

19th July 2020
William J.M. King

To the Meeting and whomever else it may concern,

I am conscientiously opposed to participating in any and all war. This is not because I am opposed to any specific war, act of war, nation, or historical precedent, but because I am opposed, as I believe everyone should be, to injustice. To wage war is to kill, to mutilate, and to rob other people of their freedom. Those who make the decision to engage in war are never the same people who fight the war, or who pay the price. They are those who have been told to believe the people they are killing are somehow evil, somehow different than us. Both sides of every war do this because to confront the truth would be to confront the fact that in every circumstance, to wage war is to kill those who are innocent.

Not only is war a brutal and horrifying tactic, it is an ineffective one. Violence begets violence, not peace. In every example, waging war has resulted in escalated tensions that have caused more violence and death, not led to peace and better lives. I firmly believe that the way problems should be approached is diplomatically, without exception.

Overall, I fundamentally believe that war is a tool for the subjugation of peoples, and causes the death of the innocent. I believe that all people deserve the fundamental right of life, and that to engage in war with people is therefore to deprive them of their rights. The Roman theory on the ethics of war, *Jus ad bellum*, describes the intentions under which Romans believed war to be acceptable. The theory discusses the "just cause and right intention." However, to me, review of the classical theory on conditions under which war is acceptable only strengthens my conviction that war is inherently unjust.

These are some of the moral and ethical reasons I am against war, but the convictions I feel to them are much deeper and more personal. Regardless of country, cause, or circumstance, I could never take the life of another person, especially in the case of war. To take a human life, under any circumstance, is antithetical to everything I have taught and every value that I hold. The people killed in war, regardless of their affiliation, position, or relation to the military, remain human, and their humanity is not diminished or excised by any such factor.

I ask that the meeting accept this letter as demonstration of my conviction to peace and objection to war, and that I could not participate in war.

Will King