

Rosa Covington Packard 1936-2016, USA

We met Rosa Packard when she represented CPTI in New York at the United Nations' Human Rights Committee. She fulfilled this task from 2001-2010; she also belonged to the relevant NGO working party. Then, however, health reasons forced her to leave New York and to move to live with her daughter in Pennsylvania. There she died on 22 February after a long illness.

We met Rosa at the International Conferences, e.g. in Hirschluch (2002¹), Brussels (2004) and at a CPTI board meeting in Geneva (2005), when the Human Rights Committee met there.

I encountered an enthusiastic pacifist who had found her religious home with the Quakers. The giving of advice to conscientious objectors to military service, and her engagement in the peace tax movement led her as far as the Supreme Court - alas, without the hoped-for success. There are papers recording her oral statement in front of the Human Rights Committee in April 2003; in the course of this, she told all those states that, in accordance with what her beliefs told her to do, she had already been paying her income tax into a special Quaker reserve account for the last 22 years.

Rosa, whose day-job was training teachers in the Montessori tradition², was a woman of great personal warmth and considerable energy who, disregarding age and limitations caused by health, would travel to Europe again and again, totally committed to the service of the cause. When we met Rosa she would be full of ideas for educational and research projects - and also for the necessary hunt for funding and staff. For work on court cases she suggested co-operation with American universities, institutes and students and herself worked out a compilation documenting four international Quaker cases, to make it easier to raise people and money. She proposed finding a trainee lawyer who would develop into a specialist for the peace tax - in the USA there are some such specialist lawyers. Now, just around International Women's Day, the time feels particularly right for us to remember yet again Rosa's question as to what we might do to make the peace tax idea appeal particularly to women.

Rosa was one of those people who, through their innermost conviction and radiance, were capable of inspiring others to join her on the often hard path and who showed: even if the goal has not yet been reached, personal engagement "really can make a difference"!

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¹) Rosa's speech is documented under: <http://www.rosapackard.org/PeaceTaxWitness.htm>

²) Rosa Covington Packard, *The Hidden Hinge - Self-development in Early Childhood the Montessori Way*, 1972 & 1995