

Trump's state visit to Britain: All that glitters...

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Donald Trump's second state visit to the UK, the first afforded any second-term US president, will be a spectacle of political corruption, decay and delusion.

Behind the walls of a palace, or within the grounds of a country retreat, far from a population which despises him, the fascist would-be dictator Trump will be feted with all the pageantry the British state has to offer.

The event—a grotesque celebration of wealth and military power instigated by an equally despised Prime Minister Keir Starmer—is a provocation against a working class mired in socio-economic crisis, and which has turned out in its hundreds of thousands for nearly two years to protest the Gaza genocide of which the US president is the chief sponsor.

Trump will be treated to audiences with the king and queen and prince and princesses of Wales; a carriage procession through the Windsor Castle estate joined by the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment and three military bands; a ceremonial welcome with a guard of honour; lunch; visits to the Royal Collection and the tomb of Queen Elizabeth II; a flypast by the Red Arrows and a special Beating Retreat military ceremony; plus the usual grand state banquet.

On Thursday he will then travel to the prime minister's country retreat, Chequers, where he will be greeted with a guard of honour from RAF Halton and bagpipers. Starmer and Trump will view the Winston Churchill Archives then take a bilateral meeting and join a business reception hosted by Chancellor Rachel Reeves.

Trump is bringing his own aristocratic retinue, but one made up of corporate giants including Jensen Huang of Nvidia, Sam Altman of OpenAI; Larry Fink of asset management company BlackRock; and Stephen Schwarzman, head of private equity giant Blackstone. Apple CEO Tim Cook may also attend.

Head of J.P. Morgan Jamie Dimon missed out due to a clash of schedules.

They will be intimately involved in discussions of business deals worth more than \$10 billion, according to Reuters, based on a “trade agreement with three pillars: a new science and technology partnership to strengthen the tech sectors of both countries, cooperation in civil nuclear power, and advances in defense technology cooperation”.

That the courting of Trump and his fellow oligarchs takes place under the supervision of Europe's leading social democratic head of government speaks volumes.

Born, as he never tires of announcing, to a toolmaker, a supporter of Michel Pablo at university and starting his career as a Doughty Street human rights lawyer, Starmer's shift to the right has been breakneck: starting as head of the Crown Prosecution Service and ending as prime minister of the most right-wing government in modern British history.

He came to office with a declared mission of maintaining the “special relationship” with the US on which British imperialism depends to project its global interests. His obsequious flattery of Trump is aimed at convincing the White House that the UK is still America's most loyal military ally and a bastion for US commercial and political interests in Europe amid an escalating trade war.

It is also intended, backed with promises of military spending and deployments, to persuade Trump to maintain US involvement in the NATO proxy war with Russia in Ukraine, on which the UK and its European allies have staked so much.

Underpinning this hoped-for alliance is a shared political agenda, with both men functioning as representatives of the corporate-financial oligarchy. Trump does so as the leader of the MAGA movement,

seeking to establish a presidential dictatorship through the mobilisation of the armed forces against the American working class.

Starmer heads a Labour government that has broken completely from its old reformist policies, is outlawing political opposition and courting the far-right—both globally as Trump’s partner in imperialist military violence such as Israel’s genocide of the Palestinians, and at home as the champions of savage austerity and a witch-hunting of migrants and refugees paralleling Trump’s ICE raids.

But this is no meeting of equals, and Starmer has a great deal to fear from his relationship with Trump.

He was already faced with controlling massive political opposition in the British working class to the US president, requiring a carefully stage-managed and curtailed visit, moving from a palace to a country house and avoiding any contact with the public.

But having extended his invitation to Trump in February, when he could boast that he was a fellow “winner” and a valuable ally, Starmer will meet the US president amid a political crisis so severe that the Labour leader’s days as prime minister are being counted in months, not years.

For their pains, Starmer and his leadership team now fear being jilted in favour of Trump’s more natural allies on Britain’s political right. Waiting in the wings is Nigel Farage, whose Reform UK has a 10-point lead over Labour, and a far-right periphery that views Trump’s MAGA agenda and his role as architect of the mass murder of the Palestinians as an inspiration for their own nationalist fantasies of the restoration of the British empire.

Saturday’s “Unite the Kingdom” rally of over 100,000 was mobilized based on demands for the mass expulsion of migrants, scapegoated for increasing social desperation and the collapse of social services. And it was ferociously hostile to Starmer, despite his government’s pledge to “stop the boats”, open de facto concentration camps in military barracks and warehouses and step up deportations.

Elon Musk was given pride of place in a satellite interview with the organiser of Saturday’s demonstration, Tommy Robinson, and called for the violent overthrow of Starmer’s government. This centred on the Trump-led campaign blaming the “left” for the murder of fascist provocateur Charlie Kirk and

calling for a political pogrom.

Trump and Musk had a spectacular fallout, but the Labour government rightly fears that, given a further deterioration of relations, the next far-right rally could enjoy the explicit backing of the White House.

Trump’s advisors have already made clear he will challenge Starmer on his attacks on free speech—by which is meant not the mass arrests of anti-genocide protesters, but the censorship of comments defined as hate speech on social media that has been denounced by Musk, Mark Zuckerberg and other oligarchs backing Trump, as well as his broader fascist base.

The reaction of most workers and young people in Britain to these events will be disgust, watching millions spent over the space of two days entertaining a war criminal at the behest of his partner in crime. The monarchical ceremonies of the next two days are entirely appropriate given that neither leader enjoys a trace of democratic legitimacy and both rule and act solely at the behest of the super-rich, the corporations and the banks.



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