

Tony Blair's Premiership Can be Summed Up in One Word

By [Morning Star](#)

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Ghosts will be haunting Windsor Castle today. The hundreds of thousands of dead Iraqis, the 179 British soldiers sent to die for a lie will be in attendance.

The occasion is Tony Blair turning up to officially be knighted by the Queen. He may arise as Sir Tony, the victims of his warmongering cannot arise at all.

But it is their memories that should be recalled today, as this most fraudulent of bourgeois politicians collects his accolade from the supreme symbol of that British imperialism he has served.

Tony Blair served as prime minister for 10 years, and leader of the Labour Party for 13. He won three consecutive general elections, albeit by severely diminishing margins.

His record in office encompassed the Good Friday agreement, the introduction of a national minimum wage, and devolution for Scotland and Wales.

It also included the full embrace of neoliberal principles of economic management, creeping privatisation and marketisation of public services and the deregulation of financialised capitalism. Inequality widened and the rich were allowed to let rip.

But in the end, Blair's record in politics comes down to one word: Iraq. In the 19 years since he joined George W Bush in his war of choice, that single word has come to stand for so much.

An illegal act of aggression. Fighting a war based on nothing more than faulty intelligence and moral piety. Ignoring public opinion and the United Nations alike. Ruthless and bloody occupation. Torture. Defeat.

It has often been said that for this record Blair belongs in the war crimes tribunal answering

for his crimes. Instead, he is to be further rewarded.

That is no aberration. Just about every atrocity committed by British colonialism and imperialism down the centuries has had as its lead perpetrator someone with “Lord” or “Sir” before their name. And if they didn’t they acquired one pretty soon afterwards.

First the crime, then the loot, then the knighthood is how it has gone for Blair. The years in between invading and occupying Iraq and trotting off to Windsor Castle have been filled by brazen and grotesque projects of self-enrichment, more-or-less unique in an ex-premier.

Today’s ceremony is, however, a studied insult to the suffering people of Iraq first of all, whose country has still far from recovered from what Blair and Bush wrought.

It is also a slap in the face to the millions in Britain and around the world who mobilised against the war in an anti-war movement of unprecedented size and scope.

Included in those millions are people like Rose Gentle and Peter Brierley who lost their sons in Blair’s war and yet found the strength to speak up against the lies that sent them to their death.

That strength, that mobilisation is needed once more. The knighthood for Blair is a step towards rehabilitating the Iraq war, and legitimising lawless aggression.

It gives a green light to present and subsequent occupants of Downing Street that their crimes will be rewarded given sufficient passage of time.

With the present British government seeking to escalate war in Ukraine there could not be a more dangerous message to send.

And with the present leader of the Labour Party seeking to ape his benighted predecessor and swaddle himself in pseudo-patriotic and militarist posturing, it holds out the prospect of still further calamities.

But as for Blair himself, a tap on the shoulder with a sword will not alter the historical record. To paraphrase Karl Marx he is already nailed to that eternal pillory from which all the artifice of his spin doctors will not avail to redeem him.

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