

Green parliamentarians write to Defence Secretary over defence spending principles

- Green MPs and peers call for defence spending decisions to be based on “core principles”
- Ellie Chowns MP calls foreign aid cut announcement “cruel and unnecessary”
- Green letter highlights growing security threats relating to climate breakdown, food security and cyber security

The six Green Party parliamentarians have written to the Defence Secretary John Healey setting out a series of “core principles” they say any decisions about defence spending should be based on [1].

The letter comes as Keir Starmer announced that a rise in the defence budget will be funded by cuts to foreign aid.

In the letter, the MPs and peers call on Healey to ensure that all decisions on defence spending “tackle the biggest threats to long term human security, including climate chaos, food insecurity, and cyber-attacks on democracy”.

They also urge an increase in spending on diplomacy, peace-building and overseas aid in order to improve our security.

Responding to Starmer’s announcement today, Ellie Chowns MP said:

“It’s horrifying to see Keir Starmer follow Trump’s lead, gutting our international aid budget to increase defence spending. This is naive populism playing with life-and-death decisions.

“How many people will fall ill or die because they cannot access health services; how many more will go hungry? And how many children will be denied an education as a result of this decision? Cutting aid risks making the world more volatile and more dangerous, not safer. Real security means tackling hunger, poverty, and climate chaos.

“Taking money from the poorest in the name of defence is both cruel and unnecessary – we could and should instead be taxing the wealthiest who can afford to contribute more.

“The idea that the only way to strengthen our defences is by taking from those with the least is immoral. It’s a choice and it’s the wrong one.”

Notes:

1. The full text of the letter reads:

Dear John,

We are writing to set out the importance of any decisions about future defence spending being underpinned by core principles. In an ever more insecure world, made more unstable by the comments and actions of the US President, and with the ongoing need to stand up to Putin, it is vital that genuine long-term stability, safety and security is a priority. Alongside addressing the threats posed by the international political situation, the government must also address the significant and growing security threats relating to climate breakdown, food security and cyber security.

As such, we call on you to uphold the following principles:

- Tackle the biggest threats to long term human security, including climate chaos, food insecurity, and cyber-attacks on democracy*
- Increase spending on diplomacy, peace-building and overseas aid, as key to security and defence policy*
- Don't cut spending from other departmental budgets to increase defence spending*
- Strengthen our ties with Europe*
- Uphold international law, the rule of law and the right to self-determination*
- Recognise that a global prohibition on nuclear weapons will make everyone safer*
- Address the underlying causes of conflict and insecurity such as poverty, human rights abuses and resource scarcity*
- Restore UK sovereignty by decoupling from reliance on the US*
- Use economic levers such as sanctions on companies still operating in the UK and complicit in Russian fossil fuel exports*

We look forward to your response and to working constructively with the government towards enduring safety and security.

Yours sincerely, all Green parliamentarians

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Standing in solidarity with Ukraine

On the weekend of the third anniversary of Russia's war on Ukraine, Green Party co-leaders Carla Denyer and Adrian Ramsay said:

"Across the world, people will be standing in solidarity with Ukraine, facing the third anniversary of Russia's invasion.

"Yes, Russia started the war and Yes, Ukraine is a democracy with an elected President. That we have to restate these simple facts is shocking but necessary because US President Donald Trump has chosen to buy into and amplify the lies and disinformation of the Russian state.

“Russian President Vladimir Putin is a dangerous tyrant. It is deeply worrying that President Trump is now joining him in spreading lies, attacking democracy, sowing division and chaos, and undermining the rule of law.

“We want this war to end, and we want peace talks.

“Our unwavering position is that the voice of Ukraine must be front and centre of the peace talks that must take place. It is for the people of Ukraine to decide their future. Not Putin, not Trump.

“The UK government could and should be doing much more to tighten sanctions on Russia. Sales of Russian fossil fuels are paying for the missiles and drones used to attack Ukrainian civilians.

“The UK government must close all the loopholes enabling the Kremlin to refill its war chest.

“Ukrainians who came to the UK to seek safety and still cannot return to their war-torn homes must be given ongoing protection and proper support.

“The UK must keep supporting Ukraine to defend itself, and Prime Minister Keir Starmer must make it crystal clear when he meets President Trump that we will do so.

“The end goal is a just and lasting peace based on the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine. That can still be achieved.”

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Discarding old friends for new autocrats

Green Party response to JD Vance speech (1)

Green MP, and party parliamentary spokesperson on foreign affairs, Ellie Chowns said: “US Vice President JD Vance’s use of the Munich Security Conference to lambast allies rather than focus on the real chaos makers in the world is sadly predictable but no less bizarre and dangerous for that.

“President Trump’s administration seems determined to usher in a new world where old friends are discarded and new friends made of dangerous autocrats. The UK should have no part of that and should work with others to protect international frameworks and institutions that support co-operation and the rule of law.”

(1)

<https://www.politico.eu/article/us-vice-president-jd-vance-attack-europe-migration-free-speech/>

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Labour are “plumbing new depths” with filmed immigration raids

Responding to the news that Labour are now publishing videos of police immigration raids, Green Party Co-Leader, Carla Denyer MP, said:

“This Labour government are plumbing new depths with their plan to broadcast footage of people being detained and deported. Those involved should be searching their consciences to ask if such breath-taking cruelty is really worth it all for the sake of aping the rhetoric of Reform. The bitter irony is that following Reform to the right on migration won’t win Labour any support – it will only lend legitimacy to Reform’s extreme views. It’s time this government showed a bit of backbone and told the truth – that migration is good for this country.”

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Greens call for Drax subsidies to be shifted to home insulation scheme

Green MP and party co-leader Adrian Ramsay has urged the government to divert planned new subsidies for the privately owned wood-burning Drax power station to a national home insulation scheme.

Adrian Ramsay said:

“Drax is a green energy scam, burning trees – some imported from ancient forests from as far away as Canada – subsidised by the taxpayer.

“The billions of pounds worth of subsidies run out in 2027, but the government is expected to try to renew them next week, turning taxpayer money into profits for a private company, instead of using the money to fuel a green energy revolution.

“Drax has benefitted from over £6 billion in subsidies since 2012 and neither taxpayers nor the environment can afford a penny more.

“The money should be used to help fund a national scheme of home insulation that would cut people’s energy bills and help to reduce energy use.

“Green MPs and Peers will be pressing the government to end this subsidy scandal and invest people’s money where it will make a real difference to them.”

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