

# DEFEND STUDENTS RIGHTS AT SFSU

## First Amendment from the Bill of Rights:

### *I - Freedom of Speech, Press, Religion and Petition*

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

On March 9th, 2005, about two hundred students at San Francisco State University protested the presence of military recruiters from the Army Corps of Engineers and the Air Force in the Cesar Chavez Student Center. They were protesting the US occupation of Iraq, which has led to the deaths of over 1500 American soldiers and 100,000 Iraqis and the diversion of funding away from education and into military spending. They also opposed the military's "Don't Ask Don't Tell" policy, which is blatantly discriminatory against gays and lesbians. The military's openly homophobic policy violates the spirit and the letter of the California State University and SFSU anti-discrimination policy. Instead of enforcing its own anti-discrimination policy against the military recruiters, the administration has targeted three student activists, Pardis Esmaili, Katrina Yeaw and Michael Hoffman, and two student organizations, Students Against War and the International Socialist Organization, among all of those who participated, for possible discipline and sanctions. Students, who staged a nonviolent sit-in, were exercising their First Amendment right to assemble peaceably and petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

The administration has stated that they must allow military recruiters on campus because of the Solomon Amendment, a 1996 law which has been used to coerce universities into compliance with threats of federal funding cuts. Yet, the Solomon Amendment has been successfully challenged by both Yale and Harvard. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit has ruled that "under the free speech protections in the First Amendment, the government may not force higher education institutions to endorse a message that violates their own policies." There is no reason why San Francisco State University cannot challenge the Solomon Amendment and uphold its anti-discrimination policy by not allowing military recruiters on campus.

## SIGNED,

For background information, see [www.campusantiwar.net](http://www.campusantiwar.net)

<b>Noam Chomsky, Professor, Massachusetts Institute of Technology</b>	<b>Charlie Elquare, Co-President, General Union of Palestine Students, SFSU</b>	Pam Africa, <i>International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal</i>	Brian Cruz, <i>Steward SEIU 790, San Francisco City College</i>	Lichi D'Amelio, <i>Students Against War, City College of San Francisco</i>	Dr. Jess Ghannam, <i>Professor, University of San Francisco</i>	Dr. Deepa Kumar, <i>Assistant Professor, Rutgers University</i>	Al-Awda, <i>Right of Return Coalition, San Francisco Chapter</i>	Middle East Children's Alliance
<b>Howard Zinn, Author, People's History of the United States</b>	<b>Autumn Yamamoto, Publicity/Outreach Coordinator, Asian Student Union, SFSU</b>	M. Junaid Alam & Derek Seidman, <i>Editors, Left Hook, www.lefthook.org</i>	Ashley Smith, <i>secretary, Vermont Chapter of National Writers Union</i>	James Quesada, <i>Associate Professor, SFSU</i>	Eugene Glickman, <i>Professor of Music, Nassau Community College</i>	George White, Jr., <i>Assistant Professor, University of Tennessee, Knoxville</i>	American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, <i>San Francisco Chapter</i>	Queers Undermining Israeli Terrorism
<b>Medea Benjamin &amp; Kevin Danaher, Global Exchange</b>	Russell Kilday-Hicks, <i>President, Chapter 305 CSUEU, SEIU 2579, SFSU</i>	Jack Heyman, <i>International Longshore and Warehouse Union, Local 10</i>	Bill Linville, <i>UW-Madison Stop the War</i>	Benito Vergara, <i>Assistant Professor, SFSU</i>	Elizabeth Terzakis, <i>Assistant Professor, Cañada College</i>	Phil Gasper, <i>Professor, Notre Dame de Namur University</i>	Malcolm X Grassroots Movement	Charlie Jenks, <i>Traprock Peace Center</i>
<b>Peter Camejo, Green Party candidate for Governor of CA</b>	Jeff Paterson, <i>Not In Our Name, former US Marine Corps Corporal</i>	Michael Letwin, <i>Co-Convenor, New York Labor Against War, UAW Local 2325/Assn of Legal Aid Attorneys</i>	Monique Dols, <i>Mid-Atlantic Rep, Campus Anti-War Network Coordinating Committee</i>	Ann Roberston, <i>Lecturer, SFSU</i>	Pranav Jani, <i>Assistant Professor, The Ohio State University</i>	Jessica Muldoon, <i>Teacher, Oakland Education Association</i>	Bay Area United Against War	Greater Knoxville Civil Liberties Association
<b>Lynne Stewart, Civil rights attorney</b>	Darlene Batchelder, <i>Vietnam Veteran, U.S. Army</i>	Transport Workers Against the War, <i>from Local 100 of Transit Workers Union, NYC</i>	Elizabeth Wrigley-Field, <i>New York University, Campus Anti-War Network</i>	Deborah Gerson, <i>Professor, SFSU</i>	Marc Schachter, <i>Professor, Duke University</i>	Andrew Libson, <i>Teacher, Mission High School, United Educators of San Francisco</i>	Ravi Halhotra, <i>New Democratic Party, Toronto, Canada</i>	Joanna Dubinsky, <i>New Orleans Counter-Recruitment Committee</i>
<b>VOX (Voices for Sexual Freedom), SFSU</b>	Dustin Langley, <i>Navy Veteran, www.NoDraftNoWay.org</i>	Sandy Brown, <i>UAW 2865, UC Berkeley</i>	Snehal Shingavi, <i>Berkeley Stop the War coalition, UC Berkeley</i>	Anatole Anton, <i>Professor, SFSU</i>	Robert Jensen, <i>Associate Professor, University of Texas, Austin</i>	Carole Seligman, <i>SFSU alumni, public school teacher</i>	Michael Shahin, <i>National Lawyers Guild</i>	Coastside Peace of Half Moon Bay
<b>La Raza Student Organization, SFSU</b>	Anthony Arnové, <i>Editor, Iraq Under Siege</i>	Emily Goldstein Vassar, <i>College Anti-War</i>	Campus Anti-War Network at New York University	Roger Bland, <i>Professor, SFSU</i>	Tom Lewis, <i>Professor, University of Iowa</i>	Derek Wright, <i>Researcher, Lawrence Livermore Labs</i>	Amanda Maystead, <i>International Socialist Organization, Mission Branch</i>	Ragina Johnson, <i>College Not Combat</i>
<b>Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan, MEChA, SFSU</b>	Ahmed Shawki, <i>Editor, International Socialist Review</i>	The Peace and Solidarity Committee of SEIU Local 790	Alex Tinonga, <i>Students Against War, UC Santa Cruz</i>	Mike Davis, <i>Author, City of Quartz, Professor of History, UC Irvine</i>	Dr. Mehrene Larudee, <i>Professor, DePaul University</i>	Free Palestine Alliance	Anne Finger, <i>Society for Disability Studies</i>	Code Pink
<b>International Socialist Organization, SFSU</b>							Janet Arnold, <i>Oakland Green Party</i>	
<b>Students Against War, SFSU</b>							Michael Rubin, <i>Bay Area Solidarity</i>	

The administration's threats may have already had a chilling effect on student activism on campus. Students on many California campuses participated in an April 20 walkout to protest budget cuts in education and support the faculty union. In the SF State campus newspaper, the *Golden Gate Xpress*, California Faculty Association office manager Laurie Owen was quoted as saying "many student groups feel too reluctant to risk incurring yet more wrath from the gods of SFSU to engage in yet more civil disobedience. Because so many groups pulled out of the walkout, it essentially fell apart." (<http://xpress.sfsu.edu/archives/news/003565.html>)

The whole history of San Francisco State University is based on a legacy of students fighting for progressive political change. Honoring protest is literally built into SFSU. The students began their protest on Malcolm X Plaza, marched into Cesar Chavez Student Center, past the Martin Luther King, Jr. Conference Rooms, Rigoberta Menchu Hall and Richard Oakes Multicultural Center and into the Jack Adams Hall to protest the military recruiters. Although less widely known than the others, Jack Adams Hall was dedicated to a campus worker who was a pioneer in the fight against AIDS and eventually died of that disease.

Shouldn't the administration respect the rights of students who dare to protest against an unjust war and a homophobic military by standing in the legacy of the very civil rights heroes the university honors?

### ***We the undersigned join San Francisco State students in demanding:***

- #1 No disciplinary action should be taken against individual students or student groups for involvement in, or endorsement of, the March 9th 2005 protest in Jack Adams Hall**
- #2 The University should seek to uphold its own anti-discrimination policy and pursue a legal challenge to the Solomon Amendment.**
- #3 The University should provide a forum for debating the issue of military recruitment on campus. This debate should include military recruiters, SFSU President Robert Corrigan, and speakers chosen by Students Against War.**
- #4 Furthermore, the administration will uphold the right to free speech on the SFSU campus and not limit it to unconstitutional "free speech zones."**

**JOIN SAW TO DELIVER STUDENT PETITIONS TO PRESIDENT CORRIGAN AT THE STEPS OF THE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING AT 11AM ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 18**