

Peace Tax Fund

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The 24th Triennial Congress of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 14-25 July 1989 in Sydney, Australia:

Modern war and the structure of an up-to-date defence demand increasing resources. Indirectly we are accomplices in maintaining the poverty situation in which many of our fellow men live. Resources are used for armament instead of more extensive efforts for the improvement of living conditions both in this country and other parts of the world. We experience a conflict of conscience by obeying the laws on this point while supporting a policy that opposes what we most profoundly consider ethically correct.

We, therefore, ask for a change of legislation, making it possible for the individual citizen to pay the percentage of the taxes which goes to military purposes to a fund for peace-building activities of a non-violent character. The means from this fund might, for instance, be used for:

- confidence-building contacts across the borders and cultural, ethical and religious dividing lines,
- information work and education, changing attitudes to further the respect for other people and human rights
- training in non-violent conflict solutions,
- work for the replacement of the military defence with non-violent protection,
- work for a just distribution of the resources of the world

There is, at present, a higher degree of openness between the Great Powers in the East and the West. The Brundtland report points out the importance of a better relationship between the North and the South. We wish that all countries in the world could contribute to detente.

The 24th Congress of WILPF called upon all WILPF sections to press their governments for a change of legislation, making it possible for the individual citizen to pay the percentage of the taxes which goes to military purposes to fund peacebuilding activities of a non-violent character and be credited toward their taxes in their own country.