



# conscience update

autumn 2012  
issue 143

Image by Rafael Edwards

# in memory of **Brenda Boughton**



Brenda Boughton, Peace Tax Seven campaigner and long time **conscience** supporter, died on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2012, after a short illness, aged 87.

Brenda was very active within the peace sector, working towards peace for many years. **conscience** has letters and newsletters written by Brenda dating back to 1987 when she headed the Oxford Peace Tax Campaign. Brenda wrote the Oxfordshire Peace Tax Campaign newsletter for many years.

SEPTEMBER 1990

THE OXFORDSHIRE NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends and Supporters,

*Brenda wrote the Oxfordshire Peace Tax Campaign newsletter for many years.*



Brenda first began calculating the amount of her taxes that went towards nuclear weapons in the late 1980s and at the same time began withholding this portion of her taxes. Brenda was taken to court on many occasions and in 1989 Brenda opened a bank account

to hold withheld tax money pending outcome of her court case. She closed the account in 1991 and thereafter, sent the money to Oxfam to show that she was not keeping the money for her own use. Since 1991, whenever asked for tax payments above the minimum

collected at source Brenda has withheld the estimated percentage intended for the use of the Ministry of Defence for all expenditures. When these sums have ultimately been removed from her

bank account by the Inland Revenue (garnishee) after a court hearing, the result has been that the sum requested has been paid twice.

## CAMPAIGNERS SET POSERS

**THE Oxford Peace Tax Campaign has been quizzing election hopefuls on their views on peace issues.**

They have carried out a mini-survey asking all parliamentary candidates in the county how they stand on nuclear topics.

"Peace is a major election issue," said campaign organiser Brenda Boughton.

In 2004 Brenda joined the Peace Tax Seven (PT7). The PT7 made a complaint to the European Court of Human Rights on the grounds that their rights were being violated by a tax system which made them pay for the deliberate killing of other human beings. They regarded this as a form of conscription, the same as military service and believe all tax paying citizens

should have the right to conscientious objection to paying tax for the military. They were seeking a change of current UK tax policy to allow any citizen who conscientiously objects to paying for preparations for war to divert that part of their taxes to a Peace Fund.

Brenda Boughton was an English and adult literacy teacher.

***"I'm a pacifist, but I didn't start life as one, but as you learn more about the world you realise it's the way to go, we have to learn to get on with other people. So I've dug my toes in over this. When I was younger, the MoD used to be known as the War Office, and it's a much more truthful description. George Orwell talked about Newspeak, changing the names of things we are uncomfortable with. This is not about defence,***

***it's about invading or struggles with other countries. How can we talk about 'loving thy neighbour' one minute while plotting to kill him the next? We have to learn that wars are not heroic, they are something to be ashamed of, a sign of weakness and failure."***

*to peace  
Brenda .*

# in memory of **Pedro Otaduy Ibañez**

Pedro Otaduy Ibañez, passed away at the age of 53 on 8th January 2012, after struggling with a serious illness.

Pedro organised the Fifth International Conference on War Tax Resistance and Peace Tax Campaigns in Hondarribia, Spain, in September 1994, with his friends from the Spanish movement against military taxation. At that time he became a founding member of Conscience and Peace Tax International (CPTI) and has served on the CPTI Board as Chairman and in other positions from its inception until his death. CPTI is a central point of reference for war tax resisters and peace tax campaigns around the world and helps facilitate communication and coordinate action between national campaigns.

We continue to appreciate Pedro's commitment to the cause of conscientious objection to military service and taxation in Spain and the years of service that he has given to CPTI. He was a gentle and wise friend and colleague.

Pedro was a pacifist and antimilitarist in Navarra, and the driving force of the Campaña de Objeción Fiscal al Gasto

Militar. He devoted his life to learning and teaching nonviolent methods for solving problems and lived these lessons as he faced challenges in his daily life and career. As a maths teacher, and later as the Headmaster of a high school in Pamplona-Iruñea, Spain, he dealt with problems in a peaceful spirit, even in very difficult political circumstances.

Pedro made this a better world by living in it. We will remember him.



*photo by Friedrich Heilmann*

# “the world will be a peaceful place” Sarah, Derby

Thank you to all of you who were able to contribute to our May appeal. In these difficult financial times, it's so encouraging to keep receiving your support. As stamp prices continue to increase, we don't feel we can justify writing individual thank you letters any longer. But we still want you to know that we couldn't continue our work without you. Thank you for believing that the world can be a more peaceful place.

And remember, you can give at any time in the year by writing to us or clicking onto our website at [www.conscienceonline.org.uk](http://www.conscienceonline.org.uk).

Thank you

Phil Rimmer  
**conscience**  
Executive Committee Member

## Taxes for real peacebuilding rather than war

*This article has been written for **conscience** Update by Monica Frisch.*

I've been a member of **conscience** since the early 1980s and on the Executive Committee for the past twenty years. In that time there have been many changes. Staff have come and gone and we have debated strategy and tactics and objectives and mission. We changed our name from the Peace Tax Campaign, to Conscience: the Peace Tax

Campaign and now we call ourselves **conscience**: TAXES FOR PEACE NOT WAR. This describes our current focus on shifting government spending away from the military towards peacebuilding, in the context of striving to create a world where taxes are used to nurture peace, not pay for war. We still seek the legal right of those with a demonstrable conscientious objection to war to have the entire military part of their taxes spent on peacebuilding. But we also campaign for a progressive increase

in the amount of UK tax spent on peacebuilding, and a corresponding decrease in the amount spent on war and preparation for war.

I am excited about the project we are developing which is focussed on getting the Ministry of Defence to explain and change their policies on military expenditure. We want more resources directed to real peacebuilders, the people whose efforts really help resolve conflicts. We believe that this will attract new supporters; people like you and me who believe that we can change government spending policies; who are fed up with scarce resources being spent on preparations for war; who want money spent on real peacebuilding that will really make a difference.

For this project we will be researching areas where defence spending can be cut – nuclear weapons is an obvious one but there will be others – and investigating what real peacebuilders are doing and what activities need more resources. We have already appointed two bright interns to help us with the research. We will then target the Ministry of Defence to get them to cut those areas of military spending we have identified and redirect the resources to peacebuilding. We will also produce new briefings and leaflets to explain the need for peacebuilding – there are too many forgotten conflicts – and the benefits of non-military forms

of intervention. Then we'll be linking up with networks of like-minded people, people who want to make change happen, to get changes in military spending.

We will report more in the next newsletter but in the meantime, check out our website – [www.conscienceonline.org](http://www.conscienceonline.org) – and let us know your reactions to this project. What would you like the Ministry of Defence to cut? Do you know of peacebuilding projects? Can you suggest groups or networks who would be interested in working with us to redirect government spending towards real peacebuilding?

Please email any comments or suggestions you have to: [campaign@conscienceonline.org.uk](mailto:campaign@conscienceonline.org.uk).

Or write to us at:

**conscience**

1A Waterlow Road  
London  
N19 5NJ

If you would like to become a **conscience** Executive Committee member please see the back of this newsletter for further details.

# have you ever considered leaving **conscience** a gift in your will?

Gifts in wills, called legacies, are a wonderful way to support us now and into the future. Leaving a gift in your will is something everyone can do in a way which suits your particular circumstances. After providing for friends and family, why not consider whether you would like to leave a gift, of whatever size, to **conscience**?

All of us at **conscience** want to see the day when we can choose for our taxes to be spent on peacebuilding rather than killing. We really hope to see that day. And we want to be sure that there is a campaigning organization continuing the struggle for the right not to pay for killing.

Leaving a gift in your will can be an opportunity to leave a donation that can make a difference, since it costs nothing now and can increase in value over time.

If you have a will already, you can replace your will with a new one, or add a codicil to modify the existing one. If you want to write a will for the first time, you may like to consult a legal professional, although this isn't a requirement. You can find out more by contacting The Co-operative Legal Services

[www.co-operative.coop/legalservices](http://www.co-operative.coop/legalservices)  
or by contacting Claire Reddeman,  
Fundraising and Membership Officer,  
on 020 3515 9132 or  
[development@conscienceonline.org.uk](mailto:development@conscienceonline.org.uk)

**thank you**



# peace tax

## beyond hypothecation

In our last issue of *conscience Update* we included a political briefing on tax hypothecation. The briefing referred to conscience as an organisation that was campaigning for tax hypothecation. In response to this we would now like to explain to our members why we advocate for Peace Tax and not hypothecation and why we still need to work towards educating politicians on Peace Tax.

Hypothecation is the process of assigning tax revenues to a specific end. **conscience** advocates for an update in the law so that those with a conscientious objection to military taxation can have the part of their taxes that currently go towards war and the preparations for war go to other forms of security instead. We are not campaigning for a change in the *amount* spent on security and defence, but a change in the way the money is spent. We believe that there are other more effective (and cheaper) ways of providing national security that do not require our taxes being used to kill.

A common argument used against our proposal is that if conscientious objectors won the right to divert taxes away from military expenditure, a

range of other groups and individuals would demand a similar right to divert their taxes away from paying for state education, new roads or the NHS, for example. Essentially, that the floodgates would open to others demanding similar rights. However, the peace tax case is different to others for a number of reasons. The major difference being that the military intentionally kill and harm people as part of their role, no other area of government spending does so.

Secondly, the desire not to contribute to state education, for example, or not to contribute to road building via taxes, is a political objection, not one based on conscience. There are very few areas where the claim of conscience is recognised in law. One is conscientious objection to military service, the right we are trying to extend to cope with the changed nature of warfare. Another is the right of Sikhs being exempt from wearing motorcycle helmets as this would force them to remove their turbans. Before capital punishment was abolished in the UK one also had the right to refuse to perform executions. Intentional killing holds because we are not talking about political objections but those driven by conscience that



*photo by Claire Reddleman*

also have a legislative precedent (conscientious objection to military service was recognised by Parliament in 1916).

Thirdly, there is parliamentary precedent from the 1916 Military Service Act. This Act introduced military conscription for the majority but by establishing the right to conscientious objection also recognised the rights of a minority to not be complicit in killing. When conscientious objection was recognised in 1916, a form of 'alternative service' was available to conscientious objectors e.g. working for an ambulance service. That choice of alternative service is not available to present day conscientious objectors, who are required to pay for the military regardless of matters of conscience. We are asking for a new form of alternative service: one that allows conscientious objectors to pay the military part of their taxes to a non-military fund

and thus providing a means by which conscientious objectors can contribute to security and safety in good conscience.

Finally, because Peace Tax provides for a conscientiously acceptable – and more effective and efficient – alternative it has no negative impact on the government's job of providing security for the nation as a whole. Assuming we succeed with the update in the law, anyone aiming to use it as a precedent would have to follow a similar model i.e. they would have to provide a comparable alternative. Therefore, there would be no legal basis for withholding taxes or diverting them into an unrelated area.

We obviously still need to get this message across to our politicians so please in your correspondence with your local MP refer to this in stating why Peace Tax is so important.

# financial position 2011

	2011	2011	2011	2010
	Restricted	Unrestricted	TOTAL	TOTAL
INCOME	£	£	£	£
Donations and legacies		42,540		56,621
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	12,500			
Grants, including QPSW		3,500		5,500
Sundry, including interest		15		902
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>46,055</b>	<b>58,555</b>	<b>63,023</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
Premises		(3,836)	(3,836)	(4,594)
Office costs		(2,973)	(2,973)	(3,110)
Staffing		(35,055)	(35,055)	(50,248)
Fundraising		(346)	(346)	(845)
Membership		(173)	(173)	(1,730)
Campaigning		(1,770)	(1,770)	(6,327)
Governance		(1,014)	(1,014)	(1,635)
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>(45,167)</b>	<b>(45,167)</b>	<b>(68,489)</b>
Net income/ (expenditure)		888	13,388	(5,466)
Total funds brought forward		6,986	6,986	12,452
Total funds carried forward	12,500	7,874	20,374	6,986

As the in-coming Treasurer I would like to acknowledge the prudent management of finances by my predecessor, Monica Frisch, which has turned around a working deficit of over £5,000 in 2010 to a small surplus in 2011. This was achieved by reducing staffing and by moving to a smaller office with lower overheads. The full effect of reduced expenditure will be seen in the 2012 accounts.

The large grant from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust was made in order for **conscience** to employ

a consultancy for marketing and fundraising. This project was completed in June 2012 and we are using the findings in our current work. It is my belief that with campaigning methods aimed at likely future supporters **conscience** will enable its message to reach a much wider audience. Our staff remain our greatest asset and I would like to thank them for taking on extra responsibilities following the economies made in 2011.

**Iain Farrell, Treasurer**  
**September 2012**

**conscience** is not a charity, but we still produce transparent public accounts that meet charity law. The figures on page 9 (in £) are a summary of our Statement of Financial Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011. If you would like a copy of the full, examined, accounts or if you have any questions, please contact us.

For maximum transparency and accountability we always ask our members to approve our annual accounts. Please take a moment to look at page 9 of this issue and then answer the question below, tear off the slip and return to:

**conscience**

FREEPOST LON18505  
London  
N19 5BR

Do you accept the accounts on page 9 of **conscience** update?

yes

no

Your name:

# conscience ec recruitment

**conscience:** TAXES FOR PEACE NOT WAR is looking for new members to join its Executive Committee (EC), which manages the work of **conscience**.

EC membership involves: attending four EC meetings a year to discuss and make decisions on matters such as policy, strategy and finance and working with other EC members and the staff to agree the framework that guides the activities of staff.

We are looking for someone who is enthusiastic and committed to helping **conscience** achieve its aims of ensuring taxes are used for peace not war; and who can bring their skills, experience and new ideas to contribute to the broad range of people that makes up the EC.

If you think you could contribute to the work of **conscience** then we would love to hear from you. Please contact us at [info@conscienceonline.org.uk](mailto:info@conscienceonline.org.uk) or call 020 3515 9132.

**conscience** TAXES FOR PEACE NOT WAR works for a world where taxes are used to nurture peace, not pay for war.

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