

# Australian Labor PM fawns on fascist Trump at the White House

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21 October 2025

Just three days after millions of people took to the streets of the United States in “No Kings” demonstrations against the fascistic Trump administration’s drive toward dictatorship, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese lauded Trump at a White House meeting yesterday.

Albanese not only hailed and solidarised himself with Trump. He declared that the Labor government was taking the 70-year post-World War II alliance with US imperialism to “the next level” by signing a critical minerals agreement aimed at preparing for a US-led war against China.

At the White House cabinet room event, both Trump and Albanese went out of their way to praise each other, even though it was the first face-to-face meeting that Albanese had been able to secure with Trump. Albanese had been desperately seeking one since Trump’s return to office in January and has repeatedly refused to publicly comment on, let alone criticise, his fascistic policies.

Behind the mutual public backslapping, the meeting signalled accelerating plans to further transform Australia into a platform for a US-led war against China, including the supply of military-related rare earths, the processing of which China currently dominates globally.

Albanese congratulated Trump on his so-called Middle East peace deal, telling him it was “an extraordinary achievement.” That backing came amid renewed Israeli bombings and killings in Gaza and further exposed the neo-colonial character of the White House plan to impose an occupation on the Palestinian population.

In return, Trump described Albanese as “highly respected” and doing “a fantastic job.” In front of cameras, Trump told him: “We’ve been long-term, longtime allies and I would say there’s never been anybody better. We fought wars together and we never had any doubts. It’s a great honour to have you as my friend and a great honour to have you in the United States of America.”

Trump praised Albanese for his May federal election victory and declared that the multi-billion-dollar AUKUS military pact against China was going “full steam ahead” with the production of nuclear-powered attack submarines,

despite still being under a prolonged Pentagon review. “We have it all set with Anthony,” Trump said.

Trump also played down, for now, his administration’s demands for far greater military spending by the Australian government. He described the Labor government’s already rising level of spending as “great” but “I’d always like more.”

The centrepiece of the stage-managed event was the signing of a “framework on critical minerals and rare earths.” Under the deal, the two governments said they would invest in or subsidise up to \$US8.5 billion in new mines and processing plants. They would also offer guaranteed “price-floors or similar measures” for new producers and block mine sales on “national security” grounds. All these moves are directed against China.

In a media statement, Albanese described the agreement as an historic elevation of the US military alliance, on which Australian governments have relied since World War II. He said it would “deliver a US/Australia secured supply chain for critical minerals and rare earths, required for defence and other advanced technologies. This represents a significant new chapter in the over 70 years of our formal Alliance.”

The “framework” consists of identifying and subsidising “priority” projects, particularly related to the supply of rare minerals needed for jet engines, military weaponry and other hi-tech equipment, including smart phones and electric vehicles.

Within six months, both governments would take steps to “provide at least \$1 billion in financing to projects located in each of the United States and Australia.” In addition, the Export-Import Bank of the United States, would contribute around \$US2.2 billion, expected to be matched by \$US5 billion in corporate investment.

Albanese said his government already had two projects ready to go. The first was a \$US200 million government investment in a “Alco-Sojitz Gallium Recovery Project” in Western Australia. His office said the project would provide up to 10 percent of the total global supply of gallium, an essential input for defence and semiconductor

manufacturing.

Secondly, the Labor government would take a \$US100 million stake in the Arafura Nolans rare earths mining project in the Northern Territory, which was projected to produce 5 percent of global rare earths. The project, which is backed by billionaire Gina Rinehart's Hancock Prospecting, has already received more than AU\$1 billion in government commitments.

In reality, such mining and processing projects cost billions of dollars to develop. Even the headline package of US\$8.5 billion will hardly overcome China's domination of an estimated 90 percent of the processing capacity of some rare earths.

But the Trump administration is aggressively seeking to close that gap, as an essential requirement for a war against China. As if to underscore that intent, the event with Albanese included Vice-President JD Vance, Secretary of State Marco Rubio, War Secretary Pete Hegseth, Chief of Staff Susie Wiles and Interior Secretary Doug Burgum.

Under the agreement, the US and Australian governments have pledged to speed up mining and processing project approvals by de-regulating and slashing "red tape." In the language of the framework: "The participants are taking measures to accelerate, streamline, or deregulate permitting timelines and processes, including to obtain permits for critical minerals and rare earths mining, separation, and processing."

A US-Australia Critical Minerals Supply Security Response Group is being established under the leadership of the US energy secretary and the Australian resources minister to "identify priority minerals and supply vulnerabilities."

Since taking office in 2022, the Albanese government already has intensified the AUKUS-related commitments made by the previous Liberal-National Coalition government with the Biden administration. In particular, it has stepped-up the US military's access to air and military bases across northern Australia and begun expanding naval facilities as logistical hubs for US nuclear submarines.

Trump specifically praised Australia's record in building "magnificent holding pads for the submarines."

In the lead-up to the White House meeting, Albanese sought to further prove his government's worth as a partner of US imperialism by seeking to impose treaties on South Pacific countries to bar military or police agreements with China, culminating in an Australian military pact with Papua New Guinea.

Despite all these efforts, however, the Trump administration may demand much more. Asked by reporters, Trump ruled out providing any relief from punishing US tariffs, which remain at 10 percent for all Australia exports

to America, plus 50 percent on steel and aluminium.

The critical minerals and rare earths framework itself is not set in stone—it "does not constitute or create any legally binding or enforceable obligations."

Moreover, US Navy Secretary John Phelan, who was also at the meeting, flagged changes to the AUKUS treaty, which includes the UK. These could involve a higher submarine purchase price than the \$368 billion allocated by the previous Coalition government.

At the White House event, the current Australian ambassador to Washington, former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, personally apologised to Trump for comments he had posted on social media in 2020, after Trump lost that year's presidential election. Rudd had labelled Trump the "most destructive president in US history."

Rudd's apology to the would-be dictator was another embodiment of Labor's dedication to intensifying Australian imperialism's alliance with Washington and commitment to a US-led war with China. Rudd himself was removed from office in 2010 by US "protected sources" inside the Labor Party after he suggested that the Obama administration could make some accommodation to the rise of China as an economic power in the Indo-Pacific region.

For the past 15 years, the Labor Party—in government and in opposition—has been fully in support of the US-led drive to war against China that Obama initiated with his "pivot to Asia." Since coming to office, the Trump administration has repeatedly made clear it is accelerating preparations for conflict with the world's second largest economic power—a fact that is underscored by yesterday's meeting with the Australian prime minister.



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