

War Tax Resisters Penalty Fund

Winter 2017

This is an update letter because we have had no new requests since December, 2016. We are very glad if this means everybody's doing well, but if it means that people don't know about our fund, that is not so good. So we ask everyone who participates in the Fund to spread the word, especially by social media and other ways that will reach more people, especially those considering for the first time how to deal with the moral question of whether to pay war taxes.

Report on appeal #49: (December 2016)

Number of active contributors: 124

Inactive members: 93

Amount requested: \$5,184

Total collected: \$5,995 (115.6%)

WTRPF statement of purpose: *"The War Tax Resistance Penalty Fund provides a process of mutual support through which war tax resisters and their supporters can distribute financial assistance to war tax resisters whose taxes are collected and for whom the collection of penalties and interest is a burden. In providing this mutual support, the Penalty Fund hopes to sustain and expand war tax resistance as a form of conscientious objection to war."*

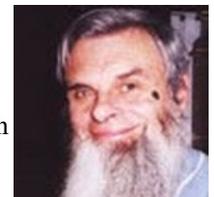
With your help, in this third year of our renewed operation, we have supported war tax resisters with \$5,184 to replace funds seized from them for their war tax penalties and interest. Here is news from the one we have helped this year.

David Zarembka. "I have always been a war tax resister as I started as a conscientious objector. In May 1961 when I was 18 years old, I had to sign up for the draft. This was well before the Vietnam War and I didn't know anyone who was a conscientious objector. Nonetheless as I walked across Shaw Park in Clayton, Missouri, I said to myself, "I can't kill anyone." In 1971 when I began working in normal jobs where I might have a tax liability, I realized that it would be hypocritical for me to refuse to kill people myself, but then pay people to kill on my behalf. I began by deducting the percentage that the War Resisters League considered to be the amount going to the military. Since I was an easy target, the IRS would assess me for the amount I owed with penalties and interest and attach my wages. The War Tax Resistance Penalty Fund reimbursed me in the 1980's for some of these years. I have been a loyal contributor to the WTRPF ever since as I like the concept that we are all in this together so that the IRS can't just pick on one of us (as they just did with me) to discourage us all. In 1989 I listened to Wally Nelson and realized that if I paid some of the federal taxes, the same percentage of those taxes would be going to war making. So I began being a non-filer. By that time I did home repair for a living and so was under the radar. I nonetheless gave my resisted taxes away to organizations promoting life-enhancing activities. In this coming new Trump era, war tax resistance is going to become even more important."



Since we have no new resisters to help with this letter, we thought we would post some information about each of the steering committee members;

Peter Smith has been a war tax resister since 1969 and a contributor to the penalty fund practically since its inception. He and his spouse refuse the military portion of their income tax. "We cannot in conscience pay the money that our government uses to buy weapons and hire soldiers to kill our neighbors across the globe. In many conflicts, both sides are using U.S.-supplied weapons. Although the IRS has seized almost all of our refused tax money plus penalties and interest, it is a price we are willing to pay for the freedom to say NO to these immoral policies of our government."



We are particularly concerned with the latest wave of suffering from gun violence as well as from hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, and wildfires. We believe that militarism is a major factor in all these disasters, Military violence is used as a justification for gun ownership and use. War preparation and execution is the major source of pollution contributing to climate change, thus strengthening and increasing the frequency of natural disasters. Not only do my partner and I refuse to pay for the destruction of lives and the environment but we donate the refused taxes to groups who are helping relieve the suffering. We have also given our personal time and energy to work in disaster areas."

Shulamith Eagle's choice to refuse war taxes is a spiritual choice. "As a Quaker, I try to live in a way 'that there is no occasion for war' (quote by founder George Fox when he refused to pay for war). We strive to 'see that of God in everyone,' and relate to people on that basis. Can I do that and then support any kind of war? Or shoot people myself, or pay for others to do so? Impossible.



I have considered sending in partial payments or a letter explaining my conscientious objection to paying for war, but decided that was like telling the thief I was leaving the house and where the key is.

I think war tax refusal is mandatory for anyone devoted to peace or who is sincere about 'thou shalt not kill.' Many people are crippled by fear of what the IRS will do to them, but the penalties are far less than we imagine, and can be avoided by payment at any time. Be bold!"

Bill Ramsey began war tax refusal and redirection in 1969 while working alongside Quakers in Durham, NC. His decision closely followed a decision to turn in his draft card to Selective Service. He began with telephone tax resistance and then in a response to the 1972 Christmas bombing of Vietnam, he began what has now been 45 years of federal income tax resistance



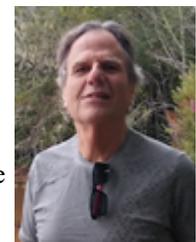
Bill has always understood his war tax refusal as a way to embolden his work with others to oppose U.S. wars in Indochina, Central American, Africa, and the Middle East and to support human rights at home and abroad. Presently, he coordinates the Conscience and Military Tax Campaign. CMTC is a war tax resistance alternative fund that holds in escrow the resisted taxes of over 200 people, invests their holdings in community development banks and micro loans and uses the interest to make grants to peace and justice projects. In 1993 he was jailed for 30 days when a federal judge cited him for violating a probation condition that sought to force him to pay his war taxes.

Bill and his partner, Joyce Hollyday, are writers and live on a wooded ridge outside Asheville, NC, where they active in efforts to provide sanctuary to their immigrant neighbors who face the threat of deportation.

Shirley Whiteside has been a supporter of the WTRPF since it started in Indiana. War tax resistance is a most-sensible means of civil disobedience. Shirley and her partner Byron Plumley have tried various methods of war tax resistance, but for the last several years have opted to W4 resist and withhold a symbolic amount from payment. These moneys are now collected from Byron's Social Security check relatively quickly (after the legally required 'you must have forgotten to pay' letters and lien notices). War making is the greatest evil and the greatest problem for our planet. Even though "they get the money anyway", we believe the act of resistance itself still matters, by whatever means we resist.



Steve Leeds became a telephone tax resister in the 1970's, then a public resister, and has been a supporter of the WTRPF since the late 80's. Steve, a Quaker, now attends Fellowship Church, an interracial and non-denominational community founded in 1944 committed to racial and economic justice. Growing up in the South, 1968 was a transformative year. The events of My Lai, Memphis, Los Angeles, Chicago, Mexico City, and beyond were seared in his conscience and led to involvement with racial justice and anti-war efforts. Over the years in San Francisco, Steve volunteered with the UFW, the anti-nuclear movement, a trainer in nonviolence, counseled young men on the military and economic conscription, the Occupy Movement/Interfaith Allies, tenant advocacy/affordable housing campaigns and other concerns.



To make a contribution to our work: visit www.wtrpf.org Questions: email webmaster@nwtrcc.org or call Peter at 574-532-3720. Since online donations go through Paypal, a \$1.17 fee is deducted from a \$30 donation.

Send checks payable to our fiscal sponsor CMTC to:

**Conscience and Military Tax Campaign
PO Box 2096
Mars Hill, NC 28754**

Note: Please do NOT make your check payable to WTRPF. We cannot deposit it in our CMTC account!