

• ARE YOU
PRAYING
FOR PEACE
BUT STILL
PAYING
FOR WAR?



CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

Many Christians have come to believe that Christian Stewardship is incompatible with paying taxes to be used for war preparations.

WHAT CHURCHES SAY

"War as a method of settling international disputes is incompatible with the teaching and example of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Lambeth 1930, 1948, 1968, 1978.

"Today, the scale and horror of modern warfare – whether nuclear or not – makes it totally unacceptable as a means of settling differences between nations. War should belong to the tragic past, to history; it should find no place in humanity's agenda for the future."

Pope John Paul, Coventry 1982.

"The doctrine of deterrence based upon the prospect of mutual assured destruction is increasingly offensive to the Christian conscience... Military budgets make demands which are a denial of Christian understanding of how resources are to be used."

British Council of Churches, 1980.

A LONG TRADITION

The Early Church saw Caesar's tax for the pagan temple in Rome as a temptation to idolatory. Many refused payment and were severely punished. Under the 4th Century Roman Emperor Constantine, Christianity became identified with the State, severely hampering its ability to criticise government. It was not until the 16th Century that a significant revival of Christian conscience brought the

issue of taxes for war into the forefront of some Christians' lives. This was particularly true for the Anabaptists and similar groups of persecuted Christians in Central Europe. By standing up for their rights of religious freedom based on Biblical teachings, they paved the way for religious freedom in this country. They held strongly to the principle of the supremacy of Christian teaching when it ran counter to the orders of the State.

The Mennonites, Huttarian Brethren and Quakers continue this tradition today. What of the other

ches in Britain?

"My soul has been too long:
among those who are enemies to peace.
I am for peace but when I speak of it:
they make themselves ready for war."
(Psalm 120, vs 5 and 6.)

IF YOU PRAY FOR PEACE, MAKE DECLARATIONS AND PASS RESOLUTIONS – IS THAT ENOUGH?

WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT IS, and we urge Christians to turn minds and conscience towards this

vital area of their stewardship.

To many, being obedient to the laws of our coory is generally recognised as 'following the Gospel'. However, conflicts between allegience to God and to government do arise and deserve our deepest consideration. The apostle Peter's declaration that we must "obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29) summarises many Christians' approach to this problem of conscience. While the apostle Paul seems to describe the government in Romans 13 as the limited instrument of good, he ends the passage with a declaration about the overarching demands of love, "Love never does any wrong to the neighbour, hence love is the fulfilment of the law."

Though not the only action one might take, refusal to pay taxes for war can be an essential act of love, a means of preventing the suffering of others.

Christ's life and teaching stand in stark contrast to the way of violence. In the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25-37) he made it quite clear that the commitment to love our neighbour is both far reaching and practical, love as Christ taught it is concrete action.

ACTION AS A CHRISTIAN WITNESS



There is much you can do:

* Include a letter of protest with your Tax Return.

* Lobby your MP, both personally and in church groups.

* Pray for guidance if your group is divided on the

issue.

* Discuss and share thoughts on the Christian way

of love, peace and justice.

* Support the PEACE TAX CAMPAIGN by subscription and commitment to the PEACE BUILDING FUND.

* Request speakers from the PEACE TAX CAM-PAIGN for church groups.

* Become a War Tax Resister.

Some people may want to withhold or re-dire part of their taxes now. They should be aware that War Tax Resistance is an act of civil disobedience and should not be undertaken without knowledge

of the possible consequences.

Following the example of Christ's teaching, we must be willing to accept the consequences of the actions we take in obedience to the higher law of God. The Peace Tax Campaign can put you in touch with counsellors and lawyers who can help you explore the various methods and related consequences in order to discover the one best suited to your circumstances.

The Peace Tax Campaign believes that pacifists should not be forced to contribute through their taxes to the military budget. This is a human rights issue deserving support even from those who would not describe themselves as pacifists.

The Campaign aims, therefore, to persuade Parliament to introduce legislation allowing people conscientiously opposed to war to have the military part of their taxes allocated to a Peace Building Fund.

The Peace Tax Campaign recommends that the Peace Building Fund be used to finance non-nilitary ways of maintaining peace.

1 1/we would like to be sent more information

about the Peace Tax Campaign.
[] I/we would like to become members of the Peace Tax Campaign and enclose the sum of £ as membership subscription (suggested subscription rate is £1.00 per £1,000 income).
Please use block capitals
Name(s)
Address
Postcode
Telephone

Peace Tax Campaign

1a Hollybush Place, London E2 9QX.

Tel: 01 739 5088.

A PRAYER

God Of Peace,
whose Son brought us the victory
by obeying your will of love,
strengthen us that we might grow
in obedience to your laws
alone,

giving us respect for those with whom in all conscience we must disagree;

that your way of love may be seen in the hearts and the laws of all peoples;

that all our talents and taxes may be used for the benefit of humankind;

that we may draw nearer to the fulfilment of your Kingdom of justice and peace promised by your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.





18/07/93 Dear Mr Ancer. Please excuse our tardiness in responding to your mustaken. we do, however, extend our very best mushes to the E. (. (. on the occasion of its 10th Birthday celebration. Me commend your organisation for 10 years of romagions struggle jer peace and justile in our wientry. we offer our rentinued support you the ware you do in striving towards a non-vident Suriere regards The Albany Black Saxh

The Black Sash is a South African Women's Organisation committed to Human Rights, Peace and Justice for all.

Sold in aid of The Albany Black Sash

The following alterations have been made to the programme:

- Page 6 Community Initiatives Against Violence
 The chair, Sheila Sisulu, will be replaced by Howard Varney from the Human Rights Commission. Jacob Dlomo will not be available and Royal Lekoba from Peace Action will be part of the panel.
- Page 7 A National Peace Keeping Force Indarin Govender from Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR) will be replaced by Aubrey Lekwane, also from LHR.
- Page 8 After Elections in Angola What can we learn? Gwen Lister will not be available.
- Page 9 Ensuring Free and Fair Elections
 Gwen Lister will not be available. Maxwell Nemadzivhanani
 (PAC) will be replaced by Bennie Ntoele, also from the PAC.
- Page 10 Intelligence Organisations and Disclosure
 Jacques Pauw will be replaced by David Bruce from ECC.
 The MK speaker is Mojo.
- Page 12 The Police as Peace Keepers

 Maxwell Nemadzivhanani (PAC) will be replaced by Abel
 Dube from the PAC. Vincent Mntambo will not be available.

 Alfred Woodington, COSATU representative to the
 Community Policing Commission, will be part of the panel.
- Page 13 **The Right Wing**The chair will be Anton Roskam. Cas Human, a regional executive member of the ANC, will be part of the panel.
- Page 24 A New Anti-Militarisation Movement?

 This workshop will be chaired by Mandy Taylor of ECC.

ORGANISATIONS

ANCYL ANCWL

ANC PEACE DESK

SACP

DEMOCRATIC PARTY

PAC NP IFP

CONSERVATIVE PARTY

PEACE ACTION

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SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENCE REVIEW

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