

COURAGE TO RESIST

WHO WE ARE, WHAT WE DO

In the past few years, tens of thousands of service members have resisted illegal war and occupation in a number of different ways—by going AWOL, seeking conscientious objector status and/or a discharge, asserting the right to speak out against injustice from within the military, and for a relative few, publicly refusing to fight.

While there are those who would like to dismiss war resisters as “cowards,” the reality is that it takes exceptional courage to resist unjust, illegal, and/or immoral orders. For many resisters, it was their first-hand experiences as occupation troops that compelled them to take a stand. For others, “doing the right thing” and acting out of conscience began to outweigh their military training in obedience.

Although the efforts of Courage to Resist are primarily focused on supporting public GI resisters, the organization also strives to provide political, emotional, and material support to all military objectors critical of our government’s current policies of empire. As a grassroots project with limited resources, Courage to Resist nevertheless has a record of successfully working with many resisters and their families in raising the needed funds for civilian legal representation as well as public education campaigns.

Courage to Resist believes in “informed resistance.” It’s important for service members contemplating public resistance to have a basic understanding of both the benefits and consequences of doing so, particularly in the context of the very arbitrary military discipline and justice systems.

Those who decide to resist while in the military have powerful stories to tell about how they came to the decision to take a stand. Courage to Resist makes a special effort to work with resisters to tell their stories, in their own words and from their own unique perspectives. We publish those stories on our website, as well as arrange media interviews and public speaking engagements.

We consider all correspondence with military service members confidential. Unless an individual’s resistance is already a matter of public record, we will not publish information about a service member without his or her expressed and informed consent. Service members should not feel that they have to be ready to “go public” before contacting us.



Courage to Resist is autonomous from and independent of any political organization, party, or group. While we collaborate and share resources, and exist within a very broad anti-war/peace community, our collective members represent only Courage to Resist in our decision-making processes. This allows us to help coordinate broad political support for resisters, while keeping the needs and objectives of specific resisters at the forefront of our efforts.

Courage to Resist is not a member organization of the GI Rights Hotline, although many of our supporters are Hotline counselors. We often refer service members to the Hotline for information about specific military regulations and practices—or just for a second opinion. To contact the GI Rights Hotline toll-free in the United States, call 877-447-4487. From Germany, call 06223-47506. From other locations overseas, call (U.S.) 415-487-2635. On the web, go to: www.girightshotline.org

Courage to Resist is a group of concerned community members, veterans, and military families. Our office, and most of our decision-making “organizing collective” members are based in the San Francisco Bay Area, with other members mostly on the West Coast. However, we do not limit our efforts to service members only within our geographic area.

Courage to Resist is motivated by a “people power” strategy that we believe can weaken the pillars that maintain war and occupation in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. By supporting GI resistance, counter-recruitment, and draft resistance, we hope to diminish the number of troops available for unjust war and occupation.

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