

Blair Damned

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But Did The Chilcot Report Go Far Enough?

Having mounted [sustained attacks on Jeremy Corbyn](#) since he became the Labour leader, the Blairite factions within the right of the party stepped-up their campaign of vilification and hostility in the wake of the much anticipated release of the Chilcot report in what they hoped would be one last concerted [push to depose](#) him.



Tony Blair, War Criminal

With Corbyn remaining defiant and showing no indication that he plans to step-down, the strategy has clearly been a [monumental failure](#). With grass-roots membership of the party [set to increase](#) to an estimated 600,000, Corbyn currently heads the biggest movement of the left in Europe.

The Chilcot report was utterly damning of Blair and, by extension, was also critical of the plotters opposing Corbyn who either abstained or voted in favour of the Iraq war. However, the report fell woefully short of offering any justice for the families of British soldiers who lost loved ones or for the hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians who were killed. For many, it wasn't necessary for Chilcot to have taken seven years to oversee a report comprising 2.6 million words at a cost of £10m, in order for the public to grasp the fact that the war amounted to what the Nuremberg Tribunal defined as the [supreme international crime](#) differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole."

Under the [UN Charter](#), two conditions must be met before a war can legally be waged. The parties to a dispute must first "seek a solution by negotiation" (Article 33). They can take up arms without an explicit mandate from the UN Security Council only "if an armed attack occurs against [them]" (Article 51). Neither of these conditions applied to the US and UK. Both governments [rejected Iraq's attempts to negotiate](#). At one point, the US State Department even [announced](#) that it would "go into thwart mode" to prevent the Iraqis from resuming talks on weapons inspection.

Iraq had launched no armed attack against either nation. We also know that the UK government was aware that the war it intended to launch was illegal. In March 2002, the [Cabinet Office](#) explained that a legal justification for invasion would be needed: "Subject to Law Officers' advice, none currently exists." In July 2002, Lord Goldsmith, the attorney-general, [told](#) the Prime Minister that there were only "three possible legal bases" for launching a war: "self-defence, humanitarian intervention, or UNSC [Security Council] authorisation. The first and second could not be the base in this case."

Bush and Blair later failed to obtain Security Council authorisation. A series of [leaked documents](#) shows that the Bush and Blair governments knew they did not possess legal justification. Chilcot repeated the [lie](#) outlined in the Butler Inquiry that the intelligence was not knowingly fixed. The contents of the Downing Street memo, puts that lie to rest. The memo, which outlines a record of a meeting in July 2002, [reveals](#) that Sir Richard Dearlove, director of the UK's foreign intelligence service MI6, told Blair that in Washington:

"Military action was now seen as inevitable. Bush wanted to remove Saddam, through military action, justified by the conjunction of terrorism and WMD. But the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy."

The Downing Street memo reveals that Blair knew that the decision to attack Iraq had already been made; that it preceded the justification, which was being retrofitted to an act of aggression; that the only legal reasons for an attack didn't apply. The legal status of Bush's decision had already been explained to Blair. In March 2002, as another [leaked memo shows](#), the UK foreign secretary, Jack Straw, had reminded him of the conditions required to launch a legal war:

"i) There must be an armed attack upon a State or such an attack must be imminent;
ii) The use of force must be necessary and other means to reverse/avert the attack must be unavailable;
iii) The acts in self-defence must be proportionate and strictly confined to the object of stopping the attack."

Straw explained that the development or possession of weapons of mass destruction "does not in itself amount to an armed attack; what would be needed would be clear evidence of an imminent attack." A third memo, from the Cabinet Office, [explained](#) that:

"there is no greater threat now than in recent years that Saddam will use WMD ... A legal justification for invasion would be needed. Subject to Law Officers' advice, none currently exists."

Apologists for Blair often claim that war was justified by recourse to UN resolution 1441. But 1441 did not authorise the use of force [since](#):

"there is no 'automaticity' in this resolution. If there is a further Iraqi breach of its disarmament obligations, the matter will return to the Council for discussion as required in paragraph 12."

In January 2003, the attorney-general [reminded Blair](#) that "resolution 1441 does not authorise the use of military force without a further determination by the security council" Such a determination was never forthcoming. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan [reaffirmed that the Iraq War was illegal](#) having breached the United Nations Charter. The world's foremost experts in the field of international law [concur](#) that "...the overwhelming jurisprudential consensus is that the Anglo-American invasion, conquest, and occupation of Iraq constitute three phases of one illegal war of aggression."

As well as their being no legal justification for war, it's also worth <https://twitter.com/hairymarx1> pointing out that the invasion was undertaken in the knowledge that it would cause terrorism - a point amplified by [Craig Murray](#):

"The intelligence advice in advance of the invasion he received was unequivocal that it would increase the threat to the UK, and it directly caused the attacks of 7/7."

Nevertheless, this determination was followed by a benevolent course of action. As Chilcot made clear, the process for coming to the conclusion that Saddam had in his possession WMD as the basis for Blair's decision to go to war, was one in which his Cabinet was not consulted.

Has Chilcot laid the ground for Blair's possible impeachment?

Alex Salmond certainly believes that under plans [drawn up by MPs](#), Blair could be impeached and put on trial in parliament. A source close to the families who died told the [Daily Telegraph](#) the report provided legal grounds for a lawsuit against Blair.

What have we learnt from Chilcot?

Firstly, that flawed intelligence assessments were made with certainty without any acknowledgement of the limitations of the said intelligence. Second, that the UK undermined the authority of the UN Security Council, and third, that Blair failed the Cabinet about Lord Goldsmith's rather perilous journey by saying the war was actually legal having previously said it was illegal having mulled over it for over a year.

In the end, even though Chilcot can be applauded for the fact that it did something that most other societies in the world didn't do, ultimately the report can be defined by the fact that it fudged the legal question. Chilcot didn't explicitly say that the war was illegal. As such, Blair in his post-Chilcot speech was still able to dishonestly depict the invasion as an effort to prevent a 9/11 on British soil in the knowledge that the real culprits of 9-11 were the Saudi elite who finance him.

The warmongering psychopath's contrived quivering voice, long pauses between sentences and attempts at conjuring-up fake tears that gave a new meaning to the Stanislavsky method, gave the impression Blair is a man who is self-aware of his accusers ability to look deep inside his soul.

In the run up to the report being published in which various worthies were wheeled out, Chilcot said, "the circumstances in which a legal basis for action was decided were not satisfactory." In other words, the establishment, which Chilcot and his team represent, hid behind processes as opposed to stating loudly and clearly that the British government at that point was hell-bent on going to war with Iraq irrespective of what the evidence said about WMD or anything else.

In the post-Chilcot context, it's clear that no lessons from the guardians of power in the media have been learned, despite [claims](#) to the contrary. This can be seen, for example, in the reluctance of the media to allow the expression of dissenting voices that extend beyond the restrictive parameters of debate the media create. In highlighting the [inherent bias](#), Craig Murray said:

"The broadcast media seem to think the Chilcot report is an occasion to give unlimited airtime to Blair and Alastair Campbell. Scores of supporters and instigators of the war have been interviewed. By contrast, almost no airtime has been given to those who campaigned against the war."

Similarly, Stop the War's Lindsey German pointed to the [lack of balance](#) on the BBCs 'Today' programme.

It's quite astonishing that the comments made by an authoritative figure such as General Wesley Clark who [tells](#) how the destabilization of the Middle East was planned as far back as 1991, has not been examined and debated in the mainstream media. Perhaps just as pertinently, the media have virtually [ignored](#) the claim made by Scott Ritter who ran intelligence operations for the United Nations from 1991 to 1998 as a [United Nations weapons inspector](#) in Iraq, that by the time bombing

began, Iraq had been “fundamentally disarmed”.

For the most part, the guardians of power are only too eager to fall into line by acting as establishment echo-chambers rather than challenging the premises upon which various stated government positions and claims are based.

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