



The Center on
Conscience & War

The Reporter for Conscience' Sake

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A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words: Special Photo Edition

The last couple of months at the Center on Conscience & War have been full of photo opportunities. From the large Washington D.C. anti-war protest in September to the School of the Americas (SOA) demonstration in November, the office has been on the move, camera in tow.



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September Protest

On September 24th between 100,000 and 300,000 anti-war demonstrators rallied in Washington D.C. to end the war in Iraq and to bring the troops home. Alongside the multitude of spirited anti-war activists marching around the White House, CCW staff participated, handing out literature and talking to many youth and parents concerned about the possibility of a draft. This was an excellent opportunity to connect with those who might have misinformed views about avoiding conscription and educate about the right to conscientious objection. (for more photos see page 6)



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News Briefs

Israeli Feminist CO Imprisoned

On November 15, 2005 Idan Halili, an Israeli feminist and conscientious objector, was sentenced to 14 days in military prison after refusing to enlist. Says Halili, "... I, as a feminist, feel I must avoid military service and act to limit and reduce the influence of the army on civic society ... I cannot join an organization which, either directly or indirectly, encourages violence ... I cannot live in such flagrant denial of my conscience." Although she is scheduled to be released November 28th, her chances of re-incarceration will still be present.

(War Resisters' International)

War Resisters Monument Incites Strong Opinions

About 30,000 of the people who crossed into Canada to avoid the Vietnam War still reside within their borders. In honor of this, the British Columbia town of Nelson resolved to erect a monument paying tribute to these war resisters. However, this plan was soon challenged as hate mail began to arrive from opponents and organizations such as the American Veterans of Foreign Wars. Jeff Schutts, US Army CO and war resister activist, defended the project saying, "It should be up to Canada to decide who to honor. If they want to honor war resisters who came and contributed to this society, I don't see why people in the states should have a problem with that." Despite building opposition in the US, the monument is still in the works, and the residents of Nelson have already started organizing an American war resisters assembly for the coming year. *(ABC News and Jeff Schutts)*

New Zealand Doctor Faces Court Martial, Questions Legality of Iraq War

Malcolm Kendall-Smith, a flight lieutenant in the Royal Air Force was suspended in June, pending court martial, after refusing orders to return to duty in Iraq. He argues, however, that he is disobeying an illegal order, that of participation in an illegal war. "Now, ICC (International Criminal Court) prosecutors can go after individual combatants in countries which signed the ICC statute, including Australia, New Zealand and Britain -- and that makes war a tricky legal situation for any thinking soldier," said Don Rothwell, director of the Sydney Centre for International and Global Law. While the United Nations has not sanctioned the war in Iraq, the legality of the war is a multi-layered argument that has already been used to little avail in some conscientious objection cases. In New Zealand, according to the Armed Forces Discipline Act, there is a maximum penalty of five years prison for disobeying a lawful command. *(The New Zealand Herald)*

Columbian COs Forced Into Military

In mid-October, along with other youth of Medellin and Antioquia, conscientious objector Juan Carlos Montoya Munera was forcefully recruited into military service. While some COs have been quietly released from service in the past, forceful enlistment is not uncommon. Columbia does not yet recognize conscientious objection as a military exemption. Without evidence of time already served, young groups are detained and transported directly to recruitment centers. *(War Resisters' International)*

Law Clerk Update: Marcus Kroll

I've been trying to come up with a brief supporting the right NOT to bear arms under the Second Amendment. The theory is to find a correlation with the right not to speak under the First Amendment.

The Supreme Court has upheld the right not to speak in several instances. For example, they have said that one does not have to say the pledge of allegiance and that one can not be required to display a state motto on one's license plate ("Live Free or Die"). I'm trying to make a parallel argument applying to the second amendment to support conscientious objectors.

There are several state constitutions that actually support the right not to bear arms. The explicit wording used by many of these states echoes the original wording for the Second Amendment. While state constitutions might not have much authority over the Bill of Rights, they do lend a bit of help, and more importantly, apply to all National Guard CO cases.



Now, our case in the Virginia Courts regarding between driving privileges and Selective Service registration has taken another turn. Originally, the case was dismissed because it wasn't ripe, as Andrew had not officially denied his driving privileges. The court finally wanted us to file a motion for reconsideration after the Virginia DMV officially denied Andrew his permit due to his parent's refusal to sign a waiver. The problem with this was that there were no official facts to reconsider on the record (as we were at a hearing on a motion for dismissal and not the actual trial yet). However, now that the DMV has denied Andrew, the judge is allowing us to amend our complaint and try again. The Virginia District Attorney is cooperating fully.

New Young Volunteer

Chances are, if you have ordered anything from us in the past month, Joe was the one to get it to you. This 19-year-old from St. Louis volunteers with the Center twice a week and has already been a helping hand with orders, data entry, and at the SOA demonstration in November. Welcome aboard, Joe.

A New Volunteer for CCW



October brought a new face to CCW. Hannah Kliever is the latest from Brethren Volunteer Service. A recent graduate of Michigan State University, Hannah worked as a college recruiter in her home state of Wyoming before deciding to pursue a year of service. "Throughout college I was quite involved with various non-profit and social justice organizations. It was then that I started to wonder how my own life reflected my values and ideals. After only a couple weeks at CCW, I can honestly say that I have met more people who genuinely practice their principles than perhaps ever before in my life. Even during the chaos that can ensue in any small office (and tight-budgeted) setting, one can feel the commitment behind each move. To be in such an environment is refreshing, and I feel lucky to be a part of this cause." Hannah is a GI Rights counselor, handles the Center's data processing needs, and edits the newsletter.

Tim Says Goodbye

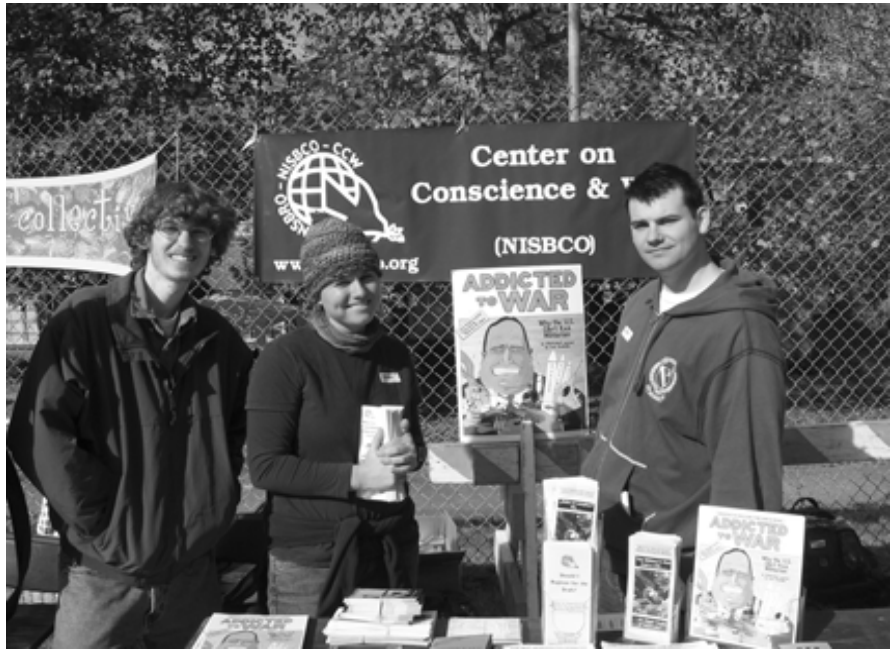
I knew from my first day in January that the work the Center does is truly important. From the daily calls by people all over the world who are trying to get out of the military, to the grandma in Indiana who can't sleep at night until she knows for certain that her only grandson will not be sent to fight for something he does not believe in. These people have taught me that no one should have to deny their conscience and beliefs. There are struggles everyday and everywhere, but hopefully we can make it easier to stand up for what is right.

My next stop will be Denver, CO where I will be a member of the Americorp N.C.C.C. program. I am excited for this change, but my experience at CCW is something I will never forget as I take all I have learned with me. The staff and volunteers here have been some of the most dedicated, caring, and patient people I have ever met. They faithfully devote their lives on a daily basis to a cause that is not always popular but that they know is crucial. CCW has really been like a family to me. Keep up the peaceful fight!

School of the Americas (SOA) Demonstration

Another Year at Fort Benning

After a long night of driving, the staff of CCW finally stretched their legs in Columbus, Georgia for the November 18th-20th demonstration against the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (aka SOA). While participating in the events of the weekend, our days were mainly focused on public education: passing out hundreds of flyers (even as it began to rain), providing resources for others to bring home to their own communities, and answering many questions. In the evening, Bill Galvin provided workshops on GI Rights and Counter-Recruitment strategies, always working to create an even broader network of counselors and allies.



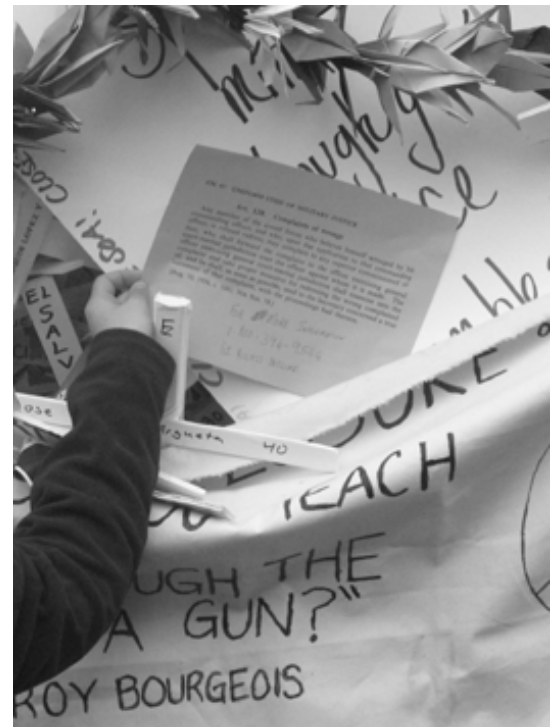
Joe, Hannah, and Dan staffing the CCW table



The "dead" in front of Fort Benning's gate



The Sunday Vigil



Planting GI Rights information on the outer Fort Benning fence. CCW does this each year with the hope that it will be pocketed by the military clean-up crew.



Dedicated Bill Galvin handing out information in the rain



Parading puppetistas are always a popular part of Sunday's march



Conscientious objectors Katherine Jashinski and Camilo Mejia. Camilo spoke several times throughout the weekend and provided support for Katherine's upcoming CO battle (see page 8).



The front gate was equipped with three barbed wire-topped fences this year, making "crossing the line" a little more difficult



Helicopter surveillance was a common sight throughout the weekend

Asserting Conscience

Press Conference Sets the Tone for a Weekend of Non-Violence

As the tables arrived and the last minute preparations began for the events of the SOA weekend, Texas National Guard member Katherine Jashinski took center stage as she publicly declared her refusal to participate in war. "I have come to the point where I am forced to choose between my legal obligation to the Army and my deepest moral values." J.E. McNeil, CCW executive director, and Jim Feldman, CCW board member, are part of her legal team. As of November 27, she is facing court-martial as she has refused to pick up a weapon. (for more see page 8)



CCW Executive Director J.E. McNeil and Katherine Jashinski prepare for their statements at the November 17th press conference in Columbus, Georgia.



Anti-War Protest Cont.



Marching around the White House



CCW's table



Press and protesters in front of the White House

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From the Desk of the Executive Director

The photocopy machine is churning, the phone is ringing and everyone is packing and folding as fast as they can. It is the week before the annual protest at Ft. Benning in Columbus, Georgia against the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, still known to many as the School of the Americas. The staff is driving down on Thursday to participate, to table, and to lead GI Rights and Counter-Recruitment workshops. The energy in the office is palpable.

I am unexpectedly flying down to Columbus myself to lend advice and support to Katherine Jashinski, a 22-year-old member of the Texas National Guard whose CO application for discharge has been denied. She was ordered to Ft. Benning to train on weapons to prepare for immediate deployment to Afghanistan. Although Beverly Reeves of Austin, TX and Peter Goldberger and Board Member Jim Feldman of Philadelphia, PA ably represent Katherine, none of them were able to drop everything and fly down—so I am doing it as co-counsel.

I flew down Wednesday night, arriving ultimately at 3 a.m. Thursday only to begin work at 6 a.m. on her statement for the press conference scheduled for that day at 11:30 a.m. Breakfast, conversation, press release, statement, practice, interviews, press conference, client consultation, film interview, discussion with client's commanding officer, another client consultation, calls to

co-counsel, strategizing session over snacks and dinner. Somewhere in there we had lunch. I left Georgia Friday morning at 4:30 a.m.

Bill, Theo, and various volunteers arrived in Columbus at about noon.

At CCW, we often do these dances. I move here while Bill moves there. Then Theo comes in and I leave. I go back to the office to cover phones. Then Hannah comes to cover them while I go to speak somewhere else. Meanwhile, the mail is opened, the checks are deposited, the thank you notes are sent and the newsletter is written.

Sometimes we misstep. That is—after all—why this is the Summer 2005 newsletter rather than the Winter 2005 newsletter. We are still catching up from an earlier misstep.

But on the whole, looking at our small budget and small staff I am proud of what we manage to get done. You should be proud of the work your support produces.

But there is still more to do in the New Year.

And we will continue the dance with your support.

Yours for Peace and Justice,

J. E. McNeil

