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P. O. Box No. 60, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

Dec. 10, 1918.

Whitehead and Vogl,  
Attorneys and Counselors,  
314-18 Colorado Bldg.,  
Denver, Colo.

My dear Friends:

After having been postponed three times, my case came before the court yesterday. The Judge overruled some motion of the U. S. Dist. Atty. who is representing Col. Rice, and gave my attorney seven days in which to prepare some kind of a brief. I have been unable to obtain particulars as yet. I believe comment on continued postponements is unnecessary.

For eighty days after my arrest, I steadfastly refused to join the army or work as a prisoner.

As I wrote to you about three or four months ago from Camp Dodge, I feel that I did wrong in finally compromising and either working as a prisoner or offering to accept certain non-combative positions. It was recognition of my mistake that actuated my refusal to accept the first-class sergeantcy as clerk to the adjutant in the 19th train headquarters which was tendered me on September 5th.

I have shown the wrong kind of consideration for my wife. Love for her led me into erroneous reasoning and resulted in a compromise with God.

To kill or help to kill, is to break the easily understood and unconditional command, "Thou Shalt Not Kill." The military machine is a killing machine. To become a part of the machine is to help the machine consummate its task.

My sentence was dated Aug. 10th. On Sept. 5th, I was offered immunity if I would accept the aforementioned position. Refused, and the execution of my sentence was proceeded with.

After arrival at the U. S. Disciplinary Barracks at Fort Leavenworth, I performed the work assigned to me, thereby aiding the killing machine. This institution is, in a certain sense, the main-spring of militarism in America, for, it is fear of incarceration that keeps many of those in the army from mutiny and rebellion.

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For more than a month, I have intended to refuse to aid organized murder by assisting in the maintenance of the Disciplinary Barracks. Expecting to be released on a writ of habeas corpus, I refrained from acting upon my intention. So, from day to day, and from week to week, I have expected to be released, and, to avoid complications, conformed to the rules of this institution.

I may be here for a week more, perhaps for a month, and, possibly for a year or many years.

Today I announced my unwillingness to hold myself amenable to the rules. I have discontinued supporting this adjunct of militarism, which, in its final analysis is wholesale murder. Militarism in its every ramification runs counter to the sublime teachings of the Nazarene.

God will sustain me in whatever punishment I must endure. He will succor my loved ones.

The prevalence of Truth is inevitable, and those who are persecuted for adherence to it will eventually triumph.

I feel no uneasiness for any of my immediate relatives, with the exception of my wife. Ask them to console her and to persuade her to put her trust in God. My wife has been very faithful, but she has unfortunately lacked the light that blessed my other relatives. I am doing more for wife and baby than she can now appreciate, some day she will know. She has been good and true.

I would greatly appreciate your mailing a copy of this letter to my mother and to Mr. Welles. Tell Mr. Welles I will write to him just as soon as possible.

Anxiously awaiting the time when I can manifest my gratitude for your many acts of kindness, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Ben J. Salmon.