

NISBCO's

Conscientious Objector Service

National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors

NISBCO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

HERMAN WILL, JR., *Chairperson*
United Methodist Church

WILLIAM T. SNYDER,
Vice Chairperson
Mennonite Central Committee

E. J. CLELLAND,
Recording Secretary
Christ's Sanctified Holy Church

GIRVEN H. CULLEY, *Treasurer*
American Baptist

JANE EVANS
Union of American
Hebrew Congregations

RICHARD T. MCSORLEY
United States Catholic Conference

CHARLES BOYER
Church of the Brethren

FAY KNOPP
Friends

HOWARD C. MAXWELL
United Presbyterian Church,
U. S. A.

ROBERT E. JONES
Unitarian Universalist Association

JAMES SIEFKES
The American Lutheran Church

WARREN W. HOOVER
Executive Director

550 Washington Bldg.,
15th and New York Ave., N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20005
Phone (202) 393-4868

January 6, 1975

Dear Friend:

Jim Miller is celebrating his 16th birthday as this letter is being written. For months he's dreamed of this day when he would be old enough to get a driver's license. This is a great day, a milestone of maturity and a threshold of new adult opportunity.

Those of us over 16 may have trouble believing, though, that Jim does not remember much about the Vietnam War. "My Lai" and "Tonkin Gulf" and "body counts" are half-heard words all but buried now in his memories.

The cake and the candles at the little family party are treated with deference, but those 16 flames burn an indelible image on his memory. This is the beginning of a new day - work permit, part time job, more independence, car. . . .

Jim's feelings of elation are dimmed a bit right in the middle of his party on his great day. Questions that have been lurking near the surface of his conscious thoughts for weeks now pop into his mind. What will he do when he is through school? When he turns 18 his senior year, will there still be a draft? Will the U. S. be involved then in open armed conflict?

Friend Jim shrugs off those little gnawing questions as he has done before with a laughing suggestion that growing old isn't so bad after all when you consider the alternative.

Still, all will not stay bright for Jim on this big birthday. Scenes from his economics course flash through his mind. Many questions have been raised about the deadly effects of "defense" spending on the economy. He has caught a glimpse of the struggle between exploiters and the exploited and the blight of world hunger.

All this seems a long way off and far away to a person just turning 16. Some school honors seem headed his way. Young people and adults like Jim because he has his serious moments as well as quick wit and a ready smile. "Live now," he thinks to himself, "life is good!"

After a few minutes of chatter, however, his mind wanders again to questions raised recently in discussions with some of his closest friends. When the U. S. goes to war again, should young women be drafted? Why must young men decide by 18 what their response will be to the draft?

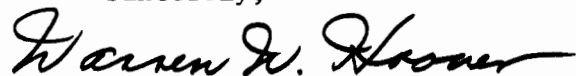
The scene in Jim's mind shifts as he serves himself more food and half consciously responds to questions. He sees smiling down at him from billboards the handsome young faces of many persons in military garb doing things they want to do and anticipating a host of fringe benefits.

"This is no way to be thinking at a birthday party," Jim scolds himself. And he joins again in the banter and small talk. Dinner ends and he moves on in the process of getting accustomed to being 16.

My guess is that at NISBCO one of these days soon we are going to get a letter from Jim. He will join the many high school students who write to us and say, "I am doing a paper for a course in school. Please send me everything you can on conscientious objection."

A big order? Yes, these are sometimes the most challenging responses to write. We must respond. Of course, no charge is ever made for these or any other services of our staff. The continuation of this vital work depends upon tax deductible contributions from persons like you.

Sincerely,



Warren W. Hoover

P.S.: Keep up on the many developments affecting persons like Jim around you who struggle with questions of conscience and war. Read NISBCO's "The Reporter for Conscience' Sake." See the SPECIAL OFFER on the coupon below

- - - - - clip here and mail - - - - -

YES, I ACCEPT YOUR SPECIAL OFFER.
PLEASE SEND ME "THE REPORTER FOR CONSCIENCE' SAKE" FOR THREE YEARS FOR THE PRICE
OF TWO. (This offer good until March 1, 1975)
PLEASE FIND MY CHECK FOR \$4.00 ENCLOSED.

(please print)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

(zip code)

THIS IS A ☐ RENEWAL - ☐ A NEW SUBSCRIPTION