

From Afghanistan to Vancouver's Downtown Eastside: Stop the War at Home and Abroad!

For seven years the government of Canada has been waging a war in Afghanistan. When this war began in October 2001, the US and Canada declared that this was a war to 'liberate' Afghan people and to bring democracy and human rights to Afghanistan.

As of April 2009, what has this war and occupation of Afghanistan by the US, Canada and NATO brought to Afghan people? Certainly not freedom and democracy. Estimates of the death toll of this war are at 50,000 or more – although there are no official counts, since, according to NATO officials themselves, most of the time the “enemy” casualties are not counted - therefore the number is most likely much higher. The war

**MONEY FOR HOUSING, NOT FOR WAR**

Poverty + Homelessness = war at home

has forced at least 300,000 people to flee their homes for other parts of Afghanistan, and millions more have fled to Pakistan, Iran, or other countries. This makes the Afghan refugee population the largest in the world, even larger than the Palestinian refugee population. Poverty and homelessness has become a painful social ill. Half of the Afghan population lives on less than \$2 a day. The unemployment rate is astonishingly high - almost half of the population is unemployed.

Health care in Afghanistan is in deep crisis. The hospitals which the occupation forces claim to be funding are filthy, understaffed, and the lack of supplies like blankets, oxygen and basic medicines is very apparent. Drug use is also on the rise, with Afghanistan now producing 93% of the world's opium (as compared to 9% before the 2001 invasion).

This is the 'liberation' which Canada has brought to Afghanistan.

But should this really surprise us? After all, the government of Canada has not even succeeded in establishing human rights in within its own border - how could Canada claim can solve problems of any other country? The growing poverty and homelessness crisis in this country is the best proof of that.

War at Home

Across every province and through every town, there are increasing numbers of people living without the basic human right to shelter. It is estimated that 200,000 to 300,000 people in Canada spent this winter without a home – a number so huge that emergency shelters certainly cannot keep up.

Across Canada, Vancouver is the city most known for its homelessness crisis – and with good reason. Homelessness in Vancouver has more than tripled since 2002, and while the Metro Vancouver annual homeless count puts the number of homeless people in the Vancouver area at 2,500, homeless count volunteers report that the number could be more accurately placed at 8,000.

And yet nothing is being done to curb this humanitarian crisis. On the contrary, over the last four months 174 single-room occupancies (SROs – low budget, typically poorly maintained 10'x10' hotel rooms), often the only housing available to

people living on welfare or on low wages - have been closed or converted to more expensive housing. Seventy-six units of social housing have also been closed in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, the poorest postal code in Canada.

The number of homeless people in Canada has increased – but not just people thought of as 'high-risk' – people with mental health or addiction problems, for ex-

ample. People from different walks of life and layers of society are now facing homelessness as well. As more low-income housing is closed, there are whole families – often with one or both parents working – sleeping on friends' couches, in shelters, in tents, or on the streets.

According to Simon Fraser University research scientist Michelle Patterson, “Families are one of the fastest-growing groups showing up at shelters. The reasons for this include a rise in poverty, changing job markets and a lack of affordable housing. Pressures such as cuts to social programs and an ever-tightening rental market also put many families at risk.” (Report: The Faces of Homelessness Across BC)

Today, Canada's homelessness crisis is worse than it was even during the Great Depression of the 1930s. As the worldwide economic crisis deepens, it is going to get even worse. In the last four months, over 400,000 people in Canada have lost their jobs, with no end to the layoffs in sight. This will no doubt put hundreds or thousands more on the streets.

Money for Housing, Not for War!

While the government of Canada is waging a war abroad against poor and working people in Afghanistan, they are also waging a war at home against poor and working people in this country, through cuts to social housing, welfare, and other vital social programs. More than \$11 billion taxpayer dollars have already been spent on the war in Afghanistan. This number is projected to reach \$22 billion – or \$1500 per family in Canada – by 2011. How many people in Canada could be housed with that money? How many could be kept employed? It is not only hypocrisy that Canada is claiming to bring 'democracy and human rights' to Afghanistan while they have not accomplished this task here; it is an outright lie that this war in Afghanistan benefits people here or in Afghanistan.

As peace and justice loving people in this country, we must fight for a dignified life for people here in Canada and in Afghanistan. We must mobilize now to demand funding for housing, jobs, and social programs in this country and end to the illegal, brutal and unjust war in Afghanistan. However, our tasks and human and political obligation cannot end just with a show of protest. Ongoing public education, ongoing public mobilization – all with a coherent and unified method – is required in order to achieve an effective result.

MONEY FOR HOUSING, NOT FOR WAR!  
STOP THE WAR AT HOME AND ABROAD!

Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah: Israel to see another failure in office

Hassan Nasrallah gave speech during a ceremony for the first anniversary of Imad Mugniyah's assassination. Hezbollah's Secretary General says all parties involved in the Israeli elections share the same hostile attitude towards the Muslims. Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah, in a Monday televised speech marking the first anniversary of Imad Mugniyah's assassination, said that “all the Israeli leaders who threaten us were defeated in Lebanon... (Menachem) Begin, (Ariel) Sharon, (Yitzhak) Rabin, (Ehud) Barak, (Benjamin) Netanyahu, (Ehud) Olmert, (Tzipi) Livni were all defeated.” The Hezbollah leader's comments come as Netanyahu, the leader of the right wing Likud party, is likely to form a coalition government



and assume power. Nasrallah went on to say that the outcome of the Gaza war indicates that the Israeli army is not capable of winning a battle. “What happened in Gaza is a military and political failure for Israel.” The Gaza war which lasted for three weeks claimed almost 1,400 Palestinian lives, including women and children, but eventually failed to achieve the objectives Tel Aviv had set at the beginning of the offensive. The Hezbollah leader also warned that any future Israeli government that sought another war against Lebanon would “receive a lesson from the students of Imad Mugniyah.” Imad Mugniyah, the movement's top military commander was killed in a car bomb attack in February 2007, in Damascus. Hezbollah has vowed to avenge the murder, saying all evidence gathered so far indicate the involvement of Israeli spy agency Mossad in the assassination. “Israel is not as mighty as it used to be and the resistance is not as weak as it used to be,” Nasrallah added. He also noted that giving concessions to reach a peace with Israel would not be a viable option because the regime would be emboldened in such a case.

CANADA OUT OF AFGHANISTAN NOW!

FREE PUBLIC FORUM  
multimedia • speakers • discussion

Wednesday May 6  
6:30pm  
Joe's Cafe  
(1150 Commercial Dr)

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION:  
-> the deepening social, economic, and political crisis in Afghanistan  
-> president obama's escalation of war in Afghanistan  
-> expansion of war in Afghanistan to Pakistan  
-> Canada's deepening quagmire in Afghanistan  
-> what next?

organized by mobilization against war & occupation (mawo)  
WWW.MAWOVANCOUVER.ORG

Mobilization Against War & Occupation  
April 25th Antiwar Rally Resolution

**WHEREAS** The Canada, U.S. and NATO occupation of Afghanistan continues with a civilian death toll that rose by 40% in 2008, and over 50,000 Afghan people have been killed in this unjust, criminal war drive. To date Canada's occupation in Afghanistan has cost over 11 billion in taxpayer dollars.

**WHEREAS** U.S. President Obama has decided to send an additional 21,000 U.S. troops to Afghanistan. This war drive has spread over to Pakistan with a U.S. bombing campaign that has killed hundreds of people.

**WHEREAS** The brutal reality of the war in Afghanistan is hitting home, as the 117th soldier, 21 year old Karine Blais, was killed on Monday April 13.

**WHEREAS** Israel's latest attack on Gaza killed over 1,300 innocent Palestinians, half of whom were children and women, and has continued the genocide of Palestinian people with their 22 month blockade on food, fuel and medical supplies into Gaza.

**WHEREAS** Six years of war, bombings, house raids, and the destruction of Iraq at the hands of US, UK and coalition forces has amounted to the death of over 1.2 million Iraqi people.

**WHEREAS** the U.S. is continuing their threats of war on Iran with a massive military build-up in the Persian Gulf, an ongoing propaganda campaign against Iran and threats of an even more severe campaign of sanctions in addition to the three sets of UN sanctions and European Union sanctions currently imposed on the people of Iran.

**WHEREAS** after two months of the 5th anniversary of the Canada, U.S. and France invasion of Haiti, where they overthrew the democratically elected President, Jean- Bertrand Aristide, today nearly 10,000 UN troops are still occupying, plundering and killing people in Haiti.

**WHEREAS** In the Sri Lankan Government's military campaign against the Tamil people, the



UN estimates that the 6,500 Tamil people have been killed, 13,000 wounded and more than 200,000 have been dislocated in the last three months.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** That we, as women, elders, youth, people of color, Indigenous people, poor, working and oppressed people, stand united with our brothers and sisters around the world to have these demands met immediately.

That we demand an end to the wars and occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the ongoing threats of war against the people of Iran and that above all their self-determination and sovereignty be respected.

That we support fully the self-determination of the Palestinian people and an end to the 61 year occupation of Palestine and the current Israeli criminal blockade of Gaza.

That we support the Tamil people's human and democratic right to self-determination.

That the Sri Lankan government must stop the war and genocide of the Tamil

people.

That the Sri Lankan government accepts a cease-fire immediately.

That all Tamil Leaders and detainees be released from military detention immediately.

That the Sri Lankan government lift the blockade on the Tamil areas and let all media and aid agencies access the people trapped in the war zone.

That the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) be removed from Canadian and U.S. governmental lists of terrorist organizations.

That Canada, U.S. and all countries open the door unconditionally to all Tamil refugees.

Self Determination for All Oppressed Nations!

TO GET INVOLVED IN ORGANIZING AROUND POVERTY AND HOMELESSNESS IN VANCOUVER, CONTACT:

Citywide Housing Coalition **CHC**

www.citywidehousingcoalition.org  
info@citywidehousingcoalition.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 unwavering 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 entry 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 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!

# 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."

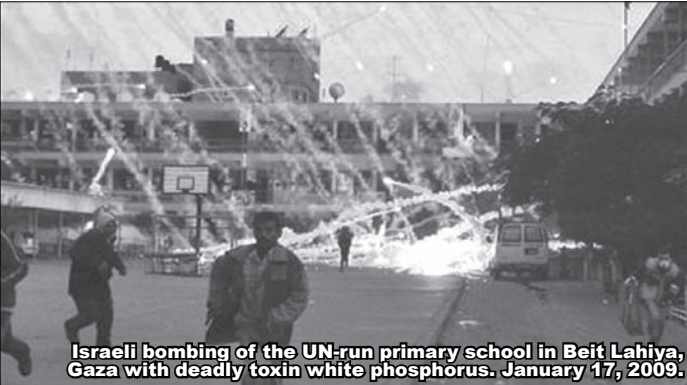
Although 64 percent of Canadians are in favour of granting permanent residency to U.S. War Resisters, the Conservative government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper has so far rejected all of the deserters' requests. The soldiers, referred to as "War Resisters" by their supporters, are awaiting review 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](http://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!





**OBAMA GO HOME**

**End the Occupations of Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, Haiti & Tamil Eelam!**

**U.S. Hands Off Iran & Pakistan!**

**Self-Determination for Indigenous Nations, Tamils & All Oppressed Nations!**

**Stop Sri Lankan Government's War on the Tamil People!**

**May 23rd Saturday 2pm**

**Vancouver Art Gallery (Robson st. Side )**

**Mobilization Against War & Occupation**

**[www.mawovancouver.org](http://www.mawovancouver.org)**



**YANKEE GO HOME**

**Get involved**

**with MAWO!**

**Meetings**  
**Wednesdays - 6:30PM**  
**For location, please visit our website:**  
**[mawovancouver.org](http://mawovancouver.org)**  
**e. [info@mawovancouver.org](mailto:info@mawovancouver.org)**  
**t. 604-322-1764**  
**f. 604-322-1763**