



Conscience and Peace Tax International

For the right to pay taxes for peace, not for war

A Non-Governmental Organization in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations

International non-profit organization (i.v.z.w. Belgium 15.075/96)

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16 January, 2009

Become a Supporting Member of Conscience and Peace Tax International (CPTI)

Many participants at the 12th International Conference on War Tax Resistance and Peace Tax Campaigns (held last September in Manchester, UK) encouraged Conscience and Peace Tax International to expand its individual membership and to provide regular informational updates to this broader group of people.

This is the response.

CPTI will send out regular email "news bulletins" that describe events of interest around the world. The first news bulletin follows below, and is also attached in .pdf format, including a photograph.

This email message is being sent to past international conference participants, to people active in national war tax resistance organizations and peace tax campaigns, and to those who believe that forcing anyone to pay taxes for war is a violation of human conscience. You will continue to receive future CPTI Bulletins until you ask to be removed from the email list, and we encourage you to forward this email to others who may be interested.

CPTI also invites you to consider becoming a Supporting Member of the organization. Supporting Members pay a modest amount annually to finance our website and to keep the information flowing. We invite you to explore www.cpti.ws. CPTI requests a yearly Supporting Member contribution of 20 Euros (\$25 U.S), and additional gifts are always welcome.

A bank transfer or IPMO (International Postal Money Order) may be sent to:

CPTI, Bruineveld 11, 3010 Leuven, Belgium

Bank van De Post, Diestsesteenweg, 3010 Kessel-Lo, Belgium

IBAN: BE12 0001 7198 1492 BIC: BPOTBEB1

In the United States or Canada, personal checks payable to PTF-CPTI may be sent to:

Alan Gamble, CPTI Treasurer

3100 Happy Valley Road, Jackson, MI 49203 USA

Residents of the United States or Canada may also contribute using PayPal by clicking [here](#) or by going to:

https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=_s-xclick&hosted_button_id=2481690.

Alan Gamble, CPTI Treasurer

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For additional information call Daniel Jenkins in the United States at 518-891-4083.

We encourage you to forward this email to others who may be interested.

To be removed from this email list send us a reply with the message "Unsubscribe".



Conscience and Peace Tax International

News Bulletin #1

January 16, 2009

Siân Cwper at Caernarfon Crown Court

On a drizzly October day, Siân Cwper (pronounced 'Shaan Cooper') and a group of her supporters gathered outside Caernarfon County Court in northern Wales. Siân received an official summons to account for the fact that she withholds ten percent of her taxes, the proportion that is used by the government to finance the military and to engage in the activities of war.

Siân has withheld this percentage of her taxes for the past five years, as a practicing Buddhist who has taken a vow not to kill or support killing, but this was the first time she was called into court to explain the reason for her tax liability.

Her hearing was delayed for awhile, and then she was told that the case had been withdrawn, as her back taxes had been paid.

It appears that when any current taxes are paid by residents of the United Kingdom, these funds are first applied to the balance due from earlier years. As a result, taxes withheld in the past as a matter of conscience are automatically paid using current revenue. But the total debt created by taking this action can continue to grow from one year to the next.

The Judge granted Siân a few minutes, privately in chambers, to make a statement. She explained that individuals have international duties of conscience which transcend national obligations of obedience, and that people have the duty to violate domestic laws in order to prevent crimes against peace and humanity.

And she added:

"Many people have said that I am brave. I would like to contradict this. I do not think that you, honourable judge, are a dangerous person. It is not impossible, even, that you sympathise with my stand. Of course, I assume that you will order a sum of money to be taken out of my bank account. That is your job, and you have no choice. But I don't see that it takes much courage to stand here in front of you and face such a threat.

The truly brave people are those who oppose their governments, and stand up for justice in a long and heartbreaking list of places, where making such a stand means the threat of imprisonment, torture or death. May the prayers that are focused on this case today be of benefit to such people everywhere."

The Judge said that he respected her views, but that he was in no position to change the law. Siân's full statement can be found on the Peace Tax Seven web site (www.peacetaxseven.com).

Siân was supported by many more people than those who traveled to be with her at Caernarfon on a rainy October day. She reports that she received messages from New Zealand, Japan, Spain, France and the United States. North American Quakers in the states of New York and Connecticut sent out an email to their membership, and to others around the world. This message explained how to contact Siân with a statement of support, and also provided the time of the court hearing so people could pause and hold her in their thoughts and prayers.

Siân may be summoned before a Judge again, and she hopes to explain, in public, that as a duty of conscience she is not able to voluntarily hand over money to the government that she knows will be used for killing.

CPTI Supporting Members will be informed in advance of the next court hearing, so that many more people can contribute to Siân's witness of conscience, in solidarity.

Daniel Jenkins
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