



# The Reporter for Conscience' Sake

The Center on  
Conscience & War

Working to extend and defend the rights of Conscientious Objectors to war since 1940

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## Making Peace at Patapsco

### Celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the First Civilian Public Service Camp at Patapsco State Park

In 1917, a young Quaker conscientious objector who had been drafted wrote this report to his church of what had befallen him in [Army Training] Camp Cody: "I have been stripped and scrubbed with a broom, put under a faucet with my mouth held open, had a rope around my neck and pulled up choking tight for a bit, been fisted, slapped, kicked, carried a bag of sand and dirt until I could hardly hold it and go, have been kept under a shower bath until pretty chilled. If this information will do no good for others, thee may just burn this letter and let it go."

The letter wasn't burned, but it did spark a movement, one to end the brutal treatment of conscientious objectors to war. A crowning achievement of this movement took place on May 15, 1941 in what is now Patapsco State Park: the opening of the country's first civilian-directed, non-military, alternative service camp for drafted conscientious objectors.

The first Civilian Public Service (CPS) camp, like most of the CPS camps, utilized an abandoned Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp. The CCC was a cornerstone of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal during the Great Depression.

During that time, over a quarter of the population was unemployed, hungry and facing a very bleak future.

The CCC provided young men with a paycheck, 3 meals a day, and work experience. The camp at Patapsco was one of the original CCC camps, and was named for Senator Millard F. Tydings (later Governor of Maryland) who attended the official dedication in 1933.

After the CCC camp closed in 1938, it was operated briefly by the National Youth Administration. The NYA was another New Deal program that sought to address the high levels of unemployment among youth during the depression. It aimed to combine economic relief with on-the-job training in federally funded work projects designed to provide youth with marketable skills for the future. When the conscientious objectors (COs) arrived there in 1941, the story made national headlines.



The Patapsco camp (CPS Camp #3) was administered by the American Friends Service Committee, a Quaker service agency, and within a week of its opening, more than 50 COs had arrived at the camp that was equipped to house 100. One hundred fifty-four conscientious objectors would eventually serve at Patapsco and they represented a variety of religious traditions: Methodist, Quaker, Catholic, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Jehovah's Witnesses, Christadelphians, Congregationalists, and various smaller faith traditions. The camp was racially integrated from the beginning. Paul Comly French, the executive secretary

of the National Service Board for Religious Objectors (the original name of the Center on Conscience & War) told the Associated Press that this was "a great opportunity for the churches of America.... and in days to come that may be more important than we now realize."

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*Founded in 1940, the Center on Conscience & War works to extend and defend the rights of conscientious objectors to war. In pursuit of this mission, the Center provides the following services free of charge:*

- Technical and community support for military conscientious objectors;
- Monitoring of Congress and Selective Service to extend and defend the rights of conscientious objectors;
- Support for COs who refuse to register for the draft;
- Counseling military personnel with accuracy and honesty through the GI Rights Hotline;
- Truth in military recruitment information;
- Workshops, training, and speakers on any of the above topics.

\* \* \*

# The Reporter

*Patapsco CPS camp 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, continued from cover*

Under the dateline, Relay, Md. May 15, the *Washington Post* reported, "In a peaceful Maryland valley, America today opened its first encampment for men willing to work, but not fight for their country. By night, 23 Selective Service registrants whose local boards had certified them as 'conscientiously opposed to participation in either combatant or noncombatant service' had moved into a one-time CCC camp 1 mile west of here and a bare 10 miles from the troop-crammed home of the twenty-ninth Division at Fort Meade." It was common for media coverage at the time to draw a contrast between the CPS camp at Patapsco and military training sites. One paper reported, "The conscientious objectors' schedule is identical with that of the army except, of course, for drilling and for a 20 minute period of meditation after breakfast at 6 a.m. ... Then the draftees—for that's what they are—deploy to duty. Right now many of them are working on the camp itself, putting up screens, installing stoves, repairing roofs, building shelves and cabinets ... When the camp is spic and span the COs will spend their days in reforestation, transplanting seedlings from a nearby nursery, landscaping, building rest rooms and drinking fountains for the park. They work as hard as any buck private at Fort Meade or Camp Lee." Other projects assigned to the CPS camp included building a stable, bathhouses, an outdoor museum, three public shelters and six public latrines; repairing park buildings; installing water systems; building seventy-five fireplaces; constructing roads and trails, with necessary ditches; installing guard rails along the roads; planting thirty acres of trees and improving 150 acres of land; clearing five miles of fire lines; making a parking area; marking boundaries; making maps; fighting forest fires and surveying the park. A few traveled to College Park, Maryland every day to work in a nursery.

As reported by the *Washington Daily News* on August 24, 1941, Patapsco Forest Superintendent David O. Price who "was looking forward glumly to riding herd on an assortment of freaks and malcontents is still rubbing his eyes over his protégés' habit of getting jobs done in about half the scheduled time—and without taking orders from anyone." Price told a *Saturday Evening Post* reporter, "I guess I was expecting a lot of freaks, but they've turned out to be the best bunch yet. I had CCC boys for five years, and NYA boys for two years and these conchies are the best yet." (Conchie was a slang term used for conscientious objectors at the time. It often had a negative connotation.)

When they weren't hard at work, the COs played basketball in the gym at Catonsville Presbyterian Church, and fielded a winning baseball team, including winning a well-attended game against a team from Fort Meade. Evenings, while officially free time, often included educational opportunities, and many discussions of the heavy issues facing the world went late into the night.

While there was a diversity of perspectives within the campers, idealism like that expressed by John Burrows was shared by many: "I believe that the power of human and divine love can overcome the problems that lead to war. I believe it is possible for men to devote the same energies wasted in war to the making of a better world. By constructive service to impoverished people everywhere, by the repairing of damage done in a world of violence, by a more unselfish way of living, men can serve a higher cause."

The conscientious objectors were aware that their beliefs were not generally popular in a country that was swept into war fervor. With the "Boogie-woogie bugle boy from company B" and "Rosie the Riveter" becoming popular icons of the culture, the COs were concerned



*COs relax by the fireplace, which is still standing today, as pictured on p. 8.  
 Photos: AFSC Papers,  
 Swarthmore Peace Collection.*

about how they were perceived in the broader community. In fact, many later CPS camps were intentionally located in remote areas to minimize the interaction of COs with the general public. The Patapsco camp was unusual in its close proximity to Baltimore and Washington. The COs at Patapsco created a public relations committee which spoke at a number of churches and other civic groups in the area, held open house days at the camp, and generally welcomed anyone who cared to join them for a while.

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# For Conscience' Sake

*Patapsco CPS camp 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, continued from p.2*

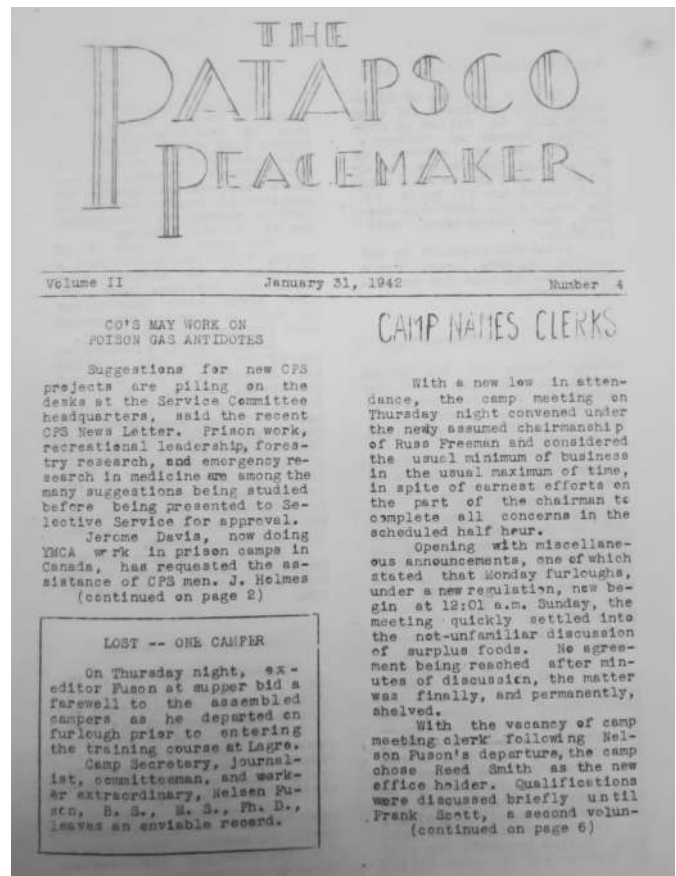
General Lewis B. Hershey, the Director of the Selective Service System, was among the visitors to the camp. Even though he was a General, reports are that he rolled up his sleeves and met informally with the COs, joining them for dinner and inviting them to ask questions rather than arrive with a speech to impose. He said to the men at Patapsco, "This experiment is an important test of the elasticity and staying power of democratic government when the chips are down. It's one which will determine whether our democracy is big enough to preserve minority rights in a time of national emergency."

The camp put out a weekly newsletter, *The Patapsco Peacemaker*, covering camp life, news about other CPS camps and conscientious objectors, and some of the big – and trivial – issues facing the world. Many of the later CPS camps, inspired by *The Patapsco Peacemaker*, would also put out their own newsletters. In August 1942 AJ Muste, one of the most well-known pacifists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, visited the camp. He spoke about the example of early Quakers and their non-cooperation with war and cautioned the COs not to compromise and cooperate with war. He talked of the significance of Gandhi's movement in India and his vision for how the war could end. "In closing, Dr. Muste emphasized that for a split to develop within the pacifist movement in this time of crisis would be a disaster" (*The Patapsco Peacemaker*, August 13, 1942).

The 'split' to which AJ Muste referred was an ongoing issue within the pacifist community about the very existence of the CPS program. Some, aware of the treatment of WWI COs and the struggle to establish 'humane, nonmilitary' camps for COs, were enthusiastic to support the CPS program, as most of the men at Patapsco did. Others felt that simply registering with the Selective Service System and doing alternative service was cooperating with the war effort or conscription and it was wrong to do so. That conflict played itself out at Patapsco when Corbet Bishop went on a hunger strike. After 44 days he was taken to St. Agnes hospital where he was nursed back to health. "Bishop's mental and physical struggle arose from a deep conviction about the injustice of the draft and conscript labor set-up."

While there was much enthusiasm at the beginning, with time morale at the Patapsco camp diminished. The conscientious objectors wanted to do meaningful service, and they began to feel that building picnic tables and fireplaces just wasn't that important. There were rumors of other more meaningful service opportunities, and several of the COs volunteered for them. When they heard of chemical researchers seeking volunteers to study "the effects of gasses on the body," four COs from Patapsco volunteered. Selective Service failed to approve this placement. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, two COs from Patapsco went into the military as non-combatants.

One of the major controversies encountered at the camp involved an air raid tower. The local American Legion proposed that the conscientious objectors build an access road for a new air raid tower that was being built in Catonsville. Because the tower very clearly was part of the war effort, 70% of the conscientious objectors at Patapsco were opposed to helping with the project. Some of them were willing to work on such a project, but others said they would go to jail for refusing to cooperate if the CPS program became involved with working to support war. The debate went to Washington, where the CPS Central Committee adopted a minute which said in part, "we earnestly request Selective Service that it designate as work of national importance for Conscientious Objectors only those projects as to which there can be no reasonable doubt that they have no material military or naval significance." *The Patapsco Peacemaker* reported on February 7, 1942 that Paul Furnas (director of CPS for the Quakers) explained that the camps were established "on the basis of a principle. 'If that principle is not respected, there is no use in continuing,' he said. 'General Hershey appreciated our position and considered it a reasonable request.'" A similar controversy arose when it was learned that some of the trees COs helped raise at the nursery in College Park were to be used for camouflage at Ft. Bragg in North Carolina. Some of the COs went on a hunger strike in protest.



The Patapsco Peacemaker was the camp newsletter published weekly by the COs.

Of course, the COs at Patapsco were concerned about their relationship with the community, and they were happy to oblige a request to help staff the Halethorpe and Catonsville fire halls. Other proposals drew opposition from the local community, though, because having the COs staff certain positions was seen as taking jobs away from local residents—a criticism that was raised about many projects that CPS men took on through the war years. The COs empathized with the community's concerns, and generally supported the local workers and their right to work and earn a decent wage.

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# For Conscience' Sake

*Patapsco CPS camp 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, continued from p. 3*

Another issue tackled within CPS was racial segregation. Most conscientious objectors were not only opposed to war, but also concerned about racial injustice and a wide variety of other justice issues. Conscientious objectors who went to prison rather than perform any drafted service organized successfully to integrate the prisons where they served, refusing to abide by the segregated seating in the dining room. After the war, the first Freedom Rides were organized by a WWII conscientious objector, and COs were integral to the civil rights movement. While the CPS camp at Patapsco was integrated from the beginning, the State Park itself was officially segregated. Jonathan Mount describes this conflict in his 2014 Master's thesis for Lehigh University:

...only a single, undeveloped, 100-acre tract [was] set aside for the use of African American visitors. Most campers objected to this unequal treatment, though they were divided on how to address the issue. Some felt that the 100-acre section should be developed, providing at least a small area where non-white visitors could enjoy themselves. Others stoutly refused, feeling that any work in establishing a recreation area for African Americans would be tacit support for racial discrimination. Regardless, the issue of park segregation was constantly discussed at Patapsco, and was eventually brought to the attention of the Department of Forests and Parks. For the state and federal governments, this was exactly the type of attention they did not want the campers to draw.

Many of the COs at Patapsco believed that this was the reason CPS camp #3 was closed, which happened in September 1942. Many of the men were transferred to CPS camp #52 in Powellville, Maryland, where they cut and cleaned drainage channels of the Pocomoke River to limit erosion of low lying farm land.

Although the Patapsco CPS camp lasted only slightly more than a year, it represented a meaningful step forward in the efforts to hold the US government accountable to its founding principles. The brutality experienced by the COs of WWI – their only 'crime' being refusing to kill – was largely absent in the US during WWII, and the credit for this achievement goes primarily to the historic peace churches and their advocacy for CPS. 🌍



## The Roots of Civilian Public Service:

### A CPS History



*Jim Stanley, a Quaker who later worked as editor of The Reporter; and John Yanger, a former boxer and wrestler, who left the sports for reasons of conscience.*

It is often cited that the CPS program was founded in response to the horrible treatment of conscientious objectors during World War I. Actually, the origins go back much farther than that. There have been conscientious objectors as long as there have been wars. And throughout history they have been seen as a problem, even perceived as a threat, to governments pursuing military objectives and conscripting their populations to go to war.

Conscientious Objectors have been imprisoned, beaten, exiled, tortured, and even executed because they chose to follow what they understood to be a higher law – many would say God's law – not to kill another person. In America, conscientious objection pre-dates the creation of the United States. Some Native American nations were pacifist. Many of the early European settlers, fleeing religious persecution in their homeland, were pacifists seeking freedom from governments that would force their young men into military service, in violation of their religious beliefs. Several of the 13 colonies had legal protection for the rights of conscientious objectors as early as 1657 (Massachusetts) and 1662 (Rhode Island).

The first documentation of conscientious objectors in America being persecuted is 1658 in Maryland, where Quakers were attacked, fined, and had their property confiscated for refusing to join the militia. Richard Keene was fined and "abused by the sheriff, who drew his cutlass and therewith made a pass at the breast of said Richard, and struck him on the shoulders saying: 'You dog, I could find it in my heart to split your brains'" (Peter Brock, *Pacifism in the United States—From the Colonial Era to the First World War*, p.55).

During the American Revolution, a number of Quakers were conscripted against their will, and when they refused to carry weapons, rifles were forcibly tied to their backs. In fact, it was none other than George Washington, who upon hearing about this, ordered that these conscientious objectors be allowed to return home, and not forced to fight.

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# For Conscience' Sake

*A CPS History, continued from p. 4*

James Madison's original proposal for the Bill of Rights included these words: "no person religiously scrupulous of bearing arms shall be compelled to render military service in person." Unfortunately, those words were not adopted into the final version. Some would argue that conscientious objection is covered by the First Amendment protection of freedom of religion, but the courts have consistently ruled that conscientious objection is not a constitutional right. In the United States, conscientious objectors have been tolerated, sometimes accommodated, often punished, and usually ostracized or worse amidst the fervor of war. During the Civil War there was limited accommodation in both the North and the South, but COs were not treated well: "Conditions in military camps and prisons were bleak on both sides, but beyond this, objectors were the special butt of camp brutality. The Civil War provides the first records of cruel punishment and deaths among conscientious objectors. They were put to forced marches and drills; they were starved and hung by the thumbs" (Lillian Schlissel, *Conscience in America*, p. 90).

World War One saw the worst treatment of conscientious objectors in our nation's history. The draft law at the time required that conscientious objectors be members of a church that prohibited its members from participating in war, and the church must have had that policy before the draft law was passed. This requirement meant that most conscientious objectors did not qualify. Upon being drafted, a man was considered to be in the military, so a drafted CO who refused to participate would be tried by a military tribunal and not a civilian court. Even when a draftee was recognized as a CO, he still would be forced to serve in the military as a non-combatant (usually an ambulance driver). If he refused, he faced the military trial. So it is no surprise that one hundred forty-two COs received life sentences for their refusal to fight. Seventeen were sentenced to death. An additional 345 conscientious objectors were imprisoned, with an average sentence of sixteen and a half years. No one was executed, but 18 died in jail because of the harsh and abusive treatment they endured, some of which included torture. The last conscientious objector from WWI was released from prison in 1933, when he received a pardon from President Roosevelt (Schlissel, p. 131).

## WWII

As World War II was raging in Europe, and it was becoming clear that the US was going to enter the war, Church leaders, including those from the Church of the Brethren, Mennonites, Quakers (Friends), and the Methodist Office of World Peace, began to organize. Aware of the abuses against COs in WWI, these leaders knew this could not happen to another generation of drafted men. Among the victories they achieved, for the first time in history a military conscription law provided a non-military alternative service for conscientious objectors. Civilian Public Service was born.



Conscientious objectors who were drafted for military service would instead now be placed in Civilian Public Service Camps (CPS) where they would perform work "of national importance under civilian direction." On the one hand, this was a major step forward for the rights of conscientious objectors. On the other hand, it established a rather awkward confluence of church and state. According to the agreement based on the Executive Order of February 6, 1941,

The Director of Selective Service recognized the Mennonite Central Committee, the Brethren Service Committee and the American Friends Service Committee as proper agencies for the direction of camps to be established for the performance of such work. Each of these committees is an independent, autonomous agency. In order that the Director of Selective Service would not have to deal with three separate offices and agencies [they] established a single Washington office to represent them. This office is now known as the National Service Board for Religious Objectors. [They] entered into an agreement whereby Selective Service obligated itself to provide camp sites and buildings, and to lend basic equipment for use in the camps, and the three committees obligated themselves to pay the cost of operating the camps...Civilian Public Service in its truest sense is a joint enterprise in which the personal sovereignty of men called to service, the independence and autonomy of the church bodies administering the camps, and the sovereignty of the Federal Government unite in a program designed to preserve inviolate the rights of conscience in a national emergency.

The wording of the agreement clearly hints at a potential problem with this type of collaboration: the churches and the government had different priorities. Although the "historic peace churches" ran most of the camps, there were camps run by Catholic, Methodist and other church agencies as well. Eventually, the government also would run some camps. Conscientious Objectors would be assigned by the government through the Selective Service System, and be accountable to that system. They would have to pay for their room and board at the camps, and if they could not afford to pay, a church would pick up the tab. The initial plan was to utilize the abandoned CCC camps for CPS, and the camp at Patapsco State Park in Maryland was the first of these to open.

In the early days COs did forest conservation work, and built shelters, roads and trails and other amenities to benefit the nation's forests and parks. The Blue Ridge Parkway was partially built by conscientious objectors doing their alternative service. Some conscientious objectors became 'smoke jumpers:' they parachuted out of airplanes into forests to fight fires.



*COs fighting a forest fire at Patapsco State Park.*

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# For Conscience' Sake

*A CPS History, continued from p. 5*

One major problem that arose was that the conscientious objectors felt there was more significant work they could and should be doing, especially after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Many had hoped to go to Europe to help provide relief to war victims, and assist in rebuilding after the devastation of the war as the American Friends Service Committee had done after WWI. They viewed their time in the CPS camps as training and preparation for the more significant work to follow. But the Selective Service System did not allow that kind of service. The conscientious objectors knew the world was in crisis, and although they were not willing to kill, they were willing to do meaningful service, and they felt building picnic tables just didn't rise to the level of work "of national importance." They lobbied the Selective Service System for more meaningful service.

*Emaciated COs who took part in starvation experiments as part of their service. Photo found on madscience museum.com.*



With time, other opportunities for service were allowed by the government. A number of conscientious objectors volunteered for medical experimentation, for example. In the names of science and service, COs were infected with malaria, typhus, hepatitis and other diseases in support of research to find cures. C Everett Koop, the US Surgeon General under President Reagan, was a young doctor at the time, and was one of the doctors involved with these experiments. "I got to know that a lot of these young men had no idea that the risk they were taking also included death, and some of those youngsters did die, and it was a very difficult thing for me to be a part of. . . It couldn't happen today. Internal review boards would not permit the use of a live virus in human subjects unless they really understood what was going to happen to them, and I doubt that even [then]... an internal review board in any academic institution would consent to that kind of experiment" (*The Good War and Those Who Refused to Fight It*, PBS Documentary by Judith Ehrlich and Rick Tejada-Flores).

Some COs also volunteered to participate in starvation experiments to learn how to nurse war victims back to health. The COs were put on a severe diet and required to do continuous exercise for months to simulate the conditions of those who were malnourished and near starvation after barely surviving the war.

Perhaps the biggest contribution of WWII conscientious objectors was to the field of mental health. When conscientious objectors went to work in mental hospitals, they were appalled by the conditions they encountered. They pledged to each other that they would never hit a patient, which was common practice at the time, and they treated the patients with dignity—at least, as much dignity as possible under those conditions. They also exposed what was happening behind the closed doors of mental institutions, an act of conscience that completely revolutionized mental health in this country.

Despite their good works, there was a strong anti-conscientious objector bias in the country during WWII. Sometimes businesses near CPS camps would put up signs reading, "No conchies allowed." In a number of communities, the American Legion organized against COs working in local mental health hospitals. After lengthy negotiations between the YMCA, AFSC and the State Commissioner of Mental Health for Massachusetts, a CPS unit was established at Gardner State Hospital. The American Legion condemned this as "un-American" and proposed instead that COs be sent abroad to do "menial work for the soldiers, to give aid to the wounded, bury the dead—yes, and dig latrines." This project was cancelled just days before it was scheduled to begin (Sareyan, *The Turning Point: How Persons of Conscience Brought About Major Change in the Care of America's Mentally Ill*, p. 60).

News reports of the time reveal the other side of this issue, such as this comment in the Providence, Rhode Island *Bulletin*: "... Mennonite conscientious objectors may be a headache to their draft boards, but they have certainly proved to be a boon for the state of Rhode Island ... according to its superintendent, Dr. John Ross. 'I only wish we could get a lot more of them,'" he said (Sareyan, p. 123).

*The Seattle Times* cited a spokesperson for a Washington state institution saying that the COs were doing an 'excellent job' and that it was "better to have them meeting a critical labor need in the hospitals than spending their days cutting roads through forests" (Sareyan, p. 123). By October of 1943 one out of six conscientious objectors were working in mental hospitals. The 3,000 COs who were working in 61 hospitals established a clearing house to share information and concerns based on their experiences in the hospitals. Directly inspired by the reports of the 'unspeakable' conditions the conscientious objectors had found, on May 6, 1946 *Life Magazine* ran a cover story exposé titled, "BEDLAM 1946—Most U.S. Mental Hospitals Are a Shame and Disgrace." This and similar exposés "so touched the conscience of the American public that they marked the dawning of a new and enlightened era for these hospitals and the patients they served" (Sareyan, pp. 263-4).

## After the war

On March 3, 1946 AFSC withdrew from the administration of CPS. The Friends did not want to be implicated in supporting peacetime conscription. In August 1946 they disbanded their CPS Section, but continued to provide support to men in CPS, which continued through the Vietnam War. Many in the peace churches questioned whether they had been co-opted by the government through the CPS arrangement, but they continued to advocate for non-military alternative service for COs. When the draft resumed in 1948, the law once again provided for non-military alternative service, but placement was on an individual basis. COs were allowed to work for faith-based service agencies, but there were no longer camps run by church agencies.

Many of the COs formed lifelong friendships. Just like reunions of military units, for the next 50 years, there were CPS reunions. Many who worked in mental hospitals became psychiatrists or worked in mental health. COs taught Martin Luther King about the power of nonviolence, and COs have been leaders in many other movements for justice and peace. 🌍

# For Conscience' Sake

*A Personal Reminiscence by Bill Galvin, continued from back cover*

I'm still working with conscientious objectors today, and while many things have changed, so much – especially the sentiments of the COs – remains the same.

Back then, *The Saturday Evening Post*, in their coverage of the Patapsco camp quoted one of the COs assigned there: "War just didn't seem to fit in with the teachings of Christ. Even on the Cross, He asked God to forgive His enemies. How can I carry a gun after that?" (Thompson, August 16, 1941). Today, the application of a young CO seeking discharge from the US Army asks basically the same question: "I remember thinking that if Jesus did not want to kill anybody else, especially after what He went through, how do I have the right to make the decision of who lives or dies?"

Those seeking recognition as COs in today's military face a daunting task: after bearing their souls to a skeptical chain of command, they often face isolation, harassment or worse while continuing to serve in the military for many months, awaiting a final decision. While we have a way to go before COs receive the fair treatment and respect they deserve, we have come a long way: a hundred years ago drafted COs had no option for non-military service. Refusing military service meant hard time in military prison.

But then, 75 years ago, we took a giant leap when conscientious objectors were allowed to perform non-military alternative service. And I'm proud that the very first place this happened was right here in Patapsco Park, *my backyard*.

Maybe this area of Patapsco Park truly is 'holy ground.' 🌍



*Above: Aerial view of the CPS camp at Patapsco State Park, ca. 1941.*

*Opposite: The Swinging Bridge at Patapsco State Park.*

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## **An Update on Extending Selective Service Registration to Women**

For several months, all three branches of our government have been considering the idea of requiring women to register for the draft. Most recently, both the House and Senate Armed Services Committees attached wording to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) to require women to register. The House Rules Committee removed that provision in May, and instead requested two related studies from the Department of Defense (DOD): one to determine the effects on defense readiness if women were included in draft registration, and a second to determine the effect of eliminating Selective Service altogether. This language was preserved when the full House passed their version of the NDAA in May.

As we go to press, the Senate just passed their version of the NDAA, with their registration requirement for women still intact. An amendment to delete the requirement, from Senator Mike Lee (R-UT), and an amendment to eliminate Selective Service altogether and restore full rights to those who have resisted registration over the years, from Senator Rand Paul (R-KY), were not considered. Because the final Senate and House bills differ, the differences must be reconciled in Conference Committee.

The amendment Senator Paul introduced to the NDAA is identical to a bi-partisan bill that was previously introduced in the House by Representative Mike Coffman (R-CO). Coffman's bill to eliminate Selective Service is H.R.4523. Senator Paul introduced a Senate version of the bill to abolish Selective Service, S. 3041.

The Center on Conscience & War supports an end to draft registration for all. We will continue to follow this issue as it evolves. 🌍



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### A Personal Reminiscence by Bill Galvin

As a child growing up in Relay, Patapsco Park was like an extension of our back yards. We regularly played in the park, skated on the frozen river in winter, had church picnics and birthday parties, camped with family and friends, and in boy scouts, we did all sorts of activities there, including maintaining trails. I also knew and was quite proud of our local history: the first railroad in the country runs through here – the B&O – and the town got its name because this is where they would relay (change) the train’s horses to continue the journey.

I always loved the awe inspiring Thomas Viaduct Bridge, which crosses the Patapsco River, and I knew well the story of our town being the site of the famous 1830 race between the horse drawn train and the steam engine train (the horse won!). I had seen pictures of Union soldiers encamped on a hillside above the Viaduct Bridge, protecting it from Confederate attack during the Civil War. I knew about the industrial history of the valley: the ‘world famous’ Patapsco flour that was milled near the Swinging Bridge. I knew about the Avalon Forge, and I loved stopping at Bloede’s Dam – one of the first hydro-electric dams ever built – on the way to or from the Landing Road Cider Mill. I knew about the flood in the 1860s and the devastation it had brought. Something else I remember about the Park is that, in some places, the sidewalks just ended. Though they led nowhere, a bush or a stone piling often marked each side, telling me there had been something there, and I always wondered what it used to be.

As a young man I became a conscientious objector, and I have since worked to support conscientious objectors throughout most of my adult life. I was in my 30’s when I first learned that there had been a work camp for conscientious objectors during World War II at Patapsco Park. Of course once I learned that, I often wondered about it and where in the park it had been. In 1990, we were planning a “Celebration of Conscience” to honor the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first law that provided for a non-military, alternative service option for conscientious objectors who were drafted. I was at the Swarthmore Library Peace Collection doing some research to get ready for that event when I came across a picture of the Patapsco Camp. I recognized it instantly! It was that place where I had played and wondered about as a child.

Ever since then, I think about those conscientious objectors every time I walk past that site. Whenever I’m walking in the park with someone new I have to tell them about the CPS camp. Apparently I do it so often that now my daughter lovingly mocks me as we approach the site, “Hey dad, did you know there used to be conscientious objectors here?”

A stone fireplace from one of the old CPS buildings anchors what is now a picnic pavilion in the park. Often, I will sit there and contemplate the significance of this place – a symbol of the courage of the men who took a stand for peace in the midst of the most destructive war in human history.



*Where the sidewalk ends: Bill at Patapsco today. The fireplace in the picnic shelter was once inside a CPS camp building.*

I imagine the conversations that must have taken place around that fireplace. I reflect on the WWII conscientious objectors I have known, and how they have inspired me to be true to my values throughout my life. Growing up, I was a member of the Relay Presbyterian Church. Thurston Griggs, a WWII conscientious objector, was an elder in that church, and he supported me as I applied for CO status before the Catonsville draft board. In doing research all these years later, I now realize that I knew some of the conscientious objectors who were here at Patapsco. If only I had known back then; I would have talked with them about their experiences, what they did in the park, and how the community reacted to them. In the Bible, there are locations that are described as Holy – could this be one of them?

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