

Section B: Religious Training and Belief

B-1 My basic beliefs are those of Christ and His ideals. This belief is best expressed by saying that love of God is demonstrated by love of man. The word man - meaning all human beings, regardless of their beliefs, race, creed or nationality. I have found it often harder to live my beliefs than to acquiesce to the pressures of our society. All men have their first obligation to their God and their beliefs; and it is from this obligation and love of God that we get the strength to resist society's pressures.

It is as a result of my desire to please God that I cannot reconcile the idea of taking another human life, nor supporting or belonging to an organization that does so (with my beliefs). Being a military man or supporting the military means that I am willing to support killing, or actually kill, and I am not prepared to do that, for it is a contradiction of my beliefs. My love of God drives me to please Him, as it does any religious person, to the best of my capabilities regarding what I believe to be His Laws. It was God who created me-not my society-and it will be He who will judge me-not my society-so I must obey what I believe to be His will and law.

B-2 This belief was acquired from many sources throughout my life. My parents were obviously instrumental in their attempt to teach me to judge right from wrong and to love all men. My education in my churches' school has had a great effect on my life. During those twelve years of school the theme that was stressed was Love of Man. In addition to my family education and my formal education, is that education that I have acquired through contact with other human beings; in effect, maturing.

This social contact includes a vast amount of reading I have done since my sophomore year of highschool. To name a few: Pacem em Terras; Henrik Ibsen's plays; Black Like Me; The Bible; The Constitution; Writings of Thomas Jefferson; Soul on Ice - and many more. All of these books and writings have had some influence on me, some more than others, but all had the concept of love for mankind and the preservation of man's rights.

I have talked to Priests, Nuns, Ministers, college professors, students, my parents and my peers, all of whom express the same thought: That if you love mankind you are loving God. To cite some specific instances which have affected my beliefs, I shall first go back to when I was 12 years old, a student at St. James School.

At that time I was involved in a fight with another student and, after being beaten, decided to revenge myself. One of my teachers, a Sister Christina, discovered my intentions and lectured me on my duties as a christian. I can clearly remember her words even to this date. She talked of love of fellow man and how we should act on what we believe in.

Later in my life I was to act on something I believed in and drew support from what she said. This occurred in High School when I wrote a paper on the infringement on students' rights by the school, particularly the after school hours, dress, and activities of the students.

This paper was commended by fellow students, some teachers, and my parents. The school administration, however, took exception to it and I was to suffer loss of my personal time as punishment. Eventually the school recanted and only exercised authority over the students during school hours and at school events.

When a student at Cleveland State University, I was involved (to some degree) in the anti-war movement and was influenced by my contacts with a Peter Jensen, one of my professors who also believed in the dignity of man and the fact that acting out of love is the highest motivation possible. It was also during my years in college that my awareness of a nation's ability to be morally wrong first started to grow.

I would also like to refer to my family's involvement in human issues. Both of my older sisters, one of whom is a Roman Catholic Nun, are involved in teaching ghetto children (by their own choice of personal involvement), and my Oldest brother is very active in Civil Rights, and the Nigerian-Biafirian Civil War. I believe that these examples of family involvement add to the strength of my claim that my family has influenced my decision considerably.

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