

# Margaret Thatcher's Greatest Achievement was Tony Blair and New Labour

By [Jim Kavanagh](#)

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*Thatcher was absolutely right that her greatest achievement was Tony Blair and New Labor, and — as Obama's encomium makes quite explicit — there's a fine parallel in that her partner, Reagan's, greatest achievement was setting an agenda that Clinton, Obama and the new, "centrist" Democratic Party still carry on. Thatcher-Blair-Brown, Reagan-Clinton-Obama. Hands across the sea. Yes, unfortunately, to this comedy-if-it-weren't-a-tragedy they are still selling tickets.*

And, no, I do not accept that one must not "speak ill of the dead" when the deceased is a public figure whose death is the occasion of innumerable, insufferable praiseful elegies to her *political* legacy. [Glenn Greenwald](#) has it right:

That one should not speak ill of the dead is arguably appropriate when a private person dies, but it is wildly inappropriate for the death of a controversial public figure, particularly one who wielded significant influence and political power... the protocols are fundamentally different when it comes to public discourse about the person's life and political acts. ...

[T]hose who admire the deceased public figure (and their politics) aren't silent at all. They are aggressively exploiting the emotions generated by the person's death to create hagiography. ...Demanding that no criticisms be voiced to counter that hagiography is to enable false history and a propagandistic whitewashing of bad acts, distortions that become quickly ossified and then endure by virtue of no opposition and the powerful emotions created by death. When a political leader dies, it is irresponsible in the extreme to demand that only praise be permitted but not criticisms.

There is absolutely nothing wrong with loathing Margaret Thatcher or any other person with political influence and power based upon perceived bad acts, and that doesn't change simply because they die. If anything, it becomes more compelling to commemorate those bad acts upon death as the only antidote against a society erecting a false and jingoistically self-serving history.

So, please, let's not use Margaret Thatcher's death to further extend her legacy, but to insist that it's long past time to pull the plug on its run.

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