

Man of Faith: Crusader Tony Blair's Vision: Eternal War: Iran and Syria Next?

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“Since 1990 upper estimates are of three million Iraqi deaths between sanctions, bombings and invasion, under four US Administrations. One thousand 9/11s.” Malcom Lagauche.*

I once worked for a man whose inconsistencies and delusions stretched the mind to a realm beyond confusion. Having laid down specific edicts as to aims and how they should be achieved, the following day he would yell at staff for following them - and deny all knowledge of his instructions.

One day an exasperated colleague hung a placard on the wall above his desk before he arrived. It read: “You are never alone with schizophrenia.”

Combing through Tony Blair's statements over the years, this week of the tenth anniversary of the attack on the Twin Towers, I had a feeling of déjà vu.

The former Prime Minister is, however, totally consistent in one thing: his inconsistency.

On 9th September, the man under whose premiership the fantasy of Iraq being able to attack the West “within 45 minutes”, instrumental in the justification for invasion, was dreamed up - yet apparently so frightened, that he was smuggled in to the Chilcot Inquiry on Iraq, via a back door in January last year - called for regime change in Syria and Iran.

As parts of Afghanistan and Iraq still smolder, daily, since Britain's enthusiastic endorsement of “liberation”, Blair, who qualified as a barrister, sworn to uphold the law, told The (London) Times: “Regime change in Iran would make me significantly more optimistic about the whole of the region.”

The West should be prepared to use force, he suggested, if Iran continued to pursue its nuclear ambitions. Iran has repeatedly denied having a weapons programme, with the country's Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei saying they will not develop nuclear weapons, unequivocally condemning them as un-Islamic.

The IAEA Inspectors have said repeatedly that they have been allowed unfettered access to installations, without prior notice. However, as the political pressure builds, they appear slightly wobbly. It has to be hoped they are not again incorporating in their teams, those with other interests, as was the case with Iraq.

President Assad of Syria, Blair further opined, has shown he: “... is not capable of reform. His

position is untenable. There is no process of change that leaves him intact.”

Yet on 13th November 2006, in a keynote speech at London’s Guildhall, the then Prime Minister announced an “evolution” in the British government’s Iraq strategy, based on greater cooperation with Syria and Iran.

The following week, he was to give evidence by video-link, to the Iraq Survey Group, headed by former US Secretary of State James Baker. Blair would urge the US Administration to open up talks with Syria and Iran, seemingly believing that he could influence Washington and change the course of the Iraq “impasse” (most would say unspeakable tragedy.) George W. Bush, he believed, was “genuinely” open to a change of strategy, after the mid-term election reverses, according to a UK government spokesman. (Guardian, 11th November 2006.) Another day, another delusion.

James Baker, incidentally, watched the attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon, from the Ritz Carlton Hotel, in Washington DC, where he was attending the annual Conference of the Carlyle Group, for whom he was Senior Counselor.(i) Also attending were representatives of Osama bin Laden’s family, which, with the Bush family, were amongst its major investors.(ii)

Blair’s busy media round on 9th September, included an interesting interview with the BBC’s “Today” programme’s John Humphreys, who suggested that his hand in the planning of involvement in Afghanistan and the Iraq invasion, had been: “An historic failure of judgement.” Two decimated countries, in response to: “a small group of people who committed a terrible act.”

It was instructive that Blair agreed that they: “ ...might have been an isolated bunch of terrorists”, but then: “Saddam was undoubtedly a threat ... the aim was regime change.” Ah, the truth finally slithered out..

Saddam Hussein and Iraq posed no threat to the West, Humphreys pursued, yet: “ ... we caused terrorism in Iraq, there was none before we went there.”

Blair, whether blinded by bloodlust, ignorance or denial, was adamant: “The war on terror has not led to the difficulties in Iraq and Afghanistan ... Iran meddling from the outside”, was the problem.

“As a result of what we did”, concluded Humphreys.

“Iran is a growing threat”, it was not to do with Saddam Hussein having gone, but to their interference in Iraq. If necessary, Blair reiterated again, “force must anyway be used to stop their nuclear programme – if they continue to produce nuclear weapons.” Threats are now: “exemplified by Iran.” Another day, another country, another unproven accusation of weapons of mass destruction.

(In context, it is worth revisiting an excerpt from Blair’s introduction to: “Assessment of the British Government” on Iraq’s weapons (24th September 2002.)

“I want to share with the British public the reasons why I believe this issue to be a current and serious threat to the UK national interest.” (“National interest”, eh?)

"In recent months, I have been increasingly alarmed by the evidence from inside Iraq, that despite sanctions, despite the damage done to his capability in the past, despite the UN Security Council Resolutions expressly outlawing it, and despite his denials, Saddam Hussein is continuing to develop WMD, and with them the ability to inflict real damage upon the region, and the stability of the world ...

"What I believe the assessed intelligence has established beyond doubt is that Saddam has continued to produce chemical and biological weapons, that he continues in his efforts to develop nuclear weapons, and that he has been able to extend the range of his ballistic missile programme.")

However, if "God loves a trier", Humphreys will have a special place in Heaven. The pathetic, broken, battered face of Baha Moussa, a hotel receptionist, beaten to death by British troops in Basra, who died of 93 injuries, fronted every paper that day, at the end of a three year Inquiry, driven by the tireless Phil Shiner's Public Interest Lawyers, which concluded there had been: "serious, gratuitous" and "systematic violence" by UK forces. Humphreys tackled alleged collusion in both torture and rendition, "enabled under your watch."

Blair knew nothing. Was more or less astonished at the question, but then, he said, one can't know everything. Astonishing. Apart from allegations of British Army excesses, first alleged in 2003, Craig Murray, Ambassador to Uzbekistan from 2002-2004, wrote to Blair and Bush, outlining the horrendous practices in that country's alliance in the "war on terror" - and was ultimately fired for the alert. (iv)

Murray's subsequent mammoth battle with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, which moved every legal mountain to stop publication of his book, (v) under Blair's Premiership, with massive accompanying publicity, documentaries, plays, can hardly have passed Blair by.

By April 2006, 185 CIA rendition flights via Britain had been tracked by Amnesty, who demanded a government Inquiry. Airports used had been London's Stanstead, Gatwick, and Luton, Glasgow International, Glasgow Prestwick and Edinburgh.(v)

Humphreys concluded the interview by pointing out that: "The consequence of the war on terror is damaging to the world and to all of us."

Of course not, said the Middle East Peace Envoy, the culprit was: " ... perversion of religion ... radical Islamism." He "totally disagreed" his actions might have led to some being "radicalized."

"When we defeat the ideology, war ends." This may not be for another generation or more, he warns.

The introductory blurb on his Faith Foundation's website states: "The Tony Blair Faith Foundation avoids commentary of the internal affairs of individual faith communities."

The man who said of his relationship with Bush: "We pray together", also notes that: "Religious faith can also be used to divide ... we still see how it can be distorted to fan the flames of hatred ." Presumably enjoining a "Crusade", and decimating only Muslim countries, does not count in flame fanning..

Allied soldiers routinely desecrating Qu'rans and Mosques and sneeringly calling victims of

their invasions “hajjis”, “ragheads” and “sand niggers”, might also do a bit of fanning.

In January 2009: Foreign Secretary, David Miliband, Blair’s former Head of Policy, described the “war on terror” approach as “misleading and mistaken”.

“Historians will judge whether it has done more harm than good,” he said, adding that, in his opinion, the whole strategy had been dangerously counterproductive, helping otherwise disparate groups find common cause against the West.” Better late than never?

It seems a long time since Anthony Charles Lynton Blair, QC., on taking office as Prime Minister, assured the country he was: “A pretty straight sort of guy.”

* *Author: “The Mother of all Battles: The Endless US-Iraq War.”*
<http://www.malcomlagauche.com/>

i. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Baker

ii. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carlyle_Group

iii.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-09-13/iran-s-ethics-don-t-allow-atomic-bombs-science-minister-says.html>

iv. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2004/jul/15/foreignpolicy.uk>

v.

http://www.amazon.co.uk/s/?ie=UTF8&keywords=craig+murray+murder&tag=googhydr-21&index=stripbooks&hvadid=9008923966&ref=pd_sl_x7vaz5479_b

vi. <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article702157.ece>

Part Two follows : Anomalies at the Chilcot Inquiry.

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