

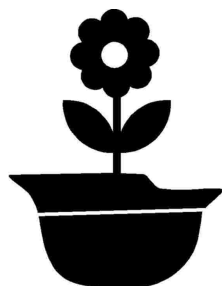
"New Challenges for Peace: From the global to the local view"

European Bureau for Conscientious Objection

in co-operation with the

European Youth Centre, Strasbourg

9- 16 March 2003



European Bureau for
Conscientious Objection



Council
of Europe

Conseil
de l'Europe

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09/03 Welcome evening

Sunday 09/03/02 ARRIVAL

WELCOME EVENING

By the evening most of the participants had arrived. To get to know each other and to build a good group relationship for the seminar two ice-breaking games were played:

“Pictures and questions” :we have given a photo of one participant to every one of them and they had to look for that person and interview him. Also they had to be interviewed by the person that had their photo. (The result of this activity was exposed in the hall during all the seminar)

“The ball of wool” : every participant presented him/herself by passing the ball of wool from one person to another. Everyone had to keep one end of the string so that at the end we created a network. The activity continued by trying to follow the same steps the other way around so every participant had to present the person that passed him the ball of wool earlier.

Monday 10/03/02 SEMINAR INTRODUCTION

OPENING AND INTRODUCTION

Natasa Siniori, volunteer in EBCO International Secretaria, went on to introduce the aims and objectives of the seminar and ran through the programme for the week.

Aims and objectives:

- To exchange experience and information on national situations; concerning conscientious objection issues
- To provide participants with an update on peace work today in a theoretical and practical perspective
- To provide participants with the opportunity to explore the contemporary meaning of conscientious objection and peace activism
- To learn about the Directorate of Human Rights and to explore the existing conventions and materials on conscientious objection
- To share models of good practice, to reflect on them and to make the link to the local reality
- To provide skills training for:
 - Campaign development
 - Political work
 - Awareness raising
 - International co-operation and networking

- Organisational management
- To introduce the function of European Institutions and their meaning for the CO movement.
- To help participants avail of the existing resources, opportunities and support structures for their daily work on the conscientious objection
- To encourage participants to multiply their experience from the seminar

After the programme for the day was presented, Yiannis Glanertatzis, Vice President of EBCO, introduced the European Bureau of Conscientious Objection. (*See Appendix*) Alana Lentin continued, the educational advisor, with a presentation of the EYC and the CoE.

Council of Europe:

- it has 44 member states
- founded in 1949

Main aims:

- to protect and strengthen pluralist democracy in Europe
- to contribute to the development of social cohesion and cultural cooperation on the European continent
- to protect human right
- to safeguard peace on the European continent

Main futures

- intergovernmental organisation
- functions according to the principles of international cooperation and international law
- 3 main organs
 - parliamentary assembly
 - committee of members
 - secretariat

The European Youth Centre was build in 1974

Mission:

- train youth work volunteers and professionals
- develop methods and strategies of non-formal education
- promote intercultural understanding and tolerance
- strengthen the role of the youth and youth NGO's in the civil society and democratic political process
- build the knowledge base and the guiding principles of a comprehensive youth policy at European level

Expectations

After the coffee everybody re-introduced themselves and mentioned what their expectations for the seminar were.

Participants were invited to put on three trees their expectations regarding the Study Session. They have to focus on the three following questions:

What do you expect to learn?

What are your expectations towards communication with the other participants?

What are expectations concerning fun during the session?

The outcome is the following

- to learn about conscientious objection (CO) and peace work
- to make new contacts and strengthen existing ones
- to get new ideas for projects
- to gain input on techniques for developing local organisations
- to find international support for local CO initiatives
- to learn how to promote CO at home
- the formulation of a concrete, collective action
- to gain an insight into European development
- the identification of needs of different organisations represented
- Networking Co-Ordination-with other org; establish relations with other peace groups

And of course have as much fun as possible!!!!!!

THE PHILOSOPHY OF CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION

After lunch, Anna Rebés, member of EBCO International Secretariat, presented the activity about the Philosophy of CO. The aim of this activity was to open a debate in small groups discussing general issues about Conscientious Objection and what is behind this choice. The participants were split in four groups and they received a text about CO and some questions to open a discussion. This would give a chance to participants to express their thoughts in general terms before getting in more detailed aspects that would be treated during the following days.

Group 1

Initially the group debated on the necessity of a common stand toward popular and conventional arguments legitimising the use of military force as a means to maintain security and peace. The basis for this discussion was an article published by a Spanish general. In the following we considered arguments the main points put by him:

1. "History has repeatedly proved that armies are a necessity in the violent world we live in"

History has just as often shown that armed forces provoke or are the actual cause of violence.

2. "It's egoistic to not be prepared to sacrifice one's life for the country in battle"

Modern wars mainly aim to control natural resources and markets. Hence it is far more egoistic to kill in order to achieve the interests of the few who profit from the results of a war.

3. "Armies guarantee stability and security"

It's only social security on both sides of the borders that can guarantee real security and peace. Trust not fear.

4. "Armies uphold the status quo"

Isn't that the crux of most problems?

5. “National interests have to be protected”

It’s been repeatedly proven that fair cooperation between nations can create the basis of prosperity and lasting stability.

Furthermore the group discussed the allegation that a large part of participants in peace rallies were there because of the mass media, and to be fashionable.

On this point they came to the conclusion that the diversity of the peace movement itself shows something else. Students, grandmas, Muslims, Communists, Christians....old and young are protesting side by side, with a clear message: STOP THE WARS!

Results of workshop of Group 1 as presented in the plenary in flipcharts:

1. Armies do not protect versus terrorist attacks
2. Should be no distinction between “legitimate” and “illegitimate” war.
3. Having an army does not protect your interests as a country.
4. Need more fair world order in order to disarm and vice versa.
5. Need to influence own society (eg. Companies that ignore embargos) to ensure more just world order.
6. Convince the individual through trust not fear.
7. “The dominant ideas are the ideas of the dominant “(Marx) because they dominate the capitalist system.
8. Amount of civilian service +COs+ Objection to war growing
9. Talk about CO-operation between societies .Not just for “your” nation.
10. People’s responsibility to read other info, sources and to be aware.

Group 2

The debate in group 2 started making clear that the situation that the text exposed was very specific, extremely violent moment during 1940 with Great Britain being threatened by the nazi regime. This situation lead the group to make a distinction between war and peace times. It was said that it is important to work for peace in peace times, because it is practically impossible to do anything during war, Balkan experience was very graphic concerning this point. The State becomes very aggressive against peaceful movements, because they are perceived like movements against the country interests.

It was also said that the no existence of armies doesn’t implies the no existence of conflicts. So it’s not enough to be against armies, it is also needed to find new ways to face problems and conflicts without using violent ways. The group gave a lot of importance to the information and propaganda, it should be important to have alternative propaganda different from the official one. The same with the information, it is important for CO movement to be able to spread information in order to make people able to chose. Two info strategies were raised: The immediate one, that should be clear, short and with slogans (like the official one but, obviously, with different contents). And the second one is the long term info, this one is based on education, to teach people how to process information by themselves, make them used to receive questions more than answers, to be able to have a critic opinion. This would make much more easy for alternative info to get to the big public.

Directly concerning to CO's, the fact that the right for CO's is sometimes seen like a right for a minority should be changed, again through info, everybody should see the possibility to become a CO like something real. If this perception of CO's like a minority changes, the movement would become more stronger and more serious.

The group also agreed that being a CO is not just objecting but also promoting. This is relevant when in some countries the right for CO's is clearly recognized, and it is quite easy to perform the alternative civilian service. In this cases, it happens easily that the CO is not promoting or getting involved at all with the whole aim of the movement. It would be important to make CO's participate actively in the promotion of this right also before and after their service.

All this strategies would lead us to avoid further militarisation, because most of the times war situations are the result of previous wrong strategies and ways to deal with problems.

1. War time /Peace time
2. Alternative information
3. How to use propaganda
4. Promoting, not just objecting
5. The right of CO is not a minority right
6. How to avoid further militarisation

Group 3

First participants were given the excerpts of "The problems of war and ways for peace" by Norberto Bobbio. That was the starting point for the discussion. The main issues were:

1. What is violence?

Physical violence in the

2. Are there any situations, when we can justify violence as the only way to solve problem?

- In no situations
- Under specific circumstances such as in order to defend one's country or family
- If the result of non-violence is worse than violence

3. Institutionalisation of violence through the state and international organisations-is it a step forward or creation of a violence monopoly?

All of the group participants shared the opinion :

- It's good to have some common rules but it's not enough
- Administration of violence is only part of the problem. The state and international institutions must prevent violence.

4. Do the people, that went on the street during last big demonstrations were aware of what they were asking for?

The conclusion of the group: One doesn't need to read Hans Blix's report to take an action

Group 4

There are different concepts of the meaning of the world mechanism between participants. So, some think that it's easily understandable, and some find it too

complex for the majority of the people (public opinion). For sure, no one can analyse the whole mechanism in details , which in fact is not necessary in order to take some kind of action.

Political power and mass media are depending on each other and depending also from one country to another. For successful campaigning it is needed to use both , in different level each-depending on the situation in the country.

Population is not aware of the power they possess, so they don't use it or more often give it away to the politicians to decide for them. (Reference: Etien de la Boesi, his texts from 18th century).

Concerning the mobilisation of the masses on recent street actions there is a feeling that not all of the people who participated had a clear vision of the situation. In some countries political parties did use the situation for their own use, but there were also examples of independent demonstrations, although with less people on spot.

For a successful anti-war campaign, it is not enough for people to join the demo once a year or join it in the morning and go home in the afternoon with clear conscience. So the ways of "activating" people must be done.

There can't be a clean war, and the economy is always the one standing behind it. Even the "non-profit" help is hypocritical.

INFOMARKET

Presentation of participants organizations.

Participants had brought materials with basic information on the activities of organization they are coming from. They exposed them in stands outside the plenary room where they remained for the whole week. This market was a starting point for further possible collaboration between participants

Tuesday 11/03/03

NEW GLOBAL CHALLENGES TO PEACE

Yiannis Glarnetzis introduced the theme of the day with a lecture on "New Global Challenges to Peace.

First, there is the question *what is peace?* For us, in the peace and conscientious objection movement, peace is not just the absence of war. We want peace inside the societies, that is the elimination of violence by authorities or groups, and also peace inside the families. But war is the complete negation of peace.

In 1989, the fall of the communist regimes in East Europe and the end of Cold War created a hope for a more peaceful world (some intellectuals declared even the end of History). And for some years there were signs that supported this optimism. The military expenditures were reduced along with the sizes of the armed forces. Many

military bases were removed from both Eastern and Western Europe. Also in many Eastern European countries the right of conscientious objection was recognized, although not always in a satisfactory level (that is partially or with discriminations against objectors), and in many Western European countries the conscription itself was abolished.

Nevertheless, the wars didn't stop. There were long wars in Europe (ex-Yugoslavia and Caucasus area), and many armed conflicts in Asia, Latin America, and, especially, Africa. And there were more international military interventions, as well. And not in the «Blue Helmets» style. Many local conflicts and wars now assume a global character (of course not of a world war) because armies from all over the world are taking part in them. The United States led a number of alliances in a sequence of wars (in Iraq, Somalia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Afghanistan). And these interventions were followed by keeping large numbers of troops in these areas (at the moment this kind of military forces are present in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, and Afghanistan) in order to maintain «peace», something that gives rise to voices calling for a re-introduction of conscription in some countries. While the Warsaw Pact was abolished, NATO accepted new members and expanded its area of interest virtually all over the world. Also notions like preventive wars or localized use of nuclear weapons are all the more used by American and Western analysts.

We observe a 19th-early 20th century kind of colonialism. Even then there were many different forms of colonialism: annexation, protectorates, mandates, hiring, etc. And also even then there were different pretences for occupying territories. We see the USA imperial policy not only in the military level but also in political one by giving emphasis to intergovernmental bodies like the International Monetary Fund or the World Trade Organization (where the votes are shared out according to financial power) against the United Nations, even though they have the veto rights in its Security Council. Even in environmental level the USA don not undersign international agreements like the Kyoto Protocol against the Greenhouse Effect.

Human rights abuses are sometimes «used» in order to justify wars (ex-Yugoslavia, for example) while in other cases there is backing of governments making such abuses (e.g. Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories). And again the United States are refusing to recognize the jurisdiction of an international war crimes tribunal for their military personnel.

Finally in Europe, after of the old Iron Curtain was diminished, the governments of European Union member states try to build a large wall around fortress-Europe. In their efforts, and that is the most worrying thing, they openly violate the Geneva Convention about the refugees by not giving them the opportunity to ask for asylum. This massive open violation of an international human rights convention is, probably, the first time that happens since World War II.

The huge demonstrations of February 15th and the whole antiwar movement give hope to the pacifists. Conscientious objectors are essential part of the antiwar movement by rejecting any kind of war, and giving an example in disobeying unjust laws and orders (where the right to conscientious objection is not fully or at all recognized). We have to undertake efforts in order to widen these activities, involve more people, give them a

clear non-violent character, and identify different ways in different fields to oppose the war (e.g. train stopping in the UK).

In conclusion, the struggle for Conscientious Objection is the ongoing effort to promote the ideology of peace in times of raising political and military conflicts.

Following Yiannis lecture a plenary discussion evolved among participants, which concentrated on a perspective war on Iraq.

Some central points that were raised:

- how do mass demonstrations influence the political decision making, if at all?
- has the anti-war hysteria become fashionable in our society, without sufficient reflection on the ideological background?
- to what extent does fear influence our attitude towards war, and how do governments try to influence public opinion by promoting a feeling of insecurity?

What is disturbing about the possibility of another war in Iraq is the double moral standards that are used by politicians as a justification.

In order to oppose this political ambivalence we need to act locally by means of civil disobedience and by spreading information.

It was concluded that “maybe we cannot prevent this war, but we can make a clear stance and make our voices heard”.

INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS ON CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION

Jordi Tolrà Mabilon, from Fundació Autònoma Solidària (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona), was invited to present the theme “European Standards on CO”. With his presentation Jordi Tolrà put the issue of CO in an international perspective, introducing the function of “key” European Institutions and their meaning for the CO movement. This provided participants with a broader understanding of political decision making with regard to CO. The lecture explained existing international standards on CO (e.g. resolutions, etc.) and how they can be used for lobbying. Participants got aware of the problems currently raised in Europe by conscientious objection to compulsory military service and of the solutions needed at international and national level.

Standards

What is it?

Who establishes them?

Which standards?

Elements documents

How to make and use them?

A standard

Common background

Generally accepted

Referential

European standards

The European construction

- Institutional work
- Practice
- NGO networking

CO in European standards

Is not a matter of the treaties,.....maybe in the future, but a question of human rights
“The right to Co is a fundamental aspect of the right to freedom of thought conscience and religion” Article 9, European Convention for the protection of HR and FF.

Council of Europe

More than 35 years working on the issue

- R. 337/1967 PA
- Rec 816/1977 PA
- Rec 87/8 CM
- Rec 1518(2001) PA

European Parliament

1983 Macciocchi

1989 Schmidbauer

1994 Bandrés-Bindi

De Gucht 1989

Juridical Elements

1. Constitutional right
2. Regulation by law
3. Civilian service
4. Appeal guarantee

Procedure

- Information
- Simple procedure
- Procedure completed before enlistment
- Right to appeal
- Appeal authority not military
-

At any time

Service

- Civilian
- Right to choose
- NGO's accepted
- Equal length
- Third country

How to promote “standards”?

- Lobbying
- Acting-up

- Transferring models of good practice
 - Politics are made by politicians
 - The reality is being made everyday
 - Standards change with the times
 - Somebody suggests the standards and fixes them
-

We can participate on all that, otherwise somebody will!!!

How to use “standards”?

Spreading

Lobbying

Testing

Improving

Updating

Using the standards

- Compare your situation with the standards → make a report
- Establish priorities
- Ask support to inform about EU st.
- Campaign on EU standards
- Collect signatures

Some clues.....

- Get a list of your representatives to international bodies
- Meet them. Lobby
- Suggest interparliament action
- Send them regular information and propositions
- Try to get your case in the annual report
- Write articles
- Invite an international delegation
- Contact the Commissioner for Human Rights..... and your ambudsman
- Ink the issue with access to EU institutions

EBCO and the standards

- Brussels office
 - Consultative status CoE, EP
 - Annual report
 - National action
-

1994 EP resolution

UN

- Commission on HR
- Resolution 2002/45

Recognises the right of everyone to have conscientious objection to military service as a legitimate exercise of the right of freedom of thought

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION REGION BY REGION

In the afternoon of Tuesday “Conscientious Objection Region by Region” took place.

The aim of this session was for the participants to present the situation regarding CO in their respective countries. To facilitate this everybody had to fill in a questionnaire which would point to issues such as legislation, length of service, numbers of COs, availability of information, and problems being faced. 'Primary groups' consisted of people from countries of similar regions discussing the national points and tried to draw a similarity between the cases. After that primary groups were mixed up in secondary ones. Each secondary group had at least one 'member' from primary one. In that way everybody was informed about everything nationally, regionally and internationally.

Israel: Military service applies to all citizens at the age of 18 and lasts 3 years for men and 2 years for women. Conscription applies only to Jewish people but a future legislation is expected in order to enable Orthodox Jews to join the army as well. There is no law about CO, conscience reasons are mentioned in the "Security service law". You can apply for the CO status at any time but there are two unofficial but necessary conditions in order to gain recognition as CO : convince the committee that one is pacifist and secondly to be a woman. More than 200 COs were imprisoned or were facing penal prosecutions in the last two years. The alternative service lasts for 22 months but applies only to religious Jewish girls of some stream.

Germany: Right to CO in constitution since 1949. Alternative service first performed 1961. Currently military service lasts 9 months and civilian service lasts 10 months and 12 months abroad. 80% of civilian service is performed in the social sector. Information on civilian service and CO is widely available from churches and other institutions and almost everybody is aware of the possibilities. CO status doesn't change during wartime or general mobilization.

Bulgaria: Military Service in Bulgaria lasts 9 months (6 months for students) and applies to men above the age of 18. You can apply for the CO status only before military service and you gain recognition as a conscientious objector only for religious reasons. There is legal provision for alternative service (lasting twice the length of military service) but in practice few people are granted CO status and exemption from military service is rare. There is a need for new, clearer legislation. The availability of information on CO is poor.

Greece: Military service lasts 12 months and it applies to men from the age of 18 to 45, only priests are .CO right is included in the Constitution since 2001. In order to gain recognition as a conscientious objector there are certain conditions to be met:

- Never have applied for a hunting license
- Never have applied for a weapon licence from the police
- Not having a prosecution.

If the right to conscientiously object is not recognised those resisting conscription face 4 years of imprisonment on charges of insubordination .At the time being there is one CO in pre-trial detention and 30 are facing penal prosecutions(most of them on political ones).Almost 10 objectors get the officially the CO status every year and the vast majority of is based on religious grounds(witnesses of Jehovah).During war time or general mobilization CO status change and COs go to unarmed military service (by law).Law 2510/97 provides for an alternative service to military service but is not satisfactory implemented since there is discrimination against the COs. Alternative

service lasts 18 months more than the military service that means 30 and is performed usually in health centres and in public institutions as post offices.. There is future legislation expected where the length of civilian service will be double, 24 months.

Italy: Overall the situation is quite good. Law 230 of 1998 "New rules in the field of CO" recognised CO as a civil right, making reference simply to "grounds of conscience". For the moment compulsory service still exists, lasting 10 months in the case of both military and civil service. However it is to be abolished in 2006 and replaced by a national voluntary civil service. Currently civilian service can be performed in NGOs, municipalities and ministries, or church-affiliated organizations and lasts 10 months. Fields of activity deemed suitable include work on solidarity and social issues, education, cultural, environmental, civil protection, and humanitarian missions. Information on performing civil service is available on the official internet site(www.serviziocivilie.it) and from youth and municipal information centres, as well as from individual associations where the service can be performed. Problems with the current situation include a lack of funds for alternative service, poorly organised structures, boycotting of the idea of civil service and CO, civil service being seen as work experience rather than a choice for peace and solidarity, and increasing funds for the military sector.

Norway: Military service lasts for 12 months and applies to men above the age of 18. You can apply for the CO right at any time but in case the right to conscientiously object is not recognised total objectors are facing imprisonment for 3 months and then 3 months more if they continue to object. There is no official information about CO and alternative service on the call-up papers but some information is available on the registration. Last year 2222 applied for the CO status, 10 withdrew their application and 3 were rejected(probably of a violent criminal record). CO status is changing during wartime or general mobilization but a new law that ensures that COs will not be called in war, will be passed in the Parliament. Civilian service lasts 14 months and is implemented in three sectors: Social and health, Culture, NGOs(peace and environmental organisations).

Serbia and Montenegro: Compulsory military service lasts 9 months and it applies to men from the age of 17 to 33 years old. There is any future legislation expected concerning conscription because there is great resistance from the military authorities against the modification or abolishment of conscription. CO was included in the Constitution one and half months ago. In practice there is no proper recognition of the right to CO and a number of Jehovah's Witnesses are in jail. You can apply for the CO status before call up for the first time but practically is possible at any time before entering the barracks It is possible to gain exemption by being declared medically unfit and many people try to avoid service by feigning mental illness. The alternative service provided is 13 months unarmed military service.

Spain: Alternative service has been provided for since 1988. Conscription has been abolished in 2001. The CO right is included in the constitution since 1978. Questions arising from the new situation include what will happen to the NGOs and public sector organisations which benefited from the work of the COs, what direction should the

peace movement take now, and how to direct government spending away from the military?

Russia: Military service applies to men from the age of 18 to 27 years old and lasts 24 months. The right of Alternative civil service is included in the Constitution since 1993. There isn't a law about CO only for civil service but a law will come in effect in 2004. You can apply for CO status only 6 months before conscription and in case you don't get the CO right recognised one can be imprisoned for 6 months (maximum length) if continues resisting conscription. The information about CO is available only in mass-media and through NGOs. The official bodies don't provide any kind of information. The law on alternative civilian service lasts 42 months and is performed in social institutions and in military organisations as non-combatant.

Azerbaijan: Military service in Azerbaijan lasts 18 months (12 months for students and 24 months for the navy). It applies to men between the age 18-35. In Azerbaijan the performance of military service is to be dreaded. The conditions in the army are very poor. There is a lack of food and illness is widespread. Although the constitution mentions the possibility of alternative service there has been no legislation providing for it and in practice it is not possible. Corruption is rife, as bribery is the only way out of performing service.

Macedonia: Military service lasts 6 months and applies to men between 18 and 28 years old. Since 2001 there is a law about CO (defence law). You can apply for the CO status at any time before, during and after the military service. Almost everybody gets the CO status once they apply for it at the local department of the Ministry of Defence. Alternative service lasts 10 months and it is performed in health care institutions, homes for old people and fire brigade departments. There are certain organisations that are working for COs and their rights: Peace action runs an information and consultation office for COs, Helsinki Committee helps on legal issues and lobbying, Resources for Civic Society (legal support).

Switzerland: Swiss society is a very militarised one with gun-ownership being very common. Every male is obliged to perform defence service. Alternative civilian service has existed since 1996 but the right to perform this is not guaranteed although everybody is entitled to apply. Civilian service can be performed in any non-commercial, public interest organization which has a contract with the administering body of the civilian service. Relevant fields of activity of such organizations include social, medical, cultural heritage, and environmental. Access to information on CO and civilian service is poor. There is only a small mention of the possibilities in the military publicity sent to those called up. Little money is available for NGOs who could be providing information on CO and civilian service. Another problem is that those whose CO applications are rejected face 6-8 months in prison if they refuse to perform military service. Furthermore it is a military court which hears appeals for rejected CO applications.

BiH : Conscription applies to all male between 18-27 years old. Policemen, firemen and people with health problems are exempted. Military service lasts 6 months with the possibility of reducing it to 4.5 months in FBiH. There is legal recognition of the right to conscientious objection and it applies in practice almost in full.

The authorities responsible for evaluating applications for CO status is in FBiH , Ministry of Justice – Commission for CO and in RS Ministry of Defence – Local Draft Commission.

The right for alternative service is included in the law of defence of both BiH entities, but is not implemented in FBiH (will be implemented soon) and in RS it is implemented but without certain necessary regulations. The period of alternative service is 9 months in FBiH and 12 months in RS and is unarmed military service. There is a network consisting of various BiH and international organizations and institutions (UNDP, OSCE, COE, Ombudsman office) that provide information and consultation to COs and organise campaigns.

INTERNATIONAL EVENING

Various national foods and drinks were eagerly sampled by the participants while further entertainment was provided by examples of different folk music traditions. In a funny environment people explained the origin and some tales linked with their regional food or drinks. The party was set up in the dining room.

Wednesday 12/03/03

NON-VIOLENCE IN PERSPECTIVE

In the morning a round table took place having as a guest invited Mr Jacques Semelin as a renown expert on peace movement. With his lecture Mr Semelin provided a broader perspective in the history and the development of the Peace Movement in the context of global political crisis.

It seems that non-violence is something abstract. At the beginning we have to define what violence is not:

- Violence does not equal with force or strength;
- Violence does not equal with aggressiveness;
- Violence does not equal with conflict.

- Non-violence means prevention of a conflict before it becomes violent;
- Non-violence is a way of being and behaving in a conflict, and respecting the other;
- Non-violence means acting against violence without using violence.

There are **five principles of non-violent action**:

1. It has to address relatively limited targets (*chose modest goals*)
2. It has to be collective work (*collective and civilian actions*)
3. There have to be methods to show the extent of our strength

4. It has to become well known (*communication and publicity*)
5. We have to remain non-violent even under oppression

Non-Violence means to resolve a conflict situation by respecting the counterpart. Therefore Non-Violence is a way of behaving – it aims to resolve conflict with respect.

Finally, non-violence does not equal sacrifice, and needs a lot of education in order to be implemented properly.

After Mr Semelin’s presentation four participants of the seminar explained how non-violence relates to the socio-cultural context of their own country. Each of them put the CO situation in their country in perspective and presented the problems that COs are facing in their societies.

Ofir Feuerstein – Israel

- violence is a fundamental phenomenon in Israel/ Palestine
- society is militarised and conditioned to violence by the media
- the Israeli government punishes COs through arbitrary detention
- promotion of Non-Violence through right to CO
- COs in Israel have a wide scale of different motivations and ideologies, according to their specific background (religion, philosophy, etc.)
- Most COs are willing to serve the army under certain circumstances
- There are examples of Civil Disobedience, which means Non-Violent action against state violence

Alexia Tsouni – Greece

- the meaning of “Non-Violence” is misunderstood in Greek society
- the notion of “Non-Violence” is linked to the promotion of “Anarchism”
- COs are considered traitors who aim to undermine national integrity
- There are examples of public Non-Violence and media actions in order to raise awareness towards a different society

Peter Dörflinger – Switzerland

- Conscientious Objection is a social taboo
- Nevertheless, there is an increasing number of COs
- The broad public must be mobilized through examples of good-practise
- It is important to “get people to start thinking”

Boro Kitanoski – Macedonia

- Non-Violence is a new phenomenon in the Balkans
- COs are considered traitors
- “We have a clear statement”

In discussing the future of the peace movement, the need for a comprehensive approach was highlighted. It is not enough to look at issues, or pursue strategies, in isolation. The overall aim of achieving a more peaceful society must be kept in view and actions like CO and tax disobedience must be seen as complimentary and pursued in tandem.

The rest of the afternoon was free for relaxing, sight-seeing and shopping, Later that evening we all had dinner in a restaurant in town with “Tart Flambe”, a traditional dish of the region.

Thursday 13/03/03

WORKSHOP ON CAMPAIGNING

The previous day participants were asked to write down an idea of a campaign that they would like to work on. The prep team gathered the information and divided them in four main categories:

Regional network in CO in Balkans

Co in Russia

Antiwar-Iraq

Awareness raising and information

The participants were then divided into 4 groups and given the task of designing their own campaign. They worked on this through Thursday and Friday and the presented the result of their workshops on Friday afternoon.

VISIT TO EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

After lunch the group made the short journey around the corner to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). There was a brief introduction to the documentation centre and then participants visited the main court rooms where they had to chance to take photos and after were free to browse through the information available and order any documents copies of any documents they were interested in.

Friday 14/03/03

“Objection for peace – Prigovor za mir”

Balkan group was consisted out of representatives of several nongovernmental organizations from the Balkans that already work on implementation of a project supposed to build a regional network of organizations working on the topic of conscientious objection, with the help of EBCO. There were present representatives from Mirovna Akcija, from Macedonia (Kitanoski Boro), Rozeta Aleksov from EBCO Balkans/Antimilitaristicka Manufaktura Serbia, Slobodan Stojanovic from Women in Black from Serbia, Darko Brkan and Goran Brkan from Zasto da ne from Bosnia and

Hercegovina, and Todor Kamburow as a one of the preparation team members, but as well as a EBCOs office worker.

For the presentation, the group made a role-play of a press conference for announcement of the regional network for conscientious objection, and for that purpose they needed to produce:

- A logo of the network
- A press release
- Info leaflet for the organizations participating in the network, and the goals of the network
- A power point presentation of the network
- A poster

After the presentation the group continued developing some more urgent activities from the action plan, and so they developed the **newsletter** of the network, **web page**, and the **Internet e-mail list** of the network.

The most valuable thing in this workshop, according to the group, is the fact that they were dealing with an ongoing existing project, which made the materials, and the planning produced in this workshop to be considered as proposals for the networks future activities.

What will we talk about?

- What is the regional network for CO?
- Aims of the network
- Structure of the network
- Aims of particular campaigns
- Plan of action for the future

STARTING LINE-UP

- Serbia – big but not structured
- Macedonia-great player , needs promotion
- Bosnia-safe and structured
- Montenegro-small but necessary
- Croatia-most valuable player
- And of course EBCO as the coach**What is it?**

•It is a joined structure of different initiatives in the Balkans area (Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia) working on CO joined around common goals and actions.

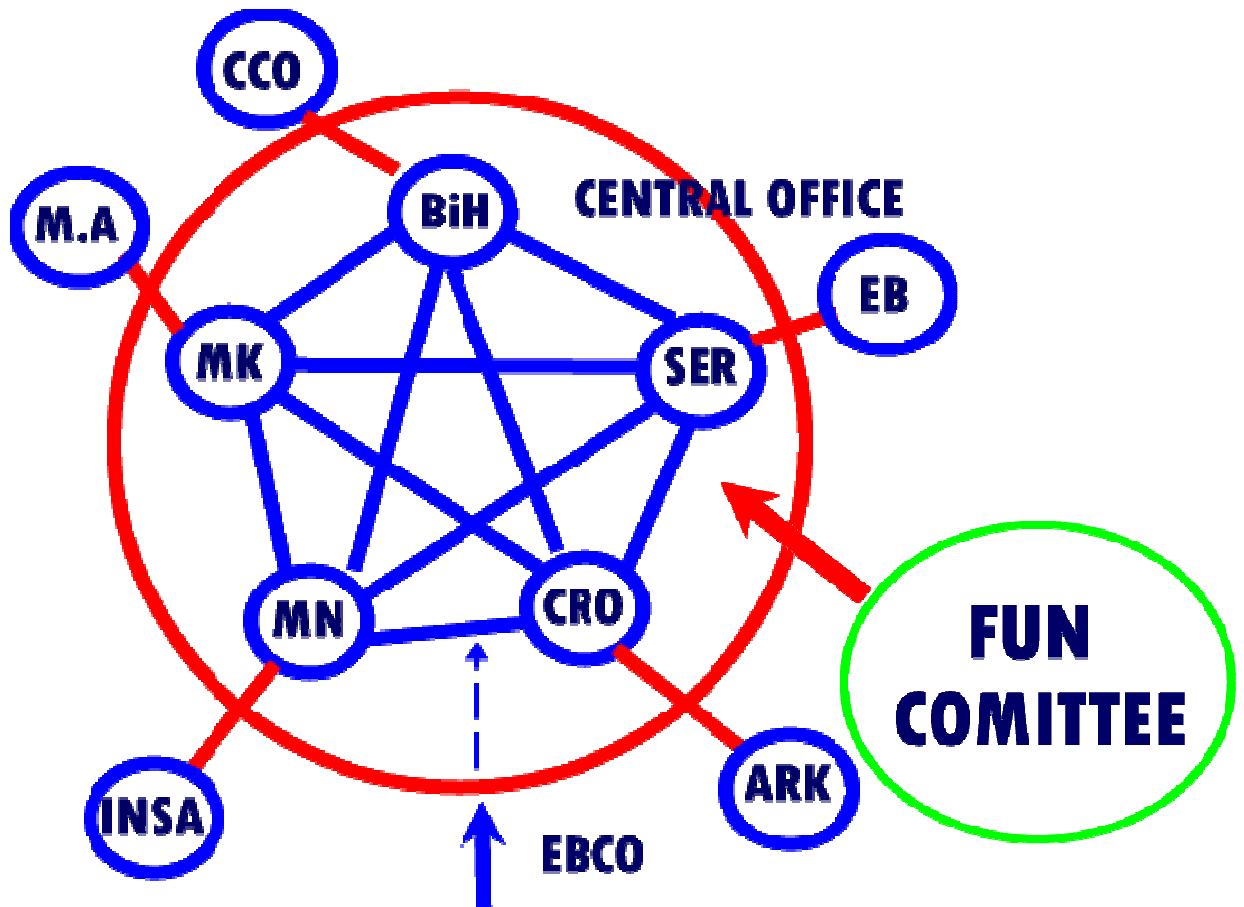
•Consists of:

- Peace Action – Macedonia
- Antimilitaristic Manufacture – Serbia
- Initiative of conscience – Montenegro
- Campaign for CO – BiH
- AntiWar Campaign – Croatia

AIMS OF THE NETWORK

- Constant exchange of information and experiences
- Sustainability of the network
- Creation of the regional standard for CO
- Joined media and political lobbying
- Coordination of joined actions
- Exchange of resources
- Mutual solidarity

STRUCTURE



Aims of the Macedonian campaign

- Further development and expansion of the solidarity network inside the country
- Promotion of peace and non-violence
- Promotional and raising awareness campaigns
- Monitoring of the implementation of civilian service
- Strengthening the peace resources on Macedonian language
- Cooperation with other campaigns in the nearby area

Things to do in Serbia

- Creating and educating activists to work on this issue
- Creating a strong network inside the country
- Lobbying for the recognition of the right for CO
- Drafting the new law proposal and the database of future civilian service hosts
- Joining the regional network properly

Bosnian objectives

- Further strengthening the network in BiH
- Finishing the lobbying campaign for implementation of existing laws
- Big informational campaign in Republika Srpska
- Start of the big lobbying campaign for passing the Law for civil service
- Work inside the regional network

Montenegro

- Starting the work on CO in the country
- Cooperating with Serbian campaign on lobbying actions
- Creating the basis for campaigning
- Receiving experience from other campaigns
Croatian campaign
- They don't need anything, do they? ☺
But we'll help them anyway.

Action plan

- Seminar in Sarajevo (March)
- Promotional materials of the network
- Regular meetings of the network
- Creating the regional standard for CO
- Joined action for the 15th of May
- Further joined actions and campaigns

“White & Black about CO and alternative civil service in Russia”

Group participants: Maria Sannikova (Center for the Development of Democracy and Human Rights), Gursky Victor (The Nizhny Novgorod Peacemaking Group), Oxana Kuznetsova (The Nizhny Novgorod Peacemaking Group)

Why White and black?

Russian politicians abroad are not the same as at home... They want to look liberal and democratic to the rest of Europe, but things change when they come back home...

Project concept

White

Information about European standards of CO and ASC adopted by Russia

Black

Information about Russian reality
in this field

Directions of activity

Europe:

–European politicians,

–European NGOs

Russia:

–Russian politicians,

–Russian NGOs

Solidarity actions

Campaign in WEB

Newsletter

European Politicians

Regular informing of the European politicians about situations on the conscientious objection and alternative civil service in Russia

The organization of meetings and conferences with the European politicians
Cooperation with international institutions (UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Council of Europe, etc.) for liberalisation of the Russian legislation

European NGOs

meetings, conferences- regular informing of NGOs- elaborating on legal acts- legal consulting- awareness rising campaigns- the cooperation with the European independent public institutes -participating in committees as experts and so on

-Solidarity actions

Russian Politicians

Cooperation with the representatives of different levels of power (local authorities, regional and federal structures)- meetings, conferences- regular informing about changes of the European law

Russian NGOs

Coalition “For democratic ACS unites about fifty regional NGOs”

Organizing solidarity actions

Monitoring of the legislation and disseminating information about novelties

Arranging seminars and conferences

Expertise of law drafts on CO and ACS

Involving specialists of different spheres of activities (law, public relations, economic, military affairs, labor) into the discussion on CO and ACS. I

Participation in congresses and forums, hearings held by (federal and regional government, the President administration, the State Duma committees and so on)

Legal consulting for Cos

International actions for solidarity

Appeal to the Russian government and the parliament to recognize the “experiments” of performing of the alternative civil service;

Appeal to the Russian government and the parliament to implement the European standards of CO and Civil Service;

Actions of solidarity for the imprisoned COs

Campaign in interest

Creating and maintaining the web-site “White & Black about CO and alternative civil service in Russia”

White & Black in www

Information about European

Standards of CO in general and in particular of those, which were adopted by the Russian Parliament

Booklet “Conscientious objection to compulsory military service”, published by the Directorate General of Human Rights of the Council of Europe

Addresses of the relevant NGOs and international organisations etc.

Information about Russian reality in this field

Adopted Legislation on CO and ACS

Expert Assessments

Annual Reports on Rights of COs

Reports about the situation in Russian army

Report on situation in social sphere and suggestions of the alternative civilian service in “social defense”

Discriminating statements of politicians concerning CO etc.

ANTI-WAR CAMPAIGN

Group participants: Alexia Tsouni(Greek section of Amnesty International), Douvis Costas(Association of Greek Conscientious Objectors), Stepan Polyakov(Future Association), Nicola Lapenta(Associazione Comunita Papa Giovanni XXIII), Nicolas Schneider(Arbeitsstelle Friedens-Dienst), Piet Dorflinger(Armeer Ade), Tomislav Hristov(Citizens Association for democracy, Peace and Tolerance”Aurora”, Anna Rebes (EBCO), Ernest Montane I Calaf(School of peace culture of the UAB)

The group in charge of the Anti-War Campaign was very diverse, this means that a regional campaign was not the best option. Everybody had a lot of ideas, objectives, targets, etc. After a while the group decided that the main object of the campaign should be to provide tools to individual people in order to adopt an anti-war attitude in their daily life.

Input of the group prepared by Anna Rebes

The first thing to do was to gather information, so the group split and went through internet to look for specific info. We found ourselves lost in the middle of a bunch of names, numbers, statistics, etc. It was hard to digest! This situation made us understand that people would never be interested in reading or listening to this information in that formal format. Thinking about the presentation that they were supposed do for the day after, they decided to present this info in a more flexible and educational way, so it

could get people's attention. The idea was to present specific facts (from serious organizations like Oxfam, International Amnesty,...) and inform people about things that they face in their everyday life. It's obvious that there are big war-logics that include companies, banks, politicians, etc... But often this logics are completely out of the reach of a regular citizen, that's why the group wanted to create personal attitudes and actions against war. In our daily life we spend money, this is one thing that we can use to be coherent with our ideas. How to deal with our money? Where to spend it? And where not to spend it? Where to keep it? Where to invest it?..... All this questions need to find an answer. Which companies are linked to the war system through economical interests, which banks are investing part of our money in humanitarian causes, etc.... We have to build an alternative way of life. This kind of actions should be presented in a attractive way.

During this workshop, the time was the enemy, it is clear that in one day and a half it is not possible to prepare all the information and a complete list of alternative conducts. Anyway, we decided to use the format of a News TV Program to make a video explaining in a very graphic way how different can be the outcome of a 20€ bill depending on who decides about them. The aim is to show how important is to be aware of what is the money that we keep in the bank is used for. This was just an example of the methodology that could be used in this kind of campaign.

In this program, there were also given some other important incomes about several issues like human rights situation in United Kingdom, USA and Iraq, to show that the violation of this rights is also happening in those countries that decide to attack another country in the name of the justice and the democracy in the world.

“Campaign workshop - CO information on the internet”

Group participants: Thomas Talaksen(The Norwegian Union of Conscientious Objection),Iliev Veselin(Youth Society for Peace and development on the Balkans),Mahir Musteidazada(Lawyers of 21st Century),Elena Gvozdeva(Leadership Development Institute at Siberian Academy of Public Administration), Ofir Feuerstein(New Profile)

This group concentrated on making a web page with information on Conscientious Objector issues. They decided to make a page which could coordinate the CO work throughout Europe. The page was meant to work on different levels; first it should present the idea of Conscientious Objection, and articles related to this. Then the international and European standards should be presented, before we included the links to the local organizations, with ideas on how to work with these standards in your own country. A debate forum should also be included, so the page could work as a meeting place, where CO's could exchange ideas and experiences.

The group made a sketch of the web page on the conference, including the basics of our ideas. A real page would need a lot more work, but if people used it, it might be worth it.

Saturday 15/03 EVALUATION

MORNING	Zen Groups evaluation meeting
AFTER COFFEE	Evaluation Games (outside the building) Back in Plenary: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Revision of expectation trees- Open round of comments- Distribution of evaluation questionnaire (to be handed back in the afternoon)- Official closing by Yiannis and Natasa
AFTERNOON	Anti-War demonstration in city centre of Strasbourg Open meeting with EBCO board, Q&A session
EVENING	Prep.-team evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none">- positive conclusion, members of prep.-team greatly satisfied- appreciation of Alana's support

ZEN GROUPS EVALUATION

In the morning participants gathered in their Zen Groups together with one member of the preparatory team each in order to discuss their impression of the seminar. In this confident atmosphere participants were able to express their criticism and their general view on the programme.

In general, all participants felt very comfortable during the seminar and expressed their overall satisfaction with the contents.

There was a good balance between theory and practical aspects of work for CO, although this opinion varied according to personal backgrounds and experience of each participant.

It also became clear that participants found it difficult to exchange opinion during the plenary session and rather preferred to work in smaller groups and workshops.

Participants greatly appreciated the guest lectures, in particular Jordi Tolra's introduction to European Institutions and International Standards on CO. Many of them found the information provided valuable as it gave them insight in a broader political perspective of human rights (in a European context).

Participants also expressed their wish to meet political representatives that could have been invited to Round Table discussions, as well as Journalists, in order to broaden the political point of view.

Concerning the programme, some participants felt that the contents was very tight and hardly left free time.

As participants also commented on the unofficial part of the programme, everyone enjoyed the icebreaking games and enjoyed the working atmosphere outside the plenary.

Some key conclusions of participants were:

- the study session was well structured and organized
- overall, participants gained practical tools for their work
- they considered the seminar a valuable experience
- the programme was balanced (with regard to theory and workshops)
- it was important that apart of the official programme people had the chance to meet and discuss means of cooperation for their future actions

DARTBOARD EVALUATION EXERCISE

This game took place in the garden of EYC since the weather was very good. Imagining a dartboard, the participants had to place themselves in it with regard as to how positive (close to the centre) or negative (far from the centre) they felt in response to certain questions such as:

<i>Work of the preparatory team?</i>	Everybody very satisfied
<i>Facilities of the EYC?</i>	Nearly everybody very satisfied
<i>Feeling in the group?</i>	Everybody very satisfied
<i>Level of discussion?</i>	Reasonably satisfied
<i>General feeling of satisfaction with seminar?</i>	Half reasonably satisfied and half very satisfied.

TREE OF EXPECTATION EVALUATION

Participants got back to the plenary where they had the second evaluation game. We used the trees of expectations we made at the expectations session at the beginning. Participants had to find their expectations hanging on the trees and move them on the tree “scale”. The higher they place them, the more the expectation is fulfilled and the lower they place them the other way around.

Participants put their expectations regarding **fun** high up in the tree and some place them even above it in order to show their satisfaction.

The same with their expectations concerning **communication between the participants**.

Their expectations regarding **learning** was put all over the tree high and low showing that there were mixed opinions: a third reasonably, a third very, and a third not satisfied.

Participants also filled in individual evaluation questionnaires where they were able to give further feedback on the different aspects of the programme and on the week as a whole. The comments in these reflected closely the outcomes of the above evaluation exercises.

There was a high degree of satisfaction with the seminar overall. The two main complaints were the shortness of the time spent discussing national situations on CO and a lack of concrete examples of how international standards can be applied in actual CO work.

Most participants felt that it was very important for their work to get informed on the *International Standards* European Institutions that are relevant for CO work. Indeed, many of them felt that time was not sufficient in order to get to concrete examples of how these standards could be applied. An extended Question & Answer session would have been useful in their opinion.

The workshop on campaigning (Thursday/ Friday) was considered very useful by all participants, as it was a good contrast to the rather formal plenary atmosphere. The practical approach and the dynamic working atmosphere made this workshop a valuable experience.

There was a balanced preference among participants between working in small groups or in plenary. Those participants who were in favour of more lectures and background information were just as many as those who opted for workshops and small group work. In conclusion participants were satisfied by the good balance of the programme throughout the week.

Yiannis lecture on “New Global Challenges to Peace” was conceived to be an important contribution in order to set the seminar in perspective with actual political developments. Some participants criticized that the following Q&A session and a group discussion was not sufficiently structured and therefore unnecessary.

The *CO Region by Region* workshop gave participants an overview on the situation of CO in different countries that were represented at the Study Session. Many participants would have preferred to have more time for this part of the programme in order to get more detailed information.

In general the plenary sessions were conceived as too formal yet informative and therefore useful.

Asked about what was missing, some participants remarked that there should have been more interactive games. In addition, they felt that lectures and presentations should have been supplemented with hand-outs for a better overview.

All participants felt that the social life during the Study Session was great and that they had the chance to make useful and interesting contacts.

The performance of the prep.-team was overall perceived as very good, the team members being caring and responsible.

Finally, the most important aspects of the Study Session for participants was:

- ideas how to improve the communication within their organisation
- to increase networking efforts with other CO groups throughout Europe
- to learn about International Standards on CO and to gain useful information on CO in various european Countries

As an immediate outcome of the Study Session, several participants announced that they will report about their experience to their organisations back home.

As a general remark, was the new regulations for travel reimbursement at the Study Session were completely inconvenient for almost all participants. This year, for the first time, the travel reimbursement had to be done by bank transfer (within 10 days after the seminar).

Yiannis Glarnetatzis officially closed the seminar by thanking all the participants, the preparatory team, and the staff of the EYC for contributing to a very enjoyable and productive week.

After lunch the majority of participants, the board members of EBCO as well as the prep.-team went together to demonstrate against a war on Iraq. A group of people had spent the night before preparing a banner as well as derrick-like hats, symbolizing our opposition to a war aiming at profit and oil.

EBCO MEETING WITH THE PARTICIPANTS

After the demonstration in town, participants who were interested in learning more about EBCO had the opportunity to meet the three present members of the board of EBCO (Maurice Montet, Hans Dijkman, Yiannis Glarnetatzis) for a Question & Answer session before dinner. It was obviously important for many participants to inquire on EBCO's political work (CoE and EP representation) and ways how EBCO could support their struggle for the recognition of CO. Apart of that it gave them the important chance to meet members of the executive board of EBCO personally, something that was very appreciated.

Sunday 03/06/01 DEPARTURE

After a hard-working week, the previous evening's farewell party, and a very long night for some, good-byes were said and everybody headed for home.

APPENDIX

THE EUROPEAN BUREAU FOR CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION

The European Bureau for Conscientious Objection was founded in 1979 in order to co-ordinate and support national organisations in Europe campaigning for the rights of conscientious objectors to military service. EBCO has 20 member organisations in 14 European countries.

Its main aims are:

1. To promote the right to conscientious objection to war preparations as a fundamental human right, at both national and international levels;
2. To obtain the legal instruments which make it possible to assert this right, these legal instruments being national legislation and international agreements, in particular the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms;
3. To ensure that this right is exercised normally, without giving rise to social,

- professional, institutional or other types of discrimination;
4. To promote an alternative to military service as a concrete contribution to peace-building and understanding between peoples;
 5. To work to give this service a European and even an international dimension, in particular by making it possible to perform it in a foreign country, in international training sessions or in internationally oriented organisations;
 6. To develop the right to asylum, in the countries which have signed the European Convention on Human Rights, for conscientious objectors who are citizens of countries which do not recognize, or insufficiently recognize their rights;
 7. To contribute to the improvement of national legislation by the circulation of information on the countries where conscientious objectors enjoy a satisfactory situation;
 8. To develop the international structuring of conscientious objectors' organisations and those which promote the right to conscientious objection;
 9. To participate in all efforts to implement resolution no. 337 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, in particular through the elimination of all restrictions on the right to conscientious objection in article 4 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and in every other instrument issued by supranational European bodies;
 10. To have national legislation adapted in accordance with the European Parliament resolution of 7 February 1983 (and the resolutions deriving from this);
 11. To promote the right to conscientious objection through the Human Rights Commission within the framework of the United Nations.

EBCO status before the European Institutions:

- Council of Europe: consultative status, member of the NGO consultative group
- European Parliament: consultative status recognised by the 1989 Schmidbauer resolution

EBCO lobby work: The European Parliament

1993: The Macciocchi resolution

"3. Points out that no court or commission can penetrate the conscience of an individual and that a declaration setting out the individual's motives must therefore suffice in the vast majority of cases to secure the status of conscientious objector;"

1989: The Schmidbauer resolution

"1. Calls for the right to be granted to all conscripts at any time to refuse military service, whether armed or unarmed, on grounds of conscience, with full respect for the principles of freedom and equal treatment for all members of society;"

"9. Calls for conscientious objectors who are recognized as such in the Member State of which they are nationals to be allowed, where appropriate and provided the individual concerned so requests to participate in programmes of alternative service in another Member State and for their release from alternative service in their own country as a result of such participation;"

1993: The De Gucht resolution

"51. Stresses that an alternative civilian service should be provided for, of the same length as military service, so that it is not seen as a sanction or deterrent;"

1994: The Bandrés, Molet & Bindi resolution

"7. Calls therefore on the Commission to submit as soon as possible
- a proposal for the harmonization of legislation and minimum guarantees of the protection of the right of conscientious objection, such as those laid down in paragraph 49 of its aforementioned resolution of 11 March 1993 on respect for human rights in the European Community, with a view to eliminating the current discrimination between Member States,
- a proposal for the establishment of a European civilian service open to both conscientious objectors and volunteers from the Member States,
- an exchange programme allowing those engaged in alternative civilian service to choose to perform it in another Member State or in a developing country as part of a cooperation programme;"

"16. Instructs its Committee on Civil Liberties to draw up an annual report on the application by the Member States of its resolutions on conscientious objection and civilian service, and to involve the European Bureau for Conscientious Objection;"

Furthermore, EBCO takes action every year on the Annual Report on Human Rights in Europe by the European Parliament, to include in it condemnations of particularly wrong situations.

EBCO lobby work: The Council of Europe

■

- 1967: Resolution 337 and recommendation 478 of the General Assembly
First document issued by an European Institution, first ground for all EBCO lobby work.
- “2. Recommends the Committee of Ministers:
to instruct the Committee of Experts on Human Rights to formulate proposals to give effect to the principles laid down by the Assembly in its Resolution 337 by means of a Convention or a recommendation to Governments so that the right of conscientious objection may be firmly implanted in all member States of the Council of Europe;”
- 1987: Recommendation No. R(87)8 of the Committee of Ministers
20 years later it was necessary to reassert the same principles as in 1967: a recognition of the right to conscientious objection, with a standardized individual and non-militarily controlled procedure, and with the provision of an equal alternative civilian service.
- 1994: Resolution 1042 of the Parliamentary Assembly
On the occasion of the war in the Former Yugoslavia, the Council of Europe, as the European Parliament did, took a stand in favor of the deserters and draft evaders:
“14. Furthermore, the Assembly:
 - i. calls on Croatia to establish a conscientious objector status enabling the individuals concerned to carry out a genuinely civilian alternative to military service, and to declare an amnesty for deserters and draft resisters;
 - ii. agrees to take account of the Croatian authorities' attitude to these matters when considering this country's application for membership of the Council of Europe;
 - iii. calls on the authorities of Serbia and Montenegro to recognize in practice the right to conscientious objection to military service and to declare an amnesty for deserters and draft resisters;
 - iv. calls on the authorities of Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina to give protection to all people fleeing the fighting and, in particular, to refrain from drafting them against their will.”
- 2001: Recommendation 1518 of the Standing Committee
After the Marty Report, according to which five member states haven't recognized the right to CO, the Council of Europe urges them to do so.

EBCO lines of work

Lobby work

- Follow-up of the activities of the European Parliament
- Follow-up of the activities of the Council of Europe
- Provision of information for the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe
- Concerted action with local groups for amelioration of the national legislations.
Recent examples: Yugoslavia and Hungary

Training

- Multilateral training seminars i. e. within the framework of the European Youth Centre Training Programme
- Other training seminars

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