

# **The Paris Peace Conference 1919 Remembered... 100 Years on 18 January to 28 June 2019**

Sponsor: Peter M. Southwood (Dr)  
[www.directionofconflict.org](http://www.directionofconflict.org)

## **PRESS RELEASE: Embargo until 00.01 hrs on Friday 18 January 2019**

Open Letter to:

Members of the former Iraq Inquiry Committee

Dear Privy Councillors,

**Re: The Queen on the application of Peter Southwood v The Rt Hon Lord Goldsmith QC (Respondent) & H.M. Attorney General (Interested Party)**

At the centenary of the opening of the Paris Peace Conference on 18 January 1919, it can be shown that the central finding of The Report of the Iraq Inquiry has been rejected by H.M. Government. The decision of the English Court of Appeal on 1 November 2018 in the above case leaves no doubt about this rejection of the underlying principle, despite a government response of 19 December 2017 to a Parliamentary Committee on your Report appearing to endorse the finding. The principle is called an 'irenical perspective', defined in law in 1998.

The Inquiry Chairman's statement on 6 July 2016, when the Report was published, read:

We have concluded that the UK chose to join the invasion of Iraq before the peaceful options for disarmament had been exhausted. Military action at that time was not a last resort.

Mr Justice Carnwath (as he then was) defined an 'irenical perspective' on 9 October 1998:

I see nothing controversial in the proposition that a purpose may be educational, even though it starts from the premise that peace is preferable to war, and puts consequent emphasis on peaceful, rather than military, techniques for resolving international disputes; and even though one purpose of the education is to 'create a public sentiment' in favour of peace.

In legal terms, your Report's finding is that the UK did not adopt an 'irenical perspective'.

.../cont'd

---

### **Sponsor's Purpose:**

**To forewarn the public one more time that the world is heading for another Great Power war.**

As in 1919, the reason is the failure of political institutions to apply 'an irenical perspective' even-handedly. Post-Cold War, the term was first defined in English charity law on 9 October 1998, drawing on a United States case of 1917, and affirmed by the Court of Appeal on 28 June 2000.

110 Purves Road, London NW10 5TB, England. Email: [consultant@directionofconflict.org](mailto:consultant@directionofconflict.org)

Contrast this with the Government's response to the House of Commons Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee report of Session 2016-17 on Lessons still to be learned from the Chilcot Inquiry:

At the most strategic level, the Government accepted that taking the country to war should always be a last resort and should only be done if all credible alternatives have been exhausted. [HC 708 of 10 January 2018 at page 1.]

While appearing to accept the central conclusion of the Iraq Inquiry, it really replaces the Committee's emphasis on exhausting 'peaceful options for disarmament' with 'credible alternatives' thereby supplanting 'an irenical perspective', that has objective criteria, with a political one, that does not.

This misleading reply was received by the Commons Committee on 19 December 2017, the day after the Iraq War Families Campaign Group publicly announced their decision to abandon the attempt to take state officials to court. They did this because the Legal Opinion which they had obtained, based on your Inquiry Report, advised that all legal avenues had been closed off. That Opinion focused on constitutional and international law but the above case, against the Attorney General considering the invasion of Iraq in 2002-03, relied on a preceding charity law case concerning the Project on Demilitarisation (Prodem). The warnings of just such a tragic foreign intervention had been written into the Court of Appeal's judgment of 28 June 2000 which emphatically affirmed education with an irenical perspective and, while rejecting Prodem's claim to charitable status, provided the objects clause for the International Peace Project<sup>2000</sup> (IPP) that continues most of Prodem's work.

My claim for judicial review at the permission stage, appealed to the Court of Appeal, showed that Attorneys General, in 2003 and 2018, rejected an irenical perspective which as Law Officer and public protector of charity the Respondent was bound to uphold or declare a conflict of interest with his role as Chief Legal Adviser to the Government. (Details of the refused Appeal decisions and my response are published separately.) That the claim was first found by a judge of the Administrative Court, at the instigation of the current Attorney General supported by the Defendant, to be 'totally without merit' puts their rejection of an 'irenical perspective' beyond argument. The Court of Appeal decision of 1 November 2018 did not refer to the Prodem case at all, without which this case could not have arisen.

### Conclusion

The way forward is not so much through international law as education on an 'irenical perspective'. The public need to be able to choose for themselves whether a state of peace can be secured, and a state of war avoided, principally by educational or political means.

Counterintuitive as this may appear to you, several of you are, or were, educators of distinction and the one politician, a cross-bencher. Your Report, produced with the benefit of hindsight, applies a similar process to that previously adopted by IPP to demonstrate, with the benefit of foresight, that the prospects for peaceful relations are not decided by politics. The ultimate failure of the Paris Peace Conference 1919 and the League of Nations and, in our own time, the post-Cold War peace settlement demand a fundamental re-think.

No rational, legal or constitutional basis has been offered by academics in the fields of war studies, peace studies, international politics or related subjects to ignore, reject or fail to operationalise – as IPP has done – an ‘irenical perspective’ in applying the results of research in conflict areas to foresee – as I have done – the prospects for peace or war. The authoritative legal framework is that outlined by Mr Justice Carnwath on 9 October 1998, emphatically endorsed by the Court of Appeal on 28 June 2000 (but then ignored without excuse or justification on 1 November 2018).

There will be blood on the hands of any senior political scientists in England and Wales who fail in their duty in this respect as this country moves inexorably, but not yet inevitably, towards another Great Power war.

Yours faithfully,

Peter M. Southwood (Dr)

Signed: 15 January 2019 for public release on *18 January 2019 when the website goes live.*

#### Linked Article

The background to the sponsor’s attempt to prove the centrality of an ‘irenical perspective’, in securing peace and avoiding war, is set out in Article no. 1 at [www.directionofconflict.org](http://www.directionofconflict.org) where there is a provisional timetable for the seven letters and articles up to 28 June 2019.

References in this letter will be found in Article no. 1 *to be published on 18 January 2019.*

#### Notes for Editors and Correspondents

Responses/questions invited to: [consultant@directionofconflict.org](mailto:consultant@directionofconflict.org) for written reply, if any.

The lack of any telephone number is deliberate. The sponsor prefers written to oral communication outside of a public audience.

This one-off letter can be copied to those who are or may be interested provided it is done in full, without amendment or financial charge. The letter may also be quoted with due acknowledgement.

#### Sponsor’s Privacy Notice

Emails and letters to the sponsor, that are within the law, will be treated as confidential except those from mass media organisations or on agreement of the correspondent concerned. No personal data base, manual or electronic, has been or will be constructed out of this series of letters and articles. Any letters posted to named individuals, who may be interested, are one-off and there will be no follow-up by the sponsor, unless requested.