

Campaña de Objeción Fiscal a los Gastos Militares (Tax Resistance Campaign against Military Expenditures)

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www.pangea.org/org/juspau/siof/es/index.htm

Country report from Spain to the 9th International Conference on War Tax Resistance and Peace Tax Campaigns Hirschluch, 2002/09/05-08

We started working in Spain on this field in 1984. During all these years our campaign has been

deeply linked with the struggle of the “*insumisos*”, the total resisters against military conscription. Thanks to the civil disobedience that they did and that brought thousands of them to imprisonment even for more than two years, Spanish government was forced to announce the end of conscription not for 2010, as it was supposed, but for 2001. We were proud to tell about this to the 8th Conference in Washington. Thus, the last Spanish conscripts finished their military service during the first months of 2002. When they left the quarters, military system used them (once again!) to make different ceremonies. From their point of view, this ending was not the sign of a victory of civilian disobedience but the victory of Spanish democracy (forgiven the undemocratic repression that *insumisos* suffered). In one of these ceremonies, a military chief said: “*Insumisos* have won a battle, but not the war: the army’s still there”.

We agree with him: the army is still there and we have to go on with our struggle against it. Military budget increases year by year and military power in politics increases too. They are trying to change their image: now they are humanitarian forces for peacekeeping all over the world. But we know that they still are a huge machine for killing and destruction. And that the only way for peace is justice and that the system they support is far away from justice.

So we are still working on our campaign on tax resistance against military expenditures. We would like to be like the *insumisos*: total resisters against military taxation, but we realise that it’s not possible. We pay taxes not only by the income tax, but in any commercial transaction too (by the Value Added Tax). And we don’t see the money we pay for Income Tax: our employer deflects it directly to the Inland Revenue.

So our proposal is more on the line of non co-operation than on the line of civil disobedience: we propose to deflect an amount of money from our taxes to an alternative project (something like a peace fund). With this money we support different projects that show to the society what a real defence could be. By the way, increasing the number of people who join us we prove the real rejection that military expenditures have among us.

During the last years the number of tax resisters in Spain has not increased. We are around two thousand people doing this every year. In the bank account for alternative project we receive every year 36000€. That is very few, it should increase every year but it’s hard. People are scared of the Internal Revenue. And we have to say that the only risk we affront is the seizure of our personal bank account or our salary for the amount we deflected and a small fine.

You can think that we pay twice, but we think we don’t: After the seizure Internal Revenue has got the same money as it wanted (something more with the fine) but the money we deflected was sent to a very valuable alternative project. Let us tell you two examples. One: the Spanish tax resistance campaign gave to the international project that we adopted in Washington more than 1500€. Two: in the second Spanish public TV station we can see every afternoon documentary programs. Once they showed a French production about Lesotho. They were in a small and lost village. They showed the water piping and people of the village explained that it was paid by the money received from the Spanish Campaign on Tax Resistance. Internal Revenue will never seize this!