

Canada Must Embrace U.S. War Resisters

The defense of American War Resisters, soldiers who refuse to fight in Iraq and come to Canada demanding refugee status, is an important struggle for the antiwar movement and for poor and working people here in Canada, the U.S. and all over the world. When Jeremy Hinzman became the first U.S. soldier to cross the border in 2004 he immediately became a part of the anti-war movement in Canada. He spoke at rallies and forums and made his claim public, highlighting the violation of his rights as a soldier and the gross reality of the U.S.' war and occupation of Iraq.

Most importantly, Hinzman did not stand alone for long, as many others have joined him.

In February 2005 the Canadian Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) denied Hinzman refugee status, but this has not intercepted the flow of U.S. War Resisters into Canada. Since the war on Iraq began, the Pentagon admits that 15,000 soldiers have gone AWOL (Absent Without Leave). Countless numbers (with estimates of between 300 to more than 600) of these soldiers are underground in cities all across Canada or waiting around the border. Approximately 40 to 50 have come forward to file for asylum. It is important that soldiers who refuse to fight in Iraq and Afghanistan be given the space to speak out against these wars. We must defend these soldiers of humanity and fight against their deportations in order to prevent them to be persecuted for their conscientious objection to the war.

U.S. War Resisters in Canada are not silent, but powerful opponents to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. As U.S. soldiers, they have a perspective and voice that no one else can provide; many have fought on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan and have seen destruction, death and the everyday life of people living under occupation. These soldiers' words are deeply human and come directly from poor and working people in the U.S. - people who face intensifying recruitment tactics and monetary incentives as the Army struggles to meet enlistment quotas. Their words come amidst the quagmires in Iraq and Afghanistan; as people who were forced to join the military as the only

means to an education and a viable future.

Darrell Anderson, a soldier who spent seven months in Iraq before returning home on a short leave and seeking refuge in Canada, has participated in numerous anti-war events all over Eastern Canada. He returned to the U.S. in September 2006. "The First steps you take in Baghdad, you realize that there's death and destruction all over the

place. No weapons of mass destruction in sight. We're fighting people that we're supposed to help, but in fact they hate you and every time you walk down the street they shoot at you because you occupy their country. You're asked to get in their houses, in their businesses, block the roads, but you're an occupying power, you're messing up their daily life. You're not a liberator."

Although 64 percent of Canadians are in favour of granting permanent residency to U.S. War Resisters, the Conservative government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper has so far rejected all of the deserters' requests. The soldiers, referred to as "War Resisters" by their supporters, are awaiting review from the country's federal courts to determine their fate.

American War Resisters in Canada not only weaken the occupation forces in Iraq and Afghanistan by refusing to fight, but also provide a strong and necessary voice to the anti-war movement. Youth and students, and poor and working people in Canada must demand full refugee status for War Resisters!

Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO), a Vancouver anti-war coalition, has been active in defending U. S. War Resisters for years now. Please visit www.mawovancouver.org to sign the petition. MAWO also

Supports the War Resister Support Campaign in Canada. To get involved please visit <http://www.resisters.ca/>

We Demand Refugee Status for US War Resisters in Canada Now!
Support and Defend War Resisters!
End the Occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan!

affiliation oppose the Iraq war, and across the country there has been broad support for resisters.

Major national organizations including the United Church of Canada, the Canadian Labour Congress and the Council of Canadians support the campaign, as do prominent Canadians including Bruce Cockburn, Shirley Douglas, David Cronenberg, Ann-Marie MacDonald.

We call on Canadians to send a message to our politicians that U.S. war resisters are welcome here! If they are returned to the US they face punishment for refusing to participate in this illegal war. Due to public outcry Canada did not participate in this war. Your voice can make a difference - together we can win sanctuary for US war resisters.

For more information: www.resisters.ca

MAWO Statement On International Women's Day (IWD) 2009



March 8th marked International Women's Day - a time to celebrate the gains women's have made, and to further advance the rights of our mothers, daughters, sisters and friends around the world. Despite the many achievements women have made, two critical factors are working against women in today's world. These are the new world wide financial and economic recession and depression, which targets especially poor and working class women, as well as the new era of war and occupation we are living in today. These factors are turning back the clock on women's rights, in countries under war and occupation as well as here at home.

In Afghanistan, bringing so called liberation for women was one of the excuses for invasion made by the U.S, Canada and NATO. Yet after 7 years of occupation, life for women in Afghanistan has deteriorated sharply.

From March 2007 to 2008 women faced a 40% increase of domestic violence (United Nations), as well as face the second highest maternal mortality rate in the world. In occupied Iraq, 15% of Iraqi women whose husbands have been killed by war are forced into prostitution to survive, as well as increasing numbers of Iraqi girls are victims of sex trafficking. In a recent Oxfam survey of widows in Iraq, more than 40 percent of respondents said their security situation worsened last year, and 55 percent had been victims of violence since 2003. In Afghanistan, Iraq and Palestine, women have had their most basic right violated - the right to life. In the recent siege by Israeli Zionist forces against Gaza, over 1,300 Palestinians were killed, half of whom were women and children.

With the recent February 29th anniversary of the US/ Canada/France/UN coup in Haiti, it is very apparent that 5 years of occupation has been devastating for women in Haiti. According to a study by the Lancet medical journal, 35,000 women and girls were sexually assaulted in Port-au-Prince during the 22-month period following the coup. Widespread reports tell of UN so-called peacekeepers using prostitutes, raping and sexually abusing women and children in Haiti. In a report released by Save the Children UK in May of 2008, children as young as 6 have been forced to have sex with aid workers and peacekeepers in return

for food and money. This applies not only to Haiti, but also Ivory Coast and Southern Sudan in Africa. The U.S. has opened a new front in this new era of war and occupation in Africa, with UN troops in Sudan who already are known for abuse and rape of women and children, and with U.S. backed Ethiopian troops in Somalia. With U.S. support, the 2006 invasion and occupation of Somalia has resulted in at least 1.3 million people internally displaced, the majority of whom are women and children. Women and children in Somalia still suffer tremendously even after the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops.

Here at home, women also have struggles to fight for rights, equality and justice. Women in Canada still earn, on average, only 72.5 cents for every dollar



a man earns (BC Federation of Labour). The situation for Indigenous women in Canada is much worse - at least five hundred Indigenous women have gone missing or have been murdered across Canada in the last 20 years, and the number of Indigenous women who die as a result of violence is three

times higher than the Canadian average (Health Canada). Yet in 2007 the Government of Canada removed the goal of women's equality from the mandate of the government agency Status of Women Canada, claiming that women in Canada had already achieved equality.

Needless to say, IWD is also celebrated for the achievement and advances that women have made all throughout history. While we recognize the great achievements that women have made all around the world, women are far away from their emancipation not only in advanced industrial countries but more importantly in third world countries. From the Middle East to Africa, from Latin America to Canada, women are still fighting just to survive, while the fight for rights and dignity remains. In the countries under occupation an end to the occupations will put women in a better position to fight for their rights. As women, anti-war activists, and peace loving people, for the rights, dignity and justice of women we must demand an end to all occupations and no to imperialist war!

House Immigration Committee Votes in Favour of Letting U.S. Iraq War Resisters Stay

WAR RESISTERS
SUPPORT CAMPAIGN
www.resisters.ca | 416-598-1222

MEDIA RELEASE
For Immediate Release
Thursday, February 12, 2009

OTTAWA—The House of Commons Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration has again passed a motion calling on the Government of Canada to immediately stop the deportation of all U.S. Iraq War resisters and their immediate family members. Today's motion reaffirms the recommendation that was adopted by Parliament on June 3, 2008: that the government establish a program to facilitate permanent resident status for the war resisters and their families.

Since the motion was adopted by Parliament in June, three Iraq War resisters have been forced back to the U.S. to be punished for their conscientious objection to the illegal war - objections that are notably similar to Canada's refusal to participate in the war, and polls showing that a large majority of Canadians continue to oppose the war.

Robin Long, a former resident of British Columbia who was deported from Canada in July 2008, is now serving a 15-month prison term for being a conscientious

objector. After he was returned to the U.S., he was court-martialed and given a felony conviction that will cause him hardship for the rest of his life - including being unable to visit his Canadian-born son.

"Once again MPs have said stop deporting Iraq war resisters, yet the Harper government continues to ignore the will of Parliament," said Michelle Robidoux, a

spokesperson for the War Resisters Support Campaign. "The majority of Canadians in every region of the country wants these war resisters and their families to be allowed to stay in Canada. We call on Mr. Harper and his government to change course to reflect this fact."

During the English-language leaders' debate in the 2008 general election, Prime Minister Stephen Harper admitted that the Iraq War is "absolutely and error". The majority of Canadians continue to call on the Prime Minister to stop punishing U.S. soldiers for coming to the same conclusion and coming to Canada.

Recently, Immigration Minister Jason Kenney revealed the federal government's blanket opposition to

U.S. Iraq War resisters by labeling them "bogus refugee claimants." The Minister's blatantly prejudicial comment was promptly denounced by Amnesty International and the Canadian Council for Refugees.

About the War Resisters Support Campaign

From the War Resisters Support Campaign

A growing number of people are leaving the U.S. military, refusing to fight in Iraq. Some of them are seeking sanctuary in Canada.

Dozens of U.S. war resisters have applied for refuge in Canada. More are coming every month.

Canada has a history of welcoming war resisters. During the Vietnam war, between 50,000 and 80,000 Americans came here. But today, war resisters face new challenges. Changes in immigration laws have made it more difficult for them to gain asylum.

The War Resisters Support Campaign is calling on the Canadian government to make a provision for U.S. war resisters to have sanctuary in this country. A majority of Canadians regardless of political or religious

END THE OCCUPATIONS OF IRAQ, AFGHANISTAN, PALESTINE, HAITI!

U.S. HANDS OFF IRAN & PAKISTAN!

SELF-DETERMINATION FOR INDIGENOUS NATIONS & ALL OPPRESSED NATIONS!

FUND JOBS & HUMAN NEEDS

NOT WARS, BANKS & BILLIONAIRES!

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

GO OUT U.S.A

Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO)

www.mawovancouver.org



Statements by Cuba, Venezuela, and Bolivia

Three Latin American Governments Condemn Israel's Attack on Gaza

The Revolutionary Government of Cuba has not had diplomatic relations with Israel since 1973, when it broke all ties prior to Israel's brutal invasion of the Golan Heights. It has continued its strong support of the Palestinian people, issuing a statement condemning Israel's siege on Gaza as "the bloodiest attack Israel has ever launched against the Palestinian people," and reiterating "its unswerving solidarity and support for the heroic and long-suffering Palestinian people."

Venezuela followed this important example, expelling its Israeli Ambassador on January 6th and cutting all diplomatic relations with Israel on January 14th. The Venezuelan government also issued a statement emphasizing, "In this tragic and outrageous time, the people of Venezuela express their unequivocal solidarity with the Palestinian people...and affirm that the Venezuelan government will not rest until it sees punishment falling on those responsible for these atrocious crimes."

Bolivia has promised to take Israeli officials, including Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, to the International Criminal Court for "genocide", after also breaking all diplomatic relations with Israel on January 14th. President Evo Morales stated, "The international community cannot allow this genocide in Palestine to go on," and the Bolivian government pledged to work with Venezuela to send food aid to the Gaza Strip.

Venezuela's first aid shipment, containing 12.5 tons of medicine, has already arrived in Egypt.

Astonishing Victory for Palestinians!
Israel's Crushing Defeat in Gaza
mawo 2nd statement - january 22 2009

On December 27, 2008, the government of Israel opened a new era of the genocide of Palestinian people in Gaza. The bloodshed and destruction in Gaza conducted by the Israeli army resulted in the killing of hundreds, the injuring of thousands, and the destruction of thousands of homes, schools, roads and mosques, as well as UN centers where thousands of civilians, including mothers and children, were sheltered. It has now been established all around the world that decades of the indiscriminate, racist killing of innocent Palestinians by the Israeli and United States' ruling elites have caused the Palestinian Holocaust.

Israel has established in Gaza an astonishing and crushing defeat. The simple proof of this is that NONE of the declared goals of Israel's Olmert-Barak-Livni government have been achieved. The Israeli army reached the Mediterranean shore of Gaza only to destroy everything in its path. While the Israeli Zionist regime was busy slaughtering Palestinians, the whole world strongly condemned Israel for this savage aggression. The Israeli government was criticized or condemned by dozens of countries for its cruelty and lack of humanity. The governments of Venezuela and Bolivia expelled the Israeli ambassadors from their countries. The Turkish foreign minister announced before the ceasefire that Israel's foreign minister, Tzipi Livni, was not welcomed in Turkey. Israel has never been so isolated and so abhorrent in the minds of the people of the world as it is today. This is a huge defeat for Israel, which suffered a blow in turning public opinion to its disadvantage, not to mention their political and military defeat.

But the recent ceasefire in Gaza did not bring a favourable situation for Palestinians. Israel still holds part of their army in Gaza, the border crossings are just partially open and only a few goods are permitted through. The Israeli government is continuing the complete blockade of Gaza and is refusing en-

try to independent shipments of aid to Gaza from sea, air and land. Israeli gunboats and artillery are still shelling Gaza randomly, and since the so-called ceasefire they have killed people and damaged dozens of homes. They even refuse to allow medical teams and medicine to regularly get in to Gaza. Enough is enough! The world must take action and demand that the blockade of Gaza be lifted completely and immediately. This blockade, this crime against humanity, will not defeat Palestinians.

Israel attacked Gaza not because Hamas sent rockets to Israel. In fact, Hamas did not renew the six-month ceasefire, which started at the beginning of summer 2008, because from Hamas' point of view, it never existed. The government of Israel did not act upon their commitment to the agreement between themselves and Hamas during the six-month ceasefire. During this time, the Israeli army repeatedly broke the so-called ceasefire by shelling Palestinian homes and infrastructure, killing 17 people and continuing the blockade, even reinforcing it in Gaza. Hamas started sending low-range rockets to Israel and refusing to renew the ceasefire only after the Israeli army killed a family of four Palestinians.

Israel did not have to kill 1,330 people, half of whom are children and their mothers. They did not have to wound more than 5,000 and destroy 5,000 homes, schools and mosques. They did not have to poison the living conditions of Palestinians with depleted uranium (DU) and white phosphorus bombs to stop Hamas rockets. Israel did this after they found that all their measures of intimidation and repression against Hamas and the Palestinians could not affect the Palestinian will of resistance and struggle. In fact, 22 days of ongoing killings and the demolition of Gaza was basically a collective punishment of Palestinians. All the atrocities that the Israeli army committed Gaza were under the leadership

(continued above right)



Protest against Israel's attack on Gaza, Hebron, West Bank, January 6, 2009.

(continued from below)

of Israeli leaders such as Ehud Olmert, Ehud Barak and Tzipi Livni. They certainly undermined the Geneva Human Rights Convention and committed crimes against humanity.

We need to tell the truth about the so-called ceasefire currently in Gaza, because practically there is no real ceasefire. The Israeli army is still shelling Gaza, the border crossings are still closed, combat airplanes are still flying close to earth to create panic and fear, and the blockade of Gaza is still strongly maintained. There are severe shortages of everything: bread, sugar, basic foods, medicine. There is truly a human crisis in Gaza. These are all acts of war. The Israeli government never truly abandoned war on the Gazan population; they are just continuing it in different ways and forms. It is a huge responsibility for the antiwar movement to address this issue by educating, organizing and mobilizing all people against this injustice. Our response must not be just reactive to the events in Gaza or in all of Palestine; rather it must be an ongoing campaign against the Zionist, apartheid regime of Israel. It is easy to here and there pass resolutions to condemn Israel, but the point is to create a mechanism in which millions of people can participate actively to isolate the racist Israeli government. Since the Israeli government has advanced itself to an apartheid-holocaust regime, it must be boycotted. The labour movement and labour unions must refuse to do any service related to Israel. People of the world have a human obligation to stop Israel's madness against the innocent people of Palestine. This holocaust must be ended. This moral cancer must be cured. Long live Palestine!

SELF-DETERMINATION FOR PALESTINE!
RIGHT OF RETURN FOR PALESTINIANS!
STOP GENOCIDE IN PALESTINE!
LIFT THE BLOCKADE ON GAZA!



Above: Women carry Venezuelan and Palestinian flags in a protest against Israeli attack on Gaza. Nablus, West Bank, January 11 2009.



Above: Israeli bombing of the UN-run primary school in Beit Lahia, Gaza with deadly toxin white phosphorus, January 17, 2009.



Above: International Women's Day march in Gaza City. March 8, 2009

U.S./CANADA/NATO
OUT OF
AFGHANISTAN
NOW!

Monthly Picket Action

THURSDAY
APRIL 16
4pm

Canadian Forces
Recruitment Center
620 Royal Avenue
(near 6th Street, beside Douglas College)
New Westminster

Protesters holding signs during a picket action.

Canada Out of Afghanistan!
FOR AN INDEPENDENT PUBLIC INQUIRY
WWW.MAWOVANCOUVER.ORG

Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO)
WWW.MAWOVANCOUVER.ORG

The International
Criminal Court

Logo of the International Criminal Court featuring a scale of justice and a question mark.

A Tool of Justice
or Injustice?

MULTIMEDIA. SPEAKERS. DISCUSSION

Wednesday, April 8th
Joe's Cafe - 6:30pm
Commercial Drive @ William Street

MOBILIZATION AGAINST WAR & OCCUPATION
WWW.MAWOVANCOUVER.ORG

2 more actions:

1. MAWO Antiwar Cultural Night & Fundraiser
SATURDAY April 18 | Doors at 7:30pm | Show at 8:00pm
Taco Loco Restaurant - 2651 Commercial Drive at 11th Avenue
2. MAWO Public Forum
Civil War in Sri Lanka & the Tamil People's Right for Self-Determination
WEDNESDAY April 22 | 6:30 pm
Large North Hall of Joe's Cafe - Commercial Drive at William Street

How Much Do You Know About The Genocide In Gaza?

► As of January 24, 2009:

>> Over 1330 Palestinians have been killed.

>> This is equivalent to 26,600 people in Canada being killed in three weeks.

>> Half of them are women and children.

>> This is equivalent to 13,300 women and children in Canada being killed in three weeks.

>> 265 Palestinian women and 400 children are among them.

>> This is equivalent to 5,300 women and 8,000 children in Canada being killed in three weeks.

>> 100,000 Palestinians are newly homeless.

>> The Israeli army is using white phosphorus, a chemical which causes deadly burns on contact.

>> They are also using depleted uranium bombs, which cause cancer in women and children as well as birth defects.

>> There are 5,500 Palestinian casualties so far.

>> This is equivalent to 110,000 casualties in Canada in three weeks.

>> Israel declared all of Gaza a war zone. 5,000 homes were destroyed and 21,000 badly damaged. 92 mosques were destroyed, 41 completely. Hundreds of hospitals, clinics, and education and cultural institutions were all destroyed or damaged.

>> 53 installations used by the United Nations Relief and Works agency (UNRWA) were damaged or destroyed, including a UN compound in central Gaza City, which ruined thousands of pounds of food aid for the people of Gaza.

>> A coalition of nine Israeli human rights groups, as well as dozens of international human rights organizations believe that the Israeli military is committing war crimes in Gaza.

>> Israeli collective punishment: Up till January 24, 13 Israelis have been killed, against 1330 Palestinians; More than 100 Palestinians have been killed by the Israeli army for each Israeli killed by Hamas.

>> The entire Gaza Strip was turned into a free fire zone with the Israeli army shooting anything that moves. There is no electricity, no water, catastrophic food shortage, and hospitals lack everything. Israel is committing a Palestinian Holocaust.

MAWO Newsletter #21 Created by:
Nita Palmer, Thomas Davies, Ali Yerevani, Janine Solanki, Tamara Hansen, Alison Bodine

Get involved

Image showing a protest with signs.

with MAWO!

Meetings
Wednesdays - 6:30PM
For location, please visit our website:
mawovancouver.org
e. info@mawovancouver.org
t. 604-322-1764
f. 604-322-1763