

SYNOPSIS OF CONTEMPT OF CONSCIENCE

In February 2003 while filming American B-52's preparing to bomb Baghdad from USAF Fairford air base in Gloucestershire Joe, a taxpayer was struck by the knowledge that it was costing British taxpayers £7million just to *police* the place.

Outraged to think that the unprecedented multitudes who had recently taken part in the historic anti-war protests across Britain were themselves compelled by law to fund the very activity they believed to be unjust - to the tune of £6 billion - he decided to do something and refused to pay his Income Tax towards the war.

After researching the history of war tax resistance and conscientious objection, he found a noble tradition of tenacity and defiance and his determination to make a film quickened. Combining the roles of war tax resister and filmmaker however was fraught particularly in high tension personal confrontations with the police and the courts whilst at the same time trying to capture events and reactions on film.

War tax resistance is a solitary process too and so he set out to find other British taxpayers who were prepared to challenge the current situation in which all taxpayers were 'financial conscripts'. Meeting up with an accountant, a toymaker, a psychiatrist, a storyteller, a single mother and a retired teacher who similarly faced court appearances, bailiffs and threats of imprisonment this unexpected coming together of seven individuals provided an opportunity to broaden the story with a progressive human-interest narrative and The Peace Tax Seven was born.

Given the ever deepening concerns about the situation in Iraq and its ramifications at home with the July 2005 London bombings, the group felt that this was an opportune time in British history to bring this issue into public consciousness and to seek a landmark change in the law so that conscientious objectors would no longer be compelled to pay for deliberate state killing.

Set against the backdrop of the extraordinary events that rocked the world, "Contempt of Conscience" challenges the viewer to consider new ways to build a much needed culture of peace.