

UK Labour Defence Secretary visits Ukraine to back escalated war

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Within 24 hours of taking his ministry seat, UK Defence Secretary John Healey ensured his first foreign visit was to Ukraine to reassure the Zelensky regime of the new Labour government's backing for war with Russia.

Healey was accompanied by the UK's chief of the armed forces, Admiral Sir Tony Radakin. Healey and Radakin made the Ukraine trip before Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, Healey, and Foreign Secretary David Lammy flew to Washington on Tuesday to attend a three-day NATO summit centred on preparing an escalation of the war.

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) issued a statement Sunday, to coincide with Healey's trip, of a "new package of support to the country, including more artillery guns, a quarter of a million ammunition rounds and nearly 100 precision Brimstone missiles." Also included are "50 small military boats to support river and coastal operations"; "61 bulldozers to help build defensive positions"; and "support for previously gifted AS-90s, including 32 new barrels and critical spares which will help Ukraine fire another 60,000 155mm rounds".

Demonstrating how a government of Conservative warmongers has been seamlessly replaced, the statement explained that Healey has "directed officials to ensure that the promised package in April of military aid is accelerated and delivered in full to Ukraine within the next 100 days."

The April support agreed by Rishi Sunak's government was the "largest ever military aid package to Ukraine, comprising 400 vehicles, 1600 strike and air defence missiles, including additional Storm Shadow long-range precision guided-missiles, four million rounds of ammunition and 60 boats, including off-shore raiding craft."

The MoD stated, "Having provided more than £7.6 billion of military support since Ukraine unprovoked invasion, the UK will continue to work with allies and partners to provide Ukraine with the equipment and weapons they need to win the war."

With Ukraine having lost hundreds of thousands of lives, NATO is plotting how to reverse disastrous military setbacks that have shattered the Zelensky government.

Even while Healey was meeting with Defence Minister Rustem Umerov, they had to flee into the basement and "take cover in a bomb shelter"... "of a Soviet-era building acting as Mr Umerov's temporary HQ" due to Russian missiles falling nearby.

Labour came to office with the backing of a ruling elite supportive of its "party of NATO" credentials and full backing for war against Russia and Israel's genocidal onslaught against the Palestinians.

Starmer won the backing of the *Financial Times*, the first time that newspaper has supported Labour in a general election in 19 years, since it backed Tony Blair in 2005 following his support for the US-led wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Starmer was also backed by the Murdoch dynasty-owned *The Sun* and *The Times*, both demanding stepped-up war against Russia and austerity cuts to pay for a vastly increased military budget.

The trip to Kiev was co-ordinated with the *Sun* whose Political Editor Harry Cole accompanied Healey—straight after he left Starmer's first Cabinet meeting on Saturday—to board a Royal Air Force-chartered flight. During the flight Healey gave Cole an exclusive interview.

This was published under the headline, "FIGHTING TALK: Britain will stand with Ukraine 'for as long as it takes', declares new Defence Secretary in direct

warning to Putin”.

It read, “He [Healey] insisted the new government is ‘totally committed’ to hiking UK defence spending to 2.5 percent of GDP but the ‘defence of Britain starts in Ukraine”’. Healey boasted that “within less than 24 hours after I was appointed I am on my way to Ukraine”, as it was time to “step up” Britain’s “special leadership” with Kiev.

Healey told the newspaper, “We will deliver... an extra quarter of a million heavy ammunition for the machine guns they use to shoot down Iranian drones.” The “extra 90 Brimstone missiles” were “the most lethal bit of kit they use to take out Russian tanks and armoured vehicles.” The 50 boats were being provided “for Ukrainian marines, these are the marines we have trained, so they will use those for attacks in the Black Sea, they will use those for raids across the Dnipro river.”

The newspaper pictured *The Sun*’s Cole meeting Zelensky and in the room while Healey was discussing with Ukraine’s defence minister. *The Sun* followed up with an editorial stating, “From Day One of the Russian invasion, our last Tory Government was resolute in its support for President Zelensky and the Ukrainian people. It is hugely welcome that, in one of Labour’s first acts, new Defence Secretary John Healey travelled to Odesa to promise there would be no wavering in the UK’s position.”

The Sun welcomed “the commitment by the new Secretary of State to spend 2.5 percent of GDP on defence, even if the detail is scant.”

The Times followed up with a demand for more. An article Tuesday, banner headlined, “Pressure on Starmer to raise defence spending,” reported that former head of the army General Sir Patrick Sanders had “warned that Britain’s armed forces were so worn down that they were only able to fight a small war for no longer than a month...”

“Sanders said that even 2.5 percent of GDP was too small and called for spending to rise to ‘closer to 3 percent’.”

The General complained that military spending and security were “conspicuously absent,” from the general election campaign. “At the moment, the political debate in in the UK is trying to shield the public from the reality of the world that that we’re now finding ourselves in.”

Sanders warned, “You’ve got the potential for a conflict that won’t look like World War Two, but could spread like cancer, will be global, and will operate at different levels of intensity in all the operational domains.”

The type of war Sanders envisages being fought was clear in his grotesque relativising of the worst crimes of the 20th century, carried out by the Nazis. He designated Russia, China and Iran, “the new Axis powers”, with the *Times* adding that Sanders “argued that they pose an even more lethal challenge than the Nazi alliance in 1939 since ‘they are more interdependent and more aligned than the original Axis powers were’”.

The message was underscored by Lord West, a Labour-supporting peer and former First Sea Lord and ex-chair of the National Security Forum. He complained to the *Times* of Labour’s position: “I think we ought to say when we are going to get to 2.5 percent. ‘When the situation allows’ is not really good enough—Putin will not wait for our situation to be good enough before he attacks.”

With an eye to the November election in the United States, West stated that Labour naming a date to reach 2.5 percent mark, “would be a very good message to the Americans, not least to Donald Trump.”



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