

# Work For Peace... Stop Paying For War **Conscience Canada**

Please note new address: 515 Langs Drive, Unit J, Cambridge, ON N3H 5E4 - Tel 250.537.5251  
info@consciencecanada.ca — www.consciencecanada.ca

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## Towards Nuclear Abolition

On September 20, the new UN Nuclear Prohibition Treaty will be open for signing - just in time for the International Day of Peace, the next day.

Conscience Canada members will join with others in various Canadian communities to participate in "citizen signing" ceremonies aimed at getting Canadian parliamentarians to support the Nuclear Prohibition Treaty. So far, the Canadian government is undermining this historic peace initiative. It is going along with a directive from the Trump administration urging NATO members "to vote 'No' on any vote at the UN First Committee on starting negotiations for a nuclear ban treaty."

There are reports that this stance weakens Canada's chances of getting a seat at the UN Security Council. But the real problem is preventing nuclear war. Former Senator Doug Roche reminds us that "the majority of nations now agree that the faulty doctrine of nuclear deterrence must be replaced with a sincere desire to build a global security architecture without nuclear weapons." An Alberta Public Interest Research Group article points out that he was "equally critical of Russia and



Draft Poster for Ottawa's Sept. 20  
#bannukes event

China for maintaining their nuclear arsenals, but said the U.S. has always taken a leading role in nuclear disarmament matters, and is wrong now in plunging ahead with a \$1 trillion program to modernize its nuclear stocks over the next decade."

In an address to the Canadian Pugwash Conference, Roche opined: "The only certainty we have in this life, beyond death and taxes, is the

never-ending ability of humans to lift themselves up and proceed from one era to another. [...] The biggest transformation of all in the human journey is the movement of humanity from a culture of war to a culture of peace. We would have to be blind not to recognize that a culture of peace is gradually developing in the world, and would move at a faster pace if governments merely lived up to the tenets of the United Nations Charter. [...] Not only can human beings affect what the future will bring, we have a grave responsibility to exercise our intellect and will to ensure that the one human family shares the benefits now attainable in the world community. Vision is required to set this course."

Please contact [janslakov@shaw.ca](mailto:janslakov@shaw.ca) (250) 537-5251 or [sstaples@publicresponse.ca](mailto:sstaples@publicresponse.ca) for more information.

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# CC Presidency: Mary Passes the Baton to Doug

*Editor's note: Many thanks to Mary Groh, not only for being CC's president since 2010, but also for writing to contributors to Conscience Canada's Trust Fund. That outreach was successful and Doug Hewitt-White has become our new president.*

*When we asked Doug to introduce himself, for this newsletter, we got more than we asked for - a vision for Conscience Canada moving forward, a vision worthy of our support:*

In taking on the presidency of Conscience Canada I realize there are many challenges ahead for CC. As always our primary focus must be to assert our right as citizens and taxpayers to not contribute taxes to the department of war and instead be able to assign a portion of our taxes, equal to the war levy, to peaceful purposes. But before talking about future work and priorities I want to introduce myself.

I grew up in Ottawa and attended Carleton University. For the past 40 years I have lived in the small eastern Ontario town of Almonte on the Mississippi River. My career centered on the communications field — early on in typography and printing in the private sector and then later on in graphic design and electronic communications in the public service (National Research Council).

Since retiring a few years back I have volunteered with a number of community organizations as a hospice board director, a hospital fundraising participant, a seniors' theatre coordinator and as part of a community group sponsoring Syrian refugees. Fitting all that together



Doug Hewitt-White - taking up the challenge as CC's president

with being an avid curler, paddler, motorcyclist and groundskeeper of a large riverside garden makes for a full agenda.

My interest in peace activism and conscientious objection goes back many years starting with speaking up in high school about the insane brinkmanship of the Cuban Missile Crisis and then later at university marching against the Vietnam war. Now, many years later, so very little has changed in our warmongering world!

So looking forward I want to work on CC reaching out to Canadians to get the word out about the Peace Tax Return and our Peace Tax Trust. The challenge is how to effectively publicize Conscience Canada, the Peace Tax Return and our mission as war tax resisters. We need to employ social media, the Web, person to person contact — whatever it takes!

For me I think it is important that we always keep before us our primary objective — we want the right

as citizens and taxpayers to not contribute taxes for war. This narrow and focused objective is, I think, CC's strongest attribute. It is a very specific niche issue, distinctive of CC.

I know this ultimate success will take a while. I think we also need to think about the short and medium term. What are our more immediate goals? What could mini partial-successes look like?

**1. We want to get the government to engage with us.** We want to be a problem, not just a silly nuisance. The more they engage with

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## 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
- promote conscientious objection legislation

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

An electronic version of this newsletter is available at [www.Conscience-Canada.ca](http://www.Conscience-Canada.ca).

Please let us know your preference.

### BOARD

Dave Bechtel, Charlie Diamond, Mary Groh, Doug Hewitt-White, Murray Lumley, Jan Slakov, Dwyer Sullivan, Eric Unger.  
Newsletter content by Jan Slakov unless otherwise noted.

# CC Activities

Mary noted in her board report for 2016, “maintaining our unique brand [as conscientious objectors to military taxation] or closing it down is becoming a perennial issue for the board”. Although Conscience Canada’s continued existence often seems tenuous, Conscience Canada was quite active over the past year. In Toronto, Murray Lumley and Elizabeth Block represented CC at the annual Hiroshima Day memorial and in Winnipeg, Eric Unger brought CC’s message to the annual Canadian School of Peace-Building. Our DVD has been updated, thanks to Don Woodside and his nephew David. And CC sent in a submission to Canada’s Defence Policy Consultation (available on our website under “resources”). For more details, please read the CC AGM report for 2017, available at [www.consciencecanada.ca](http://www.consciencecanada.ca).



Elizabeth Block & Murray Lumley (photographer)  
at Toronto’s Hiroshima Day commemoration

More recently, CC’s board has participated in three campaigns originating from Steve Staples’ new Public Response initiative: first a #no2percent campaign aiming for “No increases to military spending

- Let’s build peace instead!”, then a campaign to support nuclear weapons abolition and, as this newsletter is finalized, another campaign to support the UN’s recent Nuclear Prohibition Treaty.

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us – from sending polite argumentation on why citizens need to pay their taxes, all the way to getting really serious and setting tax auditors on each peace truster – this is a sign of partial success. Ignoring us and waiting for us to die to go after our estates – that is failure.

**2. Growing the ranks of CC.** We need to reverse recent trends and get CC membership to grow – particularly among younger Canadians. We want more people receiving our newsletter. We want younger people interested in being active CCers and joining the CC board.

**3. Growing the number of Peace Tax Returns.** I see a need to develop information and advice on how a user of a tax filing service can in-

struct the company agents on how to incorporate a Peace Tax Return in their annual filing. We need to work on guidance for objectors on how to arrange for reducing at source income tax deductions so it is possible at year end to have a balance owing – all or a part of which can at tax time be directed into CC’s Peace Tax Trust.

**4. Expanding awareness of Conscientious Objection.** There are countless components of this awareness: CO history, peace history, peace initiatives, our militarized society, military propaganda, non-violence, etc. Social media is a ready tool. It is vast and wide but terribly thin. More website views, more positive comments, more likes and thumbs-ups, petition signatures

— all positive stuff — but the bottom line? Follow the money. More awareness needs to mean more peace tax trusters and peace tax returns.

In closing I want to say how much I look forward to working with our CC community and with all peace activists. When I learned of Conscience Canada a few years back I was thrilled that there was an active and real way of expressing my horror at being forced to support war through my taxes. With the Peace Tax Return I could say “NO! No more!” I want many more people, younger Canadians in particular, to experience the thrill of saying NO! Peace everyone.

**Doug Hewitt-White**

# Inspiration Via CBC's "The Current"

CC board members were inspired by a story broadcast on CBC radio (March 21, 2017). In 1947, Benjamin Ferencz was in Nuremberg as a 27-year-old war crimes prosecutor. He had witnessed the Nazi concentration camps, which led to his "determination that the real answer to the problem is to end war making." At the age of 97, he is still working towards that goal and played an instrumental role in developing the concept of the International Criminal Court. While he is discouraged by the waves of



At 97, Benjamin Ferencz is still working to end war

populism and nationalism evident in today's world, he is still optimistic. He feels that there has been "an awakening of the hu-

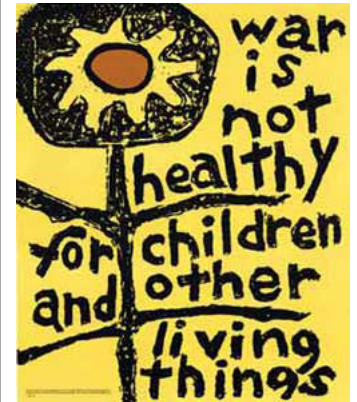
man conscience in the years [he has] lived." And he's sure "people can change when they realize the present path is a pathway to doom".

Quote: "...it takes a while for you to see progress. But it's there. It's slow, it's heavy, it's expensive, it's difficult. But there has been, in my judgement, an awakening of the human conscience in the years that I have lived." ~ Former Nuremberg prosecutor Benjamin Ferencz

## Supporting Nuclear Abolition

Even if you can't participate in a nuclear abolition event, you can help. Letters, to local papers and to elected officials can make a difference. Conscience Canada board members are happy to help with sample letters and more.

Remember....



## Conscience Canada membership application / renewal

Membership is open to any person committed to supporting Conscience Canada's objectives.

Address correction requested.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

There is no membership fee but donations in support of CC operations would be greatly appreciated. Receipts will be issued for all donations. Persons completing this membership application will receive membership privileges for two years unless removal from our mailing list is requested.

Let us know if you would like to get involved in helping as a volunteer, or if you would like more (or fewer) copies of the newsletter, or if you would like other informational material.