



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20350-2000

IN REPLY REFER TO

1730

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04 Dec 02

Dear Colleagues:

The forecast calls for snow tonight in the nation's capital—the first of the season. If the storm does come, we who live and work here will wake up tomorrow in a different world. When snow falls in Washington, the result is chaos. The simple becomes complicated, the easy becomes hard and the hard becomes impossible. If the storm comes, we may not even be here tomorrow.

We cannot control the storm; it will come or it won't. But we can get ready. We have been reviewing our emergency procedures. We have made sure we can communicate with everyone on our staff so that we can let our people know what's happening and what's expected of them as circumstances change. We have encouraged everyone to stock up on essential resources while there's still time. And we have reminded them that though our work is important, their safety is more important. If the snow falls on Washington, we'll make the best of it.

The storm clouds of war are gathering once again on the other side of the world. Many are forecasting, not the falling of a soft and silent snow, but showers of bombs and bullets. Some of you are already in the path of the storm and many others may follow. This, too, is a storm we cannot control. It will come or it won't. If it does, the results will surely include the chaos and confusion that comes with any combat. You may quickly find your lives and your ministries crowded with the complicated, the difficult and the impossible.

You cannot control the storm, but you can get ready. Review your emergency procedures, both military and religious. Make sure you maintain good communications with your command, your ministry supervisors, your people, and your God. Take inventory now of the material and spiritual resources you will need in difficult situations and obtain what you lack from the proper source (or Source) while there is time. And take care of yourself. Your ministry may take you in harm's way, and if it does, you must exercise the greatest of care, so that you can meet the needs you are there to meet.

If another conflict like Desert Storm comes, we who minister to God's people in uniform will make the best of it. We will wake up in a different world, wherever we are, and do what we are here to do. I pray that God will shower you with His blessings as we wait to see if the storm will hit or pass us by. I pray especially that God will protect you who may be directly and immediately affected and provide you every spiritual gift necessary to convey His Spirit to those you serve in His name.

Sincerely,



BARRY C. BLACK

Rear Admiral, Chaplain Corps
U. S. Navy
Chief of Navy Chaplains