



VETERANS FOR PEACE

NATIONAL OFFICE: 216 S. Meramec Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63105
PHONE: (314) 725-6005 FAX: (314) 725-7103 E-MAIL: vfp@veteransforpeace.net

Happy Thanksgiving, Canada! Thank you for supporting U.S. war resisters!

We are writing you on behalf of the 7,000 U.S. veterans who are members of Veterans For Peace. We are veterans of World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War and even the current war in Iraq. We are writing to give our thanks to you and to encourage you.

NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Elliott Adams
President

Sharon Kufeldt
Vice-President

Kenneth Mayers
Treasurer

Gary May
Secretary

Ellen Barfield

Thomas Brinson

William Collins

Mike Ferner

Anita Foster

Patrick McCann

Eli PaintedCrow

Michael Uhl

John Varone

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Michael T.
McPhearson

Thank you, Canada, for providing a safe haven for young American men and women who, although they were in the military, decided they could not in good conscience participate in the illegal and immoral U.S. war and occupation of Iraq.

This U.S. war in Iraq was not sanctioned by the United Nations, which was one reason Canada decided not to join George Bush's "coalition of the willing." It is now widely known that this tragic war was unnecessary, and based on lies. It is not about "eliminating weapons of mass destruction" or "establishing democracy in the Middle East." It is an ill-conceived attempt by discredited neo-conservatives in the U.S. to dominate the Middle East and control the flow of oil.

As a direct result of this war, the infrastructure of Iraq has been destroyed, along with its healthcare system. Over one million Iraqis are dead and millions more have become refugees. It is now well-documented that the U.S. military has committed many war crimes against the Iraqi people, including the systematic use of torture and the widespread killing of civilians.

U.S. soldiers who refuse to participate in this war have shown great moral courage. Unlike many governments around the world, these citizen soldiers are respecting international law while following their own consciences. Many of them have been to Iraq, where they witnessed war crimes with their own eyes and were sickened by the racist attitudes that the U.S. military fostered toward the Iraqi people. Some of these veterans are now struggling with the psychological wounds of war. The last thing they need is to be returned to war. Nor should they be treated like criminals because they refuse to kill.

So it is from the bottom of our hearts that we thank the many Canadians who have sheltered our war resisters. You have provided them with homes, with food, with friendship, and with legal and political support.

Working Together For Peace and Justice since 1985



VETERANS FOR PEACE

NATIONAL OFFICE: 216 S. Meramec Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63105
PHONE: (314) 725-6005 **FAX:** (314) 725-7103 **E-MAIL:** vfp@veteransforpeace.net

We especially thank the many Canadian unions, churches, artists and activists who make up the *War Resisters Support Campaign*, which has worked so hard for over four years to convince the Canadian government to do the right thing and grant sanctuary to these conscientious objectors.

We in Veterans For Peace were delighted on June 3 when we heard the news that your House of Commons had voted Yes on a motion calling on the government to halt all deportation proceedings against war resisters and to allow them to immigrate to Canada. In fact, the president of Veterans For Peace traveled to Ottawa to be in the House of Commons for this historic vote.

But thousands of U.S. veterans were shocked when, just one month later, your government defied the will of Parliament and deported a U.S. war resister, Robin Long. Agents of the Canadian Border Services Agency handed Long over to U.S. authorities with the words, "Here – we've got a deserter for you." The U.S. Army promptly convicted Robin Long of desertion and sentenced him to fifteen months in prison and a dishonorable discharge. After he finishes serving his prison sentence, Long will be treated like a felon, and will not even be allowed into Canada to visit his Canadian son.

Such a fate also awaits U.S. war resisters Jeremy Hinzman, Patrick Hart and Kimberly Rivera, who are all married with young children. Deporting these war resisters to certain imprisonment in the U.S. would rob their children of their father or mother, causing irreparable harm to entire families.

We wish all Canadians a happy Thanksgiving and a good election. May this be a special time for you and your families. We understand that after celebrating this holiday, you will be electing a new government. We ask you to think about our young war resisters when you cast your vote. And we hope that whatever political party wins this election will respect the will of Canadians.

We give thanks to the Canadian people and Parliament for the courage and compassion you have shown our young veterans and war resisters. We will be forever grateful to you.

Sincerely,

Elliott Adams, President
Veterans For Peace