

SAILORS OFTEN IGNORE THEIR PERSONAL AFFAIRS

By Chaplain Vanlandingham

Personal affairs is a subject that is often overlooked and ignored, but Benn men will soon have a special reason to have their personal affairs in order. Now is the time to take care of your personal papers and documents, for soon Bennington will be deploying on her 1968 Western Pacific cruise.

Personal Affairs cover a wide range of subject matter. A car title or a bank book may be all you have to worry about or only a minute section under your personal affairs. What would happen if you should die while the ship is deployed, or if a member of your family should die? Could your family pick up the loose ends you left or could they notify you in case of an emergency? These are questions no one likes to ask, but it is important that everyone answers them to his own satisfaction.

Wills, bank books, insurance policies, deeds, stock certificates, power of attorney and debts are a few of the items military people often ignore. With deployment coming up, it is very important for these to be brought up to date. Be sure your wife, your parents or your children know what to expect if you should die.

Besides your personal effects, does your family know the benefits to which they are entitled. Many times Navy couples, especially newly married ones are separated without the wife knowing what privileges are available. Be sure your dependent or dependents know what services the Navy has established for them in every area from medical to commissary. Building 68 of the Long Beach Naval Station handles Military Dependent's Identification Cards (DD form 1172). Your dependents need this card in order to utilize the services available for Navy Dependents.

What if you should die on active duty, in retirement or as a veteran? Does your family know what benefits to expect. Is your record of emergency data sheet up to date in the Personnel Office? Did you know that this information has nothing to do with your Navy insurance policy, if you have one, and that you must go to the disbursing Office to get your beneficiary on record? Should your wife have a power of attorney and if so, what type? Legal can help you with this.

Many Navy men find it difficult to obtain the right information in emergency leave situations. The American Red Cross provides a channel between the man in the Navy and his family in obtaining this information. The Red Cross will assist with reports needed by the military in connection with emergency leaves, hardship discharges and the like. It will help if your family understands military requirements in these areas and how to comply with them. The Red Cross will verify the facts to help the Navy decide whether a leave can be granted.

Before this deployment find out the location and telephone number of the nearest Red Cross Center and be sure your family understands that in case of emergency the Red Cross will be at their service.



There are four basic rules a Navy man can follow concerning his personal affairs:

1. Compile a comprehensive record of your assets and liabilities and all important documents. Make sure your insurance policies list the correct beneficiary. Have a will drawn up. You probably have more of an estate than you think.
2. Keep these records and documents in one place and make sure your family knows where they are located and can get to them. An excellent place is a safe deposit box.
3. Discuss your family's rights and benefits as survivors of a serviceman or veteran so they know what to expect.
4. Notify your family how to get in touch with you in case of an emergency.

Recently a retired General of the Army criticized the Administration's policy in South Vietnam. At the same time he eulogized the professionalism and courage of America's fighting men, principally the youth of America. Khe Sanh, Hue, Saigon, Quang Tri, and a host of other South Vietnamese towns and cities bear him true--there's nothing wrong with the courage of American youth.

On board BENNINGTON I have been particularly impressed with the courage of young men. Pilots, crewmen, flight deck personnel, boilermen, and all who do their jobs in dangerous places reflect courage.

Yet it's one thing to stand dauntless in the face of physical danger and fight back, and quite another to stand up to life each day. Courage is needed to face the imagined and real fears, the possible failures and few successes, and pressures to conform. Courage is needed to attain goals of education, personal standards of morality, and a religious faith.

In one sense Khe Sanh is wherever there's danger; it is like a legend. Khe Sanh may be the flight deck, the boilerroom, the electrical shop. For all of us Khe Sanh is the courage to be our faith, our ideals, our goals; in effect, our noble selves.

In times of danger we can take courage from the legacy of strength left to us by men who have faced their Khe Sanhs and triumphed. One wrote: "Never be afraid of any one or anything." In the Scriptures we read, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in the Lord."

Big Benn Hosts SECNAV Guest Cruise

Fifteen guests of the Secretary of the Navy from all over the United States spent a week on Bennington observing shipboard life Feb. 4 to 9.

Besides touring the ship and gaining their sea legs, guests were able to dine in the four different messes, see an underway replenishment and a gun shoot, and take a turn at conning Big Benn.

Guests discussed what was going on at home with crewmembers of their home states and cities, but they still found time to relax in their staterooms or spend time browsing in the ship's library.

Tired but happy guests left the ship after an eventful week, with a little better understanding what it is like to be a member of the largest Navy in the world.