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The Center on
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The Reporter for Conscience' Sake

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First World Peace Forum Kicks Off in Canada

By Bill Galvin
CCW Counseling Coordinator

The first World Peace Forum convened in Vancouver, British Columbia on June 23. In the welcome the co-chairs of the World Peace Forum Society stated, "Three years ago, we had a dream. We imagined that the public effort to stop that invasion could be nurtured, globally connected, and transformed into a force powerful enough to halt aggression in the Middle East, Africa, Asia, the Americas, or anywhere." That was a pretty big dream, and at times the WPF was somewhat overwhelming, as there was so much going on.

The WPF program guide alone was 52 pages. It included Dennis Kucinich and associates talking about the need for a cabinet level Department of Peace, Hibakusha (nuclear survivors) and others from Japan working for the abolition of nuclear weapons, a labor forum, and much more. The Forum included large plenarys', concerts, and a peace march and rally in downtown Vancouver. But most of the important work was done through smaller workshops, panels, and networking. One day included a film festival, co-sponsored by the National Film Board of Canada, CBC, and others, during which films portraying particular peace

related activities were shown, followed by a panel discussion.

The day themed "Where the Killing Stops: Soldiers turned Peacemakers" was one most relevant to CCW, and the Center's counseling See FORUM, pg. 4



A peace-inspired sculpture is displayed on the Vancouver, BC grounds of the 2006 World Peace Forum in June

CCW Visits Selective Service

By Hannah Kliever
BVS Volunteer

In early August staff and interns from the Center made their annual visit to the national headquarters of the Selective Service System in Arlington, Virginia. Each year the office makes this trip, keeping an open line of communication between the two organizations and providing an open forum to discuss questions, suggestions, and issues of concern. Topics of conversation ranged from the future chance of draft legislation to the increasing pressure on individual states to impose non-registrant penalties to the responsibility of educating the public about conscientious objection.

Of particular interest and alarm to the Center this year were accounts of less-than-adequate training of local draft boards. Counseling coordinator Bill Galvin raised his worry that many boards were still not fully grasping the idea of a non-Mennonite/Quaker/Brethren conscientious objector and were yet unsure how to evaluate the consistency and See SSS, pg. 6

From the Desk of the Executive Director

Have you ever noticed how often the Center News page includes greetings and farewells? In part, this is because we use volunteers. In part, this is because we hire people who are beginning their careers as activists.

Bill Galvin and I have been around for a while. One of the goals we both have at the Center is to help new activists to understand that this is a long-term process. We try to train them how not to burn out. We try to teach them the connectedness of the issues.

The Center has been amazingly successful in this regard over the years. Many people connected to the Center have gone on to work on other issues. Many have become professional activists like Bill and me.

Others have found other careers, but have maintained their passion for this issue.

The Center provides a valuable service in this regard beyond the basic ones of advocacy and support for conscientious objectors and members of the military. We are, to an extent, a catalyst for men and women to enter the world of

passionate living for others. Many people who come here as interns and volunteers leave to join the Peace Corp, MCC, or return to school to become ministers, lawyers, or doctors.

But we are constrained by finances as to just how many people we can launch. Even if every one of them were volunteers, there is a cost in supplies, phone, rent, and travel expenses. And, of course, not all of them have been volunteers in the purest sense. Many have been part of the Brethren or Mennonite Volunteer Service and required payments.

So it is always up to the supporters of the Center to determine how many young men and women will pass through our doors. Because the supporters keep the doors open with their contributions.

Yours for Peace and Justice,

S. E. McNeil





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News Briefs

Israeli COs Imprisoned

Three Israeli soldiers have been imprisoned for refusing to take part in the war in Lebanon. Omri Zeid departed from duty after refusing to shell a Lebanese village saying, "I am not willing to be a part of any army which shoots on women and children." Amir Pastar refused service when called up to fight in Lebanon in late July. He was sentenced to 28 days in military prison. Itzik Shabbat, a reservist called up in mid-July, refused to report. However, it is still unclear what finally became of his case.

(War Resisters' International 8/3/2006)

Recruiter Investigated for Signing Autistic Teen

An Army recruiter who signed up a 19-year-old with severe autism has been investigated for concealing the disability. Military policies forbid the enlistment of anyone with a mental disorder that interferes with school or employment, and the teen's parents immediately contacted the local Portland, Oregon newspaper. After investigation, the teen was released from his contract and the recruiter was reassigned.

(The Oregonian 8/10/2006)

Army CO Faces Jail

Augustin Aguayo, an Army Specialist who applied for a conscientious objector discharge two and a half years ago, and was turned down, has now had his Habeas claim denied by the US District Court of the District of Columbia on the grounds of a lack of religious foundation and questionable timing of the application. He will now conceivably face court-martial if he refuses to obey a direct order to pick up a weapon and deploy.

Recruiter Sexual Misconduct A Silent Problem

In the past year over 100 women experienced some form of sexual misconduct by their recruiters. An Associated Press investigation discovered more than 80 recruiters disciplined for this problem, ranging from assault to rape. This number is significantly higher than reported cases in previous years; however, prosecutions are rare and recruiters are often disciplined administratively. The increase is consistent with overall recruiter wrongdoing with 630 cases reported in 2005, up from 400 cases in 2004.

(South Florida Sun-Sentinel 8/19/2006)

Marine Reservists Face Involuntary Call-Up

The Marine Corps announced that in several months it would begin calling individual ready reservists (IRR) to involuntary active duty. While the Army has been calling up reservists and instituting "stop-loss" orders for most of the current war, the Marines' last involuntary call-up happened before the initial invasion of Iraq. The first call-up will be taken from a pool of about 34,000 Marines, calling as many as 2,500 at a time. Marines will be given five months' notice before activation and would have the opportunity to petition for deferment or exemption. They would serve a maximum of two years. Most Marine Corps tours in Iraq last seven months. For many Marines this would be their fourth tour in Iraq. Says Paul Rieckhoff, founder of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, "You can send Marines back for a third or fourth time, but you have to understand you are destroying their lives. It is not what they intended the all-voluntary military to look like."

(The Los Angeles Times 8/23/2006)

The First Jump

By Gregg Phifer

Civilian Public Service, Huson, Montana, July 1944

Standing with a death grip on the wire cable running just above the gaping door of the Johnson Flying Service Ford Trimotor, I chewed hard on my Wrigley's, stared at the light brown panels curving above the door, and gave what I fondly wished were a more reassuring glance at my securely-locked static line. I sensed Harry kneeling in the door with one foot on the step and spotter Karl, head out the window and left hand wig-wagging directions to the pilot. Suddenly the motors cut. Karl slapped Harry on the left shoulder. The door gaped wide, but only for an instant. A fraction of a second later – or so it seemed to me – my foot paused momentarily on the step, and I hopped off into space. I had no sense of either time or falling before a giant hand seized me by the shoulders. "I've done it," I said to myself as I looked down at the fields below, and suddenly felt jubilant and weak all in the same moment.

I had waited a long time for that first jump. It had been more than a year since I interviewed the three aspiring smoke jumpers leaving Buck Creek Camp for a strange place deep in the Montana wilderness, Seeley Lake. It had been nearly six months since I filled out my application and told Wes, director of CPS 37 in Coleville, California, that smoke jumping was my special service ambition for the summer of '44. It had been almost two months since I first introduced myself at Regional Fire Control in the Federal Building in Missoula.

After a week of ground training, that Wednesday morning dawned wet and gloomy. A heavy layer of mist blanketed the landing field some four miles from camp as we sat down to a bountiful dinner of chicken and gravy, complete with chocolate pie for dessert. I had loaded my plate with second helpings when Jim stood up and rapped his cup for attention. "After dinner D squad will go to the loft, collect their equipment, and we'll go to the airport to see how it is." Strangely enough, my appetite vanished.

At the airfield we unloaded our individual seamless sacks with jumping equipment. While the first jumping group suited up, those of us in D squad who had never been in a plane

CO Memories

before went up just for the ride. I sat on the floor toward the front of the plane. I was fascinated but could not say that I really enjoyed the ride. Below us drifted the bright green of the meadow and the dark green of the forest. As the plane banked, I spotted off to one side the buildings of Nine Mile Camp turning rapidly on an axis of which I was the center. All too soon we were down.

I was in the last load of jumpers. The lumbering Trimotor climbed with surprising speed. Harry smiled encouragingly and pointed out landmarks on the ground as we circled for altitude. He looked casually through the gaping doorway at his feet, calmly inspecting pygmy barns and roads. I didn't want to look down and only half heard his chatter. Perhaps he sensed my condition as he kidded me, asking whether I had my patented nose-scratcher handy. His nose itched, and he couldn't reach it through the close mesh of his mask.

I had no time for thought or sensation. On that first jump I could no more have yelled than I could have climbed back into the plane. Afraid? Every jumper is convinced – consciously – before making his first training jump over the airfield, that chances of injury are small. Perhaps the most difficult problem is the fear of being afraid, of freezing and being unable to take that big step. Part of our training was designed to make that step out of the plane automatic.

After the first relief of the comforting tug on my shoulders, I should have looked up to inspect my chute – as I did on later jumps, especially fire jumps. But I forgot; I looked down and all seemed strange. Fields and houses and haystacks formed no recognizable pattern. I pulled down hard on my left guide line. Finally my chute came around, but I still saw nothing familiar. Where had they jumped us? In the next county?

Finally I recognized the long rectangular pattern of our landing field. Quickly I turned toward it, pulling hard on my guide line. I spotted a cluster of men two hundred yards down the field. Too late! I was too low to even turn around. Suddenly I hit, banging forward on my face. Nothing of a roll on jump one! Hardly a breath of air stirred as my chute gently collapsed. I stood up, fumbled off my gloves and unbuckled my helmet. My jump one was history. I knew then what veterans meant when they said that the time one feels most like jumping is just after landing successfully.

Soldiers Speak Out



A DVD Review

By Bill Galvin
CCW Counseling Coordinator

This compelling twenty-eight minute film primarily portrays Iraq veterans speaking about their military

experiences. It is very clear from the beginning that these vets are strongly opposed to the war and that the best way we can support the troops is to work to end this war and bring them home. These heartfelt statements are supported by interspersed information about military recruitment. In fact one of the Iraq Vets Against The War, Jimmy Massey, is a former recruiter. For this reason, the film could also be used as an effective counter recruitment tool.

This DVD contains many “extras” as well. For example, there are ninety-two minutes of extended interviews with the vets who were featured in the film. Each interview can be viewed separately, most are under twelve minutes. There are also a number of shorts.

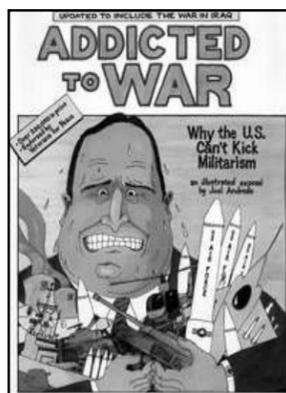
One entitled “Leave My Child Alone” is an excellent eleven minute counter recruitment resource in which recruiter abuses are exposed and the No Child Left Behind recruitment law is explained. It includes this testimony by Jimmy Massey, “Marines live by a code; honor & courage, commitment, *semper fidelis*, but when I became a recruiter, all of a sudden the Marines asked me bend the truth, lie, cheat, manipulate, steal, beg, borrow, do whatever I had to do” to get people to sign. He went on to explain that of all the people he recruited, 95% were fraudulently enlisted. Another powerful testimony is given by Cindy Sheehan about her son Casey. She says, “If I had the opportunity to get his name off the [recruiter’s] list, I definitely would have!” Another mother says, “It doesn’t seem right. You warn your kids not to take candy from strangers, but you don’t think that you’re going to have to warn them to not take X boxes from recruiters.”

Overall this is an excellent and versatile film for educating people about the military and the war, as well as a very powerful counter recruitment tool. Anyone organizing around these issues or making presentations to young people will find this to be an extremely useful resource.

SSS, *From pg. 1*
sincerity of a CO. Selective Service expressed similar concerns, but reiterated that they have only four hours a year with a local board and that it would take a much larger movement to break down CO stereotypes. This being said, they assured that they reliably revise training materials and role-plays for local boards and are working to counter some of the problems prevalent during the Vietnam draft.



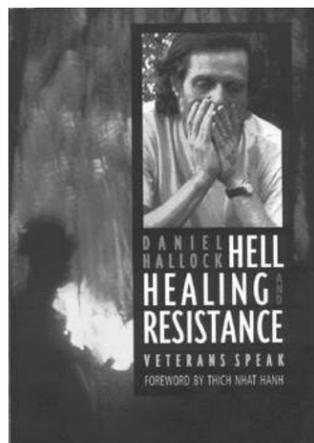
www.CenterOnConscience.org/store



Addicted to War describes the world's most active and powerful military's domination. It is a carefully documented account of the U.S. military adventures since the colonial period to the present war in Iraq and Afghanistan. With over 160 footnotes, this book is an excellent tool for both children and adults. Available in Spanish.

On Sale for \$5

Hell Healing and Resistance is a powerful book about the human cost of war. It shares veterans’ accounts of wars they faced and the their continued suffering after the wars were over. This book also offers hope and healing through personal experience, which reaches to all parts of this culture. **On Sale for \$20**



Another Summer Comes To A Close // Ian Yarett

After volunteering at the Center last summer, I came away not only with a vast amount of knowledge about the military, Selective Service, and conscientious objection, but also with a strong belief in the importance of the work that CCW does. My convictions were only deepened by a Peace and Conflict Studies class I took and other experiences I had during my first year at Swarthmore College. Thus, I decided to return to CCW this summer to continue working as a GI Rights and Draft counselor.

In addition to counseling, I spent a great deal of my time re-designing our website. Some of my other duties included preparing the Center’s archives, cleaning the office, and packing up orders to be sent out.

I have learned a tremendous amount from my work at the Center this summer, especially from my counseling calls. Despite what many Americans claim, it is absolutely possible to wholeheartedly support the soldiers, without supporting the war. The soldiers are primarily good people who mean well - all it takes is picking up a few calls on the GI Rights hotline to be convinced of that. But most of them are not there to fight; rather, they are there for the benefits, the money, the education, the enlistment bonus, the job skills, etc. - things that one GI who was absent without leave described to me as “the wrong reasons.”

Promoting awareness and helping those who have gotten stuck in bad situations with the military is, of course, a large part of what CCW does and a significant aspect of what has made working here so rewarding. As the summer draws to a close, I will be preparing to start my second year at Swarthmore. I hope to return to CCW at some point in the future.



Ian and Roger Yarett, CCW summer volunteers

A New Addition To The Summer Crew

My name is Roger Yarett, and I am a high school senior from Greenwich, Connecticut. I first learned of the Center on Conscience & War when my brother Ian volunteered here during summer 2005. I had always felt strongly opposed to war for moral and practical purposes and admired my brother’s activism at this vital juncture in our country’s history. As the war in Iraq continued and conflict in the Middle East intensified, I decided that, like my brother, I needed to get more involved with and help support peace advocates. Although my time here at CCW has been short, I have received GI Rights and draft training, conducted research, and scanned legal documents. I hope to return next summer as a GI Rights Counselor.

A Fond Farewell // Theo Sither



After three great years at CCW I am moving on to another position with the Mennonite Central Committee – Washington Office. I finished my time with the Center in August and started working for MCC in September.

During my time with CCW I gained many valuable experiences. I learned the importance and significance of working for the rights of conscientious objectors, even though, sometimes, the wider world might not see it as such.

The Center was my introduction to the Washington scene and it will always hold a very special place in my heart.

CCW Welcomes A New Staff Member



Pat Elder joined CCW in September of 2006. Pat lobbies for the rights of conscientious objectors on Capitol Hill. He is also a GI Rights counselor and he works on legislation regarding the Selective Service System.

Pat is veteran antiwar activist. He is a co-founder of the DC Antiwar Network and the Montgomery County Committee on Recruitment Issues. Pat also serves on the coordinating committee of the National Network Opposing the Militarization of Youth.

Ukraine Delegation Visits Center

By Bill Galvin
CCW Counseling Coordinator

In August, the U.S. Department of State sponsored an International Visitor Leadership project called "Civil Rights Protection within the U.S. Military" for a delegation from Ukraine. With hazing being a serious problem in the Ukrainian military, a particular focus of the trip was to learn how this is dealt with in the US. The delegation included a civilian court administrator, two military investigators, a military judge, and the program director of The Kharkiv Human Rights Group. This latter group provides assistance to individuals whose rights have been infringed, investigates cases of human rights violations, and educates the public about these violations, particularly with regard to political rights and civil liberties. The delegation mainly met with representatives of the military, law enforcement, and other government agencies while in the US; however, the State Department wisely thought it would be appropriate for them to meet with us as a non-government organization working with the GI Rights Hotline and as advocates for the rights of conscientious objectors.



This delegation was interested in far more than hazing. They asked many questions about how the military justice system in the US works, how the government and military deal with groups like CCW, how groups that might appear to be anti-government such as CCW fit into a democratic society, and even how we personally got involved in doing this work. They had particular concerns about military recruitment, how we handled recruiter fraud, and how the

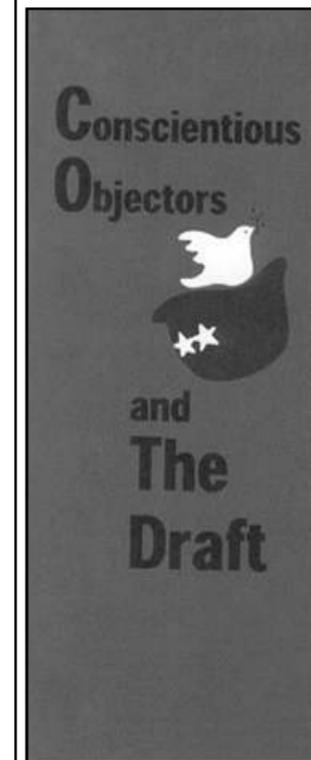
conscientious objector process works. We explained to them some of the problems created by the misleading advertising campaigns that makes enlistment appear to be about job training and money for college, and how difficult it is for groups like us to get accurate information to potential recruits about the realities of military service. They told us that in the Ukraine contact information for organizations just like ours would be posted in the recruiting office - quite a difference from US procedure. They also relayed that the Ukraine was going to end conscription soon, and they were concerned about the transition to a volunteer military and what effect that would have on their society and military. All and all, it was a surprising opportunity to create an international dialogue on issues that we often associate as close to home. Much was learned on both sides of the conversation.

FORUM, From Pg. 3
coordinator Bill Galvin participated in two of the panel presentations. The day focused on movements to help members of the military who don't want to be there, particularly concentrating on the Canadian tradition of supporting U.S. war resisters. At least three people attending the Forum were currently AWOL from the US military and seeking sanctuary in Canada. Many people from their support communities were also there. In fact, a major sub-theme of the day was to help Canadians understand the need for their help with military conscientious objectors. A common question in Canada (as here) is why there is a problem if, since there is no draft, these people volunteered. Part of the day was devoted to explaining why people in the U.S. enlist. For example, many Canadians were surprised to learn how many people in the U.S. have no medical insurance and feel that joining the military is the only way they can cover the bills for a sick spouse or child.

With so many people and events, it was initially difficult to find one's niche at the World Peace Forum and nearly impossible to fully experience the breadth of topics covered. However, once found an individual focus for the weekend, it wasn't difficult to draw value from the discussion and company.

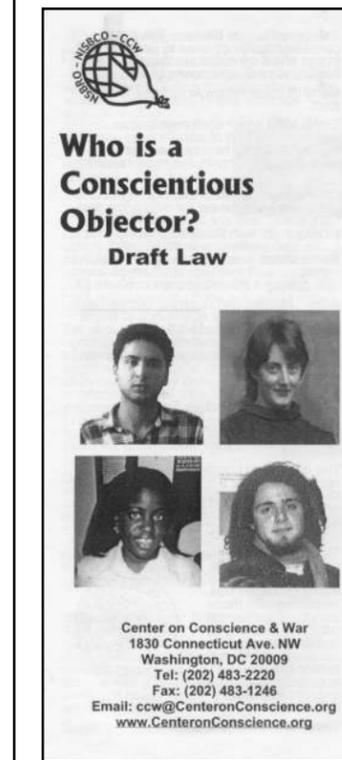
For more information, reports, newsletters, photos, and more from the 2006 World Peace Forum, visit www.worldpeaceforum.ca

In the United States an 18th birthday can be a great milestone in the lives of young men. They legally become adults and are granted the rights and responsibilities that come with this distinction. One of the first decisions that these young men must make concerns draft registration. For many, this decision is automatic, and they register with Selective Service without giving it a second thought. For others, however, this could be the biggest decision in their lives. The Center has helped many of these young men grapple with their decision over the years and has developed several helpful resources on this topic. Many of these can be downloaded from CCW's website or requested over the phone. www.centeronconscience.org



Conscientious Objectors and the Draft is a booklet that explains how a military draft would work if it was reinstated. It advises what a CO can do now to be ready for the draft and provides a bibliography and contact list of organizations for more information. **\$2**

Basic Draft and Registration Information is a free 12-page packet that provides advice and resources about registering with Selective Service, preparing for a draft, and documenting one's CO beliefs. It includes various recommendations for starting a CO file and many questions that should be considered by a CO. Finally, it provides a worksheet of beliefs that can be signed and sent to CCW for one's file.



Who is a Conscientious Objector? provides basic information on qualifying as a CO under draft law and presents a barebones look at what would happen in the case of a draft. This free brochure is an important resource for both young men and women.



The Fund for Education and Training (FEAT) provides low interest loans to young men who, for reasons of conscience, do not comply with laws requiring registration for the draft. This free brochure provides details about the loan and who may qualify.

