

WHY ABOLISH THE DRAFT?

Conscription is the most outrageous aspect of militarism in the United States. It affects every male after his 18th birthday. The Universal Military Training and Service Act exists to procure men: directly, by the draft; indirectly, through voluntary enlistment stimulated by the draft.

CONSCRIPTION IS TOTALITARIAN

Many early pioneers came to America to escape the tyranny of European conscription. For over a century Americans have cherished the tradition of being "a democracy without conscription."

Democracy is based on respect for the dignity and worth of each human being, and within a democracy people must be free--free to hear all sides, to disagree, debate, and dissent. Under Selective Service, draftees are sent to camps where outside opinions and influences are kept out, discussion and debate are curtailed, and independent decision-making is discouraged. Draftees are told what to do and expected to conform.

Conscription invades the life of a young man when he is preparing for a career and separates him from his family, home, and work. In the hands of the army he is no longer a free man. Such compulsory, involuntary service is a form of slavery.

Those who submit to conscription find their lives regimented day and night. Drills and commands produce the habit of group obedience. In time, the conscript ceases to be a free, self-determining being who can think for himself and act on his own--who is, therefore, responsible for his actions.

The totalitarian set-up into which the draftee is put begins to work methodically to destroy whatever independent will the youth may have, and replaces this with unquestioning loyalty to the authoritarian system. Two years of military indoctrination may not be discarded as easily as the uniform.

Conscription suspends the inalienable rights on which this nation was founded: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. For democracy to continue we must end compulsory military service.

CONSCRIPTION IS IMMORAL

Through the Selective Service System, the U.S. Government teaches young men how to be brutal, how to shoot and kill, how to burn and demolish cities, how to commit other crimes. Young men are required to become a part of the violence, suffering, and sadness of war.

Conscription sets the dictates of the State above those of conscience; the individual is not free to choose his duties and responsibilities. Duties are designated by "superior" officers. For example, Eichmann said, "I was only obeying orders." Blind obedience does make it possible for men to abdicate responsibility--to overcome or set aside their normal, natural reluctance to kill. Group obedience helps make war possible.

Conscription makes an absolute of the State and a pawn of the individual. This is the immorality of conscription, for the ethical basis of moral action is that the individual is responsible for his actions and cannot delegate or excuse this responsibility away.

To end war, conscription must also be ended. We must recognize the immoral and totalitarian nature of the Selective Service System and refuse to cooperate with it.

NOW

DRAFT

THE

END

NOW IS THE TIME TO END CONSCRIPTION

Craig Young, 19, and Fred Moore, 23, are speaking against the draft in California. Craig, from Belmont, California, is presently awaiting the Appeal Board decision on his CO status. He has been active with CNVA since 1960, when in New London, Connecticut, he committed civil disobedience in protest against the manufacture of Polaris submarines.

Fred, from Fillmore, California, protested compulsory ROTC at U.C. Berkeley, fasting on the steps of Sproul Hall in 1959. He recently conducted two anti-draft caravans in New England during October. As a non-cooperator with the draft, he has refused to comply with an order to report for civilian work in lieu of induction.

Committee for Nonviolent Action - West condemns equally the commitment of East and West to military defense. We urge every nation to disarm independently. We believe that genuine peace and security can be achieved only by ending reliance on weapons and violence and by using nonviolent action to extend freedom throughout the world.

We urge people everywhere not to rely on governmental and industrial bureaucracies for their livelihood. We encourage them to build a society of independent, cooperating communities, which do not exploit and which cultivate attitudes of social responsibility, freedom, and mutual sensitivity.

For further information on draft refusal and nonviolence:

CNVA
WEST



Committee for
Nonviolent Action-West
Post Office Box 5983
San Francisco, California

Name _____
Address _____

'O Jesus Christ! I'm hit,' he said; and died,
Whether he vainly cursed, or prayed indeed,
The Bullets chirped—In vain! vain! vain!
Machine-guns chuckled,——Tut-tut! Tut-tut!
And the Big Gun guffawed,

Another sighed,——'O Mother, mother! Dad!
Then smiled, at nothing, childlike, being dead.
And the lofty Shrapnel-cloud
Leisurely gestured,——Fool!
And the falling splinters tittered.

'My Love!' one moaned. Love-languid seemed his mood,
Till, slowly lowered, his whole face kissed the mud.
And the Bayonets' long teeth grinned;
Rabbles of Shells hooted and groaned;
And the Gas hissed.

--- Wilfred Owen

