

## NON-RESISTANT RELIEF ORGANIZATION

Committee to Interview the Government.

Vineland Ont., Apr. 2, 1918.

To the Ministers of the Churches interested:-

The accompanying Blank Form is sent to you by the above Committee in order to secure exact information to present to the Government regarding the nature of the exemptions granted our members. Your replies will assist greatly in clearing our relation with our Government under present conditions.

Please see each member of your congregation who has applied for exemption and get the exact information required and write it briefly in the proper column. There are four questions to consider:-

1. What was the decision of the Local Tribunal?
2. If appealed to District Tribunal, what was the decision?
3. Was the Dist. Tribunal asked for permission to appeal to the Central Appeal Judge? and what the answer?
4. Was the case decided by the Central Appeal Judge? and what was the decision?

Copies of any correspondence from members of the Government or Officials, bearing on the question, will be appreciated.

Continue in prayer, and especially for your Committee.

Return blanks and correspondence to,

S. F. Coffman, Secretary,  
Vineland, Ont.

The Committee.

L. J. Burkholder, Pres., Markham, Ont.

S. Goudie, Stouffville Ont.

Thos. Reesor, Pickering, Ont.

Chr. Gascho, Baden, Ont.

*J. W. Hesse, Gornley Act*

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Copies of any correspondence from members of the Government or officials, bearing on the question, will be appreciated.

Continue in prayer, and especially for your Committee.

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D. W. Heise, Gormley Ont.

Com. to Gov't.

L.J. Burkholder,

S. Gудie,

Thos. Reesor,

C. Gascho,

D.W. Heise,

Vineland Ont., Apr. 3, 1918.

Brethren:-

Please note, herewith, the report of the Committee which waited on the Government on the 27th of March.

Our Committee, Thos. Reesor, David W. Heise and S.F. Coffman, met with F.S. Scott, M.P. for South Waterloo, and arranged for a meeting of the Cabinet Committee at the temporary House of Parliament, at 11.30 a.m. But the appointment was later changed to 2.45 p.m. The Committee of the Cabinet was to have included the Hon. J.A. Caulder, M.P., Saskatchewan, Minister of Immigration and Colonization; Hon. Arthur Meighan, M.P., Manitoba, Secretary of the Interior; Col. Mewburn, Minister of Militia, and Hon. N.W. Rowell, President of the Council. This being the last day of the session of Parliament previous to the Easter holiday, the members were exceptionally busy and we met with Hon. J.A. Caulder and the Hon. S.F. Scott only.

The members of the Government gave your Committee a very attentive hearing and are very much interested in the purpose of our Organization. We presented our petition, a copy of which is inclosed, requesting them to advise a method of procedure and a proper application of the funds to be donated, and we also stated the conditions which at present seem to interfere with the carrying out of our purposes. We presented to the Government a statement, as per the second inclosed copy, showing how there appear to be conflicting issues between our non-resistant faith and the provisions of the Military Service Act, we requesting that we desire some statement or action on the part of the Government which may clear up our standing with the Government regarding the Military Service Act.

The members of the Government whom we met have promised to take up these matters with their fellow-members and with the proper officials at the earliest possible moment after the Easter Recess and forward to your Committee a report thereupon. They were glad for our explanation of our situation and felt to give us the fullest assurance that our interests would not be disregarded and our complete exemption from military service would be allowed.

Asking that you may continue to pray for your Committee and their work, and for the Government and their efforts to deal righteously with all of its citizens, we are

Yours in the service of the Master,

S. F. Coffman, Sec.  
for the Committee.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The Meeting of the committee to interview the government with a committee of the Cabinet ~~of the~~ at Ottawa, Mar 27 th 1918.

Your Committee composed of Thos Ressor, S. F. Coffman, and D. W. Heise, met with the Hon ~~Z. J.~~ Scott of South Waterloo and arranged for a meeting with the Cabinet Committee at the temporary House of Parliament at 11-30 A. M. but this appointment was later changed to 2-45 P.M. The Committee of the Cabinet was to be composed of HON J. A. Caulder, Sask, Minister of Immigration and colonization, Arthur Meighan, Minister of Interior, Col Mowburn, Minister of Militia, and N. W. Rowell President of the Council. <sup>this being</sup> The last day of the session previous to the easter recess, the members of the Government were very buisy, and we were able to meet with Mr Caulder and Mr Scott only.

The members of the government gave your committee a very attentive hearing, and are much interested in the purpose of our organization. We presented our petition ~~of our petition~~, (a copy of which is hereto attached) requesting them to advise a method of procedure, and a proper application of the funds donated, and stating the conditions which at present interfere with the carrying out of our purposes. We also presented to them a statement (as per copy also attached hereto) showing how there seems to be a conflict between our none-resistant faith, and the provisions of the Military service act. Requesting that we desire some statement, or action on the part of the Government which may clear up our standing, ~~with the Government~~ regarding the Military Service Act. The Members of the Cabinet whom we meet have promised to take up this matter with their fellow members, and with the proper officials of the Government, at the earliest possible moment after the Easter recess, and promised to your committee a report thereupon. They were glad for our explanation of our situation, and felt to give us the fullest assurance that our interest would not be disregarded, and that our complete exemption from Military service would be allowed. Asking that you may continue to pray for your Committee and their work, and for the members of the Government in their effort to deal righteously with all of its Citizens, we are yours in the service of the Master.

S. F. Coffman.  
 Thos Ressor.  
 D. W. Heise.

A REQUEST OF A COMMITTEE OF THE NON-RESISTANT RELIEF ORGANIZATION  
to

A COMMITTEE OF THE CABINET

Regarding a Donation from Non-Resistant Churches made to the Government  
For Charitable Purposes.

Honourable Sirs,-

As representatives of the Non-Resistant religious bodies known as Mennonites and Tunkers, whose principles of faith regarding total abstinence from war in any form has been recognized and provided for by our Government in times past by Legislation and Orders in Council which freed them from all obligations ~~to~~ to Military Service, and for which recognition and provisions our people have felt to express their gratitude by giving to the Government a sum of money in the nature of a Memorial which shall be used for charitable purposes during these times of need occasioned by the exceptional hardships brought about by the present war, we are pleased to meet you at your bidding and to confer as to the proper channels of donating this fund and the proper <sup>of the same</sup> use which may accord with the faith of our people and give them the opportunity of heartily expressing their esteem of their Government.

Permit us to state that our people have been sharing in the works of charity and relief of suffering in giving generously of their labors and means as far as consistent with their peace-loving principles. This Movement on their part, "The Non-Resistant Relief Organization," is a special effort to do more work along the same lines and share more fully in the privations of their fellowcitizens, and in the support of the charitable work of the Government. Your assistance in devising some means by which this donation may be made to the Government is earnestly solicited. We also desire that our people may have the assurance that this fund may be used for the relief of those who are worthy poor and who are in actual need of relief, either at home or abroad, preferably the relief of widows and orphans who have no support as war dependants, or who may not be included in the classes already pledged the support of the Government.

It would give us great pleasure to have confirmed to our people the assurance that the total exemption of those of our faith from all military service is still the purpose of our Government. While such pledges have been given to us from some quarters of the Government, others have not seen fit to so interpret the provisions of the Military Service Act, and many of our young men, who registered under the said Act and claimed exemptions on religious grounds have not had uniform decisions of their claims and many are still held for non-combatant classes. Our Relief Organization has been formed with all confidence of the Government's purposes of carrying out its policy of religious liberty and pledges to our people. We regret that since then we have not met with the same encouragement. What the Government may do in making clear to the minds of many of our members that our privileges are continued and guarded will meet with grateful and hearty response and, we trust, the devout thanks to God for the beneficence of the Government, and ardent prayers for His sustaining power during these times of trouble.

Your humble Petitioners, who shall ever pray,  
The Committee.

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N-R.R.O.

Com. to Gov't.

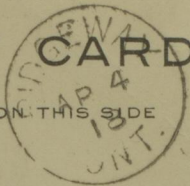
THE CONFLICTING POINTS BETWEEN THE FAITH OF THE NON-RESISTANT  
CHURCHES AND THE MILITARY SERVICE ACT.

1. If any service whatsoever is required of Non-Resistant believers, who are members of such organized Churches, it nullifies the pledges of religious liberty on the first actual occasion that privileges of exemption could have been effective.
2. In following the advice of the Government in response to the first call under the Military Service Act our young men were obliged to register under Clause 8 of the Exemptions, inserting the name of the "Tunker," or "Mennonite", or "Amish Mennonite" Church, thus describing the "tenets of faith" as opposed to "combatant" service. This incorrectly expresses our faith; but no provisions were made under the Exemptions Regulations for correctly stating our faith and the grounds of our claims as opposed to all forms of Military Service, whether "combatant" or non-combatant." Hence the Local and District Tribunals could not do otherwise than follow the directions of the Act and exempt from combatant service only, and our brethren not totaly exempted are subject to Military Service.
3. Our Brethren have not been uniformly dealt with by the various Exemption Tribunals. Some have been exempted as farmers, some as necessary at home, others until certain classes or catagories are called and others exempted from combatant service. Some few in the East and a number in the West are Exempted as Mennonites. The Military Service Council and other heads of Government Departments have almost uniformly declared that the Mennonites and Tunkers are excepted from Military Service Act and "have no duty to perform thereunder." Our appeals to the various Tribunals, using the decision of the Military Service Council, have not met with any success in securing the release from Military Service of any of our young men, and they are still held, contrary to their faith, as soldiers on leave of absence without pay, and are under the Military Authority of the Country.
4. Our people have esteemed the interpretation of the "Exceptions to the Act", that those coming under the Order in Council of Aug. 13th, 1873, included all Quakers, Tunkers and Mennonites whose liberties under the statutes of Canada had been continued to them for many years, and whose liberties were cited to the Mennonites who proposed immigrating to Canada in order to confirm their confidence in the continuance of their faith in this land. We could not believe that the Canadian Government had annulled in any degree those religious liberties and immunities whi which our fore-fathers enjoyed.

The Committee.

CANADA POST CARD

THE ADDRESS TO BE WRITTEN ON THIS SIDE



Eld. S. F. Coffman.  
Vineland.

out.



Ridgeway 4. 4. 1918.

S. F. Coffman, My Bes greeting  
your blank forms to be filled out by  
us, came to hand yesterday, will see  
to it forthwith, and act accordingly. will  
send to other congregations for them to fill

There are not many of our members  
here that applied for Exemption. most  
all got it from the local, a few to the central  
district. again thanking you for the  
interest in the cause we hold so dear.

I remain as ever

A. Bearss.

Edgeley, Ont.

Apr 5/91 P.

To Elder S. F. Coffman.

Dear Brother.

Yours to hand yesterday. I am sorry, in a sense, to have to say that there are no young men on any of my appointments needing exemption papers. On the other hand we would much appreciate a band of consecrated young men.

I would much enjoy a - or, another - conversation with you, especially upon the all absorbing questions of the day. There never has been such days as these in all the history of the world, and they will be more ominous yet.

Trusting you, wife and family are all well. I remain,

Your bro in Christ.

J. Polwell.

I am sending you two or three papers.

Wespeker, Apr. 9th, 1918.  
Mr. S. F. Coffman,  
Vineland, Ont.

Dear Bro. in Christ;—

You no doubt remember me as an old Vineland boy. I expect Vineland has changed greatly since I was there last, almost six years ago on our wedding trip.

Find enclosed the form as per request. This is the only young man that has been effected so far to my knowledge by the military draft in our membership here.

With best wishes to yourself and family and God's help in this undertaking, I am,

Your bro.,  
D. J. Storms

M.B.C.

THE OFFICE  
Vineland Ont., Apr. 5, 1918.

Elder Henry Gendle;  
Didsbury Alta.

Dear Brother:-

Please find enclosed a few blank Forms with instructions which we would be pleased to have you send to the pastors in your District who have members in their congregations who have had to do with the Exemptions Claims. It is our desire to get the information to show to the Government how our members have been dealt with and to endeavor to have matters adjusted according to the spirit of the law of Canada, and also in agreement with the principles of our faith. We desire to do our part in the work of charity and to present to the Government a fund to be used for such purposes, but, on account of the complications we have had with the Military Service Act, our people are not inclined to support such a contribution until we have the assurance that we are entirely free from military service.

Trusting to hear from your pastors as soon as possible, I am,

Yours in His service,

S. F. Coffman, Sec.

MAILED 1918

LA:W\$ 769 / 875 \$798

APR 11 1918

APR 11 1918

APR 11 1918



LESSED is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.—Psa. 1: 1, 2.

Ridgeway 4. 8, 1918

S. F. Coffman My Bro Greeting

There are only 3 of our members in this congregation applied for Exemption

They applied on religious grounds as the doctrine of our Church, believe & practice you will see by the report they tribunals try to get around conscientious believers and grant Exemption by passing over the real thing we hold dear by faith, yet they acted very reasonable.

I have sent blanks to Wainfleet church to fill for other counties mentioned besides ours. "thank you"

yours sincerely

A. Bearss

# THE BETHESDA AND STOUFFVILLE TELEPHONE COMPANY, LIMITED

D. W. HEISE, SECRETARY

ISSUER OF MARRIAGE LICENSES,  
CONVEYANCER, ETC.  
PRIVATE MONIES TO LOAN.

GORMLEY, ONT., Apr. 8 th, 1918.

Eld S. F. Coffman.

Vineland. Ont.

Beloved Brother.

I herewith inclose report of our brethern in the Draft in ~~the~~ Markham District. All of our congregations have been served with blanks sent me. I did not have enough however to supply the west. You might therefore mail supply to Bish Fred Hahn, Kindersley Sask. I trust the returns will reach you in due time from all our Districts.

Yours Fraternaly.

*D. W. Heise*

**J. R. EBERSOL**  
 MANUFACTURER OF  
**THE SPECIAL BAND CUTTER  
 AND SELF-FEEDER**

MILVERTON, ONT.

Apr 8th 1918

J. F. Coffman  
 Vineland, Ont.

Dear Bro: to an extent of our Faith:

Yours of 3rd inst, to hand and noted, but do not fully understand everything, I had it along to our Ministers yesterday. Our Ministers are a little slow to act in these Military matters and it is a little ~~hard~~ difficulty to make them understand it, and especially when I do not know enough about the matter myself. We decided to ask you to kindly let us know more about this matter. How did you come to the decision of having these forms filled for the Government. Does the Government require this of us, or what is it really for?

We all thought the Government has a record how each case ~~is~~ is handled, ~~or~~ or what each Bro got at Local and Appeal Tribunals, so that we can not thoroughly understand why more is needed, But you kindly let me know more about it.

And then if we fill these blanks for you would it be all right if I would do it for the ministers, as they would like me to do it for them, as they say I know about best how each Bro. was treated, because I was with them in nearly every instant. (over.)

(2)

or if it is necessary, they would then sign them, or would this not be good enough if I would fill it <sup>out</sup> and sign it for the ministers? Kindly let us know more definite about all of this.

As I told you before that 9 of our Brethrens cases were to be considered on Mar 13<sup>th</sup>, and they acknowledged receiving our letters with reasons for complete exemption. But we have not heard ~~and~~ any thing from the Government about their decision in our cases.

Two more of our Brethrens cases will be considered Apr. 17<sup>th</sup>. We have also to-day sent letters with reasons for complete exemption for them. I am getting anxious for an answer from the Government about our Brethren who were to be considered Mar 13<sup>th</sup>.) Now some other people who got no exemption at all said they also had appealed, as far as they could, but at last appeal got no answer until they were called upon for service. Now I am getting somewhat afraid some of our cases might be the same that we get no ans. until called upon. What do you think we should do? just wait? or what? Kindly let us know. I will give you our Ministers Names in other sheet. Remember us in your earnest prayers as we hope to do for all needful. Ans. very soon. J. R. Ebersol.



**J. R. EBERSOL**  
MANUFACTURER OF  
**THE SPECIAL BAND CUTTER  
AND SELF-FEEDER**

MILVERTON, ONT.

Apr 9

1918

J. G. Coffman

Dear Bro: to an extent of our Faith:-

I notice you wish to have copies of correspondence from members of Government or Officials bearing on our subject:- I will herewith give you a copy of what was shown to me by one of our Tribunals here. One is Tribunal circular #11 sent by E. L. Newcombe to our Tribunals. The other one is a letter in answer to some claims of Exemption which I had put in for a lot of our young Brethren so that I

would have a right <sup>(2)</sup> to appear with or for the  
brethren. When I claimed exemption, I marked  
X in the # 8. But I also wrote on that our Faith  
forbids Militarism in any form, and then W.E.  
Wismer returned them for our Tribunal to fill out  
more. But I think our Tribunal did not do this, I  
think he never returned them to W.E. Wismer. I think  
these claims are laying at Milverton yet.

But this copy of letter is the one that Wismer  
sent back with the claims. I hope this may also be  
some benefit to you.

In our statement to Ottawa we referred to  
Newcomb's letter to you, and to both these other letters  
of which I send you copy. May God Bless all  
our efforts. Remember in prayer as we hope to do  
but in great weakness  
J R Ebersol

P. S. This Bro. that did not want to appeal, has consented that we may appeal for him, which we done, and he has also signed our paper of reasons for complete exemption, and his case is one of these that will be considered Apr 17th.

One of our Brethern was Exemption allowed No 8 at Local Tribunal. Then we were afraid it would not clear him, and appealed with the others for him by his consent, But his case was to be heard at Kitchener, But his father and him self went to their Local Tribunal who told them they needed not appeal saying he is exempted, and advised them not to appear at district appeal court, and told me so. Then the best I could decide or think to do was to telegraph to those appeal tribunals, and I told them his appeal was <sup>made</sup> by mistake, and that this man has his exemption, then he got no more word of any kind that I know of. According to that I think he must be free.

( over. )

Pickering, Apr 8 1918

ONTARIO, CANADA

S. J. Coffman  
Wineland

Greetings

I received the blank forms all right - sent some to R. M. Beringer as there are quite a number of young men of military age I think she will be in a position to get the information as well as any one.

We only have 2 boys who come directly under the act - as members namely the Houser Bros their exemption is marked class 8 I do not know just what that means but one of the appeal tribunals said there is no such class, but their cases have not been appealed by the military nor by themselves.

Wishing your success in the work

I am yours truly

Thomas Reesor

Vineland Ont., April 9, 1918.

Brethren:- Greeting.

You will please find enclosed a copy of a letter to the Chief Justice, Duff, regarding the exemption claims that are being allowed to some of our brethren. This is the first case that has come to my attention and we should feel anew our interests in our young brethren and pray that they may find grace in the sight of those who are in a position to judge the righteousness of our cause and the legality of the religion which we profess to follow.

We trust to hear the results of the decision of this case in the course of a few days. Other measures are pending in regard to the Military Service Act and we should pray that in the future we will be freed from some of the trials that have come to us in this first call to furnish recruits for the army of the country.

In connection with the work of the Committee that had to do with the Non-Resistant Relief Organization, we have to report that some members of the Government have taken the case in hand and will do what they can to have our position made clear before the Government. We are glad for this interest and will endeavor to render them all the assistance possible in understanding our faith and principles and in securing such information concerning our boys as will enable them to present our case intelligently before the Government. Copies of this letter to Chief Justice Duff will be forwarded to them. We have also sent out blank forms to be filled in concerning the decisions of the Tribunals that have acted on the applications of our boys for exemption. This report will help them to see that we have not been allowed any concessions concerning our faith. All exemptions were allowed as were those of any conscientious objector and some are not given that much recognition. These reports will be compiled and forwarded as soon as the returns are in. If you have any influence in getting these reports returned promptly, please do so. Continue to pray for the cause.

Yours sincerely

Yours in faith,

*S. F. Coffman Secy.*

Vineland Ont. April 9th, 1918.

Mr. Justice Duff,  
Central Appeal Judge,  
Department of Justice,  
Ottawa.

your Honour:-

Respecting the Appeal of Joseph Cressman, New Namburg Ont., Serial Number, 726680 AC, Consecutive Number, 690A, which is an Appeal from the decision of the Appeal Tribunal at Kitchener, Ont., permit me to state a few facts.

Since addressing Your Honour on December 7th, 1917, and forwarding correspondence which was fyled for reference in case the Appeals of Mennonites coming before your Court, this is the first case that has been brought to our attention as having been allowed the privilege of appeal to the Central Tribunal. We are grateful for this consideration.

Our position as Mennonites, Amish Mennonites and Tunkers respecting our Tenets of Faith and attitude toward military service has not been described by the Exemption Clause of the Military Service Act under which our membes were obliged to claim exemption, since we hold and have held for centuries that all forms of military service are ~~not~~ inconsistent with our Christian profession.

We have been informed by Local and Appeal Tribunals that the Exceptions to the Act, referred to those Russian Brethren who were granted exemption by Order on Council, August 13th, 1873. We were pleased that the Military Service Council expressed the opinion that All Mennonites are excluded from the operation of the Act and have no duty to perform thereunder. The tenets of faith of the Russian Mennonites and their reasons for asking exemption from all military service is the only adequate description of our faith and ground for our claims, since we hold the same principles and articles of faith, and it appears to us to be the only proper classification for us under the Military Service Act.

We believe that it was not the purpose of the Government in framing the Military Service Act to prescribe what should be the articles of faith of any Church; nor was it their purpose to limit in any sence the privileges of well established and recognized religious bodies. We dutifully accept any limitations which may not interfere with our duty to our Saviour, but pray that these most sacred principles of peace and good will, as exemplified by Christ may be recognized as lawful and permitted us by the clemency of our Government.

We are, most humbly and faithfully,

Your servants who pray,

The Committee,

*S. F. Coffman*

Secretary.

Baden April 9 / 18

Dear Brother Grubing

We are well Hoping you are Same  
I Received your Letters from Recent Date  
Should have answered sooner but neglect it

You asked if not enough of the Forms  
to let you know I think I have more to spare  
So you might send some to John Gascho Welleley  
And Christian S. Gehr Welleley and Nicolas  
Kafziger Brunner and they will all be supplied  
with those Forms.

Yours in the Masters name  
Chr Gascho

.S.A.

Vineland Ont., April 10th 1918.

John R. Ebersole,  
Milverton Ont.

Dear Broth:- Greeting.

Your letter of the 8th Inst. to hand and read.

I wish to thank you for the interest you have taken in our work and trust that our united efforts may result in the securing of the liberty of worship and service to our God which is so precious to all who love Him and hold his Word as the rule of life and the power of salvation.

Regarding the blank forms that have been sent out, I wish to explain that just before Easter three of a Committee that had been appointed to go to Ottawa, met some of the members of the Government there and explained our purpose of donating a sum of money to the Government on account of our Churches having been exempt from military service. This money was to be used for charitable purposes and not for any war purposes. ~~XXXX~~ We told them that on account of the present condition, in which many of our boys were not given complete exemption it was doubtful if many of our people would give toward this fund, and we were desirous to know just where we stand under the present Military Service Act. We tried to show them that our boys were exempted only from combatant service and even that was against our principles of faith. These members of the Government promised to see what could be done toward clearing up the situation. Our Committee then decided that it would be best for us to find out how many of our boys, Mennonite, Amish and Tunker, had been required to apply for exemption, and to learn what kind of exemption had been granted them. It seems that many have been exempted for many other reasons than that they are members of the Mennonite, Amish or Tunker Churches. These exemptions do not take recognition of our faith at all, and mean nothing to us, since, if any of our boys should not engage in farming they would be held for combatant service unless some other appeal were made. In order to show the Government just how our faith has been misrepresented and how the Tribunals have failed to give a uniform decision on our appeals we have asked for the answers regarding the decisions of the Local and District appeal Tribunals. The military authorities have the lists of all who have applied for exemption and could give it to the Government if asked for, but we wanted the information solely for ourselves so that we could bring the matter to the attention of the Government in such a way that they could see the reasonableness of our request for complete exemption and the recognition of our non-resistant faith. It will not obligate any one to anything more than to take the time to get the information. These lists will not be used unless it is to make an appeal to the Government for all of the brethren who have been called and who have applied for exemption as members of the non-resistant Churches.

It will not matter who secures the information. No one will need to sign their name to the paper. All we want is the names of the persons who applied for exemption and the address, and the place where the Local Tribunal sat and what was the decision, and the place of the Appeal Tribunal and the decision and then if the appeal was made to the Central Appeal Court and what decision was given.



May I suggest that the reason why we are asking all of our brethren to appeal who have // claimed exemption under clause 8, \ Exemption as an adherent of a Church which forbids Combatant service/ is that our faith is compromised when we sign our church name to that reason. You did the right thing when you inserted the sentence, \ forbids all kinds of military service/. Again, those who are exempted under the conditions of that clause are exempted only from Combatant service and are held for some kind of non-combatant service when called upon. It is for the purpose of getting free from the conditions of that exemption that we are urging our brethren to appeal and are working with the Government to place us on the list of those entirely free from the power of the Military Service Act. If any of the exemptions were granted as a Mennonite, it will free them entirely. If any other reasons are given it will be a conditional exemption only and not recognize our faith.

I am glad that you have succeeded in getting your cases before the Central Tribunal. The case of one of our brethren will come before the Central Judge on April 12th. I am sending you a copy of the letter which we sent to the Central Judge relative to this case and to others of non-resistant faith which may come before him. I have confidence that it will come out right in the end, as there are those of the members of the Government that are promising their help in this matter, and one of them is Hon. J. A. Caulder of Saskatchewan, who knows the conditions of the faith of the Russian Brethren and who understands why we ask for complete exemption. It will not be possible for our brethren to be called into service until they have a decision on their appeal. It takes time to get the reports all ready and the brethren will no doubt hear from the Government in due time.

Thank you for the copies of correspondence sent. It is interesting and important. This is the first time that I have had any information as to the statement of the Order in Council, of August 13th 1878. It is evident that the law of Canada was confirmed to the Russian Brethren and to all Mennonites since no qualification was stated concerning any class of Mennonites. You were very fortunate in having access to the forms and instructions of the Tribunals. It seems that the Tribunal at London has information and instructions that have not been adhered to, since many of our brethren have been refused exemption when the instructions plainly state that the Mennonites needed not to have applied for exemption.

May we continue to pray and may God bless the efforts that are made to permit his humble followers to serve him in love and peace,

Yours in faith and for His cause,

*J. C. Coffman*

R. 1. Milverton Apr. 10. 1918

Bro. S. H. Coffman

Dear bro.

Greeting in the name of the Lord

Received your letter with form to fill out.

Our boys have not received the decision from  
Central Appeal Judge and even some not from  
district appeal Tribunal

Do you want we to fill out the blank now  
or wait till we receive the decisions?

yours in the Lord

Peter Boshart

Vineland Ont., April 10th, 1918.

Hon. F. S. Scott, M.P.  
House of Parliament,  
Ottawa.

Sir: -

Please find enclosed a copy of a letter to the Chief Justice, Mr. Justice Duff, regarding the Appeal of one of our members from New Hamburg. His father is a minister in our Church. I have also sent a copy of this petition to the Hon. J.A. Caulder with a statement that we are sending out special blank forms in order to secure the exact number of members who have applied for exemption and to learn the decisions of the Tribunals who rendered opinions on these appeals. We feel that in the majority of cases the decisions were made on other grounds than those upon which the appeal was made. This information will be forwarded to you and to Hon. Mr. Caulder at the earliest possible moment. I neglected to inform Hon. Mr. Caulder that I have written you regarding this matter also.

Thanking you for your special interest in our behalf and for your assistance in the work of our Organization, I am,

Respectfully,

Non-Resistant Relief Organization.  
Committee to Government.

Vineland Ont., April 10th, 1918.

Dear Brethren:- Greeting.

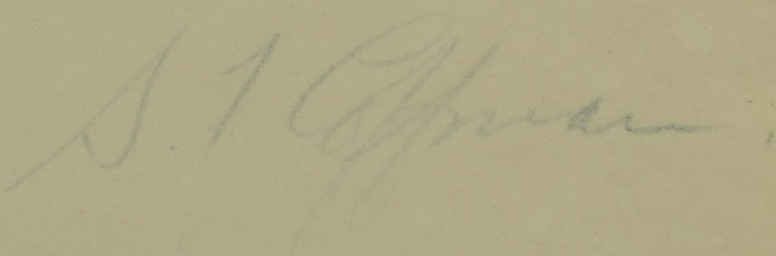
Please find enclosed a copy of a letter to the Chief Justice regarding the exemption of one of our boys. This letter is self explanatory. I have also sent copies of it to the Committee that made the appeal to the Government in the Fall of last year. A copy of this same letter is being sent to The Hon. J. A. Caulder and to Mr. F. S. Scott, who met with us in Ottawa.

This is the first opportunity that any of our boys have had to have their appeal come before the Central Tribunal and we pray to God that we may have favor at this time.

The blank forms with request for the records of those who are applying for exemption are beginning to come in and it seems that in the majority of cases the exemptions have been for other than the reasons for which they appealed for exemption. The question of religious belief has not been taken into consideration by the Local and District Tribunals generally. We should make an effort to bring this matter to the attention of the Government.

As soon as the report comes from Ottawa regarding this Appeal we will forward a report to you, and may also hear from one of the Government Committee in the near time.

Yours in faith,



S. L. Coffman  
Vineland  
Ont.

Preston Ont. P. R. No. 2  
April 10<sup>th</sup> 1918

Dear Brother Coffman. Greeting,

In speaking with the  
Chairman of the "Heafled" Tribunal, what was  
ment by having the exemptions marked  
'allowed' he told me that he thought  
they were fully exempted from all  
military duty. He said to me had they  
known that what they have found  
out since the Mennonite boys would  
not have need to appear at all.

None of our boys put in an appeal.

Hoping the Committee may be successful  
in their interview with our Government  
for which I shall ever pray.

Yours in Christian faith  
A. B. Dreyer

Vineland Ont., April 10th 1918,

Ostias Cressman,  
New Hamburg Ont.  
Dear Brother:- Greeting.

Joseph handed me the letter from the Central Appeal Tribunal and I at once went to work to frame a petition to the Central appeal judge in respect to our position and to add to what had already been sent to him. I am also sending copies of the letter to the two members of parliament whom we met on our last trip to Ottawa. They have promised to look after our interests there and so I have posted them as to what is coming up on the 12th.

I do not think that any of our boys will need to send in more than that they have already sent to the Appeal Court. All that we have to say is now on file with the Judge and will be used in evidence of our position and the grounds for our appeals. We should continue to pay for the privilege that we have of worshipping our God in peace and to love our God with to all men,

In haste,

Yours in faith,

Vineland Ont., April 10th 1918.

The Honourable J. A. Caulder,  
Minister of Immigration and Colonization,  
House of Parliament,  
Ottawa.

Sir:-

With regard to the special mission of the Mennonites and  
Tunkers who were privileged to lay before you their plans for Relief work  
in this time of suffering, the matter of the exemption of our young men  
from all military service was brought forward. I am herewith sending  
you a copy of a letter to the Chief Justice Duff, regarding the exemp-  
tion of one of our members, the first that has come before the Central  
Appeal Court. This is for your information so as to keep in touch with  
what is going on regarding our plea for total exemption.

We have forwarded blank forms to all of our congregations  
for the purpose of securing exact information as to how many of our  
members have applied for exemption and what has been the decision of the  
various Tribunals concerning their pleas. This information will be  
forwarded to you at the earliest possible moment.

Thanking you for your interest in our cause and your  
assistance in our behalf,

I am, Respectfully Yours,

Baden April 11<sup>th</sup> 1918

Dear Brother Grading

Please Enclosed find 2 of the Exemption Forms filled out as near as we possibly could. I think we have probably made a little a mistake by not having asked the District Appeal Judge for permission to appeal to Central Appeal Judge and some have not made any further Appeals and some have appealed Direct to Justice Duff and others. again have appealed to Duff through Wismer, London, without asking permission from District Appeal Judge. And so there Appeals has been Refused as you can see in the Forms and I did ~~not~~ know hardly how to fill out the 2 last spaces in the Forms. I will try and get the Boys all as soon as possible and then I will send the Balance of the names. Received your Letter last night from the 11 Inst and seen that one of the Boys's Appeal has been before the Officers at Ottawa. Hope that the good Lord will make it so that we may enjoy the Liberty in future as of the past is our prayers.

Remember us in your prayers will try and do likewise with the help from above

Yours in Faith  
Chr Gascho



Vineland Ont., April 12th, 1918.

The Librarian,  
Parliamentary Library,  
Ottawa, Ont.

Sir:-

Please inform me if it is possible to secure a copy of the "Order in Council of August 13th, 1873," which is referred to in the Military Service Act, as exempting certain classes from military service also the Order in Council of December 6th 1898, applying to the same class of exemptions.

please state also the cost of making copies of the same if at all procurable.

Yours truly,

*S. F. Coffman,*

*Appt direct to the Clerk  
of the Privy Council*

Vineland Ont., April 12, 1918.

Peter Boschart,  
Milverton, Ont.

Dear Brother:- Greeting.

Your letter received and noted.

It was our purpose to get the reports at once so that we might know how matters are standing now. We understood that there were some applications sent in to Ottawa but that there had been no report as to how the decisions were given. We hope that we may soon learn how these cases have been decided. In the mean time we want to know how many there are who have not had their appeals brought before the tribunals and how many have not had exemption on account of their faith. If your brethren there have appealed to either the District Tribunals or to the Central Appeal Judge please note it on the Blank. And whatever decisions have been given on the report forms that the brethren hold, we would like to have that recorded also.

I had a letter from Brother J.R. Ebersole of Milverton, regarding the claims of the brethren in their society. He has been doing some energetic work. Have not yet received the Blank forms from him since they did not fully understand the purpose of them. Have explained to him so that they will know that we intend the forms only for the use of the Church in connection with our appeal to the Government regarding our complete exemption. I believe that we will be allowed the full exercise of our faith when once the matters are all cleared up. Let us continue to labor and pray.

Yours in faith,

N-R. R. O.

Vineland Ont., April 12, 1918.

Thomas Reesor, Treas.  
Pickering Ont. R.R.

Dear Brother:- Greeting.

A letter from Brother Burkholder states that the travelling expenses and other expenses of the Committee to Ottawa has been arranged for to be paid by the Treasurer. Since my expenses have not been met by any other fund I will accordingly apply to good will of our brethren as represented by our Treasurer. If it were possible to meet current obligations without applying to this fund I would gladly do so. But we feel free in a sense to make use of the funds supplied by the good will of the brethren feeling that it is done out of love and for the sake of bearing one-anothers burdens.

Car fare and Railroad expenses,	\$18.20
Stenographer copies, Ottawa	1.00
Meals,	.45
Total,	<u>\$19.65</u>
Printing and making blank forms, 105,	2.50
" Circulars 125	1.00
Postage, \estimate/	<u>1.00</u>
	<u>\$24.15</u>

I have not been in the habit of charging for postage since that goes along with so much other Church and Conference work, but this special list of mail I thought ought to be placed in the account.

Some of the blank forms are being returned. Only in a few cases have the Tribunals exempted the men as Mennonites. Their faith has not been recognized. There has been no report from Ottawa. May the Lord direct our affairs and may His blessing be with you in your labors for Him.

Yours in His service,

*S. F. Coffman*



H O, EVERY one that  
thirsteth, come ye to  
the waters, and he  
that hath no money: come  
ye, buy, and eat; yea, come,  
buy wine and milk without  
money and without price.  
Isa. 55:1

Ridgeway 4. 16, 18.

S. F. Coffman, My Bro Greeting

I am asking you for an  
Explanation. D. W. Huie wrote to one  
of our officials here (not to myself)  
asking help to pay the expence of the  
delegation to Ottawa, and his letter is  
interpreted that the delegation has  
taken 9 trips to Ottawa, and the expence  
involved is \$ 175.00

Is that - including all the expence  
to Ottawa or is that only the part our  
church is asked to pay, and where  
or how is he responsible for this  
statement to us, as a church.

Truly we shall do our share in  
bearing the expence of the relief  
organization for the benefit of our  
young men

yours respectfully

Asa Bearss