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## **FBI Puts Antiwar Protesters on Criminal Database; Canada Uses It To Ban Protesters From Entry**

*By Rob Kall*

Two well-respected US peace activists, CODEPINK and Global Exchange cofounder Medea Benjamin and retired Colonel and diplomat Ann Wright, were denied entry into Canada On October third. The two women were headed to Toronto to discuss peace and security issues at the invitation of the Toronto Stop the War Coalition. At the Buffalo-Niagara Falls Bridge they were detained, questioned and denied entry.

"In my case, the border guard pulled up a file showing that I had been arrested at the US Mission to the UN where, on International Women's Day, a group of us had tried to deliver a peace petition signed by 152,000 women around the world," says Benjamin. "For this, the Canadians labeled me a criminal and refused to allow me in the country."

"The FBI's placing of peace activists on an international criminal database is blatant political intimidation of US citizens opposed to Bush administration policies," says Colonel Wright, who was also Deputy US Ambassador in four countries. "The Canadian government should certainly not accept this FBI database as the criteria for entering the country." Both Wright and Benjamin plan to request their files from the FBI through the Freedom of Information Act and demand that arrests for peaceful, non-violent actions be expunged from international records. "It's outrageous that Canada is turning away peacemakers protesting a war that does not have the support of either US or Canadian citizens," says Benjamin.

"In the past, Canada has always welcomed peace activists with open arms. This new policy, obviously a creature of the Bush administration, is shocking and we in the US and Canada must insist that it be overturned. Four members of the Canadian Parliament--Peggy Nash, Libby Davies, Paul Dewar and Peter Julian-- expressed outrage that the peace activists were barred from Canada and vow to change this policy.

Ann Wright told OpEdNews that this was the second time the two Code Pink activists had been turned away from the border, the first event occurring on August 19th.

Wright explained, "We decided to go to Canadian border to push the envelope to see if the Canadian Gov would not let us into Canada again until we had been "criminally rehabilitated."

To be criminally rehabilitated, they would have to do a huge amount of paperwork and state that they were no longer going to commit the "crimes" they were convicted of.

Wright told OpEdNews "We were told (by the canadian border

agents) if we tried to enter Canada again, we would be officially deported from the country, which is "big trouble. 'We've warned you not to come back until we are criminally rehabilitated.'

Wright asserted, "We will never be criminally rehabilitated since we intend to continue to engage in non-violent peaceful protest of Bush administration policies, particular the war on Iraq and we intend to peacefully and nonviolently protest all of these until they end. They can lead to arrests for civil disobedience, like refusing to move from the fence in front of the whitehouse or standing up and speaking at congressional hearings."

Wright explained that the Canadians, by their own law, do not allow people in who have been convicted of various kinds of offenses.

If, when you are asked by a Canadian immigration officer if you have been arrested, they check the FBI database and that's how they found we were listed.

Wright added, "The fact that the FBI has put us on this list. The [National](#) Crime Information Center Computerized Index is a form of political intimidation. The list is supposed to be for felony and serious misdemeanor offenses.

"We don't qualify-- it's for sex offenders, foreign fugitives, gang violence and terrorist organizations, people who are on parole, a list of eight categories all together.

"It is very disturbing. We've asked our congressional representatives to investigate this."

According to Wright, there was almost no coverage of this in the US, except for an AP release. In Canada, Toronto's Globe and Mail and several other newspapers and three Canadian TV stations covered it.

Authors Bio:

Rob Kall is executive editor and publisher of [OpEdNews.com](#), President of [Futurehealth, Inc](#), and organizer of several conferences, including [StoryCon](#), the Summit Meeting on the Art, Science and Application of Story and The [Winter Brain Meeting](#) on neurofeedback, biofeedback, Optimal Functioning and Positive Psychology. He is a frequent Speaker on Politics, The art, science and power of story, heroes and the hero's journey, Positive Psychology, Stress, Biofeedback and a wide range of subjects. See more of his articles [here](#) and, older ones, [here](#). <br>

BTW, the book Rob's holding in his photo is "HISTORY OF THE REBELLION" volume 3. by Edward, Earl of Clarendon, published 1816, describing the rebellion among the Irish and Scots, around 1656. This was a religious war between the Church of England, Catholics and Presbyterians. The Earl, writing for the Queen, calls the Irish far worse than terrorists.

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