

December 8, 1954

Mr. J. Harold Sherk,  
Mennonite Central Committee  
Akron, Pa.,

Dear Bro. Sherk:

Enclosed you will find copies of correspondence concerning the case of Arthur D. Goering, Peabody, Kansas, who has requested discharge from the Reserves of the Army Medical Corps because of conscientious objection.

Arthur is a member of our Church here in Elbing, and doing graduate work at the University of Wichita. He served his time in the Medical Corps, but even in service his conscience troubled him, until he finally decided to make a clean break. We are happy for his decision .

Brother HB and we first contacted the Kansas Military District in Topeka, which had us prepare a brief for the Chicago District, which in turn passed it on to the Adjutant General, Washington, D.C. On November 9 that office again returned it to the Kansas Military District for answer.(enclosed).

Now Arthur has received a routine form from his Reserve HQ in Chicago concerning his availability in emergency. He is returning it in these days together with his personal statement of faith. We may not take further action until we hear from Chicago now.

We are mailing this to you so that you may have a file on the case if we should need representation in Washington at some future date. If so, we will contact you and will also keep adding pertinent material to your file there.

Sincerely,

Cornelius J. Dyck

cc: HB Schmidt  
Arthur D. Goering

encl: Statement of faith of Arthur D. Goering  
Marion County Draft Board Statement  
Reply of Kansas Military District

# MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

AGENCY FOR RELIEF AND OTHER CHRISTIAN SERVICES

TELEPHONE EPHRATA 3-4915 • CABLE ADDRESS: MENCENCOM



ORGANIZED 1920  
INCORPORATED 1937

AKRON, PENNSYLVANIA

December 13, 1954

Cornelius J. Dyck  
Elbing,  
Kansas

Dear Brother Dyck:

Re: Arthur D. Goering

This will acknowledge your letter of December 8, with enclosures, concerning the effort of the subject Arthur D. Goering to obtain discharge from the Reserves on account of his conscientious objection to continuing in any form of military status. I read this report with very great interest.

It appears to me that Arthur has done all that he can do at present in order to establish his position as a conscientious objector. I have had some contact with several similar cases of persons who have completed their period of active service during or since the Korean war. It seems that usually the military authorities concerned take the position that it is extremely unlikely that such persons will ever be recalled, so they simply let the request for discharge lie in their files. Arthur's case has evidently received more attention, because of the effort which was made on his behalf, but has also stopped without favorable action. For the present, I think that the best that he can do is keep his record clear.

However, I have a special interest in this case because of the nature of the answer which he received from the Adjutant General's office, and, depending on the nature of other correspondence that has been involved in this case, I might want to make an inquiry at the Adjutant General's office in connection with our general problem of securing discharges on the grounds of conscientious objection. For this purpose it would help me very much to have a complete file of the correspondence in this case to date. In what you have sent me there is mention of "a brief for the Chicago district", a "routine form from his Reserve HQ in Chicago", and a letter, dated 5 October 1954, to the Adjutant General. I am particularly interested in the letter to the Adjutant General, and any materials which may have accompanied that letter. This is partly because of the nature of the reply which he received on November 23, which does not seem to deal with Arthur's particular problem at all. Will you have exact copies of all of these materials, or as many of them as are now available, sent to me? Of course, I shall also be much interested in any further correspondence that has developed, or may develop in this case.

Our best wishes to you in this Christmas Season.

Sincerely yours,

J. Harold Sherk  
Executive Secretary  
Peace Section

JHS:nh  
cc: H. B. Schmidt

January 3, 1955

Mr. J. Harold Sherk,  
Mennonite Central Committee  
Akron, Pa.

Dear Bro. Sherk:

Regarding the "Army Reserve Qualification and Availability Questionnaire, DA Form 1140" which was completed and sent to the Headquarters of the 5th Army in Chicago on Dec. 8, 1954. I will list the items and my answers which are pertinent to my case.

1. Name, Grade, Service No., and Mailing Address.

Pfc Arthur D. Goering  
HR 55 190 598 AMEDS USAR  
Peabody, Kansas

2. Unit to which assigned.

EXEMPTED from assign. for religious reasons, 16 October 1953; BY ORDER OF COLONEL GRIFFITH;

9. Mobilization Availability.

I am not available for duty in armed forces for religious reasons. Enclosed is a letter of explanation and a statement of my convictions. Also enclosed is a statement of the position of my Church upon this question.

I wish to thank you, Bro. Sherk, for your interest in this case and I shall try to provide you with the necessary documents. I shall always feel indebted to you.

Sincerely yours,

*Arthur D. Goering*  
Arthur D. Goering

cc: H. B. Schmidt  
G. J. Dyck

# MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

AGENCY FOR RELIEF AND OTHER CHRISTIAN SERVICES

TELEPHONE EPHRATA 3-4915 • CABLE ADDRESS: MENCENCOM



ORGANIZED 1920  
INCORPORATED 1937

AKRON, PENNSYLVANIA

May 18, 1955

Arthur D. Goering  
Peabody,  
Kansas

Dear Arthur:

Re: Arthur D. Goering

This refers to my letter to you on January 12, 1955, and earlier correspondence with you and with Cornelius J. Dyck concerning your desire and effort to obtain a discharge from the Reserves. I have had no word from you or Brother Dyck since my letter on January 12, and would like to know whether you have had any reply to your latest effort for discharge.

Several similar cases have come to my attention since I wrote to you last, and all had received denials, as a result of which Edgar Metzler and I made further inquiry at the Department of Defense, and have received revised instructions on the procedures to be followed in the case of Reservists (that is, Army Reservists) who are seeking a discharge on the basis of their religious convictions. I am therefore enclosing a copy of revised instructions on procedures, based on the specific advice received from the Pentagon.

You will note particularly the statement in paragraph 4 concerning the kind of materials which should be prepared for submission with the request, and the statement in paragraph 5 concerning the specific language to be used when making this request. The official who gave us this information advised the importance of using this particular language, and stated categorically that the Secretary of the Army has authority to act under the quoted regulation.

So, if nothing further has happened in your case to date, I suggest that you now resubmit your request, scrupulously observing the instructions given. I think, too, that you should send us copies of the materials that you send in, in case that we may have opportunity to give an assist at the top level. From the fact that Congress is moving to add compulsion to the Reserve program which is now on the books, I think that the earlier such requests now get into the works and are passed the better.

Sincerely yours,

J. Harold Sherck  
Executive Secretary  
Peace Section

JHS:ep  
cc: H. B. Schmidt  
Cornelius J. Dyck  
enclosure

# Zion Mennonite Church

Cornelius J. Dyck, Pastor  
Elbing, Kansas

Telephone:  
Whitewater 59-F-32

Pastor Emeritus  
Rev. H. J. DYCK

May 23, 1955

## To Whom It May Concern:

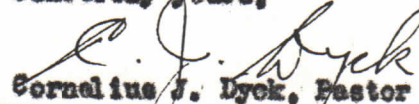
I am writing to you on behalf of Arthur D. Goering (born 6 - 28 - 1927), who is a member in good standing at our church here in Elbing, Kansas.

Several years ago Arthur followed his draft call and served in a 1-A-0 capacity in this country and overseas. Upon his release Arthur immediately took steps to sever all relations with the Armed Forces. He has told me in good faith that he had a severe struggle already during his term of service with the fact that he could not reconcile his religious convictions with the requirements of army life. He apparently found little sympathy whenever he expressed his views while in service.

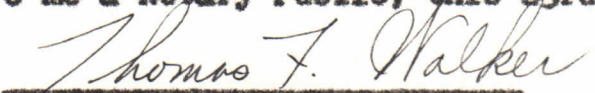
Arthur has now told me again that his conviction of over a year ago still stands. He is unable to participate in the Military Services in any form and seeks to be released from the Reserves. He has come to this position without undue pressure from myself or the church, but I do rejoice in his decision for the non-resistant position is an integral part of Mennonite doctrine and conduct for over 425 years, and to the present day. It is also the position of our church here at Elbing, being based, as we believe, upon the Word of God as revealed in Jesus Christ.

I can conscientiously say now that Arthur is leading a fine Christian life. While pursuing his graduate studies he is also active in Church activities, in teaching a Sunday School class, and other services. He has demonstrated his sincerity of conviction in consistent living, and I am happy to give this character reference for him. I believe further that Arthur will continue to be a good citizen of his country with the renewed faith he has found in his Lord and Master.

Sincerely yours,

  
Cornelius J. Dyck, Pastor

State of Kansas, County of Harvey:  
Subscribed and affirmed to before me a Notary Public, this 23rd day of May, 1955.

  
Notary Public  
Harvey County, Kansas

My Commission expires: 1/28/58

May 24, 1955

**SUBJECT:** Request for Discharge from the U. S. Army Reserve

**TO:** The Adjutant General  
Department of the Army  
Washington, D. C.

**THROUGH:** Chief, Kansas Military District  
723 Quincy Street  
Topeka, Kansas

1. Under the authority of SR 140-177-1, paragraph 3E, it is requested that I be discharged from the U. S. Army Reserve. The following personnel data is submitted:

- a. Name Arthur D. Goering
- b. Grade Private First Class
- c. Service number US 55 190 598
- d. Present assignment: 5105 USAR Control Group  
(Reinforcement)
- e. Current term of service:  
Active: Oct. 25, 1951 to Sept. 24, 1953  
Reserve: Sept. 25, 1953 to Oct. 24, 1959
- f. Date of expiration: October 24, 1959

2. Request for discharge is based or predicated upon the following conditions:

- a. My request for discharge is based upon a deep religious conviction that any participation in warfare is in conflict with the life and teachings of Christ and what He expects of His followers, of which I endeavor to be one.
- b. I can no more, as a follower of Christ, maintain a clear conscience and continue to be a part of the army.
- c. I believe Christ demands the same level of loyalty from all of His followers, ministers and laymen, alike. The tenor of the New Testament scriptures supports this fact.
- d. Attached is a more detailed statement of my conviction.
- e. If needed, I am willing to serve my country in other ways outside of the military or war effort.

Incls.

- 1. A personal statement of my convictions
- 2. A statement from my pastor
- 3. A statement of the official position of the Mennonite Church
- 4. Statements from several other persons

Name: Arthur D. Goering  
Grade: Pfc  
Service Number: US 55 190 598

Wichita, Kansas  
May 24, 1955

To whom it may concern:

RE: Discharge of Arthur D. Goering

For the past nine months Arthur D. Goering has lived in my home while doing graduate work at the University of Wichita.

From time to time we have discussed his convictions concerning his military status.. In my opinion he is entirely sincere in his beliefs, and most loyal to the best interests of the United States. He is an excellent student, honest and hard working..

I feel whatever he states as his position in this matter, has been decided after due consideration and heart searching.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Mrs. Carolyn S. Keagy*  
Mrs.. Carolyn S. Keagy

Newton,, Kansas  
May 26, 1955

To Whom it may concern:

This is to certify that to the best of my knowledge Mr. Arthur D. Goering is sincere in making his request for a change in classification from IAO to IO and is doing so as a result of a conviction he arrived at by a personal study of the New Testament Scriptures.

My acquaintance with him dates back to the year 1948. At that time he served as teacher of a cuntry school which three of our children attended. We have continued contacts with him since then and at the present he serves as a teacher of a Young People's sunday-school class at the church we both attend.

Respectfully

(signed) Louis A. Janzen

May 27, 1955

To Whom it May Concern:

This letter concerns Arthur O. Goering.

I have known Arthur for several years. Especially since his return from Germany where he served in the Armed Forces.

I have found him to have a deep conviction to work with the Alternative Service of the Mennonite Central Committee, Akron, Pa. rather than in the Armed Force. He has often expressed to me his belief in the power of Christian love over the power of Armed Force. He has taken active part in our local Mennonite Church activities. He is a hard worker and does not shrink from duty.

I personally believe that Arthur O. Goering is sincere and that his request to change his present draft status from 1-AO to 1-O. be granted.

Sincerely yours

Wm. J. Requir

R.F.D. 3

Newton, Mo

KANSAS STATE  
Counseling Committee  
for  
RELIGIOUS CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS  
May 31, 1955

To Whom it may concern:

Re: Discharge of Arthur D. Goering

I know Arthur D. Goering and he has come to my home a number of times stating that he wished that he might secure a discharge from the U. S. Army Reserve. I am convinced that he cannot conscientiously remain a member of the U. S. Army Reserve because of his religious convictions and therefore I would wish that you might find it possible to discharge him.

Mr. Goering is a very fine christian man, always willing to help in church and school work in which he is engaged at the present time. He is consistent in his christian living and I am sure warrents your consideration for an immediate discharge.

Thanking you for what you can and will do for him.

Respectfully yours

(signed)

H. E. Schmidt

Peabody, Kansas  
June 6, 1955

J. Harold Sherk  
Executive Secretary  
Peace Section  
Mennonite Central Committee  
Akron, Pennsylvania

Dear Mr. Sherk:

Thank you for your interest and assistance in this case. I received your letter recently and once again submitted a request for discharge.

My request, as you undoubtedly have observed was addressed to The Adjutant General, Department of the Army, Washington, D. C. through Chief, Kansas Military District, 723 Quincy Street, Topeka, Kansas. It was expected that the request would through army channels reach the Adjutant General's office.

It has, however, been returned from HQS KANSAS MILITARY DISTRICT, with the following statements, I quote:

1. Returned without action.
2. Your attention is invited to letters, this headquarters, dated 8 September 1954, and 23 November 1954, advising you that you were not eligible for discharge from the Army Reserve for the reasons stated in your requests. No further action is contemplated by this headquarters on your request for discharge.
3. Any request for change in draft classification should be addressed to your local draft board.

BY ORDER OF COLONEL GRIFFITH:

(signed) Carl H. Kittrell  
1st Lt. QMC  
Asst. Adjutant

After counsel and consideration, I have decided to submit a request to The Adjutant General with all of the enclosures sent with the previous request plus the request for discharge.

June 6, 1955

SUBJECT: Request for Discharge from the U. S. Army Reserve

TO: The Adjutant General  
Department of the Army  
Washington, D. C.

1. Under the authority of SR 140-177-1, paragraph 3E, it is requested that I be discharged from the U. S. Army Reserve. The following personnel data is submitted:

- a. Name Arthur D. Goering
- b. Grade Private First Class
- c. Service number US 55 190 598
- d. Present assignment: 5105 USAR Control Group  
(Reinforcement)
- e. Current term of service:  
Active: Oct. 25, 1951 to Sept. 24, 1953  
Reserve: Sept. 25, 1953 to Oct. 24, 1959
- f. Date of expiration: October 24, 1959

2. This request for discharge is sent to the Adjutant General because it had been addressed to the Adjutant General, Department of the Army, Washington, D. C. through Chief, Kansas Military District, 723 Quincy Street, Topeka, Kansas, on May 24, 1955 and had been returned without action. Enclosed is my request for discharge submitted on that date and the reply.

3. Request for discharge is based or predicated upon the following conditions:

- a. My request for discharge is based upon a deep religious conviction that any participation in warfare is in conflict with the life and teachings of Christ and what He expects of His followers, of which I endeavor to be one.
- b. I can no more, as a follower of Christ, maintain a clear conscience and continue to be a part of the army.
- c. I believe Christ demands the same level of loyalty from all of His followers, ministers and laymen, alike. The tenor of the New Testament scriptures supports this fact.
- d. Attached is a more detailed statement of my convictions.
- e. If needed, I am willing to serve my country in other ways outside of the military or war effort.

Name:

Grade:

Service Number:

Incls.

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AGENCY FOR RELIEF AND OTHER CHRISTIAN SERVICES

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INCORPORATED 1937

AKRON, PENNSYLVANIA

June 7, 1955

Arthur D. Goering  
Peabody,  
Kansas

Dear Arthur:

Re: Arthur D. Goering

I have now received two copies of your new request for discharge from the U. S. Army Reserve, apparently submitted under date of May 24, 1955. With the two signed copies of your request for discharge there were copies of a personal statement of your convictions under date of July 17, 1954; copies of a notarized statement from Cornelius J. Dyck under date of May 23, 1955; copies of a letter from Mrs. Carolyn S. Keagy under date of May 24, 1955; copies of a letter from Louis A. Janzen under date of May 26, 1955; and copies of a letter from William J. Regier under date of May 27, 1955.

A note at the bottom of your request letter also stated that you were enclosing "a statement of the official position of the Mennonite Church" but this did not come with the enclosures to me. Could you let me know what statement you used? Was it the "Christian Declaration on Peace, War, and Military Service" adopted at the General Conference at Portland, Oregon, on August 22, 1953? I should have this also in case of opportunity to make personal representations on your behalf at the Pentagon.

I would like to add that I think that you have made a very good statement, both in the request letter itself and in the supporting documents. I shall do my best to see that this gets a proper hearing. We pray for a favorable outcome.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "J. Harold Sherk".

J. Harold Sherk  
Executive Secretary  
Peace Section

JHS:ep  
cc: Cornelius Dyck  
H. B. Schmidt