

Hundreds protest Bush speech in Saskatoon

By [Global Research](#)

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A noisy but peaceful crowd of 300 assembled in downtown Saskatoon on Wednesday to protest a speech by former U.S. president George W. Bush.

But protesters hoping to boo him in person were disappointed.

Bush, in town for a noon-hour speaking engagement at TCU Place, was taken inside the building earlier in the morning and avoided any encounters with the crowd.

Security was tight, with dozens of RCMP, Saskatoon city police and U.S. Secret Service agents in the vicinity.

Barricades were set up and protesters were kept across the street from the venue, where Bush was speaking to a paying audience of about 2,000.

Some of the people in the crowd on the street said they were protesting Bush's role in the invasion of Iraq and the detention of prisoners.

Diverse group in crowd

It was a varied group that included mothers with small children, students and seniors. Many people carried signs denouncing the Bush years.

"Harper, Bush: Twins," "End the Occupation of Iraq" and "Greed, War, Barbarian" were among the slogans.

A carnival-like atmosphere prevailed. As they watched the ticket-holders across the street file into the auditorium, the crowd was treated to hip-hop performances, street theatre and speeches.

Meanwhile, in the auditorium, Bush spoke before an appreciative audience, cracking jokes as he looked back at his eight years in office.

He talked about Canada-U.S. relations, warning about the dangers of trade protectionism. He referred to his own darkest days as president after the invasion of Iraq when the suspected Iraqi weapons of mass destruction were never found.

He drew applause when he talked about how Canadian soldiers have carried a disproportionately large share of the burden in Afghanistan. When he finished, he received a standing ovation.

Outside across the street, by 1 p.m. CT the crowd had mostly dispersed.

A similar reception from protesters awaited the former president the day before in Edmonton, where he also had a speaking engagement.

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