

WAR RESISTERS SUPPORT CAMPAIGN

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Harper Government Sends Another War Resister to Jail in U.S.

Canadians Call for Immediate Implementation of House of Commons Motion

OTTAWA—U.S. Iraq War resister Cliff Cornell was arrested on Wednesday after crossing the border into the United States. Acting against the will of Canadians and the direction of Parliament, Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Minister Jason Kenney and Prime Minister Stephen Harper refused to intervene in Cliff's case, preventing him from staying in Canada.

Cliff was prepared to comply fully with U.S. laws and turn himself in to his former unit at Fort Stewart, Georgia, but he was arrested by U.S. border police and is being held at Whatcom County Jail in Bellingham, Washington. He now faces court martial and jail time, which because he refused to participate in the illegal and immoral war in Iraq.

Until this week, Cliff had been living on Gabriola Island, British Columbia where he had earned the admiration and support of his community during the four years he lived in Canada. Residents had been calling and writing to Conservative MPs in a last-ditch effort to keep Cliff "at home".

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

"Canadians are outraged that the Harper government continues to ignore the June 2008 House of Commons motion which calls for a halt to deportation proceedings against all U.S. Iraq War resisters," said Michelle Robidoux, Organiser of 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."

To mark the beginning of the new session of Parliament last week, more than 50 prominent Canadians sent an open letter to Prime Minister Harper and Minister Kenney, urging them to implement the June 3, 2008 motion which recommended that the Government of Canada establish a program to facilitate permanent residence for all U.S. Iraq War resisters and their immediate family members.

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