

Iraq's Children: Ever Expendable - From Madeleine Albright to Tony Blair and "Save the Children."

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Region: [Europe](#), [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#)

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"It's a hard choice, but the price, we think the price is worth it. " (Madeleine Albright, then US Ambassador to the UN, on the "embargo related" deaths of half a million Iraqi children, 12th May 1996.)

"The most traumatized child population on earth." (Professor Magne Raundalen, Centre for Crisis Studies, Bergen, Norway, February 1992.)

Tony Blair was, mind-stretchingly, presented with Save the Children's Global Legacy Award, on 19th November 2014. His acceptance speech included that his: "... sense is that amidst all the challenges, and all the misery and deprivation that we seek to conquer and vanquish, there is something hopeful ... something to be thankful for."

Ironically, just two months earlier (15th August 2014) Save the Children released a Report (1) on the on the trauma amongst Iraq's children in Northern Iraq alone, after eleven years of a Bush-Blair driven illegal invasion and ongoing resultant conflict. Iraq's children, it was clear, had no hope and nothing "to be thankful for."

Yet Blair was lauded by an organization that claims: "We envision a future in which no child will die from preventable causes and where every child has nutritious food and clean water."

Without Blair's claims of fantasy WMDs with which Iraq could wreak annihilation in "45 minutes", a lie quoted by General Colin Powell at the United Nations exactly twelve years ago, 5th February 2003, for the children of Iraq a genocidal "preventable cause" might have been avoided.

"Nutritious food and clean water", had, of course, been deliberately destroyed on US Central Command's order to bomb all water facilities in Iraq in 1991. Food was poisoned by the use of Depleted Uranium (DU) weapons, contaminating all fauna and flora. DU's "half-life" is 4.5 Billion years. And it is not "depleted."

The contamination nightmare was compounded in orders of magnitude by the further use of DU weapons in 2003, used again by the UK under Blair's government. (2)

Befoulment of air, water and food for infinity condemns future generations of unborn, newborn and developing children in Iraq and the region to a poisoned legacy of cancers and

deformities for generations to come. War crimes unequalled in history.

Moreover: “ The special investigator of the UN Sub-Committee on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights has declared DU munitions illegal under existing humanitarian law. DU weapons also produce a toxic metal fume (sic) that violates the Geneva Protocol on the Use of Gas in War, which the US signed in 1975.” (3)

Further, after thirteen years of the US-UK driven embargo resulting in the deaths of an average of six thousand children a month from “embargo-related causes”, according to the UN, Prime Minister Blair was integral in instigating **a war against children:**

In 2003 Iraq’s population was just twenty four million. Over forty percent were aged 0-14. The median age of the country was nineteen. (4)

By 2010, seven years in to an unending war, over a quarter of Iraqi children suffered from Post Traumatic Stress disorder. (War Child Report, May 2013.) In the five months prior to the Report’s publication, 700 children and young people had been killed, a figure, as all on Iraq, almost certainly a significant underestimate. Between financial constraints, fear of authority and the dangers of travel, numerous deaths are unrecorded.

Also in 2010 a study of cancers, leukemia’s and birth defects linked to the use of DU proved:“... that there are massive increases in cancer, a 38-fold increase in leukemia, 10-fold increase in breast cancer and infant mortalities are also staggering,” stated one of the authors, scientist Malak Hamdan. (5)

“We invest in childhood – every day, in times of crisis & for our future. We give children a healthy start, the opportunity to learn & protection from harm”, states Save the Children on Facebook.

They should urgently research what their Global Award winner has unleashed on the child population of Iraq by viewing the eye watering, mind numbing UN Report on total deaths and injuries month by month, November 2012 to date. (6) 2014 was the “deadliest year since 2008”, which was the deadliest year since 2005 in Iraq’s never ending annual hell. The figures should be engraved on Blair’s tombstone.

As Tony Blair and fellow architects of the invasion celebrated Christmas and New Year it was announced, on 1st January 2015, that: “According to casualty figures released today by UNAMI, a total of 1,101 Iraqis were killed and another 1,868 were wounded in acts of terrorism and violence in December.”

January 2015 saw no sign of improvement.

Of course, as recounted before, after the 1991 decimation, US and UK ‘planes bombed Iraq illegally, often daily, throughout the grinding deprivation of the embargo years until the 2003 blitzkrieg and invasion. That criminal onslaught intensified under Blair’s government.

As ever, children were the paramount victims. After one attack on Baghdad the children in the main orphanage refused to sleep in their beds ever again, huddling under them for pathetic perceived extra safety.

When the flocks of sheep and goats were routinely bombed – Iraqis were convinced they

were to be deprived of all food since broadly fifty percent of all livestock were targeted and destroyed, as were precious date palms, in 1991- the child shepherds were blown to bits with their flocks.

In context, but as also recounted before, when I telephoned Blair's Ministry of Defence and asked why they were targeting these flocks, always tended by very young children whose ages were not even in double digits, the spokesman did not miss a beat: "We reserve the right to take robust action when threatened", he replied.

On receiving his Award Blair also said: "What we celebrate is the opposite of cynicism and the reason for optimism ..." Not if you are a child in Iraq or Afghanistan, the latter also decimated and invaded with the help of his forces.

In the UK, Miranda Pinch was outraged enough by the Award to instantly set up a petition condemning this honouring of Blair, which gathered 125,000 signatures. With Robin Priestly of the "38 Degrees" petition organization and writer Miranda Landgraf she delivered it to Save the Children UK's Director of Policy and Advocacy, Brendan Cox on 13th January.

Landgraf, who also crochets professionally: "handed Brendon Cox three baskets of 490 crocheted flowers with the name and age, where known, of a child victim in Gaza. Countless more flowers could have been produced to represent the innocent children that have died across the Middle East under Blair's watch in his various roles", writes Miranda Pinch, detailing the meeting. (7)

Brendan Cox agreed to make a public statement regarding the Blair debacle, and the "error of judgement" of his colleague Justin Forsyth.

Forsyth is a former special advisor to Blair and is now Chief Executive of Save the Children, UK. He delivered the Award invitation to Blair personally.

After the meeting and some negotiation, Miranda Pinch received a letter (8) from Brendan Cox, it included:

"As you know, this was a decision made by Save the Children US and although we were made aware of the decision, and we passed on the invite to his office at their request, we weren't part of the decision making process. In retrospect we should have foreseen the controversy this might generate." Indeed they should.

"For a number of reasons this is not a decision Save UK would have taken."

The really mind bending bit is: "This isn't because Tony Blair doesn't deserve recognition for the leadership he showed on Africa - he does - but because his other actions, particularly those on Iraq, which Save the Children opposed strongly at the time, overshadow how the public see him in the UK."

Blair of course has made a mint from advising some controversial alleged human rights decimators in Africa. From his Africa Governance Initiative website:

"AGI works in Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea, Nigeria and Senegal at present, with new countries on the horizon. We work at two levels: At the

political leadership level, Tony Blair draws on his ten years as Prime Minister to offer leaders the kind of advice on reform that only someone who has stood in a leader's shoes can give."

Apart from jaw dropping arrogance, how his "ten years as Prime Minister" which including erasing children and their families, engaging in mistruths justifying an illegal invasion, and enjoining another (Afghanistan) and the decimation of the former Yugoslavia qualifies him to "offer leaders the kind of advice on reform ...", surely only a psychiatrist could fathom.

His direct involvement in the Iraq embargo as Prime Minister from 1997, and the subsequent illegal invasion are not an "overshadow" but a genocide.

A truly astonishing phrase in Brendan Cox's letter is that: "The intent behind the (Save the Children USA) Award was to incentivize and recognize political leadership on development."

"Leadership on development"? Blair enjoined in destroying the "Cradle of Civilization", outdoing the Mongol Hordes in their 1258 destruction of Baghdad.

Bush and Blair's onslaught obliterated unique archeological gems, ancient libraries, manuscripts, monuments, throughout the country, with infrastructure, social structures, education, health, welfare, all civil records - births, deaths, marriages, land deeds, national archives - environment, normality.

Save the Children's co-founder, Eglantyne Jebb, established the organization in the UK in response to Europe and Russia's tragedies after World War One. She: "...wanted to make the rights and welfare of children a major issue around the world. Her 'Declaration of the Rights of the Child' was adopted by the forerunner of the UN, The League of Nations and inspired the current UN Convention on the Rights of the Child."

Having established by telephone that Save the Children International is still London based, I emailed: "My main query is fairly kindergarten. If, as I understand it, Orange Street (in central London) is, if you will, the 'head office' for StC International a) why were they not consulted regarding the Award to Tony Blair and b) why have they no say in rescinding it?"

So far, there has been no response.

Notes:

1. <http://www.savethechildren.net/article/increasing-number-iraqi-children-displaying--signs-trauma-after-fleeing-violence-north>
2. [Daily Hansard - Written Answers, 22 July 2010 : Column 459W, Written Answers to Questions: Depleted Uranium](#) (Scroll to last question.)
3. <http://truth-out.org/archive/component/k2/item/68824:craig--etchison-depleted-uranium-pernicious-killer-keeps-on-killing>
4. http://www.indexmundi.com/en/facts/2003/iraq/demographics_profile.html
5. <http://rt.com/news/uk-iraq-depleted-uranium/>
6. http://www.uniraq.org/index.php?option=com_k2&view=-

[itemlist&task=category&id=159:civilian-casualties&Itemid=633&lang=en](#)

7. <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/stop-save-the-children-charity-from-giving--tony-blair-their-annual-global-legacy-award>
8. <http://www.globalresearch.ca/the-campaign-to-revoke-war-criminal-tony-blairs-global--legacy-award-save-the-children-stc-responds-and-apologizes/5428784>
9. <http://www.africagovernance.org/africa/pages/our-approach>
10. <http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/about-us/history#sthash.RTNZdYWk.dpuf>

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