

Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Diane Finley  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 1L1  
CANADA

Subject: LET U.S.A. WAR RESISTERS STAY IN CANADA

Dear Ms.Finley,

I am writing to ask you to make a provision for sanctuary for the scores of U.S. military service members currently in Canada, most of whom have traveled to your country in order to resist fighting in the war on Iraq.

Between 1965 and 1973, 50,000 Americans were able to take refuge in Canada when resisting to fight the war on Vietnam.

Today Canada again faces the choice of whether to give refuge to resisters of an unjust war. Since immigrating to Canada has become much harder now, war resisters are seeking refugee status in accord with United Nations guidelines:

„Soldiers who refuse to fight in wars that are widely condemned by the international community as contrary to standards of human conduct should be considered as refugees.“

The Canadian Refugee Board, however, has refused to hear arguments that the war in Iraq is illegal, and it continues to reject these claims.

The first two U.S. objectors to apply, Jeremy Hinzman and Brandon Hughey, were recently denied a hearing on their appeal by the Supreme Court of Canada. For more information, see:

<http://www.couragetoresist.org/x/content/view/426/99/> and  
[http://www.resisters.ca/resisters\\_stories.html](http://www.resisters.ca/resisters_stories.html)

Robin Long nearly became the first war resister to be deported. We are thankful that Canadian immigration officials have put his deportation on hold. However, he and other U.S. war resisters still face deportation—even before a decision by the Supreme Court of Canada.

Regardless of the decisions of the Refugee Board or the courts, the Canadian government should not become party to the persecution of war resisters. If forced back to the U.S., soldiers of conscience face years of incarceration and stigmatizing discharges. Although unlikely, even the death penalty remains a possible penalty for desertion in wartime under the U.S. military's Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Nearly two of three Canadians are in favor of U.S. war resisters being allowed to stay according to a recent poll, and of course many wonderful Canadians have opened their homes to resisters from the U.S.A.. Please continue Canada's rich tradition of being a refuge from militarism.

I ask that the Canadian government demonstrate its commitment to international law.  
I seek your assurance that U.S. war resisters will not be forced to leave Canada.

Sincerely,