

Freed, Any The Wiser?

This is a point that is bound to be made all over (the sane parts of) the blogosphere today, but it deserves to be made again.

Three so-called 'peace activists' who had been kidnapped by the very terrorists in Iraq for whose cause they had gone there to campaign, were **freed** today by British and Canadian special forces whom they vilify as criminals.

They have been given their freedom, no doubt at some slight risk to their own lives (though, in the event, their captors had fled by the time of the rescue), and potentially at great risk to the lives of their rescuers. They pronounce themselves "delighted" to have been granted exactly what they have devoted their lives to denying the Iraqi people.

Thu, 03/23/2006 - 15:00 | [digg](#) | [del.icio.us](#) | [permalink](#)

How had they "devoted their lives"

to denying the Iraqi people freedom?

Are you still seriously contending that the Iraqi people are any freer now than under Saddam?

by a reader on Fri, 03/24/2006 - 02:07 | [reply](#)

What?

The locusts stripping Iraq bare are insulted. General Sir Michael Jackson, a Bloody Sunday criminal, a Kosovo war criminal and now a loyal goon in the mobbing of Baghdad, told ITN that he was "saddened that there does not seem to have been a note of gratitude for the soldiers who risked their lives to save those lives". ITN arranged a phone-in programme about the release of Norman Kember and the Christian peacekeepers who were with him. The question: "Do you believe Norman Kember was right to put his life in danger for the sake of the Iraqi people? Or, do you believe he's been irresponsible?" Such a question has its own pre-written answers. It calls upon ingrained cultural prejudices, sullen racism, resentment against do-gooders, those who have the temerity, the audacity, to actually consider the lives of Iraqis worth protecting and respecting. The answers: "What did he hope to achieve by going to Iraq? Our troops are already there to keep the peace!" "He

put the lives of our troops in more danger." "How much has his rescue cost the taxpayer?"

Asked to comment on the rescue of Briton Norman Kember, readers of Britain's Daily Telegraph generally excoriated Kember and the two Canadians as "irresponsible." A typical email read:

"No civilian has a 'right' to enter a war zone to protest that war or dig up stories of abuse against the soldiers who are fighting it. These same soldiers must then go in and rescue these ridiculous people from certain death at the hands of their captors and risk their own lives doing it."

Terry Waite, whose own saintliness is matchless, has been called upon to question the tactics of the Christian peacemakers. And the Telegraph reports, Released hostages 'refuse to help their rescuers'. For The Times, the release of the hostages underlines "the warning against naive attempts by well-intentioned Western peace activists to ignore Iraq's brutal politics and risk their lives."

Forget, if you like, that these peacemakers and pacifists specifically request that no military action is undertaken to release them in the event of a kidnap. The phoney excuses for this campaign of vilification are an affront to human intelligence. Heroism played no part in their release, unless you consider the folding of the mercenary group that held them an act of heroism. No risk - none at all - befell the troops who went in to the place of captivity and found the three hostages sitting alone and unguarded. If the activities of a group intent on protecting the human rights of Iraqis invites greater risk for the troops there, what does this say about the conduct of the troops? The crime, for these snivelling wretches, these utterly pathetic whiners, is to locate evidence of and draw attention to the crimes of the imperialists, to be insufficiently grateful to the warmongers, to refuse to be pliant and play the role of saps, media darlings who will testify to the brutality of Iraq, shower praise on the hired thugs, and tell tales of woe and regret. Surely, what General Jackson should ask for is an apology, not thanks. An apology from the irresponsible elements, the unruly pacifist dreamers, who dared to interfere with so delicate and responsible an operation as the pillaging of Iraq. The only Christian do-gooders welcome in Iraq are Franklin Graham's proselytisers, the Islam-is-evil cult that fulfils the historical mandate of the civilising mission. Christians for Bush, in short. Billy Graham led Bush to Christianity, Franklin delivered the invocation at his inauguration, and the missionaries they have dispatched to Iraq sanctify the holy war against evil, testify to its virtuosity, salute the brave boys and girls who bring death to the Lord's enemies, and fervently await the glorious rapture that is sure to come now that Israel has been established for almost sixty years into the age of television. Only they, with their masturbatory fantasies of Divine Genocide, are meritorious, they who will either convert the untermenschen or say amen and bow their heads respectfully as the Lord's conduits crush them. Christians for peace? Christians for human rights? Christians against racist war? Christians against the apocalypse? Don't you know how irresponsible that is?

<http://leninology.blogspot.com/>

by a reader on Sat, 03/25/2006 - 11:05 | [reply](#)

Serious?

Yes, we seriously believe Iraq is now more free than under Saddam. Why do you think we'd post things we don't seriously believe?

-- Elliot Temple

Now Blogging Again

by [Elliot Temple](#) on Sun, 03/26/2006 - 09:41 | [reply](#)

Belief

You believed Saddam had WMD. It had remarkably little effect on the facts.

And, of course, those who are factually wrong are usually morally wrong.

You can put your head back in the sand now.

by a reader on Sun, 03/26/2006 - 10:49 | [reply](#)

Re: Belief

You believed Saddam had WMD.

Good point. So presumably you believed he didn't. You managed to see through his deception better than all the governments of the world (**including his**). What was your method?

by [Editor](#) on Sun, 03/26/2006 - 12:42 | [reply](#)

Re: Method

A good start is this rule of thumb: Q.How can you tell if a political leader is probably lying to you? A. His lips are moving. That being said, are you any the wiser for your mistakes? I don't see a lot of soul searching going on here, more of a retreat into your own fantasies.

by a reader on Sun, 03/26/2006 - 13:21 | [reply](#)

Piece of piss

1) I checked to see if the US were planning on invading. They were. I compared the situation to the handling of North Korea.

2) I listened to Ritter and Blix. Then I looked at the US and UK try to scrape together (and fake) evidence.

3) Then there's Saddam's "Oh, I have no WMD, nudge nudge, wink wink" bluffing when the US army is on his doorstep.

Pretty obvious, really.

It's amazing (if a little disheartening) to see libertarians such as yourselves swallowing (and so eagerly!) so much government cock.

by a reader on Sun, 03/26/2006 - 13:32 | [reply](#)

Re: Method

Your method of seeing through Saddam's deception, namely to assume that all other politicians were probably lying, depends on their knowing the truth before you do. Are you claiming that most of the politicians in the world knew that there were no WMD stocks in Iraq but lied about it? Or were some of them fooled by the others?

by [Editor](#) on Sun, 03/26/2006 - 13:54 | [reply](#)

Neither

Sadly, my psychic powers aren't as sharp as they once were. What goes on in the minds of politicians, we can only wonder. Not for too long, or it starts to get a bit worrying.

by a reader on Sun, 03/26/2006 - 14:30 | [reply](#)

Oh, and

"Your method of seeing through Saddam's deception, namely to assume that all other politicians were probably lying, depends on their knowing the truth before you do."

No it doesn't.

BTW, I do like your way of blogging/thinking. Arguments can be argued with, whereas a statement of opinion expressed firmly enough - and with absolutely no argument - can often be taken in as solid fact. Interesting, in a chin-stroking/pipe filling sort of way.

So, make yourself comfortable and tell me about your mother. Did she perhaps have an unpleasant experience with nuance whilst carrying you?

by a reader on Sun, 03/26/2006 - 14:37 | [reply](#)

WMDs

Why is it everybody is assuming Bush etc. were wrong about the WMDs? Just because they haven't been found in Iraq? There are reports (e.g. [here](#) and [here](#)) SH simply moved them to Syria just before the invasion.

Henry Sturman

by [Henry Sturman](#) on Tue, 03/28/2006 - 09:40 | [reply](#)

Think

IF Bush and co actually thought the WMD were there, and had done a disappearing act, don't you think they'd be just a little bit jumpy right now? Getting (then) 12 year old info off of t'net, removing caveats and not noticing when a number of papers scream 45 MINUTES UNTIL WMD ARMAGEDDON! to point out you were talking about normal armaments.

My, the government just loves you.

'Just before the invasion'

He has the World's Largest Army [tm] on his doorstep and in his duckpond. Spyplanes are (and have been for years) everywhere. 'Simply'? SIMPLY?

by anon on Fri, 04/07/2006 - 19:59 | [reply](#)

They did risk their lives

The rescuers did in fact **risk their lives**.

by a reader on Sun, 04/16/2006 - 00:18 | [reply](#)