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October 2003

**CESSATION OF 'HOODING' OF PWs, DETAINEES, AND INTERNEES.**

During the OP TELIC combat phase, the hooding of PWs, internees and detainees by UK military attracted the attention of the international media and the ICRC. The adverse comments prompted an examination of long standing standard practices by UK forces in prisoner handling. Subsequently legal advice was for the practice of hooding to stop. Recent events have again focussed attention on the standards and practices employed by our forces when apprehending Iraqi civilians and I believe further clarification is now required.

Following the death in custody of an Iraqi on 15 September 2003, it appears hooding may be a re-emerging procedure. This is to stop and you are to direct all under your command to immediately cease the hooding of persons detained.

Notwithstanding this direction, I am advised that blindfolding is an acceptable alternative and accept this advice on the basis that is used only to offer:

- a. security to our own forces and locations.
- b. protection to the detained personnel (through prevention of identification by other detainees).

Thus, you should instruct those under your command that they may blindfold detained personnel in the circumstances listed above. This should only be used for the minimum period necessary and

medical personnel should regularly assess the physical condition of the blindfolded detained personnel. You will understand that this change in practice not only protects the rights of those detained, but also UK forces, who might be accused of breaching Geneva Conventions III and IV.

In light of our experiences during OP TELIC, I feel we need to examine our doctrine and review the training of our forces with regard to PW and detainee handling. The responsibility for both lies with CDI and I have written to him explaining the current situation and asking that he reviews them. I enclose a copy of my letter.

Enclosure:

1. CJO's letter to CDI.