Draft registration law ruled unconstitutional... What next?

By Courage to Resist. December 1, 2019

Back in February 2019, a Federal District Court judge ruled that the current requirement for men, but not women, to register with the Selective Service System for a future military draft was unconstitutional. This means that Congress will have to make a choice: Either expand the system to women, or end it altogether.

As women are now eligible for all military service roles, including combat positions, there’s no longer a gender-based rationale for the historical restrictions on women in the military that justified past discrimination.

Courage to Resist supporter, and a long time anti-draft registration activist, Edward Hasbouck, explains:

“It was precisely because a decision, like this one, had become a foregone conclusion that, in 2016, Congress debated whether to end draft registration entirely or extend it to young women as well as young men. In late 2016, after the Presidential election, the lame-duck Congress decided to postpone its decision and instead appoint the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service to study the issue. But it has been, and remains, obvious to everyone following the issue that eventually Congress will either have to resolve the issue or allow it to be continued on back (pg. 4)

Recording GI Resistance: A Vietnam Era podcast

By Courage to Resist. December 1, 2019

It’s been 50 years since some of the most important GI resistance actions against the US war in Vietnam. To mark the high point of the Vietnam Era GI resistance movement, Courage to Resist has been producing a podcast series in collaboration with the Vietnam Full Disclosure effort of Veterans For Peace.

So far, we’ve released nearly 30 professionally recorded, first-hand, riveting accounts from resisters! The stories include heroes who resisted in Vietnam, afterwards, refused to go altogether, sought refuge abroad and even the first-hand account of a ship mutiny!


We hope that you’ll listen and share!
Al Glatkowski

In March of 1970, Al Glatkowski and his associate, Clyde McKay, did something unique in modern US History. As an act of protest, the sailors seized the SS Columbia Eagle, a merchant vessel under contract to the US government to take napalm to US Air Force bases in Thailand for Vietnam bombing missions.

This is the first time Al Glatkowski has publicly spoken about what happened nearly 50 years ago.

“We were weighing out the destruction that these bombs would do on humans. We knew that we were causing more suffering, and we had a chance to actually stand up against it. We honestly believed that our lives were worth less than the lives of all the people that would be affected, as well as the environmental destruction that would be affected. Being sailors and transporting these weapons, it just made it all the more real for us. You can't have a war without us…. Our goal was to save as many lives as possible, and if it meant losing ours in the process, so be it.”

Susan Schnall

While on active duty, Lt. Susan Schnall dropped antiwar leaflets over five military installations and an aircraft carrier from a small plane, held a press conference, and lead a mass peace march while in uniform. She’s been resisting war ever since.

“It became more and more obvious to me as I took care of these guys and physically got them better that I couldn’t heal them psychologically, and I certainly couldn’t heal their souls. And I thought, “I’ve become a part of the military. I need to do something about this, and we need to end this war.”

Ahmad Daniels

As a black serviceman in the 1960s, Ahmad Daniels was quickly disillusioned to fight for a country that considered him to be a second-class citizen. The military sentenced him to 10 years in prison for speaking to other servicemen about the injustices he saw and questioning military authority.

“There was one time they told us to go up this hill. About 10 of us. We went up to the top of the hill and we started dancing. We started boogalooing. Doing the twist and everything. So again, they said, ‘That must be Daniels. He must be the one who's getting people to do all that.' So they saw me as a threat … MPs, military police, came. Handcuffs. Took us to the commanding general. Finally got a chance to see him, right? And he read off a charge sheet. He said in essence we had violated the 1940 Smith Act, which made it a crime to counsel, urge, cause, and attempt to cause insubordination and refusal of duty. To the brig we go. … So after five or six days' court martial, they sentenced me to 10 years.”

Legacy giving

As you are making out your will, please consider a bequest to “Courage to Resist / Church of Conscious Objection.” For more information about bequest language in your estate plans, please give us a call: 510-488-3559.

Free Chelsea Manning (again): WikiLeaks Grand Jury Resister

By Courage to Resist. November 15, 2019

Chelsea Manning remains incarcerated for refusing to testify before a federal grand jury about events related to her 2010 disclosures. On August 5, 2019, Judge Anthony Trenga denied Chelsea’s “Motion to Reconsider Sanctions”, imposed after he found her in civil contempt of court.

“I can – without any hesitation – state that nothing will convince me to testify before this or any other grand jury for that matter," Chelsea shared from jail.

The judge is currently fining Chelsea $1,000 per day for her refusal to collaborate with the case against Julian Assange. Despite the fact that Chelsea is currently deeply in debt, and can’t work while jailed, Judge Trenga concluded that his fines are “coercive”, and not “punitive”, which wouldn’t be allowed. Chelsea will remain jailed until August, 2020 at the Alexandria, Virginia jail. She’ll owe the government a total of $441,000 in fines when she’s finally released.

Write to Chelsea today

Chelsea Elizabeth Manning, A0181426
William Truesdale Adult Detention Center
2001 Mill Road
Alexandria, VA 22314

She can NOT accept books or cards. She can receive letters, as well as newspapers.
Drone veteran turned activist Daniel Hale facing 50 years for whistleblowing

By Courage to Resist. December 1, 2019

Daniel Hale, an Air Force veteran and former US intelligence analyst turned anti-war activist, was arrested in May and charged with violating the Espionage Act. Daniel is a well-known anti-drone activist who has spoken out at a number of anti-war events and conferences, and is featured in the documentary, “National Bird.”

Daniel is a member of About Face: Veterans Against the War (formerly Iraq Veterans Against the War). For years, Daniel has expressed concern that he would be targeted by the government for his activism. It appears that while the Obama Justice Department opted to not go after him, the Trump Administration is going back in time in order to wage their war on whistleblowers. He’s plead not guilty and his legal team is expecting a long legal proceeding.

From Democracy Now, May 10th:
“Daniel Hale, 31, was arrested in Nashville. He faces up to 50 years in prison. Hale is accused of disclosing 11 top secret or secret documents to a reporter. The indictment does not name the reporter but unnamed government sources have told media outlets that the reporter is investigative journalist Jeremy Scahill of The Intercept. In 2015, The Intercept published a special report, called the Drone Papers, exposing the inner workings of the U.S. military’s assassination program in Afghanistan, Yemen and Somalia.”

Reality Winner, election hacking whistleblower, remains jailed

By Courage to Resist. December 1, 2019

Reality Winner, a whistleblower who helped expose foreign hacking of US election systems leading up to the 2016 presidential election, has been behind bars since June 3, 2017. She’s scheduled to be released from prison on December 29, 2021.

This is by far the longest sentence ever given in federal court for leaking information to the media about a matter of public interest.

Recently, Tom Whitehurst Jr. summed up Reality’s situation like this in the Corpus Christi Caller Times:
“It was common knowledge that President Donald Trump wanted an example made of what he called leakers.

“One of the interesting features of the espionage charge against her was that it prevented her and her lawyers from mounting a defense. Because the leaked document was classified, she couldn’t reference its basic information as part of her defense. She couldn’t point out that she was warning the people about the Russian hack. That would have blown an 18-wheeler-size hole in the prosecutorial notion that she was trying to do harm to her country,”

The Friends of Reality Winner, an effort that Courage to Resist helped launch in the days following Reality’s arrest, are preparing to file a petition of clemency on her behalf. Basically, it’s a formal request to the president for a reduced sentence and early release. To get the president’s attention, whomever that may be at the time the petition arrives on his or her desk, the more letters of support from individuals and organizations, the better.

Sign the clemency petition at standwithreality.org

Write to Reality today

Reality Winner 22056-021
FMC Carswell Federal Medical Center
PO Box 27137
Fort Worth TX 76127
Climate change actions offer hope

By Courage to Resist. December 1, 2019

Ransacking the earth for all that can be taken is economic/environmental war. For older anti-war/peace folks, it’s critical that we support the youth rebelling against extinction. We need to call-out the military crime syndicate that’s waging endless war against people and our planet.

The geo-political war industry’s fight over the control of fossil fuel resources, the sheer amount of fossil fuels used by the Pentagon as a whole, and the industrial extraction of fossil fuels combine to be the major driver of climate change.

» The U.S. military is the largest producer of greenhouse gases on the earth.
» The U.S. military has a larger carbon footprint than most countries.
» If the Pentagon were a country, it would be the world’s 55th biggest emitter of carbon dioxide.
» We’re killing, dying and polluting for access to the same toxic resource that’s most responsible for climate disruption.

Can we muster the courage to resist further extinction? We have no time to waste.

The US military is the largest producer of greenhouse gases on Earth with a larger carbon footprint than most countries.
War is climate violence!

Left Together shirts

» 100% profits benefit Courage to Resist
» Wear your politics and support your cause!
» left-together.com

Draft registration law ruled unconstitutional (cont.)

decided messily by the courts...

“This is not a decision that women must register for the draft. This is a decision that the current requirement for men to register for the draft is unconstitutional.

“The claim is already being made that requiring women to register for the draft is a feminist initiative. But this ignores the long historical and theoretical association of feminism with opposition to war, including the leading role of women in movements against military conscription. ... Congress should repeal the Military Selective Service Act in its entirety, abolish the Selective Service System, and expunge all registration records.”

“Oppose any and all registration and/or national service that is not 100% voluntary with full disclosure of commitments and obligations, as well as incentives.

Additionally, it is not enough to offer a conscientious objector waiver to mandatory servitude. The onus must not be placed on individuals to articulate to a government official why they should not have their freedom stolen from them,” explained Courage to Resist director Jeff Paterson to the Commission during informal testimony.

Some progressive activists claim to welcome a return to the draft from a “peace perspective” in the hopes that a draft might constrain military adventurism. However, historically, that’s never been the case. Military conscription exists to allow a government to fight a protracted war when not enough volunteers are willing. It’s a foundational fallback option for militarism, as it was most recently used during WW II, Korea and Vietnam.

The US War in Vietnam leads us to a related argument. Basically, that a draft would spark a welcomed anti-war upheaval—a magical time machine to the best parts of the 1960’s. Yet, this assumed protest movement would be in response to thousands (millions?) of deaths made possible by tens of thousands of young people forced into military servitude. And what of those that will have the courage to resist? We’d have to explain to them, “Yes, it was part of our political calculus. We needed you to face prison or conscription. Look on the bright side, now have bigger peace marches!”

Send the Commission your comment

Courage to Resist believes that draft registration needs to be ended, not extended, that the sanctions currently imposed on the millions of men who didn’t register since the Carter Administration need to be limited, and that any national service needs to be completely voluntary.

Please share your public comment with the Commission before the December 31, 2019 deadline. Simply send your comment to info@inspire2serve.gov — “End draft registration once and for ALL!”