



# DEFEND THE TORONTO 17!

## VICTIMS OF THE ANTI-MUSLIM WITCH-HUNT AT HOME

*Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) Statement on the June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2006 arrests in the Toronto area*

On Friday June 2<sup>nd</sup> seventeen mostly young, all Muslim men were arrested in South-Western Ontario under unspecified allegations of being involved in a “terrorist plot.” Alongside the Canadian military’s spring transition from a housekeeping occupation presence in Kabul to a savage combat mission in Southern Afghanistan, the arrest of the Toronto 17 has signaled that the war at home – a couple steps behind the war abroad – has entered its own “combat mission” against the democratic and human rights of oppressed people in Canada.

The Toronto 17, already found guilty of “terrorism” by the anti-Muslim smokescreen of the government of Canada and the mainstream media, represent something important for working, poor and oppressed people in Canada. The storm troopers of the right wing of Canadian politics are entering through the window of the arrest of the Toronto 17 into the homes of all Muslims in Canada.

### Terrorism or state terrorist frame-up?

One week into the saga of the arrest of the Toronto 17 still no charges have been released. The “allegations” that the Toronto 17 were involved in a “terrorist plot” have not been elaborated beyond allegation. The synopsis of the prosecution’s case that was presented at the June 6<sup>th</sup> court appearance was still nothing but a collection of imaginary police allegations.

The arrests come as result of a two-year investigation group of 17. If there was evidence of a “terrorist plot” the crown prosecution would have been certain to include some of this evidence in the synopsis documents presented at the first appearance of the Toronto 17 in court on June 6<sup>th</sup>. But no facts were presented. Instead, a mere 8 page summary of the case was presented to the defense lawyers. The desperation of the prosecution team in trying to dig up “evidence” was evident in the ludicrous allegations that were found in these 8 pages. These allegations have been broadcasted through international media as fact. They include a “plot” to bomb parliament buildings, and the “plot” to kidnap parliamentarians and to “behead” Prime Minister Stephen Harper. In fact, none of these “plots” were elaborated or developed into actual “plots” but have been presented as court evidence as loose talk, personal

desires, and thoughts. In place of evidence of intent to carry out these “plots” the government has substituted further allegation of “terrorist camps” and circumstantial evidence of the “3 tons of ammonium nitrate,” allegedly sold and delivered to the 17 by a sting



Family members of the Toronto 17 enter courthouse, June 6, 2006.

operation of the police and government themselves.

But the lack of evidence presented against the Toronto 17 has not stopped the government or media from convicting the 17 in the court of public opinion of “terrorist plotting” and launching an unprecedented fear mongering campaign. The lack of evidence has not stopped the courts and prisons from violating every civil, democratic, human, and legal right of the Toronto 17 – keeping them in solitary confinement, denying them all (including the 5 minors arrested) access to their lawyers, families, and each other. “Rule of Law” indeed. And the lack of evidence against the Toronto 17 has certainly not stopped the government and racist war mongering ruling class from taking the opportunity to ratchet up anti-Muslim hysteria, hostility, and paranoia in the media and amongst “average Canadians.”

Here we find the truth. The guilt or innocence of the Toronto 17 is not important as far as the Canadian war drive is concerned. The motivation for these arrests at this particular time has nothing to do with the alleged actions or “plots” of the Toronto 17. The arrests have everything to do with covering up the government’s war drive in Afghanistan, dividing Muslim and non-Muslim oppressed and working people in Canada, and pouring the foundation for a new round of attacks on the rights of immigrants, refugees, and all working and poor people in Canada.

### Fear of ‘terrorists’ = Support for war

Since the May 17<sup>th</sup> vote in parliament to extend Canada’s combat mission in Southern Afghanistan

until 2009 opinion polls have found a steady climb in public opposition to Canada’s occupation of Afghanistan. And just two days after the arrests, and buried beneath the Islamophobic media storm, was the news that the occupation forces in Southern Afghanistan – forces under Canada’s

control – will be doubled so “[w]hat you’re going to see is a massive influx of new troops, more troops than the Afghans have seen in a long time.” (Canadian Lt.-Col. Ian Hope, June 4<sup>th</sup> 2006)

In answer to the growing anti-war sentiment amongst people in Canada, the government of Canada borrowed a trick from the masters of fear mongering in the US government. Immediately after the arrest of the 17, Liberal MP Wajjid Khan quoted the “hateful comments” of Qayyum Abdul Jamal, the so-called “ringleader” of the Toronto 17 when the MP visited a Jamal’s mosque last summer. MP Khan recalled, “[Jamal] went on saying that we don’t need him [MP Khan] here, that our government is telling us what to do and that the Canadian troops in Afghanistan have gone there to rape Muslim women.”

In the halls of “justice”, parliament, and the newspapers rang a new truth... that opposing Canada’s occupation of Afghanistan is equal to terrorism, or at least supporting terrorism.

The proven success of this racist and Islamophobic campaign shows in the voices of people across Canada on AM talk-radio call-in shows. Many of us have been fooled. Many do not see the refusal of democratic, civil, and legal rights to the Toronto 17 as an attack on “our” rights – because we have been fooled. We do not see the attack on the democratic rights of all Muslims to express their opposition to the government’s war drive as an attack on “our” rights – because we have been fooled. This is the poison of the racist and Islamophobic campaign of the government and war mongers; they are dividing working and oppressed people in Canada along the lines of race and

# CANADA & ALL OCCUPYING FORCES OUT OF AFGHANISTAN!

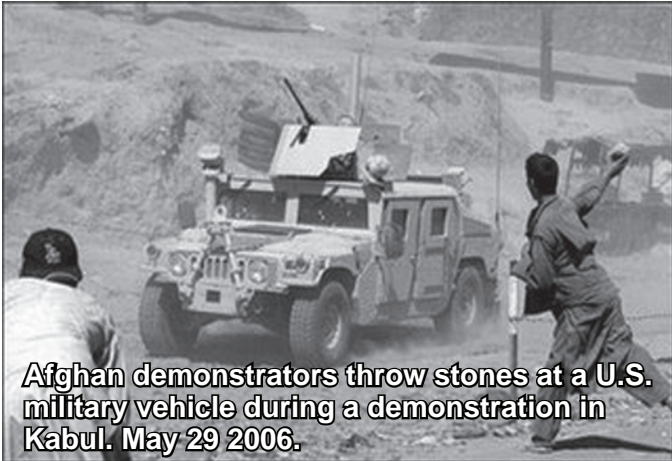
## MAWO Collects 10,000 Signatures Against the Canadian War Drive in Afghanistan!

Mobilization Against War and Occupation has collected over 10,000 signatures for the “Canada Out of Afghanistan” campaign since January 2004. The response to this

thousand more troops were deployed to Afghanistan, where they took charge of the NATO occupation of Kandahar and Southern Afghanistan.

shopping malls that remain inaccessible to them.

In order to protect its’ interests, Canada’s elite and the government of Canada must continue their war drive in Afghanistan and around the world. In order to protect the interests of poor, working, and oppressed people around the world, we as people in Canada must unite against this war drive. Over 10,000 people have voiced their opposition to the occupation in the Lower Mainland alone by signing MAWO’s petition. Across Canada, millions more are against this occupation.



Afghan demonstrators throw stones at a U.S. military vehicle during a demonstration in Kabul. May 29 2006.

petition has been incredibly positive, particularly in recent months, as the government of Canada began increasing its war drive in Afghanistan.

But while people in Canada are increasingly opposed to this occupation, April’s “take note” debate as well as May’s vote on the extension of troop deployment until 2009 have shown that Canadian MPs and ruling elites are united in support of it. The NDP, Liberals, and Conservatives have all voiced their support for the mission in some capacity.

The government of Canada and the Canadian ruling class have grown increasingly aggressive in their participation in the occupation of Afghanistan and military operations worldwide. In 2005, the military budget was doubled to \$25.8 billion. Two

Afghan people feel the effects of the Canadian occupation of their country through 80% poverty, a life expectancy that has dropped by 4.5 years, and other constant violations of human rights. Women in Afghanistan now struggle under the burden of life under occupation. Due to lack of access to health care, malnutrition, and other factors, half of all women who die in Afghanistan die during pregnancy. Youth also face a bleak situation. Afghanistan now has the worst education system in the world, with a literacy rate of less than 30%. Most young people don’t have the option of going to school, as they are forced to work and to take care of basic survival needs before considering education. All Afghan people have seen of the promised “reconstruction” is the building of hotels and

As the Canadian war drive increases, and as people in Afghanistan continue to suffer, we must demand CANADA OUT OF AFGHANISTAN NOW! At the same time we must also have an opportunity to discuss what the occupation of Afghanistan means for people in Afghanistan, and for ordinary working people in Canada. For this, we must call for an Independent Public Inquiry into the Canadian War Drive in Afghanistan, so that we can add tens of thousands of more names and voices to the demand of Canada out of Afghanistan! and an end to the suffering that is costing the lives of thousands in Afghanistan.

**Canada Out of Afghanistan!**  
**NATO Out of Afghanistan!**  
**US/UK Out of Afghanistan!**

# ‘WAR ON TERRORISM’

The recent arrests of 17 Muslim men in Ontario on allegations of terrorism are only the latest in a series of attacks against Muslims in Canada, as immigrants and refugees, as students, as workers, and as oppressed people.

In 1914, the Japanese steamship Komagata Maru reached Vancouver with 400 Indian immigrants onboard, on an unprecedented direct route from India – in accordance with the racist “Continuous Passage Act”. In violation of their own racist immigration laws, the government of Canada did not allow the ship to dock and unload its passengers. For two months the Komagata Maru was stuck in Victoria Harbour – until it was turned back, forced to return to Hong Kong.

One hundred years later, the racist policies of Canadian Immigration have changed only in wording. “Anti-terrorist” and immigrant and refugee legislation specifically targets the 750,000 Muslims living in Canada today.

### 9-11: Open season on the rights of Muslims

A new series of immigration and refugee legislations passed by the government of Canada play a large part in this anti-Muslim agenda.

The Safe Third

Country Agreement that came into effect in 2004 declares that no refugee who makes claim in Canada can first pass through the US, a so-called “Safe Country” for refugees. This has made the process for refugees coming to Canada longer and more difficult.

Along the same lines, passed in June 2002, the Immigrant and Refugee Protection Act does nothing for the rights and dignity of immigrants and refugees in Canada, but rather makes it easier for the Government of Canada to arrest and deport refugee claimants from Canada. Under this legislation, “Operation Thread”, which consisted of the arrest of 23 Muslims on allegations of “terrorism” was conducted. The flimsy evidence soon fell through and all men were set free with the stigma of being labeled terrorists, only to be deported to Pakistan.

Also encompassed within this act are Security Certificates, by which 5 Muslim men have been arrested and held in jails without them or their lawyers ever being shown the charges or evidence against them. Some of these men have gone on hunger strikes for as long as 80 days that have brought them near death for the minimal and basic





MAWO Statement Against Arrests of Toronto 17

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religion so that we cannot defend our collectively held rights. This divisive campaign pops and explodes in attacks of race hatred and Islamophobia like the June 4<sup>th</sup> vandalism of a Toronto mosque.

In the very moment of the racist and Islamophobic heat wave, the deputy director of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS)’s pronouncement was released that about 90 percent of immigration applicants from Pakistan and Afghanistan in the past five years have not been sufficiently screened for “security concerns.” The lesson is, of course, that more restrictions are necessary to curb the threat of “terrorism” that comes to Canada with Muslim immigrants. Restrictions like Security Certificates – a Canadian legal clause that allows the arrest and indefinite detention of non-citizens of Canada for suspicion of involvement in “terrorism” without evidence or charges. Coincidentally, the constitutionality of Security Certificates are set to go before Supreme Court on Monday June 12<sup>th</sup> – just over one week after the arrest of the 17.

No to Anti-Muslim Fear Mongering! Defend the Toronto 17!

Under government driven racist and Islamophobic hysteria, the Toronto 17 do not stand a chance of a fair trial anywhere in Canada. For working, poor and oppressed people in Canada, the real threat to our “security” does not come from oppressed people – Muslim or otherwise. The clear and present danger to our security, our civil liberties and democratic and human rights comes from a government that is using the frame-up case of the Toronto 17 as a cover-up for their war drive in Afghanistan, and their assaults on the rights of working and oppressed people in Canada.

Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) calls on all organizations and people committed to the cause of peace and social justice to take a stand against the government of Canada’s war drive, and against this racist, anti-Muslim arrest of the Toronto 17. We must stand in defense of the democratic, human, and civil rights of Muslims and all oppressed people in Canada. In the case of the Toronto 17, these rights are what really stand trial.

End Attacks on Muslims! Defend the Toronto 17! End the criminal occupation of Afghanistan! Stop the Canadian War Drive! Stop all attacks on the rights of immigrants and refugees!

Canada’s Legacy of Attacks on Muslims

Continued from previous page

demands of 1-hour exercise each day and family visits without a separation barrier.

The Case of Maher Arar

The international attention catching case of Maher Arar in 2002 shed light on oppressed people who are paying the price of these racist legislations. Arar was detained by the US government because of his dual Syrian-Canadian citizenship and was deported to Syria where he was tortured and jailed for 10 months. The government of Canada actively cooperated with the US to bring about the deportation of Maher Arar, a Canadian citizen. Arar’s case has been one of the clearest cases of the government of Canada’s violation of the civil and democratic rights of oppressed people in Canada in the name of “fighting terrorism.”

Defend the rights of Muslims in Canada!

Anti-terrorist and Immigrant and Refugee legislation enacted since September 2001 has worked to create a climate of isolation, demonization, and terror for Muslims living in Canada. The “War on Terrorism” has actually meant an ongoing assault on the civil liberties and democratic rights of Muslims and all immigrants and refugees in Canada.

As the Government of Canada increases its role in the occupation of Afghanistan divisions between Muslims and non-Muslims in Canada will only be more important for the interests of the Canadian war mongers. For working, poor and oppressed people in Canada, the opposite is true. We must demand equal democratic, civil, and human rights for Muslims and all working people in Canada– against anti-Muslim racism, Islamophobia, and the so-called “war on terrorism.”

STOP ATTACKS ON MUSLIMS!

STOP ISLAMOPHOBIA!

STOP RACISM!

STOP ATTACKS ON IMMIGRANTS!

STOP ATTACKS ON REFUGEES!

NO TO THE “WAR ON TERRORISM”!

Get Involved  
With MAWO!

Meetings  
Every Wednesday!  
6:30pm

Britannia Community  
Center  
1661 Napier St.  
(Commercial Dr. @  
Napier)

mawovancouver.org  
info@mawovancouver.org | 604.322.1764

CANADA  
OUT OF  
AFGHANISTAN!  
US/UK OUT OF  
IRAQ!

DEFEND CIVIL LIBERTIES!  
DEFEND THE LEGAL, HUMAN, AND DEMOCRATIC  
RIGHTS OF THE TORONTO 17!  
STOP ATTACKS ON MUSLIMS!  
END THE CRIMINAL  
OCCUPATION OF AFGHANISTAN!  
STOP ALL ATTACKS ON THE  
RIGHTS OF IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES!  
SELF-DETERMINATION FOR SIX NATIONS!  
& ALL INDIGENOUS NATIONS IN CANADA!  
STOP THE CANADIAN WAR DRIVE!  
HANDS OFF IRAN, CUBA AND VENEZUELA!  
SELF-DETERMINATION FOR ALL OPPRESSED NATIONS!

RALLY AT VANCOUVER ART GALLERY (ROBSON & HOWE)  
MARCH TO CANADIAN ARMED FORCES RECRUITMENT CENTRE

june 29 4pm  
THURSDAY

Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO) . 604-322-1764  
www.mawovancouver.org

FREE THE  
CUBAN  
FIVE

Garage Sale!

A special fundraiser to support the Cuban Five Freedom Fund and win justice for the five Cuban political prisoners held in U.S jails.

Sunday, July 9  
(Weather permitting)

10 am - Commercial Dr./Grandview Park Area



Rene Gonzalez, Ramon Labanino, Gerardo Hernandez, Antonio Guerrero, and Fernando Gonzalez are five Cuban men who are in prison in the United States for simply defending their country, Cuba, from terrorist attacks by right-wing groups of Cuban exiles in Miami.

These five Heroes never harmed anyone, yet they are in prison while the anti-Cuban terrorists they tried to stop, are being protected by the U.S. government.

A new international campaign has been launched by the National Committee to Free the Five in the United States. This campaign is to raise a quarter of a million dollars towards advertisements to raise awareness internationally of the case of these five heroes.

For more information, check:  
www.vancubasolidarity.com/freethefivevan.html  
Co-Organized By:

VANCOUVER COMMUNITES IN SOLIDARITY WITH CUBA (VCSC)  
778-892-5223 / cubacommunitites@yahoo.ca  
THE FREE THE CUBAN 5 COMMITTEE - VANCOUVER  
604-719-6947 / cuban5\_van@yahoo.ca  
WWW.VANCUBASOLIDARITY.COM

VANCOUVER’S SECOND ANNUAL 2006  
HIP HOP  
FESTIVAL  
AGAINST WAR + OCCUPATION  
JULY 21-23 FREE!

FRIDAY JULY 21  
AFTERNOON OUTDOOR SHOW IN WEST VAN!  
Ambleside Beach & Park West Vancouver  
5pm to 9pm  
FREE to ALL AGES  
Skateboard demo + graffiti wall!  
In partnership with the District of West Vancouver and the Ambleside Youth Centre

FRIDAY JULY 21  
OPENING NIGHT CLUB SHOW!  
at the Pic Pub  
620 W Pender St Vancouver  
Doors 9pm / Show 10pm  
FREE! 19+ Only

SATURDAY JULY 22  
ALL DAY OUTDOOR SHOW IN SURREY!  
Kwantlen College Surrey Campus  
12666 72nd Ave Surrey  
2pm to 8pm  
FREE ALL AGES  
LOCAL BREAKDANCE COMPETITION!  
In partnership with the Kwantlen Students Association

SATURDAY JULY 22  
EVENING YOUTH SHOW IN RICHMOND!  
Thompson Community Centre  
5151 Granville Avenue Richmond  
Doors 7pm / Show 8pm  
FREE ALL AGES  
LOCAL BREAKDANCE COMPETITION  
In partnership with the City of Richmond and the Thompson Community Centre

SUNDAY JULY 23  
ALL DAY OUTDOOR SHOW IN VANCOUVER!  
Britannia Oval Track  
West Side of Britannia Comm Ctr off Commercial Drive & Napier  
12noon to 7pm  
FREE ALL AGES  
COMMUNITY GRAFFITI WALL AND BREAKDANCE EXPO!  
In partnership with the Britannia Community Centre

SUNDAY JULY 23  
FESTIVAL WRAP-UP PARTY SHOW!  
El Cocal Restaurant  
1037 Commercial Drive  
Doors 8pm / Show 9pm  
FREE ALL AGES  
ANTI-WAR FREESTYLE SHOWDOWN

FEATURED PERFORMERS:  
Phillistines and the NOMADS | Sepia | Signia | Discreet the Chosen 1 | Daybi | Sunday Skool Dropoutz | Threat from Outer Space | Platino Latin Productions | JB the 1st Lady | Lady Sincere | Obese Child | Genetiles | Influents | Nadia Cheney | Nididi Cascade and Triple 3 | Lindsay Bomberry | Shay Faded | Shannon Bickers | Aline MC Line | Chadlo | Lyrie | (and more...)

Also endorsed by: DOUGLAS STUDENTS UNION | COALITION AGAINST WAR ON THE PEOPLE OF IRAQ AND INTERNATIONALLY - UBC | VANCOUVER COMMUNITIES IN SOLIDARITY WITH CUBA | FREE THE CUBAN 5 CTTE -VANCOUVER | THINK NDN | EL BUS DE LAS SIETE | DADABASE  
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