

The Corruption of the Media

An edited version of the Report

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Part 1 - Introduction



On 30 July 2006, at a time variously reported between 1 and 1.30 in the morning, an Israeli air strike (or strikes), launched on the southern Lebanese village of Qana, it was claimed, caused the partial collapse of a three storey residential building. In the basement were found the bodies of a large number of women and children and first reports from the scene indicated a death toll of sixty or more - many of them children. That figure was later drastically revised downwards to 28.

The name "Qana" had special significance as the village had been the location of a disaster in April 1996, ten years previously. Then, during an Israeli operation code-named "Grapes of Wrath", a UN-supervised building in the centre of the village had been shelled. This resulted in over 100 civilian deaths - an incident that was instrumental in precipitating the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon. Now, it looked as if history was repeating.

Curiously, though, despite the reports, the 2006 incident did not occur at Qana at all, but in a hamlet approximately a mile to the north of the village, called Khuraybah (also known as Al-Khariba). Nevertheless, it became "Qana" in most contemporary accounts. Hezbollah and its allies were quick to draw the historical parallels.

Addressing the account of events as dispassionately as possible, it is fair to say that no one can precisely determine what exactly transpired on and immediately before the raid, or in the hours immediately afterwards. There is

no dispute that the hamlet was and is a Hezbollah stronghold (as indeed was Qana), and that the incident occurred at the height of hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah, effectively making the village part of a war zone. Since then, there has been no independent - or any - inquiry. There has been no forensic examination of the building to determine the cause of collapse, no *post-mortems* - that we know of - on the deceased, who have now been buried, and nothing like a judicial examination of evidence and witnesses that would draw out a proper and trustworthy account of events.

As to the relief efforts, details are still confused. According to documents released by the UN, the Lebanese Red Cross (LRC) received reports of the incident at 7 am local time and ambulances were despatched immediately. They tried to reach the location of the building "via several access roads" but were unsuccessful "because of the mass of rubble... and the intensity of the bombardment". They stopped approximately 600 metres from the building and the relief workers proceeded on foot.

UNIFIL claims to have been informed of the incident at 8.15 and despatched two medical teams to the site at 9.45, which arrived respectively at 10.15 and 11 am. An engineering team arrived later, possibly around 2 pm. UNIFIL also reports that Lebanese police, civil defence and Army elements arrived at the site at 7 am but were unable to commence operations until 9 am "because of the ongoing aerial shelling". By happy coincidence, that appears to have been the time when the media started arriving.

In the hands of the media, the events were often described in highly lurid terms, most often conveying condemnation of Israel. However, in such incidents as major air crashes, we often hear caution expressed that we should wait for the outcomes of the investigations become coming to conclusions. Yet, in this analogous situation, in a context where Hezbollah have been known to exploit and even magnify incidents for propaganda purposes, the media were - just a few hours after the event - presenting their accounts as definitive statements of fact.

In being the custodian of the record, the media - especially in democratic countries which profess to have freedom of speech - have a special responsibility to report accurately, to which effect they rely on the professionalism and integrity of the journalists in the field who provide the words and images. In this instance - by comparison with the reporting of other incidents in less fevered atmospheres - the dogmatism and unwarranted certainty was jarring.

Furthermore, the images being presented by the media did not look right. At the time, this was no more than an impression, triggered by the frequent appearance of an image of one particular figure, characterised by his green helmet and orange high-visibility jacket. For obvious reasons, he was dubbed "Green Helmet".

On further investigation, "Green Helmet" appeared rather more often than was typical of any one figure in normal disaster reporting. Not only that, he appeared in a wide variety of poses, most often bearing dead children and not uncommonly displaying considerable emotion. To the jaundiced eye of this observer, they looked staged. If that was the case, then this was a very serious issue. It had to mean that the media, on which we rely so much, was presenting us - wittingly or unwittingly - with false images. And, as I wrote at the time, if you cannot trust the images, how can you trust the words?



As we looked further, another character came to prominence, a man clad in white tee-shirt and jeans (pictured above right). Again for obvious reasons - since his name was not revealed in any of the reports - he was dubbed "White Tee-shirt". His images too were prominent amongst those presented, usually portraying a man emoting strongly, while bearing a dead child. These too looked staged - the emotion was evident in such a variety of locations and circumstances that we had difficulty in believing it was spontaneous.

Accordingly, we decided to carry out an investigation - not into the events at Qana pertaining to the air raid. We have no view on these. Our investigation is exclusively confined to the events during the relief effort, to determine whether some had been staged for the benefit of the media (and for the propaganda purposes of Hezbollah). Also, we sought to determine whether the media had been complicit in any staging.

After three weeks of intensive work, with the active assistance and co-operation of the internet community - often called the "blogosphere" - we now believe we have enough evidence confidently to assert that many of the incidents recorded in visual form by the media were indeed staged. In fact, we feel we can go further. In our view, the bulk of the relief effort at Khuraybah on 30 July was turned into a perverted propaganda exercise. The site, in effect, became one vast, grotesque film-set on which a macabre drama was played out to a willing and complicit media, which actively co-operated in the production and exploited the results.

Within the overall conduct of the operations, there were many examples of this ghastly play-acting but, for convenience, we focused on four main groups of examples. Reflecting the dramatic intent of the progenitors, we have ordered them into "acts", with the divisions labelled as "scenes". The first of the four Acts records the actions of one of the central figures, "Green Helmet", parading the body of a dead baby. The second deals with secondary but

nevertheless important characters, Red Cross workers. The record shows that they actively participated in the drama. The third identifies what became the major theatrical production of the day, displaying the thespian talents of both "Green Helmet" and "White Tee-shirt" in what we call the "camera runs". The fourth and final Act now comprises two parts. The first, courtesy of the German television station NDR, shows "Green Helmet" in the act of giving stage directions in another of his perverted productions. The second portrays the showman again setting up a camera scene.



If this is worrying enough, of greater concern has been the response of the media and, in particular, the news agencies which employed many of the photographers at Qana. Fronted initially by the Kathleen Carroll, senior vice president and executive editor of Associated Press (pictured above), they issued an early denial without addressing any of the substantive issues we raised. Other media outlets have since joined the fray, including *The Guardian*, *The Daily Telegraph*, through its web site editor, and *The Washington Post*.

Their tactics have been both predictable and wearily familiar. Instead of addressing our substantive points, they have concentrated on details, picking on our errors and false starts, arguing that such flaws irredeemably damage our case. Others have branded us "right-wing", "pro-Israeli" or simply "conspiracy theorists", as if that could explain away the evidence we have gathered.

Then, after we had assembled so much evidence that our case was becoming unarguable, Associated Press mounted a defensive propaganda campaign, issuing a release attempting to make out that "Green Helmet" was some kind of latter-day saint, the hero of Qana. Inexplicably, for photographs accompanying the release, AP chose to dress their hero in blue helmet and garb (pictured below) which could only serve to confuse readers who were unfamiliar with the issue.

In response, we decided to draw together the totality of our evidence, which hitherto had been scattered throughout this site, and assemble it in one report, updating, expanding and clarifying our findings. We enlisted the assistance of

the "blogosphere" and received an extraordinary level of support. This report, therefore, is as much the work of the internet community as it is of this author.

Our purpose in producing it is to provide evidence which will enable us to force the news agencies, and the media which rely on them, to recognise that the media conduct at Qana was unacceptable. And, inasmuch as this is an example of a much wider problem affecting the way the whole of the media operates, we wish to see them address the issues we raise and to reform their operations. Without that, we feel, there can be no trust in the accuracy, impartiality or professionalism of any of their output. This is not only a major inconvenience, but threatens the very health of our democracy. For, without objective reporting, there is only propaganda.

To draw attention to this, we have entitled our report, "The corruption of the media". Inevitably, given the continued cover-up by the media, it will also be known as "Qanagate".

Part 2 - The "set"



Even now, it seems bizarre labelling the scene of what is variously described as a "disaster" and a "massacre" as a "set", borrowing the language of the theatre and film-making. But, since it is our contention that the site was turned into precisely that, a film-set for the benefit of both Hezbollah and the media - in the finest tradition of "Pallywood" - we will keep to this description.

As we noted in the introduction, though, the "set" is in the hamlet of Khuraybah, roughly one mile north of the village of Qana and about eight miles south-east of the port town of Tyre on the Lebanese coast. The above is a satellite image marked with some of the key areas that played an important part of the staged drama.



The Daily Telegraph
caption: A rescue worker carries the body of a young girl from the ruins of the basement shelter where at least 57 Lebanese civilians, mostly children, were killed by an Israeli air strike on the village of Qana yesterday.

Apart from aiding the narrative and the understanding of the reader, one of the reasons why it is so necessary to describe this "set" in some detail is to counter

the wholly misleading information conveyed by the published photographs and their captions. Typifying the problem is this picture which appeared on the front page of *The Daily Telegraph* on the morning of 31 July. It showed the iconic figure of "White Tee-shirt" with caption (illustrated above).

It is ironic that the web news editor of this newspaper has been amongst the most voluble of the claimed failures of our blog to carry out "fact-checking", yet much of the confusion in the early stages arose from demonstrably false statements such as this, in his own newspaper.

Any ordinary person unfamiliar with the details of the site would assume that the "rescue worker" had just emerged from the wreck of the basement shelter, and that the debris in the background was part of the wreckage. Only later did we fully realise that the "White Tee-shirt" is some 400 yards away and that the wreckage in the background is from a completely different building, destroyed in a previous air strike.

Once we realised this, the pieces started to fall into shape. With the additional detail that we have been able to find (and have been sent) we have been able to put together an analyses of how this and the equally iconic "Green Helmet" scenes were staged. The crucial points are the wrecked house itself, the assembly area for the bodies, outside the house, the "staging area" about 100 yards or so from it, and then the most important part of the "set", the piece of road we call "Stretcher Alley". In the following sections, we have a look at each.

The wrecked house



Curiously, for an incident that was so intensively photographed, there have been few clear pictures of the wrecked house actually published. From the satellite image, the main entrance to house itself (above right), and therefore the front, seems to be orientated roughly south-west. This shows the remains of what we are told was a three storey house, the three floors presumably including the so-called basement. The entrance and exit to the basement, used by the rescuers, is round the corner to the left in this view, on the north-west face, at which a UN excavator can be seen working.

The second picture (above left) shows the upper part of the north-west face of the building, below which is the main entrance and exit to the basement area, just visible at the lower part of the picture. The top floor structure looks largely intact, with the central section walls having collapsed, dropping the top section onto the basement structure.

Below left is the lower part of the north-west face showing the exterior of the basement area, from which the bodies were extracted. The canted, fractured beam at the front is the edge of the floor slab to the upper floor, which is restricting access to the room. There is an un-made road in front of this and (behind the viewer, unseen) is a steep drop, much of the higher part being littered with wreckage.



The picture top right shows an overall view (with the entrance to the rear), showing the debris in the room. The structure appears largely intact, but for the collapse of the left-hand wall (which is to the rear of the house), giving rise to a landslide effect. The debris, seen more clearly below left, is said to have smothered rather than crushed the casualties, which explains their lack of visible injury. Curiously, in the early frames of the rescue, many of the bodies are seen in the area where the group of men is standing, on top of the debris.



Above right is the right-hand wall of the room, showing something a second entrance to the room - possibly a doorway - which leads out to the front of the house (although the opening is not visible in the shot showing that face). This, in earlier scenes, was blocked up.

Continuing the "virtual tour" of the exterior, this looks to be the north-east face of the building, the side where the basement wall collapse and from which the debris slide entered the room.



This, therefore, is - presumably - the face exposed to the blast which precipitated the collapse, which presents something of a mystery. The figure to the right is standing with a group of others (unseen) on the veranda of a neighbouring house, the structure of which looks largely intact, although glazing seems to be absent. The veranda and that house is better seen in the next frame (below).

This frame shows the eastern quadrant of the south-east face, revealing the extensive partial collapse of the roof and the almost complete collapse of the middle floor structure. To the right is the veranda referred to in the previous frame, and the almost intact adjoining building. To the left, out of shot, is the front of the house, shown in the second frame of this sequence. This completes the "tour".

The assembly area



The next key area is the assembly area. This is the ground to the right of the main basement entrance/exit (as you face it), where bodies extracted from the

wreckage were first laid out. At times - as in this frame - they were covered - at other times they were not. Throughout the period of recovery, a variety of people was photographed against this backcloth, this frame showing a character in a pale green shirt, described as a "local resident". He appears in many more frames.

According to one witness, from here the bodies were transported directly to the waiting ambulances. But this was not always the case. We aver that the assembly area served another function, that of a selection area. Bodies (and survivors) with the potential to use for staged photo-opportunities, were chosen here and sent to an intermediate "staging area", about 100 yards or so from the wrecked building. There, they were held as "props" while photo-shoots were organised.

The staging area

This, then, is the "staging area" seen in a still photograph from Getty Images, taken by Anwar Amro. It has a veranda structure in front of what appears on the satellite photograph to be a substantial building, the function of which is unknown. The view in this frame is in the direction of the route to the wrecked building. Much of the action takes place in the further end of the veranda, where the vegetation can be seen.

This is the same area, but taken in the opposite direction, towards "Stretcher Alley". The same box-like structure can be seen, this time in the centre foreground, with a stretcher party just embarking on its journey to the waiting ambulances. The figure under the veranda, just to the right of centre in the frame, is evidently giving directions to the party.



This is an external view of the same building, again looking in the general direction of the wrecked building. This particular scene shows "White Tee-shirt" setting off on his "camera run", of which we will see more in Part 6.



Evident from this view is the considerable size of the building, suggesting industrial usage or warehousing.

Stretcher Alley

From the "staging area" the next significant location is "Stretcher Alley", some 200 or so yards further on. It is approached via a convoluted route, the final phase of which culminates in a sharp right hand turn, which we call "Stretcher Corner". This is illustrated below right, showing the alley from the lower end, with a stretcher being carried round the corner onto the alley itself. Up the rise, at the end is the area where ambulances and media vehicles are parked.



This second view, sideways on (above), is about halfway up the alley, again showing a stretcher party making laborious progress up the rise. What is clearly evident is the ruined mosque and jumble of wreckage and debris from previous bombing, which obstructs the progress of vehicles - hence necessitating the carriage of casualties.

It has to be stressed that it is *only* this section which impedes access. Beyond this, right up to the site of the wrecked house, there is a clear roadway, the width more than adequate to take ambulances and even heavier traffic. Beyond this section, up to the ambulance waiting area, the road is also relatively clear. Furthermore, this is not heavy debris but largely lightweight building blocks originating from the collapsed wall of the mosque alongside.

In the bottom right hand picture, we see "Stretcher Alley" taken from the top end, from slightly below and to the right of the parking area. This view shows why the route is so advantageous: it is ideal for the media - a clear line of sight and an impressive backcloth of wreckage against which to frame photographs. In the above picture, the journalists can be seen corralled together in one spot, awaiting their next photo-opportunity. For other shots, they congregated on the left, just up from the ruined mosque.

But for the blockage on "Stretcher Alley", ambulances would have been able to travel virtually to the scene of the wrecked building. One effect of that, however, would have been to deny major photography opportunities.

However, shown below (next page) are two more video "grabs", originally broadcast by *Channel 4 News*, the full sequence showing an ambulance making its way slowly down "Stretcher Alley". In the footage, we see no more than four men clearing a path for the vehicle. The colour tone of the film is confusing as suggests fading light, which we interpreted in the first draft of this report as indicating dusk conditions. From an assessment of the angles of the shadows, though, the timing looks to be between 10 and 11 am.



Thus, it seems, no serious attempt was made to clear the road until late morning and the obvious question is that, if the roadway was so easily cleared, why was it left blocked until after the "camera runs". Also, given that carrying the casualties absorbed considerable manpower and, for most of the time, there seems to have been plenty of spare labour, why did no one organise the clearance? The most obvious conclusion is that it suited both the journalists and Hezbollah to keep it blocked in order to maximise the photo-opportunities.

However, there may be an even greater mystery to the saga of the blockage, as satellite maps indicate that there was an alternative route, which by-passed "Stretcher Alley" altogether. We deal with the implications of this in Appendix 1.

Part 3 - Act 1: The dead baby

In the first stages of the drama at Khuraybah, the central figure, "Green Helmet" spent most of his time digging out bodies. That, at least is the case if you believe Kathy Gannon, AP's staff writer at the scene. With a dateline of Qana on 30 July, she wrote:

Abu Shadi Jradi pulled bodies out of wreckage for hours - two toddler girls wearing tiny gold earrings, a small boy whose pale blue pacifier still hung from his neck. Somewhere in the middle, Jradi slumped beneath a tree and wept.

By 11 August, in yet another story written by Gannon, "Green Helmet's" name seemed to have changed, but the story survived almost intact:

After hours of digging in the blistering heat, Salam Daher emerged from the wreckage with the body of a 9-month-old baby, a blue pacifier still pinned to its nightshirt.

However, this is one of the most-photographed events in modern times. There are hundreds if not thousands of still photographs and hours of video footage. Many scenes show digging, mostly by people dressed in Lebanese Army uniforms, aided occasionally by men in civilian dress. There is also footage of Red Cross workers clearing away debris in order to move bodies from the scene.

Intriguingly, in what looks like the early stages of the "rescue", we even see the man in a pale green shirt (described in other footage as a "local resident") sitting inside the wrecked building, actually on the mound of rubble under which people are buried, conducting a prolonged conversation on his cell phone. We see quite a lot of this man in other scenes but his demeanour in this photograph is somewhat at odds with the another legend built round the event, that the building was in danger of imminent collapse.

The one thing not seen in any footage though - including the extensive coverage of the scene inside the wrecked building - is "Green Helmet" digging. He seems to be everywhere on the site. In addition to his starring roles, and finding time to slump beneath a tree and weep (curiously unrecorded on film on a site that was saturated with photographers and video cameramen) he is filmed giving interviews to the media, inspecting the bomb crater and even helping carrying stretchers.

We also see him in a cameo role, dragging out in some haste the body of what is believed to be a ten-year-old boy, apparently illustrating the urgency of the casualty evacuation in view of the impending collapse of the building. What we see of this scene, recorded on video footage, is that "Green Helmet" enters the wreckage specifically to take part in the removal of the body. Up until then, he has not been involved in its recovery.

It would not be untoward, therefore, to suggest that the man is in fact posing for the cameras. On the basis of the photographic evidence, it would be very hard to define "Green Helmet's" role in terms other than of a "front man", functioning essentially as media liaison and the "face" of the rescue effort, posing for all manner of operations.

Act 1, Scene 1

It is here in Scene 1 that we see egregious examples of the man posing. The first photograph, taken by Ali Haider for epa/Corbis, clearly demonstrates this. There are all sorts of odd things about the scene, not least the uniform consistency of the dust in which the body is now half-buried, but what can also be surmised without hesitation is that it is obviously staged. Look at how the soldier-figure is holding the head up to the camera and how the other figures are lined up against the wall, with "Green Helmet" as the central figure.



Then there is this one (above right). It is shot by Reuters' Adnan Hajj, the man who subsequently was found out doctoring photographs of the Beirut bombing and the F-16.

Apart from the fact that the lighting is a lot less even and there is more shadow in this shot, what is evident here is that the baby's body has been excavated more completely, or "Green Helmet" has pulled it from the dust. Certainly, there is more of the body visible than in the previous frame. Of special note, though, is that of the two faces visible in the shot, both are looking up to the camera rather than down at the body which they are pulling from the debris. This is clearly and unmistakably posed.

Furthermore, in the foreground, the hand of the Red Cross worker is seen to be

blurred, indicating movement. The hand to the left, belonging to the soldier-figure seen in the previous frame - is sharp, without blurring. It is being held still - again suggestive of posing. Now look at "Green Helmet's" left foot. It has moved from the position shown in the previous frame, from about a foot away from the body's head to right next to it. The two shots are separate - not the same scene - taken at different times by different photographers.

This apart, both the poses and the circumstances of the discovery of the body seem contrived. This has given rise to suspicions that the body might have been discovered earlier and held back for a staged event in order to maximise the publicity impact of the discovery. We have explored this issue in Appendix 2.

Act 1, Scene 2

If we can call the previous sequence "Scene 1", the next scene starts as "Green Helmet" emerges from the wreckage carrying the body of the baby. We have numerous shots of this "set" (see left), with many views of rescue workers either clearing up debris or carrying out bodies. Logically, this being the entrance and exit to the disaster scene, it needs to be kept clear, and by and large it is. But not, it seems, when Green Helmet emerges with the body of the dead baby.



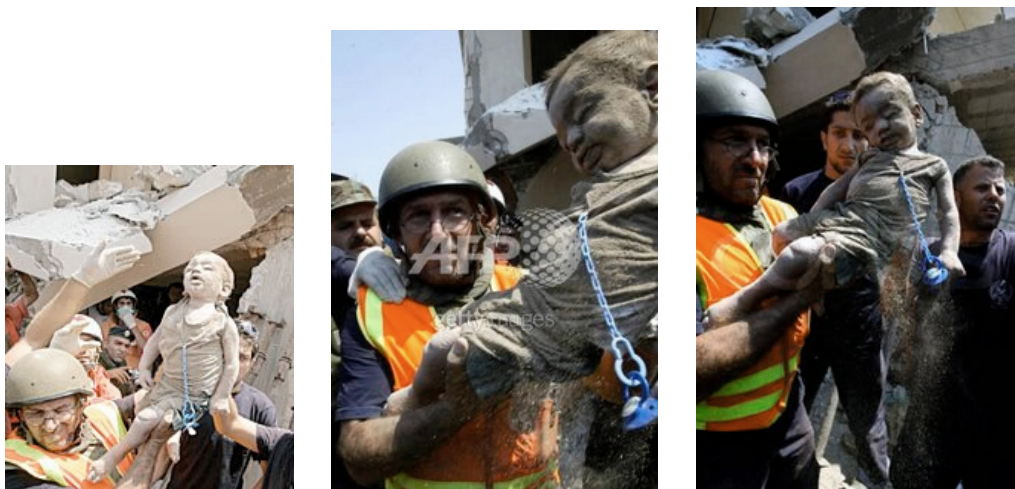
In this shot, credited to AP's Kevin Frayer, we see a group of nine people outside, all gathered around "Green Helmet". All of those with their faces visible are looking up to the camera in a composition that can only be contrived. And far from "Green Helmet" merely "displaying" the body, as Gannon puts it, he holds it up triumphantly, like a trophy.

And where is Frayer? As can be seen from subsequent shot, his is taken from

an elevated position. He has climbed up onto some vantage point to get his picture - hardly an example of a spontaneous shot.

The second shot is by Reuters' Adnan Hajj. He has already taken a shot of the body being unearthed in the wrecked building but he has time to come out and position himself ready to take another shot of "Green Helmet" as he poses with the body outside the wreckage. And this *is* posing.

In Frayer's shot, "Green Helmet" is looking up and towards the camera. In this shot, with the camera position lower and to the left, "Green Helmet" is still looking towards the camera. Clearly, these are not simultaneous shots taken from different vantage points. They are posed separately, the two photographers each being given their own unique shots.



Even with these two photographs, however, the "shoot" is not over. In the previous two shots, the head of the baby's body is tilted backwards, most noticeably in the second of the two shots. For this picture, though - original source and attribution unknown - the deficiency is remedied. It appears that one of the men in a dark blue tee-shirt has moved behind the corpse and is tilting the head forwards with his hand to give the photographer a better shot.

In the centre picture, taken by the AFP photographer, again, "Green Helmet" is facing the camera, presenting the photographer with a clean shot. In this frame the body's head is lolling but, what is remarkable is that you can see at the bottom of the frame, dust actually being shaken off the body.

That the body was shaken violently is confirmed by a short clip of video, which shows "Green Helmet" virtually throwing it into the air, a gesture which accords with some witnesses' accounts of it being a gesture of "defiance and despair". The same effect is seen in the right hand frame, a photograph taken by Nabil Ismail for Xinhua Press/Corbis. These last two frames were probably the first of the sequence of shots. Whatever, this makes at least four and possibly five (if not more) still cameras shooting the scene, plus at least one videocam.

As a final note on this issue, prominent in the photographs is the blue "pacifier" (called a "dummy" in the UK). There has been much speculation on the apparent cleanliness of this item, with suggestions that it might have been "planted". However, in the original shot where the body is unearthed it can be seen attached to the body. As to its apparent cleanliness, we are dealing here with low-definition photographs and it would be unwise to rely on them for the finer points of detail. What might not be visible on these photographs might be very obvious on the high definition copies which - so far, the agencies have not released. Further speculation, therefore, is a route down which we do not want to go.

Act 1, Scene 3

In her eulogy for "Green Helmet" - to which we refer in the introduction and will deal with more fully later - Kathy Gannon wants us to believe that an AP photographer just went "click" with his camera, taking just one, opportunist shot as "Green Helmet" momentarily lifted the baby to show to the waiting media.

That, we can see, was not true but, if there is any doubt as to the lack of spontaneity, this - Scene 3 - also seems to be highly contrived. Furthermore, it is an AP exclusive comprising three photographs in all, taken by Kevin Frayer. This one on the left - from the positioning - seems to be the first of the sequence, played out round the corner from the opening to the wrecked basement, in front of the house.



Judging from the angle relative to the window of the house, "Green Helmet" is in roughly the same position as the Red Cross worker in the picture above. He is in the company of a sizeable group of people and facing what appears to be (from other footage) a senior Red Cross worker. Crucially, from the photograph above, we know the direction of travel and "Green Helmet's" body is not facing that way. That, with the rather fortuitous composition, suggests that the shot is contrived, with "Green Helmet" once more posing for the camera.

Now, as an additional detail, look between the heads of "Green Helmet" and "Striped Tee-shirt". You will see a sliver of very distinctive blue - it looks like part of a UN soldier wearing a flak jacket.

This frame, again judging from the angle to the window, seems to be the next in the sequence. The party has moved on, senior Red Cross Worker is no longer visible and the man with a striped tee-shirt is displaying what appears to be some emotion. Once again, "Green Helmet" is facing away from the direction of travel and looking directly towards the camera, holding the body of the baby aloft. The indications are, therefore, that this again is a posed shot.

Recalling the sliver of blue in the previous frame, this can no longer be seen - perhaps concealed by the group in the foreground. But we see the same blue on the uniform of the soldier on the veranda. He is, however, in a completely different position - in front of the window opening - facing away from the camera.

Then, in the final frame of this sequence. "Green Helmet" has moved on, the man in the striped tee-shirt remains by his side and senior Red Cross worker has re-appeared on the opposite side. But revealed now is a line of UN troops up on the veranda of the wrecked house. In roughly the same position as the soldier in the previous frame with a bright blue flak jacket is one of the UN soldiers with a green uniform. "Bright blue" is nowhere to be seen.

The indications from this and other background changes (look at the relative positions of the man in the white tee-shirt in the first two pictures of the sequence) it does not seem as if "Green Helmet" and his various companions are walking continuously down the lane. More likely, it appears, they are moving progressively to slightly different locations and stopping to be photographed each time.

These three photographs, though, conclude the Frayer sequence and, effectively, Scene 3. But what are we to make of this picture, below? Published by the Italian press agency Ansa, it is actually taken by Ali Haider for epa/Corbis. It shows "Green Helmet" with the baby but with a completely different cast of characters, bar the familiar, white-haired Red Cross worker. He is stepping down what appears to be a low ridge of earth. The background is unrecognisable, but it does not match any of the other scenes. We already have three separate sequences, in three different locations, in which "Green

Helmet" poses with the baby. Now it looks as though there was a fourth. How "spontaneous" is that, and how many more sequences were shot?



Actually, there were three more that we know about. This one in the centre is taken somewhere between the wrecked house and the staging area. In sharp contrast to the "camera run" scenes, where the bodies of two girls each are carried respectively by "Green Helmet" and "White Tee-shirt", the body of baby Abbas Hashem is afforded a stretcher with two bearers, and is covered by a blanket. But, once more, a Red Cross worker cannot resist posing, peeling back the blanket to allow the shot to be taken. The man shown seems to be in charge of the Red Cross detachment, and he has already inspected the body while it was in the arms of "Green Helmet".

The picture on the right shows the back of an ambulance, presumably at the top of "Stretcher Alley". We see two Red Cross workers in again what is clearly a contrived pose. One is holding the head of the baby to the camera.

Whatever else, this cannot have been a spontaneous shot. From the angle, the photographer seems to be inside the ambulance - partially at least - what is effectively private and certainly controllable space. Had the workers wished to exclude photography, they could have done so. Instead, they posed for yet another shot.

Even then, they have not finished. There is yet another, in yet a different vehicle with an obliging Red Cross worker as the foil. Through its progress from the wreckage to the ambulance, therefore, the baby's body is exposed to seven identifiable photography sessions. This, even allowing for what some claim to be the different cultural values of the Middle East, is not normal.

Part 4 - Act 2: The Red Cross workers

In this Act, there are three scenes. Two first two are very similar, the main changes being the actors.

To see how these first scenes are played out, we must go to the wreckage of the house where a body of a girl - clad in orange pyjamas - is being recovered. Here we see a video grab from the *Aljazeera* news footage, with a bearded Red Cross worker emerging from the wreckage to the outside carrying the body of the girl.



We then see a still photograph (right), which shows a Red Cross worker holding the dead child, with the arm of another person gesticulating downwards (body out of shot) indicating - it seems - that the body should be positioned on the stretcher in view, already occupied by another body. The inference from this shot is that the body of the child is about to be placed on the stretcher. Of interest here, incidentally, is the number of photographers in view, plus a video camera operator.



This photograph, however, is almost certainly posed as, from other footage, we actually see a Red Cross worker rushing round the corner with "orange pyjamas" on his way towards the ambulances. We see him being stopped by "Green Helmet" (above), who is gesturing towards the stretcher alongside which he is standing. There could be, of course, an innocent explanation for this, with "Green Helmet" simply pointing out that there is no need to carry the

body when there is room on the stretcher. But another construction is that "Green Helmet" has uses for the body. For whatever reason the instruction is given, the Red Cross worker stops, turns round and obeys it. We see him here starting to place "orange pyjamas" on the stretcher". "Green Helmet", on the other hand, seems to be signalling to someone out of shot. A possible inference is that "Green Helmet" himself is obeying directions from someone else. But we do see the Red Cross worker actually place the body on the stretcher. Although the definition is poor, it is clear enough for it to be seen that the stretcher is already occupied by the dead man in the white shirt.

This means we have two separate sequences of the same body being placed on the same stretcher, but with a different cast of characters. As we later see the body being carried down the lane by a Red Cross worker, if this scene is genuine, the other must be staged.



Now we see this photograph. "Green Helmet" has been joined by the man in a baseball hat - we shall refer to him as "Baseball Hat". This type of hat is often the badge of Hezbollah and we see this man in many frames elsewhere, apparently directing operations and giving what seem to be orders. Tied in with the previous frames, it is evident that the pair is removing "orange pyjamas" from the stretcher.

Let us now remind you of the evacuation route for casualties laid out in this area. The route is straight down the hill to a corner, where the bearers turn left and then continue down a route which takes them to the "staging area" and eventually "Stretcher Alley". This, however, is not to be the immediate fate of "orange pyjamas".

Act 2, Scene 1

In this next sequence, in what is the start of Scene 1, we see "orange pyjamas" back in the arms of a Red Cross worker - and there is something odd about the location. The worker is, in fact, over the edge of the slope, away from the opening of the wreckage from which the body was recovered. This is in the opposite direction to which he would have to go if he was taking the body to the ambulance area.

In this, the first frame of the *Aljazeera* footage, we catch him stationary, looking down to his right, evidently under the direction of the photographer closest to him. Note also the other cameraman (extreme left), the two behind him and the one in the centre of the frame, partly down the hill. The Red Cross worker is obviously at the centre of a staged photo-shoot.



In this next "grab" taken from the sequence, we see Red Cross worker stride forwards - still under the direction of the cameraman closest to him - providing ample opportunities for a series of shots showing off his trophy. He is receiving close attention from the photographer in the foreground, who seems to be taking close-up shots of the burden carried by the worker.



Then, as the Red Cross worker continues forwards, we see revealed yet another camera operative (this looks like a video camera), demonstrating the extent of the shoot. Note also - from this and the previous picture where the Red Cross worker has been set slightly down the rise - he is climbing uphill over the rubble. In this frame, he is about to step onto the level ground. Crucially, note that the worker has red sleeves to his uniform.

Now we see the figure in a still photograph, supplied by Reuters (above right). This is very much clearer than the video footage, and - suitably cropped to take out the photographer climbing the rise in the background - was used to illustrate a "professional doing his job". The picture is not "faked" in the ordinary sense - there is no photoshop doctoring - but the scene is nonetheless false. It has been wholly staged for the benefit of the camera.

The scene above is followed by another still photograph (below, next page), this one taken by Mohamed Messara for epa/Corbis. It shows the full figure of

the Red Cross worker, his expression bemused, if anything. Behind him, one presumes, is the bomb crater resulting from the Israeli air strike, which may be the reason why this location has been chosen for the shot.



In the background, this time to the right of the central figure, just visible under the body of "orange pyjamas" is the photographer seen in the previous frame. He has positioned himself for a shot and appears to be in the act of taking it.

Now we are back to the *Aljazeera* video footage. The video sequence (below) shows the Red Cross worker has entered the lane without turning, which puts his original location - where the photo-shoot started - opposite the lane. Also revealed here is "Baseball Hat" who is acting for all the world like a stage director, giving directions and orders to clear the way so that the remaining photographers can get their shots. Is this Mr Hezbollah managing the scene?



In the final "grab" in the sequence - although there is plenty more footage on the video - we see our man having moved on a few steps to reveal yet another photographer. To the right of Red Cross worker is yet another, and there is another worker up ahead. We see the two later in the video sequence joining up together, marching down the lane towards until they are out of camera-shot.

Act 2, Scene 2

For whatever reason, the photo shoot with "Red sleeves" was not enough for the assembled journalists. In this second sequence (although it may have been staged earlier - we do not have a time-frame we can use) the whole shoot is re-

staged, but this time using a different Red Cross worker holding the body - distinguishable by his white sleeves. This is Act 2, Scene 2, starting off from a slightly different point. Here, though, from these sequences, we can see the clearest evidence of staging.



Firstly, the Red Cross worker is placed at the location. Only once his "minders" are satisfied with the positioning does the bearded man in the white shirt - acting as the "Prop master" - hand him the body of the child. Another Red Cross worker to his side takes hold of the head in what is evidently a pre-arranged pose, the pair acting as a duo.

Now that the actors are in place, with the "prop" suitably positioned, "Baseball Hat" moves in to check the arrangements and give last minute instructions to the actors. Note the two video cameras behind the actors (this and the next frame) and what appears to be a still cameraman, patiently waiting for the action to begin.

With everything evidently to the satisfaction of "Baseball Hat", the cameras roll and the party sets off - one Red Cross worker bearing the body, the second tenderly supporting the head - with the "Prop master" watching anxiously. The scenario, the apparent concern, and the ludicrous posing of two workers carrying one body has been set up for the benefit of the cameras.



One of the beneficiaries is Nicolas Asfour of AFP/Getty (image reference #71539658 - the same photograph also seems to have been attributed to AP's Nasser Nasser). Here (above right) the Red Cross party has taken a few steps forward, well onto the level ground. You can see from the background (with the peach-coloured beam) that the worker is just below the exit from the

wreckage, from which point the girl's body was extracted. One would assume from the still photograph that Asfourri has snapped the party as it passed him, but - once again - the video record gives the game away.



Here in this "grab" above, we see the party, but it is stationary for quite a few seconds, posing for the photographers. In this frame, we see "Baseball Hat" hovering in the background giving directions, but he clears the scene - standing in the background looking away - to give Asfourri a natural-looking shot.

Note, incidentally, the man in the background, to the right of the frame facing away from the camera, with the tee-shirt embossed with a number "3". In Asfourri's shot he is also in the picture, but some distance away, about to enter the wrecked basement. This gives you some idea how long the pose was held.

Confirming through the still photography the fact that the pose was held, we have another frame (attribution unknown) which virtually matches the video picture (above right). The young man in the numbered tee-shirt and "Baseball Hat" are in roughly the same positions. No one who witnessed these sequences could come to a conclusion other than these shots were quite deliberately staged. Nor indeed could any picture editor, in receipt of both frames, be under any illusions.



Somewhere in all of this, the carrier of the body manages to break away for a solo appearance - unless this was done separately, before or after the dual shoot. A jaundiced eye might consider the pose somewhat contrived, but

reference to the other frames would readily demonstrate that it had been wholly staged.

The picture above right is the last of this sequence, for which we have records - this one by AP's Nasser Nasser. It appears to be further on in the staged journey, taken with a wider framing to encompass much more of the wrecked building. Again, it is not a faked shot in the ordinary sense. What Nasser recorded did actually happen, but the action was staged. Furthermore, there can be no doubt that he and others participating were fully aware of what was going on. No-one at this point can pretend that they were unaware that the scenes were being set up for the cameras.

Sequel



Between the point where visibility is lost and "Stretcher Alley", however, it seems that, whichever Red Cross Worker was last carrying the "orange pyjamas" must have tired of his burden. It is in this next photograph, by Nicolas Asfour (ADP/Getty Images), that we see the girl's body again. It is alone on a stretcher (very similar to that on which it was originally deposited) - uncovered for the benefit of the photographers - and transported up to "Green Helmet's" waiting ambulance. The first of the stretcher bearers could be "White Tee-shirt", but we cannot see enough of him to be certain.

We know the girl's body is eventually placed in the ambulance because we also see shots of it being posed with a variety of other characters such as this one, in the uniform of a Lebanese soldier.

The picture, by AP's Lefteris Pitarakis, is particularly unpleasant as the man has the body by the scruff, treating it with less dignity than one would a rag doll. But, perhaps, this is no different from using the body as a prop by a succession of actors, all to gratify the needs of the photographers and their editors who so skilfully decided that they photographs they used were not staged. Somehow, though, that Red Cross workers were involved, who do

represent that long tradition of impartiality, makes Gannon's mendacious publicity puff for "Green Helmet" seem all the more tawdry.

Act 2, Scene 3

Strictly speaking, this is an "act" all on its own (or part of the "Stretcher Alley" sequence) but, for convenience, we have included it here as it is also an example of Red Cross workers play-acting.



This scene is illustrated here from a sequence of "screen grabs" from a video taken reportedly from *Aljazeera*. It starts (above) with "Green Helmet" being interviewed about the disaster. Speaking in Arabic, in a remarkably high-pitched voice, we are told he says there are about 210 casualties in the wreckage. the point to watch, however, is the mid-point between "Green Helmet" and the interviewer, at the end of "Stretcher Alley".

Into view then comes a stretcher party, coming round the base of the building at the bottom of the slope. They come from the left, which is from the general direction of the wrecked building, from which the casualties are being recovered. As the party starts up the slope, the interviewer and "Green Helmet" pause to look at the group. Then "Green Helmet" dashes off down the slope to intercept it while the camera operator concentrates on filming the group.



As the camera focuses on the stretcher party, and it is clear that they are uniformed Red Cross workers, with photographers in attendance – two of which we can see in the frame. Although the picture is blurred, note that the leading stretcher-bearer is wearing his helmet at a slightly raked angle. The

cameraman on the right has taken a shot and is changing cameras to get another shot.

Now, fully in view of the cameras up the hill (which we see in other shots is "Stretcher Alley" - having been staked out by the media), the stretcher party starts to walk slowly up the hill. Then, for no apparent reason (that we can discern), it suddenly comes to a stop. The workers put down their load, with one of the photographers hovering close by, over the stretcher. We can only guess, but perhaps they have been asked to stop by the photographers.



The sudden stop gives the nearest photographer the opportunity to take a close-up picture of the victim. Now, this is a highly charged situation at a disaster scene, with all the tragic implications. But of more concern to the lead stretcher bearer is his appearance - or so it would seem. He adjusts his helmet, putting it on straight, nice and neat for the cohort of camera crews and still photographers further up the hill. There is no sense of urgency and no rush. The pace is leisureed. But then, inexplicably, the Red Cross worker repeats the gesture - both hands up to his helmet - apparently to put it straight again. This, in the context, is so unnatural that it could actually be a signal.

If this was a signal, one interpretation could be: "I am about to start". And, with the photographers having completed their work on the stretcher in place, the bearers immediately picked up their load and resumed their journey. Further up the hill, duly warned, the photographers are ready and waiting. Thus do the stretcher bearers progress in a leisurely fashion. In the sequence, they are then joined by "Green Helmet" who hovers around self-importantly. All the time, there is no sense of urgency or rush.

This completes Act 2, Scene 3.

Part 5 - Act 3: The camera runs - Scene 1

It took us a long time to work it out, but the "camera runs" did not start at the wrecked building. They started at the staging area set down the lane.



But, before the runs could start, the "props" had to be delivered. We can see what might be an example of this from this frame. Initially, we thought that this first shot was the tail end of the Red Cross worker staging detailed in Act 2, Scene 2 but, if you compare the two scenes, they are different. In the earlier of the two, the workers had respectively red and white sleeves, and only one body between them. In this shot, both have white sleeves, and each is carrying a dead body. We cannot be certain, but these could be the bodies used in this Act.

However, interpreting the shots was difficult as, in one instance, Red Cross workers seem to have made their own "run", carrying the bodies of children. Curiously, that event seems to have been little recorded although this might be a photograph of one of the workers making the run - located at the bottom end of "Stretcher Alley". However, that may not be the case as this worker has red sleeves. Others (below left), we see apparently starting out on a run, had white sleeves.



Further confusion prevailed as we had difficulty identifying the precise location of the "staging area". Originally, therefore, we put the location of this frame between the wrecked house and the staging area - thus believing it to be part of a delivery sequence. In reality, this should probably have been placed

shortly after it, although we are still not quite sure of the precise location. We think they may be making their own run.

This could be the start of that run, seen on high-definition footage from *Aljazeera*, showing the route that will eventually lead to "Stretcher Alley". The workers have to turn left just before the houses in the background, going round a tight dogleg, before they descend a steep incline.

Interestingly, to the right of the frame, under the canopy of the staging area, we see a man talking on a two-way radio. Is he notifying people further up the route that the workers have just left?



We do see more of this run, with the workers escorted by the man in the pale green shirt - the same who spent his time in the wrecked basement on the cell phone. For just a "local resident", he seems to have a particularly active role in various aspects of the drama.

Returning to the staging area, we see what appears to be a delivery by Red Cross workers. They could, of course, have continued to the ambulances. They are young men and presumably fit. If there were any urgency, surely this would have been the logical thing to do. But this was clearly not part of the game plan. You see one of the workers depositing a body on a stretcher and by this means do we have delivery of the "props", ready for the start of the "camera runs" by the stars, "Green Helmet" and "White Tee-shirt". They do not, as we first thought, carry the bodies all they way from the wreckage. The props have been conveniently deposited closer to the "set" for them to pick up and strut their stuff.

In the arrangements, the bearded man in the white shirt seems to play a key role. As he did with one of the staged shots in Act 2, he seems to be acting as the "prop master", parcelling out the bodies to the actors. For ease of identification, we shall call the body of the first girl "Blue pants" and the second, "Pink pyjamas".

Intriguingly, the one thing we do not see in these staging area scenes is "Green Helmet". But do see a man with a two-way radio (picture below, left - top right of the frame) and we know that "Green Helmet" has one as well. Is this how the photo-shoots are being co-ordinated?



Anyhow, before even the bodies were parcelled out, they had already been exploited as grisly "props" with a different cast of actors. The first appears to be here (above right), where the body of a girl named Zaynab is the central figure in a clip broadcast by *Aljazeera* television. This is a scene from within the wreckage where we see the body being lifted from the mass of bodies (curiously unburied) recovered in the first phase of the relief effort.



Then there is the one above, left. We see the man in the pale green shirt - whom we have also seen sitting in the wrecked building, on top of the debris, conducting a prolonged conversation on his cell phone. He appears in a number of different poses with the dead and now is now posing with the body in the staging area, displaying his grief to the camera.

Not to be outdone, we also have the shadowy figure, the bearded man in the white tee-shirt (right). Is he Hezbollah? The frame looks to be showing him in the act of handing over "Pink pyjamas" to "White Tee-shirt" (out of shot to the right) and we see again a display of emotion. Having seen "White Tee-shirt's" expression during his run, it looks eerily familiar. (The photograph was taken by Mohamed Messara for epa/Corbis).

The run starts

This then brings us to the first of the two shots (below) taken as screen grabs from a film sequence shown on BBC television's *Newsnight*. These mark the

start of "Green Helmet's" run. As we noted when we first published the shots, the bodies are not treated with any care or dignity as they are handed out. On the video clip, there is a great deal of shouting going on, and the transfer is conducted very quickly.



The key frame of this sequence, however, is the one on the right (above), which shows entering from stage-right "Green Helmet", the "star" of the first scene in this Act.

Without any ado, he literally grabs the first of the girl's bodies (Blue pants). There is none of the apparent tenderness that we see in the full glare of the media. In the subsequent frames in the video footage (not shown) he then lifts the body and cradles it to his chest before moving out of shot. He is ready for the media scrum - the first of the "camera runs" up "Stretcher Alley", with "Green Helmet" putting on the performance of his career.



From *Al Manar* TV, we now have the opening phases of the "run" (above), as "Green Helmet" walks out from the staging area, carrying his "prop". As can be seen from this "grab", he goes directly towards the television cameras (another lens can be seen to the right of the frame), which are stationed across the road, offering them the maximum opportunity for clear shots and a full face view. At this stage, though, he is showing no great emotion.

In the second "grab" of the sequence (above right), "Green Helmet's" strategy becomes clearer. On leaving the staging area, he has to turn immediately to travel towards "Stretcher Alley", but he is delaying this until he is directly in front of the cameras, giving them some close-up shots of himself and his burden. Here, we see how close he is to the cameras before he executes his turn.



The strategy clearly works. As he swings round, he presents his burden to the camera. The operator is ready and focuses on the bundle, showing a scene writ large with emotion and pathos. To the left of the frame, we can see part of the body of another journalist, the word "press" emblazoned on his flak jacket. This looks to be a still cameraman, in the act of taking a shot.



Above left is the first published still frame of "Green Helmet's" run. The location is a few yards on from the staging area. In the right-hand frame, he has turned right, around the dogleg and is coming down the hill, alongside the building we originally thought was the staging area. Apart from the photographer following up the rear and the one taking the picture, there seems very little media presence at this stage. We certainly have no video footage of this leg of the journey. And, at this stage, "Green Helmet's" expression is very little different from that in the previous shot.

In the frame below (left), taken by AP's Nasser Nasser, "Green Helmet" has now progressed perhaps a hundred yards or so, down the hill and round a left-hand curve (from his orientation). When we first studied this photograph, the buildings in the background were unfamiliar and there was no sign of wreckage. Given the initial confusion - created by the media - about the distance from the wreckage to the ambulances, we thought this must have been posed separately, at a different time from the final "Stretcher Alley" photograph.



The evidence thus far, therefore, is unequivocal. "Green Helmet", having collected the photogenic corpse of a young girl from the staging area (after it has been delivered there by someone else) has walked down the road approximately 100 yards and round several bends, where photographers were waiting for him. Spontaneous this is not.

Now an *Aljazeera* video camera picks up the run (above, right) and we see our actor very close to "Stretcher Corner", shortly to turn right into "Stretcher Alley". There is very little coverage of him at this stage either. The footage we have seen lasts but a few seconds. And "Green Helmet's" demeanour still seems restrained. His best performance is yet to come.

Below. "Green Helmet" round the corner into "Stretcher Alley" itself, and the first photographer that seems to pick him up is from AFP. Certainly the corner is in the near background, so it is very early in "Green Helmet's" journey up the rise. He does not seem yet to have got into his full emotional stride which is perhaps why the focus in on the child's body rather than its bearer.



In the right-hand frame, though, "Green Helmet" is going up "Stretcher Alley" in full view of the waiting media. Framed against the rubble, with the girl's body in his arms, only now - when the media is assembled in full force - does he display the intensity of emotion that make this a front page picture. This intensity of emotion we have not seen in him before and the combination of this, the child's body and the location makes for the iconic shot which is published throughout the world.

And it is a fake - courtesy of AP's Nasser Nasser.

Out of shot, the route is marked out by Red Cross workers and others, redolent of a highly organised film set, which is precisely what it is. In the frame (below), "Green Helmet" co-ops one worker to provide the media with another photo opportunity. The picture itself is ambiguous - the Red Cross worker could be guiding "Green Helmet", but there seems more to it than that.



In the next frame (above) - for which we have no attribution - a hand-over seems to be taking place. The Red Cross worker is actually grasping the arm of the child's body as if to take it. Whether a hand-over actually takes place, we do not know. There is no further footage of this part of the run.

What we do know, though, is that "Green Helmet" does not complete the journey to the waiting ambulance. Past the cameras, it now seems as if the body has served its purpose. Certainly, "Green Helmet" has no further use for it. He dumps it on a gurney (litter), leaving it in the care of the worker we have called "the man in black".



The impression is that there are other photo-opportunities in the making and, to "Green Helmet", these are clearly his priority. The pictures we have do suggest that there is some urgency, as "Green Helmet" appears to depart the location with some haste, without even waiting to see the body properly secured. We next see him in the greater drama of Scene 2. But, as we will see from the pictures and narrative we offer in our exposition of that scene, some important inconsistencies emerge.

Part 6 - Act 3: The camera runs - Scene 2

In this second scene of Act 3, the central player becomes "White Tee-shirt", a brooding, enigmatic figure, also described as a "local resident" and in some photograph captions as a "rescuer". But, in the same way that we do not see "White Helmet" doing any digging, neither do we see "White Tee-shirt" doing any rescuing.



The cameras catch him around the site occasionally, but there is no hint from the poses that he is much more than an interested bystander, although he seems to have unprecedented access to the wreckage, and is seen once helping to carry a stretcher up a short section of "Stretcher Alley". He is clearly a man of some standing, as his right of access does not seem to be challenged, even though he is not in uniform and has no apparent formal role in the rescue.

The run begins

Courtesy of *Al Manar* television, we now have a complete record of the first stage of "White Tee-shirt's" camera run - continuous footage which opens with "Green Helmet" starting off with "Blue pants". In the frame here, we see "White Tee-shirt", slightly left of centre, being called by the bearded man in the white shirt, who is holding "Pink pyjamas". "White Tee-shirt" is beginning to turn in response to the call.



In this frames above, we see the start of the hand-over, filmed not only by the camera through which lens we are looking, but also by the camera on the left, just visible in the frame. Possibly of significance, we can just see to the right of the frame, what looks to be the body of yet another child. Is this part of the "stock" held by the bearded man, ready to issue to his band of thespians?

Anyhow, it is the turn of "Pink pyjamas" for the spotlight and in this frame the hand-over is nearly complete (below left). This may be the shot in which the bearded man is caught on film emoting, but it is not yet the turn of "White Tee-shirt" to do likewise. Despite the blurring, we can see that his expression, at the moment, is relatively neutral as he concentrates on the task at hand.



And now (above right) we see "White Tee-shirt", in full possession of the child's body, turning away to step out into the road where other cameras are waiting. This is the start of his own camera run. Once again though - even despite the poor quality of the picture - we can see that his expression still is relatively neutral. There is no great display of emotion.



Here (above right), with "White Tee-shirt" a few yards into his run, the full vista opens up. He has cameras to the front, side and rear, with what looks like a "minder" signalling to the cameras the direction "White Tee-shirt" will take. This is clearly an arranged "shoot" with the cameras pre-positioned to take the shots as the subject appears. There cannot possibly be anything spontaneous about this.

"White Tee-shirt" is now flanked by his minder, who has moved to the left to allow the still photographer a clear shot. You can now see the beginnings of an emotive expression developing on "White Tee-shirt's" face as he gets into his stride. Partly discernible from his pose, but clearly evident in the video footage, he is walking extremely fast, just short of a full run.

A few strides on (below left) and now "White Tee-shirt" is assuming an anguished expression. This intensifies with every stride. His mouth opens and he starts to shout passionately, as he steps onwards, his swiftening stride

conveying a sense of urgency. Yet, the urgency is false, part of the act that he is putting on for the benefit of the media. There is nothing urgent here. The child is dead and the progress of its body to the ambulance has already been delayed to allow the photo-shoot to be set up.



Well into his stride now and emoting freely (above right), a few yards on from the staging area, "White Tee-shirt" is producing iconic material, captured by Zohra Bensemra of Reuters/Corbis, who describes "White Tee-shirt" as a "Lebanese volunteer". This picture makes the *Daily Telegraph* website and many other dailies. Again, the combination of the photogenic corpse and the "raw emotion" make the picture irresistible. It is a bravura performance, even if the result lacks the essential touch of the background wreckage.



Round the bend he goes (above left), losing sight of the staging area. *Aljazeera* television now picks up the run, "White Tee-shirt" emoting less freely. He is met by another posse of photographers, ready and waiting to grab action pictures. He has only a few dozen yards to go now, with the *Aljazeera* cameraman still in attendance, before he reaches "Stretcher Corner" where he will perform his last leg of the run.

In the second frame (above right), he is actually at "Stretcher Corner", with yet more photographers waiting to capture their shots. The wreckage-strewn rise of "Stretcher Alley" can be seen to the left of the frame and it is up this rise where "White Tee-shirt" will deliver his most memorable performance, a performance which will get his image on the front pages of newspapers throughout the world.



Round the corner, this is what is waiting for him (above) - a scrum of press photographers, ready and waiting to catch the show. In this video "grab", their interest is taken by Red Cross workers carrying a stretcher, but this is precisely the position from which they will also capture "White Tee-shirt's" performance. And he is about to give the performance of a lifetime - a heart-wrenching display of raw emotion.

A problem

In earlier analyses, our narrative assumed that, of the two camera runs, "Green Helmet" started off first - which indeed he does - and there was then some delay before "White Tee-shirt" set out. What the *Al Manar* footage shows, however, is that the delay is only a matter of seconds. Furthermore, while "Green Helmet" sets off at a fairly sedate pace, "White Tee-shirt" is all but running.

Given the relative speeds of the two men, and the distance from the staging area to "Stretcher Corner", it seems inconceivable that "White Tee-shirt" had not caught up by then. Yet, as we know, "Green Helmet" is able to do a solo run, up "Stretcher Alley". Not only that, as we see in Scene 1, he deposits his load on the gurney, turns round and goes back to meet "White Tee-shirt", whence they perform a duet, running together for the last part of the second camera run. The timings thus seem to be wrong.

We have no photographic or other evidence to suggest what might have happened, but it seems reasonable to speculate that, at some point, "White Tee-shirt" paused to allow his partner to complete his phase of the run. But we have near-continuous video coverage of "White Tee-shirt" from the moment he leaves the staging area to the point where he arrives at "Stretcher Corner", and there is no record of him pausing along this route.

Whatever happens, therefore, also happens in full view of the media. However, what is interesting is that, while we do have this continuous video coverage of the first leg of the run, the record stops at the corner. So far, no

video footage has emerged for either "Green Helmet" or "White Tee-shirt" progressing up the slope. The record in this section is captured entirely by still photographers. This is curious and may be significant. Would video footage have shown the extent of the staging?

The second leg

Continuing with his journey, in a picture from AP's Nasser Nasser, we now see "White Tee-shirt" making his solo debut up "Stretcher Alley". As far as is evident, he is on his own, with no sign of "Green Helmet". He makes an appearance shortly, having completed his delivery to the gurney at the top of the rise.



The snappers are doing their business here, but "White Tee-shirt" has not yet been able to replicate the performance he gave in the first leg. His stride is too purposeful. He looks soulful but his head hangs and there is no passion or drama in the pose. The rubble is bit too messy and amorphous and there is nothing to draw the eye to add contrast to the sole figure marching up the litter-strewn slope. As a picture, this simply doesn't gel.

Whether he was truly by himself in the above shot is difficult to judge, but there is some confirmation from this, the photograph used on the front page of *The Daily Telegraph* (above right). The same picture is also used by *The Daily Mail* on its front page and its website, the caption here inexplicably reading: "A father carries a little girl from the ruins of Qana". Attributed to Lafargue Frederic of the Gamma agency, this picture again shows "White Tee-shirt" on a solo run, with no sign of "Green Helmet". We can assume that "White Tee-shirt" is most likely on his own. But this is the last shot we see him like this.

By now, "Green Helmet" has got in position for a dual shot, although from this angle you can only just see the crown of his helmet over "Tee-shirt's" left shoulder. He must either have been waiting for his partner to catch up, or he has rushed down to meet him.

As to "White Tee-shirt", his pose is now magnificent - the head thrown back in anguish, the body clutched to the bosom and the soulful expression all combine to give just the note that is needed. Many editors find this is just right and rush to print it.



Perhaps in this frame (above right), "White Tee-shirt" is overdoing it slightly, but it isn't a lot different from the previous frame. What really spoils it is "Green Helmet" peering round "Tee-shirt's" shoulder, as he strides along to catch up with his co-star in order to take an equal role in the drama. But his presence at such an awkward angle breaks up the symmetry of the pose and creates a distraction. Nevertheless, Nicolas Asfour for AFP-Getty Images labels the picture, "A man screams for help as he carries the body of a girl killed in the Israeli strike on Qana on July 30". It gets used by *Newsweek*, amongst others.



As a dual shot, this next one (above left) is unusable. Look closely at "Green Helmet" and - although he most certainly isn't - he appears to be smirking. The combination of the exertion and trying to present the appropriate *gravitas* is proving too much for the man. But, if the effect is grotesque, "Tee-shirt" is delivering. So out come the scissors (or the crop button) and "Green Helmet" is history. The result is perfect for the front page of *The Independent*.

But everything is coming right. Without moving from their positions, all the snappers have to do is let the stars come to them. Now (above right) the angles are right, the pair complement each other and the expressions are spot on. With an imaginative caption "man screaming for help...", this one goes straight on the front page of *The Guardian*, another shot from Nicolas Asfour, AFP-Getty Images. This is award-winning stuff, except the prize should really go to Hezbollah - it is all staged and the scenes have been faked.

The sequel

With the pictures in the bag, "White Tee-shirt's" body is so much dead weight.

Like "Green Helmet", he dumps it on the gurney, leaving it to the good offices of "the man in black" to strap it in and organise the load. Nevertheless, it provides a poignant photo-opportunity and the snappers do not miss out. The trouble is that the shadows are wrong and the face of "Blue pants", the body he was in such a hurry to deliver, is partially obscured. This does not really score as a top-rate picture.



Neither does the next (above right), but as a picture, it is worth a thousand words. The starring duo, having got what they wanted from the bodies, putting on their display of raw emotion and all the rest - to the delight of the assembled media - have completely lost interest in their props. The "man in black" is left to struggle unaided with the burden, heading over rough, wreckage-strewn ground to the ambulance. This can be seen in the distance over his left shoulder, past the nearer, more modern-looking vehicle. "White Tee-shirt" as gone on ahead, without offering any aid, not looking at the gurney. He has other, more pressing things on his mind, as we will see shortly.



For all his trouble, the "Man in black" is at least rewarded - he gets to pose (above left) with one of the bodies discarded by the stars. A noble giant standing at the back of the ambulance, the tiny figure in his arms, there is a certain majesty and gravity to the man. Nevertheless, he clearly lacks the star

quality, the ability to project raw emotion, a deficiency that will forever condemn him to looking after the props after they have been discarded and playing the bit parts after the stars have left the scene.

Even then, one of the stars could not resist a repeat performance (above right). It was obviously hot work running up and down the hill, and back up again, so off comes the trade-mark helmet, the radio, the flak jacket and the fluorescent waistcoat. "Green Helmet" *au naturelle* poses once more with his prop. But he is only going through the motions when it comes to projecting emotions and he lacks conviction.



And at last the body of the poor mite that was once a pretty child is laid rest temporarily in the back of the ambulance. Even then, her mortal remains are publicity fodder, providing a poignant reminder of the tragedy, without the artifice of poses. This is the only natural pose in the whole sequence, but it lacks the drama the editors need. The picture ends up as a filler for internet archives.

The man from Hezbollah?

While the dead rest at last, we now see why "White Tee-shirt" was so anxious to get away. He has to return home to be interviewed by a *France 2* reporter. He starts by showing the reporter round the house, well furnished and far from modest. This is no poverty-stricken man, embittered by deprivation. Even by European or American standards, the house is comfortable.



But what is so evident are the pictures of Sheik Hassan Nasrallah - even a calendar. This is not a dwelling - it is a shrine to Hezbollah, the party of God. But "White Tee-shirt" is not Hezbollah, oh, no! That is what he tells the young reporter, saying that it is the Israeli aggression that is radicalising Muslims and driving them into the arms of Hezbollah.



Make up your own mind. Is this a Hezbollah member, or a mere supporter? He lives in a Hezbollah stronghold, a location from which the IDF claim over 150 missiles have been fired. And our "White Tee-shirt" has a house full of Hezbollah material and is not a member - was not all day driving that agenda forward? Was he simply an ordinary joe, overcome with emotion at the death and destruction around him, of which he was entirely innocent?

As a coda, we then see "White Tee-shirt" at Tyre hospital (above right), in front of the now packaged bodies. He has finally changed his tee-shirt but is unmistakably the same man. The photograph, taken by AP's Mohammed Zaatari, is labelled, in part: "A Lebanese man, comforted by a Lebanese rescuer, cries in front of the body of his son who was recovered from under the rubble of a demolished building that was struck by Israeli warplane missiles at the village of Qana...".

Part 7 - Act 4: Caught in the act!

To this Act, originally of one scene, we have added another, both of which conform to the descriptive title, "caught in the act". In each case, the intended video sequences look natural enough and it is only when you see the full, uncut footage that you realise what is going on.

Scene 1

For this short first scene, the investigative work has been done for us. In the early stages of the investigation, this blog was very much doing the running, posting evidence of staging as we uncovered it. But then the German television station NDR (*Norddeutscher Rundfunk*) ran a short piece of footage, repeated on the German Zapp video magazine. Thus has subsequently been uploaded onto the "U-tube" site.

The video shows raw footage taken at Qana on 30 July and, unlike our work, which relies on making inferences from material assembled from different sources, this single piece actually showed "Green Helmet" staging a scene in front of the camera and giving directions to the camera operator.



The Act starts in the area above "Stretcher Alley", where a body in a stretcher is being loaded into the back of an ambulance. Interestingly, in the right foreground is that familiar figure, the man in the pale green shirt, watching the proceedings while "Green Helmet" is in the centre of the picture, his orange jacket just visible, slightly to right of centre.

As the sequence develops and the stretcher is loaded, "Green Helmet" is told that there is a television crew filming. In this shot, he walks towards the camera, giving directions to the crew, an unmistakable circular motion with his finger, instructing the operator to "keep on filming". Such is the deceit of the man that he then seeks to disguise the instruction by continuing his hand upwards, pretending to adjust his glasses.

Once he has the crew's attention, "Green Helmet" returns to the ambulance and an empty litter is produced. The body - which we later see to be that of a

young girl - is then withdrawn from the ambulance and transferred, completely unnecessarily, to the empty litter. Once this process is complete, "Green Helmet" then obligingly clears onlookers out of the way and beckons the camera operator to come closer.



As the camera continues filming, "Green Helmet" then pulls down the blanket covering the body to give a clear shot and a close-up opportunity.

Interestingly, in the previous "grab", we see the actions being witnessed by a man in the background dressed in a white helmet and blue flak jacket, with a "press" label on the front. In this frame, he has turned away, but he and the rest of the onlookers must have been well aware of what was going on.

In the final frames of the sequence, we see the camera zooming in for a close-up. As the subtitle indicates - added by the "Zapp" magazine, roughly translating the German - this is the abuse of a dead child.



Crucially, it also shows "Green Helmet" to be opportunistic and totally without scruples. He knowingly exploits the camera presence to displaying his grisly trophies. His actions betray a media awareness that strongly supports a contention that the man knows exactly what he is doing in front of a camera and contradicts any suggestion that the poses we see in the previous parts are merely spontaneous displays by a concerned rescue worker. We see here a cold, calculating man and nothing at all spontaneous in his actions.

Scene 2



The same cynicism and calculation is seen in this second scene. What you are meant to see is the first frame, where the television camera lingers on the abandoned body of a man, as scene pregnant with pathos, so laden with symbolism that even the hardest of hearts could not fail to be moved. The Arab TV station which showed this scene, however, was perhaps too enthusiastic for its own good. In a long clip, of over seven minutes, it then went on to show this separate sequence, starting at 6:45 minutes.



The sequence opens with "Green Helmet" leading a stretcher party towards "Stretcher Alley", comprising himself and two others. As he does so, he spots the camera and stops the party in its tracks. Facing the camera, he appears to give the operator a signal while he and his colleagues lower the stretcher to the ground. There can be no mistaking the deliberation in the act - "Green Helmet" is quite clearly looking directly towards the camera.

Thus we see the party (above right) lay the stretcher on the ground, "Green Helmet" all the time keeping his gaze on the camera. There is no verbal sound track to this film (it is overlaid with Arabic music) so we cannot tell if "Green Helmet" gives an order - not that we would have understood it anyway. But what happens next cannot be spontaneous.

With extraordinary rapidity, the three stretcher-bearers disperse. The "man in

black", or so it seems, heads off at the run in the direction whence he came. The young man breaks left at high speed and "Green Helmet" heads at similar speed in the direction of the camera. The indications are - and the effect certainly is - that they are trying to get out of camera-shot.



No more than a few seconds into the sequence and their high-speed dashes are paying off. All the figures are now nearly out of camera-shot. The "man in black" looks as if he is about to run all the way back to the wrecked building - that is the direction he is going. The others, we cannot see as they run past the camera out of view.



Now we are but a fraction of a second from the pathos - another iconic shot, showing the abandoned body. "Green Helmet" is just out of view, the young man has disappeared and the "man in black" is now so far up the road that he will not appear in any close-up shot. And a few seconds of a close-up shot is all it will take to make a powerful point.

Context, of course, is everything. An innocent explanation would be that the stretcher party had arrived at its destination. The "man in black" was rushing off to pick up another body and the other two were rushing forward to take on other vital tasks. However, we know exactly where this is, from the footage of "White Tee-shirt's" camera run. It is some distance from the wrecked building and even the staging area, and well short of "Stretcher Alley" and the ambulances. There is no activity here at all. There can be no explanation for their behaviour, other than they are determined to get out of camera-shot to give a clear view of the body.

Once again, the showman scores.

Part 8 - Discussion and conclusions



For whole sections of the international media, the "Qana massacre" at Khuraybah was a godsend. It provided tangible support for the narrative they had been running ever since the re-opening of hostilities in Lebanon - and before - that Israel was the pitiless aggressor which would stop at nothing to get its way, including "murdering" innocent women and children.

Thus did newspapers like the British left-wing *Independent* revel in the pictures produced so obligingly by the agencies and staff photographers, this newspaper devoting its whole front page (above) to "White Tee-shirt's" iconic expression of agony. The only problem for it, and the hundreds if not thousands of newspapers and TV channels that reproduced this and many other images, was that they were fake. Not fake in the sense that they had been doctored - as in the infamous photographs taken by Reuters' Adnan Hajj - but in the very real sense that the scenes has been staged. They were artificial, devised entirely to create shots that the media would lap up - a grisly exercise in propaganda by a terrorist organisation which had its own agenda. And the media did lap them up.

Yet, despite good evidence produced by this blog - and relayed by several thousand other websites - seen by millions of readers (over a million on this site alone) -this issue has not been addressed by the media, either on the ground or back in the comfortable, air conditioned editorial offices, thousands of miles from the action. There, pictures of death are a commodity. It does not seem to matter under what circumstances they were gained, and to what

purpose the actors paraded their emotions. Another forest-load of dead trees conveyed the story and a few dead children were exploited to provide pictures and add drama.

To an extent, this is understandable. Pictures are a commodity and, in the rush of producing a newspaper, they are treated as such. Those from "trusted" sources, like the main news agencies, are largely accepted uncritically and used freely as needed.

Quite how much of a commodity is revealed by a note from AP to its "staffers" congratulating Beirut-based photographer Hussein Malla, AP photographers Nasser Nasser, Lefteris Pitarakis and stringer Mohammed Zaatari, and Kevin Frayer for their "powerful images". The note in particular observed:

Nasser's most haunting image showed a man emerging from the rubble carrying the lifeless and dust-covered body of a child. Calm, morning light shone down on man and child, highlighting them against an almost monochrome background of pure rubble. ... Nasser's image ran on the front pages of at least 33 newspapers, including the San Francisco Chronicle, Chicago Tribune, The Philadelphia Inquirer and the New York Post. It also won a double-page center spread in The Guardian of London. Lefteris's image (above left) of a resident weeping next to a row of bodies made the front of The Washington Post, among many others.

For their work, the "team" shared the week's "\$500 Beat of the Week award".



But what is neither understandable nor forgivable is the response of the main agencies when their work was questioned. Only a day after this blog had first published evidence that the photographs had been faked - although how comprehensively and cynically, even we were not fully aware - Associated Press fronted a "rebuttal" on behalf of itself, AFP and Reuters, using its established and privileged relationship with the media to distribute a "rebuttal" of our claims. The news agencies stood by their photographs, we were told.

As other media organisations piled in with their condemnation - some overt like the *Washington Post*, and others feline like the British *Guardian* and even the supposedly right-wing *Daily Telegraph* website (re-named by us, *The Daily Hezbollahgraph*), the agencies maintained a lofty silence. Even on issues which could have been resolved by information only they had, they were

silent. But, as the evidence piled up, we issued a direct challenge to the agencies - to refute our findings or come clean and mount an inquiry, publishing their own findings.



They did neither. Instead, the self-appointed leader of a group of organisations that has become purveyors of lies responded to that charge by producing yet more lies. That was Associated Press, which produced a faux of "Green Helmet". The picture produced with the story, itself was another lie. Divested of his trade-mark green helmet, and orange high-visibility waistcoat, Salam Daher, as we then knew him, was shown with blue helmet and flak jacket. This, as any observer of the scene would have known, is the garb adopted by media personnel in the field (and especially in Lebanon), which made it highly probable that "Green Helmet" had been loaned the kit for yet another staged shot by an AP photographer.

At least, in this instance, the caption admitted the picture had been posed, with the words "sits to be photographed", but the fact remained that this was obviously a calculated rejection by AP of the charge that its staff had been complicit in the staging of scenes at Khuraybah on 30 July 2006.

AP also offered another photograph of "Green Helmet" (above right), this time an internal shot where he was fully kitted up in the borrowed rig. Readers unfamiliar with the background to the story must have been puzzled as to why he was called "Green Helmet" when he was so splendidly decked out in a blue helmet.

Anyhow, this outrageous "puff" followed initial denial of 3 August, when Kathleen Carroll, senior vice president and executive editor for Associated

Press (below left), claimed that she had personally spoken with photo editors, who had dismissed the idea of any wrongdoing. Furthermore, she said, "I also know from 30 years of experience in this business that you can't get competitive journalists to participate in the kind of (staging) experience that is being described." She also claimed that photographers were experienced in recognising when someone is trying to stage something for their benefit.



It was this, as we indicated in our introduction, that convinced us we should respond with a comprehensive post, pulling together all the evidence of the "staging" at Khuraybah which was then scattered throughout this blog, presenting it as our definitive work. In the ensuing period, much of the information came from readers, and the narrative was informed by the thousands of comments that poured in (2-300 e-mails a day, plus hundreds of comments on our forum). This is the result - no longer an individual effort but a joint production of the "blogosphere".

One of the things we did was take a brief look at the egregious Kathy Gannon (above right). Described in the Green/Blue helmet piece as an "Associated Press Writer", she was and is much more than that. Between 1986 and 2005, she was a correspondent for the Associated Press in Pakistan and Afghanistan. She is currently the Iran Bureau Chief-designate.

Her work has been published in *Foreign Affairs* and *The New Yorker*. "I is for Infidel" — on the history and politics of Afghanistan during her years working in the region — is her first book. In 2002, she was the recipient of the International Women's Media Foundation's Courage in Journalism award and in 2004, she was the Edward R. Murrow fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. This was no lowly staff hack doing a routine filler. This was the "big guns", out to do a hatchet job. And thus did she attempt to turn the cynical, manipulative and totally unscrupulous "Green Helmet" in to a latter-day saint, the "hero of Qana", a man who spent "hours of digging in the blistering heat".

This, in fact, was her second attempt at so doing, the first on the day of the incident itself where, awarding the man a different name, she wrote for AP:

Abu Shadi Jradi pulled bodies out of wreckage for hours - two toddler girls wearing tiny gold earrings, a small boy whose pale blue pacifier still hung from his neck. Somewhere in the middle, Jradi slumped beneath a tree and wept.

Not least, with the same man being given two different names, one might ask what happened to this famous fact-checking.



Returning to the point, however, if there is one iconic scene which to us sums up the cynicism of the "rescue" effort, it was not Lefteris Pitarakis's image of a resident standing next to a row of bodies weeping but the shot of the same man sitting inside the wrecked building - the one which was supposed to be in imminent danger of collapse - actually on the mound of rubble under which people were buried, conducting a prolonged conversation on his cell phone. This he did while Red Cross workers moved round him, pulling bodies from the wreckage.

Crucially, Gannon, with a Qana "dateline" to her first piece, was there at the time - and lied. In her second piece, on behalf of her employer, she constructed a total fabrication, the like of which Orwell would have been proud. What is more, having been there and thus not having to rely on second-hand accounts, she must have known she was lying. And we have found her out.

Our case against the media

As to our evidence, we have for convenience organised it into four "Acts" which form the core of our report. Turning to these, in chronological terms, the first dealing with the "dead baby" staging was probably the last. This must have occurred some time after midday, while the main recovery effort started shortly after 9 am and, from the photographic evidence, many of the bodies were probably extracted very quickly indeed.

Nevertheless, in technical terms, much of the pictorial evidence we have is far from satisfactory - largely low definition reproductions of still photographs and poor quality television videos. With such low grade material, there is a limit to how much analysis of specific frames can be done - or is advisable to do. Crucially also, we lack detail of the timings of individual photographs and video sequences, which would have assisted our work. Much of that information must be available to the originators of the material - including the agencies. While they have been critical of our attempts to work out timings, they themselves have furnished no information on these key issues.



However, as to Act 1, it is not the finer detail on which we rely, but on the evidence of that the baby's body was exposed to seven identifiable photography sessions, in which "Green Helmet" was the central figure in four. Yet, Tim Fadek, a photographer who was at Khuraybah on 30 July, claims in *Stern* magazine that he did not see evidence of staging. "Everybody was upset," he says:

...it was quite chaotic. When they carried the bodies out of the basement, the workers themselves were finished. When they held a body to the cameras, it was nothing of a pose, but sheer distress and anger: look what they did to our children!

Curiously, Michael Shaw, writing in the Huffington Post, also recruits Tim Fadek in a piece headed: "Qana was not staged". Fadek claims that photographers only had "1½ to 2 seconds" to document the dead children as they were laid in the assembly area, pending transport to the ambulances. The man relies on his innate authority of having been at the site, but he clearly has not accounted for the torrent of images that has been produced. Any number of these (not least the one above) give testament to the opportunities available to photographers and the lengths to which rescue workers went to ensure that they got their pictures. There is no way that Fadek can be telling the truth. Like Kathy Gannon, he too is lying.

As regards "Green Helmet's" displays of the dead baby, certainly, anyone seeing just the one episode when he came out of the wrecked basement and

held the body of the baby aloft - in a session that was probably over very quickly - might have come away with the impression that this was a spontaneous gesture by a man displaying "sheer distress and anger". But the totality of the evidence indicates otherwise.

Firstly and indisputably, there was the pre-emergence photography session with "Green Helmet" posing inside the basement, with the body of the baby being unearthed. That he offers two different poses to two different photographers destroys any idea of spontaneity - the man discovering the body and rushing out to display it to the media. Secondly, there are the two additional photography sessions - one clearly posed - involving "Green Helmet". If by any measure the emergence scene can be considered spontaneous, these subsequent sessions cannot.

Arguably though - and it is arguable - a relatively small number of journalists witnessed the "dead baby" display scene and unless they had also seen the other scenes they may not have realised the extent of the staging. However, as we observed, these scenes came later in the day. Before that, and probably first in the chronology, were the first two scenes involving the Red Cross workers, included as the second Act of our report. Not only was the first quite obviously staged, but it was repeated with a different Red Cross worker. In these scenes, a not inconsiderable number of photo-journalists and cameramen actively participated. No one present at either of them could have come away from Khuraybah saying that there was no evidence of staging.

Then there was that extraordinary episode of the Red Cross stretcher party coming round the corner into "Stretcher Alley". They set down their burden and then, after the first bearer had made what appeared to be a signal, picked up the stretcher and resumed their journey.

We have focused on these three scenes in particular, but throughout the day it seems that Red Cross workers were willing and active participants in staging other scenes for the benefit of the media - which raises very real questions on the impartiality of the Red Cross.



This picture (above) is one we have not used before was taken by Ali Haider for epa/Corbis. It is indisputably staged: the location is around the corner from the basement opening, in front of the wrecked house, and the stretcher party has actually left the road and is partly down the bank, facing away from the direction of travel. Highly significant is the number of press photographers in the background. Could any of those say - with any honesty - that this photograph (showing the same body that was so intensively photographed as it was brought out of the wrecked basement - see above) was not staged?

Moving on, it is appropriate at this point to deal with Act 4. The first scene deals with the NDR footage which shows "Green Helmet" actively giving camera directions and, quite cynically, staging a photo-opportunity for the television camera. This footage is largely self-explanatory and provides powerful evidence, not only of staging but also of "Green Helmet's" involvement. And, as we observe, the staging was witnessed by a number of journalists. Then there is the "abandoned body" sequence. Seen in the context of the NDR footage, this is yet more evidence of the cynical opportunism of "Green Helmet".



This brings us to Act 3, the "Stretcher Alley" camera runs made by "Green Helmet" and "White Tee-shirt". We have examined both scenes exhaustively and there can be no doubt that the events were staged. Even ignoring the possibility that traffic was sent to the top of the blocked alley, when use of the alternative route could have allowed emergency vehicles direct access to the wrecked house, there were many other factors that strongly support our thesis.

Firstly, there the apparent selection process in the assembly area. We find it very hard to believe that the choice of the two bodies - the remains of two photogenic young girls - was accidental. Ample evidence elsewhere demonstrates that Hezbollah have mounted a very effective propaganda campaign, not least in their ability to "tap in" to the western mind and "press the right buttons". Choosing these two "props" could easily have come into that category, giving the western media subjects for their photographs which would not be too offensive to their readers' sensibilities - unlike the "dead baby", images of which were little used in the west.

Then there was the dark role of the "staging area". By no means, in the efficient handling of the bodies - arranging their transfer from the wrecked building to the ambulances - could this intermediate area have been considered necessary. Just in terms of efficiency, its use invited double-handling. Then, at the area itself, the conduct of affairs was self-evidently, well... stage-managed.



Above left is another video "grab" of the area. The man in the foreground, wearing a green helmet of the same design as that worn by the eponymous "Green Helmet" was last seen - in the context of this report - posing with "Green Helmet" in the wrecked basement, as baby Abbas Hashem is uncovered. In the clip, he is seen apparently signalling to the man with the walkie-talkie. Also present are other figures who have played a key role in staging scenes, not least the man in the pale green shirt. All the signs are of preparation for a highly organised, choreographed production.



Next is the choice of the "actors". There is no obvious, logical reason why either "Green Helmet" or "White Tee-shirt" should have been involved in the transfer of the bodies to the ambulances. There were plenty of idle hands in the staging area itself - present long before either of the two actors can be seen - and then there were the two Red Cross workers who transferred the bodies from the wrecked basement to the staging area (with their escorts of

empty-handed "minders"). As we have observed, there was absolutely no reason why these Red Cross workers should not have continued their journey past the staging area, direct to the waiting ambulances.

Crucially, there was then the assembly and marshalling of the press corps. Their positioning and the sheer numbers of photo-journalists and television cameramen lining the route - in just the right places for the "iconic" shots - again cannot have been accidental. Their presence, and the signalling systems that gave them advance warning, were clearly part of that highly organised, orchestrated effort.

That the two "actors" left separately is also inexplicable, except in terms of their phasing their departures to maximise the photo-opportunities. That the bodies were carried rather than stretchered again is only explicable in terms of the opportunities this option afforded for photography. There was, after all, a stretcher available at the other end. If there were none at the staging area, this could have been brought down. That the bodies were not covered also lends support to our thesis.



Finally, as actors progressed through their performances, we see their remarkable abilities to switch on their displays of emotion, just where the camera density was highest, to switch them off again and then to re-display for the second tranche of cameras. Given the total lack of spontaneity, it is startlingly clear that these displays were false.

Against this huge weight of evidence, what do we have? The bland denials of the agencies, the flawed testimony of Tim Fadek and then Nick Blanford. There have, in fact, been two journalists who have put their heads above the parapet and specifically denied the charges raised by this blog. Blanford who, we have been told, has been working in Lebanon for twelve years for *The Times* and *Time* magazine, was one of the first on the spot. He claims:

The Red-Cross people carried the bodies out of the basement one after another. In the beginning, the ambulance had no chance to get to the destroyed building. The rescue workers had to carry the bodies over a distance of 500 metres. That's the reason there are so many pictures of rescue workers with children in their arms.

This, against the weight of evidence we have produced, does not even begin to address the issues raised.

Could they have known?

All this notwithstanding, the evidence we have produced is the fruits of considerable labour by many people. The case made, we feel, is very clear that the journalists on site must have been aware of the staging and were complicit in it. Some may even have helped organise some of it.

However, it is one thing to demonstrate that those on site knew what was happening - it is another to argue that their knowledge was shared by the agency managements which employed them, and by the picture editors and journalists who used their output.

FABRICATIONS:

Nothing in our news report – words, photos, graphics, sound or video – may be fabricated. We don't use pseudonyms, composite characters or fictional names, ages, places or dates. We don't stage or re-enact events for the camera or microphone, and we don't use sound effects or substitute video or audio from one event to another. We do not "cheat" sound by adding audio to embellish or fabricate an event. A senior editor must be consulted prior to the introduction of any neutral sound (ambient sound that does not affect the editorial meaning but corrects a technical fault).

We do not ask people to pose for photos unless we are making a portrait and then we clearly state that in the caption. We explain in the caption the circumstances under which photographs are made. If someone is asked to pose for photographs by third parties and that is reflected in AP-produced images, we say so in the caption. Such wording would be: "XXX poses for photos."

As far as the agencies are concerned, though, this is not a central issue. From AP's own statement of news values and principles, re-issued last on 16 February 2006, the staging of photographs by AP staff is forbidden. Neither are they allowed to use photographs of scenes which third parties have staged, without recording that fact. And if those are the rules, they should be enforced. The question is, therefore, whether "due diligence" was exercised. We see no evidence that it was.

On the other hand, what we do see from Qana is the sheer scale of the staging - not the occasional picture of the many. The majority seems to have been either posed or staged, or both. Given the large AP team present, this suggests that we are looking at more than just a rogue photographer - the malpractice seems institutionalised as normal practice. In the nature of things, this does not happen suddenly. It builds over time before it gets to the stage where wholesale departure from institutional norms becomes standard practice. The presumption must be that local management, at the very least, had broken down - and with it any pretence of quality control.

What then of the newspapers who used the images and the staff who had to make judgements of whether they were acceptable? All they have to go on initially is the photographs themselves and their captions. But, from Deborah

Howell of the *Washington Post*, we get this, in an article written by her about the issue:

Post photo editors are cautious about Middle East photos. "You can't take things at face value. Some freelance photographers lack journalistic training. They are not operating under the same standards as most photographers throughout the world," said Joe Elbert, assistant managing editor for photography. Editors look for manipulation and balance. "We worry about that all the time," he said.

This is fair comment and perhaps articulates the concern that all responsible editors in the western media must feel about output from the Middle East. But then, what of the output?



The editors may be thousands of miles from the action but when you get three separate photographs from the same incident (above), showing quite evidently the same man, each in completely different locations, yet the same man is apparently emoting over the same victim, are there not grounds at least for some *suspicion* that some or all of the pictures might be staged?



When you then see a different man, in very similar circumstances, again in two wholly different locations, again emoting strongly - in virtually identical poses (in one accompanied by a man who has also been posing thus), would not any reasonable person have some doubts about the authenticity of what they see?

It was precisely these images that raised our suspicions in the first place. And, as many have been quick to point out, we are not the experts. Those experts are the picture editors and the news editors who, we assume, are or should be on their guard against fakes. And they spotted nothing untoward? Nothing? Nothing at all?

Well, Deborah Howell of *The Washington Post* again cites Joe Elbert and his deputy, Keith Jenkins. They and she, or so she claims, reviewed many photos from Qana. And, she says, "Only one photo, not published, looked staged - of a rescue worker holding a dead child up for the camera. Who took it? Adnan Hajj."



The Washington Post itself used for its front page the picture of the "local resident" in the light green shirt, emoting over the line of corpses outside the wrecked house (above). Howell must have been satisfied that this was not staged. But did she not stop to ask herself how, in the midst of a frenetic rescue effort, the background in the shot suddenly, miraculously cleared of people - right where the rescue effort was at its most intense. Did she not compare this shot with the many others taken at this angle of the scene and see the buzz of activity? Did she not have the slightest doubts?



The Washington Post also published this picture (above). It is still up on its website. Taken by AP's Lefteris Pitarakis, its original caption, in part, reads: "A Lebanese Red Cross volunteer rushes to the rubble of a demolished building...". Presumably, Deborah Howell and her colleagues checked this photograph as well.

But, if you look closely at the picture you will see the surface over which the Red Cross worker is positioned. Does it look like he could be "rushing"

anywhere, without real risk of injury to himself? The pose is so obviously implausible that it has to be staged.

It is our contention, therefore, that even on the limited evidence of a few of the photographs widely in circulation on the day, there were grounds for suspecting a degree of staging. At the very least, some form of investigation should have been conducted. There was certainly time – the images came though from 9 am onwards local time and given the times differences in both Europe and the US, there was no rush at all.

Furthermore, unlike us – where we needed weeks to gather and evaluate the evidence – the newspapers had the resources. They had easy access to a much wider range of photographs than do we. They had the time-stamp information. They had the high definition images. They had the facilities and expertise to evaluate photographs and, all importantly – as customers - they had privileged access to the agencies, whose staff they could question and from whom they could demand further information and explanations. Given the will, any one of the great newspapers who used these images could have found out in hours what we took weeks to establish – that, indeed, the majority of the photographs were staged.

If any of them did carry out any investigations, then clearly the results did not prevent the publication of false images.

Conclusions

Thus, at last, we offer our conclusions. In so doing, we pose the questions that pervade this report, and answer them. Firstly, were many of the scenes during the rescue/recovery effort at Khuraybah on 30 July 2006, staged? The answer has to be yes.

Secondly, were journalists (with or without cameras) aware of the staging and complicit in it? Again, the answer has to be yes.

Third, did the media (the western media in particular) accept the images uncritically, without in any way inquiring as to their authenticity - even though there were good grounds for suspicion? Here, the answer almost certainly has to be yes.

Finally, has there since been a cover-up by the agencies and other media organisations which produced or used the material, and a sustained campaign by them either to ignore the issue or neutralise criticism? Once again, the answer has to be yes.

In defence of the media, if it can be considered thus, one can only postulate that staging scenes such as these is so common a practice, and so deeply embedded in the whole fabric of photo-journalism (and not just locally in the Middle East), that no one at the incident saw anything wrong with what transpired. Either that or, so familiar were they with the techniques used that

they simply did not register what was happening. As for the others, in their air-conditioned offices, hundreds and thousands of miles away from the action, did they care one way or the other? After all, as Shane Richmond of *The Daily Telegraph* implied, the greater truth was being served. "Is the child dead?", he asked. "Was the child killed by Israeli bombs?" Thus, did he say:

If so, the picture illustrates the story. If the picture does not alter the truth of the story, we're not being disingenuous. And the truth of the story is this: Israeli bombs killed several civilians in Qana, many of whom were children.

That is the nearest to an admission we have that it is acceptable to stage photographs.

But, by their actions and inactions are the rest condemned. Meanwhile, "Green Helmet" has entered the political vocabulary and the name "Qana" is now associated in the minds of perhaps millions of people with a media that seems to have lost its moral base and has forgotten entirely the purpose for which it exists.

Before preparing this report, we offered a challenge to the news agencies at the centre of this affair, calling for them to admit the wrongdoings carried out in their names, and to clean up their acts. Their response to that has been silence. This is our response. It stands as testimony to their failures which, if they are not addressed, will come back to haunt them.

We will be waiting, and watching.

Richard North PhD
Bradford, England
28 August 2006

Appendix 1 - The "Stretcher Alley" mystery



If the reasons for "Stretcher Alley" staying blocked remain unanswered, there is an even more bizarre mystery: there was more than one route into Khuraybah. Furthermore, the alternative by-passed the blockage and potentially allowed traffic, including ambulances, access right up to the wrecked house.

As can be seen from the satellite photograph (left), this route comes off the Tyre road (from which most of the rescue teams came) before reaching Qana, going direct to the hamlet.

Whether or not that route was blocked, we do not know for certain. However, we see that the UNOSAT post-conflict assessment (Inset #6), using the Ikonos Satellite, shows a large part of the road and no signs of damage. Perversely, there is one bomb strike on a road marked - on the main Tyre road a few yards north-west of the junction with the alternative route. If that had impeded traffic, it would have affected access to Qana from Tyre as well - from where "Green Helmet" and many of the rescue teams came.

What is possibly significant, however, is the footage from tele-journalist Kevin Sites, whose journey to the wrecked site is recorded as he arrives some time after midday - possibly between 1 and 1.30pm. The quality of the shots is very poor as the camera is hand-held and the operator is running. He approaches the wrecked building from "Stretcher Alley" and, as he turns "Stretcher Corner" revealed are two vehicles, in UN markings and colours (below). These are most likely part of one of the two convoys carrying UNIFIL medical teams from Tibnin and Naqoura, which arrived respectively at 10.15 and 11 am (below left).

They include a van or people carrier and (although indistinct) an armoured vehicle (below right) - parked up alongside the edge to the road.



This is the armoured vehicle type (below), a Finnish-built Sisu XA-180 armoured personnel carrier equipped as an ambulance. This, however, is parked just to the east of the lower end of "Stretcher Alley", the other direction from "Stretcher Corner". It may be one of the vehicles from the other medical convoy.



Now, the important point about these scenes filmed by Sites (or his camera operator) is that all the vehicles in the convoy are pointing *away* from the wrecked building and *towards* "Stretcher Corner". This is a convoy which, in the words of a UN Press Release, was sent "to provide medical and humanitarian assistance to the local population and the victims of the aerial bombardment".

Effectively, it was an emergency mission. It seems unlikely that, on arrival, all the vehicles in the convoy should have turned round and parked facing the direction from whence they came. More logically, they would have parked pointed in the direction they had been travelling when they arrived. In other words, there is a possibility that they had taken the alternative route, rather than travel through Qana and down "Stretcher Alley". If that was the case, to be in the position observed, they would have turned right when they arrived at Khuraybah, before parking, for them to be seen in the position Sites records.

However, there is also this picture (below), taken by AP's Lefteris Pitarakis, which shows a UN Sisu XA-180 travelling down "Stretcher Alley".



While it is difficult to be precise, shadow analysis indicated the time to be shortly after 12 am. Therefore, the vehicle could belong to either of the two UN medical convoys, each of which could have taken a different route to Khuraybah. Tibnin, is to the east of Qana while Naqoura is to the south-west, on the coast. Thus, the two convoys would be expected to take different routes and, for the Naqoura convoy, going through Qana would be the most direct route.

We also see here another picture of a Sisu XA-180, positioned at the bottom of "Stretcher Alley", facing up the hill (above right). One possible explanation for this and the previous shot is that the vehicle was being used as a shuttle, delivering casualties to the ambulances at the top of the hill. In that case, the picture above could be the vehicle on a return journey.

What is very evident, though, is that - by this time - the road has been cleared. We also know, however, that through the course of 30 July a variety of plant reached the wrecked building. First, there was JCB-type equipment on use, which was at the site during the "dead baby" display. We do not know how or when this equipment arrived, but it could already have been on the site, or been driven from a close by under its own power. It could have been this equipment which was used finally to clear the road to the standard we see in the picture of the Sisu on "Stretcher Alley".

Following this vehicle, additional plant arrived, a UN tracked excavator and bulldozer. These would not have come under their own power but on the backs of low-loaders. They arrived with a team of Chinese engineers who would

have had additional vehicles. This picture shows the equipment in use at the wrecked building which confirms, if it was needed, that the roadway was wide enough for vehicles such as ambulances to travel.



And we now have a photograph of the tracked excavator arriving (above). It is shown travelling down "Stretcher Alley", on a road that is completely clear of debris.

There is a problem here, though. Once it turned left past "Stretcher Corner", it would have - presumably - been confronted with the parked convoy seen in Stiles' footage, on a lane which looks scarcely wide enough for it to have passed. And if the excavators managed, it is unlikely that the bulldozer would have got through. Without doubt, it did - so there may have been some interesting manoeuvring of vehicles.

Finally, there was a wheeled excavator on site, a large piece of plant which, equally, had to gain access by some route or another. It would also - most likely - have been brought to the site by a low loader. Its passage was not recorded via "Stretcher Alley". And, while the markings on the digger arm suggest it is UN equipment, its presence on site is not mentioned in the official reports.

All of this, therefore, leaves completely unresolved the issue of whether the alternative route was open. The route could have been open and, if it had been, it would have been the logical way for "Green Helmet" and his team to have come. One source which could tell us what went on is the UN, but it has been unhelpful on this matter. We are, therefore, unable to pursue it further at this time.

Appendix 2 - The "reburying" controversy

The scenes which we record in Part 3, Scene 1, where "Green Helmet" discovers the body of baby Hashem take place, as far as we know, later in the relief effort. This we can ascertain from the frames in Scene 3, where UN troops are present. These arrived from 10.15 onwards, so baby Hashem cannot have been amongst the first to have been recovered. From the way the previous sequences are presented, his body seems to have been amongst the last, separate from the rest.

Given the way the UN troops are deployed, standing around on the veranda of the wrecked house, with apparently no particular direction or urgency to their mission, it is perhaps not untoward to speculate that they have been there some time - on the basis that the immediate-response medical teams might have been actively engaged in the relief effort. Possibly, therefore, the discovery of baby Hashem may not have occurred until around 12 midday, or even later.

In that we calculate, from shadow analysis, that the bulk of the casualties found in the early phase of the relief effort were evacuated around 9 am in the morning - that being roughly the timing of the "camera runs" conducted by "Green Helmet" and "White Tee-shirt" - there is a possibility that as much as three hours or more elapsed between their discovery and that of the body of baby Hashem.

The problem is that this does not seem to fit with the account of the relief effort by Tim Butcher in The Daily Telegraph of 31 July (We can discount the narrative of Kathy Gannon as being irredemably flawed). He writes:

When ambulance crews arrived from Tyre, bravely covering roads on which they have been attacked in recent days, they began the grimmest search and rescue task, but without any real chance of rescue.

They found limbs sticking from a muddle of broken concrete and mattresses soaked with blood attracting the busy attention of swarming flies. For a few hours the more wreckage they moved the more bodies they found.

In one section they found 12 small corpses, all children, among them tiny Abbas.

Their bodies showed few cuts or scratches. It was as if they had simply drowned in a wave of soil and cement dust that overwhelmed them in an instant.

From this account, the indications are that baby Hashem's body was found with others, and not separately as the photographic record would appear to indicate. The suspicion arises, therefore, that the body, after its initial discovery, was held back for the staged photo-shoots that we have examined.

In exploring this possibility, we have examined all the relevant photographic

and video records available to us and, despite our suspicions remaining, the study has been inconclusive.



In rough chronological sequence, our study started with the *Aljazeera* channel footage. There (above), we saw presenter Mazen Ibrahim commenting on the coverage of the Qana "massacre" in western media. The opening sequence of the film accompanying his commentary showed numerous Red Cross workers moving bodies out of the wreckage, from a pile in which they are heaped. And, in the first second of the sequence, fleetingly visible is a worker lifting up the body of what appeared to be a baby.



Identifying this figure has presented us with considerable problems. We felt it could be baby Hashem, the only baby to be recovered from the site and the video record certainly meshed with the Butcher account. Then, further indications come from the *Al Manar* video which, like the *Aljazeera* film, covered the early recovery scenes inside the basement. This frame (right) shows the same location, but from a different angle. The Red Cross worker is digging down into the debris, apparently finding something buried there. The focus of his attention is indicated by the arrow.

This activity apparently attracts the attention of the cameraman, who moves closer to the scene, saturating the local area with light, for which he does not compensate - hence the "white-out" effect on this frame (below).



But clearly, if fleetingly becomes visible the head of a very small child or baby. This can be seen for several seconds until the worker bends over the figure and it is lost to sight, whence the filming of this scene stops. We do not see the figure lifted out from the debris in this sequence. However, additional *Aljazeera* footage is much clearer.



Here (above), we see the same area being filmed, with the Red Cross worker digging in the debris. The camera focuses on a head cradled in the hand of the worker. There is an object obstructing the full face, though, so we do not see it clearly, but the scale and definition indicates that it is very small, entirely compatible with it being that of the body of a baby.

Then the Red Cross worker lifts the head slightly towards the camera, to give the clearest image of all three sequences of television footage. The head is still not completely unobscured, but the definition is better than in any other television footage. Colour balance is not as distorted in other footage, showing the grey colouration of the head, in contrast with the colour of the Red Cross workers' uniforms.

As the worker continues digging, the full body becomes visible. another worker joins in and clears the legs, which he starts to lift from the debris, revealing the body. It appears to have the same low-neck singlet that clothes Abbas Ahmad Hashem's body, and the legs appear to be bare, compatible with the shorts seen in those frames.



Then, there was this still frame. Taken by Mohamed Messara for epa/Corbis, it was tantalisingly clear but lacked that essential confirmatory detail. Certainly, the positioning seemed the same as in the video sequences, but all we can see is the upper end of the torso, while the Red Cross worker's hand obscures the head. Even then, the white of the singlet seemed not dissimilar from that seen on the body of baby Abbas Hashem. An enlargement of the photograph appeared to show a sliver of flesh between the worker's hand and the singlet, indicating that it might be sleeveless, with the same grey-toned flesh seen in other pictures.



However, we found this Getty image (above left), which appears to show the same general scene from a different angle, but from above the subject. Despite the logo in centre frame, the detail is clear enough to show that the subject is definitely not baby Hashem.

Then we came across this photograph (above, top right) on an obscure website after a reader posted the link on our forum. We had no detail on its origin, but this did look as if it could be the body of the baby being uncovered. Much of the detail looked consistent with the images we have seen of the body displayed by "Green Helmet" but the quality was so poor that, once again, a definitive identification was not possible.

However, we also had this image (above, bottom right), which shows the same scene, but less detail of the subject. What does appear, though, is that the helmetless Red Cross worker is handling the body. In this frame, though, the legs appear to be clothed.

More helpfully, there was greater location detail, showing what turns out to be the key datum. This is marked by the arrow - the cement filling of the closed-up opening. From this, and cross-referring with other photographs, it is almost certain that the body is a few feet away from the right-hand wall of the basement and lying parallel to it. The other figure was lying at right angles to the wall and was further out - closer to the leg of the half-buried woman. They are thus different bodies.



As to the location of this latter body compared with the positioning of the "Green Helmet" discovery, by reference to the blocked-off doorway (arrowed) they appear to be roughly the same - not quite the same but nearly so, to the extent that they may overlap.

By examining the markings on the wall blocks, and their pattern, the height of

the debris seems to be much the same in both key pictures. In other words, there has been no substantial excavation in this area between the two pictures. Then, in the very first picture, there is a shallow trench extending beyond the body up to the foot projecting in the top left quadrant of the picture (that belongs to a photographer - so another picture of this event might exist). A similar trench can be seen in the "Green Helmet" picture.



Now, bringing this study up-to-date, we were sent a medium-definition frame of the picture above. This shows clearly that the image is not that of baby Hashem - demonstrating once again the perils of trying to over-interpret detail from poor quality pictures.

However, the story does not end there. In the upper left-hand quadrant of this photograph (above right), we see in more detail the shallow trench and the foot of what we know to be a photographer. This is almost exactly at the location where, subsequently, "Green Helmet" discovered the body of Baby Hashem. It does not seem possible that the body could have remained here, undiscovered, in these circumstances.

Therefore, as far as we are concerned, the issue remains unresolved as to whether "Green Helmet's" discovery was genuine. We continue to be highly suspicious of the scenario and consider it a possibility, at the very least, that the body was discovered earlier and re-discovered at a later time. This would have been gauged to allow photographs to be staged and the maximum publicity impact to be gained. "Green Helmet" - not seen digging in any other scene - would, under this scenario, have been called in for the posing and subsequent display of the body.

The question is, whether this latter scenario is tenable. We are helped here by the knowledge that Adnan Hajj was one of the photographers in the "Green Helmet" scene. We can draw guidance from photographer Bryan Denton, who writes in a forum for professional photographers:

...I have been witness to the daily practice of directed shots, one case where a group of wire photographers were choreographing the unearthing of bodies, directing emergency workers here and there, asking them to position bodies

just so, even remove bodies that have already been put in graves so that they can photograph them in peoples' arms.

A man like Adnan Hajj - who, as we know, so carelessly doctored photographs which he then sent to *Reuters* - seems hardly likely to demur at a minor misdemeanour of photographing a staged scene like this.

Clearly, there is further work to do here but, throughout our inquiry, *Reuters* and others have tried to ignore this issue. Thus, we thought it appropriate for our readers to see the evidence we have, and draw their own conclusions. It may well be, though, that this issue remains unresolved.