

Archbishop Tutu Opens Gate for Prosecuting War Criminal Blair

by EIR Staff

Sept. 12—At the end of August, former Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa, created a major international incident by refusing to appear on a speakers' platform with former British Prime Minister, and war criminal, Tony Blair—the man whom the British oligarchy has tasked as a major controller of President Barack Obama. Tutu's public declaration of why Blair's actions vis-à-vis the 2003 invasion of Iraq were "morally indefensible," were then amplified in a Sept. 2 opinion column in the London *Observer*.

Not surprisingly, the U.S. media has given virtually no coverage to this public indictment of the still active and ambitious Blair, or Tutu's simultaneous attack on former President George W. Bush for the same war crime. But the action of the renowned peace activist has reverberated within Great Britain, leading to expanded attacks on Blair in the media, and some hopeful commentary that the Archbishop's attack may be the first step in a long-overdue War Crimes Tribunal for the perpetrators of aggressive war.

Tutu Withdraws

Tutu's announcement that he was withdrawing from the Aug. 30 Discovery Life and Discovery Invest Marketing conference in Johannesburg, an international event bringing together "leaders" from all over the world, came on Aug. 28. In his letter, the former Anglican Archbishop, who received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984 for his campaigning against apartheid in South Africa, said that he had withdrawn from the event because he "is of the view that Mr. Blair's decision to support the United States military invasion of Iraq, on the basis of unproven allegations of the existence in Iraq of weapons of mass destruction, was morally indefensible."



Tony Blair's "decision to support the United States military invasion of Iraq, on the basis of unproven allegations of the existence in Iraq of weapons of mass destruction, was morally indefensible," stated Archbishop Tutu.

Tutu's office added: "The Discovery Invest Summit has leadership as its theme. Morality and leadership are indivisible. In this context, it would be inappropriate for the Archbishop to share a platform with Mr. Blair."

Blair responded with a defense of his morally indefensible action, and implicitly added a threat to commit the crime again, this time against Syria and Iran. "We are faced with the same types of decisions now with Syria. Do we intervene or not intervene? With Iran, do we allow them to get nuclear capability? Are we prepared to intervene and stop them?"

Simultaneous with the Archbishop's action, a number of South African organizations announced that they wanted to arrest Blair for war crimes when he arrived in South Africa. Mustafa Darsot, a member of the South African Muslim Network executive committee,

told the *Mail & Guardian* newspaper that, “Mr. Blair is complicit in the murder of thousands of people in Iraq and should be tried for war crimes.”

Why Should Blair Be Tried?

Archbishop Tutu amplified his own reasons for spurning Blair, in a Sept. 2 London *Observer* column. We quote:

“The immorality of the United States and Great Britain’s decision to invade Iraq in 2003, premised on the lie that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction, has destabilised and polarised the world to a greater extent than any other conflict in history.

“Instead of recognising that the world we lived in, with increasingly sophisticated communications, transportation and weapons systems necessitated sophisticated leadership that would bring the global family together, the then-leaders of the US and UK fabricated the grounds to behave like playground bullies and drive us further apart. They have driven us to the edge of a precipice where we now stand with the spectre of Syria and Iran before us.

“If leaders may lie, then who should tell the truth? Days before George W Bush and Tony Blair ordered the invasion of Iraq, I called the White House and spoke to Condoleezza Rice, who was then national security adviser, to urge that United Nations weapons inspectors be given more time to confirm or deny the existence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Should they be able to confirm finding such weapons, I argued, dismantling the threat would have the support of virtually the entire world. Ms Rice demurred, saying there was too much risk and the president would not postpone any longer.

“On what grounds do we decide that Robert Mugabe should go the International Criminal Court, Tony Blair should join the international speakers’ circuit, bin Laden should be assassinated, but Iraq should be invaded, not because it possesses weapons of mass destruction, as Mr Bush’s chief supporter, Mr Blair, confessed last week, but in order to get rid of Saddam Hussein?

“The cost of the decision to rid Iraq of its by-all-accounts despotic and murderous leader has been staggering, beginning in Iraq itself. Last year, an average of 6.5 people died there each day in suicide attacks and vehicle bombs, according to the Iraqi Body Count project. More than 110,000 Iraqis have died in the conflict since 2003 and millions have been displaced. By the end of

last year, nearly 4,500 American soldiers had been killed and more than 32,000 wounded.

“On these grounds alone, in a consistent world, those responsible for this suffering and loss of life should be treading the same path as some of their African and Asian peers who have been made to answer for their actions in the Hague.

“But even greater costs have been exacted beyond the killing fields, in the hardened hearts and minds of members of the human family across the world.

“Has the potential for terrorist attacks decreased? To what extent have we succeeded in bringing the so-called Muslim and Judeo-Christian worlds closer together, in sowing the seeds of understanding and hope?

“Leadership and morality are indivisible. Good leaders are the custodians of morality. The question is not whether Saddam Hussein was good or bad or how many of his people he massacred. The point is that Mr Bush and Mr Blair should not have allowed themselves to stoop to his immoral level.

“If it is acceptable for leaders to take drastic action on the basis of a lie, without an acknowledgement or an apology when they are found out, what should we teach our children?

“My appeal to Mr Blair is not to talk about leadership, but to demonstrate it. You are a member of our family, God’s family. You are made for goodness, for honesty, for morality, for love; so are our brothers and sisters in Iraq, in the US, in Syria, in Israel and Iran. . . .”

The Next Step

Protesters staged a demonstration outside the Convention Center, to support a warrant of arrest to charge Blair for crimes against humanity relating to the invasion of Iraq.

“It is hoped that one or more demonstrators will be able to make a citizen’s arrest on the day and put Tony Blair in jail and extradite him to the Hague for trial,” said Ganief Hendricks, leader of the Muslim political party Al Jama-ah, one of the organizers of the protest.

An arrest warrant was sought against Blair by the Society for the Protection of Our Constitution (SPOC). “We filed a complaint with the SA [South African] Police Service yesterday and a ‘crimes against the state’ docket was opened,” Muhammed Vawda, secretary of SPOC, said Aug. 30.

Security was tight, so no warrant could be served against this war criminal that day.