

Tory infighting is harming the Brexit process – Keir Starmer

“David Davis’ damp squib of a speech has offered nothing new on how the Government intends to break the impasse in Brexit negotiations and deliver a new progressive partnership with the EU.

“On the day the European Parliament voted to delay future trade talks with Britain, it is now clear that Tory infighting is harming the Brexit process. Paralysis in the negotiations risks havoc for the British economy and uncertainty for EU and UK citizens.

“Theresa May must use her speech tomorrow to finally face down the fantasy Brexiteers in her party and put the national interest first. If she is unwilling to do so, Labour stands ready to take charge of the negotiations and deliver a jobs-first Brexit deal that works for the many not the few.”

Nia Griffith response to Michael Fallon comments

Nia Griffith MP, Labour’s Shadow Secretary of State for Defence, responding to Sir Michael Fallon’s call to raise NATO 2% defence spending target, said:

“The Defence Secretary has finally recognised that the Government needs to invest more in our nation’s security, but it is pretty galling for him to talk about going beyond the 2 per cent commitment when this Government is barely scraping over the line at present.

“Indeed they can only claim to be doing so by counting items, such as pensions, that do not contribute to our defence capabilities and which Labour did not include when in Government.

“Labour is fully committed to spending at least 2 per cent of GDP on defence as we consistently did when in government. If Sir Michael Fallon is serious about putting more money on the table, he should act immediately to give our Armed Forces the real terms pay rise that they have been so cruelly robbed of since 2010.”

Hammond has added £5,380 per household to the national debt since becoming Chancellor

Labour research reveals that during Philip Hammond's first year as Chancellor, he has added £145.8 billion to the national debt – the equivalent of £5,380 per household.

The eye watering increase of £145.8 billion over the first 12 months of Philip Hammond's tenure at the Treasury was the largest cash terms increase in the national debt in the first 12 months of any Chancellor for which records are available.

John McDonnell MP, Labour's Shadow Chancellor, said: "The lack of any plan from this weak Tory government is exposed when it comes to the national debt. After just one year into the job and Philip Hammond has managed to borrow a record amount of money compared to any of his predecessors' first years.

"These figures highlight the continued failure of the Tories on the economy, following seven years of falling wages and austerity cuts.

"Only a Labour government would be prepared to strategically invest in our economy, while setting out a serious plan for the public finances, underpinned by our Fiscal Credibility Rule; in order to build the high wage, high skill jobs of the future for the many not the few."

Boris Johnson is trying to treat Yemen like one of his guilty secrets – Emily Thornberry

Emily Thornberry, Labour's Shadow Foreign Secretary, responding to the speeches by Boris Johnson and Michael Fallon at the Conservative party conference, said:

"Today, we heard yet another 4,000-word personal manifesto from Boris Johnson, name-checking no fewer than 21 countries around the world. But two countries were conspicuous by their absence – both in his speech and just as disgracefully in Michael Fallon's – Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

"Yemen is facing the world's

greatest humanitarian crisis, being made worse every day by a conflict to which Britain is a party in all but name, one in which thousands of civilians – many of them children – have already been killed by British-made bombs dropped from British-made planes.

“But about this enormous tragedy neither the Foreign Secretary or the Defence Secretary were prepared to say a single word today. Boris is trying to treat Yemen like one of his guilty secrets, hoping that people will forget about it as long as it’s never discussed in public, but that will not wash.

“It won’t wash for him to boast of Britain’s permanent seat on the UN Security Council when the members of that Council have now been waiting over a year for Britain to meet its responsibilities and bring forward a draft ceasefire resolution for Yemen.

“It won’t wash for him to boast that this country’s greatest export is British values, when the only British exports experienced by the children of Yemen are the almost £4 billion of arms we’ve sold to Saudi Arabia since the conflict began.

“And it won’t wash for him to describe his disgust at the treatment of the Rohingya by the military in Myanmar, while continuing to supply the weapons that the Saudi military is using to inflict death and displacement on the people of Yemen.

“Indeed, together with his false praise for Theresa May and his false protestations of loyalty over Brexit, it made his whole speech an exercise in hypocrisy and dishonesty. But it will not wash.”

The Conservatives have abandoned any attempt to fix the crisis they created in our prisons and justice system –

Richard Burgon MP

Richard Burgon MP,
Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Justice, responding to the speech by David Lidington at the Conservative Party conference, said:

"It is clear that the Conservatives have abandoned any attempt to fix the crisis they created in our prisons and justice system. David Lidington's speech was mostly a rehashing of previous announcements, presumably he hopes no one will notice that the Conservatives have run out of ideas.

"Talk of reform and rehabilitation is empty rhetoric unless staff numbers are substantially increased. One third of prisons have seen further cuts in their officer numbers this year alone, while officer leaving rates are up three fold under this Government and plans for a further real terms pay cut for prison officers will deepen the crisis further.

"It is shocking that David Lidington didn't even bother to mention legal aid, let alone outline solutions to help the hundreds of thousands of people who have been priced out of the justice system by the Conservatives' cuts."