

Further to my earlier submission I wish to add a short note on the need for Parliamentary approval to send defence forces overseas.

Having revisited former PM John Howard's autobiography and his strained defence of the Iraq invasion, it is striking to realise there is no discussion of likely Iraqi casualties before the war and no discussion of the actual casualties after. Not one word in fact. This man has been a brilliant politician, a great strategist, a clever lawyer and a gifted writer on complex issues, but it is incomprehensible that the human cost of the war played no role whatsoever in his attempts to justify it.

I stress this point because it supports the earlier argument that an autocratic leader with these gifts and the power to wage war, can also lack compassion and moral imagination. He was both negligent in his dealings with UK and US leaders, and uncaring in his assumption that Iraqis, whatever they thought of Saddam Hussein, would not fight and die for their country.