

My name is Titus Peachey. I am a long-time resident of Lancaster City. I am grateful for this opportunity to offer brief testimony on my own behalf.

I grew up in a Mennonite household and church that taught the way of peace and nonviolence as an integral part of our faith. Our ultimate loyalty was to God and the worldwide community of faith. We believed that war violated the very purpose for which we lived...to nurture and respect the image of God in each human being and to build communities of peace that broke down the walls built by nationalism, racism and economic disparity.

With these commitments deep in my heart, I dropped out of college in 1970 and went to Vietnam to perform 3 years of alternative service as a conscientious objector to war under the auspices of the Mennonite Church. This I did voluntarily, as I had actually failed my physical examination and was not required to serve. I served alongside dozens of others my age who had been drafted but were also conscientious objectors who volunteered to do their service in Vietnam. There were also many young women who had not been drafted, but also served voluntarily in Vietnam as an expression of their commitments to service and peace.

From these experiences I offer these comments on service:

- The most meaningful service is voluntary, not mandatory.
- Conscientious objectors to war are willing to serve in dangerous places and can make significant contributions to the peaceful and secure world that we all desire.
- The present-day requirement to register with Selective Service should be abandoned, as it only exists to support a return to mandatory conscription which I oppose. It also creates additional burdens for some conscientious objectors who cannot cooperate with a system that would send conscripts to war.

I support incentivizing voluntary peaceful service under civilian direction. This already exists. Let's expand it greatly and create a culture of voluntary service.

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