

# Peace Tax: arguments and counter-arguments

**Hypothecation is not part of the British tax system.**

This is becoming less and less true every year.

- Taxes such as the road fund licence, petrol tax, congestion charge, TV licence fee, sugary drinks tax and tampon tax are all examples of hypothecation.
- Under Gift Aid regulations, a charity is allowed to recover Income Tax paid on a donation - another example of hypothecation.

**Everyone benefits from the security provided by our armed forces.**

A peace tax would allow everyone to contribute to defence with a clear conscience.

- Current reliance on armed security and overseas military intervention actually exposes UK citizens to more danger either on active service or via retaliatory acts of terrorism.
- Our faith is invested in the potential of non-military forms of national security, which would be better funded by peace tax.

**The majority of taxation is derived from other taxes such as VAT, not income tax.**

We argue for reducing personal participation through compulsory taxation.

- At present we have no legal right to redirect income tax, that is what we are addressing.

**It would not reduce military spending, they would find the money elsewhere.**

In the implementation of peace tax, we would campaign for a mechanism to prevent the loss to be made-up elsewhere.

- While a long term aim is to reduce military spending, this bill is designed to allow those with an objection to war to be true to their conscience.
- COs in WWI were aware that others may be conscripted in their place, yet their fight for exemption fundamentally shaped attitudes to war and the military.
- By focusing on the right of individual conscience, we are working to counter militarism by challenging the system that takes our financial contribution to war for granted.

Administration would be too complicated and expensive for the Treasury to manage.

The logistics are simpler than ever before.

- The Treasury already issues individual tax breakdowns.
- Administration is no more complex than that of Gift Aid

### It would 'Open the Floodgates'

Military tax is not comparable to other taxes

- The taxpayer is forced to be complicit in the killing of other human beings, and intimidation through the threat of killing. This is not a political but a moral argument.
- The right not to be involved in the deliberate killing of another human being is *already* conceded in the right of conscientious objection, and is further consolidated in Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights.
- Abortion is the only other area where conscience is recognised in law, a campaign for conscientious objection to funding abortion is therefore the *only* other campaign that could be founded using the same arguments as COMT.

**There is no equivalence between military service and paying for the military through one's taxes.**

Many feel that paying for killing is morally equivalent to killing yourself.

- This is in keeping with the logic of our domestic law. If one commissions a murder, they are as guilty as the person who physically commits the crime.

**COMT would undermine the collective nature of the taxation system, and restrict government ability**

A peace tax fund enables CO's to contribute to everything the Government provides.

- This argument equates deliberate killing with other forms of tax.
- A similar argument could be made in defence of bodily conscription in a time of war, and was therefore won in 1916.
- Peace tax is an acceptable alternative that improves the Government's job of providing security for the nation while respecting the rights of the individual.