

# David Lammy: UK Labour's foreign secretary reaches out to Trump

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Europe's ruling elites are frantically recalibrating their stance given what they consider to be the inevitability of Donald Trump being installed in the White House following November's US Presidential election.

Among the obscene efforts in this direction are those of UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy. In 2018, when he was still a backbench Labour MP and with the party then led by the nominally left Jeremy Corbyn, Lammy penned an article in *Time* magazine denouncing then US President Trump. Ahead of Trump's visits to Britain that year, Lammy wrote, "Trump is not only a woman-hating, neo-Nazi-sympathizing sociopath. He is also a profound threat to the international order that has been the foundation of Western progress for so long."

Asked about these comments on Thursday, Lammy brushed them aside, telling Sky News, "You are going to struggle to find any politician who didn't have things to say about Donald Trump back in the day." There was nothing that couldn't be smoothed over, with Lammy stating, "I meet with Republicans and Democrats, many close to Trump, and we will work with whomever the United States choose to put in the White House and become their next president."

Lammy cited as an example of those close to Trump his vice-presidential pick J.D. Vance. He told the BBC's *Breakfast* programme, "Let me just say on J.D. Vance that I've met him now on several occasions. We share a similar working-class background with addiction issues in our family. We've written books on that. We've talked about that. And we're both Christians, so I think I can find common ground with J.D. Vance."

Lammy personifies the venal, right-wing warmongers that make up Sir Keir Starmer's government. His first trip as foreign minister was to Germany, Poland and Sweden—key countries in NATO's war against Russia in Ukraine. Ahead of the trip, he promised that "this government will reset relations with Europe as a reliable partner, a dependable ally and a good neighbour."

Pivotal to this mending of fences was securing agreement on escalating war with Russia. He wrote in *The Local Europe* digital news site prior to the trips, in a piece also published on the governments' website, that he would seek to work "even more closely together [with allies] to tackle shared challenges. The most immediate of these challenges, of course, is Ukraine... European security will be this government's foreign and defence priority. Russia's barbaric invasion has made clear the need for us to do more to strengthen our own defences."

What would be discussed at the NATO summit in Washington was how "NATO allies can go further in investing in our tightly connected defence industries and providing Ukraine with its own clear path to joining our alliance." At the summit, Starmer embraced his role as Britain's wartime prime minister.

"We can deliver more cooperation in many areas bilaterally, via NATO and in groupings like the G7, the Joint Expeditionary Force or the European Political Community who will gather at Blenheim Palace on 18 July", Lammy stressed. [For an assessment of the European Political

Community summit, read here]

Lammy's article was published July 7, by which time Labour's Defence Secretary John Healey had already visited Kiev to offer a new package of military support and pledge to give Ukraine an open-ended £3 billion annually.

## Backing Israel's genocide

Lammy followed up the Europe trip with a visit last weekend to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. He went as a stalwart supporter of Israel's massacre of the Palestinians.

Last November, as shadow foreign secretary, Lammy visited Israel for meetings with President Isaac Herzog and Foreign Minister Eli Cohen to offer his support. That month, Israeli warplanes blew up the heavily populated Jabaliya neighbourhood in northern Gaza, which houses the largest refugee camp in the Strip. At least 195 civilians were killed, with 120 more buried under rubble.

Lammy said of this war crime that "it's clear to me that it's wrong to bomb a refugee camp, but clearly if there is a military objective it can be legally justifiable."

By the time of his return to Israel, the prestigious *Lancet* medical journal had estimated that up to 186,000 Palestinians have been killed so far. Claiming that he was "here to push for a ceasefire," Lammy posed shaking the hand of the mass-murderer-in-chief, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

He can make noises about ceasefires knowing full well that Israel is not listening and is confident that it can proceed with its genocide with the full backing of the US, UK and other major imperialist powers. Even as Lammy was in Jerusalem, the Israel Defense Forces were intensifying their slaughter, including blowing up the Gaza headquarters of the United Nations Palestinian relief agency UNRWA on the second day of his trip.

The Israeli newspaper *Maariv* revealed that the peacemaker Lammy had given assurances that the UK would not withdraw its objections to the International Criminal Court's application for arrest warrants for Netanyahu and Defence Minister Yoav Gallant. While he was a shadow minister, Lammy had stated that Labour in government would drop the UK's legal challenge.

There is nothing that Lammy, Healey and Starmer will not sanction as leaders of the "party of NATO", pledged to increase military spending to 2.5 percent of GDP to ensure the Armed Forces are "fit to fight".

Lammy and Healey have played a central role over the last five years in opposition in liaising with US imperialism, making frequent trips to Washington and establishing close connections with both the Biden administration and key Republican Party figures.

Referring to the "overarching 'Trump problem'" Labour would face in

office, in light of Lammy's 2018 comments, Andrew Marr wrote in the *New Statesman* in April that "there is a weary belief in Labour high command that Joe Biden won't make it, and that Trump is realistic enough to deal, however grumpily, with a Labour government sitting atop a big majority."

"To that end, Lammy has been repeatedly in Washington recently meeting Republicans such as Mike Pompeo, J.D. Vance of *Hillbilly Elegy* fame and Trump's former national security adviser Robert O'Brien. One of the best-connected British politicians in Washington DC, Lammy has been helped by the former US secretary of state Condoleezza Rice."

Given Trump's repeated threats against NATO countries who are not meeting the required at least 2 percent of GDP on military spending, Marr added, "Britain under Labour would remain a relatively high spending member of NATO and less problematic for Washington than Brussels."

Lammy has praised Vance's screed as a "wonderful" book. In an X posting made following a speech at this year's Munich Security Conference in February, Lammy cited, almost word for word, an argument made by Vance the same day (February 19) in a *Financial Times* op-ed that Europe had to increase military spending to satisfy the demands made by the US.

Lammy's post read, "South Korea is sending more shells to Ukraine than the whole of the European family combined. This is a challenge to us; to Europe. We cannot afford to stand still."

Lammy was born to a working-class family in London, and brought up in the shadow of the deprived Broadwater Farm estate. But these early days are long gone as Lammy underwent a meteoric rise into the highest echelons of government.

After studying at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, he graduated with a law degree and was called to the bar of England and Wales in 1994.

His next move was to enrol at Harvard University, attending Harvard Law School from which he graduated in 1997. Following the death of Labour left MP Bernie Grant, he was elected in his seat as Labour MP for Tottenham in 2000 aged just 27—the then youngest MP in Parliament, and as a supporter of right-wing Labour leader Tony Blair. Lammy voted in favour of Britain's invasion of Iraq in 2003, and by October 2008, was promoted by Blair's successor, Prime Minister Gordon Brown, to Minister of State, as well as being appointed to the Privy Council—the body of advisers to the reigning monarch.

All this by the time he was 36 years old!

### Lammy's US auditions for government office

Among the many trips by Lammy to the United States were joint appearances at prestigious US institutions with then shadow defence secretary Healey.

Following a previous visit by Healey to the Wilson Center in October 2022, Healey was joined in September 2023 at the same institution by Lammy for a discussion titled, "The UK Labour Party's Foreign and Defense Priorities."

Such events served as auditions, in which the Labour representatives outlined their pro-war agenda and willingness to continue to serve as the reliable junior partner of US imperialism. The event was moderated by Robin Quinville, Director of the Global Europe Program, who asked, "There are so many areas where many US policy makers will want to know your approach, both continuity and change... that includes Ukraine and the war in Europe... how would a Labour government approach them?"

Lammy reassured the US ruling elite, "We're in the United States

because the relationship between the UK and the US is so central to the rules-based order that we all enjoy, and we want to stress that there are huge points of continuity going forward."

Addressing fears that Trump was not fully on board with escalating the war against Russia, Lammy stated, "there is a debate in Washington that we have detected around support for Ukraine. We want to make clear that there is not that debate in the UK. There is a bi-partisan position right across the political establishment in the UK that we have to stand with the Ukrainian people for as long as it takes and that we have to repel Putin in his imperial ambitions."

Having reassured the Democrats that Labour was on board with war against Russia, Lammy sought to appease the Trump camp who see conflict with China, not Russia, as the priority for US imperialism.

"We are also conscious that we are here in a very changing global environment in which the United States is not the only superpower in the world. China clearly has emerged as a significant economy represent a fifth of the global economy," he said. It had adopted "a more aggressive posture and we are very conscious of the concerns in the China Sea and the Taiwan Straits."

Lammy cited AUKUS, Britain's military alliance with the US and Australia, adding that "the discussions we continue to have about Britain's role in the Indo-Pacific are very important."

On May 8 this year, two months out from the general election that brought him to power, Lammy recalibrated his message still further when speaking at the Hudson Institute in Washington, stressing that he shared common ground with Biden's Democratic Party administration but would have no problem working with Trump as US President:

"If I have the privilege of becoming foreign secretary, I am acting in what is the UK national interest as a front bench MP, and I take that very, very seriously, particularly in relation to the portfolio I have. And so where I can find common cause with Donald Trump, I will find common cause. I have many friends in the Republican Party, I'm a good Christian boy. So there are places where I can be described and have been described as a small 'c' conservative Labour politician."

For good measure, earlier this year Lammy paid tribute to Margaret Thatcher—now a requirement for anyone who makes it to the top of the Labour Party. He enthused of someone still despised by millions that she was a "visionary leader for the UK."

Standing against Labour in the general election, the Socialist Equality Party insisted that all efforts by pseudo-left parties, including those at the head of Britain's official anti-war movement, to claim that Labour can be lobbied and pressured into fighting on behalf of the working class are a fraud. The foreign policy of Labour, to support war and do the bidding of US imperialism, requires at the same time a war on the living standards of workers at home and the evisceration of democratic rights.

The necessity facing the working class is to break once and for all with Labour, and to build its own revolutionary party, the Socialist Equality Party.



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