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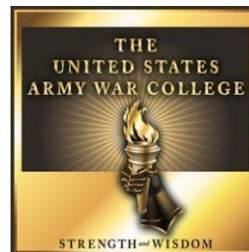
Chaplain Corps' Strategic Role in Promoting Racial Harmony Within the Army

by

Chaplain (Colonel) Alwyn Michael S. Albano
US Army

Under the Direction of:
Dr. Michael Desch and Chaplain (Colonel) Peter Sniffin

While a Fellow at:
University of Notre Dame



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Chaplain Corps' Strategic Role in Promoting Racial Harmony Within the Army

Introduction

Systemic¹ racism existed in the U.S. military from the beginning, particularly against blacks and other “non-white” ethnic groups, where segregation and open discrimination against people of color was practiced.² It was due to President Truman’s Executive Order 9981³ that military racist policies were changed which effectively ended segregation. Military chaplains had a key role in advancing the end of racism and promoting equality within the organization.

“Chaplains have served in significant numbers from earliest battles of the American War of Independence to the present”⁴ and ministered to all service members regardless of race, creed, gender and social status. A black Methodist Army chaplain, Elmer P. Gibson, “was one of the major Army forces for racial integration of the U.S. Armed Forces from 1942 to 1954 and served as an advisor on racial integration to U.S. President Harry S. Truman.”⁵ His testimony and recommendations in President Truman’s Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services

¹ “Systemic” racism is defined as racial discrimination commonly or generally practiced within the whole organization (see “systemic” definition in Merriam Webster Dictionary), <https://merriam-webster.com/dictionary/systemic> (accessed on October 16, 2020).

² See Directorate of Research, Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI), “Historical Overview of Racism in the Military,” February 2002, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a488652.pdf> (accessed on September 15, 2020).

³ Congressional Research Report, “Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity in the Armed Services: Background and Issues for Congress,” Updated June 5, 2019, p.14, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R44321.pdf> (accessed on September 18, 2020).

⁴ Headquarters Department of the Army, Army Regulation 165-1, “Chaplain Activities in the United States Army,” 23 June 2015, 1-5.

⁵ Matthew Peek, “Pioneering African American Chaplain’s Collection Available,” 1 August 2019, <https://networks.h-net.org/node/12840/discussions/4386113/pioneering-african-american-army-chaplains-collection-available> (accessed on September 18, 2020).

were instrumental in ending systemic racism within the military. Despite the change of military policy, “this does not mean that there is no evidence of racism.”⁶ Continued efforts to eradicate prejudice and prevent racism in the military are necessary. As the Chaplain Corps had championed racial harmony in the past, how can it continue to support the Army’s efforts to address racial tension within the organization?

Through societal demand for change and government mandate, the U.S. Army has transformed into an integrated and racially inclusive organization in which excellence is promoted across racial lines. However, the Army continues to struggle in attaining racial (and gender) diversity within its ranks in order to reflect the same racial profile of the U.S. civilian population. Moreover, some racial discrimination cases and perceptions of discrimination continue to be reported in some Army units despite the organization’s zero-tolerance policy against all forms of discrimination.

This paper proposes that the U.S. Army Chaplain Corps has a strategic role in addressing aforementioned gaps. The Chaplain Corps can promote racial harmony within the Army by (1) modeling⁷ racial diversity within the Chaplain Corps, (2) practicing racially inclusive chaplain ministry and (3) chaplain advisement to the command. The term “diversity” mainly focuses on race as it may also refer to other demographic data such as religion and gender. Although the Chaplain Corps consists of Chaplains and Religious Affairs Specialists,⁸ this paper puts emphasis on the racial profile of Chaplains

⁶ DEOMI, “Historical Overview of Racism in the Military,” *Ibid.*, p.17.

⁷ “Modeling” is defined as an example for imitation or emulation (see Merriam Webster Dictionary), <https://merriam-webster.com/dictionary/modeling> (accessed on October 16, 2020).

⁸ AR 165-1, 2-2.

who fulfill the dual role as military religious leaders and religious staff advisors in the Army.⁹

Background: Racism in the Military

The U.S. Army had struggled with “systemic” racism in its long history and there are numerous evidences of organizational prejudice to Blacks and other minorities. However, the Army eventually transformed itself into an inclusively diverse organization. In the midst of segregation and racial prejudice in the organization’s history, the Army Chaplain Corps remained to be inclusive in its religious support mission.

Racial Segregation from the American Revolution to World War II

When General George Washington assumed command of the Continental Army in July 1775 during the American Revolution (1775-1778), his Adjutant General, Horatio Gates, reminded recruiters, “not to accept any deserter from the Ministerial army, nor any stroller, negro, or vagabond.”¹⁰ At the end of 1775, General Washington reversed the ban on Black soldiers due to personnel shortages. By the end of the American revolution, about 5,000 Blacks fought.¹¹ “However, the new U.S. Constitution re-emphasized Black inferiority by deeming that, for political representations, each enslaved Black would only count as three-fifths of a human being. A few years later, Congress enacted the Militia Act of 1792 thereby restricting militia enrollment to every free and able White male citizen of the respective states...”¹²

⁹ See Chaplain Corps religious support capabilities and core competencies in AR 165-1, 2-3.

¹⁰ DEOMI, “Historical Overview of Racism in the Military,” p.1.

¹¹ Congressional Research Report, Ibid., p.2.

¹² DEOMI, Ibid., p.2.

Discrimination against Blacks is ironic as the first American casualty of the American Revolution was a Black American, Crispus Attucks, who is regarded as “the first African American hero.”¹³ Attucks, an African and Native American descent, escaped slavery in 1750 from a farm in Farmington, Massachusetts and was one of the American colonists killed by British soldiers in the Boston Massacre of 1770 that deepened outrage against British rule and spurred the American Revolution.¹⁴

“At the beginning of the Civil War (1861-1865), Blacks were not accepted by the Union Army.”¹⁵ This policy soon changed due to heavy casualties and in 1862, Congress authorized President Lincoln to use Blacks and other non-White men in separate, organized units as laborers.¹⁶ The Union military directed that segregated non-White units be commanded by White officers.¹⁷ Segregated Blacks were paid a little over half the amount received by the lowest ranking White soldiers until 1864.¹⁸ “Black troops who were captured by the Confederacy received much harsher treatment than their White counterparts” as “Negro soldiers were considered captured property and not prisoners of war.”¹⁹

After the Civil War into the beginning of the Indian Campaigns (1822-1866), Congress enacted the Army Reorganization Act of 1866 that authorized the retention of

¹³ Crispus Attucks on-line Museum, <http://www.crispusattucksmuseum.org/crispus-attuck/>, (accessed on February 13, 2021).

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ DEOMI, Ibid., p.3

¹⁶ Warren L. Young, *Minorities and the Military*, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982), pp.195-196.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ John Hope Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), p.74.

¹⁹ DEOMI, Ibid.

Black soldiers in two cavalry and four infantry segregated regiments.²⁰ The segregated regiments served from the Mexican border to the Canadian border.²¹ The Act included recruitment and enlistment of 1,000 Native Americans as scouts.²² “While the creation of these units guaranteed career opportunities for specific racial minorities, it also introduced an era of institutionalized segregation in the armed services.”²³

In the Spanish American War (1898), four Black Regiments served in both Cuban and Philippine campaigns and were subjected to segregated facilities though they were some of the first units to arrive.²⁴ Their achievement in coming to the rescue of Theodore Roosevelt and his Rough Riders is ignored in most history books and Lieutenant Colonel Roosevelt openly criticized Black troops as laggards and being peculiarly dependent on White officers.²⁵

In World War I (1914-1918), 17,000 Native Americans fought.²⁶ They were not considered American citizens and not subject to conscription but they were drafted without conscription.²⁷ They would not receive any veterans benefits until 1924, when they were declared citizens.²⁸ The Selective Service Act in 1917 did not exclude Blacks and about 3 million registered.²⁹ Blacks were excluded from the Army Aviation Corps,

²⁰ Michael Lee Lanning, *The African-American Soldier from Crispus Attucks to Colin Powell*, (Secaucus, NJ: Birch Lane Press, 1997), p.64.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Congressional Research Report, p.12.

²⁴ Lanning, *Ibid.*, p.83-84.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Thomas A. Britten, *American Indians in World War I*, (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1997), pp.104-105.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Neil A. Wynn, *The Afro-American and the Second World War*, (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1976), pp.6-7.

Marine Corps and Coast Guard.³⁰ Although all branches were supposed to be open to them, they were mostly assigned to service or supply regiments and were subjected to a barrage of insults and discrimination.³¹

The Army War College issued a report in October 1925 entitled “The Use of Negro Manpower in War” written by the Commandant, Major General H.E. Ely. The report, submitted to the Army Chief of Staff on October 20, 1925, reflected almost every prevailing racial stereotype, caricature, and justification for keeping Blacks in the lowest subordinate positions.³² This report shaped the Army’s policy on military recruitment of Blacks and other minority groups in subsequent years.³³

Executive Order No. 8802 was issued by President Franklin Roosevelt on June 25, 1941, which established the Fair Employment Practices Commission and created a policy of non-discrimination for all in the Armed Services.³⁴ Although discrimination was forbidden by the War Department in World War II (1939-1945), it was simply ignored. About 1.2 million African American men served in WWII but they would remain segregated in service units, along with other minority groups, and were treated like second-class citizens.³⁵ Despite their eagerness to fight in the war, only a few experienced combat. A notable exception was the 761st Black Panther Tank Battalion (Colored) under the command of General Patton that fought for more than 183

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Gerald W. Patton, *War and Race*, (New York: Greenwood, 1981), pp.124-129.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Executive Order 8802: Prohibition of Discrimination in the Defense Industry (1941), <https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=72> (accessed on January 21, 2021).

³⁵ Alexis Clark, “Black Americans Who Served in WWII Faced Segregation Abroad and at Home,” 5 August 2020, <https://www.history.com/news/black-soldiers-world-war-ii-discrimination> (accessed on January 21, 2021).

consecutive days from France to Austria.³⁶ The unit was nominated for Presidential Unit Citation on six different occasions and only in 1978 that the unit finally received the award.³⁷

On the onset of WWII, there was general public suspicion on the loyalty of Japanese Americans already serving in the military and some were removed or discharged from active duty.³⁸ However, some were later called to serve to include formation of 442nd Regimental Combat Team, a segregated Army unit of about 4,500 Japanese Americans that fought in Italy and Central Europe.³⁹

Desegregation Under President Truman

In response to racial violence and tension across the country, President Harry Truman issued Executive Order No. 9808 in December 1946 establishing the President's Committee on Civil Rights.⁴⁰ Consequently, the commission made certain recommendations for the military services. The Congressional Research Service summarized the commission's report:

The commission's report, *To Secure These Rights*, noted that blacks and other minority service members faced many barriers to equal treatment both within and outside the military. The commission advocated for (1) full racial integration within the military, (2) a ban on discrimination based on race or color, and (3) award officer commissions and promotions based solely on merit.⁴¹

³⁶ Lanning, *Ibid.*, pp. 180-81.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Jajela, Deepti, "Asian American Soldier's Suicide called a 'Wake-up Call' for the Military," *Washington Post*, February 21, 2012, https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/asian-american-soldiers-suicide-called-a-wake-up-call-for-the-military/2012/02/19/glQA7Ke4QR_story.html (accessed on January 20, 2021).

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Executive Order 9808, "Establishing the President's Commission on Civil Rights," December 5, 1946, <https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/executive-orders/9808/executive-order-9808> (accessed on January 20, 2021).

⁴¹ Congressional Research Service, *Ibid.* 18.

At the end of WWII, most of the minorities were discharged with the nation's largest demobilization in history. "As civil rights activists continued to emphasize America's hypocrisy as a democratic nation with a *Jim Crow*⁴² army, and southern politicians stood firmly against full racial equality for Blacks, President Harry Truman signed Executive Order 9981 that desegregated the U.S. Armed Forces in July 1948. Full integration, however, would not occur until the Korean War."⁴³

During the Korean War (1950-1953), the military conducted a study on the effects of segregation and integration in the Armed Services. "Project Clear" (Utilization of Negro Manpower in the Army: A 1951 Study) was conducted by the Operations Research Office of Johns Hopkins University and studied troops in Korea and in the United States.⁴⁴ In 1954, the study released its conclusion: "racially segregated units limited overall military effectiveness, while integration enhanced effectiveness. Further, the study noted that integration throughout the Armed Services as feasible and that a quota on Black participation was unnecessary."⁴⁵ With other studies supporting desegregation, the Department of the Defense disbanded all segregated units in the Army. The Vietnam War was a period of experimentation of military racial integration.

Integration and Inclusion Policies

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, racial tensions from the civilian sector also plagued the military and there were numerous violent riots in military installations. In

⁴² "Jim Crow" laws were state and local laws that enforced racial segregation in the southern United States created in the late 19th and early 20th century.

⁴³ Clark, Ibid.

⁴⁴ Operations Research Office, Johns Hopkins University, "Utilization of the Negro Manpower in the Army: A 1951 Study," July 1967, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/695677.pdf> (accessed on January 21, 2021).

⁴⁵ DEOMI, p.20

response, the Department of Defense (DoD) initiated investigations on the root of discontent. Military leaders realized that the desegregation policy that began with Executive 9981 did not solve problems as it did not create equal opportunity.⁴⁶

After the 1968 racial conflicts within the U.S. military, the Secretary of Defense, Melvin R. Laird, with the highest military and civilian leaders in the Department of Defense signed the “Human Goals Charter”⁴⁷ in August 9, 1969 which became the “blueprint for the equal opportunity programs in DoD.”⁴⁸ The charter recognized the dignity and worth of every individual and formally committed the DoD to become a model for the just and effective use of human resources.⁴⁹ The charter “advocates for the importance of service member adjustment and social improvement, racial equality and cross-cultural education, and the larger roles for women in the military.”⁵⁰

A series of DoD Instructions and Directives followed the charter. DoD Directive 1100.15, Equal Opportunity Within the Department of Defense, directed equal opportunity and treatment to be accorded to all military and civilian personnel, both on- and off-base, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. DoD Instruction 1100.16, Equal Opportunity in Off-Base Housing, addressed the problem of discrimination in local civilian housing and provided for the imposition of restrictive sanctions when violations were found. In 1971, DoD Directive 1322.11, Department of

⁴⁶ Ibid., p.21

⁴⁷ Vietnam War Commemoration, “Human Goals Charter,” 2021, https://www.vietnamwar50th.com/1969-1971_vietnamization/Human-Goals-Charter/ (accessed on January 20, 2021).

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

Defense Education on Race Relations for Armed Forces, was issued establishing a program of race relations training for military personnel.

In response to concerns about discrimination in the military justice system, the Task Force on the Administration of Military Justice in the Armed Forces was established in April 1972 by the Secretary of Defense, Melvin R. Laird.⁵¹ The Task Force found evidence of both intentional and unintentional discrimination towards racial minorities in the military justice system stating:⁵²

The Task Force believes that the military system does discriminate against its members on the basis of race and ethnic background. The discrimination is sometimes purposive; more often, it is not. Indeed, it often occurs against the dictates not only of policy but in the face of determined efforts of commanders, staff personnel and dedicated service men and women.⁵³

The Task Force's recommendation to ban discrimination in the UCMJ was not adopted and does not currently have any specific provision banning discrimination.⁵⁴ "The adoption of new antidiscrimination policies, programs and protections along with the advent of the All-Volunteer Force in 1973 helped alleviate some of the racial tensions that had plagued the Armed Forces for the better part of the 20th century."⁵⁵

The Defense Race Relations Institute (DRRI) was established in 1971 to prepare the Department of Defense (DoD) personnel to be instructors to teach race relations and conduct classes throughout the organization. In 1979, the institute's name was

⁵¹ Department of Defense (DoD), "Report of the Task Force on the Administration of Military Justice in the Armed Forces," November 30, 1972, <https://ctveteranslegal.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/DoD-Task-Force-on-the-Administration-of-Military-Justice-in-the-Armed-Forces-v1.pdf> (accessed on January 23, 2021).

⁵² Congressional Research Service, p.23.

⁵³ DoD, "Report of the Task Force on the Administration of Military Justice in the Armed Forces," Ibid., p.17.

⁵⁴ Congressional Research Service, p.23.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

changed to the Defense Equal Opportunity Institute (DEOMI) due to its expanded scope and mission “not only to address race issues but diversity and equal opportunity issues in DoD.”⁵⁶ “DEOMI also conducts research to support policy-making, training and development programs, and provides a range of online resources for diversity management and equal opportunity programming.”⁵⁷

Part of DEOMI current efforts to prevent discrimination in the DoD includes providing commanders resources to measure aspects of their command climate with the use of two surveys: the DEOMI Organizational Climate Survey (DEOCS) and DEOMI Diversity Management Climate Survey (DDMCS). DEOCS measures organization climate dimensions that can affect organizational effectiveness.⁵⁸ DDMCS is a command-requested organization development questionnaire that measures climate factors associated with diversity and inclusion.⁵⁹ These tools assist commanders in realizing the full human potential within their organizations.

Equal Opportunity (EO) offices were established in all military bases to include regular mandatory training on discrimination. Trained unit enlisted EO representatives were made available to provide easier access of support for all service members. Army Regulation 690-12, Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity, updated in December

⁵⁶ Ibid., p.14.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p.14.

⁵⁸ Military Leadership Diversity Commission, “Measuring Service Climate with an Eye for Diversity,” *Issue Paper #42*, June 2010, <https://diversity.defense.gov/Portals/51/Documents/Resources/Commission/docs/Issue%20Papers/Paper%2042%20-%20Measuring%20Service%20Climate.pdf> (accessed January 20,2021).

⁵⁹ Ibid.

2, 2019 reflects the Army's current equal employment opportunity, diversity and inclusion programs.⁶⁰

As the military transformed and continued its efforts to prevent racial prejudice within its ranks, it has succeeded in eradicating overt racism and establishing a zero-tolerance policy against any form of discrimination within the organization. The U.S. military is now a highly racially diverse institution. As described by Moskos and Butler, the Army is the only place in America "where whites are routinely bossed around by blacks" and where excellence is promoted across racial lines.⁶¹ The Armed Forces' transformation and efforts in promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace serve as a model for the civilian sector.

Chaplains' Pluralistic Ministry: Revolutionary War to Present

As the Army struggled with systemic racism through its history, Chaplains have always been inclusive and pluralistic in providing religious support to all service members regardless of their race, color, gender or religion. Army Chaplains started serving as volunteers along colonial troops providing support to their spiritual needs to include Black or "colored" units.

It was General George Washington who requested the Continental Congress for Chaplains to officially be part of the Continental Army as he wanted an ethical Army.⁶²

⁶⁰ Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Regulation 690-12, "Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity," 12 December 2019, https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/pdf/web/ARN17808_AR690-12_FINAL.pdf (accessed on January 21, 2021).

⁶¹ Charles C. Moskos and John Sibley Butler, *All That We Can Be*, (New York: Basic Books, 1996), p.2.

⁶² John Brinsfield, "Military Chaplain: A Historian's View from the American Revolution to Iraq," *The Christian Science Monitor*, October 30, 2007, <https://www.csmonitor.com/2007/1030/p25s02-usmi.html> (accessed on January 20, 2021).

In July 29, 1775, the 2nd Continental Congress granted this request establishing the Army Chaplain Corps, becoming one of the oldest branches of the military, and mandating one chaplain for each regiment in the Continental Army. Describing the duties of chaplains, Brinsfield states:

Washington wanted [chaplains] to be religious leaders... but the chaplains were also to visit the wounded, take care of the dead, write letters home for soldiers who couldn't write, give discourses of a patriotic nature to keep soldiers from deserting. The chaplain was a very important link between the commander and the troops.⁶³

Additional duties of chaplains were counseling, including prisoners of war (POW), conducting funerals, premarital counseling, religious education, resource managers and historians.⁶⁴ Two hundred-eighteen Army Chaplains served in the Continental Army and twenty-five (11%) were killed in the Revolutionary War.⁶⁵

Throughout the Civil War, there were 2,398 chaplains who served for the Union, and 938 chaplains for the Confederacy.⁶⁶ Initially, only Christian denominations were represented but chaplain representation was later on expanded as described by Williams:

Many Christian denominations were represented, although Methodists dominated in both sections. Initially, General Order no. 15, which established the position in the Union Army, stipulated that the chaplain must represent a Christian denomination. This was revised in 1862 to allow rabbis to represent Jewish soldiers. The sizeable Irish Catholic contingent of the Union Army was also represented... Fourteen African American men served as chaplains among the United States Colored Troops (USCT), were faced much of the same discrimination and prejudice encountered by Black soldiers.⁶⁷

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Rachel Williams, "Civil War Chaplains," *National Museum for Civil War Medicine*, 5 February 2017, <https://www.civilwarmed.org/chaplains/> (accessed on January 21, 2021).

⁶⁷ Ibid.

During the Civil War, Chaplains were drafted to serve in 1862 and their first duty was to advise the commander on the moral and spiritual health of the unit and make suggestions for the welfare of the soldier.⁶⁸ An Army chaplain was in charge of one of the first efforts to look after the welfare of freed slaves during the war. "In 1863, General Grant directed Chaplain John Eaton, 27th Ohio Infantry, to care for the educational and physical needs of freed slaves who were not already in the Union Army."⁶⁹ Of the 133 chaplains who served in Black units, only 14 were Black chaplains.⁷⁰

Following the Civil War, Congress increased the size of the Army to include new regiments, two cavalry and four infantry, composed of "colored" men with the Act of July 28, 1866.⁷¹ The Act authorized that "an army chaplain be assigned to each of the newly-created African American regiments."⁷² The chaplain for a Black regiment was responsible for the spiritual well-being and educational development of enlisted soldiers. They had collateral duties, like other officers, such as supervising bakery or garden, or conducting prisoners to military prisons.⁷³ More than 30 chaplains served at various posts throughout the West during the Indian Wars.⁷⁴

Chaplains were tasked to develop education curriculum and operate schools for enlisted men. With General Order No. 24 in 1878, the Army formally established the

⁶⁸ Brinsfield, Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Edwin S. Redkey, "Black Chaplains in the Union Army," *Civil War History*, Volume 33, Number 4, The Kent State University Press: December 1987, pp.331-350.

⁷¹ The National Park Service, "Army Chaplains for Black Regiments," <http://npshistory.com/brochures/foda/black-reg-chaplains.pdf> (accessed on January 24, 2021).

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

operation of post or garrison schools.⁷⁵ Chaplain George G. Mullins, assigned to 25th Infantry on April 30, 1875, was recognized for his significant contribution for the education of Black soldiers.⁷⁶ Through his leadership, he convinced Black soldiers that education is a key to social equality and acceptance.⁷⁷ Mullin's efforts did not go unnoticed and in April 1881, he was appointed Chief of Education for the U.S. Army.⁷⁸

Henry V. Plummer was the first African American to be commissioned as regular Army chaplain assigned to the 9th Cavalry in 1884, headquartered at Fort Riley, Kansas.⁷⁹ Aside from preaching and educating, he was known as a social activist who supported Black's rights and fought discrimination. Unfortunately, he failed to recognize the social and military parameters during that time and, in 1894, was discharged from service for "social actions unbecoming of an officer."⁸⁰ In 2004, Maryland governor, Robert Ehrlich, signed a document overturning his court-martial.⁸¹

Allen Allensworth, an ex-slave who served in the Union Navy during the Civil War, was the second African American chaplain in the regular Army assigned to the 24th Infantry in 1886.⁸² He advocated vocational programs for men and was invited by the National Educational Association on its annual convention to present his paper: "The History and Progress of Education in the U.S. Army."⁸³ He championed the need to

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Southwest Association of Buffalo Soldiers (SWABS), "The Black Chaplains of the Regiments," 2020, <https://swabuffalosoldiers.org/history/the-black-chaplains-of-the-regiments/> (accessed on January 20, 2021).

⁸² The National Park Service, Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

improve education to increase military efficiency, while quietly pursuing better equality for Blacks.⁸⁴ In 1906, he became the second chaplain and first Black officer to be promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, consequently becoming the highest ranking Black officer in the Army at that time.⁸⁵

Army chaplains led the way in Army diversity and inclusion with the establishment of the first training school for chaplains during World War I at Fort Monroe, Virginia. The concept of a training school was proposed by a regular Army chaplain, Aldred A. Pruden, and approved by the War Department in February 1918.⁸⁶ “To its credit, the school was racially integrated, ahead of its day.”⁸⁷ Fifty-seven African American chaplains were trained and they were assigned, however, to still serve in segregated units.⁸⁸ As “colored” soldiers were discriminated during this time, Black chaplains were also subjected to the same prejudice as described by Boyd:

At times, Black Chaplains had to deal with the racist attitudes of some enlisted soldiers and white officers. This occurred in several units, including the all African-American 92nd Infantry Division, the “Buffalo” soldiers.⁸⁹

William C. Grau and John Walter Bowman were both Black Catholic priests assigned to the 92nd Division (Colored), the only Black combat unit in the Army’s infantry during WWII.⁹⁰ Chaplain Grau was with the “Bouncing Buffaloes” in Italy for 16 months

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Dr. John Boyd, “The Chaplains Make Good: U.S. Army Chaplains in the Great War 1917-1919,” *The United States Army Chaplain Corps Journal* – FY18 Edition, p.114, <https://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00068810/00001> (accessed October 16, 2020).

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Southwest Association of Buffalo Soldiers, Ibid.

and was known to be always on the frontlines to improve the morale of all his soldiers.⁹¹ Chaplain Bowman was assigned to the 92nd Division in Fort McClellan, Alabama and was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for meritorious actions in the South Pacific.⁹²

Elmer P. Gibson, a Black Methodist Chaplain, served as chaplain in various colored units who saw action in WWII and the Korean War from 1941-1957.⁹³ On the latter years of WWII, he was the chaplain for both the 367th and 364th Infantry Regiments in the Aleutian Islands, Alaska who became known as the “island chaplain.”⁹⁴ He ministered to all Army and Army Air Force personnel on Adak Island conducting biracial chapel services when the rest of the Army was still deeply segregated.⁹⁵ He became an advisor to President Harry Truman in 1946. He directly contributed in advocating for equality and the end of segregation in the military with President Truman’s Executive Order 9981 in 1948.⁹⁶ In June 7, 1951, he became both the Division and Post Chaplain for 9th Infantry Division in Fort Dix, becoming the first African American chaplain as Division and Post Chaplain.⁹⁷ In 1952, he became the Assistant Corps Chaplain of U.S. Army 10th Corps and in 1953, as Division Chaplain for 2nd Infantry Division in Korea, becoming the first African American chaplain for a regular, non-segregated combat Division.⁹⁸

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Peek, Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

Since the War of Independence, Army chaplains have served in every American war and over 400 chaplains have died, making the ultimate sacrifice for their troops and many receiving recognition for valor.⁹⁹ Through the years, the U.S. Army Chaplain Corps has evolved with the addition of Roman Catholic chaplains in the Mexican War, and Jewish and African American chaplains during the Civil War.¹⁰⁰ The position of the chaplain assistant, now called “religious affairs specialist,” was created to support the mission of Chaplains.¹⁰¹ The Chaplain Corps has led the way in recognizing the dignity and worth of every soldier and in providing inclusive religious support to all service members throughout its history even as the Army struggled with racism.

In the U.S. Army’s effort to eliminate racism within the organization, it has focused on EO for all personnel to equally succeed or be promoted by providing a wealth of instructional courses and programs while maintaining an *affirmative action*¹⁰² plan that does not sacrifice standards or performance to meet EO and diversity goals.¹⁰³ However, these efforts have not led to the desired racial diversity within its ranks, i.e. Blacks are underrepresented among Army officers.¹⁰⁴ With zero-tolerance policies

⁹⁹ The Army Historical Foundation, “U.S. Army Chaplain Corps,” <https://armyhistory.org/u-s-army-chaplain-corps/>. Accessed on January 21, 2021.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² “Affirmative Action” is defined as an active effort to improve the employment or educational opportunities of members of minority groups and women. *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/affirmative%20action>. Accessed on February 19, 2021.

¹⁰³ See Department of Defense, Pamphlet 600-26, “Army Affirmative Action Plan,” 23 May 1990; and John Sibley Butler, “Affirmative Action in the Military,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 523 (1992), pp.196-206. Accessed on February 19, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1047591>.

¹⁰⁴ See the 2018 Military Demographics from the Department of Defense, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy (ODASD(MC&FP), “Profile of the Military Community,” <https://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Reports/2018-demographics-report.pdf>. Accessed on November 20, 2020. See also Table 6 in Congressional Research

against any form of discrimination and mandated annual EO training in place, some racial discrimination cases continue to be reported and some perceptions of discrimination and inequality still persists as reflected in various unit command-climate surveys conducted by EO personnel.

Strategic Role of the Chaplain Corps to Promote Racial Harmony

As the Army continue efforts to be a more racially diverse organization and respond to any perception of discrimination, the author proposes that the Chaplain Corps has a strategic role to address the above gaps. The Chaplain Corps can support commanders to promote racial harmony within the organization by (1) modeling racial diversity within the Corps, (2) practicing racially inclusive chaplain ministry, and (3) providing professional advisement on racial issues. The Chaplain Corps has historical credibility in modeling and preaching racial inclusion as all chaplains stand for the God-given equal dignity of every person as commonly held in their respective ecclesiastical doctrine. Chaplains have an Army mandate to execute pluralistic¹⁰⁵ religious support and in a unique position to promote racial inclusion and equality in their dual role as spiritual leaders and professional advisers in the Army.

Modeling Racial Diversity Within the Chaplain Corps

The Army Chaplain Corps should strive to reflect racial diversity within the branch to mirror the general U.S. population and serve as a credible witness in promoting racial

Report, "Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity in the Armed Services: Background and Issues for Congress," p. 24.

¹⁰⁵ "Religious pluralism" is defined as an attitude or policy regarding the diversity of religious belief systems co-existing in society. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_pluralism. Accessed on February 12, 2021.

inclusion and racial harmony within the Army as a whole. This is congruent with the National Defense Authorization Act's (NDAA) recommendation that the armed services should "reflect the diverse population of the United States eligible to serve in the armed forces, including gender specific, racial, and ethnic populations."¹⁰⁶

A recommendation for the Chaplain Corps to model diversity is to expand racial representation within its membership through recruiting, retention, and promotion processes. The Corps should also pursue an aggressive and novel plan for strategic communication with ecclesiastical endorsers. Moreover, the Corps should strengthen race-relations training within the branch to emphasize chaplains' role in building strong and harmonious relationships in the Army.

According to the Pew Research Center in September 2019, "the racial and ethnic profile of active-duty service members shows that while the majority of the military is non-Hispanic white, black and Hispanic adults represent sizable and growing shares of the armed forces. In 2017, 57% of U.S. service members were white, 16% were black and 16% were Hispanic. Some 4% of all active-duty personnel were Asian and additional 6% identified as "other" or unknown."¹⁰⁷ The racial diversity in the military closely resemble the racial profile of the general U.S. population. On the other hand, according to the Chaplain Corps Strength Report¹⁰⁸ (all Army components: Active, Reserve, National Guard) in September 2020, 71.73% of Army chaplains were White,

¹⁰⁶ Section 519, National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2013 (P.L. 112-239 codified in 10 U.S.C. Section 656), <https://www.congress.gov/112/plaws/pub/publ239/PLAW-112publ239.pdf>. Accessed in September 15, 2020.

¹⁰⁷ Amanda Barroso, "A Look at the Changing Profile of the U.S. Military," *Pew Research Center*, 10 September 2019, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/09/10/the-changing-profile-of-the-u-s-military/> (accessed September 15, 2020).

¹⁰⁸ Provided in an email from CH (COL) Matthew Kreider, Chief of Personnel Division, Office of the Chief of Chaplains, to the author dated 29 September 2020.

11.32% were Black, 4.20% Hispanic, 10.42% were Asian/Pacific Islander, 0.72% Indian American and 1.61% identified as “other.” The chaplain profile reflects under-representation of Hispanic and Black chaplains and over-representation of White and Asian/Pacific Islander chaplains.

The 2020 active-duty racial profile of the Chaplain Corps, seen as a whole with both chaplains and religious affairs specialists, shows a better picture of racial diversity (See Table 1). The active-duty chaplain profile reflects under-representation of Hispanic and Black chaplains and over-representation of White and Asian/Pacific Islander chaplains. However, the active-duty religious affairs specialist profile reflects a large under-representation of White and Asian/Pacific Islander religious affairs specialists, and over-representation of Black religious affairs specialists.

Table 1: 2020 Active-duty Chaplain Corps Racial Profile¹⁰⁹

Race/Ethnicity	Chaplain	%	Religious Affairs Specialist	%
White	1,089	72.75	477	31.93
African American	160	10.69	674	45.11
Hispanic	64	4.28	220	14.73
Asian/Pacific Islander	170	11.36	46	3.08
Native American	6	0.40	13	0.87
Other	8	0.53	64	4.28
TOTAL	1,497	100	1,494	100

The current senior leadership of the Chaplain Corps does reflect racial diversity but more effort could be expanded to improve diversity in its overall membership. An

¹⁰⁹ Chaplain profile provided in an email from CH (COL) Matthew Kreider, Chief of Personnel Division, Office of the Chief of Chaplains, to the author dated 29 September 2020, and Religious Affairs Specialist profile provided in an e-mail from SFC (P) Paul A. Johndro, 56M Talent Management NCO, Human Resource Command, to the author dated 13 October 2020.

intentional plan for racial diversity in recruitment, retention and promotion within the branch would lead to a continuous stream of racially diverse chaplains and religious affairs specialists within the Chaplain Corps. Racial diversity in the composition and leadership of the Chaplain Corps can potentially impact attractiveness towards sustained recruitment from all racial and ethnic groups. It can be a motivation to encourage retention of diverse “Unit Ministry Teams” (UMT)¹¹⁰ and provide a perception that all members “belong” or “fit” into the organization.

According to Chaplain (COL) Lawson, Chief of Chaplain Recruitment and Accessions for the Office of the Chief of Chaplains, the Chaplain Corps recruitment does not have a racial diversity quota¹¹¹ which is consistent with the Department of Defense (DoD) Instruction 1020.05.¹¹² The primary focus is recruiting best qualified applicants to meet the essential pluralistic religious support requirements of the Army. Current Chaplain Corps recruitment efforts include increasing female chaplains and low-density, high-demand chaplains (Catholic priests) utilizing digital advertisements, social media platforms and face-to-face interaction with potential candidates. A plan to promote diversity¹¹³ in the Chaplain Corps may include intentional assignment of well qualified and racially diverse chaplain recruiters to seek out and attract diverse applicants.

¹¹⁰ AR 165-1, 2-2.

¹¹¹ Monica Lawson, (Colonel, Chief of Chaplain Recruiting and Accessions, Office of the Chief of Chaplains, US Army), in discussion with the author. October 4, 2020.

¹¹² Department of Defense Instruction 1020.05, “DoD Diversity and Inclusion Management Program,” 9 September 2020, https://www.defenseculture.mil/Portals/90/Documents/Toolkit/DoDI_1020.05.pdf?ver=2020-09-10-070144-413 (accessed on October 10, 2020).

¹¹³ Robert Hart, (Colonel, Chief of Chaplain Corps Branch, Office of the Chief of Chaplains, US Army), in discussion with author. October 7, 2020.

On-going Chaplain Corps' strategic communication to all ecclesiastical endorsers may include innovative use of digital media in promoting racial diversity of chaplains wanted by the Army. The Chaplain Corps' current efforts includes conducting an annual conference with all ecclesiastical endorsers and sending Army chaplain recruiters and liaisons in denominational institutions and communities to promote military chaplain vocations.

There are, however, Chaplain Corps challenges in its efforts to promote diversity within the branch. There is a limited pool of qualified applicants from certain faith denominations due to the denominations' vocation shortage, i.e., Catholic priests. By ecclesiastical doctrine, some denominations do not allow females as "ordained" ministers, i.e., Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox, and do not endorse female chaplains. This is also similar with some Baptist denominations that do not allow females as pastors of their congregations.

Similar challenges to diversity of the U.S. civilian clergy,¹¹⁴ impacted by shortage of vocations and gender-specific minister requirements of certain faith denominations, is reflected in the Chaplain Corps. In as much as the Chaplain Corps desires promotion of diverse chaplains and religious affairs specialists to varying ranks in the organization, the effort for diversity is also dependent on those who ultimately succeed to be promoted in accordance with the merit-based system of promotion in the Army.

¹¹⁴ See 2018 race and ethnicity profile of U.S. clergy in Data USA, <https://datausa.io/profile/soc/clergy#:~:text=Race%20%26%20Ethnicity&text=75.6%25%20of%20Clergy%20are%20White,or%20ethnicity%20in%20this%20occupation>, (accessed on February 13, 2021).

Current Chaplain Corps' initial military training (IMT) includes race relations training under the Army Equal Opportunity (EO) classes and "touched"¹¹⁵ on two classes (Religious Pluralism and Advisement to Command). The chaplains' IMT can add emphasis on the role of the chaplain as the "center of gravity" (COG)¹¹⁶ in building strong relationships and facilitating racial harmony. Moreover, follow-on Senior Chaplain mentoring and career development program for chaplains and religious affairs specialists should facilitate equal opportunity for racial minority UMT members to be retained and compete for promotion.

As the Chaplain Corps attempts to reflect the racial diversity of the civilian population, is it reasonable to expect all other branches of the Army to strive for the same diversity recommended by the NDAA? The author believes that it should be an Army-wide on-going effort to attain the ideal civilian population diversity profile. All branches of the Army may also have challenges in achieving the ideal diversity profile, as each branch requires a unique skill-set and all are subject to the same merit-system of promotion. Nonetheless, every branch has to exert effort to achieve the goal in order to provide transparency and a clear perception that the Army is genuine in its efforts towards racial inclusion and diversity.

Racially Inclusive Chaplain Ministry

Practicing a racially inclusive ministry is another way in which the Chaplain Corps can promote racial harmony in the Army. "In a pluralistic religious setting of the military, the Chaplain Corps performs or provides religious support for all Soldiers, Family

¹¹⁵ Provided in an email from CH (MAJ) Rob Belton, World Religions and Advisement Instructor, U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School, dated 26 October 2020.

¹¹⁶ Provided in an email from CH (LTC) Douglas Weaver, Training Directorate Chief PME, U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School, dated 20 October 2020.

members, and authorized Department of Defense civilians from all religious traditions.”¹¹⁷ As UMTs are called to fulfill this pluralistic religious support mandate of the U.S. Constitution, the Chaplain Corps has integrated training on inclusive ministry.

A recommendation for the Chaplain Corps to conduct inclusive ministry and promote racial harmony is to improve IMT and Professional Military Training (PME) and put emphasis on chaplains’ role as the “COG” for racial harmony. Unit Ministry Teams should also promote community ecumenical services and programs. Moreover, Senior Chaplains should encourage racial diversity of installation religious support personnel. Senior Chaplains should also facilitate a wider distribution of chaplains in support of installation chapel congregations, and conduct regular dialogue with minority chaplains.

Inclusive ministry is discussed in the IMT course on “Identify the Impact of Pluralism on Religious Support” but, currently, there are “no Professional Military Education (PME) courses that specifically address racial harmony as a terminal learning objective.”¹¹⁸ “Chaplains as the COG for racial harmony”¹¹⁹ may be emphasized in existing classes such as the Army Profession and the Army Professional Ethic, or added as a separate class. The current Chief PME for Training Directorate of the U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School, CH (LTC) Douglas Weaver, suggests that it could be addressed through subjects on religious pluralism and conflict resolution. The class can be added to IMT and stressed in the Chaplain Captain Career Course (C4) and the Operational Religious Support Leaders’ Course (ORSLC).¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ AR 165-1, 1-6.

¹¹⁸ Weaver, *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

Adding a separate class on the afore-mentioned training would require the course to be developed through the Army ADDIE (Analyze, Design, Develop, Implement, and Evaluate) process¹²¹ or provided from an external source by the Department of the Army. The constraint on internal development would require additional resources to include the subject matter expertise (SME) to provide content. Moreover, the additional class would require funding and time for development, and for the class to be conducted in accordance with U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) and Army University standards.

Training and professional development program of chaplains and religious affairs specialists should emphasize that they represent and teach about respect of equal human dignity and inclusion in their direct ministry, i.e., regular worship services, pastoral care and counseling, and specialized institutional ministry in hospitals and prisons. As chaplains administer sacraments, ministrations and conduct counseling, they also bring about healing and consolation to all who suffer from trauma and pain due to racism and all forms of discrimination.¹²²

Active participation in ecumenical religious services or programs such as Thanksgiving Day Service, National Day of Prayer, 9/11 Memorial, outreach program to an orphanage and the like, is another way for UMTs to promote mutual respect and build racially inclusive communities. Chapel volunteers and auxiliaries in military installations already reflect great racial diversity. Senior or Garrison Chaplains who provide supervision, integration and oversight of all Chapel and Religious Support

¹²¹ Department of the Army, TRADOC Regulation 350-70, Army Learning Policy and Systems, 10 July 2017, <https://adminpubs.tradoc.army.mil/regulations/TR350-70.pdf>, Accessed on December 15, 2020.

¹²² William Green, (Brigadier General, Deputy Chief of Chaplains, US Army), in discussion with author. September 9, 2020.

Programs in military installations can sustain inclusive ministry by encouraging intentional recruitment or involvement of racially diverse volunteers, chapel ministers or auxiliaries, religious education teachers, and religious support contract personnel.

Additionally, Senior or Garrison Chaplains can promote a racially inclusive ministry in military communities by facilitating a wider distribution of chaplains supporting different Chapel congregations and religious support programs. As Protestant chaplains currently comprise 87.93% of all Army chaplains (88.84% for active-duty component), the researcher has observed that most of them concentrate their support to the Contemporary and Traditional Protestant Chapel congregations while, oftentimes, only one (or two) racial minority Protestant chaplain supports the Protestant Gospel Chapel congregation. Garrison Chaplains can do more to assess the diversity of available chaplains and their respective ministry skills in their installations, and direct a more distributed and inclusive chaplain ministry while respecting the religious preference of worshippers. They could encourage chaplains to expand their ecclesiastical awareness and ministry comfort zone in accordance with their ecclesiastical endorsement.

Furthermore, Senior or Garrison Chaplains can also influence racial harmony in installations by facilitating regular and open dialogue with racial minority chaplains regarding issues unique to minority chaplain ministry and any discrimination concerns. Senior Chaplains' perceived sensitivity and willingness to listen and engage in dialogue with minority chaplains would directly influence a more positive perception and relationship with the Chapel congregations that minority chaplains provide pastoral care.

Through this effort, the Senior or Garrison Chaplain also facilitates the “revitalization”¹²³ and resiliency of military communities.

Advisement to Command

Finally, the Chaplain Corps has a strategic role in its advisement to commanders and their staff regarding racial and equality issues in the Army. As staff officers, chaplains provide professional advice to commanders¹²⁴ on issues pertaining to morals, morale and ethical issues. A recommendation in which chaplains’ advisement to command can promote racial harmony is chaplains’ participation in race-relations working groups. Chaplains may be utilized by commanders to conduct unit Moral Leadership Training (MLT). The Chaplain Corps should also develop additional Strong Bonds Training curricula on human dignity and social justice themes. Moreover, chaplains should be pro-active in their advisement to commanders on soldiers’ mental and spiritual readiness.

Chaplains’ advisement to commanders may include participation in command-directed race-relations working groups. Equal Opportunity personnel are the proponent in addressing racial discrimination and EO issues in Army units, and chaplains may provide support to the command with appropriate input on the improvement of processes in monitoring, managing, reporting and responding to racial discrimination complaints.

¹²³ One of the current four Lines of Effort (LOE) of the Chaplain Corps is to “Revitalize” in order to support and retain all members of the Army family.

¹²⁴ AR 165-1, Ibid.

The Chaplain Corps is the proponent of the Army MLT.¹²⁵ “The MLT program of the Army is a commander’s program used to build more cohesive units with stronger Soldiers, Civilians, and Families by addressing a variety of moral, ethical, social and spiritual issues.”¹²⁶ Commanders may direct chaplains to conduct training for all unit leaders and service members on leadership ethics, Army values, relationship resilience and promote recognition and respect of the equal dignity of every person as protected by the U.S. Constitution. As part of the MLT or the Command Master Religious Program (CMRP), Commanders may direct chaplain-led unit cultural field trips, such as trips to the National Memorial for Peace and Justice or the Jewish Holocaust Memorial, to highlight lessons learned about discrimination.

The Chaplain Corps is also the proponent of the Strong Bonds Program and may be part of units’ CMRP. The Chaplain Corps should develop additional themes or curricula on equal human dignity, overcoming prejudice, and social justice to the program. Through these command-directed and chaplain-led training events, UMTs can facilitate open dialogue on racial and equality issues and impact positive race relations among service members.

“Project Inclusion” is a current initiative of the Chaplain Corps to promote diversity and inclusion within the Army organization. The initiative includes the production of a Strong Bonds Program film entitled “Growing through Adversity” powered by diverse groups that may be utilized by chaplains in building stronger marriages for diverse military couples.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 1-9.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 9-9. Also see AR 350-1, “Army Training and Leader Development,” 10 December 2017.

The Chaplain Corps can support Army leaders' effort to develop soldiers' interpersonal capability for their mental readiness to facilitate team cohesion and the development and sustainment of healthy, trusting relationships.¹²⁷ Chaplains are subject matter experts (SME) in interpersonal relationships and they may be utilized by commanders to provide training to facilitate effective communication techniques, caring for others, conflict resolution, and team-building in their organizations.¹²⁸

Spiritual readiness is a part of the Holistic Health and Fitness System (H2F) of the Army and the Chaplain Corps is the proponent in providing advisement to Army leaders on soldiers' spiritual development, sustainment and repair.¹²⁹ The 1st Amendment of the U.S. Constitution is the basis for religious support and spiritual readiness, and UMTs are the staff proponent to ensure the free exercise of religion in the Army. As stated in H2F:

The Army values Soldiers' rights to observe tenets of their respective religion, or to observe no religion at all. Free exercise of religion supports the Army mission of sustaining Soldiers' short and long-term readiness, building ethical and moral strength, and motivating soldiers to meet present and future challenges.¹³⁰

Army leaders' responsibility in ensuring spiritual readiness of soldiers includes providing information or referral for all available spiritual readiness practices in and around military installations.¹³¹ Garrison Chaplains and UMTs support commanders by maintaining and providing current lists of various local civilian, religious and secular

¹²⁷ Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Field Manual 7-22, Holistic Health and Fitness, 8 October 2020, 9-45.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 10.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 10-4.

¹³¹ Ibid., 10-36.

organizations that may assist in providing spiritual readiness, education and direction for soldiers and their families.¹³²

In accordance with the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, commanders cannot deny soldiers' requests for religious accommodation except for military necessity.¹³³ Department of Defense Instruction 1300.17, Religious Liberties in Military Services, provides policy and procedures for Army leaders to allow individual practice of religious exercise in the Army workplace to support spiritual readiness.¹³⁴ Chaplains provide advisement to commanders on soldiers' religious accommodation requests¹³⁵ that are oftentimes connected with their ethnic or cultural background. Soldiers' religious accommodation requests may include spiritual readiness practices, dietary practices, clothing and apparel, and physical appearance.¹³⁶ Senior Chaplain oversight of all discrimination cases in an Army installation, especially cases related to religious liberty and religious accommodation requests, can help ensure appropriate and timely handling of discrimination-related issues.

Conclusion

The U.S. military has made great progress in overcoming systemic racism within its ranks and maintains zero tolerance policies against overt racism and racial discrimination. The military has been commended as a workplace leader "ahead of

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ See Department of Defense Instruction 1300.17, Religious Liberties in the Military Services, 10 February 2009, and AR 600-20.

¹³⁴ FM 7-22, 10-5.

¹³⁵ See AR 600-20.

¹³⁶ See AR 670-1, "Religious Accommodations," and AR 600-20, "Army Command Policy."

civilian sector”¹³⁷ for its promotion of diversity and anti-discrimination efforts and, “historically, the Army has been the most successful of all the services at racial integration.”¹³⁸ These efforts are further demonstrated in the U.S. Army’s recent action to remove the data on race, religion and sexual orientation in all service members’ Officer Record Briefs and Enlisted Record Briefs presented in promotion boards in order to avoid any perception of discrimination that may be associated with the service member’s demographic data. Continued efforts to eliminate discrimination within the Army are crucial and the Army Chaplain Corps has a strategic role in addressing this issue.

In keeping with its identity, the Chaplain Corps can effectively promote racial harmony within the Army by striving to model within the branch the same racial diversity of the U.S. Army and general U.S. civilian population, by practicing a racially inclusive ministry in its pluralistic religious support, and command advisement on racial discrimination. There may be continued debates about proper balance between emphasis on racial diversity and inclusion of personnel within the Army and importance of merit-based systems, and whether racial diversity in all units actually promotes unit readiness, cohesion and morale, but the Chaplain Corps consistently stands by its “moral imperative”¹³⁹ in promoting respect for God-given equal human dignity of all service members and their families in its faithful service for God and Country.

¹³⁷ Gerard Astor, *The Right to Fight: A History of African Americans in the Military*, (Novato, CA: Presidio, 1998), p.479.

¹³⁸ “Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity in the Military,” https://clintonwhitehouse1.archives.gov/White_House/EOP/OP/html/aa/aa07.html. Accessed on February 13, 2021.

¹³⁹ Thomas Solhjem, (Major General, Chief of Chaplains, US Army), in discussion with author. September 14, 2020.