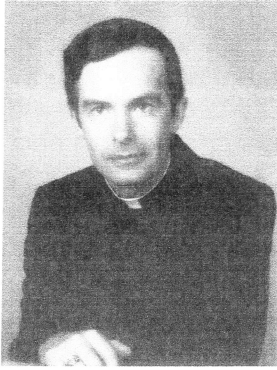# Chaplain's Corner, Hughes Camp Chaplain Richard W Rudd

With the proliferation of computers since the late 20th century, the phrase virtual reality has become a part of our vernacular. But, its existence predates computers. Before technology became a major source of information, authors of revisionist history texts manufactured fictional accounts of how we supposedly arrived at where they wanted us to be as a society. In the early 20th century, the Hollywood movie industry was creating virtual realities before computers were ever imagined. By the 1950's, TV became the first mechanism to project virtual realities within the confines of our homes.

In the movie *Revenge*, one of the protagonists is a computer expert. In his quest to identify the antagonist, he discovers he has met his match and seeks assistance from a fellow expert who chides him for not spending more time in the *real world* of virtual reality. Today's youth are addicted to computer games depicting violence as an acceptable way of solving problems and a normal part of life without negative or permanent consequences. Not long ago, the electricity was temporarily cut off for several days in the neighborhood of a girl who lived her life vicariously through her computer. When forced to do so, she was amazed to discover a world she had ignored and a reality with which she had lost touch. For her, it was an epiphany.

Virtual reality, as manufactured by those who seek to design a society to their liking, is the attempt to fabricate a perception of life in effect, but not fact. It strives to conjure up the equivalent of, but not the actual. It is smoke and mirrors; in a word, it is fake. For example, too many history texts in their account of the WBTS never fail to mention the horrors of the Confederate detention camp at Andersonville. They never explain that it was because of the efforts of the Union forces that supplies were short for both the prisoners of war and their guards. They never document the horrors of Yankee prison camps in the North and the fact that those unjustified conditions could have been humanely prevented. One hundred fifty years later, nothing has changed. In their reporting of the events transpiring in the war zone of the Middle East, the liberal media never misses an opportunity to show armed Israeli soldiers and civilian casualties in Gaza. They rarely show armed Moslems attacking Israel and the suffering they cause. In the liberal media's world of virtual reality, the roles of aggression and self-defense are reversed.

This summer, the *Kansas City Star* published an article about southern culture in Missouri. It could have been written about the people who live in every southern state. The article began with an interview of a man legally wearing a gun at a restaurant. One resident, a member of the League of the South, said he considered the Confederate flag a symbol of a glorious past and "hopefully a glorious future." Another commented that "…you can see a few Confederate flags around, but white supremacy is rare." "The national media flocked to the area and reminded the country once again of the dark side…" when an extremist individual or group infiltrated a community. Another being interviewed lamented, "But because of a few stories, the rest of the country doesn't know the difference." They concluded that the rest of the US sees them as "…a bunch of backwoods, ignorant, gun-totin' hillbilly rednecks" that smoke corncob pipes. Such assessments are not an accurate description of the real world in the South, but in the pseudo- world of virtual reality, as one man stated, "That's who we are now." That same national media almost never showcases the fomenting racism and hate, guns, violent extremists, and lawlessness in old Haight-Ashbury, south Chicago, or Harlem. Compare these areas to the South and one must truthfully admit that a place with guns and *Bibles* is more civilized than one with guns and no *Bibles*. And, guns and *Bibles* are a better combination than bombs and *Korans*.

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When Philip told Nathanael that the Messiah was from Nazareth, Nathanael asked, "Can something good come out of Nazareth?" (Jn. 1:46) Nazareth is a town in an area called Galilee. Like the American south, it had an agricultural economy and was populated by people who were described as being patriotic, courageous, and respectful of law and order. As the American south is known as the Bible Belt, so the people of Galilee were known as a religious people. Christ was reared there and conducted most of His ministry there, giving His first homily and performing His first miracle. Nearly all of the apostles came from Galilee. Like American Yankees, the people from outside of Galilee viewed its residents with contempt. They arrogantly considered them less cultivated and refined, mocked their accent and dialect, and were critical of their spiritual dedication and acceptance of Christ. As Christ chose to associate with the less proud and privileged of Galilee, so God the Father seems to have blessed the Southland with an extra outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We should not be surprised when Yankees ask, "Can something good come out of Dixie?"

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