

Subject: 201905 Letter from the Bruderhof to The National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service - May 16 event - Increasing Awareness Among Young Americans and Lessing the Civil Military Divide.

From: Johann Huleatt <johannah@ccimail.com>

Date: 5/15/19, 7:42 AM

To: "'info@inspire2serve.gov'" <info@inspire2serve.gov>

CC: "Brown, Craig T." <Craig.Brown@sss.gov>, "'Massey, Jorene I.'" <Jorene.Massey@sss.gov>, Shaina Huleatt <shainahuleatt@ccilc.com>

To Whom It May Concern from The National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service:

Attached is a letter that serves as a statement to be considered by The National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service.

Please include the attached letter it as part of the public hearing record for the May 16 Hearing on Military Service that addresses: Increasing Awareness Among Young Americans and Lessing the Civil Military Divide.

If there are any related questions, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Johann Huleatt

Outreach Director - Bruderhof

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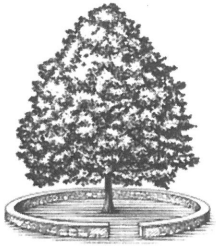
Email: johannah@ccimail.com <<mailto:johannah@ccimail.com>>

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— Attachments: —

20190515 Bruderhof letter to the Commission and Military
Service Hearing.pdf

1.6 MB



BRUDERHOF

May 15, 2019

Commissioners

National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service

2530 Crystal Drive

Suite 1000, Box #63

Arlington, VA 22202

Submitted via email to: info@inspire2serve.gov

Dear Commissioners,

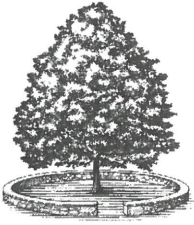
On behalf of the Bruderhof, a historical peace church rooted in the Anabaptist tradition of the 16th century, this letter is our response to the May 16, 2019 military service hearings. We are aware of the work of the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service, and understand its concern to encourage young Americans to serve their country. As you deliberate on this topic, we ask that you take into account the beliefs of many who came to this country seeking a place where they could serve God and their fellow man without compromising their religious beliefs.

As a matter of personal conviction, no one while a member of the Bruderhof has ever taken part in war or military service of any kind. This position is based on the teachings of Jesus and is explained in *Foundations of our Faith and Calling*, the Bruderhof's public account of its faith and way of life:

Jesus instructed us: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, pray for those who persecute you, and forgive as you need to be forgiven. He taught: Do not resist those who mistreat you, but allow yourself to be struck again rather than to strike back. He rejected political power when it was offered to him, and he refused to defend himself with force, rather letting himself be killed. We must do the same.

The way of peace demands reverence for all life, above all each human life, since every person is made in the image of God. Christ's word and example, as affirmed by the teaching of the early church, absolutely forbid us to take human life for any reason, directly or indirectly, whether in war or self-defense, through the death penalty, or by any other means, including euthanasia or abortion. As conscientious objectors, we will not serve in the armed services of any country, not even as noncombatants. Nor may we support war-making or the use of deadly force by others through our consent or aid. . . .

We uphold the way of nonviolent love and unconditional forgiveness. This is not a pacifism of detachment or cowardice. Jesus calls us to be ambassadors of peace, even at the risk of death or dishonor. Opposing war is only the first step; we seek to build up a life that removes the occasion for war by overcoming its root causes: injustice, hatred, and greed. We



want to use our lives to advance the peaceable kingdom foretold by the prophets, which will transform not only individuals but also all human society and the whole of nature:

The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. Isaiah 11:6 (NRSV)

They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Isaiah 11:9 (NRSV)

Foundations of our Faith and Calling, paragraphs 11 and 13.

Every day we seek to live out the teaching of Jesus in a practical way. This includes serving within our church communities and local neighborhoods, as well as responding with church and nonprofit partners to national and international needs. At present we are working with the Selective Service System to ensure that our communities can offer viable alternatives to military service in the event of a national military draft.

We are concerned that no one is pressured into military service, especially where this contradicts their religious beliefs and conscience. We pray that the United States will always remain a nation where believers like us can live and serve in accordance with Jesus' instruction to strive for peace and care for our neighbors and all those that are neglected.

Sincerely,

Johann Huleatt
Outreach Director

cc: Mr. Craig Brown and Ms. Irish Lewis Massey – Selective Service System