

Sum and Substance of Discussion with
Hearing Officer on July 7, 1959
Spokane, Washington

by
Richard M. Rawe

Arrived at 9:50 but as the Hearing Officer was not in yet we came back at 10:00. Mr. Daniel W. Gaiser, Hearing Officer, conducted myself, Mrs. Norton, my stenographer for the occasion, Mrs. Hall and my mother to the room where the hearing was to be conducted. Upon arrival he seemed rather nervous and stated that he would not allow all to be present at the hearing. Only Mrs. Norton and myself, then later one by one the others I brought to testify could come in and testify in my behalf and then leave.

As Mrs. Norton and myself sat down at the table with him he began to explain that the sole purpose of this hearing was to consider my conscientious Objector claim and my ministerial claim would not be considered at all. His purpose at this meeting was to get an opinion as to the validity of my C. O. claim, he was nearly acting as an agent for the Attorney General and that this hearing procedure was not a requirement of the law but was merely a provision by courtesy of the Department of Justice to give a full and fair hearing of the case.

So to proceed he started by asking my name, members of my family, etc. Then he proceeded to ask the basis of my claim, and why I had objections to military service.

At this point my stenographer started to take notes on what was being said. He objected and said that no notes would be taken at this hearing. He was rattled. He felt he had the sole right to determine the proceedings and what would be done. He then proceeded to ask me some questions and then make some notes of his own. I, at this point, ask if I could interrupt to discuss this point of taking notes as he was breaking his own rule. He explained that the purpose of his taking notes was so he would not get my case mixed up with another. In support of my request I read paragraph one on page 20 of the 'Procedure' booklet to him. He again became disturbed. I asked for the source of his information for denying me the right to have a stenographer take notes in as much as he was taking said notes. He read from a paragraph of instructions to him which seemed to apply to the situation and seemed to give the right to him to proceed so at his disgression. I thanked him for calling such information to his attention and he seemed receptive. The recording of the discussion from this point on are not necessarily in chronological order but only as I best remember them and also verified by Mrs. Norton.

How were you trained? By parents reading to me from Bible at first and as I grew older from reading and studying the Bible myself, together with attending and participating in Congregational meetings.

How did you get this C.O.? What is the Basis for this objection? Did you get it by studying or did some tell you about it? The basis of my objection is my conscientious as trained by God's Word. This training I received as described above. I clearly discerned for myself what position I would take in the matter as I studied the Bible.

Were you told not to fight? Where did you get this attitude? Who told you? The basis for my C.O. I described above. No one told me to or not to fight, my attitude on the matter was received from God's Word.

Where in the Bible do you get this information? Quoted 2 Cor. 10:3-5.

Would you defend yourself if attacked? Yes, to the limits that the Bible, and the above scripture allow me to. But not with fleshly weapons.

If this nation was under attack would you defend yourself? Protect yourself? Yes, as described above.

What would you do if this nation was under attack? I would carry on my ministry work just the same. I would help people to the extent necessary and in harmony with the Scriptures.

What help would this be? Scriptural and Spiritual help which is by far the most important and beneficial.

Are you a Pacifist? By no means.

What I can't understand is why you people are willing to pay taxes, which we know at least 60% of go for war purposes, but at the same time you refuse to serve in non-military or non-combatant occupations that the government asks you to serve in? Why don't you at least do this and help out to some extent, like the Quakers, who are a respected group and are C.O. but yet help out to this extent? Why not at least your part-time ministers, who could just as well do this type of work as not or in place of the present jobs they may have and also at the same time carry on their part-time ministerial work? (this is substance of question asked) (Substance of answer follows.)

Each individual has to so answer for himself, according to the dictates of his conscience. As for me, I view myself as a minister or ambassador, which the Bible describes a Christian as being at 2 Cor. 5:20. Let me draw you an illustration. Say that an ambassador from this country is sent to another country. His duties there are for the purpose of creating good-will for his country. He is commissioned by his government to perform services for his country. It would be improper for that ambassador to quite his post to take another occupation, he would be disrespectful and unloyal to his assignment and country. Further, if the nation to which he was sent got itself into war with yet another nation it would also be improper for him to take sides in this conflict, as it is really none of his business. In fact it would be creating ill will for his country by the opposing nations. Again, it is improper for such an ambassador to meddle in the internal affairs of the nation to which he is sent, it wouldn't be proper for him to take sides in issues of that nation nor its politics. Now let's apply some of the points of this illustration to my work as a full-time minister or ambassador of God's heavenly kingdom.

Since I view myself as such an ambassador as above then it would be Scripturally improper for me to engage in such outside activities as is not becoming and ambassador of God's Kingdom Government. Isa. 9:6. Jesus plainly showed that paying of taxes to Caesar was not in contradiction to being an ambassador of God Kingdom. Mr. 12:13-17. I, being an ambassador of Jehovah's kingdom, dedicating my life to HIM, could not conscientiously give up doing the work he has commissioned me to do.

Doesn't the Bible say that you should return like for like? Eye for Eye? Yes, Jesus quoted this scripture at Mat. Ch. 5, (which we read) Yes, but isn't there another one? Yes, in Ex. for one place. 'Read that' (read it) 'Now, doesn't that show that we have a right to defend our nation in a war?' (In answer I referred back to Mat. 5 to show how Jesus changed it under the New Covenant arrangement, also pointed out that it was not necessarily an obligation to give eye for eye, but punishment could be withheld; Under the Law covenant you were to show mercy for those opposed to you)

What are your views on Communism? What do you think about it? I only know what I read about it in the newspaper and news magazines, I understand that it is more Socialism than pure Communism. (Communism in Russia is such a collaboration)

During the war we heard of Collaborators, ones, who collaborated with the enemy when they took over. If Russia was to take over this country, would you act as such a collaborator? (ans.) No. I would carry on my preaching work just the same as I am doing now, my position would be the same as it is now. It would not change.

Do any of your church or faith belong to the Military service as far as you know? Not that I know of off hand. I do know of some who were J.W.'s and joined the army but I have not seen them for some time and don't know whether they view themselves as J.W.'s or not nor do I know the extent of their association.

How do you view military men? Do you preach to them? Do you allow them into your Congregational meetings? Do some come to your Congregational meetings? I ask this because I know that you are near to Larson Air Force Base. (Ans) Yes, I preach to army men, have studies with them and some have attended meetings. I have no hatred for them but view them as any one else I would preach to.

Would you preach to Military men on the Base? Yes, but not as an agent of the Government or being paid to do so by them as a Chaplin. I have no objections as to calling on them from house to house nor conducting Bible studies with them.

If after becoming a J.W. and then one joined the army, could he remain a J.W.? Or would he be required to give up being a J.W.? (ans.) The matter would be entirely up to him. I would have regard toward him if his conscience so dictated him. I don't feel that I would harbor any ill will toward him if he wanted to change his convictions.

How do you view the Military campaign of Israel? Don't they show it is all right for a Christian nation to defend itself? (ans) Yes it is true the JHVH authorized the Nation of Israel to fight battles. In fact Jehovah fought these battles for them. He said 'stand back and watch'. "But didn't they use swords and do killing themselves" True, Jehovah it was that was backing them up. He was the real source of their strength. When they went against the instructions he gave they lost the battle. Those are wars that were authorized by Jehovah and backed up by him.

Don't you believe we are to only have one Master? Yes, Jehovah is my master through Christ Jesus. "Arn't governors here on earth to be obeyed"? Yes, if there instructions are in harmony with God's. (Ac. 5:29) Gave an illustration of a family. If one of my big brothers in the family asked me to do something that was not in harmony with my parents wishes, I would obey my parents. Likewise today, we are all 'brothers' in a fleshly sense, being from Adam. If one of my 'brothers' asked me to do something in harmony with my Father's wishes then I would do it, not necessarily because my 'brother' asked me to but because my Heavenly Father instructed me to. So it is with things that are not my 'Father's' will, these I would not do.

How would you defend yourself if not with carnal weapons, with words? What if someone was ready to shoot you? What would you do? In answer I referred to 2 Cor. 10:3-5 again and show how Paul said we were to use words to bring every thought into captivity to make it obedient to the Christ. Cited how Jesus got away from those who wanted to mob him. How Paul divided them mobsters of the Supreme Court ~~of the~~ against themselves by shouting out, 'Over the hope of the resurrection I am being Judged' Then he asked, " Don't you think Paul would have used carnal weapons if they would have been at his disposal?" I answered, no, and supported by referring back to 2 Cor. 10:3-5.

Would you take part in wars authorized by Jehovah? Yes, but I see no such wars for the future. Referred to Supreme Court decision on this matter, he said he was very familiar with it.

What positions do you hold in the church? Bible Study servant, Magazine-Terr. Servan Ministry School Instructor, and until just recently Service Center Conductor also.

Now let's assume for a minute that you were to change your convictions in regard to your C. O. claim? Would you be required to give up these positions in the Congregation (Ans.) If I gave up such Co.O. principles most likely I wouldn't want to have such responsibilities as I now have. I know of nothing that would require me to give up such positions.

Would you defend yourself if attacked? Yes, to point that Scriptures ~~authorize me to~~ authorize me to.

Do you believe that this government is doing anything good? Yes, there are many good services that this government performs from the taxes it receives.

What training did you receive to become a minister? Did you attend any school? Yes, (I described details of training I received, Ministry School, ect. in the field)

Isn't it true that you were brought up to believe that it was wrong to serve this country in war? I was taught the principles of God's Word, Yes.

But wasn't it your interpretation of what the Bible said that you were taught? The Bible interprets itself on these matters and is clear enough for any reasoning person to discern.

How did this point of C. O. develop in your mind? At what point in life? As I remember it, it was something that developed from early childhood, built upon the principles of love, love of enemies, doing good to those persecuting you.

Do you feel that your C. O. are just as strong now as they were when you started with the draft or more so now? I feel I have the same strong convictions then as I do now, but of course these have been strengthened and deepened through the years. This is only natural with anyone who has strong convictions on anything and continues to think along those lines. I am still only human.

Isn't yours an attitude of resistance against the government? Don't you oppose the government? This is the impression I get from other J.W.'s that come here. (ans) No, I am not against the government nor do I know of any J.W. that is of this attitude. We co-operate with the government in every way we can, to the extent that our conscience as trained by God's Word, allows us. I have no attitude of opposition, resistance or hatred toward this government.

Mrs. Norton was asked to testify as to my sincerity as a C. O. She had known me over a period of many years and testified to my sincerity as a C. O. She herself is an active minister of J. W.'s and has been associated with me in the work and meetings. Her testimony included a witness to the fact that the Bible says we were bought with a price and that this being the case we, as dedicated servants to Jehovah, could not be slaves to others.

Mrs. Rowe, my mother, was next called to testify and give information. She described the early training that I was given as child. "Do you feel that you played a part in the development of his C. O. conviction?" Yes, naturally this home training from God's Word would impress these principles of love on his mind. Every mother is happy to see her son succeed. I am especially happy to see my son succeed in the most important vocation, the ministry, I feel I had a part in this.

Mrs. Hall was then called in. How long have you known Richard? Since he was about 14. Are you a neighbor? I was but am now living here in Spokane. Are you also a J.W.? Yes. Can you testify to his C.O. conviction? Do you feel that he is a C.O.? I most certainly do. Have you been associated with him in the work also the meetings? Yes. Dismissed

Comment was made by hearing officer as to my request in my letter to him to have available the full F. B. I. report. He said that this was not available to me as it was the property of the Department of Justice and is not made a part of the Draft Board file. I commented that the reasons I ask for it were outlined in my letter to him. He said that the Summary was an accurate reflection of the full report and added that there was no unfavorable evidence. All evidence was complementary to me, from the viewpoint of those who testified for me. This ended the hearing itself.

Following I asked to see my file. He obliged. Asked permission to copy the last Local Board's minutes as I didn't have there. He granted but shortly changed his mind.

I noted several documents in my file with dates, May 1, 4, 1953 June 11, 1953, Jan. 10, and 11, 1958 and if I would have had the time I am sure there must have been others. These documents were findings by the Appeal Boards, and communications with the State headquarters that had my name on them and beyond doubt belong in my files they were there then, but these have not been in my file while at the Draft board office. I have not been permitted to see these although I suspected that they were in existence.

Observations On Hearing Officers Attitude: He was nervous, high strung and emotional. Had attitude of trying to make out the J.W.'s were doing things illegal as can be seen by the above questions he asked. Was visibly upset at the effectiveness of the answers I gave and was afraid to press the matter further as I felt that he felt his conscience might be swayed in our favor by a continued discussion of the point. He seemed to just want to ask questions that he felt could not be reasonable and intelligently answered by J. W. He was a religious man and somewhat familiar with the Bible. He said his father was a minister. After the meeting was going for a while he assumed a diplomatic attitude and the meeting ended with a lot better spirit prevailing. Even shook hands. He at no time would reveal, directly, his attitude or definition of a C.O. and tried to protect himself from every angle. I have the impression that he has deep seated prejudices against J. W.'s but made efforts to restrain himself. This, of course, is just my opinion.

END OF AT 11:45