

Refusing to Fight: Canadians Supporting US War Deserters

Global Research News Hour Episode 51

By [Michael Welch](#)

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Canada: A Refuge from Militarism?



January 2014 marks the ten year anniversary since [Jeremy Hinzman](#), US soldier with the 82nd Airborne Division, having deserted his battalion, crossed the border into Canada and sought refuge from a war he could not legally or morally participate in.

In so doing, he became the first modern day US War Resister to seek asylum in Canada.

Others followed.

Brandon Hughey, David Sanders, Joshua Key, Kim Rivera, and ultimately more than two dozen others followed suit. All publicly declared their conscientious opposition to the US war agenda, particularly the conflict in Iraq.

This is not including the more than one hundred who may have crossed over

unacknowledged.

Given the unpopularity of the Iraq War, especially in Canada, one would think there would be significant support for these military personnel who sacrificed their careers, their families and their reputations for an unknown future in a foreign country.

However, the experience of today's war resisters indicates otherwise.

The current Conservative government in Canada seems anything but accommodating of US military deserters, regardless of the questionable legality of the conflicts they were ordered to participate in.

To date, at least three of these former military personnel, including young mother Kimberley Rivera, have been sent back to the US to serve lengthy prison sentences.

Those still in Canada live with considerable uncertainty about when and if their number may be up.

Joshua Key is the author of [*The Deserter's Tale: The Story of an Ordinary Soldier Who Walked Away from the War in Iraq*](#). He has had to deal with poor revenue from his book sales, a complete inability to raise money through paid work or social assistance, health concerns and recently, an unfair eviction from his home in Southern Saskatchewan. He brings his family's ordeal to light in the first half hour.

This interview is followed by the perspective of Vietnam era draft evader **Howard Davidson**. He explains the critical similarities and differences between the GI Resister movement today and its Vietnam era counterpart.

Finally, **Michelle Robidoux** of the [War Resisters Support Campaign](#) explains how the modern War Resister movement in Canada got off the ground ten years ago, outlines critical victories and defeats in the campaign, and lays out concrete actions Canadians can take to show solidarity with these American men and women during [Let Them Stay Week](#).

From the article ["We the People Refuse to Fight": Abandon the Battlefield!](#)

By Michel Chossudovsky,

Disobey unlawful orders! Abandon the battlefield! ...

Refuse to fight in a war which blatantly violates international law and the US Constitution!

But this is not a choice which enlisted men and women can make individually.

It is a collective and societal choice, which requires an organizational structure.

Across the land in the US, Britain, Canada and in all coalition countries, the anti-war movement must assist enlisted men and women to make that moral choice possible, to abandon the battlefield in Iraq and Afghanistan.

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