

Burnham on Gaza: an exercise in whitewashing

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The Guardian [notes this morning](#):

Andy Burnham apologises for Labour's stance on Gaza and says it 'didn't get it right'

You would think they were saying that Burnham had said he was sorry for not recognising the Israeli genocide in Gaza. But he did not. In fact, he failed to do a great deal.

He did not apologise for Labour's support, explicit or implicit, for Israel during the early months of the war.

He did not apologise for Labour's failure to oppose the siege of Gaza.

He did not apologise for Labour's failure to call for a ceasefire immediately.

He did not apologise for the tens of thousands of Palestinian deaths that occurred while Labour maintained its initial position.

He did not apologise for Labour's repeated refusal to describe Israeli actions in stronger legal or moral terms by calling its actions a genocide, which he still will not do.

He did not apologise for Labour's reluctance to recognise Palestine until very late in the conflict.

He did not apologise for Labour MPs and members who were disciplined or marginalised after speaking out on Gaza.

He did not apologise to Britain's Muslim communities, many of whom felt abandoned by Labour.

He did not apologise for Labour's loss of moral authority on questions of international law.

He did not apologise for continuing British military or diplomatic support that critics argue enabled Israeli military operations.

He did not apologise for Britain's failure to fulfil its obligations under international humanitarian law, assuming one accepts that such obligations were engaged.

Instead, his apology was carefully framed around Labour's response rather than Labour's actions or policies.

That is not good enough, not by a very long way, I say.

If this is the Prime Minister we are getting, weasel words skating over the reality of Israeli - and British - war crimes are to remain the order of the day, and that isn't the leadership we need.