

National
War Tax
Resistance
Coordinating
Committee



of RESISTANCE
Taxes for Peace
NOT WAR

Military and Tax Resisters Meet 14th International Conference

By David Gross

For about thirty years, war tax resisters and peace tax campaigners from around the world have met in biennial international conferences. This year's conference, the fourteenth, was the first in South America, and took place in Bogotá, Colombia, in early February.

The conference brought together activists from Europe and the United States who are working on conscientious objection to military taxation, with activists from Colombia who are working to defend the right to conscientious objection to military service (there is an active military draft in Colombia, conscientious objection has a tenuous legal status, and the military sometimes forms press gangs to kidnap young men and force them to enlist).

The international visitors conducted workshops that guided attendees through the process of creating pithy "statements of conscience," and discussed the tactics of tax resistance and the state of the national peace tax campaigns in their countries.

Local activists designed and implemented a lobbying campaign in which they (with the support of the international visitors) visited representatives of the United Nations, the national Colombian and local Bogotá governments, the Colombian military, and political candidates to press for improvements in the legal protection for conscientious objectors and draftees in Colombia.

We also heard reports from experts on the Colombian situation, including presidential candidate Clara López and former supreme constitutional court justice Carlos Gaviria.

Conscience U.K.

Gayle Kinhead of the group "Conscience" from the United Kingdom reported that her group had brought in an outside marketing consultant to help them refine their message for more effective outreach and recruiting.



Conference participants meet with Clara López, head of the Polo Democratic Party, to ask for her party's support for pending legislation on conscientious objection to military service. NWTRCC's representative David Gross (front row, left) and Clara López next to him are among those pictured. *Photo courtesy of David Gross.*

Tax Resistance and Symbolic Protest

By Julian Forth

This piece was originally posted at partyoftheuncertain.wordpress.com/2013/03/05/tax-resistance.

On Friday, March 1, I attended the monthly session called "Clarification of Thought" at the Dorothy Day Catholic Worker [in Washington, DC]. The chairs were arranged to face one side of this rather humble living room, the setting was intimate, and the people welcoming. That night's event was titled "Taxes for Peace, Not War," a presentation and discussion about tax resistance. The presenter, Jack Payden-Travers*, spoke about the possibilities of tax resistance and the various forms it may take. In paying taxes, one not only pays for roads, schools, and social services, but one also funds and enables a large military machine. By paying taxes one funds hegemonic violence and the proliferation of weaponry (nuclear and otherwise), wars and the preparations for war. Our taxes are the life blood of state-sanctioned operations of violence and domination. For those of us who consider ourselves pacifists, and for any person with any ethical concerns, our direct participation in such operations in the payment

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More Than a Paycheck 30th Anniversary Issue

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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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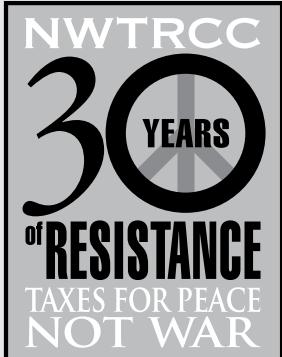
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Many Thanks

To all the individuals who help to keep us going, and to these affiliates for their recent dues payments:

Lehigh Valley (PA) WTR Life Fund

New England War Tax Resistance, Boston

Nonviolence International, Washington, DC

Oregon Community for War Tax Resisters, Portland

Voices for Creative Nonviolence, Chicago

Counseling Notes

Congratulations, Cindy Sheehan

In one of the more remarkable conclusions to a war tax resistance court case, Cindy Sheehan received a letter stating that "after further review the Internal Revenue Service has decided to withdraw the summons served on November 11, 2011." The Department of Justice (DoJ) sent her a follow-up statement that the action is moot and the case is dismissed. Cindy and her lawyer Dennis Cunningham appeared in court in Sacramento on April 19, 2012, in response to a summons from the IRS in their effort to collect for a couple years of her war tax resistance. In a follow up meeting Cindy used the 5th Amendment to respond to IRS questions. After months of uncertainty as to the status of her case (which is generally how these things remain), Cindy received the dismissal letters in February 2013. See the letters at cindysheehanssoapbox.blogspot.com/2013/02/its-over-with-irs-for-now.html.

Now Cindy Sheehan has organized a bicycle Tour de Peace, which began in California on March 16 and is planned to end in "WashedUp, DeCeit" as she says (Washington, DC) on July 3. To join the Tour or see the schedule, go to tourdepeace.org.

Is There A WTR Community?

This question came up at a recent workshop in Philadelphia, and we found there are many answers. Others have raised the same question lately, especially with many aging WTRs with little savings and questions of long-term care. The work of NWTRCC is intended to create some community by WTRs with local group and individual support. Our community is not located in one place, but we do our best to refer people to like-minded folks in their vicinity. However, there are also resisters and refusers who do live together, whether in formal Catholic Worker communities or associated communities like Nashville Greenlands, intentional communities like Twin Oaks in Virginia, land trust communities as in Western Massachusetts, or just banding together as neighbors as some in our network have done. David Gross collected some examples in his Picket Line blog on September 11, 2012, at sniggle.net/TPL. There is definitely serious interest in developing a stronger community of war tax resisters or setting up some kind of mutual aid section on our website. If you have ideas about this, please contact the NTWRCC office, and we will try to connect you with others to get something going.

Social Security Levies

A longtime resister told us recently that a note some time ago in this newsletter said the IRS was dropping the 15% levy on social security payments in 2011. In 2011 the levy did stop on his checks. However, the IRS does still apply the 15% levy, so we had to review this question and the context of our past note. This clarifying information is quoted from the IRS website:

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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 note that "Area Contacts" are not meant to be war tax resistance Counselors. We try to keep those coded with a "C" updated on issues important to WTR counseling. Contacts are intended to be people supportive or interested in war tax resistance, who should know something about the NWTRCC network and be able to provide written materials or make referrals if they are contacted. If you feel that you have not gotten proper information from our network, please let us know and we will endeavor to improve the system. Contact the NWTRCC office at nwtrcc@nwtrcc.org or 1-800-269-7464.

The consultant discovered a particular and identifiable segment of the population—the consultant calls them “transcendents”—who are particularly susceptible to the war tax resistance message. The consultant also found that the term “conscientious objector” was seen as archaic and irrelevant to the younger generation of activists. (Conscience UK has kindly shared their report with NWTRCC.)

Based on this, Conscience has refined its message—from one that focuses on conscientious objection to one that advocates shifting security spending from the military to nonviolent conflict resolution/prevention solutions. They plan to highlight real-world examples of effective nonviolent conflict resolution in a “Meet the Real Peace-keepers” campaign, and to develop a strategy game (tentatively titled “Spend & Defend”) to highlight how using nonviolent conflict prevention/resolution tactics is more effective and less costly than relying on military solutions.

The Norwegian Peace Fund

Activists in Norway are forming a “Norwegian Peace Fund” and are asking taxpayers to donate to the fund. When they reach a critical mass of contributors the fund will gain tax-exempt status and these donations will reduce the contributors’ taxes at their marginal tax rate. (This is typically 28%, according to Fund promoter Øystein Øgaard, which means that, at least from one perspective, objectors can offset their war tax by contributing a little more than three times the amount of the tax to the fund).

The fund is being designed as though it were a government-run peace tax fund accepting tax dollars and then spending them on peace-promoting projects. They hope that by laying the groundwork of creating and running such a fund, they will be better able to convince the government to legalize conscientious objection to military taxation and to absorb the fund as its lawful alternative fund.

Tactical Innovation

I gave a presentation summarizing my research into the variety of tactics that have been used by successful tax resistance campaigns around the world and throughout history.

In this presentation, I argued that a successful tax resistance campaign has to include more than just successful tax resistance: it must also include tactics that support resisters, recruit new resisters, vary resistance techniques, combat the government’s counter measures, and prepare for victory. You can see the slides of this presentation on-line at <http://goo.gl/aYr4z>.

Statements of Conscience

What led you to become a war tax resister? Chances are it was your conscience telling you it was time to take a stand. If you could better articulate what your conscience was telling you—in the form of a pithy “elevator pitch”—you might be more persuasive in helping other people become war tax resisters too.

This was the focus of a series of exercises led by U.S. participants Jens Braun and Dan Jenkins. We discussed the triggers that had led us to our individual stands of conscience; considered the question “what is

conscience?”; listed off those things that help us to listen to the voice of conscience over other noisy distractions; and finally worked to craft our own statements of conscience down to a sentence or two, which we shared with each other.



Sharing statements of conscience.

Lobby Day

Our host organization was Acción Colectiva de Objectoras y Objetores de Conciencia (ACOOC). It is a tribute to their open-mindedness and curiosity that they hosted this conference, since their own urgent focus is on protecting conscripts and conscientious objectors. War tax resistance isn’t really on the radar in Colombia yet, being mostly crowded out by these priorities.

The group hoped that the conference could help them, and other Colombian activists with a similar focus, to learn about war tax resistance. They also wanted to use the opportunity to confer with other Colombian activists about the status of the struggle to legalize conscientious objection to military service, and to capitalize on the gravitas of an “international conference” to add weight to their lobbying efforts.

ACOOC organized a lobby day, in which conferees—locals and international visitors alike—split up into groups to plan and carry out visits to military, governmental, political, and human rights officials in Bogotá who have influence over the treatment of conscientious objectors and draftees in the country. This exercise was well-planned and -executed and seemed likely to be of immediate practical benefit to ACOOC’s work and to those it is trying to protect.

The Next Conference

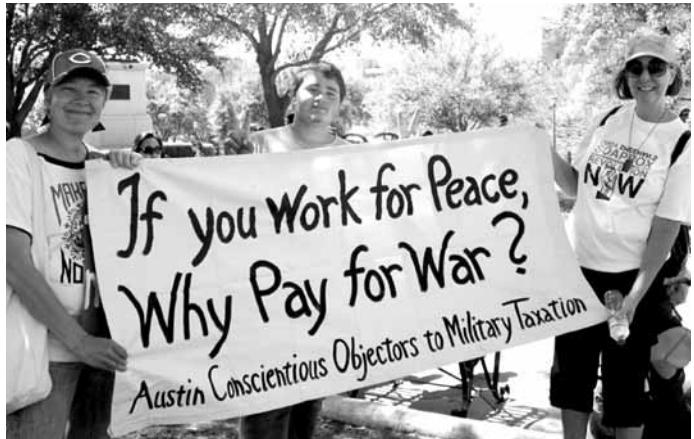
The next international conference will likely be held in Geneva, Switzerland. Because this year’s conference was delayed by a few months, the next one will be in fewer than two years: likely some time in 2014. •

David Gross was NWTRCC’s representative at the conference. He is currently working on a book about the variety of tactics of successful tax resisters and tax resistance campaigns from around the world and throughout history. He blogs on this subject at “The Picket Line,” sniggle.net/TPL.

Tax Resistance Ideas and Actions

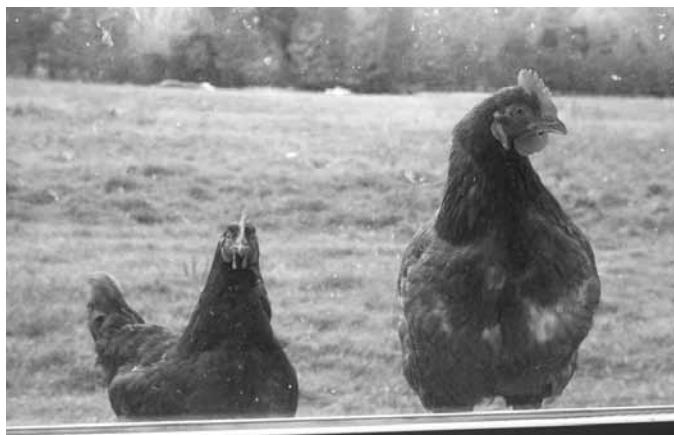
Austin, Texas, war tax resisters marched with their banner in the Musical March for Peace on March 16, held in conjunction with the South by Southwest (SXSW) Music Festival. A local group of musicians organized the march through the entertainment district and Cindy Sheehan (pictured, right with Susan Van Haitsma at left) was invited to speak at the rally at the Capitol building. She spoke about her own war tax resistance as part of her speech. The March included a good contingent of Iraq Veterans Against the War and musicians who led us in New Orleans style as they played "Ain't Gonna Study War No More." The great thing was that SXSW is huge our audience was very big along the March route.

—Susan Van Haitsma



Save the Date! New England Gathering

The 28th Annual New England Regional Gathering of War Tax Resisters and Supporters will be held **September 27-29, 2013**, at Amazing Planet! Farm & Justice Center in Williamsville, Vermont. More details will be included in future issues of *MTAP* or contact Susan Lannen, susanlannen@hotmail.com, (617) 233-7975.



The welcoming committee, Amazing Planet! Farm, Vermont. Photo by Ed Hedemann.

On Military Spending

In response to the article in the previous issue, "Pies, Graphs, and Income Taxes," Joffre Stewart, Chicago, wrote:

You ask, "Why don't we all get together?" on war budgeted figures. Maybe I have been too subtle in pointing out that 1% of a "defense" budget of any size is more than enough to destroy our world (WMD). I've made no secret of it: it has been out there for years. The way that it has been ignored suggests that we don't want to get together on any possible point of statistical agreement. My sociology text, around 1949 said that 2/3 of federal expenditure went to war. I was shocked to see pacifists coming out with such a smaller figure, but thought it didn't matter because we are against war no matter how much is budgeted. The important thing is not

to pay. But the way 1% WMD is ignored, suggests that we don't want to agree. And don't have to, to be state-wreckers & tax resisters.

On the war tax resistance listserve/discussion group, a novel idea was posted by Joe Maizlish, Los Angeles:

A proposal from the "Committee for MORE Fraud in Military Spending"

The Committee originally favored increasing military spending on high-priced weapons, planes and trinkets which would not work as intended, and reduction of spending on weapons which worked. This was on the theory that the people and economies of the U.S. and of the world would be better off if the U.S. government got NOTHING AT ALL in return for its military spending. In view of today's economic crisis, we have modified our proposal. Here is our current proposal:

We propose that the U.S. government continue to pay its military people and the companies which have been doing military production and contracting, and the companies pass the money along to their current sub-contractors and sub-sub-contractors, employees and suppliers, who in turn spend just as they do now (right down to paying the gas stations where they buy the fuel that takes them to work) — all ON CONDITION that everyone keep going to their workplaces BUT NOT PRODUCING the deadly stuff they've been producing, not do the war planning or war fighting or actually consuming of resources (such as fuel) or producing the pollution. Just pass the money along and spend it as they have been. If just that basic part of our proposal was all that was enacted, it would be a big gain.

An optional addition would be that while people are at their workplaces NOT producing or planning or training for war, those who wish could use their time studying what their communities need, how those needs could be satisfied, and how they and their various workplaces might have a role in satisfying those needs. They could even do practical planning for converting to that work. The plans might even be carried out. But none of that is required.

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Tax Resistance Ideas and Actions

If people use the opportunity to do some constructive planning, and if the plans are enacted, our committee will need a new name, for the spending will be neither military nor a fraud. Please be ready with your suggestions.

A final note: The Committee has found that people hearing our proposal think it's a joke. But if it seems strange, we recommend you take a serious look at the current situation — how strange is that?

To which Dana Visalli, Winthrop, Washington, replied with a longer article entitled, "Should the U.S. Military Become a 501(C)3 Charitable Organization?" He describes some of the horrifying consequences of war and continues:

....[T]he U.S. military is a life-destroying organization. First it destroys other cultures, then it destroys its own soldiers, then it destroys the economy of the nation. Almost all of the \$16 trillion national debt owes its etiology to our many wars.

The near-term solution may be to turn the entire military-industrial-complex into a charity, in which all members currently employed continue to show up and to be paid, but do absolutely nothing while at work. The nation and the world would be immeasurably improved in an instant. Afterwards we can slowly dismantle the charitable organization as the old soldiers die off, and then reallocate our resources from life-destroying to life-enhancing endeavors.

To read the latest proposals from creative people like Joe and Dana or comment on or ask about war tax resistance, sign on to the listserve by clicking on the black and red star at nwtrcc.org. The articles above have the subject "Do Nothing Day" and can be read without subscribing. Click on the star and then on "archive." ●

Counseling Notes

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Beginning February 2011, the Federal Payment Levy Program (FPLP) may exclude certain delinquent taxpayers who receive social security payments if their income falls at or below certain established levels, based on the Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines."

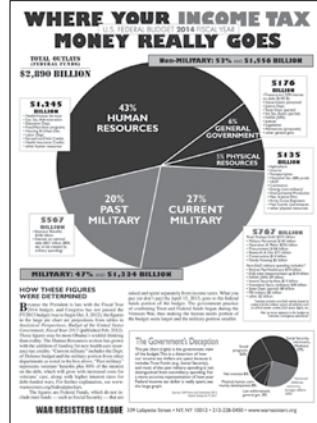
The HHS guideline level begins at \$11,490 for a single person. Note the word "may," indicating the IRS can make exceptions. The ins and outs of IRS collection methods are clearer on paper than in practice, but we are always happy to hear that a levy has been lifted whether for this reason or some random click of a key on an IRS computer.

Source: irs.gov/Individuals/Social-Security-Benefits-Eligible-for-the-Federal-Payment-Levy-Program ●

Resources

Ready for Tax Day?

- The War Resisters League Pie Chart flyer is enclosed in this issue. Order 200 or fewer for 10 cents each from NWTRCC. For larger orders see warresisters.org or call WRL at 212-228-0450.



- **Death and Taxes** DVD, 30 minutes. Sliding scale, \$10-\$20 each postpaid.
- **"Thoreau and his Heirs: The History and Legacy of Thoreau's Civil Disobedience."** Teaching Kit, \$30 postpaid. (Includes DVD, Thoreau's essay, questions for students, and select list of historic civil disobedience actions; see it online at nwtrcc.org/thoreau.php)
- Brochures, 20 cents each: "Why and How to Refuse to Pay for War"; "Why Isn't Everyone Who's For Peace A War Tax Resister? Answers to Common Questions"; "Refusing the Federal Telephone Tax"; "Are You Praying for Peace But Still Paying for War? A Christian Perspective"
- Book: **War Tax Resistance: A Guide to Withholding Your Support from the Military**, 144 page book with 2012 update. \$10 each plus \$5 first class postage (call for bulk rates)
- Practical War Tax Resistance Series booklets, (#1-3, 75 cents each; #4-7, \$1 each) — #1: Controlling Withholding; #2: To File Or Not To File; #3: How To Resist Collection; #4: Self-Employment; #5: Low Income/Simple Living; #6: Organizational Resistance; #7: Aging and War Tax Resistance

- "War Tax Resistance at a Glance" booklet, \$1.50 each
Please add a contribution for postage costs. Affiliates take 20% off total cost of literature. See the NWTRCC website for all of our publications and to order online: nwtrcc.org/publications.php#brochures.

Businesses & WTRs

We are collecting stories for a short information sheet about being part of a business as a war tax resister. Many resisters ask about a safe way to set up a small business, which often involves partners who are not WTRs, and worry about the implications. So far we have a few examples of collectives or cooperatives that have worked for WTRs, but the laws and structures also vary by state. If you have a story about a business model that works — or doesn't — please contact Ruth Benn at the NWTRCC office.

Asheville Welcomes You

NWTRCC Gathering · May 3–5, 2013

with presentations by David Swanson, Cindy Sheehan, and Hamid Dabashi and a WTR Counselors' training on Monday, May 6



Planning Committee for the gathering. From left: Coleman Smith, Carlos Steward, Bill Ramsey, redmoonsong, and Clare Hanrahan.

War tax resisters in the Asheville area have been organizing and gathering as Fools of Conscience for over 20 years. We come together from remote rural homesteads, mountain communities and small cities in the Katauh bioregion of the Southern Appalachian Mountains.

We held our first regional gathering on April Fools Day, 1995, in Celo, a nearby community land trust. Twenty-two persons from Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and throughout North Carolina, met in the rustic Celo Friends Meeting. Warmed by a hearth fire, we told our stories of resistance to war tax paying and called to mind the rich legacy of those who inspired us along the way. Asheville Area War Tax Resisters continued to gather in Celo year after year for fun, fellowship, and folly. Some of us have moved away, others have passed away. We have been joined over the years by new resisters as this movement grows. Each April 15, some among us come together in a public way to speak out and educate others about war tax resistance as a path to peace.

Over the years, our **Taxes For Life! Alternative Fund**, made numerous public grants of resisted tax dollars. This year the Conscience and

Military Tax Campaign Escrow Account and other Alternative Funds will be making grants to as many as a dozen community based projects throughout the country. This action will take place at the Federal Building in Asheville on May 4, with a moving picket and solidarity walk back to the conference.

In 1999, Asheville hosted the NWTRCC Spring gathering. We are delighted to once again welcome NWTRCC to Asheville in the Spring of 2013. We wish to thank Jolene Mechanic, director of the Flood Fine Arts Center, for donating the Phil Mechanic Building for the conference. Many others in our lovely mountain community will open their homes and hearts to you. Our planning committee is pulling together a powerful weekend of action, workshops, and speakers, with a little bit of foolishness to keep our perspective. Come prepared for wide mountain vistas in a lively and progressive small city where old mountain ways meet new age visionaries, where activism takes many forms on many fronts, and music and poetry abound!

—Clare Hanrahan and the
2013 Spring NWTRCC planning committee

Find the registration form, travel information, and schedule at nwtrcc.org/gatheringMay2013.php or call the NWTRCC office, 800-269-7464, for a brochure by mail.



"Fools of Conscience" Regional Gathering in Celo, North Carolina, 1995. Photos courtesy of Clare Hanrahan and New South Network of War Resisters.

Tax Resistance and Symbolic Protest continued from page 1

of taxes should give rise to reconsider our responsibility.

In a refusal to support armed forces, much less the state, some intentionally live below a taxable income. Payden-Travers acknowledged this tactic, but spent much time discussing other avenues and degrees of tax resistance. There are some who refuse to pay the percentage of their taxes equivalent to the percentage of state funds put toward the armed forces, there are some who withhold varying portions (even just a few dollars), and others submit letters of protest along with their filed taxes. Even in the smaller acts of withholding small portions or submitting an accompanying letter, Payden-Travers reminded us that we should

not underestimate the importance of "symbolic protest," which he likened to the refusal to burn incense to Caesar.

Even though I'm uncertain about the use of the word "symbolic" (as though it is somehow opposed to real, efficacious protest), I was happy to be reminded of the importance of such seemingly insignificant gestures of resistance. These gestures of resistance make visible what tends to operate invisibly, or rather, it makes profane that which operates as sacred — in this case, the state. The state uses symbols, narratives, and rituals in order to sustain the smooth and imperceptible working of its war operations. In this sense, even the smallest disruption brought about by symbolic

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April 15, 2013 Action List

Our action list is still growing at nwtrcc.org/taxday2013.php. Call or email the office with your events right up to April 15. After that send in your photos and report for the next newsletter.

Arizona

Tucson — Tax Day peace vigil at war profiteer Raytheon Missile Systems (building cruise missiles, cluster bombs, pilotless drones and more in Tucson). 6:30–7:30 am, Hermans Rd. entrance to the plant.

More info: nukeresister@igc.org or (520) 323-8697.

California

Berkeley — Northern California War Tax Resistance and People's Life Fund granting ceremony with dessert potluck. April 15 at Co-Housing Common House, 2220 Sacramento St., Berkeley. More info: (510) 842-6124 or see nowartax.org.

Colorado

Boulder — Leafleting on Pearl Street mall, Saturday, April 13 and Sunday, April 14, 11 am–1 pm. Sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center. Info: (303) 499-9456.

Colorado Springs — Penny poll and banner at the downtown post office, April 15, noon–1 pm. Sponsored by Citizens for Peace in Space. More info: bill.sulzman@gmail.com.

Iowa

Dubuque — Vigil and leafleting sponsored by Citizens' Tax Moratorium, Federal Building, 6th and Locust, April 15 from 5 pm–7 pm, and every Monday until tax day at noon or 5 pm. More info: john-klotz@uiowa.edu or (563) 583-2586.

Maine

Brunswick — Saturday, April 13, 10 am–1 pm at the Post Office for rally, demonstration, and leafleting. Sponsored by Occupy Maine Bath/Brunswick. More info: occupybrunswick.wordpress.com/2013/03/13/wall-street-war-street.

Statewide — Leafleting around the state on or before April 16 (Tax Day in Maine). Call or email for a supply of flyers to give out at your post office or other public location. Contact: Larry Dansinger, Maine WTR Resource Center, (207) 525-7776 or rosc@psouth.net.

Massachusetts

Boston — Grants will be given out from New England War Tax Resistance's Alternative Fund. Sponsored by New England War Tax Resistance, (508) 831-3622. Plans are in development.

resistance (or as "countersymbols") weakens the myths by making them known and therefore questionable. Large or small, countersymbols keep consciousness and the demand for further resistance active by virtue of the disruption it produces. Whether the protests are forms of property destruction, such as found in the Plowshares Movement, or marches against ongoing military actions, I believe the power of the resistance as countersymbolic give them much of their power and make them a resource for future resistance.

***Editor's note:** Jack Payden-Travers is the Director of the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund, peacetaxfund.org. •



Seattle, tax day 2012. Photo by Michelle Kinnucan.

New Hampshire

Statewide — Distributing flyers at post offices, sponsored by New Hampshire Peace Action. Planning underway. More info: Will Hopkins, will@nhpeaceaction.org.

New York

New York City — NYC War Resisters League, war tax resisters, and others will gather at 4 pm on April 15 at the Manhattan IRS office (110 W. 44th Street), then march with Rude Mechanical Orchestra around 5 pm to the main Post Office at 34th and 8th Avenue. Or meet us at the P0 around 5:30 or 6 pm. for vigil and leafleting. More info: nycwrl@att.net or (718) 768-7306.

Oregon

Portland — "Burma shave" style signs on various bridges at morning rush hour, April 15, 7:25 am. Evening "redirection" program at the Metanoia Peace House at 5pm. Sponsored by War Resisters League, Portland chapter. More info: (503) 249-6343.

Tennessee

Nashville — Distribution of WRL budget leaflet to peace and justice activists at various spring events, sponsored by Nashville Greenlands. More info: (615) 322-9523.

Vermont

Brattleboro — Music, vigil, and tabling with war tax resistance literature on April 15, 10 am–2 pm, outside the Post Office. Sponsored by Pioneer Valley War Tax Resistance. More info: (802) 387-2798 or dhsicken@yahoo.com.

Washington

Seattle — Join Greater Seattle Veterans for Peace and distribute copies of the WRL pie chart. Midtown Post Office, 301 Union St (at 3rd Ave.), April 15, 11:00 am–1:00 pm. More info: dhgilman@msn.com or (206) 499-0226.



Transform Now Plowshares, Michael R. Walli, Megan Rice, SHCJ, and Greg Boertje-Obed, created major disruption with their action at the Oak Ridge Y-12 Nuclear facility on July 28, 2012. Their trial is scheduled for May 7, 2013, in Knoxville (right after the NWTRCC gathering in Asheville). The date may change, so visit transformnowplowshares.wordpress.com for continued updates.

60 Billion Reasons to Act

Tax Day, Monday, April 15

By Ruth Benn

With the March 19 anniversary of the illegal, immoral, ill-conceived, and ill-managed invasion, war, and occupation of Iraq ten years ago, there were a lot of news stories about the disaster created by the Bush Administration. Mainstream media released articles such as "Too much money spent in Iraq for too few results," or, "A Decade Later, Stability Eludes Iraq." Elected officials in Washington skipped over commenting on March 19. They should have collectively resigned for their complicity in the ongoing tragedy wrought by war criminals like Bush, Cheney, and Rumsfeld. They should have been using the day to take steps to end all war based on lessons learned in Iraq and Afghanistan (and Vietnam, Korea, Libya, Latin America...).

Kathy Kelly wrote about being in Iraq at the start of the U.S. invasion and bombing in her March 19 piece, "War Without End" (wagingnonviolence.org). "I still feel haunted by children and their heartbroken mothers and fathers whom we met in Iraqi hospitals," she says. If elected officials took a minute to witness that pain would they move to end war?



NWTRCC Coordinator Ruth Benn with the "What if they gave a war..." sign on tax day 2011, New York City main post office. Photo by Ed Hedemann.

Another way of looking at this is our friend Francesca Fiorentini's "Laugh to not cry" video blog on YouTube (follow link at nwtrcc.org). Her March 19 release, "60 Billion Reasons the War on Iraq was a Rotten Idea," presents more convincing arguments for refusing to pay for war. Starting off with the fact that a 2011 Commission on War Time Contracting found that \$31-\$60 billion had been lost to waste or fraud in Iraq, she manages in five minutes to add up her 60 billion reasons. She totals the number of weapons Colin Powell lied

about + total U.S. troops in Iraq + Iraqi civilians killed in war + Iraqis made refugees + torture techniques + days Bradley Manning has been in custody + copies of Bush's autobiography sold + earnings of contractors, and so on to 60 billion.

That's also 60 billion reasons to get out and do something public against war and war spending on or before April 15. Once again, tax day in the U.S. is also the Global Day of Action on Military Spending. Each of our actions adds to a worldwide outcry against the waste of lives and money for war and gives us a chance to promote war tax resistance. •

Check page 7 for our Tax Day 2013 Action List.



NATIONAL WAR TAX RESISTANCE COORDINATING COMMITTEE

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