

Pentagon Prayer

Washington

Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird apparently thinks generals, admirals and their civilian bosses need to meditate at least as much as congressmen.

On Laird's orders, workmen are building a wood-paneled "meditation room" in the Pentagon—a small, two-room sanctuary just off a busy corridor.

The defense chief, a ruling elder of the Presbyterian Church, brought the idea with him when he came over from the Capitol where he served as a congressman from Wisconsin.

As the Defense Department put it: "Secretary Laird, a regular visitor to the prayer room on Capitol Hill, strongly believed there was a similar

need for a non-denominational place for meditation in the Pentagon.

"Accordingly, he ordered a renovation of a small area . . ."

Gold glass panels lend a chapel-like air to the meditation room, but no worship services will be held there.

The place is divided into two parts. There is a small area where a person can be alone with his thoughts and a somewhat larger space "for small groups desiring to share common concerns."

It will be open daily to all, the Pentagon said.

By the time the meditation room is finished about mid-June it will cost about \$15,000.

Associated Press