



Veterans for Peace
Greater Seattle, Chapter 92

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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RESURRECTING THE ANTI-WAR MOVEMENT ON TAX DAY
Veterans for Peace Raise Awareness about Federal Budget's Oversized Military Component Outside Seattle's Midtown Post Office

Seattle, WA. Members of the group *Veterans for Peace* passed out flyers in front of the Midtown Post Office on Monday. The group chose April 15th in the hopes that last-minute income tax filers would be more receptive to their anti-war, pro-peace message.

A team of five from the Greater Seattle Chapter of *Veterans for Peace* took up positions on the corners of 3rd Avenue and Union Street beginning at 11am. They passed out flyers titled "Where Your Income Tax Money Really Goes," to a mix of tax filers, office workers on lunch break, tourists, and the homeless.

Dan, a veteran in his late 50's, organized the effort and supplied the rest of the group with the flyers. "I don't know how many people realize what the federal government spends on the military," he said. "Maybe they'd rather not know?"

The group endured a steady, cold wind on an overcast day to hand out flyers. Most of the people who walked by were not interested. "I'm busy, I got 10 things on my mind, I can't be bothered," said one young man in a suit. "Maybe this is an important issue but....do these people have jobs?" he wondered.

The group remained undeterred and hopeful. "We do this every year," said Mason, a Vietnam veteran. "If we could just speak to a few people with the pie-charts, the facts of what our government is spending our money on.... then we'd begin to see resistance." Educating the public about things as distant as defense contracts, lobbying, and spending rates is "tough" the members

all agreed. That is why small-scale tax "protests" are necessary, they said.

Nationally, the number of anti-war protests has dwindled as the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere have continued. Prior to the Iraq invasion in 2003, downtown Seattle regularly hosted protests that numbered in the thousands. Today, similar gatherings are usually ignored by both mainstream and alternative media outlets.

The most obvious difference between protests in 2003 and 2013 is party affiliation. According to researchers at the [University of Michigan](#), those who attend anti-war protests since President Obama's inauguration are third-party and non-affiliated voters. In contrast, the protesters who turned out en masse during President Bush's first term were overwhelmingly Democrats.

At 1pm, after two hours in front of the Post Office, the members packed down. Dan and Mason were asked if they thought they reached anyone who previously hadn't considered the link between income taxes and military spending. "Hard to say," Dan said. "People rarely have an immediate 'A-ha' moment, it usually takes some time to read about it more and reflect. If they bothered to take a flyer, then we count that as success."

Veterans For Peace, Greater Seattle, Chapter 92, also known informally as VFP 92, is the local chapter of Veterans For Peace in the greater Seattle area. The group formed in 2002 to add the voice of veterans to those opposed to the invasion of Iraq.

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