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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

**NAVY PERSONNEL COMMAND
5720 INTEGRITY DRIVE
MILLINGTON TN 38055-0000**

5720
PERS 00J6/20150434
April 21, 2015

Mr. John Greenewald
The Black Vault



Dear Mr. Greenewald:

SUBJECT: YOUR FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA) REQUEST

This is in response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request of April 12, 2015. You request a copy of the Navy's policy, and applications received, regarding Conscientious Objection. Your request was received in this office (PERS-00J) on April 21, 2015, and has been assigned FOIA case file number CNPC20150434 by this command.

Enclosed is a copy of documentation responsive to your request. The redacted portions of the provided documents are exempt from disclosure under FOIA exemption 6 [5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(6)]. Release of such information would be a clearly unwarranted invasion of individuals' personal privacy.

Because your request has been partially denied by this command, you are advised of your right to appeal this determination in writing to the Office of the Judge Advocate General, OJAG Code 14, 1322 Patterson Avenue SE Suite 3000, Washington Navy Yard, DC 20374-5066.

If an appeal is deemed necessary, it must be received in that office within 60 calendar days from the date of this letter, in order to be considered. To expedite an appeal, you should enclose a copy of this letter and a copy of the original request along with a statement regarding why your appeal should be granted. The letter of appeal and the envelope should bear the notation, "FOIA/PA APPEAL."

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5720

PERS 00J6/20150434

April 21, 2015

I am the official responsible for the partial denial of your request. Should you wish to discuss the processing of your request by this command, you may contact the undersigned at (901) 874-3165.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. P. German', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

D. P. GERMAN
FOIA/PA Officer
By direction

1900
10 Jan 14

From: [REDACTED]
To: Navy Personnel Command (PERS-832)
Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

1. I request DISCHARGE on the grounds of conscientious objection.
The following required information is provided:

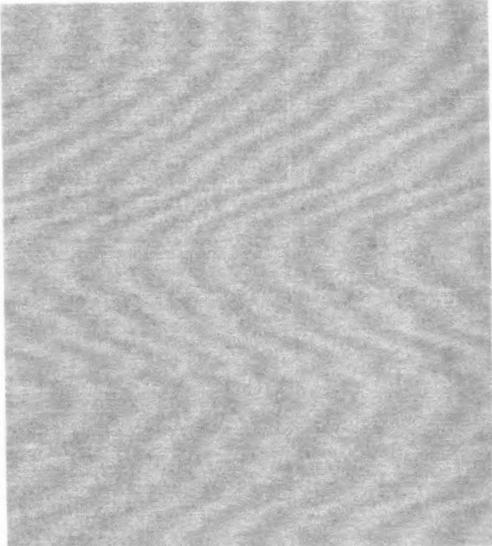
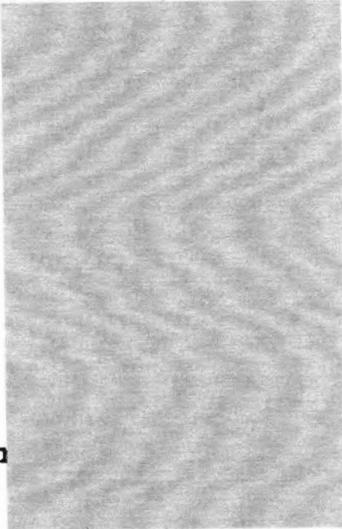
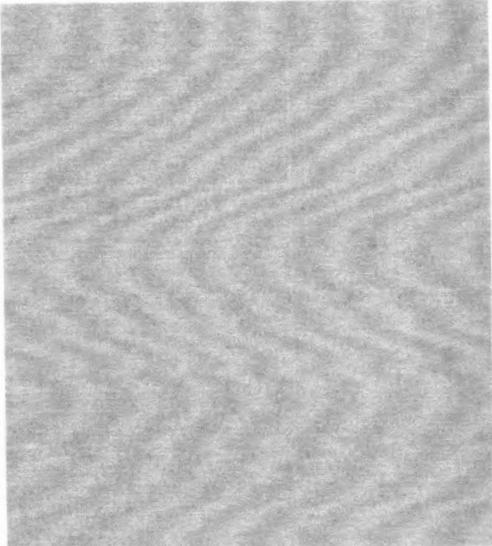
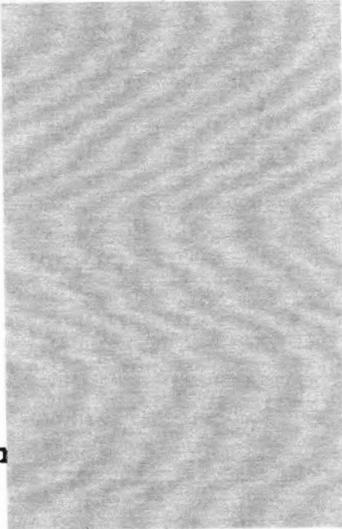
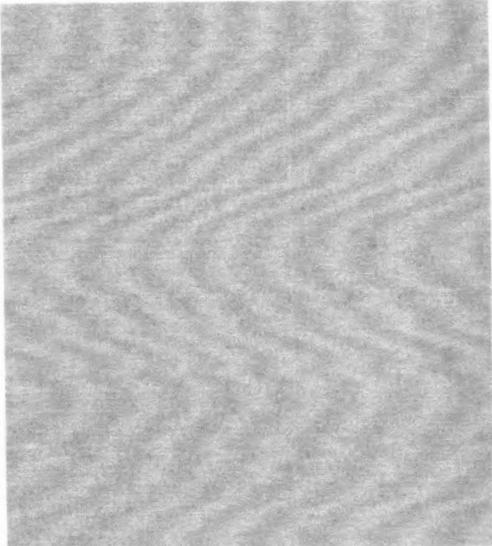
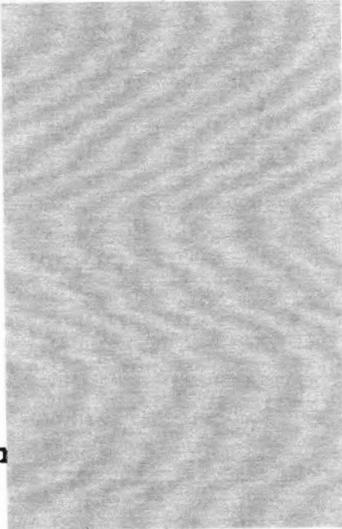
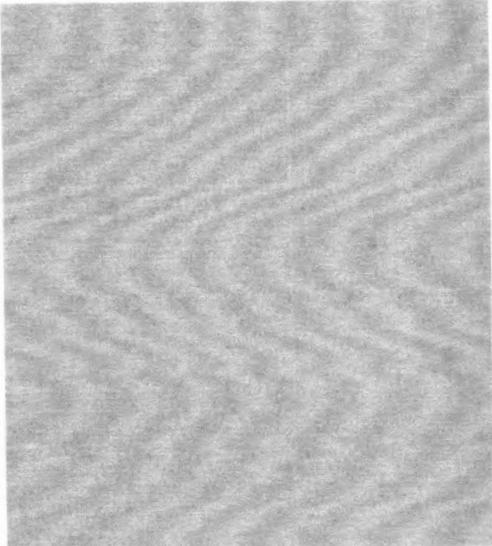
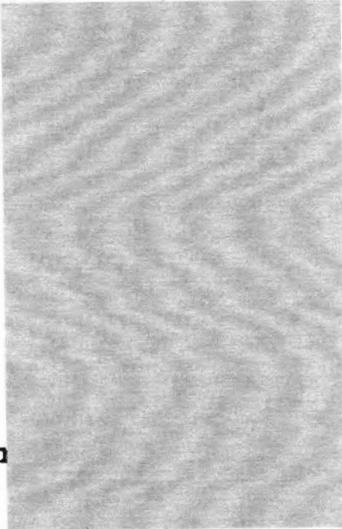
- a. Permanent home address: [REDACTED]
- b. School and colleges attended after age 16:

<u>School Name/Address</u>	<u>Type School</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	High School	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Private Christian University	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	State University	[REDACTED]

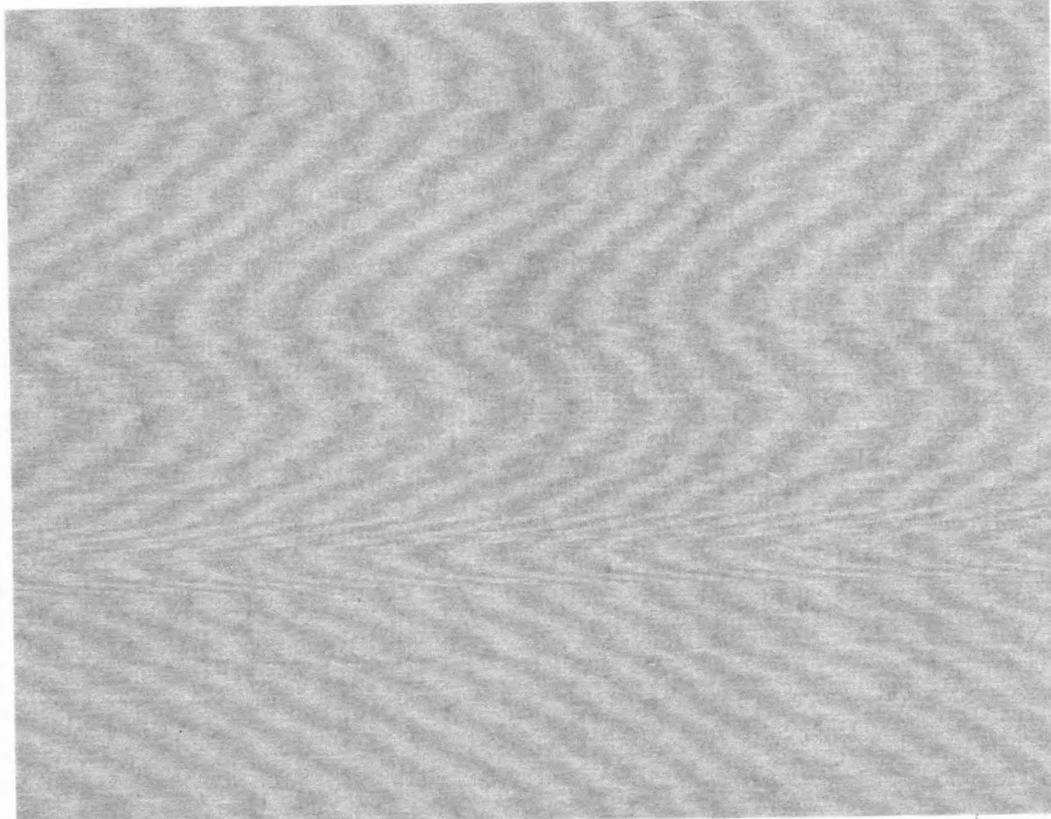
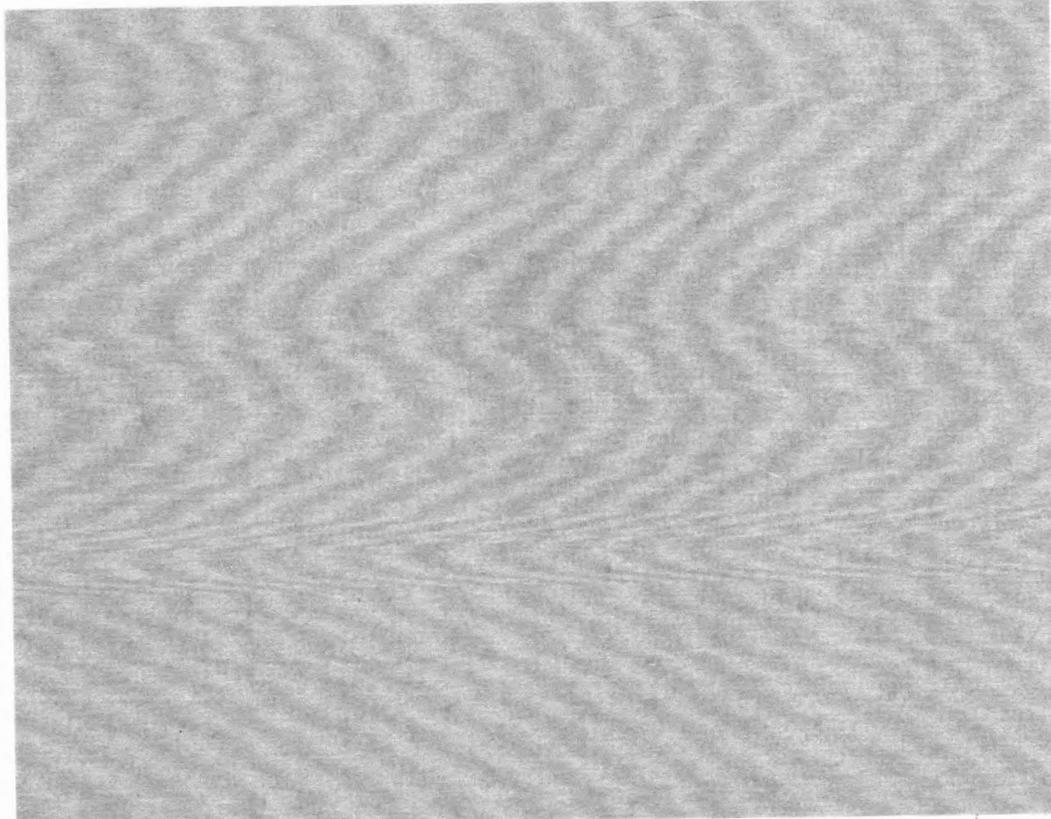
c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

<u>Employer/Address</u>	<u>Type Work</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	Sales	[REDACTED]

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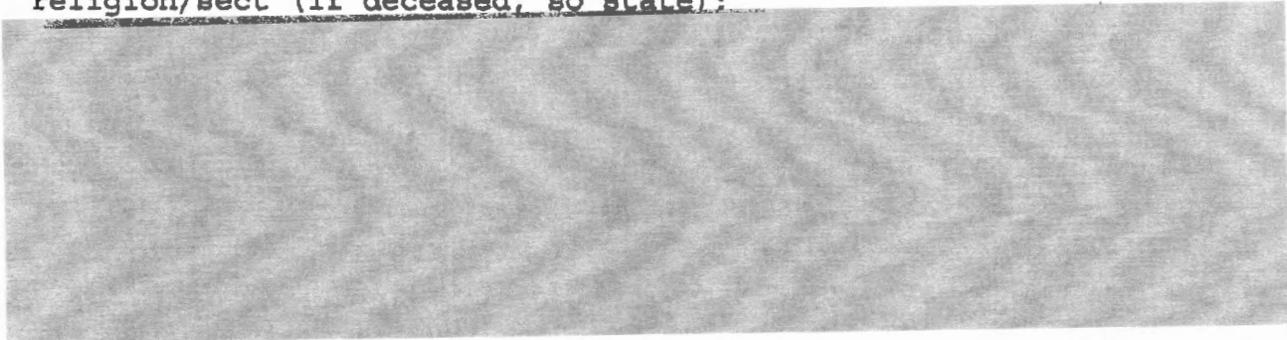
<u>Employer/Address</u>	<u>Type Work</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
	Sales	
	Substitute	
	Youth Minister (Uncompensated)	
	Pulpit Minister	

d. All Residences After Age 16:

<u>Address/City/State</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
	

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

e. Spouse and member's parents' names/address and religion/sect (if deceased, so state):



f. I DID NOT MAKE application to the Selective Service System for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.

g. A description of the nature of my belief: Killing is wrong. It is not congruent with my faith, and if I am going to live out my faith, I cannot be responsible in any form or fashion for the killing of another human being. I am a person who lives out my life in accordance with the Word of God. The Bible gives many reasons why it is wrong for a Christian to kill another human being. Jesus taught against it. The New Testament prophets, under the leading of the Holy Spirit, taught against it. The Old Testament foreshadows it. There are the examples set forth in the actions of those recorded in the Bible. The greatest meaning of my life comes from the teachings of Christ. As the Messiah, anything he says is to be conformed to as much as physically possible.

Matthew 5:39, 5:44, 7:12, and 26:52, Luke 6:27, 6:37, and 12:22, and John 18:36 teach of loving my enemies and praying for those who persecute me. I cannot say that killing someone shows love or a biblical option of response. He also teaches to not return evil for evil, which seems to me to be the very principle of war. I find in these teachings that I do not need to ever defend my life for the final answer is the Lord's. There is also a presence of war begetting more war. This is to say that war is never the answer, for it would then be just causing another problem and not an acceptable answer. Killing another person is not doing to others what I want them to do to me or my family. Christ also specifically said not to fight for his Kingdom since it was not of this earth.

The Holy Spirit, through the Word of God, taught against war. 1 Peter 2:21 and 3:9, Romans 12:17-21 and 13:10, James 4:1-2,

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Galatians 5:14 and 19-23, 1 Thessalonians 5:15, 1 Chronicles 11:4 and 22:8, 1 Corinthians 4:12, 6, and 13, 1 John 4:20, Ephesians 6:12, Ezekiel 18:32, and Colossians 3:11 are good examples of what the Holy Spirit revealed about war. Good cannot be repaid for evil which is the ideal of war. There is no necessary evil: only good and evil. Christ suffering is our example in non-violence. These teach us that the cause of all war is sin. Sin is never justified no matter the desired outcome. Violence is contrary to the Holy Spirit and therefore one cannot be walking in the Spirit if they are living through violence. Christ said that peacemakers are the sons of God. To be a child of God is the only thing that matters in this life. These verses promote peace and war is the antithesis of peace.

The Law is fulfilled in love. Love is contrary to war. Love is selfish. It seeks its own. It does wrong. It is contrary to all the description of love. Some of these are Old Testament references and I still see the idea that God's holy people, who are bought with a price, cannot participate in war and that those who do give up the right to serve Him. The Levites did not fight in war. David, who fought in war, gave up the right to build God's temple. God's holy special people cannot go to war because it puts blood on their hands. There is also history of the Church that teaches us that war is wrong. The restoring of the Church through the Restoration movement refused to participate in the civil war at its purest stage of commitment to the Word of God. The early church did not go to war. Alexander Campbell and Barton W Stone both opposed war.

The Christian soldier is also a stumbling block to true Christianity. It caused Gandhi to reject Christianity for its hypocrisy. War removes a person's chance of repentance. After reading about Jeffrey Dahmer's conversion, the apostle Paul's conversion, and the repentance of the people of Nineveh, I do not see how Bin Laden, Hitler, Stalin, or the vilest sinner or populace of sinners should have the chance of repentance taken from them. This is a sample of the scriptures that God has used to show me that He forbids war for His children. The risk is covered in Hebrews 10. It makes it overly clear that anyone who has received Christ and then sins intentionally continually has no hope, but that person should instead expect to face a fiery judgment from God. I feel that at the point I load a plane to kill that the blood on my hands will separate me from a relationship with God for eternity. Nothing in the world is worth that not even patriotism. I cannot in faith do it making it sin. I know that sin is the final separator and nothing is worth risking my soul.

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h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed: Before joining the military and for much of the first year and a half in the Navy, I was extremely pro-military and war. I was convinced that holy war was important that we fight to stop the Muslim opposition. I felt I should fight for America and defend this Christian nation. I had preached many a sermon on the importance of Christians dying for their faith. I did not seek out the right or wrong of Christianity and war. God sent people into my life to ask me questions. I argued vehemently against my father's passive ways. He used the Ten Commandments to say that killing was wrong, but I could not get behind using the Old Testament as a reason to believe anything. He did leave me with one question that I brushed aside. He asked me about the fact that Buddhists are better Christians than Christians because they love and do not kill. In hindsight, it angered me at first but became clear that I was wrong.

I joined in August of 2011. I told them that I wanted to kill for my country. I wanted to be a hero and die for my country. At that time, I did not realize that dying for your country does not necessitate killing for your country. I shocked many with how overzealous I was for being in the military after being a preacher. While stationed in [REDACTED] from November 2011 to July 2012, one of the preachers at [REDACTED] who I greatly respected, talked about how he could not kill for his country because that did not seem like the Christian thing to do. He had graduated from the same university as me. He taught with such reverence for the Bible. I could not discredit someone as loyal to the Holy Word of God as speaking unbiblical, but I reasoned that he must be mistaken. Then, the music minister was teaching our small group and mentioned that vengeance was only God's and that all our strivings were evil.

This is the first time that God finally allowed me to learn that I needed to focus more on love. My heart was softened and things started to become so much clearer. Sometime in January of 2012, I started trying to reconcile my relationship with my dad. Was I being fair to my dad about what he believed? As always, I brushed it aside but it cast small amounts of doubt on the strength of my conviction. I knew that he had been raised in a very Bible based house and wondered how he could be so far off. Maybe I was the wrong one. Again the Lord softened my heart. In July of 2012, I was stationed in Norfolk, VA [REDACTED]. I studied hard but things started to get weird. I went to every accapella church of Christ I could find.

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I drove to Virginia Beach, Portsmouth, Chesapeake, Newport News, and Norfolk, but I discovered that [REDACTED] taught me to love everyone. In May 2013, I convinced my wife to return to [REDACTED], a church we had earlier rejected because it bore the name but was not part of our faith group. It is an [REDACTED]. There I met some people who talked a lot about love and lived out that love. The second the pre-Navy me would have realized that they had instruments I would have returned to my guns. This was not my reaction. I had to question why I was against a place that Biblically was not wrong. I wanted to learn more about what Christ really taught. Again, God softened my heart. When I was working on separating from [REDACTED] because I was getting too [REDACTED] to perform my job as [REDACTED], I talked to one of the petty officers about why it was alright for him to be in the military as a Christian. He said something that once again hit me pretty hard. He said I was justifying doing what I wanted to do. Once, again, God softened my heart and made me realize my hypocrisy in not giving over that part of my life to the Holy Spirit.

In July of 2013, one of the elders who I love the most, [REDACTED], started a class on patriotism as a form of idolatry. During that month, I missed a couple weeks to go out to see my dad and spend time at the [REDACTED] helping. My dad said that he had been going to an independent Christian Church. It hit me really hard that I was completely ignoring him, but he was willing to hear me out. I realized how much hate was running my life. When I came back to church in [REDACTED] the bible class spent the next few weeks discussing patriotism and Christianity. [REDACTED] was convinced that it was okay to go to war, but his evidence made me really question his conclusion. Once again, he said something that hit me really hard, that I was acting the hypocrite. There was a disconnect that allowed me to think that I was following the Bible while harboring hate in my heart. I remember wanting to justify myself, but instead, God softened my heart.

I began to feel real sorrow for being in the Navy. During the month of August 2013, one of the deacons, [REDACTED] who is probably my best friend and most respected brother in the Word, told me more about his beliefs on war and how he could not see how someone who respected the Word as much as me believed in war. He confronted me on the core of my existence. He asked if my allegiance to the United States blinded me to my allegiance to God. He called me out on the first commandment of loving God with everything. This broke my heart, and I began my struggle to seek God. I spent many nights

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weeping, praying, and reading to come closer to my God. I started reading the Bible cover to cover. I started talking to people about what I believed and what they thought. In August 2013, I was in

I remember two things that hit me unusually hard for them being spoken so nonchalantly. One was that it may seem obnoxious to be training, but one day it would all be worth it when we fully load a plane five full and it returns empty. The other incident was when we were marching over for pt, and one of the marines was leading cadence over to the workout field. He sang "little birdie on a window sill." It caused me to realize that if you can kill a person you can kill anything else just for fun. I felt for once as though I was separated from the military I had been conditioned to embrace.

In September 2013, I met an agnostic, she told me how laughable it was that I was a Christian. She said that it was funny how I could follow Jesus who taught love and forgiveness and turning the other cheek and worked so that others may die. "It's not so much a question of your faith as it is a question of your personal morals." I was being corrected on my hypocrisy by someone who only saw things as a true outsider. God softened my heart. In October 2013, spent some time in our house while transitioning from one place to another. This allowed me to really be challenged by him. This provided my wife a chance to speak out. I never knew it, but my wife is strongly against killing because it removes a person's ability to repent, it makes us look bad before unbelievers, and Christ's teaching are the core of what we should believe. That was the biggest blow to my faith. She was right.

I was being such a jerk that my wife felt like she could not tell me that. I realized my hate. In November of 2013, I went to

Being separated from all the distractions of normal life caused me to have a lot of time to read and pray. I decided listening and learning about the bombs, missiles, and rockets that I will have blood on my hands if I help this killing to occur. At one point during the stay in asked me if I was serious about the whole not wanting to be part of the killing. He stressed that mission is to put warheads on foreheads. I told him then and there that I wanted to figure out how to not have to bear that blood on my hands. During the stay in one of the petty officers asked me a question about his world religions class. He let me look at his books. I found that Christianity was described as loving enemies, being a peacemaker, and turning the other cheek. After returning from in late November, I have sought to get

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out because I must avoid that blood on my hands separating me from the Father I love so dearly. I still want to be patriotic, but I love my God too much to have anything compete with Him. I am willing to give up anything for Him.

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service: I came to the point on 15 November 2013 that God had finally answered all my objections through his Word. My beliefs became incompatible with military service on this date. What is so significant about that date? It was on this date that everything just really shocked my conscience. The planes were having war games in the air. I was also working on my wings package. We had a lot of time that day to work on qualifications and learn about the plane. Specifically, I had a lot of questions that day. My biggest question was why our planes kept losing to F-16's. I could not figure out if we were trying to create a great fighter why was it not that good a fighter. I talked to AT's to prepare for my ordnance section of my wings package. It was then, that the great reality of what I was doing got to me. The AT's explained to me that the F/A-18 was able to carry a lot greater payload than the F-16. It is not designed be a great fighter, but it is designed to be a mass casualty plane. It holds a greater payload so that it can kill all the more.

I talked to some of the guys in the shop and the response was that of our unofficial creed, "Anytime, Anyplace" putting warheads on foreheads. They said that our job was to kill and that that was our whole purpose. This was overwhelming a little, but then I asked about Napalm. Napalm is officially not used, but I was reading my wings packet. Napalm has just changed its name. Napalm has no other purpose than mass casualties. War is about doing what kills the most people. Civilians, women, and children count for body counts. Again I was told, our job is warheads on foreheads. My job is to get warheads on foreheads. Every time the pilots returned saying thanks for the plane all I could think is thanks for warheads on foreheads. They cannot do it without us. Master Chief thanked us for helping prepare for warheads on foreheads.

j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances (if none, so state): Force is not an issue. Force is necessary for discipline. Force is necessary for de-escalation. Force is necessary for life saving. Force is only a problem when it is no longer compatible with love. Force is necessary for discipline. The Bible mentions correction in 2 Timothy 3:16-17. Most people recognize that

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spanking a child is a form of discipline. This type of force is a temporary hurt that teaches a lesson. The purpose of the force use in discipline is to help the person being disciplined. I do not like to spank my child, but I find that it is in his best interest to learn self-control. Force is necessary for de-escalation. If a person is about to kill someone, a police officer would be perfectly right in using a non-lethal shot. If someone were hurting someone else, a different person would be safe in using force to try and stop the fighting. Sometimes what may be most loving for a person is the use of force. Jesus drove out those in the temple because he loved those Gentiles trying to worship there. This does not show a lack of love. Love means doing what is best for a person; not necessarily what they want. I would want someone to keep me from killing someone, even if they knocked me out. This is the case because one must show love for both the victim and the attacker. Force is necessary for life saving. CPR is acceptable. Pushing someone out of the way of a speeding car is fine. There is no way to possibly cover all the different times when force would be acceptable. Force is no longer acceptable once it is incompatible with love. Lethal force does not teach, does not deescalate, and does not save their life. Lethal force leaves no room for either learning or repenting. Lethal force puts the person using that force in the position of God. If you take a life, you take everything from that person. There is no love in using lethal force. Be a peacemaker. Love your enemies. None of these allow for lethal force. Force is also not acceptable in defense of one's self. I do not believe in defending my life even with the smallest amount of force. If I try to live by the sword, I will die by the sword. My life is protected by my God, not by me. There is no excuse for self-defense.

k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs: I am becoming a different person. I am a very different driver. I do not become angry as quickly. I do not yell and argue with my wife; but instead, I now wait for the Lord to show her once I have stated something. I am rekindling a relationship with my earthly father, who is a pacifist. I am seeking to become ordained in an independent Christian church instead of a more legalistic, less love focused, church of Christ. I do not allow my son to kill bugs as to prevent him from becoming a violent person. I have stopped fighting, boxing, and any other martial arts around my son until he can learn the value of human life. I am working on writing a book of sermon outlines for addressing war from a Biblical perspective, when our culture runs so counter to what the Bible

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teaches. I am trying to get as many people around me to question their beliefs on war as possible. I no longer wear my uniform with pride, but I bare it as a symbol of hate to be avoided. I used to enjoy going to church in my NSU's, but now I change as quickly as possible. I have a whole new collection of music. I listen to music that promotes peace. I am working on becoming a more emotional person. I have changed to those around me. I, now, cry and do not care who knows. I have given up my war music. I have stopped putting those other influences into my head so that I can focus on my heavenly Father more. I have quit watching my previously favorite movie, Boondocks Saints. I have read the gospels a lot, lately. I want to be like this brown skinned hippie from the Middle East, Jesus.

1. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs which gave rise to this application: The most obvious change is the way that I deal with being in the military. I used to go to work in the military thinking that I may not enjoy every day, but I was doing something worthwhile and of great value. I through boot camp, aircrew candidate school, months of puking on the C-2, and months after that of being frustrated wanting to get to actually serve my country. All this was nothing because of the hope of one day being able to say that I was one of those who had served his country. Now, it is obvious to everyone who works with me that I have lost my heart for doing things and now do it as a job and not a mission. I wanted to do and die for my country. Now, I only do what is required of me. I am frustrated because I feel betrayed by the American Christianity. I have lost my joy in doing my job. In my work, it can be seen that I no longer do it for a higher reason. Instead, I spend most of my time dreading the day that I will be asked to fix a plane so that it can be loaded with bombs to kill people. I am not the kind of person who hides his true feelings. This frustration with the American ideal of war causes me to not like wearing my uniform. I am allowed to wear my NWU's to town and stop on the way if I need something. I will go out of my way to change clothes so that I am not seen as part of the Christianity that is so detached from Christ's teachings. I do not want anyone in town to know that I am a Christian in an organization known for killing their enemies, instead of loving them.

m. Prior service (if any; if none, so state): N/A

n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization:

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[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] They asked for me to confess Christ publicly and verify that I had been baptized.

o. Information on the pastor or leader of my (church, congregation, or meeting): [REDACTED]

p. A description of the creed or official statements (if any, and if known) of said religious sect or organization in relation to participation in war: not applicable to Independent Christian Church

NOTE: Members will submit a signed copy of the following privacy act statement with their application:

THE AUTHORITY TO REQUEST THIS INFORMATION IS DERIVED FROM 50 U.S.C. 456j AND 38 U.S.C. 3103, AND 5 U.S.C. 301, DEPARTMENTAL REGULATIONS. THE PURPOSE OF THIS APPLICATION IS TO ALLOW THE MEMBER TO APPLY FOR CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR STATUS. THIS APPLICATION IS COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY; HOWEVER, FAILURE TO PROVIDE THE REQUIRED INFORMATION WOULD RESULT IN AN INABILITY TO PROCESS THIS REQUEST AND THE MEMBER WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO RECEIVE THE REQUESTED STATUS."

q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated (since age 16), other than military, political, or labor organizations:

- (1) [REDACTED] Youth group
- (2) [REDACTED] Helper with children's tutoring
- (3) [REDACTED] Youth group
- (4) [REDACTED] Chaplain and vice president
- (5) [REDACTED] Member
- (6) [REDACTED] Assistant to youth minister
- (7) [REDACTED] Youth minister

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(8) [REDACTED] Pulpit minister

(9) [REDACTED] Member

(10) [REDACTED] Member

(11) [REDACTED] Member, G2G
Teacher

(12) [REDACTED] Member

2. Enclosures (1) through (5) provide additional information, references, or official statements which I desire you to consider in review of this application.



RECEIVED
4 MAR 13

(20MAR13)

From: [REDACTED]
To: Navy Personnel Command (PERS-832 for Enlisted)
Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: **REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR**

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

1. I request (**discharge**) on the grounds of conscientious objection.
The following required information is provided:

a. **Permanent home address:**

[REDACTED]

b. **School and colleges attended after age 16:**

<u>School Name/Address</u>	<u>Type School</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	ART	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	HORTICULTURE DEGREE	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	PAINTING	[REDACTED]

c. **Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:**

<u>Employer/Address</u>	<u>Type Work</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	MOVIE THEATRE	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	CARPENTRY STUDIO	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	VOLENTEER	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	PAINTING	[REDACTED]

d. All residences after age 16:

<u>Address/City/State</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

e. Spouse and member's parents' names/address and religion/sect (if deceased, so state):

PARENTS:

[REDACTED]

f. I (did not make) application to the Selective Service System (local board) for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.

g. **A description of the nature of my belief:** (Thoroughly explain the nature of the belief, which requires you to seek separation from the Navy or assignment to noncombatant services/duties by reason of conscientious objection.)

My religious, moral, and ethical convictions are derived from the study of many of the world's great religions, but based mainly on the precepts of Buddhism. I believe the tenets of Buddhism that are truly useful to living a life, with compassion for the life of others, are those which are shared by most religious schools of thought, and I have found that almost all of the religions of the world share the belief that one should not kill, even though the words and names may be different in these religions the true meaning in its self is the same. In the Judeo-Christian tradition this basic moral tenet is stated quite simply as one of the Ten Commandments and as Gandhi said "An eye for an eye leaves the whole world blind". I sincerely believe War is the greatest source of violence on Earth, whether its purpose is defensive or offensive. This idea of War solely exists to kill human beings. I have thought carefully about the reality of War and I can no longer justify it in any way. War in my eyes is not only

immoral and unethical but also criminal, even the acceptance of War and War's very nature is one of tragedy and suffering.

Through the study of Buddhism I have discovered the Four Noble Truths as set down by the Buddha.

1. Death, sorrow, pain, grief, and despair, ie; War is suffering.
2. Craving is the origin of suffering.
3. Extinction of hate and self delusion can end suffering.
4. The Noble Eightfold Path is the 'Way' or in Judeo-Christian beliefs God.

I deeply believe that we as sentient beings are what we think. All that we are arises with our thoughts and with our thoughts we make the world that we live in. I want to do away with all War and develop Loving-Kindness. I perceive Loving-Kindness to be like a drop of water at the top of a mountain. Starting with a man that follows the Dharma this drop of water flows down the mountain humanizing, enriching, and illuminating (I believe this to be what Buddha meant by enlightenment) the lives of others, becoming a great river of peace that leads out to an Ocean; that is the Dharma. My beliefs and ethical views of being a conscientious objector have crystallized; they are firmly rooted in Buddha-mind.

The Dharma is the ultimate foundation of Buddhist ethics. Dharma has many meanings, but in my mind it basically means a universal moral law that is intuitively felt by all sentient beings. I strive to live in accordance with Dharma and it is said that implementing its requirements leads to happiness, fulfillment in one's life and salvation; neglecting or transgressing it is said to lead to endless suffering. For this very purpose I vow to refrain from causing harming to, or taking a life. I refrain from stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, and becoming intoxicated.

The Noble Eightfold Path is a way of living one's life based on wisdom, good ethical conduct, and a constant pursuit of mental development with the goal of freeing the individual from attachments and delusions, finally leading one to understand the truth about all things. The Noble Eightfold Path describes the way to the end of suffering, as it was laid out by Siddhartha Gautama. Together with the Four Noble Truths it constitutes the foundation of my beliefs. I put great emphasis on the practical aspect of my beliefs because it is only through practice that one can attain a higher level of existence and finally reach Nirvana. The eight aspects of the path in my understanding are not to be understood as a sequence of single steps, instead they are highly interdependent principles that have to be seen in relationship with each other. These aspects are Right Views, Right Intentions, Right Speech, Right Action, Right livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.

1. Right View

Right view simply means to see and to understand things as they really are and to realize the Four Noble Truths. As such, right view means to see things through, to grasp the impermanent and imperfect nature of worldly objects and ideas, and to understand the law of karma and karmic conditioning. It begins with the intuitive insight that all beings are subject to suffering and it ends with complete understanding of the true nature of all things. Since my view of the world forms my thoughts and actions, right view yields right thoughts and right actions.

2. Right Intention

This refers to the kind of mental energy that controls my actions. I describe right intention as a commitment to ethical and mental self-improvement. I distinguish three types of right intentions, the intention to resist the pull of desire, the intention of good will, meaning resistance to feelings of anger and aversion, and the intention of harmlessness, meaning not to think or act cruelly, violently, or aggressively, and to develop compassion.

3. Right Speech

The importance of speech in the context of my ethics is obvious: words can break or save lives, make enemies or friends, start war or create peace. For me this means to tell the truth, to speak friendly, warm, and gently and to talk only when necessary.

4. Right Action

This means to abstain from harming sentient beings, especially to abstain from taking life and doing harm to others intentionally. Right action means to act kindly and compassionately, to be honest, to respect the belongings of others, and to keep sexual relationships harmless to others.

5. Right Livelihood

Right livelihood means that one should earn one's living in a righteous way and that wealth should be gained legally and peacefully. The Buddha mentions four specific activities that harm other beings and that one should avoid for this reason: 1. dealing in weapons, 2. dealing in living beings 3. Working in meat production and butchery, and 4. Selling intoxicants and poisons, such as alcohol and drugs.

6. Right Effort

Without effort, which is in itself an act of will, nothing can be achieved. Mental energy is the force behind right effort. It can occur in either wholesome or unwholesome states. The same type of energy that fuels desire, envy, aggression, and violence can on the other side fuel self-discipline, honesty, compassion, and loving-kindness.

7. Right Mindfulness

Right mindfulness is the ability to see things as they are and to always be aware that one's actions or inactions really do affect the world.

8. Right Concentration

This can be done with Meditation.

The practice of War pacifies the mind leaving one in an adolescent mentality; it hardens the body with hate and sedates the soul with ignorance. While the practice of Zazen (meditation) and the Noble Eightfold Path awakens the mind letting one grow and mature. It lifts up the body with Compassion and enlightens the soul with Loving-kindness. To say killing is just, or that it is a necessary evil to stop more people from killing, is a compartmentalization of values and this is something I can't believe in. The only way to have peace is to find peace in one's self first. To refrain from violence, even revile it, and no longer will War exist.

This ineffable truth, the concrete foundation of my beliefs, is hard to put into words. It is like Faith, it must be experienced and it is my hope that all the people of the world can one day understand it as I do. If humankind redirected all the energy spent forcing others to believe as they do, and started accepting others for the beauty of their different beliefs with fearlessness, wisdom, love, and friendship. War would never arise. My beliefs have room for all the world's 8 million Gods. For the God of Compassion is very good and welcomes friends. I look at myself as a warrior for peace based on the principles of reconciliation, harmony, cooperation and empathy. If all people have values such as these I see a path that could lead the elimination of all strife and the reconciliation of humankind. To me all the people of the world are part of one Community, no matter what race, creed, or political affiliation, and I cannot conceive of a circumstance where I would participate in or condone the killing of any of them. Inherent in the dharma is the belief of universal oneness, knowing this I can no longer support War in any way. I am a Conscientious Objector to War in all forms and cannot serve on active duty in the Navy in any capacity.

I am not claiming to be a saint or that I am some extremely enlightened monk. I am just a man trying to be a good person. I have a pit in the bottom of my stomach that I would turn into a jewel. I know not what to call it, faith, a deeply held moral conviction, an ethical framework from which I am trying to build the rest of my life around, but whatever it is I accept this jewel requires shaping and polishing and this comes from the soul. For me the way to achieve this rings most true in the words of the Buddha. I find profound epiphanies in the most simple of analogies used by this great sage and at the core of it all I find a sincere objection to war.

Aware of the suffering caused by the destruction of life, I am committed to cultivating compassion and learning ways to protect the lives of people. I am determined not to kill, not to let others kill, and not to condone any act of killing in the world, in my thinking, and in my way of life.

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed: (Includes factors (how/when/from whom/from what source training was received) and the beliefs acquired or which caused the change in or development of conscientious objector beliefs.)

Before joining the Navy I had no stability in my life. After leaving the [REDACTED] I started to travel as much as I could. I traveled to many places around the world such as, Israel, Italy, France, and Nepal. In these places as well as many others I meet many types of people with many different beliefs, but I never seemed to adhere to any of them. I had nothing to believe in.

At the age of [REDACTED] I found myself back in the U.S. still searching for something to believe in, and without questioning myself I felt the Military may have an answer. I had experienced many things and felt this new experience may hold the key. Once in the navy I found that the navy's core values of honor, courage and commitment to be a great guideline, but I found them to be lacking in my pursuit for a spiritual anchor. So I finally started to search for what I believed in. Through rigorous practice of Zazen in Tokyo at the [REDACTED], as well as on my own in my free time, and the study of Buddhist text I found my spiritual core as well as finding that my definitions of honor, courage and commitment have changed.

In the Military one's moral and religious beliefs are mitigated by the ethical principles of a system fueled by War. This is something I cannot take part in. War denies the right of freedom of conscience, faith and expression. In short joining the Military and learning the truth about War, caused not only a change in my spiritual beliefs but also helped to develop my own deeply held ethical, and moral foundations for which I will use to guide the rest of my life.

I do not regret joining the Navy, because without doing so I would never have become a Conscientious Objector.

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service:

While in security and armed with a loaded weapon a security alert was called away and I found myself questioning if I could actually kill another person. Even if it meant doing so would save another's life. My answer was no, I would not kill another living being. I found myself thinking of Buddha and what his answer would be. I believe that if one was to live life in accordance with the Dharma's five precepts such situations would never arise. With that single realization I objected to all forms of War as well as all support of War.

Even more recently while on security watch a Chinese national tried to enter gate 1 on the pier leading to the [REDACTED] I had arrived to relieve the watch just after the man was detained. While standing there watching this man being searched for weapons I was relieved and at once ashamed because I knew that if this man did have a weapon I would not be willing to fire upon him, potentially putting my friends' lives at risk, crystallizing my conscientious objection to war even more so within myself, so much so, that I believe War is the root of all violence and suffering in the world.

Before joining the navy such ideas never crossed my mind. Even while joining as a [REDACTED] I had a sense that since I would only be navigating a ship I would not need to worry about such things. Now I find that even in Support I am perpetuating the idea of War and am as much to blame as the man/woman firing a weapon.

j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances (if none, so state):

I do not want my belief in force to be misconstrued as the belief in violence, since I find both things to be highly subjective. So I will start with my personal definition of what force is.

Force is a type of energy that I would rather call Will or Intention. To follow the Noble Eight fold Path a lot of mental and moral strength must be intended. I see this type of force as being ineffably good for all people. The only thing needed to keep this type of force from turning to violence is right mindfulness in one's actions. To live with compassion in your heart requires a very strong force behind it.

Violence on the other hand I do not believe in. Violence comes from ignorance, fear, and an unwillingness to have empathy.

k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs:

When I look back at the man I was; drinking to excess, sleeping with random women, and a blatant disregard for others, I want to tell

him to stop, open his eyes, see things as they are and to always be aware that one's actions or inactions really do affect others. Buddhism teaches the past doesn't matter and the future is not written, all that matters is what I do here and now.

So, here, now, I stand up for what I believe in. The Five Precepts have become the foundation of everything I believe in as well the ideas of honor, courage, and commitment. The corner stone of my life will from now on will be:

1. To honor all beings with compassion and loving-kindness.
2. To have the courage to stand up for what I believe is right.
3. To be committed to the Dharma and instill peace in my heart and those around me.

As to the way I live my life now, because of my beliefs, I follow the five precepts. I no longer get intoxicated, I don't go out having sex with any woman I meet on the street, I find myself giving more to charity, and every Saturday when I can make it out to Tokyo I study Zazen with the [REDACTED] When I do go out with friends I make sure nobody makes any bad decisions, before the development of these morals based on Zen beliefs I would be the one making the bad decisions.

In the future I will meditate, live purely, be quiet, and do my work with mastery.

1. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs which gave rise to this application:

Every day I endeavor meditate at least 30 minutes a day. I study Zazen and go to lectures on ancient Zen masters as often as I can. I no longer get intoxicated. I have quit smoking which brings about attachment and was one of the hardest things to let go of.

m. Prior service (if any; if none, so state): NONE

n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization:

At this point in my life my practice and sincere belief is mainly an individual one based on Buddhist precepts. I am still learning and hope to do so for as long as I live. The Great Zen master Dogen said that "ZEN is not a sect." nowhere does Siddhartha Gautama speak of Zen, master Dogen goes on to say that all Buddha(enlightened) can trace their lineage back to the first Buddha and all the sects, schisms, and branches with their different names are meaningless. All that matters is if one follows the middle way and the Eight Fold path. I find myself in this frame of mind, not wanting to have to label/name some sect. where in my beliefs there is at this point in my life no such thing. When I can, on Saturdays I attend Soto style Zazen meditation

and Lectures at [REDACTED]. I have also attended meditation ceremonies at [REDACTED]. I go to meetings like these because one is allowed to be the guide of their own meditation, to work out their own path to enlightenment, and afterwards we get together and talk about shared beliefs. Since being stationed in Japan I have been as active as my work schedule allows. Personally the governing body of my religious beliefs is Buddha and since every person has the potential of becoming a Buddha I find myself, my morals, and my ethics to be my guiding spiritual force.

o. Information on the pastor or leader of my (church, congregation, or meeting):

As stated in the previous section, my truly sincere religious beliefs come from a personal study and practice just as rigorous as any other form of religion. If I have to chose a living religious leader that would most likely be His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama.

p. A description of the creed or official statements (if any and if known) of said religious sect or organization in relation to participation in war:

The 14th Dalai Lama has stated that war "should be relegated to the dustbin of history." The first of the five precepts of Buddhism is "I undertake the precept to refrain from destroying living creatures"

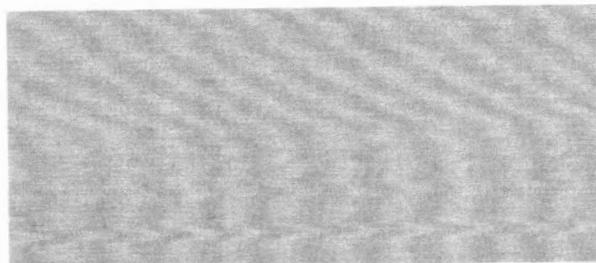
NOTE: Members will submit a signed copy of the following privacy act statement with their application:

"THE AUTHORITY TO REQUEST THIS INFORMATION IS DERIVED FROM 50 U.S.C. 456j AND 38 U.S.C. 3103, AND 5 U.S.C. 301, DEPARTMENTAL REGULATIONS. THE PURPOSE OF THIS APPLICATION IS TO ALLOW THE MEMBER TO APPLY FOR CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR STATUS. THIS APPLICATION IS COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY; HOWEVER, FAILURE TO PROVIDE THE REQUIRED INFORMATION WOULD RESULT IN AN INABILITY TO PROCESS THIS REQUEST AND THE MEMBER WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO RECEIVE THE REQUESTED STATUS."

q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated (since age 16), other than military, political, or labor organizations:

I am an [REDACTED] I was a member of [REDACTED].

2. Enclosures (1) - (4) (as applicable) provide additional information, references, or official statements which I desire you to consider in review of this application.



26AUG13

From: [REDACTED]
To: Navv Personnel Command (PERS-832)
Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

1. I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection.

The following required information is provided:

a. Permanent home address:

[REDACTED]

b. School and colleges attended after age 16:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

[REDACTED]

• Manual Labor/Public Municipalities

[REDACTED]

- Forklift Operator

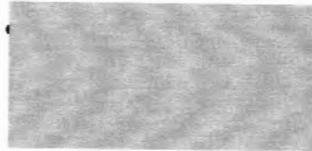
d. All residences after age 16:



e. Spouse and member's parents' names/address and religion/sect (if deceased, so state):

Martial Status: Single

Father



-Mother



f. I did not make application to the Selective Service System (local board) for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces. (If application was made, list local board and decision made by the board - if known.)

g. A description of the nature of my belief: (Thoroughly explain the nature of the belief, which requires you to seek separation from the Navy or assignment to noncombatant services/duties by reason of conscientious objection.)

I respectfully request discharge from the Navy on the grounds of Conscientious Objection. To me, life is sacred and the way we live our lives should be through peace and cooperation. Human beings have evolved over time and I would like to believe that we are past the stage in time where we must battle each other and fight to obtain the things we need to survive. We have evolved past the idea that the person with the biggest rock should be in charge. War is a failure in humanity. It is to my belief that if war was completely ended for good, humanity could find

more efficient and peaceful ways of settling disputes and it would change (evolve) the way human beings value life and the lives of those around us. I believe that all men and women are created equal and that no one human life is more important than any other; regardless of race, religion, or country of origin. That is why I consider myself a humanitarian. Everyone deserves their shot at "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness." In my eyes, war does not allow this for humanity. I hate the very real possibility that one day there could be a devastating war fought that deters the way myself and my family live our lives. How does one live a happy life if he or she lives in a warzone? When I consider how bad war would be for my family, my heart goes out to any family across the globe that has had their lives affected by war. War strips those of their right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Human beings should not have to live their lives in fear and be afraid that they are going to be blown up or caught in the crossfire of war on a daily basis. Nobody has the right to do that to another human being. I would most definitely consider myself a pacifist. I think pacifism and humanitarianism sort of go hand in hand. I am a humanitarian and value human life. I can't stand to see innocent lives taken in war. Therefore, I cannot stand the thought of war itself; making me a pacifist. One life taken by war is one too many. War degrades the very value of human life and what it means to be a good and moral person. War is literally a disease to humanity. When I think about war has done to my generation especially it is sad. Movies, TV commercials, and the media make out going off to fight and die for your country the most honorable thing you can do with your life. At first, these propaganda techniques worked on me and I wanted to fight for my country and to me, dying while fighting for my country would have been the most honorable way to die if it had to come to that. I think war today has had a very negative impact on my generation especially and created this notion that fighting and killing are almost the social norm now and it's unfortunately considered cool by many. "Of all enemies of public liberty, war is the most to be dreaded because it comprises and develops the germ of every other." -James Madison. To me, what Madison is saying is that war brings out the worst in society and it should be avoided at all costs; and I agree with him. I hate what war has done to society, and I hope to do my part in reversing the terrible affects that war has caused. I believe that war causes extreme xenophobia and racism alike; which completely goes against my humanitarian values. Today it is more directed at the Islamic religion and the people of the Middle East. Xenophobia later leads to racism and racism later leads to segregation and it is really hard to tell were it goes from there. Even Asians are

wrongly depicted by many Americans because of the world wars. A lot of old timers I know call Asians names like "Yellow bellies" or "spooks." This is proof that war has lasting affects on society. In war, I don't believe there are any good guys or bad guys. "I love peace, and am anxious that we should give the world still another useful lesson, by showing to them other modes of punishing injuries than by war, which is as much a punishment to the punisher as to the sufferer." -Thomas Jefferson. I agree with what Jefferson is saying: that war is bad news for everyone and there is never a victor in war. There is no winning, only suffering. The people aren't the only things that suffer from war. War has shown it has harmful affects on the environment as well. In certain areas in Japan, irradiated soil and land is still and always will be a problem. I consider myself a conservationist of the land and have always enjoyed nature. I don't think the environment should be over-looked as a victim of war. After all, we all share this environment together and we must cooperate with it to survive in the long term. Thomas Jefferson believed in a peaceful United State's of America. Think of the positive influence we could show the world if we ended all acts of war and replaced them with acts of peace. If we replaced combat missions with humanitarian missions, that would be a great step in the right direction (that direction being lasting world peace). "War will exist until that distant day when the conscientious objector enjoys the same reputation and prestige that the warrior does today." - John F. Kennedy. I believe that distant day Kennedy spoke of is getting closer and closer.

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed: (Includes factors (how/when/from whom/from what source training was received) and the beliefs acquired or which caused the change in or development of conscientious objector beliefs.)

I grew up in a family full of military veterans and I always thought it was just something a good, strong man did in my family. So, I knew it was something I wanted to do. I felt like I owed it to myself and to my family. My brother enlisted in the Marine Corps in [redacted] and I remember seeing him come home on leave in his dress blues and people seemed to idolize him as a hero. When he got back from his 7 month tour in Iraq he was in the paper and on the news. He was recognized as a hero. I would see commercials on television of Soldiers running through the desert beside tanks. I saw larger than life people. I saw heroes. I would even watch war movies like "We Were Soldiers" and I would be in awe while I watched these heroic American Soldiers fighting and giving their lives for their country in Vietnam. I thought that the Vietcong deserved

what they were getting and I felt good in the scenes when the Americans won the battle. My thoughts when I see movies like this and military commercials on television now have completely flip-flopped. I now realize that the people dying in that movie were real people with real families that cared about them. I recall being home on leave around Christmas time in December 2012 (right after I had checked in on board the [REDACTED] and speaking with my uncle about his time in the Army. He is a Vietnam War veteran and I had never really spoken with him about the military until this point. He started getting into the Vietnam War and he even shared some terrifying battle stories that he witnessed first hand. I remember him saying "I don't really know why we were there, but it sure wasn't a vacation." Then, I started to see the affects of war (even years after the war had come to a halt). My uncle didn't even know why they were over there. Sending troops into a warzone to fight without even giving them a clear message as to why they are fighting? That's awful. I am not saying that the war could have been justified had he understood the reasoning, but that is how chaotic and unsympathetic war can be to human life. My uncle had put his life on the line for his country and didn't even understand why he was doing it. To me, this seemed to be an overwhelming devaluation of human life. He is a beloved family member of mine who still pays the price of war to this day. He suffers from PTSD. It was after hearing his story that I started to feel a little uneasy about what I was doing in the Navy. A few weeks after I had checked back on board the [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I recall a phone conversation I had with an old high school friend who joined the Army about the same time that I joined the Navy (September of 2012). We shared boot camp stories and talked about our experiences so far. He told me in Army basic training they were forced to yell things like "What makes the grass grow? Blood! Blood! Blood!" He laughed about it, but it made me feel uneasy. To me at that time, the military wasn't supposed to want to kill. I thought military was for defense, not looking forward to covering the grass in blood. After hearing that it sparked a memory in my head from things we had to yell in boot camp like "Kill! Kill! Kill!" during PT. After this phone conversation I was really starting to view the military in a different light. Today, if I was to go back to boot camp I would refuse to yell such barbaric and sociopathic phrases. After the conversation with my uncle, the phone call with my friend, and the general atmosphere of the military itself I started doing my research online and came across anti-war pacifist like [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] (both military veterans turned anti-war). It hit home for me. They spoke about how

they had once been blinded with patriotism and were willing to slay anything or anyone they were ordered to as they felt they were defending their country; as did I when I enlisted. When I started getting more and more into pacifism I felt the same betrayal that [REDACTED] had felt when they turned anti-war. I felt lied to. I felt like the patriotism and sense of pride we were shown (by recruiters, the media, movies, etc.) was a hoax. I came to realize that there is no pride in taking the lives of people you don't even know the names of. There is no pride to be gained by fighting terrorism with acts of terror itself. I want to help people, not hurt them. I believe Soldiers are not sent places to help people. I believe Soldiers are sent places to kill. The online research took off after that. It was very disheartening to see and read the things about war that I was so blinded to before joining. I remember a story that my brother had shared with me after his tour in Iraq in 2008. He described a very young Iraqi girl that he had grown quite attached to. She would follow him around on patrol and he would share candy he got in gift packages with her. He said this happened daily for about a week. Then, one day a firefight broke out and he witnessed that little girl and her mother got caught in the crossfire. They were both gruesomely killed. He told me this with tears in his eyes. After hearing his story, at that time, I was filled with anger towards the "terrorists" in Iraq and Afghanistan. I viewed them as a whole, as the "bad guys." I now think back on this story and look at it in a very different way. Stories like this are not that uncommon in war. War is inherently evil and stories like this are inevitable. The only way to put an end to such tragedy is to end the wars. I don't view the people in Iraq and Afghanistan as evil anymore. They are human beings that deserve their shot at life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness just like every citizen in America does. War has given two of my beloved relatives PTSD and war has costs millions of individuals the ultimate price, their lives. Today, I stand as a proud pacifist and humanitarian. My conscience will not allow me to fire my weapon or participate in war. I believe I can commit an act of greater good for humanity by requesting discharge from the Navy as a conscientious objector.

I. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service:

My beliefs have 100% become incompatible with my military service. There are days I don't even want to be at work. It is a terrible feeling to feel to be stuck in a place when your conscience disapproves of everything you do. I know I am in the Navy and may not be out on

the front lines, but everything we do is an effort to support the war. We get our ship ready to transport Marines and their supplies to be sent to different parts of the world. So, I am definitely still too involved in war than my conscience can handle. This is why I am seeking discharge from the Navy. When these beliefs of mine started, they definitely grew day by day (they started shortly after joining the [REDACTED]). The more I researched and the more I dug into conflicts going on in the world and the more anti-war groups I came across, the more my beliefs strengthened. One of the key events that stood out in particular was the Benghazi attack that took place in Libya in September of 2012. Although the attack took place the same month that I joined the military, I did not hear about it until March of 2013. The Benghazi attack showed me how unsympathetic human beings can be towards each other in war and can even drag a person down to the level of letting people die without attempting to help. United State's Ambassador Stevens was killed in an attack at a U.S. embassy in Libya while they received no help from the United State's government. I am not saying that I would have liked to seen the use of force to be used to help these men under attack. What I am saying is that if we weren't involved in hostile conflicts anywhere in the world, these attacks wouldn't even happen. I also read about how American troops have accidently been killed by U.S. drones. To me, this completely devalues human life. Ordering troops into a warzone only to end up being killed by American-made war machines? There is something wrong with that picture. The military probably sent a letter to the families of the deceased victims, stating that there had been an accident and that their son had been killed in a friendly fire accident, but that there death was honorable. How are the victim's families supposed to react to that? The mistake that was made costs those men their lives. Their families will never see them again. Both of these events are further proof that war devalues the significance of life itself. I realized one of the troops killed could have been my brother while he served in the Marine Corps or my high school friend currently serving in the Army. It could even potentially be me. Those men that died were individuals with families that cared for them. Now they are gone. After looking into the Benghazi attack I started looking for a way out. That is when I came across Conscientious Objection and it fit my situation perfectly. My moral code of pacifism and my conscience can no longer allow my participation in war. I hope that many more service members change their minds about what they are actually doing in the military and refuse participation in war.

j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances (if none, so state):

I do not condone violence or killing. The only way I could possibly kill someone would be if my life or a loved one's life was being directly threatened personally and there was no other option at hand. That being said, I am not alright with war (even if it is in self-defense). Personal self-defense is much different than self-defense on a national level involving military forces. If I defend myself personally, the only potential victims are I and the person threatening my life. In war, there is always collateral damage. War is never justifiable. But, yes I believe in personal self-defense and the use of force if it means the direct result would be saving my own life or the life of a loved one.

k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs:

My life has definitely changed since I became such a strong willed pacifist. I feel isolated from my shipmates. I feel like a minority in my beliefs. I am one of only a handful of people that I have physically met in my life that share the same views on war that I do. There are days I do not want to be at work and I have a lack of enthusiasm and a lack of care in my work ethic. My work reflects my attitude towards the military. I have become unmotivated to be great and succeed in the Navy. I cannot live a normal life working somewhere my employer's interests completely contradict and vary from my own personal morals and ethics. Every day I know the work I am doing is ultimately in support of the war effort or at least the readiness for war. It depresses me and makes me feel like I am in the belly of the beast. Everything I stand against is everything that my job stands for. The military is definitely not a place for a pacifist to be employed. It makes me angry when I hear other Sailors and Marines talking about how cool they think it is when a Blackhawk helicopter blows a town in the Middle East to bits. Back before I joined the Navy I would have acted the same way with my buddies. We would say things like, "Damn towel heads had it coming." We endorsed the idea of war in the Middle East. It sickens me now. War isn't supposed to be cool. I remember getting into an argument with a Marine who was on board on our voyage up to [REDACTED] back in May of this year. The Marine and I simply started talking about how he liked being out on the ocean and our military careers thus far. Then, he told me about his tour down

range to Afghanistan. He laughed about seeing the aftermath of helicopter attacks on villages and about shooting mosques for no reason. I asked him what was so funny about that and he replied by asking me what my problem with it was. He couldn't comprehend the idea that I viewed him laughing about stuff like that as wrong. I don't really recall everything we said after that, but I let him know how I felt in the regards that I don't feel it is normal to actually want to see people killed and commit violent acts. He seemed to think it was a game and that the people that die over there are not real humans at all. This is what war has done to humanity. It needs to change. Who doesn't want to live in a more peaceful society where people actually care about each other? "In peace, sons bury their fathers. In war, fathers bury their sons."—Herodotus. War has changed society for the worse. War is a crime against humanity. War is a cancer to this planet that we all inhabit together. There are no positive results from war and I can no longer participate. I have been participating in it for a year now and that is a year I will regret. My friends have noticed how active I have been in becoming more and more educated on being against war. I get into more arguments now than ever. I am too passionate about these beliefs to not say something when a Marine brags about how many confirmed kills he has in Afghanistan. That is not cool in my book. That is not something to brag about. That is something to feel terrible about. War has changed the hearts and minds of men. War creates the notion that killing is acceptable. I have no plans to stop standing up proudly to defend my beliefs either. My future plans are to, firstly, get out of the military. Then, after that, I will have more doors open to me and I feel that I will be able to live the life that I want to live. I can live a life of peace and I can disconnect myself from acts of war. It the healthiest thing I can do for myself. I can even look into ways to spread anti-war awareness. I hope to educate people on why I believe they should look into becoming pacifists. I hope I have the opportunity to spread the word on Conscientious Objection.

I. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs which gave rise to this application:

The most important evidence I have to prove that my beliefs are true is the fact that I am taking a huge risk in my life by making the decision to request separation from the military as a Conscientious Objector. I am putting a lot on the line here. I am scared of what my family will say. I am yet to consult with many of the members in family about this due to the fact that I am

nervous at how they will accept it. Most of the men in my family are military veterans and I can't even imagine what my father will have to say about all of this. The fact that I am here today, writing this essay is evidence that I am firm and true in my beliefs. I wouldn't take the risk of throwing away the best and most stable job I have ever had. Besides working for the city that I lived in the military is the only job that I have ever had. It is especially the only job I have ever had that holds any merit on an application. I actually have no idea what career path or job choice I will decide on after discharge, but I am more worried about removing myself from the military than finding a job afterwards. I would accept a minimum wage job for the rest of my life before I continue working for the military and working towards the war effort. Like I said, I come from a long line of veterans and I might even lose relationships with family (brother, uncles, fathers). I do not want that to happen, but I feel so strongly about pacifism that it does not matter what anyone has to say to me, this is how I feel and it is not going to change. My brother is a proud Marine Corps war veteran who believes strongly in honor and duty. He will be very disappointed in me when he hears about this, but I hope he will eventually understand why I am doing this. This is something that I have to do and I hope someday the members of family will side with me.

m. Prior service (if any; if none, so state):

-N/A

n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization:

-N/A

o. Information on the pastor or leader of my (church, congregation, or meeting):

-N/A

p. A description of the creed or official statements (if any, and if known) of said religious sect or organization in relation to participation in war:

-N/A

NOTE: Members will submit a signed copy of the following privacy act statement with their application:

"THE AUTHORITY TO REQUEST THIS INFORMATION IS DERIVED FROM 50 U.S.C. 456j AND 38 U.S.C. 3103, AND 5 U.S.C. 301, DEPARTMENTAL REGULATIONS. THE PURPOSE OF THIS APPLICATION IS TO ALLOW THE MEMBER TO APPLY FOR CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR STATUS. THIS APPLICATION IS COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY; HOWEVER, FAILURE TO PROVIDE THE REQUIRED INFORMATION WOULD RESULT IN AN INABILITY TO PROCESS THIS REQUEST AND THE MEMBER WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO RECEIVE THE REQUESTED STATUS."

g. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated (since age 16), other than military, political, or labor organizations:

[REDACTED]

2. Enclosures (1) - () (as applicable) provide additional information, references, or official statements which I desire you to consider in review of this application.

-Letters of support (see attached):

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

To: Navy Personnel Command PERS-832

Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

1. I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection. The following required information is provided:

a. Permanent home address: [REDACTED]

b. School and colleges attended after age 16:

<u>School Name/Address</u>	<u>Type School</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	High School	[REDACTED]

c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

<u>Employer/Address</u>	<u>Type Work</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
NAVY	Military Service	2011 - Present

d. All residences after age 16:

<u>Address/City/State</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

e. Spouse and member's parents' names/address and religion/sect:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- f. I did not make application to the Selective Service System for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.
- g. A description of the nature of my belief:

For many months now I have been deeply concerned with specific details of my military service due to what I have learned studying with Jehovah's Witnesses. Through my studies I have been deeply saddened to learn that my military service is not in keeping with the teachings of the Bible and our reigning King Jesus Christ. Specifically speaking, that of political neutrality, the value of life to Jehovah (in terms of taking the life of another), and rendering service unto those not in keeping with Bible principles (i.e. Military Service).

During his time on this Earth, instead of partaking in the politics of his day, Jesus focused on preaching about God's Kingdom. This future heavenly government, of which Jesus himself is to be king, was prophesied by Daniel during the rule of King Bel-shaz'zar. Daniel 7:13, 14 records part of Daniel's vision: "I kept watching in the visions of the night, and look! With the clouds of the heavens, someone like a son of man was coming; and he gained access to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him up close before the one. And to him there were given rulership, honor, and a kingdom, that the peoples, nations, and language groups should all serve him. His rulership is an everlasting rulership that will not pass away, and his kingdom will not be destroyed." Jesus had no interest in the politics of his day due to the simple reason that the kingdoms of man, no matter how mighty they may seem, pale in comparison to the heavenly kingdom Jehovah has promised. It is wise of us to follow in Jesus' footsteps on this matter and to preach the word of the Bible rather than to become distracted with the political issues of this world and its governments (Mathew 28:19). Though Jehovah's Witnesses show a level of respect for the governments they are a part of, they do not participate in its elections or wars, nor do they share in its political views. My continued military service places me in a position where I am required to render honor and support to this government and its president. Through my studies and gaining further

knowledge of the Bible I have come to learn that all of my honor and support needs to be reserved solely for Jehovah and his Heavenly Kingdom.

God wants for us not only to respect our own lives but also to respect the lives of others. He frowns upon those who would do things that put themselves or others lives at risk. The best example of Jehovah's love for life comes from the book of Genesis when Cain, the son of Adam, murdered his brother Abel out of anger (Genesis 4:3-11). Jehovah was struck with a terrible sadness upon the sight of Abel that when he confronted Cain he was so displeased with him that he banished him into the wilderness. This belief in punishment for murder resonated in to the times of the Mosaic Laws, One of which being "You must not murder" (Deuteronomy 5:17). Jehovah's Witnesses do not condone killing of any kind, be it self-defense or otherwise, instead they follow the commandment set forth by Jesus found at John 13:34 "I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, you also love one another". The training I have received in the military is to use the minimum force necessary to gain compliance but under certain circumstances it may become necessary for me to use deadly force. Due to my beliefs and my love for not only my life but the lives of others, and in keeping with the laws set forth by Jehovah, I cannot take the life of another human being nor be a part of a job that may require the killing of thousands of innocent people ().

My service in the United States Navy highly conflicts with my ongoing spiritual progress as a Jehovah's Witness. The Bible brings out at Deuteronomy 6:5 "You must love Jehovah you God with all your heart and all your soul and all your vital force." In order for me to commit myself to further serving Jehovah I must put forth the effort to live in a way that pleases him. Studying with Jehovah's Witnesses has helped me to understand Godly qualities that I must reflect in order to please Jehovah such as kindness, faith and self-control (Galatians 5:22, 23). The Bible likens changing your life to stripping off your old personality and clothing yourself with a new one (Colossians 3:9, 10), so in order for me to further pursue my spiritual goals as a member of Jehovah's organization I need to strip off my old personality of serving a government not supported by Jehovah and cloth myself with the knowledge of his

love for all creation. Jesus, in his preaching work, spoke of what would happen to those who found themselves in a situation such as this, torn between two paths "No one can slave for two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will stick to the one and despise the other. You cannot slave for God and for riches." (Mathew 6:24). My service in the military reflects poorly on my congregation's standpoint on military service thus making it impossible for me to gain any privileges to preach under the title of Jehovah's Witness, or for me to become a baptized brother in the Kingdom Hall. These are two of the biggest spiritual goals for me becoming a Jehovah's Witness that I cannot achieve while I am still serving in the Navy. I feel that my life has been lead down a path where the desires of this world cannot follow, and that I must make a change before it becomes too late for my spiritual well-being to remain intact.

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed:

My wife has been a Jehovah's Witness since she was 12 years old and when we started dating in early 2011 I began attending small religious events with her. At this time I had already been in the DEP program for a few months so I did not really take on much of an interest in the organization other than learning a few basic things such as them not celebrating holidays or birthdays. When my wife and I got married in 2012 I began regularly attending meetings with her every Sunday and Thursday. At first I would attend the meetings with her just as a way of getting some kind of religious service in. After a while though, I began to learn more just from meeting attendance and decided that this was the religion for me. I took on a Bible study with an elder in our kingdom hall named [REDACTED] in August of 2013 and have been studying once, sometimes even twice a week ever since. The studies that I have had with [REDACTED] greatly increased my knowledge of the Bible thus helping me to understand that my spiritual growth could no longer coincide with my military service. After only three months of studying with [REDACTED] I knew that I wanted to be one of Jehovah's people. I then spent my time researching what I needed to do in order to break away from my military contract. I had the help of two brothers in the kingdom hall by the names of [REDACTED] who had also conscientiously objected to

military service. They helped me to understand where in the Bible it discussed what our political standpoint as Jehovah's people should be and they encouraged me enough to the point that I finally made known my intent to conscientiously object.

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service:

My beliefs became incompatible with military service when I began studying with Jehovah's Witnesses. Shortly after I began studying we went over scriptures in the bible that talked about serving Jehovah and the sorts of qualities that are found in Jehovah that we need to reflect. Those qualities of kindness and love towards our fellow man coupled with the commandment "You must not murder" (Deuteronomy 5:17) led me to the conclusion that I could no longer serve in the military, as well as continue to grow spiritually in Jehovah's Organization.

j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances:

I do not believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances be it self-defense or otherwise.

k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs:

My current life style has done nothing but change for the better ever since I started studying with Jehovah's Witnesses. I have found nothing but happiness in the knowledge that I have gained from the Bible and I am still learning more each and every day. My attendance of meetings twice a week and religious events throughout the year is a substantial improvement from when I was a non denominational Christian and only attended Sunday service. My plans, if given the opportunity, are to rapidly become a Baptized brother in the kingdom hall and to start giving talks at the Thursday night meetings. On top of

that, as soon as my military service is complete, I expect to immediately begin preaching in field service in and around town.

- l. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs which gave rise to this application:

In my opinion, my thorough study of the Bible and its scriptures is what demonstrates the consistency and depth of my beliefs. Simply put the Bible is the source of information that gave rise to this application, thus giving me the knowledge necessary to understand my beliefs.

- m. Prior service:

I have had no prior military service.

- n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization

<u>Religious Sect/ Organization</u>	<u>Name and Location of Governing Body/Head</u>	<u>Name and Location of Congregation Customarily Attending</u>	<u>Level of Participation</u>
Jehovah's Witness	[REDACTED]		Study and Attendance

I became a member of the [REDACTED] in February of 2013 when I first arrived in [REDACTED]. I became a member by beginning to attend the meetings regularly and starting a study with an elder in the hall.

- o. Information on the pastor or leader of my church:

[REDACTED] is a baptized elder in our hall along with a few other gentlemen, there is no one designated leader of the congregation.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Address</u>
[REDACTED]	Elder	[REDACTED]

- p. A description of the creed or official statements of said religious sect or organization in relation to participation in war:

There are no creeds or official statements in relation to participation in war that I am aware of as a Jehovah's Witness.

"THE AUTHORITY TO REQUEST THIS INFORMATION IS DERIVED FROM 50 U.S.C. 456j AND 38 U.S.C. 3103, AND 5 U.S.C. 301, DEPARTMENTAL REGULATIONS. THE PURPOSE OF THIS APPLICATION IS TO ALLOW THE MEMBER TO APPLY FOR CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR STATUS. THIS APPLICATION IS COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY; HOWEVER, FAILURE TO PROVIDE THE REQUIRED INFORMATION WOULD RESULT IN AN INABILITY TO PROCESS THIS REQUEST AND THE MEMBER WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO RECEIVE THE REQUESTED STATUS."

- q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated, other than military, political, or labor organizations:

I have not been a member nor participated in any organization outside of military service.

Signature



e 06 JUN 17

From [REDACTED]

To: Navy Personnel Command (PERS-832)

Via: [REDACTED]

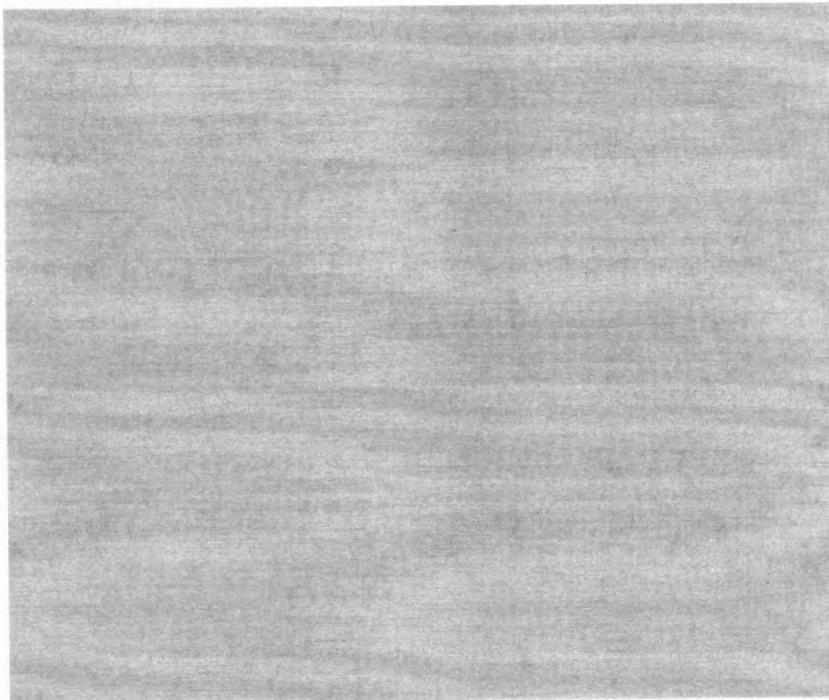
Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: MILPERSMAN 1900-020

I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection. The following required information is provided:

a. Permanent home address [REDACTED]

b. School and colleges attended after age 16:



c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

[REDACTED] customer service [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED], salesmar [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[redacted] customer service [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] Cement worker [redacted]

[redacted]

- United States Navy, [redacted] Aug. 2011 - Present)

d. All residents after age 16:

[redacted]

[redacted]

e. Member's parents' names/address and religion/sect:

[redacted]

f. I did not make an application to the Selective Service System for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.

g. The whole point of being a Christian is to be Christ-like. Jesus was the only perfect man to walk the earth therefore; as followers of Christ, it would only make sense to follow him as closely as we can. Jesus would never condone the use of military force, period. No troops on the ground, planes in the air, or simply being behind a keyboard to support a war effort. Whether or not someone is deployed in a combat zone is irrelevant. Supporting a military is supporting a war.

The bible says that there will be wars (Matthew 24:6) but never does it justify any of them. There is no such thing as a just war. I couldn't see the man called "the prince of peace" going into battle with a rifle for the sake of peace. That's just counter intuitive.

And if he wouldn't do that, why would he be sitting in an [REDACTED] conducting a mission there? He wouldn't. Combatant or not, the military is no place for a Christian because Christ would have no part in it.

h/i. Growing up, I was always a Christian but that doesn't mean I was educated to everything the bible taught. Christianity is a lifetime journey, always learning more. Sometimes you can read the same passage fifty times and not truly know what it means until one day it just clicks. Other times you just need to be in the right situation in your life to learn what it's saying. There are even certain topics you simply just don't give any thought to for a while. The latter was my situation.

I never gave any thought as to whether or not military service was the right or wrong thing until it was too late. We're always told as kids that military members are brave and protecting our country. That's the lie I gave into even as an adult. A few months prior to going into the delayed entry program I stopped going to church, so looking to see what God thought about me joining was the furthest thing from my mind. I just bought into the whole "protecting our country" bit. That combined with imminent financial hardship at the time is what made me join.

Everyone asks me if I woke up one day and thought to myself "I'm a conscientious objector". I wish it was the simple. It was a slow progression. I started feeling a little depressed, as if something wasn't right so I started asking myself why I felt that way. At first I thought maybe I was just drifting too far from the church so I decided to find one in the area. I also decided to start reading my bible more. I also started going to a bible study in the barracks. Only as I was trying to reconnect in my relationship with God did I start to realize what was wrong. Because my beliefs weren't stone solid at the time I went on deployment, the whole time questioning what we were doing out there and why it was "necessary". I thought our mission out there was immoral and meaningless. To cope with the thought that what I was doing was wrong I turned to my bible even more, especially since I wasn't going to church out there. My crew made jokes about how they never saw me but they never knew what I was doing in my room. I didn't want them to know because it would have drawn unnecessary attention to me if I told them what I was thinking about doing but then decided not to follow through.

After I got back from deployment I started going back to church. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] said one thing that really stuck with me; "if the bible says it twice, that's God's way of saying 'this is really important'". Later, I went home on Christmas leave and told myself I was going to do more research on the topic of

conscientious objection and pray about it until I knew I was going to make the right decision. I came across two passages while on leave: Micah 4:3 and Isaiah 2:4 both state that the nations will no longer know war. I did not go out of my way to find these passages. They found me. When the Lord speaks to you, you will never in my experience hear an audible voice. He will tell you in a way you cannot deny. I couldn't deny that this was a sign. If at the end of times everything is supposed to be perfect and the nations no longer know war then the rest is simple; War is wrong. God the father states that war is wrong before the Jesus' time. Jesus then talks of peace and never condones the use of military force. And the Holy Spirit is what led me to question what I was doing to begin with. When the whole trinity is telling you something is wrong, it is wrong.

j. The bible is very clear about when force may be used. "If a thief is caught breaking in at night and is struck a fatal blow, the defender is not guilty of bloodshed" Exodus 22:2. Defense of your family, your home and yourself are the only situations I believe force may be used. This doesn't mean try to kill the man but if it happens in the act of self-defense you would be justified in God's eyes. Nowhere does the bible say that defense of your country makes you innocent. Nor does it say to enter another country and fight for any reason, just simply defense of your home and family.

Even in the New Testament Jesus tells us "...whoever has no sword is to sell his coat and buy one" Luke 22:36. Swords were the most advanced weapons of the time. Why would Christ tell someone to buy a weapon? Self-defense. Just a few verses later Jesus stops one of his disciples from using a sword and heals the man who was stricken by it. Jesus stopped his disciple because he was not taking up a sword in self-defense but to attack. I have no reason to believe that violent force should be used outside of defense.

k. My lifestyle has changed by me being more active in my spiritual walk with Christ. Whether it be through prayer, reading my bible or going to church. I do miss out on a few Sundays for one reason or another. Lucky for me, my church records all the sermons and puts them online so I can still listen to the week's teaching. I've even been trying to listen to more Christian music to keep myself focused on God. The bible basically gives you an outline of how to live your life for God. I plan on continuing my education on what it says and do my best to cleanse myself of the impure practices in my life.

l. The most conspicuous change in my life that demonstrates the depth of my belief is something I didn't even notice a change in at first. Some of my closest friends and family noticed a huge change in my attitude and just the way I carried myself. Doing something that you disagree with to your core takes a huge toll on how you feel and carry

yourself. It's something I let eat at me for a while because I was still struggling with my beliefs at the time. I guess my subconscious knows me better than I do. As soon as I took a stand for my beliefs people started noticing a change in my demeanor. It was like I was no longer carrying a huge weight on my shoulders. I was suddenly a happier person. If there was nothing I could say to make someone believe I was telling the truth I would tell them to just compare my attitude before and after I stood up for my beliefs.

m. No prior service.

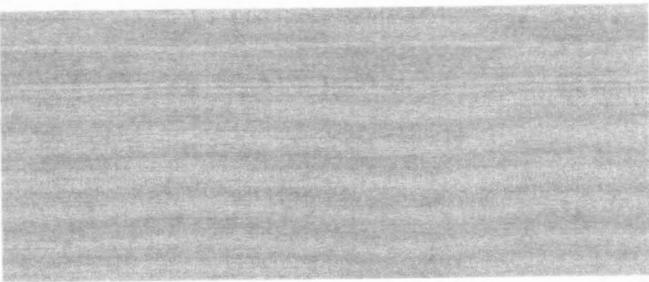
n. I am a nondenominational Christian. The only governing body/head is in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] is the church I attend. I am not a "member" of the church but I attend regularly.

As I said before, I have always been a Christian but when my beliefs started strengthening and when I've found a local church to attend was about a year ago. A friend who went to my small barracks bible study recommended [REDACTED]. At the time I was a little hesitant. It's hard to find a church that fits you and I doubted he knew which one would suit me well. About a month or two later I heard about [REDACTED] from someone at one of the local coffee shops. After hearing two people vouch that this was a good church, I decided to give it a try.

o. [REDACTED] is the senior/teaching pastor of [REDACTED].
The address of the church is [REDACTED].

p. To say there is a creed or official statement towards any belief would contradict being nondenominational. To be a nondenominational Christian there is only one requirement: Believe in Christ as your savior. This is the only requirement for any form of Christianity. The only thing that separates the different sects of Christianity is their beliefs in anything else. And anything else in comparison is insignificant. Sometimes we get too busy arguing amongst ourselves and lose sight of the big picture; to be Christ's disciples. So, to have an official statement in my eyes would be counter intuitive.

q. N/A



14 JAN 2013

MEMORANDUM

From: [REDACTED]
To: Navy Personnel Command (PERS-832)
Via: [REDACTED]
Hawaii [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

Encl: (1) Personal/Official Statement

1. I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection. The following required information is provided:

a. Permanent home address:

[REDACTED]

b. School and colleges attended after age 16:

<u>School Name/Address</u>	<u>Type School</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	High School	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Technical Vocation	[REDACTED]

c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

<u>Employer/Address</u>	<u>Type Work</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	Cook	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Cook	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Cook	[REDACTED]

United States Navy



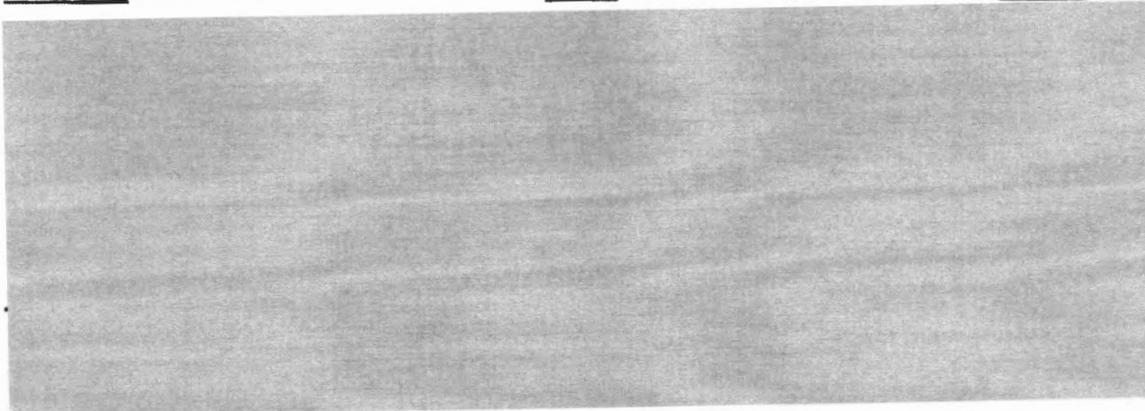
Feb 2011-Present

d. All residences after age 16:

Address

City

State



e. Spouse and member's parents' names/address and religion/sect (if deceased, so state):

Spouse:



Mother:



Father:



f. I did not make application to the Selective Service System (local board) for classification as a Conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.

g. A description of the nature of my belief:

I view that the Holy bible, and contained teachings of Christ Jesus, advocate an unconditional, self-sacrificing love to every human being regardless of walk of life, criminal activity and other factors; for the purpose of reflecting God's love and forgiveness, in an attempt to open the eyes of every person to repent from living at enmity with God and turn instead to the Loving arms of Christ, who died as an atonement for every person's sins, if they so choose to give their life in utter

completeness to the Messiah, Christ Jesus, to bear instead the guilt of their transgressions for them, and avoid the eternal damnation of one who has rejected the all powerful King of the Universe, and instead trade that damnation for the inheritance of the only Son of God. While these teachings of Christ, do in fact, call Followers of Christ to exhort sinners to repentance and turn from the wrong doings of sin, it does NOT condone the condemnation of men, of taking God's judgment upon person of wrong doing into man's hands, as this would rob a sinner of the chance to come to repentance by prematurely ending a person's walk on this earth, simultaneously repaying evil for evil, but stooping to the level of the sinner in the first place. Taking God's judgment into Human hands by war and killing also undermines the faith that God's judgment in the end is justice and appropriate. As one who places my life into the hands of God and follows the teachings of Christ, I cannot, in good faith, advocate or participate in a Machine that takes judgment and vengeance into its own hands, when God has said that Vengeance is ~~the~~ HIS. See also Enclosure 1, for a deeper description.

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed:

These beliefs occurred by delving deeply, exegetically and unbiased into the Holy Scriptures of the Bible; by reading God's word and changing my views to match it, instead of the previous habit of twisting the Scriptures to match my worldview. Notable other sources that support the teachings of Non-Violence for the purpose of Loving as God does, besides Jesus Christ, would be Martin Luther King Jr., Shane Claiborne, and Preston Sprinkle.

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service:

It was a grueling process of these views contradicting the military, it started about April-July of 2013, and I wrestled with the idea for many months, trying to bury the issue until after my enlistment, but I eventually could not hide the proverbial elephant in the room. And I made the decision to put in this request in the beginning of October or so, of 2013. The Military is incompatible with my beliefs, because it interferes with the ability to love everyone unconditionally, and self-sacrificially, as the Christ commands me.

j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances:

Force, as defined as; overriding a victim's expressed consent, or taking action without a person's consent, is excusable when saving someone who is unconscious from a danger, such as a burning building, or perhaps as far as stopping a delusional person from committing suicide. There may be a grey area of pushing, or shoving someone, to help someone else, but never do I foresee an occasion where I should judge someone so unworthy, as to take their life from them, as The Bible states that every man has fallen short of God and rejected Him and is worthy of death by His standards, and so, to paraphrase Christ, we are told to let the one who is without sin cast the first stone.

k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs:

My life has changed in the fact that I strive to be at peace with all men now, as Christ has commanded me. My goal in life is now to show everyone the love of Christ in order to get them to see the truth of God's forgiveness. This is my goal and motivation in all that I do, second only to Loving God Himself, and worshipping Him accordingly. I have altered my core mindset and heart to love every man, not just Americans, and not only the righteous. For as Christ said; "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." -Mark 2:17.

l. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs, which gave Rise to this application:

In my opinion, the most conspicuous demonstration of my beliefs is this application itself. I can think of no better proof of my convictions, than for me to leave the steady paycheck and high esteem and lifestyle of a service member of the US Navy, the most powerful Navy in the world. To give up the job security and respect of this position in [REDACTED] is in my opinion the greatest act I could do to forsake all my worldly desires to cling instead to the cross of Christ. This is inarguably the scariest act I have ever done; essentially it is leaping into the unknown with my future, and the future of my family, placing all my cards in God's basket.

m. Prior service: None

n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization:

Religious Sect/ Organization

Follower of Christ, the Messiah and Son of God, Jesus of Nazareth.

Name & Location of Governing Body/Head

The head of the Church is Christ himself, as reflected in the Bible, see:

"He [Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence."

- Colossians 1:15-17

"...as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body."- Ephesians 5:23

Name & Location of Church, Congregation Customarily Attending

Currently attending the non-denominational [REDACTED]

Level of Participation

Whenever possible I attend church services [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I also try to attend Bible studies, and worship fellowship with other Disciples of Christ, whenever possible.

Explain when, where, and how you became of member of said sect or organization.

o. Information on the pastor or leader of my (church, Congregation or meeting):

Currently I have no official sect of my following of Christ, other than that I Follow Christ the Messiah. Christ taught against sectarianism very clearly in the Bible. My only guidance is the Written Word of God, and guidance from Prayer. See:

"Now John answered Him, saying, "Teacher, we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow us." But Jesus said, "Do not forbid him, for no one who works a miracle in My name can soon afterward speak evil of Me. For he who is not against us is on our side. For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward." - Mark 9:38-41

"Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you. Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?" - 1 Corinthians 10-13

p. A description of the creed or official statements (if any, and if known) of said religious sect or organization in Relation to participation in war:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are those who mourn,
For they shall be comforted.
Blessed are the meek,
for they shall inherit the earth.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they shall be filled.
Blessed are the merciful,
for they shall obtain mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they shall see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they shall be called sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." - Matthew 5: 3-10

"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect."

-Matthew 5:38-48

"Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.

Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. Therefore:

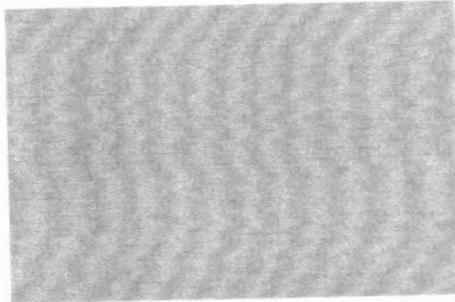
"If your enemy is hungry, feed him;
If he is thirsty, give him a drink;
For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.

"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."
-Romans 12:9-21

g. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated (since age 16), other than military, political, or labor organizations:

None

2. Enclosure (2) is my personal narrative which I desire you to consider in review of this application.



04 Sept 12

From: [REDACTED]
To: Navy Personnel Command PERS832
Via: [REDACTED]
Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR
Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

1. I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection. The following required information is provided:

a. Permanent home address [REDACTED]

b. School and colleges attended after age 16:

<u>School Name/Address</u>	<u>Type of School</u>	<u>Inclusive Date</u>
[REDACTED]	High School	[REDACTED]

c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

<u>Employer/Address Type Work</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
US Navy	July 25, 2011-

d. All residences after age 16:

<u>Address/City/State</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

e. Spouse and member's parents' names/address and religion/sect (if deceased, so state):
Mother: [REDACTED]

f. I did not make application to the Selective Service System (local board) for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces. (If application was made, list local board and decision made by the board if known.)

g. A description of the nature of my belief: (Thoroughly explain the nature of the belief, which requires you to seek separation from the Navy or assignment to noncombatant services/duties by reason of conscientious objection.)

I've never picked up a gun and shot an enemy of the US military. I've never raided an insurgent's hideout and secured a target. I've never piloted an aircraft, shooting ammo at or dropped bombs on targets. I can't see how anyone honestly believes it's helping anything. But I'm right beside them every day, wearing the same uniform, upholding the same constitution, and saluting the same ensign. I'm not blind to the devastation that's caused by these actions. To be living through 2012 is an amazing thing. A time where

people are connected and sharing ideas that benefit each other in ways earlier generations could never fathom. Deciding to continue killing and conquering land for the wellbeing of freedom and democracy is contradicting itself. Every day I walk to work and try to rationalize this. But I can't. It literally makes me sick. I want to believe it's not true and we are saving countless lives because that is our purpose but I know it's not. Aiding humans who are in need of resources to survive and prosper in a healthy, jovial environment so they may attain the knowledge that'll improve upon they're society is the sole purpose of our existence. Sending warships and Marines across the Oceans to wipe people out, in my opinion, is not liberating anyone. Not only is war destructive and inhumane, it wrecks the very foundation that holds a societies future generation together thus continuing an inevitable downfall from its effects and debt created by it. We live in an age where it's indisputably obvious that war, debt, famine, poverty and unnecessary human suffering are unacceptable. Participation in a practice where these consequences are even slightly probable send chills along my spine. I'm not trying to escape my duties because of fear or undesirable tasks. The only thing that scares me is residing in a society that allows a corrupt economic system to invade its walls, create the conditions that support war and then agree to pick up arms at the snap of a finger, disregarding the teachings of a religion that is the very foundation of its existence, to engage in combat. War is an outdated tactic incompatible with our current morals, intelligence, and ways of dissolving disagreements which is why I cannot and refuse to be a part the military. "I have no notions of a perfect society; I don't know what that means. I know we can do much better than what we've got, I'm no utopian, I'm not a humanist that would like to see everybody living in warmth and harmony: I know that if we don't live that way, we'll kill each other and destroy the Earth." [redacted]; a person I've been studying and come to find holds many of the same ideals as me.

- h. Explanation of how my beliefs changed/developed: (Includes factors (how/when/from whom/from what source training was received) and the beliefs acquired or which caused the change in or development of conscientious objector beliefs.)

Growing up in an undesirable childhood, I sought out to help mothers, families, and kids just like me. I promised my mom one day I'd get rich so she'd never have to worry about being put out and living on the streets. I hated seeing homeless people on the streets. I'd get mad when I'd see people of the same species have the audacity to walk right by them smiling like they don't exist. Towering them like a speck of dirt and didn't deserve to breathe. The last straw was drawn when I found a website that showed people cutting men and children's heads off in the name of a deity. I didn't know what to do but something had to be done. Then one day a recruiter came to my school. He told me of the glorious things I can do in the military and all the lives I could be saving. After explaining the Navy Seals I was curious why I was still in that class and not at the recruiting station signing up. After boot camp and A School, I was still headstrong with my decision and upon arrival to Australia; I embarked on the [redacted] return back to San Diego. Shocked and in awe of the fighter jets, becoming a pilot officer was a must as well. On the return home and settling down I began to question the purpose of a Navy Seal and a pilot. I asked myself if pulling the trigger was any different than the people walking by that starving homeless man. If I were flying that aircraft could I drop bombs annihilating thousands of people who I know absolutely nothing about? People who have kids, a wife, friends, and pets or are homeless and starving just like my society and me? Who have to eat, sleep, and think to survive just like me? Surely, I'm not the only person asking these questions. So I took a step back, sought out to see why these choices were even a possibility in our society today. What I found was insanity. Countries are going bankrupt because of debt, which doesn't even exist in the physical reality, but destroys the wellbeing of billions of people. Fisherman turned pirates because of inflation and invasion. Engaging in unconstitutional wars, drone attacks, strengthening of security, poverty, and a rising rate of unemployment. All because of a global scale game of monopoly? That very moment crystallized my firm belief that I couldn't partake in war. Killing innocent or guilty people is not acceptable to me. Only relatively educating and ridding the cause that enables them to hurt others will relieve them from stupidity, war and empower true freedom. I know there are people across our borders and even here are being tortured and killed. I don't

believe killing their oppressors is solving the situation. You can't fight fire with fire. I know you can't kill someone and expect that to end it all. Only attacking the heart of the problem will prevent the atrocities that later prevail because of.

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service:

It only took a short couple of weeks for this realization to sink in but at the moment of clarity I felt as if I were choking on a gulp of air. I began to get headaches and feel disgusted when I'd go to the ship. I try my best to avoid anyone in the military because I feel normal when I'm away from anyone or anything that has something to do with it. Realizing my newfound beliefs towards war and putting them aside to carry out my duties is damaging me. I try to bury my feelings, keep my head up, and act like everything is perfect but it's now at a point where duties don't matter. I was going to lose it if I didn't do something about it. While sitting in basic training, I found it hard for to pay attention to training necessary to keep a ship in combat preparedness. All I could think about was how being there was the least helpful thing I could be putting forth to society. Knowing I'm actually contributing to the downfall of it by supporting war completely through me off. I just couldn't focus. The [redacted] asked me questions and I gave what I believed was the correct answer but he wasn't too fond of that and told me to leave if I didn't want to be there. So I left. I knew at that moment that embarking on a ship again wasn't possible. I cannot set sail and aid in war ever again. I can't do anything that'll support war. I won't do it. To me going out to fight wars would be like cutting my stomach open to pull a tape worm out. People on the street thank me for my service. They know the complete outcomes of war but they accept it as the right thing to be doing. That makes my heart drop. I give my all when I'm doing my job but as of now my ideals contradict my duties of being a sailor.

j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances (if none, so state):

I can't determine the outcomes of every situation and the ways I would react because there are unlimited variables to any given situation. But if anyone's life were in immediate danger I'd do what I could to defend them. That doesn't mean I'd kill someone to protect another or myself. After all other options are exhausted the most I'd do is restrain an attacker. As a kid I tried my best to be a happy positive person. I'd never cause altercations between other kids and myself because I was taught to know and understand the cause of my emotions act from there. If I had a toy another kid wanted I'd smile and give it to him/her. There were other ways of entertaining myself. Plus there's always the possibility he was poor like me and didn't have toys to play with. If someone didn't like me for whatever reason I'd ask them why and just have a conversation with them. There are other ways of handling harmful situations without the use of physical or verbal force.

k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I Plan to continue my support of these beliefs:

I feel as if something was taken from me. Like I've lost the rights to feel the way I feel. It's depressing. When at work I'm shut off to people. I participate in activities, do my job, and portray positivity as much as possible. It's not necessary for me to go across the ocean to see what's happening. I know what it's like to watch someone you love die slowly. I watched my sister die slowly from back and brain tumors. I cleaned her wounds, changed her diaper, and talked her to sleep every night. I felt a deep hurt. The feeling of not being able to do anything rots you. To know humans in a foreign lands situation is ten times worse than that angers me with a passion. My life may not have been extreme as an African refugees but I know what it's like to be scared, alone, and feeble with no hope: With the arrival of my new beliefs I've began to revert back to those feelings. I do feel like an outcast but I'm not afraid to speak how I truly feel. I've come to realize that ideals pushed upon me by the military are completely external. Fighting for America becomes redundant when the lives of others are in harm's way. Although man is a mirror of his environment, he is in 100%

control of how it influences him. The ideals of the military are contradicting my beliefs. I've been searching for others who disagree with war and once I am free from its control I will contribute as much as possible to eliminate the need of war and end poverty. When looking for ways to contribute to this cause I came across an organization called [REDACTED]. It proposes an idea that requires cooperation and time but the basic achievable concept alters the values of a society that work towards equally distributing all common goods for all earths' inhabitants, therefore, making current crimes that prevail today obsolete. There are many arguments against this organization. Some are ignorant and others are justifiable but the basic ideals are put forth from a scientific outlook on how we can make sure no know one starves or lives in poverty. I know this is contradicting to a military and the profiting ruling classes agenda but that's the point. I don't want to be a part of organized killing and I refuse to sit back and reside in a society that allows a guy own 5 mansions and drive Lamborghinis' while kids starve. I support all life. I'm going to aid organizations that build hydroponic gardening systems that feed homeless or anyone who wants food and gives free education and housing to people.

- i. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs which gave rise to this application:

A huge factor that shows evidence of my beliefs is the fact that I've always been a helpful person because of my background and upbringing. That has never changed and is the main reason I joined the military. The fact that I demonstrate and stress as much as possible to my younger siblings and friends that there are ways they can contribute positive products to society shows so. Because the impact my [REDACTED] had on me is so painful I can only imagine what the how war affects the victims family members. I can't be a part of an organization that disrupts and causes agony to other human lives. If war hurts them it's hurting everyone else in the world because we're all fighting to survive in this life. Being active in [REDACTED] viewing there videos, reading their documents, and spreading the points they bring forth also show evidence. I converse with friends over the topic of war. Some agree with me, others think it's a necessary thing. The love for my family, friends, people in general and the world are far too important to risk destroying the planet in the process of protecting them. All of them drive me to do what I do. They affect my beliefs and thinking. Therefore I'm forced to oppose war. I have no choice and refuse to partake in killing of people innocent or guilty. I refuse to be a needle in a massive, fiery haystack that burns villages to the ground. And most importantly I refuse to continue to destroy myself by staying in the military. I find no honor, courage, or commitment to the wellbeing of humanity in war, the military, and therefore myself. I have become disgusted with myself because I chose to be a part of this. I know as kid I will be naive to most things. But war is not one of them anymore. I don't see the outcome of my presence here getting any better. I only see darkness and hatred for my continuance of participation in the military. I cannot and will not let that happen. My beliefs are all that I have. They are my core foundation and the reason I respectfully request permission to be discharged as a conscientious objector or however you see suitable so I may lend a true hand to the people who need help and love.

- m. Prior service (if any; if none, so state): No prior service.

<u>Military Service</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>	<u>Type Discharge</u>
NA	NA	NA

- n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization:

<u>Religious sect/ Organization</u>	<u>Name and Location of Governing Body/Head</u>	<u>Name and location of Congregation Customarily Attending</u>	<u>Level of Participation</u>
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Explain when, where, and how you became of member of said sect or organization.

This summer I logged onto the internet and signed up to become an official member to converse on forums with other members.

- o. Information on the pastor or leader of my (church, congregation, or meeting):

Name	Title	Address
[REDACTED]		

- p. A description of the creed or official statements (if any and if known) of said religious sect or organization in relation to participation in war:

[REDACTED] offers a comprehensive plan for social reclamation in which human beings, technology and nature will be able to coexist in a long term, sustainable state of dynamic equilibrium.

"THE AUTHORITY TO REQUEST THIS INFORMATION IS DERIVED FROM 50 U.S.C. 456j AND 38 U.S.C. 3103, AND 5 U.S.C. 301, DEPARTMENTAL REGULATIONS. THE PURPOSE OF THIS APPLICATION IS TO ALLOW THE MEMBER TO APPLY FOR CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR STATUS. THIS APPLICATION IS COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY; HOWEVER, FAILURE TO PROVIDE THE REQUIRED INFORMATION WOULD RESULT IN AN INABILITY TO PROCESS THIS REQUEST AND THE MEMBER WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO RECEIVE THE REQUESTED STATUS."

- q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated (since age 16), other than military, political, or labor organizations:

[REDACTED] I am a contributor of ideas like every other member of the human race.

[REDACTED]

6 Aug 12

From: [REDACTED]
To: Navy Personnel Command (PERS-832)
Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

1. I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection.
The following required information is provided:

a. Permanent home address:

[REDACTED]

b. School and colleges attended after age 16:

<u>School Name/Address</u>	<u>Type School</u>	<u>Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	High School	[REDACTED]

c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

<u>Employer/Address</u>	<u>Type Work</u>	<u>Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	Dishwasher	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Factory worker	[REDACTED]

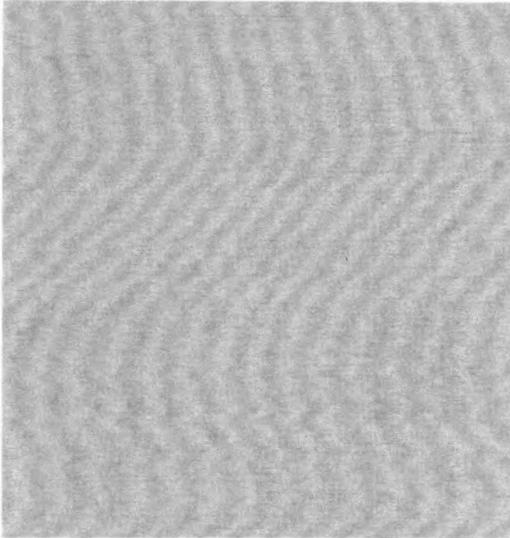
d. All residences after age 16:

<u>Address/City/State</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

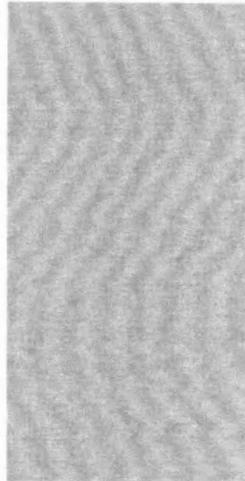
"FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY"

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Address/City/State



Inclusive Dates



e. Spouse and member's parents' names/addresses and religion/sect:

Spouses' father:



Above mentioned person's whereabouts are unknown at this time.

Spouses' mother:



Member's Father:



Member's Mother:



f. I did not make application to the Selective Service System (local board) for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

g. A description of the nature of my belief:

(1) Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the entire Bible is the inspired Word of God, and instead of adhering to a creed based on human tradition, we hold to the Bible as the standard for all our beliefs.

(2) We worship Jehovah as the only true God and freely speak to others about him and his loving purposes toward mankind.

(3) We believe that God's Kingdom is the only hope for mankind; that it is a real government; that it will soon destroy the present wicked system of things, including all human governments, and that it will produce a new system in which righteousness will prevail.

(4) We earnestly endeavor to be no part of the world, as Jesus said would rather be true of his followers and we do not share in the politics or the wars of any Nation. We provide for the material needs of our families but shun the world's most avid pursuit of material things and personal fame and its excessive indulgence in pleasure.

(5) We believe that it is important to apply the counsel of God's Word in everyday life now-at home, in school, in business, and in our congregation. Regardless of a person's past way of life, he or she may become one of Jehovah's Witnesses if he or she abandons practices condemned by God's Word and applies its godly counsel, but if anyone thereafter makes a practice of adultery, fornication, homosexuality, drug abuse, drunkenness, lying, or stealing, he or she will be disfellowshipped from the congregation. We do not interfere with what others do about sharing in patriotic ceremonies, serving in the Armed Forces, joining a political party, running for a political office or voting, but we ourselves worship only Jehovah, the God of the Bible; we have dedicated our lives unreservedly to him and give our full support to his Kingdom. Isaiah 2:4 states, "Nation will not lift up sword against Nation, neither will they learn war anymore." Luke 4:8 states, "It is Jehovah your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service." John 17:16 states, "They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world." Psalms 146:3-4 states, "Do not put YOUR trust in nobles, nor in the son of earthling man, to whom no salvation belongs. His spirit goes out; he goes back to his ground; in that day his thoughts do perish."

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed:

(1) It occurred in January 2009, due to me sitting down with a Jehovah's Witness and listening to what they had to say. I enjoyed it a lot and I wanted to learn more about the religion that I am choosing to further pursue. I want to take my religion further, but, cannot do that due to my being in the military. I also read the Bible and believe its counsel to be 100 percent true and correct.

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service:

(1) It all became incompatible with military service in January 2009. As Luke 4:8 states, "It is written, It is Jehovah your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service". Micah 4:3 states, "They will not lift up sword, Nation against Nation, neither will they learn war anymore."

j. Explanation of the circumstances which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances:

(1) I do not believe in the use of force in any way, shape, or form.

k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs:

(1) I have changed for the better and live by Bible rules. I do not participate in holidays or birthdays and I plan to be in no part of this world. In the future, I plan to get baptized and teach the Bible as it was so finely taught to me. I plan to continue to attend meetings as I am currently doing so. In order for me to get baptized, I have to be out of the military 100 percent. My wife and kids attend two Bible meetings a week, and I read the book of Bible stories to my children every night before they go to sleep. We say prayers everyday together, including, before we eat, before we go to sleep, and before the start of each day. My kids and wife also participate in conversations that are discussed at the Kingdom Hall.

l. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs, which gave rise to this application:

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

(1) I learned about Jehovah and I believe that my religion is the Truth and nothing or anyone will ever change that. I want to obey Jehovah and all his commands from the Bible.

m. Prior service:

(1) I do not have any prior military service.

n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization:

(1) Sect/Name of Organization: [REDACTED]

(2) Name & Location of Governing Body: [REDACTED]

(3) Level Attendance: I attend meetings 1-2 times a week.

(4) Level Participation: I started two years ago in [REDACTED] as a student and learned through my wife and her mother. My wife's mother is a Jehovah's Witness.

o. Information on the pastor:

p. A description of the creed or official statements of said religious sect or organization in relation to participation in war:

As Matthew 26:52 states, "Then Jesus said to him: 'Return your sword to its place, for all those who take the sword will perish by the sword.'"

q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated other than military, political, or labor organizations:

(1) I have a regular Bible study once a week every Thursday at 1100 and I attend weekly meetings and I have a very good relationship with God.

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

(a) Deuteronomy 21:22 "And in case there comes to be in a man a sin deserving the sentence of death, and he has been put to death, and you have hung him upon a stake."

(b) Isaiah 2:2-4 "And it must occur in the final part of the days [that] the mountain of the house of Jehovah will become firmly established above the top of the mountains, and it will certainly be lifted up above the hills; and to it all the nations must stream. And many people's will certainly go and say: Come, YOU people, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will instruct us about his ways, and we will walk in his paths. For out of Zion law will go forth, and the word of Jehovah out of Jerusalem. And he will certainly render judgment among the nations and set matters straight respecting many peoples. And they will have to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears. Nation will not lift up sword against Nation; neither will they learn war anymore."

(c) Micah 4:3 "And he will certainly render judgment among many peoples, and set matters straight respecting mighty nations far away. And they will have to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears. They will not lift up sword, Nation against nation; neither will they learn war anymore."

(d) Ephesians 5:18 "Also, do not be getting drunk with wine, in which there is debauchery, but keep getting filled with spirit."

(e) Matthew 5:21 "YOU heard that it was said to those of ancient times, You must not murder; but whoever commits a murder will be accountable to the court of justice."

(f) Exodus 20:13 "You must not murder."

(g) Psalms 83:18 "That people may know that you, whose name is Jehovah, You alone are the Most High over all the earth."

(h) John 17:16 "They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world."

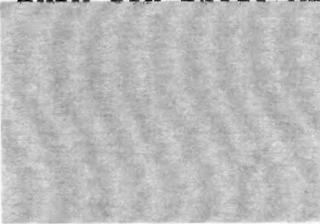
(i) 1 John 2:15 "Do not be loving either the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

(j) James 4:4 "Adulteresses, do YOU not know that the friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever, therefore, wants to be a friend of the world is constituting himself an enemy of God."

(k) Matthew 26:52 Then Jesus said to him: "Return your sword to its place, for all those who take the sword will perish by the sword."

(l) Luke 6:27 "But I say to YOU who are listening, Continue to love YOUR enemies, to do good to those hating YOU, 28 to bless those cursing YOU, to pray for those who are insulting YOU."



20 OCT 12

From: [REDACTED]

To: Navy Personnel Command, PERS-832

Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

1. I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection.

The following required information is provided:

a. Permanent home address:

[REDACTED]

b. School and colleges attended after age 16:

<u>School Name/Address</u>	<u>Type School</u>	<u>Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	High School	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	High School	[REDACTED]

c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

<u>Employer/Address</u>	<u>Type Work</u>	<u>Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	Roofing	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Demolition	[REDACTED]

d. All residences after age 16:

Address/City/State

Inclusive Dates

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

e. Spouse and member's parents' names/address and religion/sect:

Wife:

[REDACTED]

Mother:

[REDACTED]

Father:

[REDACTED]

f. I did not make application to the Selective Service System (local board) for classification as a Conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.

g. A description of the nature of my belief:

I am a loving passionate Christian follower of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ commands, speaks and teaches of love and forgiveness rather than vengeance and killing. I believe these following scripture verses illustrate my core beliefs:

Matt 26:52, "Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place; for those who live by the sword, die by the sword."

Luke 6:27-32, "But I say to you that hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same."

Romans 12:17-21, Do not return evil for evil. Avenge not yourselves, but rather give way to wrath; for it is written,

vengeance is mine; I will repay, says the Lord. Therefore if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him

drink: for in so doing you shall heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

John 14:23, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."

I believe the Christian faith demands that we no longer take up sword against other nations, nor are we to learn war any more, but we are charged to become the children of peace, for the sake of Jesus, who is my leader. I am a soldier of Christ; it is not lawful for me to fight with sword and kill another person. As Christ's disciple, I am charged to fight with spiritual weapons of prayer, fasting, acts of mercy and so on - not with weapons of death and destruction. I believe it can never be lawful for a righteous man to kill another human being, including the use of capital punishment. Clearly, in my understanding murder or the putting to death of another human is strictly prohibited.

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed:

Prior to my enlistment, I considered myself a Christian. However, I had little knowledge on what that meant or how to be one, I just believed in Christ and God. Since reporting to boot camp on January 25, 2011, I have become considerably more educated on how and what it means to be a Christian. Prior to my enlistment I read only a few passages in the bible and attended church very rarely. During boot camp, I started regularly attending church services. Since completing boot camp, I have regularly attended Sunday services and mid-week bible studies. I can honestly say from these services and bible studies helped define my understanding of Christian life and duty and led me to becoming a passionate and faithful Christian man. Now having a wealth of Christian knowledge, commitment and passion, I have come to terms with my core beliefs and find them in direct opposition of my primary mission in the military to support the waging of war. I understand that what I do in the Armed Services is directly in violation of the commandments and will of God and Jesus Christ for my life. I can no longer be involved or associated with any organization that uses violence or force as a solution to a problem.

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service:

At all times my association to an organization that kills and destroys is in direct violation of my faith and beliefs. Just because my government as a whole can grant me justification to kill someone does not mean that my God will justify that action or forgive my soul for such a deed. Direct or indirect killing, i.e. the building of bombs or support of military operations, is forbidden. For example, in the building of bombs, who can say who is more responsible for the death and destruction bombing brings? Who is most to blame, the person building the bombs, the pilot who drops them or the Commanding Officer who orders the mission? I cannot rationalize or make the moral justification for myself that any part in the taking of human life is permissible. Continuance in the military has become a very harrowing religious burden upon my soul.

j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances:

I do not believe in the use of force. Instead of trying to eradicate and enforce unwanted compliance upon other cultures, I feel we should be more forgiving. We should be more understanding of the grievances committed and teach and educate such cultures in order to speak loudly of our need for world peace. War gives rise only to hate and despair and to new generations of combatants willing to avenge wrongs done to their culture. It is akin to us Americans killing 500,000 Middle Eastern children in the past desert war. Undoubtedly, there will be a whole generation in that area that will feel they have been dealt an injustice and desire revenge. As human beings, we tend to forget this world belongs to God, we are his creation and national might does not make right.

Forgiving and educating go far beyond the effects of killing and destroying. Jesus could have avenged his crucifixion with more force than humanly imaginable. He could have condemned us all but he chose instead to forgive, educate and love us, which is the only righteous choice. Not only was that the decision Jesus made but the decision he commands us to take when dealt with injustice.

k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs:

My entire life has change since my commitment to faith. Prior to

my newfound faith, I accepted of all sorts of sinful ways as acceptable in dealing with other people. I was not very accepting of differences among peoples. I resorted to verbal abuse when people crossed me in a negative way. I had a very short temper and was full of discontent. Now, I no longer stumble my way through life without direction or hope. I now have a clear understanding of how to live a spiritually prosperous life and I am determined never to allow my faith to slip from me.

Now I stand as a once lost but now found Christian. I live my life full of faith and hope and I am determined to live at peace with all people. Accordingly, I plan to continue forward as such: as soon as I depart from the Navy, I will find the right Bible school that fits my Christian beliefs. Once eligible I am going to take all the steps to become a Pastor. I am positive that I am called to be a Pastor. My God has and is blessing me with the skill sets and passion necessary to commit to ministry in a pastoral role.

1. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs, which gave rise to this application:

Even though the primary mission of the Armed Forces is to protect and defend the national interests of the United States, the fact is that includes killing. This is in direct violation of God's number one commandment that you shall not kill or strike down anyone. God is the only one who has the right to end a life. My belief is that if anyone breaks that commandment they will be condemned to hell for all eternity. I in no way desire to violate God's will and suffer the same fate. I am absolutely committed to obeying God, as I understand his will, continuing to progress in my Christian discipleship. I believe this leaves me no option, but to leave military service in the most honorable way possible.

m. Prior service:

<u>Military Service</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>	<u>Type Discharge</u>
N/A	N/A	N/A

n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization:

<u>Religious Sect/Organization</u>	<u>Name & Location of Governing Body/Head</u>	<u>Name & Location of Church, Congregation Customarily Attending</u>	<u>Level of Participation Sunday Service, Midweek Bible Study</u>
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Explain when, where, and how you became a member of said sect or organization.

Reporting to boot camp I worshiped with the non-denominational service and experienced a sense of peace and understanding I had never known before. Reporting to [REDACTED] I accessed a listing of churches, via the internet, and came across [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] is has been renamed [REDACTED]. I have attended Sunday service at [REDACTED] since July 2011 and have found that same sense of peace and understanding I first experienced while attending worship during boot camp.

o. Information on the pastor or leader of my (church, congregation, or meeting):

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Address</u>
[REDACTED]	Head pastor	[REDACTED]

p. A description of the creed or official statements of said religious sect or organization in relation to participation in war:

Christians follow the word (scripture) and commandments of Jesus Christ. Here are just a few words from Jesus Christ.

Mathew 5:38-48, "You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him

the other also. And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you."

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated, other than military, political, or labor organizations:

My other affiliations are limited to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I have not other previous affiliations.

2. Enclosures (1) - (0) provide additional Information, references, or official statements, which I desire you to consider in review of this application.

Since my enlistment into the U.S. Navy on January 25, 2011 I have become a consciences objector. I no longer can directly or indirectly bear arms. I can no longer spiritually or religiously justify or rationalize the use of violence in any form. I see myself as a Christian evangelist, who during my short stint in the Navy, has truly found my calling.

I take seriously my Lord and Savior's words and that they apply equally to be as they do to all believers. One of the many commandments of Jesus Christ which has led me to object to being involved in any form of war is, "thy shall love ones neighbor and enemy as thy loves oneself". I believe any direct involvement in killing is clearly an egregious violation of this commandment. I can no longer disregard my Lords commandment by remaining actively associated with any organization using violence or force.

My life and career goal is to be a head pastor of a non-denomination Christian church that shares these same biblical values. I believe that God calls Christians to forgiveness not war, to live out the core values of love and forgiveness. Therefore, in my current service in the Navy, I am in direct violation of my own and I would say Jesus' desire for my life.

I have only really scratched the surface as to the great struggle that is going on inside my life as I try to maintain the bearing of a good Sailor, while living out my Christian discipleship. Since January 2011, these Christian values have come to be my life's strength and core values. I am very sincere and I stand firm on all that I have stated. I swear my hand before God, I am not attempting to deceive or defraud the U.S. Navy. This document contains my true beliefs and history of how I have come to own this faith. I trust that whoever reads this statement will sense the truthfulness of my statements.



"THE AUTHORITY TO REQUEST THIS INFORMATION IS DERIVED FROM 50 U.S.C. 456j AND 38 U.S.C. 3103, AND 5 U.S.C. 301, DEPARTMENTAL REGULATIONS. THE PURPOSE OF THIS APPLICATION IS TO ALLOW THE MEMBER TO APPLY FOR CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR STATUS. THIS APPLICATION IS COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY; HOWEVER, FAILURE TO PROVIDE THE REQUIRED INFORMATION WOULD RESULT IN AN INABILITY TO PROCESS THIS REQUEST AND THE MEMBER WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO RECEIVE THE REQUESTED STATUS "

Signature:



Date:

08 NOV 12

26 Jul 13

MEMORANDUM

From: [REDACTED]

To: Navy Personnel Command PERS-634

Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

Encl: (1) Statement of Conscientious Objector

1. I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection.

a. Permanent home address [REDACTED]

b. Schools and colleges attended were Northwest School of the [REDACTED]

c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

Food Service,
Pharmacy,
Bus Driver,
Bus Driver,
Bus Driver and Minister,

d. All residences after age 16: [REDACTED]

e. Parents name and address and religious sect: [REDACTED]

f. I did not make application to the selective service system for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.

g. A description of the nature of my belief: I believe that I cannot participate in war because the Word of God from the Bible makes it clear that the Nations of the world fight wars in order to establish rule on the earth and that rule but power only belongs to God. Isaiah 34:1-2 Come here and listen, O nations of the earth. Let the world and everything in it hear my words. For the LORD is enraged against the nations. His fury is against all their armies. He will completely destroy them, dooming them to slaughter. The God of Heaven and earth chose His Son Jesus Christ to rule as KING. Jesus is LORD of all and Israel is God's chosen holy nation. The nations of the world wage war constantly, fighting to rule and control God's chosen people and nation. God has called all people and all nations to repent of their evil deeds and to accept His Son Jesus Christ as LORD and Savior. Acts 17:30 "God overlooked people's ignorance about these things in earlier times, but now He commands everyone everywhere to repent of their sins and turn to Him. 31. For He has set a day for judging the world with justice by the man He has appointed, and He proved to everyone who this is by raising Him from the dead." God's ways are just He does not promote bribes, idols, greed, violence, etc. The Nations of the world refuse to submit to God's call to forsake these and other things so they wage war on a conquest to establish their own rule and authority, which is clearly in opposition to God.

Zechariah 14:2-3 says for I will gather all nations to battle against Jerusalem. Then the LORD will go out to fight against those nations, as He has fought in times past. These verses describe God taking vengeance on the nations that have waged war against His Kingdom and His authority and verse 9 of Chapter 14 states the outcome which is God's purpose "And the LORD will be king over all the earth. On that day there will be one Lord-His Name alone will be worshipped. Verse 12 And the LORD will send a plague against all Nations that fought against Jerusalem. As a Christian my whole hearted belief is 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 we are human, but we don't wage war as humans do. We use God's mighty weapons not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments. Christians are called to preach the Gospel message and convince people of the truth which builds God's Kingdom as more people repent and believe the gospel. We don't wage war as human's do because our mission is not to kill but to see people receive eternal life. John 10:10 the thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly, the words of Jesus. A Christian's mission is to walk in, live out and proclaim the truth of God's Word which promotes peace and righteous living in full submission to Christ as LORD. Accepting God's law as the true law and obeying it, The 10 commandments including thou shall not murder.

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed: I became a Christian in May 2008. I immediately became a local minister serving in many churches driving the bus for youth churches, ministering music, and preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. I've studied the Word of God and received a solid foundation of faith through the New Testament. I came into the Navy as an answer to a call that God confirmed in a powerful way to me. I had a dream I was being called to report to a ship after I prayed for confirmation that the Navy was God's will for me. I began preparing physically by jogging. One day as I jogged around the block I asked my LORD if He was sure about the Navy being for me, I looked down on the ground and found an E-2 undesignated dress white Navy patch. That confirmed God's will for me. I've been standing firm on my faith throughout my service in the Navy I have been faithfully serving God as I swore I would when I took my oath. Recently I spent many hours laboring in my studies of eschatology which is a branch of theology concerned with the final events in the history of the world, specifically the second coming of Christ. During my leave period I was blessed to be able to dig into the book of the Prophet Daniel. I enrolled in a course on Christian courses.com and God began to open my eyes to the reality of His predicting in advance events that took place in history. I began to see that the book of Daniel namely chapter 11 prophesied well in advance about historical events like the rule of Alexander the Great in Daniel 11:4 which speaks of the Macedonian Empire all the way to Cleopatra and Ptolemy(Daniel 11:17) and many more historical events were told in advance. The Book also declares things that have yet to come and that placed me in prayer and on a journey to seek my purpose and role on the earth today. My eyes began to open to the truth that the Bible is not just a book of Jewish and Christian history, but it tells the history of the world and prophecies of many things yet to come. God revealed to me that Christ has come to establish rule over all the Nations of the world and the very rule and authority that nations have gone to war over for so long is the rule and authority that Christ has been given. Daniel 7:14 then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed. These truths caused me to realize that this war and any war is a problem for me to participate in because it fights against God's purpose. Recently I've come to see how practically the Word of God can be applied to our world today, that it addresses our nation and every nation and that the spiritual revelations and instructions of the New Testament are fulfillment of the Old Testament. The Bible explains that the Nations of the world and

their armies will battle AGAINST the LORD and His army (Revelation 19:19). That is the farthest thing from my purpose in life and I conscientiously object to participation in war based off this fact and request separation from the Navy.

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service: These beliefs became incompatible with military service as I studied Daniel Chapter 11 namely verse 40 which mentions a vast Navy that will be a part of a conquest during a war in the middle east. When I received revelation of how relevant the Prophecies of the Bible are to the events that take place in our world today and the warnings that God gives to the Nations to repent and submit to His ways I realized that I have to continue to preach the gospel to build God's kingdom and that participating in war is participating in the Nations plans which reject Christ as KING. I don't reject Jesus I submit to Him. I believe firmly in Isaiah 9:6-7 for a child is born to us; a son is given to us. The government will rest on His shoulders and He will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace. His government and its peace will never end. He will rule with fairness and justice from the throne of His ancestor David for all eternity. The passionate commitment of the LORD of Heaven's Armies will make this happen. Christ's Kingdom and Government is the only rule worth fighting for and it is not fought for with carnal weapons. Christ's Kingdom is established through the progression of the Word of God which I am called to preach. Waging war with carnal weapons is not God's way. 2 Corinthians 10:3 We are human but we don't wage war as human's do.

j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances (if none, so state): None

k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs: My current lifestyle has changed drastically since I became a Christian. I do not practice the ungodly things (i.e. smoking, drinking, cursing, etc.) I did before I accepted Christ. This recent revelation has made me much more zealous to proclaim the authenticity of the Bible as a historical book as well as God's message to the Nations to repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. I plan to go on mission trips sharing the Word of God and do whatever is in God's will for me to do.

l. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs, which gave rise to this application: My lifestyle in itself reflects the depths of my beliefs from the Scriptures taped up on my desk to the clothes that I wear which testify about the Word of God and the coming of His Son. I spend my time studying the Word of God and preaching the gospel. I'm known for not cursing and for being a Christian. The investment in materials that I've purchased to further my eschatological study also attests to my new revelation. Lastly I would have to say my conversation, every chance I get as God leads I share these profound truths revealed through His Word.

m. Prior service (if any; if none, so state): None

n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization: Christian, Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.); Music minister, bus driver, Bible study, etc. I became a Christian five years ago in [redacted] after thoroughly studying the Bible for instruction on how to live life God's way and receive the salvation from sin offered through His Son. I became a Christian by grace through the power of the Holy Spirit with exposure to the gospel.

o. Information on the Pastor or leader of my church. congregation:

[REDACTED] have been true teachers and leaders of the faith that I have grown under.

p. A description of the creed or official statements of said religious sect or organization in relation to participation in war: 2 Corinthians 10:3 we are human, but we don't wage war as humans do. Ephesians 6:12 for we are not fighting against flesh and blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in heavenly places. Exodus 20:13 "You must not murder.

q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated since age 16, other than military, political, or labor organizations: [REDACTED]

Very respectfully,

[REDACTED]

1900
30SEP13

From: [REDACTED]
To: NAVY PERSONNEL COMMAND PERS-832
Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR (1-0)

Ref: (a) MILPERMAN 1900-020

- Encl: (1) MEMORANDUM
 (2) Letter of reference from [REDACTED]
 (3) Letter of reference from [REDACTED]
 (4) Letter of reference from [REDACTED]
 (5) Letter of reference from [REDACTED]
 (6) Letter of reference from [REDACTED]
 (7) MISSION IMPACT STATEMENT FOR CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR STATUS

1. I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection. The following required information is provided:

a. Permanent home address: [REDACTED]

b. School and colleges attended after age 16:

<u>School Name/Address</u>	<u>Type School</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	High School	2005-2008
[REDACTED]	High School	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	DoD Institute	[REDACTED]

c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

<u>Employer/Address</u>	<u>Type Work</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
United States Navy	[REDACTED]	2009-2013

d. All residences after age 16:

[REDACTED]

e. Spouse and member's parents' names/address and religion/sect (if deceased, so state):



f. I did not make application to the Selective Service System (local board) for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces. (If application was made, list local board and decision made by the board - if known.

g. A description of the nature of my belief: I am a pacifist and a vegan. I do not believe that it is morally right to take the life of another person. I do not believe violence is the answer to conflict nor do I believe that war is justifiable. I believe that a peaceful and non-violent solution should be used when dealing with conflict. I believe that life is precious and invaluable. I strive to not cause pain to any living creature and avoid killing any living being at all costs. I believe other living creatures have a right to live their life just as much as we do. We have the opportunity to live without killing other creatures through our actions, and I feel that I have a moral obligation to not have my actions result in pain or death to the living. I don't believe in harming people, I don't believe in harming animals. The result of war is death and destruction; therefore I do not believe participation in war can be justified under any circumstances.

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed:

I am fifth generation Navy. My father is a [REDACTED], and has traveled all over the world in his 20 years of service and has spent 16 of those years in the [REDACTED]. When I was younger, I always wanted to join the military like my father. I wanted to be a fighter pilot in the Navy, or join the SEAL community like he had. Naval service and tradition are very important in our family. I wanted to serve my country and give back for what freedoms I was able to enjoy because of those who served. I wanted to help defend this country from those who wanted to harm it. When I first enlisted, I couldn't wait to make a difference and honor this nation. I had thought long and hard

about war at this time, as we were still immersed in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. I believed I would take a life to protect those around me, and to protect my nation. I would defend this nation with my life, if need be.

The foundation of those beliefs began to change in March of 2012. I had started a two month [redacted] at this time. During the period of the course, we began to get to know our teachers very well and one of our teachers was born and raised in Iraq. This teacher had told us about his experiences living in Iraq. One day, he told us about how Iraqi gunships were flying towards his village and he and his family had to run away to the mountains to hide from the approaching army. He said fellow villagers were being gunned down by the helicopters and everyone tried to escape and find a place to hide from the attack by Saddam's regime. This event really stuck with me. It was a very tragic thing he had to witness when he was young. On another occasion he answered one of our questions on how he viewed Iraq now.

He made mention that he felt that Iraq was worse off now than when it was under Saddam. He said that before the war, life had a certainty to it. There was a sense of order to things and despite the hardships of that rule it wasn't all bad. He said that Iraq now was full of corruption. There was no longer any certainty, and while you could get food easily in Saddam's Iraq, that became a struggle under the new government.

I thought very long about what he had said regarding this. I began to think on the value of war. We had entered that country and removed a cruel dictator. He had killed many people, gassed the Kurdish people in the north, and committed many crimes against his people. Yet, his dictatorship was better than the current rule of Iraq?

I began to look into the results of the war. We had indeed destabilized the country. Corruption had run wild to the point that you had to bribe for driver's licenses and food rations. The country's security was severely crippled. Car bombs are now an everyday occurrence Iraq.

After researching the Iraq war, I began to look at other wars and armed conflicts. I talked with veterans from both Iraq and Afghanistan. One man in particular had joined a private security contractor and began working for them in Afghanistan after serving in the Army. He spoke of how after seeing so much violence and taking so many lives, he couldn't go back to an ordinary life in the United States. He felt the only thing he could live for was protecting the man next to

him. He spoke of how he felt he lost his humanity and only looked forward to the next operation.

This had a big effect on me. Here was a person with much experience in a combat zone, and he couldn't accept any other way of life other than one of conflict, after seeing so much of it. He was not alone either; there were many soldiers who spoke of their difficulties in trying to adjust back into regular life. Many suffered from PTSD and had trouble with sleeping or couldn't go to firework shows anymore without bringing back the painful trauma of their experiences during the war. Many had trouble driving normally on the roads, because they had been used to speeding and knocking other vehicles aside as a security precaution so they wouldn't be blocked in if they came under attack. I began to pay attention and understand that war never just stops after the shooting ends. It lasts with the participants their whole lives.

I also began to look at other results of the war in Afghanistan, World War I, World War II, etc. When I looked at the casualties of World War II alone, I couldn't fathom it. The estimates for the death toll for that war are 40 million at a minimum and as high as 72 million victims. Only the Taiping Rebellion in China and the Bubonic plague have taken more lives in human history. I could not see a purpose to that much suffering, that great a loss of life. How could we as a species condone such suffering upon ourselves?

You can still see the impact of that war in Europe. I visited Germany in September of 2010 and you could still find the remnants of buildings blown in half by tank shells. When I went to a museum, the curator showed us a model of what the city looked like before it was bombed, and then we could look outside the window and see the rubble of a building that was in the model. I thought about all the labor and work it must have taken to build a home and to have it destroyed so easily. It seemed as fragile as a human life, and that war had taken both mercilessly.

I later reflected on this visit to Germany along with all of my research in the spring of 2012. After considering everything I had learned, I could not see a just cause for war anymore. It brings about so much destruction and instability. It ruins so many lives. How could it be justified? How could violence be an answer? I couldn't accept war as a solution anymore. I couldn't stand for it as a policy, or as a way of settling problems. When you have a problem with someone, you discuss it. You don't kill them.

How could we think differently just because these people live in a different country than us and speak a different language? How does that make it okay to kill someone we have problems with?

There was an experience I had that also profoundly shaped my views. Around April, 2012, one of my colleagues had come up to me and said they had felt sick by what they saw. Everyone they were working with was applauding the death of a person. They saw it as a successful part of their job; they cheered and clapped at the person's death. I was taken aback by this. It was a huge burden to bear to kill someone, and that action should not be carried out lightly. Yet here people were applauding it. They didn't view it as a sober consequence of their duties, but as an accomplishment. I was sickened by what I was told.

I began to become disillusioned by violence and war. I began to believe more in finding a peaceful solution to conflict. If you kill someone you have a problem with, you can no longer find a solution to problems that you both have. By killing, you close any opportunity that existed to coexist and bring about peaceful resolution.

Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, "Hate begets hate; violence begets violence; toughness begets a greater toughness. We must meet the forces of hate with the power of love... Our aim must never be to defeat or humiliate the white man, but to win his friendship and understanding". This message was profound. Here was one of the most prolific figures in modern American history. He helped guarantee freedoms for people of color. He was a pacifist, who stood by his doctrine of non-violence and did not waver even when others threatened him and his loved ones with violence. He proved that a difference can be made, and can be made peacefully. We now revere him for his actions in life. We celebrate his namesake on Martin Luther King Day.

He showed the world that we can bring about change without violence. We can help others and make progress without hurting or killing. I began to think on how powerful a message this was, to not view others as enemies even when they may view you as one. He preached to love and accept everyone, and treat them kindly. His actions had achieved so much without bringing any pain or suffering.

Around June and July of 2012, I experienced what could best be described as a revelation. I began to see life differently. It's difficult to describe, like I was able to see something I hadn't been able to see my whole life. I

could see the life moving all around me, even the life beneath my feet. There was so much I was overlooking by being too caught up in my own goals and work. I began to take time and see what I had been missing. I developed a sincere curiosity in how other life on this planet lived and survived. I wanted to know how they worked, how they moved, how they adapted. I wanted to know everything about them, and I began to love them just for being what they were. I also did not want to see any harm done to them.

I began to study Biology and grew to appreciate the complexity of life and how spectacular it is. I became particularly fond of insects and arthropods. Their diversity and resolve to survive was the most recognizable trait about this class of life. There are so many species, and all of them have such unique traits that help them survive. There is even a vegetarian jumping spider called *Bagheera kiplingi* that lives off of Beltian bodies, a protein formed on Acacia leaves. The spider protects the ants, who harvest the protein, from other predators and in return receives some of the proteins for itself. My interest in life doesn't stop at invertebrates, though. All animals, including humans, in the animal kingdom are incredibly interesting and beautiful. I have also studied anatomy on my own time as I'm interested in how our own bodies work. Such complex systems within ourselves and most of us hardly understand how it works, including me!

During this time, I also began to evaluate my diet. I have come to love animals and all life dearly. I realized that if I didn't wish to harm them, I could not eat their flesh or wear their skin. After some discussions with my fiancée, I decided that the only way I could honor my beliefs was to no longer eat or wear animal products; I became a vegetarian.

At first it was difficult to make the change to vegetarianism. I had to pay more attention to what I was eating, buying, and wearing. Cutting out meat was easy enough, but there are many foods and products that you wouldn't suspect that use animal byproducts. McDonald's fries, for instance, use beef tallow in their fries for flavoring, even though they cook them in vegetable oil. Luckily, my fiancée had been a vegetarian for 5 years, so I was able to use her experience to help guide me. Some of my friends have also been vegetarian or vegan at some point in their lives, and I was able to provide guidance as well. I also spent a lot of time looking up guides on the internet on

what foods and ingredients would be vegetarian.

Since becoming vegan, I've had to primarily rely on the internet for guidance on how to choose foods that are vegan. It is much stricter and many foods that would be vegetarian would not pass as vegan. Finding substitutes for eggs and dairy products has been difficult. Butter has been an especially difficult obstacle, as almost everything contains it in one form or another. That alone has cut out many food options, and I have had to become very careful about what I eat.

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service:

My beliefs became incompatible with military service in June of 2012. I knew then that I could never take a life under any circumstance, even if I were under attack. I thought long and hard about if I were ever to be in a position where my actions would be responsible for someone's death, and I couldn't accept it. It didn't matter if I pulled the trigger or if I just told them where the target was. I knew my actions would have led to their death and it was unacceptable to me and my beliefs. I didn't know that I had a right to request a discharge under conscientious objection until September 1st, 2013. I had stumbled upon news articles on the web of service-members getting discharges because they were pacifists and no longer believed in violence.

I had spent over a year believing I didn't have any options available to me, that I would just have to keep quiet and try to avoid doing anything that violated my beliefs as best as possible. Before I discovered this discharge, I was distraught. I was always worried about being required to deploy and being forced to locate targets. I was afraid of what I would have to do to avoid this and what consequences I would face from the Navy. Before I became a pacifist, I loved the thought of deploying and seeing the world. Now I had come to fear the thought.

During this time I felt helpless; I was a part of an organization that I no longer agreed with. I looked at things I could do to avoid being put in a situation that was inconsistent with my beliefs, but to no avail. The only thing I thought I could do was try to extend my projected rotation date so that I at least wouldn't be deployed. I would still be working in an environment that I wasn't okay with, but the chances of my actions

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resulting in someone's death would be much lower.

Just after initiating the process for extending my rotation, I stumbled upon articles citing servicemembers being discharged through conscientious objection. I couldn't believe it when I discovered this. I looked into it more and found the MILPERSMAN covering this very discharge. I was so relieved. It was hard to imagine that I could actually be given a discharge for my beliefs. I felt like there was a light at the end of the tunnel.

As soon as I discovered this was an option for me, I began preparing this document immediately. I have contacted the few people who I've been open to in regards to my pacifism and have received letters of reference from them. I have made this discharge process an absolute priority since its discovery.

- j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances (if none, so state):

A clarification should be made to make a distinction between force and violence.

Force is defined as: strength or energy exerted or brought to bear:

Cause of motion or change: active power < the motivating force in her life>. . b: moral or mental strength, c: capacity to persuade or convince <the force of the argument>.

Violence is defined as: the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation.

I do not believe in the use of force that would result in violence or the death of another living being. I am not against the use of a police force as long as it doesn't result in the harming or killing of people. A police force has many duties, including directing traffic flow and

keeping the peace within an area. These duties do not entail violence. As long as a police force used non-violent and non-lethal means to protect, then I would be okay with a force such as this. I am against any use of force that would kill or harm a living being.

I myself am okay with using evasive tactics, distraction, restraining force that is non-lethal, but I am not okay with any use of force that results in death or that is violent. If I were in an extreme situation where my life or the life of someone else, including a loved one, was threatened, I would use every non-lethal and non-violent means I could to prevent the perpetrator from doing harm. I would not sit idly by and watch someone inflict suffering on another, but I will not take their life or use violent force.

k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs:

Since adopting pacifism, I have been trying to limit the pain and suffering I cause others. When it comes to the treatment of animals, I have adopted veganism and do not wear leather. I have also become a feminist ally and have learned a lot about male and white privilege. I make it an important aspect of my life to recognize and understand certain thoughts or points of views I might have that would be racist/sexist, and remove those from my life. I try to address the privilege I have by being a white male and not to take advantage of it. I do not use ableist slurs which would be offensive to the disabled. I do not want my actions to oppress or marginalize a person. I want to use language that is inclusive and does not make someone feel that they are lesser just because they are of a different.

In my spare time, I have come to spend less time watching violent movies or playing violent video games. I don't watch movies as much as I used to now, and I try to find movies that aren't action movies or filled with violence. With video games, I've been playing more games that don't involve shooting or killing as part of the objectives. I no longer play warfare video games like Call of Duty. Instead I enjoy games like Civilization, where I

can choose the option to play the game without warring or killing anyone else. I also play more roleplaying games with characters that avoid combat and use non-combat skills.

I also have become fascinated with biology, and after I am discharged from the military, I plan to enroll in a biology program to receive a Bachelor of Science in Biology and a Bachelor of Arts in Chemistry as a double-major. My aspirations are to work in research as an entomologist, or work in the medical field, as either an immunologist helping treat infectious diseases or as a physician directly helping patients in need. I will continue to practice my pacifism by opposing war and violent actions such as death sentences and gun violence.

1. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs, which gave rise to this application:

My veganism is a major change in my life that is spurred solely by my belief to not harm or kill any living being. It is the most conspicuous demonstration of my belief to cause no death or harm by my actions. I had discussed vegetarianism and the impact of eating meat with my fiancée. I watched videos of animals being slaughtered before they were hauled on a forklift into meat factories. I was sickened by what was done to provide the meat that I ate. I couldn't see it as okay to cause a living creature pain and suffering in this world. I did not want to give any more money or support to such suffering and pain. It was at this time that I became a vegetarian. I did not eat the flesh of any animal, and I removed leather and other animal products that were derived from the killing or harming of animals.

My goal in life is to stay true to this path and to not have my actions result in the death of another living creature. I no longer eat meat, nor do I wear any leather or animal flesh. I am always looking down where I walk so as to not step on an insect that is in front of my path. I am always trying to be conscious of my actions and make sure that no living being suffers pain or death by my doing.

My relationship with my father has deteriorated as a result of my beliefs. As I made mention to earlier, my father is a [REDACTED]. I did not expect my father to be happy about my pacifism and was quite reluctant to tell him until I

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knew that this discharge was a possibility. When I finally opened up to him about it, he was incredulous that I wanted to be a conscientious objector. He even asked, "You aren't a pacifist are you?" When I confirmed his fears, he responded very abrasively and critically to my beliefs. He said he was disappointed in me. Hearing those words were very difficult for me. Ever since I decided to join and carry on my family's naval tradition, my father only told me how proud of me he was. My admittance of my beliefs to my father has created a difficult divide between us, and we have barely spoken since. Despite this painful rupture in my relationship with my father, I know that I have to seek a conscientious objector discharge in order to remain true to my beliefs.

m. Prior service (if any; if none, so state): None

n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization: I have no religious preference.

o. Information on the pastor or leader of my (church, congregation, or meeting): I am not a member of a church.

p. A description of the creed or official statements (if any, and if known) of said religious sect or organization in relation to participation in war: None

q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated (since age 16), other than military, political, or labor organizations: I have not been affiliated with any other organization.

2. Enclosures (1) - (7) provide additional information, references, or official statements, which I desire you to consider in review of this application.



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8JUL14

From: [REDACTED]
To: Navy Personnel Command (PERS832)
Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

1. I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection. The following required information is provided:

a. Permanent home address: [REDACTED]

b. School and colleges attended after age 16:

<u>School Name/Address</u>	<u>Type School</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	high school	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	high school	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	college	[REDACTED]

c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

<u>Employer/Address</u>	<u>Type Work</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	Restaurant	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Restaurant	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Hotel	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Hotel	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Salesman	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Salesman	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Military	[REDACTED]

d. All residences after age 16:

<u>Address/City/State</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

e. Spouse and member's parents' names/address and religion/sect (if deceased, so state):

[REDACTED]

f. I did not make application to the Selective Service System for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.

g. A description of the nature of my belief: My beliefs are heavily founded in the Bible. I believe the Bible and it's prophesies are 100% true. I believe we are in a spiritual battle against Satar (Eph. 6:12). The Bible tells us that Satan is the father of this world and that the earth has been given unto the hands of the wicked (Job 9:24). This means that Satan is at the head of our governments and militaries as well as the leaders that control them. Satan is at the top of a pyramid type structure, with the government and military underneath his control. Psalm 2:2 tells us that the kings and rulers of this world rise up together to take counsel against our Lord. With this being said, the rulers, who are under Satan's control, utilize the government, the military, and the media, to push a satanic plot to control this world. I believe that ALL war is a systematic scheme to make money, destroy God's people, destroy God's land, and to set up Satan's ruler ship. I am against ALL war in any form or shape and I am extremely against the wars and the lies that are told regarding every war that America has ever participated in. I will not partake in any type of war. I believe that the elite leadership of this world are directly under Satan's control (John 8:44). I do not support war, America, the government, or the military. I believe that America is the Babylon that is spoken of in the book of Revelation. This is why I can no longer be a part of this organization. It is against my Lord and my beliefs.

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed: In January of 2012 I came into some information on the internet about different aspects about the world. I began to learn about the evil doings of our government and what is really going on behind the scenes. During boot camp in August of 2012 I furthered my knowledge and understanding by reading the Bible daily. My faith and beliefs began to grow as I talked with other sailors in boot camp who had similar beliefs. I am now a firm believer in the Bible and the Bible is where I get all of my beliefs, knowledge, and understanding from.

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service: My beliefs and religion began to become incompatible once I began to truly understand how evil and wicked the rulers of this earth are. As I learned more and more about what really goes on and how these people are plotting to destroy God's people and war against Christ, I began to realize I could no longer be a part of such an organization. It upsets me every day I wake up knowing that I am going to work for an organization that I do not support. It also frightens me that I may be called to participate in a war that I will

refuse to participate in. Inevitably, my beliefs will eventually cause me to have to disobey a direct order, which I would rather avoid.

j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances: To protect myself using minimum force only if death is inevitable to me or a loved one.

k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs: Prior to learning the truth about the Bible and how it relates to the world we live in today, I was an atheist. I was very selfish and only cared about myself. I learned how music, television, and movies impact our thoughts and feelings by encouraging violence, sex, and drugs. I have since then minimized my time spent engaging in these negative activities. I have become more loving and caring. I no longer believe in harming out of spite and I do not believe in violence like fighting, killing, war, etc. I believe I should do everything in my power to help others. I will continue to better myself as a person by continuously studying the Bible and interacting with other people who share similar beliefs. I want to be an example to others by being a walking testimony and standing firm in my beliefs. My lifestyle has changed dramatically. I now try to always live my life according to the fruits of the spirit (Gal. 5:22-23). I feel that everyone should act out of love and love only. My drive to be in the military service and fight for this country is now gone, as I no longer support America's agenda and I refuse to participate in war.

l. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs which gave rise to this application: I do not support the government's agenda and I will not participate in any form of war. Because of this, if I were called to war I would be forced to refuse participation. I believe that this country is built on lies and is the "Babylon" that we read about in the book of Revelation. According to the Bible, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12). The Bible tells us that Satan is the god of this world; therefore he is the one who gives power to the ones who are truly in charge. Empires such as America, Rome, Ancient Babylon, etc., are directly ruled by Satan and his power and authority trickles down to the ones underneath him (i.e. the elite families, Presidents, and certain government officials). These powers that are in charge are at the head of our government and military and are the ones who call all the shots. The fact that I am against these things is what most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency of my beliefs.

m. Prior service (if any; if none, so state): None

n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization:

Religious Sect/ Organi- zation	Name & Location of Governing Body/Head	Name & Location of Church, Congregation Customarily Attending	Level of Partici- pation
[REDACTED]	Self Bible Study	Self-Residence	High

Explain when, where, and how you became a member of said sect or organization: I began following the [REDACTED] when I came across their teachings provided to me by a friend. Their teachings are strictly from a biblical standpoint which helps me learn more about the doctrine in the Bible. Around July of 2013 I began to learn the truth about the different religions and their origins. I separated myself from religion and became spiritual with a quest to find the truth about God and his purpose for us as his followers. I believe that religion separates and confuses us as a people, rather than uniting us as one under the Most High God. I now only follow the Bible and it's corresponding teachings.

o. Information on the pastor or leader of my church, congregation, or meeting: My friends and I have Bible study meetings and discussions weekly at each other's houses. We consider this "church". There is no set "leader". We are just a group who share similar beliefs. We do follow the [REDACTED] however and get guidance from their teachings, as they are much more educated in the Bible.

p. A description of the creed or official statements (if any, and if known) of said religious sect or organization in relation to participation in war: Thou shalt love thy Lord thy God with all thy heart, all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. (Matthew 22:37-39)

Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. (Matthew 26:52-53)

"THE AUTHORITY TO REQUEST THIS INFORMATION IS DERIVED FROM 50 U.S.C. 456j AND 38 U.S.C. 3103, AND 5 U.S.C. 301, DEPARTMENTAL REGULATIONS. THE PURPOSE OF THIS APPLICATION IS TO ALLOW THE MEMBER TO APPLY FOR CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR STATUS. THIS APPLICATION IS COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY; HOWEVER, FAILURE TO PROVIDE THE REQUIRED INFORMATION WOULD RESULT IN AN INABILITY TO PROCESS THIS REQUEST AND THE MEMBER WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO RECEIVE THE REQUESTED STATUS."

q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated (since age 16), other than military, political, or labor organizations: I

2. Enclosures (1) (as applicable) provide additional information, references, or official statements which I desire you to consider in review of this application

11 AUG 14

From: [REDACTED]

To: Navy Personnel Command PERS-832

Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR 1-0 DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

1. I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection status 1-0. The following required information is provided:

a. Permanent home address: [REDACTED]

b. School and colleges attended after age 16:

<u>School Name/Address</u>	<u>Type School</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	Junior College	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Junior College	[REDACTED]

c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

<u>Employer/Address</u>	<u>Type Work</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	Retail	[REDACTED]

d. All residences after age 16:

<u>Address/City/State</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

e. Spouse and member's parents' names/address and religion/sect: [REDACTED]

f. I did not make application to the Selective Service System (local board) for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.

g. A description of the nature of my belief: I identify myself as a Buddhist, promoting general non-violence, peace, and an avoidance in altercations. Through months of intense introspection on my deepest spiritual plane, the realization of taking human life and participating in

Subj: REQUEST FOR 1-0 DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

armed conflict would be nearly impossible to reconcile within my conscience. Service in the Navy, regardless of duty assigned, supports the ultimate purpose of the military: warfighting. *What the Buddha Taught* by Walpola Rahula expresses the fundamentals of "Right Livelihood," the moral conduct of business one partakes in. He writes, "Right Livelihood means that one should abstain from making one's living through a profession that brings harm to others, such as trading in arms and lethal weapons [...]". Military service can be described as "an evil and unjust means of livelihood," incompatible with my deeply held morals and beliefs. I believe in the cause of peace for all; I believe that one should avoid occupations that significantly impact the lives and homes of others. The Buddhist teachings of pacifism reflect the importance and fragility of life. These teachings of compassion and loving kindness speak to me and influence my daily life. I do my best to avoid confrontations, to be careful about what I say and do, to have consideration for others, and to promote peace in all ways possible.

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed: I worked a retail job from [REDACTED] at a store [REDACTED] that sold tactical equipment to military and law enforcement for training and daily use. Several co-workers and over half of my friends had joined various branches of the military-- it seemed to be almost a natural progression. I wanted to combat enemies of the United States and protect our homeland. The idea of fighting a highly trained opposing force in foreign countries was appealing to me, [REDACTED]. I received my contract for [REDACTED]. I had my very first encounter with Buddhism in boot camp, January 2012, during a Sunday service. A Buddhist chaplain was present and taught basic fundamentals of Buddha's teachings, particularly regarding mental strength and discipline through meditation to achieve goals in a challenging setting. It was a strategy that I used only as a psychological tool, but it never manifested into a deep philosophical inquiry until much later on in my career. I had d [REDACTED] on request, as I was not mentally prepared for the rigors of training. I rated as a [REDACTED] shortly thereafter and eventually was stationed with [REDACTED] in March 2013. I was eager to get on the next deployment, so I volunteered for Alpha Company as they were the next company to deploy from my unit. During the workup phase throughout 2013, I was placed in the MEU platoon for my performance, by the choice of the platoon commander, who was happy with my medical and tactical ability. I continued further training and left for Japan in November 2013. While deployed, I felt as if information regarding safety was being withheld from all servicemen in Okinawa. No media outlet was available regarding world events; all television and radio channels were controlled by the Armed Forces Network, displaying strictly military-only material and mentioned nothing regarding important conditions so local to me. After a snorkeling visit to the shore I saw that all coral formations were dead and discolored. Alarmed by this, I consulted the internet, where I read that the situation from the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster was a very real danger and not as controlled as portrayed by American news sources. The seed of doubt was then planted and I began to distrust what I was told by my superiors, peers, and intel resources. Curious as to what else may not be as it seems, I examined the relationship between the indigenous people and the US military. I began to look at the way Marines and Sailors felt towards the Okinawans and our utilization of their land. Non-compliance and disrespect of the environmental regulations in place for our vehicles and equipment actually bothered me for the first time. I noticed that we were not welcome to the island. Parents would shield their children from me in stores out in town; we'd receive malicious stares from locals out in town. Even though there was no ordnance being used

Subj: REQUEST FOR 1-0 DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

against me, I had a deep feeling of unwelcomeness that we were there not as peacekeepers, but rather like an oppressive, occupying force. I compared the war stories of Afghanistan and Iraq, as told to me by fellow Marines and Sailors, to the treatment of Okinawans and our presence in Japan. Although Okinawa is completely different and far less dangerous than a war zone, disrespect, inconsideration, and hatred by many of my fellow servicemen toward the Okinawan people (and vice-versa) seemed baseless and unnecessary. I questioned our involvement there. I tied this to the dehumanization of the Afghani people; my fellow servicemen swapped stories of how we should "have just nuked this place (Okinawa) too" and "destroy as much of this land as possible." I thought deeply about the stories of collateral damage, needless loss of life, and cruelty to animals from those in OIF/OEF. If we were this unwelcome in Japan, I could not imagine being an occupier in the war-torn Middle East. I did not hate the Okinawans, and I realized that I did not hate Afghans either as many of my peers did. I questioned my purpose in Asia and what I would have done if I had deployed to Afghanistan. I mentally put myself in the position of my Marines in an attempt to understand them. Their ideology did not make sense to me and felt entirely unnecessary. The furthering of life is much more important than the destruction of a potentially false enemy and training at the cost of lives, land, and livelihood. By February 2014, as I boarded the [REDACTED], I was having strong reservations regarding my purpose in the military. I began to question myself and my moral compass. I decided to research more into Buddhism, as I found that I agreed with the majority of its tenants. I felt that I was truly a peaceful person inside, that I was not excited to kill and destroy enemies as those around me were. I was not able to look into it further while aboard, as we were in an operational status, but I upon our return in late April, I began reading Buddhist lessons online. I was unsure of my purpose in the military and felt directionless. I found that the teachings of the Buddha organized my thoughts and emotions and gave me newfound guidance. I felt a moral purpose to help others in a peaceful manner, not furthering wars or warriors in battle.

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service: While underway with the [REDACTED] we had finished conducting amphibious operations in South Korea and began the return to Okinawa when the Korean ferry *Sewol* had sunk with over 200 lives aboard. As our ship reversed course back to Korea, I witnessed crew and Marines aboard expressing anger and frustration regarding our new mission. A complete disregard for the lives of those in the water, majority of them children, was shared among most aboard. I felt that very few around me carried any urgency and sympathy toward the victims of the accident. The South Korean government did not utilize our resources, except for minor air assets, for the rescue of the *Sewol*, despite an additional week and a half at sea, at the expense of nearly 300 lives. It was April 2014 and, at this point, I was already having reservations regarding my service; but it was this event that made me realize that I was a part of the wrong organization and that the promotion of life is more important than our presence in the Pacific. By my return home in May 2014, I began to research into daily meditations. I found meditation to be a calming, strengthening exercise that expanded the mind and the spirit. I began to visit a local temple, the [REDACTED] during weekend meditations and lessons in English. Stepping into the [REDACTED] almost completely melts your stress away, leaving the doors with a sense of awareness and fortitude. Weekly lessons from the teachings of the Buddha provide a sense of guidance and direction while giving you the tools to take charge of your life and travel down your personal path of enlightenment. I implemented meditation during the week,

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typically before bed. Although my roommates are understanding of my beliefs, I still try to keep much of my personal life away from them. Through introspection, I knew that I could no longer perform my duties as a [REDACTED] and felt the need to talk to a military official. By June 2014, I spoke with my command during weapons re-issue that I declined to be issued a weapon. I was directed to our battalion chaplain, [REDACTED], regarding my situation. He inquired into my thoughts regarding service and the morality of our occupation. At the end of our conversation, he implied that I might be a "conscientious objector to war." I researched online into conscientious objection and found resources for the proper documentation process. Consulting with my local monk, the [REDACTED] and expressing my situation to my family, I decided to file as a conscientious objector.

j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances: I do not advocate the use of violence or deadly force, however when found in a violent situation, I believe one should try to defend themselves with the minimal amount of force required to stop the attack. To defend my life, the lives of others, and my property, I would exhaust every possible method of stopping an aggressor, beginning with non-violence. If placed in the position to use lethal force, I would aim not to kill but rather to subdue. Buddhism advocates the least amount of harm to the fewest living beings and I choose to guide my life by these principles. Regarding the use of force in the case of national defense, I affirm my previously stated beliefs. In a hypothetical invasion of the United States by a foreign country, I would do my best to aid and abet fellow citizens to further their survival. I would try at my utmost to avoid confrontation with the enemy, so that I may help as many others as I can without bringing on additional death and destruction.

k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs: I have begun to meditate on my own, between 2 and 5 times per week, to rest my mind and expand my spiritual horizon. I have found reduced stress and a more positive, wholesome outlook on life since my conversion to Buddhism and weekly meditations. On the weekends, I attend services provided by the [REDACTED] when provided in English. I have established a good relationship with a monk and a teacher there; they have provided a sense of spiritual protection for me and my family during my current service in the Navy. I plan to attend services, whether at this [REDACTED] or another one in the future, for the rest of my life. I spread the ideas of Buddhism to others that I meet and encourage those searching for answers to begin their path to spiritual enlightenment. Buddhism is a guiding force in my life of which I am devout.

l. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs, which gave rise to this application: In my current occupation as a corpsman, I am bombarded with talk about the mission and readiness of the marines that I serve with. I am filled with deep disgust regarding the purpose of my daily tasks, as I feel as if I am a supporter of violence and warfighting. It expands beyond my job, however. I no longer take interest in things such as violent video games and books about notable military figures as I used to enjoy. I cannot bear to watch the news. I do not have a sense of pride in my service as others around me do. Meditation removes me from the distractions of the world and focused on what is truly important: life, compassion, loving kindness, and consideration for the world around you. Although I am constantly told that I am a non-

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combatant, I was instructed to sign a Scope of Practice agreement with my unit upon check-in. Listed in that agreement under responsibilities, corpsmen are responsible for "[providing] cover fire to incapacitate an enemy" among other things, such as accompanying patrols for all marines in combat. Although I have refused a weapon and have been placed in supply company, medical coverage for tactical training and medical readiness for the battalion remains a constant duty of mine that I find increasingly difficult to fulfill. I have chosen to file as a conscientious objector as I no longer can support the mission of the Navy or the Marine Corps, respecting the tenants of Buddhism and my moral compass.

m. Prior service: None.

n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization:

<u>Religious Sect/ Organization</u>	<u>Name & Location of Governing Body/Head</u>	<u>Name & Location of Church, Congregation Customarily Attending</u>	<u>Level of Participation</u>
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Weekends for lessons in English

I visited the [REDACTED] prior to the [REDACTED] in early June of 2014 after deployment. Unsatisfied with the way the church conducted itself, I visited the [REDACTED] in late June and spoke with [REDACTED] regarding membership. Since then, I have had regular attendance of meditations and lessons when offered on weekends in English.

o. Information on the pastor or leader of my congregation:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Address</u>
[REDACTED]	Monk	[REDACTED]

p. A description of the creed or official statements (if any, and if known) of said religious sect or organization in relation to participation in war: A collective of pacifists against warfighting or the use of violence in any way, shape, or form; a group dedicated to ending suffering for all forms of life and extending spiritual enlightenment through mindfulness, compassion, and introspection.

q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated (since age 16) other than military, political, or labor organizations: None. Non-religious prior to service.



17 February 2010

From: [REDACTED]
To: Navy Personnel Command PERS-832
Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

Encl: (1) Privacy Act Statement
(2) Essay
(3) Chaplain's Letter
(4) Psychiatrist's Letter

1. I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection. The following required information is provided:

a. Permanent home address:

b. School and colleges attended after age 16: Home schooled.

c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

Employer/Address

Type Work
Food Retail

Inclusive Dates

Electrical Construction

Food Retail

Property Tax Consultation

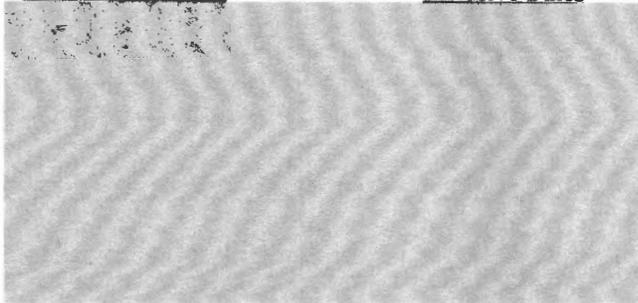
Food Retail

General Retail

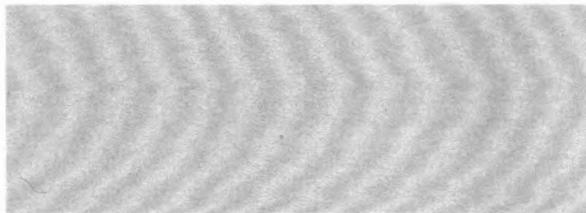
- d. All residences after age 16:

Address/City/State

Inclusive Dates



- e. Spouse and member's parents' names/address and religion/sect (if deceased, so state):
I am unmarried.



- f. I did not make application to the Selective Service System for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.

- g. A description of the nature of my belief:

Simply put, I am a Christian. To be a Christian means to be Christ-like. Christ said those who live by the sword, die by the sword (Mat. 26:52). Christ also taught the commandment forbidding murder (Mat. 15:19; Mat. 19:18). I cannot be part of any war because I would be taking part in the taking of lives; lives that are not mine to take. I believe it is wrong to take a life because no one has the right to take a life.

Christ taught us to walk by faith in Him (Mat. 26:53; Luke 8:22-25; Luke 12:22-31). Therefore, rather than put my trust in a weapon for the protection of my life, I will trust in Him to protect me. I will live in faith that I will only die in this life at the time which God has appointed (Rom. 8:28-29; Eph. 1:11; Isa. 65:12). If God has appointed that time, I cannot possibly be capable of preventing it with any weapon.

No war can be a justifiable war. If a government goes to war for retaliation for attacks on that government, then that government is only going to war to seek revenge. Christ taught that vengeance is the Lord's (Rom. 12:19; Deut. 32:35). If that government is going to war in an effort to prevent attacks on themselves, then they are not living by faith that God can protect them. Since both war itself and the reasons why a government would go to war are sinful in the eyes of God, I cannot be part of any war because it would be sinful for a Christian to willingly involve himself in anyway. If I were sent to combat I would not fire a weapon at another person, even if they were firing at me.

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed:

In recent months I have come to understand better what it means to be a Christian. Part of that includes *refusing* to do what is wrong no matter how much easier the alternative may be, or how hard the consequences of such refusal are for me to *endure* (Acts 5:28-29, 40-42). I thought I could simply go along and hope that if God does not want me to go overseas, He won't let me. I realized only recently that I can't expect God to keep me from doing wrong or going overseas. If it is wrong to go, then I should just not go. If I *am* sent, then I should not participate in any way.

I used to believe that I could serve God and country at the same time. Only several months ago did I come to believe that one cannot. The reason that I came to this conclusion is based on two factors. (1) I decided that no two governments are really any different in terms of what a government means to God. Meaning, I don't believe that any government serves God. (2) As I mentioned above, war in all its ways are sinful for the Christian to willingly involve himself.

Christ teaches us that we are to become disciples. Approximately one or two years ago I started such a discipleship process. This included thorough daily Bible reading, as well as instruction from someone else that is capable of disciplining others.

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service:

I came to believe the things that I am saying now probably several months ago. If someone were to ask me why I didn't file for conscientious objection then, all I can say is that I realize that is what I should have done. Going about things the way that I have been; hoping I can just finish my enlistment nice and quietly and without being ordered to go overseas, was wrong. If I believed that I should not go to war or serve in the military, then I should have done then what I am doing now. Now my sin is that I did not do what I believe was right by God. Even when I got my orders I was expecting God to "bail me out." As I said, I now realize I was wrong in that (Luke 17:5-10).

j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances:

If a man breaks into my house, I may use force to restrain him from any harm he may try to cause my family or property, but I must not intend to kill him. Again, I believe it is wrong to take a life.

k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs:

I am filing for separation for conscientious objection, regardless of whatever may happen to me in terms of my job opportunities, damage to relationships with people I love, or debt I may owe the government, all because I believe this is what is right by God. Maybe this doesn't sound like much, but having been on the other side of this fence only months ago, it is a significant change. I thought that a flag or country was something worth dying for. I now believe that only God is worth dying for. I thought that I could serve God while I serve this country. Now I believe that for me to continue onward with the orders I have been given would be sinful. Therefore, I must do what is necessary to do what is right in the eyes of God.

- l. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs which gave rise to this application:

I'm not quite sure what this question is asking for here. An action that corresponds with what I now believe? This very discharge I am filing for is exactly that. Especially knowing what may happen to me afterward (as mentioned above). Also knowing that if I am not granted this discharge, I will have to stay with my commitment to do what I believe is right by God and still refuse to do what I believe is wrong. I know what happens to me if that should be the case. However, because I am more concerned with being right by God in my actions than my own well-being, I will not allow thoughts of what may happen to me to dictate my decision but rather what I believe will please God.

- m. Prior service: None.

- n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization:

<u>Religious Sect / Organization</u>	<u>Name and Location of Governing Body / Head</u>	<u>Name and Location of Church, Congregation Customarily Attending</u>	<u>Level of Participation</u>
Christian	None	None	Daily

What I believe now has not come from teachings from a pastor in a church every Sunday, nor some nationally or government recognized group. As I said, I have been involved in a discipleship process.

- o. Information on the pastor or leader of my (church, congregation, or meeting):

I am a Christian and a disciple of Christ. So my teacher's name is Jesus Christ. His title, Messiah. His address, heaven.

- p. A description of the creed or official statements of said religious sect or organization in relation to participation in war: None.

- q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organization with which I am or have been affiliated (since age 16), other than military, political, or labor organizations:



03JAN2010

From: [REDACTED]
To: Navy Personnel Command PERS-832
Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

1. I request (discharge) on the grounds of conscientious objection. The following required information is provided:

- a. Permanent home address [REDACTED]
- b. School and colleges attended after age 16:

	<u>School Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>School Dates</u>
1. High School:	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
2. College:	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

- c. Chronological list of all compensated jobs held after age 16:

	<u>Employer/Address</u>	<u>Type Work</u>	<u>Dates</u>
1.	[REDACTED]	Grocery Bagger	[REDACTED]
2.	[REDACTED]	Cook/Car Hop	[REDACTED]
3. USN	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	09/2005-Present

- d. All residences after age 16:

	<u>Address</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
1	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
2	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
3	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
4	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
5	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

6. [REDACTED]

e. Spouse and member's Parents' names/address and religion/sect (if deceased, so state):

	<u>Names</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Religion/Sect</u>
Spouses' Parents:	[REDACTED]		
Members' Parents:	[REDACTED]		

f. I did not make application to the selective Service System (local board) for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.

g. A description of the nature of my belief: (Thoroughly explain the nature of the belief, which requires you to seek separation from the Navy duties by reason of conscientious objection.

The nature of my belief is the Holy Scriptures. I believe that all scriptures are "inspired of God", as said in 2 Timothy 3:16. The Bible also states at Eccl. 12:13 "Fear the true God and keep his commandments. For this is the whole obligation of man." Knowing this I want to uphold to the principles and commands at Romans 12:17-21, "Return evil for evil to no one..." It is in those scriptures that I find the need/obligation for myself to be separated from the Navy. The Navy is not only defending the United States but is also in the business of waging warfare (returning evil for evil). Instead the Bible has taught me that I need to "Continue to love your enemies and to pray for those persecuting you; that you may prove yourselves sons of your father who is in the heavens..." (Matthew 5:44-45). I believe it is not for man to kill man because "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says Jehovah" (Romans 12:19).

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed: (Includes factors (how/when/from whom/from what source training was received) and the beliefs acquired or which cause the change in or development of conscientious objector beliefs.)

When I joined the Navy, I believed there was a God, but I didn't know much about him or the Bible. I was in the Navy for 2 years before I came to [redacted]. Shortly after getting to [redacted] I came in contact with one of Jehovah's witnesses, [redacted]. Not long after that I began studying the Bible with him. We would get together and about once or twice a week and study different subjects in the scriptures. A couple months later I started going to the Sunday meetings; with him, and really began to learn a lot. So I started going to the Ministry school on Thursday evenings. While going to the meetings we continued to do a study once a week. As I also did my personal study, which consisted of reading and meditating on scriptures. A few months later I was sent to [redacted]. I would call into the Sunday meetings (they have a sound board that they hook the phone to so I can hear the meeting), I would call [redacted] east once a week to continue our bible studies, and I would do my own studying as well. It was during these studies with the witnesses and my personal studies that I gained an enormous amount of love for Jehovah. I have come to the realization that being in the military is wrong for me. It is wrong because of the warfare that must be conducted. "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not wage warfare according to [what we are in the] flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly..." (2 Corinthians 10:3-4). Jesus taught a powerful lesson for us at his betrayal and arrest. "Return your sword to its place, for all those who take the sword will perish by the sword" (Matthew 26:52) I can not continue to worship Jehovah in a proper way and be affiliated with an organization (the Navy) that operates in a manner that is contrary and in direct conflict with the teachings of Jehovah God and his son Jesus Christ. This is why I am requesting separation from the navy as a conscientious objector.

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service:

My beliefs became incompatible with military service when I received the accurate knowledge of the teachings of Jehovah God through his son the Christ. This is not something that happened overnight. My beliefs have developed over the past two years, through a lot of studying, praying, and meditating. One scripture that really caught my attention was Luke 6:27, 28 "continue to love your enemies, to do good to those hating you, to bless those cursing you, to pray for those who are insulting you." Jesus did not only teach this, but he did this. Jesus prayed for those who were putting him up on the torture stake.

To help us, Jehovah God sent Jesus to earth as our Exemplar. There would seem to be no cause more worthy of armed defense than the life and security of God's son Jesus Christ. One of his apostles felt that way. When Jesus was betrayed and arrested by an armed mob in the middle of the night, his friend Peter "reached out his hand and drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest and took off his ear." Then Jesus said to Peter: "Return your sword to its place, for all those who take the sword will perish by the sword." Jesus also taught us to have love for our neighbor (Matthew 22:39). It is my understanding that when Jesus said to love your neighbor he was not just talking about the person who lived next to you, or of your same nationality, or even the same religion as demonstrated in the illustration of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). He was talking about fellow man in general.

One other scripture that helped me with this decision is Matthew 28:19: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father.....". When I read this I thought hard about and it put everything together for me. If we are to make disciples of all the nations, that would mean there would be true Christians in all the nations (which I believe there are). If true Christians in one nation went to war against another nation they would be fighting against fellow believers, against people who prayed for help to the same God. Appropriately, Christ directed his followers to lay down the sword. (Matthew 26:52)

I know that I have less than a year left, but after my active duty time is up I have three years of inactive reserves left. I know that my chances of being called back in the inactive reserves are very small, but I do not want to take that chance. I also know that my role in the Navy is that of [redacted] and I am not required to carry arms against US enemies. I meditated over this and then it was pointed out to me, by one of the brothers, in 1 Samuel 25:13. Here David and his men are gearing up for battle; 400 men go, 200 stay behind with the baggage. Later in 1 Samuel 30:24 it shows that the ones left to watch the baggage, although not participating in the battle, would have share in the spoils, as if they had participated in the battle. Although I am [redacted] I am a sharer in the actions of the Navy, good and bad. It is impossible for me to love my neighbor as myself while the organization I am a part of is killing them. I might not ever be in a position, while in the Navy, to have to kill someone or even be around when killing is taking place, but I still have a part of it because I am part of the Navy.

j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances (if none, so state):

Use of force is a delicate phrase. Would I try to stop a mugging? Yes. Would I protect my family from a burglar? Yes. Would I purposely try to kill someone in order to do so? Never. Do I own a gun for home defense? No. In any situation that I would feel the need to intervene I would use the minimal amount of force necessary.

k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs:

In the past couple years my life has changed tremendously. Before I started studying the bible I was fornicating, cursing, had no true direction in life, and I was going down a road where I was starting to drink to much (sometimes not even remembering what happened). Now I want to devote the rest of my life to the service of Jehovah God. I use the bible to guide me in everything that I do. I'm not saying that I am doing everything perfectly, but when I come across something in my studies or one of the brothers point something out to me I work earnestly to implement this in my life as to not continue sinning against God. I attend every meeting that I can (work schedule permitting), as well as do a weekly bible study with one of the brothers, and doing my own personal studies. I also follow the command of Christ Jesus at Matthew 28:19 "go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations...". I will

remain on this course because I find this is the only real purpose mankind has "to love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole strength and with your whole mind, and your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:37) When I get discharged from the Navy, if I qualify, I will be baptized at the earliest opportunity to make my public declaration that I will serve Jehovah God the rest of my life. Then I will have the privilege of partaking in the door to door ministry as one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

i. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs which gave rise to this application:

In my opinion what demonstrates the consistency and depth of my beliefs is that wanting to separate from the navy was not a spur of the moment. I have been considering and praying about this for about 2 years. I know I don't have enough time left in to deploy or be sent anywhere, but I can not wait it out like so many people have asked me to do. This doesn't mean I am not scared to get out, because I am. I joined the Navy right out of High School, I haven't done anything else. I don't know if I will be able to find a job, but like I said before I use the bible to guide me in my life and Jesus stated at Matthew 6:33: "Keep on seeking first the kingdom and his righteousness, and all these other things will be added to you." All I want to do is work in Harmony with the scriptures. I hope that I have proven to you my beliefs on warfare and being a part of it, and I hope that I have shown to you that as a follower of Christ I can no longer serve in the military.

m. Prior service (if any, so state): None.

n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization:

Religion <u>Sect/Organization</u>	Name & Location of Governing <u>Body/Head</u>	Name & Location of Church, Congregation. <u>customarily attending</u>	Level of <u>Participation</u>
			Student

Explain when, where, and how you became of member of said sect or organization.

I started studying the Bible with one of Jehovah's' Witnesses shortly after being stationed at [redacted] in Nov 2007. Since then I have had a continuous bible study and have attended Christian Meetings. I currently attend the [redacted]. I became a member by having good personal attendance at the congregational meetings.

1916
Ser. N1/
21 Feb 10

From: [REDACTED]
To: Navy Personnel Command (PERS-832)
Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

Encl: (1) Letter from [REDACTED]
(2) Letter from a Jehovah's Witness.
(3) Privacy Act Statement

1. I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection. The following required information is provided:

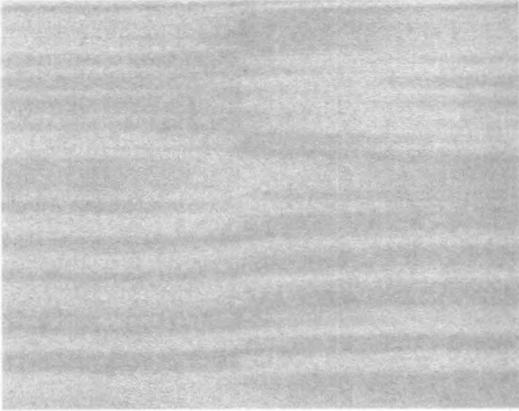
a. Permanent home address: [REDACTED]

b. School and colleges attended after age 16:

<u>School Name/ Address</u>	<u>Type School</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	High School	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	College	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	College	[REDACTED]

c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

<u>Employer/Address</u>	<u>Type Work</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	Asst Instructor	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Student Employee	[REDACTED]



Camera Operator



Clerk



Clerk



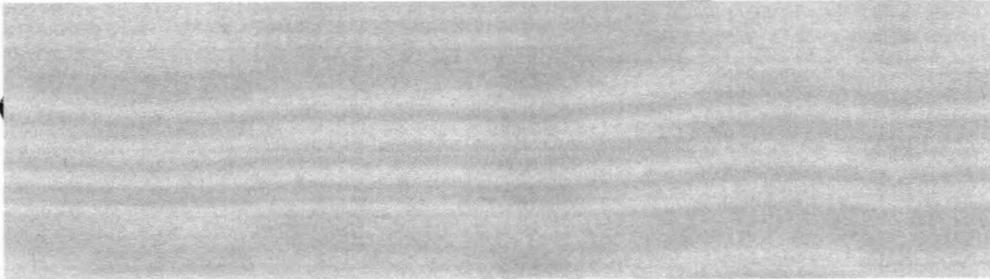
Media Asst



d. All residences after age 16:

Address/City/State

Inclusive Dates



e. Spouse: N/A

f. I did not make application to the Selective Service System for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.

g. As a result of recent bible study with Jehovah's Witnesses and knowledge of the scriptures contained within many of its books I have personally come to believe that it is wrong for humans to wage or support war, with any form of military service. The following excerpts from the bible provide the foundation for this belief:

In Matthew 26:52 an account is given of how Jesus' disciple Peter attempted to use weapons of war to fight off the Roman soldiers coming to arrest and eventually execute him. However, "Jesus said to him: 'return your sword to its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.'" If I ever was to think human violence would be approved by God (Jehovah), what better reason would there be than to protect the Son of God? This shows how not even fighting for religious beliefs could ever be right, especially when many of the wars that have occurred throughout history are based on religion.

Also, Isaiah 2:2-4 describes how those who come to serve Jehovah will not "...learn war anymore." I really feel that this is key to understanding that Jehovah does not want war for the earth, and how his people are peaceful.

This particular excerpt was difficult for me to stomach at first, but Revelations 6:15; 19:15-19 describes in great detail how in the last days the military commanders, nations and armies of the world will be turned against God and judged for their actions. I do not want to be a part of this judgment, because I know what will happen in advance. Also, I believe it is worse to know the truth and deny it than it would be to not even know the truth at all. At least then my conscience would not be constantly sounding off alarms, followed by guilt. Also, it is easier to be forgiven in many situations if a person does not have any idea what is going on, just like the Roman soldiers, who Jesus prayed to Jehovah asking forgiveness for. They thought by executing him they were ridding the world nothing more than a mere criminal, when actually they were killing who many believe to be the most innocent person who ever lived.

Really, I see no other option for myself than to be free of anything that is described in the bible as being in opposition to Jehovah. I don't know when exactly Armageddon will take place, because it will come like a "thief in the night" (Rev. 16: 15), so I want to be ready now.

Zec. 4:6 describes how God's will is not done by military force, but by his spirit. Honestly, I don't see why he would need humans to fight on his behalf when he could destroy or create anything at the drop of a hat.

2 Corinthians 10:3, 4 also states that Jehovah's people "... do not wage warfare according to what we are in the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly..." To me this means that the type of war that even the earliest Christians were intended to fight was of a spiritual nature, not fleshly.

In Matthew 22:36-40 Jesus says that the greatest commandment is to "...love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind... the second, like it, is this, you must love your neighbor as yourself." This requires me to follow the scriptures in full compliance and at all costs, even if it affects my career, because for me to show love to Jehovah I will have to keep his will before mine or anyone else's. This teaching of Jesus also shows me the importance of loving my neighbor, whether that neighbor is friend or foe. I

must demonstrate love to my neighbors and even enemies, as described in Romans 12:17-20, for vengeance belongs to God alone. Ultimately, I feel that I cannot obey the greatest commandment, which all God's laws were founded on, if I am serving two masters as described in Matthew. 6:24. This teaching of serving only one master is also leads my next major concern, which is idolatry.

Idolatry is forbidden all throughout the bible. In Exodus 20:3-5 Jehovah makes clear His commandment: "You must not have any other gods before my face. You must not make for yourself a carved image or a form like anything that is in the heavens above or that is on the earth underneath or that is the waters under the earth. You must not bow down to them nor be induced to serve them, because I Jehovah your God am a God exacting exclusive devotion..." Idolatry is the ceremonial reverence to anything, whether manmade or existing in nature. One example of this would be ceremonial practices involving national flags and emblems, even the U.S. flag, unfortunately. I firmly believe this includes, but is not limited to the military uses of the flag in colors, solutes, funeral honors, and retirement ceremonies. This excerpt from the frequently recited patriotic poem about the United States' ensign, *My Name Is Old Glory*, gives further reason for this belief:

"I bow to no one.
I am recognized all over the world.
I am worshipped.
I am saluted.
I am respected.
I am revered. I am loved.
And I am feared."

This may be unsettling to many, as it was to me when I made my realization, but idolatry includes "sacred poles" as described in Exodus 34:13. It is clear that if I am to fully devote myself to Jehovah, I can no longer participate in any practices that show forms of worship to what I believe to be false gods, as described previously in Exodus 20:3-5. A flag is a manmade image that represents the ideas and practices of human governments (often involved in war) and contains stars, which are images from the heavens above. Those stars represent the 50 states, which are of the earth. To me both characteristics seem in direct relation to the forbidden conditions stated in that verse.

In Luke 4:8 Jesus says it is to Jehovah alone that we should render sacred service. If I participate in the military custom of flag saluting, I feel I would be dishonoring Jehovah. I do not want to think of myself as a person who is opposed to anyone who, like me, is involved in the military. Instead I should stress that it is my strong desire to live in true peace, which I have come to realize can only be attained by following Jehovah's laws and principals as well as the teachings of Jesus, the Prince of Peace as he is referred to in Isaiah 9:6.

The bible points out in Acts 5:29 that "we must obey God as ruler rather than men." The bible also says that God's kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36), and lovers of the world cannot be lovers of God (2 Tim. 3: 1-5). Love of this world drives people to war (Matt 24:7). Oftentimes war is caused in the name of false peace or false gods (including a false understanding of Jehovah), which I see as a completely nonsensical practice; in fact it even defiles his name (Exodus 20:7). Jehovah's people have but one leader, the Christ, and are to call no one else our leader (Matt 23:10). It is him that leads us to Jehovah's kingdom. The bible emphasizes to me, not to rely on my own understanding, but on that of the true God's (Pro. 3:5, 6) and if I seek his kingdom first he will take care of my needs (Matt. 6:33). I trust that if I demonstrate my faith for him it will allow me grow as a Christian and be able to fully serve his purpose. Jesus' followers will be known by their works (Matt. 7:16). After all, faith without works is dead (James 2:17).

I have a strong conviction to take what I have learned and put it into practice, and eventually become a baptized witness and participate in the ministry of Jehovah's kingdom. But first I must cease all involvement with my anything that is connected to war, and what I believe to be false worship.

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed:

My beliefs have changed in the regards to humankind's role in war and the military as a result of scriptures I have studied throughout the latter half of 2009. It was an uncomfortable feeling at first when I saw how all of these scriptures fit together. There were times when I, at first, tried to disprove what I had been learning, just so I would not have to feel guilt and shame for my involvement in this lifestyle. However, no matter how I looked at one verse, there was still another verse to put my thinking in check. I finally came to the conclusion that it is not by man's thinking that I should direct the course

of my life, but by God's thinking. "Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding. In all your ways take notice of him, and he himself will make your paths straight." (Proverbs 3:5,6) I came to the conclusion that if I was to really apply this thinking to my life, I would have to lose my love for money as well. In other words, give up my entire bonus pay, G.I. Bill, V.A. assistance, steady paycheck, BAH, Tricare and all other perks of being in the military. After all, Jesus said, "It is easier for a camel to get through a needle's eye than for a rich man to get into the kingdom of God." (Matthew 19:24)

I had heard of Jehovah's Witnesses before, and been to a series of bible studies in 2003, however, my Methodist upbringing and family did not really allow me to get to involved with taking on this new understanding. So, my question was "Why?" The focuses of my studies at that time were on the trinity doctrine and worldly holidays. I can understand how parents would not want to explain to the rest of the family why their son won't be joining them for Christmas, Easter, birthdays, thanksgiving and many more. It actually made me sad to have to talk about why the bible does not support these practices with them. How can a son tell his parents they are wrong? Eventually, the pressures of my family got to me and I made excuses why I should not believe what I had learned. I also know that even as much as parents may love their children, like my parents love me, they may not always know what's best. In Matthew 12:48-50, Jesus even points out that whoever does the will of his father in heaven is his real mother, father, sister and brother. When I completed my training in boot camp and started [REDACTED] I had the opportunity to do some more research on the bible without other people's opinions and emotions getting in my way. I could privately look more into what I never really finished six years prior.

Ironically, it was at this time in [REDACTED] that I discovered there were publications put out by the Jehovah's witnesses dealing specifically with flag worship, military service, and involvement with war. It seems the more accustomed I get with bible research the more I have these experiences. I guess one could call them rude awakenings. In life, the truth does not always seem convenient, but also everything is not what it seems. I had to give these publications more research to see if they really had any scriptural evidence in their teachings.

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service:

In [redacted] I convinced a fellow [redacted] to drive me to an annual convention for Jehovah's witnesses held at [redacted]. Ironically, the title of this convention was [redacted] and I did a small amount of bible study on certain training command watches which permitted me time to study. One evening in my BEQ I looked further into one of the publications, which I had received at the convention, about a little girl who lived in Nazi Germany and was sent to a concentration camp for not denying her religion, and I was inspired to read more. She had been in schools that required all students to sing an anthem for Hitler and salute their flag, as if they were gods. The teachers told her she could just halfway raise her arm and mumble so that it looked like she was singing, but she did not compromise one bit. Eventually, after she was sent into a concentration camp for her beliefs and firm stance, she faced even tougher trials. Despite all of the suffering she remained faithful to Jehovah. I was astonished. Even though there is a huge difference between Nazi Germany and the United States, I began to realize how I could never cross the quarterdeck the same way. Flag worship is flag worship, plain and simple, no matter when or where. The very thought of saluting any flag now makes my stomach cringe. I had to avoid being outside during morning and evening colors, so as not to put myself in an awful situation. I became intensely disturbed by the double life it seems I would be doomed to live in.

Soon after, I was fortunate enough to arrange rides to congregation meetings at a local Kingdom Hall from an elder. Upon moving to [redacted] I quickly found another Kingdom Hall to attend. While at this hall, I plan to continue to grow in obtaining an accurate knowledge of the scriptures through personal, one on one, and group bible studies. My immediate goal is to prepare myself for baptism, which can not happen until after my time with the military expires, and thus any involvement with war and idolatry is over.

j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstance:

None. Jesus says to turn the other cheek if stuck by an enemy.
(Matt 5:39)

k. Explanation of how my current lifestyle has changed as a result of my belief and the future actions I plan to continue the support of these beliefs:

My lifestyle has without a doubt changed for the better in many ways since my understanding of Jehovah's plan has increased. I can honestly say there is no better perspective for me to become familiar with than that of who I believe the creator. Similarly, when a mechanic has a question on diagnosing an engine problem he or she would benefit most from the perspective of that engines designer.

By using the bible as my guide to understanding how to live, I have been able to make several applications that proved to be beneficial. I have been fighting to resist involvement with many other damaging lifestyle choices, such as fornication, defilement of the flesh with tobacco, celebration of holidays with origin in what I believe to be false religion, and my overall demeanor. The regular attendance to Sunday congregation meetings and watchtower discussions, Tuesday congregation meetings and ministry training, personal review of Christian publications, the bible and so on have really helped change my thinking as well as my heart's desire permanently. I can't unlearn what I already know, or ignore what course my life is headed. It is because of these things that I feel drawn to serve Jehovah, who I know to be the one true god, but the only way I can do that is to break free of my connection to the ways of the world and war as well as any other things that he hates.

1. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depths of my beliefs:

I am eager to give up all of the worldly opportunities and benefits that could come to through my service in the military. Without a doubt, I can live with loosing material treasure, but by no means can I live with losing spiritual treasure. I hate war and idolatry. Each day I am learning to hate everything that my god hates and love everything that he loves, as I see the biblical reasoning behind it. I have made every meeting that circumstance allowed since my personal convictions, and dedicated myself to studying the bible's truths on almost a daily basis, as well as telling my family about my decision to become a Jehovah's Witness. This wasn't easy either, because of my father's background as a [REDACTED]. If Jehovah allows me to overcome my current obstacle, which is taking part in the support of war, I feel the other obstacles that follow will surely pose no threat to the continuing development of my faith. No matter what happens, I will remain strong and let my satisfaction come from pleasing Jehovah, rather than anyone else. That is the only way I know to live a life of meaning, be

truly be happy and most importantly, live to see the fulfillment of Jehovah's plan for the earth after Armageddon.

m. Prior Service: None

n. The following information is provided by my religious sect or organization:

1. Religious Organization and Name and Location of Governing Body

Jehovah's Witnesses; [REDACTED]

2. Name and Location of Congregation Attending and Level of Participation

[REDACTED] Bible Student

3. Explain when where why and how you became a member of said sect or organization: I am not a full member, because I am in the military.

o. Information on the pastor/leader of my congregation:

There is not one leader; the whole congregation [REDACTED] bears the responsibility of ministry together.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Address</u>
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Elder Body	Elder Body	[REDACTED]
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p. A description of the creed or official statement (if any, and if known) of said religious sect or organization in relation to participation in war:

Jehovah's Witnesses take a firm stance in Neutrality. No involvement in any military service or support of any kind of war.

q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated (since age 16), other than military, political, or labor organizations:

I attended a Christian high school. I attended the Methodist Church, and became an assistant youth minister (as a volunteer) at [REDACTED] from around 1999 to 2003. Then I learned of the Jehovah's witnesses and learned a small bit about

their view on the trinity doctrine and worldly holidays in 2003. I did not become a full member because of family pressure to stick with tradition. I began truly studying with the Jehovah's Witnesses, at [REDACTED] this spring. Now I am intent on letting nothing stop me from wholeheartedly practicing my faith, no matter what the consequences may be, because in the end it will be well worth it.

2. Enclosures (1) - (3) provide additional information, references, or official statements, which I desire you to consider in review of this application.

[REDACTED]

OFFICIAL RECORD COPY

29MAR2010

From: [REDACTED]

To: Navy Personnel Command PERS-832

Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

- Encl: (1) Chaplain's response to interview
(2) Command Psychologist's response to interview
(3) Comments on interview with psychologist
(4) Reference letter from [REDACTED]
(5) Reference letter from [REDACTED]
(6) Reference letter from [REDACTED]
(7) Additional evidence: letter to [REDACTED]
(8) Additional evidence: journal entries
(9) Privacy Act statement
(10) Command [REDACTED] recommendation

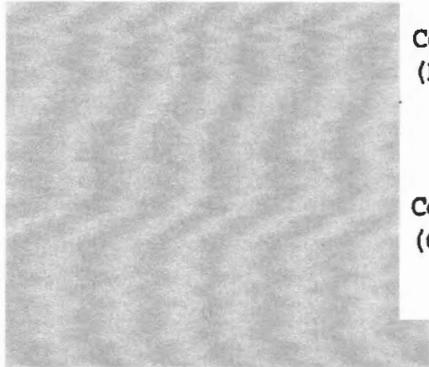
1. I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection. The following required information is provided:

a. Permanent home address:

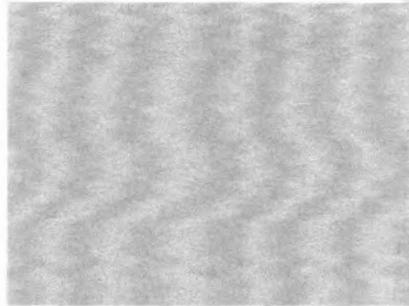
[REDACTED]

b. School and colleges attended after age 16:

<u>School Name/Address</u>	<u>Type School</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	High School	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	University	[REDACTED]



College
(NCPACE)



College
(Online)

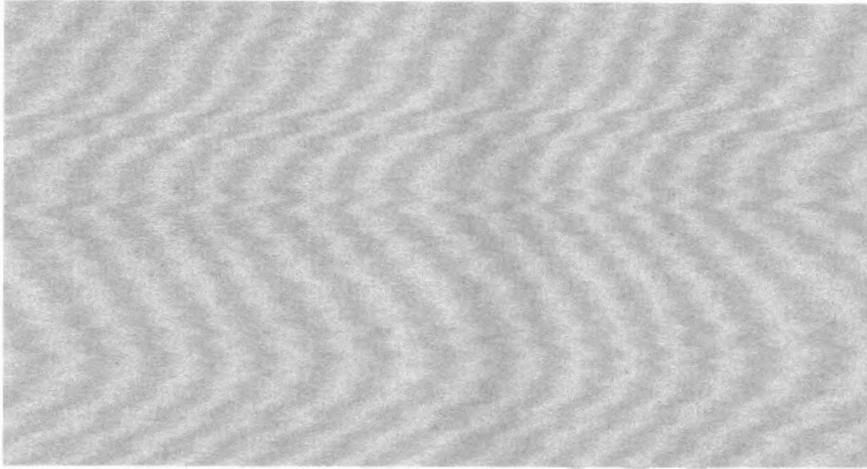
c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

<u>Employer/Address</u>	<u>Type Work</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
	CAD operator	
	Delivery	
	Sales	
	Land Surveying	
	Galleyhand Oil rig	
	Heavy Machinery Operator	

d. All residences after age 16:

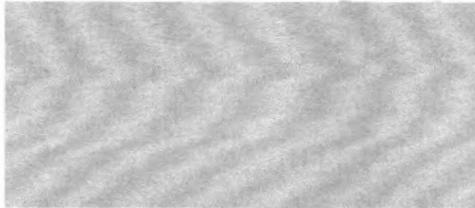
Address/City/State

Inclusive Dates



e. Spouse and member's parents' names/address and religion/sect:

Parents:



f. I did not make application to the Selective Service System for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.

g. A description of the nature of my belief:

War consists of the murder and deaths of countless human beings. It is the single-most destructive human enterprise and is a blight upon our species. War is replete with senseless slaughter, death and destruction. Despite whatever so-called noble aims may lead a nation to war, the death and destruction cannot be justified. No ideal is worth the loss of life that accompanies war.

We have two choices in life. Either we can engage in constructive, life-affirming activities or we can engage in destructive activities, which undermine the sanctity of human life. Life is sacred. And every human being is sacred in his or her own right. I do not have the right to take another human life. No one has this right, not even governments.

As a fallible human being, my judgment is often mistaken. All human beings are prone to error when making moral decisions. We are

by nature very imperfect beings. Even pursuing commendable goals with nothing but the best intentions, our actions often result in consequences that were not intended. Many times, when we try to do what is good, we end up causing harm. This is the one great paradox of trying to live morally. We cannot know for certain that our actions are just, but we can know that our actions will be imperfect, our intentions sometimes corrupt.

Because I know that I am not perfect, I must attempt to make myself as benign as possible. I must do all I can to prevent myself from doing harm or evil. An obvious step is to avoid participation in any activity that causes suffering. War is such an activity. War results in more death, suffering and pain than any other human endeavor.

I cannot kill another because my judgment is imperfect. I cannot kill on behalf of another or on behalf of the government because these entities are imperfect as well. Abstinence from war and from killing is a basic precaution. It protects me from doing evil, and it protects others from the evil I might do.

With warfare there is a lot of talk about ends and means. If the result of something is beneficial, does it justify a violent approach to reaching that result? I do not believe so. War does not lead to peace. If anything it leads to more violence. *He who lives by the sword dies by the sword. Violence breeds violence. You reap what you sow.* These old axioms are true. They were understood by humanity's greatest teachers, but have rarely been pursued in practice.

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said, "War does not end strife - it sows it. War does not end hatred - it feeds it. For those who argue war is a necessary evil, I say you are half right. War is evil... But it is not necessary. War cannot be a necessary evil, because non-violence is a necessary good. The two cannot co-exist."

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points out a possible means of action besides war. He says that nonviolence can be a source of change and a way to settle disputes. Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. are probably the two most well known advocates for nonviolence. Both these men utilized nonviolent resistance to overcome incredible odds and produce profound changes in society. They proved that it works! If peaceful means are effective, how can we still justify violent means? Doesn't this mean that war is unnecessary - that societies and individuals can promote liberty and justice through moral force instead of the force of arms?

To me, it puts the matter in a very clear light. However, even if nonviolent resistance had not been discovered, I would still

oppose war. The very thought of the death and destruction that results from warfare is enough to chill my heart at night. I imagine very graphic images of the effects wars cause. I see people burning with napalm, bombs falling on innocent villages and mothers holding their dead children. In one war, a large bomb was dropped unintentionally on a large group of local villagers and killed nearly 100 of them. They protested by dragging the broken bodies and separated limbs of their loved ones to the doorstep of their leader's home. When I think of war, I imagine that long sad walk of tear-laden eyes and deferred dreams, and this image alone is enough for me. This image alone proves to me that war is immoral. Nothing that causes such pain can be a good force in this world. Even if I did not know how else a nation might accomplish its goals besides a war, I would not wish to serve. I would prefer to spend my life searching for new, peaceful solutions to problems, instead of participating in an endeavor that I know is wrong.

Ethics, the study of right and wrong, is a study that has consumed many of the world's greatest philosophers and religious leaders. Throughout the ages from Aristotle's philosophy of the golden mean to the special revelations of religious texts, men have endeavored to separate the right from the wrong. I have read many theories and many religious revelations, but I think when it comes down to it, ethics is something we sort out instinctively. One cannot apply pragmatic logic or political expediency to ethics. One knows right from wrong with the simple equipment provided by nature. The sight of suffering is enough to reach most people. It is more than enough to affect me. Having researched the actual consequences of war, having seen images of the destruction wreaked by bombings, gunfire and shrapnel, a very primal part of me recoils from warfare.

War is a political state between nations. In national debates it is often argued for or against based on the likelihood of its success, instead of the realities of its consequences. The truth about war that is often ignored is the mass suffering that accompanies it and is caused by it. I condemn war simply because of the suffering it causes. It does not matter what the political realities are surrounding war. The only fact that matters is that because war causes suffering, it is therefore wrong and immoral.

Another moral fact that I instinctively know to be truth is that the promotion of love and brotherhood is the primary mission of our lives. How can there be a loving war? A brotherly war? Such oxymoronic terms are absurd.

Killing other men is wrong. This evil is only compounded by killing them in mass. I believe that war is an evil force in this world, and my heart will not allow me to participate in something so terrible.

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed: (Includes factors (how/when/from whom/from what source training was received) and the beliefs acquired or which caused the change in or development of conscientious objector beliefs.)

When I entered the military, I believed that war could be justified. I thought an army of men could justly fight another army of men. I thought they could justly pump the other men full of bullets. I thought they could justly drop 2000-pound explosives on top of other men hiding in foxholes. I thought they could justly burn their skin with white phosphorous and napalm. I thought they could justly rip their bodies apart with fragmentation grenades. Even when whole populations of innocent communities were wiped out, I thought this collateral damage could be justified in pursuit of a higher cause.

What dramatically changed my mind about this and what actually made me think about war, about violence and about how human beings should conduct their lives, was the realization that the wars in the past that I thought were noble in reality included terrible incidents of suffering of which I had no knowledge. Reading about Dresden and about Vietnam, as well as American history in the Middle East dramatically changed my views about war. I simply did not know the consequences of warfare. Sure, I was exposed to casualty reports of wars in my various history classes. But somehow through much of my life these reports were sterilized. I had never before identified with the victims, but instead proudly pretended I was the American soldier fighting for glory and freedom. After reading "Slaughter House Five", I learned to identify with the victims. That book had a tremendous impact on me.

I read "Slaughter House Five" while on deployment in the Persian Gulf. I read it as I listened to F/A-18s launch from the catapults and fly off to perform their misdeeds in the desert. I reviewed the plight of Dresden, Germany as I was kept in the bubble of my Navy job. While "Slaughter House Five" showed me that there are often largely untold consequences of war, at the same time I received zero information about what the jets I helped send into the air were doing. It was up to my imagination to decide what sort of mission they embarked upon. Were they hurrying off after an Arabic Dresden? Until I read that book, I had always thought that America's involvement in World War II was justified. We were defending ourselves from imperial Japan and saving the Jews right? But, even with so-stated noble intentions, we still loosed undue havoc upon innocent people. We took nearly 100,000 lives in the firebombing of Dresden. This mission had no military objective besides disheartening the German population. What I realized then is that war cannot be justified. No matter what the intentions, the goals or even the

results, the enterprise of itself is too destructive and violent.

Reading about Vietnam was another revelation. I read Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman's "Manufacturing Consent". The book dealt primarily with media bias and inaccuracies, but in it the authors presented a pretty stark picture of what events were like on the ground in that county. I had never even heard of My Lai before. Now, I was reading about how B-52s carpet bombing not only Vietnam, but Laos and Cambodia too, effectively destroyed entire cultures. Literally millions of innocents died. Not combatants, but regular people trying to live their lives and feed their families. We could analyze the political motivations of Kennedy, Kissinger, Johnson and Nixon, but those are beside the point. What is important about Vietnam and the rest of Indochina is that these are concrete examples of the consequences of war. When I read the book, I was primarily concerned with what I regarded as the callousness and lack of compassion and concern shown by America's leaders toward the Vietnamese people. People regard these as political ideas, but there is a root of moral imperative in such reactions. I consider a disregard of human life to be a moral violation. If I see this in a general or a president, it is still a moral argument and not necessarily a political one (though it may be both). Regardless, the study of the wars in Indochina introduced me to a human tragedy I never understood before.

I also met a man aboard [redacted] who challenged me in my political thought. His name is [redacted] and at the time he was an [redacted]. Not only did he consistently challenge me to explain my views, but his adversarial stance in political discussions forced me to examine the roots of what I believed. He was also an unfailing source of support as I gradually accepted what are extremely unpopular beliefs in America not to mention in the military. It was through discussion with him that I learned the most. He was a sort of trivia master, but all his facts supported a world view that leaned towards the need for anarchy based on a revulsion with capitalism. During discussions he could toss out obscure quotes and dates like they were common knowledge. Additionally, [redacted] he introduced me to a wealth of literature of which I had never heard. Much of this literature supported two paradigm shifts - that historically war was fought for immoral goals and that unfettered capitalism did not serve the interests of the people.

Yes, it is true that [redacted] and I had conversations that focused on politics. It may seem odd that through political discourse, I was able to derive at new ethical thoughts and moral training, but this is in actual fact what happened. Much of political discussion in all countries is one-sided. Whether I am democrat, republican, communist or anarchist, if I am waging a political battle I am waging a war of

propaganda. Much of what I thought I knew about war before I joined the military was propagandistic. I gloried in war and thought it led to greater freedom. Conversing with James gave me the opportunity to see the other side of the coin. I learned about the brutal realities of war toward which I had for years been willfully blind.

I have read many books about war, politics, religion and philosophy since joining the Navy. Reading about things I would have had no contact with otherwise greatly influenced me. I studied the political movements of Ghandi and Martin Luther King Jr. Their stances and their actions were not purely political, but at the core moral. They opposed oppression and violence on moral grounds, and it was only a consequence of these beliefs which led them into the political arena. Similarly, my exposure to differing interpretations of historical events, led me to accept new fundamental moral truths. I accepted that the foundation of morality is love. It is being concerned about the welfare and freedom of our fellow human beings, all human beings (whether they be friends or enemies). We cannot love all people yet bring death and destruction against many of them. Violence does not coexist with love. I credit my budding political beliefs with helping me arrive at this realization.

The book that cemented all my new views was Thoreau's "Civil Disobedience". Thoreau above all things valued integrity. He placed his moral conclusions side by side with those of the state's, and said no matter what outside pressures a man faces, it is his duty to himself to stick to what he knows is right. He discusses primarily the best ways by which to resist injustice, concluding that he has the right to break those laws which are wrong or inhumane (he was concerned with slavery and the Mexican American War). He concludes that even if he does not devote his life to correcting the tremendous wrongs of the state, he is at least obligated to ensure he does not participate in these wrongs.

"It is not a man's duty, as a matter of course, to devote himself to the eradication of any, even the most enormous wrong; he may still properly have other concerns to engage him; but it is his duty, at least, to wash his hands of it, and, if he gives it no thought longer, not to give it practically his support."

While I don't agree with Thoreau's conclusion that is it morally permissible to turn a blind eye to evil, he is absolutely correct in stating that we certainly have no business participating in it. After reading this passage, I was struck with how applicable it was to my own situation. I knew I had no business participating in the military and being a part of war. What struck me most about Thoreau's writing was his concern throughout the essay for following the dictates of his conscience. I realized that I was not so adamant in following my conscience in my own life and it pained me. I had tears in my eyes as I drove back to the ship that night. Thoreau really struck a cord.

I think to properly explain myself I need to discuss my religious development as well. This is difficult to put down because the issues have always been somewhat clouded for me (personal as well). I've always felt in the depths of my soul that nihilism was perhaps the correct philosophy. That in all actuality since the entire universe is a colossal accident, then there is no right and wrong and that nothing about our lives really matters. I've instituted moral and ethical principles for myself in order to guard myself from the despair that is corollary to a nihilist view, but here I will explain my religious development and how I arrived at my current views.

I was raised in [REDACTED]. I remember as a child being scared stiff of evil and of the devil. In fact, I was baptized at the age of six because I was terrified that Satan might decide to possess me (do not let impressionable children watch The Exorcist unless you plan on counseling them afterwards). While a member of the church, I was an adamant Christian. I argued constantly with my peers about the lies of evolution and about why I thought all homosexuals should be put on a boat and sank to the bottom of the ocean. Obviously, church life was a poor development on my moral character. I viewed everything as extremely black and white. Either something was good or it was evil.

At the age of 15, I left the church and Christianity. I learned about the scientific explanations for how the world and man came into existence and renounced the idea of God. I said if science and logic can explain the entire formation of the universe, then science and logic can tell me everything I need to know about life. Science left no room for God, so all of the sudden I stopped worrying about him. It felt like a weight had been lifted from my shoulders. All of the sudden I was free from this terrifying conception that someone was watching everything I did and planned to pass judgment on me in the most painful of ways. Suddenly I was free to pursue any entertainment I found fit. Nothing really mattered because there was no God to send me to hell if I was bad. So, for many years I lived very much according to the pleasure principle. I was concerned with good or bad, but only in the way that sometimes pleasurable things happened

to me -- this was my conception of good -- and sometimes I experienced negative emotions - my conception of evil. What a horribly perverse way of looking at things.

I discovered Nietzsche at some point and very much enjoyed his writings. This is where I was when I joined Navy. I remember pouring over Nietzsche in my rack when the ship was in the Persian Gulf. What I liked about Nietzsche's writings was that even though I only lived for myself, he seemed to say that doing so was alright. I've been told many times by my friend [redacted] that I have badly misinterpreted Nietzsche, but what I took from Nietzsche was that only the strong survive and even our instincts which go against our conscience are commendable in that they add vitality to our lives. So, what I took from Nietzsche was to embrace every emotion, every passion because it was these things that made me alive. It gave me an escape from Nihilism, and a way to find more meaning from life. Still, in the back of my mind I thought there must be something wrong with this philosophy, that this philosophy could leave us to do evil. Yet I admonished these feelings because I felt they had been beaten into me by my Christian childhood, a source for which I blamed a lot of my emotional hangups.

I decided that there was something wrong with my Nietzschean philosophy after reading about the affects of war and about the suffering in this world caused poverty and hunger. These things I told myself are obviously wrong. It was something I knew by instinct. And if Nietzsche's philosophy asked me to remain unmindful of such horrible evils, then it was wrong too. I remember mulling this problem over smoking cigarettes on the catwalks. I asked myself how it would be possible to combine morality and science. How could I logically include a system of ethics (one based on compassion and in many ways similar to what I had learned about right and wrong in church as a child) in a nihilistic explanation of the origin of the cosmos.

The Navy was gracious enough to provide me with the funds to take a class on philosophy once I returned to home port and my ship docked in the [redacted]. From this class I learned about a philosophical theory called existentialism. Existentialism means basically that we create our own theories of right and wrong. Since there is no specially revealed system of ethics, it is up to each individual man to look about him and decide what is right and wrong. This basically just gave a name to what I was trying to do for myself. And it inspired me to try harder to figure out what I believed about good and evil. I began looking in all sorts of places for definitions of morality. I reread the New Testament, read the teaching of Buddha, read Gandhi, and Martin Luther King Jr. Most of all, and with some influence from Buddhist philosophy, I looked introspectively. I tried to understand what my conscience told me, to

codify what moral rules I knew instinctively. One thing I determined early on was something that has been repeated from teachers as varied as Jesus, Confucius and Emmanuel Kant - the golden rule (do unto others as you would have them do unto you). I developed my theory of non-violence primarily from Jesus, John Dewey, Martin Luther King Jr. and Gandhi. John Dewey and Gandhi put the theory in a logical philosophy light for me, while Martin Luther King Jr. and Jesus spoke more to my emotional instincts that I simply felt were right.

My system of morality is still developing. I regard my beliefs as similar to a religion in the fact that I set rules and try with all my strength to live by them. One of the most steadfast of my moral rules is to love others, and this necessitates avoiding doing them harm. It is above all this moral rule that requires me to abstain from war and violence.

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service:

These beliefs became incompatible with military service the night I read Thoreau's "Civil Disobedience". Before reading that book, I believed that what we did was wrong, but I did not feel that I had a duty to oppose it. I realized that I was a hypocrite. I don't know why I didn't put in as a conscientious objector then. I should have. I imagine that I found life in the Navy rather easy at that point. I was financially stable for probably the first time in my life and living independently of my parents. Things weren't bad for me, and by putting in a CO package I would assume a tremendous risk. I don't know if it was immaturity or cowardice that kept me from pursuing separation. Whichever it was, I regret it.

My beliefs were incompatible with military service because the mission of the military is to conduct war and in the process kill people. My moral beliefs tell me that I should love others, and treat them as I would have them treat me. Treating them as I would have them treat me requires me to put myself in their shoes. It requires me to take a look at things from their viewpoint. Imagining myself as an enemy soldier, who is fighting because he believes his cause is right and because he believes he is helping his country's people, I realized that I had no right to kill him. I realized that the goal of the military is to settle political and ideological differences with bullets. You don't show love, brotherliness and compassion with a bullet. And since my goal is to further the causes of love and affection, I knew that my military service was counterproductive to these goals.

It is true that within my job in the military, I do not have to personally take anyone's life. I do not directly cause suffering and in my role as a Navy mass communications specialist, I do not

personally do violence to anyone. However, after thinking it over more, just by being a part of the military, I lend my practical support to war. I may not pull the trigger,

. This is turn drives up recruitment (people who will perhaps pull triggers) and helps maintain tremendous funding for bombs, bullets and other items of destruction.

I read Thoreau in late 2008. I have thought this way and festered under my own inability to find coherence between what I believe and what I do for more than a year now. I have become a bitter and disillusioned sailor. Bitter at myself for getting myself into a bad situation and disillusioned with the mission, the nation and what I thought I knew about life. At some point, enough is enough. We have to take action or face the shame of dishonesty with ourselves. I can't live hypocritically anymore. I want to be a better man than that.

j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances:

I believe force can be used against human beings for the needs of personal defense. If I was attacked on the street and someone was pointing a gun at me, it would be foolish to not try and take the gun away from the attacker (if that was the only option - first I would try to talk him out of using the gun, even give in to his demands to avoid violence). It would even be permissible to try and knock the man down or incapacitate him in a way in which he would be unable to shoot me. In this way I neutralize the threat to myself, but do as little harm as possible to the attacker. It would not be right to kill the man with the gun, however. I have explained earlier that human beings do not have the right to kill others. This is based not only on conscience, but also on the logical need to prevent future violence. If I kill this man and escape harm, I would to some extent internalize that the use of violence accomplished a favorable end. I would be more prone to resort to violence in the future. Additionally, does not this attacker have friends, family, a brother. All would suffer by his death. Would his brothers want revenge for his death? Would they not turn to violence to avenge his suffering? It is logical that by using violence, I only encourage more violence both from others and from myself.

The reason I can even remotely justify the use of force in the above situation is because in the this situation an individual makes the moral judgment. Certainly all individuals will not make the correct judgments, but it is far more likely for a single person confronted by immediate circumstances to determine whether force is justified than it is for a political body or military organization.

In a personal situation like the above the individual is confronted immediately with the consequences of his actions. He knows he will have to live with that decision and can directly use his conscience to guide him. This is one of the problems with military service. In a military, the soldier is told to follow orders and nothing else. It is not up to him to make individual moral judgments, but to follow the dictates of protocol. If his orders are unjust, he still must follow them. Any organization that deprives individuals of the ability to determine right and wrong for themselves is an invitation for abuse.

Force can be used to imprison criminals who break the laws and put others at risk. The prison system in this society is sadly in need of comprehensive reform, but it only makes sense that in order to protect the majority, we must remove some of our brothers from positions in which they can do harm. The goal of imprisonment should always be the rehabilitation of inmates. Though we confine them, we should show them imperishable love, so that they will learn to love and respect living as members of the society. Under no circumstances should a man be condemned to death. What is the motivation of the death penalty besides needless revenge? Surely a man deprived of instruments of violence and locked behind bars poses no threat to the rest of us.

These are really the only two circumstances in which I could approve of the use of force against human beings. In the first instance it is clear that the defense of one's person or of one's loved ones surely overrides the rights of the attacker. However that right of defense ends when one uses it to justify serious bodily harm or the killing of another. I don't believe it is right to kill a person for any reason.

k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs:

Considering that much of my life is determined by my service in the Navy, my day to day life style may not appear to have changed much to an observer who does not know me. I've been told that what is searched for in answer to this question of the application is something along the lines of becoming a vegetarian or renouncing violent movies and video games. I haven't done either of these things. I am not the ideal pacifist. I am a rather normal person with as many faults and intellectual contradictions as anyone else. If I claim to have begun living my life perfectly morally since becoming a conscientious objector, I would quickly be corrected. I try to do the right things and make ethical decisions, but as an incomplete and still evolving animal, I often make mistakes. However, some things have changed, and dramatically.

I discussed earlier how I have worked to develop a new personal system of ethics. A big part of my life is trying to live up to the ethical standards which I have set for myself. Generally my entire thought process has shifted. In any person's life the most constant and necessary part of being is that inner dialogue of the mind. Instead of asking myself if someone likes me or not, I try to ask myself whether I spoke to them fairly, if I treated them well. Before joining the Navy, I used to always do and say what I thought other people wanted me to in some sort of effort to be liked and accepted. My friends in [redacted] made racist jokes and used the N-word. I did the same to appease them. Now, I recoil at all forms of bigotry even the hidden meanings behind common expressions. Now, I correct people when they use racist slang. I do so out of consideration for them and the people their slang disparages.

I debate politics and war with anyone who will listen. I never tire of trying to convince people that war is wrong, that the government is wrong, that neo-liberal economics is starving billions. Realizing that certain moral truths underlie political stances led me to more adamantly debate national policy. I feel now that it is my responsibility to encourage at least within my own circle of acquaintances an understanding of how we can better the world. Here's an example of that: on the [redacted] a special space dedicated to our namesake. As part of the ship's [redacted] effort, [redacted] is to give visitors a tour of the space and explain to them the life of [redacted]. Three of my shipmates and I were doing training on conducting the tour and comparing notes on how it was to be done. In a moment of zest, I explained to them what is the unwritten history of [redacted]. I explained how he had helped set the stage for the Cold War, how he got America into Korean and what we did in that war, how he [redacted] etc. One of the guys chastised me and called me a hypocrite. He said that I had all these views, but I was too scared to do anything about it. This was in October 2009. After this discussion I became serious about separation and began doing research about submitting a conscientious objector package.

Before the Navy I had never been to a protest of any sort. This year I went to two big ones. I traveled to Pittsburgh in September where I and nearly 10,000 others protested the policies of the G20. It was a peaceful march, but was portrayed on TV and in most newspapers as a violent gathering. The G20 is a group of the world's most wealthy nations who in the interests of the wealthy classes continually use military might and economic strength to exploit the people of the third world. It is my belief that powerful groups like this have breached their responsibility to humanity by encouraging policies that have led to mass suffering. By far the most common cry of the protesters was to put "people before profit" as they advocated

for peace and justice. It is my responsibility to encourage peace, and my willingness to take political action in pursuit of that goal, I think shows my resolve. I put myself at risk by doing this. I didn't know how my chain of command might respond to me being a part of a protest. Historically, military service and grassroots action have not exactly gone hand-in-hand.

Two or three weeks later I attended a huge protest in Washington D.C. for gay rights. More than 100,000 people gay, straight, Christian, atheist, black and white marched down Pennsylvania Avenue to the Capital building where we held a rally. Before joining the Navy, I was homophobic. I tossed out terms like "faggot" and said things that I didn't like were "gay". Since my ethical re-education, I have realized that this position is wrong. I have no right to discriminate against people who pose no threat to others, just because they live differently than I do.

I will continue to encourage policies that will lead to upholding the rights of life, liberty and happiness for all world citizens. I want to spread the message of peace, and I think the best way for me to do that would be a career in journalism. That way I can write about my beliefs and try to make an impact on public opinion. Outside of my occupational choice, I will do all I can to promote organizations and charities that work toward the causes of peace and social justice. I want to be a positive force in this world. I want to help change things for the better.

1. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs, which gave rise to this application:

To people I know, what most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of my beliefs is the strength of my discourse. When I speak about war, I speak passionately. I know that war, violence and destruction are wrong. I discuss these issues with people whenever I think I won't offend them. I speak to strangers about what I believe. I speak to loved ones about what I believe. I even wrote a letter to my senator.

I think also that my seeking out different protests, trying to get out there and do something that will make a difference shows the strength of my beliefs. I have volunteered for community service projects and am currently raising money for a charity that [REDACTED]

One last word, since this is the last chance I have to write freely. Even if you don't believe me, even if you don't think I am an honest man, even if you deny this application, please consider the points I have raised. Please consider your own role in the military.

Would not your talents be a more positive force if you used them to promote a peaceful world? As long as so many dedicate themselves to the art of war, peace will remain impossible.

m. Prior service (if any; if none, so state):

<u>Military Service</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>	<u>Type</u> <u>Discharge</u>
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No prior service

n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization:

<u>Religious</u> <u>Sect/</u> <u>Organi-</u> <u>zation</u>	<u>Name & Location</u> <u>of Governing</u> <u>Body/Head</u>	<u>Name and Location</u> <u>of Church,</u> <u>Congregation</u> <u>Customarily</u> <u>Attending</u>	<u>Level of</u> <u>Participa-</u> <u>tion</u>
None	None	None	None

o. Information on the pastor or leader of my (church, congregation, or meeting):

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Address</u>
None	None	None

p. A description of the creed or official statements (if any, and if known) of said religious sect or organization in relation to participation in war:

I am not a member of any religious sect. I believe that one's religious beliefs are a personal matter and that a person can only achieve a level of spirituality through individual reflection and personal practice.

q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated (since age 16), other than military, political, or labor organizations:

None

2. Enclosures (1) - (12) (as applicable) provide additional information, references, or official statements, which I desire you to consider in review of this application.



23 Sep 2010

From: [REDACTED]
To: Navy Personnel Command (PERS-832)
Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

1. I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection. The following required information is provided:

a. Permanent home address:

[REDACTED]

b. School and colleges attended after age 16:

<u>School Name/Address</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	High School	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	University	[REDACTED]

c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

<u>Employer/Address</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	Telephone Research	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Fast Food	[REDACTED]

d. All residences after age 16:

<u>Address/City/State</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

e. Spouse and member's parents' names and religion/sect:

Spouse: N/A

Mother: [REDACTED]

Father: [REDACTED]

f. I did not make application to the Selective Service System for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.

g. A description of the nature of my belief:

I believe in the principles taught by God's Word, the Bible. Bible principles teach that life is a gift from God, and, as such, man must respect life. That man should love each other is another principle strongly emphasized in the scriptures. The Greek scriptures very clearly demonstrate how man should live his life through the example of the perfect life lived by Jesus Christ. I have come to find that it is impossible to reconcile these principles with participation in war.

No rationally thinking person would argue that life is not a gift. Throughout human history many have wondered where the gift of life comes from. One of the kings of ancient Israel, David, said to God, "With you is the source of life." (Psalm 36:9) So life is a gift, and it comes from God. Before David's reign as king, God, whose name is Jehovah, gave his people laws by which to live through his servant, Moses. One of these laws stated "You must not murder." (Deuteronomy 5:17) By giving his people this law, Jehovah showed that he values human life, and that we should value life as well. This was also demonstrated when Jehovah told his follower, Noah, "Anyone shedding man's blood, by man will his own blood be shed." In war, man shows little to no value for the lives of others. Instead soldiers take the lives of the political or ideological enemies of their leader usually over something as simple as a disagreement. Wars cost many human lives, and spending life in this way cannot be brought into harmony with the bible principle that life is a gift from God.

There are 473 occurrences of the word "love" in the Bible. The number of pages in a Bible varies from copy to the next, but in my personal copy, there are 1547 pages. This means, on average, "love" appears in the Bible more than once every 4 pages. If love is mentioned so frequently in the Bible, it must be important to Jehovah. On the topic of love, Jesus told his disciples "I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves." (John 13:34, 35). Clearly, Jehovah wanted his followers to get along. Now imagine if God's followers participated in war. Since Jehovah's servants reside all over the world, it would be very likely that some would find themselves warring with other followers of God. Going to war with someone is absolutely no way to express love for them. Not only did Jesus encourage love among his disciples, he also taught them to love those who persecuted them. He told them, "You heard that it was said, 'You must love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' However, I say to you: Continue to love your enemies and to pray for those persecuting you; that you may prove yourselves sons of your Father who is in the heavens, since he makes his sun rise upon wicked people and good and makes it rain upon righteous people and unrighteous." (Matthew 5:43-45) Thus, we should not make war against our enemies. Instead we should love them and pray for them. Participating in war is contrary to everything the Bible teaches with regard to love.

Jesus, God's son, lived a perfect life on earth. The Bible teaches that Jesus' life is "a model for [us] to follow his steps closely." (1 Peter 2:21) Before we can model our life after that of Jesus, we must first learn about Jesus. The prophet Isaiah called Jesus "prince of peace." (Isaiah 9:6) It cannot be argued that one supporting war could be called prince of peace. If the only person ever to live a perfect opposed war, logically then, anyone supporting war is flawed. Near the end of his life, Jesus was betrayed and

arrested by an armed mob in the middle of the night. His friend Peter "reached out his hand and drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest and took off his ear." By his reaction, Jesus showed how he felt about violence. Jesus said to Peter: "Return your sword to its place, for all those who take the sword will perish by the sword." (Matthew 26:47-52) Anyone, after learning about Jesus, would agree that it would be absurd to conceive of Jesus marching to war with an assault rifle, dropping bombs on his enemies, or supporting those who perform such actions. It is impossible then, that a person could follow Jesus in an effort to live a life as close to perfect as imperfect man can manage, and still participate in war.

God's word is clear. Life is a gift Jehovah and should not be taken lightly. Mankind is meant to love each other, not make war on each other. Jesus, who lived a perfect life and set the example for the rest of us, would never participate in war and neither should we. By continuing to serve in the military, I am disobeying and displeasing my creator. As a result, my conscience will no longer allow me to participate in war.

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed:

[REDACTED] This major life event prompted me to evaluate other aspects of my life. I was raised believing in God and the Bible but I never really acted on those beliefs. Essentially, even though I knew there was a god, I chose to ignore Him. I decided I was not happy with this aspect of my life and that I needed to change it.

I began discussing religion with a friend of mine named [REDACTED] and began to learn what she believed as a Jehovah's Witness. Though her beliefs initially seemed misguided to me, the more I researched them, the more I realized they were true. After much discussion and research, I decided to visit the [REDACTED]. During that visit I met three gentlemen named [REDACTED] with whom I have been studying the Bible every week ever since. I have also been attending meetings at the Kingdom Hall twice a week every week unless I was on duty.

By studying the Bible with the three men I met at the Kingdom Hall and through attending the meetings, I gained a deeper understanding of the Bible and what it teaches. It was through these events that I developed an objection to participating in war in any kind.

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service:

During the week of 20 Sep 2010, the upcoming operational schedule for the next year was discussed at training. Due to the increased workload for propulsion plant testing, sea trials, the underways planned to prepare for deployment 2011, and deployment 2011 itself, I realized it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to continue my study of the Bible and attending meetings at the Kingdom Hall. It became clear to me that I would not be able to continue to pursue spiritual growth until early 2012. Furthermore, because "Bad associations spoil useful habits" (1 Corinthians 15:33) I began to fear that I would actually regress spiritually as a result of associating almost exclusively with worldly people.

Even though I had already come to realize that participating in war was not in harmony with Bible principles, I rationalized my actions to myself with the thought that as long as I diligently studied the bible and consistently attended meetings, I was doing enough. In reality, I was deluding myself to avoid making a decision I knew would be difficult. I was reluctant to submit a request for discharge as a conscientious objector because I knew I would be letting many down, would likely face ostracization, and would be putting myself in a potentially unstable financial situation. Now that I was forced to acknowledge how my

participation in war would directly interfere with my spiritual growth, I found I was no longer able to avoid making a decision. I decided that I could no longer rationalize my participation in war when the principles taught by the Word of God are so clearly against it.

J. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances:

I believe the use of a minimal amount of non-lethal force to prevent an aggressor from harming an innocent is acceptable. For example, restraining a man from hitting his wife in the heat of an argument is not only acceptable, but it would be irresponsible not to. In a hypothetical situation it could conceivably be possible to justify taking a life if necessary to protect the life of an innocent. Taking the life of an aggressor to protect the life of an innocent supports the principle of respecting life. However this should not be extrapolated to justify a hypothetical war. An individual deciding that taking a life is the only option available to protect the innocent is not the same as waging war, which is an organized activity for social or political ends.

k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs:

As a result of my change in beliefs, I now attend religious services twice a week. In the past, I did not attend religious services at all. I read the Bible daily and have a group Bible study weekly. I quit smoking and stopped swearing. I did not celebrate the 4th of July or my birthday this year. I no longer gamble or associate with worldly people outside of work. I have also stopped playing violent video games or watching violent movies. I have become more peaceable with some of my coworkers where I used to be very argumentative.

To continue supporting these beliefs, I will continue the behaviors above. I will also begin to participate in the door to door ministry that Jesus' disciples began and Jehovah's Witnesses continue today. I will dedicate my life to Jehovah and symbolize my dedication through baptism.

l. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs which gave rise to this application:

The majority of the changes I have made have been small when considered individually. The single largest change to my life is actually submission of this request. From a worldly point of view, this request is very foolish. I'm walking away from a reliable job at a time when the economy is struggling and I have significant financial obligations. Though I'm not certain, I expect to lose my NEC and clearance, limiting my occupational options when I get out. I will have to repay a portion of my reenlistment bonus, about \$9000 by my estimate. I will disappoint my dad, step mom and coworkers. I expect to be mocked for my beliefs. Many will view me as a coward and think I am just trying to avoid responsibility. Others will accuse me of being weak and unable to handle life in the military. But in the end, all this is a small price to pay for a clean conscience.

m. Prior service:

None

n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization:

<u>Religious Sect/Organization</u>	<u>Name & Location of Governing Body</u>	<u>Name & location of Congregation Attending</u>	<u>Level of Participation</u>
Jehovah's Witnesses			Bible Student



I became a member of the organization in May 2010 when I walked into the Kingdom hall and requested a home bible study.

o. Information on the leader of my congregation:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Address</u>

p. A description of the creed or official statements of said religious organization in relation to participation in war:

Jehovah's Witnesses have many statements on participation in war or politics. These statements are included in the Bible and many other Bible-based publications. These statements teach that those who worship Jehovah should remain neutral in world conflicts or politics. We should show respect for life. We should love each other, enemies included. We should treat others as we want them to treat us.

q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated, other than military, political, or labor organizations:

None

2. Enclosures (1) - (3) provide additional information which I desire you to consider in review of this application.

THE AUTHORITY TO REQUEST THIS INFORMATION IS DERIVED FROM 50 U.S.C. 456j AND 38 U.S.C. 3103, AND 5 U.S.C. 301, DEPARTMENTAL REGULATIONS. THE PURPOSE OF THIS APPLICATION IS TO ALLOW THE MEMBER TO APPLY FOR CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR STATUS. THIS APPLICATION IS COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY; HOWEVER, FAILURE TO PROVIDE THE REQUIRED INFORMATION WOULD RESULT IN AN INABILITY TO PROCESS THIS REQUEST AND THE MEMBER WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO RECEIVE THE REQUESTED STATUS.



From: [REDACTED]

To: Navy Personnel Command, PERS-832

Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILSPERSMAN 1900-020

1. I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection. The following required information is provided:

a. Permanent home address: [REDACTED]

b. School and colleges attended after age 16:

<u>School name/ address</u>	<u>Type School</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	High School	[REDACTED]

c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

<u>Employer/ address</u>	<u>Type Work</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
DFAS Cleveland 1240 east 9th st Cleveland, OH 44199	Navy	JUL 2006- present

d. All residences after age 16:

<u>Address/City/State</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

e. Spouse and members parents' names/address and religion/sect (if deceased, so state):

[REDACTED]

f. I did not make application to the selective service system (local board) for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the armed forces.

g. A description of the nature of my belief:
Through my study of the bible with Jehovah's witnesses, I am being shown that we are to love all people including our enemies, and to pray for them. Since Jehovah our god makes his sun rise on the wicked people and the good, and makes it rain upon the righteous and the unrighteous. As I am studying to be one of Jehovah's witnesses I cannot love and pray for such while waging war against them. This is why Jesus said "we are to be no part of the world as he is no part of the world" john 18:36. I must remain politically neutral in military services.

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed:
My belief developed when I had married my wife, and saw how she treated others. I wanted to understand why this religion was so important to her. I was also encouraged by the general close bond everyone in the congregation had with one another. My belief started to change when I started a bible study with brother [REDACTED] as well as attending congregation meetings at the kingdom hall. As I continued this my lifestyle has started changing, and that we are to love everyone including our enemies. Being in the military I am going against the bible. It says "return your sword to its place, for all those who take to the sword will perish by the sword" Matthew 26:52. Also worshipping idols also goes against the bible such as the flag and other political affairs. This goes against my conscience and belief as to what I am learning.

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service. My beliefs became incompatible with military service through study of the bible. I have learned that Jesus preached the good news of god's kingdom, and never used military force to defend it. Military service of any kind is going against my conscience. As states in 1 Corinthian 10:14 and Luke 4:8" that it is to Jehovah god only do we worship and render sacred service to him" we do not worship or salute the flag, or any idols. We are to remain neutral.

j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances. (If none, so state). Jehovah's witnesses do not believe in the use of force of any kind.

k. Explanation of how my current lifestyle has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of those beliefs:

My lifestyle has changed in that I am using the bible as my guide, and changing my life to fit Jehovah's standards. I am currently studying the bible and attending meetings at the kingdom hall of Jehovah's witnesses. In the future I plan to become a baptized servant of Jehovah's witnesses as I continue learning.

l. Explanation of what in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of my beliefs, which gave rise to this application:

In my opinion I am becoming more involved in the religion of Jehovah's witnesses and what I am learning at my studies and meetings at the kingdom hall. I am applying them to my life, and as I continue to learn more my conscience is telling me that I cannot be in the military.

m. Prior service: none

n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization.

Name of organization governing head location congregation
customarily attending level participation.

Jehovah's witnesses

5

Explain when, where, and how you became a member of said sect or organization:

I became interested in the religion approximately 6 months after meeting my wife, I was skeptical at first, but after attending a few meetings I became very interested. Through my studies of the bible I have progressed in learning about the bible, but I cannot become a baptized member until my conscience is clean in all matters.

o. Information on the pastor or leader of my congregation.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Address</u>
[REDACTED]		

p. a description of the creed or official statements of said religious organization in relation to participation in war.

Matthew 26:52 "return the sword to its place for those who take to the sword will perish by the sword"

Luke 10:27 "you must love Jehovah your god with your whole heart, whole strength, whole mind, whole soul, and neighbor as yourself"

Exodus 20:13 "you must not murder"

q. a description of my relationship with and activities with and activities in all organization with which I am or have been affiliated (since age 16), other than military, political, or labor organizations.

None

2. Enclosures (1) - () (as applicable) provide additional information, references, or official statements, which I desire you to consider in review of this application.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

OFFICIAL COPY

9 Nov 10

From: [REDACTED]
To: Navy Personnel Command, PERS-832
Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

1. I Request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection.

a. Permanent home address:

[REDACTED]

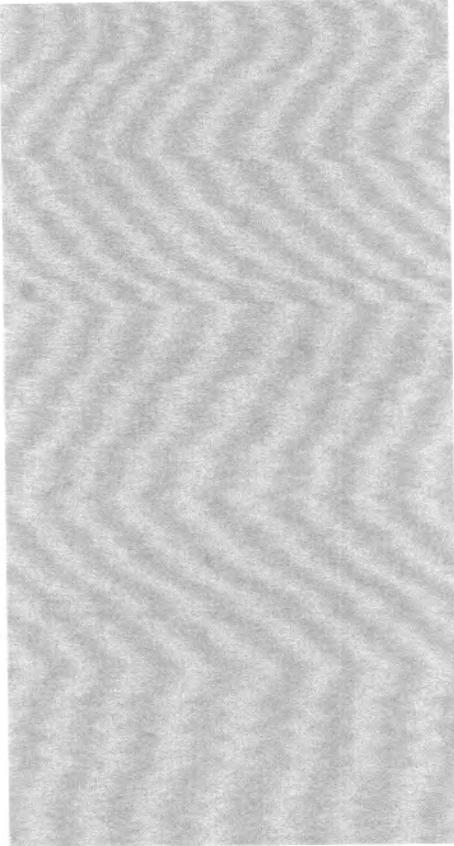
b. School and colleges attended after age 16:

School Name/Address	Type School	Dates
[REDACTED]	Middle/High School	

c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

Employer/Address	Type Work	Dates
[REDACTED]	Stocker	
[REDACTED]	Security	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Day camp Instructor	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Bagger	[REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR



Student



Cook



Cook



Watch Captain



Watch Captain



DET



Watch Captain



Maintenance PO



Cargo Supervisor



d. All residences after age 16:

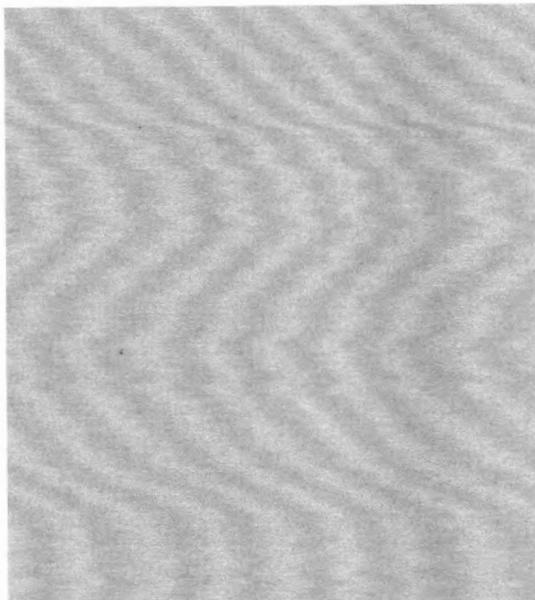
Address/City/State

Dates



Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

e. Spouse and member's parents' names/address and religion/sect (if deceased, so state):



f. I, [REDACTED] did not make application to the Selective Service System (local board) for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.

g. A description of the nature of my belief: About two years ago I started attending the meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses. Studying the Bible opened my eyes, my understanding grew and I became deeply involved in what I was studying. I know what God wants from us of our own free will and that is to serve him and whole heartedly show our love by preaching the good news and keeping his commandments. God promises a life of peace and true happiness for those who are obedient. Serving in the military is in direct opposition with what God wants and teaches by means of Jesus Christ, to which I find it necessary to separate myself from the military.

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed: Before studying with Jehovah's Witnesses I wasn't a religious person, although having some knowledge of the Bible, I didn't have an accurate knowledge or a relationship with Jehovah God. It wasn't until about two years ago I started attending meetings and having a regular study of the Bible that I learned what God loves and hates. [REDACTED] was one of the persons that

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

help me to understand the Bible. Through my study of the Bible I became familiar with the teachings of Jesus Christ and his message of peace which includes the coming of Gods Kingdom.

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service: Jesus encourages true Christians followers to be loyal to Gods Kingdom by being neutral when it comes to the political affairs of any nation (John 17:16), (John 18:36). It's because of my study of the Bible that my conviction draws me to taking action by separating from the Navy. I know that by staying in the military would be against Jehovah's command and contrary to what Jesus taught. This would include combatant and noncombatant services.

j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances: God commands not to murder and views life as something precious (Exodus 20:13, Matthew 5:21). To commit an act of murder or to support murder would be displeasing and disobedient to his command. So, why would I want to put my self in the position of practicing violence (Psalms 11:5, Proverbs 10:29, 3: 1-7). This is the time to practice peace, not war. As true Christians remaining neutral in conflicts of the world, they are able to enjoy peaceful unity even when those around them are at war. God wants us to observe his commands as loving protection and for us to exhibit qualities like love, kindness, compassion and not just for one nation over another but for all mankind.

k. Explanation of how my current lifestyle has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs: In marriage a husband must stick to his wife and they are to be as one flesh. I need to care for the spiritual welfare of my wife as myself (Genesis 2:24). I know that I also need to congregate with fellow believers and to hear the message taught on a regular basis as well as ensuring that my wife and children hear it for spiritual growth (Hebrews 10:25). I am to train and guide my family in regular family study of the Bible daily as the head (Deuteronomy 6:6-7, 1Timothy 5:8). My life has changed and is centered on the more important things, my spiritual growth and relationship with Jehovah.

l. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs which rise to this application: In my opinion the more I study the Bible the

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

deeper it's meaning becomes and the more I understand what my true purpose is. I am to follow Jesus' teachings and ways, preaching and worshipping God.

m. Prior military service: None.

n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization:

Religious sect/Organization:
Jehovah's Witnesses

Name & Location of Governing Body:



Name & Location of Church, Congregation Customarily Attending:



Level of Participation: Bible Student.

Explain when, where, and how you became of member of said sect or organization:

I became a regular Bible student studying to become an active Jehovah's Witness on about February 2009 in [redacted] where while at home, Jehovah's Witnesses were doing door to door preaching and offered me literature. I accepted the publications and from then continued studying twice a week. Although I attend congregations meetings and participate in question and answer studies, I am not a member or an active Jehovah's witness because, I am not baptized and have not fully dedicated my life to the preaching work needed to done. By me putting faith in Jesus and serving Jehovah fully I will become an active member.

o. Information on pastor or leader of my (church, congregation, or meeting):

There is no pastor or leader. Please contact the Coordinator of the body of Elders.



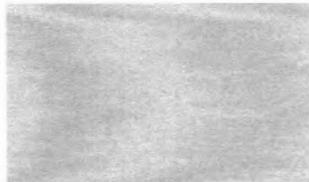
p. See Enclosure (1) for creed.

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

"THE AUTHORITY TO REQUEST THIS INFORMATION IS DERIVED FROM 50 U.S.C. 456j AND 38 U.S.C. 3103, AND 5 U.S.C. 301, DEPARTMENTAL REGULATIONS. THE PURPOSE OF THIS APPLICATION IS TO ALLOW THE MEMBER TO APPLY FOR CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR STATUS. THIS APPLICATION IS COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY; HOWEVER, FAILURE TO PROVIDE THE REQUIRED INFORMATION WOULD RESULT IN AN INABILITY TO PROCESS THIS REQUEST AND THE MEMBER WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO RECEIVE THE REQUEST STATUS."

q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated (since age 16), other than military, political, or labor organizations: Since age 16-18, I attended [redacted] involuntarily and was not actively involved in the church or nor was I affiliated with any other organizations. It should be understood that I attended church services at the insistence of my legal guardian and [redacted]. As an adult I have an understanding of the Bible and made a decision to separate from the military based on it.

2. Enclosure (1) (as applicable) provides additional information, references, or official statements, which I desire you to consider in review of this application.



11NOV10

From: [REDACTED]

To: Navy Personnel Command PERS-832

Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

1. I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection. The following required information is provided:

a. Permanent home address:

[REDACTED]

b. School and colleges attended after age 16:

[REDACTED]

c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

[REDACTED]

Food service

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Food service

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Entertainment(seasonal)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

STOCK ASSOCIATE

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Security (seasonal)
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Logistics (temporary)
[REDACTED]

d. All residences after age 16:

[REDACTED]

e. Spouse and member's parents' names/address and religion/sect (if deceased, so state):

[REDACTED]

f. I did not make application to the Selective Service System (local board) for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces. (If application was made, list local board and decision made by the board - if known.)

g. A description of the nature of my belief:

Attached, entitled "DESCRIPTION OF THE NATURE OF MY BELIEF"

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed:

Attached, entitled "HOW MY FAITH HAS GROWN"

- i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service:

Attached, entitled "HOW MY BELIEFS ARE INCOMPATIBLE IN MILITARY SERVICE"

- j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances (if none, so state):

None to kill even in events of certain death. Any force that of which presents unnecessary human suffering is against my beliefs; i.e.; using greater violence to enforce the actions of violence.

- k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs:

Attached, entitled "MY CURRENT LIFESTYLE"

- l. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs which gave rise to this application:

Attached, entitled "WHY MY BELIEFS LED TO MY APPLICATION"

- m. Prior service (if any; if none, so state):

None.

- n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization:



- o. Information on the pastor or leader of my (church, congregation, or meeting):



- p. A description of the creed or official statements (if any, and if known) of said religious sect or organization in relation to participation in war:

None known

NOTE: Members will submit a signed copy of the following privacy act statement with their application:

"THE AUTHORITY TO REQUEST THIS INFORMATION IS DERIVED FROM 50 U.S.C. 456j AND 38 U.S.C. 3103, AND 5 U.S.C. 301, DEPARTMENTAL REGULATIONS. THE PURPOSE OF THIS APPLICATION IS TO ALLOW THE MEMBER TO APPLY FOR CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR STATUS. THIS APPLICATION IS COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY; HOWEVER, FAILURE TO PROVIDE THE REQUIRED INFORMATION WOULD RESULT IN AN INABILITY TO PROCESS THIS REQUEST AND THE MEMBER WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO RECEIVE THE REQUESTED STATUS."

q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated (since age 16), other than military, political, or labor organizations:



- Student worship band
- Sunday night Bible study
- Mission trips to Arizona Indian reservation and Ecuador
- Christ in Youth trips

- Youth counselor for middle school



- Student worship leader internship
- Wednesday night Bible study leader



- High School Intern
- Worship minister internship

2. Enclosures (3) - (Letters from 
To provide additional information, references, or official statements which I desire you to consider in review of this application.



04 February, 2011

From: [REDACTED]

To: Navy Personnel Command (PERS-832 for Enlisted)

Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1980-020

1. I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection. The following required information is provided:

a. Permanent home address:

b. School and colleges attended after age 16:

<u>School Name/Address</u>	<u>Type School</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
----------------------------	--------------------	------------------------

[REDACTED]	High School	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	College	[REDACTED]

c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

<u>Employer/Address</u>	<u>Type Work</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
-------------------------	------------------	------------------------

[REDACTED]	Assistant Man.	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Owner/Man.	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Combine Driver	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	General Laborer	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Cashier	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Warehouser	[REDACTED]

d. All residences after age 16:

Address/City/State

Inclusive Dates



e. Spouse and member's parents' names / address and religion / sect (if deceased, so state):

Spouse-N/A

Mon

Dad-

f. I did not make application to the Selective Service System (local board) for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.

g. A description of the nature of my belief: (Thoroughly explain the nature of the belief, which requires you to seek separation from the Navy or assignment to noncombatant services/duties by reason of conscientious objection.)

The Mennonite faith is made up of a group of people with a belief of a simple lifestyle. It is mine and the member's beliefs that there are many temptations within a worldly lifestyle that one has to separate his or her lives from to live a lifestyle that is true to God's word. We still work within a modern day society but believe that certain things do not belong within the home and there are certain places within society that it is best for us not to accompany ourselves with.

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed: (Includes factors (how/when/from whom/from what source training was received) and the beliefs acquired or which caused the change in or development of conscientious objector beliefs.)

By the end of my active duty service in [redacted] and after arriving back home in [redacted] felt as though something was missing in my life. Later I would find myself traveling by the Mennonite Church in [redacted] for a few weeks; feeling like I wanted to stop and go in. After this I found myself in line at the local supermarket in town and behind me was a member from the church. I asked her on my way out when services were and if members of the public were welcome. She told me when services were and assured me that they would love to see me there. I went the next day and the weeks to follow and as I did, I found myself in tears as I listened to the sermons.

I would further be welcomed into the homes of the members, would begin attending youth functions, church activities, Sunday school, bible study, and other services. As the weeks continued past I remember traveling to a member's home one evening for a youth function and riding with me was one of the youth members. We discussed beliefs along the way and

he told me that he believed if he was not a part of this church, that he believed that he wouldn't be anywhere else. It brought tears to my eyes again as I felt in my heart that God had lead me to exactly where I needed to be in life. I feel that I have had a calling to this church through my experiences with it and a calling to the lifestyle and faith in God. I believe that this lifestyle and my faith in God now are what I need and the way I am to live.

I have continued to attend church functions, youth activities, church activities, Sunday school, bible studies, going to member's homes and all other aspects of the religion and faith that I can. I have studied the testaments from members and God in my bible and with each step along the way, I believe that I have recognized that the military cannot accommodate to changes I feel that I must make for God and I cannot perform duties adequately that the military is expecting of me because of my new found beliefs. I have continued to try and fulfill my duties on drill weekends but, I feel as though while I am in the military that I cannot fully commit to my faith, my brothers and sisters in Christ and most importantly, to God.

I. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military services:

I have been attending the Mennonite Church in [redacted] and participating as closely as I can to that of a member in its activities, youth functions and other ways of life since the end of Oct '10. Along the way I have slowly learned customs and beliefs of the faith and felt the calling on my heart to change my life and my ways. I believe that I am a different person now from when I started going to the church. I believe that when I first started going to the church and correcting my path with God that the choices I was making were personal and did not affect my life within the military service directly. But, as the last month has gone by, I have found myself struggling to separate the two. Even forced to make choices of doing things that weren't of my heart and life with Christ, but, I had to because of military customs and orders.

I have even seen my choices within my faith cause disagreements with family, friends and me. I would have to say that this has also shed light on my conclusion of the incapability to stay within the military while trying to honor my new beliefs. Members of my family and friends have expressed displeasure or disagreement in some of my life changes and have even expressed to others that they shouldn't talk to me because of my beliefs. I talked to the members of the Church about what was happening and I was reminded of many verses. Such as James 3; 12, "Who are you to judge your neighbor", or Peter 3; 8 "All of you, live in harmony with one another, be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble", or Mathew 5; 39 "If someone strikes you on the right cheek turn to him the other also" and many other verses in the scripture. I believe that I was being reminded not to judge my friends or family just because they chose to judge me. I was also encouraged to pray for them and not fight with them.

I recognized that God was putting a conviction on my heart to love my enemy's and those that judge me. Whether it be my friends, relatives, or enemy in our current battle within the military or any battle to come. I believe that even being within the military that I am participating in our battles over seas and supporting it. I believe that even if I am not bearing

arms within my job that I would still be supporting those that do. That would not be turning the other cheek, or loving as brothers, but in my belief, passing judgment upon them. For this reason as well as others, I believe that my beliefs and new found way of life are incompatible with the military service.

- j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances (if none, so state):

I don't believe that I can foresee any circumstance where the use of force or deadly force against another man or woman is acceptable. Certain instances such as hunting may require force over an animal or object but, not another person.

- k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs:

My new faith has changed my lifestyle in many ways. I think the biggest would be trying to live my life in a lifestyle that more pleasing to God, by means of a Godlier manor and the happiness it gives me in living for God. Examples would include selling my vehicle and downsizing into what is needed, not the self gratifying vehicle I had before. Not listening to the radio, and trying to eliminate TV from my life. As those things have to many negative messages and things that can cause a Mennonite Christian to slip in there walk with God. I don't shave normally except when going to military functions because it is required. I have quite drinking alcohol and have been working on eliminating my presence within bars and places of such where the main purpose of business is to sell alcohol or listen to music. I try to read my bible daily and have tried to center my life and way of living around the Church, its members, and above all, my walk with God. I believe that this is keeping me on the right path with Christ and allows me to assist my brothers and sister in there walks with Christ as needed. In the mere future I would like to be baptized and become a member within the Church, but, being in the military, I cannot seek membership. Nor would I feel that I was giving my whole heart and committing myself completely to him for re-birth, unless I was out of the military.

- l. Explanation of What, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs, which gave rise to this application:

I don't know that this will fit exactly what is being asked by this question but, I would have to say that God is the creator of the universe and all that is within it. I also believe that he gave his only begotten son so that who so ever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. One of the many major things in our faith is being reborn and having a new found belief in God and with that faith is a change of heart to be reborn and live for him. God cannot necessarily be seen and a change in heart cannot necessarily be seen, leaving many people to look at it as conspicuous. But, I ask you to see that I may not be perfect but my heart has been reborn with the lord.

My actions are of faith and my belief in God. It is because of this faith that I give up everyday things that most people think they couldn't live without. It is the reason I don't

Just continue in the military like everything is fine. It is the reasons why I don't care about my bonus money having to be repaid or how dumb my family or peers feel I am for giving up what they see as stability (being in the military). We are only on this earth for so long before the father calls us to judgment and on my day of judgment, I know that I believe and didn't deny him.

m. Prior Service (if any; if none, so state):

<u>Military Service</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>	<u>Type Discharge</u>
RTC Great Lakes	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
NMITC- Damneck	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization:

<u>Religious Sect/ Organization</u>	<u>Name & Location of Governing Body/Head</u>	<u>Name & Location of Church, Congregation Customarily Attending</u>	<u>Level of Participation</u>
Unknown	Unknown	[REDACTED]	Explanation Below

Explain when, where, and how you became a member of said sect or organization.

In my opinion my level of participation would be as much as possible without being a member. I have been attending this Church and its services and learning with the members since the end of Oct 2010. I am not a member as of this time and cannot seek membership while in military service. My participation began with a member invite in October and a calling to attend services within this church.

o. Information on the pastor or leader of my (church, congregation, or meeting):

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Address</u>
[REDACTED]	Member/Minister	[REDACTED]

Within this church everyone helps in leading, though there are two other pastors that work with [REDACTED] There information is not available.

p. A description of the creed or official statements (if any, and if known) of said religious sect or organization in relation to participation in war:

Our reasons for not participating in War would be for reasons given by the bible and its absolute truth and guidance to the world we live in. It is believed that war would be placing a form of judgment on someone and a battle between children of God, which is not acceptable. I believe that it could be said that being within a military setting exposes us to

worldly things and self gratifying objects that push us to live an ungodly lifestyle. Things like rank systems within the military gives us a sense of power and being above another, which can lead to negative and displeasing walks without God.

Many resources within the [REDACTED] explain these beliefs, one would be out of a Bible Doctrine and Practice book which tells us that the occupation, or activity that may require the use of carnal force violates the tenor of the gospel. It also can create a problem with separation of church and the State.

It also discusses how Jesus was the "Prince of Peace" and he was quoted saying "Put up again they sword into his place: For all that take the sword shall perish with the sword". This tells us that we are not to fight and if we do we are to perish. We are to have peace among one another because God is Love.

NOTE: Members will submit a signed copy of the following privacy act statement with their application:

"THE AUTHORITY TO REQUEST THIS INFORMATION IS DERIVED FROM 50 U.S.C. 456J AND 38 U.S.C. 3103, AND 5 U.S.C. 301, DEPARTMENTAL REGULATIONS. THE PURPOSE OF THIS APPLICATION IS TO ALLOW THE MEMBER TO APPLY FOR CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR STATUS. THIS APPLICATION IS COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY; HOWEVER, FAILURE TO PROVIDE THE REQUIRED INFORMATION WOULD RESULT IN AN INABILITY TO PROCESS THIS REQUEST AND THE MEMBER WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO RECEIVE THE REQUESTED STATUS."

- q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated (since age 16), other than military, political or labor organizations:

Since the age of 16 I have been engaged in many activities in [REDACTED]

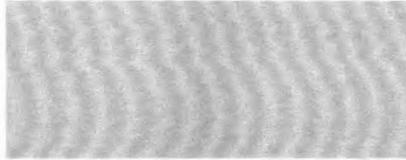
I attended many churches such as [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], but, I did not

[REDACTED], but, I didn't commit myself to anymore within the church other than

Sunday Service. Within a few months before going into the military I stopped going to church. I began attending the [REDACTED] around the end of October, 2010 and have continued since. I attend Sunday school, Sunday morning and evening Services, Youth functions, Wednesday night Bible Study, Church gatherings and visit members within their homes regularly.

2. Enclosures (1) – (4) (as applicable) provide additional information, references, or official statements, which I desire you to consider in review of this application.

A rectangular area with a wavy, textured pattern, indicating that the signature has been redacted.

(Signature)

OFFICIAL RECORD COPY

3 November 2010

From: [REDACTED]
To: Navy Personnel Command PERS-832
Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

1. I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection. The following required information is provided:

a. Permanent home address:

[REDACTED]

b. School and colleges attended after the age 16:

<u>School Name/Address</u>	<u>Type School</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	Public High School	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Public High School (Home School Program)	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Community College	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Accelerate To Excellence Program	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

United States Navy
[REDACTED]
Delayed Entry Program April 2008-June 2009
Active Duty June 2009-Present

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Server

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Courtesy Clerk

[REDACTED]

Volunteer

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Communication Tower/Equipment Technical Assistance

[REDACTED]

d. All residences after age 16:

Address/City/State

Inclusive Dates

[REDACTED]

e. Spouse and member's parents' names/address and religion/sect (if deceased, so state):

[REDACTED]

f. I did not make application to the Selective Reserve System for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.

g. A description of the nature of my belief:

I am seeking separation from the military as a conscientious objector because I no longer wish to serve as a contributor to war. My reasons are prominently based on religious and moral standards. Basically, I firmly believe that by serving in the military I am not living in harmony with God's commandments. As a consequence, over time I have developed a guilty conscience that has led me to seek separation. I am appreciative for all that the military has provided me, and I understand the sacrifice involved in serving. However, what use am I to the military if I have a moral objection to participating in it? My beliefs are founded in faith that I can be more beneficial to man's ultimate salvation by serving in the ministry to the best of my abilities. This I know will take time to accomplish, but I cannot apply myself as diligently as possible while taking part in the premeditation of force to take lives. Nor will I agree that man's salvation lies in the hands of politicians or politically backed religious powers.

Granted we can't just "turn our backs" against the evil and wrongdoers of society and we cannot change the past and I am by no means representing a political agenda. I am simply claiming neutrality and absolutely cannot live my life as a true Christian whom I intend to be while serving in the military as a conscientious objector. A substantial guilt has overcome me, and I know that I can more diligently apply myself toward serving God if I am free of this guilt.

Though my rate does not put me in the front lines of war, I still contribute to the conflict by [REDACTED] that contribute directly to the fighting of nations. One of many aspirations I had was to fly fighter aircraft. I was planning to apply for STA-21 and seek training in Naval Aviation. However, over time as I observed and experienced military lifestyle and mentality I felt morally uncomfortable with what my mission would be. Essentially,

if I don't want to drop bombs on people, is it not ironic that [REDACTED] Also, it would not matter what my job would be, serving in the military altogether conflicts with my beliefs.

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed:

I was inspired by faith for years, but never to a great extent. During the semester prior to A school I was learning a lot about my potential career in the Navy and unlike most of my peers I became despondent. I even researched various jobs within the military that I could potentially cross rate into. And I began doing research on religions that most accurately interpret the bible, leading me to Jehovah's Witnesses. As I sought to find answers, hope, inspiration, etc from the bible, I became more discontent with the situation I put myself in. I began to realize that the bible is just more than a self help book, or a historical reference to times of accomplishment and overcoming tyranny. It is the means of planting the seed of knowledge and direction, a safeguard from turmoil and pain, and the necessary means of establishing and maintaining a fervent relationship with God.

My objection got stronger. During [REDACTED] A School, I became ever more familiar with what my job would consist of. In addition to the moral dilemma that had cultivated during my semester of college prior to A school, and my faith getting stronger, I realized that the imminent conclusion that I cannot continue to pursue this path would become clearer. As I still thought of numerous ways that I could stay in the military, I became more anxious and guilty. It always came back to what I truly believe in- that I must be free of a guilt that was not necessary. I must dedicate my life to Jehovah God, and I must love others as He does. I must love Him and listen to His commands. I must commit myself to His mission, for I must overcome the influence to participate in premeditated warfare. I do not have a solution to the problems we face today, and I do not believe that any man does. However, I will no longer go forth in promoting what is wrong in the eyes of Jehovah, for his judgment is imminent.

- i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service:

The bible clearly states that followers of God's commandments are not to participate in politics or wars of the nations. We will not learn war anymore (Isaiah 2:4). Along with a prevalent desire to help people in more personal and inspirational ways, I began to understand through reading the bible that by dedicating my time to the military I am not doing with my life all that I can to ultimately benefit mankind. When I started studying the bible more diligently in November of 2009, I knew that I would not stop. I had been exposed to various religions as a youth, but none made as much sense to me as the teachings facilitated by Jehovah's Witnesses. So, as time progressed I became certain that I would not be able to serve in two armies at once. It becomes a "tug of war" on my conscience that instills guilt and agitation. My beliefs are becoming more and more grounded, and I will stand by my decision to respectfully and tactfully request separation from the military.

Jehovah God is my prominent influence. He is my mentor and guide. Nothing is going to convince me otherwise.

- j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstance (if none, so state):

It is very possible to avoid the use of force. I believe that every conflict has a nonviolent solution, but I am by no means proclaiming pacifism. I am simply proclaiming neutrality. Sometimes it can be very difficult to persuade someone who is determined to get something by force to stop and think about what it is he or she is doing, but I believe that it is possible. I will not contribute to the premeditation of force to take lives.

The statement (j) does not clearly define "force". To what extent of the word force am I trying to describe? Even during the times of Mosaic Law, which conformed strictly to

God's commandments, the use of force was necessary in many cases. Force has many degrees of application. I believe that non-lethal force to subdue a mad person or group of people is necessary, but where does one draw the line where premeditated force to exile or execute large numbers of people is necessary? I do not believe that it is. And I know that as long as man is in control of the systems of government, the use of force will be used and no matter how volatile the wars may become I will not put my faith in man to bring peace. It will not happen, as we've seen throughout history. Therefore, and to reiterate, I will not contribute to the premeditated use of force to take lives.

In regards to self defense it may be necessary to use force to subdue or alleviate an escalating situation. There are a substantial amount of "what if" situations that can be considered, but the principal in any unexpected attack depends greatly on the environment, the severity of the attack, and the resources available to handle the situation. If in the event that my peers, loved ones, or myself are in threat I would do my best to avoid contribution to an escalating situation and only if it is absolutely necessary will I use a weapon of any kind to subdue a person, or even an animal if that were the case.

- k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs:

The major changes are in my ways of thinking, my beliefs, outlooks, and the effects that such have had on my performance in training. My judgment and focus frequently becomes clouded as I conscientiously and critically think about what it is I am doing as a member in the military. As lucrative and rewarding the work and benefits may be to some individuals, they are of worldly importance to me. They are not of spiritual importance and are no longer in harmony with my beliefs. True, what I do until the time my obligation ends is only temporary, but such thinking is to me a form of complacency that will lead to emotional agitation and a stronger conscientious objection.

As far as lifestyle changes, I have become more vigilant about who I hang out with and what I do, say, and think. I began attending meetings with the congregation in Pensacola after almost five months of self-study while going through military training and found more answers, enlightenment, and enrichment in the bible than anywhere else. Perhaps this sounds subjective, but as my personal feelings about actions and consequences become fortified by setting higher moral standards, I became more and more motivated to conduct my life more strictly than even the military can facilitate. As 1 Peter 2:11 states: "keep abstaining from fleshly desires, which are the very ones that carry on a conflict [or, "are doing military service"] against the soul" My heart lies in a determination to find truth and to serve accordingly to the standards that are set by God. This determination will only get stronger for I will not falter in my attainment of love and peace with the world and with Jehovah. "We must obey God as ruler rather than men." Acts 5:29, Mark 12:17.

I plan to become a baptized publisher soon after my separation from the military, for I cannot do so while in the military. I intend to be a full time member in the worldwide organization of brothers and sisters dedicated to announcing the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Specifically I wish to join the [REDACTED] and eventually attend the [REDACTED]. Furthermore I want to join the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to travel to various places as a missionary to build Kingdom Halls, educate, and provide humanitarian aid.

1. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs, which gave rise to this application:

It is evident in my meeting attendance, association with the organization, and actions to notify my chain of command that my spiritual connection with Jehovah has grown immensely in the last eight months. My determination to pursue a legitimate and practical separation from the

military also demonstrates that my beliefs are sincere and have developed through deep thought and meditation over my circumstances and that of those around me. I feel that though it may be known that I can adapt well and adhere to the duties and responsibilities of my job in the military, a growing conflict of interest may lead to a diminishing morale and overall effort to the many facets of being a sailor [REDACTED]. As much as I can write about my beliefs there is no way to demonstrate in writing just how substantial my interest and faith in Jehovah really has become, for actions speak louder than words.

The bible states, those who fight by the sword will die by the sword (Matthew 26:52). Granted, thousands of Christians are fighting and have fought in war to defend the rights of the people who make up the nations of the world. And by no means can I say that they will suffer eternal death; for they can change and be granted salvation. God strictly commanded His people the guidelines for which we should live our lives; i.e. we must not participate in the taking of lives no matter what the cause; for a Christian may be taking the lives of other Christians.

m. Prior service: None

n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization:

<u>Religious Sect/Organization</u>	<u>Name & Location of Governing Body/Head</u>	<u>Name & Location of Church, congregation Customarily Attending</u>	<u>Level Of Participation</u>
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Jehovah's Witness

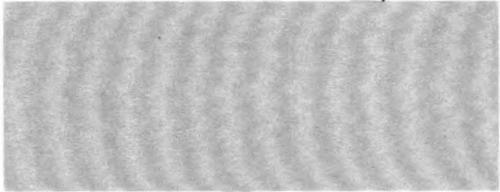
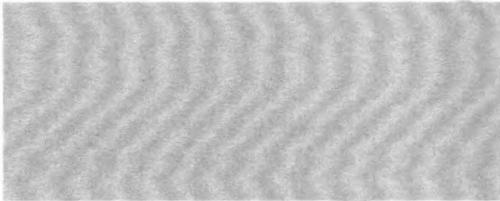


Bible Student

Explain when, where, and how you became a member of said sect or organization:

After almost five months of occasional yet influential self bible study and dealing with strong inclinations to seek participation within the ministry I called the [REDACTED] in March and spoke with an elder. I requested information as to the times of the meeting on Sundays and Wednesdays. I immediately began to attend the meetings and became acquainted with the organization. From that time until I left [REDACTED] I missed only three meetings on account of going home for emergency leave for a week in March and the occasional Duty Day. Also, I had a Bible study teacher whom I studied with on Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings before the meetings.

- o. Information on the pastor or leader of my (church, congregation, or meeting):



- p. A description of the creed or official statements (if any, and if known) of said religious sect or organization in relation to participation in war:

"Following the examples set by Jesus and first-century Christians, Jehovah's Witnesses do not share in the politics or wars of any nation. Our stand of Christian neutrality is well documented in history. We firmly believe that we must 'beat their swords into plowshares' and not 'learn war anymore.' (Isaiah 2:4) At the same time, we recognize the authority of nations to raise armies and

defend themselves, and we do not interfere with what others choose to do.—John 18:36.”

“We are neutral in political matters, not favoring one group over another, because we look to God’s Kingdom for the resolution of mankind’s problems. However, we cooperate with whatever lawful government is in power, and we strive to live in peace with our fellowman.”

(<http://www.jw-media.org/aboutjw/article11.htm#neutrality>)

“I [Jesus Christ] say to you who are listening, Continue to love your enemies, to do good to those hating you, to bless those cursing you, to pray for those who are insulting you.” Luke 6:27, 28

“Though we walk in the flesh, we do not wage warfare according to what we are in the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly, but powerful by God for overturning strongly entrenched things.”—2 Corinthians 10:3, 4

“Jesus said to him: ‘Return your sword to its place, for all those who take the sword will perish by the sword.’” — Matthew 26:52

“...And he will certainly render judgment among the nations and set matters straight respecting many peoples. And they will have to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, neither will they learn war anymore.” — Isaiah 2:2-4

“Let every soul be in subjection to the superior authorities, for there is no authority except by God; the existing authorities stand in place in their relative positions by God....There is therefore compelling reason for you people to be in subjection, not only on account of that wrath but also on account of your conscience...” — Romans 13:1,5

“Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding. In all your ways take notice of him, and he himself will make your paths straight.”

"A careful review of all the information available goes to show that, until the time of Marcus Aurelius [Roman Emperor from 161-180 C.E.], no Christian became a soldier; and no soldier, after becoming a Christian, remained in military service." -The Rise of Christianity (London, 1947), E.W. Barnes, p. 333.

"They refused to take any active part in the civil administration or the military defense of the empire...it was impossible that the Christians, without renouncing a more sacred duty, could assume the character of soldiers, of magistrates, or of princes." -History of Christianity (New York, 1891, pp. 162, 163)

- q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated (since age 16), other than military, political, or labor organizations:

Other than my affiliation with organizations within the community such as the

[REDACTED] that led me to the latter, I was not active in many organizations from age 16 to age 19 when I signed up for military service.

As described in part (n) of this application regarding level of participation, I am participating to the extent possible with the local congregation, formally and informally. By "extent possible" I mean that until I am out of the military I cannot dedicate myself to God and the congregation through baptism and participation in the ministry via pioneering and other volunteer service until I am free of conscientious objection and the consequential guilt. This is a stipulation of not only my personal beliefs, but that of the organization of Jehovah's Witnesses. To elaborate simply, a man wanting to serve God and the congregation must be pure in mind and heart to facilitate a loving relationship with himself, his family, the people he intends to benefit, and the superlative-his God.

I understand that it is my responsibility and burden to provide testimony from others if I so choose. Along with this application, I will include two letter enclosures from the [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. If necessary I will acquire letters from any individual familiar with my circumstances with the greatest extent being made to not convey a biased opinion.

2. Enclosures (1) - (2) provide additional information, references, or official statements, which I desire you to consider in review of this application.

[REDACTED]

OFFICIAL RECORD COPY

Date: 07NOV11

From: [REDACTED]
To: PERS-832
Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

1. I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection.
The following required information is provided:

a. Permanent home address: [REDACTED]

b. Schools and colleges attended after age 16:

<u>School Name/Address</u>	<u>Type School</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	High School	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	High School	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	High School	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	College	[REDACTED]

c. Chronological list of all the compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

<u>Employer/Address</u>	<u>Type Work</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	Kitchen worker	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Cashier	[REDACTED]

d. All residences after age 16:

<u>Address/City/State</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

e. Spouse and member's parents names and religion/sect:

[REDACTED]

f. I did not make application to the Selective Service System for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.

g. A description of the nature of my belief:

The Christ I know and follow came down from the heavens through the form of man and lived as a man. I am convinced in Him living life as a man He gave us all hope to live out a life like Him. That, I believe full-heartedly, to include finding peaceful manners to resolve issues with others. For it is written "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." Romans 12:14-21 The heaping of burning coals is not a literal action, but the idea that his spirit has been convicted by the Holy Spirit. The conviction cannot come from force, but by the gentleness that is found in the fruit of the Spirit. Conviction is the idea that the Holy Spirit comes in and tells a man that what he has done, or is doing is wrong or misguided. A man could be of good intentions, but approaches the issue or his life as a whole the wrong way. This comes into play when the Holy Spirit starts showing the man the path he should be on. Changing his fruits into what God has planned for him. As it says in Galatians 5:22-23 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law." These characteristics are the very example that Christ has shown to all. When allowing the Spirit to bring conviction, the changing of ones heart, the change is honest and pure. War goes against all of these things. Even in it's best intentions it cannot save. It cannot make a person a better person. Because it loses that person in violence and hatred, even if hatred was not the cause for war. He becomes something different.

Peace does not come out of the preparation for war, or war itself. If that were the case peace would of came many years ago.

Especially with the claim that World War I would of been the last war. But it wasn't, and it won't be unless there is a genuine approach to finding peace, through living out peace. Christ was that example for Christians in His ministries. When Mary Magdalene was about to be stoned for a sin she did commit Jesus stepped in and instead of joining them, He asked who was without sin that they may cast the first stone. Christ was the only without sin and did not cast a stone, but showed her mercy so that she may find an alternative to the life she was living. In a moment where violence was used by the culture to try and correct a person, He showed something different. On the cross, instead of cursing those who crucified Him, and asking His disciples to seek His revenge He asked that they be forgiving.

As I look at the Scriptures and see how Christ approached various persons and the words He said, I come to the issue of violence and the Word. I see the application of non vi, sed verbo, not through violence, but through the word. Christ being the very Word that we do all things through when we call upon His name. When Christ says one thing and another tried to be justified instead of one actually listening to what is being said I can see how war and violence become a justified means to the end. In listening and doing, not as two separate actions, but one peace is found reshaping the very being of a person. War, forgiveness and peace are separate from each other. War is thought of a tool to bring peace, but it takes away the humanity that is found on both sides of the war. In war good and evil begin to look the same. Both sides say they are the good guys. WWII is the best example I have of this thought process. Found in Adolf Hitler's "Mien Kampf" in several spots he declares that what he is doing is of God because of what the Jews had done against Christ. Many of the allies thought what they were doing was also of God's work. Two separate sides fighting for the same God instead of dropping arms and coming to an agreement as the Pope of the time urged.

In the Sermon on the Mount Christ gives various points to the life of non-violence and forgiveness. Matthew 5:21-22 He says, "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be liable to judgement.' But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgement; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire." Saying to me that even the position of my heart towards another man is deemed murder and to seek peace before I have set myself against the word of God. The wars in the Old Testament happened because His wrath had not yet been satisfied by the sacrifice of His only begotten Son on the cross. In this understanding that what Christ has done is found in satisfaction to God as the Father brings to conclusion that wrath of the Old Testament. His character has not changed. He is always mercy, grace, love, forgiveness and our judge. In the satisfaction of His wrath we are no longer instruments of His judgement. Christians should be instruments of peace, not of

war. If a man is to strike me I do not just cower at him, but approach him as an equal. Violence is used to lower the meaning of another's life. To approach him and say you and I are both human, in actions taking, I start crossing bridges most burn down. In reconciliation walls begin to crumble and forgiveness and grace begin to form.

When I ponder upon the words, "Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also," (Mathews 5:39) I do not see an excuse to not stand up for what is right. But I see an urgency to live a life where standing up means holding oneself in place and not resorting to the means of violence and evil towards another. As Walter Wink points out Christ isn't about a "fight or flight" mentality, but a third way that actively engages a man in his enemies life, showing him love where it wasn't previously found. To forgive and seek retribution, instead of retaliating you make that person, in your eyes, human. Not a foreigner, nor demon, but a neighbor, hoping to share in a common goal. Retribution is the completion of forgiveness, in that all things are made new. In that completion it isn't that what was done wrong never happened, but that in the coming together instead of retaliating in revenge the parties become one party in brotherhood. This is also in the spirit of John who said "Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God." (3 John 1:11), who in all three books of his talked about giving love unto others and not being found in sin by being full of hate. In the regard that some believe that violence has the ability to save. That violence is only found on the cross. In the violent death of my Saviour I can find hope for a world where men do not learn war any longer. To kill a man, or torture him, even with the intent of trying to make him a better man takes away his humanity because the thought is that you are playing the part of the better man. Justice should be a means for a man to see his wrongs and change from them. When justice doesn't look any different than the crime he has committed it is lost.

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed:

I joined the Navy to pay off school debt. When I first joined I had no issue with war. It was something that happened, and I knew of some people in my town who had died while in. But I didn't let that bother me. Everything was running pretty smoothly for the most part. I had my hiccups. But I was enjoying it.

When I had gotten into "A" school I was getting back into church because I hadn't really been going since joining. It was a very close net community at the church. The people there made me feel very welcome. Within a couple visits I felt as if I had a home there. I had become close friends with the youth pastor and his girlfriend and we talked about many different things. We talked about what a life looks like that is following Christ. As time went on I had refreshed myself on things I once knew dearly. I became familiar with the

freedoms that are found in fellowship with Christ. Also with the forgiveness and mercy and grace that is promised to all men. At this point I still didn't have issues with war. I hadn't yet understood that my brothers and sisters in God are all men. I understood that a man or woman who believed in Christ were my brother or sister. These things were the building block of what I believe now. I had always held the understanding that Christ died for all and their sins, but didn't realize that should imply a certain reaction from me. This realization didn't come about until the end of my first under-way I started to understand that all men were under the same condition of sin and just as capable as evil, but the interesting part of it all is that all are also given the opportunity to turn from that evil and turn towards God. I was learning this through reading "The Kingdom of God Is Within You" by Leo Tolstoy I decided to pick up this book because I had previously read "War and Peace" and I wanted to read something else of his and this was a thinner book so it would be easier to read while also working on my qualifications. Much of Tolstoy's book looks at the Sermon on the Mount and how one must look at the life they lead using that as an example. Which is the reason I was reading Matthew. In Matthew I saw that what Christ was doing was very different from the Church today. It started to bother me in the difference. Christ was a very forgiving man. It wasn't that He was weak in what He had done, but that what He was saying was to all men and women around Him. He even spoke to the Pharisees about the evils of making yourself look like something you are not. This is what struck me, because the Church as I was seeing it was making it look like something it was not. I was thinking of this because the church I had left back home had made itself more concerned with bringing people in and less about those who are in the community. There were outreaches and other ministries being done, but had the feeling of we want the people in our specific body. While in off crew after that deployment the question came to mind "Who am I to decide that another man dies because of what he has done?" I had sat on this question for some time, just searching the Scriptures about judging and our actions in judging. The answer came to me when in the Bible says "Judge not, or you will be judged with greater measure." To say a man is not worth his life because of the wrongs he has done means that you should be judged in a greater manner. That judgement that is giving to men does not come out of righteousness but a self-righteousness that is possessed in thinking that a man's actions make him higher than other peoples. During that same time I went up to [redacted] a band I had started listening to around the time of getting to [redacted]. The show was at a small church called [redacted]. When I went there I noticed how peaceful the group was as a whole. The peacefulness of the crowd struck me and made me start questioning my own heart because I wasn't very calm in those days. My heart continually felt in turmoil. I was still struggling with the death of my friend who was the youth pastor I previously mentioned. During that night after I had left the church and went to find a place to stay for the night with my friend. We had a found a place to camp in an undeveloped

subdivision. While getting set up I was thinking about a thought that had past through my head while listening to whom I have regular contact with online. When she was playing I was thinking about salvation and how it applies to all men. Not that all men are saved already, but that salvation is available to them. When I went to bed I had a dream where she was playing her on a platform in the middle of a river while a group of children were coming down to be baptized. They were not just Americans, but children of all lands. When I woke I wasn't sure what to do with myself. I felt two different ideas colliding against one another. One said that war was justifiable, the other said that war is not and that one should seek out peaceable means to live. I was already in the Word a lot more at this time, so I started to search more and more for that source of peace that they held. I understood that it came from Christ, but the example being lived out was something new to me. Something I was subconsciously looking for the entire time. I had grown up with church members coming on Sundays and Wednesdays being completely different people than I knew the other days of the week. My family left the church because my Dad was stabbed in the back by another member saying he did not do enough with my brother and I at the time. My Dad was my for as long as I can remember as a child, until we moved to my freshman year. He also allowed me to do stuff with the older children and teenagers even though I was young in comparison to them. As I was searching through the Bible about peace and the implication that the Christian has a choice to make, either continue to say "Lord, Lord" but not really live out what is said or to truly say "Abba" and seek out the peaceable kingdom of God. After the time I had in I also started reading books by Walter Wink, Tripp York, Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin. From all of these writers in different ways I was learning that The Kingdom of God is different and separate from the kingdoms of men. It helped me understand what Christ was saying when He said my kingdom is not of this world. I was finding peace in this. I was reading Tripp York's "Living on Hope In Babylon" when I was under-way with the I had gone under-way with this boat to help support their watch bill because they had recently lost member of their Radio Division due to them getting out of the Navy. This would have been in April two weeks after the bombing of Libya, that was done with the help of the opposite crew of my boat. While under-way with the I was praying a lot about what I should do now. I hurt for those who were killed by the attack. Not because I agreed with what they were doing, but because they could never know salvation and the love and peace that comes from it. Christ had given me a second chance I did not deserve when I was 18. I have realized what that looks like now. That second chance in salvation is a right to all men. The same even goes to people like Osama bin Laden. The best Biblical example is when Saul was on his way to oversee the execution of Christians gets blinded and God gives Him a vision to visit a man and he will speak with you. At the end of that Saul went from someone who was feared by Christians, to Paul who wrote 2/3rd of the New Testament.

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service:

My beliefs became incompatible with military service while going under-way with [REDACTED]. I could no longer see myself continue on this path if I am to call myself a Christian with the beliefs I hold. I would be serving two masters, two different, conflicting ideals. I can no longer say that I am a Christian and serve in a place that organizes strikes against others we deem as enemies, knowing that these said enemies are made in the image of God and that I am called to love and pray for them. Feed them when they are hungry, give them drink when they are thirsty. Justice is not found in striking down against them, but in the action of fully loving and praying for them that in the end one can hope that they do not part sides from us, but are mutual benefactors or friends in the world that we live in together. To strike against them I go against the belief I hold, and have gained from the example of Christ of what justice is. Justice is not a one-sided battle, but the bringing together of two halves. Before going under-way with [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the opposite crew of my boat took part in the devastation that occurred in Libya. Prior to this I was praying on what I should do with my new found beliefs. I prayed a lot while under-way with the Georgia. Halfway through the deployment I had a dream where I was travelling with a group of men and women serving the poor in community with them. I remember hearing God said this is what I have for you. I understood that I needed to learn more about community before travelling in one. This is what struck my interest into looking for a means to get out and start getting back into ministry.

The carrying of arms goes against the cross mentality of bearing a common yoke with all. A yoke of goodness and gentleness. I cannot say to myself I am carrying this yoke, which says I have put myself under Christ, and serve in a place that carries a different yoke. This yoke is a yoke of war. It is not an easy or light yoke to carry, and does much damage to persons as an individual and as a group. It can blind a person from the truth of the grace and mercy of God found in His Son's death. It can also cause a man to forget that he and those in others lands are created in the same image. The early church had a deep understanding of this. Many were called incestuous, because the Romans believed that they with each other, calling themselves brother and sister. But the case really was that they saw where they came from, realizing that they were adopted into the family of God, making them brother and sisters in Christ.

j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances:

In the event of someone perpetrating violence towards me I would seek creative non-violent means to approach the situation. Holding

the understanding that all men are created in the image of God I cannot justify causing harm on their body for the self-preservation of my own. Christ went throughout His ministry using a third way, one not of fight or flight. In the garden when He was arrested He healed the Centurion that Peter had struck. On the cross He forgave those who crucified Him. In doing this He showed me something new, that is not full of myself, nor is it a cowardly act of running away from issues. But approaching them in His Spirit, with a strength that is only given by God.

k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs:

I no longer play violent video games. I would play them hours at a time, but now in that time I read the Bible and do studies of the cultures in the Bible to get a clearer picture of what is being said. I also read theologians who profess non-violent behavior. Some of the theologians and authors I read include Walter Wink, John Howard Yoder, Shane Claiborne, Dorothy Day and Tripp Yorke. It also includes Leo Tolstoy, Martin Luther King Jr. and Peter Maurin. My temper has calmed compared to what it was prior to this understanding that to seek Christ and His kingdom that I am to live in peace I was very hot-headed. In doing this I want to learn to one day create a community and do the same in another part of the world. I had been in contact with the [REDACTED]. They are in need of someone more experienced in working at a house of hospitality. As of right now I am speaking with people at [REDACTED] community that was started by [REDACTED] to possibly do an internship there. Along side them I am speaking with [REDACTED] which came out of [REDACTED]. It is an organization that helps those who have struggled with serving in the military and veterans who struggle with what they did while in service. But the goal is to live out the Way of Christ through community, as He did with the disciples, which was continued when He ascended to Heaven through the clouds.

1. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs, which gave rise to this application:

What gave rise to this application is a process of prayer and study of who Christ is and what He wants out of His followers. And understanding that I would be nothing without Him. There is the chance that I would not even be able to do what I have done day in and day out, but He is gracious enough to allow me to wake in the morning. To deny the example He gives I am denying that blessing and I feel to deny the blessing of life giving, that is to include the lives of others. I am to serve the poor with a the fullness of my heart, and am unable to do so while serving in the military. I am to seek peace

, justice and love all things that are only found in the serving of Christ. I cannot say I am a Christian and continue to serve the military and their needs. I have the utmost respect for those who have given their lives for what they believe in. My beliefs, however, no longer align to that of the United States Navy.

I have sight of a peaceful community, who seeks diplomacy over violence and war. I want to seek this idea full-heartedly. This has been laid on my heart with the utmost importance and I cannot ignore the desire to seek after God, just to continue to serve in the Navy for financial gain. It has afforded me the opportunity to study and thought me about myself, and who I am in Christ. To say that no good came out of serving would be a lie. Because God can bring good out of any circumstance.

What I learn from my studies I plan to share through travelling the states and teach similar to the form found in [REDACTED]. Instead of living according to the confounds of money and social status, teach others to live in community as the disciples and early church did. A person has no meaning if found left alone, but having a common work and common idea community is found, building a person up. This living is not possible if in continuous fighting, but is found in working together to solve issues that can otherwise lay unsettled causing strife later down the road.

m. Prior service:

NONE

n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization:

<u>Religious Sect/ Organization</u>	<u>Name & Location of Governing Body/Head</u>	<u>Name & Location of Church, Congregation Customarily Attending</u>	<u>Level of Participation</u>
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Attend every Sunday that is possible

* In having only gone to this church a short period I am unsure of the affiliated head that they are associated with.

o. Information on the pastor or leader of my church:

The church I am currently attending is in the search of a new pastor. I am not sure what had happened to the old pastor, because he was gone before I had started to attend this church.

p. A description of the creed or official statements of said religious sect or organization in relation to participation in war:

In the transition of finding a new pastor I am unaware of a creed that they have to justify Christian involvement in war.

q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated, other than military, political, or labor organizations:

During the majority of my childhood I was [REDACTED] I was highly involved, spent the majority of my summers at camps and events. When I was 21 I spent a year working with [REDACTED]

2. Enclosure 1 provide additional information, references, or official statements, which I desire you to consider in review of this application.

01DEC2011

From: [REDACTED]
To: Navy Personnel Command PERS-832
Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

1. I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection. The following required information is provided:

a. Permanent Home Address:

[REDACTED]

b. School and colleges attended after age 16:

[REDACTED]

c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

Employer/Address
USN

Type Work

Inclusive Dates

05/2009 to present

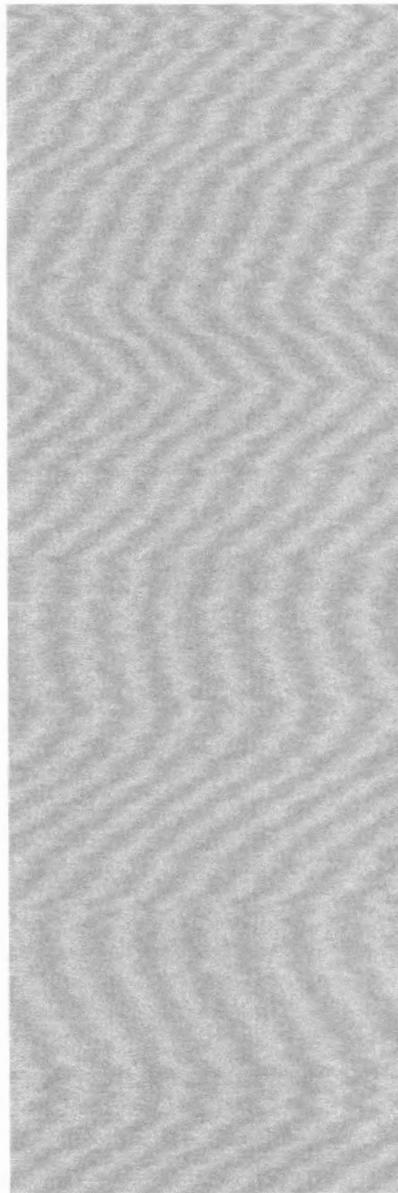
Labor

None

General Manager

Pizza Prep

Delivery Driver



Ramp Agent



Manager



Sales



Service Laborer



None



Driver Assistant



Sales



Clerk



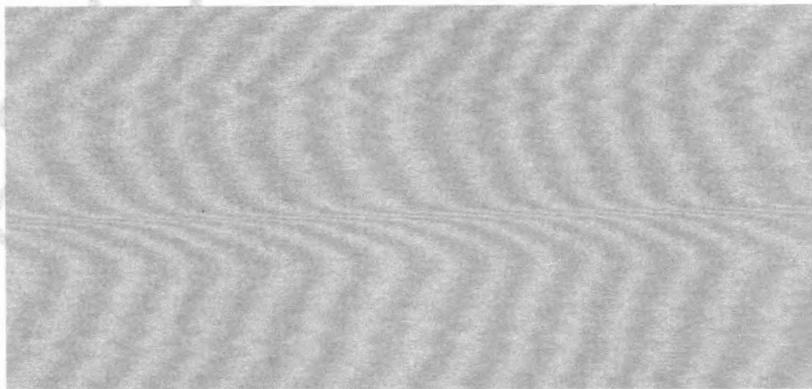
Food Prep/Sales



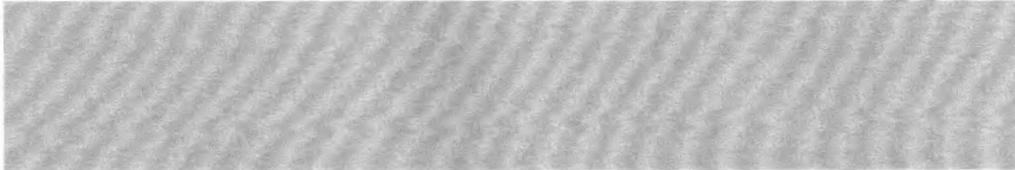
None



d. All residences after age 16:



e. Spouse and member's parents' names/address and religion/sect:



f. I did not make application to the Selective Service System for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.

g. A description of the nature of my belief:

I believe that all religions are different pathways to the same place and that they all describe the same heavenly force. Although I cannot claim to follow one religion, I have faith that there is a higher power in the universe. My beliefs stem from a study of various religions of the world, their sacred texts, meditation, yoga, and contemplation on social values. I take what I find in different religions and examples from everyday life to help shape myself into what I deem a better person day by day.

If it is true what Ghandi said that "You must be the change you wish to see in the world." I want to witness a peaceful world where humans are not killing or violating each other's basic rights. For me to facilitate this change, to become this change, it is impossible for me to continue my service in the armed forces without extreme physical and emotional consequences that come as a result of the nature of the armed forces conflicting with my beliefs.

Change starts in the home and with that in mind I could not with a clean conscience help raise my daughter with peaceful, selfless, and generous values while being a member of an organization that promotes and strives toward a goal that I now feel is exactly opposite that.

In the course of my meditations, reflections, and studies I have come to view any situation where rights are violated or arms are raised against fellow man as abhorrent. People are people no matter their color, religion, up-bringing, economic class, gender, nationality, or whether they are involved in a violent group or a peaceful group, they were human first. We are all humans above all and before all else.

One strange but powerful catalyst in my change was Dr. Bronners' Magic Soap. I would stand in the shower and read these soap bottles for extended periods of time contemplating the meaning of "All one or none! Exceptions eternally? Absolutely none!" and the "All one God faith." Shortly after I saw another piece of the puzzle in the form of a poster hanging in a chiropractor's office and on it was written a quotation from Chief Seattle "Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect." Something in these words resonated in my

heart and helped in developing my belief that the world and the human race is a whole interconnected unit, a "web," as Chief Seattle stated.

We must remember the ultimate rule the rule that applies to everyone all the time and that is "Do to others what you would have others do to you." It is of the utmost importance that we honor and respect each other because we would not wish them to treat us any other way. If everyman were excellent and treated their brothers and sisters in human kind with fairness then there would be an atmosphere of mutual respect, life, and love, as opposed to the prevailing attitude of the western society and the emphasis it places on death and fear.

I sincerely believe that living a peaceful lifestyle is the change I want to see in the world. I now see that treading lightly on the web that Chief Seattle spoke of and helping to mend it where it needs mending will allow our planet to thrive.

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed:

I used to be so enthusiastic about all things Navy. I loved attending and participating in ceremonies, the history, and the camaraderie. I had been ecstatic to be a part of something larger, a global community of diverse individuals working together toward a common goal. I was proud to say that I am in the Navy and I held my head high in my uniform. Throughout my training in the Navy, from my DEP meetings at the recruiters' office to my follow on training at [REDACTED] I had been a proud sailor. While at Recruit Training Command I worked hard and helped my shipmates while holding a position as section leader. When I was a student at the [REDACTED]

I held a position as a squad leader in my division and a section leader in a multi-service classroom. I worked very hard to obtain good grades in my studies while simultaneously striving to increase my physical fitness so that I may excel at the Physical Readiness Test. I trained very hard to be physically fit and excel in my target language so that I might one day apply and receive orders to either an aircrew shop or assist SEAL teams in the field, although I knew that neither was possible during my first enlistment in the Navy. I also explored career paths in programs designed to help enlisted service members achieve a commissioned rank, such as STA-21. I had no plans on leaving the military after one enlistment.

My belief has changed and developed steadily since checking in to [REDACTED] in January. It began when I read the book "Be Here Now" by Ram Dass, which introduced me to spirituality, eastern philosophy, and faith. While reading this book I began practicing yoga and meditation. After I finished this book I continued my studies in spiritual texts including the Bible, the Yoga Sutras, the Quran, and the Tao Te Ching. With all this study, meditation, and work toward unification of body and mind I started to see humanity as one whole unified body working together where every single person has an important role to play in the whole.

The more news I watched and the more I learned about the state of our world, I realized that humanity is ill; it is imbalanced in spirit, body, and mind. If humanity had one physical body, then people hurting other people is akin to humanity slicing its own appendages off. I came to contemplating my role in humanity only to discover that I want to help sew the limbs back on and restore a balance in the world as a whole, a balance that left our world long ago.

My wife and I began attending meetings of the [REDACTED] in February. We were expecting a baby in August and these groups help parents-to-be become educated consumers when choosing birth services. It is a common theme in the meetings to compare and contrast the "normal" hospital birth with birth center birth and home birth with a trained midwife. We saw many birth movies and the differences between a hospital birth and a home birth.

In a "normal" hospital birth the baby is immediately torn from its mother's arms screaming, has goo wiped in its eyes, is poked with needles, the umbilical cord is cut immediately (depriving the child of a third of its blood supply), the room is painfully bright compared to the darkness of the womb, it is washed by rough hands removing the scent of amniotic fluid which is the only thing familiar to the newborn, and if it is a male the child may be subject to genital mutilation (circumcision). I then thought "This is what will happen to my child if born in a hospital?" I would feel terrified, alone, sad, freakish, and ill if someone did this to me. Just because a newborn baby cannot speak our language or does not have advanced motor skills does not mean we should do such gross things to it. I would exhaust all resources to prevent this happening to anyone whether newborn, elderly, or anywhere in between. I began to wonder if this violent treatment of newborns has anything to do with how people interact later in life. Could our treatment of babies have consequences so loud that they echo into future generations? "What we do to the web, we do to ourselves."

My daughter was born at home July 31st with the assistance of a certified professional midwife. As opposed to what happens in hospitals there was no screaming from the newborn, the light was dim and relaxing in our bedroom where she was born, as soon as my daughter was born she was placed on her mother's chest, she had no goo rubbed in her eyes, there were no needles to poke her, she was wiped dry, not bathed, and wrapped up in a blanket and given right back to her mother to stay warm and nurse, she remained attached to the placenta for almost two hours (ample time for her blood to return to her body), and she was examined, weighed, and measured without ever leaving the bed. It was as peaceful as birth can be. This was the most amazing experience of my life. What I felt is beyond words to describe. A profound change took place in me that night, though I did not realize it until about two months later.

After the birth I took three weeks of leave to help my wife while she healed and to get acquainted with my new daughter. When I went back to work I went directly to a language refresher class. I was distracted for a

couple of months and did not notice anything different about myself until I started the [REDACTED]. This course is the final piece of the [REDACTED] training pipeline.

- i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service:

To receive the campus access badge, clearance to secured spaces, and access classified compartmented information it is required to participate in a series of briefings commonly referred to as "Newcomer's Orientation," which I attended in February.

[REDACTED]

All of a sudden I was no longer so enthusiastic about my future in the Navy. I had some extremely valuable conversations with my shipmates and friends about the brief we had attended, transparency, and the morals of intelligence collection. In the course of our discourse one March day conscientious objection arose as a topic. I decided it to research it more, but could not find satisfactory information and decided to give the Navy the benefit of the doubt. After all, I really could not know very much from just a few hours of orientation briefings. I decided that I must learn more about my job, my role in the military, and the effect that I would have on the lives of people all over the world. In the interim period I clung to the notion that all that I had found to be so heinous really was not that bad and that if it truly is then perhaps I could bring about a change for the better. I continued my spiritual and religious study, as well as my yoga practice. I developed a strong desire to become a vegetarian so that no creature would have to die for my comfort. However, my wife was pregnant so we decided to err on the side of safety and keep flesh in the diet for the time being.

[REDACTED]

began in late September 2011 during which I found that the more I learned, the more difficulty I had, accepting my role in what I saw unfolding in front of me. Though, still, I remained in class waiting to find the silver lining of the cloud. In the middle of October I took my concerns with what I had learned to my chain of command. I sat with three chiefs and two first class petty officers to discuss my beliefs toward the topics at hand. One chief told me that what I was saying sounded like conscientious objection. He recommended that I look into the topic and take a good long look at what I wanted to do with my life and made it very clear that there is no room for conscientious objectors in "his Navy." The following day I met with the chaplain to discuss conscientious objection and where I would find reliable resources on the topic. Once I had familiarized myself with the topic I began to gather my thoughts so that I could begin my application process. For two more weeks I continued in class while

collecting my evidence. All the while I maintained good grades in the course. Shortly after this I made my declaration as a conscientious objector. Before being placed in a non-combatant job after declaring myself to be a conscientious objector it took hours after the end of the work day for me to look my wife in the eyes or even speak to her because I was so disturbed by what I was contributing to.

- j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances:

The use of force is acceptable when the goal is to diffuse aggression and restore balance. Self defense or aiding in the defense of a person who is being subject to aggression is a good example. Once the aggressor has been rendered harmless there is no further need to apply force. This is what I have come to believe from reading about the Japanese martial art, Aikido and participating in an Aikido class.

The use of force is appropriate in a time critical situation where a life maybe saved or when the injury from the applied force is less than the injury that would otherwise be inflicted. An example would be pulling a child out of the path of a moving automobile in a parking lot. I remember such an event happening to me as a child. My arm hurt and I may have had a bruise where my parents had grabbed my arm, but this is preferable, by far, to getting run over.

I do not believe that war is an acceptable solution to any conflict. It is not a solution at all, but a problem. Killing each other is wrong no matter which way you look at it. I can no longer carry out my duties in the military because I now believe all work in the military is work toward the goal of destroying life. While I believe that personal self defense is sometimes necessary, the intentional taking of a life is never acceptable, especially that of war.

- k. Explaining how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs:

The following paragraphs will catalog the most concrete changes I have seen in my life since my beliefs began to change and crystallize. I am very uncomfortable around firearms and lethal weaponry. I have no intentions to further my weapons training while in the Navy or after the Navy. Once upon a time I did wish to purchase a few hand guns, but never had the money to spare. I have never owned a firearm and now I do not intend to ever own one.

I now try very hard to recognize all creatures' right to life. I felt compelled to live a vegetarian lifestyle while my beliefs were changing. Finally, my household began eating cruelty free in October 2011. I have donated my leather clothes, outside of uniform items, to charity. It is a great feeling to have taken this step. I also use only bath and grooming products

that have no animal products in them and that were not tested on animals.

I no longer kill insects or pests I find in my home or garden. If I find a bug in the house I simply catch it in a jar and set it free in the yard. If I have an infested plant in the garden I will remove the plant far from the others to prevent further problems, or if it is just a single bug that has the capacity to inflict heavy damages on one or two plants I will either remove it or let it eat. I try to grow enough for everyone because I understand caterpillars turn to butterflies which pollinate my other plants and give me great joy to watch floating around the yard.

I recently found a possum in my chicken coop with a pile of feathers, blood, and bones. I grabbed a shovel to shoo him out of the coop because I could not bring myself to avenge my chicken. The possum must eat too. Before the change in my beliefs I would have most likely smashed or chopped off the possums head with the shovel instead of merely nudging it away. I would have then proceeded to dress it out and cook him for dinner. It is also worth noting that until recently I had planned on raising said chickens for meat and eggs. It was actually my hens that helped me become a vegetarian when I realized that I could not bring myself to kill them for food.

My household recycles, grows as much of our own food as possible, uses cloth diapers, and composts because it is the only way we see fit to respect our environment and be gentle on our habitat. If we are indeed all parts of one big web then I believe that living like this affects the web in a more positive way than the typical "American" lifestyle. I also see it as a way to invite harmony back into the world. We can no longer see how our lives would work if we did not do these things and we will continue these habits as long as we are able.

Since the birth of my daughter I have had an aversion to violent movies and provocative music. I started listening to artists who sing about peace, truth and standing up for yourself and the little guy instead of the latest pop hits about drinking, violence, and having casual sex with anyone and everyone. My favorite movies used to be action, suspense, and horror films. I enjoyed the movement, the fighting, and the gore. I find that now I would rather watch a documentary, a comedy, or a children's movie because the violent movies no longer hold their appeal with me like they once did. I saw a church marquee with the message "What should not be heard by little ears, should not be said by big mouths." Taking this to heart, I have been more aware of the language I use on a daily basis and try very hard to not use profanity.

I aim toward the goal of becoming a healer. I have been introduced to the ancient Indian practice of Ayurveda during my studies. Ayurveda is a system designed to promote human happiness, health, and growth. It does not separate science, philosophy, and religion, but is a systemized knowledge and practical wisdom encompassing all phases of life, body, mind, and spirit. I intend on one day attending a school to become a certified practitioner so that I may aid people in restoring balance and health in their own body, mind and spirit and in turn help to heal our entire planet. Along with Ayurveda I

plan to obtain training in Yoga and Reiki. Through a more formal study of Yoga I will be able to receive 200 hour and 500 hour teacher training certifications. With that, I will teach Yoga so that I may help people create peace in mind and body, which will also benefit my Ayurveda practice. Reiki is a Japanese technique for stress reduction and relaxation that also promotes healing. Formal training and certification in Reiki will provide me one more tool to use to help people heal. I also intend on studying Aikido. Although it is a martial art, Aikido is focused on restoring balance and preventing harm to the attacker as well as the victim. Someday when we have no growing children in the house my wife and I may make the leap into a vegan lifestyle.

- I. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs which gave rise to this application:

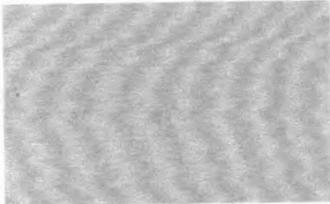
Every day I strive to tell the truth and not burden myself with keeping secrets. I help others anytime I am able despite inconvenience or financial burden. I firmly believe that nothing should have to die for my comfort. I do not wear expensive clothes or drive a fancy car. Although I may not offer prayers to a specific god every day I do know that opening up to the powers that be while going through hard times can be an awesome experience to help me make it through the day. My family and I consider ourselves doubly blessed that we are not cold, wet, or hungry. Because we are so content and thankful for warmth, shelter, food, and the small luxuries we are given, I do not pursue promotion or the additional comforts that it may bring. I do not strive for advancement because I have no need to validate myself via a position over my peers. Knowing that truth is more difficult to live through than lying but lying is more difficult to live with helps me accept the consequences of my actions. All tasks I am charged with are carried out to the best of my ability within the capacity of my morals. I will not lie, cheat, steal, kill, or sell myself or anybody else to complete a job at hand.

My wife and I would be considered "attached parents." According to Attachment Parenting International "The long range vision of Attachment Parenting is to raise children who will become adults with a highly developed capacity for empathy and connection. It eliminates violence as a means for raising children, and ultimately helps to prevent violence in society as a whole... Attachment Parenting challenges us as parents to treat our children with kindness, respect and dignity, and to model in our interactions with them the way we'd like them to interact with others." In the autumn of 2010 we discussed how our future children would be raised. I thought it was unacceptable for a child to nurse for longer than six months. She also quoted me as saying "Our child will NEVER sleep in our bed." My wife pointed out to me recently that I am now supportive of extended breast feeding and co-sleeping/bed sharing with our daughter.

q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated, other than military, political, or labor organizations:

My wife and I have been members of [REDACTED] since February 2011 and [REDACTED] since April 2011. We attend meetings of each once a month. Both organization help educate families on their options for giving birth while promoting peaceful birthing and parenting practices.

2. Enclosures 1 - 5 provide additional information, references, or official statements which I desire you to consider in review of this application.



01 DEC 2011
Date

SSN



Printed Name (last, first, middle initial)

16 Aug 11

From: [REDACTED]
To: NAVY Personnel Command. Pers-832
Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

1. I request assignment to noncombatant services/duties on the grounds of conscientious objection. The following required information is provided:

a. Permanent home address: [REDACTED]

b. School and colleges attended after age 16:

[REDACTED]
Public High school

[REDACTED]
Public High school

[REDACTED]
Public High school

[REDACTED]
Community college

c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

[REDACTED]
Worked in the produce and meat department.

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[REDACTED]

d. All residences after age 16:

[REDACTED]

e. Spouse and member's parents' names/ address and religion/sect (if deceased, so state):

[REDACTED]

f. I did not make application to the selective service system (local board) for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.

g. A description of the nature of my belief: To the Navy I am for the most part just a body, but valued by God as somebody who he would send his only begotten Son to die for me, to die the death I truly deserve. (John 3:16) "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." I am not one who looks to destroy the life that God gave his only begotten son to die for, regardless if one human organization says I am just in doing so. I am not ignorant to the fact there is many of evil in this world, some consider violence is the way to deal with the problems and this may be one way the world handle it's matters, but for me as long as I am in this world, I am called to be the light of the world, no matter how evil a person may be that person is of such value that God would send his only begotten Son to die in his place. I've done and still do many of wrongs, and if I told you I have never done things with this body both physically and verbally to have afflicted anybody, I would be a liar, because I have, and if wasn't because of the grace of God I would still be often

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doing so. The me that join the service would not be writing this letter based on what my beliefs where before enlisting for when I first got in my focus was not on seeking the things of God, I was focused on me, seeking temporal pursuits, but not neglecting the fact in totality that these temporary things can only do so much for yet there still lies a void, there is not comfort in doubt, but in truth, anxiety, stress all things all man deal with, but through my experience I've learned it's better to hand it over to the God in Heaven that can change the heart of man around, to use the lives that man may not see fit for even man's service but useable in his service, in his service where it calls us to save live and not take it, and because it calls for not the taking of one's life, I respectively ask assignment to non-combatant duty. (John 10:10) "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/ developed: My belief prior to coming to look at the world from a biblical worldview, was one that consisted of many different accumulated ideas; the source of the ideas being things taught in school, media, books, and teachings instilled in me by the influence both by words and action of the people I lived with and came in contact, but as I study the word of God many of my former views where laid aside, the word of God is where this development of this change in my view of the world began and the continual development stems from. I came to understand that there is a God, and only one God (Isaiah 46: 10) "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me," and this God is revealed through the Bible and by Creation. It is in the Bible where I realized that I came from a Loving Creator, the value of a human being, the state of humanity, lost, sick, separated from it's Creator, and the Creator's solution to our problems. Prior to joining the Navy I was looking for a change in life and I thought it would be found by me being in the Navy. The change did come in the navy but not by the Navy, but by God. The more I study the word of God, the more truths this life has and still has to surrender this life to. That is where it leads me to where I am at, I was asked by my chain command in a talk which started on the basis on me getting the Sabbath off. The Sabbath, the fourth of God's commandment, (Exodus 20:8) Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt

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not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and Hallowed it." A day which points us to the Creator and the one who Sanctifies. It was in this talk with my chief that he brought up whether I was willing to use deadly force, I had been asked this question previously due to the fact I had a talk with one of my co-workers about my beliefs, he asked me a question, it involved a scenario that stated whether I would do something to individual whose intention was to hurt one of my family members. My answer may have left him with uncertainty in me, this my belief is due to the fact a couple weeks or so later, just before I was to be coxswain qualified, I was pulled aside first by my sectional leadership and than later my divisional leadership they asked me a question on whether I would use deadly force, both times I said "yes", both times I answered based on the fact that I didn't have a strong conviction or neither adequate education to go and say a definite "No". Couple weeks or so later as we rotated days off I had a conflict with the fact I couldn't get Sabbath off. I addressed the issue with my chain of command and in between talks I was looking online to better express my position on getting the Sabbath off. I then came across articles to better express my issue and also came across the issue concerning noncombatancy. The info moved on my heart, as a Christian our only weapon we are to have is the word of God for it is our sword, (Ephesians 6:17) And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:" we are called to distance ourselves from using arms (Matthew 26:52) " Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." For we are to represent peace, one to promote and seek to live a life of peace (Matthew 5:9) "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the Children of God." (Psalm 34:14) Depart from evil, and do good, seek peace, and pursue it." I meditated on what I learned and seeing that I work in a combatant role, change came to my mind, I didn't know when or how to bring this manner up to the chain of command, for I already have had a talk about deadly force with my chain of command. A day or so later, I talked to my chain of command about the Sabbath accommodation again, and to my amazement, it showed God had the manner in hand and it proves God can read our hearts, my Chief than asked me the question again whether I was willing to use deadly force and I told him

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"No". I understand I said "Yes" before a more educated reason leading to a conviction that was in opposition to the prior. I told them I looked to request for a conscientious objector status, I looked to take the path of least resistance so, yes, I looked to get complete separation from the Navy, not because I want to do my own thing nor looking to get ahead and seeking out the pleasures in this world, for if I wanted to do my own thing and looked to get ahead and seek out the pleasure the world has to offer, I'd be fine with being in the Navy, but my issue lies more of me being in the Navy and being able to live my faith, than me not being altogether wanting to distance myself from all that the Navy is about, and if there is a way at this time to accommodate me being in the Navy to the end of my contract I will do so.

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service: In the midst of all this not once have I personally opened to discussion about using deadly force. The first time my A-sup talked to me about a scenario involving force, then after this it led my sectional supervisor, to question me if I would use deadly force, then after that I was brought in before my Chief, they asked me a question, I was brought a question and I gave an answer, so I gave them one, "yes", and what came with that answer I took the responsibility, it did not move upon my conscience to the extent where it led me to meditate upon to educate myself enough to give one solid answer were there would be not turning on my part. Over the past months I have engaged in various different studies, came over many different topics, this topic I hadn't educated myself on, but as I was taking my time in studies on the same website that had information on the Sabbath, it happened to have information on noncombatancy and it just so happened than when I talked to my Chief regarding the Sabbath the subject of deadly force came up, where my Chief brought the subject up where I did not and he asked me a question and I gave him an answer, the process of education is one that is progressive if I knew all things, I would be placing myself in the level of God not lowly human being that I am, my decision yes, are not always the best, nor are my answers to questions I am asked. With every day demanding choices, and we not having a choice but to make choices, on that day when my Chief asked me whether I was willing to use deadly force, my choice of answer was "no", and this decision in what is known as conscientious objector status. It is but one of the many decisions I made that day, one bearing much weight and responsibility from the

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whole change of scene, from going to Harbor security, driving boats, to the work that mainly consist of manual labor, the taking of people's precious time for this manner, making time in between work, my daily studies, service to others, church task, trying to balance all things but still falling short, the hours in putting this paper work together.

j. Explanation of the circumstance under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances (if none, so state): Not that I am all points perfect nor have I understood to Love and respect all man in a way the Lord Jesus leaves us in the example of in his words and action, but because my God values life more than we can comprehend, for I believe only he really who created life can understand the complete value of it, and because I have experienced his love for myself, and if a man that is to love God he will love his fellow man for God loves all and gave all of Heaven in one, his Son, Jesus, for all, showing he is not a hateful God but a loving God, who I will to live for and change for and the work I have now that I committed to him is not work that puts me in a place in no circumstance to take life, but to save it.

k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs: Changes: Learning to love what I hate by nature, and hate what I love by nature. Went from doing 4 styles of martial arts to none months prior to this, went from looking into continuing further my college education to rather to devoting his time, on education on which last and of more value, to devote his time to better understand life by the continual study of the word of God, and other Christian literature, and through prayer. Also thankful to be able to spend the Sabbath away from work allowing my attendance in church. Looking forward to doing service for the Lord outside the navy to where he calls me.

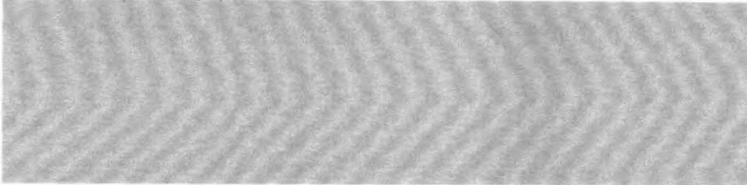
l. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrate the consistency and depth of beliefs which gave rise to this application: My factoring in the things I've learned coming across looking over the literature and come to understand, clearing out my misunderstanding, that me carrying out duties as combatant is a duty I am not able to carry out.

m. Prior service (if any; if none, so State): None

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n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization:

Seventh Day Adventist



Attendante often

I meet a friend named [REDACTED] in the Navy he was the one who witnessed to me and opened up the Bible in a way I had never been taught, after he left to [REDACTED] last October, that's when my studies really took off, first gradual then more and more constant, although I was still skeptical on whether I wanted to attend the [REDACTED] on the base at the time, For I was at difference because I didn't understand some of their beliefs. I wanted a fellowship with a congregation and their was no other church I would rather attend than the [REDACTED] given they had the most in common in what I believed at the time, so maybe Mid November I walked into my first bible study and then from there I kept going back missing a couple days here and there, and it was after much study and time, and changes that I made the decision to become an official baptized member of the church on August 13, 2011.

o. Information on the Pastor or leader of my (church, congregation, or meeting):



p. **NONCOMBATANCY** (Conscientious Objection to Bearing Arms)
The Seventh-day Adventist Church officially organized
Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

during a tragic civil war that divided the United States of America (1861-1865). Early in their denominational formation Adventists were confronted with the dilemma of how to fulfill civic and faith relationships responsibly, especially when temporal and religious obligations were in apparent conflict.

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After much prayerful and thorough study early church leaders concluded that the best position to adopt was the principle of noncombatancy. This stance was officially registered with the United States federal government in 1864 and has remained the position of Seventh-day Adventists ever since.

Noncombatant service and training is defined as follows:

1) The term "noncombatant service" shall mean (a) service in any unit of the armed forces which is unarmed at all times; (b) service in the medical department of any of the armed forces, wherever performed; or (c) any other assignment of the primary function of which does not require the use of arms in combat; provided that such other assignment is acceptable to the individual concerned and does not require them to bear arms or to be trained in their use.

2) The term "noncombatant training" shall mean any training which is not concerned with the study, use, or handling of arms or weapons.

The official stand of the Church was reaffirmed by action taken at the 1972 Annual Council of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists held 14 - 29 October in Mexico City, Mexico: Genuine Christianity manifests itself in good citizenship and loyalty to civil government. The breaking out of war among men in no way alters the Christian's supreme allegiance and responsibility to God or modifies their obligation to practice their beliefs and put God first. This partnership with God through Jesus Christ who came into this world not to destroy men's lives but to save them causes Seventh-day Adventists to advocate a noncombatant position, following their divine Master in not taking human life, but rendering all possible service to save it. As they accept the obligation of citizenship as well as its benefits, their loyalty to government requires them willingly to serve the state in any noncombatant capacity, civil

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or military, in war or peace, in uniform or out of it, which will contribute to saving life, asking only that they may serve in those capacities which do not violate their conscientious convictions.

This statement is not a rigid position binding church members, but gives guidance leaving the individual member free to assess the situation for her or himself.

When national laws permit options, church members, in making a personal decision on how to fulfill obligated terms of service to their country, should first consider the historic teaching of the Church on noncombatancy. If because of personal convictions they choose otherwise, pastors, chaplains, teachers or other church workers should aid the member in satisfying any legal requirements for securing their choice and should minister to the member's spiritual needs as follows:

a) For those choosing civilian alternative service in lieu of military service, pastoral counsel and guidance should be provided when it is established that such a request is based on consistent religious experience. Pastors, chaplains, teachers, or other church workers should provide statements of their personal knowledge of the member's position on the following: (1) church membership, (2) attendance and participation in services of the church, (3) personal standards of conduct, (4) previous expressions of belief supporting the request for exemption. Those providing such statements should request government officials to respect and honor the individual's personal convictions.

b) For those who conscientiously choose military service as a combatant, pastoral counsel and guidance should be

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provided in ministering to their needs since the Church refrains from passing judgment on them. Notice that the Seventh-day Adventist Church advocates a noncombatant position, but does not require it. Thus, some church members are willing to train with and use weapons; while others cannot, because of their own individual conscience, have anything to do with weapons or military service. Historically, most Seventh-day Adventists have served as noncombatant medics for several reasons: (1) Such service minimizes Sabbath conflicts (saving and maintaining life is honorable on Sabbath), and (2) Such service is more in harmony with the Church's stated recommendation.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church does not seek to be the conscience for any member or commander. But we do seek to inform the conscience and behavior of both, so decisions can be made with maximum understanding and thought.

g. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organization with which I am or have been affiliated (since age 16) , other military, political, or labor organizations: Have been affiliated with the [REDACTED], Not devoted to it's teaching yet influenced being that it the choice of religion of my parents. Was a practitioner of karate, kung fu, judo, aikido.

2. Enclosures:

- Encl 1 of 4 Privacy Act Statement
 - Encl 2 of 4 Chaplain Endorsement
 - Encl 3 of 4 Clinical Psychologist statement
 - Encl 4 of 4 Non-combatancy Article
- 

24MAY2012

FROM :

TO : Navy Personnel Command PERS-832

VIA

Subj : REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS CLASS 1-0 CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref : (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

1) I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection (Class 1-0). The following required information is provided :

a) Permanent Home Address

b) Schools and colleges attended after age 16 :

/ High School

Community College

c) Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

Barista /

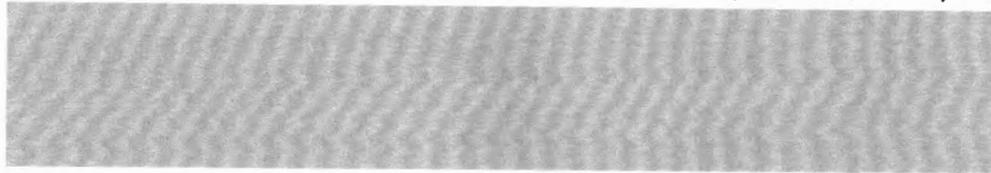
Office Assistant /

Account Executive /

Correctional Officer /

e. Spouse and member's parents' names/address and religion/sect (if deceased, so state):

e. *Spouse and member's parents' names/address and religion/sect (if deceased, so state):*



f. *I did not make application to the Selective Service System for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.*

g. *A description of the nature of the belief that requires the applicant to seek separation from military service or assignment to non-combatant training and duty for reasons of conscience.*

Based on my belief in Secular Humanism, every human life has the same value. If I were to kill an innocent person at random today, I would be prosecuted and sent to prison. But if an innocent person is killed in war, it is dismissed as a casualty of war or collateral damage. The concept of the end justifying the means, which signifies that sometimes people have to die in order to complete the mission. I do not believe that any human life is expendable for any purpose, and war essentially guarantees that innocent non-combatants will be killed.

I believe that war is inherently racist. One must dehumanize their victim in order to justify taking their life, and this separation of persons has always been based on ethnicity in modern warfare. As a person of color who has personally experienced racism, I can no longer participate in a system that does not recognize the humanity of all people, regardless of race or ethnicity.

I was a devout Christian when I joined the Navy. I see now the way that the Bible promotes war and nationalism, and I completely disagree with that. I believe that the concept of "chosen" people has done a lot of damage throughout history. In Secular Humanism, there's the belief that morality does not have to come from a deity, and that every human being is precious and has a right to life. I do not believe in an afterlife anymore, and that has changed the way that I see death. Once a person is dead, that's it. What right do I have to take that away from another person? None. If there is nothing else after this time that we are here, then I believe it is up to every individual to make sure that what they do doesn't infringe on another human being's right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. One of the major tenets of Secular Humanism is the Golden Rule, which is do unto others as you have them to unto you. Essentially, treat people the way you want to be treated. I believe that just starting with that would begin to improve things in the world.

h. *An explanation as to how the applicant's beliefs changed or developed, to include an explanation as to what factors (how, when, and from whom or from what source training was received and/or belief acquired) caused the change in or development of conscientious objection status.*

My beliefs about war have changed drastically since being in the military. This shift in my belief was influenced by two major events; the first was hearing war stories from actual veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan when I went through [REDACTED], and the second being my first real experience with racism.

In Spring of 2010, I referred myself to [REDACTED] and I felt myself going down that same path.

✱

[REDACTED] I was the only sailor there. Everyone else was in the Army, and I believe the vast majority were war veterans. Listening to their stories was like being inside of a war documentary. I couldn't relate to any of their stories, but they were so powerful that I soaked up everything they said. Even though I was in the military, I had never been faced with war until I had this experience. I saw the things they went through with their families, with drinking, with suicide attempts, TBIs, and the accusations of malingering when they went to medical. I listened to them open up about things they did to people that they weren't quite sure were guilty, the "shoot first, ask questions later" way they carried out their missions, and the guilt they carried with them all the time. It was my first picture of what war actually does to the participants, and I didn't hear any of them say that they felt good about what they did, or that it was worth it because they were protecting freedom and democracy. I began to ask myself if this human cost was worth what we were doing over there, the fact that they would be dealing with these issues for the rest of their lives. I didn't come to any strong conclusions about the bigger picture of war after that experience, but it definitely showed me a different side of things that I had never taken into account before.

The second experience which greatly shaped my feelings about war was my first real encounter with racism. This had, and continues to have, a very profound impact on my life. It changed everything about the way I see the world, the way I see my place in society, and the way that I see other people. It was the most degrading and humiliating experience of my life, and traumatic in ways that I can only hope to fully capture and articulate here.

I was born and raised in [REDACTED]. I've always been in environments with a diverse population, and had never dealt directly with discrimination before. I'm not saying that it doesn't exist in my hometown, but it was just something I never really thought about; it was never a part of my daily life. When I joined the Navy, it was the first time that I was in an environment, in particular a [REDACTED] where I was one of only a very small number of black people. The best way I can describe it is that I became the "token black guy". It made me upset at first, and I felt as though I was constantly being mocked because of people always making reference to my ethnicity. I wasn't used to that, and it was a huge culture shock for me. But I tried to be understanding and realize that we were all experiencing a sort of culture shock, and that maybe me getting upset all the time wasn't the best way to deal with this type of treatment. Over the span of about three years, the constant joking and mockery began to build up a lot of anger and resentment inside. I didn't know how exactly how to react, so I never did, but I knew in the back of my head that it was only a matter of time before I would reach a boiling point. I didn't understand why I was being treated differently just because I was black, and even though it was under the guise of joking, and people always said that their intent was never to hurt me, it still made me feel like they saw me as less of a person.

I reached my boiling on one particular night at a house party. This was in July of 2011. I don't know what it was about that night, but I had finally had enough. I was the only black person there, out of about 40 people, and from the moment I walked in until the time I left, the jokes never stopped. People who normally didn't joke with me in that way began to feed off of the energy of the others, and joined in. I had been drinking, and I knew that if I had reacted in any way, it would have been physical, and I was afraid of having an [REDACTED]. So I didn't react, I just took it. Some people were uncomfortable, and could tell that I was upset because I had long since stopped laughing, but it continued. I had to wait for my designated driver to leave, because I wasn't able to drive home. The next day, I felt the lowest that I've ever felt in my entire life. I was so upset that I felt physical pain. Every word I want to use (depressed, humiliated, ashamed, angry) doesn't capture how I felt after this experience. I finally understood what racism really was. A person doesn't recognize the humanity of another person, solely based on their preconceived notions about people with that skin color. I am a

person, I am a human being. I am not "the black guy", but that's all I felt like I was to them. I had just taken it all of these years because I wanted to be accepted, and they were just mocking me the whole time.

I did not come out of my room for two weeks, I was living with roommates at the time. They knew something was obviously wrong, but I couldn't face the world. I only came out to go to work, and it took every ounce of strength within me to go to work. I had never paid attention to race before, but I was weary of white people after that incident. I was so hurt and didn't quite understand what had happened. After a couple weeks, I didn't feel any better. I didn't want to go to counseling, because I felt awkward requesting a black counselor. I couldn't talk to anyone except for my family. I tried to explain it to one of my white friends here, and he told me I was overreacting. I realized that no one can really understand it unless they've experienced it. I considered suicide, and I was serious about it. I couldn't see myself living in this new world; this paradigm shift was too drastic, the reality of what being black in America has been and still is. But I told myself that if I do that, then they win. My family wasn't going to gain anything but heartache if I did that, and I owed it to myself to deal with my pain in a way other than just checking out. The only thing that kept me sane during this time was reading. I began to read African-American literature, and I was inspired by how strong they were, to stand up for themselves and demand to be recognized and respected. I called another friend of mine who lives in Arkansas, and told him that I knew I would snap and get myself in trouble if anyone said anything racist to me, and that I needed to leave. He asked me for how long, and I told him I wasn't sure. I was ready to throw all of my Navy career away. I even looked up what my punishment would be if I went UA for a few weeks, and it was worth it to me at the time. I thought that restriction would be good for me because I would be isolated, and I would no longer fear punishment in the event that my anger resulted in a physical altercation with someone. I was a ticking time bomb, and I wasn't sure if I could harness all of those years of anger once it was unleashed. Instead of going UA, I took a few days of leave and drove to [redacted]. I didn't tell anyone where I was going, because I didn't want anyone to know where I was in case I decided to stay. I began reading about the Civil Rights movement and the Black Panthers. I read *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison, and cried buckets of tears. It was the story of my life. It was like Ellison lived my life and went back in time to write that book for me. Invisible. That's exactly how I felt. No one saw me, all they saw was my skin. It's an appalling thought, even looking back now. I finally decided, after a long talk with my friend, that I wouldn't accomplish anything by going UA. I was the only one that was going to lose everything I had worked for, so I decided to come back.

Fast forward to September 2011, and I was feeling a little better. I had completely stopped hanging out with friends, deleted my facebook account, and just kept to myself. I spent all of my free time reading and still trying to process what had happened. But I didn't dread going to work anymore, and I was starting to talk to people again. One day at work, I received a PM from one of my coworkers, basically showing me a conversation that people were having about me in one of the channels, and they were making some very offensive jokes about me, all racial in their content. After all I had been through, I had finally had enough. I printed the conversation and reported it to my Chain of Command. It became a much bigger monster than I had anticipated, but I didn't care. I was minding my own business, just trying to do my job, and people were still targeting me. My Chain of Command handled my Equal Opportunity complaint beautifully. It went directly to the Chief in charge of Command Managed Equal Opportunity, and I had individual meetings with everyone in my chain, with them making sure that I was good to continue in my shop. They had seen a shift in my behavior since the incident at the party, which I hadn't told anyone about, and now I had some hard evidence exhibiting the reason I had changed.

1. An explanation as to when these beliefs became incompatible with military service or combatant duties, and why.

How does all of this relate to my feelings about war? Well, after this incident happened, I still hadn't quite connected the dots. I didn't really think there were any dots to connect, as far as war was concerned. Getting out of the Navy never even crossed my mind. I mentioned that I contemplated going UA, but the reason I did not was because I did not want any blemishes on my record. It took a few months of reading and studying to start to string things together, which wasn't necessarily something that I was trying to do. It just sort of emerged. During this time, the author I connected with the most was Howard Zinn. He has written extensively about war, why we fight them, and what we can do in the future to stop them. He was a bombardier during WWII, and it was through him that I learned the term "cognitive dissonance". He says that he dropped lots of bombs during the war, and that he never thought about it as he was carrying out missions. When flying five miles above your target, you don't see where the bombs go or what they do once they hit the ground. It wasn't until after the war was over that he began to think about the war, and whether they had actually done a good thing. Years later, Zinn went back to the city that he had bombed, and learned that the aerial bombing attacks he participated in led to the death of over 1,000 French and German civilians. They were hiding out, waiting for the end of the war.

I watched the documentary "Hearts and Minds (1974)", and it was about the Vietnam war. This was while I was on leave in December 2011. I would say that this documentary was the most effective in connecting my personal experience with racism and my participation in war together. I had heard the term Conscientious Objector before, but I had never seen a person actually display these beliefs against war until I watched this documentary. I actually paused the video on Netflix and looked up what the actual definition was, and I saw that it described my beliefs perfectly. The documentary was very well done because they interviewed American troops, Vietnamese troops, Vietnamese civilians, and showed the Winter Soldier testimonies by Conscientious Objectors. The ubiquitous image of the little girl running naked down the street trying to escape a napalm attack is from this documentary. Seeing that in action was chilling and horrifying. I watched the interviews in which the civilians talked about their villages being destroyed and countless family members being killed. I know lots of Vietnamese people back in [redacted], and I never knew that their parents and grandparents had experienced this; this is possibly why many of them emigrated to [redacted]. They are human beings, and I can't wrap my mind around how that destruction was able to happen. I find myself vicariously experiencing the massive peace movement that this war inspired. The bomber pilots in this documentary said the same thing that Howard Zinn mentions; they never saw where their bombs went, and never thought about the effect it was having on the ground. The Conscientious Objectors during the Winter Soldier testimonies mentioned the pervasive racism as a way of justification for committing atrocities against the Vietnamese people.

My experience of dealing with racism showed me something very valuable – that sometimes the way we perceive the world is not how things really are. I was under the impression that people saw me as a person, but the rude awakening was that for many people, they see my ethnicity before they see anything else about me. W.E.B DuBois, in *Souls of Black Folks*, calls it "double consciousness". It is the moment in which you become conscious that the way you see yourself is not the way the rest of society sees you, and it alters the way in which you interact with a world that can't see past the "veil". I began to see how this type of think is crucial in allowing people to do horrible things to other human beings. This is the root of cognitive dissonance that Howard Zinn speaks of. When I connected my experience to slavery and the Civil Rights movement, I realized that it was about more than equal

rights, it was really about human rights. If we are all human beings, we all deserve to be treated with dignity and have the same opportunities. Skin color or ethnicity shouldn't separate or hinder any person from living life with the same rights that God (or I believe, Nature) has bestowed upon every human being. I don't blame the soldiers for what they did, I blame war in and of itself. It is only in that type of environment that regular people are able to do that and use racism to subjugate others.

The only way you can get regular people to participate in war is to convince them that the people they are fighting are inferior or less human. Now, we may use terms like "insurgent", "terrorist", "enemy", "jap", "gook", etc. Howard Zinn says "Once you've convinced yourself that they are the enemy, then you don't have to think anymore. You can commit whatever atrocities are necessary for the completion of your mission." War must contain an element of dehumanization and racism in order to even exist. Once you allow yourself to realize that you are killing another human being, the rules of the game change significantly. After my experience with racism, I don't have the capability to dehumanize anymore. I would never be able to take another human being's life and not think about them being someone's family member or friend. That person is not their country, not their military, not a symbol, not a robot with a gun, they are a person. They are involved in a government sanctioned conflict, in the same way that we are. I no longer see war in terms of good vs. bad, us vs. them. Once you take nationalism out of the equation, it exposes the humanity of all of the participants. Then, in my head, it becomes murder. If I were to shoot up a room full of people, I would be deemed a psychopath and sent to the electric chair. But if I were to do that in a combat zone, but kill one suspected terrorist or insurgent in the process, it would be looked at in a different light. In my mind now, government sanctioned killing doesn't make people any less dead, or any less human. In the same way that I would never take another person's life here, I would never be able to live with myself knowing that my actions led to the death of another human being. I no longer have the capability to dissociate humanity away from any human being, which means that I feel I can no longer participate in a system that promotes war.

My grandfather is a World War II veteran. When he was stationed in England, and later in France, he told me it was his first experience ever having touched a white person. The French kids were fascinated by his palms being white but his skin being brown on the top of his hands. The white soldiers would tell the French girls that the negro soldiers were monkeys, and the girls would ask if they could see their tails. My grandfather served his time, and tried to use his VA loan to purchase a home back in [redacted]. The neighborhood he wanted to move to had been "redlined", meaning that only white families were able to live there. He decided that he did not want to continue to raise his family in that environment, and moved them (my mother included) [redacted] where I was born. He fought for his country, but was still deemed a second-class citizen when he returned. The question I ask myself is who really wins in war? I would say that there aren't any winners. Referring specifically to WWII, there were some economic benefits, and we as a country were able to emerge as a superpower. I can't see, however, than anyone personally benefited, but I am able to see the incalculable damage that was done. This, along with my own experiences, makes me question whether war does any good for people other than those in power, even the wars that history tells us were ultimately for a good cause.

j. An explanation as to the circumstances, if any, under which the applicant believes in use of force, and to what extent, under any foreseeable circumstances.

I believe in self-defense and protecting one's family. I believe that if someone is threatening to take your life, you have every right to defend yourself. If I saw anything happening to anyone in my family, I would do whatever was necessary to make sure my family was safe. This is use of force on a

personal scale, which means that one may need to resort to force to protect themselves, but it is not the same as the widespread killing that occurs in war.

I also believe that in law enforcement, there are situations in which a police officer can and should use force in order to stop a person that is endangering the lives of others. Even police officers have very strict procedures that they must go through in order to arrive at the level of using force to stop a person. I believe that because war involves weaponry and killing on such a massive scale, there is no way to verify whether every person killed is an enemy combatant. My personal stance is that regardless of the circumstances, as long as someone is not personally trying to harm me, I have no right to take another person's life, solely because they are on the other side. That is not a justifiably reason to kill, and war inevitably puts people in a situation where killing must happen.

k. An explanation as to how the applicant's daily life style has changed as a result of the beliefs and what future actions the applicant plans to continue to support his or her stated beliefs.

To say that everything in my life has changed after this realization would be a gross understatement. When I joined the Navy, I finally felt like I had found something that I could throw myself into. I had many goals and aspirations, such as volunteering for a [redacted] then putting in an [redacted]. I have completely lost interest in everything, because I don't want to build my career on the back of a system that promotes war. I would rather be doing something that I know is truly a force for good in the world. I don't judge anyone that is in the military, and I know lots of people that want to stay in so that they can change things from within. I applaud them and respect their decision, and I hope that my decision will be respected as well. John F. Kennedy said "war will continue to exist until that distant day when the conscientious objector enjoys the same reputation and prestige that a warrior does today." Seeing the reality of the thinking that goes into fighting war has made me completely detach. I was always a good sailor and participated quite a bit in the Command, through leading PT and doing funeral detail. I stopped all my activities, and didn't continue my paperwork for my deployment request. I realize I am still in the Navy, and I have continued to do my job and not get in trouble, but my attitude towards the Navy after seeing the bigger picture has shifted significantly.

I've always had the reputation of being amiable and easy to work with. I enjoyed the camaraderie of my shop and was always friendly with everyone. One day I heard one of the civilian contractors say that he hoped we would go to war with Iran, because it would keep his contract open and allow him to renew. These incidents, along with this shift in my beliefs, have caused me to completely shut down. I sit far away from everyone, and try to interact as little as possible with people. It is torture for me because it is completely counter to my personality; it is natural for me to be friendly and talkative. But I can't handle conversations about war, and I avoid conversations about our technological abilities because I have no desire to know our full capabilities. It comes across as a lack of desire for more training and technical expertise, and that is hard for me to reconcile with people without getting into a conversation about war. I have even avoided opportunities for more training in my shop because I don't want to be even more capable in this job that I'm doing.

I have made a commitment to freedom of thought and mental clarity. I made a dietary change and stopped eating carbohydrates and all other types of processed foods. In Taoism, the monks believe that "grains cloud the mind", and I have experienced this new mental stamina and flexibility in my daily life. I have also started meditating and seeking more spiritual guidance outside of the traditional Christian setting that I am used to. I've begun to read books about Eastern religions, and while I don't practice or subscribe to any one religion in particular, I want to make sure that I am constantly open to new ideas about faith and spirituality. I believe that having one's mind free is the first and most vital

step in recognizing one's own humanity and the humanity of everyone else here on earth.

I used to spend lots of time with friends, and I got along really well with my shipmates and coworkers. I have transitioned into spending much more time at the library, reading and watching documentaries. The stronger I feel about this, the less connected I feel to this community here and to my shipmates. I still have people that I talk to, but it is more with my family and friends from back home; I keep my relationships very surface with people here now. I consciously avoid or excuse myself from conversations about work, war, and politics when I'm around others in the military now. The decision to go through this process is a very difficult and personal one, and I don't want to come across as judging people who don't have the same moral conflict that I have. I find myself hanging out more with shipmates who think along the same lines that I do, but have their own reasons for not going through this process. I have even met another Conscientious Objector here, and it's been great to not feel alone in this anymore. I made contact with

and I speak with them now when I am feeling discouraged about what my job is. I have tried to block out everything I have learned and tough out the rest of my contract or find ways to distract myself from the reality, but I am not able to. It's all I think about whenever I walk into the building; it is on my mind constantly, why this building exists in the first place.

Since discovering that I am Conscientious Objector, it is the first time I've had hope for the future. I don't worry about going to war anymore, and I don't agonize over being forced to do things that are against my beliefs. While it is hard for me to go to work everyday, my personal life has been much better because I feel like I am channeling my gifts and energy into good things. I am not able to be an active participant in peace organizations because of my work schedule and location of my duty station, but just making contact with people who have been in my situation and want to stop war constantly motivates me and confirms for me that I am doing the right thing. Instead of focusing on avoiding participation in war, I now focus on things I want to do when I get out that will help prevent the dying of more American troops and innocent civilians.

I would never say that I am ashamed of being in the military, but I find myself not wanting people to know that I am in the Navy. I never go to the grocery store in uniform anymore, I don't wear my PT sweats out like I used to, and I never show my military ID. I've stopped showing my military ID even if the place gives military discounts. It's this disconnect that I find coming out more and more in my daily life; that I want to dissociate as much as possible.

I made contact with I correspond with these groups frequently, and since they are all based out of I plan on going and volunteering with these groups when I get out. I also joined and unfortunately haven't been able to attend any meetings because my work schedule, but I will continue to correspond with them and help out in any way that I can. I do have a membership card.

in the same format that veterans did during the Vietnam war, and many of the soldiers talking about the existence of racism in the military. The need to dehumanize the enemy in order to torture and/or kill them for mission purposes. Hearing their testimonies caused me to reach out and make contact with them. Will I be marching on the streets and protesting against war when I get out? I honestly don't know. But I have found solidarity with these groups, and I know I'm not alone in how strongly I feel about the necessity to end war. I want to do my part in making sure this happens. The Universe has given me the opportunity to experience what I have, which I believe was meant to teach me something and give me this shift in perspective. I want to use my new found knowledge to help others, and to save lives. Maybe we can channel all of this energy we put into the military to promote peace around the world, and not war.

1. *An explanation as to what in the applicant's opinion most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of the stated beliefs that gave rise to the applicant's claim.*

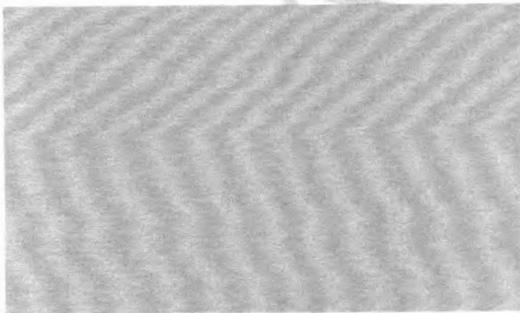
Friends that were already in the military before I joined gave me this advice before I went to boot camp. They said "as long as you show up 15 minutes early to everything in the right uniform, you will have a successful military career." As trite as that sounds, I have done my best to follow that. I have done my best to be a good sailor, not draw attention to myself, and maintain a good reputation and work ethic. I have asked myself a thousand times if putting in this packet is a good idea, being that I have less than two years left on my contract. I thought that since I am more than halfway done, that I would be able to keep quiet and tough it out. But I am not able to do that anymore. I know that I received a larger enlistment bonus because of the extension on my contract, and I will have to pay that back. Also, I am not entirely sure of what other financial obligations I will be required to fulfill due to ending my contract early. The path of least resistance in this situation for me would be to continue what I've been doing. I have never wanted to be the person to draw attention to myself in any way, but after having gone through what I have, I see that people continue to suffer when you remain quiet. Other people in my shop thanked me for speaking up about being harassed, because they saw that a person speaking up can change the environment for other people. In those situations, one begins to feel hopeless because they feel like nothing will ever change. One feels encouraged when there is a positive change, which there definitely was in my shop after I spoke up.

I believe that standing up for what you believe in, regardless of the personal sacrifice, is the only way have true freedom. I don't know how much this will cost me financially, and I have accepted that I may lose some meaningful friendships over this. Toughing it out would be the easy way, but after what I have seen and knowing what I know, my conscience will not allow me to do that.

q. *A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated (since age 16), other than military, political, or labor organizations:*

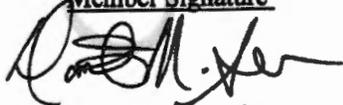
As I mentioned earlier, I have been affiliated with

All three of these groups are peace organizations which have to goal of seeking alternatives to war.



"THE AUTHORITY TO REQUEST THIS INFORMATION IS DERIVED FROM 50 U.S.C. 456j AND 38 U.S.C. 3103, AND 5 U.S.C. 301, DEPARTMENTAL REGULATIONS. THE PURPOSE OF THIS APPLICATION IS TO ALLOW THE MEMBER TO APPLY FOR CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR STATUS. THIS APPLICATION IS COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY; HOWEVER, FAILURE TO PROVIDE THE REQUIRED INFORMATION WOULD RESULT IN AN INABILITY TO PROCESS THIS REQUEST AND THE MEMBER WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO RECEIVE THE REQUESTED STATUS."

Member Signature



Date

28 JUN 2012

Social Security Number



WITNESSED:



LT JASON A. FELL, JAGC, USN
SJA, NAVYCOM GA

DATE: 28 JUN 12

22

1900
15 Jul 11

From: [REDACTED]
To: Navy Personnel Command (PERS-832)
Via: (1) [REDACTED]
(2) [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

Encl: (1) Letter from [REDACTED]
(2) Letter from [REDACTED]
(3) Letter from [REDACTED]

1. I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection. The following required information is provided:

- a. Permanent home address: [REDACTED]
b. School and colleges attended after age 16:

<u>School Name/Address</u>	<u>Type School</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[REDACTED]	Junior College	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	University	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Technical School	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	University	[REDACTED]

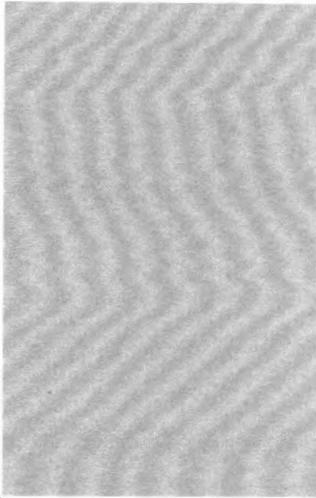
Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR



c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

<u>Employer Name/Address</u>	<u>Type Work</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
	Tele-surveyist	
	Claims Filer	
	Shelf stocker	
	Sales Associate	
	Group Host	
	Server	
	Install Technician	

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Server



Care Giver



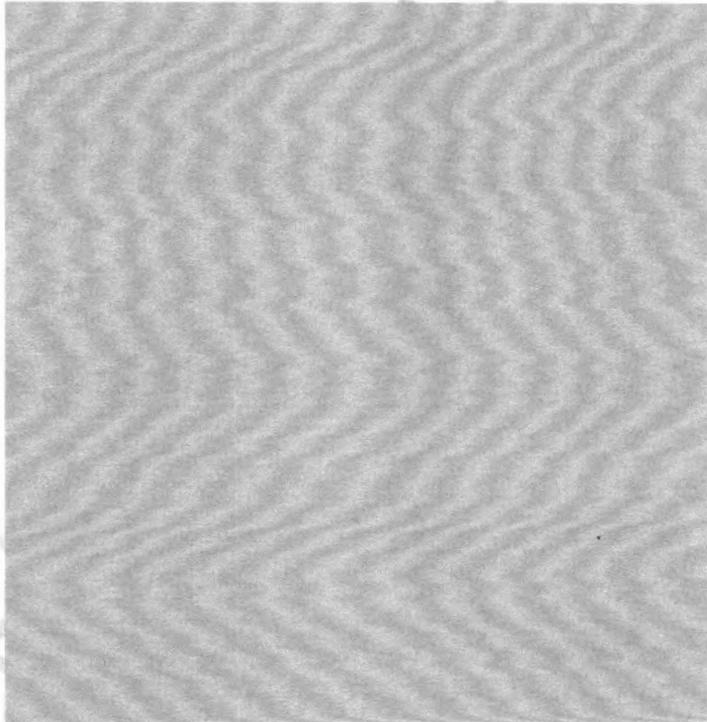
Server



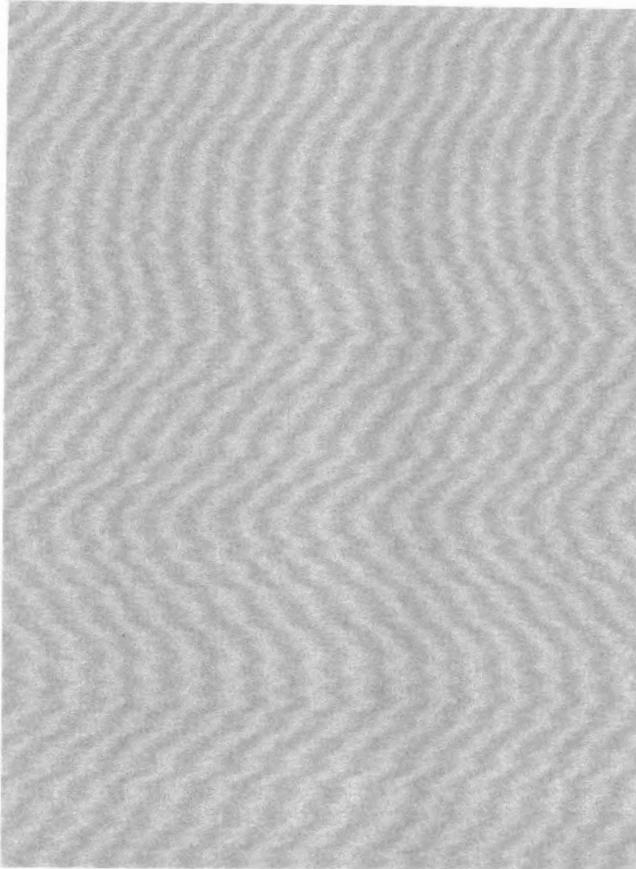
d. All residences after age 16:

Address/City/State

Inclusive Dates



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e. Spouse and member's parents' names/address and religion/sect:



f. I did not make an application to the Selective Service System (local board) for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.

g. A description of the nature of my belief:

(1) I believe that, in the basic humanity which I share with all other people, I am essentially the same as them. This gives me a complete empathy for all other human life. I feel that in killing any other human being, I might as well be killing myself or the people I love for all the meaningful differences that actually exist between us. This realization

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makes me value all human life as much as I do my own. In that way, human life itself has become sacred to me, just as my own life and the lives of my family are sacred to me. With this understanding, I cannot justify taking another human being's life in an act of war or having any part in it.

(2) Because of this, I see war as fundamentally immoral and invariably wrong. It is against my strongest moral conviction to have any involvement in any act of any war. To do so would corrupt the center of who I am by violating that connection I have with other people. I know that everything else within me and my life would be touched by the destruction of the intentional killing that I would have participated in. I will not allow this to happen. I cannot be a tool in the destruction of war. I will not intentionally cause another person's suffering in the name of war. I will not kill. I will not participate in war.

(3) The moral system that my inability to participate in war is based on is the simple Ethic of Reciprocity—the idea that, knowing that anything you do to other people could be done to you in the same manner; knowing that however you would be affected by those actions is the same as the other person is affected by them; and using the fundamental empathy for other human beings that this realization brings as a base for your actions toward other people on that understanding.

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed:

(1) My mom, who was the main parent in my life was intensely religious, and I grew up surrounded by her religious doctrines. But her religion was totalitarian and judgmental and something I had such a negative reaction to that my repulsion of it extended to encompass religion as a whole and everything that I saw as connected with it—which included any kind of moral belief system in general. As a result, I ended up becoming morally apathetic. And nothing occurred in my life that was strong enough to force me to question what I really believed morally, until I joined the military.

(2) I knew on entering the services that boot camp was supposed to be very difficult and uncomfortable. And I thought that to give in to that discomfort—to let it get to me or affect my perspective or conduct—was to "crack" under the pressure. I was determined not to let that happen to me. I was so prepared

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for the mental challenge of boot camp that when I experienced the beginning of what was my conscience trying to finally manifest, I reacted to it as a challenge. I actually believed that what I was starting to experience was the kind of weakness that basic training was supposed to bring out in you so you could overcome it. I brushed it roughly aside. I thought that by ignoring the realizations that were starting to occur to me, I was becoming a better, stronger person. But I was smothering the most important part of me. I thought I was building character by stomping on my humanity.

(3) The first time I started to feel something wrong with what I was doing came with the motto that my division commander began using: "The attention to detail that we're teaching you is so important because every action you take means the life or death of a shipmate." The truth of the statement hit me strongly. I know it was intended to make us take our jobs seriously. But it for me it was the beginning of a major understanding. Not only were my shipmates' lives in my hands, but it was actually my job to help cause death. Even in doing my job perfectly, with-as the motto went-flawless attention to detail, I would cause death. Of course, I knew what war was before I joined the military. But my previous view of it was an abstract idea, and was always dominated by the positive image of defending my country. Now that I was in the thick of my training, the reality of what it means to be a part of war surrounded me and affected me. I would be personally responsible for every life I caused to be taken. My involvement with the "defense of my country" meant I would be a killer. This disturbing feeling started to permeate everything I did from that point on. And it grew worse when weapons training began.

(4) The act of aiming a gun and shooting at a human-shaped target pulled me even more from the abstract idea I had had of what it meant to serve in the military and forced the reality of it in front of me. The training didn't last long, but the discomfort I felt in going through with the shooting didn't end with it. We were required to carry a loaded gun on our belt at all times during our watches from that point on. And my discomfort grew stronger each time.

(5) As I've looked back through these experiences, understanding what I do now, what I was going through is very clear to me, but at the time, I'd never been more confused. I

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figured I was just very sensitive in general because of the stresses of boot camp—I thought as soon as I graduated I would be okay again and back to thinking and seeing with what I considered my more what normal logical eyes again. I viewed my negative reaction to the experiences as a weakness—something I was wrong for feeling, something to be ashamed of, and something to be overcome that would ultimately make me a stronger, better person for conquering it. I shoved away all of the anxious feelings of wrongness that had forced their way to my attention: They would end with graduation, I was sure of it.

(6) But after graduation came and went, and the intensity of bootcamp no longer became a factor, the anxiety I was having didn't lessen, and instead, started getting worse. I had already dismissed my discomfort about the violent atmosphere my life had been pervaded by in boot camp as just sensitivity brought on by the jolt of boot camp, so I had pushed it to the back of my mind. And I was now in an environment where the violent elements were not nearly as strongly present as they were before. I was more able to ignore what had started occurring to me in boot camp. Yet I still felt the awful, overwhelming sense of what I could only describe as wrongness. All of the normal activities and things of life were now very tainted with that feeling. But nobody else seemed to be feeling the way I was. All I could think was, "There's something wrong with me."

(7) I ended up going to a counselor to help me understand what was going on. In talking to him, I focused on trying to find the root of my feelings that had become a strong anxiety. I was convinced that I was just having a hard time adjusting to everything, (as I had started thinking in bootcamp), so we focused on any factors that could be the cause of that. We talked about fear of not being able to live up to standards and getting in trouble or being overwhelmed from the different responsibilities I had. But it was in some exercises he had me do that I finally realized that my negative reaction to the thought of being involved in the killing of war was not a symptom of the stress caused by boot camp or adjusting to military life—it was in fact the cause of my anxiety. First, he had me start keeping a journal of things that happened and how I reacted to them. The journal didn't help much, but it did bring something important to my attention. Part of the journal exercise was to write down the dreams that I was having, and after a few days I looked back and saw that a lot of the dreams

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I had were nightmares about killing. I even had one in which I was forced to kill my family. I was reminded of the thoughts about the destructive element of the military that had started to occur to me in boot camp. I still couldn't accept that as a valid thing to dwell on. However, those dreams did bring back my thoughts from boot camp more strongly to my mind. The second thing he had me do was an exercise meant to help me adjust. He told me to take the free time I had and use it to immerse myself in whatever made me feel the most like me. When I told him that that was probably Reading for me, he told me to surround myself with that activity. In following this advice, I finally experienced a moment when I couldn't deny what was occurring in me.

(8) I went to the town library on a weekend. While browsing through the classics section, I came across a small book by Mark Twain. It was called *The War Prayer*. It was very short and I read through it in a few minutes. The story was about a town preparing to go to war. The people in the town were excited about the promise of victory and were idolizing the young soldiers, who were parading through the streets, about to take the battlefield. And a prayer is said by the town minister, asking for God's hand in helping them attain victory. Immediately after the prayer is over a stranger steps up beside the minister and says God has heard the prayer and will grant its request, but only after they truly understand what it is they are asking. So he recites for them the "unspoken prayer" that lay within the one they had spoken: "O Lord, our God, help us to tear their soldiers to bloody shreds with our shells . . . help us to lay waste their humble homes with a hurricane of fire; help us to wring the hearts of their unoffending widows with unavailing grief; help us to turn them out roofless with little children to wander unfriended the wastes of their desolated land in rags and hunger and thirst . . . for our sakes who adore Thee Lord, blast their hopes, blight their lives, protract their bitter pilgrimage, make heavy their steps, water their way with their tears, stain the white snow with the blood of their wounded feet! We ask it, in the spirit of love, of Him Who is the Source of Love. Amen."*

(9) This story struck something basic in me. As I read it, the feelings and thoughts I had starting having in boot camp

*Mark Twain, *The War Prayer*.

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started taking distinct shape in my mind and started to actually make sense to me. Before, my viewpoint was that war in defense of freedom—though not pleasant—was simply just "what happened" and was necessary. But the realization that started to occur to me upon entering the military was made explicit there in the "unspoken words" of the story's prayer. The "heroes" pray to lay waste to their enemies' humble homes, to cause great suffering to the widows and orphans, to blight their hopes and dreams. That passage struck me with the fact that those orphans and widows and hopes and dreams are described the same way the "heroes" of the story might've described their own. Which brought a crucial question to my mind—how truly different is the enemy from the heroes? How different are the enemy's orphans and widows and hopes and dreams from those of the heroes? Their pain is just as real as the heroes' pain, and their suffering is, in a broader perspective of things, just as horrific. And whatever their cultural differences are, they are only surface differences. They are not as important as the basic similarity that they share with each other as human beings—the connection created by their fundamental similarity as human beings. It does not justify the death and suffering it would ultimately cause to either side of the war.

(10) I looked at myself and what I was doing in being part of a force of war. I am training to be an implement in an organization that has legitimized intentional killing. I do understand the justifications for that. But what I started to realize is that, for me, they are not valid reasons for destroying human life. If the people I bring pain and suffering to in a war I am part of waging are essentially the same as me, it is just as wrong as if I were doing it to myself. And that is what I become personally responsible for in waging war. As I really started to become aware of that connection to other people, I understood that, to me, causing the pain or death of another human being in war became morally no different from bringing the same fate on myself. Understanding this makes the thought of intentionally bringing the suffering of war on any other person a terrible thing to me.

(11) I did not understand all of this in its entirety the moment I read *The War Prayer*, but reading the story made me start seeing war in a different way from the way in which I had when I had joined the military. And I knew that what I had been experiencing since joining was not a weakness—it was my conscience trying to manifest. The moral part of my life that I

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had so vehemently rejected when I rejected my mother's religion was directly facing me and refusing to be ignored anymore. Though I had refused to deal with that part of myself before, I was being forced to now. Because I was having moral issues with being a part of war. This became the focus of my life from that point on. I did have my time-consuming military duties, but I started talking to my family and friends about realizations I was having, and for months, I studied everything I could find that might help me understand what I was going through morally, and hopefully somehow put it in a light that would allow me to reconcile my profession with what my conscience was telling me. I read literature by Camus and Martin Luther King, Jr. I even read literature about the psychology of killing in war. The most helpful material though, was the Buddhist writings that I studied. As I started talking to people about what I was dealing with morally, somebody mentioned that the way I put my reverence toward other human life and the connection I feel to other people sounded Buddhist in nature. So I decided to do some reading about it, which led me to start attending a Buddhist service here in the area. I connected strongly with the things that I heard there and the material that I studied about Buddhism. And it helped me realize that my moral objections to what I was doing were coming from a very basic empathy for other human life and the connection I feel for them as members of the same race. I have not become a Buddhist at this time, but the teachings I found in it have helped me immensely in understanding my moral issues with participation in war.

(12) After months of figuring out what this all really meant to me and my life, I reached a point at which I knew there was no angle I could look from that would allow me to continue my path in the military without completely violating my conscience. There wasn't any question in my mind that I could not allow myself to consider participation in war with my fellow human beings as moral. And I realized that neither the financial security nor the social troubles I would face as a result of following my conscience were important compared to knowing that I am not the cause of the suffering of war in my fellow human beings. The conviction that to do that would be utterly wrong is at the moral center of who I am. It is a part of me; not a part of me like a taste I've picked up or an opinion I've come to. It exists at the core of who I am. Now that I've realized it, it's not something my mind can be changed about because it is as much who I am as any other aspect of me.

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To kill another human being intentionally in the name of war or to be any part of doing so is not something I can do. I cannot be a part of war in any way. I will not violate my conscience and my humanity by doing so.

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service: During the first weekend of January 2011, I read "The War Prayer" by Mark Twain. The words of this book helped me to see my participation in war from a perspective I had not had before. At that point I knew that what I was training to do was at odds with my conscience. I did not immediately accept that there was no way I could in some way reconcile the two. I tried to see my situation in every light possible. I had to figure out exactly what I believed and why. And I had to be absolutely sure that the moral understanding I was discovering was not just a fleeting reaction to something I read or a disproportionate sensitivity to thoughts that had come up from being in the military. So through the next five months I did everything I could to figure those things out. Everything that I studied and thought about and talked with my family and friends about over those months added to the understanding I had started to have when I read that book. And ultimately, I reached a point at which, to me, my conviction of the immorality of participating in war became a knowledge and I knew that it wasn't going to go away and there was no way I could change it or try to somehow downplay it and ignore it. I understood strongly the connection I feel to other people. I knew that, for me, the act of war violates that connection, and the devastation that it causes to it is an immoral thing to me. And I knew that every duty I carry out in my military responsibilities contributes directly to the violence of war that is something I am fundamentally opposed to.

j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances: I do not think it would be right to kill in any instance. But if one of my family were in immediate danger, I would do everything in my power to defend them, short of using a weapon or killing. And my object would purely be immediate defense, so I would only use physical force to counter direct physical force from the attacker. For example, I would not attack them by punching them in order to get them to leave but in order to help the person I was defending, I might knock the attacker aside to create an escape path.

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k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs:

(1) My moral realization has opened the spiritual part of me that I had adamantly turned away from and refused to allow myself to be open to in any way before. I have actually begun studying the teachings of Buddhism. Much of what it says relates directly to what I've been uncovering about my core connection to other human beings. Because of this moral crisis I've experienced I've had to face my own moral center and own what was there, and it's opened up the spiritual side that has been lost to me for the better part of my life. Whereas before I vehemently avoided all institutions of spirituality, I now feel a definite need for spirituality to be a part of my life. Because of this I've started to going to a service regularly at a local Buddhist temple and having conversations with the religious leader there. And now, instead of refusing any spirituality, it is becoming a major factor in my life. So I can already see the impact of my realization on my life in the way that I interact with other people. Even my family and friends have noticed that difference. My sister told me in one of the conversations I had with her that to hear me talking about moral opinions and what I believed was really weird because she had never heard me talk like that before

(2) My brother has always been my main confidant in the things I've gone through in life. A major point that our bond was built around was the fact that we were the only two of our siblings who left our mom's religion. So a common theme for our conversations was about how that experience affected our lives. And when I started understanding my moral objections to being a part of war, was the first person in my family I talked about it with. I told him about the feelings I had been having and that they were even finally opening me up to the spirituality that I had constantly rejected for most of my life. He knows me, and about my past experience with religion and moral belief, probably better than anybody else. And I was surprised when his reaction was aggressively negative. When I told him that I was even looking into Buddhism because it spoke to the moral part of me that I was finally starting understand, his response was like someone who had been betrayed. He made fun of me and implied that I was following in Mom's footsteps—an accusation that you can only understand if you had been a witness to our numerous conversations about her over the years.

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When [redacted] reacted the way he did, I was hurt. But my belief that I had been realizing was not changed even by his reaction. And I saw the reality of how much influence it was actually having on the rest of my life. Since that conversation when [redacted] reacted so negatively to what I was trying to tell him, the subject has become taboo, and for a while it seemed like it was going to have lasting damage on our relationship. During this time I realized that even when the relationship with my brother that I very much valued was endangered by the moral conviction I was developing, I still couldn't do anything to change it because it's not simply a matter of perspective for me even if it means suffering in the personal aspects of my own life.

1. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of the beliefs, which gave rise to this application: The main reason I joined the Navy was the military's offer to pay back the \$50,000 in student loans I had taken out to attend school. The date I was supposed to have turned in the paperwork for that has already passed and I did not turn it in. That benefit was my entire plan for paying those loans back and without it I have no idea how I'm going to pay them off. So in following through with this claim, I'm putting myself in serious financial difficulty. But that is not as important to me as what I know it will mean to the center of who I am if I perform my responsibilities as a member of the military.

m. Prior service:

<u>Military Service</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>	<u>Type Discharge</u>
None	N/A	N/A

n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization:

<u>Religious Sect/ Organization</u>	<u>Name & Location of Governing Body/Head</u>	<u>Name & Location of Church, Congregation Customarily Attending</u>	<u>Level of Participation</u>
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

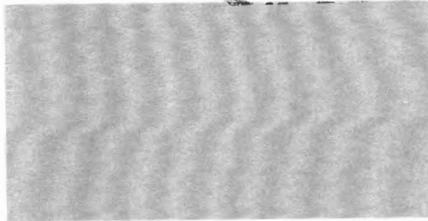
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o. Information on the pastor or leader of my (church, congregation, or meeting):

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Address</u>
N/A	N/A	N/A

p. A description of the creed or official statements of said religious sect or organization in relation to participation in war: N/A

q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated (since age 16), other than military, political, or labor organizations:
None



Date: 07NOV11

From: [Redacted]
To: PERS-832
Via: [Redacted]

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Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

1. I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection.
The following required information is provided:

a. Permanent home address: [Redacted]

b. Schools and colleges attended after age 16:

<u>School Name/Address</u>	<u>Type School</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[Redacted]	High School	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	High School	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	High School	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	College	[Redacted]

c. Chronological list of all the compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

<u>Employer/Address</u>	<u>Type Work</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[Redacted]	Kitchen worker	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	Cashier	[Redacted]

d. All residences after age 16:

<u>Address/City/State</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
[Redacted]	[Redacted]

[REDACTED]

e. Spouse and member's parents names and religion/sect:

[REDACTED]

f. I did not make application to the Selective Service System for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.

g. A description of the nature of my belief:

The Christ I know and follow came down from the heavens through the form of man and lived as a man. I am convinced in Him living life as a man He gave us all hope to live out a life like Him. That, I believe full-heartedly, to include finding peaceful manners to resolve issues with others. For it is written "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." Romans 12:14-21 The heaping of burning coals is not a literal action, but the idea that his spirit has been convicted by the Holy Spirit. The conviction cannot come from force, but by the gentleness that is found in the fruit of the Spirit. Conviction is the idea that the Holy Spirit comes in and tells a man that what he has done, or is doing is wrong or misguided. A man could be of good intentions, but approaches the issue or his life as a whole the wrong way. This comes into play when the Holy Spirit starts showing the man the path he should be on. Changing his fruits into what God has planned for him. As it says in Galatians 5:22-23 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law." These characteristics are the very example that Christ has shown to all. When allowing the Spirit to bring conviction, the changing of ones heart, the change is honest and pure. War goes against all of these things. Even in it's best intentions it cannot save. It cannot make a person a better person. Because it loses that person in violence and hatred, even if hatred was not the cause for war. He becomes something different.

Peace does not come out of the preparation for war, or war itself. If that were the case peace would of came many years ago.

Especially with the claim that World War I would of been the last war. But it wasn't, and it won't be unless there is a genuine approach to finding peace, through living out peace. Christ was that example for Christians in His ministries. When Mary Magdalene was about to be stoned for a sin she did commit Jesus stepped in and instead of joining them, He asked who was without sin that they may cast the first stone. Christ was the only without sin and did not cast a stone, but showed her mercy so that she may find an alternative to the life she was living. In a moment where violence was used by the culture to try and correct a person, He showed something different. On the cross, instead of cursing those who crucified Him, and asking His disciples to seek His revenge He asked that they be forgiving.

As I look at the Scriptures and see how Christ approached various persons and the words He said, I come to the issue of violence and the Word. I see the application of non vi, sed verbo, not through violence, but through the word. Christ being the very Word that we do all things through when we call upon His name. When Christ says one thing and another tried to be justified instead of one actually listening to what is being said I can see how war and violence become a justified means to the end. In listening and doing, not as two separate actions, but one peace is found reshaping the very being of a person. War, forgiveness and peace are separate from each other. War is thought of a tool to bring peace, but it takes away the humanity that is found on both sides of the war. In war good and evil begin to look the same. Both sides say they are the good guys. WWII is the best example I have of this thought process. Found in Adolf Hitler's "Mein Kampf" in several spots he declares that what he is doing is of God because of what the Jews had done against Christ. Many of the allies thought what they were doing was also of God's work. Two separate sides fighting for the same God instead of dropping arms and coming to an agreement as the Pope of the time urged.

In the Sermon on the Mount Christ gives various points to the life of non-violence and forgiveness. Matthew 5:21-22 He says, "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be liable to judgement.' But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgement; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire." Saying to me that even the position of my heart towards another man is deemed murder and to seek peace before I have set myself against the word of God. The wars in the Old Testament happened because His wrath had not yet been satisfied by the sacrifice of His only begotten Son on the cross. In this understanding that what Christ has done is found in satisfaction to God as the Father brings to conclusion that wrath of the Old Testament. His character has not changed. He is always mercy, grace, love, forgiveness and our judge. In the satisfaction of His wrath we are no longer instruments of His judgement. Christians should be instruments of peace, not of

war. If a man is to strike me I do not just cower at him, but approach him as an equal. Violence is used to lower the meaning of another's life. To approach him and say you and I are both human, in actions taking, I start crossing bridges most burn down. In reconciliation walls begin to crumble and forgiveness and grace begin to form.

When I ponder upon the words, "Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also," (Mathews 5:39) I do not see an excuse to not stand up for what is right. But I see an urgency to live a life where standing up means holding oneself in place and not resorting to the means of violence and evil towards another. As Walter Wink points out Christ isn't about a "fight or flight" mentality, but a third way that actively engages a man in his enemies life, showing him love where it wasn't previously found. To forgive and seek retribution, instead of retaliating you make that person, in your eyes, human. Not a foreigner, nor demon, but a neighbor, hoping to share in a common goal. Retribution is the completion of forgiveness, in that all things are made new. In that completion it isn't that what was done wrong never happened, but that in the coming together instead of retaliating in revenge the parties become one party in brotherhood. This is also in the spirit of John who said "Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God." (3 John 1:11), who in all three books of his talked about giving love unto others and not being found in sin by being full of hate. In the regard that some believe that violence has the ability to save. That violence is only found on the cross. In the violent death of my Saviour I can find hope for a world where men do not learn war any longer. To kill a man, or torture him, even with the intent of trying to make him a better man takes away his humanity because the thought is that you are playing the part of the better man. Justice should be a means for a man to see his wrongs and change from them. When justice doesn't look any different than the crime he has committed it is lost.

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed:

I joined the Navy to pay off school debt. When I first joined I had no issue with war. It was something that happened, and I knew of some people in my town who had died while in. But I didn't let that bother me. Everything was running pretty smoothly for the most part. I had my hiccups. But I was enjoying it.

When I had gotten into "A" school I was getting back into church because I hadn't really been going since joining. It was a very close net community at the church. The people there made me feel very welcome. Within a couple visits I felt as if I had a home there. I had become close friends with the youth pastor and his girlfriend and we talked about many different things. We talked about what a life looks like that is following Christ. As time went on I had refreshed myself on things I once knew dearly. I became familiar with the

freedoms that are found in fellowship with Christ. Also with the forgiveness and mercy and grace that is promised to all men. At this point I still didn't have issues with war. I hadn't yet understood that my brothers and sisters in God are all men. I understood that a man or woman who believed in Christ were my brother or sister. These things were the building block of what I believe now. I had always held the understanding that Christ died for all and their sins, but didn't realize that should imply a certain reaction from me. This realization didn't come about until the end of my first under-way I started to understand that all men were under the same condition of sin and just as capable as evil, but the interesting part of it all is that all are also given the opportunity to turn from that evil and turn towards God. I was learning this through reading "The Kingdom of God Is Within You" by Leo Tolstoy I decided to pick up this book because I had previously read "War and Peace" and I wanted to read something else of his and this was a thinner book so it would be easier to read while also working on my qualifications. Much of Tolstoy's book looks at the Sermon on the Mount and how one must look at the life they lead using that as an example. Which is the reason I was reading Matthew. In Matthew I saw that what Christ was doing was very different from the Church today. It started to bother me in the difference. Christ was a very forgiving man. It wasn't that He was weak in what He had done, but that what He was saying was to all men and women around Him. He even spoke to the Pharisees about the evils of making yourself look like something you are not. This is what struck me, because the Church as I was seeing it was making it look like something it was not. I was thinking of this because the church I had left back home had made itself more concerned with bringing people in and less about those who are in the community. There were outreaches and other ministries being done, but had the feeling of we want the people in our specific body. While in off crew after that deployment the question came to mind "Who am I to decide that another man dies because of what he has done?" I had sat on this question for some time, just searching the Scriptures about judging and our actions in judging. The answer came to me when in the Bible says "Judge not, or you will be judged with greater measure." To say a man is not worth his life because of the wrongs he has done means that you should be judged in a greater manner. That judgement that is giving to men does not come out of righteousness but a self-righteousness that is possessed in thinking that a man's actions make him higher than other peoples. During that same time I went up to [redacted] a band I had started listening to around the time of getting to [redacted]. The show was at a small church called [redacted]. When I went there I noticed how peaceful the group was as a whole. The peacefulness of the crowd struck me and made me start questioning my own heart because I wasn't very calm in those days. My heart continually felt in turmoil. I was still struggling with the death of my friend who was the youth pastor I previously mentioned. During that night after I had left the church and went to find a place to stay for the night with my friend. We had a found a place to camp in an undeveloped

subdivision. While getting set up I was thinking about a thought that had past through my head while listening to whom I have regular contact with online. When she was playing I was thinking about salvation and how it applies to all men. Not that all men are saved already, but that salvation is available to them. When I went to bed I had a dream where she was playing her on a platform in the middle of a river while a group of children were coming down to be baptized. They were not just Americans, but children of all lands. When I woke I wasn't sure what to do with myself. I felt two different ideas colliding against one another. One said that war was justifiable, the other said that war is not and that one should seek out peaceable means to live. I was already in the Word a lot more at this time, so I started to search more and more for that source of peace that they held. I understood that it came from Christ, but the example being lived out was something new to me. Something I was subconsciously looking for the entire time. I had grown up with church members coming on Sundays and Wednesdays being completely different people than I knew the other days of the week. My family left the church because my Dad was stabbed in the back by another member saying he did not do enough with my brother and I at the time. My Dad was my for as long as I can remember as a child, until we moved to my freshman year. He also allowed me to do stuff with the older children and teenagers even though I was young in comparison to them. As I was searching through the Bible about peace and the implication that the Christian has a choice to make, either continue to say "Lord, Lord" but not really live out what is said or to truly say "Abba" and seek out the peaceable kingdom of God. After the time I had in I also started reading books by Walter Wink, Tripp York, Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin. From all of these writers in different ways I was learning that The Kingdom of God is different and separate from the kingdoms of men. It helped me understand what Christ was saying when He said my kingdom is not of this world. I was finding peace in this. I was reading Tripp York's "Living on Hope In Babylon" when I was under-way with the I had gone under-way with this boat to help support their watch bill because they had recently lost member of their Radio Division due to them getting out of the Navy. This would have been in April two weeks after the bombing of Libya, that was done with the help of the opposite crew of my boat. While under-way with the I was praying a lot about what I should do now. I hurt for those who were killed by the attack. Not because I agreed with what they were doing, but because they could never know salvation and the love and peace that comes from it. Christ had given me a second chance I did not deserve when I was 18. I have realized what that looks like now. That second chance in salvation is a right to all men. The same even goes to people like Osama bin Laden. The best Biblical example is when Saul was on his way to oversee the execution of Christians gets blinded and God gives Him a vision to visit a man and he will speak with you. At the end of that Saul went from someone who was feared by Christians, to Paul who wrote 2/3rd of the New Testament.

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service:

My beliefs became incompatible with military service while going under-way with [REDACTED]. I could no longer see myself continue on this path if I am to call myself a Christian with the beliefs I hold. I would be serving two masters, two different, conflicting ideals. I can no longer say that I am a Christian and serve in a place that organizes strikes against others we deem as enemies, knowing that these said enemies are made in the image of God and that I am called to love and pray for them. Feed them when they are hungry, give them drink when they are thirsty. Justice is not found in striking down against them, but in the action of fully loving and praying for them that in the end one can hope that they do not part sides from us, but are mutual benefactors or friends in the world that we live in together. To strike against them I go against the belief I hold, and have gained from the example of Christ of what justice is. Justice is not a one-sided battle, but the bringing together of two halves. Before going under-way with [REDACTED] the opposite crew of my boat took part in the devastation that occurred in Libya. Prior to this I was praying on what I should do with my new found beliefs. I prayed a lot while under-way with the Georgia. Halfway through the deployment I had a dream where I was travelling with a group of men and women serving the poor in community with them. I remember hearing God said this is what I have for you. I understood that I needed to learn more about community before travelling in one. This is what struck my interest into looking for a means to get out and start getting back into ministry.

The carrying of arms goes against the cross mentality of bearing a common yoke with all. A yoke of goodness and gentleness. I cannot say to myself I am carrying this yoke, which says I have put myself under Christ, and serve in a place that carries a different yoke. This yoke is a yoke of war. It is not an easy or light yoke to carry, and does much damage to persons as an individual and as a group. It can blind a person from the truth of the grace and mercy of God found in His Son's death. It can also cause a man to forget that he and those in others lands are created in the same image. The early church had a deep understanding of this. Many were called incestuous, because the Romans believed that they with each other, calling themselves brother and sister. But the case really was that they saw where they came from, realizing that they were adopted into the family of God, making them brother and sisters in Christ.

j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances:

In the event of someone perpetrating violence towards me I would seek creative non-violent means to approach the situation. Holding

the understanding that all men are created in the image of God I cannot justify causing harm on their body for the self-preservation of my own. Christ went throughout His ministry using a third way, one not of fight or flight. In the garden when He was arrested He healed the Centurion that Peter had struck. On the cross He forgave those who crucified Him. In doing this He showed me something new, that is not full of myself, nor is it a cowardly act of running away from issues. But approaching them in His Spirit, with a strength that is only given by God.

k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs:

I no longer play violent video games. I would play them hours at a time, but now in that time I read the Bible and do studies of the cultures in the Bible to get a clearer picture of what is being said. I also read theologians who profess non-violent behavior. Some of the theologians and authors I read include Walter Wink, John Howard Yoder, Shane Claiborne, Dorothy Day and Tripp Yorke. It also includes Leo Tolstoy, Martin Luther King Jr. and Peter Maurin. My temper has calmed compared to what it was prior to this understanding that to seek Christ and His kingdom that I am to live in peace I was very hot-headed. In doing this I want to learn to one day create a community and do the same in another part of the world. I had been in contact with the [redacted]. They are in need of someone more experienced in working at a house of hospitality. As of right now I am speaking with people at [redacted] community that was started by [redacted] to possibly do an internship there. Along side them I am speaking with [redacted] which came out of [redacted]. It is an organization that helps those who have struggled with serving in the military and veterans who struggle with what they did while in service. But the goal is to live out the Way of Christ through community, as He did with the disciples, which was continued when He ascended to Heaven through the clouds.

l. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs, which gave rise to this application:

What gave rise to this application is a process of prayer and study of who Christ is and what He wants out of His followers. And understanding that I would be nothing with Him. There is the chance that I would not even be able to do what I have done day in and day out, but He is gracious enough to allow me to wake in the morning. To deny the example He gives I am denying that blessing and I feel to deny the blessing of life giving, that is to include the lives of others. I am to serve the poor with a the fullness of my heart, and am unable to do so while serving in the military. I am to seek peace

, justice and love all things that are only found in the serving of Christ. I cannot say I am a Christian and continue to serve the military and their needs. I have the utmost respect for those who have given their lives for what they believe in. My beliefs, however, no longer align to that of the United States Navy.

I have sight of a peaceful community, who seeks diplomacy over violence and war. I want to seek this idea full-heartedly. This has been laid on my heart with the utmost importance and I cannot ignore the desire to seek after God, just to continue to serve in the Navy for financial gain. It has afforded me the opportunity to study and thought me about myself, and who I am in Christ. To say that no good came out of serving would be a lie. Because God can bring good out of any circumstance.

What I learn from my studies I plan to share through travelling the states and teach similar to the form found in [redacted]. Instead of living according to the confounds of money and social status, teach others to live in community as the disciples and early church did. A person has no meaning if found left alone, but having a common work and common idea community is found, building a person up. This living is not possible if in continuous fighting, but is found in working together to solve issues that can otherwise lay unsettled causing strife later down the road.

m. Prior service:

NONE

n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization:

Religious Sect/ Organization	Name & Location of Governing Body/Head	Name & Location of Church, Congregation Customarily Attending	Level of Participation
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	Attend every Sunday that is possible

* In having only gone to this church a short period I am unsure of the affiliated head that they are associated with.

o. Information on the pastor or leader of my church:

The church I am currently attending is in the search of a new pastor. I am not sure what had happened to the old pastor, because he was gone before I had started to attend this church.

p. A description of the creed or official statements of said religious sect or organization in relation to participation in war:

In the transition of finding a new pastor I am unaware of a creed that they have to justify Christian involvement in war.

q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated, other than military, political, or labor organizations:

During the majority of my childhood I was [REDACTED] I was highly involved, spent the majority of my summers at camps and events. When I was 21 I spent a year working with [REDACTED]

2. Enclosure 1 provide additional information, references, or official statements, which I desire you to consider in review of this application.

16 Aug 11

From: [REDACTED]

To: Navy Personnel Command. Pers-832

Via: [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

1. I request assignment to noncombatant services/duties on the grounds of conscientious objection. The following required information is provided:

a. Permanent home address: [REDACTED]

b. School and colleges attended after age 16:

[REDACTED]
Public High school

[REDACTED]
Public High school

[REDACTED]
Public High school

[REDACTED]
Community college

c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

[REDACTED]
Worked in the produce and meat department.

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[REDACTED]

d. All residences after age 16:

[REDACTED]

e. Spouse and member's parents' names/ address and religion/sect (if deceased, so state):

[REDACTED]

f. I did not make application to the selective service system (local board) for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.

g. A description of the nature of my belief: To the Navy I am for the most part just a body, but valued by God as somebody who he would send his only begotten Son to die for me, to die the death I truly deserve. (John 3:16) "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." I am not one who looks to destroy the life that God gave his only begotten son to die for, regardless if one human organization says I am just in doing so. I am not ignorant to the fact there is many of evil in this world, some consider violence is the way to deal with the problems and this may be one way the world handle it's matters, but for me as long as I am in this world, I am called to be the light of the world, no matter how evil a person may be that person is of such value that God would send his only begotten Son to die in his place. I've done and still do many of wrongs, and if I told you I have never done things with this body both physically and verbally to have afflicted anybody, I would be a liar, because I have, and if wasn't because of the grace of God I would still be often

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doing so. The me that join the service would not be writing this letter based on what my beliefs were before enlisting for when I first got in my focus was not on seeking the things of God, I was focused on me, seeking temporal pursuits, but not neglecting the fact in totality that these temporary things can only do so much for yet there still lies a void, there is not comfort in doubt, but in truth, anxiety, stress all things all man deal with, but through my experience I've learned it's better to hand it over to the God in Heaven that can change the heart of man around, to use the lives that man may not see fit for even man's service but useable in his service, in his service where it calls us to save live and not take it, and because it calls for not the taking of one's life, I respectfully ask assignment to non-combatant duty. (John 10:10) "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/ developed: My belief prior to coming to look at the world from a biblical worldview, was one that consisted of many different accumulated ideas; the source of the ideas being things taught in school, media, books, and teachings instilled in me by the influence both by words and action of the people I lived with and came in contact, but as I study the word of God many of my former views were laid aside, the word of God is where this development of this change in my view of the world began and the continual development stems from. I came to understand that there is a God, and only one God (Isaiah 46: 10) "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me," and this God is revealed through the Bible and by Creation. It is in the Bible where I realized that I came from a Loving Creator, the value of a human being, the state of humanity, lost, sick, separated from it's Creator, and the Creator's solution to our problems. Prior to joining the Navy I was looking for a change in life and I thought it would be found by me being in the Navy. The change did come in the navy but not by the Navy, but by God. The more I study the word of God, the more truths this life has and still has to surrender this life to. That is where it leads me to where I am at, I was asked by my chain command in a talk which started on the basis on me getting the Sabbath off. The Sabbath, the fourth of God's commandment, (Exodus 20:8) Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt

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not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and Hallowed it." A day which points us to the Creator and the one who Sanctifies. It was in this talk with my chief that he brought up whether I was willing to use deadly force, I had been asked this question previously due to the fact I had a talk with one of my co-workers about my beliefs, he asked me a question, it involved a scenario that stated whether I would do something to individual whose intention was to hurt one of my family members. My answer may have left him with uncertainty in me, this my belief is due to the fact a couple weeks or so later, just before I was to be coxswain qualified, I was pulled aside first by my sectional leadership and than later my divisional leadership they asked me a question on whether I would use deadly force, both times I said "yes", both times I answered based on the fact that I didn't have a strong conviction or neither adequate education to go and say a definite "No". Couple weeks or so later as we rotated days off I had a conflict with the fact I couldn't get Sabbath off. I addressed the issue with my chain of command and in between talks I was looking online to better express my position on getting the Sabbath off. I then came across articles to better express my issue and also came across the issue concerning noncombatancy. The info moved on my heart, as a Christian our only weapon we are to have is the word of God for it is our sword, (Ephesians 6:17) And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:" we are called to distance ourselves from using arms (Matthew 26:52) " Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." For we are to represent peace, one to promote and seek to live a life of peace (Matthew 5:9) "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the Children of God." (Psalm 34:14) Depart from evil, and do good, seek peace, and pursue it." I meditated on what I learned and seeing that I work in a combatant role, change came to my mind, I didn't know when or how to bring this manner up to the chain of command, for I already have had a talk about deadly force with my chain of command. A day or so later, I talked to my chain of command about the Sabbath accommodation again, and to my amazement, it showed God had the manner in hand and it proves God can read our hearts, my Chief than asked me the question again whether I was willing to use deadly force and I told him

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"No". I understand I said "Yes" before a more educated reason leading to a conviction that was in opposition to the prior. I told them I looked to request for a conscientious objector status, I looked to take the path of least resistance so, yes, I looked to get complete separation from the Navy, not because I want to do my own thing nor looking to get ahead and seeking out the pleasures in this world, for if I wanted to do my own thing and looked to get ahead and seek out the pleasure the world has to offer, I'd be fine with being in the Navy, but my issue lies more of me being in the Navy and being able to live my faith, than me not being altogether wanting to distance myself from all that the Navy is about, and if there is a way at this time to accommodate me being in the Navy to the end of my contract I will do so.

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service: In the midst of all this not once have I personally opened to discussion about using deadly force. The first time my A-sup talked to me about a scenario involving force, then after this it led my sectional supervisor, to question me if I would use deadly force, then after that I was brought in before my Chief, they asked me a question, I was brought a question and I gave an answer, so I gave them one, "yes", and what came with that answer I took the responsibility, it did not move upon my conscience to the extent where it led me to meditate upon to educate myself enough to give one solid answer were there would be not turning on my part. Over the past months I have engaged in various different studies, came over many different topics, this topic I hadn't educated myself on, but as I was taking my time in studies on the same website that had information on the Sabbath, it happened to have information on noncombatancy and it just so happened than when I talked to my Chief regarding the Sabbath the subject of deadly force came up, where my Chief brought the subject up where I did not and he asked me a question and I gave him an answer, the process of education is one that is progressive if I knew all things, I would be placing myself in the level of God not lowly human being that I am, my decision yes, are not always the best, nor are my answers to questions I am asked. With every day demanding choices, and we not having a choice but to make choices, on that day when my Chief asked me whether I was willing to use deadly force, my choice of answer was "no", and this decision in what is known as conscientious objector status. It is but one of the many decisions I made that day, one bearing much weight and responsibility from the

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whole change of scene, from going to Harbor security, driving boats, to the work that mainly consist of manual labor, the taking of people's precious time for this manner, making time in between work, my daily studies, service to others, church task, trying to balance all things but still falling short, the hours in putting this paper work together.

j. Explanation of the circumstance under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances (if none, so state): Not that I am all points perfect nor have I understood to Love and respect all man in a way the Lord Jesus leaves us in the example of in his words and action, but because my God values life more than we can comprehend, for I believe only he really who created life can understand the complete value of it, and because I have experienced his love for myself, and if a man that is to love God he will love his fellow man for God loves all and gave all of Heaven in one, his Son, Jesus, for all, showing he is not a hateful God but a loving God, who I will to live for and change for and the work I have now that I committed to him is not work that puts me in a place in no circumstance to take life, but to save it.

k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs: Changes: Learning to love what I hate by nature, and hate what I love by nature. Went from doing 4 styles of martial arts to none months prior to this, went from looking into continuing further my college education to rather to devoting his time, on education on which last and of more value, to devote his time to better understand life by the continual study of the word of God, and other Christian literature, and through prayer. Also thankful to be able to spend the Sabbath away from work allowing my attendance in church. Looking forward to doing service for the Lord outside the navy to where he calls me.

l. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrate the consistency and depth of beliefs which gave rise to this application: My factoring in the things I've learned coming across looking over the literature and come to understand, clearing out my misunderstanding, that me carrying out duties as combatant is a duty I am not able to carry out.

m. Prior service (if any; if none, so State): None

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n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization:

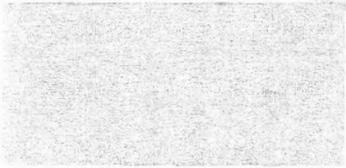
Seventh Day Adventist



Attendance often

I meet a friend named [redacted] in the Navy he was the one who witnessed to me and opened up the Bible in a way I had never been taught, after he left to [redacted] last October, that's when my studies really took off, first gradual then more and more constant, although I was still skeptical on whether I wanted to attend the [redacted] on the base at the time, For I was at difference because I didn't understand some of their beliefs. I wanted a fellowship with a congregation and their was no other church I would rather attend than the [redacted] given they had the most in common in what I believed at the time, so maybe Mid November I walked into my first bible study and then from there I kept going back missing a couple days here and there, and it was after much study and time, and changes that I made the decision to become an official baptized member of the church on August 13, 2011.

o. Information on the Pastor or leader of my (church, congregation, or meeting):



p. **NONCOMBATANCY** (Conscientious Objection to Bearing Arms)
The Seventh-day Adventist Church officially organized
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during a tragic civil war that divided the United States of America (1861-1865). Early in their denominational formation Adventists were confronted with the dilemma of how to fulfill civic and faith relationships responsibly, especially when temporal and religious obligations were in apparent conflict.

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After much prayerful and thorough study early church leaders concluded that the best position to adopt was the principle of noncombatancy. This stance was officially registered with the United States federal government in 1864 and has remained the position of Seventh-day Adventists ever since.

Noncombatant service and training is defined as follows:

1) The term "noncombatant service" shall mean (a) service in any unit of the armed forces which is unarmed at all times; (b) service in the medical department of any of the armed forces, wherever performed; or (c) any other assignment of the primary function of which does not require the use of arms in combat; provided that such other assignment is acceptable to the individual concerned and does not require them to bear arms or to be trained in their use.

2) The term "noncombatant training" shall mean any training which is not concerned with the study, use, or handling of arms or weapons.

The official stand of the Church was reaffirmed by action taken at the 1972 Annual Council of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists held 14 - 29 October in Mexico City, Mexico: Genuine Christianity manifests itself in good citizenship and loyalty to civil government. The breaking out of war among men in no way alters the Christian's supreme allegiance and responsibility to God or modifies their obligation to practice their beliefs and put God first. This partnership with God through Jesus Christ who came into this world not to destroy men's lives but to save them causes Seventh-day Adventists to advocate a noncombatant position, following their divine Master in not taking human life, but rendering all possible service to save it. As they accept the obligation of citizenship as well as its benefits, their loyalty to government requires them willingly to serve the state in any noncombatant capacity, civil

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or military, in war or peace, in uniform or out of it, which will contribute to saving life, asking only that they may serve in those capacities which do not violate their conscientious convictions.

This statement is not a rigid position binding church members, but gives guidance leaving the individual member free to assess the situation for her or himself.

When national laws permit options, church members, in making a personal decision on how to fulfill obligated terms of service to their country, should first consider the historic teaching of the Church on noncombatancy. If because of personal convictions they choose otherwise, pastors, chaplains, teachers or other church workers should aid the member in satisfying any legal requirements for securing their choice and should minister to the member's spiritual needs as follows:

a) For those choosing civilian alternative service in lieu of military service, pastoral counsel and guidance should be provided when it is established that such a request is based on consistent religious experience. Pastors, chaplains, teachers, or other church workers should provide statements of their personal knowledge of the member's position on the following: (1) church membership, (2) attendance and participation in services of the church, (3) personal standards of conduct, (4) previous expressions of belief supporting the request for exemption. Those providing such statements should request government officials to respect and honor the individual's personal convictions.

b) For those who conscientiously choose military service as a combatant, pastoral counsel and guidance should be

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provided in ministering to their needs since the Church refrains from passing judgment on them. Notice that the Seventh-day Adventist Church advocates a noncombatant position, but does not require it. Thus, some church members are willing to train with and use weapons; while others cannot, because of their own individual conscience, have anything to do with weapons or military service. Historically, most Seventh-day Adventists have served as noncombatant medics for several reasons: (1) Such service minimizes Sabbath conflicts (saving and maintaining life is honorable on Sabbath), and (2) Such service is more in harmony with the Church's stated recommendation.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church does not seek to be the conscience for any member or commander. But we do seek to inform the conscience and behavior of both, so decisions can be made with maximum understanding and thought.

q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organization with which I am or have been affiliated (since age 16) , other military, political, or labor organizations: Have been affiliated with the _____, Not devoted to it's teaching yet influenced being that it the choice of religion of my parents. Was a practitioner of karate, kung fu, judo, aikido.

2. Enclosures:

- Encl 1 of 4 Privacy Act Statement
- Encl 2 of 4 Chaplain Endorsement
- Encl 3 of 4 Clinical Psychologist statement
- Encl 4 of 4 Non-combatancy Article

24MAY2012

FROM : [REDACTED]

TO : Navy Personnel Command PERS-832

VIA [REDACTED]

Subj : REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS CLASS 1-0 CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref : (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

1) I request discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection (Class 1-0). The following required information is provided :

a) Permanent Home Address [REDACTED]

b) Schools and colleges attended after age 16 :

[REDACTED] / High School [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Community College [REDACTED]

c) Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

[REDACTED] Barista / [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Office Assistant / [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Account Executive / [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Correctional Officer / [REDACTED]

e. *Spouse and member's parents' names/address and religion/sect (if deceased, so state):*

[REDACTED]

e. *Spouse and member's parents' names/address and religion/sect (if deceased, so state):*

[REDACTED]

f. *I did not make application to the Selective Service System for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces.*

g. *A description of the nature of the belief that requires the applicant to seek separation from military service or assignment to non-combatant training and duty for reasons of conscience.*

Based on my belief in Secular Humanism, every human life has the same value. If I were to kill an innocent person at random today, I would be prosecuted and sent to prison. But if an innocent person is killed in war, it is dismissed as a casualty of war or collateral damage. The concept of the end justifying the means, which signifies that sometimes people have to die in order to complete the mission. I do not believe that any human life is expendable for any purpose, and war essentially guarantees that innocent non-combatants will be killed.

I believe that war is inherently racist. One must dehumanize their victim in order to justify taking their life, and this separation of persons has always been based on ethnicity in modern warfare. As a person of color who has personally experienced racism, I can no longer participate in a system that does not recognize the humanity of all people, regardless of race or ethnicity.

I was a devout Christian when I joined the Navy. I see now the way that the Bible promotes war and nationalism, and I completely disagree with that. I believe that the concept of "chosen" people has done a lot of damage throughout history. In Secular Humanism, there's the belief that morality does not have to come from a diety, and that every human being is precious and has a right to life. I do not believe in an afterlife anymore, and that has changed the way that I see death. Once a person is dead, that's it. What right do I have to take that away from another person? None. If there is nothing else after this time that we are here, then I believe it is up to every individual to make sure that what they do doesn't infringe on another human being's right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. One of the major tenets of Secular Humanism is the Golden Rule, which is do unto others as you have them to unto you. Essentially, treat people the way you want to be treated. I believe that just starting with that would begin to improve things in the world.

h. *An explanation as to how the applicant's beliefs changed or developed, to include an explanation as to what factors (how, when, and from whom or from what source training was received and/or belief acquired) caused the change in or development of conscientious objection status.*

My beliefs about war have changed drastically since being in the military. This shift in my belief was influenced by two major events; the first was hearing war stories from actual veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan when I went through [REDACTED], and the second being my first real experience with racism.

In Spring of 2010, I referred myself to [REDACTED] and I felt myself going down that same path.

X

I was the only sailor there. Everyone else was in the Army, and I believe the vast majority were war veterans. Listening to their stories was like being inside of a war documentary. I couldn't relate to any of their stories, but they were so powerful that I soaked up everything they said. Even though I was in the military, I had never been faced with war until I had this experience. I saw the things they went through with their families, with drinking, with suicide attempts, TBIs, and the accusations of malingering when they went to medical. I listened to them open up about things they did to people that they weren't quite sure were guilty, the "shoot first, ask questions later" way they carried out their missions, and the guilt they carried with them all the time. It was my first picture of what war actually does to the participants, and I didn't hear any of them say that they felt good about what they did, or that it was worth it because they were protecting freedom and democracy. I began to ask myself if this human cost was worth what we were doing over there, the fact that they would be dealing with these issues for the rest of their lives. I didn't come to any strong conclusions about the bigger picture of war after that experience, but it definitely showed me a different side of things that I had never taken into account before.

The second experience which greatly shaped my feelings about war was my first real encounter with racism. This had, and continues to have, a very profound impact on my life. It changed everything about the way I see the world, the way I see my place in society, and the way that I see other people. It was the most degrading and humiliating experience of my life, and traumatic in ways that I can only hope to fully capture and articulate here.

I was born and raised in [redacted] I've always been in environments with a diverse population, and had never dealt directly with discrimination before. I'm not saying that it doesn't exist in my hometown, but it was just something I never really thought about; it was never a part of my daily life. When I joined the Navy, it was the first time that I was in an environment, in particular a [redacted] where I was one of only a very small number of black people. The best way I can describe it is that I became the "token black guy". It made me upset at first, and I felt as though I was constantly being mocked because of people always making reference to my ethnicity. I wasn't used to that, and it was a huge culture shock for me. But I tried to be understanding and realize that we were all experiencing a sort of culture shock, and that maybe me getting upset all the time wasn't the best way to deal with this type of treatment. Over the span of about three years, the constant joking and mockery began to build up a lot of anger and resentment inside. I didn't know how exactly how to react, so I never did, but I knew in the back of my head that it was only a matter of time before I would reach a boiling point. I didn't understand why I was being treated differently just because I was black, and even though it was under the guise of joking, and people always said that their intent was never to hurt me, it still made me feel like they saw me as less of a person.

I reached my boiling on one particular night at a house party. This was in July of 2011. I don't know what it was about that night, but I had finally had enough. I was the only black person there, out of about 40 people, and from the moment I walked in until the time I left, the jokes never stopped. People who normally didn't joke with me in that way began to feed off of the energy of the others, and joined in. I had been drinking, and I knew that if I had reacted in any way, it would have been physical, and I was afraid of having an [redacted] So I didn't react, I just took it. Some people were uncomfortable, and could tell that I was upset because I had long since stopped laughing, but it continued. I had to wait for my designated driver to leave, because I wasn't able to drive home. The next day, I felt the lowest that I've ever felt in my entire life. I was so upset that I felt physical pain. Every word I want to use (depressed, humiliated, ashamed, angry) doesn't capture how I felt after this experience. I finally understood that racism really was. A person doesn't recognize the humanity of another person, solely based on their preconceived notions about people with that skin color. I am a

person, I am a human being. I am not "the black guy", but that's all I felt like I was to them. I had just taken it all of these years because I wanted to be accepted, and they were just mocking me the whole time.

I did not come out of my room for two weeks, I was living with roommates at the time. They knew something was obviously wrong, but I couldn't face the world. I only came out to go to work, and it took every ounce of strength within me to go to work. I had never paid attention to race before, but I was weary of white people after that incident. I was so hurt and didn't quite understand what had happened. After a couple weeks, I didn't feel any better. I didn't want to go to counseling, because I felt awkward requesting a black counselor. I couldn't talk to anyone except for my family. I tried to explain it to one of my white friends here, and he told me I was overreacting. I realized that no one can really understand it unless they've experienced it. I considered suicide, and I was serious about it. I couldn't see myself living in this new world; this paradigm shift was too drastic, the reality of what being black in America has been and still is. But I told myself that if I do that, then they win. My family wasn't going to gain anything but heartache if I did that, and I owed it to myself to deal with my pain in a way other than just checking out. The only thing that kept me sane during this time was reading. I began to read African-American literature, and I was inspired by how strong they were, to stand up for themselves and demand to be recognized and respected. I called another friend of mine who lives in Arkansas, and told him that I knew I would snap and get myself in trouble if anyone said anything racist to me, and that I needed to leave. He asked me for how long, and I told him I wasn't sure. I was ready to throw all of my Navy career away. I even looked up what my punishment would be if I went UA for a few weeks, and it was worth it to me at the time. I thought that restriction would be good for me because I would be isolated, and I would no longer fear punishment in the event that my anger resulted in a physical altercation with someone. I was a ticking time bomb, and I wasn't sure if I could harness all of those years of anger once it was unleashed. Instead of going UA, I took a few days of leave and drove to [redacted]. I didn't tell anyone where I was going, because I didn't want anyone to know where I was in case I decided to stay. I began reading about the Civil Rights movement and the Black Panthers. I read *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison, and cried buckets of tears. It was the story of my life. It was like Ellison lived my life and went back in time to write that book for me. Invisible. That's exactly how I felt. No one saw me, all they saw was my skin. It's an appalling thought, even looking back now. I finally decided, after a long talk with my friend, that I wouldn't accomplish anything by going UA. I was the only one that was going to lose everything I had worked for, so I decided to come back.

Fast forward to September 2011, and I was feeling a little better. I had completely stopped hanging out with friends, deleted my facebook account, and just kept to myself. I spent all of my free time reading and still trying to process what had happened. But I didn't dread going to work anymore, and I was starting to talk to people again. One day at work, I received a PM from one of my coworkers, basically showing me a conversation that people were having about me in one of the channels, and they were making some very offensive jokes about me, all racial in their content. After all I had been through, I had finally had enough. I printed the conversation and reported it to my Chain of Command. It became a much bigger monster than I had anticipated, but I didn't care. I was minding my own business, just trying to do my job, and people were still targeting me. My Chain of Command handled my Equal Opportunity complaint beautifully. It went directly to the Chief in charge of Command Managed Equal Opportunity, and I had individual meetings with everyone in my chain, with them making sure that I was good to continue in my shop. They had seen a shift in my behavior since the incident at the party, which I hadn't told anyone about, and now I had some hard evidence exhibiting the reason I had changed.

1. An explanation as to when these beliefs became incompatible with military service or combatant duties, and why.

How does all of this relate to my feelings about war? Well, after this incident happened, I still hadn't quite connected the dots. I didn't really think there were any dots to connect, as far as war was concerned. Getting out of the Navy never even crossed my mind. I mentioned that I contemplated going UA, but the reason I did not was because I did not want any blemishes on my record. It took a few months of reading and studying to start to string things together, which wasn't necessarily something that I was trying to do. It just sort of emerged. During this time, the author I connected with the most was Howard Zinn. He has written extensively about war, why we fight them, and what we can do in the future to stop them. He was a bombardier during WWII, and it was through him that I learned the term "cognitive dissonance". He says that he dropped lots of bombs during the war, and that he never thought about it as he was carrying out missions. When flying five miles above your target, you don't see where the bombs go or what they do once they hit the ground. It wasn't until after the war was over that he began to think about the war, and whether they had actually done a good thing. Years later, Zinn went back to the city that he had bombed, and learned that the aerial bombing attacks he participated in led to the death of over 1,000 French and German civilians. They were hiding out, waiting for the end of the war.

I watched the documentary "Hearts and Minds (1974)", and it was about the Vietnam war. This was while I was on leave in December 2011. I would say that this documentary was the most effective in connecting my personal experience with racism and my participation in war together. I had heard the term Conscientious Objector before, but I had never seen a person actually display these beliefs against war until I watched this documentary. I actually paused the video on Netflix and looked up what the actual definition was, and I saw that it described my beliefs perfectly. The documentary was very well done because they interviewed American troops, Vietnamese troops, Vietnamese civilians, and showed the Winter Soldier testimonies by Conscientious Objectors. The ubiquitous image of the little girl running naked down the street trying to escape a napalm attack is from this documentary. Seeing that in action was chilling and horrifying. I watched the interviews in which the civilians talked about their villages being destroyed and countless family members being killed. I know lots of Vietnamese people back in _____, and I never knew that their parents and grandparents had experienced this; this is possibly why many of them emigrated to _____. They are human beings, and I can't wrap my mind around how that destruction was able to happen. I find myself vicariously experiencing the massive peace movement that this war inspired. The bomber pilots in this documentary said the same thing that Howard Zinn mentions; they never saw where their bombs went, and never thought about the effect it was having on the ground. The Conscientious Objectors during the Winter Soldier testimonies mentioned the pervasive racism as a way of justification for committing atrocities against the Vietnamese people.

My experience of dealing with racism showed me something very valuable – that sometimes the way we perceive the world is not how things really are. I was under the impression that people saw me as a person, but the rude awakening was that for many people, they see my ethnicity before they see anything else about me. W.E.B DuBois, in *Souls of Black Folks*, calls it "double consciousness". It is the moment in which you become conscious that the way you see yourself is not the way the rest of society sees you, and it alters the way in which you interact with a world that can't see past the "veil". I began to see how this type of think is crucial in allowing people to do horrible things to other human beings. This is the root of cognitive dissonance that Howard Zinn speaks of. When I connected my experience to slavery and the Civil Rights movement, I realized that it was about more than equal

rights, it was really about human rights. If we are all human beings, we all deserve to be treated with dignity and have the same opportunities. Skin color or ethnicity shouldn't separate or hinder any person from living life with the same rights that God (or I believe, Nature) has bestowed upon every human being. I don't blame the soldiers for what they did, I blame war in and of itself. It is only in that type of environment that regular people are able to do that and use racism to subjugate others.

The only way you can get regular people to participate in war is to convince them that the people they are fighting are inferior or less human. Now, we may use terms like "insurgent", "terrorist", "enemy", "jap", "gook", etc. Howard Zinn says "Once you've convinced yourself that they are the enemy, then you don't have to think anymore. You can commit whatever atrocities are necessary for the completion of your mission." War must contain an element of dehumanization and racism in order to even exist. Once you allow yourself to realize that you are killing another human being, the rules of the game change significantly. After my experience with racism, I don't have the capability to dehumanize anymore. I would never be able to take another human being's life and not think about them being someone's family member or friend. That person is not their country, not their military, not a symbol, not a robot with a gun, they are a person. They are involved in a government sanctioned conflict, in the same way that we are. I no longer see war in terms of good vs. bad, us vs. them. Once you take nationalism out of the equation, it exposes the humanity of all of the participants. Then, in my head, it becomes murder. If I were to shoot up a room full of people, I would be deemed a psychopath and sent to the electric chair. But if I were to do that in a combat zone, but kill one suspected terrorist or insurgent in the process, it would be looked at in a different light. In my mind now, government sanctioned killing doesn't make people any less dead, or any less human. In the same way that I would never take another person's life here, I would never be able to live with myself knowing that my actions led to the death of another human being. I no longer have the capability to dissociate humanity away from any human being, which means that I feel I can no longer participate in a system that promotes war.

My grandfather is a World War II veteran. When he was stationed in England, and later in France, he told me it was his first experience ever having touched a white person. The French kids were fascinated by his palms being white but his skin being brown on the top of his hands. The white soldiers would tell the French girls that the negro soldiers were monkeys, and the girls would ask if they could see their tails. My grandfather served his time, and tried to use his VA loan to purchase a home back in the neighborhood he wanted to move to had been "redlined", meaning that only white families were able to live there. He decided that he did not want to continue to raise his family in that environment, and moved them (my mother included) where I was born. He fought for his country, but was still deemed a second-class citizen when he returned. The question I ask myself is who really wins in war? I would say that there aren't any winners. Referring specifically to WWII, there were some economic benefits, and we as a country were able to emerge as a superpower. I can't see, however, than anyone personally benefited, but I am able to see the incalculable damage that was done. This, along with my own experiences, makes me question whether war does any good for people other than those in power, even the wars that history tells us were ultimately for a good cause.

j. An explanation as to the circumstances, if any, under which the applicant believes in use of force, and to what extent, under any foreseeable circumstances.

I believe in self-defense and protecting one's family. I believe that if someone is threatening to take your life, you have every right to defend yourself. If I saw anything happening to anyone in my family, I would do whatever was necessary to make sure my family was safe. This is use of force on a

personal scale, which means that one may need to resort to force to protect themselves, but it is not the same as the widespread killing that occurs in war.

I also believe that in law enforcement, there are situations in which a police officer can and should use force in order to stop a person that is endangering the lives of others. Even police officers have very strict procedures that they must go through in order to arrive at the level of using force to stop a person. I believe that because war involves weaponry and killing on such a massive scale, there is no way to verify whether every person killed is an enemy combatant. My personal stance is that regardless of the circumstances, as long as someone is not personally trying to harm me, I have no right to take another person's life, solely because they are on the other side. That is not a justifiably reason to kill, and war inevitably puts people in a situation where killing must happen.

k. An explanation as to how the applicant's daily life style has changed as a result of the beliefs and what future actions the applicant plans to continue to support his or her stated beliefs.

To say that everything in my life has changed after this realization would be a gross understatement. When I joined the Navy, I finally felt like I had found something that I could throw myself into. I had many goals and aspirations, such as volunteering for air then putting in an . I have completely lost interest in everything, because I don't want to build my career on the back of a system that promotes war. I would rather be doing something that I know is truly a force for good in the world. I don't judge anyone that is in the military, and I know lots of people that want to stay in so that they can change things from within. I applaud them and respect their decision, and I hope that my decision will be respected as well. John F. Kennedy said "war will continue to exist until that distant day when the conscientious objector enjoys the same reputation and prestige that a warrior does today." Seeing the reality of the thinking that goes into fighting war has made me completely detach. I was always a good sailor and participated quite a bit in the Command, through leading PT and doing funeral detail. I stopped all my activities, and didn't continue my paperwork for my deployment request. I realize I am still in the Navy, and I have continued to do my job and not get in trouble, but my attitude towards the Navy after seeing the bigger picture has shifted significantly.

I've always had the reputation of being amiable and easy to work with. I enjoyed the camaraderie of my shop and was always friendly with everyone. One day I heard one of the civilian contractors say that he hoped we would go to war with Iran, because it would keep his contract open and allow him to renew. These incidents, along with this shift in my beliefs, have caused me to completely shut down. I sit far away from everyone, and try to interact as little as possible with people. It is torture for me because it is completely counter to my personality; it is natural for me to be friendly and talkative. But I can't handle conversations about war, and I avoid conversations about our technological abilities because I have no desire to know our full capabilities. It comes across as a lack of desire for more training and technical expertise, and that is hard for me to reconcile with people without getting into a conversation about war. I have even avoided opportunities for more training in my shop because I don't want to be even more capable in this job that I'm doing.

I have made a commitment to freedom of thought and mental clarity. I made a dietary change and stopped eating carbohydrates and all other types of processed foods. In Taoism, the monks believe that "grains cloud the mind", and I have experienced this new mental stamina and flexibility in my daily life. I have also started meditating and seeking more spiritual guidance outside of the traditional Christian setting that I am used to. I've begun to read books about Eastern religions, and while I don't practice or subscribe to any one religion in particular, I want to make sure that I am constantly open to new ideas about faith and spirituality. I believe that having one's mind free is the first and most vital

step in recognizing one's own humanity and the humanity of everyone else here on earth.

I used to spend lots of time with friends, and I got along really well with my shipmates and coworkers. I have transitioned into spending much more time at the library, reading and watching documentaries. The stronger I feel about this, the less connected I feel to this community here and to my shipmates. I still have people that I talk to, but it is more with my family and friends from back home; I keep my relationships very surface with people here now. I consciously avoid or excuse myself from conversations about work, war, and politics when I'm around others in the military now. The decision to go through this process is a very difficult and personal one, and I don't want to come across as judging people who don't have the same moral conflict that I have. I find myself hanging out more with shipmates who think along the same lines that I do, but have their own reasons for not going through this process. I have even met another Conscientious Objector here, and it's been great to not feel alone in this anymore. I made contact with

and I speak with them now when I am feeling discouraged about what my job is. I have tried to block out everything I have learned and tough out the rest of my contract or find ways to distract myself from the reality, but I am not able to. It's all I think about whenever I walk into the building; it is on my mind constantly, why this building exists in the first place.

Since discovering that I am Conscientious Objector, it is the first time I've had hope for the future. I don't worry about going to war anymore, and I don't agonize over being forced to do things that are against my beliefs. While it is hard for me to go to work everyday, my personal life has been much better because I feel like I am channeling my gifts and energy into good things. I am not able to be an active participant in peace organizations because of my work schedule and location of my duty station, but just making contact with people who have been in my situation and want to stop war constantly motivates me and confirms for me that I am doing the right thing. Instead of focusing on avoiding participation in war, I now focus on things I want to do when I get out that will help prevent the dying of more American troops and innocent civilians.

I would never say that I am ashamed of being in the military, but I find myself not wanting people to know that I am in the Navy. I never go to the grocery store in uniform anymore, I don't wear my PT sweats out like I used to, and I never show my military ID. I've stopped showing my military ID even if the place gives military discounts. It's this disconnect that I find coming out more and more in my daily life; that I want to dissociate as much as possible.

I made contact with _____ I correspond with these _____ groups frequently, and since they are all based out of _____ I plan on going and volunteering with these groups when I get out. I also joined _____ and unfortunately haven't been able to attend any meetings because my work schedule, but I will continue to correspond with them and help out in any way that I can. I do have a membership card.

_____ in the same format that veterans did during the Vietnam war, and many of the soldiers talking about the existence of racism in the military. The need to dehumanize the enemy in order to torture and/or kill them for mission purposes. Hearing their testimonies caused me to reach out and make contact with them. Will I be marching on the streets and protesting against war when I get out? I honestly don't know. But I have found solidarity with these groups, and I know I'm not alone in how strongly I feel about the necessity to end war. I want to do my part in making sure this happens. The Universe has given me the opportunity to experience what I have, which I believe was meant to teach me something and give me this shift in perspective. I want to use my new found knowledge to help others, and to save lives. Maybe we can channel all of this energy we put into the military to promote peace around the world, and not war.

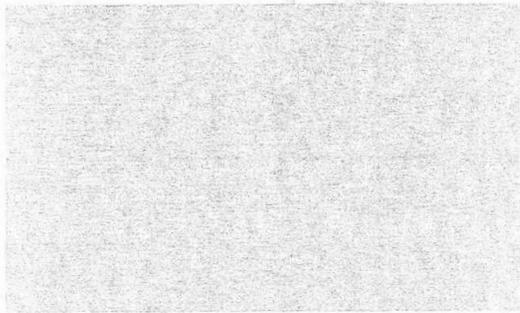
1. An explanation as to what in the applicant's opinion most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of the stated beliefs that gave rise to the applicant's claim.

Friends that were already in the military before I joined gave me this advice before I went to boot camp. They said "as long as you show up 15 minutes early to everything in the right uniform, you will have a successful military career." As trite as that sounds, I have done my best to follow that. I have done my best to be a good sailor, not draw attention to myself, and maintain a good reputation and work ethic. I have asked myself a thousand times if putting in this packet is a good idea, being that I have less than two years left on my contract. I thought that since I am more than halfway done, that I would be able to keep quiet and tough it out. But I am not able to do that anymore. I know that I received a larger enlistment bonus because of the extension on my contract, and I will have to pay that back. Also, I am not entirely sure of what other financial obligations I will be required to fulfill due to ending my contract early. The path of least resistance in this situation for me would be to continue what I've been doing. I have never wanted to be the person to draw attention to myself in any way, but after having gone through what I have, I see that people continue to suffer when you remain quiet. Other people in my shop thanked me for speaking up about being harassed, because they saw that a person speaking up can change the environment for other people. In those situations, one begins to feel hopeless because they feel like nothing will ever change. One feels encouraged when there is a positive change, which there definitely was in my shop after I spoke up.

I believe that standing up for what you believe in, regardless of the personal sacrifice, is the only way have true freedom. I don't know how much this will cost me financially, and I have accepted that I may lose some meaningful friendships over this. Toughing it out would be the easy way, but after what I have seen and knowing what I know, my conscience will not allow me to do that.

q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated (since age 16), other than military, political, or labor organizations:

As I mentioned earlier, I have been affiliated with [REDACTED] All three of these groups are peace organizations which have to goal of seeking alternatives to war.



MILPERSMAN 1900-020

CONVENIENCE OF THE GOVERNMENT SEPARATION BASED ON
 CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION (ENLISTED AND OFFICERS)

Responsible Office	NAVPERSCOM (PERS-832) Enlisted	Phone:	DSN COM FAX	882-4431/4428 (901) 874-4431 882-2754
	NAVPERSCOM (PERS-834) Officers	Phone:	DSN COM FAX	882-3197 (901) 874-3197 882-2621
	NAVPERSCOM (PERS-913) Inactive Enlisted Members	Phone:	DSN COM FAX	882-4503 (901) 874-4503 882-2673
NAVPERSCOM CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTER		Phone:	Toll Free	1-866-U ASK NPC

References	50 U.S.C. 456 38 U.S.C. 3103 5 U.S.C. 301
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1. **Policy.** Members may be separated on the basis of Conscientious Objection when their religious training and belief have a firm, fixed, and sincere objection of their participation in war in any form, or the bearing of arms.

2. **Burden of Proof.** The applicant bears the burden of proving their claim of conscientious objection as grounds for separation, or assignment to noncombatant training and service. They must show, by clear and convincing evidence

a. the nature or basis of their claim comes within the definition and criteria prescribed herein; and

b. their belief in connection therewith is honest, sincere, and deeply held. They also have the burden of determining and setting forth the exact nature of their request (i.e., whether for separation based on conscientious objection (1-0); or for

assignment to noncombatant training and service based on conscientious objection (1-A-0).

3. Conditions or Restrictions

a. After entering the naval service, a request for discharge based solely on conscientious objection, which existed but was not claimed prior to enlistment or notice of induction, shall not be considered when such beliefs satisfied the requirements if

(1) classification as a conscientious objector under Section 6(j) of the Universal Military Training and Service Act, as amended (50 U.S.C 456) and related provisions of law; and

(2) the member failed to request classification as a conscientious objector by the Selective Service System (SSS); or

(3) if their request for classification as a conscientious objector before entering military service was denied on the merits by the SSS and their present request for classification as a conscientious objector is based on essentially the same grounds; or

(4) supported by essentially the same evidence, as the request, which was denied by the SSS.

b. Claims growing out of the experiences prior to entering military service but which did not become fixed until after entry into the service will not be considered.

c. All claims of conscientious objection will be judged by SSS standards used in determining 1-0 or 1-A-0 classification of draft registrants prior to induction. Subject to the limitations set forth above, an application for conscientious objector status may be approved for any member who is conscientiously opposed to participation in war, in any form, when opposition is founded on "religious training and belief" as defined in MILPERSMAN 1900-010, and whose position is sincere and deeply held.

d. A true conscientious objector must be against all wars, rather than a specific war.

4. Applicant's Proof of Moral and Ethical Beliefs. The applicant must show that moral and ethical beliefs are against

participation in war, in any form, that these beliefs have directed their life in the way traditional religious convictions of equal strength, depth, and duration have directed the lives of those whose beliefs are clearly found in traditional religious convictions.

5. Primary Factors

a. A primary factor to be considered is the sincerity with which the belief is held. Great care must be exercised in determining whether asserted beliefs are honestly and genuinely held. Sincerity is determined by an impartial evaluation of the applicant's thinking and living in its totality, past and present.

b. Care must be exercised in determining the integrity of belief and the consistency of application.

c. Information presented by the applicant should be sufficient to convince that the applicant's personal history reveals views and actions strong enough to demonstrate the belief upon which conscientious objection is based is the primary controlling force in their life and that expediency or avoidance of military service is not the basis of their claim.

d. The conduct of an applicant, in particular their outward manifestation of the beliefs asserted, will be carefully examined and given substantial weight in evaluating the application.

6. Relevant Factors

a. Relevant factors to consider in determining applicant's claim of conscientious objector include

(1) training in the home and church;

(2) general demeanor and pattern of conduct which supports asserted beliefs;

(3) participation in religious activities;

(4) whether ethical or moral convictions were gained through training, study, contemplation, or other activity comparable in rigor and dedication to the processes by which traditional religious convictions are formulated;

(5) credibility of the applicant; and

(6) credibility of persons supporting the claim.

(i.e., Applicant made some major commitments during the time their beliefs were developing which are inconsistent with their claim. Application as a conscientious objector shortly after applying and denied for a special Navy program - or becoming aware of the prospect of hazardous or other undesirable duty. Taking the military oath of office shortly before applying for conscientious objector status may be evidence of insincerity in a given case.) These examples are noteworthy because of their frequent recurrence. The potential relevant areas of inquiry are limitless.

b. An applicant claiming 1-0 status will not be granted 1-A-0 status as a compromise. An applicant may be assigned noncombatant status if the record clearly indicates beliefs such that the applicant is qualified as a noncombatant, but not for discharge as a conscientious objector.

c. Particular care must be exercised not to deny the existence of bona fide beliefs simply because those beliefs are incompatible with one's own. Church membership or adherence to particular theological tenets are not required to warrant separation or assignment to noncombatant training and service for conscientious objectors. Mere affiliation with a church or other group, which advocates conscientious objection as a tenet of its creed, is not necessarily determinative of an applicant's position or belief. Conversely, affiliation with a church or group, which does not teach conscientious objection beliefs in any, given case. Where an applicant is or has been a member of a church, religious organization, or religious sect, and where their claim of conscientious objection is related to such membership, inquiry may properly be made as to the fact of membership and the teaching of the church, religious organization, or religious sect, as well as the applicant's religious activity. The fact that the applicant may disagree with, or not subscribe to, some of the tenets of their church does not necessarily discredit their claim. The personal convictions of each applicant will be controlling so long as they derive from their moral, ethical, or religious beliefs. An applicant who is otherwise eligible for conscientious objector status may not be denied that status simply because their conscientious objection influences their views concerning the nation's domestic or foreign policies. The task is to decide whether the beliefs professed are sincerely held and

whether they govern the claimant's actions in both word and deed.

7. Classification of Conscientious Objectors. Conscientious objectors are classified as

a. **1-0:** a person who by reason of conscientious objection, sincerely objects to participation of any kind of war - in any form.

b. **1-A-0:** a person who by reason of conscientious objection, sincerely objects to participation as a combatant in any war in any form, but whose convictions are such as to permit military service in a noncombatant status.

8. Procedures When Classified 1-A-0 Upon Induction. Members classified 1-A-0 by Selective Service prior to induction shall be transferred for recruit training and be subject to noncombatant service/duties and training. The member shall sign the following NAVPERS 1070/613 (Rev. 10-81), Administrative Remarks entry:

(date): "I have been counseled concerning designation as a conscientious objector. Based on my training and belief, I consider myself to be a conscientious objector within the meaning of the status and regulations governing conscientious objectors and am conscientiously opposed to participation in combatant training and service. I request assignment to noncombatant duties for the remainder of my term of service (end of EAOS). I fully understand that on expiration of my current term of service, I may not be eligible for voluntary enlistment, reenlistment, extension or amendment or current enlistment, or active service in the Armed Forces by reason of my 1-A-0 classification."

WITNESSED:

SIGNATURE OF MEMBER

9. Procedures for Requesting Classification as a Conscientious Objector. Use the following format to apply for designation as a Conscientious Objector:

(date)

From: (Rate/full name/class/SSN)
To: Navy Personnel Command (PERS-832 for Enlisted)/
(PERS-834 for Officers)
Via: Commanding Officer, (command)

Subj: REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1900-020

1. I request (discharge -or- assignment to noncombatant services/duties) on the grounds of conscientious objection. The following required information is provided:

a. Permanent home address:

b. School and colleges attended after age 16:

<u>School Name/Address</u>	<u>Type School</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
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c. Chronological list of all compensated and uncompensated jobs held after age 16:

<u>Employer/Address</u>	<u>Type Work</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
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d. All residences after age 16:

<u>Address/City/State</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
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e. Spouse and member's parents' names/address and religion/sect (if deceased, so state):

f. I (made/did not make) application to the Selective Service System (local board) for classification as a conscientious objector prior to entry into the Armed Forces. (If application was made, list local board and decision made by the board - if known.)

g. A description of the nature of my belief: (Thoroughly explain the nature of the belief, which requires you to seek separation from the Navy or assignment to noncombatant services/duties by reason of conscientious objection.)

h. Explanation of how my belief changed/developed: (Includes factors (how/when/from whom/from what source training was received) and the beliefs acquired or which caused the change in or development of conscientious objector beliefs.)

i. Explanation of when and why these beliefs became incompatible with military service:

j. Explanation of the circumstances under which I believe in the use of force, under any foreseeable circumstances (if none, so state):

k. Explanation of how my current life style has changed as a result of my belief, and the future actions I plan to continue my support of these beliefs:

l. Explanation of what, in my opinion, most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of beliefs, which gave rise to this application:

m. Prior service (if any; if none, so state):

<u>Military Service</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>	<u>Type Discharge</u>
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n. The following information is provided regarding my religious sect or organization:

<u>Religious Sect/ Organization</u>	<u>Name & Location of Governing Body/Head</u>	<u>Name & Location of Church, Congregation Customarily Attending</u>	<u>Level of Participation</u>
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Explain when, where, and how you became of member of said sect or organization.

o. Information on the pastor or leader of my (church, congregation, or meeting):

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Address</u>
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p. A description of the creed or official statements (if any, and if known) of said religious sect or organization in relation to participation in war:

NOTE: Members will submit a signed copy of the following privacy act statement with their application:

"THE AUTHORITY TO REQUEST THIS INFORMATION IS DERIVED FROM 50 U.S.C. 456j AND 38 U.S.C. 3103, AND 5 U.S.C. 301, DEPARTMENTAL REGULATIONS. THE PURPOSE OF THIS APPLICATION IS TO ALLOW THE MEMBER TO APPLY FOR CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR STATUS. THIS APPLICATION IS COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY; HOWEVER, FAILURE TO PROVIDE THE REQUIRED INFORMATION WOULD RESULT IN AN INABILITY TO PROCESS THIS REQUEST AND THE MEMBER WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO RECEIVE THE REQUESTED STATUS."

q. A description of my relationship with and activities in all organizations with which I am or have been affiliated (since age 16), other than military, political, or labor organizations:

2. Enclosures (1) - () (as applicable) provide additional information, references, or official statements, which I desire you to consider in review of this application.

(Signature)

10. Required Interviews

a. A chaplain and psychiatrist or clinical psychologist, who are members of a regular or reserve component of any of the Armed Forces, will personally interview the applicant. A written report must be provided by both and attached as enclosures and part of the case file. If the applicant refuses to participate, is uncooperative, or unresponsive in the course of these interviews, this fact will be included in their statements.

b. The chaplain will provide opinion of the nature and basis of the applicant's claim, sincerity, and depth of conviction in the claim of conscientious objection, and a recommendation of disposition with the rationale for the conclusion.

c. The psychiatrist or clinical psychologist will provide a report or psychiatric disorders which would warrant treatment or disposition through medical channels or such personality disorder, which would warrant recommendation for appropriate administrative separation action. Comments concerning the sincerity or credibility of the applicant's claimed convictions may also be included.

d. Both interviewing officers will provide their personal impressions of the applicant, such as demeanor and manner in which they answer questions. Consideration should be given to all background information and any outward manifestations, which tend to support or rebut the applicant's claim.

e. Applicants should be carefully evaluated to ensure they are not objecting to military service solely on the basis of a false premise. (Example - applicant may state they cannot serve because they are opposed to murder, organized killing for the sake of ideology, military ventures to gain territory or national wealth, and similar reasons which they indicate to be policies of the Government or the Armed Forces). Political opposition to national policies is not necessarily an indication of an applicant's objection to war on a moral, ethical, or religious basis.

11. Investigating Officer

a. A lieutenant commander or above will be appointed, by the commanding officer (CO), as the Investigating Officer (IO). If not reasonably available, the CO may appoint a lieutenant, who in his opinion, is well-qualified by reason of age, education, training, experience, and length of service. The officer will not be in the immediate chain of command of the member, and will be senior to the applicant.

NOTE: The CO may appoint a judge advocate of the grade of lieutenant or above. (In this regard, the Naval Legal Service Office (NLSO) may provide on an "as available" basis a judge advocate to act as hearing officer).

b. The investigating officer

(1) may obtain guidance and assistance from the NLSO or command judge advocate.

(2) will conduct a hearing on the application to afford the applicant an opportunity to present any evidence desired in support of the application. This will help the hearing officer to ascertain and assemble all relevant facts to create a comprehensive record, and to facilitate an informed recommendation to the CO.

(3) will actively and critically examine the applicant's beliefs, and any failure or refusal to submit to questioning under oath or affirmation. Should the applicant fail to appear, the IO may proceed in the applicant's absence as the applicant is considered to have waived the right for appearance.

(4) will fully advise and counsel the applicant concerning the provisions of 38 U.S.C. 3103 which provides in pertinent part that the discharge of any person on the grounds of conscientious objection who refused to perform military duty, to wear the uniform, or otherwise to follow lawful orders of competent military authority shall bar all rights (except government insurance) of such personnel under laws administered by the Department of Veteran's Affairs (DVA) based upon the period of service from which discharged or dismissed. The only exception is in cases where it is established to the satisfaction of the DVA that the member was insane. Have the applicant sign the following NAVPERS 1070/613 entry (include in case file):

"(date): I have been advised of the provisions of 38 U.S.C. 3103 concerning possible non-entitlement to benefits administered by the Department of Veteran's Affairs (DVA) due to discharge from the military service as a conscientious objector under certain conditions. I understand that a discharge as a conscientious objector who refused to perform military duty or otherwise to follow lawful orders of competent military authority, shall bar all rights, based upon the period of service from which discharged, under any laws administered by the DVA except my legal entitlement (if any) to any war risk, government (converted), National Services Life Insurance (NSLI), or Serviceman's Group Life Insurance (SGLI)."

12. Documentation by the Investigating Officer (IO)

a. The IO will include his/her recommendations for disposition of the case and the rationale for such disposition. Subject to the provisions that an applicant claiming 1-0 status will not be granted 1-A-0 status as a compromise, the actions recommended will be limited to denial of any classification as a conscientious objector, classification as 1-A-0 conscientious objector, or classification as 1-0 conscientious objector.

b. Provide a written report summarizing the hearing. Indicate if member appeared at the hearing, if member had counsel present and if so, provide the counsel's identity, and whether the nature and purpose of the hearing was explained to the applicant. Provide conclusions regarding the underlying basis, sincerity, and depth of the applicant's conscientious objection and beliefs. Forward all documents considered and reviewed during the hearing.

c. The entire package will be forwarded to the CO, with a copy to the applicant and his/her counsel (if applicable). Have the applicant sign a statement per below, and include a copy of such statement with your report to the CO.

"(date): I received this date a copy of the record (as defined in MILPERSMAN 1900-020) of my conscientious objection hearing. I understand that I have the right to submit a written rebuttal to this record, provided my rebuttal is submitted to the investigating officer within 5 working days after this date. I (do/do not) desire to submit a rebuttal."

(Signature)

13. The Hearing

a. The hearing will be informal in character and the rules of evidence employed by court-martial do not apply, except that all oral testimony presented shall be under oath or affirmation. Any relevant evidence may be received. Statements obtained from persons not present at the hearing need not be made under oath or affirmation. The hearing is not an adversary proceeding.

b. A verbatim record of the hearing is not required. If the applicant desires such a record and agrees to provide it at their own expense, it may be done. If elected, a copy will be provided to the IO at the conclusion of the hearing and at no expense to the government. The IO will summarize the testimony of witnesses and permit the applicant or their counsel to examine the summaries and note for the record their differences from the IO's summary.

14. Applicants' Rights at Hearing

a. They are entitled, at their own expense, to be represented by counsel who shall be permitted to be present at the hearing, assist the applicant in the presentation of their case, and examine all items in the file.

b. They may submit additional evidence (including sworn/unsworn statements), and present witnesses in their own behalf; but they are responsible for securing their attendance. The installation or local commander shall render all reasonable assistance in making available witnesses requested by the applicant. The applicant is permitted to question any other witnesses who appear and to examine all items in the file.

15. Commanding Officer's Responsibilities

a. Review the record for completeness, and return to the IO for further investigation as necessary.

b. Forward completed case file to NAVPERSCOM (PERS-832 for Enlisted/PERS-834 for Officers) with CO's comments and recommendations. Comments are restricted to those matters contained in the record.

c. If the applicant's request is for assignment to noncombatant services/duties, provide a recommendation whether the applicant should be detailed to such assignment or training, and if so, whether they are qualified and desire assignment to the Hospital Corps or in the case of officers, to the Medical Corps/Medical Service Corps/Dental Corps/Nurse Corps. If the member does not desire such duties and training, or is not qualified, state whether their services can be used on board if assigned a Limited Duty Designator L-8.

d. Comments as appropriate on the member's rebuttal of the IO's investigation if applicable.

e. Upon receipt of the member's request, assign the member duties provided the minimum practicable conflict with their professed beliefs and require the member to maintain the same standards of performance and behavior as other members assigned. If member is under orders for transfer, they are required to carry out orders in effect at the time or subsequently received.

f. Inform all concerned, and NAVPERSCOM (PERS-832) if the member becomes the subject of disciplinary action, and outcome of such. If member will be receiving a court-martial, action of their request will be held in abeyance pending the outcome of such trial.

g. Administrative separations for any reasons other than Conscientious Objection take precedence over separation as a conscientious objector.

16. Action by NAVPERSCOM

a. When a determination that member's application meets the criteria of 1-0 classification, NAVPERSCOM (PERS-832/834) will direct member's discharge by reason of Convenience of the Government - Conscientious Objection.

b. Members classified as 1-A-0 will be reassigned to noncombatant training and services/duties as indicated below, or discharged from military service at the discretion of NAVPERSCOM (PERS-832/834). Members reassigned shall sign the NAVPERS 1070/613 entry for 1-A-0 induction under block "Procedures When Classified 1-A-0 Upon Induction". Add the following statement block above the member's signature.

c. "Privacy Act Statement: The authority to request this information is derived from 5 U.S.C. 301, Departmental Regulations. Purpose of this form is for member's acknowledgment of the conscientious objector status. Information is used to restrict member's reenlistment or extension of enlistment upon expiration of current enlistment. Completion of this form is mandatory, failure to provide the required information may result in not being designated as a conscientious objector."

d. Determination by NAVPERSCOM is final with respect to administrative separation. Personnel designated as conscientious objectors and retained in the service for

noncombatant training or services/duties will be assigned as follows:

(1) After completion of recruit training, enlisted or inducted members may be transferred to the Hospital Corps for further training provided they volunteer and meet the requirements. Qualified members previously classified 1-A-0 and subject to induction into certain staff corps and only with the approval of NAVPERSCOM (PERS-834). Such members shall not be allowed to avoid the important or hazardous duties, which are the responsibility of all members of the medical organization. Any member who does not meet the requirements for this training, who fails to complete the prescribed course of instruction, or who otherwise cannot be assigned to this training or duty, shall be employed in other noncombatant service/duties if retain in the naval service.

(2) If a member cannot be utilized in a noncombatant assignment, the CO shall report this fact to the cognizant personnel distributor who shall transfer the member to a noncombatant duty assignment.

17. Characterization of Service

a. Officers: Honorable

b. Enlisted: Honorable, unless a General (Under Honorable Conditions) or Entry Level Separation is warranted in MILPERSMAN 1910-300.