"A PRONOUNCEMENT BY THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS OF THE UNITED STATES CONCERNING BEARING ARMS

"To the Proper Authorities:

"In behalf of the Seventh-day Adventists in the United States of America, the executive committee of the North American Division Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, respectfully submits the following statement:

"We believe that civil government is ordained of God, and that in the exercise of its legitimate functions it should receive the support of its citizens. We believe in the principles upon which this government was founded. We are loyal to its Constitution, which is based upon the principles of democracy, and guarantees civil and religious liberty to all its citizens.

"We deplore that our nation has been drawn into the horrors of war, and shall continually pray that the God of heaven may speedily bring peace to our country.

"We have been noncombatants throughout our history. During the Civil War our people officially declared:

"'That we recognize civil government as ordained of God, that order, justice, and quiet may be maintained in the land, and that the people of God may lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty.

"'In accordance with this fact, we acknowledge the justice of rendering tribute, custom, honor, and reverence to the civil power, as enjoined in the New Testament. While we thus cheerfully render to Caesar the things which the Scriptures show to be his, we are compelled to decline all participation in acts of war and bloodshed, as being inconsistent with the duties enjoined upon us by our divine Master toward our enemies and toward all mankind.'

"We hereby reaffirm the foregoing declaration. We petition that our religious convictions be recognized by those in authority, and that we be required to serve our country only in such capacity as will not violate our conscientious obedience to the law of God as contained in the decalogue, interpreted in the teachings of Christ, and exemplified in His life."