

IF YOU WORK
FOR PEACE



STOP PAYING
FOR WAR.

More than a paycheck

NEWS FROM THE WAR TAX RESISTANCE MOVEMENT

October 2005

New England WTR Gatherings

Sharing Ideas, Support and Good Times

New England War Tax Resisters came together during the weekend of September 9 – 11 for their 20th Annual Gathering. That's an impressive record for any group, especially for one with no leader, and no hierarchy—generally thought a requirement to make things happen. There are some solid WTR groups in New England including New England WTR based in Boston, Pioneer Valley WTR in Western Massachusetts, New England WRL in Connecticut, and in Maine the WTR Resource Center, along with a lot of individual wtrs in each New England state.

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Joanne Sheehan explains Gandhi's constructive program.
Photo by Ruth Benn.



The Well-Rounded Resister
Annual Gathering of War Tax Resisters, Refusers, & Supporters in New England & Beyond



Friday-Sunday,
October 17-19, 1997
The School Around U
Arundel, Maine
(between Portland and Portsmouth, NH)

The 13th Annual Gathering of New England War Tax Resisters



Exchanging Ideas,
Reconnecting. Supporting.
(& of course) Having a Good Time

December 4, 5 & 6, 1995
at
Woolman Hill Conference Cen
Deerfield, Massachusetts

20th Annual
New England Regional Gathering
of War Tax Resisters



Beyond NO!
Gandhi's
Constructive
Campaign
& War Tax
Resistance

Friday - Sunday
September 9 - 11, 2005
Pioneer Valley Cohousing
Amherst, Massachusetts

Gandhi's Three Elements of Nonviolent Social Transformation

By Joanne Sheehan

This text is from the keynote presentation at the New England WTR Gathering, September 9, 2005.

“What is effective social change?” is a question that I have been thinking about over the last few years, and I've been developing workshops based on Gandhi's work.

Gandhi outlined three elements for social transformation and saw them as intertwined. Social change will not come about by just doing one of them. The three elements are personal transformation, political action, and constructive program.

Personal Transformation: Gandhi saw this as a beginning, because even if each of us becomes “peaceful,” we still need to do more. Personal empowerment is a first step in the process. If we are working together and feel unempowered we won't be able to do what we want. In addition, personal transformation includes understanding the choices that we make. In my own work with high school students, it is apparent that young people

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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.

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COUNSELING NOTES

BACKUP WITHHOLDING

In a random conversation with a nonfiler recently, he mentioned that the only collection he has had from the IRS in many years is "backup withholding" on his bank account. The IRS informed his bank of the seizure, and the bank wrote the resister:

We have been notified by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) that you have underreported reportable interest or dividend income. As a result, the IRS is requiring us under Internal Revenue Code Section 3406(a)(1)(C) to "backup withhold" twenty-eight percent (28%) of all reportable interest and dividend payments made to you.

... You must contact the IRS and obtain a written determination (release) in order to be able to stop backup withholding. According to IRS regulations, we are not allowed to stop backup withholding until the IRS notifies us in writing. At that time, we will write to let you know the exact date on which the backup withholding will be discontinued.

While you are subject to backup withholding, you may not certify to any payor (bank, broker, etc.) making reportable interest or dividend payments that you are not subject to backup withholding.

In the case of this resister, monthly interest on the account has been between 72¢ and 92¢, and it is unclear from his bank statements if these small amounts are actually being paid over to the IRS. As the letter indicates, you may not be able to open another interest-bearing bank account while subject to backup withholding, and, of course, closing

the account can end the seizure.

If you have any interesting experiences with backup withholding, please let us know your stories.

CHARITABLE DEDUCTIONS

A friendly accountant offers a short summary on this topic: "You can itemize deductions for donations of up to 50% of your income to nonprofits. If you donated more, then the excess would be carryover to the following year and could be used as a deduction then. So a single person making \$30,000 could only get a deduction for \$15,000 in charitable contributions. This by itself would not reduce the tax to zero. However, that \$15,000 deduction would be added to other itemized deductions such as state taxes, real estate tax, mortgage interest, and others. So combined, there is a potential that the charitable contributions added with other deductions could generate a zero tax."

People who are interested in bringing down their taxable income can download forms from the IRS website and play around with the numbers before the end of the year to see how their tax bill is adding up. It is impossible for NWTRCC or most WTR counselors to offer this kind of detailed tax information, so filers should be encouraged to work out the numbers on their own or with help from friends, family, or paid services as desired. Filers interested in this style of not paying for war might find these websites helpful: Tax Resistance Blog, <http://warresistanceblog.blogspot.com> and The Picket Line, www.sniggle.net/Experiment.

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Many Thanks



Network List Updates

Many thanks to
Chicago Area War Tax
Resisters Support Group
St. Louis Covenant
Community for War Tax
Resisters

who gave since our last
newsletter. We deeply appreciate
your support!

We've also gotten behind on
sending thank you notes to individuals
who gave over the summer. We are
most grateful for your contributions and
will use these resources wisely.

Contacts needed! We are in search of new area contacts or counselors in Albuquerque, Montana, Nebraska, and New Hampshire. If you live in any of those areas (or know someone who should be asked) and can be a contact for people interested in war tax resistance, please call or email Ruth Benn at the NWTRCC office, 800-269-7464 or nwtrcc@nwtrcc.org. The local WTR network is so much more important than having a distant number to call.

The update of the network list of Counselors, Area Contacts, and Affiliates is in progress. If you have not returned the green postcard, please try to dig it out of the pile and send it in—even past the deadline!

We will put changes on the website "Contacts and Counselors" page by early November, and print versions for the nation or by region will be available about the same time from the NWTRCC office.

Peace Tax Seven: The Struggle Continues

By Simon Heywood

"We will appeal and if necessary take this all the way to the European Court of Human Rights"

This update appears on the website of the Peace Tax Seven, www.peacetaxseven.com, along with other details about their case.

In a two-hour hearing at the High Court in London on July 25, Judge Collins rejected the Peace Tax Seven's (see *MTAP*, Oct. 2004) appeal and upheld the previous decision to refuse permission for a full hearing.

In a nutshell, the judge accepted that we had enough of an argument to warrant a full hearing, but refused to offer us one, at least in a British court. It was, he said, an argument relating to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). The basic decision-making body for the ECHR is the European

Court in Strasbourg, so, effectively, we were told to take the case to Strasbourg.

We were bringing the case under the British 1998 Human Rights Act (HRA), which allows British courts the discretion to interpret the European Convention in their own British way. There has been no ruling on military taxation under the Human Rights Act, so this was uncharted legal territory. As we understand it, the judge could have allowed a full hearing in Britain under the terms of the HRA, but he chose not to. He said he was afraid that if British courts allowed themselves to listen to our arguments, it would risk putting British law, as regards the Convention, out of step with the rest of the European Union.



It will be possible for us to appeal again, to the Appeal Court. Chances of a win are very slim, but this would open the door to a direct application to the Strasbourg court. The Seven decided unanimously to proceed along these lines, and we have instructed our lawyers accordingly.

Of course we disagree strongly with the judge's decision, and we are disappointed by it. But the main impression of the day was the amazing support we had, from more than 50 people who turned out in person to pack the courtroom and to the thousands who signed the online petition. There are too many of you to thank individually but we deeply value the contribution of each and every one of you. These are grim times in many ways, but in the middle of it all we have had tangible proof of how much good can be done. . . . A groundswell of opinion is a powerful tool for positive change. ▼

Counseling Notes

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NEW PRACTICAL COMING SOON!

Number 7 in NWTRCC's Practical War Tax Resistance series of pamphlets will cover issues of health insurance (or lack thereof), social security, inheritances, and aging. We plan to have the final version in print in November. Watch the website or the next issue for ordering information.

VERIZON WIRELESS

A telephone tax resister has had success getting Verizon Wireless to remove the federal excise tax from bills by faxing a short letter to the company at 800-734-4707. Show your name and phone number, and write a note similar to this: *To Whom It May Concern, This letter is a formal statement to take all necessary measures to meet my request for my Refusal to Pay the Federal Excise Tax because it helps pay for war. Thank you very much. Sincerely, Name.* ▼

Gandhi's Three Elements

Continued from page 1

need to know about choices—how we live our lives, lifestyles choices, how we relate to others. This can be the most important part of a workshop with young people, but it is something each and every one of us must explore. War tax resistance is certainly an aspect of personal transformation, as we make decisions about what we do with our money, what we choose to support or refuse to support.

Political Action: When asked what is non-violent action, in the U.S. we often think of civil disobedience or particular actions. I do an exercise in nonviolence trainings where I ask small groups to list 10 wars. They do this quite quickly, but then they struggle to come up with 10 nonviolent campaigns. (People who have seen the series "A Force More Powerful" are better at this!) And usually they list tactics and movements rather than campaigns, not understanding the difference. In contrast, when I've been in India, people describe non-violent action as what they are doing in the

villages, the constructive work they are doing.

Effective nonviolence is strategic. Too often we see a problem but only think of single actions in response. We don't think strategically about a longer term response. In her excellent speech at the opening of the World Social Forum in January 2004, Arundhati Roy said that even though the international anti-war outpouring on February 15, 2003, was wonderful, it was a weekend, and, "Holiday protests don't stop wars."

In Gandhian campaigns of nonviolent action against specific evils, noncooperation is a key. Gandhi's Salt March initially involved only 80 people, but the act of picking up the salt from the sea and making their own salt in defiance of British taxed salt was revolutionary. The power of the Salt March was that it became a massive campaign—there was something everyone could do. Some packaged the salt, some sold it, all could refuse to buy the taxed salt and buy the alternative. The people of India were saying no to the Empire and that became the turning point in their struggle for independence. We say no as WTR's. People in

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Resource Centers: A Simple Way to Organize for WTR

By Larry Dansinger

Back in the early 1980's my partner, Karen Marysdaughter, began the Maine War Tax Resistance Resource Center. It's still operating over 20 years later. While we haven't turned the whole state toward war tax resistance (yet), it's an issue that many peace and justice people in Maine are aware of; they know where to go to get that information.

While some organized WTR groups are obvious contacts for anyone seeking information, even one person willing to give a few hours a month can begin a resource center. Where there is no group, the resource center is a perfect substitute.

Our resource center consists of: (1) Usually three e/mailings a year (flyers for a regional New England gathering in the fall, notice of the statewide WTR meeting in February, and a list of resources along with April 15 plans); (2) A brochure about the Maine War Tax Resistance Resource Center that gets displayed at events and in supportive organizational offices; (3) A phone number and email for people to call or write if they need counseling or support (which actually can be done by other people); (4) Occasional articles on WTR, workshops, or other activities to keep WTR in the minds of peace and justice people and the public; and (5) An account at a local credit union for donations and refused taxes.

To do this only requires a small but regular time commitment to promoting WTR, a

willingness to be "out there" as a wtr, and a few basic organizational skills, such as doing e/mailings, writing articles, and keeping track of money. Our budgets have been pretty minimal, usually \$250 or less per year, covered by a few donors and sales of literature.

I would be happy to send samples from our resource center or talk with anyone who

wants to start one in their state or area. It's quite simple, yet it is crucial for potential wtrs to know where to get information and support if they are going to take what may seem like a serious risk and no longer pay for war.

Contact: Larry Dansinger, Maine WTR Resource Center, 161 Stovepipe Alley, Monroe, ME 04951, (207) 525-7776, invert@acadia.net. ▼

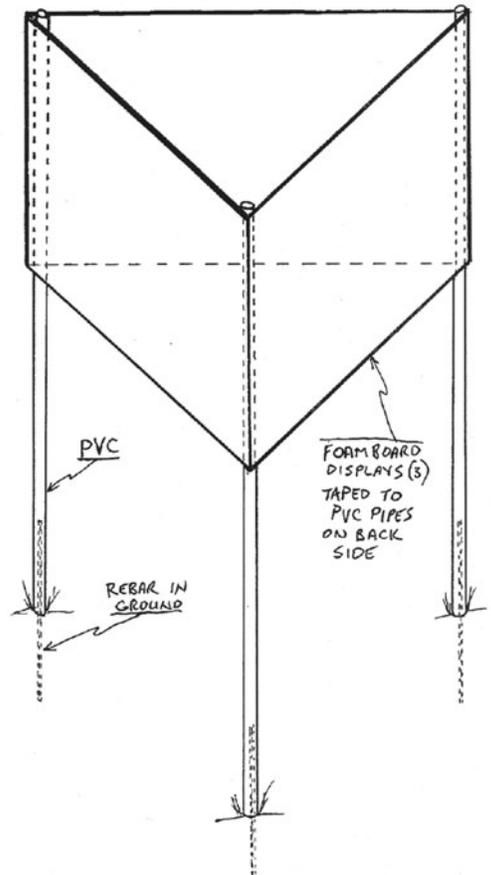
Making WTR Visible

Here's a way to create an outdoor display for the WTR Exhibit (see Resources sidebar):

Mount the six posters along the bottom edge of 30" x 40" foam board, and add large hand-printed headings across the top for greater visibility.

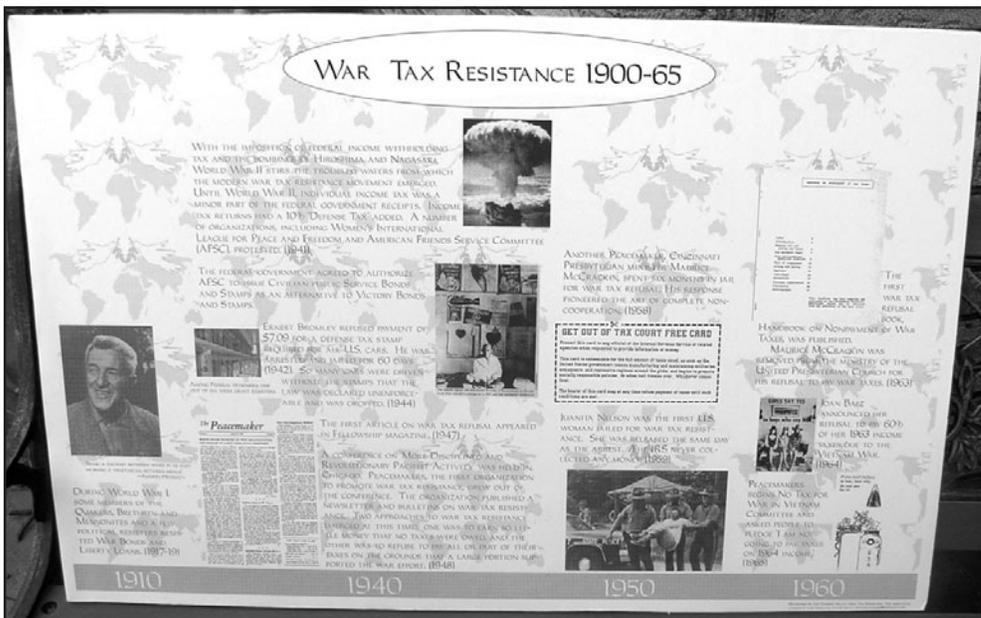
Purchase six pieces of 2' x 3/8" rebar (ribbed steel rods used for concrete reinforcement), and two 20' sections of 1" PVC pipe, cut into thirds for six pieces about 6'8" long.

Set up (see drawing this page): Pound the rebar into the ground vertically forming two triangles, 40"/side, positioned several feet apart. Place a section of PVC over each



rebar. Use strips of plastic packing tape to secure the back of the foam board panels along each side to the vertical PVC, with the top of the panel just a few inches below the top of the PVC. (If you fold back a tab on one end of a tape strip before placing it, it makes removal and disassembly much easier.) This makes a pair of sturdy, wind-resistant kiosks for temporary outdoor display, with the larger print mostly visible from afar, even above the heads of people reading the text.

Thanks to Jack Cohen-Joppa, S. Arizona WTR/Nuclear Resister, Tucson, AZ ▼



Activists' Trial Ends

The first and only federal conspiracy trial arising out of civil resistance to the Iraq War ended September 26 when the jury announced their verdicts: not guilty of conspiracy. The four were convicted on lesser charges, damage to property and trespassing, both misdemeanors that carry possible sentences of one year and six months respectively.

Two days before the invasion of Iraq four Catholic Workers from Ithaca (WTRs and friends of NWTRCC) committed nonviolent civil resistance at a military recruiting center. The trial in Tompkins County Court in April 2004 ended in a hung jury. However, almost a year later, the U.S. government decided to retry the four, on charges including con-

spiracy, a trial closely watched by activists. See www.stpatricksfour.com for more information. ▼

Prison Support

Please send letters of support to Inge Donato, who began a six-month prison sentence in August. Inge was convicted on charges related to the refusal to pay war taxes by members of Restored Israel of Yahweh (see *MTAP*, August 2005).

Inge Donato # 40885-050
FDC Philadelphia Detention Center
PO Box 562
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Gandhi's Three Elements

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the military are saying no. We need to explore more in our culture how we say no, how we noncooperate, and acknowledge that there is a network that exists that helps this happen. Military resisters are not alone by and large. These days Cindy Sheehan has helped galvanize the network and make it more connected.

To be effective political action, noncooperation needs to be one aspect of a strategic nonviolent campaign that might include other tactics such as protest, public pressure from boycotts, etc.

War tax resisters tend to be very experienced with the two elements above. It is the third of Gandhi's elements that we need to study and add to our efforts as we work for social transformation.

Constructive Program: We are quick to identify and protest the things we don't like in our society, but we are often asked "so what are you for?" As revolutionaries we need to start building a new society in the shell of the old. Gandhi said we should not wait for one to crumble before starting the other. Constructive program brings people together to do the kind of community work that is empowering, bringing them to a point of self reliance and being ready to develop a new society. To outline a nonviolent campaign involving all these elements, we need to begin to identify where the change is needed. Gandhi identified 18 elements of constructive pro-

gram in India that included removal of untouchability, developing village industries, sanitation, basic education, national language, spinning cloth as a symbol of economic freedom, labor unions, involving students, and caring for lepers. These are not a specific model for us, but ones that we can begin to get help from as we look at the changes needed in our society to begin to build a new one.

Gandhi was disappointed that the Congress Party did not take his constructive program and move forward with it into self reliance and beyond. In India some changes have been made, some are still being made. One example (of many) in India of constructive program involved getting clean water and village sanitation to hill tribes. The government spent decades trying to bring in high technology solutions that didn't work. But when the women of the area, who were disempowered and had been hauling water for years, began to organize around their own issues and gain strength, they eventually bought a pump. The pump allowed them to create community industries, and each transformation built on the next.

When we talk about the "shell of the old" in the U.S., we can see with Hurricane Katrina that we are one hurricane away from being a third world country. The structure is not working for people. It is a façade that is only working for the people at the top. The poverty,

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RESOURCES

Fixed!

If, during the past year, you purchased the Practical #3 pamphlet on "Resisting Collection" from NWTRCC you may find that the text does not flow properly. Somehow we mixed up two different versions in a print run last year. It is now corrected and updated, and new copies are available. We can replace your old one, or you can download it from the website in either a text or PDF version: www.nwtrcc.org/publications.htm#practical.

WTR Exhibit

Get ready for tax season now! Order the National War Tax Resistance Exhibit and then see the instructions on the opposite page for an idea about setting up an outdoor display. The Exhibit consists of six posters measuring 22" x 34" each, depicting the history of war tax resistance from 400 BCE to 2000, with one panel on current resistance outside the U.S. The posters are mailed in a tube, and purchasers should plan to mount it, such as on foam core, for display.

Introduce people to war tax resistance at demonstrations, fairs, workshops, libraries, schools, shopping centers, or food coops, and then be sure to send photos of your display to NWTRCC.

You can see pictures of each poster on the web at www.nwtrcc.org/exhibit.htm. The set of six posters costs \$30, which includes shipping and handling. Contact the NWTRCC office for more information or to order an Exhibit.



Some of the attendees at the May 2005 Coordinating Committee meeting in Nashville: (clockwise from top) Peter Smith, Karl Meyer, Patrick O'Neil, Robert Randall, Pam Beziat, GlendaRae Hernandez, Bill O'Connell, Rick Bickhart, Katherine O'Donahue, David Waters, Eszter Freeman, Lincoln Rice, and Jim Stockwell (center). Photo by Ruth Benn.

Ideas and Strategies

With the war tax resistance strategy conference just around the corner as this is written, this issue includes a few pieces to add to the brainstorming mix. Joanne Sheehan's presentation on Gandhi's constructive program, Larry Dansinger's description of a WTR resource center, and Marion Bromley's words from 1991 all offer organizing approaches or thoughts. In addition, I am reminded of some of the ideas that come to the NWTRCC office. Usually these are just short notes or quick calls, and it's hard to figure out how to respond, but in light of the conference, I'll list a few of them here. Maybe one of them will strike your fancy. Stay tuned in the next issue for a report on the conference itself!

- A large scale tax rebellion or a mass "tea party" for April 2006.
- Bringing a class action lawsuit of as many war tax resisters as possible into the U.S. court system, and/or have someone who is a "certified conscientious objector" (someone who got out of the military recognized as a CO) bring a case against war taxes in the U.S.
- Bringing a complaint/court case against paying U.S. taxes for war to the International Court.
- Calling for national actions at times of year other than just on Tax Day.
- Surveying progressive circles to get a good count of how many war tax resisters there are (a proposal that includes the survey will come before the conference too).

—Ruth Benn ▼

Coordinating Committee Meetings

Past, Present, and Future

The National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee holds two meetings each year of the Coordinating Committee, where decisions are made about the budget and direction of NWTRCC and the work of the office is reviewed.

Last May the meeting was in Nashville, and we carried only a short report in an earlier issue. A few other things that came up at that meeting were that we will produce a flyer (half-sheet size is recommended) linking spending on the war in Iraq and Afghanistan with war tax resistance; we will try to produce some new Public Service Announcements for radio before the next tax season; on flyers we should use more graphics and fewer words and could make something bookmark size for student outreach. The group talked about fundraising and asking more people who use Working Assets to nominate NWTRCC for funds when WALD sends out the annual ballot, to get more groups to link to the NWTRCC site, and to ask Alternative Funds to include NWTRCC in their redirections.

We also welcomed new members to our Administrative Committee, which helps plan these meetings and oversees the work of NWTRCC between meetings. The Committee members for the coming year are: continuing as full members: Lincoln Rice (WI) and Eszter Freeman (CA); joining as full members: Daniel Woodham (NC) and Susan Balzer (KS). Alice Liu (CA) will be an alternate for one year and then move into a full position. Welcome to them all!

The next Coordinating Committee meeting will be during the Strategy Conference weekend, and in May 2006 we will meet in Seattle, WA. Watch for the date and details on the Seattle meeting in one of the next couple issues! We hope to meet you at one of our weekend gatherings. ▼



Karl Meyer and Pam Beziat (Nashville hosts) performing "Some Enchanted Taxman," written by Karl and enjoyed by Robert Randall, seated. Photo by Ruth Benn.

New England WTR Gatherings

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Over the years they have shared the responsibility for pulling off a weekend get together. Sometimes the schedule is pretty well planned out; other times they've come together and figured it out as they go along. One way or another, it's always an excellent place to find what you need to carry on for another year.

The theme for the 20th Gathering was "Beyond NO! Gandhi's Constructive Campaign & War Tax Resistance." The keynote talk is printed here, and in future issues we may follow-up with more from other panels and small groups that further developed a Gandhian-style strategically planned nonviolent campaign.

Announcements for these fall gatherings appear in this newsletter or on the NWTRCC website. You don't have to be from New England to attend. ▼

Gandhi's Three Elements

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classism, and racism of our society was exposed by the winds and floods of Katrina. Gandhi was working with a huge society of very poor people. As we look at our nation of very poor and very rich people, the things that we identify as underlying our constructive

"...NONVIOLENCE FOR GANDHI was more than just a technique of struggle or a strategy for resisting military aggression; it was intimately related to the wider struggle for social justice, economic self-reliance, and ecological harmony as well as the quest for self-realization. For Gandhi, nonviolent defense required the reconstruction of the personal, social, economic, and political life of each individual. 'We get nothing by asking; we shall have to take what we want, and we need the requisite strength for the effort.' ... For the individual, it meant increased power-from-within through the development of personal identity, self-reliance, and fearlessness. For the community, it meant the creation of a new set of political, social, and economic relations. At the community level, then, the constructive program is that part of the strategy designed to facilitate the development of new social structures that foster political participation, cultural diversity, economic self-reliance, and ecological resilience."

From *The Strategy of Nonviolent Defense* by Robert Burrowes (pages 204-205)

program will be much different. There is also the issues of who defines what the elements of a constructive program would look like in this society? I think it is a continuous group process that needs to include those most in need of a new society, and those most interested in building one. That is our challenge.

Editor's note: In a future issue we will present some of the examples of elements of

constructive program, and some programs themselves, that the group identified during the rest of the weekend.

Joanne Sheehan works with War Resisters League New England and is the Chair of War Resisters' International through which she has traveled to India twice. She has not paid taxes for war in her lifetime. ▼

A Sense of Freedom

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people to do something. And I certainly have learned that except in a general way of helping to put tax resistance into the literature and speech and consciousness of anti-war people, I cannot persuade other pacifists, who care as much about the suffering of warfare as I do, to stop paying for what they abhor. *Mostly* I remember that.

But sometimes, when I see what can happen in, for example, Czechoslovakia, when people get in the streets and refuse to cease their clamor, and bring about some important changes in their political life, a little hope flickers in the back of my eyes somewhere about what could happen if people really knew they could prevent war. They could stop the murderous adventures of the U.S. in such places as Grenada, Panama, and the Persian Gulf. They could cause the energy, the brains, the national resources of the country to be used to meet the basic needs of the poor, the cities, education, food, sensible health care, housing. They could force the empire to withdraw its tentacles from those bases all over the world. ...stop arming the world in the prof-

itable grossest of all national products.

Maybe that represents an unrealistic goal. As I said, mostly I don't feel it's my responsibility to cause that to happen. I'm not suggesting anyone else should take responsibility for that. All I'm trying to do is recognize where we are. Or, as they say these days, "where we are at."

I don't want to leave the impression that a change of national leadership, such as was accomplished in Czechoslovakia, is the kind of revolution I'm interested in. When I happen to be in a group that is singing, "All we are saying is give peace a chance," I feel I'm being somewhat hypocritical. I want much more than the absence of warfare. I want a much different society from that I happen to be living in. People often ask why I don't have such-and-such a bumper sticker on our car. I explain that if I were honest I would have to have the car covered with stickers, windows and all. I'm not an unhappy individual. But I'm far from satisfied.

However, our theme this weekend is taxes for war. Maybe if we can't figure out how to start a massive rebellion against taxes for war, the next best thing is to figure out why we have not been joined by a least a few hun-

dred thousand people who have decided to stop paying those taxes. How come we took that matter of paying for war seriously enough to take some action, and so few of our comrades have done so? Are we really different? Do we care less, somehow, for clothes, or cars, or fancy homes, and so on? What makes the difference between a refuser and a conscientious serious person who continues to pay?

One thing I'm clear about is that I'm not "into" sacrifice. It seems to me the assumption that I should take some punishment onto myself to make amends for the evils of society is somehow a denial of one of my deepest convictions—the absolute equality of all human beings. It seems to me to demean others to feel I'm so morally superior I have to serve as the sacrificial lamb. Any steps I've taken against the practices that are so obviously evil seem to me to be more from my desire to be free. I know my resisting taxes hasn't had a fig's worth of significance in changing anything. I look upon it as my feeling a little more free because of that step. And I know for sure that I haven't made any sacrifices. I only wish I could convey that sense of freedom to others. ▼

A Sense of Freedom

A Talk by Marion Bromley

Marion Bromley (1913-1996) was working for the Fellowship of Reconciliation in the 1940s when she met Ernest Bromley, who was circulating a statement about refusing to pay for war. She and Ernest married not too long after that and made their way to Cincinnati, Ohio, where they lived the rest of their lives. They are two of the founders of the modern day war tax resistance movement. Marion gave the keynote address at the 1991 New England War Tax Resistance Gathering in Voluntown, Connecticut. The following thoughts on WTR organizing made up about the last third of her talk, originally called "80,000 Days of War Tax Resistance."

For each of us, I feel sure, refusing to pay taxes is a very personal decision. similar to refusing military service. In the beginning, of course, I thought this was such a simple, clear way to oppose the devilish war system, that it ought not be hard to let people know how it could be done. One of the songs we used to sing was "If two and two and 50 make a million, we'll see that day come round." And the logic of the potential of tax refusal to stop war is sound, I still believe. Maybe I shouldn't think of that as a naive dream and still be focusing on ways to bring that day when they couldn't have a war because nobody would pay for it.

In the past in Cincinnati we've had some dandy demonstrations on tax day, with original, creative skits on Fountain Plaza. We've picketed at the IRS on various occasions, always showed up to leaflet the dilatory taxpayers whose cars were lined up in the blocks around the Post Office every year, so anxious about getting their return in the mail before midnight.

The three-year struggle with the IRS over the Gano Peacemakers property, starting in 1972 with their assessments so obviously based on a crooked audit, gave all of us an opportunity to expose in that specific example their tactics and the way the Nixon administration had manipulated the IRS to attack its political enemies. The seizure of the house in 1975 brought about an increase in support activity, in Cincinnati and in Washington, which resulted in their reversing the sale at auction and removing their signs from our front and back doors. A similar campaign in Western Massachusetts over the seizing of two houses ... received tremendous support from

organized tax resisters and favorable national attention.

In the 1980's we had several fine workshops in Cincinnati. We had good resource people come in to help our small local contingent who had been solid refusers for years. We had good process, people shared their concern about refusing and about continuing to pay; suggestions were available about ways to avoid withholding, and good literature was distributed. Good people came to the workshops and appreciated them.

But our group of tax refusers attending regular meetings did not increase; it decreased during the next few years. It happened that some people felt they had to stop refusing because of factors in their personal lives; some of our strong pillars moved from the area; and we no longer had a group.

Now sometime in the last 20 years or so I've stopped feeling it was my responsibility to save the world. I don't feel I have failed my



Maurice McCrackin listening to Marion Bromley's talk at the 1991 New England gathering. Photo by Ed Hedemann.

life's mission because people still go on paying for war. Better people than I am go on paying for war. Most of the time I know I am responsible for myself, not for the actions of others. I've done some "organizing," getting other people to meet and plan some event; I prefer not being in the role of urging other
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