work as we had known it when I was in seminary, to which my patient host replied that field work had long ago been abolished as a second-rate rival of this approach within the seminary itself. It was decided, he said, that the on-the-job experiences, often poorly supervised, lacked not only the concentrated intensity of the case studies but the important setting of collegiality as well, within which students would be stimulated and instructed by the display of their friends' imaginations and expertise. Whereas a student in a field-work situation might proceed through three or four major experiences a year, with only sporadic or uneven treatment in a seminar setting; he might reasonably have as many as sixty or seventy such experiences annually in the case studies program.

Briefs of the daily studies, I learned, were circulated among the students several days in advance of the public hearings, so that there was opportunity for research and reflection before actually becoming involved in the sessions themselves. The subjects for the studies ranged widely. Generally they had to do with parish response to such situations as the alarming consumption of sexual pornography by the young; the death of a nonbeliever; the divorce of a prominent parish couple; the defeat of a particularly worthy candidate for political office; the bombing of a small African city by UN containment troops; a devastating flood that had left thousands of tenement families homeless; public indifference to educational method; and subliminal patterns of prejudice on government television channels.

It was primarily for the case studies, which were constantly being changed and renewed, that most of the ministers and laymen returned to seminary once they had left. A month's worth of these sessions, declared by mentor, and they go back to their parishes like new persons!

Many of the case studies, I learned, were brought to the seminary by returning students. Some represented actual incidents which they had had to face in the line of duty. Others were the fruit of imagination and speculation which resulted when the students reflected on the relationship between various life situations and certain theological teachings or positions. All in all, it meant that there was little place in this modern seminary for purely abstract thought or belief. The religion inculcated there was a commando religion. Belief was constantly being challenged by real situations.

I could not but concede to my host that it was the most incomparable system I had ever encountered.

But did it mean, I asked, that students never entered upon church vocations during their seminary training? And, if it did,