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Statement made at a press conference held by the Chicago chapter of the National Resistance Committee at which several Chicago-area draft-age men spoke.

My name is Edward Hasbrouck. I am 20 years old, a natural-born United States citizen, and, for what I do today and will do in the weeks to come, a federal felon. I urge you to join me in felony.

Consider, if you will, the absurdity of my position. I am here to explain—to justify—my belief that thou shalt not kill. I am here to tell you why I do not want to be a murderer, to be a slave, to join a cult, or to be brainwashed.

I am not, and will not be, a tool to be used against another person by still a third. To me, who was born with the Sixties and who grew up with the Vietnam war, it is evident that force is not and cannot be an instrument of progress. Faced with those who would use force—or, more likely, have others use force—I feel as one who, confronted with the ravings of a madman, must explain to him why those ravings make no sense.

Anyone, if he uses enough force, can make anyone else do what he wants; but no one, no matter how much force he uses, can make anyone else think what he wants. Simply ask yourself when you have ever been forced to change your own mind. I do not believe you have.

As one veteran said, "Like in the 4th, 5th grade, you come home with a black eye, you know, and you're told... 'Don't do that,' you know, 'that's stupid—to fight.' And if you don't go to the draft when you're 18, 19, you know, then once again you're stupid. So what do you do? They change it around the way they want.... Like I told them in Vietnam after I threw my rifle down..." [1]

They do indeed change it around the way they want. In particular, they will change those of us whom they draft—and registration has never failed to be accompanied by a draft—around the way they want. Ramsey Clark, speaking here in Chicago last week, remarked on "the pictures of all those people [in Iran] out in the streets yelling and wailing". "Have you seen their beautiful human faces", he asked, "And wondered what it is that made them act that way? Is it something in the water?" [2] I ask the same question about the pictures of all those soldiers in the military out on the battlefields killing and wounding. Except that I know what made them act that way: the military cult, the cult of death, the oldest, most experienced, and most successful death cult in the world. And I am altogether too scared that if I let myself into the hands of their indoctrinators they might succeed in making me too into a killing machine. Even more frightening is the possibility that, like most Vietnam veterans, I might fail to successfully deprogram myself after leaving the military.

These are some of the reasons why I will not register. I urge those of you who are subject to registration to consider what I and others are saying, to consider the consequences of registration as well as of non-registration, and to face the choice you must make before you act. Registration is irrevocable: you will never be able to remove any information you give from the Selective Service system's files. On the other hand, I am almost certain that those who register late will not be prosecuted, since to prosecute them would merely discourage others who have not yet registered from registering at all. Take your time—there is still time—and think.

No one is required to do anything until Saturday, July 26. Contact the Midwest Committee for Military Counseling, 939-3349, or come to a meeting of the Chicago Coalition Against Registration and the Draft, at which draft counseling will be available, on Thursday evening, July 24, at 7 at 53 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Room 1333.

If you decide that you must register, **DO NOT GIVE YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER ON THE REGISTRATION CARD.** The director of the Selective Service system has already admitted publicly that, "We want it (the Social Security number), but prudence dictates that if people don't have it, we're not going to prosecute them" [3] Proposals have already been made to give the Selective Service system access to all public and private records that might enable them to track down non-registrants, but if enough registrants exercise their legal right to refuse to give their Social Security numbers those files will be almost useless.

Resist the draft. Refuse to register. If you must register, refuse to give your Social Security number.

Peace.

[1] Gary Battles, quoted by James Simon Nunen, "Standard Operating Procedure", p. 105.

[2] Ramsey Clark, speech delivered at Rockefeller Chapel, the University of Chicago, Friday 11 July 1980

[3] Bernard Rostker, quoted in the Boston Globe, 8 July 1980, p. 8