Refusing To Bear Arms: A World Survey Of Conscription And Conscientious Objection To Military Service

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Conscientious objection is recognized as a fundamental human right by the United Nations. The right to conscientious objection is not legally recognized and there are no international legal standards to protect this right in all countries. In some countries, conscientious objectors are prosecuted and imprisoned for their refusal to perform military service.

The most recent complete survey of the situation facing conscientious objectors was conducted in 1998 as part of the “Refusing to Bear Arms” survey. This survey covered a wide range of countries and provided detailed information on conscription systems, the legal status of conscientious objection, and the treatment of conscientious objectors in armed forces.

The survey found that many countries have conscription systems that require all men to serve in the military for a certain period of time. However, in some countries, conscientious objectors are granted exemptions from conscription and military service.

The survey also highlighted the problems faced by conscientious objectors in countries where conscription is in place. In some cases, conscientious objectors have been arrested, imprisoned, or subjected to other forms of punishment due to their refusal to serve in the military.

The survey concluded that there is a need for international legal standards to protect the rights of conscientious objectors and to ensure that they are not discriminated against or subjected to unfair treatment.

The survey recommended that international organizations and governments take steps to ensure that conscientious objectors are treated fairly and that their rights are respected. It also called for greater efforts to promote the adoption of international legal standards to protect the rights of conscientious objectors.

The survey was conducted by War Resisters' International, an international organization that advocates for the rights of conscientious objectors and promotes nonviolent alternatives to military service.
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