in Durban and Simon's Town.[84]

South African chaplains served in North Africa and in Europe. In Kenya, Abyssinia and Egypt they were under the command of the Deputy Assistant Chaplain General East Africa, Lt Col (Rev.) Eric Yelverton, OBE, of the RAChD. Lt Col (Rev.) Yelverton honoured most South African chaplaincy arrangements, but the RAChD structure required the appointment of a Divisional Chaplain to coordinate the South African ministry. Maj. (Rev.) GR van Rooijen took up this position on 27 February 1941. As in the case of World War I, the Afrikaans Reformed Churches experienced a shortage of chaplains. The Afrikaans communities had strong anti-British sentiments and rejected the All Africa Oath of loyalty to the crown. Enlistment was voluntary, but the oath was compulsory for soldiers fighting outside the borders of the Union. Soldiers who took the oath were identified by a red ribbon and they encountered much hostility at home.[85]

In September 1941, approximately 60 000 South African troops served in Egypt and it became necessary to revise South African chaplaincy services in the Middle East. Maj. (Rev.) Van Rooijen accepted the new position of Principal Chaplain: Middle East, but resigned on 5 February 1943. His successor, Lt Col (Rev.) C Runge, worked closely with the RAChD and successfully structured South African chaplaincy services in the Middle East. Chaplains were not appointed to units as in World War I, but were rotated on a regular basis.[86] The main base was at Helvan, where one chaplain for each denomination, as well as four black chaplains, ministered. The extended troop lines and lack of transport seriously hampered ministry. St Paul's Anglican Church in Durban solved the problem by donating a mobile church. Two more were sponsored by the District Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons from England and St Mary's Cathedral.[87]

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[83]   *Ibid.*, pp. 129-135, 323-324; Potgieter, pp. 218-219.

[84]   Van Niekerk, pp. 139-140.

[85]   *Ibid.*, pp. 144, 149; Potgieter, pp. 212, 219-220. Maj. (Rev.) CC Albertyn (Methodist) succeeded Maj. (Rev.) Van Rooijen as Divisional Chaplain on 26 September 1941, but died shortly afterwards of cerebral malaria. On 17 October 1941 Maj. (Rev.) Ian Kennedy (Presbyterian) became Divisional Chaplain.

[86]   Van Niekerk, pp. 146-150, 155-157. There were 71 chaplains serving in June 1942. In June 1944, chaplaincy in the Middle East was organized along the lines of the UDF Chaplains' Branch.

[87]   *Ibid.*, pp. 150-152.

At Tobruk, in June 1942, 33 000 Allied troops surrendered, including 13 South African chaplains. They continued their ministry in the POW camps. A captured doctor commented in his book on the way in which a South African Methodist chaplain, Rev. Ron Letcher, was able to inspire the men with evening songs and prayers, in what the doctor called a "hell camp of Libya".[88]

In April 1944 the 6th SA Division became part of the 8th Army in Italy and in September they converged with the American 5th Army. The 6th SA Armoured Division was unique. It had a school of religion which functioned along inter-denominational lines under Maj. (Rev.) GM Daneel, the Divisional Chaplain. By August 1945, 500 soldiers of the Division had already completed courses. One of the chaplains of this Division, Capt. (Rev.) MDV Cloete (nicknamed "Doempie"), became a legend as a result of his bravery. He received the Military Cross for evacuating the wounded during the Battle of Monte Stanco on 13 October 1944.[89]

Various problems confronted chaplains. Lay organizations such as the YMCA provided recreation, but also held services and prayer meetings. To resolve the increasing tension, it was decided that only chaplains could provide religious ministry to the troops.[90] Alcohol abuse and immorality were widespread and chaplains were advised to preach on these problems and to discuss them with individuals. When Lt Col (Rev.) Strathern visited the Middle East, his efforts led to the closing of brothels by the Egyptian government for a period of six months, ending in February 1943.[91]

As in the case of World War I, controversy arose regarding the rank and status of black chaplains. In 1940 white chaplains were asked to minister to all black staff in their units, and in December 1942, black chaplains were appointed on a part-time basis to serve the Native Military Corps (NMC). They received no rank, but were accorded special rates of pay and a status similar to the highest rank of black NMC members, and they wore uniforms with chaplain's badges and collars. On 7 October 1942 the Principal Chaplains decided that black chaplains should wear birettas to give them some distinction, but a lack of birettas in the Union hampered the implementation of the decision.[92]

On demobilization, the Anglican and the DRC Principal Chaplains retained the rank of Chaplain 2nd Class (Lieutenant Colonel), owing to the numbers in their

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[88]   SC Mustarde, *The sun stood still* (London, 1944), p. 58 in Van Niekerk, pp. 154-155. Also see SJ Henrico, "NG veldpredikers in krygsgevangeskap in Wêreldoorlog II" in *Commando* 15(11), November 1964, pp. 18, 22.

[89]   MDV Cloete, "Met die manne in die veld: Oktober 1944 tot April 1945" in *Commando* 15(11), November 1964, p. 19; Van Niekerk, pp. 157-161; Potgieter, p. 222. After the war, Rev. Cloete joined the Permanent Force and ended his career as the Chaplain General of the South African Police Force.

[90]   Van Niekerk, pp. 161-162.

[91]   *Ibid.*, pp. 137-138, 168. In 1942 an Anglican Episcopal Synod commented on the abuse of alcohol by some chaplains.

[92]   *Ibid.*, pp.140-143; Potgieter, p. 221.

denominations.[93] A total of 492 chaplains, including 15 black chaplains, served during World War II.[94] For most of the war, part-time chaplains carried the day. The system of part-time chaplains was abolished on 31 December 1946, but a shortage of chaplains led to its reinstatement in September 1948.[95]

3.3   Peacetime chaplains in South Africa, 1946-1966

By virtue of South African Government Proclamation 204 of 18 October 1946, military chaplaincy was recognized as part and parcel of the armed forces in South Africa, and the evolutionary process of professionalization gained momentum. In terms of the proclamation, the South African Corps of Chaplains was founded as a separate unit within the UDF, reporting directly to the Chief of the General Staff.[96] In June 1949 the Minister of Defence, Advocate FC Erasmus, appointed a committee of inquiry into matters related to chaplaincy. The committee recommended the appointment of an officer of rank who could serve as a link between the different denominations and the military authority, and on 21 December 1949 Senator (Rev.) Cecil Frank Miles-Cadman OBE took up the position of Deputy Chaplain General. Under his guidance chaplaincy was divided into separate contingents to serve the three branches of land, air and sea forces. Cmdt (Rev.) SW Burger, Principal Chaplain of the DRC, was appointed Staff Chaplain to the Land Forces; Cmdt (Rev.) JA Gurney, Principal Chaplain of the Free Churches, was appointed to the Air Force; and Lt Cmndr (Rev.) WAF Cilliers, to the SA Naval Forces.[97]

From September 1950 onwards, 2 Squadron SAAF, known as the "Flying Cheetahs", participated in the United Nations (UN) operations in Korea and were served by four South African chaplains. Capt. (Rev.) MDV Cloete and Capt. (Rev.) JA Olivier both received the American Bronze Star Medal, while Capt. (Rev.) Cloete also received the American Legion of Merit (Officer) and the Korean Ulchi Decoration.[98]

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[93]   Potgieter, p. 226; Van Niekerk, p. 170. The other denominations reverted to the rank of Chaplain 3rd Class (Major). Lt Col.(Rev.) AGO Coertse retired on 10 December 1945, after which the only Permanent Force Chaplain serving was Lt Col (Rev.) RF Strathern.

[94]   Van Niekerk, pp. 163-167; Potgieter, pp. 223-224. Three chaplains received the Military Cross, two the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire – Officers (OBE) Military, and five the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire – Members (MBE) Military; nine were mentioned in dispatches and four received the King's Commendation (Military). Seventeen were taken prisoner and five died in action. Other statistics set the number of chaplains at 517. See Die kapelaansvroue SAW, p. 110 and JA van Zyl, "Die kapelaansdiens in die SA Weermag" in *Paratus* 25(2), February 1974, p. 2.

[95]   Van Niekerk, pp. 170-171; Potgieter, pp. 218-219. The first eight Permanent Force posts were filled on 1 May 1946 and the rest by the end of 1947. An additional 44 Regimental Chaplain positions were created in the Active Citizen Force and Coast Garrison. On 1 July 1948, these positions were transformed into posts for Honorary Chaplains with no official position, rank or uniform. Few were filled.

[96]   G Kruger, "Hy bring die evangelie in wonderlike eenvoud" in *Die Kerkbode*, 136(5), 11 February 1984, p. 6; Die kapelaansvroue SAW, p. 110.

[97]   Potgieter, pp. 225-227; Van Niekerk, pp. 171-174; Die kapelaansvroue SAW, p. 110; "Padre JA Gurney" in *Paratus* 23(12), pp. 55, 59.

[98]   Van Niekerk, pp. 175-178; Potgieter, pp. 227-228; Die kapelaansvroue SAW, p. 110.

As from 1952, the military rank of chaplains was adjusted according to that of other UDF officers. The conscription system of 1953 necessitated the appointment of more chaplains and, instead of appointing a successor to Col Miles-Cadman on his retirement in May 1954, the funds allocated to his post were used to appoint three new Permanent Force chaplains.[99] A decision at a conference of Permanent Force Chaplains in February 1955 that chaplains should minister only to members of their own denomination, led to a situation where some members of the UDF had no direct access to a chaplain. To rectify this, a system of circuit chaplains was implemented, but it overlapped with the ministry of part-time chaplains and was abolished in 1960.[100]

Defence Act 44 of 1957 changed the name of the UDF to the South African Defence Force (SADF). Through the establishment of the South African Corps of Chaplains on 1 December 1957, acknowledgement was finally accorded to the independence and relevancy of military chaplaincy in the SADF. The Corps resorted directly under the Commandant General, but the lack of a proper command structure still hampered the functioning of chaplaincy services. The restructuring of the SADF on 1 July 1966 placed chaplaincy under the newly created Director: Physical and Spiritual Welfare, with the result that chaplaincy was divested of its independence and direct representation to the highest authority in the SADF. Col (Rev.) JA van Zyl was appointed Senior Staff Officer: Chaplains and Welfare. He soon realized that welfare and chaplaincy should be separated, and he petitioned the Minister of Defence in this regard. On 5 January 1968 the Corps of Chaplains became an independent directorate under the Chief of the Defence Force Administration. Col (Rev.) Van Zyl was appointed Director of Chaplains with the rank of Brigadier.[101]

Discussions at conferences held in 1957 and 1966 led to the abolishment of all ranks for chaplains. These ranks were replaced with a distinctive badge consisting of the Christ monogram. This ensured that there were no barriers between the chaplain and the soldiers; and unit commanders could not use chaplains as regimental officers. It was also in line with the view that all ministers of religion were equal. Chaplains were entitled to the conditions of service of Colonels, and they were addressed by their respective religious titles. The Afrikaans term "veldprediker" was replaced by the term "kapelaan". Chaplains on the staff of the Director of Chaplains bore the military rank of Colonel to denote their positions as Staff Officers.[102] Military

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99   Potgieter, pp. 230-232; Van Niekerk, pp. 174-175. Ranking according to classes were abolished and Revs TFJ Dreyer and DJ van der Walt were appointed Principal Chaplains for the other major Afrikaans Reformed denominations.
100   Van Niekerk, pp. 174-175. Also see *Die Volksblad*, 21 June 1991, p. 5.
101   Potgieter, pp. 232-233; Van Niekerk, pp. 179-181; Die kapelaansvroue SAW, p. 111.
102   Potgieter, pp. 234-237; Van Niekerk, pp. 181-182; B de Klerk, "Die dienspligtige en die kapelaansdiens van die SAW" in *Die Kerkblad* 87(2760), 28 January 1987, p. 10; Kruger, p. 6; Die kapelaansvroue SAW, pp. 111, 133.

chaplaincy in South Africa had come a long way, but finally it could operate as an independent and inherent part of the SADF.

4.   EVALUATION

An overview of the major world religions shows that ministry to armed units has been part of the history of humankind ever since the first military campaigns, but traditionally it did not include the concept of a religious person ministering to combatants in military circumstances. In most cases the ministry consisted of a priestly blessing ritual, entreating the holy one(s) for victory before the advance of the forces. Military chaplaincy is a modern concept that evolved in the Western Christian world. During the last decades of the twentieth century, multicultural societies and the campaign against discrimination, racism and gender inequality necessitated the appointment of chaplains from all religious and ethnic backgrounds, without regard to gender, to minister to a multicultural, multiracial army, navy or air force. Today, chaplains from different denominations are found in most military structures. Over time, chaplaincy evolved from different tasks to focus exclusively on the spiritual ministry to all combatants, despite conflicting viewpoints on the just war principle.

In South Africa, the concept of military chaplaincy as a ministry to soldiers was instituted with the establishment of a European settlement, but the modern con-cept only evolved after World War I. Until World War II, South African authorities regarded chaplaincy as dispensable and chaplains as ministers temporarily detached from their congregations. After World War II, South African chaplaincy services were professionalized, and by the time the war broke out in the north of SWA (now Namibia) in August 1966, South African chaplaincy services had been in place for more than 50 years – first in the UDF and later in the SADF. Chaplains formed a separate, but important branch in the SADF, in support of the other branches of the Defence Force. Their role and position were very similar to those of the chaplaincy services in other modern armed forces. In the next article, the role and evolution of chaplaincy services in the SADF during the Namibian War of Independence, 1966-1989, will be discussed.