The Sermon on the Mount

"The basic fact about the international situation is that in any future world-conflict nobody can win the war. No matter whose armies and navies defeat whose, the total economic and social disaster on winners and losers alike will be so colossal as to submerge utterly the margin of military difference between the two.

"We all believe in national defense, but the militarists cannot supply it."  
Dr. Harry Emerson Fehlrick.

Social Engineers Are Needed to Build Methods that Work!

Shall I Renounce Compulsory Military Training?

A Problem for Students

General Pact for the Renunciation of War
Signed at Paris, August 27, 1928.

Article 1

The High Contracting Parties solemnly declare in the name of their respective peoples that they condemn recourse to war for the solution of international controversies, and renounce it as an instrument of national policy in their relations with one another.

Article 2

The High Contracting Parties agree that the settlement or solution of all disputes or conflicts of whatever nature or of whatever origin they may be, which may arise among them, shall never be sought except by pacific means.

SEP 23 1942
Nations Have Agreed to Renounce the War Method

"In signing this Paris Peace Pact 56 nations have agreed that all disputes shall be settled by pacific means. Both our governments resolve to accept the peace pact not only as a declaration of good intentions but as a positive obligation to direct national policy in accordance with its pledge."

Joint statement of President Herbert Hoover and Prime Minister Ramsey MacDonald, October, 1929.

We Must Develop Peaceful Methods as Substitutes

"If the peoples are minded that there shall be no more war, there will not be . . . inculcate into the minds of people a peaceful attitude, teaching them that war is not only a barbarous means of settling disputes, but one which has brought upon the world the greatest affliction, suffering, and disaster."

Secretary of State, Frank B. Kellogg, Armistice Day, 1928.

"The Churches should throw the whole weight of their moral authority into a crusade for winning men's minds to the conviction that the security, peace and welfare of our country and the world depend in this age of science on effectively demobilizing the armed agencies of death and on efficiently constructing and improving pacific agencies for the settlement of every form of strife."


Educators Urge Better Courses Than Drill

Great educational bodies like the American Physical Education Assn., the National Education Assn. (Dept. of Superintendence), the World Federation of Education Assns., and the American Federation of Teachers, all declare that more modern courses in physical education, in the problems of present day citizenship, etc., are better education for civilians than military drill.

Educational leaders also urge the need for more courses that help students to build and live in the new kind of world community outlined in the Kellogg Pact and made necessary by the failure of our old policies of militaristic and nationalistic armaments to maintain peace and prosperity.

Important Bodies Denounce Peace-Time Conscription

Some of the organizations officially on record against military compulsion are:


Many Institutions Are Dropping Drill

Some of the 65 educational institutions that have tried military training under the War Department and dropped it since 1920 are:


Many Institutions Let Students Choose

Some of the universities offering elective courses for students desiring military training are:


A number of high schools and colleges that had compulsory military training have ceased to compel students to drill:

Boston U., California Institute of Technology, College of the City of N. Y., Cincinnati U., De Pauw, Emory, Georgetown U. and Med. Sch., Northwestern Dental, Pomona, Wisconsin U., Sacramento H. S., Nashville H. S., etc.

No federal law requires any civil college to make drill compulsory. All civil colleges and schools might drop military compulsion if they chose to do so.

Some institutions list drill as required of all, but exempt students who object.

The Growing Movement Against Militarism in Education

Student and civic groups waged campaigns against militarism in more than forty colleges and city school systems this season. Three hundred and forty College Presidents, Deans, and other educators petitioned Congress this spring to take the War Department out of the field of education. Twenty-five thousand students voting in a student poll of seventy colleges revealed 81% against compulsory drill. The largest national student conference in recent years, held Christmas, 1931, voted 1,409 to 47 against compulsory drill and 1,172 to 228 for removing all military training from colleges. At the conference of the National Student Federation of America, held at the same time, and made up of the student officers and leaders of some 500 colleges, 80% of those voting opposed compulsory military training.

This movement arises from a deepening religious, patriotic, and civic conviction that military compulsion and the whole war-habit of mind are out-of-date, are dangerously retarding, are even imperilling human progress.
If You Do Not Plan to Be an Officer

The Reserve Officers' Training Corps, as the name states, is intended to train men to become officers in our Officers' Reserve Corps. Experience shows that most students who do not intend to become officers merely waste federal funds by starting courses which they drop when compulsion is removed. Last year, with 147,009 students drilling at federal expense, only 5,984 finished the course for commissions. In past years about half of these have failed to show further interest in their commissions.

Preparation for Peaceful Service Needed

Many students seek training to serve their country and humanity in helping abolish war and in helping to solve other social problems that hinder peace and prosperity. Many great minds are convinced that our civilization faces a crisis, calling for the keenest intelligence and greatest perseverance in such patriotic service.

The farm problem, unemployment, depression, these are real enemies of our security and happiness which young patriots wish to attack, and military drill won't help. They request this greater preparedness.

Is It Right to Refuse Drill?

Unyielding objection to compulsory drill is a fundamental right, based upon ample precedent and basic American traditions. Our country was founded upon the right to object, and our history is filled with noble defenses of the inviolability of private conscience.

Education, religion and political leadership, at their best, combine today in an effort to get mankind to foreswear the war method. The right of the individual to do so is not only legally grounded but is morally necessary for human progress. All men cannot become wearier before individuals renounce that system. The reason is obvious.

Social evils, out-of-date traditions and obsolete customs frequently "hang on", burdening humanity until leaders come forth who will not tolerate such evils. Upon the active and persistent labors of generations of such objectors rests much of the finer fabric of our civilization. Few great liberties, if any, have come to men without this price. This is why every enlightened society guards so jealously the right of individuals to revolt conscientiously against oppression.

Earnest and dignified objectors will win the respect of students and teachers and the support of enlightened public opinion. Such resistance to drill focuses the issue as nothing else can. Without it, progress usually waits. And it is a task only students can perform.

To Secure Exemption

Many students are securing exemption from compulsory drill. If you are opposed to being compelled to take military training:

1. Write, and have your parents, your minister and your friends write the college authorities asking exemption. Write the Committee on Militarism in Education at once.

2. When you register state your opposition to drill and ask for exemption.

3. If your personal convictions are against training to use the war method, do not attend military classes, but ask for exemption.

4. Ask for better courses in constructive lines:
   a. social problems affecting citizens, the causes of wars, the peaceful methods of preventing wars, the methods of building a friendly and prosperous world community of nations. Get our folder on such courses.
   b. sports and games you can play all your life — for your social and physical betterment.

5. Call upon those churches and other agencies that have expressed their disapproval of military compulsion for the aid they can give in securing exemption. We can supply a list.

6. If possible, have a delegation made up of your parents, your minister and other citizens go with you to see the college authorities — either before college opens, or at the time of registration.

7. Students wishing to attend tax-supported institutions will usually have good legal grounds for seeking an education without military compulsion. Have the best lawyer you can secure investigate for you. The Committee on Militarism in Education will be glad to assist in exploring this ground for exemption.

8. Be prepared to state your case and to sustain your position in the face of possible attempts to argue whether you ought to drill, to "bluff" you into submission, or to get you to compromise by "trying drill for awhile". Always be courteous, brief, friendly but firm — indicating your willingness to explain why you cannot drill, but showing that you do not mean to drill.

9. If the college authorities refer you to the War Department representative to ask for your exemption, explain your willingness to state your case to anyone, including the army officers, but point out that you expect to conduct your official relations with the civil authorities. They are responsible for military compulsion and you look to them for exemption.

10. When you secure personal exemption remember that other students desire the same consideration. Write letters to your newspaper commemorating the college authorities for their stand, and urging the public to support the movement to abolish compulsion. Work for this cause yourself.

(Third edition published August 1, 1932.)

For further information and suggestions, write

George A. Coe, Chairman, or Tucker P. Smith, Sec'y
Committee on Militarism in Education
Bible House, Astor Place
New York City.
The Challenge to Leaders in Education, Religion and Civic Progress.

Mental Disarmament and Peace-Mindedness Necessary

"We have entered into a pact renouncing war. After making all allowances for the accompanying interpretations, there is no escaping the fact that we have exchanged our pledges to seek the solution of all controversies exclusively by pacific means. Having made this pledge, the obvious course is to act as if we meant it. What we need is a state of mind to match this anti-war treaty. We need to cultivate the psychology of peace."

Hon. Chauncey B. Little, quoted in Buffalo Courier Express, May 13, 1929.

"When the people of one country, through education of its youth, come to understand the ideals, aspirations and hopes of other countries, they no longer will submit to war, any more than a civilized community now will tolerate a street brawl."


Individuals Must Embody These Ideals

Peace-mindedness means nothing unless it means the dedication of the individual to new ideals, new loyalties, new services. National renunciation of the war method and our new peace machinery have meaning and force only when sustained by the peace consciences for which individuals will live and die—with even more discernment and determination than have served the old war methods and machinery.

Peace must be just such a growth in the convictions, plans and daily habits of increasing numbers of individuals who move spiritually, one by one, into the new world community of cooperative and friendly nations, leaving behind their cast-off war-habits of thought, feeling and action. The more adventurous, the more progressive and the more determined spirits will run ahead of the multitudes. Their leadership, especially in the early stages of this great social change, must rest upon personal convictions and experiences deep enough to surmount inertia, habit, prejudice and ridicule.

We Must Support the New Patriotism

When all our religious and educational forces are striving to create this essential peace mind, we must welcome, encourage and conserve individual manifestations and attainments of our objective. The individual student who renounces the war method in favor of peaceful service must be sustained in his new faith, and his growth therein encouraged in every way possible—if we are to retain his confidence in our ideal and in our leadership. However humble these youthful convictions, they are the fruits of our labors—the acid test of our peace education—and the hope of tomorrow.

No educational experience for the student surpasses in permanent value his conquering in his first direct, personal conflicts with the old war system and methods. The future leadership of the movement toward peace must rest upon such vital experiences of facing war issues as they arise day by day. It would be self-deception and folly to "preach peace in general," to renounce war nationally, to urge greater patriotism in the abstract, while leaving the individual student to suffer military suppression, or to succumb to the old lures of Mars without our best help and encouragement.

Promote Organized Aid for the Individual Patriot

Resolved:

(a) That this General Assembly (of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.) reaffirms the action of the General Assembly of 1926 in regard to compulsory military drill in educational institutions (opposing compulsion).

(b) That, in view of this action, the Board of Christian Education be instructed to take such action as may be necessary to establish the status of a Presbyterian who has conscientious objections to war as being the same as that of a member of the Society of Friends."

Resolution of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., June, 1931.

"We hold that our country is benefited by having as citizens those who unswervingly follow the dictates of their consciences . . . Furthermore, we believe it to be the duty of the churches to give moral support to those individuals who hold conscientious scruples against participation in military training or military service. We petition the government of the United States to grant to members of the Methodist Episcopal Church who may be conscientious objectors to war the same exemption from military service as has long been granted to members of the Society of Friends and other similar religious organizations. Similarly we petition all educational institutions which require military training to excuse from such training any student belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church who has conscientious scruples against it. We earnestly petition the government of the United States to cease to support financially all military training in civil educational institutions."

Resolution of the Quadrennial General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, May, 1932.

A group of students objecting to compulsory drill in Oklahoma appealed to the Farmers' Union and received the following reply dated, July 14, 1931, and signed by John A. Simpson, National President of the Farmers’ Union, and by Tom W. Cheek, President, and Z. H. Lawter, Secretary, of the Okla. Farmers’ Union:

"Any student, it makes no difference what year he is, in the A. & M. College at Stillwater who does not desire to take military training, and if authorities there demand that he take it, we request that he report to the State Farmers’ Union here. And, we will see that he attends school without taking military training, even if we have to go to the courts to do it and it will be without expense to him."

Carry Out the Peace Pact Now

Peace ideals and tolerance of individual conscience have always been a part of the great American tradition, but the Peace Pact—an integral part of the law of our land—now places upon every citizen the civic duty of preparing to serve by peaceful methods and creates a new legal foundation for individual rejection of war methods. "Urge educational institutions to give popular courses in "The Problems and Methods of Building a World Community of Cooperating Nations", instead of military training. Write for suggested outlines for such courses, now being prepared.