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**WAR RESISTERS' INTERNATIONAL**  
LANSBURY HOUSE, 88 PARK AVENUE, ENFIELD,  
MIDDLESEX, ENGLAND

# THE WAR RESISTERS' INTERNATIONAL



## DECLARATION

"War is a crime against humanity. We, therefore, are determined not to support any kind of war and to strive for the removal of all causes of war."



THE WAR RESISTERS' INTERNATIONAL

was founded at Bilthoven in Holland in 1921, under the name of "Paco", by representatives of groups of war resisters in four European countries. In March 1923 it was re-organised under the name of The War Resisters' International and the Headquarters transferred to England.

In September, 1958 there are 30 affiliated organisations in 22 countries, representing all five continents, and contacts in 60 other countries, i.e. 82 countries in all.

DECLARATION

(Adopted in 1921, and slightly altered at the Ninth Triennial Conference, 1957)

"War is a crime against humanity. I therefore am determined not to support any kind of war and to strive for the removal of all causes of war."

IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECLARATION

(Each member will implement the Declaration according to his own circumstances and in the light of his own conscience. The following statement is based on one adopted at the foundation of the International)

We are convinced that violence cannot preserve order, defend our homes, achieve social justice or give security to any nation. In fact, experience has shown that in all wars order, justice and liberty disappear. We hold, however, that consistent pacifists have no

right to take up a merely negative position, but must recognise the obligation to seek effective non-violent means of achieving our ends.

We recognise that war begins in the hearts and minds of men, but that there are agencies which seek to manipulate and exaggerate our human frailties, creating fear, hatred and antagonism between groups of people. Among the causes of war we regard the following as the more important to-day:

(1) Colonialism and Economic Imperialism

People have not only the desire, but the right to govern themselves and to select their own economic, social and political structures, without outside coercion, control or interference.

(2) Intolerance

Refusal to tolerate differences between races, religions and ideologies, which are not in themselves causes of war, may often lead to violence.

(3) Economic Injustice

Two-thirds of the world's population lack the necessary food, clothing and shelter. To ignore their need drives them to violence.

(4) Military Preparedness

Money spent on H-Bombs cannot also be spent on bread, and vast accumulations of armaments are a threat to world peace. The threat of nuclear weapons, far from being a deterrent, only increases fear and suspicion.

(5) Nationalism

Movements or Governments which make claims for their own people inconsistent with the well-being of others provoke the spirit which leads to war.

(6) The State

An important cause of war is the prevalent claim to sovereignty of national States. The State exists for man, not man for the State. The recognition of the sanctity of human personality must become the basic principle of human society, and the brotherhood of all peoples the basis of international relations.

AIMS OF THE INTERNATIONAL

The War Resisters' International seeks to replace prejudice with understanding, hatred with tolerance, and cynicism with hope, so that our society will be transformed and world brotherhood become a living reality.

Our aim is to give practical expression to our beliefs, beginning with the unconditional rejection of war, and to succour and support those individuals and groups which are dedicated to the abolition of war.

The cost to the individual is often very heavy. Young men have resolutely resisted militarism and conscription and faced poverty, ostracism, loss of liberty and even death. Many thousands have passed through prison; hundreds are in prison now, as you read these words.

The International remains uncommitted to any particular political or religious doctrine, and thus can freely and effectively present the pacifist message in a great variety of situations.

SERVICES OF THE INTERNATIONAL

The War Resisters' International acts as co-ordinating centre for its autonomous affiliated organisations (called Sections). On their behalf it:

SEEKS to encourage the formation of pacifist organisations where none exist.

SEEKS AND MAINTAINS CONTACT with isolated war resisters in countries where it is dangerous to oppose government policies, giving support and encouragement.

GIVES financial and other support to war resisters in legal or personal difficulty, and to their families.

ACTS as an information centre, and makes possible the exchange of news, opinions and concerns. To facilitate this service the W.R.I. has over sixty volunteer translators with a working knowledge of twenty-one of the world's languages.

The International has obtained the release from prison and penal settlement of scores of war resisters and during the Second World War, saved many from concentration camps. It has helped numerous members to settle in new lands, and still offers this service.

The W.R.I. serves the war resistance movement in these and many other ways and symbolises the movement's unity of purpose.

A unique compilation of the military service regulations of the world, constantly being revised and supplemented, has been especially useful in pressing governments to grant the legal right of conscientious objection to military service.

The annual observation of "Prisoners for Peace Day" on December the first, is a growing witness of solidarity with war resisters suffering imprisonment in loyalty to our common ideals.

The W.R.I. co-operates with kindred organisations for the furtherance of common ends, and places its views before governments, the United Nations, and other bodies as opportunities arise.

MEMBERSHIP

ORGANISATIONS: Any pacifist organisation, whether national or local, may affiliate, provided every individual member of such organisation accepts the International's Declaration or some statement which the International Council can recognise as its equivalent. Affiliation cannot be accepted if applied for merely on a majority vote.

As one of the objects of the International is to create a fellowship of war resisters, it is desirable that there should be not more than one Section in any country, or, if that is not practicable, as few as possible, and it is the policy of the International to encourage the closest co-operation between such Sections.

INDIVIDUALS: For individuals, membership of the International is normally through membership of an affiliated

organisation but, from countries where there is as yet no affiliated movement, direct individual membership is accepted.

FINANCE

Owing to varying conditions and currency restrictions, no fixed fee is demanded as a condition of membership from either organisations or individuals, but it is expected that when circumstances do not render it impossible, both organisations and individuals will make such contributions towards the expenses of the International Headquarters as their means allow. In addition, the International shall raise funds by direct appeal, affiliated organisations co-operating when possible.

DIRECT CONTACT with the International Secretariat is encouraged. Anyone is welcome to receive W.R.I. literature as published, although those in a position to do so are asked to contribute annually the minimum of five shillings (U.S.A. \$1.00), or the equivalent. To facilitate contributions, the W.R.I. has Financial Agents in Australia, Belgium, Denmark, France, Holland, India, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States of America.

ORGANISATION

In 1925 the first International Conference was held at Hoddesdon, England, and, except during the Second World War, Conferences have been held at three yearly intervals since that date. Apart from England, subsequent Conferences have been held in Austria (1928),

France (1931), Denmark (1937), Germany (1951), and France (1954). At the 1957 Conference at Roehampton, England, there were representatives from twenty countries. The 1960 Triennial Conference will be held at the Gandhigram in India.

At these Conferences the Chairman and the governing body, called the Council, are elected by the official delegates of Sections. The Council meets annually and its Executive Committee at least four times a year.

The quarterly organ of the W.R.I., "The War Resister", is published in English, French and German. A booklet in Esperanto is published annually, and occasionally literature is prepared in other languages. In addition, many W.R.I. Sections have their own publications.

For further information apply to:

The General Secretary,  
War Resisters' International,  
Lansbury House,  
88 Park Avenue,  
Enfield, Middlesex,  
England.

DECLARATION

Date.....19...

"War is a crime against humanity. I therefore am determined not to support any kind of war and to strive for the removal of all causes of war."

.....  
(signature)

Mr/Mrs/Miss.....  
(block letters)

Address: (block letters)

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.....  
.....

I am interested in the work of the WAR RESISTERS' INTERNATIONAL, and would like to be placed on the mailing list to receive the quarterly "WAR RESISTER" in English/French/German. (Delete which language not required)

Mr/Mrs/Miss .....  
(block letters)

Address: (block letters)

.....  
.....

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Contributions are also gratefully  
received at Headquarters.

Those unable to contribute financially  
are encouraged to send new and cancelled  
stamps, the sale of which brings in added  
income.