



The Center on
Conscience & War

Volume 68

Summer 2011

Number 2

The Reporter for Conscience' Sake

Squaring the National Debt? Cut Corners at the Pentagon!

Ben Teets, Volunteer, & CCW Staff

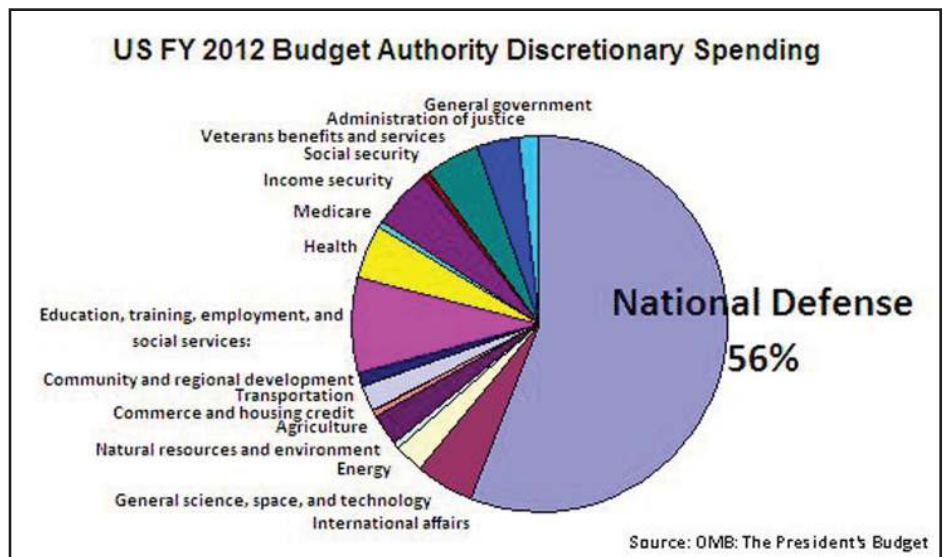
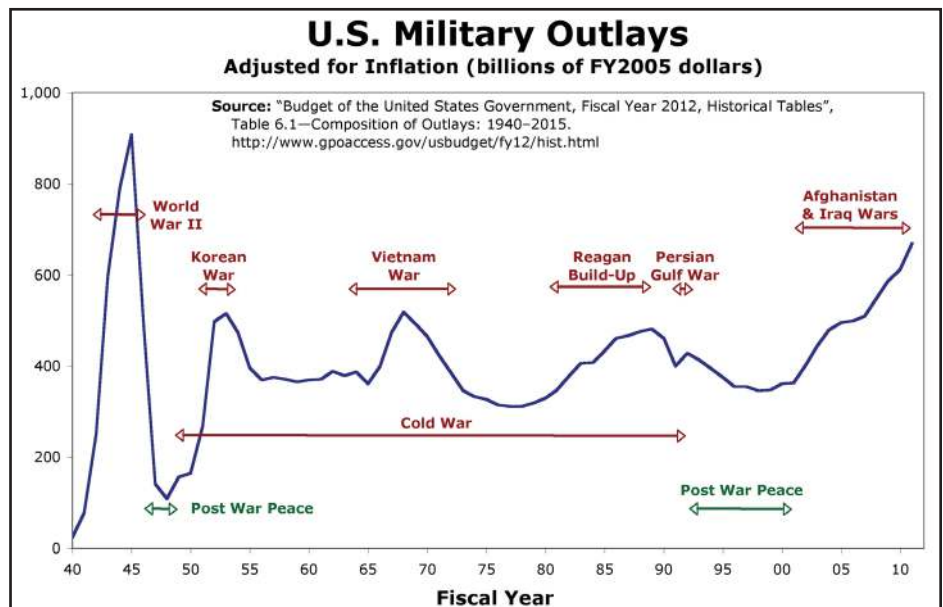
In Washington, politicians are at odds about how to address the national debt, which has grown to over \$14 trillion, costing taxpayers \$161 billion just to pay the interest last year on past Pentagon spending.

Many Republicans want to see spending cuts from social services while some Democrats are looking to raise taxes, but neither wants to seriously address the fact that our bloated defense spending over the last ten years alone accounts for much of the problem.

Struggling to devise a plan to cut a few trillion dollars from the budget over the next decade, both parties took it relatively easy on a \$1.15 trillion elephant: defense spending. They asked for only \$350 billion in cuts over the next ten years.

CCW has posted a full run-down of the figures on our website (<http://centeronconscience.org>), but the short version is this: the 2011 Proposed Budget includes \$1.15 trillion in defense and security spending for our oversized and overused military. Post-9/11 spending, including ten years of continuous war in Afghanistan as of this October, combined with nuclear weapons spending, veterans' benefits and care, defense environmental cleanup, and dozens of other mandatory and discretionary spending programs and expenses, amounts to \$11.5 trillion in military expenses over the last decade! The federal debt as of August 2011 is just over 14 trillion dollars.

continued on pg. 5



Also Inside:

News Briefs.....page 2
CCW News.....page 3
MCN in Germany.....page 4

National Debt and the Military....page 5
A CO Memory.....page 6
CCW News.....page 7

From the Desk of.....page 8



Board of Directors

Dallas Wischaupt, Chair
At Large

Taj Johnson, Vice Chair
At Large

Joan Broadfield, Secretary
At Large

Jordan Blevins, Treasurer
Church of the Brethren

E. James Lieberman
Jewish Peace Fellowship

Dan Mach
At Large

Camilo Mejía
At Large

Jo Ann Zimmerman
At Large

Staff

Maria Santelli
Executive Director

Bill Galvin
Counseling Coordinator

Jake Short
Brethren Volunteer

Nico Holz
Brethren Volunteer

Call us at 1-800-379-2679
<http://centeronconscience.org>
ccw@centeronconscience.org

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

- Counsel military conscientious objectors.
- Provide legal support for military personnel.
- Lobby Congress to extend and defend the rights of conscientious objectors.
- Provide accurate information to the public on Selective Service registration.
- Provide support to COs who refuse to register for the draft through F.E.A.T student loans.
- Counsel soldiers on the GI Rights Hotline with accuracy and honesty.
- Military counter-recruitment information
- Provide workshops, training, and speakers on any of the above topics.

News Briefs

United Kingdom

Royal Navy medic Michael Lyons had his conscientious objection appeal turned down in Dec. 2010 by the Advisory Committee on Conscientious Objection (see Reporter, *Winter 2011*). He had not been formally notified of his appeal to Defence Secretary Liam Fox as of July.

In Sept. 2010, Lyons had been ordered to participate in advance rifle training in preparation for deployment to Afghanistan. He requested noncombatant duties, but he was ordered to draw a weapon and he refused. Despite Lyons' commanding officer supporting his CO application, Lyons was court-martialed on July 5, 2011 for "disobeying a lawful order."

He was convicted and sentenced to seven months detention, reduction in rank, and dismissal from the Royal Navy. At the court-martial, Lyons' defense argued that medics were protected as noncombatants from weapons training under the Geneva Convention.

Emma Sangster, coordinator of Forces Watch, observed, "This seems a deliberately harsh sentence, which serves not only to punish Michael but to dissuade others from following his actions. I hope that people will realize from this they do have a right to object on grounds of conscience and that there is a process, albeit a very obscure one, which they can follow."

War Resisters' League & Forces Watch

Europe

The Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights, in the case of *Bayatyan v. Armenia*, ruled, "that states have a duty to respect individuals' right to conscientious objection to military service . . . set out in Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights."

This is the first time the right of conscientious objection to military service has been truly recognized under the European Convention on Human Rights.

Amnesty International, Conscience & Peace Tax International, International Commission of Jurists, Quaker United Nations Office-Geneva, and War Resisters' International issued a joint statement on July 7, 2011 praising the affirmation of the right to conscientious objection.

Bayatyan v. Armenia concerned an Armenian Jehovah's Witness who was sentenced to two and a half years in prison for refusing in 2001 to perform military service due to his religious beliefs.

Conscientious objection is still a contentious

issue in many parts of Europe. Turkey (including Turkish controlled Cyprus) and Azerbaijan don't provide alternatives to military service. Armenia doesn't provide civilian alternative service. Austria, Greece, and Finland have punitive alternative service, while many others retain conscription on some level. Germany recently ended conscription and implemented an all-volunteer military.

War Resisters' League & European Bureau for Conscientious Objection (EBCO)

United States

The Air Force has suspended a controversial ethics training for nuclear missile officers due to media exposure of its questionable teachings.

Often referred to as the "Jesus loves nukes speech," the training was required for all officers in the nuclear missile program regardless of personal beliefs, religious or not.

Truthout.org exposed the training and publicized the PowerPoint presentation used (released under the Freedom of Information Act) that relied heavily upon Christian ethicists such as St. Augustine, as well as the faith of famous Americans like George Washington.

Air Force spokesman Dave Smith said, "We're in the process of reviewing that training and we'll make a determination whether or not to continue or if it will be a different course."

The Military Religious Freedom Foundation (MRFF) said in July 2011 more than 30 officers, most of whom were Christian, contacted them, wanting that part of the training removed.

News of the controversial training surrounding nuclear weapons ethics broke the week before the 66th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Truthout.org & Military.com

Norway

The Norwegian parliament announced on July 1, 2011 that alternative service for conscientious objectors will end later in the year.

Justice Minister Knut Storberget said COs will be exempt from both military and alternative service.

Like the need for military personnel, the number of COs has been declining, from over 3,000 in 2001 to current numbers of about 350.

In anticipation of the bill exempting COs, new COs will no longer be called to do alternative service, but those currently serving will continue to do so, although the time could be shortened for those serving beyond Jan. 1, 2012.

War Resisters' League

Marine Corps Veteran, Law Student Volunteers

Ben Teets, Volunteer

Ben Teets has been involved with the Center since February, coming from Georgetown University Law Center, where he is studying to pursue public interest work as a lawyer. He previously obtained a B.A. in History from the University of South Carolina in 2009.

He was discharged from the Marine Corps after five years enlisted, and two deployments, in the summer of 2010. He wants to help with counter-recruitment by telling people the truth about the military, and helping COs act on their opposition to war.

Ben is also a member of Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW), and was instrumental in bringing together the "Squaring the National Debt?" article (*see page 1*). His other interests are in labor law and workers' advocacy organizations.



CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE:
[HTTP://CENTERONCONSCIENCE.ORG](http://centeronconscience.org)



Bill Galvin (third from right) meets with the Committee on Conscientious Objection to Paying for War at the annual gathering of New York Yearly Meeting (Quakers) at Silver Bay, New York, July 17-23. *Photo courtesy of Bill Galvin*

*Another Way to Support
CCW: Workplace Giving*



Calling all Federal Employees (and state or municipal employees in California): The Center on Conscience & War is now a member of the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) and the California State Employees Charitable Campaign (CSECC).

That means federal workers and California state or city workers can now make contributions to CCW by designating a portion of each paycheck as a donation. The Center's Combined Federal Campaign code is **73073**. Our California State Employees code is **3545**. Fall is the time of year when most workplaces launch their giving campaigns, so keep a lookout and tell your friends and loved ones. For more information, give us a call or contact the Human Resources or Payroll office at your place of employment. Thank you!

follow us on
twitter @CCW4COs

GoodShop
by GoodSearch

UP TO 30% OF A PURCHASE YOU MIGHT MAKE CAN GO TOWARDS CCW. LOG ON TO:
WWW.GOODSEARCH.COM
AND SEARCH FOR YOUR FAVORITE ONLINE STORE. SELECT "CENTER ON CONSCIENCE & WAR" AS YOUR CHARITY OF CHOICE AND SUPPORT THE RIGHTS OF COs AT NO EXTRA CHARGE TO YOU!

A New Direction for Military Counseling Network

Chris Capps-Schubert, Chair, MCN

The Military Counseling Network (MCN), located in Germany, is currently the only overseas node of the GI Rights Hotline. Reactivated in late 2002 following a period of inactivity after the Gulf War, MCN has been counseling U.S. military personnel stationed in Europe continuously for almost nine years. It has provided assistance to and developed relationships with many clients, among them Agustin Aguayo, Clifton Hicks, André Shepherd, David Cortelyou, and myself.

I was a client of MCN in late 2006 and early 2007. Soon after returning from Baghdad, Iraq in 2006, I was faced with a transfer to another unit in Germany that was preparing to deploy to Afghanistan. MCN provided me with the knowledge I needed in order to receive a discharge instead of deploying to Afghanistan, and I eagerly assisted MCN with some of their cases after I returned to Germany in May of 2007.

After working with MCN for some years and assisting with some of their cases, I have to admit I was a bit disappointed when I heard that MCN was going to be shutting down its operations in 2011. Reasons given were less capability for support of overseas programs from the Mennonite Central Committee in the U.S., a steady but dramatic decrease in the number of inquiries MCN had been receiving over the years, and the gradual loss of knowledge of military law and regulations as responsibility for MCN's services was passed on from one counselor to the next.

Despite the steady loss of inquiries MCN was receiving, in my experience MCN was still providing a critical service to those who were inquiring. Its location overseas meant that MCN was available for face-to-face meetings and to provide moral support to clients stationed in Europe. It also had access to local resources in Germany, something that could not be fully substituted by any hotline node in the U.S.

I also felt the decrease in inquiries was not due to a reduced need of the services that MCN can provide. The rate of suicide attempts in Baumholder, for example, has reached 11% among enlisted personnel, and it has been my observation that the proportion of inquiries we have received relating to mental health problems has increased significantly over the years.

In my opinion, the reduction in inquiries was largely due to less awareness of the existence of MCN and its services among active duty military personnel.

In September 2010, after discussions with the Mennonites in Germany who ran MCN, my wife Meike and I decided to continue the work of MCN to ensure that these critical services in Germany don't disappear, with some adjustments as to how MCN

would run. The Mennonites in Germany want to remain in touch with and be supportive of MCN, and have provided a great deal of the support during the current transition period. They were happy to hand over operations of MCN to my wife and me with the condition they could someday reinvolve themselves if things changed.

We decided to open a GI Coffeehouse (Café), similar to Under the Hood in Killeen, Texas (near Ft. Hood), and Coffee Strong in Tacoma, Washington (near joint base Lewis-McChord).

MCN's base of operations since 2002 had been in Bammental, a small village near a military community in Heidelberg where it is not easily found by U.S. military personnel. To help address the problem of fewer inquiries, we decided to move and open our Café in the middle

of the largest U.S. military community outside of the United States: Kaiserslautern.

The Café will expand upon MCN's mission of providing top quality counseling to military personnel, but will also serve as a safe space for them and their families away from the bases. We will assist U.S. military veterans with claims for their benefits and integration into German society, and provide an alternative cultural program to what they may normally find on bases and in military communities.

The Café has come a long way since the original planning phases in September of last year. My wife and I moved to Kaiserslautern from Hanau on July 4. Also in July, MCN was officially incorporated as its own independent tax deductible organization (it had previously been a part of the German Mennonite Peace Committee), and the Center on Conscience & War is the U.S. fiscal sponsor of the GI Café. In August we hope to sign a rental agreement for a property in Kaiserslautern, and begin renovation. We hope to have the renovation and appropriate licensing complete to open the Café in September.

We are incredibly excited about this project. Kaiserslautern has shown great potential for this kind of work, and we are certain that a Café here will have a positive impact on several people's lives. To find out more about MCN, the Café, and how you can get involved and support this new undertaking, please visit: <http://www.gicafegermany.com>, <http://www.mc-network.de/>, or email us at GI-Cafe-Germany@gmx.net.



Members of MCN hold a foundational meeting in July.
Photo courtesy of Chris Capps-Schubert



Chris Capps-Schubert is an Iraq veteran and Afghanistan war resister currently residing in Kaiserslautern, Germany. He is chairman of and a counselor for the Military Counseling Network.

Costs of the Military

continued from pg. 1

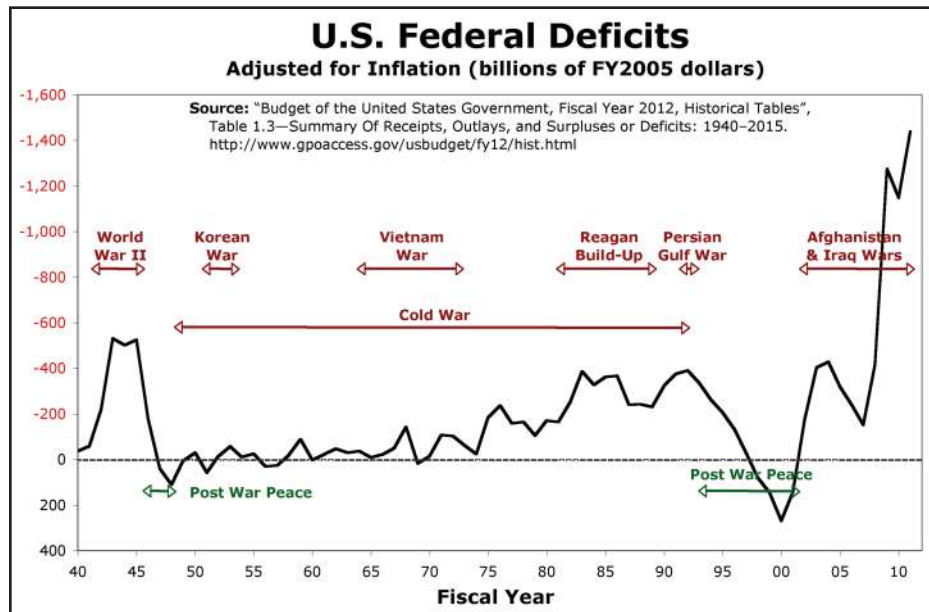
These comprehensive figures are not well-publicized and rarely discussed. The White House Office of Management and Budget provides a total of \$549 billion for its 2011 Defense budget request. However, that number only includes the proposed discretionary spending budget for programs listed under the Department of Defense, while excluding military Mandatory Spending Programs (e.g. Veterans Affairs, military retirement programs, military sales, Department of Energy nuclear weapons budgets, etc.), money spent retraining unqualified veterans, paying employers to hire veterans, money spent compensating service members injured by other defense programs, the cost of providing tax exemptions for service members, and numerous other services. In total, the costs of operating a military like ours and handling the physical and emotional toll on veterans of multiple foreign wars, is more than double (\$1,150 billion) the publicized figure of \$549 billion!

Of a federal budget that is just over \$3.8 trillion, \$1.15 trillion per year is dedicated to a military-industrial complex about which little is heard in the suggestions for reducing federal spending. CCW doesn't suggest cutting the budgets for Veterans' Affairs or compensation for federal employees injured by "Atomic En-

ergy Defense" (as it is listed) programs. Instead, the suggestion is by refusing to launch, support, fuel, or fund foreign wars, the expenses for all of the programs that make possible our offensive military capability will be reduced or, even better, cease to exist, freeing up resources for other, more urgent programs in our federal budget.

Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta said days after Congress approved the debt deal that further cuts to the defense budget would be "unacceptable."

Panetta also said, "I will do everything I can to ensure that further reductions in defense spending are not pursued in a hasty, ill-conceived way that would undermine the military's ability to protect America and its vital interests around the globe." CCW sees military spending of this magnitude as undermining America.



Please visit our website to look at the numbers and then contact your senators and representatives in Congress. A new study by researchers at Brown University on the human, economic, social, and political costs of the wars is also available at: <http://costsofwar.org>.

As the "Super Committee" of Congress prepares to do its work of attempting to reduce the deficit by \$1.5 trillion or more over the next ten years, you can remind them there is a simple, popular solution for fixing the budget crisis: end the wars!



The annual gathering of the GI Rights Hotline Network, of which CCW is a member, took place in Albuquerque, New Mexico, May 19-22, 2011. During the conference, participants demonstrated their support for alleged Iraq War whistleblower Pfc. Bradley Manning. Learn more about Private Manning and the "I am Bradley Manning" campaign at: bradleymanning.org.

Photo courtesy of Rena Guay, Oklahoma Center for Conscience

A CO Memory

From Childhood Dreams to CO Realities: Alternative Service in Africa

Benjamin T. Sollenberger
Church of the Brethren, Indiana

I remember that I applied for a CO status from the draft board in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, which was my home and the county seat for Cumberland County. This would have been in the 1950's during the Korean War. I did get a CO classification.

I believe it was during my junior year at Bridgewater College that I got a letter informing me I was to report to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania for a physical examination. I remember hitchhiking from Bridgewater, Virginia, to Carlisle. This was my first and only real experience of hitchhiking. I did not have any real problems arriving at Carlisle where I got my dad's car and went the 20 miles to Harrisburg. I passed the physical, but since I was in college, I was allowed to continue my studies under a deferment.

After graduation from Bridgewater in 1956, I notified my draft board that I was entering Brethren Volunteer Service (BVS) to serve my alternative service. This was approved, so in September 1956, I entered Unit #32 of BVS at New Windsor, Maryland; Ivan Fry was the leader. When the time came for project assignment, no one raised their hand to go to Nigeria as a teacher. I remembered in elementary school that I had said in a class that someday I wanted to go to Africa. Here was an opportunity to do just that, so I raised my hand and said that I would go.

I spent November through most of January at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), waiting for visa and travel arrangements to be made. While there I had all my wisdom teeth removed. It was something that I was going to have to do, so I did it at NIH as part of a study and at no cost to me. Fortunately, my jaws healed sufficiently that I could travel to Nigeria. About the third week of January, 1957, I had a great experience sailing to England on the RMS *Queen Mary*, the last trip it made before stabilizers were installed.

From London I flew to Kano, Nigeria, passing over the Sahara Desert, which was beautiful. A regional flight took me to Jos,

where Dr. Roy Pfaltzgraff met me. I didn't know it then, but he was a 5th cousin, once removed. After a few days in Jos buying supplies, Dr. Pfaltzgraff and I flew in a Sudan Interior Mission plane to Biu, Nigeria, where Waka Schools was located. From Waka we took a jeep to Marama where I was to be stationed. On this trip I learned my first lesson. As we passed people along the road, Dr. Pfaltzgraff would shake a fist at them. I thought that was a terrible way for a missionary to treat the local people. Then I learned that an open hand could be considered putting a curse on someone, so a closed fist was the proper way to wave at someone.

I spent a year and a half teaching at Marama Senior Primary School. It was here that I met the girl who would become my wife, as she and her family were touring the Church of the Brethren Mission area.

In July, 1958, Ivan Eikenberry and family were going home for a one-year furlough. Ivan was principal and teacher at Waka Teacher Training School. I was then moved to Waka to teach Ivan's classes for the rest of the year.

I finished my alternative service and returned home in December 1958, visiting BVS work in Switzerland and Germany on the way home. My experience was so good that my wife and I returned to Waka Schools to teach for 6 more years. Many of the students I had at Marama I had again at Waka. Some of my students went on to get PhD degrees, and some have come to visit me at my home while they were on temporary teaching assignments at universities in this country. Plant a seed, and you never know into what it will grow.

Total BVS (CO) time:

Sept. 1956 – Oct. 1956: BVS Orientation,

Nov. 1956 – Jan. 1957: NIH & travel to Nigeria

Feb. 1957 – Jun. 1958: Marama Senior Primary School

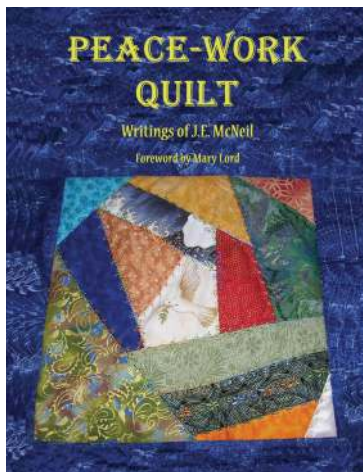
July 1958 – Dec. 1958: Waka Teacher Training College

*Do you have a CO story or memory to share?
Send it the Center on Conscience & War!*

We are looking for a variety of CO stories from recent wars, such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Kosovo, the Persian Gulf, etc., as well as stories from any time in the past 100 years, from WWI to today.

CCW will feature these stories in future editions of *The Reporter for Conscience' Sake*.

Please send your stories and any relevant photos to: jake@centeronconscience.org. Thanks!



Peace-Work Quilt

Writings of J.E. McNeil

publication date:

July 1, 2011

Publication price: \$15.00
(shipping charge: \$5.00)

Also available to order on our website.

All proceeds go directly to the work of CCW.

Checks may be made payable to:

Center on Conscience & War
1830 Connecticut Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20009

Credit Card:

___ Visa ___ Mastercard
___ Discover ___ American Express

Card # _____

Exp ___/___ verification security number _____

Signature _____

Print Name _____

Artists Against War: Helping Those Who Refuse to Kill

David Thompson, FEAT Administrator

Artists Against War (AAW) is a group of musicians in the Washington, D.C. area that believes violence is not the best method of resolving our differences.

Headed by CCW board vice chair Taj Johnson, AAW's music, which could be described as a form of jazz, is based on an ever-evolving fusion of harmony and balance. Not static in its nature, it allows each musician to ebb and flow from each other in ascendancy or domination as the piece progresses.

AAW maintains that conscientious objection is an expression of the heart



Taj Johnson (right) leads Artists Against War in song at Twins Jazz club, Washington, D.C., on Feb. 24. The event was a fundraiser for CCW. Photo by Bill Galvin

energy that each of us feels when we are faced with the realization that we cannot kill. Their belief is that with the proper intention, music can bring about a heartfelt alignment amongst individuals.

One of the goals of AAW is to support individuals in the military who wish to be discharged because one feels the heartfelt passion against killing. They support the work of CCW and have on occasion lent their talents and time to help fundraise for the Center.

For more information about the group, its performance schedule, or how you can host an event, follow AAW on Facebook.

CHOICES: Our Youth Deserve to Have Them

Nico Holz, Brethren Volunteer

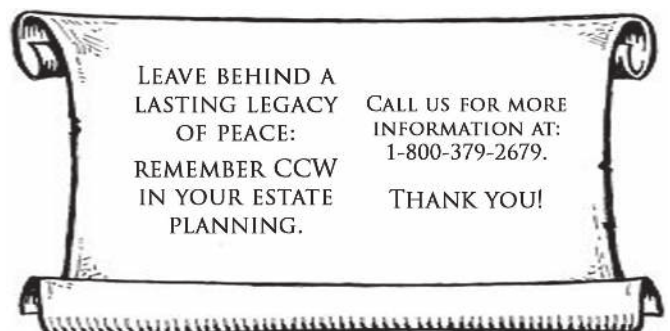
The Committee for High Schools, Options & Information on Careers, Education, and Self-Improvement (CHOICES) is an organization working in the greater District of Columbia area. The focus of CHOICES is students in underprivileged circumstances, and the work is to bring to them more post-graduation options than are normally presented to them.

Created and run by John Judge, a Vietnam era CO, CHOICES is in partnership with CCW in working to bring alternatives to the military to students facing an uncertain future. Those associated with CHOICES go to schools and other events throughout the year, working to expose lies often spread by military recruiters.

The goal is to motivate students through personal interactions and help present all options that might be available. The future

welfare of the students is the biggest concern of CHOICES.

In the last few months, Nico Holz and other interns at CCW have joined Judge in various schools, where they see Judge and his 30 years of counter-recruitment experience at work.





Center on Conscience & War
 1830 Connecticut Avenue, NW
 Washington, DC 20009-5706

Address service requested

Non-Profit Org.
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Baltimore, Md
 Permit No. 1

From the Desk of the Executive Director

It is an important responsibility that I enter into this month, as the new Executive Director of the Center on Conscience & War: to honor the history that came before me, while ensuring that the Center remains a significant force for peace in our changing world.

As I join the staff of CCW, I understand that I become more than simply a part of an organization. I unite with a legacy that dates back some seven decades—a community that includes the spirits of WWI conscientious objectors from nearly 100 years ago, the hearts of those who are called to follow their conscience and object to war today, and the faith of the supporters who stand with them and with us—a community that sustains this work. We are nourished each by the other, and we are fortified by our victories, like this one:

Just this week, as we go to print, we got the news that Wes, an airman with a particularly challenging case, was awarded a discharge from the Air Force as a conscientious objector. Wes was a very young man when he joined the Air Force, and, like so many young enlistees, had quite a different view of the role of our military before he was a part of it. Once inside, he noted the disillusionment of some of his superiors and wanted to understand why. In his studies, he uncovered a lot of the same information we discuss in our cover story. Wes was disturbed that while millions in our country lack adequate housing, healthcare, food, and other basic necessities, defense and security spending is off the charts.

Wes is right to be disturbed by that. Objecting to the disproportionate spending and the lop-sided priorities of our federal budget is a matter of conscience, because Ike was right, too:

“Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children. This is not a way of life at all in any true sense. Under the clouds of war, it is humanity hanging on a cross of iron.”

- President Dwight D. Eisenhower, April 1953

When I first accepted this job and talked about it with others, inevitably the question raised was, “Are there still conscientious objectors, even though there is not a draft?” As you know, the answer is yes, because people like Wes experience their “crystalizing moments” at different times and for different reasons. As long as governments continue to rely on war, there will be conscientious objectors. With your help, and in your name, we will do our best to be there for them.

With gratitude,

Maria Santelli

