

Police attack on Bush Demonstration exposed: Message from British Antiwar Coalition

By [Global Research](#)

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1) TIME TO BRING THE TROOPS HOME

The Bush visit and its aftermath shows beyond any doubt Brown's government is as committed to Bush's War on Terror as the previous one. From time to time Gordon Brown has tentatively proposed a 'timetable for withdrawal' from Iraq. Each time a phone call from Washington or a cup of tea with Condoleezza Rice or George Bush has been enough to get him back in line and scurrying to the press to announce his commitment to 'finishing the job' in Iraq. More than 4,000 British troops remain near Basra, facing mortar rounds, supporting military operations against local people or on the Iranian border, and crucially giving political cover to the continuing US occupation and the US attempt to impose a political agreement that would guarantee its right to remain indefinitely, control the oil and direct the countries' future.

Meanwhile Britain remains the one European power that has responded enthusiastically to the drive to escalate in Afghanistan. The Brown government is doing everything it can to promote the idea that Afghanistan is a good war. Military parades are used to generate patriotic support for 'our boys'. Government ministers are wheeled out to claim that despite the evidence we are 'turning the corner' and 'making headway against the Taliban'. The little news that is allowed out from Afghanistan suggests the opposite. Daring Taliban raids into NATO held Kandahar, increased fighting round Peshwar and above all a steeply rising casualty rate tell a very different story.

All serious assessments show that far from being won Afghanistan has been devastated by this 'humanitarian' war and occupation. It is now 174 out of 178 on the UN's world development index. Life expectancy stands at 44 and it has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world (so much for liberating women!) No doubt this has something to do with the fact that health care is virtually non-existent for the majority of Afghans.

For all these reasons, the Stop the War Coalition is stepping up its demand for troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan in the run up to the Labour Party Conference which starts in

Manchester on 21 September.

We will be organising a series of Troops Out, Defend Civil Liberties Rallies in the first weeks of September. In the meantime, we are asking all our groups and supporters to do two things from now:

* **DOWNLOAD TROOPS OUT LETTER:** Available from the Stop the War website at www.stopwar.org.uk. Take it to local politicians, trades unionists and other prominent figures and ask them to sign it so that we have built up a huge list of supporters over the summer.

* **START ORGANISING NOW FOR 20 SEPTEMBER PROTEST.** This takes place in Manchester on the day before the start of the Labour Party Conference. Called by Greater Manchester Stop the War Coalition and CND.

2) ACTION STATIONS OVER IRAN

There is alarming evidence that Israel and the US are coming closer to an attack on Iran. Ten days ago, the Israeli Air Force conducted one of the biggest military exercises in its history, flying 100 warplanes 1,500kms over the Mediterranean – matching the distance from Israel to Iran’s nuclear facilities. Deputy Prime Minister Shaul Mofaz said earlier this month Israel had no choice but to attack Iran. Leading neocon John Bolton has been briefing the press making the case for an Israeli strike and a string of other Israeli officials and academics from Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni to Defence Analyst Shmuel Bar have been making similarly inflammatory statements.

Bar says “The only thing that can stop Israel’s intent (to bomb) would be extremely robust steps on the part of the West – a blockade of Iranian refined oil, something that would indicate that steps were meant to force regime change. Since that is not on the cards, only bombing Iran will work”.

There are still divisions in the US on the question but the pressure from the remaining neocons and Israel is immense.

Apart from the horrendous suffering it would create in Iran any bombing attack on Iran would send shockwaves across the Middle East, invite retaliation from Iran and lead to uproar on the streets from Cairo to . In the words of Mohammed El Baradei, chief of the International Atomic Agency it would create a fireball in the region.

In these circumstances Stop the War is asking all its groups to take a number of steps. First, where possible organise meetings over the summer to discuss the situation over Iran. Second, circulate as widely as possible the fact sheet and take round the action pledge. Finally prepare and publicise protests should an attack take place.

If an attack takes place after 5pm, we ask groups to hold local protests/sit downs outside town halls or other appropriate local centres. We will call a protest at Downing Street on the evening of the day of an attack or the day after if the attack takes place after 5pm.

3) POLICE ATTACK ON BUSH DEMONSTRATION EXPOSED

The large number of photos and video clips we have received of the June 15 demonstration (for a selection see www.stopwar.org.uk) show beyond doubt that the police drastically and

violently overreacted to a peaceful protest. Even more worryingly a number of protestors have identified at least one police officer in plain clothes actively shouting abuse at the police and in the words of the Mail on Sunday “apparently stirring up trouble”. SEE <http://tinyurl.com/68zrmr>

Stop the War has complained to the police and the Home Secretary and asked for detailed explanations of police behaviour on the day. We will distribute information of further developments as they arise. Any more photos or video clips of the day taken by participants in the Bush protest would be gratefully received.

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