

WATCHTOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, INC.

25 COLUMBIA HEIGHTS, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11201, U.S.A.

PHONE (718) 625-3600

April 21, 1989

MEMORANDUM ON 1980 REGISTRATION FOR SELECTIVE SERVICE

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS IN THE UNITED STATES

Dear Brothers:

Federal law requires that male citizens of the United States present themselves for registration with the Selective Service System within 30 days of their 18th birthday. In keeping with the requirements of Romans 13 and related scriptures, Christian brothers will comply with the law. This memorandum is provided so that you can inform the brothers in your congregation concerning these requirements. This memorandum should be read by each member of the body of elders and should be held in the permanent files of the congregation by the secretary who should be thoroughly informed as to its contents. The body of elders should be aware of those younger brothers in their congregation who are approaching their 18th birthday. As these younger ones approach their 18th birthday, an elder should review this information with them. (Obviously, no one should copy this information and give it out.)

Registration takes place at United States Post Offices. The postal clerks act as agents of the Selective Service System to distribute the registration cards and accept them for filing on behalf of the Selective Service System. Registrants are thereafter required to keep the Selective Service System advised of any change of names or addresses. If you process any applications for Bethel service, please check with each applicant as to his registration and make a notation on the application form as to what he has done. The following are some suggestions:

1. Have the brother keep a copy of anything that is filed with the Selective Service System. Try to obtain two copies of the registration card, fill them out identically, and have the postal clerk stamp one with the date and keep it as a receipt for his registration. This will provide the brother with a legal record of his registration, in the event the card which is filed with the postal authorities is lost. The postal employee may not want to give a person two cards, but the effort should be made to obtain them. A person is entitled to have a copy of any form he is required to file. Of course, a copy may be made before the original is filed, but a receipted copy is preferred.

A brother who is required to register with Selective Service should develop the habit of making and keeping copies of everything that is filed, so that his personal file is an exact duplicate of the Selective Service file.

When one registers, he may be required to furnish his Social Security card and other identification, such as a birth certificate or driver's license, so such should be taken by him when he goes to register.

2. It is a good idea to obtain a receipt for everything that is filed. Thus, when papers are sent directly to the Selective Service System (for

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example, to register a change of address or in connection with the classification process, when that comes into being), they should be sent Certified Mail (or better, Registered Mail), *Return Receipt Requested*.

3. The Selective Service does not intend to classify registrants until they are to be ordered for induction. At that time, one may present his claim for deferment as a minister of religion or otherwise.

4. A brother might want to take a mature person along as a witness when he registers, so that there will be a witness to what transpires should the postal clerk want to refuse to give a receipt for a registration card.

5. Young brothers would do well to begin thinking about the nature of their beliefs, and formulating the statement that they will submit in support of their claims, as a minister or any other deferment to which they may be entitled, so that if the draft is reinstated, they will be in a position to substantiate their claims.

Although any new Selective Service regulations will probably be different from the regulations previously in existence, the information contained in *Memorandum on Procedure of Jehovah's Witnesses Under Selective Service* (which the congregation may have in its file) may be consulted for guidance, insofar as it relates to ministerial claims. (If your congregation does not have a copy of *Memorandum on Procedure of Jehovah's Witnesses Under Selective Service*, do not write to the Society for it. It is out of print. You may want to consult a neighboring congregation that has it.)

6. As brothers who were involved with the Selective Service System under the previous regulations will remember, when the Selective Service System refused to recognize a claim and thus a brother ended up in court, it was the written record that was made with the Selective Service System, and that record only, which was used in court. Therefore, brothers should now be alert to prepare well and make a good written record of their claim in the papers filed with the Selective Service System.

A generation of brothers has grown up without having to be concerned with Selective Service, but Selective Service obligations are now back and will affect the lives of young brothers. We hope this memorandum will be of assistance in alerting such brothers to their responsibilities and obligations as they prepare to present their claims and to maintain their Christian integrity in connection therewith.

Each one of our young brothers must determine for himself as to his course, and we wish them Jehovah's blessing as they conscientiously consider their relationship to Him and maintain their Christian integrity. Be assured of our warm Christian love.

Your brothers and fellow servants,

Watchtower B. V. Society

OF NEW YORK, INC.