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Save the Apologies, Just Stop Promoting War

Usually when politicians apologize it's because they have been caught doing something wrong, or they are about to be caught. Such was likely the case with former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, who recently offered an "apology" for the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Blair faces the release of a potentially damning report on his government's conduct in the run-up to the 2003 US/UK invasion of Iraq.



Similarly, a batch of emails released from the private server of former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton show Blair pledging support for US military action against Iraq a full year before the decision to attack had supposedly been made. While Prime Minister Blair was assuring his constituents that he was dedicated to diplomacy in the Iraq crisis, he was communicating through back channels that he was ready for war whenever Bush decided on it.

A careful observer of public opinion, Blair took the surprising step of "apologizing" for the Iraq war during an interview on CNN last month.

However, there are two other characteristics of politicians' apologies: they rarely take personal blame for a misdeed and rarely do they atone for those misdeeds.

Thus Tony Blair did not apologize for his role in pushing the disastrous Iraq war. He did not apologize for having, as former head UN Iraq inspector Hans Blix claimed, "misrepresented intelligence on weapons of mass destruction to gain approval for the Iraq War."

No, Tony Blair "apologized" for "the fact that the intelligence we received was wrong," on Iraq. He apologized for "mistakes in planning" for post-Saddam Iraq. He boldly refused to apologize for removing Saddam from power.

In other words, he apologized that the intelligence manipulated by his cronies to look like Saddam had weapons of mass destruction and posed a threat to the UK turned out to not be the case. For Blair, it was someone else's fault.

But if we are waiting for any kind of apology from George W. Bush for Iraq we shouldn't hold our breath. Likewise if we are looking for any kind of apology from President Obama for a similarly disastrous war on false pretext against Libya we shouldn't bother waiting.

If they ever did apologize, we can be sure that like Blair they would never really confess to their own manipulations nor would they seek to atone for the destruction their manipulations caused.

In fact, far from apologizing for leading the United States into the Libya war based on a false pretext, President Obama is taking US ground troops into Syria on a false pretext. Let's not forget, this US military action was sold as a limited operation to save a small religious minority stranded on a hilltop in northern Iraq. After one year and thousands of bombing runs against Iraq and Syria, Obama announced last week he is sending US ground troops into Syria after promising no fewer than seven times that he would not do so.



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Here's an idea: instead of apologies and non-apologies from politicians, how about an actual debate on the policies that led to such disasters? Why not discuss why the US keeps being drawn into wars on false pretexts? But that is a discussion we will not have, because both parties are in favor of these wars. They are ready to spend us into Third World status to continue their empire. When we get there, we will never hear their apologies.

Ron Paul is a former U.S. congressman from Texas. This article originally appeared at the [Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity](#) and is reprinted here with permission.



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