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Bush arrested in Canada for war crimes

Monday, November 29, 2004 Posted: 8:19 PM EST (0119 GMT)

OTTAWA, CANADA (AP) -- On the first of his two-day planned visit to Canada, George W. Bush was taken into custody by Canadian authorities citing war crime charges. Under Canadian law, even a non-citizen can be charged for crimes committed outside of Canada once that individual enters the country.

The **arrest** claims that President **Bush** has been "party to the crime of torturing prisoners held in Guantánamo Bay and Abu Ghraib."

Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin released a written statement indicating that "proceedings have commenced against President George W. **Bush** under the Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Act (s. 9(3))."

Irwin Cotler, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of **Canada**, had began an investigation into the alleged crimes of the **Bush** administration on the basis of reports prepared by human rights organizations, journalists and scholars as well as recent decisions by U.S. courts.

"Let this serve as a warning to any current or former official of the **Bush** administration, like Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld," said Cotler, "that they enter **Canada** at their own risk."

Bush's trip to **Canada** was originally planned to negotiate security and trade

Bush Arrested



Bush received a bruise on his face during the arrest, which some observers have noted resembles a Canadian maple leaf.

THE CASE AGAINST BUSH

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issues with Martin, including the on-going ban on Canadian beef and the 27 percent tariff on softwood lumber imports imposed by the U.S. in 2001.

Bush received a minor injury to his face during the **arrest** when Canadian authorities confronted members of the Secret Service trying to protect the president during the welcome ceremony.

The charges were initially drafted by a group called Lawyers Against the War (LAW) and then adopted by Canadian prosecutors. Michael Mandel, Professor of Law and co-chair of LAW, issued the following statement:

"The actions of George W. **Bush** and his administration are nothing short of mass murder. They have killed Iraqi civilians without any lawful justification or excuse. That's a crime in the United States and in **Canada** and under international law. No one is above the law, not even presidents. If they do terrible things, we are going to see to it that they are personally brought to justice. We are going to prosecute them for each and every crime they commit."

U.S. condemns arrest as 'illegal and dangerous'

In a press conference this morning, White House spokesman Jim Morrell said, "Under international law, active foreign officials and diplomats are immune from state prosecution. Given this fact – and the sheer absurdity of these illegal and dangerous allegations – we demand the immediate release of President **Bush** and a formal apology from **Canada** to all Americans."

While international law forbids issuing process against a head of state, Canadian prosecutors claim that there is nothing in the decided cases on immunity from local process that prevents the opening of an investigation into international crimes committed by any foreign government official.

Both parties in the U.S. Congress also condemned the **arrest**. Democrats in the House stated that "the case against President **Bush** is without merit and flies in the face of international guidelines and basic common sense."

Using the same expletive from a heated exchange earlier this year, Vice President Dick Cheney was overheard on the Senate floor with an even stronger response. "These charges are f***** outrageous."

"The incarceration of a sitting U.S. president is unthinkable," stated Republican Majority Leader Tom DeLay. "Prime Minister Martin must release President **Bush** without delay, or face the full glory, might and wrath of the United States of America."

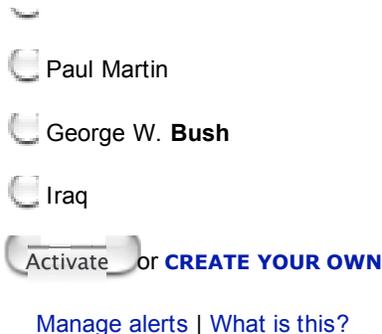
Martha Johnson, a Republican voter in Ohio, expressed similar outrage. "How dare these pretentious, liberal Canadians **arrest** our president? Who do they think they are? I can't believe their chutzpah. Forget North Korea and Iran ... we must invade **Canada** next."

Canadians are solidly Anti-Bush

According to polls, Canadians are strongly opposed to the Iraq war and disagree with many of the president's domestic and foreign policies. An Ekos Research survey last month showed support at 84 percent for **Canada's** decision not to send troops to Iraq and 59 percent of respondents indicating an overall dislike of President **Bush**.

The No to **Bush** Committee organized a large protest march in anticipation of the president's visit to **Canada**. Speakers include Naomi Klein, a writer known for her work against globalization, and Brandon Hughey, a U.S. war resister who escaped to **Canada** from Texas. The protest committee is composed of the New Democratic Party, the Canadian Peace Alliance, and the Canadian Arab Federation.

Protesters were unanimous in their praise of the **arrest** this morning. "Yes, I believe that George W. **Bush** should be held accountable for his crimes in Iraq," stated Harold Smith from Toronto. "His actions in the U.S. and around the world have been



Paul Martin

George W. **Bush**

Iraq

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reprehensible."

Another protester justified **Bush's arrest** with a hypothetical analogy. "Let's say I heard that my ex-convict neighbor is stockpiling weapons in his apartment. I call the police but they don't act swiftly enough. So, in order to protect my family from this threat, I take matters into my own hand and break into my neighbor's home while torturing and killing members of his family. Of course, I do not find any weapons."

"If justice is to be served, regardless if my claims had proven true, I would be thrown in jail forever for acting like an insane, murdering, vigilante cowboy. All we ask is that George W. **Bush** – who did the same exact thing in Iraqi on a larger, more horrifying scale – be likewise held accountable."

A third protester was more literal. "Whatever his reasons, **Bush** invaded a sovereign country. He tortured and killed thousands of innocent people. He should feel very lucky that we Canadians, unlike the Texans, do not believe in the death penalty."

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