

**DISPLAYING THE AMERICAN FLAG**

Suppose the city or state officials should issue an order requiring, or even requesting, that all persons display the American flag. What should we do? We answer, We think it would be right to display the flag in obedience to such order or request. The American flag was adopted as an emblem of liberty. It is the national emblem. While some have insisted that it now represents war, this is hardly in keeping with the facts. It may represent war to those who desire war, but to those who love liberty and peace, the flag represents liberty and peace. However that may be, the displaying of the American flag can do injury to no one. If commanded or requested to display the flag, it should be done, out of respect to the Government under which it is the privilege of Christians to live. If an American was the guest of the British Government and was requested to display the British flag and refused to do so, it would be showing disrespect to the British Government, his host. If a Christian, who is an alien amongst all earthly governments, should, while journeying amongst them, be requested to display a flag of the country whose benefits he is enjoying, and refuse to do so, such refusal would be failing to show the proper respect to such government. Recognizing that the Government of the United States has been the special refuge of Christian people from intolerable persecution; that it was founded as an asylum of religious liberty and freedom of speech, every one in America should take pleasure in displaying the American flag—especially when requested so to do. It does not mean that by putting a flag on your house you would want to go to war.

Since the Bethel Home was established, in one end of the Drawing Room there has been kept a small bust of Abraham Lincoln with two American flags displayed about the bust. This is deemed entirely proper, having in mind what Mr. Lincoln did for the Government and for the people of the United States, and in this we see nothing inconsistent with a Christian's duty.

The Sixty-fifth Congress, now in session at Washington, has passed a law providing for selective draft into military service of the United States of all men between certain ages. Section II of said Act provides:

"Such draft shall be based upon liability to military service of all male citizens, or male persons not alien enemies who have declared their intention to become citizens, between the ages of 21 and 30 years, and shall take place and be maintained under such regulations as the President may prescribe not inconsistent with the terms of this Act. Quotas for the several States, Territories, and the District of Columbia, or subdivisions thereof, shall be determined in proportion to the population thereof available for military service, as shown by the registration provided for herein."

This provision of the Act means that the President of the United States may by selective draft call to arms all male citizens of the United States, and all male persons not alien enemies who have declared their intention (by taking out what is known as "First Papers") to become citizens of the United States, between designated ages; and that he has power to compel all such to respond to such call.

**REGISTRATION FIRST**

For the purpose of enabling the Government to know who may be called into such service, the Act provides for a registration as follows:

"Sec. 4. All persons liable to military service under the provisions of this Act shall be subject to registration in accordance with regulations to be prescribed by the President, and upon proclamation by the President or other public notice given by him or by his direction stating the time and place of such registration, it shall be the duty of every such person liable to military service under the provisions hereof to present himself for and submit to registration under the provisions of this Act; and every such person liable to military service shall be deemed to have notice of the requirements of this Act upon the publication of said proclamation or other notice as aforesaid given by the President or by his direction; and any person who shall fail or neglect to present himself for registration or to submit thereto as herein provided shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall, upon conviction in the proper district court of the United States, be punished by imprisonment for not less than three months or more than one year, and shall thereupon be duly registered."

This Section of the Act means that the President of the United States, by public proclamation, will designate the time and place of registration, and that the publication of such proclamation or notice given by the President will be all the notice that any one will need or be given concerning such registration; and that all male persons embraced within the

Act are required under the law to register and submit to examination; that on the day provided by such proclamation it shall be the duty of all male persons liable to military service under the provisions of said Act to present themselves for registration before the proper officers and to give answers to such questions as may be propounded to them. Since this section is not in any way in conflict with the law of God, as believed and understood by Bible Students of the INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION, then all such should cheerfully obey this provision of the Act and duly appear and register in accordance with its terms.

**EXEMPTION FROM MILITARY SERVICE**

Recognizing the right of each person to exercise an honest religious conviction with respect to participation in war, Congress, in the Act herein under examination, has made provision for certain persons to be exempted or excused from selective draft for military service. Section 3 of said Act providing for such exemption, is as follows:

"Sec. 3. The Vice President of the United States, the officers, legislative, executive, and judicial of the United States and of the several States and Territories, and all persons in the military and naval service of the United States, shall be exempt from the selective draft herein prescribed; and nothing in this Act contained shall be construed to require or compel any person to serve in any of the forces herein provided for if found to be a member of any well-organized religious sect or organization, at present organized and existing, whose creed forbids its members to participate in war in any form and whose religious convictions are against war or participation therein in accordance with the creed of said religious organization; and the President is hereby authorized to exclude or discharge from said selective draft and from the draft under the second paragraph of section one hereof, or to draft for partial military service only, persons of the following classes: Custom-house clerks; persons employed by the United States in the transmission of the mails; artificers and workmen employed in the armories, arsenals, and navy yards of the United States, and such other persons employed in the service of the United States as the President may designate; pilots; mariners actually employed in the sea service of any citizen or merchant within the United States; persons engaged in industries including agriculture, found to be necessary to the maintenance of the military establishment or the effective operation of the military forces or the maintenance of national interest during the emergency; those in a status with respect to persons dependent upon them for support, which renders their exclusion or discharge advisable; and those found to be physically and morally deficient. No exemption or exclusion shall continue when a cause therefor no longer exists."

It follows, therefore, that any person who makes application for exemption because of his religious creed, or belief, forbidding his participation in war in any form, or whose religious convictions are against war or participation therein, is not violating any law of the land, but, on the contrary, is availing himself of the provisions of such law. In calling the attention of our brethren thereto, we are merely advising what rights and privilege this law grants to them.

The WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY was incorporated and organized according to law in the year 1884 as a religious organization, and still is organized and exists as such religious organization. The INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION is the same organization incorporated and organized in the year 1913 under that name according to the provisions of the laws of Great Britain, but said organization had existed as an unincorporated religious organization many years prior thereto, and still exists as such religious organization. The classes or congregations of Christian people throughout the United States organized and existing under the name of ASSOCIATED BIBLE STUDENTS of the INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION are so organized and directed under the supervision of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY and its like organization, the INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION. The members of all such Bible Classes come clearly within the provisions of said section of the above Act of Congress relating to the exemption from military service. The Act provides that "Nothing in this Act contained shall be construed to require or compel any person to serve in any of the forces herein provided for who is a member of any well-organized religious sect or organization at present organized and existing, whose creed forbids its members to participate in war in any form and whose religious convictions are against war or participation therein in accordance with the creed of said religious organization."

The word "creed," of course, means belief. All Christians of the above mentioned religious organizations believe the Bible