

AN EXPLANATION OF MY RESIGNATION
FROM THE CIVILIAN PUBLIC SERVICE CAMP, 135
GERMFASK, MICHIGAN

Practices, which at first seem proper, tend to become undesirable, if through them, others whose motives may be either weak or strong are caused distress or led into estrangement.

Realizing that since the expression of my life must be love that springs from a pure heart (mind) and from a good conscience through a faith unfeigned, I can no longer sit in judgment upon my fellow men; but rather, it is my determination to put nothing in the way of another which might cause him to stumble or fall; therefore as a follower of Jesus Christ and his principle of overcoming evil with love, I can no longer continue in the administering of conscription.

This entire decision that I have arrived at is concerned with the thought of my responsibility toward the other man's conscience. The individual conscience is recognized by the U.S.'s Constitution, and also by the recent Selective Service Laws-- re --C.P.S.. As I now see it, there are at least three groups of consciences as affecting attitudes towards conscription.

1. Those whose conscience compels them to fight in war.
2. Those who feel that they cannot fight, but are willing to do alternate service.
3. Those who because of their conscience feel that even conscription is not for them.

If we honor the first two, I feel that I personally must also allow the third class the right to their sincerity, even though I may not agree with them in everything they may propose, nor the methods they may use. The very basic teaching of conscience and the Christian attitude towards it, (please read chapter 14 of the book of Romans in the Bible) is this--

1. That no Christian shall judge another (criticize) the other Christian for his status of conscience.
2. That no Christian shall cause one, who has convictions differing, to go against his conscience.
3. That all shall have forbearance and patience towards one another.

In my original concept and understanding of the purpose of CPS Camp 135, I was uninformed until May 11, the day before the arrival of the first assignees, that this was to be a camp where as administrators, we were to carry notebooks to the intent of gathering information, quotations, etc., with the expressed purpose of building up a case for the F.B.I. to prosecute and imprison some, to send others to insane asylums, that these were "outlaws and saboteurs" quoting Victor Olson. Out of respect to Mr. Clarence Johnson, the Camp Director, I felt it unwise to resign immediately without at least endeavoring to find the motive that caused these to be classified as they were. I had understood in coming into the administration of the camp that my unofficial job was to study the men and help them to respond, if such were possible, not to try my utmost to send

them to prison. As I understood it, this was the charge as given to us by a representative of Selective Service, and did not coincide with my original understanding.

In listening to further discussions by Selective Service men; in conversation with Army officers who came into the camp to aid in administering it, or with whom I have had contact; in seeing assignees go AWOL knowing that it meant prison for them; and in seeing others ask for a IA classification, necessitated by their physical and financial distresses, or those of their dependents--which are not being met in the Administration of C.P.S., perhaps because of their inability to do so, I came to the conclusion that an undesirable reaction was developing in my own mental being. The adversities of life in general, and of conscription in particular always does one of two things to us. It either develops us into better people, or else into more degraded personalities. My own personal decisions were---

1. If I were to continue longer in the administration of conscription I must steel and harden my attitudes and approaches to the assignees. To longer force them, against their will, would eventually callous and harden me, and very likely cause me to lose those finer and deeper sensitive traits which I just must retain if I am to continue to minister to the spiritual and moral needs of the family of humanity.
2. That if my original purpose, and request by Mr. Clarence Johnson, for entering the administration of the camp was to be followed successfully, I must retain the self-respect of the assignees, to whom I was endeavoring to give a positive motive for continuing in C.P.S..

I feel that in this statement of my resignation I have not been unfair to anyone, including the Selective Service, the Camp Administration, the assignees, nor myself; and that to be fair to all concerned, I cannot longer continue.

July 25, 1944
Germfask, Michigan

Chester C. Osborne