

11.11.21

Dear Chapel Hill Friends Meeting,

I am writing this letter to document my beliefs and feelings about selective service. I hope that this letter adequately explains my reasons for requesting your support in my position as a conscientious objector.

Born into the Chapel Hill Friends Meeting, to parents married under the care of the Meeting, I have been a part of the Chapel Hill Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) my whole life. I grew up in the Meeting as an active participant and caring member. This community shaped me, modeling for me the values of peace, integrity and community - ethics that guide my life.

Quakers practice non-violence, and I have continuously considered and integrated this belief as I matured. I'm a peacemaker, I do not like conflict. When I interact with another human, I attempt to do so with utmost diplomacy, respect and understanding. I'm not a fighter; I seek nonviolent solutions to every problem that arises. I see no gain from violence, only distraught misled emotions, piling up and fueling each other.

Likewise, I see no reason for war. I will not go to war, or kill, for a country that has every resource to approach any "Opposition" with open arms and attentive ears. War has no meaningful purpose, and killing is the worst part about it. Waging war just avoids crucial conversations. Removing a possibility for conversation is cowardice, and improves no one, only creating larger divides, and more reasons for violence. It's an easy way out. When wars are waged, those who are in need get suppressed, covering up a problem with a larger problem. Even when the war is in their name, they become casualties. War is an attempt to make those who are most affected forget about all the other failures, because there's something "being done" - while nothing productive happens at all. When wars end, the defeated party is usually beaten into the ground and the innocent lives of bystanders are destroyed by the actions of the victor. Emotions and needs can be very strong at times, driving people to make rash decisions, but poor decisions do not condemn them to death.

The only position that I could take during a war would be to provide stewardship towards a peaceful resolution. At the end of WWII, the Marshall plan did this for the axis powers, leading them to a time of prosperity instead of poverty. Without actions of this nature, reducing reason for future conflict, there would be no hope. I will always be present and willing to do my part to maintain peace without violence.

Everyone on this beautiful planet has been made equally, and I would not be able to remove their life from this world. I could not be brought to tarnish something as sacred as Humanity. Each breath, heartbeat, blink, sneeze, and thought have a purpose. I want to understand how others think, feel and see. To kill a fellow human would be to go against everything that I believe. A man who is unwilling to listen and learn is his own largest threat. True peace is not achievable through violence.

Over the past 18 years, I have been able to look to this Meeting for support and nurture, even through the toughest questions and experiences. In this time of transition, I ask for continued support as I respectfully decline selective service and request to be recognized as a conscientious objector.

Gratefully Yours,

Rufus Carver King

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rufus King". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name.