

Registration

Alexander Berkman

Registration is the first step of conscription.

The war shouters and their prostitute press, bet on snaring you into the army, tell you that registration has nothing to do with conscription.

They lie.

Without registration, conscription is impossible.

Conscription is the abdication of your rights as a citizen. Conscription is the cemetery where every vestige of your liberty is to be buried. Registration is its undertaker.

No man with red blood in his veins can be forced to fight against his will.

But you cannot successfully oppose conscription if you approve of, or submit to, registration.

Every beginning is hard. But if the government can induce you to register, it will have little difficulty in putting over conscription.

By registering, you willfully supply the government with the information it needs to make conscription effective.

Registration means placing in the hands of the authorities the despotic power of the machinery of passports which made darkest Russia what it was before the Revolution.

There are thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands of young men in this country who have never voted and who have never paid taxes, and who, legally speaking, have no official existence. Their registration means nothing short of suicide, in a majority of cases.

Failure to register is punishable by imprisonment. Refusal to be conscripted may be punishable by death.

To register is to acknowledge the right of the government to conscript.

The consistent conscientious objector to human slaughter will neither register nor be conscripted.

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