

## Quaker Faith on Capitol Hill—FCNL’s “Green” Building

In 2005, FCNL will move back into its reconstructed historic building on Capitol Hill. The building will be fully handicapped-accessible and certified as “green.” Leadership in Energy and Environment Design (LEED) certification of the structure should aid FCNL in lobbying for national policy supporting energy alternatives to oil dependence and conservation in energy use. The renovated offices will increase usable space by 25%, incorporate the best features of “green architecture,” and ensure a Quaker presence on Capitol Hill for future generations.

For more information on the building renovation, visit the FCNL web site at [www.fcnl.org](http://www.fcnl.org) and click on the “bricks” icon.



### Conscientious Objection continued

said, “War will exist until that distant day when the conscientious objector enjoys the same reputation and prestige that the warrior does today.”<sup>9</sup> We call upon our government and the people of the United States to recognize and honor the conscientious objector to military service or war taxes.

We support the recognition of the rights of persons not to be subjected to military registration, military service, or continued military service. We support the inclusion of a “check-off box” or other means for persons to declare their conscientious objection to war on military registration forms that they currently are required to complete and file with the Selective Service System upon turning eighteen. We support enactment of the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Act.

We urge all Friends monthly meetings and churches to provide counsel and support to those who seek recognition as conscientious objectors.

From his deep experience in war and governance, Dwight D. Eisenhower counseled that “Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed.”<sup>10</sup> The witness of those who object to participating in preparation for war and in war making calls all of us back to this truth, reminding us that true “peace and security can be achieved only by peaceful means.”<sup>11</sup>

### WAR IS NOT THE ANSWER.

*Approved by FCNL’s General Committee, 11/14/04;  
finalized by the Executive Committee, 2/19/05*

This minute does not seek to replace the Statement of Legislative Priorities approved 11/14/04,12 but rather to augment it. This minute is intended to be an expression of the General Committee to share in the wider community, to add our voice to those who work to protect and broaden rights of conscience and the peaceful prevention of deadly conflict.

<sup>1</sup> Declaration “Against All Plotters and Fighters in the World” addressed to Charles II by Fox, Hubberthorne et al,1661; <http://www.quaker.org/peaceweb/pdecla07.html>.

<sup>2</sup> The Journal of George Fox (1651), John L. Nickalls, ed. (London: Cambridge University Press, 1952), ch. 2; <http://www.geocities.com/quakerpages/fox05.htm> (abridged edition)

<sup>3</sup> The Epistle from the Elders at Balby, 1656, no. 13 (as set forth in the copy in the Lancashire Records Office at Preston, from the papers of Marsden Monthly Meeting); <http://www.qhpress.org/texts/balby.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Peter Brock, The Quaker Peace Testimony 1660 to 1914 (Sessions, York, England, 1990), p. 48.

<sup>5</sup> See, e.g., Brock, pp. 142-183 & 290-298.

<sup>6</sup> Minute of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Quoted in Brock, p. 190.

<sup>7</sup> Quaker Crosscurrents: 300 Years of Friends in the New York Yearly Meetings, Hugh Barbour, ed. (Syracuse Univ. Press, 1995), p. 313.

<sup>8</sup> See American Friends Service Committee v. United States, 368 F.Supp. 1176 (E.D.Pa. 1973), rev’d on procedural grounds, 419 U.S. 7 (1974)(per curiam)(objection to being compelled to withhold taxes from the wages of Quaker employees who were refusing to pay war taxes); United States v. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 753 F.Supp. 1300 (E.D.Pa. 1990)(refusal to comply with Internal Revenue Service levies on wages of employees who were engaging in war tax protests); United States v. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, 322 F.Supp. 2d 603 (E.D.Pa. June 21, 2004)(refusal to honor Internal Revenue Service levy on wages of employee engaged in war tax resistance).

<sup>9</sup> Letter to a colleague from his naval PT-boat experience during World War II reflecting upon his observation of the founding sessions of the United Nations in San Francisco in June 1945, as reported in Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House (Houghton Mifflin, 1965), p. 76.

<sup>10</sup> Chance For Peace Address to the American Society of Newspaper Editors, Washington, DC, April 16, 1953, <http://eisenhower.archives.gov/chance.htm>.

<sup>11</sup> FCNL Statement of Legislative Policy (approved 11/03), Part I, [http://www.fcnl.org/legpolcy/indx\\_extnd.htm](http://www.fcnl.org/legpolcy/indx_extnd.htm).

<sup>12</sup> FCNL Legislative Priorities for the 109th Congress (approved 11/04), [http://www.fcnl.org/legpolcy/priority\\_109th.htm](http://www.fcnl.org/legpolcy/priority_109th.htm).

## FCNL’s Legislative Priorities for the 109th Congress

The Friends Committee on National Legislation seeks to bring the religious experience of Friends to bear on public policy decisions. We are called to bear witness to God’s love for every person by sounding a clear voice for truth and peace, bringing forward alternatives to violence, and working for justice.

We are committed to government of, by, and for the people. Current U.S. policies cause the vulnerable to lose hope and allow the wealthy to amass greater wealth. The public good is compromised in favor of private interests without accountability. The Executive branch is undermining laws, and Congress is abdicating its responsibilities to promote the public good.

Friends cherish integrity in public and private life. We call on our public officials to lead by example, to be accountable to the people they serve, and to adhere to the highest standards of ethics and civility.

We know that true security grows from international cooperation and trust, as well as respect for human dignity, economic and social equality, and the rule of law. Fear of further acts of terror is being manipulated to justify an agenda of endless war in the name of “security.”

In light of these concerns, FCNL selects the following priorities for its work during the 109th Congress:

- Remove all U.S. military forces and bases from Iraq, and fulfill U.S. moral and legal obligations to reconstruct Iraq through appropriate multinational, national, and Iraqi agencies.
- Promote a framework for national and international security that includes peaceful prevention and resolution of deadly conflicts, active pursuit of arms control and disarmament, adherence to international law, support for the United Nations, and participation in multilateral efforts to address the root causes of war and of terrorism.
- Restore and assure full civil liberties for all persons in the United States or under its jurisdiction, and promote human rights around the world through international institutions and treaties.

- Change federal budget, tax, and fiscal policies to reduce military spending, meet pressing human needs, and address structural economic violence.
- Promote long-term protection of the environment and eliminate a critical cause of violent conflict by reducing oil consumption and accelerating development and use of renewable energy sources.

FCNL will continue active advocacy on Native American issues. As way opens, FCNL will continue Friends’ long-standing witness for rights of conscience, criminal justice reform, abolition of the death penalty, and an end to institutional racism.

FCNL’s work will be based on legislative opportunity, specific expertise and leadings, and resource availability. FCNL has the flexibility, within the Statement of Legislative Policy, to respond to crises and important legislative opportunities. Omitting an issue from these priorities does not imply a change in our policy.

The General Committee calls upon its members, other Friends, and like-minded people to promote these priorities. In addition to the issues that FCNL has the resources to address, many other deeply held concerns will continue to receive attention from individual Friends, monthly meetings and churches, yearly meetings, and other Quaker organizations.

As we work to find solutions to complex problems, Friends continue to seek divine guidance and ask for renewed strength and hope.

*Approved by FCNL’s General Committee, 11/14/04*

### Implementing FCNL Priorities

You can learn how FCNL is implementing its legislative priorities for the 109th Congress over the next two year by going to our web site at [www.fcnl.org](http://www.fcnl.org) and clicking on the “Issues” link.

## Statement on Moral Values

The Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) is a faith based Quaker organization. As seekers of truth and as Christians, we seek to remain open to where Gods spirit leads us.

FCNL bases its public policy positions on moral and religious values.

FCNL has been witnessing on a nonpartisan basis in Washington for more than 60 years, seeking to create a world without war and the threat of war, a society with equity and justice for all, a community where every person's potential may be fulfilled, and an earth restored.

We talk with members of Congress and their staff about our values as they relate to pending legislation and national policy.

We believe moral values should be a prime component of electoral, legislative, and public policy. Individuals have a right and a responsibility

as citizens to express their views within the framework of the First Amendment of the Constitution.

We invite all who are followers of Jesus and all people of faith to consider ways in which Christ's total message of peace, forgiveness, and justice and his call to succor the poor, the helpless, the scape-goated, and the outcast should be included in the definition of moral values. We recall the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-11) and Jesus quoting Isaiah in Luke 4:18: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me...to proclaim good news to the poor, freedom for the prisoners, recovery of sight for the blind, release for the oppressed..."

We seek a dialogue about our moral values and how we are attempting to apply them to national policy with followers of all faiths, traditions, and beliefs, and with those whose primary concern is the "security" of our nation.

*Approved by FCNL's General Committee, 11/14/04*

## FCNL Counts on Its Grassroots Base

Without its strong grassroots base, FCNL could not do an effective job in Washington advocating for peaceful prevention of deadly conflict, the protection of civil liberties, and less dependency on imported petroleum.

The arguments FCNL makes when meeting with members of Congress and their aides to discuss these and other issues get closer attention when they are backed up by letters, faxes, and phone calls from the legislators' constituents.



You can get involved by subscribing to receive FCNL's Legislative Action Message (LAM) which provides weekly updates on legislation pending in Congress. Sign up through FCNL's home page, [www.fcnl.org](http://www.fcnl.org). Each week you will receive an electronic message which details an issue requiring attention, gives background, and allows you to compose and send a message to your congressional representative.

It's easy and effective; congressional offices in any one week may receive as many as 3,000 messages on a particular issue from FCNL supporters.

To keep informed, you also can subscribe on the web site to FCNL email lists on specific issues such as Native American advocacy, civil liberties, and young Friends. You will receive periodic news updates, alerts, and suggestions of actions you can take in that issue area.

## Statement on Conscientious Objection to War

As members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), we share an abiding faith that heeding the Inner Light present in every person empowers all people to resolve disputes without resorting to the machinery of war. The earliest Friends "testif[ied] to the world, that the spirit of Christ, which leads us into all Truth, will never more move us to fight and war against any man with outward weapons, neither for the Kingdom of Christ, nor for Kingdoms of this world."<sup>1</sup>

Friends have long followed this testimony of peace by opposing the institution of military conscription, refusing to participate in war-making, even when they suffered for their acts of conscience. In 1651, George Fox, a founder of the Religious Society of Friends, twice declined offers of freedom from imprisonment in exchange for serving in the Commonwealth's army, stating "I told them that I lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion of all wars."<sup>2</sup> And in 1656, Friends in Great Britain cautioned "that care be taken, that as any are called before outward powers of the nation, that in the light, obedience to the Lord be given."<sup>3</sup> By the middle of the eighteenth century, the absolute refusal of Quakers to fight was so familiar that at least five colonies—New York, Virginia, Massachusetts, North Carolina and Rhode Island—allowed Friends to be exempted from obligatory military service. (Pennsylvania, because of its Quaker roots, did not even adopt a military conscription act until 1775).<sup>4</sup> Conscientious objection has remained an important expression of Friends'



peace testimony in all the major wars, from the Revolution through the present conflicts.<sup>5</sup>

Friends have also long been opposed to supporting war making, even indirectly. Some avoid employment or investment in war industries. Some decline to register with the Selective Service System or to cooperate with conscription, or undertake non-combatant military service. Some refuse to pay war taxes voluntarily. During the Revolutionary War, Friends approved minutes similar to that of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting: "that a tax levied for the purchasing of drums, colours, and other warlike purposes, cannot be paid consistent with our Christian testimony."<sup>6</sup> Many individual Friends and Quaker organizations refused to pay the federal telephone tax imposed to help finance the Vietnam War.<sup>7</sup> Some Friends continue to ask that their taxes be applied only to non-military uses; and some Quaker organizations affirm such employees by refusing to cooperate with Internal Revenue Service withholding requirements or levies on their wages.<sup>8</sup> In faithfulness to this historic peace testimony, Friends today uphold all whose conscience calls them to refuse participation in warfare. John F. Kennedy

*continued page 4*

### Join Us in Taking a Stand to Promote Peaceful Alternatives to War

Order FCNL's booklet, "If War is Not the Answer, What Is? Peaceful Prevention of Deadly Conflict" for your family and friends. Put some on the literature table at your meeting, church, house of worship or community center. A Spanish language version is also available by downloading from the FCNL web site.

The booklet provides a thorough introduction to the peaceful prevention to deadly conflict. Its contents includes frequently asked questions, concrete policy suggestions, further resources, and examples of critical conflict prevention work already underway around the world.

A \$2 per booklet donation is requested. To order, please send an email with your contact information to [field@fcnl.org](mailto:field@fcnl.org) or call 1-800-630-1330, ext. 142. Or order from the FCNL web site at [www.fcnl.org](http://www.fcnl.org) by clicking on the blue "Special Publications" button and following the links.

