

# WAR RESISTERS SUPPORT CAMPAIGN

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MEDIA RELEASE

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## **Moms and Kids Urge Harper, Kenney “Let Them Stay” on Iraq War Resisters**

**Toronto**—A room full of more than 75 friends and neighbours surrounded American Iraq War resisters in Toronto today at an event to symbolise Canadians’ concern that they would soon be unjustly punished by the Canadian government.

Moms and tots who have come to know Kim Rivera and her three young children, and the co-volunteers who have come to depend on Dean Walcott, turned out in force to urge the Government of Canada to help ensure Canadian sensibilities prevail in their cases. The two stand to be deported next week as part of a rash of hurried exits seemingly coordinated by the Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism.

“Knowing her I understand completely how Kim had to leave the horror of things in Iraq,” said Allison Sommer, whose family housed the Riveras when they first arrived in Canada. “I would have done the same if I had learned what she did.”

The House of Commons voted on June 3, 2008 to recognise as legitimate a special category of potential immigrants who are conscientious objectors from wars not sanctioned by the United Nations, and to stop removal or deportation until they have been so considered.

“The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and the Prime Minister have an obligation to apply the perspective of Parliament and of Canadians in this matter” said Parkdale-High Park Member of Parliament Gerard Kennedy. “In the interest of fairness, they should immediately suspend the scheduled removals pending the full outcome of related hearings that are taking place in the next several weeks.”

Though Parliament has expressed that its preference is for war resisters to be allowed to stay immediately, the federal government has so far refused to act on the recommendation of the House of Commons. The Federal Court has decided to review the humanitarian and compassionate grounds decisions for two other war resisters, Jeremy Hinzman and Matt Lowell, and those cases—though potentially precedent-setting—aren’t expected to begin until February and March.

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