

International News

Chaplain Praises Yanks in Viet War

By Religious News Service

Forth Worth — There is a "God-centered morality about our involvement" in the Vietnam War, the U.S. Navy chief of chaplains said here.

Rear Adm. James Kelly, a Southern Baptist, asserted that "we are in the right place to preserve peace in the world," and that "the price we are paying for freedom is worth it."

He addressed ministers, missionaries and students at a one-day conference on the military chaplaincy at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Chaplain Kelly said that in his 26 year career in the armed forces he had never seen such deep and mature religious concern among servicemen as he had on his recent South Vietnam visit.

"There is a definite search for and expression of a dynamic and vital faith in God," said Chaplain Kelly. "It is evident from church attendance, counseling interviews, handshakes, smiles, courage, bravery, goodwill, loyalty, love and from the experience of people relating to people."

He cited "great strides" in servicemen's "humanitarian outreach" in South Vietnam, as they build hospitals, children's homes, and help war victims.

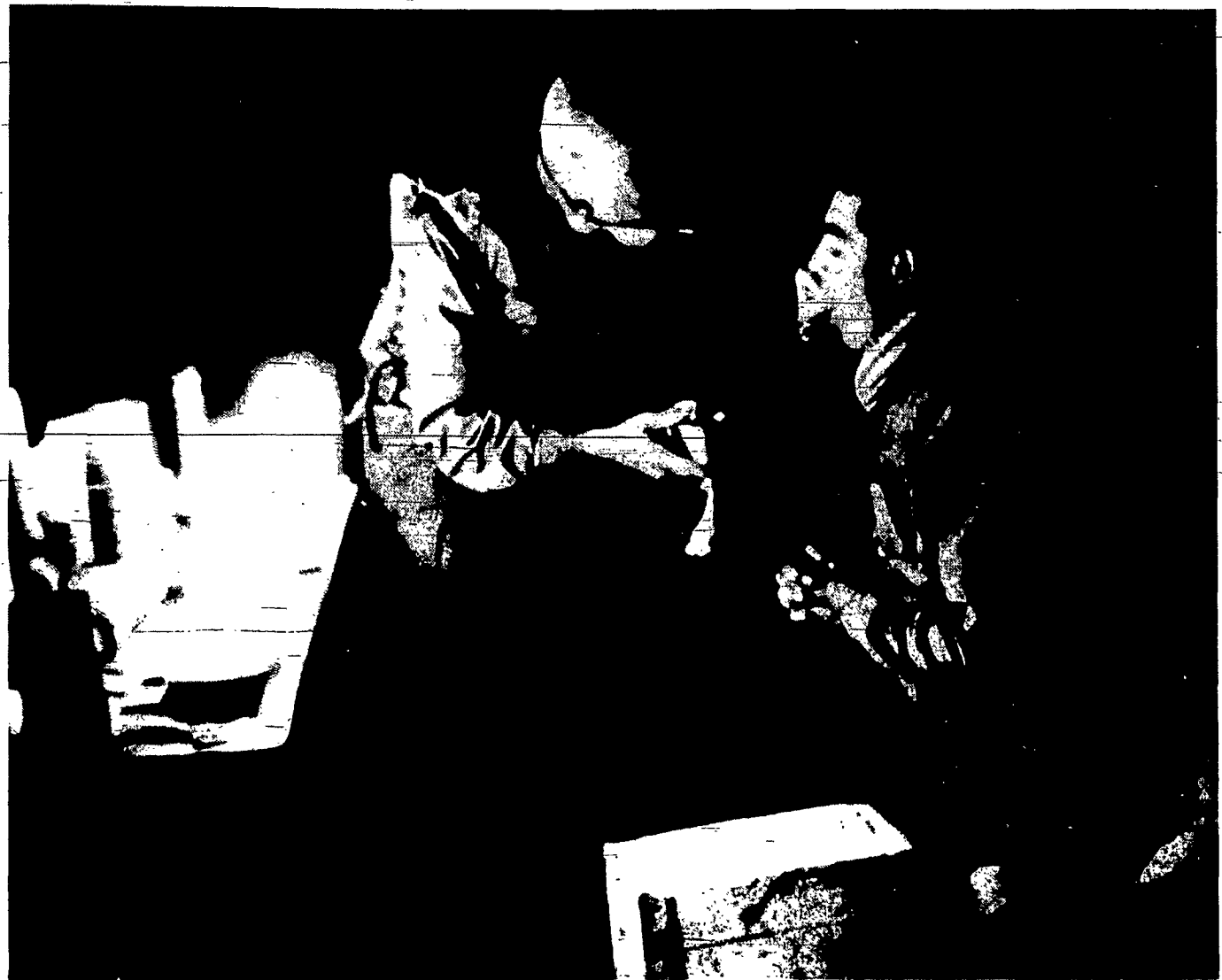
The morale of the troops is "high, stable and consistent," Chaplain Kelly said, because each fighting man believes that "what he is doing is crucially important."

"The average young Marine or

sailor may not see the war as honoring our international commitments or containing militant communism," he said. "He sees it as defense of an otherwise helpless people from the horrors of Vietcong terrorism."

"No one needs to tell him about the terrible suffering of the South Vietnamese people at the hands of terrorist gangsters. He knows because he sees."

The serviceman "does not always speak kindly of the demonstrators" against the war, Chaplain Kelly said "but because he considers them to be utterly misinformed, neither their actions nor their arguments do more than arouse a passing expression of contempt."



Preparing For Battle

Hue, S. Vietnam — (RNS) — An American Marine receives Communion from a Presbyterian chaplain at a forward command post in Hue before meeting the enemy in battle.

Vatican, Council of Churches Call for Peace in Nigeria

Geneva—(RNS)—In a joint statement issued simultaneously here and at the Vatican, the World Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church called for a negotiated peace in Nigeria.

It was the first time the Catholic Church and the World Council, composed of 231 Protestant and Orthodox Churches, had jointly appealed to men of goodwill to unite their voices in prayer for the achievement of peace.

The communique was authorized by Pope Paul VI and by the officers of the Central Committee of the World Council Signing for the WCC were Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, chairman; Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, general secretary, and Dr. Ernest A. Payne and Dr. J. Russell Chandran, vice-chairmen.

The papal envoys were Msgr. Dominic Conway, rector of Rome's Irish College, and Msgr. George Rochau of French National Catholic Charities.

L'Osservatore Romano quoted the response of Biafra's military governor, Col. Odumegwu Ojukwu, to the papal mission's appeal for "honorable negotiations" for peace.

Col. Ojukwu said: "I would ask you to have this message taken to the Holy Father today if possible, that we of Biafra are happy to have received the comfort of his message, and that all of us here in Biafra hold that the only means of resolving the problem is through honorable negotiations."

He told the papal envoys that Biafra is ready "at any moment, without further consultations or discussions, to accept a cease-fire and to sit down at the negotiating table for an honorable peace."

The newspaper said that festive crowds lined the road taken by the envoys "at times for an uninterrupted length of 20 miles." Churches where they said Mass could not contain the crowds that flocked to them.

"The Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches unite in one voice," the statement said, "in a most urgent appeal to both contesting parties for an immediate cessation of armed hostilities in this sad conflict and for the establishment of a lasting peace by honorable negotiations in the highest African traditions."

In separate statements, both the Pope and the WCC had earlier urged steps toward peace in the civil conflict between the federal state of Nigeria and Biafra, the former Eastern Province which last May declared itself independent.

The creation of the new state came after it was reported in late 1966 that some 30,000 Ibo tribesmen had been massacred in the northern region of Nigeria. Ibos from the federal republic withdrew to their Biafran home territory.

Seeking to prevent a rupture in the republic, the federal Nigerian government has militarily opposed the secession. The Ibos have declared they will fight to the death to preserve the independence of their new state.

A request to both warring parties was contained in the joint Catholic-WCC statement:

"Anguished at the appalling loss of life caused by the war, we most solemnly recall to both parties and to the world in general the sacredness of human life of which God is the sole arbiter of its earthly dura-

tion and in His name appeal for the respecting of His rights especially in the avoidance of all atrocities, general massacre, mass hatred and vengeance.

"We further point out that war is an inhuman and a futile attempt to settle disputes. In this sad conflict especially, armed hostilities cannot achieve the settlement of the differences. On the contrary they are liable to bring, on a scale that is frightening to contemplate, only further loss of life, starvation, suffering and devastation."

The WCC-Catholic statement noted that even if the hostilities are to be continued the two sides cannot achieve peaceful co-existence without a negotiated settlement.

There have been occasions when the conflict has been termed a "religious war." Most of the Ibos are Christians while there is a large Islamic population in portions of Nigeria.

The WCC-Vatican appeal made no mention of the specific factors inciting the war. Its final paragraphs said:

"War always sows in the natural heart of man seeds of deep hatred and separation which jeopardizes co-operation between the parties to the conflict even on the natural plane and makes peaceful cohabitation as children of God difficult.

"We . . . urge governments and international agencies in a position to act effectively in this matter to secure a denial of external military assistance to both parties, immediate cessation of hostilities, the necessary assurances of security to both sides on the laying down of arms and a negotiated peace."

U Thant

Prejudice -- World Problem

United Nations, N.Y. — (RNS) — U.N. Secretary General U Thant said here that nations and individuals must show that they sympathize with the aspirations and hopes of down-trodden and oppressed peoples, by making it clear that human dignity, freedom and non-discrimination are inseparable from one another.

He made his appeal on the International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination, observed on the eighth anniversary of the shooting of apartheid victims at Sharpeville, South Africa.

U Thant noted that later this year the International Convention against Racial Discrimination would come into force, stating:

"Even so, the international community would still be a long way from its goal . . . Nor has it made

sufficient progress towards removing the erroneous beliefs — such as the belief in the superiority of one race over another — which give rise to such practices. Indeed, we have been witnessing in recent years the insidious spread in a number of areas of racial prejudice — that most dangerous form of emotional sickness which arises from a sense of fear and insecurity rather than from any feeling of true superiority."

U Thant said that the problem of racial discrimination must be viewed as worldwide to be solved "at all costs and peacefully."

"In our attitudes we must refuse to defend or support or even tolerate any such discrimination," he said. "Only then, the Secretary General concluded, "may we see the emergence of a world opinion so insistent on

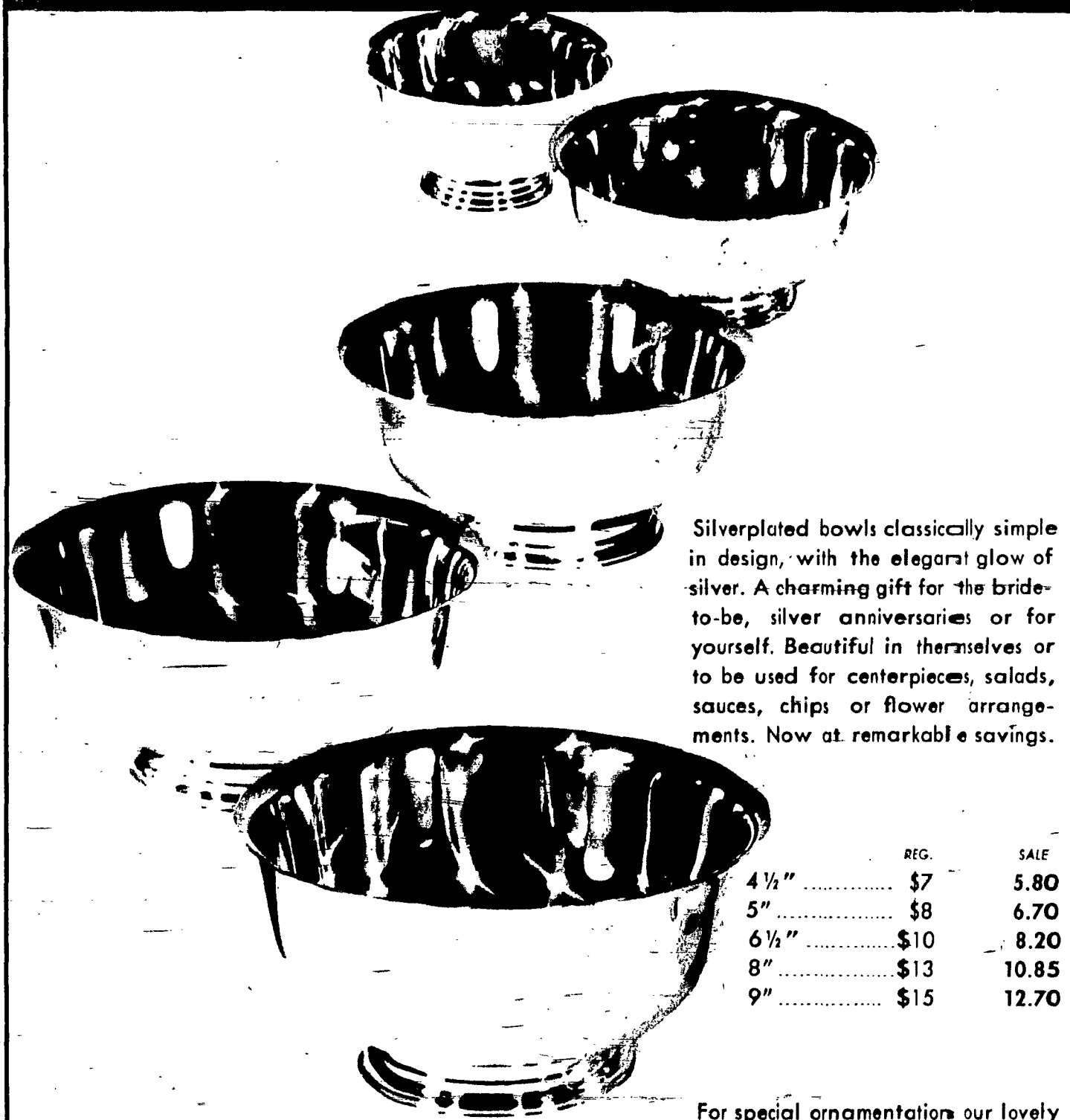
progress towards peace and human brotherhood that these imperatives will prevail."

In Geneva, David A. Morse, Director General of the International Labor Office, noted that his agency, responsible for social justice and the protection of human rights of workers throughout the world, "has fought, and will continue to fight for the elimination of discrimination against workers in the field of employment and occupation."

Mr. Morse referred particularly to the situation in South Africa and the plight of the African migrant worker there. He promised to publicize "the evils of apartheid" and to impress upon the international community the need "for a peaceful change to a just society" for the benefit of all races in South Africa.



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