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Petition to UK Parliament: Arrest Tony Blair for War Crimes

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Arrest Tony Blair for War Crimes in the Middle East. A few reasons why. On Saturday, 26th September Ahmed Mahdi Al Faqi was arrested and delivered to the International Criminal Court at The Hague. He is charged with war crimes, the deliberate destruction of religious or historical monuments in Mali and especially the ancient shrines of Timbuktu

"The word genocide comes to mind."

(Weapons expert Dai Williams, letter to Tony Blair warning of consequences of Iraq action, 13th October 2002.)

On Saturday, 26th September Ahmed Mahdi Al Faqi was arrested and delivered to the International Criminal Court at The Hague. He is charged with war crimes, the deliberate destruction of religious or historical monuments in Mali and especially the irreplaceable ancient shrines of Timbuktu, in 2012.

Felicity Arbuthnot

The ICC's Chief Prosecutor, Fatou Nesouda described the destruction in Timbuktu as: "a callous assault on the dignity and identity of entire populations and their religious and historical roots."

Timbuktu city is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. During the 16th and 17th Centuries this academic and cultural beacon boasted one hundred and eighty schools and universities, drawing students and scholars from across the Muslim world.

"The people of Mali deserve justice for the attacks against their cities, their beliefs and their communities", states Nesouda.

On the same day as Al Faqi's arrest a petition to the British Parliament was released to: "Arrest Tony Blair for war crimes in the Middle East and for misleading the public."

Britain is a signatory to the one hundred and twenty three nation-backed ICC thus the petition's aims are possible.

Blair indeed blatantly misled the public and the Parliament he headed. The disinformation was breathtaking and the result also: "a callous assault on the dignity and identity of entire populations and their religious and historical roots." The people of Iraq too deserve: "justice for the attacks against their cities, their beliefs and their communities."

On 24th September 2002 Blair addressed Parliament. He began: "Today we published a 50-page dossier detailing the history of Iraq's WMD, its breach of UN resolutions and the current attempts to rebuild the illegal WMD programme."

It was, broadly, fifty pages of obfuscations, untruths and economies with the truth. For instance he stated that the UN weapons Inspectors met with "obstruction" e.g: " ... finally in late 1998, the UN team were forced to withdraw. As the dossier sets out, we estimate on the basis of the UN's work that there were: up to 360 tonnes of bulk chemical warfare agents, including one and a half tonnes of VX nerve agent; up to 3,000 tonnes of precursor chemicals; growth media sufficient to

produce 26,000 litres of anthrax spores; and over 30,000 special munitions for delivery of chemical and biological agents ... All of this was missing or unaccounted for."

Of course no such chemical and biological agents existed - and in 1998 the UN Inspectors had fled to the safety of Bahrain on the orders of Richard Butler, who then headed the team, having been tipped off that the US and UK were to bomb Iraq again, illegally, in time for Christmas.

To clarify "obstruction." As one who was in Iraq numerous times during the UN weapons inspectors tenures and who witnessed their arrogant, discourteous, uncivil behavior towards Iraqis staggering financially under the weight of the crippling embargo. Iraq was however charged for their accommodation, vehicles, living expenses, salaries. "Obstruction" became a sick game.

"Obstructions" were noted and reported to the UN as non-co-operation on behalf of the Iraqi authorities, building a case for further bombing or invasion. These almost invariably occurred when the weapons inspectors turned up unannounced, out of hours so the facility to be inspected was, naturally, deserted. They would drive away and note it as an obstruction - or if they called the owner or manager and he had to get dressed and drive for an hour to get there to let them in, that too was an "obstruction."

Other "obstructions" would be to turn up on Friday, the Sabbath, or on public holidays, when only security guards were there. They needed the permission of their boss to allow any one in to the facility. As they made the telephone call for that permission, it was noted as an "obstruction." There are uncounted other examples of the devious wickedness perpetrated in the name of the UN.

The fifty page dossier, Blair assured, confirmed: "(Saddam Hussein's) WMD programme is active, detailed and growing. The policy of containment is not working. The WMD programme is not shut down. It is up and running."

It was: "... important we explain our concerns over Saddam to the British people ..." Moreover: "... he has existing and active military plans for the use of chemical and biological weapons, which could be activated within 45 minutes ..."

Destroyed munitions plants had been rebuilt and: "... In addition, we know Saddam has been trying to buy significant quantities of uranium from Africa ..."

This all was a pack of lies, the latter claim comprehensively trashed by Ambassador Joseph Wilson. Iraq has vast amounts of uranium, discovered, marked and mapped by the British

in the 1950s and had they been developing a weapons programme, had no need to buy it from anywhere.

Saddam Hussein had in fact closed down his nuclear programme shortly after the 1991 attack.

As for the rebuilt munitions plants, a number of them were visited by former UN Under Secretary General, Hans von Sponeck and myself as these stories circulated, they remained in ruins or trashed, devoured by overgrown undergrowth and deserted.

Saddam Hussein, said Blair, could: "could begin a conflict" of which: "the consequences" could: "engulf the whole world." What an irony that the consequences of US and UK actions in Iraq and throughout the region in their demented "Crusade" indeed now endangers all the Middle East, North Africa and drawn in to combat the madness are countries as far away as Australia, Canada and Europe. Much of the world.

Three weeks after Blair's fantasy assurances to Parliament, weapons research expert Dai Williams wrote to him warning of the illegalities of the weapons the UK and US coalition would use:

They would be: "... directly in contravention of Articles 35 and 55 of the 1st Protocol additional to the Geneva Conventions. They are, put simply, weapons of indiscriminate effect."

The letter, headed:

"Use of Uranium weapons in Afghanistan and Iraq: Hazards for civilians and ground forces", begins: "In recent weeks I have been alarmed by your support for US plans to launch another major military offensive on Iraq, ostensibly to destroy Iraqi weapons of mass destruction."

Williams makes clear it will be the UK and US who will be using weapons of mass and indiscriminate destruction: "These weapons are large radiological bombs."

"Last week I was advised of US Patent Number 6,389,977 (1997) for a 'shrouded aerial bomb.' This is the patent for a series of guided weapons using the upgraded BLU-109/B warhead. Claim 5 of this patent states:

'The shrouded aerial bomb as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the penetrating body is formed of depleted uranium.'

"This and 6 other US patents verify the development of guided weapons and sub-munitions with Uranium warheads ..."

"An additional problem is emerging from my recent investigations. It seems likely that US arms manufacturers may be using standard, not depleted uranium in new weapons i.e. Uranium metal with the same isotopic mix as natural uranium (99.3% U238, 0.7% U235). "
The full Report was attached to the letter.

"This would explain why researchers in Hungary and Greece detected increased airborne Uranium dust soon after the Balkans bombing began, but that it appeared to be natural, not depleted uranium ... Independent researchers are now alert to this possibility. I hope Ministry of Defence staff are also considering it. Unfortunately standard uranium is more radioactive than depleted uranium."

Depleted uranium has a cancer inducing, birth deforming "half-life" of 4.5 Billion years. Crimes against humanity do not come bigger.

In context, in 1991, the UK Atomic Energy Authority warned the government of the day regarding the Iraq attack that: "If fifty tonnes" of the residual radioactive dust remained "in the region" from the bombing there would be "half a million extra cancer deaths by the end of the century" ie 2000. Their prediction was an understatement.

Williams issued a stark warning:

"I guess that the UK Storm Shadow cruise missile, also suspected of using Uranium components, has been tested in Afghanistan and will be operational in a new attack on Iraq. Other known or suspected Uranium weapons not needed in Afghanistan (e.g. anti-tank systems) will also be used in large quantities in Iraq.

"The implication is that at least 1,500 tons of Uranium weapons will be used to prosecute US war plans in Iraq, greatly increasing existing Uranium contamination from 1991 and jeopardising allied troops and Iraqi civilians alike.

"Can you justify using known weapons of indiscriminate effect to defeat supposed weapons of mass destruction? The US has scant regard for international law in its military operations. What is your Government's view on knowingly using weapons of indiscriminate effect in Iraq?

"This letter puts you on notice of that issue. UK forces are accountable to you. The use of such weapons contravening international law must be a political, not military decision, preferably decided by Parliament."

The letter warns:

"Regardless of your obligations under international law ... I suggest you have moral obligations in this matter.

"How will you justify risking the slow death of tens of thousands of people whose lives will be irreversibly affected by Uranium contamination? The word genocide comes to mind. This may not concern President Bush. I hope it will concern you, your Cabinet and all MPs asked to support your plans now you are alerted to the latest evidence about Uranium weapons."

Williams concludes:

"With respect Prime Minister I suggest you need a lot more facts before you commit more UK troops to a new war in Iraq. At this time you face being drawn by the Pentagon and US Government into the greatest military scandal since Agent Orange in Vietnam."

Since Williams prophetic words former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has declared the Iraq decimation illegal stating: "I have indicated it is not in conformity with the UN Charter, from our point of view, and from the Charter point of view it was illegal."

The UN's former Chief weapons Inspector, Hans Blix has echoed this view, telling the UK Iraq Inquiry: "I am of the firm view that it was an illegal war. There can be cases where it is doubtful, maybe it was permissible to go to war, but Iraq was, in my view, not one of those."

Numerous international law experts concur, as have many legally led public Inquiries as the 2011 Kuala Lumpur War Crime Tribunal, a seven Member panel chaired by former Malaysian Federal Court Judge, Abdul Kadir Sulaiman.

"The five panel tribunal unanimously decided that the former US and British leaders had committed crimes against peace and humanity, and also violated international law when they ordered the invasion of Iraq in March 2003."

UNESCO has described the destruction and pillage of Iraq "cultural cleansing."

If a man is deemed a war criminal for the terrible destruction of history in Mali is and delivered to the ICC, Bush and Blair - whose actions destroyed virtually the whole of Iraq, a swathe of its history and set in train the ongoing destruction, indeed genocide, should be treated no differently. Tony Blair's assertions in Parliament in 2002 were integral in the excuse for the illegal invasion and ongoing bloodbath now also engulfing Syria.

If you care for the law, for humanity, if eligible, please sign the petition.