



PRESS RELEASE

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Veterans For Peace censored by American Legion *Peace veterans denied full participation in Veterans Day events but will march anyway*

BOSTON — The American Legion will not permit the Smedley D. Butler Brigade Chapter 9 of Veterans For Peace to march with signs and chanting cadences in the annual Boston Veterans Day parade this Sunday, Nov. 11.

Despite this clear violation of the First Amendment right to free speech, the Veterans For Peace and their supporters will march anyway at the end of the parade behind the street sweepers. The parade begins at 1 p.m. on Charles St. between the Boston Common and Public Garden and marches to City Hall Plaza for a speaking event there.

“It is an insult to veterans, some of us veterans of combat, who have an outlook of promoting peace in an event that honors all veterans,” said Nate Goldshlag, an U.S. Army veteran and co-coordinator of the Smedley Butler Brigade. “We march with signs against the war in Iraq and chant cadences with our message, and we are being prevented from exercising our rights of free speech by the American Legion. All they want is a show of militarism and support for wars of aggression,” Goldshlag said.

A request to have a speaker at the event on City Hall Plaza following the parade was also denied by the American Legion, in spite of a City Council hearing called by Boston City Councillor Chuck Turner and two other councillors titled “Isn’t Veterans Day For All Veterans?”

“The Legion claims the event is non-political, but in fact it is very political – in prior years speakers have been very pro-war and spouted the Bush Administration’s line,” Goldshlag said. “As veterans who have been opposed to this war from the beginning, we have the right to be heard. But apparently suppression of our rights of free speech is on the agenda of the American Legion.”

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Web site of the Smedley D. Butler Brigade of Veterans For Peace: <http://smedleyvfp.org>

National web site of Veterans for Peace: <http://veteransforpeace.org>