

British voters do not like Trump 'because they don't really know him', Farage claims – as it happened



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The Guardian (London)

November 8, 2024 Friday 9:24 AM GMT

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theguardian

Section: POLITICS; Version:17

Length: 5516 words

Byline: Andrew Sparrow

Highlight: This live blog is closed

Body

block-time published-time 5.45pm GMT

Afternoon summary [Jonathan Powell, the former chief of staff to Tony Blair, has been appointed as Keir Starmer's new national security adviser in a further sign that important figures from the New Labour era are returning to the government.](#) David Lammy, the foreign secretary, has said that Donald Trump "didn't seem to think it mattered", in response to a question about whether his past comments about Trump would harm UK-US relations. Lammy was speaking about what happened at a dinner he and Keir Starmer had with Trump in September. He also said the comments were not alluded to, "not even vaguely". (See [10.16am](#).) Nigel Farage, the Reform UK leader, has claimed that British voters do not like Donald Trump because "they don't really know him". (See [4.34pm](#).) He was speaking at his party's Welsh conference, where he also released polling showing Reform UK ahead of the Conservative party in Wales. (See [1.46pm](#).) [Asda has warned that measures in the government's budget will be a "big burden" for the supermarket chain, costing it £100m, and could prevent it from raising wages or hiring as many staff, as it struggles to turn around falling sales.](#)

block-time updated-time Updated at 5.47pm GMT

block-time published-time 5.40pm GMT

Farage says Reform UK has 96,000 members - putting it less than 40,000 behind Tory party

Farage said Reform UK needs candidates to stand in the next Senedd elections. And he urged people in the audience to sign up to be a candidate at the end of his speech. He went on:

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If we organise and mobilise, we will succeed. If we professionalise, we will break every political historical record you have ever seen in this country.

Because I know that the gap in the political market is enormous, and I sense it might just be bigger in Wales than it is in any other part of the United Kingdom.

Farage claimed Reform UK has 96,000 members.

(Last weekend the Conservative party revealed it has 131,680 members – the number eligible to vote in the leadership contest.)

And Farage ended his speech saying the sky was the limit in terms of his ambition for the party.

Nigel Farage speaking at the Reform UK Welsh conference. Photograph: Ben Birchall/PA

block-time published-time 5.33pm GMT

Farage attacked the government over illegal immigration. He claimed people were enraged by young men crossing the Channel in dinghies. They were not, “as the BBC might tell you, poor, desperate people”, he claimed. He alleged:

Increasingly they're aggressive young males coming into our country to get involved directly in criminality.

He said one arrival was [a person who has threatened to kill him.](#)

And he claimed it was “unbelievable” that this week the London assembly passed [a motion](#) saying asylum seekers should be able to get free bus travel. He said the Conservatives in the assembly abstained, which he said was evidence of “what a wet weekend of a political party” they were.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 5.41pm GMT

block-time published-time 5.21pm GMT

Farage says Tory party 'split down the middle', and shadow cabinet full of 'total non-entities'

Turning to the Tories, Farage said that Kemi Badenoch, the new Conservative leader, has chosen a shadow cabinet of “total non-entities”. He claimed not to have heard of any of them, except for perhaps Priti Patel.

And he claimed the Tories were “split down the middle”, divided between some people who agree with Reform UK, and others who are Blairites or Liberal Democrats.

block-time published-time 5.15pm GMT

Farage restates offer to serve as link between UK and Trump, saying he will know 'at least half' of incoming US cabinet

Nigel Farage, the Reform UK, started his speech by recalling being in the ballroom at Donald Trump's home in Mar-a-Lago watching the election results come in.

And he claimed there was a lesson for the Reform UK in what happened in the US.

What has happened in America in the last few days is what happens when you get a political movement with a strong political leader that actually talks to the electorate about the things that they care about – and not what the mainstream media discuss, not what politicians in Westminster, or dare I say Cardiff, discuss.

Farage said Trump's inauguration would be the day woke “died” in the US.

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He said Britain needed a good relationship with the Trump administration. He attacked Labour for their approach to Trump, singling out in particular Sadiq Khan, the mayor of London and David Lammy, the foreign secretary.

And he restated his offer to act as an intermediary between the government and the Trump administration.

I have a relationship with Trump. But equally I will know at least half of his incoming cabinet, and I have said if I can in any way help to mend fences between this Labour administration and the incoming Trump administration, that I will do so.

Farage said that was “not because I support a single thing this Labour government is doing”, but because he wanted to act in the national interest.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 5.16pm GMT

block-time published-time 5.04pm GMT

Nigel Farage is now speaking at the Reform UK Welsh conference.

There is a live feed here.

enltrReform UK Leader Nigel Farage MP is about to speak at Reform Welsh Conference 2024. Watch his speech live ?? <https://t.co/Y6QX0JjEjE> pic.twitter.com/U9BEdUDP7J

— Reform UK (@reformparty_uk) [November 8, 2024](#)

block-time published-time 4.39pm GMT

Farage says Labour not using him as link with Trump because they're putting 'dislike of me above national interest'

Ali **Fortescue** from Sky News also asked Nigel Farage, the Reform UK leader, about the Labour government's decision [to turn down his offer to act as an intermediary with Trump](#). Farage replied:

If they want to put their dislike of me above the national interest, I would have thought that's rather short-sighted. But, hey, who am I?

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 4.44pm GMT

block-time published-time 4.34pm GMT

British voters do not like Trump 'because they don't really know him', Farage claims

British voters do not like Donald Trump because ‘they don't really know him”, Nigel Farage, the Reform UK leader has claimed.

Asked about evidence showing that British voters don't like Trump, Farage blamed the media, saying that it was “not surprising he's not popular” because of the negative publicity had had received.

Farage was speaking to Ali **Fortescue** from Sky News, who interviewed him as he arrived at the Reform UK Welsh conference in Newport.

Farage is proud of his personal friendship with Trump and and he has been thrilled by the outcome of the US presidential election. In [an article for the Daily Telegraph](#) this week he claimed it showed that “politics, including our own, is moving rightwards”.

Asked by **Fortescue** if he saw himself as a British Trump, Farage joked that he could not be because Trump is teetotal.

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But when **Fortescue** reminded him about Trump's unpopularity in the UK, Farage attacked the media.

On Wednesday YouGov released polling that suggests 55% of Britons think Trump's victory will be bad for the UK. Only 18% think it will be good for the country.

When **Fortescue** said Trump was not particularly popular in the UK, Farage replied:

Not for you people, no, and that's not surprising ... All he's ever had is negative publicity. People don't really know him, do they?

Farage also said, regardless of what Britons thought of him, it was important for the government to have a good relationship with him. He went on:

He is the president for the next four years. They are our most important relationship in the world in terms of trade, intelligence, sharing, defence and, arguably, culture as well. So our relationship with him is fundamentally important.

block-time updated-time Updated at 4.40pm GMT

block-time published-time 4.01pm GMT

Jonathan Powell will serve as national security adviser in a political capacity, as a Labour special adviser, and not as a civil servant, the Guardian has been told. That is unusual for a job of this kind and partially justifies the Tory claim that he is a "Labour apparatchik". (See [2.53pm](#).) Powell crossed the line into party politics when he left the civil service to work for Tony Blair in opposition in 1995 and, as Downing Street chief of staff, he was a party political "spad" (special adviser), not a conventional civil servant.

But, unlike Alastair Campbell, the other very senior "spad" given executive authority in Blair's No 10, Powell never got particularly involved in party politics, particularly the murkier side. After leaving No 10, he had a brief career in banking, but mostly he has been involved in policy work and conflict resolution (inspired by the important role he played in the Northern Ireland peace process). In practice, he is much more of a civil servant than a party hack.

block-time published-time 2.53pm GMT

Appointment of 'Labour apparatchik' Jonathan Powell as national security adviser 'disappointing', say Tories

The Conservative party has criticised the appointment of Jonathan Powell as national security adviser. Shortly before the general election Rishi Sunak, the then PM, named Gwyn Jenkins, then the vice-chief of the armed forces, as the new national security adviser, but Keir Starmer [cancelled that appointment](#) when he took office.

Referring to Jenkins being sidelined, and to Powell's role in the transfer of sovereignty of the Chagos Islands to Mauritius, a Tory spokesperson said:

It's disappointing the government have appointed another Labour apparatchik to a senior role sidelining an experienced general.

Mr Powell's [previous comments](#) about the unimportance of British overseas territories are extremely concerning and many will be worried that there is more to come.

block-time published-time 2.14pm GMT

Tories condemn Treasury for 'misleading' claim on social media that it did not raise national insurance in budget

The Conservatives have condemned the Treasury for posting a misleading advert on social media about the budget.

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The advert, which has been tweeted from the Treasury's official account not from a Labour party account, refers to the budget and says "we are not increasing the basic, higher or additional rates of income tax, national insurance or VAT" – even though the budget included plans to raise £25bn by increasing employers' national insurance.

Last week we committed to protecting working people in the Budget. That is why we are not increasing the basic, higher or additional rates of Income Tax, National Insurance or VAT. Click below to find out what else we're doing to support working people. <https://t.co/DITxGaLf3F> [pic.twitter.com/xsxyGBml16](https://t.co/xsxyGBml16)

— HM Treasury (@hmtreasury) [November 7, 2024](#)

In its manifesto Labour said it would not raise national insurance and, because the manifesto said Labour would protect working people, the party now argues that this pledge only covered employees' national insurance contributions (NICs) – not the other component of national insurance, employers' NICs, paid by firms. Labour says it kept its promise because during the campaign it did not rule out raising employers' NICs.

Paul Johnson, director of the Institute for Fiscal Studies, put [a post on social media](#) this morning saying the new claim is "at best dubious".

And Mel Stride, the shadow chancellor, has written to James Bowler, permanent secretary at the Treasury, asking him to justify repeating this "misleading" claim and to commit to ensuring that in future Treasury communications are factual.

Spot on. I have written to the Permanent Secretary of the Treasury over the Government's consistent use of misleading claims relating to their National Insurance hike. Labour promised not to raise NICs and they did. They should be honest about that. <https://t.co/PNciR9DeyM> [pic.twitter.com/ESs2UtFM1X](https://t.co/ESs2UtFM1X)

— Mel Stride (@MelJStride) [November 8, 2024](#)

Spot on.

I have written to the Permanent Secretary of the Treasury over the Government's consistent use of misleading claims relating to their National Insurance hike.

Labour promised not to raise NICs and they did. They should be honest about that.

Updated at 2.16pm GMT

Published at 1.46pm GMT

Reform UK now ahead of Tories in Wales, polling suggests

Nigel Farage, the Reform UK leader, has said that his party is now best placed to take on the Labour party in Wales.

He made the claim on the basis of polling showing Reform UK ahead of the Conservatives in Wales. The polling was released to coincide with Reform UK's Welsh conference, which is taking place in Newport.

Reform UK does not currently have any seats in the Senedd, even though in the past Ukip (a predecessor party to Reform UK) had significant representation there and at the general election the Conservative vote in Wales (18%) was only narrowly ahead of Reform UK's (17%).

The new polling, by Survation, suggests Reform UK is now ahead of the Tories on three voting measures. But it also suggests that Plaid Cymru is ahead of both the Tories and Reform UK in voting intention for the next Senedd elections – even though the two rightwing parties are ahead in Westminster voting intention.

On voting intention for a general election, the results are:

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Labour: 33%

Reform UK: 21%

Conservatives: 18%

Plaid Cymru: 13%

Lib Dems: 9%

Greens: 5%

On constituency voting in the next Senedd elections, the results are:

Labour: 30%

Reform UK: 20%

Conservatives: 17%

Plaid Cymru: 21%

Lib Dems: 6%

Greens: 5%

And on party list voting in the next Senedd elections (voters get two votes), the results are:

Labour: 29%

Reform UK: 19%

Conservatives: 18%

Plaid Cymru: 20%

Lib Dems: 7%

Greens: 7%

The Welsh government has changed the electoral system for the next Senedd elections, in 2026, making them even more proportional than they are now. This will make it [*even harder than it now is*](#) for Labour to be the dominant party.

Commenting on the polling figures, Farage said:

The Senedd elections are now just 18 months away. This new poll shows Reform ahead of the Conservatives in Wales on 19%, and we are on 26% in the Valleys. Only Reform can be the challenger to Labour.

The people of Wales have been failed by Labour for nearly three decades now. Half of all voters think they have handled the NHS badly.

Our conference in Newport today marks the start of our efforts to present a fresh choice to an electorate who have been badly let down. Wales needs Reform.

block-time published-time 1.08pm GMT

Keir Starmer has hosted veterans and charities at Downing Street with defence secretary John Healey in the lead-up to Remembrance Day, PA Media reports. PA says:

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The informal reception was held after Starmer pledged [£3.5m in support for veterans facing homelessness](#).

Peter Kent, 99, the oldest veteran at the event, said he was pleased by the increase in funding and described Starmer as a “good guy”.

Kent is a D-Day veteran who served in the Royal Navy on board HMS Adventurer and HMS Hartland Point.

The funding will go towards a dedicated wraparound support service for veterans at risk of or already experiencing homelessness and ensures they have access to specialist support for employment and independent living.

Guests included representatives from the Chelsea Pensioners, retired British soldiers living at the Royal Hospital Chelsea in London, and Scotty's Little Soldiers, a charity for bereaved military children.

block-time published-time 12.52pm GMT

Lammy suggests Trump may be offered state visit to UK - but not next year

David Lammy has suggested that Donald Trump may be invited to the UK for a state visit – but not next year.

Asked about the prospect of a state visit, in his interview with BBC's Newscast, Lammy said that organising one for 2025 might be “a bit of a tall order” because of the time needed to prepare.

But he said the UK would want to be “generous with our American friends”.

A state visit is the most prestigious category of visit that a foreign head of state can make to the UK. There are normally only about two a year, and they involve almost all the royal and ceremonial trappings the UK is able to lay on.

Theresa May was criticised when she was prime minister for inviting Trump to the UK on a state visit only seven days after his inauguration. The offer was seen as premature and ingratiating, although it seems to have played a role in enabling May to become the first foreign leader to visit Trump in the White House.

At a joint press conference in Washington in January 2017 May said the state visit would come later that year. But Trump later told May he did not when to come [if there were going to protests](#), and the state visit did not take place [until 2019](#). There were other visits before then, including one featuring [a reception at Blenheim Palace](#) that was almost as grand as a state visit event.

Asked if Trump would be offered a state visit in 2025, Lammy said:

State visits take a while to organise. So in the next year, I've got to tell you, I think that would be a bit of a tall order. But [Trump] was genuine in his respect and his affection for the royal family.

Asked if a state visit might be offered later, Lammy said the government would “want to be generous with our American friends as they will be, I imagine, with us, particularly in a second term”.

block-time published-time 12.12pm GMT

Tony Blair leads tributes to former Labour spin chief David Hill

Tony Blair has paid tribute to David Hill, who ended a very long career in Labour politics, as an adviser and spin doctor, as Blair's director of communications in Downing Street from 2003 to 2007. Hill died on Monday and [his death was announced yesterday](#). In a statement Blair said:

I have known David Hill for well over 30 years. He was highly intelligent, insightful, had a wonderfully unruffled manner and was deeply respected by everyone who worked with him.

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He was a natural pick to succeed Alastair Campbell [as director of communications in No 10] and became my press spokesman in 2003 at a moment of real difficulty for the government.

His ability to work under pressure, to remain unflappable when most people would have been severely flapping, was what made him such a great person to be around. His diligence and capability were enormous. And the media liked him and trusted him.

But most of all the people who worked with him and under him, felt a huge loyalty and affection for him. My deepest condolences to Hilary [Hill's partner, Hilary Coffman], who was such a help to David through the good times and more recently bad, and to his wider family.

Other Labour figures, and journalists, have also been paying tribute on social media. Here are some of their comments.

From [Alastair Campbell](#)

So sorry to hear that David Hill has died. Few people gave as much as he did to the Labour Party over many decades. He was as solid and reliable as they come and his wisdom and expertise were of immense value to me, both when I was a journalist. and when we were close colleagues in the Blair era. When finally I left Downing Street he was the obvious successor and did a brilliant job calming things down after a period of such turmoil. He and Hilary Coffman were a great couple and a great team. Their contribution to what we achieved cannot be overstated. My and Fiona's thoughts and love are with her above all right now, alongside fond memories of a real Labour hero RIP

From [Kevin Maguire](#) , the Daily Mirror associate editor

David Hill was a Labour spin doctor with genuine integrity, trusted and a joy to speak to. RIP.

From [Michael Barber](#), former head of Blair's delivery unit

I totally agree about David Hill, a great colleague.

From [Ed Owen](#) , a former Labour special adviser

That's such sad news. He was a legend & an inspirational guide to me when I started out in Westminster as a naive and stumbling political adviser in the early 1990s. Wise, funny and a reassuring presence, he made a huge contribution to Labour's return to government in 1997

From [Patrick Hennessey](#) , a former political journalist and Labour adviser

Such sad news - really nice guy and an expert briefer!

From [George Pascoe-Watson](#), former political editor of the Sun

One of the best.

block-time published-time 11.51am GMT

Lammy says he was 'surprised' Democrats did not focus more on economy in US presidential campaign

In his Newcastle interview, David Lammy, the foreign secretary, said that he had expected Donald Trump to win the presidential election "for some time". He said that when he met people from the Republican campaign in the spring he was impressed by how organised they were and he said: "I felt in my bones that there could be a Trump presidency."

He also said he was surprised the Democrats did not focus more on the economy in their campaign. He said:

British voters do not like Trump 'because they don't really know him', Farage claims – as it happened

Because we had just come out of a campaign effectively, as the British Labour party having won an election, I was a little bit surprised that the Democrats had made a decision not to centre particularly the economy in their approach to the election.

We obviously had been really clear about growth for us. We knew that cost of living crisis, that's where the public's [attention was].

block-time updated-time Updated at 12.48pm GMT

block-time published-time 11.37am GMT

Starmer appoints Tony Blair's former chief of staff Jonathan Powell as national security adviser

It is quite a week for comebacks. Jonathan Powell 's return to No 10 is not up there with Donald Trump getting back to the White House, but it is big news for anyone interested Whitehall machinery. Powell started his career as a Foreign Office civil servant but he started working for Tony Blair when Blair was Labour leader in 1995 and, unlike Sue Gray, who made a similar leap into party politics, Powell survived as chief of staff for Blair's entire premiership.

Now he's back – as the new national security adviser.

In a statement announcing his appointment, Keir Starmer said:

Jonathan has devoted his career to protecting the interests of the country, having served for 17 years as a diplomat in the Foreign Office and 10 years as chief of staff in No 10, and I am delighted to appoint him to this important role.

Together with his experience helping to negotiate the Belfast (Good Friday) agreement and work on some of the world's most complex conflicts, he is uniquely qualified to advise the government on tackling the challenges ahead and engage with counterparts across the globe to protect and advance UK interests.

I would also like to thank Sir Tim Barrow [the outgoing national security adviser] for his service and the support and advice he has given me. He has helped steer the national security community through some of the most challenging times in recent history, demonstrating throughout his outstanding commitment to public service and to the safety and security of this country. I've no doubt he will continue to play a positive role on these issues in the future.

Powell has already been working for the Starmer government. He was appointed as [a special envoy dealing with Mauritius and the Chagos Islands](#) , and within weeks of his appointment the government was able to finalise a deal that transferred sovereignty of the Chagos Islands to Mauritius while ensuring that the US-UK military base at Diego Garcia remains under UK control for at least another 99 years.

block-time published-time 11.24am GMT

In an interview with the Today programme this morning Sir Alex Younger, a former head of MI6, said that in any talks about an end to the Ukraine war, Britain should be particularly opposed to moves to leave Ukraine in the future neutralised.

Discussing the impact of Donald Trump's election on Ukraine's future, Younger said:

[Trump] will attempt to engineer a rapid solution, but he's been pulled in two directions.

There will be a land swap. That is a terrible thing for the people who end up living under Russian rule. But fundamentally, it's not the main argument. The main argument is whether Ukraine is a western or eastern country in future.

Trump's advisers, on the one hand, are saying that Ukraine should be forced into neutrality, so basically back into the bosom of [Russian President Vladimir] Putin.

British voters do not like Trump 'because they don't really know him', Farage claims – as it happened

Others are talking about the need to do a land swap, but then reinforce its military and economic capabilities, and we need to make sure we are compounding that second argument.

block-time published-time 11.13am GMT

Trump will not want settlement to Ukraine war that leaves Putin 'emboldened', Lammy claims

David Lammy told Newscast that Donald Trump would not want an outcome to the Ukraine war that would leave Vladimir Putin, the Russian president, “emboldened”.

For the British government, and many other European governments, one of the biggest worries about a Trump presidency is that Trump would halt US support for Ukraine, forcing Kyiv to negotiate a peace settlement that would in practice amount to a Russian victory.

While not writing off this possibility, Lammy suggested that having Trump as US president might not be as bad for Ukraine as some people have claimed.

He said that Volodymyr Zelenskyy, the Ukrainian president, has tried to build a relationship with Trump and he said that Trump’s approach to foreign policy was “peace through strength”.

Donald Trump signs up to a way of doing foreign policy, which is peace through strength. That is the starting point. Donald Trump will not want a situation where the US troops that he’s got in Europe rise substantially because of further war or threats in Europe. He will not want Putin to leave emboldened from this war.

Lammy says the British governments view is that Russia should withdraw from the parts of Ukraine that it is occupying and its assessment is that Putin will not be willing to accept a peace deal on these terms. But Lammy also suggested that Trump might have some influence over Russia. He explained:

I do recognise that Donald Trump and the Republicans around him have a relationship that goes back with Putin longer than my own in fact. And they will seek to use leverage that they have. So this is a discussion that we will be engaged in.

Asked if he thought Trump would be able to end the war in 24 hours, as he has claimed, Lammy just replied: “We’ll know the answer to that on January the 22nd [the day after Trump’s first full day in office].”

Lammy also insisted that the British government remains “solidly behind Ukraine”.

block-time published-time 10.41am GMT

Lammy suggests Trump might drop plan for tariffs on UK imports because it would be counter-productive

This is what David Lammy, the foreign secretary, told the BBC’s Newscast podcast about how the government would respond to Donald Trump’s plan to impose tariffs of at least 10% on imports from Britain and other countries. Economists say [this could halve UK growth](#).

Asked if the government would seek an exemption, Lammy said he hoped Trump would realise his plan would be counter-productive. He said:

We will seek to ensure and to get across to the United States – and I believe that they would understand this – that hurting your closest allies cannot be in your medium or long term interests.

Earlier this week Rachel Reeves, the chancellor, suggested that the tariff plans proposed by Trump during the election campaign [could be watered down](#) following British lobbying.

block-time published-time 10.16am GMT

British voters do not like Trump 'because they don't really know him', Farage claims – as it happened

Trump 'didn't seem to think it mattered', says Lammy, when asked if past critical comments came up when they had dinner

In his interview with the BBC's Newscast podcast, David Lammy, the foreign secretary, was asked about the dinner he and Keir Starmer had with Donald Trump in New York at the end of September. An account of the dinner published [in the Sunday Times](#) described it as cordial, and said that Trump offered Lammy a second helping, suggesting that this was evidence Trump did not hold a grudge about the multiple hostile comments from Lammy in the past.

Asked if Trump brought up those comments at the dinner, Lammy said:

Not even vaguely. I've got to say, I found him to be a very gracious host.

Asked if Trump really gave him a second helping, Lammy said:

He did offer me a second portion of chicken. He was very generous, very gracious, very keen to make sure that we felt relaxed and comfortable in his surroundings. He was funny. He was warm about the UK. Very warm about the royal family. I've got to tell you, [he] loves Scotland ...

I suppose what I'm saying is I've met the man and in the end diplomacy – actually, just common manners – is in particular building relationships [with] people. And I think he's someone that we can build a relationship with in our national interest because we must.

At that point Chris Mason, the BBC's political editor, said that Lammy's past comments including calling Trump a "woman hating, neo-Nazi, sympathising sociopath" who was "a profound threat to the international order that has been the foundation of Western progress for so long". Mason suggests comments like that had to be a problem, because Trump might weaponise them in the future. But Lammy replied:

He didn't seem to think it mattered a few weeks ago.

Asked if he still agreed with these views, Lammy did not disown them. Instead he said:

Look, I think that what you say as a backbencher and what you do wearing the the real duty of public office are two different things. And I am foreign secretary. There are things I know now that I didn't know back then, and that's the truth of it.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 10.17am GMT

block-time published-time 9.24am GMT

David Lammy plays down fears over Trump presidency and says UK must seize 'opportunities' on offer

Good morning. As the Labour government tries to work out what having Donald Trump back in the White House will mean for Britain, and what it must do in response, David Lammy is absolutely at the centre of that debate. Partly that is because he is foreign secretary, and partly it's because (in a crowded field) he is probably the British MP who has been most outspoken and critical about Trump in the past.

Lammy has now given a long interview to the BBC's Newscast podcast to discuss these issues. And, as Jamie Grierson reports, he dismissed suggestions that his past diatribes about Trump would damage the relationship now, describing his comments as "old news".

Related: [Lammy dismisses past criticism calling Trump a 'sociopath' as 'old news'](#)

But Lammy also pushed back against suggestions that Trump's election would be wholly negative and he said it could also present "opportunities" for Britain.

British voters do not like Trump 'because they don't really know him', Farage claims – as it happened

Asked if he accepted that Trump's election had made life "harder" for the UK government, Lammy said they would certainly be "different". But, when it was put to him that he was just being diplomatic, Lammy did not accept that. He said he wanted to make two points.

The first thing is to say that, on the whole, foreign policy is less partisan than domestic policy. And that is the case in the American system as much as it is in our system.

The second thing to say is, yes, there will be differences and there will be areas where we disagree actually, I suspect.

But there are also opportunities and we shouldn't underestimate the opportunities that there will be as well. And we must seize those.

Lammy said he thought Trump was right to argue that Europe needed to spend more on defence. Asked about claims that the British economy would be harmed by the tariffs that Trump plans to impose, Lammy suggested that would be counter-productive for the US, and he suggested that the UK might be able to get exemptions. He also said that in foreign policy there would be areas where the UK and a Trump administration had common interests.

In a world where there's war in Europe, where there's a tremendous loss of life in the Middle East, where the US and the UK genuinely have a special relationship, where we got someone who's about to become again the US president who has experience of doing the job last time around, we will forge common interests. We will agree and align on much and, where we disagree, we'll have those conversations as well, most often in private.

I will post more from the interview soon.

Otherwise, it looks like a relatively quiet day. Parliament is in recess. Ed Davey, the Lib Dem leader, is due to be talking about Ukraine during a visit later. And the Reform UK Welsh conference is taking place in Newport, where Nigel Farage is due to speak at 5pm.

If you want to contact me, please post a message below the line or message me on social media. I can't read all the messages BTL, but if you put "Andrew" in a message aimed at me, I am more likely to see it because I search for posts containing that word.

If you want to flag something up urgently, it is best to use social media. I'm still using X and I'll see something addressed to @AndrewSparrow very quickly. I'm also trying Bluesky (@andrewsparrowgdn) and Threads (@andrewsparrowtheguardian).

I find it very helpful when readers point out mistakes, even minor typos. No error is too small to correct. And I find your questions very interesting too. I can't promise to reply to them all, but I will try to reply to as many as I can, either BTL or sometimes in the blog.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 10.18am GMT

Load-Date: November 8, 2024