"We propose to the President that all those Americans who seek so vigorously to BUILD INSTEAD OF BURN be given their chance to do so."

"You don't believe in war, but what's that gun you're totin'?"

"The army's not for me, man!"
"I'm not going to the war."
Are you saying something like that?
Then READ THIS:
You may be legally and morally right.
GUIDE TO CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION

HERE'S THE MAIN QUESTION PEOPLE ASK ABOUT C.O.'S:

"Aren't C.O.'s cowards or draft-dodgers?"

NO. It takes courage to stand up for what you believe, in a country ruled by war fever. People who are afraid are frequently the ones who strike out violently. Conscientious Objectors serve their country. Carrying a gun isn't the only way you serve your country — or mankind. The C.O. serves in hospitals, in schools, working in the slums of the U.S.A. — or in Saigon and South America. Even in jail a man can serve time for his country and its values. The work C.O.'s do is as vital to a strong and healthy country — and as tough — as what most G.I.'s do. Tom Dooley served his country in Vietnam better carrying a doctor's bag than a gun.

Also remember, a guy who gets C.O. will almost certainly serve 2 years in "Alternative Service". He doesn't "evade" any obligation. There are lots of ways some men use to "beat the draft" and not serve at all — some men fake illness, homosexuality, drug addiction, general undesirability to the military. But the C.O. asks to serve — in a way right for him and his country — as soon as he files the C.O. form.

HERE'S THE MAIN QUESTION GUYS ASK ABOUT C.O.:

"If I file for C.O., don't I take a chance with my draft board?"

NO. You've got nothing to lose if you file for C.O. The board won't draft you faster if they reject your application. They won't even consider it if you're II-S until after graduation. They're not allowed to discriminate against you. You don't lose your chance to be deferred as a student or the family wage earner or anything else.

Matter of fact, if you are a C.O. and don't file, you may lose your rights to get legal recognition as a C.O.

Just like if you have the right to appeal and don't do it, you lose that right.

Men sometimes fear their draft boards and so don't assert their rights. This is bad for everybody — and unnecessary. Draft boards are only people trying to do a job as they see it. They've got rules to follow — and they mostly play by the rules. As long as you stick to your beliefs and the rules, there isn't any reason for worry about filing a C.O. application. At the same time, remember that filing for C.O. is a strong moral commitment, and you may have to choose between army and jail if your application is finally rejected.

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First off: Why don't you belong in the army? Here are some answers you may be giving:

"I'm a student."
"I'm supporting my family."
"I'm against war."
"I won't fight in Vietnam."

Mainly this is for people who give the last two answers. (But anyone who thinks he's getting a wrong deal from the draft board, see p. 8).

What if you're against war? or against the fighting in Vietnam? The law says you may be eligible to become a CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR (Selective Service Classification 1-A-O or 1-D). A "Conscientious Objector" or "C.O." is a man who says "my conscience or my beliefs tell me it's wrong to kill, it's wrong to bomb or shoot and destroy people. I won't do it. Instead, I'll do 'alternative service' like the work done in poor communities on development, teaching or organization, that's good for the country and other people."

WHO CAN FILE

The law may not cover everybody who's against the war. It says a man can be a C.O. "who, by reason of religious training and belief, is conscientiously opposed to war in any form." A lot more men fit this description than you may think right off, especially after recent court cases broadening the "religion" clause. But no one knows who will get C.O. status from his draft board and who won't. Even though the law may not cover everybody, any man can file Form 150 (Special Form for C.O.'s) asking to be a C.O. If you are conscientiously against war —

— you may want to file for C.O. because you think you qualify clearly under the law;

— you may want to file for C.O. even if you're not sure you come under the law; but you want to express your beliefs honestly and let your draft board decide;

— you may want to file for C.O. to tell your draft board and everyone else that you're against the war;

— you may want to file for C.O. to try to get the government to broaden the law to cover all men who don't want to go kill people; this would take an Act of Congress or a Supreme Court decision.

To find out if you're likely to qualify as a C.O., talk to someone who knows what the law is and who isn't against the C.O. position. Unfortunately, many counsellors in school and even ministers do not really know. Many of them don't like guys to talk about being against war. You may not get good advice from them. Every draft board also has an "Appeals
GUIDE TO CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION

Agent", whose job is to help guys with questions. Only he's part of the draft system, so it's hard to tell what sort of help he will be.

To find out where you can get dependable advice, see the inside back cover of this pamphlet.

Don't try to go it alone. The law is tricky; court rulings change it all the time, although the questions on Form 150 have not been changed to conform to these decisions. At the very least, get and read the Handbook for Conscientious Objectors (50c), put out by the CCCO. This pamphlet is no substitute for the Handbook.

Now say you decide to file Form 150.

HERE'S HOW YOU DO IT

First, you must WRITE your draft board asking them to send you Form 150, the special form for C.O.'s. Your first chance to ask them to send you Form 150 comes when you fill in the Classification Questionnaire (Form 100), which you usually get soon after you register when you're 18. All you have to do is fill in "Series VIII" on that form.

Or, you can ask your draft board to send you Form 150 anytime after that until they send you an Induction Notice (but see the next paragraph).

If you wait till they send an Induction Notice, they will tell you "it's too late, buddy." It usually is, though they have to give you the form. But even if they send that Induction Notice, you must not only send Form 150 if you request it, but you must act on that form if you return it on time. DON'T PHONE: WRITE. Boards have been known to ignore telephone requests. Keep copies of letters you send, and mail them Certified or Registered, return receipt requested.

Even if you've received that Induction Notice, you may still have a chance to file as a C.O. You can WRITE your draft board and your State Director of Selective Service asking them to send you Form 150 and to reopen your case. They probably won't open it, but they may. They don't have to unless you can prove your conscience changed after the Induction Notice was sent. That's hard to do.

Let's assume you've written your Draft Board and gotten back Form 150. You must file it within 10 days after they send it to you. That doesn't give you much time. Try to get help in filling out the form from a counsellor even before you send for it. You'll find the Handbook for Conscientious Objectors very necessary.

What follows here is a very simplified guide to filling in the Form.

Remember two things: Make a copy of everything you write and keep it. And answer every question honestly and fully. Dishonest answers are not only illegal and contrary to the whole morality of the C.O. position, but you're likely to get trapped. The first thing you have to do is sign one of these statements.

GUIDE TO CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION

(A) I am, by reason of my religious training and belief, conscientiously opposed to participation in war in any form. I, therefore, claim exemption from combatant training and service in the Armed Forces.

(B) I am, by reason of my religious training and belief, conscientiously opposed to participation in war in any form and I am further conscientiously opposed to participation in noncombatant training and service in the Armed Forces. I, therefore, claim exemption from both combatant and noncombatant training and service in the Armed Forces.

If you sign the top one, asking for I-A-O, you're saying you'll go in the army, but you won't carry a gun or learn to use weapons. That means you may serve as a clerk, a chaplain's assistant, or, most likely, in the Medical Corps. You ought to know that the Medic is a soldier; his job, says army regulations, is "to contribute to the success of the military effort" by keeping soldiers alive and healthy.

Many men against war sign the second statement, asking for I-O. That says you won't serve in the Army, but you will do Alternative Service. More about that later.

Some men can't honestly sign either statement. Sometimes they cross out or change words in the statement. Some cross out the word "religious"; others, the words "in any form". If you do that, the local board must still consider your application, though it probably won't approve it. If you don't cross out such phrases, your later answers should square with what you signed or you'll be considered insincere. It's probably better morally and in court to be considered sincere but unqualified than insincere and therefore unqualified anyway. If you have trouble with the phrases "religious training and belief" or "war in any form," keep on reading — you may find out that your beliefs qualify even though you don't know it. You're certainly not limited to formal religion, and you don't have to be against using force in all circumstances.

Next is Series II. The form doesn't give you enough room for answering most of these questions, so finish your answers on separate sheets.

WHAT ABOUT RELIGION?

The first two questions can be sticklers for some men:

1. Do you believe in a Supreme Being? □ Yes □ No

2. Describe the nature of your belief which is the basis of your claim made in Series I above, and state whether or not your belief in a Supreme Being involves duties which to you are superior to those arising from any human relation.

If you believe in God the way people who go to most churches do, there's no problem. You just check "yes" in No. 1 and describe your beliefs in No. 2.
What about using force?

Question 5 is the big stickler: “Under what circumstances, if any, do you believe in the use of force?” Everybody uses some force — like the force of character or the force of love or public opinion or police. And everybody rejects some force — probably very few men or draft boards would kill a million Jews, or Catholics, or Vietnamese, even on orders. What you have to do is tell where you draw your line between the force you will use and the force you won’t.

Some people draw a line between “force” and “violence”. They believe in using nonviolent force, or the force of love. But they don’t believe in violence — in fighting or using guns. You don’t have to be against all violence to be a C.O.

Other people draw a line between personal violence and organized violence. They say, “I’ll defend myself if a guy jumps me on the street, but the army is organized mass violence, and I won’t have anything to do with that.” You can still be a C.O. if you believe in defending yourself.

Other people draw a line between creative and destructive force. They say, for example, that a civil rights demonstration like the Selma-Montgomery March is the kind of force that tries to create, tries to make peoples’ lives better, tries to change the opponents’ views. But they say, an army destroys lives and property — it doesn’t build much.

There are other tough questions, which you may be asked if you have a hearing, and which you should think through now. Like, “How can you be against armies, if you are willing to use police?” Aldous Huxley, the writer, gives somewhat of an answer: “When the police wish to arrest a criminal, they do not burn up a town in which he is living and kill or torture all its inhabitants. But this precisely is what an army does, particularly an army using modern weapons.” You might think of how we use napalm on villages suspected of hiding Viet Cong. There are other differences between police and armies too.

Another kind of question is, “Don’t you think we should have supported England against Hitler in 1940?” Such a question tries to trap you by leaving out what led up to the rise of Hitler and what could have been done peacefully to prevent Nazism from growing. Some people might say that the real problem is what we did after the first World War. Or some people might say to the draft board: “Would you be asking me to fight in Vietnam if you had followed a pacifist policy of social reform in Southeast Asia ten years ago?”

Another tough question is, “If everyone was like you, wouldn’t the Communists come in and take over? How could we defend our country?” Some people answer simply that love is the strongest force in the world and we need to practice it. Some people say that there are more important things to defend than a country, like justice or law or the ideals of freedom of speech and conscience our country stands for. Others say a country can
GUIDE TO CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION

best be defended by nonviolent means, that an oppressor can be overcome as the Civil Rights movement has been doing in the south, or Gandhi did in India. Gandhi said nonviolence is “the weapon ... of the strongest and bravest.” If you defended your country nonviolently, you might use strikes, pickets, sit-ins, boycotts, everything Negroes in the South use.

The point is, you don’t have to prove a whole case. And there isn’t any one “right” answer. You have to show how what you say about using force fits in with what you say about your beliefs (Question 2).

Don’t let the people asking you questions force you into a ground of discussion which they have deliberately chosen to try to trip you up. Remember, winning the argument is not essential, but demonstrating your sincerity and your attitude towards members of the Selective Service System may be more important than your answers.

HOW YOU SHOW YOUR BELIEFS

Questions 6 and 7 ask for what you’ve done or said that shows what you believe. Put down here work in peace groups, nonviolent Civil Rights groups like SNCC, SCLC, or SDS, or brotherhood groups. Also church and relief activities. If you’ve written or spoken on peace or against war, tell about that. If you’ve been on demonstrations for peace or civil rights, taught in freedom schools, worked in the movement, participated in projects of the A.F.S.C. tell about that. But you don’t have to be a demonstrator, any more than you have to belong to a church, to be a C.O. If you’ve had jobs or plan to have a job — like teaching, social work, or organizing — that shows your belief, put that. If you’ve gone to jail for what you believe, tell about it.

Try to explain how each thing you’ve done or said shows your beliefs put into practice. But you don’t have to have done any of these things, though it’s harder to get recognition as a C.O. without having acted on your beliefs in any way.

The questions in Series III and IV ask about your background and organizations you belong to. If you were ever in the military, including ROTC or Reserves or National Guard, you must tell that in Series IV, question 1. Don’t say you took ROTC because it was compulsory, or they will make military service compulsory. You should explain why and when you changed your mind about being in the military.

If you are or have been a church member, remember that almost every church has a statement supporting C.O.’s. You should get it and put it down in answer to IV, 2, c.

In the last question, tell what organizations you’ve belonged to and what you’ve done in them. You can put here work in SDS, Student Peace Union, etc. Some of this will overlap with the answer to question 6 in Series II.

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If you’ve belonged to a group which doesn’t oppose war, you might explain how your work in such a group was opposed to war. Or how you have changed your mind. Don’t try to hide anything. If you have to appeal and you get investigated, the FBI may find out what you left off the form and it would look bad.

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

The last thing asked for is references. Put down at least 4 people who can give specific facts about your sincerity in filing for C.O. and how your life and thought show your stand as a C.O. Someone who disagrees with your stand against war but who can say that you are sincere and honest in opposing war and that he respects your position is desirable; such a person may carry more weight with your board than someone they know is a pacifist. Send your references copies of your answers to Form 150 and ask them to send brief, typewritten letters of support to you. Read the letters you get. If you think a letter won’t help your cause, don’t send it to the draft board — it’s your neck. Otherwise, send the letters to your board together with your 150 form.

Now you’ve finished the questions. Send the form in on time. The date it has to be back to the draft board is stamped on the front. You can always send in more material, but make sure you get the form sent so the board gets it before the deadline. Get special delivery stamps and a Certification sticker in advance from the Post Office if you think you’re getting near the deadline. Draft boards can extend the ten-day limit a little if you write and ask.

WHAT THE BOARD DOES

What happens next is the board reads the form and your supporting letters. They may call you in to talk with you. If you get called in, try to get a friend or lawyer or counsellor to ask you the kinds of hard questions the board may ask. Think about your answers and talk them over. You don’t need put answers, but you should be honest and sincere about your beliefs.

After all that, the board decides and sends you a Classification Notice, saying you are given C.O. (I-O or I-A-O) or I-A or anything else. It may take them two weeks or many months.

What happens if you get a different classification — like I-A — than you think is right? You have the right to ask for a hearing and to appeal. But you must act fast, in 10 days. Otherwise, the draft board doesn’t have to hear your appeal (they may, but they don’t have to).
GUIDE TO CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION

APPELLING

What do you appeal for or against?

If you have asked for C.O. classification and get I-A, you can appeal to be reclassified I-O.

If you are in college full time and get classified I-A, you can appeal to be reclassified II-S. If you make all or most of the money for your family, you can appeal to be classified III-A.

The first step in appealing is to ask for a hearing before your local draft board. You don't have to have such a hearing, but it's a good idea. WRITE the draft board (never phone — a phone call hasn't much legal standing) saying "I appeal to be classified I-O" (or II-S or whatever you think you should be) "and I request a personal appearance (hearing)." As long as your case is being appealed, you can't be drafted.

The next thing you should do is see a counselor or a lawyer for guidance.

Prepare for that hearing. Go to the board's office and look at your file — you have the right to see it. See if anything is left out. Figure out what you want to add at the hearing or point out to the board or explain further. Write out why you disagree with the classification given you and give that to the board at the hearing. Make a list of these things.

At the hearing, bring a witness who is not a relative but who knows your character and beliefs. He may not be given a chance to speak for you, but if the board doesn't let him speak, it may indicate to courts later on that they had a bad attitude toward you. Try to make your points at the hearing one by one, checking your list. When it's all over, write down what happened in as much detail as you can and send a copy to the board to put in your file. Make sure to write down whenever the board has cut you off or treated you in a way you were unhappy with, but don't let resentment show through.

If the board still doesn't give you the classification you think you should have, ask them for an appeal to the State Appeals Board within ten days after a new notice of classification is sent. That process is too involved to go into here. C.O. appeals are somewhat different from others. A man appealing for C.O. will be given a non-criminal investigation by the F.B.I., given a chance to reply to their report, and will get a hearing before a hearing officer who is usually a retired lawyer. The whole business will take months, or even a year or more.

What happens, then, if all appeals fail, and a man is given I-A and ordered to report for induction? He must face a choice between going in the army, and risking jail by refusing induction and pursuing his claim in court. The courts have ruled that to do that he must come to the induction station and have the physical and mental tests, because the doctors may decide he isn't healthy enough for armed service. Some men have protested against the war at the induction station; they've passed out leaflets against the war in Vietnam, gotten up petitions against the war, made speeches. Some of the guys who have done such things have been sent home classified IV-Y or IV-F, but this is less and less likely to happen. Mostly such protesters, like other C.O.'s whose applications for I-O have been rejected, will have to face going into the army or refusing induction and risking jail.

If the doctors say a man's O.K. for service and he still cannot conscientiously go into the army, he can only refuse induction, and take his case to court. If he wants to try to win his case in court, he must follow the procedure right up to induction: It is not enough to tell everyone at the induction center that he's refusing to go into the army. When the officer says take one step forward to be inducted into the army or navy, a man refusing induction doesn't take that step. By not stepping forward he commits a felony. He will be indicted and tried in Federal Court. What happens then, no one can tell.

He might be found not guilty because of some error in procedure the draft board may have made (so write down anything about your dealings with the draft board that seems unusual, or when they treat you different from others, or tell you they can't do something they're supposed to do). He might be found guilty. If he's lucky, he might be given probationary work, much like Alternative Service. He might get up to 5 years, though the average sentence is about 2 years. But he may feel the war policy is so wrong and immoral and un-American that he must serve his time in jail for his country.

What if you are given C.O. classification (I-O)? You will be called up in the same order as you would be if you were I-A. Meanwhile you'll be arranging an Alternative Service job. That can be work at home or abroad contributing to the national "health, safety, or interest" done with local or U.S. government, a hospital, or with a non-profit agency like the Brethren Service Commission or the American Friends Service Committee. Alternative Service gives a man a chance to do something really constructive, like teaching, community organizing, peace activity, hospital work, medical and farm research. The draft board will assign you to work, probably in a hospital, if you don't get your own, but you'll find there are endless opportunities for you to put your desire to help and serve mankind into practice.
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DRAFT CLASSIFICATIONS

If you're between 18 and 35, you've been "classified" by your draft board — or soon will be. Here are the main classifications you can get:

I-A  You're available for military duty and you can figure on getting drafted.
I-A-O You're opposed to war in any form, but you will serve in the army — like the medical corps — so long as you don't have to kill or use weapons.
I-O  You're opposed to war in any form, but you will do civilian work good for the country.
I-S  You're a student ordered to report for induction but deferred until you complete this school year.
I-Y  You're not fit for military duty by present standards and will be drafted only in war or a big emergency. But there's a plan going to take I-Y's into special new training and talk of lowering the standards.
II-A You're deferred because your job is "essential".
II-C You're deferred because you do essential farm work.
II-S You're deferred because you're a full time student, working toward a degree. But some students, especially in graduate school, have been reclassified I-A, and regulations for students deferments are generally tightening.
II-D You're in the reserve or ROTC.
III-A You're deferred because you support your family. Married men with children go here; also men supporting mothers, brothers, and sisters, etc.
IV-D You're a minister or ministerial student.
IV-F You don't qualify for service. But remember, they can test and reclassify you.
V-A Over-age. Mostly this means you've cracked 35.
I-W  Conscientious Objector (I-O) doing civilian Alternative Service.
I-C  You're in the army, buddy.

GUIDE TO CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION

STATEMENT OF PAUL BOOTH, SDS NATIONAL SECRETARY

Washington, D.C.
October 28, 1965

Students for a Democratic Society wishes to reiterate emphatically its intention to pursue its opposition to the war in Viet-Nam, undeterred by the diversionary tactics of the Administration.

We feel that the war is immoral at its root, that it is fought alongside a regime with no claim to represent its people, and that it is foreclosing the hope of making America a decent and truly Democratic Society.

The commitment of SDS, and of the whole generation we represent, is clear: we are anxious to build villages; we refuse to burn them. We are anxious to help and to change our country; we refuse to destroy someone else's country. We are anxious to advance the cause of democracy; we do not believe that cause can be advanced by torture and terror.

We are fully prepared to volunteer for service to our country and to democracy. We volunteer to go into Watts to work with the people of Watts to rebuild that neighborhood to be the kind of place that the people of Watts want it to be—and when we say "rebuild," we mean socially as well as physically. We volunteer to help the Peace Corps learn, as we have been learning in the slums and in Mississippi, how to energize the hungry and desperate and defeated of the world to make the big decisions about their own future—and to carry out those decisions. We volunteer to serve in hospitals and schools in the slums, in the Job Corps and VISTA, in the new Teachers Corps—and to do so in such a way as to strengthen democracy at its grass roots. And in order to make our volunteering possible, we propose to the President that all those Americans who seek so vigorously to build
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instead of burn be given their chance to do so. We propose that he test the young people of America: if they had a free choice, would they want to burn and torture in Viet-Nam or to build a democracy at home and overseas? There is only one way to make that choice real: let us see what happens if service to democracy is made grounds for exemption from the military draft. I predict that almost every member of my generation would choose to build, not to burn; to teach, not to torture; to help not to kill. And I am sure that the overwhelming majority of our brothers and cousins in the army in Viet-Nam, would make the same choice if they could—to serve and build, not kill and destroy.

Our generation is not afraid of service for long years and low pay; SDS has been working for years in the slums of America at $10 a week to build a movement for democracy there. We are not afraid to risk our lives; we have been risking our lives in Mississippi and Alabama, and some of us died there. But we will not bomb the people, the women and children of another country.

I have just sent a telegram to the President and the Attorney-General asking to meet with them immediately to discuss our proposal. Let me state it again: that any American who is ready to risk his life, his health, his career, and his material possessions in order to build democracy not be asked to take part in a war that is destroying democracy. If they do this, I say again—they will find the whole of our generation rejoicing in the opportunity to build. I hope the President and the Attorney-General will respond to our request and will meet with us at once; for every hour and day that passes, more human beings, American and Vietnamese, die needlessly in that ugly war, and for every hour and day that passes, more members of our generation become desperate and hopeless in their search for the decent society.

Until the President agrees to our proposal, we have only one choice: we do in conscience object, utterly and wholeheartedly, to this war.

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Send me more information on S.D.S. .....................
Send me ...... more copies of this pamphlet at 10c each.
Name .....................................................
Address .....................................................
City & State .............................................
School .....................................................

For information and counselling on Conscientious Objection
Write or Phone:

Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors
2006 Walnut Street
Philadelphia, Penna. 19103
LO 3-1480

American Friends Service Comm.
160 North 15th Street
Philadelphia, Penna. 19103
LO 3-9372
or AFSC regional offices in Ann Arbor, Atlanta, Cambridge, Chicago, Dayton, Des Moines, High Point, Houston, New York, Pasadena, Philadelphia, Portland, Miami, San Francisco, Seattle.

National Service Board for Religious Objectors
Washington, Building, Room 604
15th and New York Avenues
Washington, D.C. 20005

or your campus chapter

Students for a Democratic Society

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