



The Center on
Conscience & War

The Reporter for Conscience' Sake

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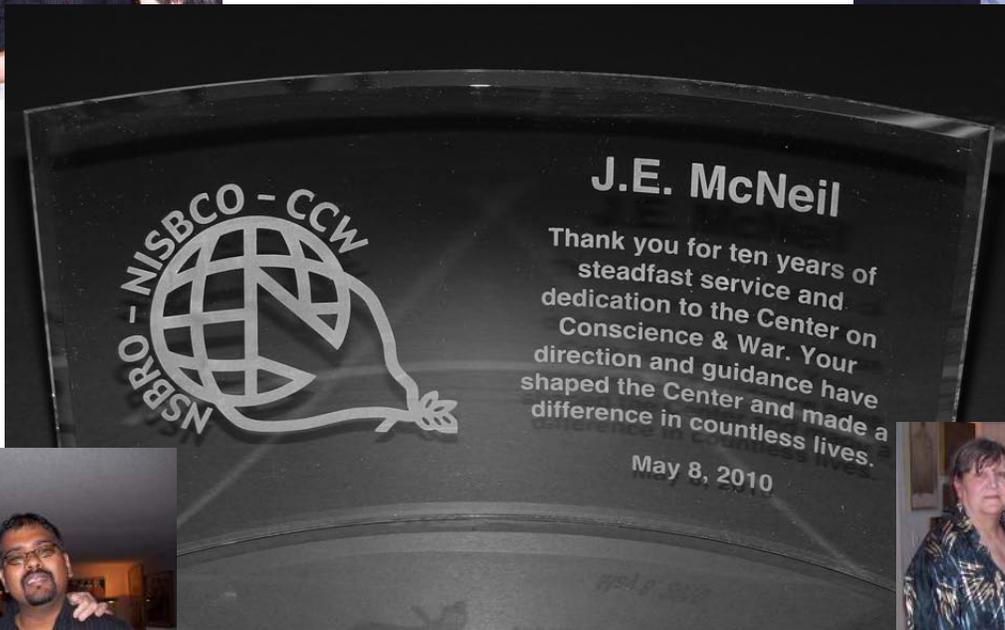
CCW Celebrates the Dedication of Conscience



Daniel
Lakemacher with
Kazuo Shii,
Article 9
Coalition



Former Executive Director
Bill Yolton



Bill Galvin with former Board & Staff member
Theo Sittler



J.E. McNeil and former Staff Lawyer and
supporter Charles A. Maresca

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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 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

Compulsory Military Service

Taiwan

Alternatives to compulsory military service will disappear once conscription is abolished on Jan. 1, 2015, but the wages of soldiers will rise significantly, defense officials said yesterday. Taiwan plans to finish conscription by the end of 2014 following successive governments' measures to cut down the size of the military. Potential conscripts born in 1994 or later would only have to undergo four months of basic military training, reports said.

Responding to fears from legislators that some would refuse to undergo the four months of training for religious reasons, Chao said they could do administrative work at departments not involved in combat duties.

Alternative service began in 2000, with about 23,000 people fulfilling the service during 2009, reports said.

(etaiwannews.com)

Russia

Russia can not afford to change its conscription-based military system to a contract one, Defense Minister Anatoli Serdyukov said. Serdyukov criticized underfinancing of the army and a shortage of conscripts, local media reported. The Defense Ministry has been preparing a law that aims to toughen the charges for attempts to avoid military service and to abolish the respites for university students. The Kremlin publicly recognizes that the existing conscription service suffers from numerous flaws like hazing, malnutrition and poor living conditions for soldiers. Russian leaders have repeatedly called for shifting the army to a contract mode. Still, the number of servicemen on contracts will not likely rise, military officials said. "No money, no professional army," Serdyukov said when asked about the timing of the army reform. The minister did not confirm rumors that his ministry plans to raise the call-up age to 30 years from the current 27. According to official data, there are 150,000 servicemen on contract in a million-strong Russian army. Demographers forecast that Russia will fall into the "demographic pit" after 2012, which means fewer young people will be available for military draft each year.

(english.peopledaily.com.cn)

Sweden

The Swedish parliament formalized the abolishment of compulsory military service in the country. From July this year, the recruitment of new soldiers will be based exclusively on applications from the people interested, Swedish Radio reports. The authorities expect 3000-4000 young men and women to apply for military service under the new system. They will subsequently be enrolled in a three-month program, after which the most suited individuals will be invited to continue military careers. Until now, all young men have served 11-month military service. Although compulsory, the number of conscripts have still dropped significantly over the last years, from 50,000 in year 2000 to about 10,000 in 2000.

(www.barentobserver.com)

Bermuda

Bermudians Against the Draft (BAD) have failed in their fight to get conscription outlawed. Judges at the Privy Council unanimously dismissed the group's appeal to get the policy abolished. The judgement was announced nearly three months after BAD took their case to the Privy Council. The group claimed that the draft was discriminatory as only men were conscripted to the Regiment. They maintained that conscription was only lawful if volunteers could not be found—and that required the Governor to take reasonable steps to recruit men. BAD also cited three further grounds under which they claimed that the policy of conscription was unlawful. But judges sitting at the Privy Council rejected all five grounds of the appeal. Attorney General, Senator Kim N. Wilson, said the Government of Bermuda is naturally pleased with the ruling of the Privy Council in upholding conscription in the Bermuda Regiment.

(bermudasun.bm)

Send us your CO memory
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CCW Attends GI Rights Conference in San Francisco

Staff from the Center on Conscience & War participated in the fourth annual conference of the GI Rights Hotline from April 22nd – 25th. This year’s conference was held in downtown San Francisco at the historic Veterans Building, and it was made possible by the support of local chapters of Veterans for Peace, American Friends Service Committee, and Alternatives to Militarism through Information and Empowerment (AMIE).

In addition to those from the local area, representatives attended the conference from member groups throughout the United States and even from Germany. It was a great opportunity for both encouragement and learning from the decades of counseling experience embodied in such a diverse group.

After introductions and some general business (including recognition of Executive Director J.E. McNeil’s contribution to the Hotline corporate legal matters) on the opening night of the conference attendees benefited from the music of the band Annie and the Vets. The first educational sessions began the next morning and included information presented by a licensed therapist about counseling callers with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, traumatic brain injuries, and suicidal thoughts. Another session involved an attorney who represented a soldier who was also a single mother that the Army arrested after she failed to deploy. What was particularly egregious in this case was that the soldier did not deploy because she was unable to find someone to take care of her 10-month-old son. During the session, the attorney described how a court martial was avoided and the soldier was eventually discharged.

Lawyers and seasoned counselors presented the latest information on military AWOL policies and issues concerning the activation of personnel from the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR). Other workshops provided information about how to assist with sexual assault complaints, Veterans benefits, and medical discharges. Presenters ranged from members of the Hotline, partner organizations like Courage to Resist and Swords to Plowshares, and veterans themselves speaking about their own experiences.

Amidst the large array of military issues with which the GI Rights Hotline offers assistance, the topic of conscientious objection clearly stood out as close to everyone’s heart. CCW’s Counseling Coordinator, Bill Galvin, led an in-depth workshop on assisting conscientious objectors in the military. Bill’s workshop was the only one with homework, as he asked participants to read and make notes on the modified version of a CO application that CCW received this past year.

Galvin explained that whenever the Center receives a CO application, the staff engages in this same process of individually

reading and marking up each draft prior to meeting together to share ideas for improvement or potential pitfalls. After allowing all those in the session to voice their suggestions, Galvin shared his own and the rest of the Center’s staff comments on this application. Galvin also provided a copy of the Investigating Officer’s report so that everyone could learn and practice how to help a CO in writing an effective rebuttal to a less-than-favorable recommendation. With many decades of experience working directly with conscientious objectors, as well as in training other counselors, Bill Galvin’s expertise was much appreciated within his CO session and throughout the conference overall.

After days of discussing the intense and often heart-wrenching problems counselors encounter, the last evening included a panel discussion entitled, “Why We Do This Work.” The goal was to offer perspectives from different counselors as to what has fostered their commitment to the work of the GI Rights Hotline. For example, CCW’s newest staff member and former counselee, Daniel Lakemacher, spoke about the monumental difference it can make to a CO to find an ally outside the military. Having been on the other side of the phone less than one year earlier as an active duty Sailor, Lakemacher emphasized the extreme isolation felt by many military personnel. He reminded all present that they could literally have a life-changing impact for someone, just as the staff of the Center had for him. Many of the participants commented later how moving they found Lakemacher’s contribution.

The three CCW staff, who attended the annual conference of the GI Rights Hotline were afforded a unique opportunity to learn, share, and connect with the many other people, each doing the work necessary to provide an outside resource for members of the military to turn to for free support and advice.

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Up to 30% of a purchase you might have made anyway can go towards the Center. Just log on to www.goodsearch.com/goodshop.aspx, and search for your favorite online store. Just make sure you select **“Center on Conscience & War”** as your charity of choice, and proceeds from your purchase will go towards our efforts at defending the rights of conscientious objectors...at no extra charge to you!

“Extending the rights of conscience...”

CCW Honors J.E. McNeil and Bill Galvin for 10 Years of Dedicated Service

by Dan O’Conner

The Center on Conscience & War celebrated 10 years of hard work and dedication by Executive Director J.E. McNeil and Counseling Coordinator Bill Galvin. Galvin, a conscientious

Navy CO and now the Development Director and a counselor at the Center.

McNeil and Galvin were introduced by Bill Yolton, a former Executive Director of the Center. They spoke of their own beliefs about conscientious objection and how those beliefs formed. Both spoke of the need to keep the important work of the Center going through the dedication of all of us who believe in conscientious objection. At the close of the celebration, McNeil and Galvin each were awarded glass plaques engraved with the CCW logo and a personal message thanking them for their 10 years of service to the Center. Rebecca Rawls, the Fund for Education and Training Coordinator and five-year volunteer with the Center also received a glass engraved plaque for her volunteer efforts with the Center.



Dallas Wisehaupt congratulates Bill Galvin for 10 years at the Center

objector during the Vietnam War, has continued to counsel conscientious objectors in the military ever since. He was on the staff of the United Presbyterian Church’s Emergency Ministry on Conscience & War in the 1970s, and later worked for Central Committee for Conscientious Objection before joining CCW in 2000. McNeil is a lawyer dedicated to the cause of conscientious objection and war tax resistance. Prior to becoming the Executive Director, she worked with CCW on its legal committee, where she contributed to *amicus* briefs and represented conscientious objectors in court.

A celebration was held in their honor on May 8, in Arlington, VA at the home of Center supporter Sally Cooper. Several COs who were counseled by Galvin and McNeil spoke about their experiences becoming conscientious objectors while serving in the military and how important it was to have the guidance of the Center’s counsel. “Just having someone with the experience of J.E. and Bill to counsel me through the CO process made all the difference during that difficult time,” said Daniel Lakemacher, a



J.E. McNeil describes her 10 years at the Center, here with former Executive Director Bill Yolton

“Extending the rights of conscience...”

CCW supports West Point CO

by Dan O' Conner

The Center on Conscience & War and the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) filed an *amicus* brief on May 20, in the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals in *Kanai v. McHugh*. The brief supports Steven Kanai, a West Point cadet who came to conscientious objection in his senior year.

Kanai filed his CO application on May 19, 2008 after realizing that his Christian and Buddhist beliefs were no longer compatible with military service. His application was subsequently denied by the Army, and he filed a suit in Federal District Court asking that the decision be overturned.

The District Court found that the officers reviewing Kanai's application violated several Army regulations and denied Kanai a fair hearing. It found that many officers exhibited an open bias against Kanai's beliefs. Several officers suggested his resignation from West Point be approved, but instead of discharge, Kanai would be placed in the enlisted service for a punitive number of years. One officer stated that Kanai must be placed in the enlisted service for two years more than the maximum allowed by law because doing otherwise would "set an unacceptable precedent."

Another officer stated that Kanai's attempt to resign on conscientious objection grounds "directly insults and marginalizes the sacrifices of men and women in uniform that serve." Because of this bias, the Court found, the reviewing officers did not judge Kanai's application based on the law and regulations, and granted Kanai his CO discharge. The government appealed the case to the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond, VA.

Amicus briefs, rather than arguing the basic issue in the appellant brief, focuses a particular aspect that would be difficult to explore otherwise. In their *amicus* brief to the 4th Circuit, the Center and AFSC explained that the regimentation of the military creates a culture in which any deviation from the military norm is greeted with skepticism, at best, and, in many cases, outright hostility. As a result it is difficult for conscientious objectors to show outwardly their change in beliefs. In addition, this hostility creates biases in the minds of many military officers who are charged with reviewing CO applications. The Center and AFSC argued that the officers reviewing Kanai's claim allowed their biases to taint the review process and so denied Kanai a fair hearing.

The Court has yet to set a date for hearings on the case. The Center will continue to stand behind Kanai through the judicial process.

**Center on Conscience & War
Celebration of 10 Years of Dedication
by Bill Galvin and J. E. McNeil
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“Spreading the word...”

Inspired Pasta & Peace Talks

by Patrick Spahn

The Providence Friends Meeting in Media, PA held a series of monthly talks that they call Inspired Pasta & Peace Talks. May’s talk, “Conscientious Objection – Why did they refuse to fight?” included a panel of three conscientious objectors of three different generations. The Center was invited to come to the event and provide information about our work.

Allen Bacon began the panel. He is a World War II conscientious objector who served as a Civilian Public Servant at a mental hospital in Maryland. Civilian Public Service workers helped reform the way mental patients are treated through a nonviolent care of the patients.

Panelist John Braxton is a Vietnam-Era conscientious objector who joined a daring sailboat voyage to deliver medical supplies to North and South Vietnam. His action was seen by the U.S. government as “trading with the enemy”. Braxton also refused to do alternative service as a conscientious objector. These actions ultimately lead to a two-and-one-half year prison sentence, of which he served seventeen months.

Jose Vasquez is a CO discharged from the Army Reserve in May, 2007, who currently serves as Executive Director of the Iraq Veterans against the War. Vasquez spent four years on active duty and received an honorable discharge from the Army. Unable to continue his education even with the GI Bill, Vasquez reenlisted in the Army Reserve as a medic hoping to gain skills he could carry over into the civilian world. Listening to combat veterans share their experience of the ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan made him reconsider whether he could participate in the Army Reserve. In January, 2005, Vasquez applied for conscientious objector status and received his discharge in May, 2007.

It was a lovely organized event with three very inspirational speakers and even more conscientious objectors from WWII and the Vietnam War in the audience.

As a German CO and volunteer with the Brethren Volunteer Service, it was a particularly moving event to me. I haven’t met so many WWII COs at once, and I am thankful that these people refused to fight and possibly kill people like my grandfather, who had no choice but to fight as German soldier or be executed.

CCW Celebrates International CO Day

In celebration of International CO Day on May 15, the Center on Conscience & War sponsored a day of activities designed to raise awareness of the plight of conscientious objectors in the military. Many supporters of the rights of conscientious objectors think of this as an issue that only arises when there is a military draft. But people who join the armed forces voluntarily also face issues of conscience as they experience military life first-hand. Those who discover through this process that they cannot participate in war or preparation for it find themselves in a difficult situation.

To illustrate the challenges of conscience faced by people in the military, the Center hosted a free screening of the documentary film “Soldiers of Conscience.” Produced by Luna Productions, the film offers a carefully balanced view of the issues of conscience faced by men and women on active military service.

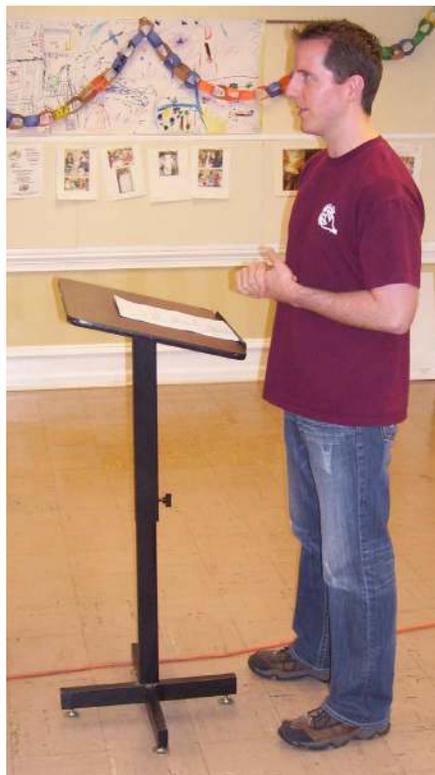
In addition, Daniel Lakemacher, the Center’s Director of Development, told his story of getting into the Navy, being deployed to Guantanamo Bay, and coming to realize while serving there that he was a conscientious objector. Lakemacher’s powerful story shocked the attendees with some details about the detention of prisoners at Guantanamo Bay. He was a psychiatric technician in the behavioral health unit. His job was to evaluate the mental and emotional health of detainees. Since a part of any proper mental health evaluation includes assessing the effect of environmental factors, part of his job was to ask whether unlawful and indefinite detention might affect a prisoner’s mental health.

Daniel described the common practice of force feeding prisoners who wanted to gain attention by not eating or who had no will to live anymore. He was not allowed to know the names of detainees; to discourage staff sympathy for prisoners, they were referred to only by numbers.

When one prisoner did not give back his styrofoam meal tray, six soldiers in full riot gear, including Plexiglas shields, went into his cell to get the tray back by force.

“Any time evil is perpetrated in a systematic fashion against people, a high level of dehumanization has to be involved,” Lakemacher said.

The Center was very pleased by the outcome of the International CO Day events. They hope that the screening of “Soldiers of Conscience” and Lakemacher’s talk will result in new supporters of the Center’s work with COs in the military.



Lakemacher speaking at International CO Day

“Spreading the word...”

CCW Attends “Third Thursday Lunch”

On May 20 CCW’s Counseling Coordinator, Bill Galvin, spoke to the “Third Thursday Lunch” sponsored by the Fellowship of Reconciliation & Interfaith Paths to Peace in Louisville, KY. He spoke about the current work of the Center supporting military COs and the GI Rights Hotline. He also shared a bit about the history of conscientious objection in the U.S., creating a CO file to document one’s objection, and military recruitment.

That evening, he spoke at Central Presbyterian Church in Louisville. Many of the same people attended and he spoke to many of the same issues, in much more detail.

On May 21 Galvin traveled to Lexington, KY where he spoke at Transylvania University to a class on Pacifism and Just War. About 15 students were engaged and asked some serious and tough questions. After class, one of the students expressed an interest in possibly interning at the Center, and several expressed genuine appreciation of the class discussion.

CCW meets with Japanese delegation

On June 7 the Center on Conscience & War, in conjunction with the National Lawyers Guild, hosted a group of Japanese visitors called the Article 9 Coalition. The coalition included members of the Japanese parliament and members of the Japanese Communist Party.

Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution states, “Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes. To accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.”

The delegation had come to the U.S. with two major objectives. One was to meet with United Nations officials about the abolition of nuclear weapons. As the only country to have been attacked with nuclear bombs, the Japanese have a long history of actively working for the abolition of these weapons. Believing that no one should suffer as they did from those attacks, they speak to this issue with a great deal of credibility.

The other agenda for the group was to meet with U.S. officials about closing the U.S. military bases at Okinawa. The Center is quite familiar with the kinds of problems that are often found near large military bases. It happens here in the U.S. as well. But the enormity of the problem in Okinawa is surprising. U.S. military bases comprise almost twenty percent of the city, and the military installations are right in the middle of the city. The surrounding communities are significantly impacted by their

presence. Besides prostitution and violent crime, a number of accidents have occurred -- including airplanes crashing near the bases, sometimes on schools and killing students.

The Center learned that over 85% of the population in Okinawa is opposed to the U.S. military presence there. It is quite clear that there is little chance that the Okinawan community will consent to extending the agreement by which the U.S. maintains the bases. Unfortunately, the Japanese government is not so firmly against the bases. So the Article 9 Coalition is working to close the bases now, and not wait till the current agreement expires. They have considerable support on the home front.



Bill Galvin with Kazuo Shii, Article 9 Coalition

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From the Desk of the Executive Director

Ever get into a long, important conversation on an airplane with a complete stranger? It happens sometimes. It happened to me in 1990 on a puddle jumper in New England. I had gotten a seat against the bulkhead and several rows from my husband and our 4-year-old son. I tried to convince the Asian gentleman who had the seat across the aisle from them to let me sit there with no success. After the plane took off, however, he came up to me and insisted I take his seat. When I took it, I commented to the much older Asian gentleman next to me about how nice it was and he replied, "I ordered him to give you the seat."

And that is how I met the Commanding General of the South Korean Army.

In July 1990, not much was going in the war business in the United States (if you don't count any of our covert or "advisory" actions—the Gulf War was yet to come). But the General and I had a long and interesting conversation. We talked about travel in the U.S., Quakers in Korea, and whether his wife would want to travel with him (He had never even thought of that possibility before.)

But most of all we talked about war.

In particular, the General talked about being a young soldier and then officer. He talked about fighting in Vietnam, leading even younger men to their deaths. We talked about the killing. He expressed a concern about the fact that pilots never saw the results of their handiwork, but could drop bombs and fly back to the safety of their ship or base. He expressed a concern that one day all officers would be men who had never seen the killing close at hand. This, he averred, would result in a trigger-happy military.

I wonder what he thinks about drones. An article in *Stars and Stripes* had this to say about the "new training" for recruits:

For recruits, the unique challenge of the unmanned planes is keeping focused on the idea they are in a war zone, even if they are physically half a world away, flying the planes from a base in the Nevada desert.

I guess it is a good thing for these soldiers to feel they are in a battle zone, but no training will change the fact that these men and women can get up from a hard day of killing people and go home to their nice suburban ranch house with the two car garage and have a picnic with their spouse and children.

The Center, too, does a lot of its work remotely. We count on the phones, email and faxes to allow us to help the men and women who, whether they had to face killing directly or not, have to face their own hearts directly and concluded that they cannot participate in killing any more. But internet, phones and staff to answer them cost money.

So you, too, can do your work remotely by supporting the Center.

And let us hope the next generation of Generals understands what war really means.

Yours for Peace and Justice,

J. E. McNeil

