

Our country is at war

In September of 1942, Dad Frank S. Land sent a message to the DeMolay Chapters around the country that began with “Our country is at war. The whole world is in chaos. Every bit of earth is a battle front. Men are fighting and dying. DeMolay is experiencing its first war.” He noted that Mother Chapter had over 500 members, but that 400 of them were draft-age. The letter outlined his vision for the survival of DeMolay, when most of the older boys had left their Chapters and enlisted in the Armed Forces. He calmly suggested that Chapters focus on the youngest members, the 15, 16 and 17 year olds, knowing that the 18, 19 and 20 year-olds were going off to war. This was a great shift in thinking for Chapters that had only ever been led by the oldest members. He told them that the older officers in Mother Chapter had organized a recruitment program and were poised to initiate 300 high school aged boys to fill the roster, and that they had stepped aside to let their younger brothers take over all the leadership positions.

1. What personal change did Dad Land have to make in order to take this approach to problem solving?
2. Why didn't Dad Land just direct every Chapter to change their program to appeal to the high school aged members?
3. Do you think his letter was successful in gaining the cooperation of most of the Chapters? Explain why you think it did, or did not, work!