

The Military Chaplaincy and Scouting

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When the Wisconsin Synod in its special 1953 Convention charged the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod with “persistent adherence to its unionistic practices,” it mentioned as instances of such practices scouting and chaplaincy, the two subjects treated in this paper in inverse order.

The Military Chaplaincy

Brief History of the Controversy

The disagreement regarding the chaplaincy has existed for some fifteen years and repeated attempts to settle it have been unsuccessful. In 1939 and 1941 the Wisconsin Synod decided it could not on Scriptural grounds commission military chaplains, a decision in which its 1951 committee, after studying revised government regulations, concurred. As early as 1941 the Army and Navy Commission of the Missouri Synod was speaking about a profound difference of opinion between the two synods on basic principles involved in this subject, fruitless efforts to remove them, and an end of efforts to cooperate with the sister synod in its work. The chaplaincy question was before the 1946 Synodical Conference Convention. It was on the agenda of its Interim Committee from 1946-1952, It was referred to the faculties of the theological seminaries in 1952. This year the Missouri-Wisconsin Presidents' Conference also considered, among other matters, the chaplaincy, but without reaching any substantial agreement.

The Issue

We obviously are confronted, not by a minor difficulty that has arisen because of misunderstanding and lack of consultation and can be relegated to committee after committee, but by a serious difference regarding either the application of Bible doctrines or the doctrines themselves that must be given full and prompt attention and dealt with in all seriousness and with all possible dispatch. Previous discussions should certainly by now have eliminated any and all suspicions that one Synod might be callous to the needs of servicemen or that the other might, contrary to its convictions, be taking the line of least resistance. We should be ready to center our whole attention on the question on which the controversy hinges, the question: Can the Church, in accordance with the divine instructions given in God's Word, commission its ministers to serve as military chaplains under prevailing conditions? The Missouri Synod answers in the positive by word and deed. The Wisconsin Synod stands by the reply it gave in its 1941 chaplaincy resolutions which read:

The Commissioning of Army and Navy Chaplains by our Synod would conflict with Scriptural principles and established Lutheran practice because

1. The application for and appointment to chaplaincy conflicts with our doctrinal stand on the divinity of the pastoral call. Also, the Training Manual of the War Department entitled “The Chaplaincy” specifies duties to the chaplain which are in direct violation of the divine call of a Lutheran pastor.
2. The appointment to chaplaincy and the regulation of the chaplains duties by the War Department are a violation of the principle of separation of Church and State.

3. The spirit of doctrinal indifferentism pervades the regulations of the War Department pertaining to the office of chaplaincy and fosters unionism. (Wisconsin Proceedings, 1941, p. 43 f.)

The Chaplaincy and the Divinity of the Call

"The chaplain is the religious and spiritual leader of the military community. His relationship is analogous to the relationship of a clergyman to a civilian community" (*Department of the Army Field Manual*, F N 16-5, The Chaplain, January 1952—hereafter referred to as "*Manual*"—p. 8). "The chaplain in the military service is a representative of a recognized denomination" (*Manual*, p.12). For such a religious, spiritual office a divine call is an absolute prerequisite. "No one should publicly teach in the Church or administer the Sacraments unless he be regularly called" (*AC Art. XIV*). Consequently an important question suggests itself: Does the chaplain's call measure up to the standards the Bible sets for the divine call?

A Strange Situation

When the Wisconsin Synod declared that "the application for and appointment to chaplaincy conflicts with our doctrinal stand on the divinity of the pastoral call," it was pointing, though by no means exclusively, to dangers involved in a situation where, according to prevailing procedure, the candidate for the chaplaincy takes the initiative, where his acceptance depends on other factors beside his church's endorsement and call, and where his appointment and salary come from the government. Perhaps safeguards can be set up to insure that the legitimacy of the call is maintained when the position of chaplain is obtained. It may be argued that the church, on occasion, has taken and does take financial support from the state, and that the government, that supplies the chaplain's salary, is receiving value in return in the way of increased military efficiency. But there are obvious dangers in the circumstances under which the chaplain is called and these dangers, while they will by no means be our only concern, will give us reason to pause and consider before we call men to serve in the chaplaincy. It is admitted and maintained by us that the Church has the right to call men into special types of service unlike the parish, ministry if that can be done without violating Scriptural principles. But it is also maintained by us that under the present system it is not possible to call chaplains for reasons far weightier than the dangers to which reference has been made.

The Church is Limited when Calling a Chaplain

"Our Confessions, in accord with Scripture, Matt. 18:17-20; I Cor. 5:13; Rom. 16:17; I Pet. 2:9, expressly teach that the Office of the Keys belongs to the whole Church and that Christian ministers therefore hold their office by virtue of their call from their churches" (Mueller, *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 574). "It is necessary for the Church to retain the authority to call, elect, and ordain ministers. And this authority is a gift which in reality is given to the Church, which no human power can wrest from the Church" (*Smalcald Articles, Of the Power and Primacy of the Pope*, 67). The Church, which has received from its Head the precious gift of the Keys and the inalienable right to call ministers, has the holy duty to cherish this gift and right and to guard it zealously. It ought never surrender any part of its right or even give the appearance of doing so.

It is difficult to reconcile the chaplain's call with this mandate. True, the Church extends a call to the Chaplain but only by sufferance of the government. True, the *Manual* says, p. 3: "The chaplain's spiritual authority...is imparted in the ordination that his denomination has given him." And yet the chaplain is what he is, not only by virtue of his call, but also by virtue of a law of the land. This law providing for military chaplains was originally passed in 1831, has been modified frequently since then, but never has been repealed. As long as the law stands, there can be chaplains. Should the law ever be rescinded, the present chaplaincy system would fall, no matter how many calls the chaplains might have. In such an event it would be only too apparent that the

power and authority of the Church to call chaplains is not by any means absolute but conditional, and that upon the yea and nay of the government.

Though the government is willing to say that the chaplain's spiritual authority is imparted in ordination, yet it jealously reserves for itself the right to say when and where, by whom and for whom this authority is exercised. Under the chaplaincy system the Church must surrender rights that are inherent in the absolute authority to call. It can call only those who meet government standards, and only in such a number as is allowed according to the quota basis under which the system operates. It must suffer its called servants to be stationed and transferred, promoted and discharged at the government's beck and call. Its called servants must observe numerous and specific regulations of the armed forces regarding their work. Its called servants are placed under the supervision of a military commander who somehow "without trespassing upon the ecclesiastical field" (as A R 660-20, p. 4, says) is to make himself "ultimately as completely responsible for the religious life, morals, and morale within the command as he is for strictly military affairs" (*Manual*, p. 13). It is obviously to the interest of the government to set standards for all in the military, to determine the number of the chaplains and the station of each, to see that chaplains earn their salary, to guard the chain of command. But at the same time it should also be obvious that under such a system the Church's absolute authority to call is being infringed upon. And that is something the Church dare not invite but should resist steadfastly.

Duties Imposed on the Chaplain are in Violation of the Divine Call

What is far worse, military regulations governing those called as chaplains do not only pertain to external arrangements but also in certain instances reach into the heart and core of the work and, as the 1941 Wisconsin Synod resolution says, especially "duties to the chaplain which are in direct violation of the divine call of a Lutheran pastor." This point is especially to be emphasized in the matter of the chaplaincy and the call.

A R 650-10, 7 Dec. 1951 requires that the chaplain "will strive to promote religion, morality, patriotism, good morale, and the principles of the character guidance program and will cooperate fully with commanders in the accomplishment of this purpose." The character guidance program is an important part of the Army's total program instituted by the Secretary of War in 1947 and given permanence in the life of the Army by A R 15-120, 30 Jan. 1951. Much of the program deals with patriotism and morality but its underlying principles are false religion. The publication, *Character Guidance*, says:

The basic idea in the Character Guidance Program...is that man is a moral being...His character is what he makes of himself through the exercise of his free will...The exercise of...rights is held in delicate balance by the observance of...obligations, or the keeping of the moral Law. Man possesses free will and therefore he actually can violate the Moral Law, renounce his obligation, But to the extent that he does this, he jeopardizes the essential liberty which he has from God. Freedom therefore is weighed with a sense of responsibility and the necessity of self-discipline which will promote the cultivation and positive practice of virtues.

We will recognize the basic idea of the character guidance program as the old false doctrine that man has full free will and is of himself willing and able to keep the Law. The principles of this program chaplains are required to promote. This is a duty which is "in direct violation of the divine call of a Lutheran pastor."

At this point it may be well to state that we are aware and appreciative of the numerous statements in regulations that permit and, in fact, require chaplains to abide by their convictions and the rules of their denominations. "No chaplain is required to conduct any service or rite contrary to the regulations of his denomination" (*Manual*, p. 3) is just one of many similar stipulations. Concerning them the Wisconsin Synod Committee Report of 195 says: "The strenuous efforts of the military in protecting the consciences and convictions of the individual chaplains are commendable, noteworthy and, in view of the normal rigidity of military regulations, remarkable" (*Wisconsin Proceedings*, 1951, p. 69). But when the very regulations which contain these safeguards stipulate duties which conflict with cherished convictions and Scriptural practices, then

one scarcely have the right to accept appointment with the reservation that convictions are safeguarded. Then the honorable course would be, on the basis of the guarantees, to have all such objectionable duties eliminated from the assignment before accepting it.

There are other objectionable duties specified in the regulations. "The Chaplain is morally obligated to provide for the religious needs of the entire command," (*Manual*, p. 2) also of those who are not of his denomination, personally performing certain duties, such as visiting, (cf. *Manual*, p. 9) but under the stipulation that all denominational tenets must be respected, and he is enjoined, in other instances, to enlist the aid of false teachers of other denominations. A Protestant chaplain "provides a worship service which is acceptable and meaningful to the maximum number of Protestant personnel in the command," (*Manual*, p. 4) and thus he is limited when preaching the Word. "A R 660-10 requires chaplains to conduct or arrange for appropriate burial services...upon request," (*Manual* p. 7) even though the deceased may not be entitled to the ministrations of a called servant of the Church. A more detailed discussion of the objectionable features of such duties is reserved for another section of the essay. Here they are merely listed as examples of duties of a chaplain "which are in direct violation of the divine call of a Lutheran pastor" and therefore also play their part in making the chaplaincy a field of service which the Church and its ministers cannot enter.

The Chaplaincy and the Principle of Separation of Church and State

The second point of the Wisconsin Synod 1941 resolutions on the chaplaincy reads: "The appointment to the chaplaincy and the regulation of the chaplain's duties by the War Department are a violation of the principle of separation of Church and State." The pages of the Bible and of the history of the Church and the world record over and over again the sad report that the separation of Church and State has not always been maintained. But Scripture teaches that there can and should be a separation of Church and State. It assigns to both Church and State definite and distinct domains, definite and distinct functions and purposes, definite and distinct tools to fulfill these functions and achieve these purposes. It urges the believers to appreciate this separation and to do all in their power to maintain it. On the basis of this Scriptural principle, enunciated most clearly in the "Render" passage, Matt. 22:21, our *Augsburg Confession* says, Art. 28,12: "The power of the Church and the civil power must not be confounded."

The principle of the separation of Church and State is, however, undermined by the Chaplaincy system, in which the State establishes by law the post of chaplain, "the religious and spiritual leader of the military community," (*Manual*, p. 8) and maintains it by public funds. By providing this religious ministry, the State is going beyond its prescribed field and function. This basic fact should not be overlooked nor can it be canceled by considerations like these: the government is interested in maintaining a high standard of civic righteousness, especially in its soldiers in time of war; or the State permits the Church to call chaplains and traces their spiritual authority to spiritual sources; or the government is fair to all in dealings with various denominations. No matter from what good motive or under what extenuating circumstances or with what attempts at indiscriminate, the fact remains that in the chaplaincy system the State invades the realm of the Church.

The main counter-argument of apologists—the word is used in its original meaning—for the chaplaincy can be found in the pertinent section of the chaplaincy article in *Another Fraternal Endeavor*, p. 51 f. where the following statements are made:

Our military chaplains are functioning in a dual capacity. They are, on the one hand, appointed by the government to promote religion and morality in the Armed Forces; and, on the other hand, they are called by the Church to administer the Office of to keys in behalf of the local congregations...The government is not thereby taking over the work of the Church...The government is interested only in adding greater efficiency to those engaged in the military defense of the country...The government does not make it the duty of the chaplain to preach the Word, to administer the sacraments and do the work of a minister of the Gospel...It pays him not

for doing what we call church work, but for the service rendered to promote religion, morality, patriotism, good morale and the principles of the character guidance program.

From these premises the conclusion is drawn that the chaplaincy system is one “fully safeguarding the principle of separation of Church and State.” And the claim, “the government recognizes this part of the chaplain's position” is based on the stipulation, “The chaplains spiritual authority...is imparted in the ordination that his denomination has given him” (*Manual*, p. 3).

We, however, know of no sound basis for the assumption that the government in the chaplaincy system is limiting its interest and concern exclusively to morals and morale and is not involving itself in spiritual matters. Able students of this aspect of constitutional law in tracing the origin and justifying the existence of the system speak differently. Leo Pfeffer in *Church, State And Freedom* e.g., says, p. 475:

As far as the government is concerned there may appear to be a conflict between the two aspects of the First Amendment, separation of state and church and religious freedom, in regard to chaplaincy. Furnishing the services of a government paid chaplain to members of the armed services may violate the mandate of separation but depriving a conscripted sailor of the opportunity to obtain spiritual comfort from a pastor of his faith may unnecessarily violate the mandate of freedom.

Not only is the opinion rendered that the chaplaincy may violate the principle of separation, but also, what is more to the point here, the system is justified, not on the grounds of the governments interest in civic righteousness, but by reason of its desire to provide opportunity for spiritual comfort. Can one insist that "the government does not make it the duty of the chaplain to preach the Word" when the Manual requires that opportunities for the public worship of God be provided (cf. *Manual*, p. 1), that explanation for every omission of a Sunday service be made (cf. *Manual*, p. 4)? How valid is the statement that the government does not pay the chaplain "for doing what we call. church work" when the Manual has definite stipulations regarding communion, baptisms, funerals?

Do military regulations really indicate that chaplains are functioning "in a dual capacity" whereby they are in the eyes of the State mere promoters of civic righteousness, and all their spiritual work is placed far beyond the reach and concern of the government? Regulations require of the chaplain many duties that lie in the area of civic righteousness but also many others that involve true spiritual work. Regulations do trace the “chaplains spiritual authority to teach and to preach, in public, to conduct religious services” etc. to ordination (cf. *Manual*, p. 63), thereby yielding that the source of spiritual authority is not to be found in the government, but by no means ceding all rights and concerns regarding the exercise of the authority. The real intent of the statement just quoted is explained and a reference to a “dual” nature in the chaplain is made in Section XV of *Denominational Coverage Requirements* S T 16-160, The Chaplain School, 1 October 1950, and reads: “As a chaplain you function in the military service by virtue of a dual authorization. The President...has delegated to you, through your commission as an officer, such military authority as you may require to accomplish your taskYou receive the religious authority you require to function as a clergyman in the military service, not from the Army or the Air Force, but from your denomination.” The distinction is between the military status of the chaplain and his function as a clergyman in the military service. There is no indication that his function as a clergyman is being further divided, as alleged, into separate areas marked “promotion of civic righteousness for the government” and “spiritual work done for the Church.” But there is an indication here, as in so many other places in the regulations, that the government wants as chaplains, not only those who can serve as promoters of civic righteousness, but bona fide clergymen with authority to function as such from their denomination, but functioning in and for the military service. The conclusion is inescapable that, no matter what distinctions we might wish existed, when the government commissions chaplains, it is invading the field of the Church and violating the principle of separation of Church and State.

The Regulation of the Chaplain's Duties by the Government is a Violation of the Principle of Separation of Church and State.

Furthermore, that principle is violated when the chaplain's duties are regulated by the State. The government may yield that it does not supply the chaplain's spiritual authority and may insist that he be guided by the rules of his denomination. But it is still encroaching upon the Church's domain when, within these limits, it regulates the field and flock, the work and words of the chaplain, as it does when it tells him whom he is to serve and how he is to do it, when it orders him to teach the character guidance program and to preach at the general Protestant service. The government makes the chaplain "the religious and spiritual leader of the military community" (*Manual*, p. 8). "Morally obligated to provide for the religious needs of the entire command" (*Manual*, p. 2). It assigns him to a particular post where there may be members of his own denomination, of other denominations, of no denomination. He is made the spiritual leader of all; all are placed into his charge. They may decline his ministrations; he may in certain cases provide the ministrations of another. But that does not change the fact that the government is establishing a relationship between chaplain and men which lies in the religious field. In any other setting that would be recognized as a violation of the principle of separation of Church and State and should be so recognized in this instance.

We do not accuse the government of maliciously invading the realm of the Church and deliberately attempting to dominate or destroy it. We appreciate the attempts of the government to render the Church its due and to safeguard denominational heritages. If, however, we are convinced that in the chaplaincy system the principle of separation of Church and State is being violated, we will have to voice our convictions and act accordingly.

The Chaplaincy and Unionism

But the most serious charge the Wisconsin Synod makes against the chaplaincy now, as before, is unionism. Back in 1941 it said: "The spirit of doctrinal indifferentism pervades the regulations of the War Department pertaining to the office of the chaplaincy and fosters unionism." The Manual of those days has since been revised. A number of grossly unionistic statements have been removed. But the basic error still remains and the charge of unionism still stands. The term as used here is to be understood in the sense of the sentence of the *Brief Statement*, Sect. 28: "We repudiate unionism, that is church-fellowship with the adherents of false doctrine as disobedience to God's command, as causing divisions in the Church, Rom. 16:17; II John 9:10, and as involving the constant danger of losing the Word of God entirely, II Tim. 2:17-21."

The Chaplaincy Involves in Unionism by Making the Chaplain the Spiritual Leader of a Certain Group without Regard to Denominational Lines.

"The chaplain is the religious and spiritual leader of the military community" (*Manual*, p. 8) and is "morally obligated to provide for the religious needs of the entire command" (*Manual*, p. 2). The chaplain dare not regard those of his own church body as his exclusive charge nor adopt a purely passive role in dealing with those of another denomination. The Manual is explicit on this point. "In maneuvers and in combat situations he (the chaplain) takes every opportunity to make personal contact with small groups and individuals" (*Manual*, p. 9). "The chaplain makes calls in the interest of the religious welfare of the command in the homes of personnel who reside within or near the military reservation...Such calls are not to be confused with official social calls..." (*Manual* p. 9). There are similar stipulations reminding the chaplain of his responsibility to all in his unit in confinement and in the hospital (cf. *Manual*, p. 9).

The chaplain has personal duties and direct responsibilities over against those of other denominations of his charge. But he is under a system which promises to safeguard the denominational tenets of all. "Freedom of worship inherent in our democratic way of life has long been recognized by the military establishment" (*Manual*, p. 3). Chaplains are taught: "You are expected to respect the convictions of others. 'The Army prides

itself on its lack of denominational bias and lack of religious coercion'...the religious convictions and the freedom of conscience of all personnel will be respected" (*Denominational Coverage Requirements*, S T 16-160, The Chaplain School, 1 October 1950, XVIII c-d). From any other viewpoint we would heartily approve of these stipulations. But when they serve as the fundamental principle guiding the chaplain's relation to those in his charge, then an intolerable situation is created. The chaplain, while functioning as the spiritual leader and advising those in his charge, will have to refrain from giving the advice that may be most necessary, the warning against false doctrine and deviation from the Word. The parish pastor will not give such warning to all members of heterodox churches with whom he comes in contact, but only because such persons are not his responsibility. But when he deals with those who are his responsibility, he must reserve the right to "teach all things" (Matt. 28:20) including the right to testify against error. The chaplain, however, who is obligated to render certain pastoral services to those of other denominations must function with this right impaired and annulled. That is unionism, church-fellowship with the adherents of false doctrine, of the highest and, consequently, the most dangerous level—the relation of the spiritual leader with those in his charge.

In the case of public worship, sacraments, death-bed ministrations the chaplain can and must provide, whenever possible, the services of other chaplains and ministers who can satisfy all denominational requirements. But this stipulation, far from canceling the charge of unionism serves only to involve further therein. The chaplain refrains from providing certain religious ministrations because of convictions. But he, as part of his official duties, must insure that these ministrations of which he personally disapproves as being contrary to God's Word are provided for those in his charge, and to this end he must enlist the cooperation of false teachers of Roman, Jewish, and heterodox churches. That is unionism. It has been said that providing such services for those of another faith is nothing more than an act of simple courtesy such as we perform when we direct a person to the nearest Roman Church, and that the matter of confession and unionism does not enter the picture. The two cases are, however, not identical. In the one case, we are concerned with an individual and a random occurrence in daily life. In the other, the chaplain, as spiritual leader of the soldiers concerned, as part of the official duties which he is called to perform, provides through false teachers the services that are not in accord with Scripture. It has also been said: "To make heterodox services available to the heterodox is not the same as giving them personal approval. The very fact that a chaplain refuses to officiate in such capacity and enlists the service of another chaplain or civilian pastor is evidence enough that he does not approve of them" (*Another Fraternal Endeavor*, p. 55). But the chaplains disapproval dare not be vocal or loud and will, we fear, be pushed into the background by his activity in providing the service. The real point, however, is not how much disapproval there is of what is made available, but this, that a conscientious spiritual leader ought not accept the call to make available to those in his charge a ministrations of which he for conscience sake disapproves, and that the confessional church ought not call him to engage in such unionistic practice.

The Chaplaincy Involves in Unionism by Insisting on the General Protestant Service.

In the chaplaincy system the Roman and Jewish churches are granted, separate classifications while all others are lumped together under the heading of "Protestant." Though this arrangement is not at all to our liking, we might be ready to accept and excuse it, if it were made only in the interest of outward order and efficiency. But when this grouping of all who are not Roman or Jewish is carried into the field of actual Church work, when it provides the basis for the so-called "General Protestant Service," then we must object with the charge of unionism.

The Manual stipulates also for representatives of the Lutheran Church: "A chaplain belonging to a denomination classified as Protestant provides a worship service which is acceptable and meaningful to the maximum number of Protestant personnel in the command" (*Manual*, p. 4). In these services those separated by differences of doctrine are united in worship and prayer. That is unionism. Can a Lutheran minister with a good conscience officiate under such circumstances? The service is not a Lutheran service. The Lutheran service, if there is one, will be held at a different time. The Lutheran chaplain may be in charge of the general Protestant service, may select hymns, prayers, order of service, and the like. But he is not, under the regulations, free in the

one point that matters most, in the sermon he preaches. Nothing is to be said that is unacceptable to the members of other denominations. Doctrinal differences are to be brushed aside and all, the adherents of true and false teachings, are to be joined in the preaching and hearing of the Word. He who should feel constrained in his ministry of preaching "to declare all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27) and who, "as a steward of the mysteries of God," is to strive to be "faithful" (I Cor. 4:2) must consent to provide a service and sermon acceptable to those with whom he is not in doctrinal agreement. That is unionism and cannot be explained away by drawing a parallel between the general Protestant services and those held in our churches on the ground that, also at the latter, there are members of other denominations in attendance. The cases are not at all parallel. Guests, no matter what their beliefs, are always welcome at our Sunday services, but always with the clear understanding that they are guests at a Lutheran service. But at the Army post members of various denominations are drawn to the general Protestant service with the understanding and promise that denominational lines and doctrinal differences will be ignored, and that they will be united in worship which "is acceptable and meaningful" to the most, in short, that unionism will be practiced—also when a Lutheran chaplain is in charge.

In the Chaplaincy System, there is a Tendency to Become More and More Unionistic.

Unionism is a by-way that leads step by step, farther and farther, faster and faster from the high road of confessionalism. That is a truth taught in Scripture, substantiated by the pages of Church History, and apparent in the developments of recent years without and, what concerns us here, within the area of participation in the chaplaincy. We refer not only to isolated occurrences, acts of individuals, instances of unionistic practice on the part of this or that chaplain. What is most disturbing is evidence in official statements and acts of the sister synod regarding the chaplaincy that the spirit of unionism is waxing. In the matter of burial where unionism can be practiced, if not with the living, then in regard to the dead—we have for cogent reasons and many years followed the practice outlined by Fritz in his *Pastoral Theology*, 1945 ed., where (p. 302 f) he says:

A Christian pastor should not officiate at the funeral of a person concerning whom at the time of his death there was no evidence of his being a Christian (or self-evidently, who at the time of his death was a member of another congregation, either orthodox or heterodox)...It must be remembered that, whenever a Christian pastor officiates at a funeral, he is always officially representing his Christian congregation. The pastor should bear in mind that he is not an undertaker, nor should he grace a funeral with his official presence merely to satisfy the people.

We would expect that these principles would also be applied by chaplains, especially since they may either "conduct or arrange for appropriate burial services" (*Manual*, p. 7). But the chaplaincy article in *Another Fraternal Endeavor* propounds a different set of standards and a new burial practice when it says:

As for funerals in particular, he (The Chaplain) is at liberty to arrange the ceremonies as he sees fit. If it was an individual to whom he can conscientiously give a Christian, even a Lutheran funeral, he may do so. If he does not feel free to officiate, he may refer the case to another chaplain who is willing and does not find it contrary to his convictions. If it was an unbeliever, he can refer, or use a very brief strictly military interment without any indication of a Christian burial and therefore without denial of the faith (*Another Fraternal Endeavor*, p. 57).

This is different language than that spoken in the quotation from *Pastoral Theology*.

Furthermore, participation in the chaplaincy system has to a large extent given rise to the *Articles of Agreement* between the Missouri Synod and the National Lutheran Council regarding communion in the Armed Services whereby, in exceptional cases, there can be administration and reception of communion without regard to synodical affiliation. If there has been one matter of doctrine and practice on which all in the Synodical Conference were in times past agreed it was the principle that altar fellowship should not be granted to those

who are not in doctrinal agreement with us. Any contrary course was recognized and opposed as unionism. But it is that contrary course for which the *Articles of Agreement* provide. These Articles are defended on the grounds that they deal only with "exceptional cases" which can also arise in civilian life (cf. *Articles*, par. 7). No doubt every pastor is confronted by exceptional cases regarding the administration of the Lord Supper and, when they arise, he will strive to deal with them in an evangelical spirit. But the faithful pastor does not feel called upon to make communion agreements with others on the basis of these exceptional cases, least of all with those who disagree with him in doctrine, in practice, and on unionism. The Articles are upheld with the argument that one of their main purposes is "to prevent, through a multiplication of exceptional cases, which are natural in war times and battle lines, a break down of our church's practice of close communion" (*Another Fraternal Endeavor* p.51), that, therefore, they are not unionism but actually a weapon against unionism. We sometimes fight fire with fire. But we make a sad mistake and defeat ourselves when we try to fight Beelzebub with Beelzebub or unionism with unionism. The Articles themselves offer the explanation that they are being drawn up in a "great emergency," in "perilous times." The best answer to the suggestion that times of emergency may excuse a deviation from normal and wholesome practice has been given by the President of the Missouri Synod. In 1942 at Columbus, Ohio, he remarked in connection with joint communion services with those of other Lutheran bodies, "Are we expected to sacrifice principles in an emergency?" (cf. *Quartalschrift*, Oct. 1942) With this statement we agree. We see no reason and no excuse for the *Articles Of Agreement*. After all arguments regarding exceptional nature, worthy motive, and perilous times have been offered, the basic fact still remains that these articles provide for A unionistic administration of Lord Supper.

Abhorrence of unionism, concern for the principle of separation of Church and State, and regard for the divinity of the call compel us of the Wisconsin Synod to take this stand against the military chaplaincy. We take this stand without doubting that many a chaplain may be able to report heart-warming experiences he has had, especially in his dealings with fellow-believers or the unchurched, but also without forgetting that harm and havoc will be wrought whenever the Lord's Will and Word are disregarded. We abide by this stand without being swayed by any listing of results or by any proofs that the chaplaincy system is more effective than a mailing program, for we deem such considerations beside the point. We want to make every sacrifice possible for those in the armed forces but always in the spirit that bows humbly to the word, "To obey is better than sacrifice" (I Sam. 15:22). We need not fear that the Lord will hold us accountable for results that could not be achieved on the pathway of obedience. But we have every reason to fear that He will hold us responsible for any harm that comes to the Church now or later through wavering in convictions that rest on God's Word and through departure from His ways. We bring to the attention of the sister synod the stand we have taken and the reasons for it in the fervent hope that they might join us there and stand with us in regard to the military chaplaincy.

Scouting

Scouting, the second subject treated in this paper, has been a controversial subject in the Synodical Conference especially since 1944 when the Missouri Synod resolved "that the matter of Scouting should be left to the individual congregation to decide," (*Missouri Proceedings*, 1944, p. 2577) with the result that the number of church groups in our circles and the difficulties of those who opposed the movement increased rapidly and markedly. The chaplaincy controversy has extended over more years, but the Scouting problem, because it reaches into the inner working of the Christian congregation and the Christians, has engendered more deliberations, discussions, dealings, and disagreements on congregational, conference, synod, and Synodical Conference level. The Wisconsin Synod ought not be considered impatient and premature if it insists that a major effort be made to deal with and dispose of the problem, in view of the fact that postponement will allow for the spread of Scouting in our Church and will serve to increase unrest over what is a very real, and practical problem for many congregations.

Previous discussions and dealings suggest the subject matter to be treated here. In all of them attention has been given to certain chief points of controversy set forth at the first forum of discussion, the

Inter-synodical Relations Committee of the Synodical Conference, and recurring constantly in subsequent dealings. When individual synods acted in the matter they reaffirmed their stand on these points. Intersynodical committees rendered divided reports reflecting a basic difference of opinion on the same points of controversy, The first of these points can be stated in the form of the question:

Does Scoutism Today have Objectionable Religious Features?

The Missouri Synod and Slovak Synod members of the Synodical Conference Committee on Scouting in their report claim:

Scouting is a secular boys organization designed to promote good citizenship (That Scoutism advocates a life governed by religious principles does not make it a religious movement). Scoutism does not teach religion (Scoutism expects the church to add the religious element without which the program is incomplete)...Scoutism does not promise spiritual blessings such as forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation, peace with God, etc., to those who obey the Scout law. (cf. *Syn. Conf. Proceeding*, 1952, p. 146)

These claims are to lead to the conclusion that Scoutism is a harmless secular organization which the Church can embrace in the interest of its youth-training program.

Is Scouting Merely a Secular Organization?

While much of Scouting is concerned with the purely material and devoted to citizenship training, we are not ready to follow the claims quoted above to their intended conclusion. The first of these claims conveys the incorrect impression that the only alternative to a secular organization is a religious movement. There is a middle ground between the two. There are secular organizations that have religious features and seek religious ends, often improper and false, without ever becoming completely religious. To say that Scouting is not a religious movement is not identical with proving that it is a secular organization free of all objectionable religious features. Furthermore, the lack of reference to "spiritual blessings such as forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, peace with God, etc.," in the principles of an organization does not, in itself, mean that the organization is wholly secular and devoid of all religious aspects. The existence of religions that deal exclusively with the things of this life has led to the coining of the untranslatable terms, "Diesseitigkeitstheologie, Diesseitigkeitsreligion." And the very claim that "Scouting expects the churches to add the religious element without which the program is incomplete" seem to warrant the conclusion that in the complete Scouting program there are essential religious features.

The Religious Features of Scouting

By insisting on the oath or promise, "On my honor I will do my best...to do my duty to God," by defining "duty to God" as regular worship, faithfulness to Almighty God's Commandments, gratitude, helping others (cf. *Handbook For Boys, Fifth Edition*, Sixth Printing, June 1953—hereafter referred to as "*Handbook For Boys*"—p.20-21) Scouting indicates that there is in its platform a solid, substantial religious plank. By its twelfth law: "A Scout is reverent. He is faithful in his religious duties and respects the convictions of others in matters of custom and religion" and its explanation that this requires the Scout to pray to God, to love God, and to serve Him (cf., *Handbook For Boys*, p.39) Scouting shows its concern for something that lies far beyond and above the field of citizenship. When its interpretation of its slogan, "Do a Good Turn Daily" states that "these small Good Turns are the boys first steps toward service to others. By, encouraging the boy to replace Self

with Service to others you aid him in fulfilling his promise ‘to do my duty to God and my country’” (*Handbook for Scoutmasters, fourth Edition, Sixth printing, 1952*—hereafter referred to as “*Handbook for Scoutmasters*”—p. 20); then it becomes plain that the Scout slogan has a definite religious implication.

Since these religious features are contained in the mandatory Scout oath or promise, law, and slogan which are called the “rules of Scouting” (*Handbook for Boys, p. 17*) and which are stressed at the time of initiation, in the course of activities, and when promotion is determined, it follows that they are not a relatively unimportant and often ignored part of Scouting but will be brought to bear upon members of the organization heavily and steadily and serve to give the movement a distinctly religious character. In fact one of the main ideas on which the movement rests is the assumption that Scouting contains what is basic and fundamental to all religions and can therefore be of assistance to all Christian and non-Christian religious bodies in their work, supplying what is common to all and being modified only by the details the various churches desire to add. “The Boy Scouts of America maintains that no boy can grow into the best kind of citizenship without recognizing his obligations to God...The Boy Scouts of America therefore recognizes the religious element in the training of the boy, but it is absolutely non-sectarian in its attitude toward that religious training” (*Constitution, Article IV, Principles, Section 1*).

Standards for Evaluating these Religious Features of Scoutism.

Are these religious features contained in Scoutism objectionable or unobjectionable? Scout authorities maintain that its program can be adopted by and will prove beneficial to any church. They are, no doubt, sincere in their opinion. But it could be an act of folly and unfaithfulness if the Church were to surrender blindly its God given duty to judge such matters, "to prove all things" (I Thess. 5:21) and permit others to decide for it what is objectionable and unobjectionable according to Scripture.

Advocates of Scouting will, in this connection, advance the argument that there need be no fear of objectionable religious features in the movement, since Scouting says, "Its policy is that the organization or institution with which the Boy Scout is connected shall give definite attention to his religious life" (*Constitution, Article IV, Principles, section 1*) and promises, "There is no Boy Scout authority which supersedes the authority of the local pastor and the congregation in any phase of the program affecting the spiritual welfare of Lutheran men and boys in Scouting." But even though the religious elements of Scouting are employed and applied according to the beliefs of the various churches, the fact remains that religious features are being applied. Before we are willing to apply them, we will have to be sure that they pass the test, the acid test of the Word. They will be found wanting, not only if they are false as can be, but also if they are only slightly adulterated. Anything less than pure religion and undefiled is unacceptable.

And we should not be too ready to accept such religious features on the grounds that they have their origin in natural knowledge of God and His Law and lie in the field of civic righteousness. In the first place, civic righteousness can hardly be stretched so wide that it covers things like regular worship, faithfulness to Almighty God's commandments, prayer, love to God, all of which are, according to Scouting itself, included in its oath or promise, law, and slogan. And secondly, not all religious elements born of natural knowledge of God and His Law will be unobjectionable. This natural knowledge of God and His Law is a gift of the Creator and serves a good purpose, as Paul clearly teaches in Romans 1 and 2. But at the same time it is to be remembered that this gift is constantly being perverted by sinful man, as Paul also clearly teaches in Romans 1 and 2. The Church will thank God for this gift and make good use of it when it can, but it will also testify with Paul frankly and fearlessly regarding the limits of natural knowledge of God and of his Law and against any human perversion of the same. These are points to be remembered when the religious features of the Scout movement are being judged.

Evaluation of the Religious Features of Scoutism

To which "God" does Scouting refer when it in its handbooks speaks about "God," "duty to God" "worship of God"? Obviously not to the true God, for it offers its "God" also to non-Trinitarian churches. We know that Scouting, operating with natural knowledge, will not be able to ascertain the truth regarding the loving, saving Triune God revealed in Christ Jesus. But we will, as confessors, point out this deficiency and term such recognition of "God" not identical with the Triune God a sin in the light of the First Commandment and the Savior's Word: "He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent him" (Jn. 5:25). A report that excuses Scouting because it "does not demand a deistic content of God" (*Syn. Conf. Proceedings*, 195, p. 146) is evading the issue. The question is not whether a deistic concept of God is better or worse than any other false one. We are to maintain the truth that failure to confess the Triune God and transfer of His honor to another is sin.

Scouting requires the boy to say: "On my honor I will do my best...to do my duty to God" and in describing this duty instruct him: "Above all you are faithful to Almighty God's Commandments" (*Handbook For Boys*, p. 20). "It is something to be good but it is far better to do good" (*Handbook For Boys*, p. 43). Thereby Scouting is attempting to foster fulfillment of the Law, a righteousness that it is man's duty to offer to God and that, in the case of the non-Christian, will and must be self-righteousness. It speaks of "duty to God," "faithfulness to His Commandments" without any reference to the basic duty, repentance, or to faith, without which it is impossible to please God. Scouting's "neutral position" whereby "it leaves the question of the motivation for 'doing their duty to God' to the churches the boys are affiliated with" (cf. *Another Fraternal Endeavor*, p. 85) is a false position conflicting with the Bible doctrines of original sin, conversion and sanctification. The claim is made that Scouting, when it speaks of "duty to God," is merely applying the natural knowledge of God's Law and promoting civic righteousness. But civic righteousness and "duty to God," as Scouting defines it, ought not and cannot be made synonymous. Civic righteousness lies in the field of earthly relationships. It is not fulfillment of God's Holy Law and when natural knowledge of the Law is applied it ought to be applied in the right, God-intended way—as a mirror to arouse terrors of conscience, as a curb to limit wickedness, as a guide in fostering civic righteousness. When Scouting applies it, without any distinction between the regenerate and unregenerate, as a guide in doing "duty to God" and keeping His Commandments, then the Satanic lie of self-righteousness is fostered.

"The twelfth Scout law is basically unionistic since it obligates every Scout to faithfulness in his religious duties without defining these duties or the God whom he is to serve, cf. II John 9-10; II Cor. 6:14-18" (*Syn. Conf. Proceedings*, 1952, p. 147). The twelfth Scout Law reads: "A Scout is reverent. He is faithful in his religious duties and respects the conviction of others in matters of custom and religion" and is interpreted to include prayer, love and service to God (cf. *Handbook for Boys*, p. 39). Scouting insists on belief in God, granting to all beliefs in all "Gods" equal value and validity. It requires faithfulness in religious duties, implying that any kind of worship and duty is good and God pleasing. That is the obvious intent of the twelfth law. That is the basic assumption on which Scouting's relationship to the various churches rests. That is the idea that underlies all unionism. Scouting may leave "to the parents of the boys and to his church everything that deals with the application of these goals (i.e. of the twelfth law), their motivation and carrying out" (*Another Fraternal Endeavor*, p. 86). But when it obligates Scouts to faithfulness in religious duties, whether true or false, and when it says, "Your own spiritual leader, minister, priest or rabbi will teach you how to know God better" (*Handbook for Boys*, p. 25) it is promoting the Spirit of unionism. Without too much of a struggle Scouting has eliminated the rule obligating Scouts to attend grossly unionistic services. But it has not yet eliminated the more subtle and, consequently, the more dangerous unionistic services inherent in its twelfth law. This is another objectionable religious feature in the movement that compels us to take a stand against Scoutism.

Is the Scout Oath or Promise and Oath Forbidden by God's Word?

A religious feature of Scouting that warrants individual treatment is its mandatory oath or promise. The question: "Is the Scout oath or promise an oath forbidden by God's Word?" cannot be answered by the movement itself. Scouting employs two designative terms, "oath" and "promise," and is, in any event,

incompetent to render soundly Biblical verdict. Up until twenty-five years ago there was general agreement within the Synodical Conference that the Scout oath or promise was contrary to the Bible, as the literature of that period indicates. But now those who advocate Scouting maintain that the same oath or promise "is not an oath in the Biblical sense of the term" saying "God's name is not involved at all" (*Another Fraternal Endeavor*, p. 85). By way of reply a lengthy quotation from an article by Prof. J. P. Meyer is offered, which clearly sets forth the Biblical principles involved. Discussion the Scout oath, Prof. Meyer writes:

Although the three upraised fingers may not refer to the Trinity, and although the pledge itself is not made with an express appeal to God, yet it is a promise reinforced with an appeal to one's own honor. Very definitely so: "On my honor I promise...."

What Says Scripture

We compare a few Scripture passages that speak of oaths. St. James says: "Above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation" (Chap. 5:12). Does St. James say that because an oath does not contain a direct reference to God it loses its nature as an oath? - Jesus Himself warned His disciples: "Let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil" (Matt.5:37).

Jesus also explained why an oath, though it contains no direct reference to God, must still be regarded as an oath in the strict sense of the word. "Again ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of a great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black" (Matt. 5:33-36).

The Jews were trying to salve their consciences when in their daily dealings they went beyond a simple yea or nay, and reinforced their statements with an appeal to heaven, to the earth, or to their own head. They considered such language as not being oaths in the proper sense. They tried to draw some very fine distinctions, as we read in Matt. 23, where Jesus rebukes the scribes and Pharisees: "Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing, but whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing, but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor...And whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing, and whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty" (v. 16, 18).

Does Jesus explain that they really have no cause for worry, that they are worrying about nothing; that, since they make no express reference to God, they were not using an oath at all? He calls them "fools," but for a very different reason: "Ye fools and blind, for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?...Ye fools and blind, for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?" (v.17, 19).

The Real Meaning

What is the real meaning of phrases that are thus introduced to reinforce a plain statement with an appeal to heaven, to the temple, to the altar, and the like? If they are not to be empty words, then they contain an implied reference to God: as Jesus explains: "Whoso therefore shall swear by the temple sweareth by it and by him that dwelleth therein. And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God and by him that sitteth thereon" (v. 20-22).

On swearing by one's own head Jesus sharply calls attention to the fact that we cannot even so much as change the color of a single hair, God created our head, He alone.--This applies also to

our honor. Our honor is a gift from God. We must thank God for it, but we must not abuse it. If God should withdraw His support, our honor would fall to the ground. We cannot uphold it; left to ourselves we should sink into shame and disgrace. Before Peter went into the high priest's palace he was strong in his own honor, claiming that he was ready to die for his Lord. But then his honor vanished into nothing, and he most shamefully denied his Savior.

If the phrase On my honor is not to be a meaningless babbling, if it is not to be an expression of arrogant self-reliance, and thus a gross abuse of God's gift to us: then it is an implied reference to God, the Giver and Preserver of our honor. It is an oath, no matter how much men may try to tone it down.

Let us beware. Let us not trifle with the Name of God. (*Northwestern Lutheran*, July 6, 1947. J. P. M.)

On the basis of these Bible principles regarding oaths we would, if for no other reason, have to testify against Scouting. And that is already an answer to a third Question that invariably arises when the pros and cons of Scouting are considered, the question:

Is Scouting Unobjectionable when Carried on in a Church-Sponsored Troop?

The question needs to be considered because the Missouri Synod resolutions on Scouting in recent years have dealt primarily with the matter of Lutheran Scoutmasters, Lutheran Scout troops, and the sovereignty of the local congregation; and because the argument is frequently advanced that there could be no harm in a church troop since "there is no Boy Scout authority which supersedes the authority of the local Pastor and congregation in any phase of the movement affecting the spiritual welfare of Lutheran men and boys in Scouting."

Church Troops must Accept Mandatory and Objectionable Features of Scouting

The obvious advantage of a church troop lies in the authority of the sponsoring body to apply Scout principles according to its own belief. But its authority is not so supreme that it can reject and discard the mandatory oath or promise, law and slogan which contain objectionable features. At best the sponsoring body will have to be satisfied with superimposing its alterations and corrections on objectionable religious elements in Scouting. And it would even then find itself in the position of sponsoring elsewhere by moral and financial support of Scouting the very same objectionable religious elements it corrects in the privacy of the church troop, for membership in a well-known organization like the Boy Scouts cannot help but imply agreement with, and sponsorship of its widely publicized oath or promise, law, and slogan and the religious implications they are known to have.

Church Troops Hinder the Church's Confession

And then the Church would be doing the very opposite of what it should. The church-sponsored troop would be a contradiction of the confession the Church owes the world regarding the depravity of natural man, the sin of false worship, the evil of false doctrine. The Gospel would be compromised in the all-important field of youth training. Now all this will make no impression at all on him who maintains there is absolutely nothing objectionable in Scoutism. But to those who have objections to certain religious features in the movement, it ought to mean that they dare not condone objectionable features in Scouting with the thought that these can be corrected in the church troop. If Scouting is altogether acceptable, then so are church troops. If Scouting is objectionable because of elements of false religion, then it remains so also in a church-sponsored troop. A final point to be consider is the question:

Has the Missouri Synod Changed its Position on Scouting?

The question is not raised in order to provoke feelings of discomfort nor does it imply that a church body is to be faulted in every case when it changes its position. We in the Wisconsin Synod are still thanking God for using the Missouri Synod to help guide our founding fathers from the path of indifferentism on to the way of conservative, confessional Lutheranism. But the question has been raised repeatedly since 1944. It receives considerable attention in the Scouting article in *Another Fraternal Endeavor*. And it is of some interest to the Wisconsin Synod because it feels strongly that its plea to the sister synod for joint testimony against Scoutism, is not an unwarranted demand, but simply the request for a return to a position but recently abandoned. The Missouri Synod, on the other hand, maintains that its position has not changed and that a change in Scouting is the explanation for its 1944 resolutions.

Has Scouting or the Position of the Missouri Synod Changed?

But as late as 1938 and after years of dealing with Scout authorities the Missouri Synod resolved: “Because of the naturalistic and unionistic tendencies still prevalent in the Boy Scout movement membership in non-Lutheran or sectarian troops cannot be sanctioned” (*Missouri Synod Proceedings*, 1938 p. 341). This resolution is preceded by one stating that Scout authorities had “so modified their position as to grant to the individual congregation complete control of its troops” and followed by another that congregations be provided “with an educational and recreational program that will attract the interest of our youth and thus counteract the inclination, to affiliate with the Boy Scout organization.” Though at this time there may have been “neither unanimity of opinion nor conformity of practice” (*Another Fraternal Endeavor*, p. 13), though there was assurance of local sovereignty over the church troop, yet there was testimony against objectionable “naturalistic and unionistic tendencies still prevalent in the movement” and counter measures were urged to discourage affiliation with Scouting. In 1941 a committee report was adopted by the Missouri Synod to the effect that “nothing was brought to its attention which would at this time call for either a more favorable or unfavorable treatment of the Boy Scout movement than the one outlined in...the 1938 Proceedings” (*Missouri Synod Proceedings*, 1941, p. 418 f.).

Then in 1944 the recommendation was adopted that “the matter of scouting should be left to the individual congregation to decide and that under the circumstances Synod may consider her interests sufficiently protected” (*Missouri Proceedings*, 1944, p. 257). The board originally advocating such action reported at length about its search in official handbooks “for any ingredients of the program which would militate against a Lutheran scoutmaster’s committing himself to the program” and stated that “it was unable to find any factors which would violate our principles.” It referred to the guarantee of Scouting: “We recognize that there is no Boy Scout authority which supersedes the authority of the local Pastor and congregation...”—a guarantee which, however, could in substance be offered already in 1938 and even before and which, therefore, was no new change effected between 1938 and 1944. But the board was strangely silent about the “naturalistic and unionistic tendencies still prevalent in the Boy Scout movement” in 1938 and 1941. A clear explanation as to how the objectionable “tendencies” of 1938 and 1941 had been correct was to be expected. That explanation is not found in the 1944 report.

The Scoutism essay in *Another Fraternal Endeavor* (p. 83-87) deals at some length with the matter of change in Boy Scout policy. But the changes it lists and documents all antedate 1938 and 1941 by a number of years. These changes did not prevent the Missouri Synod's unfavorable reports on Scouting in 1938 and 1941, and can not logically be used to support the dissimilar report of 1944. Concern over objectionable “tendencies” in Scoutism in 1938 and 1941 should not have been removed completely three years later by the assurance of local sovereignty over troops which had been offered already in 1938 and, according to *Handbook of Organizations* (p. 350 f.) as early as 1927.

Plea for a Return to the Former Stand Against Scouting

We are compelled to ask, “When and how have the naturalistic and unionistic tendencies still prevalent in the Boy Scout movements as late as 1941 been corrected?” It is our contention and conviction that these tendencies were, in 1944, and are now still prevalent in Scouting, inherent in its mandatory unchanging oath or promise, law, and slogan, and that these tendencies will not be removed unless Scouting alters itself so radically as to become the converse of itself. That certain changes in Scouting have been made we readily grant. But a major change in its principles must still be made before its objectionable religious features are eliminated, whatever changes have been effected have only served to correct glaring outward faults and thus to obscure the greater evils within. We point out the change in the position of the sister synod on Scouting, not to gain a pound of flesh, but to reinforce our fervent plea that the Missouri Synod say with us now, as it did in 1938 and 1941, “There are naturalistic and unionistic tendencies still prevalent in the Boy Scout movement.” As long as there are objectionable religious features in Scoutism we should all refrain from sponsoring them, also and especially in church-controlled troops and should stand together, as we once did, in testifying against the movement.