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THE CHRONICLE

U.S. anti-war protester barred from Canada for two years for entry lie

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VANCOUVER - A U.S. citizen and anti-war activist has been barred from Canada for two years for lying by omission when she tried to cross the border into Canada the second time in the same day, an adjudicator with the Immigration and Refugee Board ruled Wednesday. But the ruling also made clear that the decision to bar Alison Bodine had nothing to do with her anti-war activities or anti-war literature she had tried to carry into Canada. Marc Tessler said the Immigration Act stipulated that her lack of full disclosure at the border crossing south of Vancouver amounted to "misrepresentation" as defined in the legislation.

Bodine, a 22-year-old resident of Broomfield, Colo., who graduated from the University of British Columbia, had spent the past seven weeks in Canada. She was arrested Sept. 18 after she drove to the border to try to retrieve some of her belongings and anti-war literature that was confiscated as she tried to enter Canada for the second time in the same day Sept. 10. The circumstances of the second entry into Canada was what led to the misrepresentation, the adjudicator said. A few dozen supporters gathered outside the Immigration offices in downtown Vancouver as Tessler outlined the reasons for his decision.

He said Bodine arrived at the Peace Arch crossing south of Vancouver about 2 a.m. Sept. 10 with a vehicle loaded with personal belongings. The border officer said the amount of belonging and her limited funds made it unlikely she only planned to stay for the two months she indicated. She was refused entry and headed south to the small community of Blaine, Wash., where a friend loaded much of her belongings and the anti-war literature into his car.

She returned to the border crossing, said Tessler, and was admitted into Canada but didn't tell the border agent of her earlier attempt to cross. The bulk of her belongings and the anti-war literature were seized when the friend attempted to cross the border.

The adjudicator conceded he was "bewildered" by the earlier opinion of the border agent that she might not leave after two months. He said she had been at UBC for four years and had crossed the border many times. He also said the anti-war literature and her belief that they were what led to her problems had nothing to do with his decision. The adjudicator said that when she went to the border the second time she told the official her car contained only her possessions; she didn't tell the agent that some of her belongings had been transferred to her friend's vehicle. She also said she planned to stay in Canada for two to three days and did not mention her earlier entry refusal, said Tessler. While the initial refusal was "unjustified," the "elements of the allegations of misrepresentation are established," he said in ordering her removal. Outside the building, Bodine spoke to reporters and supporters. "What we have seen is that justice definitely does not come within the courtroom of the same government of Canada that is occupying Afghanistan and that deports immigrants and refugees back to countries where they will be persecuted," she said. She said the adjudicator's decision was based on a "technicality as a way to continue this political targeting against me." She said she did not know when she would be removed from Canada and had not made a decision on whether to appeal the ruling.