



Mid Island War Resisters' Support Campaign Newsletter



War Resisters' Benefit Concert

Featuring

Tim Richard (baritone) with Devon Joiner (piano)

Rachel Kiyu Iwaasa (piano)

St. Andrew's Church (Wesley St)
Sunday afternoon, April 30th 2:30 p.m.

Suggested Donation: \$10.

This concert is a joint fundraiser for the church and for the War Resisters Support group.

Update on Local War Resisters

Our two war resisters on Gabriola, Joshua Key, his wife Brandi and their 4 children, and Cliff Cornell are doing much better now that spring is here and there is more work for them. Josh had his hearing at the refugee board in Toronto on March 30. It went quite well as the judge was quite sympathetic and allowed him to speak of the illegality of the war and of the atrocities he had seen performed by US soldiers.

Some time in May his lawyer, Jeffrey House will go to the board to further Josh's plea.

Cliff Cornell leaves on Tuesday, May 2nd for Toronto and has his hearing on May 4th. We hope he has success.

Both Josh and Tim Richard of Nanaimo spoke at rallies on Vancouver Island on March 18 and also at the Nanaimo Labour Council Meeting.

Last week Josh spoke to 3 classes of senior students at Dover Bay School. He was able to give them a taste of the reality of war. He is doing a great job speaking forthrightly and honestly.

Military Mom Speaks Out!

CINDY SHEEHAN
in Vancouver

Saturday May 6, 2006 7:30 pm
Shaughnessy Heights United Church
1550 West 33rd Ave (near Granville)

Tickets \$10 (sliding scale)
call: 778-837-1475

As a mother looking for answers to her son's death in Iraq, Cindy has become a beacon for many in the struggle to end the illegal occupation of Iraq.

Join Cindy and the War Resisters to build a stronger opposition to war and occupation.

One UK Resister Gets Honourable Discharge while another goes to Jail

"I did not join the British Army to conduct American foreign policy," said British soldier Ben Griffin, a member of the Special Air Services (SAS) - Britain's elite commando force. Griffin has resigned from the army in disgust after witnessing "dozens of illegal acts" by American troops, claiming they viewed all Iraqi's as "untermenschen"-the Nazi term for races regarded as sub-human.

Griffin is no ordinary soldier. The SAS is the British equivalent of Canada's JTF2, America's Delta Force, Green Berets and Special Forces. In World War II parlance these groups were known as commandos, they operate behind enemy lines destroying selected targets and gaining intelligence. They are trained to kill and no trick is too dirty in getting the job done.

Griffin is the first SAS member to resign in protest. The fact that he does makes one wonder about the nature of the atrocities he has seen, for the very essence of these commandos is their mental and physical toughness and their willingness to be absolutely ruthless. He has been granted an honourable discharge; no doubt because the British government wants to dodge the publicity that a court martial would generate.

However, War Resisters' International is very concerned about the sentencing of British conscientious objector Flight Lieutenant Malcolm Kendall-Smith (UK14787). The RAF

doctor refused to serve in Iraq because he believed the war to be illegal. He was jailed for eight months on 13 April 2006.

According to a report in The Independent of 14 April 2006, bitter accusations and recriminations dominated the trial, which took place at Aldershot barracks. At an earlier hearing, Assistant Judge Advocate Jack Bayliss had ruled the doctor could not use the defence that in refusing military orders he had acted according to his conscience.

Judge Advocate Bayliss also refused to allow the defence to call as witnesses, among others, Ben Griffin, a member of the SAS who resigned from the Army because he believed the Iraq war was illegal and who refused to serve alongside US forces because of the excesses they committed. Also barred was an Iraqi doctor who had flown to Britain to describe his experience of what has happened to the country following the invasion.

It took the military jury of five RAF officers just one hour and 28 minutes to find Kendall-Smith guilty on all five charges of disobeying orders.

The sentence was intended to make an example of him and serve as a warning to others in the forces.

WAR RESISTERS' SUPPORT CAMPAIGN FINANCIAL REPORT, April 24, 2006.

November, December, January	
Income: Donations and Pledges:	\$6,020
Expenses: Rent and Supplies	\$5,295
Available February 1	\$ 725
February, March, April (to 24 th)	
Income: Donations and Pledges	
February	\$1,872
March	\$1,445
April (to 24 th)	\$1,000
Total	\$5,042
Expenditure	
February, rent & supplies	\$1,582
March, rent & supplies	\$ 875
April (to 24 th)	\$ 953
Total	\$3,410
Currently available	\$1,632
Pledges: May	\$ 825
June	\$ 700

The fundraising concert April 30 and individual donations from generous people allow us to keep going. We will encourage donors to keep up their help and will ask for more ongoing pledges.

We offer a hearty THANK YOU to support groups in Victoria and Ontario who have also provided assistance to local resisters helping with dental expenses and transportation etc.
Al Stewart

March 18th Peace Events

Local War Resisters participated in the world wide Day of Peace on March 18th by attending a rally in Comox and a HipHop for Peace event in downtown Nanaimo.

Elsewhere on the planet, people gathered in their own communities. We were able to find participation figures for the following events:

Budapest: 4,000 people, Calgary: 150, Chicago: 7,000, Columbus, Ohio: 800-1,500, Concord, New Hampshire: 300, Copenhagen, Denmark: 2,000, Istanbul: 5000, Kansas City: 800, Kuala Lumpur: 600, London: 15,000-80,000, Milwaukee: 100s, Montreal: 700, New Haven, Ct: 100s, New York City: 1000s, Ottawa: 500-1,000, Perth: 1000, Portland, Oregon: 10,000, Rome: 1000s, Salt Lake City: 200, San Rafael, Calif.: 100, San Francisco: 10,000. Seoul: 1,000, Stockholm: 1000, Sydney: 500, Tokyo: 3,000, Toronto: 1000, Traverse City, Mich.: 200, Walnut Creek: 3,000, West Palm Beach: 75.

Canada & Afghanistan

A recent article in the Toronto Star notes that "After repeatedly saying that the Canadian contingent in Kandahar is part of a "multinational, NATO-led, United Nations-backed mission," both the government and the opposition Liberals came clean that our soldiers are indeed under U.S. command, carrying out a U.S. mission."

The web site of our Department of National "Defence" is clear that our force is there as part of Operation Enduring Freedom, begun by the US in 2001. Operation Enduring Freedom was later endorsed by the UN under article 51, which gives every UN member the right to act in its own defence, in the chaotic political environment following the 9/11 attack. There was no invasion or attack on the U.S. by the Afghanistan nation or government. The US invaded Afghanistan in search of Osama Bin Laden.

Afghanistan is now Canada's largest recipient of bilateral, or country-to-country "aid". \$656.5 million is allocated between 2001 and 2009.

The Canadian International Development Agency says "Our development assistance is part of a coordinated, long-term approach that brings together three arms of Canadian foreign policy: diplomacy, defence, and development".

So, we are delivering aid to Afghanistan while in a combat role under the command of the nation which installed the government of Hamid Karzai. The northern warlords maintain a rule of terror and increase the drug trade. The Taliban usurped by Karzai are strong in the south, and wage mountain guerilla tactics where Canada's force is deploying.

As Alexa McDonough, NDP, pointed out, "The role of the Canadian military should be to provide security and protection for Afghan civilians rather than blending a



Josh speaking at the May 18th peace rally in the Library Square (photo credit A. Buttrick)

Update On Tim Richard

Here is a chance to get to know Tim Richard, one of our Nanaimo war resisters a little better. Tim is one of the featured musicians in Sundays concert.

Tim received his training in Choral Conducting and Vocal Performance from the University of Northern Iowa, specializing in both music education and solo performance. While there, Tim participated in 4 different top-tier ensembles, and through various opportunities, conducted other UNI choirs. In addition, he worked with area high schools and with music teachers to help improve the quality of vocal development in the local area.

Currently Mr. Richard teaches voice privately in Nanaimo and caters to people of all ages and backgrounds. Active in the Nanaimo music community, he sings in local choirs and gives numerous solo performances, often for charitable causes. Mr. Richard looks forward to teaching a new summer singing workshop, *The Summer Of Song* at St. Andrew's United Church in July, as well as continuing his work and education in Nanaimo and other venues across Canada.

Tim is in the process of applying to a University in Ontario for the fall. Through a Nanaimo contact he has already found housing and a teacher to work with. We wish him great success in the completion of his music degree.

combat role with development and reconstruction. The assistance needs to be delivered by Afghans and Afghan civil society, with support from international agencies, and security provided by military who are not involved in aggressive combat roles."

What Is a War Resister?

War Resisters' International (WRI), founded in 1921, based in England, opposes all war, whether "waged by a state, by a 'liberation army', or under the auspices of the United Nations, even if it is called a 'humanitarian military intervention.'" WRI co-ordinates 15 May - International Conscientious Objectors' Day and 1 December - Prisoners for Peace Day. The WRI program "Refuse to Kill" endorses "Support for asylum seekers and their lawyers, in cases of draft evasion, desertion, conscientious objection and other cases related to military service." International Conscientious Objectors' Day 2006 will focus on the situation of US COs and GIs who want to leave the US military.

The War Resisters' Support group in Nanaimo (WRS) is a project of United for Peace and Justice, Nanaimo, formed in resistance to the US invasion of Iraq. WRS takes the position that individuals leaving the US army, National Guard and any other group subject to deployment in Iraq deserve our support and respect. WRS fundraises for necessities such as rent, medical bills and groceries for the three resisters in our area, including a family with four small children. A growing number of local citizens pay monthly pledges to our Credit Union account.

WRS has incorporated WRI's internationally-recognised symbol, the broken rifle, into its logo.

WRS maintains liaison with support groups in Toronto, Victoria and Vancouver, supports their advocacy work and appreciates the financial help they provide for transportation of war resisters to official hearings

So, What IS a War Resister?

A war resister is a person who has made a decision of conscience to resist compliance with war and to strive for the removal of all causes of war.

Karen Kwiatkowski, retired senior Pentagon officer, responded to the question "Why Do We Fight?" in the movie of that name with the suggestion that people fight because they do not have the courage to say they will not. Buffy Saint-Marie's profound lyrics for "Universal Soldier" put the same question.

WRS in Nanaimo believes that those with the courage to leave the US military rather than go to kill and destroy in Iraq have made heroic decisions and we will support those in our area as best we can.

How to help

Deposit directly to the War Resisters' Support account at any branch of the Coastal Community Credit Union OR

Send cheques to that account c/o 7516C Lantzville Road, Lantzville, BC, V0R 2H0

Financial statements are available on request.

LET THEM STAY! PLEDGE FORM

I pledge WRS to pay:

\$10 \$20 \$30 \$40 \$50 Other monthly amount: \$_____ for a total of

2 3 4 5 6 months.

I enclose I will send a series of post-dated cheques to

WRS, c/o 7516C Lantzville Road, Lantzville, BC V0R 2H0.

or, I prefer to make a one time payment of \$_____

(Make cheques payable to WRS or War Resisters Support.)

Name: _____ Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Mailing address: _____

Please Note:

(1) You may change or cancel your payments at any time by sending written notice to WRS, c/o 7516C Lantzville Road, Lantzville, BC V0R 2H0

(2) We are not a Registered Charity so your receipts will not be good for Income Tax deductions