



Conscience Canada

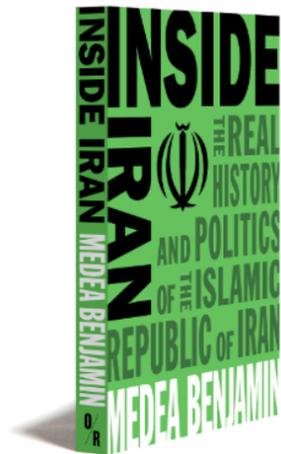
Work for peace. Stop paying for war!
Travaillons pour la paix. Cessons de payer pour la guerre !

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Celebrating International Peace Day in Toronto!



All aboard for a series of peace events from Thursday September 20 to Sunday 23rd!

Thursday, September 20, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm @ OCAD University (Ontario College of Art and Design, 100 McCaul St.)

Inside Iran

A book talk with Medea Benjamin co-founder of CODEPINK: Women for Peace. CodePink is a grassroots peace and social justice movement working to end U.S.-funded wars and occupations, to challenge militarism globally and to redirect resources into health care, education, green jobs and other life-affirming activities.

Benjamin's book tackles the contradictions in Iran's system of government, traces the history of its stormy relationship with the United States, and presents a realistic and hopeful case for the two nations' future.

To RSVP for the talk contact Greta Zarro greta@worldbeyondwar.org

Friday, September 21 from 5:00 pm and all day Saturday, September 22 at OCAD University

#NoWar2018 Conference

Conscience Canada is a sponsor of World Beyond War's 2018 international conference. The theme is how to design and build an alternative global governance system. Workshops, discussion sessions, and plenaries will explore how the rule of law has been used both to restrain war and to legitimize it – and how we can re-design systems to abolish the institution of war and uphold human and ecological justice. View the full agenda and register at www.worldbeyondwar.org/nowar2018

Topics will include: tax resistance; creative activism; divestment from war profiteers; people's tribunals;



#NoWar 2018
designing a world beyond war:
legalizing peace
Toronto • September 21-22, 2018
worldbeyondwar.org/nowar2018

departments and other national infrastructures of peace; Canadian wars, weapons, and indigenous rights; citizen action using the rule of law against war; and much more.

Sunday, September 23, 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm @ Grange Park on Beverly St.

Blue Scarf Peace Walk

Join your allies in Toronto for a peaceful walk through the city to celebrate the International Day of Peace. Along the way, there will be talks from peace activists and community leaders in the anti-war movement.

Seven Quotes from Famous Military Characters

ERIC UNGER

I believe that one purpose of living a long life is to be able to pass along to the next generation any wisdom learned in the present one. In many African cultures, where the wisdom of the aged is still held in high esteem, there are three groups of people: the living (with whom we interact in the course of our work and play), the living dead (with whom we once interacted, but who have recently – within our lifetimes – passed away and remain fresh in our memories), and the dead dead (with whom we have never interacted, but whose pilgrimage on earth has been recorded). Each group passes on its wisdom to succeeding generations. I believe we would do well to listen to those who speak from experience.

My perception of war as a sensible means of human interaction can be summed up in a quote from Blaise Pascal, a very logical thinker and a person of deep faith: “Can anything be more stupid than that a man has the right to kill me because he lives on the other side of a river and his ruler has a quarrel with mine, though I have not quarreled with him?”

Consider the following seven quotes, particularly the last three, taken from among dozens found in “Symposium on War” published by Mennonite Peace Problems Committee in 1927. Those speaking are the dead dead – all men pleading from the grave that we would ex-



ercise wisdom in order to prevent the immeasurable suffering that war brings on soldier and civilian, nation and planet, alike.

1: If my soldiers would really think, not one of them would remain in the ranks. – *Frederick the Great*

2: The more I study the history of the world, the more I am convinced of the inability of brute force to create anything durable. – *Napoleon Bonaparte*

3: My first wish is to see this plague on mankind [war] banished from the earth and, although it is against the

profession of arms and would clip the wings of some young soldiers soaring after glory, to see the whole world at peace and the inhabitants striving who could contribute most to the happiness of mankind. – *George Washington*

4: I confess without shame that I am tired and sick of war. Its glory is all moonshine. It is only those who have neither heard a shot nor heard the shrieks and groans of the wounded, who cry aloud for more blood, more vengeance, more desolation . . . War is hell. – *General W. T. Sherman*

5: The object of military training is to win battles . . . bayonet fighting is only possible because red-blooded men naturally possess the fighting instinct. This inherent desire to fight and kill must be carefully watched for and encouraged. – *“Manual of Military Training,” by Colonel James A. Moss, U.S.A., and Major John W. Lang, U.S.A.*

6: An army exists to kill men . . . it should train its men to a single end. If we object to any of our citizens thus specializing on murderous and unchristian activities, we should abolish the army. If we want an army, we should recognize it for what it is. We should not tell lies about its being a school of citizenship. – *An army officer, Christian Century, March 11, 1926*

7: The longer two enemies fight, the more alike they become. – *unknown*

With which of these voices would you disagree?

PS: An additional quote from a former president of the United States, Dwight Eisenhower, who intimately understood what war is all about, and shares his wisdom from the grave: “I hate war as only a soldier who has lived it can, as only one can who has seen its brutality, its stupidity.”



Conscience Canada joins International Peace Bureau

CC has become a member of the International Peace Bureau. The IPB is the oldest peace network in the world bringing together more than 300 organizations in over 70 countries. It was founded in 1891 and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1910 for furthering the work and spirit of Alfred Nobel to support, accelerate, and promote the peace movement.

The IPB is dedicated to a vision of the world without war. The IPB has worked on a wide range of peace promotion topics, including nuclear weapons, the arms trade and other aspects of disarmament; peace education and creating a culture of peace; women and peacemaking; peace history; as well as related themes such as international law and human rights.

Conscience Canada shares IBP's vision and its belief that by reducing funding for the military, significant amounts of money can be released

for social projects, domestically and abroad, which can lead to the fulfillment of real human needs and the protection of the environment.

This last May, Reiner Braun, President of the IPB, met with members of CC and other peace activists at a strategy session organized by the Canadian Voice of Women for Peace at the Friends Meeting House in Toronto. He talked about current IPB campaign activities, plans and priorities focused on nuclear disarmament and the Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty, NATO, and global military spending and the arms trade. There was discussion on linking

the work in peace movements in Canada to other worldwide movements through the IPB. How do we make our movement bigger, and stronger?

More information about the International Peace Bureau can be found on the IBP website (www.ipb.org). There you can find info on publications, activities, and their Youth Network. IPB newsletters are also being posted on our CC website.



A B O U T

This newsletter is produced by Conscience Canada, a non-governmental organization which 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
- press for military tax re-direction legislation in Canada

The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the positions of Conscience Canada.

This newsletter is available on-line at www.consciencecanada.ca. If you are receiving a printed copy please let us know if you would prefer the e-version (in colour, less expensive!)

B O A R D

Scott Albrecht, Dave Bechtel, Charlie Diamond, Mary Groh, Doug Hewitt-White, Murray Lumley, Jan Slakov, Dwyer Sullivan, Eric Unger

Join Conscience Canada



Membership is open to anyone supporting CC's objectives.

No membership fee (donations are welcome!)

Visit: consciencecanada.ca/membership/

Let us know if you can get involved as a volunteer. Email us: info@consciencecanada.ca

What can I do to stop the insanity?

DOUG HEWITT-WHITE

In a world of ever increasing military spending and violent conflict, the question hangs in the air: Am I doing enough to help stop this?

My sleep is disturbed thinking about the stark similarities between the fascist tactics of the thirties and today's right-wing populists. Then there are the military killing machines powered by tax money. They flourish and destroy lives, communities, and our environment. What can I do to restrict the flow of money to war and warriors – to degrade that torrent down to a trickle?

I work with Conscience Canada so Canadians can have the choice: pay taxes for war or pay taxes for peace. The challenges are immense. Incessant nationalistic fervour pours forth an endless stream of warrior words to drown out any rational calls for peace. Politicians, in clever plays of logic, tell us letting taxpayers choose whether to pay for a war department or a peace department is undemocratic. And I know some peace activists say we are wasting our energy – our warrior leaders will never allow any disruption to a tax system critical to feeding the military.

Yet I know that when Gandhi walked to the sea to grasp and hold aloft a handful of salt, many within his movement scoffed at such a trivial action. But everyone needed salt; everyone had to pay the salt tax. A tremor ran through the British imperial order. That tremor became a quake

**SHOULD WE ACCEPT
THE THINGS WE
CANNOT CHANGE ?
LET'S CHANGE THE
THINGS WE CANNOT
ACCEPT !**

that upended the colonial world.

Today, what is Conscience Canada doing to trigger a tremor through the established tax order that fuels our war machine?

We are working on three fronts:

1. A Court Challenge: we are exploring what legal grounds there may be for a court case that would claim the right of conscientious exemption from military taxes. Our



Ghandi walks to the sea to grasp a handful of salt

supreme court refused to hear such a case 30 years ago. But much has changed since then. We need to push forward to get this before the courts again. It will be a long slow process but we have begun. We now have a Conscience Canada Board Team dedicated to this. And it needs help from members: suggestions, ideas, some of your time? Contact me: hwdoug@gmail.com

2. Legislation: we are working to find a parliamentarian to re-introduce the bill for conscientious objection to the use of taxes for military purposes. This bill received first reading as Bill C-363 on November 28, 2011. We need it back again before parliament. A Conscience Canada Board Team will be lobbying MPs and senators. The team needs help from members: suggestions, ideas, some of your time? Contact Murray Lumley: murraylumley@ca.inter.net

3. Peace Tax Return (PTR): We need more people using our PTR. This is how we turn off the tap. And we need more financial support for Conscience Canada. Membership is open and free. But this means our revenue is very low. Promoting the PTR and effectively spreading the word on tax resistance takes resources. So the Board Team working on promoting our PTR needs your help: suggestions, ideas, some of your time? Contact Dave Bechtel: dbechtel75@hotmail.com

What are you doing to stop the insanity? The question hangs in the air . . .

I do not want to pay for war, but . . .

Doug's update of Don Woodside's 2011 rebuttal to doubts about conscientious objection to military taxation.

1. Even if I redirect my taxes, it won't reduce the military budget.

It is Parliament's prerogative to set the national budget. That is a cornerstone of our democracy. Nonetheless our taxes are being conscripted to pay for war, and we have the capacity individually to signal our refusal to cooperate. Imagine the impact of thousands of citizens redirecting the military portion of income taxes. Parliament would have to pay attention to our desire to pay for peace and not pay for war.

2. If I redirect 9 percent of my taxes, they will take the military portion from the other 91 percent.

As long as the money is in our hands, and we know that 9 percent is heading to the military, then it is our responsibility to resist, even if we can't control what happens to the rest. The most recent private member's CO bill, Bill C-363 introduced in November 2011, states that the military portion of a CO's taxes would go into a conscientious objector account and that this fund would be for any non-military peace-building purpose (audited and reported on by the parliamentary budget officer).

3. The money I put in the Peace Tax Trust Fund isn't doing anything.

Peace trusters can ask Conscience Canada to transfer their deposits to

CC's operating budget for work on legislation, lobbying, court challenges etc. Or they may withdraw it and donate it to any charity or peace organization of their choice. The Peace Tax Trust Fund demonstrates that non-military taxes have been paid. The military portion of taxes

“If COs can be recognized in wartime and assigned non-combat work, then surely COs can be identified for tax purposes.”

is being held in trust for payment into a non-military account when it is created. Their trust money can be returned to a depositor at any time should the government seize taxes owed. Conscience Canada



is a supporter of the Department of Peace initiative. Such a department would offer an ideal repository for our redirected military taxes.

4. If we can do this, anyone can refuse to pay for anything on grounds of conscience.

This “Floodgates” argument frightens politicians, who don't see how they would identify legitimate conscientious objection. However, conscientious objection has centuries of historical precedent in Canada. If COs can be recognized in wartime and assigned non-combat work, then surely COs can be identified for tax purposes. It is also very clear that today our taxes are being conscripted in lieu of our bodies.

5. There is no precedent anywhere for redirection of military taxes.

The clearest precedent was set in Ontario (Upper Canada) in 1841 when, after decades of lobbying, the government agreed to allow Quakers, Mennonites and others to redirect their militia taxes to building roads and bridges.

6. Canada's armed forces are used for peacekeeping, not waging war.

Despite government peacekeeping propaganda, it is clear that this is not the case. Canadian troops in Afghanistan did not keep a peace that did not exist. There is no peace in Mali for troops to keep. Troops are there to impose a peace on combatants. As we have learned from Iraq, Libya and Afghanistan, imposing peace by waging war does not work.

7. The UN endorses the responsibility to protect (R2P). Canada may need military forces to intervene and protect civilians.

In some situations there could be a
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Conscience Canada 2018 AGM

In early spring, twenty people gathered at Conrad Grebel College in Waterloo to discuss matters of relevance to CC. Seven board members attended, and one new board member (Scott Albrecht of Kitchener) was elected.

Tamara Lorincz, a PhD candidate in Global Governance, was the guest speaker. Tamara gave an eloquent and passionate presentation on “The Climate Costs of Canada’s New Defence Policy.” It soon became clear that she is among few Canadians who is willing to swim upstream against very powerful forces in order to expose the direct harm being done to our environment through our military, something our government has consistently ignored. Factually grounded and wide-ranging, her talk emphasized the difference between federal support for efforts toward national security and environmental protection. While almost tripling the amount being spent on military expenditures between 1997 and 2016, the federally allocated amount for environmental security has hardly moved over the same period. And of what



use will a military force be when there is no planet to protect? While she continues to live in hope for a healthier, happier world, it was abundantly clear by the end of her speech that the burden of knowledge through her research into environmental degradation caused by our military was almost too much for her to bear.

Important facts submitted in the Annual Report:

- Mary Groh has retired as president of CC; Doug Hewitt-White has accepted those responsibilities.
- CC has joined with other Canadian peace groups in providing

financial support to the No2Percent campaign. Another contribution was made to support the Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty. Additionally, CC is now a member of the International Peace Bureau (IPB).

- CC board members agreed on the use of a consistent logo for its communications.
- CC has launched a strategic planning process to address important issues (declining numbers, declining financial resources, future directions).

For further details, see the summary of our AGM on our website www.consciencecanada.ca

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need for a policing type of peacekeeper, requiring accountability for every use of force, and having civilian oversight. A police force of skilled professional peace officers could do the job. Training for war is not equivalent to police training to protect civilians.

8. Conscientious Objection to Military Taxation is a threat to parliamentary democracy. It subverts the will of parliament.

We are trying to prevent our money from being appropriated by government for war and militarism. To direct our taxes away from war and toward peace is

not essentially different from taxpayers having the choice of paying for a public education system or, for reasons of religious conviction, paying for a separate school system. This is a clear precedent for citizen’s directing their taxes based on conscientious belief.