

# Democratic faith



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

To clarify the statements that freedom carries obligations and that liberty and duty go together is essential before discussing it in the sense of our constitutional democracy. In the “constitutional democracy” sense of this statement, it is generally accepted to mean that freedom carries with it an obligation to fight on behalf of our country however the government may be constituted, however the government defines the national interest. In this sense I do not believe that anyone anywhere has an obligation to engage in any activity if it goes against one’s individual conscience.

I believe if one knows it is not the right thing to do, it doesn’t matter who they receive orders from, they should not do it. I am a great believer in that one knows what is right for him or herself and one knows when an action doesn’t set well in one’s conscience. We are each responsible for our own actions. You are not responsible for my actions and I am not responsible for your actions. In situations like war, one should not have the right to demand another person risk their life for something he/she does not believe in.

There is no guarantee, and I would go so far to say there is minimal chance that the president or the leaders of a nation will only go to war at times that would be comfortable with every person’s conscience to go to war. How the government defines “best for the national interest” may or may not be within the realm of what I believe to be the right thing to do. However, if I had two members of my family and one chose to engage in a war and the other chose not to, I would not judge either to be a lesser person than the other. I would hope they wouldn’t either.

I trust them enough to know that each of them is listening to their conscience and doing what they know is right for them. In stating all of the

above, I also don't believe an individual should sign up for the military or for any position to receive free education or other benefits if there is a chance they will be asked to perform tasks/duties they may be uncomfortable performing but which would be a normal expectation of the job. This is a consideration that needs to be well thought out beforehand. By the time most of us are expected to know about the rewards and consequences of liberty and duty, freedom and responsibility we are adults.

By adulthood, most of us have already had experience with decision-making and an awareness of what we know to be things we are and are not comfortable with. Although I am comfortable working in my field to receive compensation, volunteering and assisting in positive constructive ways to make a positive difference in the world, I cannot look as this concept that I must be willing to engage in any war or situation my country deems worthy to engage in, because it is my conscience and life, not theirs, that will be forever affected by these monumental decisions.