

IF YOU WORK
FOR PEACE



STOP PAYING
FOR WAR.

More than a paycheck

NEWS FROM THE WAR TAX RESISTANCE MOVEMENT

April/May 2012

Stop the Money

Who says this must be so?

Who cares that this is so?

*I shudder that the raids and bombs
have made us less than human.*

*I wish to go to our deserted schools
to understand why we are like this.*

*I used to dream of space,
blue skies and gentler people.*

*I heard mother through her burqa
pleading "Please stop!*

*Stop the money. Stop the killing.
Stop."*

*Another local explosion,
more international lies.*

*Our global problem is that
guns impose greater force
than common sense*

*or vision, which tells me
that my mother's world is crashing.*

Kathy Kelly quoted these lines from Hakim of the Afghan Youth Peace Volunteers in the December 2011 *Catholic Worker*. Could we express any stronger argument to protest war taxes by resisting and/or getting out on tax day?

This year Tuesday, April 17, is Tax Day, the final day to file IRS returns. It happens that April 17 is also the Global Day of Action on Military Spending (GDAMS), which NWTRCC has endorsed. Our action list is still growing at nwttrcc.org/taxday2012.php, and we link to the GDAMS website. Call or email the office with your events right up to April 17. After that send in your photos and report for the next newsletter!

California

Oakland — Northern California War Tax Resistance joins with CodePINK, Occupy Oakland, and others in GDAMS demonstration, April 17, 12-4 pm, Oakland Federal Building, 1301 Clay St. Press conference, speakers, music, and visuals on the historical extent of U.S. military interventions and costs. March to nearby state building to join protest against cuts to education funding. Info: (510) 842-6124 or nowartax.org.

Petaluma — War tax resisters participate in The Really Really Free Market Occupy Petaluma Public Event, April 14, 1-5 pm. Music, workshops, clothes, art, kids activities, plants, seeds, community!
facebook.com/events/409991702351215.

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One person can make a big statement. Rosalie Riegler, Tax Day 2011, Evanston, IL. Photo courtesy of Neighbors for Peace.

What Does Conscience Require?

By Berry Friesen

Paying taxes that are used for war has long been a vexing problem for those whose conscience forbids direct participation in war. If it would be wrong to take up arms and kill, then isn't it equally wrong to provide the means for another to commit the same act? The conventional escape from this dilemma is found in the legal obligation to pay taxes. Payment is compelled, not voluntary, and thus one's conscience remains clear.

"Conscience and Taxes in a Culture of War," a March 11 forum in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, sponsored by **1040 for Peace** and **Every Church A Peace Church**, asked a different question about the upcoming April 17 tax deadline: how can we use the filing of our

annual federal tax return to witness for peace and against the wars that have become a permanent feature of U.S. foreign policy?

For Shane Claiborne, the activist who co-founded The Simple Way in Philadelphia, commitment to Jesus the Nazarene has prompted him to adopt a posture of "revolutionary subordination" vis-à-vis the federal government. "I respect the law and those who administer it but I also have been called to be prophetic, to expose injustice." Thus, when he filed his federal tax return for 2010, he paid only 70% of what was due. In a letter sent along with his return, Claiborne described his reasons for not paying the other 30%.

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FOR PEACE**



More than a paycheck

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Production

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Printing and Mailing

Lakeside Printing
Cooperative, Madison, WI

Printed on Recycled Paper

More Than a Paycheck is a bimonthly publication of the National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee, a clearinghouse and resource center for the conscientious war tax resistance movement in the United States. NWTRCC is a coalition of local, regional and national affiliate groups working on war tax related issues.

NWTRCC sees poverty, racism, sexism, homophobia, economic exploitation, environmental destruction and militarization of law enforcement as integrally linked with the militarism which we abhor. Through the redirection of our tax dollars, NWTRCC members contribute directly to the struggle for peace and justice for all.

Subscriptions to *More Than a Paycheck* are \$15 per year.

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Law School Clinic

A resister dealing with a frivolous penalty had contacted the Tax Advocate's office for some help with her situation. In the course of the conversation the Advocate suggested the resister try to get help from the law school clinic at a local university. After a meeting with the clinic, the resister received a letter saying they would take the case. The school's clinic has a low income requirement, which the resister had met. While much of what we do in war tax resistance does not require a lawyer or legal help, contacting such a clinic in your area could be an option in some of these sticky situations.

Revenue Crunch

Richard Cebula and Edgar L. Feige (of Jacksonville U. and the U. of Wisconsin, Madison) have attempted to estimate the size of the underground economy in the U.S. They estimate that 18-19% of legally reportable income stays under-the-table, which translates to about half a trillion dollars in taxes each year that the IRS fails to collect. The IRS itself hasn't attempted to measure this underground economy since 1988, but they have worked hard in recent years to find nonfilers. In particular the IRS takes a dim view of independent contractors and makes it a priority to shift people to salaries when possible. They'd love to institute withholding for everyone who receives pay-for-work, but so far the opposition is too strong.

Adding to the federal revenue crunch, more than 40% of American households that filed tax returns last year did not pay or owe any federal income tax. This is the second year in a row that the percentage

of non-income-tax-paying households has topped 40%. The "Other Taxes" page on our website includes information about other taxes to resist if you don't owe income taxes. Find the link at the end of the text on our home page.

Ghost Returns

If you are a nonfiler with reported income (1099s, W-2s, etc.) the IRS computers are pretty good, eventually it seems, at matching that information with the lack of a return for that person/social security number. We've heard from some longtime nonfilers who have had the IRS go after them for as far back as 9 or 10 years, but usually that's related to some special, large amount of income reported for that year. If the IRS gets after you for, say, 2009, they won't necessarily demand that you file for years previous to that (as far as we've heard). If you do not respond to their collection letters, they will file for you, and we've seen that called a "ghost return." The IRS only calculates the tax due based on the reported income and a single standard deduction, so collection efforts are usually based on a principal higher than you really owed. You always have the option to file yourself, but of course that can mean getting into dealing with the agency you chose to avoid in the first place. If you are not very collectible (no salary, regular clients, or large bank accounts) or don't worry about potential collection, this may not be of concern. We recommend nonfilers with reported income fill out the forms each year in case their circumstances change after some years, or they need to argue numbers with the IRS.

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Many Thanks



Network Updates

All of us in the NWTRCC network are grateful to Craigslist Charitable Fund for the unexpected grant of \$25,000, which we received for educational work early this year. Our May meeting in Chicago will include a discussion on proposals to make the best use of this very special grant. Contact the office if you will not be in Chicago but would like to offer input for the process.

Thanks to all of you for your continued support and to these groups for recent dues payments and donations:

Boulder War Tax Information Project
Maine War Tax Funds for Life
New England War Tax Resistance
OR Community for War Tax Resisters

NWTRCC's Network List of Affiliates, Area Contacts, Counselors, and Alternative Funds appear on the website, or request a list from the NWTRCC office.

Please let us know if you are interested in being a contact on our network list: nwtrcc@nwtrcc.org or 1-800-269-7464.

Advertising rates for this newsletter can be found at nwtrcc.org/ads.php or contact the editor at 1-800-269-7464.

Conscience Canada Update

I am a Canadian war tax resister. For the past five years I have been a member and supporter of the national peace tax organization Conscience Canada (consciencecanada.ca). Our members are a diverse group separated by vast distances. What we have in common is the belief that as long as we pay taxes we are complicit in war. Conscience Canada works on various levels to promote freedom of conscience and to advocate for changes in law. Each year we ask Canadian taxpayers to consider completing a Peace Tax Return. The return provides two options. Option A is simply a statement of conscience against military spending. Option B provides the opportunity to redirect a portion of one's tax dollars. We see this as interim measure until a recognized legal option is available.

The past few months have been busy and exciting ones for Conscience Canada. In November, 2011 Alex Atamanenko, Member of Parliament for British Columbia Southern Interior, introduced Bill C-363 in Parliament. If passed into law this piece of legislation would make it possible for conscientious objectors to war to direct the military portion of their taxes into a separate peace fund. This bill is a long way from becoming law, but its introduction has sparked meaningful debate and dialogue. Search on "Bill C-363 Canada" to read the bill and find updates online.

Conscience Canada members here in British Columbia are using NWTRCC's excellent film *Death and Taxes* at a Peace Cafe event. It is comforting and inspiring to know that so many others are committed to the same cause.

—Anna Kirkpatrick

Letter to NWTRCC

Dear NWTRCC,

In your recent mailing, you included the *Huffington Post* article entitled "Catholic Bishops' Contraception Coverage Argument Ridiculed by Pacifist Activists," which supports paying taxes on items that people object to based upon religious and moral grounds. Some people don't want their taxes used for war based upon religious/moral grounds. Likewise, other people (Catholics/other religious) don't want their taxes used for contraception/abortifacents based upon religious/moral grounds. Different belief on religious/moral grounds, but same principle

of objection based upon religious and moral grounds. Please consider teaming up with the Catholics on the simple principle if you have a religious/moral objection, then USA citizens should have the right to exemption. Contact these people religiously/morally objecting to tax paid contraception/abortifacents and say we, NWTRCC, have been protesting too that we have religious/moral objections to tax-paid war and people want exemptions. Teaming up with the Catholics will definitely create great synergy and help the NWTRCC cause! Please no more support by pacifist activists ridiculing the Catholics. Team up with the Catholics instead, they may be paving the way for religious/moral objection to tax-paid war exemptions.

Thanks for your consideration,
Beth Bechtel, Haslett, Michigan

Letter to a Senator

Dear Senator Ayotte:

Thank you for your 3/9/12 email. First, I find it interesting that there is such concern

about contraception and abortion when no one is talking about conscientious objection to the military. For over 30 years, Peace Tax Fund legislation has been introduced in Congress without passage. With regard to killing people, there is some doubt about this re: contraception and abortion; there is no doubt about it when it comes to war. People with religious and moral beliefs against killing do not have the same choice to stop paying for war as a military conscript who claims conscientious objector status. If you are so concerned about life, I suggest you support the Peace Tax Fund bill.

Second, my understanding is that religious organizations are not required to pay the cost of contraception and abortion. The insurance companies are. Please explain to me how this violates the separation of church and state.

Thank you for your support of the above and any assistance you provide with passing the Peace Tax Fund.

Sincerely,
Ginny Schneider, New Hampshire ▼

Counseling Notes

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Tax Collection Scams?

A couple of weeks ago, the phone rang at 8 o'clock in the morning.

A cheery voice explained, after ascertaining my identity, that she was calling about my tax liability. This was not the IRS, but an outfit called Clear-something. Flabbergasted by their chutzpah, I said, "How dare you call me!" and hung up.

Then I began to wonder what records they were working from. Is IRS cooking up something new against me? I wished I had stayed on the phone longer and gotten more information.

Then they called again. Cool! I asked what

this was in reference to and was given the name of another tenant in my building, who runs a business. I said that I knew him, but had no financial connection with him. The nice lady asked if I could tell her how to reach him. I refused.

She huffed, "Well, you don't have to be so..." I guess she's not used to dealing with New Yorkers. In answer to another question, I reiterated that it was not my job to supply her with information, and hung up.

—Vicki Rovere, NYC

(Editor's Note: This story remains a mystery. Anyone have a similar call? In 2006 the IRS subcontracted to private collection agencies, but those contracts were dropped in 2009 when the IRS realized it was more cost effective to just hire more staff.)

Occupy the IRS to Support Cindy Sheehan and Oppose the U.S. Empire

Thursday, April 19, 2012 • 10:30 am

U.S. Court, 501 I St., Sacramento, CA 95814

Peace Activist and Gold Star Mother, Cindy Sheehan, is a conscientious war tax resister. The U.S. Attorney, on behalf of the IRS, has summoned her to court to produce requested documents. This hearing date is just a few days after Tax Day where millions of Americans will help fund the war machine with their hard earned money.

For updates and more information see cindysheehanssoapbox.blogspot.com or the Facebook event page at facebook.com/events/27744603233238.

WTR Ideas and Actions



Members of Occupy Bangor (Maine) enjoy their new “Foreclose on war, invest in people” scarves, compliments of NWTRCC, after their General Assembly in downtown Bangor. Thanks to the generosity of NWTRCC donors we were able to send about 200 scarves to occupiers around the country. Photo by Mary Anne Royal.

Brought to you by...

The Maine War Tax Funds for Life will spend \$200 of its redirected tax money for a year long underwriting of a radio program on WERU Community Radio in Maine. The tag line will be, “This program is brought to you by listeners like you, and by the Maine War Tax Resisters’ Resource Center, supporting redirection of and resistance to war taxes since 1982. 525-7776 or wartaxboycott.org.” Readers might consider this idea in their community.

Disarm the Census

British war resisters organized as “Count Me Out” are boycotting the census. In tax resistance campaigns of yore, census resistance has usually come because the census was seen as a prelude to a tax. In this case, the boycott has a different cause: the resisters are protesting against the government’s awarding

Stop the Money

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Colorado

Colorado Springs — Leafleting at the downtown post office, April 16, Noon-1. Bannering and leafleting during the Space Symposium, April 17+. Sponsored by Citizens for Peace in Space, bsulzman@juno.com

Illinois

Evanston — Leafleting with WRL flyers, Main Post Office, Davis at Oak, April 17, 8 am-3 pm, Sponsored by Neighbors for Peace, (847) 644-2281 or riegle@svsu.edu.

Indiana

South Bend — Michiana War Tax Refusers bean poll and leaflet with WRL pie chart, downtown South Bend, April 17, noon-1. Info: (574) 289-2126 or psmith@saintmarys.edu.

Iowa

Dubuque — Citizens’ Tax Moratorium vigil and leaflet with War Tax Boycott cards and other handouts, Federal Building, 6th and Locust on April 13, 16, and 17, 4-5 pm. Info: (563) 583-2586.

Louisiana

New Orleans — Vigil and leafleting with pie chart flyer, April 16, 4-6 pm, Main Post Office/Federal Building. Sponsored by Pax Christi New Orleans, (504) 522-3751 or benhgordon@yahoo.com.

Maine

Statewide — Leafleting at post offices and other public locations in towns and cities around the state, April 17. Location list is in formation. Maine War Tax Funds for Life accepts refused tax money for redirection. Info: Maine WTR Resource Center, (207) 525-7776 or rosc@south.net.

Massachusetts

Worcester — Penny poll and leafleting, April 14, 10 am - 2 pm, Central Street Post Office. Sponsored by Worcester Friends Meeting. Info: mattshorten@yahoo.com.

Michigan

Royal Oak — Demonstration, April 17, 3 pm-7 pm, Royal Oak post office. Sponsored by Peace Action-Michigan. Info: (248) 548-3920 or weberodonnell@sbcglobal.net.

New York

Ithaca — Vigil with Ithaca War Tax Resistance, April 16, noon. Location and info: (607) 277-7426.

New York City — Vigil at Manhattan IRS office, 110 W. 44th St., April 17, 4 pm. March at 5 pm with Rude Mechanical Orchestra to main post office, 34th St. and 8th Ave. Leaflet, vigil, sing, dance, etc. til 6:30 pm. Sponsored by NYC War Resisters League, NYC People’s Life Fund, others. Info: (718) 768-7306 or nycwrl@att.net.

North Carolina

Asheville — Asheville war tax resisters and Occupy Asheville/Financial Working Group co-sponsor rally, picket, street theater, leafleting in downtown Asheville, April 14-15. Info: (828) 301-6683 or newsouthnetwork@gmail.com.

Franklinville Area — Plans developing for pre-tax day penny poll and leafleting (or whatever develops). To help and info: danielwoodham@yahoo.com.

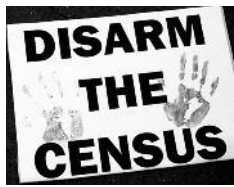
Oregon

Portland — Oregon Community for War Tax Resistance hosts Redirection of Taxes Ceremony with talk by Sharif Abdullah,

Ideas and Actions

RESOURCES

of the contract to run the census to the arms manufacturer Lockheed Martin.



“When I was 18 I refused to fire a rifle on military service,” John Marjoram told

a reporter. “I couldn’t live with myself if I collaborated with a military company.”

The government is responding to the boycott with criminal prosecutions, and has thus far won over 100 convictions.

One resister, Derek Shields, said at his sentencing: “I’ve only got one thing to say and that is I’m a Christian and I wouldn’t get into bed with an arms dealer.” He was fined by the court and quickly responded that he would not pay: “I’m not going to pay. If I pay that’s admitting I’ve done something wrong and I don’t believe I have done anything wrong.”

—David Gross, sniggle.net/Experiment

Lunch with John Woolman

By Elizabeth Boardman

War tax resister John Woolman was the featured guest at a recent celebratory luncheon in Davis, California. Woolman, as portrayed by aspiring young actor Jeffrey Viguie, shared the famous “Epistle of Tender Love and Caution” of 1755, in which he and 20 others described their concern about paying the new taxes “intended for purposes inconsistent with our peaceable testimony.” Having met together several times to season their concern, the 21 Friends concluded that, “though some part of the money...is said to be for such benevolent purposes as supporting our friendship with our Indian neighbors and relieving the distresses of our fellows,” these purposes are “so mixed” with others that we cannot heartily concur in one “without at the same time assenting to...practices which we

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April 15, 7-9 pm, Unitarian Church, 12th and Salmon. Annual “Burma Shave” style sign holding with antiwar, pro-peace slogans across bridges during rush hour, April 16. Info: (503) 249-6343 or email kimasuegarrison@gmail.com.

Pennsylvania

Philadelphia — House party to celebrate Peace Tax Day and Party for Conscience, April 15, 4-6 pm. Sponsored by Center on Conscience and War. Info: (202) 483-2220 or maria@centeronconscience.org.

Vermont

Brattleboro — Music, vigil, and tabling, April 17, 10 am-2 pm, outside Post Office. Sponsored by Pioneer Valley War Tax Resisters. Info: (802) 387-2798 or dhsicken@yahoo.com.

Washington

Seattle — Leafleting at several Seattle post offices and maybe outside one or more “corporate tax dodgers” buildings with pie chart flyers and info on Bring Our Billions Home Campaign. Sponsored by Western Washington Fellowship of Reconciliation (WWFOR). Info: (206) 789-5565 or wwfor@wwfor.org.



Activists with Western Washington Fellowship of Reconciliation pose after their Die-In and Sing-In inside the rotunda of the State Capitol in Olympia on Feb 20 (President’s Day). Photo by Robert Tabor.

Seattle — Leafleting at Midtown Post Office, 301 Union St. (at 3rd Ave.), April 17, 11:30 am-1:30 pm. Sponsored by Greater Seattle Veterans For Peace. Info: (206) 297-6746.

Wisconsin

Milwaukee — Milwaukee War Tax Resistance and the Casa Maria Catholic Worker will have a vigil outside the Army Recruiting center at 3133 N. Oakland (by UW-Milwaukee and two high schools) from noon to 1 p.m. on Tuesday April 17th. There will also be civil disobedience for those interested. For more information, contact Lincoln at (414) 344-5745 or usury_sucks@hotmail.com.

Surfing the Web

NWTRCC’s website is packed with information, so we hope you check it often. The “What You Can Do Page” has a whole section on action ideas for tax day (or anytime). Find that page under the “Programs” button. It includes a link to the illustrated “how to do a penny poll” page.



David Gross in California just posted a trove of newspaper articles about war tax resistance going back to 1901! He collected them from a big Google scanning project that has been discontinued. If you go to nwtrcc.org/articles.php,

you will find a great collection of links to stories such as, “Widow Refuses to Pay War Tax,” from 1948; “12 Refuse to Pay War Tax in Philadelphia,” from 1953, and “Nay Saying Taxpayers Reject Arms Expenditures,” from 1964.

Other websites that have important information, especially in preparation for tax day include:

- War Resisters League, warresisters.org
- National Priorities Project, nationalpriorities.org
- Friends Committee on National Legislation, fcnl.org
- Global Day of Action on Military Spending, demilitarize.org
- National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund, peacetaxfund.org
- Mennonite Central Committee, “Turning toward peace” initiative, us.mcc.org/wartaxes

Voices for Creative Nonviolence, vcnv.org
“Our Taxes are Off to War,” dailykos.com/story/2012/02/23/1067636/-Our-Taxes-are-Off-to-War-2012-Edition

NWTRCC continues to stock printed publications, buttons, bumperstickers, books, and pamphlets. See the list at nwtrcc.org/publications.php or call the office if you’d like a copy in the mail at (800) 269-7464.

NWTRCC Gathering

Demand a NATO-Free Future

May 18-20, 2012

57th Street Meeting of Friends • Chicago, IL

Registration begins 5 pm Friday, May 18

We're meeting in Chicago to participate with thousands of activists in the protests against NATO and G8. Plans are in flux with the demonstration shifting from Saturday to Sunday. Stay late on Sunday if you can. We'll be flexible with our agenda, but take time to report on tax day, local actions, and the War Tax Boycott campaign and strategize our continuing work. NWTRCC's business meeting is Sunday, and all are welcome. Find registration information at nwtrcc.org/meetings.php or call the office for details. Please register by April 30 or sooner if you need housing. If you live in Chicago and can offer housing, please let us know. The Windy City is going to busy that weekend!

Congratulations, Juanita!

Juanita Nelson, "war tax resister," was honored with a Clara Lemlich Award for Social Activism at a ceremony on March 20, 2012, in New York City. The award is named for the 23-year-old garment worker who stood up during a crowded meeting, interrupted union leader Samuel Gompers, and shouted, "I've Got Something to Say." Her speech inspired a vote to strike that led to the Uprising of 20,000. The award honors women who have been working for the larger good all their

lives, in the tradition of those who sparked so many reforms in the aftermath of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire one hundred years ago.

LaborArts and the Triangle Fire Coalition sponsor the Clara Lemlich Award, and Juanita was among seven honorees this year. The others were Judy West, jazz singer/tenant organizer; Jackie Steiner, musician/anti-fascist activist; Betty Reardon, feminist peace educator; Connie Ling, garment worker organizer; and Connie Hogarth, agitator for civil rights and the environment. NWTRCC Coordinator Ruth Benn accepted the award on behalf of Juanita, who was not able to make the trip to New York.

For more about the award and the March 20 event see laborarts.org/lemlichawards. ▼

John Woolman

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apprehend contrary to the testimony which the Lord has given us."

The modern-day occasion for the lunchtime celebration was delivery to U.S. District Court of Elizabeth Boardman's Claim for Injunctive Relief against the Commissioner of Internal Revenue for standing in the way of her religious practice of refusing voluntarily to support war with her income tax payments.

The IRS has declared that a person's refusal to pay war taxes on grounds of religion or conscience is "frivolous." IRS responses to Elizabeth's protests are inconsistent at best, threatening at worst. The lawsuit seeks to enjoin actions that punish and prohibit Elizabeth's free exercise of religion, which is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution. Moreover, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 requires government to accommodate such religious practices in ways similar to accommodation of conscientious objection to conscription. The lawsuit seeks to compel the IRS to establish similar "alternative procedures" for religious war tax resisters.

For five years now, Elizabeth has felt led to pay only half of her income tax bill, putting the rest into escrow pending the day that it is no longer budgeted for the Department of Defense. She is under the care of a Davis Monthly Meeting support committee. Bob Kovsky, an attorney who is representing Elizabeth, feels called to support her in her witness and to add a voice to the Quaker principles she embodies and expresses in action. He has a support committee in the San Francisco Monthly Meeting, to which he belongs.

The recent luncheon was generously hosted by Jim and Marilee Eusebio. Just before the food was served, "John Woolman" reported that, at Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in 1757, despite two years of seasoning the moral challenge of the war tax "among Friends everywhere," the committee found that there was no unity on making this a Yearly Meeting platform. "When the tax was gathered, many paid it and others scrupled the payment."

As Friends agreed in 1757, "it is highly necessary..that Friends everywhere endeavor earnestly to have their minds covered with fervent charity towards one another" on this issue. ▼

For more information about the case or the Pay Under Protest campaign that Elizabeth and other California Quakers are working on, email eboardman@sbcglobal.net or call (530) 759-1980.



Jeffrey Viguie as John Woolman.
Photo by Elizabeth Boardman.

Mahatma Gandhi • John Woolman • Larry Rosenwald • Juanita Nelson • Julia Butterfly Hill • John Adams • Paul Cuffe • Pyotr Kropotkin • Carl Watner • William Lloyd Garrison • Charles Kellems • Lucy Stone • Ammc n Mayer • Karl Hess Upham • Gene St Jenkins • Alexand Grimké • Annie S el Edward • Konkin I ebel • Kat Kanning a Gandhi • John Wo a Butterfly Hill • Jot y Rothbard • Carl V Thoreau • Leo Tols Benjamin Ricketso • Ammon Hennacy Karl Hess • Bernard ne Sharp • Julia Sn Alexander Hamilton nie Shaw • Beatrice nkin III • Richard ng • Robert McGee Woolman • Larry Ro John Adams • Paul C l Watner • William Tolstoy • Vivien Kellems Ricketson Tucker • Lucy Stone • Elizabeth Hennacy • Karl Marx • Allen Ginsberg • Milton Mayer Hess • Bernard Offen • Peace Pilgrim • Thomas C. Upham • Gene Sharp • Julia Sm on • Ch price

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A Tax Resistance Reader
Edited by David M. Gross

<http://createspace.com/3339658>

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Conscience

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When asked if he also would support the practice of sending a letter of protest while overpaying federal taxes, Claiborne said, "Yes. I support provoking our imaginations to witness, to raising the right questions, stimulating more conversation and not more polarization."

For Pat Hostetter Martin, a Harrisonburg, Virginia resident who has engaged in tax witness for nearly 40 years, it all began with the friends, neighbors and colleagues victimized by war during the '60s when she was working in Vietnam. "I expect the federal government eventually will get the money I withhold. That's not the point. The point is that I speak on behalf of those victimized by my government's wars."

Jack Payden-Travers also began witnessing via nonpayment of taxes during the Vietnam War. These days he works on Capitol Hill where he leads the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund. Citing the witness of the Berrigan brothers and their acts of protest during the '60s, Payden-Travers urged the audience not to de-value symbolic acts, such as withholding \$10.40 from one's tax pay-



Shane Claiborne and Jack Payden-Travers.

Photo by H.A. Penner.

ment. "There is great power in symbolic acts, in refusing to offer the pinch of incense."

Moravian College professor Kelly Denton-Borhaug, shifted the focus from government to the need for witness to the church and broader society. "The necessity of war as

sacrifice has incredible resonance within American culture," combining the potent image of Jesus on the cross with the war-making of U.S. military personnel. "This use of religious imagery to talk about war is so powerful that continuous war is now seen as normal, and dissent has been largely suppressed. Meanwhile, the peace movement hasn't measured up to the power of this message."

Although "the sacralization of war" has long been a device political leaders of all stripes have employed to win popular support, Denton-Borhaug insisted the stakes are higher now. "The U.S. military is so dominant, and the U.S. war culture so pervasive, that we dare not ignore it. The threat to the world is too great." Besides, she said, it is our faith that is being hijacked for military purposes.

When it comes to taxes, what does conscience require? Purity may be a pipe-dream, beyond our reach. Witness is something each of us can achieve. And it is what conscience requires. ▼

Berry Friesen is active with 1040 for Peace. For more information see 1040forpeace.org or call (717) 471-9691 or (717) 859-3529.

Committed Radicals

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policy options for domestic and international use. We had a few fundraisers and some events to raise awareness, but unfortunately it was hard to gain much interest and support so it kind of fizzled out.

Ruth: When will we have a peace college comparable to West Point, Annapolis, and the Air Force Academy? If we are the number one country of the world, we should set an example and lead the world to PEACE. We must have people in United States who know how to work for peace if they were given the time and a good salary. We need a Department of Peace that has as much power as the other departments have. The Pentagon could become our Department of Peace so the government does not even have to build a new building.

Carol: Finally, since money talks, my mother and I have supported the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund, which for the past 40+ years has been trying to get a bill allowing conscientious objector status for taxpayers passed in Congress. This bill would establish a fund in the federal treasury to receive the taxes of conscientious objectors, which would be allocated annually to any nonmilitary appropriation within the federal budget. Kudos go to Representative John Lewis from Georgia and Dennis Kucinich, who have been steadfast supporters of this. Needless to say, this bill still hasn't passed!

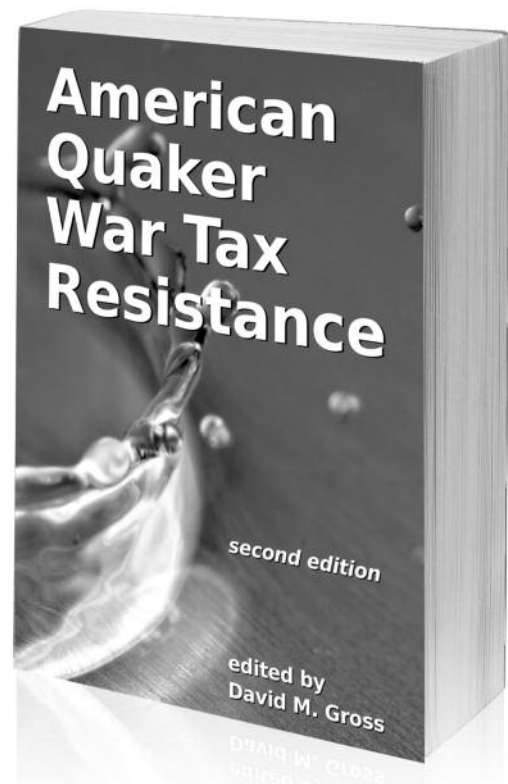
Carol and Ruth: We realize that this is an uphill task; however with organizations like National War Tax Resistance, Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance, National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund, Friends Committee on National Legislation, and Occupy, there is hope that we will have a peaceful world for our children and grandchildren. ▼

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Committed Radicals

By Carol Dotterer

My 88-year-old mom, Ruth Kirk, was visiting me in South Carolina when we were asked to write a profile for this newsletter after we asked for some Zombie war tax resistance forms mentioned in the December 2011 issue.

Ruth: I sent every senator and representative a copy of the book *Addicted to War*. I sent them a questionnaire to answer about the book. Not one of them answered it. I followed up with a letter a year later saying you were not courteous enough to thank me for the book I sent. I received one reply. That senator said he never got the book. It seems to me that all our representatives benefit from war profiteering, therefore they want to continue having wars. I financially support many peace organizations.

Carol: It's easy to see how I got involved in the peace movement. My mother has always been a woman of peace and an inspiration to me, as well as many others. Add to this the fact that both of us are birthright Quakers, a faith that subscribes and practices the testimony of peace, and you can see why our lives have taken this direction. Both of us grew up in Philadelphia, the "hotbed" of Quakerism as well as the home of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. We both like the quote they use: "It'll be a great day when the Air Force has to have a bake sale to build a bomber!"

Ruth: We had a serendipitous moment when we met at a peace rally in Florida because neither of us knew we would be there. I came to the peace rally with a group of people from St. Petersburg where I was living at that time. My daughter was there with a group from Koinonia—an intended peace and justice community—in Americus, Georgia. Now I am active in the Granny Peace Brigade in Philadelphia. We give out flyers with phone numbers of senators and representatives in Washington and have petitions for people to sign to bring our troops home. Every week I call Washington to reduce our military budget and bring our troops home.

Carol: Currently in Charleston a small group of us, Charleston Peace, are planning on visiting our representatives when they're on recess and asking them to cut the military budget. We're also planning on doing a counter recruitment at a local high school's

career fair where, as in the past, we'll hand out flyers, brochures, peace buttons giving students alternatives to joining the military and letting them know the facts and their rights. In the spring, we hope to continue our bi-monthly vigils for peace, handing out flyers here too on the cost of war. We are also planning on hosting the American Friends Service Committee's exhibit of artwork from students in Afghanistan called "Windows and Mirrors."

Ruth: One year I did not pay income tax. It only took them three months to contact me. I wrote back that I was not paying for war, and I know more than half my tax goes to the military. Naturally they did not accept my reason for not paying so they added penalties and interest to my tax, and they deducted it from my paycheck. When I realized they would get much more money this way, I paid the tax. For several years they have audited my taxes trying to get more, but I paid them in full so they could not penalize me.

Carol: About 5 years ago here in Charleston, we had a group of activists trying to get a Department of Peace established in Washing-



Carol Dotterer and Ruth Kirk meet up at a demonstration in the 1980s.

ton, DC. The national group was the Peace Alliance and the bill they sponsored called for establishing nonviolence as an organizing principal of American society—a novel idea indeed! The bill would provide the U.S. President with an array of peace-building

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