

Workshop Nr.4: Arguments pro and contra a Peace Tax Law

Moderation: Gertie Brammer

Minutes: Gertie Brammer & Klaus Martin Voigt

10 Participants: Irene Auerbach, Sarah Barnett, Douglas Draper, Wolfgang Janisch, Günther Lott, Hilder Mariën, Henriette Naehring, Werner Neumann, Pedro Otaduy, Klausmartin Voigt (John and Nana Randall during the last 10 minutes).

Objective of the workshop:

1. The creation of a basic stock of objections and questions concerning a Peace Tax-Legislation and possible answers, and if necessary, for each nation group a collection of arguments related to its specific situation.
2. Discussion about how to make these arguments accessible on internet.

What ist the purpose?

In lobby work it is not only important to let one's own conscience speak, but also

- be able to show familiarity with the situation in other countries and to provide examples („We are not alone.....“);
- be able to define CPTI's current position;
- ask those questions which members of parliament mostly avoid;
- to know the churches' points of view and, if positive, to use them.

A first basic stock of questions and answers had been compiled by Gertie Brammer out of the „pro and cons“ of Belgium, Canada and Germany. For this purpose the questions had been divided into the following sections:

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| a. Conscience | (impossible to be invalidated by law) |
| b. Democracy | (our claim is according to the constitution) |
| c. Administration | (Peace Tax Law is feasible and costs are extensively neutral) |
| d. History | (Pacifism = no fire brigade, it's a basic attitude) |
| e. Present and future | (Pacifism = dealing with conflicts in a non-violent way) |
| f. Economy | (main cause of all wars) |
| g. Churches | (what they say about „righteous“ wars and actually existing wars?) |

This first basic stock was discussed and supplemented with some more questions.

Gertie brought with her the German „pro and cons“, formulated by Klaus Martin Voigt. From Alan Gamble we obtained the „pro and cons“ of the USA (National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund), a more elaborated version of the „pro and cons“ of Conscience Canada, and a presentation from the mennonite view-point USA).

Sarah Barnett had brought with her a list with „pro and cons“ from QCEA / Quaker Council for European Affairs.

All these papers were handed out; further copies can be ordered by email (Gertie).

Decissions

We decided to continue working as follows:

- Everyone is asked to contribute to the continuous development of the „pro and cons“ stock.
- We will look for a permanent partner from each country (*on Saturday afternoon we found Gertie Brammer/Germany, Huberte Gautreau/Canada, Dirk Panhuis/Belgium, Pedro Otaduy/Spain and Lawrence Rosenwald/USA*).
- These partners will coordinate with each other, when the basic stock is to be put on internet and in which form (not yet publicly, but under code word for internal use).
- Gertie Brammer takes care of coordination and so continues the initiative of Conscience Canada (Marylin Hébert 2004 in Brussels).