



Political Coverup of Iraq Atrocities: Britain's "Independent" Inquiry into « Allegations of Torture and Unlawful Killings »

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« Nothing justifies killing of innocent people. » Tony Blair, CNN, 15th January 2015. (GR Editor: « In your face », Tony Blair)

A little over three months short of the thirteenth anniversary of the invasion of Iraq (20th March 2003) now widely accepted as unlawful even by the former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, it has emerged that the Unit in the British Ministry of Defence established to investigate "allegations of torture and unlawful killings" by members of the 46,000 UK armed forces originally deployed has been "overwhelmed" with cases.

The Independent reports (1) that:

"British soldiers who have served in Iraq may face prosecution for crimes, including murder", according to Mark Warwick, the former police detective heading the Unit, the Iraq Historic Allegations Team. (IHAT.)

In his first major interview, Mr. Warwick told The Independent he "believed there would be sufficient evidence to justify criminal charges."

The "serious allegations" which "include homicide", could lead to "significant evidence" being laid before "the Service Prosecuting Authority to prosecute and charge."

Allegations of torture, rape and unlawful killing by British armed services personnel between 2003 and 2009 – after which they slunk out of Iraq under cover of darkness – has increased tenfold, since the Unit was established, in November 2010:

"In 2010 (there were) cases involving 152 victims." There are now: "more than 1,500 victims", according to recent update. "Of these, 280 are victims of alleged unlawful killing by British forces in Iraq, but more than 200 of these cases have yet to be investigated, with just 25 under investigation."

Further:

“Of 1,235 alleged cases of ill-treatment, including accusations of rape and torture, only 45 are under investigation.”

Cases are to be reviewed over the coming twelve to eighteen months with “significant cases” being studied with “the war crimes threshold” in mind. Five years after IHAT’s establishment there have been no prosecutions.

To the cynic IHAT seems to have all the hallmarks of a typical British sweeping under the straw operation with the fox in charge of the henhouse brooms.

The organization was set up by the Ministry of Defence to investigate the armed services’, employees of the Ministry of Defence, alleged misconduct. Though it was established under Mark Warwick, a civilian detective, he was originally assisted by the Royal Military Police (RMP) until a ruling in the UK Court of Appeal in November 2011 that their involvement “substantially compromised” proceeding since they had been involved in detentions in Iraq – which were what were being scrutinised.

Armed Forces Minister Nick Harvey responded by replacing the RMP with the Royal Navy Police. Birmingham, UK’s Public Interest Lawyers who represent many who claim to have been tortured, challenged the new den of advocate foxes, since the Naval Police had also taken part in interrogations, alleging: “that abuses were so systemic and widespread that only a public inquiry will satisfy the UK’s human rights obligations.”

The judgement handed down on 24th May 2013 was that: “IHAT has now been structured in such a way that it can independently carry out its investigative and prosecutorial functions.” (2) RIP independent British judiciary.

The Ministry of Defence has one last, well, defence – and defiance. The funds it gave to the “Inquiry” were due to be cut off in 2016. They have been extended to 2019. Were there any will hidden somewhere in those handpicked from the ranks of those which includes alleged perpetrators to deliver justice, in such a time scale, given such a massive, meticulous legal task, it would be between Herculean to impossible to achieve.

Incidentally the Royal Navy still had a contingency in Iraq until May 2011, even after the Inquiry had been established into the horrors of Britain’s £9.24 Billion lawless onslaught (2010 figure.)

The savagery will surely haunt the UK and “allies” for countless decades to come. What an age since Tony Blair’s Christmas visit to Iraq on 23rd December 2005 when he crept in to the country, his visit kept a secret until he appeared, helicoptered in from Kuwait.

He told the troops:

« The importance of this is probably greater today than it has ever been” and that Iraq would now mean that: “ ... the region is more safe, our own country is more safe, because international terrorism will have been dealt a huge blow.

« If we manage to defeat the terrorism here, we will have dealt it a blow worldwide.”

Of course before the invasion there was no terrorism, car bombs, suicide bombers in Iraq, Syria or widely elsewhere, they manifested and multiplied with the arrival of the invaders.

Tony Blair is pursued globally by those aiming to try him for war crimes, crimes against the peace, or crimes of aggression. Events have displayed his delusional mendacity not alone in his hand in the unimaginable horrors of the destruction of Iraq and that inflicted on the people, country and poisoning of the region by the chemically toxic and radioactive weapons used – but the totally predictable blowback it has wrought in terror alerts and acts in the West and against Western interests.

The least that is owed, minimal as it is, given the enormity of Iraq's victims, is independent, honest investigations and justice from Britain's IHAT. It is very little, very late. It will not quell the grief, the rage, home the dispossessed, the orphans, widows, or bring back the dead, but it would be a start.

Charles Antony Lynton Blair, QC, in the Dock with his cohorts in this tragedy, which will be recorded amongst history's great crimes, would also serve as a warning that Nuremberg's great Principles still apply, as expressed then by Chief American Prosecutor Robert H. Jackson:

“To initiate a war of aggression, therefore, is not only an international crime; it is the supreme international crime differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole.”

Notes

1. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/british-soldiers-could-face-prosecution-for-crimes-committed-during-iraq-conflict-investigators-a6793271.html>
2. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iraq_Historic_Allegations_Team#cite_note-7
3. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iraq_Historic_Allegations_Team
4. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/4551650.stm

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