

WAR RESISTERS SUPPORT CAMPAIGN

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MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Thursday, February 12, 2009

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

Harper Government Must Act on the Will of Canadian Majority and MPs

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 labelling them “bogus refugee claimants.” The Minister's blatantly prejudicial comment was promptly denounced by Amnesty International and the Canadian Council for Refugees.

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