

Annex B

A.

- 1) DeShawn Omari Reed
 - 2) SSN: (deleted)
 - 3) Selective Service Number: NA
 - 4) Service address and component: Regular Army, 64th Medical Detachment (VS)
 - 5) Permanent home address: (deleted)
 - 6) Name and address of schools attended
(deleted)
 - 7) Chronological list of occupations and jobs:
(deleted)
 - 8) All former addresses and dates of residence:
(deleted)
 - 9) Parents name and address:
(deleted)
 - 10) Religion of both parents: Christian - non-denomination
 - 11) No application made to Selective Service System for Conscientious objector prior to entry.
 - 12) No previous application for Conscientious objection made.
 - 13) NA
- b. Training and Belief (attached)
 - c. Participation in organizations-NA
 - d. References (attached)

13) b.

Discharge or Transfer

I am applying for a 1-0 Conscientious Objection status - discharge from the Army. I am unwilling to serve in the military as a noncombatant. I believe that even though on noncombatant status I am part of the military and in some way or another contribute toward its mission - War to which I morally object.

Nature of Belief

I have faith in the supreme authority of God and redemption through his son Jesus Christ, the Messiah. I trust in His holy word that he has given us in the form of the Bible. The life and teachings of Jesus serve as model for Christians and all humans worldwide to follow. Many scriptures in the Bible are lent to the foretelling of the kingdom of Christ. It is to be a wonderful place where the military would desist and the citizens of his kingdom will be adherents of peaceful coexistence with all other nations and nationalities. I believe God through his Word calls us to live in communities shaped by peace and cooperation. We should always strive to hold fast to harmonious cooperation as opposed to violence and contravention. I feel God created us for each other and therefore our safekeeping depends on the well-being of our neighbors. The tenets of justice and civil rights in conjunction with mutual aid and concern are of the utmost importance. I believe God calls us to be advocates for the most vulnerable and those in need in our world. Therefore it is imperative that we try to reduce the growing disparity between rich and poor. I believe each human being is created in the image of God and is of infinite worth so racial justice and equal opportunity for all is essential. I trust the

earth belongs to God and is intrinsically good and that we should strive to maintain its upkeep. War in one way or another goes against all of these morals I profess. It places nations in disarray and is anything but harmonious. Instead of bringing about ultimate peace it only adds to a state of insecurity and it isn't exactly looking out for the welfare of our neighbors. War already places a great load upon the nations involved but it places even a greater burden on the poor amongst those lands. Many innocent people lose their belongings and homes and are forced to become refugees. The poor essentially become even poorer. The basis for War in and of itself is racist and causes nations to become dangerously nationalistic. And if all of these things weren't enough war causes not only great destruction to humanity but to the environment as well. Entire countries are left in rubble. The beautiful lands we have been blessed to live in utterly ruined. It is quite obvious why my moral beliefs keep me from participating in war. Every aspect of War goes against the grain of my morals. It is impossible for me to put my conscience at bay and circumvent my morals in order to take part in War.

Change in Beliefs

I have always had - as I am sure most people have had - strong reservations about war. I did believe it made sense and was absolutely necessary in some situations however. I was raised in a strong spiritual home in which I learned to take solace in and stand firm behind my religious and moral beliefs. My family strictly adhered to Biblical principles and throughout my upbringing I learned to put God's authority before all others and to formulate my own opinions. My parents taught me early that not everybody who was in an authoritative position above me was right.

One night in 1991 when I was 11 years old sitting in front of the TV, my parents' words became very real to me. A man was getting beat senseless by approximately 4 police officers while more policemen in upwards of 20 stood-by idly. Something inside intuitively told me that what I was witnessing was very, very wrong. I lost my innocence that day.

The Rodney King beating and the ensuing riots confirmed my parents' teachings - even the people who swear to uphold and protect you don't always have your interests at heart. Upon reflection this event had a profound impact on my life. Prior to this point I wanted to become a policeman, become a hero. I would never take people at face value anymore. I also embarked upon a journey to always do what I believed to be morally right.

High school was a wonderful time for me. I was very active and kept busy with sports and other extra-curricular activities, such as student government, church, work, etc. I learned a lot about people during this time. I began to develop a strong sense about teamwork and what it takes to get along with a group of people. I also started to develop my own leadership style and found that I had the propensity for stepping to the forefront of a group or on a project and leading people. I had an excellent support structure. My family even with our limited financial resources provided for me in so many ways. They taught me to work hard, respect people and that the value of one's life can not be measured by material things, but that happiness is measured by ones kindness and good deeds as well as one's sense of purpose and relationship with God.

After high school I decided to attend college. Thanks to my many extra-curricular activities and good academic standing, I was accepted at every school that I applied to. I

finally decided to attend the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). I didn't have any money and definitely not for the likes of a college tuition but thankfully I had decent financial aid which included some grants, scholarships and a whole lot of loans. UCLA was a new and grand experience for me. I went from a small city to the hub of the West coast. UCLA's undergraduate population was approximately 35,000 students. On any given day, including faculty and graduate students there was believed to be 100,000 people on campus daily. I continued to do well academically, however, as the year went on I started to become more and more disenchanted with the institution. One problem was the sheer class size of my lectures. Most of the courses had anywhere from 500-800 students. Needless to say there was not a whole lot of faculty-student interaction. The issue of affirmative action was also a big issue at the time. Prop 209, which ended affirmative action in schools, had recently been passed. Regardless of one's political views on this issue the results were devastating. There were drops in minority admissions all across the board. There was a 46% drop in African-American attendance between my first and second year. It was definitely felt. I remember walking around the campus my sophomore year thinking to myself, "what happened to all of the diversity?" The environment had changed dramatically physically and mentally. A lot of racist writings were being tagged on walls throughout the dormitory halls. All of these factors including the fact that I was accumulating massive debt through student loans, and the fact that I didn't know which direction I wanted to go career-wise led to me dropping out after my 3rd semester. Initially I was planning on just transferring to another school that gave me more for my dollar. But I realized I still didn't have the money and I didn't know what path I wanted to pursue.

In comes the Army! I had always been intrigued by the military. I had always had so much respect for the many heroes who had worn the uniform to fight for a better world. I also really like the military's disciplined structure, as well as its ideals. Its emphasis on teamwork and camaraderie as well as respect and pride are all things that I hold in high esteem. The financial benefits were not at all too shabby either. They offered money for college, great medical care, good promotional opportunities, and the chance to travel and experience the world. I had never really thought of myself as the soldier type but this was something I wanted to do. In retrospect I believe it was these experiences coupled with my strong views about honor, justice and freedom that led to my enlistment in the Army. I wanted to be like the heroes that I read about whose acts benefited the nation. I took pride at the chance of filling the shoes of soldiers of heroes-past. I went to basic training and Advance Individual Training at Ft. Jackson, SC, and became a Human Resource Specialist. Immediately after, I was whisked away to my first duty station in Kaiserslautern, Germany. Like many soldiers who go overseas for their first time I went through a difficult transition. I tried to learn to cope with being away from home, which had always provided that needed moral support structure as well as try to adjust to the peculiarities and customs of a new country. As I started to get out and absorb the culture I came to love Germany. I started taking German classes and became quite adept with the language. I was also excelling career-wise as well. I became a Non-Commissioned Officer after only 2 years in service. I even contemplated doing the Green 2 Gold program in order to attain my commission. But I enjoyed my job too much. I really got a great satisfaction from taking care of soldiers. As a Human Resources SGT, I am able to take care of the Army's number one asset - people. Making

sure their pay, career and families are taken care of brings much pride. I used to believe in my position here in the military was right. I was proud of the service I was doing my country especially after 9/11. naturally, I didn't agree with all of the missions that our military service undertook, but I believed in the overall purpose of our Armed Forces. These beliefs led to my re-enlistment in the early part of 2003. I re-enlisted to stay in Germany in order to continue to take care of the great people I worked with and continue to live in a great land. But as I progressed in life and my career, events began to unfold that caused me to reassess those moral values and beliefs. Formal education played a major role. Living in Germany I thought it very important to try to learn the language and culture. Becoming proficient in the language opened up a whole new world to me. It really provided the opportunity for me to immerse in the culture and meet new people and do many things that frankly, most soldiers don't take advantage of. I traveled extensively throughout Germany and Europe frequenting museums, plays, café's etc. It also allowed me to more effectively take on an international perspective on World Events. It really sparked my interest not only in German Culture but in European History.

The development of my beliefs has been a slow process throughout my enlistment. As an individual who was used to attending church regularly throughout my life it was a natural progression for me to seek out a church home when I got to my first and only duty station in Kaiserslautern, Germany. I come from a Christian non-denominational background from a church that directly follows and interprets the Bible. I attended various churches on and off-post but I could never quite find a home. All of the churches I had attended had a constant "military mission" theme entwined with their

teachings. I couldn't place my finger exactly on it, but something inside of me wasn't comfortable with the idea of Military and religion/church being lumped together. I elected not to attend church regularly, and dedicated my spiritual training to personal readings of the Bible and other religious texts.

The ministry of Jesus was of particular interest to me. A thorough reading of the Gospels in the New Testament as well as other books such as the Reader's Digest Textbook, The Bible through the Ages, or Faith by Morris Chapman, brought new light and depth to my understanding of Jesus and the Holy Scriptures. A lot of times people see religion as some separate entity and not as real and personal part of this world and history. The life of Jesus was so real, for here was a man who took the truth to the masses. He didn't belong to some exclusive hypocritical sect. The Pharisees at that time were the religious and political leaders of the people. They subscribed to a rigid code of beliefs that were sometimes contradictory and hypocritical. Jesus didn't uphold the Pharisee's opinions just because they were the governing body. He called them on their discrepancies and stood up for truth and righteousness no matter what.

I also continued to pursue higher education. I continued to take German courses but I branched out and started delving into other subjects. Two courses that particularly stand out are a European History and an African-American history course that I took. In any history course the topic of war is going to invariably come up. As a matter of fact if one thinks about how we measure history it is in terms of war. I pushed to learn more about various historical conflicts like World War I and World War II and re-analyze things I already knew and held to be true. Where as before I believed these wars were very necessary, I began now to think otherwise. I started focusing on the numbers. The

amount of lives lost was horrendous. What is even more repulsive is the brutal way in which people suffered. I began to really think about every person that died in those conflicts. That was someone's brother, sister, son, daughter, mother or father. And for what? I started questioning some of my own preconceptions. Before I came to Germany I assumed it was a land of Nazis. Taking the time to learn the culture and people I now know that that couldn't be further from the truth. A German wants the same thing as an American or any human for that matter - just a right to a good life! However, it's interesting how with war we are made to believe that our "enemies" are so much different than us. I had always been uncomfortable with the thought of War but had relegated it as a "necessary evil." But as my "myth" about Germans began to shatter so to did my thoughts on War. I began to delve deeper and ask the question - What is the purpose of War? One sad truth kept coming to the fore. War is futile! World War II was a result of World War I. The Cold War was a direct result of WWII and the Vietnam and Korean War were direct results of the Cold War. I was all the more cognizant of this fact with the concurrent Iraq War II being waged.

War was really the answer just because our leaders said it was? I took what lessons my parents and the Bible had given me and that were deeply ingrained within me and embarked on a journey of self-discovery. There will never be a war to end all wars. Is the death of one bad person worth the lives of countless innocent people? Maybe war is not the answer! These thoughts really began creating inner turmoil with me. While my job is to take care of the personnel needs of soldiers, there are no mistakes about it, I am part of the Army and our mission is - War, ultimately, to kill when called upon. I had been raised a spiritual person bred with a deep sense of Christian moral principles. As I

began to struggle with my mission the lessons that I had studied and continue to learn in the Bible started shedding some light. The God-given nature of every person is not to kill, main or destroy. God's perfect law was always that of harmony and reconciliation between enemies. This is the constant theme throughout the Bible. The military must alter our God-given nature through training with weapons and killing techniques in order to support war. It was somewhat ironic but everything started to reaffirm what I now held to be true: that war is wrong. In the African-American Culture course I was taking for instance, I truly began to understand the significance of my hero Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement. King understood that violence only begat violence and that non-violence was the only effective way to bring about permanent change.

Other books started to have profound impact on me as well brining clarity to this inner struggle I was having with my position as a soldier. Walking with the Wind, an autobiography of John Lewis was one such book. John Lewis is currently a congressman of Georgia. He was also one of the great leaders of the Civil Rights Movement. At only 19 he was instrumental in forming the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. They embarked on many peaceful missions during their heyday. One such even was the Freedom Rides in which black and white students rode on buses throughout cities in the south in attempts to desegregate the transportation system. They faced extreme adversary including being firebombed, beat and thrown in jail. John even sustained permanent injuries. Nonetheless, they remained peaceful and held strong to the ideals of non-violence. Here was a man who fought and struggled for what he believed in - equal rights for all - without ever having to kill or be violent. The results speak for themselves. Legal segregation has been eliminated throughout our country thanks to such peaceful

struggles. The revolutionary Civil Rights Movement might very well be the most significant event in American history, in that it brought about equality for all. A physical war would have yielded different results. John Lewis became a CO in the early 60's because he could not go against his conscience and put himself in a position where he might have to kill. Muhammad Ali is another such great man. In Muhammad Ali a biography by Ray Gordon, I learned of this hero's many accomplishments. Besides being a prized boxer he fought for equality and human rights for all. He too became a CO because he felt War was morally wrong.

I am an avid reader. Books are so powerful. They have the ability to make various life situations so real. I enjoy reading many different types of books but in retrospect I realize that the majority of books that I was attracted to and read possessed a common theme: to do what's right no matter what - which ironically is the Army's definition of Honor.

My analysis was also mirrored by what was going on in the headlines. An event that dramatically affected me was the story of Jessica Lynch. When the story first broke PVT Lynch was described as a hero. When Iraqi insurgents attacked her company's convoy it was reported that she valiantly fought back and then was captured as a POW. Days later after supposed intelligence became aware of her location a special mission was created to rescue her. It was an enormous event and Jessica became America's poster girl. Weeks later however the truth about the whole ordeal came out. Not only did PVT Lynch not fight back because her weapon had jammed, the operation to rescue her was completely staged. They had always been aware of her location and the rescue operation was created just for the cameras. As a matter of fact, the soldiers who waged the rescue,

had blanks in their weapons. This dishonesty profoundly impacted me. It made me call into question the integrity of my leaders, similar to the fateful night when I had witnessed the beating of Rodney King and questioned police authority.

Timing and Crystallization of Beliefs

My CO beliefs really crystallized after I learned of a situation my colleague had been through. After a short time in Iraq he was called back to the rear in Germany on emergency leave, tragically to learn that his only son, only 12 years old had died. Upon his return to Germany he told me about a situation that he had encountered prior to leaving Iraq. While on a convoy a young child had approached his vehicle. The child had something in his hands ... my colleague initially believed it to be a grenade and was about to open fire on the little boy ... at the last second he realized that the object was only a rock and luckily did not shoot the child. My colleague's entire situation had a very profound effect on me. The irony that he almost took a child's life shortly before returning home to realize his own child was dead was not lost on me. I truly know that I could not morally face that situation. The Army asks you if you're willing to die for your country but they never ask if you're willing to kill for it. Scenarios like these face our soldiers deployed to various regions around the world daily. I hear it is quite common for terrorists to strap bombs to children and send them towards military installations. This is a dilemma that would prove tough for most anyone but that needs to be dealt with swiftly. The lives of many people are put at risk. I would be a liability in this situation. I know for a fact that I could not kill if faced with this circumstance. This could prove to

be detrimental to my fellow comrades. I would not only be jeopardizing my own life but the life of many others. These are the feelings that one cannot be debating when a situation arises. There can be no indecisiveness. A predetermined decision has to be made. I refuse to put myself in that situation. I am unable to go around my conscious.

Use of Force

As an all-round athlete and a big fan of sports I have always enjoyed the spirit of competition and rigorous physical activity. Having played and excelled in the sport of football I know what aggressive behavior is all about. There is however a big difference in sport and in War. In real life violence especially in the form of war is extreme and pointless. I am all for a person defending themselves and family. But defense is not bombarding some person, killing off their family, and destroying their land in order to demand their surrender - all elements of military force.

We live in a violent society. Movies that reveal bloody murderous acts are commonplace in Hollywood. It is also very popular to engage in other forms of entertainment such as violent video games, many of whose plot it is to kill as many people as possible to win. These types of standards are contributing greatly to the desensitizing of people as a whole. It is nothing out of the ordinary now to hear about kids who go and shoot up their schools. Or to read about another suicide bomber that takes the lives of countless innocent people in Jerusalem. This brutality is not a new phenomenon however. When I ponder my thoughts on violence, I can't help but be reminded of a particular cruel form of terrorism that existed in American only a

generation ago in the form of Lynching. Lynching is the practice whereby a mob - usually several dozen or several hundred persons - takes the law into its own hands in order to injure and kill a person accused of some wrongdoing. The alleged offense can range from a serious crime like theft or murder to a mere violation of local customs and sensibilities. The issue of the victim's guilt is usually secondary, since the mob serves as prosecutor, judge, jury, and executioner. One account of lynching that I read really drove home the brutality of it all for me. The Jackson Daily news offered up this account of a local Mississippi farmer names Charles Shepard. "It was a seven-hour period, of the enraged farm and townspeople of the Delta going about their work of torturing. Shepherd's body was soaked with gasoline, but before he was ignited the mob saw to it that his mouth and nose were partially filled with mud so that the inhalation of the gas fumes would not bring his agony to a premature end. It was 45 minutes before the powerfully built Negro finally quit his convulsive twitching and agonized fighting at the ropes and flames ... the blackened skull smoked in a ditch beside the road this morning, tossed there by a souvenir hunter." This description of a lynching act caused me to contemplate the horrors of lynching. Reading that story truly made me sick inside. Even though it is an outdated practice that took place decades ago the viciousness of it all is still relevant. After all, what is lynching? It is essentially organized excessive violence. Lynching of African-Americans was rampant throughout America. There were countless documented African-American lynch mob victims. On average more than one Black was murdered through lynching a week. The idea of such carnage is mind-boggling, but pales in comparison to the death tolls of Wars. The death toll of the First World War is estimated at 8.5 million military deaths and 12.5 million civilian deaths. World War II is

estimated to have a total death toll of a whopping 35 million people. 35 million people! No matter how you look at it killing innocent people is wrong. There is nothing humane about that number. What is war? It too is excessive organized violence. I wholeheartedly object to such violence. The God-given nature of every person is not to kill, injure, maim or destroy. Lynching in America was particularly heinous. Through such violent and atrocious behavior perpetrators of lynching were in effect able to purge themselves of any blame by destroying the humanity of their victims. If victims (black) are sub-human, than the merciless sacrifice of them, was nothing more than an acceptable ritual. Similarly if there is no human face put on your enemy and their land it is easy to drop bombs. One goes against his nature in order to kill, even if the victim is guilty. It is even more extreme if the victim is innocent. War which is violent to the nth degree, where many innocent indiscriminates lose their lives is even worse. One would imagine that there would be a purpose for such carnage, that war would inevitably lead to some type of peace. That we would reach a point where war was no longer needed. After all, peace is "supposed" to be the objective of war isn't it? Unfortunately, the exact opposite is the case. Countless other conflicts which kill countless more people are the results. Shouldn't 35 million lives that were already spent on World War II be enough? There will never be a war to end war. A person proceeding to battle convinced he will institute peace will not terminate war, but will only contribute to and continue the incessant history of warfare and the manufacture of weapons and military equipment. After the conclusion of one conflict another will arise shortly after in another region and between other nations. That is why I definitely disagree with military force. Beside it being haphazard and excessive it is worthless and I refuse to take part in it. One must only look

to the time when lynching was at its most prevalent to see that it was a nonviolent struggle in the form of the Civil Rights Movement that finally brought about its demise.

Change in Lifestyle

Many bystanders used to stand idly by and watch the atrocities of lynching being perpetrated upon its victims. Many people were not comfortable and did not agree with the violence they witnessed being committed. Similarly during World War II many Germans pretend they didn't know a Holocaust was being waged. They had to know something was happening, for it was no coincidence that all of their previous Jewish friends and neighbors just started to disappear. The question is always raised, but what could we have done? Well to stand by and do nothing is almost as bad as committing the crime yourself. I do not want to be one of those idle bystanders and my lifestyle has changed to reflect that.

The fact that I'm even writing this CO application in the first place is a big testament. I am a Non-Commissioned Officer in the U.S. Army. It is a position that has a long history and proud tradition. I am respected amongst my peers, and likewise I respect the hard work and effort my fellow soldiers put into accomplishing various missions their country asks them too. As difficult as it is for me to want to step away from that tradition, I can no longer take part in what I believe to be morally wrong. It isn't easy taking this stand, especially amongst my peers but it is something I have to do. The application in and of itself demonstrates the fact. My lifestyle has also changed in other ways. One item of particular notice is that I find it difficult to watch the news. I used to watch the news daily, but since becoming a CO it is increasingly more and more

difficult to hear about the World tragedies, especially those caused by War. I cringe when I hear about another roadside bomb in Iraq, or a suicide attack in Jerusalem. The daily headlines serve as a poignant reminder of my moral dilemma as a soldier in the US Army. I have also found it extremely difficult to perform many of my military duties. Here in US Army Europe, Thursdays are dedicated to training. This weekly ordeal is known as SGT Times. Regardless, of one's Military Occupational Specialty, or the fact that one is in garrison, soldiers are required to practice their wartime jobs. Most of these tasks are combative in nature, and reinforce the "Soldier skills" needed to survive on the battlefield. As an NCO I have a vital responsibility when it comes to SGT Time's. I am supposed to teach my soldiers how to do the various individual and collective tasks. This function has become all the more difficult since becoming a CO. I loathe Thursdays, and look for any possible way to get out of it. I know that this predicament doesn't only affect me morally, but limits my effectiveness in training my soldiers. The same can be said for various other military duties such as weapon ranges, Field Exercises, and guard duty. Many of these duties aren't fun for anybody, but my reluctance in performing these jobs is amplified because of my moral beliefs.

I have taken an active role in letting my voice be heard. I have spoken with a number of my friends and even strangers about the tenets of conscientious objection and the uselessness of war. I have randomly distributed a good amount of CO literature throughout various locations in the Kaiserslautern area like bars and clubs that soldiers frequent regularly. My hope - to get my comrades to seriously think about War holistically in all of its complexity. I also attended a Mennonite Peace Organization meeting where I was able to meet up with other conscientious objectors and peace

workers in the community. All of these events have strengthened my resolve and have inspired me to do even more in the future. I also plan on volunteering to teach underprivileged kids tennis when I am discharged from the military and back in the US. This will give me opportunity to help mentor and provide a positive outlet for the kids. My life has also changed on a personal level. Becoming a CO has also led me onto a path of self-discovery. It has allowed me to reassess my priorities and focus on what is important on life. It has even brought my family and me closer.

Depth of Belief

I have always had a propensity for kindness. In high school and college I was a sponsor of the Random Acts of Kindness program. This was a program established to combat the high levels of violence in our society. Through education and deed its purpose was to make people aware of the alternatives to random acts of violence that so deeply pervade our communities. Through Random Acts of Kindness people were encouraged to go out of their way to do nice things for people. For example while at the drive thru at McDonald's one might secretly pay for the order of the car behind you without even knowing them. Or how about finding an office filled with flowers as opposed to explosive devices. Random Acts of Kindness can be infectious and really caught on with the students. It forces on to remember what's really important in life - helping others. Becoming a CO has drawn me back to that state. I have tried to find ways of not only doing random kind things for people but being part of an overall movement for the greater good. I have talked extensively with my friends about Conscientious Objection, peace movements, and civil rights. I even influence my best

friend so much that she became part of Amnesty International. I have grown spiritually and have had an increase of faith as a result of becoming a CO. I was able to rededicate my life to God and struggle to adhere to His word as best I can. I try everyday to read my Bible. I have also become an active player in the peace movement. I joined the Episcopal Peace Fellowship. Recently I was in London with some friends and came across something that really touched me. In front of Buckingham Palace is a great anti-war display. It is manned 24 hours a day 7 days a week by peace volunteers. You couldn't help but be emotional and shed a tear as the horrors of war were brought to life through graphic picture, gruesome statistics, and melancholy writings. After a while my friends were ready to leave the display and move on. But somehow I was unable to move from my spot. As I stood there with tears rolling down my cheeks my friends could see that I was pretty distressed. The as civilians couldn't understand my personal connection to all of this. That as a soldier I felt somehow partly responsible for these innocent lives. I was a part of this incessant cycle of War. I believe God spoke to my heart that day and reinforced my thoughts that becoming a CO was the right thing to do. I will no longer put aside my conscious. I take solace in the fact that I refuse to take part in War. Many people have stood up to a lot more.