

Kucinich and Carson Cosponsor Peace Tax Fund

BY CHRIS FRETZ On December 15, Representatives Dennis Kucinich (OH-10) and Julia Carson (IN-07) added their names to the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Bill, H.R. 2631. The bill now has support from 41 members of Congress, including lead sponsor Rep. John Lewis (GA-05).

Kucinich, whose 2004 Presidential campaign embodied the ideals of many progressives, is also the lead sponsor of a bill to establish a Department of Peace. He has described the proposed Department of Peace as a counter-balance to the Department of Defense. It would redirect national energies towards nonviolent intervention, mediation, and conflict resolution on all matters of human security. This is his first time to cosponsor the Peace Tax Fund Bill. Kucinich, in his 5th term in Congress, represents areas in and around Cleveland.

This is Carson's 4th time cosponsoring the Peace Tax Fund Bill. In her 5th term in Congress, Carson is the successor to Andy Jacobs who was the lead sponsor of the Peace Tax Fund Bill in the early 1990s. Carson represents Indianapolis.

Peace Tax Fund staff visited the offices of Kucinich and Carson on February 21 to officially thank them for their endorsements. Staff also visited the offices of Rep. Brian Baird (WA-03) and Rep. Mike Thompson (CA-01) to follow up on petitions that Peace Tax Fund supporters sent to Baird and Thompson requesting their endorsement of the bill. As this newsletter goes to press Baird and Thompson are not cosponsors and we encourage their constituents to request their support.

The Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Bill only needs

four more cosponsors to add their names by December to garner the most cosponsors it has had since 1990. You can help us achieve this goal by participating in Lobby Day on Tuesday, May 16 (For more info, see back page). Rep. Ron Dellums first introduced this bill in 1972 as the World Peace Tax Fund Bill. It has been re-introduced each year since then, with several name and wording changes over the years.

Do You Hear What I Hear?

Report from Rhode Island Peace Tax Hearing

NOAH MERRILL

By NATALIE AND | On December 12, 2005, more than 25 people gathered in the State Room of the Rhode Island State House for a Public Hearing on the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Bill. At a podium bearing

the Seal of the Governor of Rhode Island, witnesses giving testimony in support of the Peace Tax Fund shared in a morning of hope and fervent petition.

The hearing was convened by Keith Harvey, Executive Director of the American Friends Service Committee in New England. Marian Franz, Executive Director of NCPTF, presented the bill, and outlined its provisions. She was followed by presentations grouped by subject matter.

Continued on Page 6

Keith Harvey, Executive Director of the New England Region of the American Friends Service Committee stands with Peter Michaelson of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship. Harvey convened the hearing, and Michaelson gave testimony, calling for an end to religious persecution against conscientious objectors.



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By Tim Godshall Interim Director

Preaching to the Choir

For 23 years, Marian Franz filled this column with inspiring and challenging words drawn from her experiences on Capitol Hill. With skill, humor, and compassion, she made space for transformation in the lives of those she lobbied. I'm grateful that, following some

time off for medical leave, Marian plans to return as our senior lobbyist, to train and equip staff and volunteers with the skills they need to clarify the issue. I'm one of the people that could use some help!

During a recent lobby visit, I pulled out a federal budget graph to emphasize how much our nation spends on war. "You're preaching to the choir!" said the congressional aide, who urged us to shift our focus toward electing Democrats who will cut the military budget. Despite their anti-war stance, the aide and his boss do not support the Peace Tax Fund because they think it undermines the ability of Congress to allocate money. (For a response to his objections, refer to our Q&A Brochure, available at www.peacetaxfund.org.)

His objections notwithstanding, I left that meeting feeling like I had failed to clearly communicate our point, which is not "Reduce the military budget". Our point is this: "Allow conscientious objectors a way to pay their taxes and follow their beliefs."

Don't get me wrong! Reducing the military budget by even 10% could address so many problems in our society. Many organizations, including ours, make the important connection between dollars spent on war and dollars *not* spent on peace. While important, however, the question of an acceptable military budget is not addressed by the Peace Tax Fund.

Here's why: The argument for a Peace Tax Fund is based upon existing U.S. legal precedent that allows conscientious objectors (COs) to do alternative service. This law defines COs very narrowly as only those who are opposed to participating in all wars. While we seek to extend the rights of COs into the financial realm, we are still bound by the existing definition of a CO. Therefore, someone could not selectively use the Peace Tax Fund to avoid paying taxes for certain wars and not others. Likewise, the Peace Tax Fund would not be for use by those who would like to see less of their money going

to the military, but would accept paying a "reasonable" amount for national military defense.

The effort to establish a Peace Tax Fund is for the sake of COs for whom paying *any* amount of taxes to fund the violence of war is unacceptable. That is why, even if we followed the aide's suggestion and worked on electing members of his boss's party to office, we wouldn't eliminate the need for this legislation.

The federal budget is appalling. Last year, 42% of every federal tax dollar we paid went to the military. This year, even more of our taxes will go toward war. Let's participate in the choir calling for different national priorities. But let's also speak clearly about the need to honor the consciences of those who cannot pay for war.

Executive Director Search Update

The Search Committee of the NCPTF and Peace Tax Foundation Boards of Directors has narrowed down a list of Executive Director applicants to several strong candidates. As this newsletter goes to press, the committee is interviewing these applicants and checking references, with the hope of presenting a candidate to the full Board for approval in April. The new Executive Director is expected to begin serving on June 1.

What Belongs to Caesar Reprinted

What Belongs to Caesar, by Don Kauffman, first published in 1970, is available once again. The book presents analysis of biblical passages pertaining to the relationship of Christians and the state. It looks particularly at the issue of the payment of taxes. The re-printed version of the book includes some new material and is available for \$17 from Wipf and Stock Publishers. The publisher will accept orders by telephone (541) 344-1528, FAX (541) 344-1506 or e-mail: orders@wipfandstock.com. The book's ISBN is: 1-59752-540-5.

Campaign to Expand Local Activist Network

BY CHRIS FRETZ One of our major goals is to increase our network of local grassroots organizers. Members of Congress listen to their own constituents, and local activists insure that Congress listens to our supporters. The Campaign is looking for people to fill two specific roles, Congressional District Contacts and Congregational Contacts.

Congressional District Contacts (CDCs) are the local liaison between our office and the supporters in their congressional district. They organize local supporters in letter-writing campaigns, Congressional lobby visits, and local actions. They also educate people in their district about the Campaign by hosting events about military spending and the bill, distributing literature at local events, and getting press coverage of the Campaign.

The Campaign provides resources to CDCs to assist them in their work, such as lists of Campaign members in their area, a video for use at meetings, and a supply of basic informational literature. The Campaign also reports to its CDCs on national developments and on visits to specific legislators.

CDCs have found that publicizing the Campaign has been a rewarding experience.

"Not many people have thought about a legal option to

National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund & The Peace Tax Foundation



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Honorary Board Chair: David Bassett

Update is published 3 times annually and distributed to members of the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund. Update equips readers actively to support peace tax legislation by informing them of news relating to the peace tax fund movement, drawing attention to the costs of militarism, and publicizing stories and viewpoints of individuals and groups who cannot, in good conscience, pay for war.

Membership in the NCPTF costs \$35 annually. Since NCPTF advocates for the legal recognition of conscientious objection to military taxation, membership dues and gifts to NCPTF are not tax-deductible. Tax-deductible contributions can be made to the Peace Tax Foundation, which educates the public about issues of taxes and war.

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Chris Fretz began work in January as our Outreach and Development Assistant. He spends a lot of time talking to our supporters from around the country.

TIM GODSH

avoid paying taxes for war, and most that hear about it for the first time are excited and enthusiastic about the idea," said Jodi-Beth McCain of Maryland's 8th district.

Penny Allen of Ohio's 11th district had similar sentiments. "There are more people than you ever thought there were who share our goals and values, and you'll meet them as you work to find supporters of NCPTF and the bill," she said. Allen extended her efforts into nearby districts, and her hard work paid off when Rep. Dennis Kucinich cosponsored the bill in December (see article on page 2).

Although current CDCs are active and doing good work, our network currently represents less than twenty states. We need a stronger national presence. To learn more, find a CDC near you, or become a CDC, visit www.peacetaxfund.org.

The Campaign is also looking for Congregational Contacts. These are the liaisons between the Campaign and the contact's congregation or religious group. They inform their congregation about the work of the Campaign and organize congregation members. They organize lobby visits, hold letter-writing events, display and distribute Peace Tax Fund literature, and obtain financial support of the Campaign from their congregation.

The Campaign supplies literature to Congregational Contacts, and has developed resources for churches to hold a service that would address how people of faith respond to military taxation (see article on page 5).

If you are interested in becoming a Congressional District Contact or Congregational Contact, please email Chris Fretz, Outreach and Development Assistant, at **chris@peacetaxfund.org**, or call 1-888-PEACETAX.

A Memorial Tribute to Richard Reichley

BY DAVID BASSETT We mourn the loss of Richard N. Reichley, former NCPTF Board member, who died of cancer January 16, 2006, at age 78 at his home in Harleysville, Pa.

Richard was a Quaker, a peace activist for more than 30 years, and a faithful member for many years on the NCPTF Board. He had been a war tax resister since 1971, and, in the course of this witness, had been audited, had a lien placed on his home, and had his wages seized by the Internal Revenue Service. He was very active in lobbying for passage of the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund (RFPTF) Bill, speaking often to local groups about the Bill and about peaceful coexistence. He served as a Congressional District Contact, organizing lobbying sessions in his home district, and bringing groups to lobby in Washington congressional offices. He helped greatly in arranging for more than 300 persons from southeastern Pennsylvania to attend the Ways and Means Committee hearings on the RFPTF Bill on May 21, 1992 in Washington.

Richard also served on the War Tax Concerns Committee of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Richard was a



Richard Reichley with Mary, his wife of 56 years. Richard was a peace activist for more than 30 years, and served on the NCPTF Board of Directors for many years.

dedicated co-worker, committed to nonviolent ways of living and of resolving conflicts.

Richard is survived by Mary, his wife of 56 years (who often accompanied him in attending NCPTF Board meetings); a daughter and three sons, a sister, nine grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

It was always inspiring to me observe the ways in which Richard lived out the peace testimony, as it applied to one-to-one relationships, and on a global scale.

David R. Bassett is the Honorary Chair of the NCPTF Board of Directors.

✓ NCPTF Board Ballot ✓

The Board of Directors is the policy-making body for the NCPTF. The following list has been presented by the Nominating Committee for election to a two-year term on the Board. Terms begin in the spring of 2006 and end in the spring of 2008. Please vote by circling "Yes" or "No" after each candidate. Cut out this ballot and return it in the envelope provided no later than May 1, 2006. Only current members of the NCPTF are eligible to vote.

Dan Jenkins (new) Yes No

Dan is a hydrogeologist who lives in upstate New York. He withholds and escrows a portion of his income taxes. His current court case claims a 'liberty of conscience' right to exemption based on the pre-federal New York State constitution of 1777 and subsequent state laws.

Jeff Heie (incumbent) Yes No

Jeff lives in Phoenix, Arizona where he divides his time between caring for his two sons, building environmentally friendly houses, and installing solar electric sytems. He is a graduate of the Conflict Transformation Program at Eastern Mennonite University.

Rev. Kim McDowell (incumbent) Yes No

Kim is the pastor of the University Park Church of the Brethren. She and her husband Hooker are the parents of two daughters. They live in Hyattsville, MD.

Rosa Packard (incumbent) Yes No

Rosa is an NGO representative for Conscience and Peace Tax International at the United Nations in New York and associated with the Quaker UN office for issues of conscientious objection. She counsels conscientious objectors to military taxation and military service.

John Randall (incumbent) Yes No

John teaches math and computer science at a South Bronx community college. One of his hobbies is building wooden models of sailing ships. His wife Nana, from Ghana, is an accountant with the UN Secretariat. They have two collegeage children.



Tax Day: A Smorgasbord of Educational Opportunity

Although many Americans have taxes withdrawn from every paycheck, many people do not often think about the subject of taxes until Tax Day, which this year falls on April 17.

Taxpayers typically try to keep as much of their income from going to toward taxes as possible. Tax Day is a great opportunity to get people thinking not only about how much of their money goes for taxes, but also about the moral implications of how their tax dollars are spent. Here are some ideas:

A Presentation on the Peace Tax Fund

Use the time leading up to Tax Day to organize an event about the PTF to a local peace group, church, or other community group. Good resources for a presentation would be the video, *Compelled by Conscience*, the booklet *Congress Shall Make No Law*, and other resources available from our office. (See order sheet on page 7.)

Letter-Writing

Tax Day is an ideal time to write letters to your members of Congress and to the editor of your local paper. Present the conflict that thousands of taxpayers face between following their conscience and obeying the law regarding taxes. Personalize the letter to include your experiences. Editors welcome human-interest letters, and lawmakers respond to issues that tangibly affect their constituents.

Personal Lobby Visits

A visit to the local or DC office of your legislator is an effective way to make sure your concerns are heard about the rights of conscience for taxpayers. The visit puts a face to an abstract issue, and helps the Congressperson see that military taxation affects real people, especially their constituents.

Public Action

Amemorable way to publicize the Peace Tax Fund is to hold a demonstration or leaflet at the IRS building. This can be done on Tax Day, or in the weeks prior to it. Another good location is your local post office, since many post offices have longer hours and more customers on Tax Day. Some eye-catching materials we have available are a federal spending bar graph, the *Where Your Income Tax Money Really Goes* pie chart, and our very own Funny Money. Issuing a press release can greatly increase coverage of your action since many media sources do stories on the IRS and Tax Day.

You may want to research where you may demonstrate, what permits are required, and other logistical details to avoid confrontation with local authorities.

Media Publicity

TV and radio are good sources for publicity. Local access cable channels often need to fill airtime, and may be willing to air the Peace Tax Fund video or air an interview with local conscientious objectors. Local news shows and radio talk shows are potential outlets for stories on opposition to military taxation.

Be Creative

Find your own ways to engage people about where their tax dollars go. An interactive way to stimulate interest is to poll people on their spending priorities for federal programs, then compare it to the government's current allocation. Getting people thinking can help them realize that military taxation affects them and their community, not just conscientious objectors.

Keep in Touch

We'd love to hear what Tax Day actions you take this year. Please contact us for more information on any of these ideas. Let us know any other techniques you used that were successful. New ideas are always welcome!

Peace Tax Fund Offers Worship Resources

Many congregations and religious groups grapple with the fact that over 40 cents out of every U.S. Federal Income Tax dollar funds war and war preparation! As part of our outreach to communities of faith we have compiled resources for a "Peace Tax Sunday." This assortment of resources can be used in a worship service on the issue of conscientious objection to military taxation. The resources include songs, prayers, readings, sample sermons and biblical studies, children's story ideas, and a video with discussion guide. Having a Peace Tax Sunday creates an opportunity for people of faith to share a spiritual response to the issue of paying taxes for war. Resources can be found at www.peacetaxfund.org/peacetaxsunday.

This web page currently includes only resources from a Christian perspective. We plan to add pages to include resources from a variety of faith perspectives. We need your help us to do this! If you have ideas or resources to add to these pages, please be in touch with Chris Fretz: **chris@peacetaxfund.org**, 1-888-732-2382.

Continued from Page 1

The first group, Voices of Faith, included remarks from Episcopal, Presbyterian, Catholic and Quaker communities. Peter Michaelson, an Episcopal priest, stated, "...passage of this measure will relieve the IRS of a duty which amounts to religious persecution."

They were followed by Rhode Island Voices of Conscience, which included local war tax resisters and those caught in what Franz described as the "terrible either/or" of choosing obedience to one's God over obedience to one's country. Supporters spoke of refusal to pay telephone taxes, of property seizures, of attached wages, and the firm refusal to behave dishonestly in the face of what was described as "ruthless persecution" by agents of the IRS.

Historian Edward Baker presented on the history of Religious Freedom in Rhode Island, beginning with the colony's foundation by Roger Williams, a religious refugee from England and the Massachusetts Bay Colony. He cited Senator Lincoln Chafee's (R-RI) recent work to recognize Newport, Rhode Island as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, a claim based on Newport's centrality in establishing the foundation of tolerance and religious freedom on which the United States was founded.

Carl Bogus, Professor at Roger Williams University School of Law, testified that he sees no legal obstacles to the passage of this legislation. "If this legislation has any national effect, besides increasing tax revenue, it may give small numbers of people a slightly higher soapbox on which to advocate their notions of the limits of force, and the principles and practicalities of nonviolence. It seems to me that there are always enough voices supporting the opulent support of the military-industrial complex. I cannot see how the country would be harmed if voices for peace were slightly louder."

David Segal, Minority Leader of the Providence City Council, spoke about the imbalances in local and federal spending priorities that place violence and armaments over human needs, in Iraq and Providence.

The hearing closed with testimony from humanitarian workers presenting the human cost of war. Laura Wood, a teacher of resettled refugees at the International Institute of Rhode Island, presented the following witness to her experiences:

"I have stood and felt entirely helpless to say anything of worth to mother after mother, sleepless with worry, exhausted in prayer, wondering where her missing children are – praying that they are alive, that they are safe and in good hands, dreaming of a time when she may see them again. I have tried to think of ways to stress the importance of completing homework or the importance of budgeting to a classroom of people who have watched their husbands killed, their houses burned, their daughters raped. This is war...war is murder and I will not buy it."

Noah Merrill, Program Coordinator for the American Friends Service Committee in Southeastern New England, highlighted the suffering of over 1 million Iraqis who are refugees in Jordan and a similar number in Syria, based on a recent fact-finding trip to the region. He testified to the lack of critical services in Iraq, the resurgence of epidemic deaths from preventable diseases, and the sharp increase in human rights abuses by US-backed security forces under US occupation brought on by the 2003 invasion.

These unsettling testimonies gave the hearing's closing an authority that it deserved. In keeping with Quaker tradition, Keith Harvey called the assembly into several moments of silent meditation and worship, and asked us to rededicate ourselves to the recognition of this crucial right of religious freedom and conscience, for ourselves, and for the world. As we waited together in silence, the sounds of a children's choir in another part of the State Capitol rose in the hearing room - "Do you hear what I hear...."

A song of anticipation, of faith in a dark time. A message of Hope for a suffering world, and for a people who have been waiting a long time for liberation.

A video recording of the hearing will be presented to each of Rhode Island's senators and representatives as part of follow-up efforts requesting their co-sponsorship of H.R. 2631, the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Bill. This 55-minute video is also available for the public. Please e-mail **info@peacetaxfund.org** to purchase a copy (\$5 plus shipping)

Beyond the Ocean StateR.I. Report Available

The hearing concluded the Peace Tax Foundation's 6-month educational project in Rhode Island. Natalie Merrill, our Rhode Island organizer during this period, has carefully documented the steps she followed over these six months. This report, which we will adapt and include in an upcoming local organizer's manual, is available on the Rhode Island Campaign for Conscience Website: www.ri.peacetaxfund.org.

While there are no more paid staff in Rhode Island, volunteer local organizers will continue to keep the work going. Please contact Richard Frechette (richard.frechette@cox.net, 401-769-4433) to be involved in continuing efforts in the Ocean State.

Peace Tax Fund Activist Resources

Brochures and Flyers	
Peace Tax Fund Basic Brochure - Redesigned 11/2005	10 for \$1.00
Basic Q&A about the Peace Tax Fund Bill - Redesigned 9/2005	5 for \$1.00
Funny Money - Spoof dollar bill flyer with info about Peace Tax Fund and National War Tax Resistance	20 for \$1.00
Stages of Conscientious Objection to Military Taxation - From realizing taxes fund war to taking action, outlined in 5 steps5 for \$1.00	
Federal Spending Bar Graph - Graphic portrayal of military spending vs. selected human needs	
Where Your Income Tax Money Really Goes - U.S. FY 2006 pie chart by War Resisters League	10 for \$1.00
Button - 1.5 inches, blue and white, "Taxes for Peace Not War" Bumperstickers - 11.5" x 3", blue and white	\$1.00 <u></u>
taxes for peace not war. "Taxes for Peace Not War"	\$1.00_
	\$1.00
Lobby Packet - Give this to your rep. when you lobby - contains basic information, bill, endorsers & cospo	
Text of the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Bill - H.R. 2631 in the 109th Congress, 2 pages	\$0.50
"Conscientious Objector" - Poem by Edna St. Vincent Millay	5 for \$1.00
Books and Video Video: Compelled by Conscience - Introduction to Peace Tax Fund, 15 minutes, 2001	or VHS (circle one)\$12.00
"Congress Shall Make No Law" - Personal stories of conscientious objectors to military taxation, 14 p.	
Conscience and the Courts - Selected Supreme Ct. & other cases which define conscientious objection to participation in war, 2005\$5.00	
Communities of Conscience - Collected statements on conscience and taxes for the military, 2nd editio	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
Handbook on Military Taxes and Conscience - ed. Linda B. Coffin (1988, 212 p)	\$5.00
War Tax Resistance: a guide to withholding your support from the military- ed. Ruth Benn, Ed Hedemann (2003, 144 p) \$15.00	
Questions that Refuse to Go Away - Marian Franz (1991, 103 p)	
Seeking Peace: Notes and Conversations Along the Way - Johann Christoph Arnold, preface by Thich Nhat Hanh (1998, 237 p)\$15.00	
= downloadable version available online	Subtotal
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*for orders \$10 or less, add \$3, for orders above \$10, add \$5. Bulk pricing is available upon request.

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Prisoners of Conscience

Joe Donato and Kevin McKee, war tax resisters sentenced last summer to prison terms of 27 and 24 months, respectively, began these sentences in February. Joe and Kevin belong to a Bible study-based religious society in southern New Jersey. Members of the group are pacifist and do not believe in paying taxes for military purposes. A third member of the group, Inge Donato, was also sentenced last summer, but finished her 6-month sentence on February 6.

Though Joe's and Kevin's sentences are significantly longer than Inge's, they are being punished for the same thing as she: their refusal to violate their consciences and pay taxes that they know would be used for military violence.

For more info on this case, see Peace Tax Fund Update, 2005 Issue 3, available online at: www.peacetaxfund.org

To send a letter of support to Joe and/or Kevin please use the following addresses:

Joseph Donato # 40884-050 FCI Fairton- Satellite camp FPC Schuylkill PO Box 420

PO Box 700 Fairton, NJ 08320 Minersville, PA 17954

MAY 16 - LOBBY DAY

Join us in DC for our annual joint lobby day with Center on Conscience and War on Tuesday, May 16. This is a good time to meet and share with other Peace Tax Fund supporters while you educate your members of Congress about conscientious objection. If you can't make it to DC, plan a lobby visit to the local office of your member of Congress. If you are interested in coming or if you have questions, please contact Chris Fretz: chris@peacetaxfund.org (1-888-732-2382) or visit our website.

MAY 18 - FAREWELL FOR MARIAN FRANZ

In honor of her 23 years of excellent service as Executive Director of the NCPTF, the Board of Directors is hosting a reception for Marian Franz on Thursday, May 18, from 4-6 p.m. NCPTF members, Congressional cosponsors, and other allies in this work over Marian's long career are invited to attend this drop-in event at the Methodist Building on Capitol Hill. If you wish to attend, please RSVP by May 1 to: longwing@peacetaxfund.org

MAY 19 AND 20 - ANNUAL MEETING

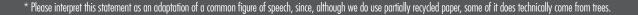
The annual meeting of the Board of Directors will occur on Friday and Saturday, May 19 and 20. All NCPTF members are welcome to attend. If you plann to attend please e-mail: longwing@peacetaxfund.org

NEWSLETTERS DON'T GROW ON TREES!*

Kevin McKee

40886-050

Please help us cover publishing and outreach costs by sending your annual \$35 membership dues (or additional contribution) in the enclosed envelope. You may also make a secure, online donation at www.peacetaxfund.org. Thanks!





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