



War Resisters' International

Executive Committee and International Office

Report 2003

Covering the period July 2002 – June 2003

Introduction

REPORT 2003 covers a difficult and challenging year for War Resisters International and for those opposed to war and militarism. We were heartened when 10 million people went out onto the streets around the world to show their opposition to a war on Iraq on February 15th. But we understand that it will take more than that to stop wars. We must continue to promote nonviolence and anti-militarism, deepening opposition to war, supporting those who refuse to kill, dealing with the past so that we do not continue that cycle of violence. This was a year of growth for both of WRI's programmes - The Right to Refuse to Kill and Dealing with the Past. Through this work we have brought more people into the network. But we still face the challenge of strengthening the network so that we do not simply become an organisation with international programmes. Our other challenge is to raise the funds necessary to reach our goals. As our Financial Report details, the financial loss from the Triennial in Dublin was disastrous. The staff and Exec have worked even harder this year to develop new fundraising plans. These challenges need to be taken up by all of War Resisters' International.

Programme Work

The Right to Refuse to Kill

The Right to Refuse to Kill project was launched in 2001, with initial funding for 2 years (through April 2003). At the end of 2002, War Resisters' International succeeded in securing funding for a further 2 years – through April 2005. This can be seen as a major success. The programme is staffed by Andreas Speck.

Prisoners for Peace 2002 focused on Caucasus and Central Asia, and for the first time *The Broken Rifle* was published as an insert into *Peace News* and also *The Nonviolent Activist*, the magazine of WRI's US section *War Resisters League*. The German version was published as a supplement to the German daily *die tageszeitung*. The French version was distributed by

Union Pacifiste de France to all their French supporters.

Work on this region with little WRI contacts was an ambitious project, and was only possible with the help of interns, especially *Silke Makowski* and *Milana Müller*, who did a great job in compiling the information for *Prisoners for Peace*, and the layout of *The Broken Rifle*.

International Conscientious Objectors' Day 2003 focused on Israel and Palestine, and was a great challenge. *Andreas Speck* went to Israel in January 2003, to meet with *New Profile*, *Yesh Gvul*, *The Shministim*, the *Druze Initiative Committee for Conscientious Objection*, and *Gush Shalom*. The visit focused on preparations and ideas for International Conscientious Objectors' Day 2003 in Israel, but also included general discussion on improving communication between these organisations and the WRI Office and network.

In February 2003, War Resisters' International submitted a report on conscientious objection in Israel to the United Nations Committee on Human Rights¹. WRI followed up on this report with a visit to Geneva in March 2003, organised by *Rachel Brett*, which included a presentation of the report to representatives from different NGOs.

The international training and action took place from 9-15 May 2003, with participants from Chile, Turkey, Spain, South Korea, and Israel. Two persons – from Serbia and Macedonia – could not participate, because they were not able to get a visa. A report on the seminar and action was published in *Peace News*² and *Graswurzelrevolution*.

1 War Resisters' International: Conscientious objection to military service in Israel: an unrecognised human right. Report for the Human Rights Committee in relation to Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 3 February 2003, <http://wri-irg.org/co/co-isr-03.htm>

2 Andreas Speck: Militarism in everyday life – a street performance on International CO Day. *Peace News* No 2451, June-August 2003, <http://www.peaceneeds.info/issues/2451/245108.html>

Other activities:

In November, the WRI office was contacted by *Fonds Sozidanie* from Russia and was asked to send a representative to the founding meeting of a new youth network on alternative service. *Daniel Garay* went as WRI representative, as WRI's CO worker was unavailable³. As a result of this visit, *Fonds Sozidanie* is now applying for affiliation to WRI.

WRI's work with South Korea is progressing. In December, WRI staff *Andreas Speck* visited South Korea and participated in an afternoon workshop on "Conscientious objection to military service". The visit was also used to discuss a larger international conference on CO in South Korea, which took place in March 2003, and was organised by *Korea Solidarity for Conscientious Objection (KSCO)* and co-sponsored by the *American Friends Service Committee*. Again, *Andreas Speck* participated in this conference⁴. At present there are preparations under way for a South Korean intern in the WRI office from September to November 2003, and for *Prisoners for Peace Day 2003* to focus on South Korea.

Yugoslavia, now called Serbia and Montenegro, also received some attention. In September 2002, WRI organised a delegation to Serbia, to accompany two conscientious objectors who have been called up to military service to their barracks. A report on this delegation is available on WRI's website⁵. *Igor Seke* from Serbia also took part in the CO conference in South Korea mentioned earlier. At present, the WRI office is following up on the developments in Serbia&Montenegro regarding conscientious objection.

In its CO work on European countries, WRI cooperates closely with the *European Bureau for Conscientious Objection (EBCO)*. *Andreas Speck* represented WRI at the EBCO General Assembly in Barcelona in February 2003.

Dealing with the Past

WRI has been involved in work on dealing with the past since 1998, when *Roberta Bacic* from Chile joined the staff. Because of *Roberta's* Chilean experience working for the *National Corporation of Reconciliation and Reparation* and the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, WRI received numerous requests from affiliate groups, other organisations, NGOs, universities and peace study programs for input and assistance in this field. A theme group on Dealing with the Past took place at the 2002 Triennial, and the Triennial Business Meeting agreed to the development of this programme area to address how to deal with post-conflict situations in a more structured way.

We have set up a working team that has met twice since the 2002 Triennial: *Vesna Terselic* (Council member), *Siva Ramamoorthy* (Exec member), *Sian Jones* (Council member), *Tony Kempster* (Anglican Pacifist Fellowship) and *Sophie Reynolds* (nonviolence trainer and WRI volunteer). The team is focused mainly in developing a Pilot Project for 2004, which wants to work in Sri Lanka

and Croatia. These places were chosen because both countries have endured war and we have elected council members from these regions.

The following objectives were set:

1. Empower victims-survivors of conflicts and the groups/organisations that work with them.
2. Facilitate a process of individual and social acknowledgement of what has happened. Thus making a contribution to incorporating violent experiences into individual's lives and social memory, as part of the process of establishing control over individual and social trauma.
3. Support ongoing initiatives and provide space for initiating community activities and institutional processes related to dealing with the past. Thus contributing to the exchange of experiences amongst groups already working on these issues.
4. Look at the causes of present and past conflicts and widening the information pool. This would involve the use of insights and experience gathered from WRI's world-wide network and the analysis of the consequences of armed conflict from the perspective of both the survivors and the perpetrators.
5. Articulate initiatives that would prevent future violence and war.

Main activities carried out during the year 2002/2003

- Setting up of the team and organising meetings, discussion of goals and specific focus of WRI in the topic of Dealing with the Past.
- Exploratory trip to Sri Lanka (15-24 March 2003) by team members *Roberta Bacic*, *Siva Ramamoorthy*, *Sophie Reynolds* and *Tony Kempster*. (Internal and general public report can be requested from the office)
- *Roberta* has given several lectures, workshops and seminars on ad hoc related to dealing with the past for Universities, NGOs and organisations.
- *Roberta* has written various articles on specific issues related to dealing with the past for journals, magazines and newsletters.
- *Roberta*, with the invaluable assistance and help from *Alberto Estefania* from MOC-Bilbao, who has been a volunteer at the office since last Triennial, has set up an exhibition that marks the 30 years since the military coup in Chile next September 11th. **Memory and memorials from Chile: 30 years since the military coup.** The exhibition has been on in London for a month at *St Ethelburga's Centre for Reconciliation and Peace*. In August it will be at the *West Belfast Festival* and then will travel to *Nuremberg* for September 11th. Several other organisations have asked for it and it will end the year at *Cambridge University*.

For more specific information go into our web www.wri-irg.org and go into Dealing with the Past Project. You will find a detailed list of activities (2001–2002) and many links to reports, articles and other connected web pages.

Crisis response: war on Iraq

The WRI Office produced a range of materials on the war on Iraq. As part of WRI's networking, *Roberta Bacic* set up an email address list and distributed a wide range of articles on the war on Iraq beyond WRI's traditional network, especially academics and students. She received a lot of responses that these materials have been widely used, especially by university students.

3 Daniel Garay wrote an article on his visit: The alternative. *Peace News* No 2450, March-May 2003, <http://www.peacenews.info/issues/2450/24509.html>

4 Andreas Speck: A young movement in search of direction. *Peace News* No 2451, June-August 2003, <http://www.peacenews.info/issues/2451/245124.html>

5 Conscientious Objection in Yugoslavia - the cases of Igor Seke and Goran Miladinovic, 13 September 2002, <http://wri-irg.org/news/2002/goranigor.htm>

As part of WRI's *The Right to Refuse to Kill* project, several special reports have been produced. In December 2002, War Resisters' International produced a report on deserters in Iraq⁶, which was widely published⁷. In March 2003, the WRI Office produced a report "Conscientious objection in the countries of the Coalition of the Willing"⁸.

In cooperation with WRI's webmaster *Ken Simons*, a multi-lingual *Iraq Crisis Page*⁹ was set up as part of WRI's website, which included links to a wide range of resources, especially on conscientious objection, especially in the United States and Britain. A subsection of this site also included material in Euskera (Basque) and Italian. Unfortunately, a request for information from WRI affiliates on how to apply for conscientious objection in other countries participating in the war on Iraq, and web links to these resources, did not bring in any results. In February, the War Resisters' International Executive Committee decided to take up the idea of British groups to call for a weekend of nonviolent action at military bases under the slogan "*Reclaim The Bases*", and issued an international call to "*Reclaim The Bases*"¹⁰. In addition, WRI's "*Say No!*" statement from 2001¹¹ was re-issued and received widespread attention. The WRI Office produced some background material, which was sent out to more than 2,000 addresses world-wide. WRI staff participated in most of the big London demonstrations against the war on Iraq, which were organised by the *Stop the War Coalition*, in spite of our political reservations. WRI staff also took part in several interviews with a wide range of media, including the BBC.

Nonviolence and Social Empowerment

Writings on the theme of Nonviolence and Social Empowerment are being compiled and edited by *Christopher Ney*. Consisting of articles primarily by people who attended the WRI Conference on Nonviolence and Social Empowerment in India, they will be made available on the WRI website.

A Nonviolence Trainers Working Group was revived this year. Fourteen people from nine countries have joined the task force, which has set up an email listserve.

The WRI Women's Working Group is co-organizing "*Asking the Right Questions: Nonviolence Training and Gender, an International Women's Consultation of Trainers*" with the *Women Peacemakers Program* of the *International Fellowship of Reconciliation* (IFOR). The conference will take place in Thailand around October or November of 2004.

Internal organisational matters

Triennial 2002

In August 2002 WRI had its 23rd International Conference

6 War Resisters' International: Iraqi Deserters. In case of war, those who oppose the Iraqi regime will suffer the most. <http://wri-irg.org/news/2003/iraq-co1.htm>

7 A German translation was published in *Graswurzelrevolution*, a French version in *Le RiRe*, and an Italian version was published by *Movimiento Noviolento*.

8 War Resisters' International: Conscientious objection in the countries of the Coalition of the Willing, <http://wri-irg.org/news/2003/willing-co.htm>

9 <http://wri-irg.org/news/2003/crisis.htm>

10 <http://wri-irg.org/news/2003/reclaim.htm>

11 <http://wri-irg.org/statemnt/sayno.htm>

in Dublin, Ireland. Titled "*Stories and Strategies: nonviolent resistance and social change*", the week-long conference attracted some 180 people from 20 countries. The morning plenaries opened with personal stories. Every day eight theme groups discussed themes such as International Peace Operations, Dealing with the Past, Conscientious Objection. The proceedings of the plenaries and theme groups were laid down in a Triennial report.

No major organisational decisions were made during the business-meeting. Some slight changes to the constitution were adopted and a committee was appointed to prepare and discuss major constitutional changes. *Joanne Sheehan* was re-elected as Chair and all nominated candidates for the elected members of Council were elected.

Council met before and after the Triennial. Following an invitation from *Red de Juveniles* it was decided to have the next Council in Medellin, Colombia in 2003. However, due to lack of secured funding, the Council meeting in Colombia had to be cancelled in May 2003, but *Red de Juveniles* is going ahead with an international seminar. Council elected *Ellen Elster* and *Siva Ramamoorthy* to join the Chair *Joanne Sheehan* and the Treasurer *Bart Horeman* in the Executive Committee.

Executive Committee

Four Executive meetings took place between July 2002 and July 2003, on 10 August 2002, 22 to 24 November 2002, 21 to 23 February 2003 and 23 to 24 May 2003.

Finances

2002

Financially, the year 2002 has been disastrous. After the relatively promising trend of the last years, with negative results declining and the prospect to become more viable, WRI lost an incredible amount of money in the year 2002. The main reason was an expensive and insufficient attendance at the Triennial in Dublin.

The year 2002 ended with the huge shortage of some GBP 68,000, which was partly covered by our reserves. This being twice the amount we normally take out of the reserves, the tremendous loss in 2002 means we are very rapidly eating up our reserves.

Although we have the *Myrtle Solomon Memorial Fund* (MSMF) reserves of *Lansbury House Trust Fund* (LHTF), at the end of the year 2002 WRI had some serious debts. Obviously, this is the result of the fact that the deficit of Triennial 2002 has not been fully covered. The end-of-the-year balance therefore shows a negative balance. In the case of 2003 WRI will take a further amount from its MSMF reserves to cover that.

Despite the huge loss, there are reasons to be optimistic.

If we take out the Triennial from the year account, we would have had a 'normal' year with a negative result of (only) some GBP 20,000 which would have been more than covered by the normal use of GBP 25,000 from our reserves. Obviously, WRI is not viable without its reserves, but it seems the discrepancy can be overcome.

The reason to be optimistic is the fact that the necessary shift to get programme work funded is taking place. First of all, we have succeeded in extending the *Joseph Rowntrees Charitable Trust* grant for the *Right to Refuse to Kill* project for a further two years. Meanwhile the prospects of obtaining further grants for certain aspects of the programme are hopeful. Secondly, the *Dealing with the Past* programme

War Resisters' International: Balance Sheet

	30-jun-03	31-dec-02	31-dec-01
Assets			
Financial agents balances	4.847,52	4.116,75	11.013,28
Current accounts & cash	1.036,75	3.838,64	3.807,17
Accounts receivable	814,63	814,63	1.352,43
Other current assets	1.781,30	1.781,30	1.781,30
Fixed assets	0,00	0,00	0,00
Deposit accounts	110,79	110,79	10.604,23
Total	8.590,99	10.662,11	28.558,41
Liabilities			
Accounts payable	206,90	206,90	-293,78
Designated funds	0,00	7.014,54	7.014,54
Debts	15.535,64	16.205,46	14.107,67
Total	16.152,25	23.634,98	20.828,43
Total Equity	-7.561,26	-12.972,87	7.729,98

War Resisters' International: Summary Account

	2004 budget	2003 half year	2003 budget	2002 account	2002 budget	2001 account
Income						
General income	27.500	16.609,68	27.500	30.708,09	22.500	49.651,62
Workshops/lectures	1.000	0,00	1.000	239,29	0	0,00
Online Resources	0	0,00	0	0,00	0	0,00
Networking	0	0,00	0	0,00	0	0,00
Crisis response	150	0,00	150	0,00	0	0,00
NVSE	0	0,00	0	0,00	0	27.048,67
Right to Refuse to Kill	31.000	18.198,19	31.000	26.483,25	25.000	19.428,78
Dealing with the past	2.000	2.212,00	2.000	273,00	0	0,00
Other projects	6.500	0,00	6.500	1.010,00	1.000	0,00
Yearly seminar & Triennial	12.000	-990,00	12.000	39.497,25	95.817	8.236,52
Total	80.150	36.029,87	80.150	98.210,88	144.317	104.365,59
Expense						
Overhead expenses	45.250	11.251,55	45.250	35.878,64	34.500	44.319,83
Outreach (publications)	5.300	1.642,80	5.300	5.893,18	5.325	4.649,78
Workshops/lectures	1.000	0,00	1.000	0,00	0	0,00
Online Resources	500	0,00	500	0,00	300	0,00
Networking	6.000	2.964,07	6.000	5.611,82	5.400	3.687,31
Crisis response	3.500	1.482,06	3.500	2.806,00	2.700	1.961,47
NVSE	0	0,00	0	2.242,00	0	35.109,51
Right to Refuse to Kill	27.000	15.089,34	27.000	25.071,54	20.000	15.022,56
Dealing with the past	2.000	2.557,15	2.000	578,00	3.000	0,00
Other projects	6.500	0,00	6.500	1.066,19	1.000	610,82
Yearly seminar & Triennial	7.000	7.145,83	7.000	87.665,59	104.817	15.196,67
Total	104.050	42.132,80	104.050	166.812,96	177.042	120.557,95
Year Result	-23.900	-6.102,93	-23.900	-68.602,08	-32.725	-16.192,36
taken from WRI Reserves	25.000	4.500,00	25.000	49.500,00	25.000	25.000,00
Final result	1.100	-1.602,93	1.100	-19.102,08	-7.725	8.807,64

has established a fundraising group, which has further increased the possibilities to eventually get the programme funded.

First half year 2003

Compared to 2002, in the first half of 2003 WRI has generated more income than before. Together with the fact that there will be no great financial risks in 2003, the chance of

the year ending with a deficit is small.

Compared to the end-of-the-year-2002 balance, the negative equity of the balance slightly increased, due to the small shortage of the half-year account 2003. However, Exec has decided to assign the designated funds to the general WRI budget. Thus, equity has diminished from minus 12,972.87 to minus 7,561.21. To cover this, more money from the MSMF reserves will be taken soon.