

Australian PM invites Canadian leader to visit

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Over the past week there has been a remarkable silence in the Australian corporate media over the invitation issued by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese to his Canadian counterpart Mark Carney to visit Australia and deliver a speech to the parliament in Canberra in March.

Albanese's announcement, made in a January 25 television interview, came only three days after Carney addressed the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, where he declared that the "rules-based international order" had "ruptured."

The silence reflects the anxiety and uncertainty wracking the ruling class, including the Albanese Labor government itself, about the obvious risks involved in seeking to balance, however cautiously, between the Trump administration and those in Washington's firing line, such as Canada and the European powers, under conditions where US tariff wars and military aggression have torn apart the post-World War II global order.

Carney's speech came amid the political fallout globally from US President Donald Trump's threats to seize Greenland, a move that could precipitate the collapse of the post-World War II NATO alliance and put the US on a collision course with its erstwhile European imperialist allies.

Carney did not name Trump, but the target of his message was obvious. Carney denounced "great powers" for "using economic integration as weapons, tariffs as leverage" and said so-called "middle powers" such as Canada "must act together" against this.

Trump's response to Carney in his own speech at Davos was threatening. "Canada lives because of the United States," Trump said. "Remember that, Mark, the next time you make your statements."

Trump then withdrew an invitation for Canada to join his supposed "Board of Peace" initiative—to transform the Gaza Strip into a US-dominated colony—and threatened 100 percent tariffs against Canada if Carney's government proceeded with a trade deal with China.

Two days later, Albanese not only announced Carney's

visit but said he agreed with Carney's speech—while studiously avoiding any criticism of Trump. "I agree with him," Albanese said when asked about Carney's declaration that: "We're in the midst of a rupture, not a transition. Middle powers must act together because if we're not at the table, we're on the menu."

As the WSWs explained: "Carney's remarks were a damning admission by the leader of one of the G7 imperialist powers that an imperialist-led struggle to repartition the world economically and territorially, akin to that which culminated in the imperialist world wars of the last century, is underway."

Albanese's response reflects the vulnerable position of the Australian capitalist class. Along with their Canadian counterparts, they have been the closest allies of the US since World War II. During the post-war "international order," they benefited—as Carney himself said in his Davos speech—from the dominance of US imperialism, on whose military might and corporate investment they depended heavily to assert their own predatory interests.

The "America first" drive by the oligarchic Trump administration to restore US dominance after years of economic decline, above all against China but also at the expense of one-time US allies such as Canada and the European imperialist powers, threatens a catastrophe. In the case of Australia, its economy is tied substantially to raw material exports to China, its largest single market by far, as well as to investment flows from the US.

In unveiling Carney's visit, Albanese anxiously sought to couch it in terms of Australia potentially acting as "a stabilising force at a time where, quite frankly, there is a lot of turbulence and turmoil in the world."

There is not the slightest basis for such stability as the White House ramps up its global aggression, notably against any ties to China, which Washington has identified as an existential threat to US global dominance.

So far, there has been no reported public reprisal threatened by the White House, but behind the scenes Albanese's move would certainly have been noted there.

Albanese may have made himself a target, even more so than one of his predecessors, Kevin Rudd.

Rudd was ousted as prime minister in 2010 by US “protected sources” inside the Labor Party after he suggested that the Obama administration should make some accommodation to the rise of China as an economic power in the Indo-Pacific region. Ever since, the Labor Party—in government and in opposition—has been unequivocal in support of the US-led drive to war against China that Obama initiated with his “pivot to Asia.”

Last October, after months of being unable to secure an audience with Trump, and confronted by US demands for higher military spending, Albanese joined Trump in engaging in mutual praise at a White House meeting. Albanese 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 supply agreement aimed at preparing for a US-led war against China.

But Trump’s “Make America Great Again” offensive has thrown a question mark over all such alliances, not just NATO.

At the same time, the US economic position has continued to deteriorate. One measure is the decline in the value of the US dollar, which has plunged by 10 percent over the past year, reflecting falling confidence in its role as the de facto global currency since World War II. The price of gold, a hedge against the dollar, has surged above \$5,000 per ounce.

This decline is fuelling the eruption of US imperialist violence, from Venezuela to Iran and beyond. It is an effort to resolve the escalating economic crisis and maintain Washington’s global hegemony through military force.

While trying to respond to the implications of this worldwide “rupture,” Albanese’s invitation to Carney may also have been bound up with domestic political calculations. The Labor government won the May 2025 federal election by default, with the vote for the Liberal-National Coalition plummeting because it was widely identified by voters as mirroring the Trump administration’s program of gutting social spending and public sector jobs.

Since then, however, the Albanese government has faced continuing working-class discontent over plummeting real wages, the soaring cost of living, skyrocketing housing prices, staggering social inequality, the Gaza genocide, global militarism and war preparations.

Albanese’s announcement of an invitation to Carney evidently followed intense discussion inside the Labor government about how to respond to Carney’s declaration of the disintegration of the global order.

Two days earlier, Treasurer Jim Chalmers praised Carney’s “stunning” speech, saying it had been widely

discussed within government. Chalmers described the speech as “very thoughtful, and obviously very impactful.”

Chalmers said the “old certainties” Australia had relied on were breaking down. He referred to “shocks” stemming from economic crises, trade tensions, “discussions with NATO” and Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. He added: “Australia was such a big beneficiary of that long period of calm between the end of the Cold War and the start of the GFC [the 2008-09 global financial crisis].”

In his January 25 television interview, Albanese made an effort to maintain a balancing act with Washington by also unveiling the appointment of Greg Moriarty as the next Australian ambassador to the United States, replacing Rudd, who quit this month, a year early. Moriarty is a longtime pro-US Washington military and diplomatic insider, and ardent advocate of the aggressive AUKUS military alliance against China.

Since 2022, Albanese’s government has sought to satisfy Washington’s demands, first under Biden then Trump, by transforming Australia into a platform for war against China. Via the expansion of the AUKUS commitments and other arrangements, Labor has escalated US access to bases across the country and agreed to spend hundreds of billions of dollars acquiring nuclear-powered attack submarines and other US weaponry.

Despite all these efforts, the escalating conflicts between US imperialism and its rivals have thrown the Australian capitalist class into a profound crisis. The worldwide “shocks” will mean higher military spending and an even greater offensive against the living standards and social conditions of the working class than has already occurred under the Labor government since it took office in 2022.



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