

## **Nyack Declaration of Conscience and Courage**

On the weekend of February 18th through February 21st, 2005, a diverse community of some 30 scholars, activists and students from the U.S. and Canada gathered at the Fellowship of Reconciliation in Nyack, New York, to affirm the human right of conscientious objection to all forms of war and oppose the reinstatement of a military draft in the United States.

This Gathering of Conscience and Courage affirmed, by consensus, the following statement:

We celebrate and declare our support of conscientious objectors because we value the sanctity of life, respect human dignity, and affirm the right of freedom of thought, as expressed in individual moral, ethical, or religious beliefs.

Conscientious objectors are those individuals who refuse to participate in, or otherwise directly support, the conduct of warfare and the killing and degradation of fellow human beings.

More specifically, following and expanding upon the statements of faith contained in various religious doctrines, as well as established declarations of secular law contained in the UN Charter and US Constitution, we support those who conscientiously object to participation in "war in any form," as well as those who object to:

- Specific wars deemed unjust by the individual's religious faith or conscience ("selective objection");
- Particular methods of warfare individually deemed unjust and inhumane;
- Supporting warfare with taxes, forced registration for Selective Service ("the draft"), or compulsory "national service";
- Ideological systems and social structures of injustice and exploitation that leave some individuals no alternative but military service for employment to support their sustenance and survival ("poverty draft").

Therefore, it is our hope that in so honoring conscientious objection, individual dignity, and human freedom we resist a culture of death and work for a world where war and violence are replaced by peace and justice.

February 21, 2005  
Nyack, New York