

National
War Tax
Resistance
Coordinating
Committee



of **RESISTANCE**
Taxes for Peace
NOT WAR

Pies, Graphs, and Income Taxes

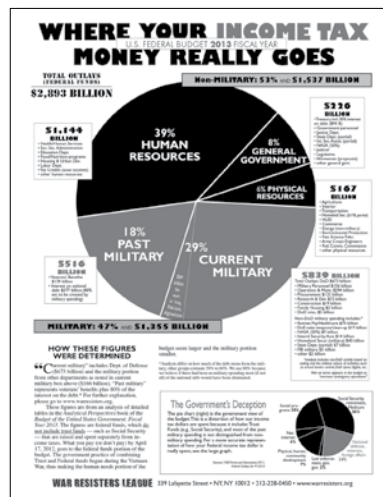
By Ruth Benn and Ed Hedemann

President Obama is about to release his budget proposal for fiscal year 2014, which begins October 1, 2013. The military budget was in the news at the end of December because the President added his signature to the \$663 billion Pentagon budget that Congress wrangled over for months and finally passed in December for the fiscal year that began October 1, 2012.

Budgets might make us yawn, but the analysis and presentation is important in the work that we do. Most of you hand out flyers during tax season, and some are confused by the various figures used by different groups. As the researchers and authors (Ed is the originator) of the War Resisters League pie chart, this topic is of particular concern to us.

NWTRCC sends out and sells the War Resisters League (WRL) pie chart and has done so for almost three decades for various reasons, including:

- The WRL pie chart is designed to tell you what its title suggests, "Where Your Income Tax Money Really Goes." War tax resisters have had a primary concern about how much of their income tax – as calculated on the 1040 form – goes to war, and the pie chart endeavors to answer that question.
- The WRL pie chart emphasis is not on the full unified budget of the U.S., which usually includes Social Security and other trust fund monies. The trust funds are still collected separately ("FICA" on your paycheck is the social security tax) and are intended to cover payments for specific purposes – even if the actual dollars are borrowed for general spending or invested in treasury bonds, which help to pay for war. The trust fund may not be pure, but the amount collected is tallied on the books to cover trust fund defined expenses that do not include military spending.
- WRL includes veterans' benefits in military spending. Some other groups list veterans' benefits separately, more like a human services expense. The WRL pie chart reflects those expenses as a direct cost of war, training for war, preparing for war, or supporting war.



The new flyer will be out in late February 2013.

Survey Summary

This is a preliminary look at the responses to the Information Survey that was mailed to 900 people on our list and in the last newsletter, emailed to our listserve and e-list (500), and linked on our Facebook page.

Responses came from 202 people, more men than women and a few who noted "trans," "gay," and 1 "Polymorphous perverse." The vast majority are Caucasian with a smattering of responses from people who identify as Asian, African-American, Hispanic, or American Indian. Other comments as to ethnicity include "human" and "Never fill this kind of question out because it is myth." Respondents come from at least 35 states (matching where war tax resistance (WTR) has been most active) plus Switzerland, Panama and Kenya. About 75% are over age 51 with 7% in the 20-30 age group.

One-third have been in a WTR group, but many report that either they or the group are not very active. Nearly 70% have known NWTRCC for more than 10 years, and we also separated out the 36 people who met NWTRCC more recently to see if their responses differed from the total response. Where that was the case it will be noted.

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More Than a Paycheck 30th Anniversary Issue

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More Than a Paycheck: Refusing to Pay for War 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 are \$15 per year.

NWTRCC

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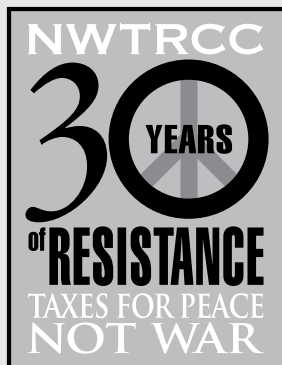
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Counseling Notes

Taxable Income Levels

NWTRCC presents the standard deductions and personal exemption chart as a guide for people who choose to live below the taxable income. To figure out how much you can earn in 2013 before owing income taxes, identify your category and multiply the personal exemption by the number of dependents you can claim, including yourself, then add your standard deduction. For example, if you are married and filing jointly, with two children, you would add \$15,600 (\$3,900 x 4) to \$12,200, equaling a taxable level of \$27,800. Below this amount your family would owe no income taxes for the year, and you probably do not need to file. If filing is a concern, read the instructions on the 1040 form or at irs.gov to doublecheck on filing requirements. Self-employed persons would probably owe Social Security taxes even at these low income levels, so consider your options around paying or not paying those taxes. (We still mean to do an article on this topic soon.)

2013 IRS Deductions and Exemptions

Category	Standard Deduction	Personal Exemption
Single	\$6,100	\$3,900
Married, filing jointly	\$12,200	\$3,900
Married, filing separately	\$6,100	\$3,900
Head of household	\$8,950	\$3,900

An additional \$1,200 standard deduction may be claimed by a married taxpayer who is at least 65 years old or blind. If the taxpayer is single, the additional standard deduction amount is \$1,500.

You may be able to make significantly more than the amounts indicated above and owe no taxes. NWTRCC's Practical #5, "Low Income/ Simple Living as War Tax Resistance" (\$1 from the NWTRCC office), includes information on legal ways to reduce taxable income and owe no federal income taxes. We suggest that nonfilers fill out the forms and keep their receipts for reference in case their circumstances change or the IRS comes calling.

Starting a New Job?

The NWTRCC office gets regular calls from individuals who are starting a new job and have to fill out the W-4 form. We encourage all those with questions to read our Practical #1, "Controlling Federal Income Tax Withholding." It's free to read on our website or 75¢ from the office and covers all the whys, hows, and legal risks of this aspect of war tax resistance. We also refer people to Publication 15 on the IRS website, irs.gov. The "Wage Bracket" tables listed in the index help you see the level of withholding for your situation, such as "Single, weekly payroll," and other such categories. The tables are set up by wage levels down the left side and number of withholding allowances (*allowances* not "exemptions")

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Many Thanks

To everyone who has given a contribution in December and January. Your extra generosity in response to our 30th anniversary appeals is much appreciated.

And, thanks to these affiliates for their recent dues payments:

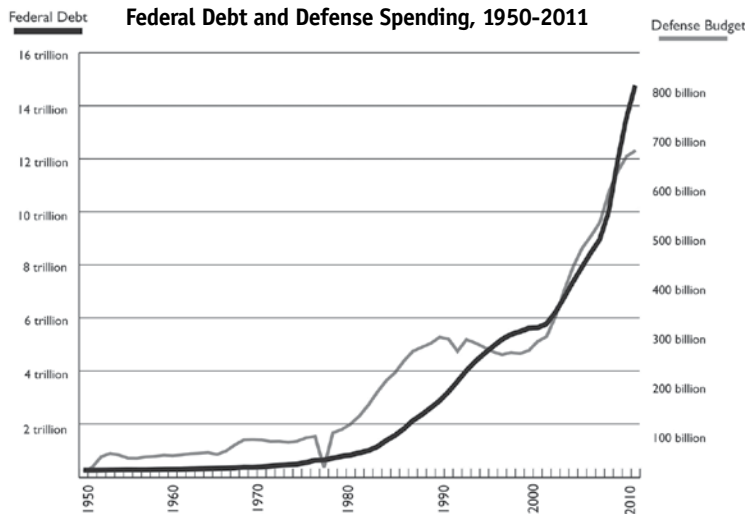
St. Lawrence House, Kansas City
Milwaukee War Tax Resistance
War Resisters League National

Network Updates

The latest Network List of Affiliates, Area Contacts, Counselors, and Alternative Funds is on the NWTRCC website, nwtrcc.org/contacts_counselors.php. You may also request a printed list by mail from the NWTRCC office.

Please let us know if you are interested in being a contact on our network list. We could use area contacts in Nebraska, Delaware, and Florida – and Affiliates from any region! Information about the various ways to be active with NWTRCC is on our website under the "Who We Are" tab. Click on "Join Us." Or contact the NWTRCC office at nwtrcc@nwtrcc.org or **1-800-269-7464**.

- WRL includes a large chunk of interest on the federal debt in past military spending. WRL applies 80% of the interest to war spending and the other 20% is in the General Government slice, reasoning that if there were no wars or military spending, there would be little debt.



Based on chart in Dave Johnson's 2010 blog, "Dear Deficit Commission, It's Not Hard," Campaign for America's Future. Data from Federal Budget Historical Tables, Office of Management and Budget.

- WRL created its pie chart for activists to help them take action and give them information to respond to the government budget presentations that leaves out the military spending in many agencies. These calculations may vary among groups also.

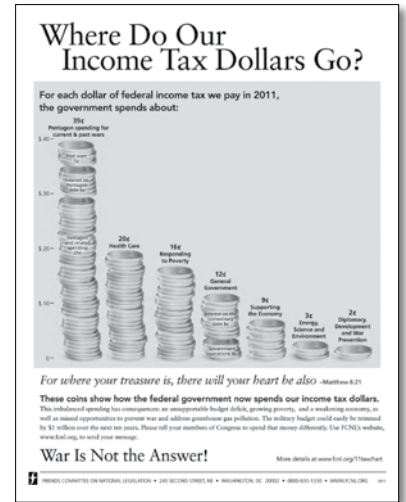


Colorado Springs activists with AFSC's "strip banner." Photo by Donna Johnson.

- Comparing the WRL pie chart to, for example, AFSC's "strip" flyer and banner that show a much higher percentage of military spending is a current source of confusion. The AFSC presentation is based on *discretionary* spending, which does not include mandatory spending such as interest on the debt (partly past wars expenses) or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which are part of where your income taxes go. There is nothing wrong with this budget breakdown, it is just not the same as "how an income tax dollar is spent." Because Congress has more control each year over discretionary spending, this presentation is particularly focused on for lobbying. AFSC has a good explanation at oneminuteforpeace.org/budget.

- National Priorities Project (NPP) has excellent explanations of all these budget details on its website, nationalpriorities.org. They have quick links right at the top of their homepage to budget breakdowns for discretionary spending, mandatory spending, total federal spending, where your taxes go, along with a "Budget Basics" tab. The WRL pie and NPP's income tax spending totals differ for some of the reasons mentioned above.

- Friends Committee on National Legislation (fcnl.org) produces a neat "pile of coins" flyer to show where income taxes go. One key difference between their analysis and that of WRL's is that FCNL uses the previous year's spending; WRL presents an analysis of the proposed budget for the coming fiscal year, the budget that is in the news during tax season. In either case, since the federal fiscal year begins in October and the tax year is on the calendar year, tax filing crosses federal fiscal years.



- Colorado war tax resister Gary Erb has concerns (see page 5) about NWTRCC using WRL's pie chart in part because it does not show the entire debt, we see that as a different presentation than one on income taxes. New outreach materials are always welcome.

Why Don't We All Get Together?

Is there a good answer to this? Tradition? Habit? Individual and organizational preferences? Outreach to pie chart geeks?

WRL began presenting its pie chart analysis of the federal budget in 1977 and created the first street flyer in 1984, specifically to provide the percentage information to war tax resisters. Many in our network use this to decide how much they are going to refuse. WRL tries to get the flyer out as fast as possible before tax day to serve the war tax resisting, refusing, and protesting community. Overall it remains popular. It's the most viewed page on the WRL website after the homepage. It pops up on bulletin boards and in blogs, is requested for use in books, shows up in newsletters around the country, and generates plenty of pro and con response.

Unless there is mass outcry in our network, NWTRCC will continue to carry the WRL pie chart flyer and let people know about the others. But we and many others in NWTRCC are always willing to help produce new resources that will be useful to WTR activists. ●

Ruth Benn is the NWTRCC Coordinator. Ed Hedemann is a longtime WTR and NWTRCC activist. Both are former staff members of War Resisters League.

Book Review

Feeling Light Within, I Walk: Tales, Adventures and Reflections of a Quaker Activist

By Peg Morton, Cedar Row Press (2013), 351 pages

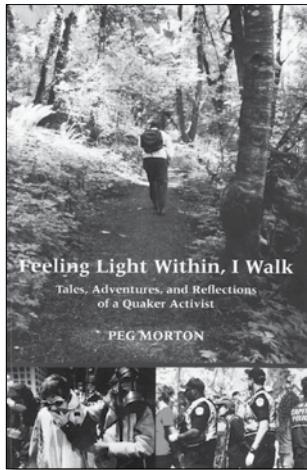
Reviewed by Mary Loehr

One of my greatest values as an activist is to look at my own privilege and come to terms with it. What should I as a white, well-educated, upper middle-class woman do in this world of injustice, oppression, and violence? I have concluded that I need to constantly be aware of it and try as best as possible to use that privilege towards the work for justice. Not climb the social and privilege ladder but instead be true to my interpretation of the Christian gospels. Dave Dellinger's book title *From Yale to Jail* sums it up well.

Peg Morton, an 82-year-old war tax resister and lifelong social justice activist, has reached a similar conclusion. To the good fortune of the rest of us, she has taken the time to write her memoir. What a rich life she has led! *Feeling Light Within, I Walk* details Peg's years of following her inner light and where it led her.

I love learning about how people get "from here to there." In this case, Peg shows how she found the Quakers at age 17, which in turn led her to war tax resistance; to many Latin America solidarity trips; to the School of the Americas and an arrest and jail time; to several walks in solidarity with native peoples; and to fasting at the Oregon State house asking for funding for disabled people. As she says in her preface, it was all done not alone but in community. She continually opened her heart to the joys and sorrows of others.

On one solidarity trip – in Chiapas, Mexico – she met Bishop Samuel Ruiz, a follower of Liberation Theology and much loved by indigenous people in Mexico. She asked him "How do you reconcile yourself as you support and advocate for oppressed peoples, with the use of violence?" He answered that the worst violence is the violence of poverty and its roots in the economic policies of the privileged, in capitalism. "This led me into deep reflection about my own complicit role in this system," she writes.



Peg Morton speaking at a NWTRCC gathering in 2008. Photo by Ruth Benn.

Peg returns to this theme over and over in her book. I wish I could quote all the great insights that she came to on the spiritual journey of her life. All I can say is thank you, Peg, for taking the time to sit down and write your memoir. It will inspire the rest of us to stay on the path.

Mary Loehr is an activist in Ithaca, NY, and served as NWTRCC Coordinator from 1999-2003.

Cultivating Peace

By Wendie Stauffer

30 years! Oh to have reached that sweet spot as a society where NWTRCC's mission has been fulfilled and future generations have to dig in the archives to read about decades gone by when citizens felt they had no choice but to pay taxes, even if they knew doing so included paying for war.

As NWTRCC attendees celebrated 30 years of activities during the Gathering in Colorado Springs last November, numerous accomplishments were highlighted. We acknowledged the dedication, perseverance, blood, sweat and tears of pioneers who built the foundation on which we are fortunate to rely on today.

And then, all heads and hearts were asked to look forward. Where do we go from here? And NWTRCC is not the only one asking that question. Reading the year end mailings from the likes of Voices for Creative Nonviolence, American Friends Service Committee, Citizen Soldier, Iraq Veterans Against the War, War Resisters League, and Occupy, it would appear there's no end in sight for the ongoing struggles all are committed to.

Aware that where our thoughts go our energy follows, I drove away from the Gathering asking myself, if we're focusing on "resistance" are we attracting more situations into our lives that turn the volume up on the need for resistance? It's a challenge not to be overwhelmed by the magnitude of "issues" out there for which resistance seems to be the only solution.

Fortunately, there is ground breaking work being done in many collaborative peace efforts, including James O'Dea's recent release *Cultivating Peace: Becoming a 21st – Century Peace Ambassador*. In Chapter I James indicates "we are witnessing a tidal shift in consciousness" and offers key transformations to define the new peace movement including:

"We are moving from being locked into outrage at war and violence, or being defined as a protest movement, to creating a culture of peace from the ground up and the inside out.

"We are moving from a consciousness that is problem-centered to one that is solution centered. This has a radical impact on how we organize. We are informed by our vision, and our approach is not always defined by the tactics or stance of those we associate with the source of the problem.

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Tax Resistance Ideas and Actions

"We are moving from merely critiquing the absence of humanity in others to honing our own capacity for compassionate action, deep empathy, and authentic forgiveness."

Junot Díaz illustrated in the segment "Rewriting the Story of America" on Bill Moyers (billmoyers.com, December 28) what would appear to be the challenge NWTRCC faces: rewriting the story of compassionate peace loving beings. Who knows, maybe James O'Dea or Junot Díaz would meet with NWTRCC activists to brainstorm goals and objectives that render its mission obsolete sooner than later.

Wendie Stauffer lives in Colorado. After a car wreck in 1997, 5 years of rehab . . . aka unemployment, in 2002 Wendie formalized 20 years of skills in Reflexology by joining her partner, Don Rabbit Skonieczka, LAc at his holistic health clinic. In 2003, during the buildup to yet another war, she formalized her long held beliefs in peace and non-violence by joining the ranks of War Resisters and War Tax Resisters.

Another Look

By Gary Erb

Take another look at WRL's pie chart flyer "Where Your Income Tax Money Really Goes." Of the Current Military portion only 10% is for the wars in Iraq, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Since 2001 base military expenditure has multiplied. Having expanded their global presence, especially in Africa and Asia, the Pentagon has bases in 120 countries, up from 80 during the cold War.

Servicing 80% of the national debt is \$377 billion. Therefore, servicing 100% of the debt is 16% of the pie. This portion needs

room to grow, but the amount of the debt, almost twice the size of the pie, is not given, and neither is the current deficit.

For 30 years we have tailored our message for people who have given their lives to Pacifism. Consequently our movement has not grown.

Meanwhile, the young in the encampments, in the streets, and locked down in The Hole are there because they are victims of predatory lending without having signed the mortgage. But they do not understand that 40 years of investing in military dominance required disinvestment in youth, and military spending has been Wall Street's safety net since 1950. They do not understand that surveillance, intimidation, demonization, "turtle cop" brutality, the warrantless burst ins, seizures, and arrests without *habeus corpus* are because global full spectrum dominance includes the USA.

WRL and NWTRCC do not have to begin by converting the whole generation to tax resisting Pacifism. Occupy Wall Street has had an enormous impact by taking inequality from unmentionable to unignorable without converting a whole generation to military Socialism.

If not us, Who? If not now, When? ●

Gary Erb is active with the Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center and Boulder War Tax Information Project.



Gary Erb, November 2012.
Photo by Ruth Benn.

Counseling Notes

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across the top. The row shows how much tax it taken out with that many allowances (up to 10 on these charts). We also have a short flyer on this topic at nwtrcc.org/PDFs/w4flyer2012.pdf or free by mail.

Phone Tax Successes 1 & 2

#1) Larry Dansinger in Maine spotted an interesting note on the Maine Public Advocate's website about the charges on phone bills. Next to "Federal Excise Tax" they added, "3% (still collecting for the Spanish American War)." Perhaps phone tax resisters had a wider impact over the decades than we realized! You can see the note at maine.gov/meopa/utilities/telephone/anatomy_bill.html.

#2) Brian Watson emailed about phone tax problems with Century Link. They were adding up the tax and carrying it as past due and charging a \$5 per month fee. Other complaints

have come in about this company, so we suggested trying to contact the legal office or someone higher up in the company, making sure they are aware of the IRS regulation (§49.4291-1, title 26; 1996). Brian wrote a letter to the Executive Offices and also had a lawyer send a letter. He got a call back from the Executive Office, and they worked out a deal that Brian's future resistance letters would be sent to the Century Link Client Service Center rather than with his bill. Century Link will refund \$20 and show a credit for the resisted tax. Brian says he was probably owed a bit more, but "I'm pleased with how this worked out. It pays to dig deeper and go to the top. The letter from my attorney didn't hurt, either, but I think it was primarily my own persistence that got me this result."

If you want detailed contact information for Century Link, contact the NWTRCC office. ●

Save the Dates

War Tax Resistance Gathering

May 3–5 (or 6), 2013 · Asheville, NC

NWTRCC will meet in North Carolina the first weekend in May. We might add a day if enough people want to stay over for a WTR Counselor's Training. If you are interested, call or email the office asap, and we'll begin to plan for the training. If you expect your travel to involve flying, cheaper fares may be found flying to Charlotte or Greenville, SC, and we will arrange group transport to Asheville. A mailing with more details will go out late February, or call for a brochure or watch the NWTRCC website.

Call for Nominees

NWTRCC's Administrative Committee (AdComm) seeks two new members to give oversight to day-to-day business operations and to plan for the two meetings held each November and May. New members will be selected from nominees at the May 2013 Coordinating Committee meeting. If selected, members serve as alternates for one year and full members for two years. Full members have travel paid to the meetings. Qualifications include an



An Asheville welcome! Photo courtesy of Clare Hanrahan.

interest in being part of NWTRCC's decision-making structure and a desire to help promote war tax resistance. Diversity considerations (geographic, gender, ethnic, etc.) are involved in selecting new members. Self nominations are welcome, and affiliate groups should make a special effort to offer nominations. Contact NWTRCC for more information. Nominees will receive a letter with further details. Deadline for nominations is March 12, 2013. ●

INTERNATIONAL

War Taxes Paid Under Protest

On January 17, staff and supporters of War Resisters' International in London held a protest at the HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) building as they agreed to pay over five years of withheld taxes. Since 2007, the organization has been withholding a proportion of PAYE as a form of protest against Britain's military spending and policies, including cooperation with criminal programs such as "rendition" of suspects, military intervention, and the development and manufacture of drones for long-distance assassination. Annually about 10% of the UK's tax goes to fund war and preparations for war – ranking the UK fourth in military expenditure compared with other countries.

"As an organization employing pacifists and working for the right to conscientious objection to militarism, the WRI Executive Committee has tried to grant our employees the option to object to war taxes," WRI chairperson Howard Clark explained. WRI has been threatened with legal action various times, and the "pay under protest" action was held to stop bailiffs contracted by HMRC from entering WRI's offices and confiscating computers, printers and other equipment. Their cash payment was not accepted, and staff had to proceed to a different office to hand over a check. They are renewing their resistance with the next payroll.

For more information and photos see wri-irg.org. ●

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money, or take my paycheck from my Church. I make no accommodation for the IRS – meaning I have not changed my lifestyle or avoided having a bank account or anything. I live my life, they do whatever they feel they must do. I know they are taking what I withhold plus interest and penalty, and I do not give that reality much attention or energy.

Do you have comments about how this form of resistance fits in the wider peace movement? Do you think of a "war tax resistance movement" or mostly the personal resistance?

I feel strength from the war tax resistance movement – and I think we are a quiet, strong, powerful movement. But I engage in this witness mainly so I can live with myself. Some people call this witness "a silent scream," but I find that it quietly informs and strengthens all my other work for justice and peace. Plus in my own mind it makes me credible

when I say I do not believe in war, will always stand against war, and will not pay for war.

Over the years, and it has now been over 30 years, I find that my WTR is simply a quiet part of my identity. It is like my ongoing activism around LGBT issues as an ally, it is like my continuing work to dismantle racism, it is like my ongoing work to stop global warming – these things are all part of who I am. I am grateful to the many, many brave war tax resisters, especially Wally and Juanita Nelson, who went before me and showed me the way and gave me courage. I am very grateful to those who have been harassed far more than I have and have been strong and brave and clear over many years. I believe WTR is an important, quiet, powerful witness. And I am proud to be among all those nationwide who say no to taxes for war – in whatever fashion they choose – and "choose life" as it says in the Hebrew Scriptures! ●

How you connect to NWTRCC

Over half of respondents read the newsletter or contribute money (thanks!). Nearly half are on the e-list, look at the website, and use resources (especially brochures, Practicals 1-5, counseling, and *Death and Taxes*). Only 13% of the newer group has attended a NWTRCC gathering. A few commented about not knowing of the resources or being overwhelmed by information they receive.

Do you find NWTRCC welcoming?

About 25% left this blank. Of respondents, 90% said yes, but more interesting are the comments, including:

"...the nature of a small national group that rarely meets in your region is that it's hard to be connected in person..."

"I think more basic information needs to be available. War Tax Resisting is a big step."

"Could encourage people to call for personal counseling – phones are more personal than computers or literature."

"It feels like you have to be a 'voluntary poverty' or involuntary poverty person to belong 100%."

"I often feel oppressed by the certitude of people of conscience and the reliance on tired slogans."

A few others indicated that when they needed help it did not materialize or no one responded to their question.

NWTRCC's mission and ideal mission were fill-ins and have yet to be analyzed. Most popular words: "educate" and "support" followed by "promote," "provide," "help," "inform," "encourage"

About half who responded about the "ideal" mission referred to their statement above. A range of other responses included: "keep the idea alive"; "help pass the peace tax fund bill"; "end all war"; "somehow get the masses on board!"; "revolution"; "convince enough people to practice WTR to get the feds afraid"; and "Oh ack – I have no idea. Ask someone smart."

Groups people are active in

Everything from anarchism, ACLU, Adbusters and Africa to Witness Against Torture, worker's rights, wealth redistribution, watershed protection. Most mentioned were peace groups (local and beyond), antinuclear (power and weapons), churches and Quaker meetings, environmental issues/climate change. The full list is useful in terms of informing our outreach and making alliances.

Organizational Penny Poll (ranked with points)

There was strong support for NWTRCC to do "just what it is doing now", but 58% of the points covered a range of other ideas. "A focused campaign to connect WTR with other issues" was first, but not by much. Newer people slightly favored "Strengthen ties to alternative economy communities." Although "a strategy session" got fewer points, it may be needed to reconcile the responses

Outreach methods

"More activity on social media" received the most votes, followed by speaking tours, school presentations, starting groups on college campuses. Each of these possibilities needs your help. Link to our website, post something about WTR on Facebook, follow us on Twitter (click on the links on our homepage), invite a speaker to your community or campus, etc. Your ideas and help are welcome!

"Reinvigorate local groups" was also popular and is one of our priorities

for 2013. At our November meeting we said we would focus on a couple groups and try to create a model that will work elsewhere.

Primary reason to resist war taxes

- 1) "To Noncooperate with violence and war" – well above the rest
- 2) "To work to change the US culture of war"

This was the same order with newer people. "Noncooperate" seems to resonate.

How you engage in WTR

Some use a mix of methods, so responses were a little confusing and overlapping. About 25% of everyone have done telephone tax, but only 3% of the newer people. Low income and using legal means to lower taxable income were checked by another 25%, followed closely by "file and refuse" some or all of amount due. 40% redirect taxes, and 10% of respondents send protest letters but don't resist.

How do you publicize your WTR?

80% talk with family, friends, co-workers; 40% signed onto Boycott website (20% of newer), attend protests, or write letters ; 32% allow name to be used in advertising; 18% mention WTR on social media

Refusal and Collection

About half have resisted for more than 20 years, and 25% have refused more than \$10,000. Another 25% don't know how much they've refused, plus another bunch who don't track their refusal. Lots more have resisted something from \$1 to \$10,000.

Of those who refused some amount, 35% said "none" has been collected, and 25% said very little. 19% said "all," and 11% said "about half." 4% are in an ongoing collection.

Where do you get your news? (most mentioned)

Radio, TV, or online: NPR, Democracy Now, MSNBC

Magazines: *Progressive*, *Nation*

Alternative online news sites: Common Dreams, Truthout

New people were more likely than all respondents to get news from email forwards, social media, and news websites; many fewer of them checked daily papers and TV. Many outlets mentioned will be useful as we look at outreach and advertising.

Comments

95 people wrote additional comments with a strong trend for more outreach, especially "Get younger people involved." We have to study comments further (and reply to those with specific questions), but a few other entries:

"Ramp up. Connect to passion of Occupy and climate change activists. Also Move Your Money groups."

"Somehow combining with other peace groups to increase impact."

"The organization's name and acronym are liabilities!"

"Hold workshops and lectures to help people understand war tax resistance. Do this in every city utilizing libraries and other public spaces."

"We must review our message, and strategy in light of current circumstance. We are stuck in the 1970s."

"Make a serious (?) effort at humor. There's fun in this game!"

Thanks so much to everyone who responded. Please contact the NWTRCC office at nwtrcc@nwtrcc.org or **800-269-7464** if you are especially interested in surveys would like to help analyze responses or design future, shorter surveys online. ●

A Part of My Identity

Q&A with Rev. Andrea Ayvazian

MTAP: Tell us a little about yourself.

Andrea: When asked about who I am, how to introduce myself, I fumble around and use some or all of these words – I am the proud mother of Sasha Klare-Ayvazian (now 24); I am a woman of faith, a long-time activist for peace, social justice, environmental sanity, and an anti-racist world; I am an ordained pastor in the United Church of Christ, a former Quaker, a singer, songwriter and poet. And I am the life partner and long-time fan of Michael Klare, who I admire enormously (Michael is Professor of Peace and World Security Studies at Hampshire College, an expert on global resource politics, and the author of many books including, most recently, *The Race For What's Left*). I am currently the pastor of the Haydenville Congregational Church in Western Massachusetts. We are a growing, vibrant, Spirit-filled, gay-affirming, anti-racist, child-centered, justice-seeking, peace-loving, song-filled, ever thankful, stubbornly hopeful beloved community.

How did you first hear about war tax resistance (WTR)?

I first heard about WTR in 1981 when I attended a workshop on tax resistance led by a group of Quakers and held in a local UU Church basement. I had vaguely heard about WTR before then, at Quaker Meeting, but knew very little. The presenter was clear, helpful, specific and inspiring, and I left knowing I would become a resister in 1982 when it was time to pay my federal income taxes. I have been a tax resister since April 1982.



Photo courtesy of Andrea Ayvazian.

How did you first resist?

I began right out of the gate withholding 51% of the federal income taxes I owed which corresponded to the pie chart I got from the War Resisters League that said 51% of our taxes were funneled off to pay for war and the debt on past wars.

How have you dealt with fear of the IRS or the negative consequences of resistance?

For some reason, maybe because of my faith, I have faced very little fear around this decision and all its consequences over the years. I have not been frightened. In fact I have only felt empowered. I have been audited (a few times), had a lien put on my house (a few times), had many paychecks at many jobs levied, had money taken from my bank account (many years), and had the IRS threaten to take my car (but I sold it practically overnight). For some reason, I have approached the threats, seizures and liens with surprising calmness (this is amazing because I am not a calm person!). I used to know the IRS agent assigned to my case by name, and I sent him peace literature, newsletters, and Christmas cards. Now all I get is computer letters, certified mail, and threats. I do not understand why I have not been more frightened over the years. I feel the strength of the witness and loving support from other tax resisters, especially David Hartsough, and Randy Kehler who is my son's Godfather.

How has your style of resistance changed over the years?

My WTR has not changed over the years. I withhold a portion (usually 50%) of what the government believes I owe them every April. I keep a bank account. I earn a salary. They have to find and harass me for the

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