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Editorial

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Editorial

In this issue our writers deal with subjects quite disparate: the Puritans, Vietnam, and computers. While computers are as contemporary as today, Vietnam is an experience most Americans would like to bury in the past. And Puritans are easily dismissed as irrelevant in our fast-changing society.

We think, however, that an analysis of the positions of the New England Puritans is demanded if present-day Calvinists are to avoid mistakes similar to those of our spiritual forefathers. The Puritan dream did not last. Why? Can Calvinists who try to structure society to the last detail ever hope to have these visions take on flesh and blood?

Applying the Christ-culture canons of H. Reinhold Niebuhr, James Schaap tests the positions of Governors William Bradford and John Winthrop. (In the next issue theologians Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards will submit to Schaap's scalpel-pen.)

Few want to re-live or even mention Vietnam now; it's too recent. Later, historians, sociologists, novelists—a host of specialists—will probe, classify and sort it all out. Chaplain Galen Meyer has kept us from

the luxury of a detached post mortem. He previously used *Pro Rege's* pages to keep Vietnam before us (Vol. XI, 4, June 1983). Now he gives a first-hand account of a military chaplain's agony:

To a chaplain peace is more than a word; it is his mission as a pastor. For this reason, he cannot help feel the heavy irony in his efforts to bring peace to the soldier caught up in the war. The peace he brings is not the cessation of hostilities. That is the business of governments.

Russell Maatman, professor of Chemistry and *Pro Rege* editorial board member, makes extensive use of computers in his research and teaching. Gifted with the ability of making scientific matters understandable (at least in part) to laypeople, Prof. Maatman cautions us not to fear computers as though they were super-human beasts. They are tools—though quite sophisticated ones—and like all tools they are extensions of the human person.

John M. Zinkand