

New York Yearly Meeting
Witness Coordinating Committee

Present: Mary Eagleson (Clerk), Jill McLellan, Robert Kazmayer (Sunfire, Recording clerk), Helen Garay Toppins, Pamela Wood.

1/31/2015

2015-01-01. Mary Eagleson presented the report of the Finance Subcommittee. Our budget is contributions from the sharing fund, distribution from endowments and a small amount from the NYYM operating budget. Our distribution from the endowment is 5% of the three-year rolling average.

2015-01-02. The Committee approved Paragraph A. 2 of the Finance Sub-Committee's recommendations:

The cost of one Sharing Fund appeal using a letter, etc. is approximately \$1900. The cost using a color postcard would be about \$900, including postage. The Spring appeal only generates a few thousand dollars in contributions, at best. The Committee recommends a postcard for the Spring appeal and a letter for the Fall appeal, for a total of \$2800. Monies allocated to WCC from NYYM's Operating Account will be applied to the costs of the appeals and posters, with additional funds for the appeals, as necessary, taken out of the Sharing Fund before distributions to committees in accordance with their percentages.

2015-01-03. The Committee modified and approved the following Paragraph A. 1 of the Finance Sub-Committee's recommendations. – which said that moneys come from "the Sharing Fund budget" [in first sentence].

Our commitments to contributions to outside organizations will be taken out of the Sharing Fund income. Committees will be assigned percentages based on their requests. Those percentages will be applied to the distribution from the Endowment (approximately \$20,000), which is guaranteed, and to contributions, which are dependent on our fund-raising efforts, but back-stopped by the Endowment.

2015-01-04. We noted that Paragraph A. 3 states a policy already approved by the Committee.

The contribution from the Endowment will be calculated in accordance with our prior discernment (5% of the 3-year average of the value of the Endowment) and will be taken in 2 equal installments; one in February and the second in September. The payments to outside organizations - Witness to the World contributions - will be made in September.

2015-01-05. The Committee approved Paragraph A. 4 – which includes a goal for contributions of \$45,000.

The Committee recommends a Sharing Fund contributions goal of \$45,000; an estimated contribution from the Endowment of \$20,000; and a resulting total Sharing Fund budget of approximately \$65,000.

2015-01-06. The Committee approved the percentage allocations in Paragraph A. 5 of the Finance Sub-Committee's report.

<u>Group</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Estimated Dollars</u>
AVP	7%	\$ 4,550
Barrington-Dunbar	21%	\$13,650
Black Concerns	8%	\$ 5,200
Earthcare	2%	\$ 1,300
EAQWER	1%	\$ 650
Indian Affairs	16%	\$10,400
Prisons	8%	\$ 5,200
Right Sharing	6%	\$ 3,900
World Ministries	10%	\$ 6,500
Witness Activities Fund	15%	\$ 9,750
<u>Witness To The World</u>	<u>6%</u>	<u>\$ 3,900</u>
TOTAL:	100%	\$65,000

2015-01-07. We agreed to pass on to the nominating committee that we have acknowledge the resignation of Jan Simkin from the Board of Rural and Migrant Ministries, - We are notifying the nominating committee that we are laying down our connection with this organization.

2015-01-08. We approved the following distribution of the allocation to witness to the world.

<u>Group</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Estimated Dollars</u>
BQEF	20%	\$ 780
AFSC (Healing & Trans.)	10%	\$ 390
Friends Peace Teams	10%	\$ 390
NJ Council of Churches	5%	\$ 195
NY Council of Churches	10%	\$ 390
Quaker Earthcare Witness	15%	\$ 585
Rural & Migrant Ministries	5%	\$ 195
William Penn House	10%	\$ 390
NCPTF	10%	\$ 390
<u>NRCAT</u>	<u>10%</u>	<u>\$ 390</u>
TOTAL:	100%	\$ 3900

2015-01-09. We approved the minutes up to this point.

2015-01-10. We approved a special contribution recommended in Paragraph 7 of the report of the Finance Sub-Committee.

The Committee recommends a special contribution of \$2000 to Right Sharing for its work on combating the Ebola epidemic and its aftermath in Sierra Leone, and the Committees under the care of WCC are requested to ascertain if they can contribute funds from their Sharing Fund carry-over balance to cover this special contribution.

Mary reported that World ministries has indicated that they can contribute \$1000. Mary will send the appeal already sent to World ministries to the other committees to give them background.

2015-01-10. Concerning the reports from committees:

The report of the Earthcare Working Group had been orally presented the evening before. It included information on the preparations that the Connector Friends have been making, and the fact that monthly meetings have not responded quickly to the offer of visitation by Earthcare Connectors.

The Prisons Committee gave an oral report on their group. They included mention of the 40th anniversary of the Auburn Prison Worship Group (the oldest prison worship group in NYS). The Prisons Committee stressed the importance of abiding by the regulations of the Department of Corrections (including the regulation that volunteers must not correspond by letter with inmates.) The Prison Committee reported keeping track of discharged prisoners reentering society. They are working on establishing new worship groups in Medium Security prisons. They are looking for volunteers to participate in a new Prison Worship Group at Orleans correctional Facility in Albion, NY. There is now a Farmington-Scipio Prison's Committee. June will email announcements which will be included in this meeting

Sarah Faith Dickinson gave a Short report on EAQWER. They had a retreat in October which members of Indian Affairs attended. They hope to have one or two members attend the conference on mass incarceration at Pendell Hill. They have started talking about visiting monthly meetings to explain what goes on the EAQWES.

Mary suggests he feels that we should inquire of monthly meetings what their concerns are.

Black Concerns: Helen reports that Black Concerns is cosponsoring a program with Fifteenth Street Meeting and later at Brooklyn Meeting. They are looking for other Meetings to cosponsor programs. They have helped upstate meetings with money's for anti-racism workshops, and scholarships to workshops.

Jill reported that the AVP workshop is Saturday, April 18 at Woodburn.

2015-01-11. Pamela Wood read a minute in support of HALT – to which the prison committed has revised the introduction. The committee has approved the minute for submission to Spring Sessions.

2015-01-12. Helen reported on the pending march for nuclear nonproliferation. The Witness Coordinating Committee would like to encourage Friends involvement. [Helen to give exact wording.] We will make an announcement of our support as part of our presentation at Spring Sessions.

2015-01-13. The remaining minutes from the meeting were approved.

2/2/2015

On January 22, 2015, The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists moved the hands of its Doomsday Clock two minutes closer to midnight, citing the twin interconnected threats posed by nuclear weapons and climate change. It's 3 minutes to midnight!

SPRING 2015 PEACE & PLANET MOBILIZATION FOR A NUCLEAR-FREE, JUST AND SUSTAINABLE WORLD

CALL TO ACTION

A nuclear weapons-free world can and must be achieved. Together, people's movements and governments committed to securing human survival by eliminating the world's nuclear arsenals can prevail. Building on our popular mobilizations since the indefinite extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1995, we call on all people who want to build a fair, democratic, ecologically sustainable and peaceful future to join us in the streets and meeting halls in New York and in your own capitals and cities worldwide in late April and early May, 2015 during the NPT 5-year Review Conference. Joining with "move the money" and climate change forces we will press the nuclear powers to fulfill their Article VI commitments to engage in good faith negotiations for the complete elimination of their nuclear arsenals, for deep reductions of military spending in order to meet human needs, and for measures to reverse the devastation being wrought by climate change.

We issue this call at a crucial juncture in history, a moment when the unresolved tensions of a deeply inequitable society, great power ambitions and the destructive effects of an unsustainable economic system are exploding into overlapping crises. Tensions among nuclear-armed countries are rising amidst circumstances that bear worrisome resemblances to those that brought the world wars of the last century. For the first time in the nuclear age we are in a sustained global economic crisis that is deepening the gulf between rich and poor in a starkly two-tier world. Both climate change and fossil fuel-based economies generate conflicts within and among states. Extreme economic inequality and the economic policies that create it, NATO's aggressive expansion, struggles over diminishing fossil fuels, food price spikes and crop failures drive wars and revive arms races from Iraq to Syria to Ukraine to South Asia and the Western Pacific. We face a moment in which policies that benefit a fraction of the world's population feed conflicts that could precipitate catastrophic wars, even nuclear wars, and in which the power to make war is wielded by largely unaccountable elites.

The 2010 NPT Review Conference reaffirmed "the unequivocal undertaking of the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament." Five more years have passed; another Review Conference is in the offing. Nuclear stockpiles of civilization-destroying size persist, and even limited progress on disarmament has stalled. Over 16,000 nuclear weapons remain, with 10,000 in military service

and 1800 on high alert. All nuclear-armed states are modernizing their nuclear arsenals, manifesting the intention to sustain them for decades to come.

Nuclear-armed countries spend over \$100 billion per year on nuclear weapons and related costs. Those expenditures are expected to increase as nuclear weapon States modernize their warheads and delivery systems. Spending on high-tech weapons not only deepens the reliance of some governments on their nuclear arsenals, but also furthers the growing divide between rich and poor. In 2013, \$1.75 trillion was spent on militaries and armaments – more than the total annual income of the poorest third of the world's population.

The capacity to sustain a nuclear fuel cycle and to operate reactors provides the technological base for the production of nuclear weapons. Many of the same institutions that insist that nuclear weapons provide political security claim that nuclear power can provide energy security. While the NPT bargain wrongly includes the right of all countries to develop peaceful nuclear energy, it does not obligate them to do so. With the dangers of proliferation and in the wake of the Fukushima power plant disaster, it should be clear that the human and ecological costs of nuclear power are unacceptable.

Countries that are free of nuclear weapons, supported by peace organizations around the world, have responded to the growing atmosphere of conflict and confrontation involving nuclear-armed states with renewed, urgent calls for disarmament – calls the nuclear weapon states have largely ignored:

- At the 2010 NPT Review Conference, the parties agreed unanimously to organize a conference on a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear and other Weapons of Mass Destruction, to be held in 2012 and to be convened “with the full support and engagement of the nuclear-weapon States.” That conference has yet to be convened.

In November 2011, the International Red Cross reminded the world that nuclear weapons cause “incalculable human suffering” and that as a consequence there is an “absolute imperative” to prevent any use of nuclear weapons. It called for negotiations to “completely eliminate nuclear weapons.” In March 2013, Norway hosted a conference on the Humanitarian Impacts of Nuclear Weapons in Oslo, with 127 governments in attendance. Mexico hosted a follow-on conference in Nayarit in February 2014, with 146 governments present. Both conferences were boycotted by the P-5 nuclear weapon possessing nations. A third conference, hosted by Austria, took place in Vienna in December 2014. The Chair's Summary emphasized that “as long as nuclear weapons exist, there remains the possibility of a nuclear weapon explosion. Even if the probability is considered low, given the catastrophic consequences of a nuclear weapon detonation, the risk is unacceptable.”

The P-5 also boycotted the Open-Ended Working Group which was mandated “to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons,” established by the UN General Assembly in

2012. The General Assembly also initiated an unprecedented High Level Meeting on nuclear disarmament in September 2013, to which the P-5 sent only low-level representatives.

In April 2014, The Republic of the Marshall Islands initiated a challenge in the International Court of Justice, urging the ICJ to find the nine nuclear-armed states in noncompliance with their obligations to disarm under international law. This courageous action by direct victims of nuclear colonialism reminds us that disarmament depends on collective action by the people of the world, using all available peaceful means. We urge governments of non-nuclear weapons States to participate by intervening in the Marshall Islands cases or by filing their own parallel applications.

2015 marks the 70th anniversary of the United States atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It also marks 45 years since the entry into force of the NPT, in which the United States, the Soviet Union, and the United Kingdom, who together hold most of the world's nuclear weapons, agreed to undertake good faith negotiations for the elimination of their nuclear arsenals. It is long past time for the world's people to call to account all those who exercise power by threatening nuclear annihilation.

- We call upon the parties to the NPT to use the 2015 Review Conference to immediately, without delay, develop a time-bound framework for negotiating the total ban and elimination of all nuclear arsenals.
- We call on the four states outside the Treaty that have nuclear arms, India, Israel, North Korea, and Pakistan, to join in any such negotiations, immediately and without delay.
- We urge all people who hope to build a fair, democratic, ecologically sustainable and peaceful future to join us in New York City and around the world for international days of action, including:
 - An international peace, justice and environmental conference – April 24 & 25;
 - A major international rally, march to the United Nations and peace festival – April 26;
 - A 'Global Wave' of symbolic public actions in cities around the world to 'Wave Goodbye to Nuclear Weapons';
 - Nonviolent demonstrations, protest actions and numerous side events to press our demands for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, and for economic justice and environmental sustainability;
 - The presentation to the NPT Review Conference of millions of signatures on petitions calling for nuclear weapons abolition;
 - Youth and student organizing; and
 - An Interfaith Service for Nuclear Weapons Abolition

Let our numbers be so large that our voices are certain to be heard inside the UN and around the world!