

A good day in court for war journalism

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The news that a coroner has ruled that the US military unlawfully killed the ITN reporter [Terry Lloyd](#) during the last Iraq war is a significant step forward for those who want an end to murdering the messenger.

I should declare an interest in that I was working at ITN's Channel 4 News during that period. There are few things more soul-destroying for a news team than to lose a friend and colleague like that but the management and staff at ITN responded in a magnificent way. They have secured a highly significant result.

We've been looking at war reporting and safety at [POLIS](#) in the last few weeks as you'll see from the posts below. We have a report out soon. What has been clear is that journalists are now seen as legitimate targets by all militaries, be they national armies like the US forces in Iraq or irregular militia like the Iraqi insurgents. This legal judgement opens up the possibility that US forces may face criminal charges for Terry's death. It won't bring him back. Nor does it mean that the US forces are worse than any other that targets journalists. But it does mean that military organisations may think twice before allowing their soldiers to act as if they are without impunity when they shoot at journalists. As Stewart Purvis, the former boss of ITN [writes](#), we can all learn from this. And that can only be good for journalism and the public who need to know more about what happens during wars.

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