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June 3, 1969

Captain G. F. Sharp, ~~Commanding~~ Officer
Naval Station
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Re: John W. Koster, U.S.N. (Serial No. B-43-33-69)

Dear Captain Sharp:

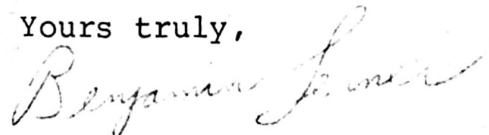
At the request of the Selective Service Panel of the American Civil Liberties Union I am representing Petty Officer John Koster in his application to be re-classified as a conscientious objector.

It is my understanding that Petty Officer Koster's initial application for classification as a conscientious objector was rejected on the ground that Koster's beliefs, although sincere, were not based on religious ideals or teachings. Mr. Koster is now requesting permission to file an amended application which will further document the fact that his pacifist beliefs are grounded in his interpretation of the teachings of his Roman Catholic religion.

I realize that the Navy has the discretion to decide whether or not to accept and consider this amended application. However, those who have spoken with Koster are firmly convinced, as was Lt. Faulkner, that Koster is sincere in his beliefs. We earnestly hope, therefore, that you will exercise your discretion in favor of accepting Koster's amended application so that it will not be necessary to pursue this matter further in the Federal District Court.

Thank you for your attention.

Yours truly,



Benjamin Lerner

BL:gs