

To the Chapel Hill Friends Meeting,

On Dec 9th 2021, I crossed the threshold into adulthood, and a new chapter of my life. I am aware that I am about to be thrust into adventures I can't start to guess, and am excited to take each one head on. However, along with becoming an adult, the country in which I live sees not only a new member of its society, but another well-bodied soldier to use in order to "protect" a country with violence. I am here to state that I am not one of those soldiers.

Since I was a child I have been raised with a deep rooted sense of morality, and a will to protect the sacred life within us all. My family instilled values of equality, forgiveness, and empathy that taught me ideas of non-violent conflict resolution, and the intrinsic worth of every human. These ideas were reinforced through my connections with the Religious Society of Friends. And while I will protect those I hold dear, I will not do so with guns on my hip, or death upon my fingers. I will not partake in any action that will steal another's life. War goes against every aspect of the beliefs I have been taught. To even support a conquest to rid another of life is, in my beliefs, despicable.

War does more harm than just destroying human life. Building and sustaining military force consumes vast quantities of resources, not only during war, but in preparation for unknown conflict. The CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of the largest militaries are greater than many of the world's countries combined. Military training disrupts terrestrial and marine habitats and creates pollutants. I hold the natural world as my divinity and a conquest that so blatantly disregards that spiritual belief will never be one to which I offer my services.

War is an ink stain on what makes us human, it is what removes us from our neighbor and what pushes us from the peace I hold so dear. In conclusion, war contradicts my moral and ethical beliefs—I will not partake in any and all war. I ask that the meeting accept and hold my letter as documentation of my conscientious objection beliefs.

Sutton, 1/16/2022