Interview with Tom Moore
Date: ca. 1998
Interviewer: Judy Ehrlich

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Note: These transcripts contain material that did not appear in the final program. Only text appearing in ***bold italics*** was used in the final version of *The Good War and Those Who Refused to Fight It: The Story of World War II Conscientious Objectors*.

00:00:12:00

Tom Moore:

Mm-hmm.

Interviewer #1:

—willing to be drafted, whether you had some—I'm sure everyone had some, [laughs] some qualifications about—

Tom Moore:

Sure—

Interviewer #1:

—some concerns about being drafted.

Tom Moore:

—sure.

Interviewer #1:

But were you seriously concerned about being drafted?

Tom Moore:

But, yeah.

Interviewer #1:

Or was this, or—

Tom Moore:

I was always, I was a religious person.

00:00:28:00

Interviewer #1:

I'm, I'm going to go back and we're, once we're rolling—

Tom Moore:

Yeah. And I was involved in the, in the student YMCA—

Interviewer #1:

Oh we are rolling? I'm sorry, let's—

Tom Moore:

—and I was involved—

Interviewer #1:

I'm sorry, back up a little bit.

Tom Moore:

—yeah, sure. [lifts his hands in a surrender pose]

00:00:36:00

Interviewer #1:

Introduce yourself, and tell us what, why you're here, or, just, just introduce yourself and talk about, and then we'll go back and talk about your experience in the war.

Tom Moore:

And are you Judith?

Interviewer #1:

I'm Judith.

Tom Moore:

Can I speak to you as Judith?

Interviewer #1:

Yes.

Tom Moore:

Yes.

00:00:49:00

Interviewer #1:

And you know what, one more thing, which is that, you're not going to hear my questions, so you need to incorporate my questions into your answers, if you know what I mean. So give me a full sentence, and then—

Tom Moore:

Oh, these people—

Interviewer #1:

—saying—

Tom Moore:

—the tape is not going to hear your questions.

Interviewer #1:

Exactly.

Interviewer #2:

And don't use her name.

Interviewer #1:

And, the audience will not use, hear my questions, right. And don't use my name. So, do you, what—

Tom Moore:

Uh-huh.

Interviewer #1:

—you'll, you need to say, rather than, they blah blah, say—

Tom Moore:

Yes.

Interviewer #1:

—the conscientious objectors did such and such—

Tom Moore:

Uh-huh. [clicks tongue]

Interviewer #1:

—the military—

Tom Moore:

Got it.

00:01:15:00

Interviewer #1:

—soldiers did—so you—OK? Great, thanks. So starting, start by introducing yourself.

Tom Moore:

Well, I'm Tom Moore. I'm a, Quaker from nearby, in Pennsylvania. But my, in my youth I was a Presbyterian, and then I was a congregationalist, and in Berkeley, California, where I lived as a young person, I became, acquainted with the Religious Society of Friends. And of

course, being in Berkeley, I went to the University of California. And, [smacks lips] after a year and a half at the university, during which I became very active in the student Y, I was drafted, in 1943. I was, still only eighteen years old at the time. And I had just, between Christmas and New Years, learned about the phenomenon of, conscientious objection, from a very impressive person, the, O.W. Mendenhall, the president of Whittier College. And—this was at a student-wide conference. And, I was already drafted. All I had to do, the, was take my final exams and go off, and so I did.

00:02:27:00

Interviewer #1:

When you were drafted, you didn't know about conscientious objection?

Tom Moore:

The, the law—yeah, the, the, the, the draft order came, sort of, almost simultaneously with finding out about this. And then the board, being in Berkeley, for some foolish reason they were on the side of, I don't know what. They, they deferred my actual reporting for duty until after my finals were over. Dreadful thing. And, as a consequence, I, was really distracted from thinking hard about this new idea of conscientious objection. And I had to take my final exams, and, at eighteen, I didn't have a good prioritizing system set up, I guess. And so I did. And I went off to war, in a sense. I was lost in the bookkeeping of the Army for, for, weeks at various times, and I had a lot of time to reflect. And, I went to a, a chapel service, and they sang a hymn that said that, wars weren't won with swords, they were won by the Spirit of the Lord. And I thought, wow, you know, that's really not what we're about. And then we took, basic training, and we had to learn—although I was going to be in the Air Force ground crew, and that was already known, I still had to learn how to use a rifle and a bayonet. And we stuck these bayonets into, dummies, and we were taught to grunt when we put them in, and to grunt when we pulled them out. And we began to see that we were being indoctrinated. And the more I was in the armed forces, the more—although I was remote from real fighting as a ground crew man—we, more and more were, it was clear that we were being told that these Japanese are not real people. They're some kind of other animal. And that was the way we were going to be prepared to fight against them.

00:04:44:00

Interviewer #1:

And you already had experience with Japanese-Americans?

Tom Moore:

I have—

00:04:47:00

Camera Man:

Right, let me change, let me change this tape, or we won't have a lot of time.

Tom Moore:

[laughs] Sure.

[cut]

00:04:52:00

Tom Moore:

—render.

Interviewer #1:

But then how did you get a conscientious objection, were you released from the military as a conscientious—

Tom Moore:

—and so—

Interviewer #1:

—objector?

Tom Moore:

—when the war was over, we moved to, first to Okinawa, where I saw some of the way we used people. And then we were moved to, to—

Interviewer #1:

[inaudible]

Tom Moore:

—the Philippines, and then I was discharged.

Interviewer #1:

I see.

Tom Moore:

And then in 1948, [gestures with his hands] see—

Interviewer #1:

Let me, let's go back.

Tom Moore:

—the, the law, the law—I'll just fill that in for you, though. The law expired, and then a few months later the congress re-enacted the draft law. So everybody who was age-eligible had to go and sign up again, and that was when I, decided I was going to say I was a CO.

00:05:28:00

Interviewer #1:

I mean, you were already—

Interviewer #2:

Well, wait, hang on—

Interviewer #1:

Oh, yeah.

Interviewer #2:

—are we rolling?

Interviewer #1:

Let's go back. Yeah, now we're starting to roll, right?

Tom Moore:

[laughs]

Camera Man:

Yeah, we're rolling—

Interviewer #1:

OK, OK, so go back to, I, we lost, we lost the—or, let's see, we stopped rolling at the point that you had gone into the military.

Tom Moore:

Yes, and I was going to talk about Japanese—

Interviewer #1:

Yes.

Tom Moore:

—knowing Japanese people.

00:05:45:00

Interviewer #1:

Yes, that's where we were. Yeah, I had asked you the question about knowing Japanese-Americans.

Tom Moore:

Of course, I had been a student at the University of California, and there were a substantial number of Japanese-American students there. And because I was active in the student Y—it was a place that was standing up for equality, and so it tended to attract minority students on the campus. And I had a number of Japanese-American friends. And that was possible for me, therefore, to see the kind of contrast between what I was being taught in the Army and what I knew from personal experience. Of course, a lot of the, my fellow soldiers from places like, say, West Virginia, had no experience with, people of other races.

00:06:31:00

Interviewer #1:

Mm-hmm. So what happened to you during, can you quickly tell us how you went from being in the military, briefly, what your experience was in the military, and the transition to be, realizing that you were a conscientious objector?

Tom Moore:

[pause] Quickly's not my style—

Interviewer #1:

[laughs]

Tom Moore:

—but I'll do my best. One of the things was that we had chapel services, and that was full of the stock Christian, love your neighbor kind of stuff. And here we were preparing to do quite different things, and there was one hymn that struck me with great force. Something about, not with swords loud clashing, but with the, through the love of Jesus will, the victory be won. And that really struck me, cause I was in this context where I was in basic training, and I was learning to use a bayonet. I was already in the Air Force, and I was never going to use a bayonet in any practical sense. But we learned to do that, and we learned to stick that bayonet into this dummy, and to, we were instructed to grunt when we did it. And we whirled around with our rifles and smashed the dummy with the butt of the rifle, and we were supposed to yell, like a rebel yell, when we did it. And all that was part of, clearly the enemy was becoming somebody not really human. This was not something you were doing to human beings. And as I served in the military, I saw this more and more. And the use of the word, Japs, rather than, the Japanese, or, or, people, or, soldiers, or other things. And I knew all that was, untrue. And I was in correspondence with people who were working on the evacuation, people with the Japanese who were in the evacuation centers, and I had had my, basic training at the fairgrounds in Fresno, which had been the, where the stables had been converted to barracks in order to accommodate the Japanese, just, as they were gathered there, as an assembly point. And then, having those barracks there, the Army moved in, and used them for training us. And, so that was all sorts of things like that—and as we went, through training soldiers, people were being trained—in the Air Force, I was in an outfit, was training pilots to shoot straight, and they were shooting at a target that was towed by an airplane, and it was just a matter of counting up scores. Each pilot had a different color, of paint of the noses, tips of his, of the bullets in his guns. And, the target would be dropped and then we would go and count all the blue spots, and all the red spots, and all the yellow spots, and each pilot could be graded. All this kind of thing—war was so clean and neat in some ways, but specially either impersonal, or when it became personal, the enemy was dehumanized. And what that did to us—and when I arrived on Iwo Jima, very near the end of the war, after, in July of 1945, the German, the war in Europe was over, the Japanese were not struggling at all anymore, really, except in isolated places. And we were in a situation—people came up who had been there when the marines were there, and they had taken pictures, and it was sort of like being sold a dirty picture. You want to buy this picture? And the pictures were of atrocities committed on the bodies of killed Japanese soldiers by American marines. And you know that those guys were probably really nice people, but they had gone and cut the genitals off of, the bodies of the enemy, and done all sorts of, awful things. And we ourselves were in this. The, our mess sergeant went into the caves of Iwo Jima and collected gold teeth out of the bodies he found in there. You know, what can you say about this? Human beings were just degraded, and we were the ones who were most degraded. And, I can only say that that helped to, to convince me that those pacifists I had talked to just before I was [laughs] taken into the armed forces were right, that war is going to be, you know, it's not the way for you to deal with human beings, not the way for you to stay human.

00:11:18:00

Interviewer #1:

And the war, so, and were you, during the war you only, you served in the Pacific. You weren't in Europe?

Tom Moore:

No.

00:11:25:00

Interviewer #1:

Was that issue, the issue of, did people say to you, what about Hitler? Were you, did you feel World War II was a justifiable war in some way? How did you, during the war, you—

Tom Moore:

Yeah.

Interviewer #1:

—you—

Tom Moore:

The second war, world war was, as everybody knows, the good war, because the, the forces against which we were fighting were so horrible. The, not only was the Japanese government, bent on conquest, and, and doing a really brutal job of it in many places, and we knew all that. But the solution gradually came to me, I could not participate in that, even though I understood that. I didn't have, I wasn't sophisticated enough, I'm not sure I am sophisticated enough today, to know, how do we contend with that sort of thing, short of war? But it certainly was true that, that I became convinced that it was not a positive, way to deal with such a situation when, the—God wants me to love my friends, God loves these people. I'm supposed to love them. Well, how can you love somebody who's doing a, what you think is a misguided thing, and what you think, what you think, what you know is not what God wants them to do? I don't have the answer to that. But I found, that after I was discharged, and the draft law expired, and then I was asked to sign up again in 1948, I said, I'm not going to just take my veteran's exemption. I'm going to ask to be considered a conscientious objector to war. I wanted, I'm, do this partly to think through my own thinking, partly to establish who I am and where I am. And so I did that.

00:13:24:00

Interviewer #1:

So you could have been exempted as a veteran? You weren't required to go back and be drafted in 1948.

Tom Moore:

I was required to sign up, cause I was still an age, eligible, but I wasn't, wasn't going to be drafted. I was sent a draft card, a, a, a classification card that said, you're exempt because you're a veteran. And I had to go back and appeal my classification, and say to them, well, it's really true that the, on the front page of the questionnaire that says I had served from, for three and a little, just about three years, and, but on page two, which they had never turned to, because they'd only, didn't need to, it says, I want to be sent the questionnaire for conscientious objectors. And so, I'm appealing. And they first investigated me, and then they gave me the questionnaire, and then, I, they considered that. And there were, further, the, all my friends kept saying, well, the FBI was here to see me about you. They're checking to see that I hadn't somehow become a communist, because, you know, by that time, the McCarthy thing was coming along. [laughs]

00:14:37:00

Interviewer #1:

Mm-hmm. And so you were suspect of being a communist if you were a conscientious objector.

Tom Moore:

Well, that's what they, that's the only, the, what the, what the—communism wasn't, was just sort of one of the obsessions of the government. And what the, the law required of the draft board was to find out if I was sincerely a religious objector, and so they were looking for, well, could there be some other reason why I was raising this point than my religious beliefs. And so that was why, I think that, and I'll say in their defense, they kept saying, well, have you been associating with any bad people, you know? Not religious people, but bad people, who have the wrong kind of political ideas, and, I had with some, but I, I hadn't been with very many, and I don't think that was crucial.

00:15:33:00

Interviewer #1:

What was crucial? What, what you said, the influence of the pacifists that you met, right before your, you were drafted. And were there other, and your experience during the war, there was a turning point for you. What, was there a moment that you recall where you really realized you were a conscientious objector? Was it the hymn, or was there anything else that

you can pinpoint?

Tom Moore:

I don't think there was any single moment when I became a conscientious objector. I didn't have a, a conversion experience. Rather, that it was the cumulative effect of the experiences I was having. On Iwo Jima, we, we in the Air Force landed there, and the war was almost over. And, you know, we got three medals: one for the campaign of the western Pacific, and one for something else, and one for something else; the victory medal, or something, over Japan. Well, we were present at that time. There was a, a duck outfit that, you know, they were, and they were all black, and they were using, these, amphibious trucks to bring supplies ashore. Those guys had started down in, Australia and worked their way north, through, Guadalcanal and all sorts of historic, real fighting. And the, many the men in those outfits had lost, their friends and, and, and colleagues to, to gunfire. And they had three medals, too, you know? There were injustice of all sorts, that kind of—medals aren't so very important, but there were all kinds of injustices that were woven into the experience. And this, but the supreme thing, I think, was this dehumanization.

00:17:24:00

Interviewer #1:

How did your experience—then, did you, you became a conscientious objector? Did you, did—

Tom Moore:

So I, I got, I got re-classified, yeah. And that made it possible then for me to move with a kind of, sense of authenticity, that I had the stamp of approval [laughs] of the selective service system, that, that I was a really sincere conscientious objector. I had been active in the student Y before I, was drafted. I became very active in it, afterwards. I was, the president of my local YMCA, I was a regional officer, and I was a national officer of the student Y. And so, I was kind of an official Christian, you might say, by virtue of those, positions I had.

00:18:16:00

Interviewer #1:

Were you back at UC at that time? You went—

Tom Moore:

Went back to UC, University of California, mm-hmm.

00:18:20:00

Interviewer #1:

And you said you were interested in being a, plant pathologist, and then you changed your mind. Could you talk a little about how your, conscientious objection shaped the rest of your life, in terms of what you chose to do with your—

Tom Moore:

When I enrolled at the University of California, I was very much interested in, natural science, and particularly botany. And, California, as you know, is a, [coughs] a biological island, and so it's an especially interesting place to, to be brought up. And I was going to become a botanist, and then I was going to, specialized in plant pathology. I thought that was really interesting. And I was moving toward that when I was drafted. When I came, by the time I came back, I had concluded that there were other pathologies, the human pathologies that, called strongly to me to deal with them. Race, racial discrimination; the, the, the way, people, deal with war, put all their reliance in the use of force, and not in other, means that are available to all of us human beings for settling disputes. All those kinds of things had impressed themselves on me as being more important than plant pathology, [laughs] the diseases of, of, wheat, and so on. In the retrospect, I think, having seen the green revolution and its effect, I might have done better to stick with the plant pathology. I don't know how much influence I've had. But I became, as a consequence, first, a teacher, an elementary teacher. [scratches his face] I wasn't really very good at it. And then I became a YMCA youth worker, and then my wife and I were the directors of the international student house in Washington D.C., which was run by the American Friends Service Committee, and that was a wonderful experience. And moving from that, to continue to work with college students, we went to Lawrence, Kansas, where I was the executives director of the YMCA and YWCA at the University of Kansas. And I think there, in Lawrence, I, we became real influences. There was a peace movement, and my wife and I were at the, in the thick of it. There was a, a civil rights movement, and my wife and I were at the, center of it. And there was, a kind of, general emphasis on justice and civility, and we were there. And we were involved in every aspect of most of the good [laughs], of the good changes that were going on. Not that we were, the, the whole of it, by far, but, we were involved in all of it.

00:21:15:00

Interviewer #1:

No one ever is. Would you, would you—

Camera Man:

[coughs]

Interviewer #1:

—talk a little about being mentored, and being a mentor to other people? It sounds like you

had the opportunity to do that in Kansas, and that you had someone who influenced you. I mean, how does—and something I think I've just learned at this conference, when I always assumed lots and lots of Quakers were conscientious objectors. In fact, it's a very small, you're going against the tide even as a Quaker, being a conscientious objector; that many Quakers didn't choose that course, that—but it seems like somebody was influenced by a particular person and that changed their course. Would you say that that was true for you, and do you think you've changed, the thinking of other people, younger people you've had contact with?

Tom Moore:

[pause; rubs his face] The question of how we got to where we were, [laughs], and who—

Interviewer #2:

Can you say, how I got to where I was?

Tom Moore:

Yeah, or how I got to—the question of how I got to where I was is a really complex one. I suppose I would have to give some clear credit to people who were in the student Y that I had dealings with, but there's a whole wide number of those people, staff people particularly. But also, I became a Quaker after the war, and that was, another one of these symbolic acts, in a sense, saying who I was, and what I was, and how I saw myself. And of course, by doing that I exposed myself to more Quakers. And—

00:23:01:00

Interviewer #1:

Can you wait one second?

Camera Man:

Wait till they clear.

Interviewer #1:

One second.

Interviewer #2:

Judy, we have about ten minutes—

Interviewer #1:

OK.

Interviewer #2:

—for this interview.

00:23:14:00

Tom Moore:

So, I was, I was exposed to a great many people who, who thought about, who were, like I was, concerned about civil rights, concerned about peace, concerned about, a, a civil, civil society, in today's phrase. [pause] And they, it's really hard to, to sort that out, and pin the responsibility on any one of those relationships. Certainly, the, the Y secretaries that I worked with as a college student, they caught me at a very important time in my life, just as with the people who were in the Civilian Public Service. And a lot of the people that I knew were survivors of the Civilian Public Service camps, cause we were traveling in the same circles. The, the, the student Y, and the, Religious Society of Friends overlapped a great deal, and they're both rather small bodies of people. And it was like the, sort of like being an army brat. Everywhere you went you discovered somebody that knew somebody that knew somebody that knew you, or your family, and so on.

00:24:32:00

Interviewer #1:

Have you influenced other people, do you think? Have there been, have you been a mentor to other young people who have been grappling with the issue of conscientious objection? Or—

Tom Moore:

I'm sure I have been a mentor, a lot of it unconscious. When I worked for the Civil Rights Commission in Kansas—I traveled sometimes, the, in Kansas—and I would go someplace, and somebody would come up to me and say, maybe you don't remember me, but I remember you; when I was a student at the University of Kansas, and you were the Y secretary there. And they would talk about how they had been influenced. The Y sponsored, a model United Nations, which was, done because it was an opportunity to talk about solving world problems. It was the, sponsored, not only the model UN, but we had an annual ski trip. And we used a lot of these things for, American students to have contact with foreign students. We had foreign students to be ski instructors on our ski trip. And the, but the underlying objective of that was to bring people of different backgrounds together. We had, lots of students working in the schools, helping with mental, mentally retarded youngsters, and doing things like that; working as big brothers and big sisters with people that were, at risk, I guess we would say today. We had a lot of things going on, and, and I was helping make these connections with the agencies in the community and the students who were eager to do things, and, express their concerns for the world around them, both the narrower

community and the larger, the world community.

00:26:16:00

Interviewer #1:

Do you think that people who were conscientious objectors during and, and shortly after World War II had an influence on, on young people during the Vietnam era, and passed on—

Tom Moore:

Oh, I'm sure so. In our case, it was very clear that, the peace movement drew a lot of, strength from those of us who had been involved earlier. Cause one of the things that we, made clear by our, just our existence was that this is a long term job, not some mere passing fancy that you're going to be able to take care of, and peace will blossom, and, you can go on with your other, rest of your life, you know. And our, our, just our existence helped make that clear. I used to stand in those vigils that we had, with the long-haired hippies. And I was dressed pretty much like I am now, with the same hair-length that I have now, and I saw this as a kind of testimony. That was really important, that the respectable, quote, you know, middle class be represented in these vigils for the passing crowd that went by in their automobiles, to see that this wasn't just the hippie enterprise, it was a lot of people. It included the hippies, but it didn't, stop there.

00:27:44:00

Interviewer #1:

Did being a conscientious objector make you feel different? Did it make you feel different in, in terms of what the society around you looked like to you, and did you, was that ever brought home to you in any difficult way, or any hostile, or, were you ever treated hostilely because of your position?

Tom Moore:

[pause, rubs his face] I think that, being a conscientious objector did make us different. But we won't, we didn't encounter hostility. When we were having, near-riots in, Lawrence, Kansas, over the Vietnam war protests, and over, racial discrimination, I went and talked to the police and said, how about if I go and talk to these people? And the sergeant says to me—he had his troops lined up. There were about eleven of them. There aren't a whole, wasn't a big police force. It was the whole evening shift. And he was walking up and down behind them saying, now stay calm, now stay calm, keep cool. And I said, can I go and talk to these people? So I went over and talked to, one, in one instance, the Black Panthers. We had a little, everything came to Lawrence a few years after it developed on the coasts. And, and so I went and talked to the Black Panthers, and, and just to, find out—and, and what we had discovered was that you didn't find out much, but talking to them helped to sort of cool things down a little bit, cause they had been recognized, at least. They weren't being just

treated like animals, you know. They were real people that you could talk to. And by doing that—and the police were not in a position to do that. And another time we had a really major, fracas on the University of Kansas campus, and the state police came in, and the state police commander came and sat down on the grass on a corner, at the heart of the campus, and students gathered round him and asked him questions. And he defused the whole process almost by himself, by being just a really good human being. And that was part of a, something that the religious advisers, including the Y secretary [laughs], had been doing before then. We had had a time when the students, were throwing stones at the military science building, and we decided it really wasn't a good idea to burn down the military science building, or tear down its doors, and so we just, gathered, and we said, we're going to go and talk to these students. And we just scattered out, and if we knew anybody, we talked to somebody we knew, and if we didn't, we went and introduced ourselves and found out their names. And we helped people to look at their thing in a, some sort of responsible way. And the throwing stones was fine, they had made their point, but it really wasn't going to help the university, which they also loved, to wreck the building. And gradually the whole thing dissipated. And we had enough experience with peaceful resolution of conflicts that we knew it made a difference. Now, Robert Hinshaw, a well-known Quaker from a well-known Quaker family—Cecil Hinshaw was his father, who was president of Penn College in Oskaloosa—came to teach anthropology. And he had several children, and we had several children. And one year the elementary school decided—they were all in the same elementary school, and the school decided they were going to elect the citizen of the week, every classroom was going to elect the citizen of the week. And the first time they did it, all—there were thirteen classrooms. The, well, seven, seven Quaker kids in that school were all elected citizen of the week in seven different classrooms the first time it happened. It was not a hostile situation. We were influential. We didn't deal with, hostility. We've, were perceived as real peacemakers, and accepted because we had a value to the community, which also wanted to have peace.

00:32:08:00

Interviewer #1:

Do you have a question?

Interviewer #2:

OK, I have a couple questions.

Interviewer #1:

Go ahead.

Camera Man:

I really need to—

Interviewer #1:

Can you—

Camera Man:

—one second, wait for me to change the bag.

Interviewer #1:

Sure.

[sound warps out]

[cut]

00:32:17:00

Camera Man:

OK, we're rolling.

Interviewer #2:

OK. When you filed your, conscientious objector papers in the 1948 draft, what was the basis of the, of your conscientious, your CO argument?

Tom Moore:

When I filed my conscientious objector, request in 1948, I said that my, the—and the law required, in a sense, that, that you justify this in terms of your religious belief. And I said, my religious beliefs had developed at that point, to the point where I could no longer envision cooperating or being a part of the military, because I knew that the whole mechanism was set up to support people to, kill people. I don't have that paper in front of me, so maybe I'm mis-quoting myself with the glory, of, past history, but I, I really, it was somewhere in that vicinity, so that I wasn't denying, I was embracing my military experience, and helping to show, using it to help me show how my, views had changed.

00:33:42:00

Interviewer #2:

Did you refer to this idea of dehumanization? Did, do you, do you remember if you were actually using that, that language, of your experience in the military causing dehumanization?

Tom Moore:

I think I was aware, and probably used the term, dehumanization, that I'm using today, then, because I was very much aware—think about how we dealt with the Germans and the, we called them Nazis, we called them fascists, we called them, the, we had some kind of name rather than their, even their nationality was not sufficient. I knew that, from my mother, my mother had studied German in college, and had, and had forgotten her German in the First World War. The intense, anti-German feeling was such that she had done that. And I, that was part of my family history, and so I knew what wars had done, what that war had done to people's efforts, sort of a brainwashing, effect. And so I was keenly aware of what was going on in, in, in my war, the Second World War.

00:34:54:00

Interviewer #2:

A couple of times you referred to—

Crew Member:

Oh, we're going to have to change the tape.

Interviewer #2:

OK.

[cut]

00:34:58:00

Camera Man:

OK. We're, we're rolling.

Interviewer #2:

A couple of times you talked about the dehumanization and the effect that it had on, on the people who were, not the Japanese or the Germans, but the soldiers who were doing it. Can you talk about, can you remember, what effect did it have on you, personally, to experience, going through that process of dehumanization, or what effect were you afraid it was going to have?

Tom Moore:

When I faced the, those efforts to, to make the Japanese less than human, I felt very keenly this contrast with my religious understanding of what humanity was about, that we are one, and that we are, the, called to love one another, and all those kinds of ideas were present.

And so I had, I had a kind of job to do, I thought the war needed to be over, and I did my job, but I was also internally quite clear about not, being taken over by this hating the enemy sort of thing.

00:36:19:00

Interviewer #2:

Why you? So many Christians, so many men who were good Christians and careful, conscientious people didn't have to switch to being a conscientious objector. What, why do you think you did? What's, what do you think?

Tom Moore:

I wonder why I switched to being a conscientious objector. I think some of it was, coming back to the University of California in 1946 and, when I was discharged, and associating immediately with lots and lots of other veterans at the university. One of them is an example, had been in the Air Force, a black man flying in the first, in that famous Air Force squadron that was trained at Tuskegee, Jim Goodwin, and he said, I thought when I came back everybody would know I was a war hero and that things would be different. But things weren't different. He was still just a black man that they could see on the street, and they couldn't see what he had done. And, and my Japanese-American friends who had come back in large numbers from, from the internment camps, and from the scattering over the United States, and some of whom I had seen when I was in the Army on, on leave. I'd visited with one of my friends in New York City, as an example. I saw those people again, and, and we could see—we were people who were involved in social change, and we were concerned about social change, and it was [laughs], it was, and, and we were, we were all participants in that process. And I had this wonderful experience of being able to be in that situation. I wasn't taken back into some kind of, all-white enclave where I didn't get any support for my idealism and my, interest in, in, in changing things. I got a lot of support. And, and I got a lot of, and as I said at one point here earlier, I had become a kind of an official Christian, having to, explain to people what Christianity was all about; and what the Y was about, which I was involved in; and what Quakers were about, which is what I was involved in—was, not just talking about Christianity, not debating Biblical points, but applying Christian insights in the real world. And there I was, you know, at the heart of that sort of thing.

00:39:04:00

Interviewer #2:

And your family? Did, your father or your, your mother, how did they feel when you became a conscientious objector?

Tom Moore:

My father and mother were wonderful. [laughs] And, and indeed, of course, the, the acorn

doesn't fall far from the tree, and, and I don't know how my parents became what they became. They grew up in a very narrow kind of environment in a small town in Michigan where anti-Semitism was the going thing, and they somehow rejected it, and didn't live it, and didn't practice it. And, and, and, that was, you know, the, the, all sorts of things like that. This openness and tolerance. My father came home laughing one day. He had figured out in Berkeley that, that the pecking order was a complete circle, and that, he had found enough groups of people who were looking down on other groups of people so that the last group was looking down on the first group, and this pecking order, and that was a kind of thing that was part of his value structure, was looking at society, accepting it, but, you know, a kind of, taking joy in it in one sense, but also being aware of the peccadilloes of humanity in—

00:40:24:00

Interviewer #2:

Do you think your father was proud of you for taking the stand of conscientious objection?

Tom Moore:

[pause] Well, he wouldn't have expected, expressed pride exactly. He was, it was OK. It was good, you know, but not proud. He was not proud of my brother and myself going into the Army, particularly. He was, it was OK, cause it was a bad war, and we did, we were good people and we did good things. And my brother, who is my family, who's the, our hero—he was five years older than I was, and, very handsome fellow, and, and, he, he had the same sort of attitudes that I'm expressing, this being able to be involved in something, doing a good job, but seeing how, human beings just do flawed things.

00:41:26:00

Interviewer #2:

So your brother didn't condemn you for becoming a CO?

Tom Moore:

Oh, not at all, huh-uh—

Interviewer #2:

Great.

Tom Moore:

—nor my sister, nor my mother, no.

00:41:35:00

Interviewer #2:

I think we've finished—

Interviewer #1:

I think we're done. Good.

Interviewer #2:

Thank you very—

Tom Moore:

Mm-hmm.

Interviewer #2:

—very much.

Interviewer #1:

Thank you very much, Tom.

[cut]

[end of interview]

00:41:41:00