



National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee (NWTRCC)

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PRESS RELEASE

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Refusing to Pay for War and Weapons “War Tax Resisters” Protest with their Money

On April 15 people in communities across the United States will be leafleting, marching, doing street theatre, committing civil disobedience, and picketing at post offices, IRS offices, federal buildings calling attention to what they see as the harmful effects of military spending. A list of U.S. Tax Day events can be found at <http://www.nwtrcc.org/taxday2014.php>.

Many of these actions include individuals who are refusing to pay for war as an act of civil disobedience, a protest made famous in this country by Henry David Thoreau. For several years, he refused to pay a \$1 poll tax that supported the Mexican-American War, once resulting in a night in jail.

Today the stakes are higher — both in weaponry and in refused taxes. While some people make their protest by refusing just \$1 of income taxes due, others refuse to send hundreds or thousands of dollars to the federal government. These people often say, “I pay my taxes, just not to the IRS,” because they donate the money to humanitarian groups. Many pool their refused taxes and hold ceremonies to give grants to organizations that fund human needs and peace and justice projects.

The Conscience and Military Tax Campaign, based in Asheville, North Carolina, is granting \$10,900 to 18 organizations, including Veterans for Peace, an urban farm, Virginia Student Power Network, and peacemaker trainings for African conflict zones. Bill Ramsey, who administers the fund, says, “Redirection is our version of Gandhi's constructive program. It is the fruit of our deeply rooted resistance.”

Across the country in Portland, Oregon, for the 11th year John and Pat Schwiebert will deliver their redirected taxes to the Multnomah County Commissioners, a gift to the county to “promote the general welfare.” As their annual letter explains, “loving others cannot, by any stretch of morality or logic, include killing them or paying for others, including our government, to kill them...hence this need to redirect the amount the IRS says we owe to this local government body.”

Also in Portland, other individuals figure their taxes and then collect their “taxes due” into one fund. Together they choose how to distribute the money. On April 12, 2014, their "Redirection Program" will feature the granting of over \$6,000 to five groups. Resisters in Eugene have a similar process, and longtime Eugene activist Peg Morton says, “It means a lot to me to be able to redirect my taxes to life-giving groups and to have them receive these donations knowing where they come from.”

Other such ceremonies take place from Boston to Berkeley, along with tax day events like a circus in Denver, a “Human Penny Poll” in Austin, and a parade with a marching band in New York City.

The National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee (NWTRCC), founded in 1982, is a coalition of local, regional and national groups providing information and support to people who are conscientious objectors to paying taxes for war. NWTRCC publicizes antiwar, tax day protests and supports individual resisters.

Tax day in the U.S. coincides with the annual Global Day of Action on Military Spending. See the action list at <http://www.nwtrcc.org/taxday2014.php>.

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*War tax resisters are available for interviews.
Please contact NWTRCC, 1-800-269-7464, if you need contacts in your area.*