

UK Labour backs Israel's bloody reprisals against Palestinians, supports NATO military escalation against Russia and China

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Labour's Sir Keir Starmer was one of the first world leaders to denounce the Palestinians' courageous uprising against Israeli occupation, describing it as an "appalling act of terrorism". As missiles rained down on the besieged Palestinians of Gaza, killing hundreds of unarmed civilians, Starmer backed the fascistic ravings of Zionist generals announcing they would "destroy" the Palestinians and "open the gates of hell", declaring: "Israel has the right to defend itself."

Starmer's full-throated support for Israel's war on the Palestinians was made on the eve of the Labour Party conference which opened Sunday in Liverpool. The conference is being staged with one central goal: to profile the party's readiness for government based on a programme of militarism and class war. Support for Israel's ongoing bloodbath served as the touchstone for these efforts.

Speaking at a fringe event at the conference over the weekend, Shadow Foreign Secretary David Lammy echoed Starmer's declarations, stating that if a similar act of "terrorism" took place in Britain, "we would be approaching that on a war footing". Lisa Nandy, Shadow Secretary of State for International Development, said Britain should review all aid given to Palestinians after Saturday's attack.

Shadow Chancellor Rachel Reeves denounced former Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn's plea for "a ceasefire and urgent de-escalation" and his call for an end to Israel's occupation. She told BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme, "Gaza is not occupied by Israel". On Monday, she declared that Corbyn would "absolutely not be welcomed back as an MP".

Labour's National Executive Committee has prepared a motion to conference authorising the expulsion of any party member who supports Corbyn or others dis-endorsed by Labour.

Starmer has seized on the conference to demonstrate Labour's zero tolerance for any opposition to the crimes of the Israeli state, even while Netanyahu's far-right government tramples international law, announcing its genocidal military campaign and enforcing collective punishment of civilians. On Saturday, the Labour Party banned the words "end apartheid" from a Palestine Solidarity Campaign fringe event at the conference. A party spokesperson stated: "the Labour party will not publish a description of Israel as an apartheid state". The term "apartheid" has been used by Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch

in recent landmark reports evidencing Israel's decades-long state violence and "inhumane oppression" of the Palestinian people.

Starmer's support for the war unleashed by Israel against Palestinians, including the Biden administration's dispatch of the U.S.S. Gerald Ford Strike Group and squadrons of F-35, F-15, F-16 and A-10 warplanes to the region, is an essential element of a global military strategy backed to the hilt by Labour's shadow cabinet.

On September 27, the pro-Tory *Telegraph* published an article by Lammy and Labour's Shadow Defence Secretary John Healey under the headline, "The nuclear deterrent is part of Labour's heritage".

Their article burnished Labour's credentials as "the party of NATO", assuring the *Telegraph's* readership—above all Britain's military and defence chiefs—that Sir Keir Starmer has exorcised the anti-war posture of Corbyn and that Labour will unconditionally pursue the vital interests of British imperialism in every corner of the globe, from Europe to the South China Sea.

Healey and Lammy wrote, "with Keir Starmer, our commitment to NATO and the UK's nuclear deterrent—maintained on behalf of NATO allies—is unshakeable."

They outlined Labour's plans to massively boost the NATO alliance, enhance British nuclear capabilities and prepare for direct military conflict with Russia and China, committing a future Labour government to a militarist and expansionist course that is rapidly spiralling toward World War III.

The pair boasted of their private audiences in America's corridors of power: "Our joint visit to Washington DC last week—for meetings in the White House, State Department, Pentagon and Congress—reinforced the seriousness and scale of the challenges Labour aims to inherit after the election. The world has become less stable and more dangerous since we served as ministers in the Blair and Brown governments."

What are the implications of this statement? Healey and Lammy are speaking as point men for the next Labour government, anointed successors to a Conservative government viewed in Washington as a spent force. Labour is being readied to facilitate direct military confrontation against Russia and to bolster US plans for war against China, an agenda outlined by Healey in a series of bellicose speeches this year.

Labour is Britain's party of war. Its bloody crimes include the

party's support for the imperialist carve-up of World War I, and its coalition with the Tories in World War II, encompassing the brutal suppression of the anti-imperialist and anti-fascist insurgency in Greece and Indochina. In 2003, on behalf of US and British imperialism, the Blair Labour government manufactured intelligence that Iraq possessed "weapons of mass destruction". Their lies were used to stampede Britain into an illegal US-led invasion and occupation of Iraq that claimed more than 1 million lives.

What "more dangerous" challenges did Lammy and Healey discuss with the Pentagon's generals? And what commitments did they make on behalf of a future Labour government? Both men are silent. But their first action on return—hailing Britain's nuclear weapons programme—indicates the subject of their talks, posing immense dangers to the working class.

Healey and Lammy arrived in the US amid a political crisis in Washington following the collapse of Ukraine's NATO-backed "spring offensive". The Biden administration is seeking to press plans for a major escalation of war against Russia—up to and including the mobilisation of NATO troops. Healey and Lammy's *Telegraph* article was followed days later by the newspaper's interview with the British Defence Secretary, headlined: "Grant Shapps to send UK troops to Ukraine."

Shapps had stated that Britain would deploy military trainers to Ukraine, and that Britain's Royal Navy must prepare to confront Russian forces in the Black Sea. On Friday, the Socialist Equality Party (UK) responded with a statement, "Oppose sending British troops to Ukraine! Mobilise the working class against imperialist war!"

While Conservative Party Prime Minister Rishi Sunak joined Shapps in rowing back on the troops announcement, the earlier statements from Labour's shadow defence team and their high-level talks in Washington suggest that plans for military escalation are far advanced.

On September 23, the *Telegraph* reported Labour's Washington visit with the headline, "Labour: 'You can trust us on defence. We are committed to Nato and US leadership'". It stated bluntly, "Two decades after Iraq, the party's shadow foreign and defence secretaries echo Blair as they mount a defence and diplomacy offensive."

Ahead of a UK general election expected next year, and with Labour holding a 20-point poll lead over the Tories, the *Telegraph* reported Starmer's shadow cabinet "has racked up tens of thousands of air miles crossing the Atlantic—and connections with the Biden White House are growing."

Lammy and Healey were in Washington, the *Telegraph* reported, "to promote a new, robust Labour foreign and defence policy", their visit coinciding with Volodymyr Zelensky's audience with top US officials "to discuss an impasse in Congress over US military support for Ukraine."

They boasted that in Britain no similar conflict exists over NATO's proxy war in Ukraine—both parties are equally committed to military confrontation against Russia. As the *Telegraph* put it, the war in Ukraine "has provided the party with an opportunity to chip off the veneer of distrust on defence issues it acquired among British voters after the Iraq War and the beleaguered leadership of

Jeremy Corbyn."

What a grotesque inversion of reality. Corbyn was elected Labour leader in September 2015 by more than 250,000 party members who demanded an end to the Blairites' programme of austerity and war. A destabilisation campaign immediately ensued, involving the military and intelligence agencies of Britain, the US and Israel, aimed at subverting the democratic will of the British people. Unnamed generals threatened a mutiny if Corbyn were elected prime minister, while British soldiers were later filmed shooting live ammunition rounds into target photos of Corbyn's head.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo declared just months before the 2019 general election that the US would "push-back" to prevent Corbyn ever becoming prime minister.

This destabilisation campaign, spearheaded by Labour's right-wing, was facilitated by the Corbynites' capitulation at every turn. Corbyn and the Socialist Campaign Group of Labour MPs—including John McDonnell and Diane Abbott—ceded to the Blairites' key demands: allowing a free vote on the bombing of Syria, retaining support for NATO and Trident nuclear subs in Labour's manifesto, and colluding with the mass expulsion of party members framed-up as anti-Semites for their defence of Corbyn and their support for the Palestinians against Zionist oppression.

Healey and Lammy are spelling out the results of this filthy state conspiracy, declaring that an incoming Labour government will ensure that Britain takes a "lead European nation" role in NATO, "backed by a 'NATO test' of the armed forces in the first 100 days of Sir Keir's administration." They have attacked the Tories for "hollowing out" Britain's armed forces and have pledged to increase military spending by billions of pounds to compete with Germany.

Labour's defence planning goes beyond the current war in Ukraine. It is preparing a new imperialist carve-up of the globe. That is why Lammy and Healey were "invited into the Pentagon for meetings with top officials including Michael Chase, the deputy assistant Secretary of Defence for China, Taiwan and Mongolia" and it is why Labour's defence team describes the AUKUS military alliance against China as "a once in a lifetime opportunity". Is it any wonder that the *Telegraph* concludes: "among policy anoraks in the Washington defence establishment there no longer seems to be concern about Labour's commitment to NATO."



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