

Poor Tony Blair, Hard As He Tries the Iraq War Won't Leave Him Alone

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Tony Blair's advisers were fond of remarking as war approached, it would all be forgotten in a few weeks. Some hope.

Tony Blair could have been forgiven for thinking, back in 2002 and 2003 when he was planning the Iraq war, that nearly 13 years later it would all be forgiven and forgotten.

He thought that he could ride out an unprecedented level of opposition outside parliament as millions took to the streets, school students struck, protestors blocked roads and bridges.

He also cajoled, bullied and deceived Labour MPs in order to get them to vote for war, and won a comfortable majority by relying on the Tories, despite huge rebellion among his own ranks.

As his advisers were fond of remarking as war approached, it would all be forgotten in a few weeks, once Saddam Hussein was overthrown.



Yet there are thundering echoes of the Iraq war at the centre of British politics, all these years later. It has defined a generation. It continues to weigh on politics for several reasons.

Firstly of course because [the war in Iraq has never gone away](#), with Britain and the US now bombing the country against ISIS, over a decade after Saddam Hussein was executed.

As the [newsreader Jon Snow wrote in a recent blog](#), the sight of ISIS carrying out horrific acts serves to somehow remind millions that the war helped to create a hell in Iraq from which it still cannot awake. <http://t.co/Gtk2aCcGCK>

Secondly there is no resolution to questions raised by the war. The [Chilcot report still has no finish date](#), nearly five years after taking its final evidence. Many in any case are sceptical of an inquiry carried out by the establishment for the establishment, and fear that there will be no justice for those who suffered in the war.

Already families of soldiers who died are [threatening legal action against Chilcot](#).

Thirdly it remains a live political issue. In the election only a few months ago, the received wisdom was that no one was interested in foreign affairs, and that the war no longer influenced opinion.

It is now clear that the politicians were not interested in discussing it, but many people were. The Jeremy [Corbyn campaign is proof of that](#). Many of those attracted to his rallies are young people for whom the war was defining issue, and older people who stopped voting for or being members of Labour because of Blair's warmongering.

A recent set of polling figures illustrates the [importance of the war in Corbyn supporters' thinking](#).

<https://yougov.co.uk/news/2015/08/27/you-may-say-im-dreamer-inside-mindset-jeremy-corb-y/>

And much of the [right wing criticism of Corbyn focuses on his foreign policy](#).

Jeremy Corbyn's announcement that if he becomes leader of the Labour party he would [apologise on behalf of the party](#) whose then leader took Britain into an illegal war, lying in the process to parliament and the country.

An apology is necessary. But what will be even more significant to the families and loved ones of up to a million Iraqis who died, and those of the British soldiers sent to kill and be killed, is if [those responsible for one of the worst war crimes in recent history](#), are held to account in a court of law, as Jeremy Corbyn thinks they should be.

Jeremy Corbyn: All those responsible for the illegal Iraq war should stand trial for war crimes

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