

## **SDA'S AND MILITARY SERVICE AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW**

- 1860-63      The church formally begins to organize in North America
- 1861      August 3 EGW vision of the battle of Manassas, Virginia (I T 266-7)  
God intervenes because of the Northern tolerance of slavery.
- 1862      January 12....EGW Vision of the civil war (Parkville, Michigan)  
She predicted that there would be those in the congregation who  
would lose sons in the war.
- August 2 James White's editorial "The Nation" In which he states  
The position that regarding Sabbath and Killing, "in the case of drafting, the  
Government assumes the responsibility of the violation of the law of God,  
it would be madness to resist.. He who would resist until, in the administration  
of military law, he was shot down, goes too far, we think, in taking the  
responsibility of suicide."
- The article created a firestorm of criticism. White asked readers who  
had points to make to do so in "informed" articles.
- H E Carver replied on October 21 with a response that we should always  
obey the commandments, even if required to break them by government.  
Carver agreed with supporting the government up to the point of asking  
people to disobey the ten commandments.
- October 20.. .JP Kellogg and James White on a committee in Battle Creek  
to raise funds for a \$200 bounty for enlistees in the military (there were 9  
members .,:5on the committee) When questioned about the correctness of SDA  
involvement in the bounty program, White replied, "We think it is, and we have  
done so in Battle Creek." R&H August 30, 1864
- April 15      A Lincoln calls for 75,000 men to join the military for 3 months  
1863 Testimony 9 (IT 355-368) EGW discusses the rebellion, draft and slavery.  
She clearly articulates her abhorrence of slavery, and comments that it is  
This evil which makes it impossible for Adventists to serve in the military  
while the North still supports slavery. It is on this basis that she rejects our  
Godlessness and pride mixed with racism.
- 1953 US Army authorizes the White coat Project. Operates that from
- 1953-73. Nearly 2200 SDA personnel are involved.
- 1954 Annual Council states the denominational position as noncombatant

National Service Organization begun at NAD/GC

1969 Annual Council (October 12) states that the church ADVOCATES Non-combatancy, but allows for pacifism (1-0)

1972 Annual Council affirms the statements of 1954 and 69 but makes the decisions a personal matter for members.

## **1972 Annual Council (NAD)**

The Relationships of Seventh-day Adventist to Civil Government and War

VOTED, That we accept as our basic view the 1954 General Conference Session action entitled, "The Relationships of Seventh-day Adventist to Civil Government and War," as amended at the 1954 Autumn Council, and further amended to read as follows:

Genuine Christianity manifests itself in good citizenship and loyalty to civil government. The breaking out of war among men in no way alters the Christian's supreme allegiance and responsibility to God or modifies his obligation to practice his beliefs and put God first.

This partnership with God through Jesus Christ who came into this world not to destroy men's lives but to save them causes Seventh-day Adventist to advocate a noncombatant position, following their divine Master in not taking human life, but rendering all possible service to save it. As they accept the obligation of citizenship as well as its benefits, their loyalty to government requires them willingly to serve the state in any noncombatant capacity, civil or military in war or peace, in uniform or out of it, which will contribute to saving life, asking only that they may serve in those capacities which do not violate their conscientious convictions.