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London Stop the  
War demo

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**SocialistWorkeronline** dated 24 February 2007  
| issue 2039

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News

[7.35pm Sat 24 Feb]

## 100,000 on London anti-war march demand all troops out of Iraq and no Trident replacement online only

by Matthew Cookson

A huge demonstration filled the streets of central London today, calling for all occupying troops to be withdrawn from Iraq, no replacement of Britain's nuclear weapons system and no attack on Iran.

Over 100,000 people joined the protest, organised by the Stop the War Coalition, CND and the British Muslim Initiative.

The march once again showed the depth, breadth and vibrancy of the anti-war movement. Thousands of students, trade unionists, Muslims, Christians and campaigners joined the protest.

Lindsey German, the convenor of the Stop the War Coalition, told marchers, "Tony Blair says the war on Iraq is not his fault. He took us into war on lies. He is responsible for the death of 655,000 Iraqis

"Blair wants to site the Star Wars US nuclear defence system here. He wants to spend money on Trident not on hospitals and schools.

"Blair had to announce the withdrawal of 1,500 troops from Iraq this week. Our movement made him announce that.

"They want to send 1,000 extra troops to Afghanistan. We want the troops home from there too. This is an unsustainable and unwinnable war.

"We are fed up with a government that is addicted to war. This war is spreading from, Afghanistan to Iraq, Somalia and Lebanon. Now they want to attack Iran.

"If they do we will be on the streets in even greater numbers. We will demonstrate, strike and take action until all these wars are at an end.

John McDonnell MP, the left wing challenger for the Labour leadership, told the marchers, "This tremendous demonstration shows the anger of the British people.

"We have come together every time because we want a peace agenda. We want all British occupying troops out of Iraq immediately and we don't want any threats to Iran.

"We want a peace prime minister, not a warmonger in 10 Downing Street."

Ken Livingstone, the mayor of London, said, "London is proud to have this demonstration here today. The overwhelming majority of its population oppose war and the next generation of nuclear weapons.

"The biggest threat humanity faces is climate change. Any government that doesn't make that its priority is betraying the people. A new world is being formed of people who don't accept the US agenda."

Respect MP George Galloway said, "Tony Blair must go now

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bloody liar

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won't fight for Bush

» George Galloway:  
'The Iraq war has  
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### WEB ONLY

» British troop  
reductions  
announced - tell  
Blair to get all the  
troops out now

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before he does any more damage. Not content with the death and destruction he has caused all over the world, he is planning with Israel and George Bush another war against a Muslim country – Iran.

“I warn him that there will be riots in Britain if he takes us into that war.”

Solidarity was brought to the marchers from Judith LeBlanc, the co-chair of the US United for Peace and Justice and Augusto Montiel, a Venezuelan MP.

Labour MPs Jeremy Corbyn, Bob Wareing, John Trickett, Green MEP Caroline Lucas and Plaid Cymru MEP Jill Evans all also spoke.

The support of trade unions for the movement was made clear by the speeches of Paul Mackney, the UCU lecturers’ union joint general secretary, Billy Hayes, the CWU communication workers’ union general secretary, and Keith Sonnet, the assistant general secretary of the Unison public sector workers’ union.

Rose Gentle of the Military Families Against the War also spoke, as did playwright David Edgar, Doctor Daoud Abdullah of the Muslim Council, Ismail Patel of the British Muslim Initiative, and Noreen Fatima of Stop the War’s Muslim Network.

Andrew Murray, the chair of the Stop the War Coalition, stated that the movement would stay on the streets against the occupation and any threats to attack Iran. He called on people to attend the Stop the War Coalition’s People’s Assembly in central London on Tuesday 20 March.

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