

April 15, 2003

Internal Revenue Service  
Holtsville, NY

Dear People:

Enclosed you will find my completed form and attachments as required. As you will see there is an amount owed of \$1,532, but in good conscience, I cannot pay this money to the U.S. government. I cannot allow my tax dollars to be used for killing and war. As you see by the enclosed chart nearly 50% of federal income taxes go to the Pentagon.

I do pay my taxes; I do this by sending it to groups who work for peace and care for people both in the U.S. and abroad. The money that I am not sending the federal government is being used wisely and safely. This is not an easy stand to take, but it is one that is very important to me. I would not like to be one who goes along with a criminal system just because it is easier than following one's conscience.

During this past year and in recent months the U.S. has rained bombs down on Afghanistan and Iraq. The U.S. public in general has forgotten about Afghanistan and promises to help them recover from years of war. While money dried up for aid to Afghanistan, billions of dollars were suddenly found for a war on the people of Iraq, which was supposed to be about finding weapons of mass destruction. The greatest share of those weapons on this earth are held by the U.S. and paid for by U.S. taxpayers.

I just can't bear to be part of these destructive priorities, and I will continue to withhold as much of my federal taxes as possible to avoid being part of this killing spree. States and cities are facing record deficits. Today New York City is talking about closing zoos and laying off police and fire department workers. Transit fares are going up, senior centers are being closed. While our money kills in Iraq, it also forces people to suffer here in the U.S.

We will strengthen our country by using our tax dollars at home to improve our schools, develop job training programs, provide universal health care, build more drug rehab centers, increase mass transit, etc. We will also strengthen the U.S. by giving aid for human needs in foreign countries instead of giving them weapons. I do hope one day to be able to support in full a government that is a leader of peace and not a leader of militarism and war.

Sincerely,

Ruth Benn  
Brooklyn, NY