

WHICH WAY

ARE YOU GOING?

*Counsel
for
Men
Facing
the
Draft*

THE
EPISCOPAL
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FELLOWSHIP



Many young men are going in increasing numbers into military service these days. They are drafted or they sign up. In either case, they choose to enter the military, often with little thought about the whys and wherefores of their commitment.

There are others who think a great deal about this decision. Some are in the military. An increasing number are not. This same choice is up to you. It is the agony of decision-making that makes each of us most truly human. It is neither easy nor simple to decide about military service. Yet each of us must ask ourselves, Which Way Am I Going?

The Christian has a special urgency "bugging" him in this decision. For his decision will reflect not only which way he trusts Christ wants him personally to go. His decision also reflects the Body of Christ in the world, the way he sees his Lord moving in the affairs of men and nations in the nuclear age, especially in regard to war and the movement for peace.

"Baptism is the assurance—accepted, enacted, verified, and represented by Christians—of the unity of *all men* in Christ. Thus the vocation of the baptized person is a simple thing to live from day to day, whatever the day brings, in the extraordinary unity, in this reconciliation with all men and all things. The only thing that really matters is to live in Christ instead of death."

—WILLIAM STRINGFELLOW

No doubt about it. Many sincere men believe they are serving their country's best interests in the armed forces. The Episcopal Church is well-known for its laity in high levels of military and governmental councils. The armed forces them-

selves have heavy recruiting programs to the end of your enlistment.

But is this for you? You alone can decide. And you are not alone as you make this decision.

You may become a *conscientious objector to war*. You would become one of a company of men, including an increasing number of Episcopalians, who are convinced no less sincerely in the aim of "freedom and justice for all," but who believe that militarism and war are wrong ways to pursue that goal. They realize the primary function of the military is to wage war when considered necessary by the State. So they face this moral issue (among others): Can you prepare to kill your fellow human being and fully reverence his life at the same time?

What can you do? You need to get two questions straight. First, and ultimately, it is not "Will I risk my life for my country?" but "Will I help in taking the lives of others on the battle fields of modern war?" Second, in the atomic age, as war now threatens the destruction of God's creation, "Will I commit myself to being a willing partner in the threat of nuclear holocaust?"

Jesus faced the basic issues with agonizing realism in the satanic temptations, all during his ministry, and before Pilate. He was tempted to accept the world as it is, to align with the kind of power that sat on the throne in Rome, and thus to overthrow tyranny and bring in the new day of peace and freedom. Jesus refused.

Ultimately, men could not bear the weight of that judgement, and so they crucified it in person. Still his authentic humanity triumphed, and he is even now in peaceable conflict among men as Reconciler . . . Peacemaker. We who follow his lead owe our first loyalty not to a flag proclaiming our national heritage, but to a cross declaring our universal human involvement. We are bound to one who knocks down our walls of hostility and opens doors to our peace.

You can affirm Christ's way of non-violent love by conscientiously objecting to militarism and war. Today, the United States Government provides non-violent alternatives to military service.

The World Council of Churches in 1948, having declared that war is against the will of God, has recognized the way of pacifism as a Christian vocation. The Lambeth Conference of Anglican Bishops, in 1958, reaffirmed an earlier protest against war: "War as a method of settling international disputes is incompatible with the teaching and example of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . Nothing less than the abolition of war itself should be the goal of the nations, their leaders and all citizens." Our own Episcopal House of Bishops, in 1962 recognized "the validity of the calling of the conscientious objector and the pacifist and the duty of the Church to fully minister to him, and its obligation to see that we live in a society in which the dictates of his conscience are respected."

Your choices include:

General Conscientious Objection This 1-0 classification obligates a man to two years of alternate national service. You must request S.S. Form 150, submit your claim, and if accepted, submit the work you hope to do. Your claim is that you are "opposed to war in any form."

Non-combatant Service This 1-A-0 classification is for those who, while not willing to bear arms, will serve the military in other ways. It should be realized that such persons still serve the military command first, and that their loyalty to human kind becomes secondary.

Non-cooperation Those who are convinced the system of conscription itself is wrong, profoundly unfair, and basically anti-democratic are called non-cooperators. Some may refuse to register or to keep in possession their draft card. Such persons face up to \$10,000 in fines and/or five years in prison, although the penalty is generally less severe. If a regular CO claim is not secured and all due process is exhausted, and the person still refuses induction, that person faces the same penalties.

Selective Objection Some men now conscientiously refuse to serve in the Armed Forces on grounds that our government is involved in "unjust" wars, as in Vietnam. This claim, while often

served the Church with its peace witness. Today, our Fellowship is moving, as our Episcopal bishops have charged, "to meet all the issues of war and peace, including the menace of nuclear weapons." Membership in the E.P.F. is open to baptized Episcopalians. Others are welcome on our mailing list.

In addition to this pamphlet, the E.P.F. provides speakers, seminar helps, draft counseling, and experimental peace education in parishes. It cooperates with the Department of Christian Social Relations of the Episcopal Church. Sponsors of the E.P.F. include: Winslow Ames, Fr. Robert Beggs, Peter Boehmer, Dr. John V. Butler, Fr. John W. Day, Mrs. Mary Dikeman, Fr. Charles Fisher, Dr. Daisuke Kitagawa, Fr. Robert Lesch, Dr. Henry Lewis, Canon Charles Martin, Edward Morgan, Fr. Albert Neilson, Fr. Thomas Pike, Fr. Robert Pollard, Archdeacon Charles Rehkopf, Mrs. Joseph Rohrer, Mrs. George Schindler, Mrs. Arthur Sherman, Dr. Alfred Starrat, Peter Tailer, William Tilenius, Fr. Lawson Willard.

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THE EPISCOPAL PEACE FELLOWSHIP
229 E. 59th Street, New York, N. Y. 10022