

# Australian Labor government pledges to work with Trump, billionaires hail inauguration

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Like its counterparts internationally, the Australian Labor government is practically falling over itself to align with the new Trump administration and to normalise its fascistic agenda.

Amid Trump's declarations that he will immediately carry out mass deportations and other dictatorial measures, seize whatever territories and even countries he wishes and abolish virtually all social programs, not a single Labor MP has issued a word of criticism or warning.

Instead, with an Australian election due by May, Labor Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has been in a competition with opposition leader Peter Dutton over who would work best with Trump. Albanese has touted his role in the militarisation of Australia, as part of US-led plans for war with China. Dutton has presented himself as a "strong man" with ideological affinities with Trump.

In two interviews yesterday, hours before the inauguration, Albanese's remarks effectively welcomed the Trump regime. Speaking to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), Albanese recalled his "very constructive discussion with the incoming President when I wished him well on his election."

Asked about the potentially disastrous global economic implications of Trump's trade war program, Albanese responded: "I made the point to President Trump that the United States has enjoyed a trade surplus with Australia since the Truman Presidency." He noted that the US is "a major investor here in Australia... So, I'm very confident that we will work these issues through because they're in the interests of both Australia and the United States."

That was essentially a pitch for Australia, a close US military ally, to be welcomed into Trump's Fortress America, as he threatens economic warfare and even military conquest against friends and foes alike.

Labor's Foreign Minister Penny Wong was at Trump's inauguration today, along with former Labor prime minister and current Australian ambassador to the US Kevin Rudd. The two sat politely through the degraded spectacle of reaction, with Wong then giving comments to the media

positive of Trump.

"President Trump has made it very clear he's going to do things differently," Wong told ABC radio this morning. "He's made it clear he's going to implement an 'America first' agenda and we should be realistic about that." And, Wong said, "We should also be confident in who we are, in our values, our place in the world."

Were Wong transported back to 1933, perhaps she might have said "Chancellor Hitler has made it very clear he's going to do things differently. He's going to implement a 'Germany first' agenda," etc.

That is hardly an exaggeration. Wong had just participated in an event where Trump hailed as heroes the insurrectionists who attempted to overthrow American democracy on January 6, 2021, at his behest, and said that he would begin mass roundups of immigrants immediately. The implications were made clear by Elon Musk, the richest man in the world and a central figure in the new administration, who repeatedly performed a Nazi salute to applause at a Trump rally after the inauguration ceremony.

Wong told the ABC: "It was an honour and a privilege for me to be there, as you say, the first time the Australian Foreign Minister has been invited and I was very honoured to represent our country at such an important event, the peaceful transfer of power in this great democracy."

Wong's grovelling adulation of the new fascist president must be a warning to the Australian working class and the working class throughout the Indo-Pacific region. Trump's program of social counter revolution at home and war abroad is not an American phenomenon only. It is one that is increasingly being adopted by governments globally including in Australia.

For more than a year, Wong, as foreign minister, along with Albanese, has been most directly responsible for Australia's unwavering support of the Israeli genocide of Palestinians. That has included spearheading a fraudulent campaign, conflating all opposition to the war crimes with antisemitism.

But here was a fascistic figure, Trump, giving a speech

clearly modelled on those of Adolf Hitler. And Musk had delivered his Nazi salute, before Wong's media interviews. By participating in the inauguration and not raising a critical word afterwards, Wong was complicit in genuine antisemitism.

One of the few questions she received from the ABC, pointing to Trump's fascist rhetoric, raised his comments about seizing the Panama Canal. The interviewer noted that Trump had claimed China was taking over the canal, and the US would not allow that.

Wong, a colourless bureaucrat, replied in her droning tone: "Well, I think that that is an expression of his view, and the President's view, and the approach that they will take vis-à-vis China. And I think that is an unsurprising approach given what has been said during the campaign in relation to China." That is, she effectively endorsed Trump's hysterical anti-China demagogy, as well as his naked threats of imperial plunder.

Wong, like Albanese, touted US investment in Australia. And she raised the other central preoccupation of the government, the AUKUS war pact with the US and the UK, directed against China, under which Australia is acquiring nuclear-powered submarines as part of a massive militarisation. Wong was confident AUKUS would persist under Trump, and she is meeting his incoming Secretary of State Marco Rubio tomorrow, to discuss deepening the anti-China push.

Labor's welcoming of the Trump regime is bound up with the fact that dominant sections of the ruling elite view the interests of Australian imperialism, including in the South Pacific, as being served by the US war drive targeting Beijing.

But more generally, the response is part of a far-reaching normalisation of fascistic and authoritarian rule. Amid a breakdown of capitalism, growing social opposition and war, there is a sense in ruling circles that Trump's dictatorial, militaristic and anti-working class agenda advances their interests.

That has found expression in the media reaction too. The Murdoch-owned *Australian* has hailed Trump's inauguration, including by presenting him as a saviour of AUKUS. But the erstwhile "liberal" publications have essentially taken the same position.

The *Sydney Morning Herald* uncritically cited CNN's description of Musk's Nazi salutes as "odd-looking salutes." Their hack reporters have been centrally involved in the demonisation of the pro-Palestinian movement, "finding" antisemitism, where there was none, in countless protests and anti-war events, but now they seem not to know what a Sieg Heil signifies.

The *Herald* also published an annotated copy of Trump's

address, that was uncritical, bordering on adulatory.

For instance, in response to Trump's Hitlerian declaration that "For American citizens, January 20, 2025, is Liberation Day," the *Herald's* "analysts" wrote: "Of all the American values, liberty is probably the most compelling, and this declaration is both Churchillian and weirdly filmic." And where Trump said, "Many people thought it was impossible for me to stage such a historic political comeback," the *Herald* commented "Ain't that the truth. To be fair, Trump has earned his triumphalism here."

The WWSWS has characterised Trump's ascension as the rule of the oligarchy. That this is not only a US phenomenon was expressed in the decision by Australia's richest individual, Gina Rinehart, to take out a full-page ad in the *Wall Street Journal* hailing his victory. Fellow Australian billionaire Anthony Pratt did the same in the *New York Times*.

Rinehart, a mining magnate with a fortune estimated at \$A47.3 billion, gushed "Like many all over the world we salute your leadership President-elect Trump." In ads that she took out last month, Rinehart, who has met repeatedly with Trump, pointed to the reasons for that support. He was an "Outstanding Leader, Who understands that high government tape, regulation and taxes do nothing to encourage investment."

Rinehart has become increasingly politically active. In August, she called for the introduction of compulsory military training and the construction of an Israel-style Iron Dome missile defence system in northern Australia, as part of the confrontation with China. Rinehart has called for sweeping tax cuts and the establishment of "special economic zones," that would fuel business and billionaire profits.

In 2012, Rinehart caused widespread anger with a video noting that workers in African mines were willing to labour for \$2 a day. Australian workers would need to be more productive to compete, she said.

These are the social interests represented, not only by Trump, but by capitalist governments around the world, including Albanese's Labor administration.



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