

Who is running the Foreign Office? Lammy or Corbyn?

written by Arsen Ostrovsky | 01.10.2024

Fast forward one year, with Hamas still holding hostages and firing rockets, and Israel now engaged in multi-front battle for her existence against the Islamic Republic of Iran and its terrorist proxies, including Hezbollah, the Starmer government's support is no longer unequivocal. In fact, it has completely turned its back on Israel, abandoning the Jewish state in her time of need.

For example, at the current Labour Party conference just concluded in Liverpool, instead of reiterating their support for Israel, Starmer's Foreign Secretary David Lammy suggested UK could in fact impose further sanctions against Israelis.

This is just latest in a series of appalling betrayals, which follows the UK's unconscionable decision earlier this month to institute an arms embargo against the Jewish state, while reversing the previous government's principled appeal over the International Criminal Court's mendacious and baseless warrants against the Israeli Prime Minister and Defense Minister.

Britain has also renewed funding to UNRWA, the UN Palestinian refugee agency still embroiled in controversy surrounding their staff's participation in the October 7th massacre by Hamas.

One may indeed be forgiven for asking, is Jeremy Corbyn running the Foreign Office or David Lammy?

Whilst Lammy may have triumphantly touted some of these 'achievements', by saying "Britain is back," the only thing Britain has returned to, is the viscerally anti-Israel foreign policy of Corbyn, when he was Labour leader. It would appear, despite different leaders and fanciful pre-election promises, the same disdain for the UK-Israel alliance and cold indifference to Jewish lives, remains at the heart of the UK Labour party under new leader Keir Starmer.

The news that Lammy is now seeking to adopt further sanctions against Israelis that the British government unilaterally deems as 'extremist' or 'violence', also only underscores the glaring arbitrariness and politicization of the existing UK

sanctions regime, which has singled out Israelis for opprobrium and punishment, but not Palestinian extremists and officials who continue to incite violence and racial hatred, or those who call for jihad and intifada on the streets of London every other week, with impunity.

Whilst a robust sanctions regime is as a key foreign policy and national security tool for any nation, it is only credible insofar as it is fair, transparent and based on clearly defined criteria. It must also conform with Britain's obligations under international law and respect for the principles of due process and individual rights, not a politicized tool to be used at the whim of any sitting Foreign Secretary.

Speaking at the same Labour Party conference, Starmer's Attorney-General, Lord Hermer, said that the Government must be "militant about our belief in the rule of law and human rights."

Indeed, it ought to, yet this British government betrays that very commitment, in endorsing the ICC Prosecutor's attempt to indict Israeli leaders, which is the most egregious and unprecedented abuse of rule of law in recent memory, while applying an arms embargo on Israel, based on a false and politicized interpretation of international humanitarian law and arbitrarily singling out Jewish Israelis for illegitimate sanctions.

In view of the Starmer government's abdication of principled leadership on the foreign stage and unequivocal determination to fight terror, it is therefore hardly surprising that ahead of his G7 meeting this week, Lammy has refused to condemn Hezbollah, a UK-designated terror group which has fired almost 10,000 rockets against Israel the last 12 twelve months, displacing almost 100,000 residents from the north of the country.

Instead, in a Chamberlainesque display, Lammy demonstrated only pitiful moral cowardice, in calling for a "ceasefire on both sides".

It this kind of exasperation with a once cherished ally, that led even Israel's normally exceedingly diplomatic President, Isaac Herzog, to proclaim in a Sky News interview this week that "there is a sense of disappointment in Israel. We expect that all our allies will be side by side with us."

Yet regrettably, the cold hard truth is that, given the choice between standing

with its democratic ally Israel, or the jihadist proxies serving at the behest of the Islamic Republic of Iran, this UK government has shamefully turned its back on Israel, betraying an ally engaged in an existential battle and its very own principles and commitment to rule of law.

Published in Eu Reporter, October 1, 2024.