



“Faithful Witness amid Endless War” delegate comments summary

The resolution passed handily and that support is reflected in the comments. Delegates were appreciative of the resolution and saw it as a recommitment to our history and beliefs:

- Resolution grows out of our shared commitment to Christ. Seems like an obvious step. Importance of recognizing a different way than endless war.
- Glad to see this resolution. Like that it has been called for.
- Grateful to see our denomination take a stand.
- Grateful for resolution – calls us back to who we are

There was however a sentiment that the resolution wasn’t specific enough in recommending action:

- Support, but how to act?
- Is this just a “feel-good” resolution? Does it have any effect?
- We are looking for more description of action items, types of responses that churches can embody.
- Steps not specific enough.

The call to address “moral injury” and the wounds of soldiers resonated strongly with the delegates:

- Attracted to the encouragement to reach the “wounded” of our communities.
- Strong support for item #2, especially for more ministries that will support those persons who have been traumatized by war (both as perpetrators and as victims).
- People on one end of gun are harmed differently than those on the other end. Importance of helping soldiers heal from PTSD.
- We feel the need to increase our ministry to people who are involved in killing (soldiers, veterans, etc.).

A small number of delegates wondered about the appropriateness of addressing the government:

- Sometimes in following Jesus, I’m not sure how to understand my intentions with my government. What is my responsibility to the government – to war – “God uses the State to mete out His justice.”
- Are we wading into political waters? How do we remain separate?
- Is this telling our government how to act?

The amendment focusing on drone warfare was supported in general, with some specific objections:

- Drones signify an escalation in our nation’s distancing from face to face warfare.
- Favor. Trust in God, not drones.
- There was some strong opposition to the amendment because it was overly broad and could be read to ban use of robotics and artificial intelligence not related to war.

Overall, the delegate comments communicated a desire for Mennonite Church USA to be bold in addressing war, urged us to find specific avenues of action for people and congregations and expressed a desire to work to help veterans find healing from the spiritual wounds of war. Further education on drone warfare is needed as well.

- summarized by Jason Boone, coordinating minister of the Peace and Justice Support Network