

The following is a statement by Larry Knickerbocker to his local draft board as to why he was going to refuse induction into the military. Unable to get the Selective Service System to recognize his claim as a conscientious objector, Larry refused induction at the Syracuse induction center on May 19, 1969. During the period before his refusal and now, as he is awaiting arrest, he is working in the Peace Council office. Previously he was a high school teacher and a yard man at a used car lot. Larry's wife, Marcia, is a kindergarten teacher in North Syracuse.

WHY I RESIST: A PERSONAL MANIFESTO

(I have prepared the following statement in the hope that it may serve to explain, at least in part, the reasons for my contemplated refusal to serve in the armed forces of the United States of America.)

For all of the twenty-four years of my life, I have been a citizen of the United States of America. I was born in this country in 1944, the son of an American soldier stationed in Europe with the Army Corps of Engineers. By right of birth, therefore, and by reason of my upbringing, the course of my life has been committed, from its beginning, to the life and fortunes of this nation.

Inherent in this commitment is what I feel to be my personal responsibility in the social and political affairs of this nation. I am an American and this is my nation; whatever is done in the name of this nation and the people of this nation is done in my name as well.

In terms of the long-standing traditions of human society, the relationship thus defined - between citizenship and individual responsibility - seems well established. Moreover, in terms of a modern legal precedent, it is the principle established by the war trials at Nuremberg, a principle of international relations which was both recognized and sanctioned by the United States through its co-sponsorship of those trials.

On the basis of these criteria, it seems imperative that individual human beings recognize a kind of dual citizenship, a double responsibility, thrust upon them by reason of their very existence at this juncture in human history. The traditional relationship between the individual citizen and his nation-state is now explicitly paralleled by the wider responsibilities incumbent upon him as a member of the human race. In fact, in seeking to define the limitations - and call to recognition the perils - of uncritical loyalty to national self-interests, the previously mentioned war trials served to indicate that the first claim on individual loyalty is the mutually shared responsibility for humanity-at-large.

It is within the context of this definition, and in recognition of the responsibility which it entails, that I feel compelled to repudiate the recent conduct of this nation's foreign affairs, particularly with reference to our present involvement in Vietnam. Therefore, to the end that I may fulfill my responsibility as a member of the race of Man, I declare that I will not serve as a member of the armed forces of the United States and that I will henceforth seek to do all within my power to secure the end of that nation's involvement in Vietnam and in all like enterprises which reasonably seem to be to the detriment of the human race.

If the consequence of my refusal to serve the limited and selfish interests of this nation is to be the relinquishment of my liberties as a citizen, then it may serve the broader interests of humanity for me to accept those consequences and not be deterred from acknowledging the solemn responsibilities that human life and human perception have thrust upon me. Perhaps, in serving first the interests of humanity, I may ultimately be serving the most crucial needs of this nation. That, at least, is my hope.

To reiterate, I do not mean to imply that the sole basis of my present position is the assumption suggested by the Nuremberg trials. The concept of humanitarian responsibility is much older, and much more widely sanctioned in our own society than the present example would in itself suggest.

In two important respects, however, it provides an historically objectified standard by which we may judge the validity of our own commitments. First, as mentioned above, the Nuremberg tribunal represents a direct attempt, on the part of the United States and her allies, to broaden the scope of individual responsibility beyond simple loyalty to nation and to re-define that responsibility in terms of international law. Secondly, and in a very real sense, it follows that the dilemma of the German people during World War II may find a significant parallel in that which faces Americans of conscience today.

In this regard, it is one of the chilling ironies of our position in Vietnam that in the person of Vice-President Ky we are asked to support the policies and political assumptions of a man whose avowed hero in history is none other than Adolph Hitler. I firmly believe that there is good reason to suggest that this unwholesome affinity of Mr. Ky's has more widely characterized the policy-making and military tactics of our Saigon allies than our own government would like to admit and that we, as a nation, are therefore liable to an equal guilt by association,

Be that as it may, we as Americans, citizens of a powerful and democratic nation, have many reasons - more, perhaps, than any other people in history - to repudiate violence as an accepted means of dealing with our problems in the world at large.

We, as Americans, have the responsibility to see that the power derived from the consent of the people is not used to the detriment of others.

--Lawrence P. Knickerbocker
May 6, 1969

Syracuse Peace Council
3049 East Genesee Street
Syracuse, New York 13224

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If you want to work for Peace, it is not enough to sit and wait for someone from the Executive Committee or Peace Council staff to telephone you and ask you to work. They are busy people and may or may not find time to call you this month. It is your responsibility to call the Peace Council office, 446-5656 and ask what you can do. If you have an idea and want to know additional persons who can work with you by all means call the office. If you want to work but don't know what to do, call the office and David Easter or Mary Jane Hoffman will be glad to work out with you a task that interests you.

Coming Event: Hiroshima Vigil, August 6, at noon
Co-sponsored with Women's International League for Peace

New Publication: "The ABM And A World Without War" by Robert Pickus (a co-author of Speak Truth to Power)
Published by A World Without War Council
Available from our literature rack at 95¢
..... This book Challenges the assumptions of ABM proponents and many opponents
Defines the role of non-expert citizens bewildered by the complexity of the technical debate;
Places the ABM debate in the context of work for a world without war;
Offers a strategy of American peace initiatives capable of confronting and changing present reliance on national military power for security.

ACTION CALL NOW

The issue of deployment of a costly and unproven anti-ballistic system has far too grave consequences to all mankind to be decided on the basis of narrow political interests. Write your local newspaper. Wire or write your representatives in Congress. Tell them to vote NO on the ABM. Tell them to vote for life.

Wire or write these uncommitted Senators:

Senator Warren G. Magnuson
Senator John J. Williams
Senator Thomas J. McIntyre
Senator Mike Gravel
Senator Clinton P. Anderson
(all at Senate Office Bldg., Washington, D.C.)
(Public Opinion Cable - 15 words - 95¢

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Syracuse Peace Council
Staff Report
June 3 - July 15, 1969

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Syracuse Peace Council was held on June 12, 1969. Over 60 persons were present for dinner. The following members were elected to the Executive Committee for the coming year: Chairman, Rev. Harvey Bates, and Rev. Ron Clark, Mrs. Pat Dargin, Allen Miller and Dale Tussing. Many thanks are extended to retiring members: co-chairmen Julian Friedman and Norman Kelm and Norman Balabanian, Jerome Berrigan, Ralph Cooper and Isabel Cowan. The speaker of the evening, Ron Clark talked about trends within the peace movement.

PEACEMOBILE

The greatest amount of staff time during this period has been spent preparing for and maintaining the Syracuse Peace Council's Peacemobile. The Peacemobile is an experiment in reaching out into the community. Nearly every day during July a team of 6 persons has traveled in a car or Bus with a sign on top to a shopping center, church, ball game or other public gathering. At their destination they have handed out leaflets on the draft or on MIRV or some other peace topic. When possible the leafleters have engaged passersby in conversation. The response so far has been varied. A number of persons have returned the tear sheets at the bottom of the leaflets indicating they would like to work for peace. Sooner or later in about half the trips, a manager of a store has come out to inform the team that leafleting is not allowed. At present we are investigating the possibility of a suit asking for a declaratory judgment through the courts stating our right to pass out literature at shopping centers. There have been several other cases in other cities indicating that we would win such a suit. Additional persons to man the Peacemobile are needed. Suggestions as to how to refine and make the Peacemobile more effective are wanted.

STATE FAIR

The Peace Council is going to have a booth in the Harriet May Mills Building at the State Fair. Mary Jane Hoffman and Ada Carter had successful conversations with Fair managers who reduced the rental fee for a small booth from \$275 to free space. A committee has been meeting weekly to design the booth. Current plans call for a continuous peace Questionnaire to be projected on a screen so that questions can be asked and immediately answered. Plans also call for the distribution of peace literature as well as handing out helium filled balloons bearing a peace message. Members of the Peace Council will be called by phone and asked to work on this booth. Don't wait to be drafted: instead phone the Peace Council office and volunteer. The Fair is August 26 through September 1.

HIGH SCHOOL

The high school committee carried out two events during this period. One was a potluck supper at the home of Jane Whitney. The other was a Vietnam teach-in led by Oliver Clubb held at the Church Center.

DRAFT COUNSELING

Draft counseling has taken an excessive amount of staff time this past month. Two or three persons have been in nearly every day. Additional counselors are being trained but at present a workable system for distributing the counseling load has yet to be worked out.

FILM

The film "A Plague On Your Children," which is about Chemical and Biological Warfare produced by the BBC was shown on July 10 for persons working in the Church Center and interested visitors including representatives of the United Presbyterian Church, Church Women United, and W.I.L. In addition, that same day the film was shown in one of the dormitories at Syracuse University.

OFFICE

A mailing was sent to the 100 persons who participated in the Memorial Day Roll Call of the Vietnam war dead who were not previously on our mailing list. A similar mailing including a leaflet on the ABM was sent to attenders of the ABM teach-in at Syracuse University last spring. Through the Presbytery office, a leaflet on Violence in our Society was mailed out to 60 Presbyterian churches in the Cayuga-Syracuse Presbytery. So far one church has requested enough leaflets to distribute in the Church bulletin.

During the month 10,000 leaflets have been prepared for the Peacemobile.

Tapes made of speeches given at the China Institute have been given to the Methodist Film library as a supplemental aid to the Friendship Press material for next year's mission study on China by the Protestant churches.