

Part Three: Workshops

3.1

Workshop 1: “Strategies and Tactics: Future of WTR-PTC”

Led by Daniel Woodham (USA)

Report by Dominique Boisvert (Canada)

We were 11 participants (7 of them from Germany).

Since we had to focus on the “future” of our movements, we tried to recognise first the features of our current situation (study the “map” before departure).

We first acknowledged the **perennial tension/diversity of our movement**:

- between WTR and PTC
 1. few people do both tax resistance and peace tax lobby (even though PTC serve as “support” for individual WTR witness)
 2. many WTR would not stop resistance even with the adoption of a Peace Tax Law (do we want to pay all our taxes to Government provided none of them are used for military purposes or do we want to direct the military part of our taxes to peace groups or priorities?)
 3. PTC are longer term projects while WTR is “immediate” refusal to be part of war
- between “conscience” motivation (more individual) and more “activist/militant” motivations (more collective)
- between “us” (tax peace or resisters) and the rest of the “peace movement” (dedicated to all sorts of various issues, from nuclear disarmament to anti-war in Irak to alternative security, etc.)

We then tried to identify the relationships and **“common ground”** between all of us (at the Conference) and between us and them:

- no to (all?) war and looking for alternatives
- in favour of peace (but so general as to mean little)
- most of us in favour of (total?) non-violence
- individually ready to “pay a price” to achieve these goals (either as COs or WTRs)

The **key issue** being: how can we work together complementarily, stressing more (and building on) what we have in common rather than focusing on our differences/diversity? Such a new way of working/struggling together, in loose and sometimes temporary coalitions (“rainbow coalitions”) seems to be the most promising trend of current political and citizen movements around the world (the “antiglobalisation” movement, the ecological movement, the Seattle events, the vast “anti-war” marches of Spring 2003, etc.). That seems also a pre-condition to be able to reach wider public audiences.

We can either look first at “how much do we have to agree?” or rather at **“how much can we do together?”** It is very often more difficult to agree on intellectual principles and wordings than on concrete actions. German participants gave the example of a common Peace Fair which was a success, even though the same participants were not able to agree on a common statement after the 9/11 events. The more we concentrate on specific “platforms”, the more difficult and restrictive it may tend to become.

Some participants proposed **the image of a “wheel”** as the organisational model for us to follow: the “common ground” may be *small but central* (the “hub”); and from there, all sorts of “spokes” are expanding in all directions, more or less similar or close and sometimes apparently aiming in totally opposite directions; and contrary to a regular wheel, where the spokes are not linked to each other except through their own individual connection to the outer rim, our organisational wheel has to favour as many links as possible between the various spokes (some being connected to many all around the sphere, some others only to their close neighbour spoke, etc. Each of those links between spokes contribute to hold it together, to reinforce each other and to get it moving further.

Those “links in action” must be favoured locally, nationally and internationally: having some common action held on similar dates or weeks in many locations/countries help to build a sense of membership, of community and solidarity between far apart participants.

We must change our way of “thinking”: conscientious objection and non-violence are often seen as “negative”; but negation or refusal of war or violence, which are themselves an evil, a negative behaviour, should be seen more and more as *positive* (exactly as in mathematics, a negative plus a negative equals a positive).

We witness more and more *small ad hoc groups* being formed around specific issues or membership links (physicians against nuclear; artists for peace; neighbourhood committee against war in Irak; etc.). This diversity has to be favoured to reach more people through their own “channels” and interests. Once again, **the key challenge** is how to build coalitions and add up all those forces instead of letting this energy for peace being scattered, split or wasted.

We clearly have to look for **new kinds of actions**: we can no more rely only on demonstrations or petitions; we have to use creativity, have more fun, reach to new and younger people where they are, etc.

The tax for war/peace issue has the advantage of being direct, concrete, personal involvement. Its main strength: it concerns everybody and help “visualise” the choices and priorities (money for war/military is taken away from more pressing social needs (the “pie charts”, the “loony polls” where people can choose where to put their money). Its main weakness: people think that the only way to participate is to actually refuse to pay military taxes (which implies more personal commitment and is usually only accessible to self-employed); we have to find concrete ways to allow for *general* involvement of people, including those whose taxes are deducted from salary by their employer.

We should insist on building strong (even if small) local peace groups or movements before trying to connect with larger groups or issues: nothing replaces a dedicated group of committed people, and we cannot bring to the larger group or issue more than what we already have gathered at our local level.

Of course we must acknowledge **major differences between the North and the South** with regard to peace tax issues, though both are equally concerned with the priority given to military force and to the huge amount of money devoted to that part of the national budget. We have to ask southern countries what *they* identify as their principal needs in order to be able to give real effective support when we can.

Finally, there seems to be a new trend evolving in many countries: to move **from mere opposition to war and violence into** more positive **alternative propositions**. Simultaneously in various countries, people, groups and movements have started to initiate “Dialogues” about what could/should we do to replace the army/military traditional approach to security and conflict resolution which we condemn and refuse to be part of. And those “dialogues” take place at various levels: among ourselves as COs and peace activists, but also with other partners (like university research people) or authorities (senior civil servants, senior military personnel, more traditional lobby with politicians, etc.). United Kingdom seems to have developed this alternative approach to lobbying and Canada has initiated some kind of public discussion which has been proposed and adopted by the 10th WTR-PTC Conference as its “international project” for the next two years. Whether this new trend will prove to be significant or not remains to be seen, but one of the founding members of WTR-PTC Conferences said that he felt “this was the only way to go for our movement”.

3.2

Workshop 2: “Forms of Action and Exchange of Action Experiences”

Led by Tim Godshall (USA), 7 participants

We had a good discussion of how to go about changing the way society views military violence. In Belgium, due to a successful media campaign, drunk driving is now considered unacceptable, which was not always the case. How can the peace movement come to make war and preparation for war also unacceptable? Here are some ideas we thought of.

1. Come up with ways to publicly recognize peacemakers. The military has many ceremonies to provide honor to its members who it approves of. What are ways that the peace movement could provide recognition to its participants?

--**Idea:** Give a “Peace Oscar” annually to a film that promotes peaceful values or debunks war myths, like “Fahrenheit 9-11”

--**Idea:** On war holidays, hold events which mourn the tragedy of war, or celebrate humanity, or do something to propose that there must be a better way to solve our problems than killing each other.

2. Engage the public with creative and interactive demonstrations:

Nonviolent Civil Disobedience: War Tax Resistance is an act of civil disobedience, but it is often not seen publicly. Doing public civil disobedience raises the awareness of the issue.

--**Idea:** massive nonviolent civil disobedience to shut down federal buildings on “tax day”. (April 15 is the day that taxes are due in the U.S.)

Street theater and eye-catching visuals: People generally are drawn to things that look interesting. Make your form of protest stand out so people will notice.

--**Idea:** Dress up as a military officer and go down the line thanking people who are standing in line waiting to pay their taxes, then show them how much they actually pay for the military.

--**Idea:** Very large graphic, such as long strips of cloth laid out in a public plaza, demonstrating military spending.

Interactive activities: If people are given a chance to think for themselves, they might learn more than if they are just given information.

--**Idea:** “Penny Poll” – give people 10 cents (pennies) and ask them to place the pennies into jars in proportion to the way they would want their tax money to be spent. Then show them information on how it is really spent.

3. Provide Real Alternatives to Military Defense

This idea was explained in much more detail in some other workshops. If people don’t have any sense of what are alternatives to military defense, then they will be less likely to support or understand those of us who are conscientiously opposed to paying for war and its preparation. Promoting conflict mediation skills and other forms of security were mentioned.

4. Use internet technology effectively

There are many well-organized public advocacy campaigns going on using the internet. One example is MoveOn.org, which enables hundreds of thousands of U.S. citizens to e-mail their representatives about legislation.

3.3

**Workshop 3: “Another World is Possible/Necessary:
Broadening a non-violence alliance between
War Tax Resistance and Peace Tax Campaigns
and the Alternative Globalization Movement”**

Led by Daniel Woodham (USA)
Report by Marya Nijland (Canada)

This workshop followed up the keynote speaker John Van Daele’s excellent address on the Anti-Globalization movement and the Social Forums the night before, and was enthusiastically and creatively led by Daniel Woodham of the USA. Twelve participants.

After a constructive brainstorming session with a lively discussion, we decided on the following action plans:

1. ENCOURAGE ALL GROUPS TO HOLD WORKSHOPS ON NON-VIOLENCE. We are envisioning respect, using non-violent, non-military language, and the practice of a voluntary simplicity lifestyle, giving hope within a world of violence and wars.
This model is being used in India (Ghandhi-in Action, Arya Bhushan Bhardwaj) and in Ghana (school with non-violence teachings, Nana Fosu-Randall). Both Arya and Nana were present in our workshop and provided valuable information.
Marya Nijland will obtain information on a non-violence curriculum used by Quaker Friends in Victoria BC Canada and she will send this to Dirk Panhuis for further mail-out.
2. ORGANIZE REPRESENTATION OF WTR/ PTC (War Tax Resistance and Peace Tax Campaigns) at the NEXT SOCIAL FORUM IN BRAZIL IN 2005, or plan to attend in 2007. We are suggesting that regional groups send representation as well! (Dominique Boisvert will further explore how to register for the next Social Forum)
3. ORGANIZE INTERNATIONAL ACTION DAYS, for instance: Sept. 21 is the UN DAY OF PEACE; WTR/PTC must be present with pamphlets and speakers.
Feb. 15 WTR/PTC DAY: IN PREPARATION FOR OUR TAXES IN APRIL, pamphlets, banners, speakers, editorials and letters to the local papers.
May 15 “DAY OF CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS”, celebrate, acknowledge this day, give out awards, give public speeches on the work we are doing, use pamphlets and banners.
4. Set up a LISTSERVE for CPTI so that we and other concerned activists are able to communicate with each other about actions and creative ideas.
Create WEBSITE links for Conscientious Objectors, realizing we already have a website (John Randall, webmaster). Gea Meyers of the Netherlands will further explore these possibility, thanks Gea!)
5. Include ANTI-GLOBALIZATION SUBJECTS in WTR/PTC handouts and literature.
6. HAVING DIAGNOSED THAT GREED AND POWER ARE DESEASES THAT HAVE INFILTRATED THE WORLD, WE ARE DETERMINED TO PERSONALLY CREATE NON-VIOLENT SIMPLE LIFE STYLES!

Many thanks to Daniel for having guided us.

3.4

Workshop 4: “Training in Lobbying Techniques”

Led by Marian Franz (USA)

Report by Marilyn Hébert (Canada)

Participants from six different countries profited from the wisdom gained by Marian Franz during her twenty years of lobbying parliamentarians both in Washington, D.C. and in parliamentarians' home districts at the invitation of U.S. peace groups. The focus of Marian's work is the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Bill.

Marian shared with us spiritual insights and reflections as well as lots of practical advice. Among what may be referred to as spiritual insights, one can mention the importance of persevering in the work of lobbying by reminding oneself of one's two-fold motivation for being involved in such work, namely concern for the victims of war and of preparation for war, and recognition of one's religious beliefs and/or rights of conscience. Marian also stressed the possibility of lobbying being an enjoyable experience and the importance of seeing this work as a privilege and of recognizing the power of deep commitment to communicate.

Here follows a listing of some practical advice – often mixed with spiritual insights – that Marian offered for our consideration:

- Make an appointment. If possible, precede visit to parliamentarian with supportive letters from his/her constituents.
- Right from the start, include the human element, be it chit-chat or positive feedback, such as congratulating the parliamentarian on some good stand or action.
- Put the issues of rights of conscience and the peace tax bill in a context the parliamentarian can understand. (Example: *If the law obliged you to sell drugs to children on the street, would you do it? Well, the law obliges me to do something my conscience tells me not to do.*)
- Watch for connecting links that come up spontaneously in the exchange and expand on them. (Example: Parliamentarian mentions a friend who was a CO in WW II.)
- Approach parliamentarians with respect and concern for them as people and believe in their ability to change.

N.B. In this respect, Marian has learned that a quick diagnosis of how this parliamentarian fits into the lobbying work, helps in determining the course the lobbying will take:

- Sponsor or co-sponsors of Peace Tax Bill: remember these people need to hear expressions of gratitude.
 - Swing voters: keep a list on hand of those who have already changed their mind on this issue and mention their names to parliamentarians who resist.
 - Those who won't work against you.
 - Those who absolutely will work against you.
-
- See yourself as a leading expert on what you believe Yours is a belief and a right, not an opinion!
 - Listen, keep calm, have patience. If necessary, remind parliamentarians that pacifists respect people and that their job as parliamentarians is to listen to what their constituents have to say.
 - Use your intuition to know when to stop talking and when to be creative – as by the use of examples.
 - Give weight to your arguments by telling tax resister stories and by mentioning the positions of religious leaders, if this is pertinent, and/or statements of organizations defending rights of conscience.

- If the parliamentarian asks a question you cannot answer or argues a point for which no counter-argument comes to mind, offer to do some homework/research and to send a reply in writing as quickly as possible. Remember you do not need to have airtight arguments.
- Leave something behind: Marian's folder (National Campaign For a Peace Tax Fund for the sake of conscience) contains the following: her calling card, the text of the bill, a one-page executive summary of the bill, rationale for the bill, a letter from a sponsor or a list of the names of sponsors and co-sponsors of the bill, a book of stories of religious freedom and conscience in the United States. Other ideas mentioned include a graphic showing the amount invested in arms trade/military expenditures etc., (see www.truemajority.org for a graphic on USA spending on armaments and the military) and a page of frequently given arguments and counter-arguments.
- Plan a follow-up so as to develop a rapport with the parliamentarian contacted. Send a thank-you note.
- Do an evaluation and write up a report. Of course should the lobbying be done by a group of 2 persons, then plan ahead of time the interventions of each person and evaluate the experience together prior to the written report. For the evaluation, focus on such points as what went well/less well/the turning point/how to gather momentum.

For those of us who are novices with regard to lobbying techniques, this workshop was an eye-opener and a confidence-builder! Thanks, Marian!

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3.5

Workshop 5: "Government: Dialogue and Lobbying"

Presented by Oliver Haslam and Deanna Douglas (U.K.)

Report by Philip Symons (Canada)

Ten participants

Oliver Haslam reviewed methods of lobbying the British government, and Deanna Douglas followed this with a discussion of how to engage parliamentarians and civil servants in dialogue, and importantly, how to coordinate other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in this dialogue.

Oliver noted that the methods of lobbying the British government were somewhat archaic and not particularly effective, although the methods did raise awareness of issues among NGO members and sometimes the public. He described three methods for submitting issues to government plus a "Ten-minute Rule Bill". "Petitions" are read in parliament and formally recognized, then are put in a box and forgotten! "Early day motions" are another kind of petition. They are tabled by a parliamentarian, and may be signed by others, which attracts civilian interest, but they are never openly discussed. Finally, a Government Minister may request an "Adjournment Debate". Requests for such debates are drawn at random, and if it is drawn the requesting Minister speaks on it for five minutes after which both sides of the house may speak. There is no vote. The "Ten-minute Rule Bill" is a bill that is formally presented and noted, but it requires second and third readings in order to pass, and there is never time for these. The Bill may be useful in getting parliamentarians to think about the issue.

Letter-writing is an important part of lobbying. People who refuse to pay the military portion of their taxes write letters to the Treasury and Inland Revenue, and this has resulted in changes to the form-letter reply. Letters may also be sent to civil servants who have persuasive though no direct power. Letters are most effective when the sender is a constituent of the Member of Parliament addressed. To reach a large number of Parliamentarians effectively, therefore,

NGOs need to mobilize members from many constituencies. Oliver has built a network of "Quick Action Lobbyists" from a wide range of constituencies who will respond rapidly to requests to write letters.

Dialoguing with government is distinct from lobbying in that dialoguing is a search for the best way forward rather than an attempt to change the minds of parliamentarians, which is the objective of lobbying. Dialoguing with government can gain credibility when a number of NGOs work together. Conscience (U.K.) therefore has been working with eleven other organizations: BASIC, CAAT, Conciliation Resources, International Alert, MEDACT, ORG, Peace Direct, Peaceworkers U.K, Quaker Peace and Social Witness, Saferworld, and UN Assoc. (full names for acronyms were not given).

Working with other organizations requires careful planning and preparation. Those NGO representatives engaging in the dialogue must be extremely well prepared--Deanna likened this to a Ph.D. candidate being prepared to defend her thesis.

The various cooperating NGOs need to put their own immediate goals aside and agree to one over-arching theme or objective. For the purposes of working with other organizations, therefore, Conscience (U.K.) set aside its goal of promoting a peace tax fund in favour of a common agreed upon topic for dialogue: "New models of Security".

Dialoguing is usually conducted with civil servants, although members of parliament may occasionally be involved. Civil servants sometimes include military personnel, and finding a way to engage them can be a challenge! Being able to provide information of which the military people are unaware will get their attention. Sometimes NGOs through their international links will be aware of military manoeuvres and objectives in other countries that have not come to the attention of local military personnel. This again emphasizes the need for thorough preparation.

Dialoguing with parliamentarians, military personnel and civil servants can be facilitated by attention to protocol. Civil servants appreciate a one-page briefing paper; parliamentarians require none. Use of "Chatham House Rules" where what is said is recorded, but not who said it, helps to build trust. Notes need to be restricted to those present at the meeting and government officials, and not be broadcast in NGO newsletters. NGO personnel must constantly look and act professionally! Notes and memoranda must be double-checked for accuracy, and for correct grammar and spelling. Always leave something at the end of a meeting that will entice those in the dialogue to request another meeting.

In sum, lobbying may often be more useful in raising awareness about an issue among NGO members and the public than it is in changing the minds of parliamentarians, although with luck that may also occur. Dialoguing is useful for finding a way forward; credibility is gained when several NGOs participate together, but this requires careful coordination, planning and preparation.

3.6

Workshop 6: “Arguments and Counter-Arguments”

Led by Koen Moens (VRAK)
Report by Oliver Haslam (U.K.)

Koen started by explaining that in Belgium they have been developing and professionalizing their lobbying. They have experienced increased contact with parliamentarians and have been analysing how they can improve their lobbying. One way in which this has been done is with a focus on the counter-arguments they hear from parliamentarians.

VRAK have started by lobbying sympathetic MPs and now are working on those who need more persuading. Koen presented a document of 10 common misconceptions of the argument for peace tax legislation - a document which has been given to parliamentarians in order to avoid wasting time on irrelevancies.

The common misconceptions document has been revised into a list of arguments and counter-arguments. In the time available we discussed some of the arguments/counter-arguments experienced. Below are some of the points discussed:

- Conscientious objectors want to pay less tax - this is untrue as we are happy to pay the same amount of tax as others but not if a portion of it is devoted to killing.
- COs do not want to pay for the Army - it is not a question of not ‘wanting’ to pay but being ‘unable’. COs cannot pay taxes for the military.
- We have to defend ourselves with the Army - abolition of the Army misses the point of peace tax and is not our main issue (desirable as it may be) and conveniently forgets it is possible to ‘defend’ the country using an unarmed military and/or non-military security techniques.
- How would you oppose Hitler? - Every war is in large part a result of a previous one so we must break the cycle. It was noted that the general public, churches etc. could have resisted Hitler more, both within and beyond Germany.
- Military power is needed to oppose militarism - a military approach to tackling terrorism encourages more terrorist acts and terrorist sympathisers.
- We cannot, as individuals, choose how taxes are spent - In Belgium they already choose how 20% of their taxes by means of donations to charity, rebates on mortgages etc.
- The floodgates will be opened to other campaigns who object to parts of their taxes being spent on things they do not agree with - the peace tax issue is almost unique in that it relies on existent legislation which recognises conscientious objection as a human right. It is also a special case because it concerns the deliberate taking of life (a question of conscience) unlike issues such as having to pay taxes for schools even if one has no children (a question of politics).
- Abortions and taxes used to fund abortions was a difficult issue and was the only argument seen to be at all similar to peace tax. It is, arguably, the deliberate taking of life and medical practitioners (certainly in the UK and possibly in many other parts of the world) have an established human right to withdraw their physical support for such procedures. We were not aware of any campaign arguing for the right of taxpayers not to pay taxes that pay for abortion procedures, however.

In all the workshop was extremely useful and only a lack of time halted our interesting conversation.

3.7 Workshop 7: “Communicating with the Press and the Public”

Led by Oliver Haslam (U.K.); 8 Participants

Report by Gertie Brammer (Germany)

Purposes of communicating with press and public:

- To reach like-minded people
- To reach a wider public for raising more consciousness about our topic
- To have the press create a written and pictorial archives about our concerns
- To get the press to do more research on our topics
- To become clearer in our own mind by looking for simpler and better words to explain our concerns. For example finding positive terms instead of negative ones („conscientious objector“ is better than „war tax resister“): CO to war taxes.

These purposes we can achieve in the press (news articles, feature articles) or in raising attention at events.

A: Press: Types of journals and how to come in, for positive mention:

- National Press:

- Higher quality, smaller public, difficult to come in. For example: An eloquent well-known person tells a very good real story (e.g. a court case).

Lower quality, broader public, better chance to come in. For example: give the journal interviews with 4 or 5 very different activists, photographs included. Among them should be several, but at least one good-looking, pretty young woman (!).

Let the main points be told in the interviews – background as short as possible in between.

- Regional & Local Press:

These journals are fond of any type of topic and theme as long as they are related to the real present-day local or regional level of their readers. Easier to come in.

- Important are:

- # think like a journalist: good presentation. Keep the story short, it must include all main topics; in addition furnish a background article with details, this will help journalists to write their feature article. Make it easy for them.
- # good timing (give a first press-release 6-7 days before event, and a second one 1-2 days before).
- # funny headlines (with a joke in it, with alliteration etc).
- # profound knowledge about the Who-Why-What-Where & When in the press.
- # keep contacts alive (mail them every small development, call them by phone from time to time).

B: Public

Don't be shy – be **effective**! Let yourself be seen, be heard, and let your message be clear and focussed! Let actions be funny and have **quality**!

1. Demonstrations and Street Theatre

At demonstrations our clothes should differentiate us radically from other demonstrators and we should do unexpected, surprising things.

Oliver told about a demonstration in the neighbourhood of an arms fair. He went to the participants of this fair, being clothed like them in banker's suit and with a bankers' briefcase. No problem to come close to the VIPs! Then he opened his briefcase and distributed false banknotes („dirty money“). Immediately journalists were at the spot. His message was twofold:

- a) x-millions of pounds go to the military;
- b) with this amount of money we could indeed do better things: ----.

In the same clothes he went to a festival and attracted the attention of the young people. They were surprised, quickly interested and ready to get involved in immediate action. Here fun is the opening to raising consciousness.

2. Printed materials

If folders etc. look attractive and professional – people will take them. If they are easy to read – people will go through the whole text. Work with photographs and graphics (scanner) – here also quality wins. If you try to put your message into the newsletters of other organisations:

- make it easy for them;
- don't ask for money or membership (the host won't like to lose *his* money and *his* members!);
- ask for action only, and offer more information.

3. Website

It should be very easy to get in and to grasp the message and the main themes immediately. Good examples:

Indymedia; Jubilee 2000 (Jubilee Dept Campaign).

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3.8

Workshop 8:
“Peace Tax as a Human Right:
What can the United Nations and
other international organizations do to help?”
 Led by Martina Weitsch, Kshama Pandey, and Derek Brett
 Report by John Krehbiel, Jr.

Attendees: David Bassett, Vic Thiessen, Bjørg Berg, Hannelore Morgenstern, Klaus Eherler, Ulla Klotz, Jan Birk, Robert Antoch, Ute Antoch, Svend Henriksen, Sepp Rottmayr, Christa Voigt, Tim Godshall, Klaus Martin Voigt, John Krehbiel Jr., Bart Horeman, Nick Wright.

Presenters briefly introduced themselves. Nicholas Wright volunteered to make an oral report to the plenary, John Krehbiel, Jr. a written report.

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Martina Weitsch works with the Quaker Council on European Affairs (QCEA) and brings Quaker concerns to:

a) the European Union (EU):

- European Council/Council of Ministers (Brussels)
- European Commission (Brussels)
- European Parliament (Brussels and Strasbourg)

b) Council of Europe (CoE) in Strasbourg.

[Another important institution is NATO in Brussels.]

Utilizing an overhead projector, Martina Weitsch displayed a map of EU members and potential members. She also showed a map of the CoE with its 45 member countries. She noted that Belarus is not a member because of its poor human rights record and practices. The CoE has

recognized the right to Conscientious Objection to military service. The CoE has also agreed against the use of capital punishment. The United States and Japan have observer status with the CoE. Discussions are taking place with the USA and Japan with regard to their use of the death penalty. In the background of this discussion is the possibility that the United States and Japan could lose their observer status with the CoE due to their continuing use of capital punishment. (The issue of the United States' practice of torture and other human rights violations has not apparently been raised nor does it seem any other state's human rights records are currently in question).

After the workshop, Martina also made available a chart listing the Membership of EU and CoE. It is obvious from this list that all EU members are CoE members. Additionally the CoE has 21 more members, thus making it a more broadly inclusive international organization than the EU. (See annex 1.)

How do Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) interact with the EU and the CoE?

In answering this question Martina showed **Chart 1** comparing the CoE and the EU on five issues.

Chart 1
Key Differences and Issues
The Council of Europe and the EU in the context of lobbying on the Peace Tax

Issues	Council of Europe	European Union
1 NGO Status and Structures	Participatory Status Can raise issues either via NGO Groupings or with relevant committees or both	None
2 Human Rights remit	Yes, one of their main areas of activity	Limited
3 Interest in and Competence for Peace issues	Limited	In the context of Common Foreign and Security Policy; Increasing emphasis on militarisation;
4 Competence in matters of Taxation	No	No
5 Freedom of Conscience; Religious Freedom	Yes: Article 9 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms; Conscientious Objection is not specifically mentioned in this text. However, there is a resolution adopted in 1967 relating to this.	Yes: Article 10 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights but right to conscientious objection is constrained to a recognition 'in accordance with the national laws governing the exercise of this right'.

Martina Weitsch then explained QCEA's **Reasons for Choosing to Focus on Council of Europe** rather than the EU. See **Chart 2**. It should be noted that the EU is still in the process of development and that its relationship with NGO's for example, while informal at present, may evolve into more formal structures and status.

Chart 2
Reasons for Choosing to Focus on Council of Europe

1. Right to conscientious objection to the payment of taxes for military purposes = to right to conscientious objection to military service.
2. Issue of human rights – Council of Europe competence
3. Council of Europe has a history of supporting conscientious objection under Article 9 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms.
4. NGO status – allows the submission of proposals for recommendations and resolutions.
5. NGO Human Rights Theme Grouping allows us to generate support from a range of NGOs before taking the proposal forward to the relevant committee and from their to the Parliamentary Assembly; this gives us a slightly higher chance of success.
6. Broader membership of countries than EU.
7. All EU countries are also members of Council of Europe

The concluding insights which Martina presented were the **Interests of the European Union in this Context**. (See **Chart 3**.) Unfortunately, some of these areas of interest have to do with developing military capacities. However, there are also areas of interest which could benefit from a "Peacebuilding/Conflict Prevention fund that could arise from the implementation of Peace Tax Legislation". Yet, the reality is that the EU seems to be manifesting signs of increasing militarization. This is due in part to Article 40 which calls on members to increase their military capacities. The USA and the armaments lobby are also pushing for increased military spending. It is also being speculated that the EU may be desperate to compete with the US in military capacity for geopolitical reasons.

Nevertheless, despite the reasons for choosing to focus on the CoE for the Peace Tax Proposal, it is still recognized that the EU is being observed as having issues and areas of interest in which we need to continue being observant and engaged.

Chart 3: Interests of the European Union in this Context

- 1. Areas of Interest which rely to some extent on military capabilities of Member States**
 - Common Foreign Security Policy (Council)
 - European Security and Defense Policy (Council)
 - Rapid Reaction Force (Council)
- 2. Areas of Interest which might benefit from a Peacebuilding/Conflict Prevention Fund that could arise from the implementation of Peace Tax Legislation**
 - Civilian Conflict Prevention Initiatives (Council)
 - European Civilian Peace Corps (EP)
 - Conflict Prevention Unit (Commission)
- 3. Militarisation of the EU**
 - Article 40 of the Constitution
 - Competing with the US in terms of military spending
 - No significant progress in terms of civilian alternatives

Kshama Pandey, who also works with the Quaker Council on European Affairs, presented the current status of QCEA's **Peace Tax Resolution** which will be submitted to the CoE. The QCEA approach will be to reference both Article 9 of the Convention for Human Rights and Freedoms and Resolution #337 (See **Chart 4**) adopted in 1967 which more clearly specifies Conscientious Objection (CO) to Military Service. Having established that CO to military service is specified, means that CO to military taxation (COMT) may be presented as "updating" CO provisions. Kshama also pointed out that conscription for military service is not currently very widespread and even when it has been utilized the amount of time for military service is usually only a couple of years. This contrasts with military taxation which goes on during nearly all of one's working life. So, COMT provides an outlet for a person to register their Conscientious Objection for a much more significant portion of their lifetime. Kshama appealed to those attending for feedback on the Peace Tax Resolution (See **Chart 5**) and emphasized that the current version is an early draft and not the final proposal.

**Chart 4:
Resolution 337 (1967)
on the right of conscientious objection**

The Assembly

Having regard to Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights which binds member States to respect the individual freedom of conscience and religion

Declares

A. Basic principles

1. Persons liable to conscription for military service who, for reasons of conscience or profound conviction arising from religious, ethical, moral, humanitarian, philosophical or similar motives, refuse to perform armed service shall enjoy a personal right to be released from the obligation to perform such service.

2. This right shall be regarded as deriving logically from the fundamental rights of the individual in democratic Rule of Law States which are guaranteed in Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

B. Procedure

1. Persons liable for military service should be informed, when notified of their call-up of the rights they are entitled to exercise.

2. Where the decision regarding the recognition of the right of conscientious objection is taken in the first instance by an administrative authority, the decision taking body shall be entirely separate from the military authorities and its composition shall guarantee maximum independence and impartiality.

3. Where the decision regarding the recognition of the right of conscientious objection is taken in the first instance by an administrative authority, its decision shall be subject to control by at least one other administrative body, composed likewise in the manner prescribed above, and subsequently to the control of at least one independent judicial body.

4. The legislative authorities should investigate how the exercise of the right claimed can be made more effective by ensuring that objections and judicial appeals have the effect of suspending the armed service call-up order until the decision regarding the claim has been rendered.

5. Applicant should be granted a hearing and should also be entitled to be represented and to call relevant witnesses.

C. Alternative Service

1. The period to be served in alternative work shall be at least as long as the period of normal military service.
2. The social and financial equality of recognized conscientious objectors and ordinary conscripts shall be guaranteed.
3. The Governments concerned shall ensure that conscientious objectors are employed in social work or other work of national importance - having regard also to the manifold needs of the developing countries.

Chart 5

Draft Peace Tax Resolution (as presented at the Conference on July 9, 2004),
which recognises the right to conscientious objection
to paying taxes designated for military purposes.

The Assembly,

Having regard to Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Right which binds member States to respect the individual freedom of conscience and religion

Declares

A. Basic principles

1. Persons who, for reasons of conscience or profound conviction arising from religious, ethical, moral, humanitarian, philosophical or similar motives, would refuse to perform armed service, if required to do so by conscription or contract, shall enjoy a personal right to be released from their obligation to contribute to military spending through taxes. This right does not absolve the person from the general duty to pay taxes, but allows for an alternative peaceful use of the amount of money that would otherwise have contributed to military spending.

B. Procedure

1. All persons liable to pay taxes have the right to register as conscientious objectors with their national authorities.

2. The authorities shall notify all persons liable to pay taxes about the right in paragraph 1.

3. Where the decision regarding the recognition of the right to conscientious objection is taken in the first instance by an administrative authority, this decision-taking body shall be entirely separate from the military authorities, and its composition shall guarantee maximum independence and impartiality. It is advisable that the existing decision making body on Conscientious Objection to military service also fulfill this duty.

4. Where the decision regarding the recognition of the right to conscientious objection is taken in the first instance by an administrative authority, its decision shall be subject to control by at least one other administrative body, composed likewise in the manner prescribed above, and subsequently to the control of at least one independent body. This shall be the existing decision making body in the area of Conscientious Objection to military service.

Where a person's claim to have a conscientious objection to military service is no longer subject to administrative assessment, persons claiming to have a conscientious objection to military taxation shall equally enjoy such absence of an assessment procedure.

5. The money shall be kept in a holding account earmarked for peace tax, the account controlled by an independent authority.

*

Derek Brett spoke regarding his knowledge of the United Nations. Derek Brett has been and continues to be a CPTI representative in Geneva. First off, he explained that the UN, being a much larger and more diverse body than the CoE, is perhaps less likely to support Conscientious Objection initiatives.

Derek explained, while the UN has a presence in many cities around the world, New York and Geneva are where we are focusing our efforts. The New York UN presence usually garners the most attention because it is where the General Assembly and the Security Council meet and pass resolutions. Geneva is a part of the UN system which among other things addresses Human Rights issues. Geneva then reports back to the Economic and Social Committee in New York.

As the UN system is rather complicated Derek mentioned the availability of the book *A Conscientious Objectors Guide to the UN Human Rights System* by Emily Miles. The book was commissioned by the Quaker United Nations Office and published by Conscription and Conscientious Objection Documentation (CONCODOC). CONCODOC was set up by War Resister's International in 1996.

Though the CoE's resolution recognizing Conscientious Objection took place in 1967, it wasn't until the late 1970's that CO made it onto the stage of the UN in New York. Ghana brought a resolution to the General Assembly to provide refugee status to those refusing military service in defense of apartheid. Thus it was, virtually "by the back door" so to speak, that the issue of CO first appeared as part of a General Assembly Resolution which primarily focused on the crime of apartheid in South Africa.

Partly based on this historical achievement regarding the introduction of the concept of CO to military service and the entrenched militarist view represented in the UN system, D. Brett believes that a COMT resolution in the UN will also have to be accomplished "by the back door".

Nevertheless, subsequent to being introduced as a UN G.A. resolution, the issue of CO has regularly been considered by the "Commission on Human Rights".

At this point Derek Brett interjected that in UN jargon "mechanisms" are in fact persons such as special rapporteurs and independent experts who work and present findings on special topics. While acknowledging the need for many approaches, Derek speculated that an approach through the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion and Belief could raise the question whether or not the widespread rejection of COMT as practiced by Quakers in many countries might be a breach of the right of Freedom of Religion and Belief as stated in the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. As a Quaker, Derek acknowledged particular and personal interest in this approach while again indicating other approaches may be adopted.

Another UN body that addresses Human Rights issues is the "Sub-Commission for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights". This group is made up of government appointed representatives and Derek's view is that we are not currently in a position to move the issue of COMT forward in this group.

A third UN body that addresses Human Rights issues is the "Human Rights Committee" which is set-up under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The "Human Rights

Committee” usually meets twice yearly in Geneva and once yearly in New York. The 18 genuinely independent lawyers that comprise this committee are charged with overseeing the operation of the covenant (i.e. the ICCPR).

If states (i.e. nation-states) have signed the 2nd Optional Protocol to the ICCPR then there are three possible ways of addressing human rights concerns by the “Human Rights Committee”. (It should be noted the United Kingdom and the United States of America are two of the states that have not signed.)

- 1) An individual citizen may bring a “communication” to the Human Rights Committee that alleges a breach of the ICCPR. Around 1992, a communication was received from Dr. Jerilyn Prior in Canada relating to COMT. The ruling by the Human Rights Committee was not favorable at that time and Derek’s assessment is that there is no indication that we could expect a more favorable ruling for another COMT “communication” at the present time.
- 2) The Human Rights Committee receives reports from the states which have ratified the ICCPR. Member state’s representatives then appear before the 18 committee members and the public to respond to questions from the committee for the public record.
- 3) The Human Rights Committee of 18 legal experts may also consider an issue (e.g. Conscientious Objection to Military Service). After studying the issue the committee will then present a general statement of their interpretation of the present state of international law on the subject. General Statement #22 from the early 1990’s is significant in this regard as it indicated that CO to military service may be derived from the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and belief.

Having mentioned these three UN bodies concerned with Human Rights [1) The Commission on Human Rights, 2) The Sub-Commission for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, and 3) The Human Rights Committee], Derek Brett brought the discussion back to The Commission on Human Rights.

The Commission on Human Rights is actually the UN group which CPTI works with most frequently. Currently the Commission on Human Rights considers some of the sub-items on its agenda, such as sub-item 11G on Conscientious Objection to Military Service, every other year. So far, a most crucial resolution by the commission came in 1998 in which it recognized that Conscientious Objection to Military Service is a Human Right.

At this point Derek Brett said it was important to remember that in contrast to the situation with the CoE, only member states’ representatives of the UN Commission on Human Rights may put forward resolutions. In other words NGO’s can not write and present resolutions to the UN Commission on Human Rights. CPTI’s and other NGO’s input regarding resolutions is informal.

Resolutions by the Commission on Human Rights in the years 2000 and 2002 called upon the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights to seek best practices input on Conscientious Objection to military service from states and (eventually, with some pushing) from NGO’s. CPTI has given input regarding COMT but unfortunately the report writer did not make any reference to CPTI’s input.

A current resolution by the commission is calling for input on the issue of CO from wider sources. It is hoped that during the 2006 meeting on CO, that the issues of CO status for those already in military service, refugee rights for CO’s, COMT rights will be elaborated.

CPTI as an NGO with official status with the UN is permitted to make written reports and oral reports which then become a part of the UN public record and are made available to member states. (Please, see attached copies of a CPTI written and oral report.)

Derek then posed the question...Is all this just producing pieces of paper? Gladly it appears the situation is more hopeful. CPTI heard from NGO's in South Korea regarding a case where a Conscientious Objector to military service was facing imprisonment. The judge hearing the case found in favor of the Conscientious Objector. Apparently, the judge cited the 1998 UN Commission on Human Rights Resolution saying it established there was an international recognition of the right to Conscientious Objection.

Following these presentations there was some continuing discussion.

Someone brought up that she has heard many CO's, who are not Quakers or even members of other traditional peace churches, express conscientious objection to military taxation. QCEA representative Weitsch responded that other traditional peace churches are also NGO's with participatory status with the CoE and they will certainly be consulted regarding the Peace Tax Resolution which is in its very early stages of drafting. Peace Tax Resolution supporters and CO's who are members of other churches need to urge their churches to consider and support this issue.

The challenge of indirect taxes and value-added-taxes (VAT's) that help fund arms and militaries is unaddressed by the Peace Tax Resolution to the CoE but this challenge is being seriously considered especially by citizens in Germany.

Derek Brett: ... At this time, international organizations such as the UN and CoE may only express desired outcomes to states and are unable to specify to states what mechanisms the states employ to achieve the outcomes.

Bart Horeman affirmed the Peace Tax Resolution being considered for presentation to the CoE as an interesting and good idea. However, he wondered if there was a precedent for any right such as COMT ever being established by an international body such as the CoE before the right had been established in a nation. He expressed an interest in this question being researched.

Koen Moens reminded us that an effort such as the Peace Tax Resolution to the CoE as suggested by the QCEA can also be supported and advanced simultaneously through all the other avenues available such as lobbying governmental representatives and special rapporteurs. Informing each other and coordinating these efforts on a timely basis is also desirable. The great positive potential in establishing these rights at the EU or CoE level is that then these rights must be recognized by all the member states of these international bodies. Koen offered us all insight, encouragement, and inspiration to each add our own little contribution to this long term effort.

Christa Voigt expressed the idea that CPTI could ask for a new commentary about this article. However, this approach by QCEA towards submitting a resolution to the CoE may be a new way. Nevertheless, it is still important to continue the lobby work with Parliamentary members.

Bart Horeman redirected our attention back to Derek's remarks in which he stated that the first mention of Conscientious Objection at the UN came via "the back door" in a resolution focusing on the crime of apartheid. He speculated that many of the supporters of this essentially anti-apartheid resolution had probably not even contemplated the issue of Conscientious Objection

before. So, he entreated us to consider what might be other “back door” approaches. Furthermore, it may be more effective to approach the CoE focusing on making more resources available for peace rather than focusing on Conscientious Objection. The sense is that more people would readily agree with this focus. There is also a sense that many more people in Europe recognize that peace cannot be obtained by military might such as employed by the USA.

John Krehbiel, Jr. reminded the workshop members that Marian Franz had, earlier in the day during a plenary session, urged us to focus on the victims. Perhaps, we should not be focused so much on Conscientious Objectors as the victims, but rather those direct victims of war who lose their lives, their limbs, their family members and loved ones, their communities, culture and infrastructure. Beyond these countless direct victims of war there are also many other indirect victims of war who for example may not receive an education that would help them meet their potentials because too many of the world’s resources are devoted to arms and militaries. In addition to focusing on these victims, it may be helpful to recall the Preamble to UN Charter which calls for the members to work for peace and security “with the least diversion for armaments of the world’s human and economic resources.” Also the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and chemical and biological weapons conventions all contain the commitment “to complete and general disarmament”. These are commitments to which the nation-states may be held accountable by the human family.

Björg Berg drew our attention to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan’s report of June 7, 2001 regarding the Prevention of Armed Conflict. The essential theme of the report is a pledge to move the UN from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention. Please, see the introduction—presented by Björg Berg—of this report (see annex 2), or better yet ask an electronic copy of the report in its entirety from Dirk Panhuis (<mailto:cpti@cpti.ws>) or consult it at <http://www.reliefweb.int/library/documents/2001/un-conflprev-07jun.htm>.)

A concluding THANK YOU was offered to QCEA for this Peace Tax Resolution idea and effort.

WS 8: Annex 1

European Union (with year of joining)	Council of Europe (with date of joining)
	Albania (13.07.1995)
	Andorra (10.11.1994)
	Armenia (25.01.2001)
Austria (1995)	Austria (16.04.1956)
	Azerbaijan (25.01.2001)
Belgium (Founder Member – 1952)	Belgium (05.05.1949)
	Bosnia & Herzegovina (24.04.2002)
	Bulgaria (07.05.1992)
	Croatia (06.11.1996)
Cyprus (2004)	Cyprus (24.05.1961)
Czech Republic (2004)	Czech Republic (30.06.1993)
Denmark (1973)	Denmark (05.05.1949)
Estonia (2004)	Estonia (14.05.1993)
Finland (1995)	Finland (05.05.1989)
France (Founder Member 1952)	France (05.05.1949)
	Georgia (27.04.1999)
Germany (Founder Member 1952)	Germany (13.07.1950)
Greece (1981)	Greece (09.08.1949)
	Hungary (06.11.1990)
	Iceland (07.03.1950)
Ireland (1973)	Ireland (05.05.1949)
Italy (Founder Member 1952)	Italy (05.05.1949)
Latvia (2004)	Latvia (10.02.1995)
	Liechtenstein (23.11.1978)
Lithuania (2004)	Lithuania (14.05.1993)
Luxembourg (Founder Member 1952)	Luxembourg (05.05.1949)
Malta (2004)	Malta (29.04.1965)
	Moldova (13.07.1995)
Netherlands (Founder Member 1952)	Netherlands (05.05.1949)
	Norway (05.05.1949)
Poland (2004)	Poland (26.11.1991)
Portugal (1986)	Portugal (22.09.1976)
	Romania (07.10.1993)
	Russian Federation (28.02.1996)
	San Marino (16.11.1988)
	Serbia and Montenegro (03.04.2003)
Slovakia (2004)	Slovakia (30.06.1993)
Slovenia (2004)	Slovenia (14.05.1993)
Spain (1986)	Spain (24.11.1977)
Sweden (1995)	Sweden (05.05.1949)
	Switzerland (06.05.1963)
	"The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" (09.11.1995)
	Turkey (09.08.1949)
	Ukraine (09.11.1995)
United Kingdom (1973)	United Kingdom (05.05.1949)

WS 8: Annex 2**United Nations**

General Assembly
Security Council

A_{/55/985}–**S**_{/2001/574}

General Assembly: Fifty-fifth session: Agenda item 10
Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization

Security Council Fifty-sixth year

**Prevention of armed conflict
Report of the Secretary-General**

Executive summary

Since assuming office, I have pledged to move the United Nations from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention. In its presidential statement of 20 July 2000, the Security Council invited me to submit a report on the prevention of armed conflict, containing an analysis and recommendations on initiatives within the United Nations, taking into account previous experience and the views and considerations expressed by Member States. My first objective in the present report is to review the progress that has been achieved in developing the conflict prevention capacity of the United Nations, as called for by both the General Assembly and the Security Council. My second aim is to present specific recommendations on how the efforts of the United Nations system in this field could be further enhanced, with the cooperation and active involvement of Member States, who ultimately have the primary responsibility for conflict prevention.

In drafting the present report, I have endeavoured to take into account the many different views and considerations of Member States expressed in recent debates of the General Assembly and the Security Council on conflict prevention. It is axiomatic that the active support and cooperation of Member States will be needed for conflict prevention efforts to succeed. The specific contributions that can be made by the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice and the Secretary-General are explored in the present report, as is the cooperation between the United Nations and outside actors, such as regional organizations, NGOs, civil society and the business community.

The work of the United Nations system in the field of conflict prevention is not new. Many of the development and other programmes and projects of the United Nations system already have preventive effects or at least preventive potential, though they are often disparate and inchoate. My emphasis here is to show how the United Nations family of departments, programmes, offices and agencies (which have all contributed to the present report) interact in the furtherance of the prevention of armed conflict. Of particular importance are United Nations efforts for enhancing the capacity of Member States for conflict prevention. The challenge before us is how to mobilize the collective potential of the United Nations system with greater coherence and focus for conflict prevention, without necessarily requiring major new resources.

The basic premises of the present report are the following:

- Conflict prevention is one of the primary obligations of Member States set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, and United Nations efforts in conflict prevention must be in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter. Conflict prevention is also an activity best undertaken under Chapter VI of the Charter.
- The primary responsibility for conflict prevention rests with national Governments, with civil society playing an important role. The main role of the United Nations and the international community is to support national efforts for conflict prevention and assist in building national capacity in this field.

- Preventive action should be initiated at the earliest possible stage of a conflict cycle in order to be most effective. One of the principal aims of preventive action should be to address the deep-rooted socio-economic, cultural, environmental, institutional and other structural causes that often underlie the immediate political symptoms of conflicts.
- An effective preventive strategy requires a comprehensive approach that encompasses both short-term and long-term political, diplomatic, humanitarian, human rights, developmental, institutional and other measures taken by the international community, in cooperation with national and regional actors.
- Conflict prevention and sustainable and equitable development are mutually reinforcing activities. An investment in national and international efforts for conflict prevention must be seen as a simultaneous investment in sustainable development since the latter can best take place in an environment of sustainable peace.
- A successful preventive strategy depends on the cooperation of many United Nations actors, including the Secretary-General, the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice and United Nations agencies, offices, funds and programmes, as well as the Bretton Woods institutions. The United Nations is not the only actor in prevention and may often not be the actor best suited to take the lead. Therefore, Member States, international, regional and subregional organizations the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and other civil society actors also have very important roles to play in this field.

I am under no illusion that preventive strategies will be easy to implement. The costs of prevention have to be paid in the present, while its benefits lie in the distant future. The main lesson to be drawn from past United Nations experiences in this regard is that the earlier the root causes of a potential conflict are identified and effectively addressed, the more likely it is that the parties to a conflict will be ready to engage in a constructive dialogue, address the actual grievances that lie at the root of the potential conflict and refrain from the use of force to achieve their aims.

Governments that live up to their sovereign responsibility to resolve peacefully a situation that might deteriorate into a threat to international peace and security and call on the United Nations or other international actors for preventive assistance as early as needed, provide the best protection for their citizens against unwelcome outside interference. In this way, preventive action by the international community can contribute significantly to strengthening the national sovereignty of Member States.

In the present report, I have stressed that conflict prevention lies at the heart of the mandate of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security, and that a general consensus is emerging among Member States that comprehensive and coherent conflict prevention strategies offer the greatest potential for promoting lasting peace and creating an enabling environment for sustainable development. The imperative for effective conflict prevention goes beyond creating a culture, establishing mechanisms or summoning political will. The United Nations also has a moral responsibility to ensure that genocides such as that perpetrated in Rwanda are prevented from ever happening again.

The time has come to translate the rhetoric of conflict prevention into concrete action. It is my earnest hope that the United Nations system and Member States will be able to work together in developing a practical road map to implement the specific recommendations contained in the present report. It is axiomatic that effective preventive action will require sustained political will and a long-term commitment of resources by Member States and the United Nations system as a whole if a genuine culture of prevention is to take root in the international community. The present report marks a beginning in that direction.

3.9

Workshop 9: “Working for a New Model of Security”

Led by Deanne Douglas (UK)

Report by Gea Meijers (Netherlands)

Introduction

Deanne Douglas introduced her workshop by defining the problem with working for a new model of Security: ‘there is information about new models in science and in the field, but how do we get this information across to the general public?, How do we get this knowledge to an understandable level of simplicity and clarity?’.

She then went on to explain that the UK government assumes a nationalistic military answer to security and that it takes this view for granted, not considering there are other ways too. Luckily all Western governments have some small conflict prevention programmes which are a sign for hope.

We should create security by using a toolbox in which the nationalistic military way is only the hammer. We need the other tools as well. Conflicts are complex and not all tools have the same effect in each conflict. Through the conflict in Zimbabwe she discussed 10 violent-free tools of conflict resolution. She also brought with her a paper with a brief of her introduction together with links to more material on the subject.

The 10 tools are:

- 1) **Civilian Protection**, like the peace brigades international.
- 2) **Control of arms export and weapons control**.
- 3) **Trained inspectors** (they can observe in conflicts)
- 4) **Law enforcement**. One can train better the national police and army in the country and train the judicial system, for instance to do something against bribery.
- 5) **Bringing Warlords and Militias under control**. Talking with especially the groups that keep the conflict going, is important. Ask them why they do what they do.
- 6) **Back channel diplomacy**. Also it is good to talk with all parties that have a problem with the conflict. In most countries where there is a conflict, civil society is weak; usually it is the government talking to opposition only.
- 7) **Meditation training**.
- 8) **Reconciliation Committees**. These were very successful in South Africa as most people know, but also in other countries they had effect.
- 9) **Support for civil society**. Sometimes very small things like helping organisations to send out leaflets may have great effect. For instance the civil opposition for Milosovic couldn’t oppose since they had no money for leaflets; if they could have done more, the conflict could have been not so escalated.
- 10) **A free press**.

Discussion

After the introduction, it was time for discussion. One of the first points made, was the lack of political will to use these tools. For instance in the US, but also within the EU there is no money for EU-peace keeping activities. Deanne suggested that the peace movement should try what the green movement have done, making this new ways of security well known and locked into the hearts and minds of people. Through changing the public, we may be able to change the politics

One other point raised was the activities of the UN concerning peace. Some one told there is a global platform on conflict prevention and they have held its first regional conference in Dublin where 350 organisations together with some representatives of governments drafted a 15page

action plan. There are still 14 other regional conferences planned. On a question if this may divert action of give it a boost, some one answered that it can work both ways. Of course it asks time from peace-activists, but you also create many new contacts especially the contacts with government may be of use.

Then the discussion focussed for some time on the problems with finding civilians for peacekeeping missions. Anyone can do this, which is a great aspect of it. But in the Netherlands and Germany they have experienced problems with finding people who want to do this. One German person was of the opinion that Germans shouldn't do this, because of the specific history of the German state; the focus should be on teaching peace in Germany. Another German disagreed with this position: 'we have to act on the conflicts in the world'.

At the end of the workshop someone raised the question of what already exists on human rights and peace education. According to one person there is a lot out there, but it doesn't question enough the military premise. An other person mentioned that in New Zealand they have the only minister of peace in the whole world.

* * *

3.10

Workshop 10: "Churches and Religious Movements"

Led by Reverend/PfarrerIn Ilse Staude

Report by Hannelore Morgenstern-Przygoda

Announcement: We invite members of Christian churches and other religious movements to exchange informations about the latest developments in churches/religious movements and in the process of the „Decade to Overcome Violence“ related to our concern. We also invite a member of CEC/Conference of European Churches with the intention to inform this organisation and to ask for putting WTR on its agenda.

10 Participants: **Robert Antoch/G:** Society of Friends, Peace-group, working-group „Gütekraft“; **David Bassett/Ann Arbor, USA:** Society of Friends, 33 years Peace Tax Campaigns; **Ricardo Esquivia Ballestas, Columbia:** Mennonite Church, vice-president of the protestant churches; in negotiations between para-militaries and government he works as mediator; **Nana Fosu-Randall/Ghana, London, USA:** Methodist Church; 29 years financial officer/UN-peace-keeping-projects, Founder of „The voices of African Mother“; **Michael Held/G:** volunteer, Ev. Diocese Bad Hersfeld: work and coordination for practical steps on behalf justice, peace and integrity of the creation; **Hannelore Morgenstern/G:** lay staff in Industrial Mission Cologne, Ev. Kirche im Rheinland; **Marya Nyland/Canada:** social activist, Unitarian Church, (which is not member of the WCC); **Liesel Rottmayr/G:** rom.-cath., Pax Chrsiti; **Ilse Staude/G:** chaplain for the vocational school/Ev. Kirche Hessen-Nassau; **Vic Thiessen/Canada:** Mennonite Centre London; Chair of „Church & Peace“; Interpreters: **Konrad Borst, Burkhardt Doempke, Brigitte Schneider**

Introduction: Last year Hannelore applied at the Council of European Churches/CEC and invited this year a representative of CEC to this workshop, but failed in both occasions.

Summary:

We started with an overview of the attitude of our churches towards war tax resistance/WTR.

- David told us as a special example about Philadelphia Yearly Meeting/PYM – Society of Friends. On application of the staff member Priscilla Adams the PYM as her employer did not pay

part of the taxes for her. The Internal Revenue claimed for this taxes 40.000 \$ and a penalty of 50%. PYM sued against this claim. Recently the district court released PYM from the penalty. After that the managing directors decided to pay the tax debt; they did not want to let the bailiff seize it.

- Ricardo offers workshops for non-violent acting in Latin-America.
- The UN and Kofi Annan encourage nations and NGO to participate in the „Decade to Overcome Violence“.
- The main question in our stock-taking was: Is WTR an item on the agenda of the „Decade“, called out by the World Council of Churches? The only hopeful information came from Germany. The decade-representatives of the 24 protestant dioceses have dealt twice with WTR and have formed a working group. This should collect material for a campaign, which might include WTR. Presently they long to know about other churches that support WTR.
- Nana told us about the school project which she and her husband have launched in Ghana, where meantime 700 pupils are educated in a non-violent way and which is now a modell for other schools. Her way is: „It is unimportant to what church people belong. I just go and talk to persons, parishes and enterprises.“
- Ricardo points out that churches/religious movements as organisations have to be taken into responsibility for non-violence.

List of next steps:

- Court cases: documentation, precise study and communication about the consequences
- We should inform about WTR our own minister/parish and church organisations/leaders on all levels and all activities of the Decade to Overcome Violence
- Tell and publish the stories of victims and martyrs and positive examples (instead of „heros“)
- Support of the project „Gütekraft“ or „thruthforce“(based on satyagraha): The project will extend and spread the awareness of truthforce (research, education; publishing)
- Bring churches that deal already with WTR into contact and into international, inter-confessional and inter-faith action
- Conscientious objectors need personal courage; they also need encouragement and protection by all of us not to be treated as enemies. We must inform others about the true intentions of WTR.

Request to everybody: The German representatives of the „Decade to Overcome Violence“ long for precise informations about other churches which support WTR, preferably with the name & address of a contact-person. Please answer to: hannelore.morgenstern@gmx.de.

* * *

3.11

Workshop 11: “Court Cases”

Led by Bart Horeman (NL)

Report by Jan Birk (G)

Participants: David Basset (USA), Jan Birk (G), Dominique Boisvert (CND), Lieven A. Denys (B), Jan Hellebaut (B), Bart Horeman (NL), Lyle Jenks (USA), Annemie Nilsen (N), Rosa Packard (USA), Dirk Panhuis (B), Katharina Rottmayr (D), Sepp Rottmayr (D), Christa Voigt (D), Nicholas Wright (USA).

Cases past and current

In **Belgium** Jan Hellebaut is having a juridical odyssey: The 1st judge told him he was in the wrong court, the 2nd judge (Court of appeals in Antwerp) looked interested but told him he was one day too late, and so he had lost his case for formal reasons. Now the supreme financial court (Hof van Cassatie) has to decide whether time really had elapsed. If so, the case will go back to an Appeals Court in another town.

In **Canada** there are few court cases and they are usually brought by individuals. In the 80s there was one case that went up to the Supreme Court. There is no compilation of the cases. Thomas Berger writes in *A Life of Justice* that Canadian courts referred to US cases, which were lousy.

One of the most recent Court Cases in **Germany** was that of Jan Birk in September 2003. He had asked for not having to pay that percentage of his income tax that is spent for the military. This was denied because the use of taxes is the sole decision of Parliament, so his conscience could not possibly have been involved. After a decision of the Federal Constitutional Court in the early 90s, this is the usual result. One way of keeping the number of court cases low is that the authorities will not answer to your demand in any way unless you are persistent. So this case was about the taxes of 1993.

On the court level the conscientious objectors will usually refer to a financial law that gives the tax authorities the right to reduce taxes or collect none at all. It is common practice to apply this on cases of bankruptcy, which is not covered in the constitution but not to matters of conscience, which is covered.

Nowadays, however, several courts are responsive to an individual conflict of conscience. The legal problem is that both the budget right of Parliament and the freedom of conscience are in the constitution.

Someone who is not in touch with us got through all the German courts and is going to the EU court. Another court case is being prepared by the Rottmayr family and friends.

In **Norway** there were no court cases.

USA: The Philadelphia Annual Meeting (of the Quakers) had not paid the taxes for several employees and was ordered to pay the taxes plus a 50 % fine. It took the IRS (financial authorities) to court. The judge accepted the argument of the religious freedom act: The Quakers could have been expected to act as they did, so they did not have to pay the 50 % penalty, although they did have to pay the full tax. If they appeal, they risk having to pay the penalty. The Meeting decided to pay the tax to point to the success of not having to pay the fine, but to furthermore support their employees against the IRS.

The IRS never even hears cases that refer to religion, conscience etc. - which is a breach of laws. Daniel Jenkins told the judge: “I came for what is behind your back (the flag with “In God we

trust”).” He asked the IRS for advice, and was sent to the tax court. He studied old and very old cases in New York State and found some where the military tax was redirected to social spending. The next court will give him the opportunity to appeal to the Supreme Court.

US citizens can’t appeal to the UN Human Rights Committee, because the Government hasn’t signed the Protocol of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Fundamental Considerations

- Our point is “**Where does the money come from**”. If a judge says it is Parliament who decides where the money goes to, it is a wrong reading. But this is hard to make a court accept.
- The consideration **no taxes - no military** should make clear that there is individual responsibility even if Parliament makes budget decisions.
- **Equal treatment** means: Someone who does not accept this situation has the same rights as someone who is at ease, so he must have the opportunity to appeal.
- **Ad impossibile nemo tenetur** (= nobody can be made to do the impossible) is an old and fundamental juridical phrase. In our case: if I am faced with an impossible obligation I cannot be made to pay; and if my conscience forbids me to pay, it is a case of an act of God (overmacht / force majeure / höhere Gewalt).
- It is **oppression**, when a government is making us to do what our conscience forbids.

Fundamental Questions

- Does a court have the **right to condemn Parliament**? In Germany it has, in Belgium it has since last year, in the UK it will have in accordance to European legislation, in the Netherlands it has not. This is of crucial importance as national Supreme Courts are first instances for the UN Court.
- Is the money **raised** for the military **or** is it simply **spent for the military** (see above)? The European Court stated that you have the right to refuse to pay a tax that is used for one purpose only.
- **Which court** do we choose? One judge said: “Don’t come to the financial court! Challenge the state, because this is not a tax case but a human rights case.” The answer will depend on the national situation.

What is there to do?

- We have to **continue to go to court** because even if we loose we have to make clear that there is a conscience matter at stake. And we must organize public support and press coverage. There is a **force in numbers**: A former German minister of justice asked: “How many cases are pending?” No cases - no need to act. We badly need to win a case to get on with the law. Judges are sensible to the question of minority rights, and the freedom of conscience is a legal right. So court cases may be used as a **leverage to force the legislator** to do their job and pass a law on conscientious objection to military funding. And there can always be a surprise! (“In court and on the high seas we are all in God’s hand.” Is a German saying))
- **Hearings** are a means of making our issue and our position visible.
- Available information is scarce—which is a handicap especially for lawyers. We need an internationally available **archive of court cases**. It should be short and give citations. This

means a lot of work that has to be organised. (C. Voigt is starting an archive of German court cases, R. Packard of US cases. CPTI wants to collect the cases somehow, but doesn't know how.)

- We have to make a **list of arguments**, showing among other things what argument beats what other argument. (As an Israeli judge said: "Your conscience doesn't apply here!") Lawyers take the easy way, so if they find that other courts in other countries go in a certain direction, they may follow.
- Maître Lieven Denys (professor of international tax law at the Free University of Brussels) proposes to find a young lawyer who looks for a subject for his Ph.D. There is an *International Bureau of Fiscal Documentation* in Amsterdam that does tax research and might be interested.

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3.12

Workshop 12: "Promoting a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence through Education"

Led by Rosa Packard (USA), about 15 participants

Report by Kay Ellison (USA)

In response to the United Nations declared Decade of Peace for promoting "a culture of peace and non-violence for the sake of the children of the world," Rosa Packard had members of our workshop read a comparison of the culture of war and the culture of peace.

<u>The Culture of War</u>	<u>The Culture of Peace</u>
Power understood as violence.	Power understood as truth force or transforming power.
Hierarchical Authority Chain of Command	Decision making includes and empowers all
People organized to defeat an enemy	People organized to meet human needs
Secrecy and censorship	Information available to all
Male dominance	Men and women equal partners
Economic exploitation for the gain of a few	Just distribution of resources to meet human needs

Rosa led us in three different exercises that would be appropriate to use when teaching people a culture of peace.

The first exercise was for us to introduce ourselves, giving a short example of an experience we've had that helped create a culture of peace among learners. This sharing of ourselves helped us to learn more about each other's homeland, work situations, but also what helped motivate us to learn and teach peace. It was felt that this exercise, because each person got to speak and had to reflect on what he or she was going to say, was helpful in building community, a culture of peace.

Rosa's second exercise was called an "empathy exercise," written by Paulo Freire. In this exercise a question is posed to the group, each person answering the question on a piece of paper. The

papers are exchanged secretly. Then each person takes a turn pretending to be the original writer. This helps the reader to be empathetic toward the writer. The other people in the group respond to the writing. This allows the original writer of the piece to get feedback without being put on the spot or to feel threatened. We found this exercise helpful in not only learning about each other and getting practical answers to situations, but useful for getting into deeper discussions and relationships quickly.

Rosa's last exercise was a listening exercise. We were given a question and a moment to reflect to form an answer. Then we each found a partner with whom to share our answer. The rule of this exercise was to only listen, not to give any response—positive or negative. "No interrupting!" Each person was given 3 minutes of uninterrupted time. Three minutes of being able to speak without being interrupted seemed enough to be able to get the answer across in a meaningful way. We noticed this exercise again helped the people of our workshop to get to know each other quickly.

These exercises would be easily used among people of all ages in any number of situations. The questions can be changed to suit age levels, experiences and situations.

Rosa then gave a quick overview of several educational ideas.

1. Using art to teach how Jesus was born in a war tax time. Flemish artist Pieter Brueghel's painting illustrates this in a beautiful and revealing way.
2. Using New Testament references about war tax.
3. An activity with high schoolers, "Stories of Peacemaking." High school aged students from the United Nations who did this with Rosa most often told stories that came from their own high schools.
4. Websites of groups that are involved in peace education can be used for more teaching ideas. These will be on the CPTI website at: www.cpti.ws.

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3.13

Workshop 13: "Women Working for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence"

Led by Evelyn Nana-Fosu Randall (USA/Ghana)

Report by Carol Carder Krehbiel (USA)

This workshop was originally to have been facilitated by Lynnet Martin (from Bangladesh) Due to Lynnet's last minute travel problems, Nana-Fosu Randall was asked to fill in. Nana introduced herself, in rhyme, as "Nana from Ghana."

Part I

Nana spoke about her 29 years of experience working with the United Nations and her assignments in some areas of conflict, such as the Middle East and Africa. She mentioned the tremendous waste of oil and life and the hatred in Iraq and Kuwait.

After she returned from her service in Kuwait and Iraq, Nana and her husband (John Randall) started a school in her hometown of Kumasi, Ghana. It is a school where non-violence and conflict resolution are taught along with other peace building skills. The school now has 700 hundred students, ages 3 to 14, and 62 staff. John William Montessori School is a family and community affair. The parents are part of the engine that runs and supports the school. The school web site is jwms.org.

Part II

In 2001 and 2002, Nana worked in West Africa as a United Nations official because of the wars and conflict in the Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone, the Congo and Liberia. She supervised and often visited refugee centers. "Wherever there is a war, it is the children and women who are hurt the most," Nana explained. A short video was shown which illustrated how innocent civilians suffer horrible acts at the hands of the military. It showed where social structures are breaking down and millions of people are forced to live in abject poverty and hopelessness. Many children are crippled by the ravages of war. Some children who have no legs were on boards with wheels playing soccer by using their hands to "kick" the ball.

Once Nana saw 5 young women in wheelchairs sitting in front of a supermarket on a main street in Liberia and one of them was trying to feed her child. Some of them did not have hands and feet. It was unbelievably sad. The woman, with the child, told Nana that in an armed conflict some insurgents drove people into the bush. The young woman was shot and pretended to be dead. She dragged herself along for about two weeks until she finally reached help. By the time medical personnel saw her, she had gangrene and her hands had to be amputated.

Later, still in Liberia, Nana saw many people without hands or arms. These had been chopped off so the people could not vote because someone wanted to be president. Power is more addictive than any drug. Those in power are so afraid that someone will do something to them for the destruction they cause.

Part III

There was an active question and discussion period amongst the participants. We learned that on 5 June 2004, Nana launched in a new Non-Governmental Organization based in Accra, Ghana: Voices of African Mothers.

Voices of African Mothers calls on African mothers to say no to violence, crime, conflict, war and separatism; promotes conflict prevention; helps women engage in dialogue on peace building; and advocates on behalf of women and children in Africa. When Nana visited war torn areas it was evident that women and children were suffering tremendously. "Wars do not build nations, they destroy them. Wars bring unnecessary pain, hunger, distress and suffering," says Nana. "There is an alternative to war. This is the promotion of peace, the sharing of resources and creation of understanding among all peoples." The website for Voices of African Mothers is vamothers.org.

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