

Join us in making a positive contribution to peace

- ✓ **Become a member of Conscience Canada** (<http://www.consciencecanada.ca>)
The size of our membership is an important indicator of the support for conscientious objection. Membership in Conscience Canada is open to any person who supports its objectives and who pays an annual membership fee of \$10. This entitles you to receive the two newsletters each year and to vote at the Annual General Meeting.
- ✓ **Join online discussions** (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/consciencecanada>)
Stay informed and involved. Our low-traffic email list offers ongoing information on fiscal conscientious objection and constructive alternatives to violence, and provides a network for political, legal, and moral support for conscientious objectors.
- ✓ **Conscientiously object to military taxation through the Peace Tax Trust Fund**
Directing the military portion of your taxes (or a symbolic portion) into Conscience Canada's Peace Tax Trust Fund sends a message to the Canadian government that you want your taxes to be used for peace, not war. The money is held in trust for you and will be returned to you upon your request (for any reason).
- ✓ **Write to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance and your MP**
Request the enacting of Conscientious Objection Tax legislation. This would allow COs to have all of their income taxes used only for peaceful and constructive purposes, and would help financially support alternatives to war.
- ✓ **Educate others about military taxation**
We have pamphlets, booklets, and other materials you can use to promote awareness about military taxation and the possibility of contributing instead to peaceful alternatives. We encourage organizations to write letters supporting peace tax legislation.
- ✓ **Volunteer with Conscience Canada**
You can volunteer in a range of Conscience Canada projects (e.g., promoting CO legislation, networking, education). You can also support the organization more broadly by getting involved with fundraising events, or (for members) by serving on the Board.
- ✓ **Make a donation**
Conscience Canada is a non-profit, volunteer-based group. Donations go directly to educating for peace and creating a legal alternative to paying for war.

Conscience Canada

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How do I redirect the military portion of my taxes?

Some COs deposit the military portion of their taxes into the Conscience Canada Peace Tax Trust Fund. Some, whose taxes are deducted by their employer, make a symbolic deposit in the Peace Tax Trust Fund. Others contribute their withheld tax money to organizations that work to prevent war, protect human rights, and promote justice. In all cases, it is important to inform the government of the objection to paying military tax.

What will be the legal consequences if I redirect the military portion of my taxes?

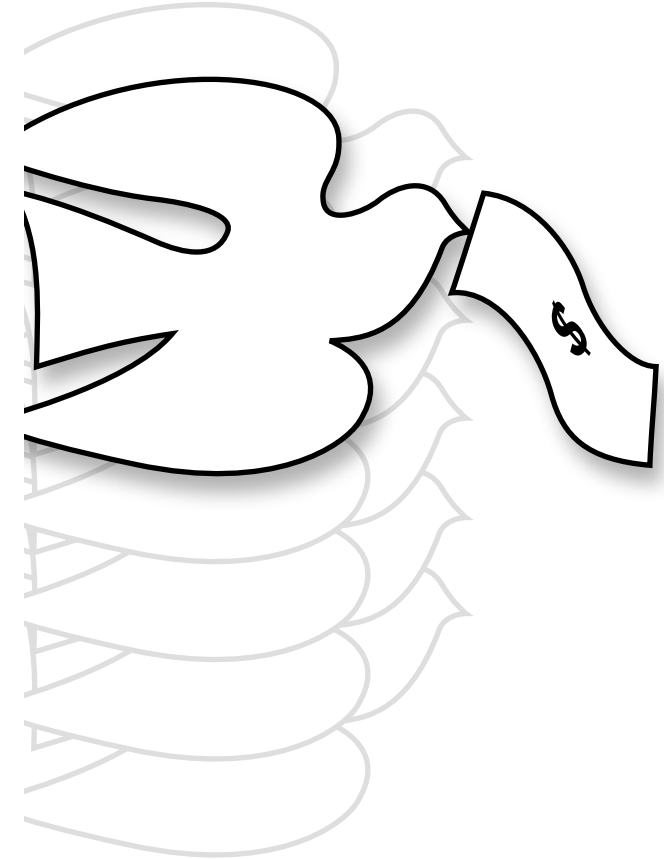
The Canadian government does not currently recognize conscientious objection to military taxation as a legal right. COs who have redirected the military portion of their taxes have encountered a variety of responses from Canada Revenue Agency such as money being seized from bank accounts or employers being compelled to withhold a portion of wages. A few COs have taken their cases to court.

Conscience Canada's network of COs provides a place for people to share information and receive moral support. At any time, at your request, your money is returned to you by CC.

Will diverting war taxes reduce support for Canada's role in peacekeeping?

Canada's contribution to UN-led peacekeeping is only \$36 million out of 1.1 billion spent on overseas missions, and 60 persons out of 65,000 under UN command worldwide. We believe that peacebuilding and peacekeeping must be separate from non-military services with training, organization and equipment specifically for peacekeeping or humanitarian aid. While some COs are complete pacifists, others support the parallel development of a policing style of peacekeeping under civilian/UN control where every instance of the use of military force must be justified.

Conscience Canada



**Make an investment in peace.
Withdraw your financial contribution to war.**

Conscience Canada has worked since 1978 to:

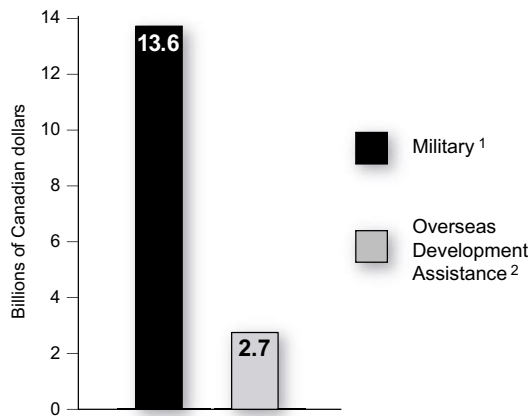
- increase Canadians' awareness of the connection between taxes and war,
- divert taxes away from war,
- support creative nonviolent conflict prevention and resolution, and
- promote conscientious objection legislation.

We ask government to respect the Freedom of Conscience and Religion in the *Canadian Charter of Rights* and allow Canadians to pay taxes according to the dictates of their conscience.

As Conscientious Objectors to military taxation (COs):

- We choose to follow our conscience and refuse to pay for war, to buy weapons or war technology.
- We want our security to be ensured by non-military means.
- We insist that all taxes be used to enhance our common humanity, to build a just world for all.

Allocation of Canada's Security Dollars 2003/2004 (Cdn\$ billions)



1 Department of National Defence (2004). *Report on plans and priorities, 2004-2005*. Ottawa: DND.

2 Canadian International Development Agency (2005). *Statistical report on official development assistance, fiscal year 2003-2004*. Gatineau, PQ: CIDA.

“Why I am a Conscientious Objector”

The CO movement is diverse and there are many reasons people feel they cannot pay taxes to finance war and militarism. Examples, inspired by the American National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee (<http://www.nwtrcc.org>), illustrate this diversity and the positive impacts of conscientious objection to military taxation:

Moral and Ethical Reasons

- To achieve integrity in one's beliefs and actions.
- To respond faithfully to the call of one's spiritual tradition.
- To act concretely in light of one's philosophical and ethical beliefs.
- To reduce complicity in the military machine.

Economic Reasons

- To increase the amount of money available for meeting human needs.
- To encourage cooperation vs competition in the “right sharing” of the world's resources.

Common Security Reasons

- To make a clear and direct statement of protest against government's reliance on military strategies for security.
- To encourage the establishment of nonviolent alternatives for conflict prevention and resolution.
- To model a behaviour which encourages others to reflect and act.
- To join other COs and peace activists in the dismantling of the institution of war and the creation of a new society.

Legal Reasons

- To obey the highest principles of domestic and international law, such as the United Nations Charter and the Nuremberg Principles.

Lifestyle Reasons

- To do something “concrete” in response to the pervasive and destructive dynamics of militarism.
- To live more intentionally and carefully in light of the far-reaching effects of one's actions.

If you work for peace...



COs do not want to avoid paying taxes.

We want to use this money to contribute to the common good, to meet human needs in our communities and around the world and to create lasting security.

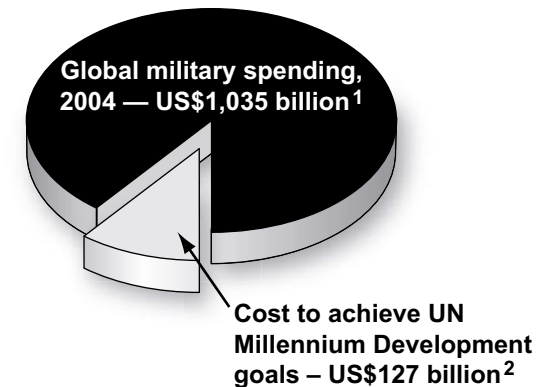
We want to do more than merely protest. General Alexander Haig, the U.S. Secretary of State at the time, once commented while observing a large anti-war demonstration:

“Let them demonstrate, just as long as they continue to pay their taxes.”

Redirecting taxes from killing to promoting life seems like an essential step towards the nonviolent world we are working towards.

Make a meaningful long-term investment in peace by joining with us to withdraw your financial contribution from the institution of war.

Cost of Bombs and Guns vs. Human Needs



1 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (2005). *SIPRI yearbook 2005: Armaments, disarmament, and national security*. Stockholm: SIPRI.

2 Mainka, S., McNeely, J., & Jackson, B. (2005). *Depend on nature: Ecosystem services supporting human livelihoods*. Gland, Switzerland: The World Conservation Union. US\$127 billion is the estimated annual cost to meet the goals agreed to by all 189 member states at the UN Millennium Summit, to halve poverty, remove hunger, put every child in school and stem global health and environmental crises by the year 2015. Canada's military budget, approx. US\$11.2 billion, would pay for nearly a tenth of this cost.