

*Originally sent to:* Ian McCartney  
16 Old Queen Street  
London  
SW1H 9HP

Jim Adams  
Ground Floor Flat  
163 Ditchling Rise  
Brighton  
BN1 4QR

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email: jim-adams@supanet.com

Dear David

[I thanked Ian McCartney for his letter of 5<sup>th</sup> January this year in which he responded to my letter in which I itemised some of the reasons for my leaving the Labour Party].

I have now decided to rejoin the Labour Party and have reapplied for membership. In this letter to both you and (with names reversed) Ian McCartney MP, I would like to list some of the reasons why my reading of the situation has changed, both in favour of Labour, and in other aspects, against it.

My ostensible reason for leaving the Labour Party was the attack and bombing of Falluja. The confluence of reasons may be mainly classified under an international heading. I still believe the attack was wrong in principle and practice, and that Tony Blair lied to me when he said he had heard of "no such plans".

In principle I am satisfied with the situation in which elections in Iraq are now over, although I believe elections should have taken place much earlier. British influence on American policy was never sufficient to redirect American intent. The Sunni minority that used to wield overwhelming political influence no longer does so and is eclipsed, to the probable future detriment of the stability of a secular Iraq, as the British should realise by analogy with the historic exclusion for so long of the Catholic population in Northern Ireland.

I often have to write, that since history is irreversible, I have no option if I wish to be a part of a political process as a supporter, than to adopt the position of supporting the optimum outcome in the present moment, even when I want to caution people in politics to reflect on their actions and intentions.

There are now a number of positive developments in U.S. government policy and personnel, which is of significance since British policies are so closely aligned to American ones.

The first positive development, according to a former cardiologist I know, which I frame in the blunt style of a neo-con, is that Dick Cheney should die in about 14 months.

The second positive development is the appointment of Robert Zoellick as Undersecretary of State at the State Department (and not John Bolton). Although I do not understand the detailed actual political process that led to this appointment, I

approve of it, as is evidenced in a more adroit political stance and instanced in the warm reception of President Bush in some European venues.

This leads me further to say that I no longer believe that my other stated reason for leaving the Labour Party, the possibility of a war against *Iran*, will now take place, both because John Bolton has not been appointed to the previously mentioned post and because George Bush has intimated that no such invasion is likely to take place. Rationality, it seems, has prevailed.

Incidentally, the appointment of John Bolton as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations surprised me, since I do not equate Bolton with diplomacy. On the other hand, I am not so sure. Ribbentrop was a diplomat.

Having dealt in this way with international matters, I would now like to turn to a certain aspect of domestic policy.

The resignation of David Blunkett as Home Secretary and his replacement by the hapless Charles Clarke (I am not sure of the etymology of the word 'hapless', but current events definitely show him lacking in 'hap') indicated to me at the time that there was hope for an end to the process of erosion of human rights in this country. In the process that unfolded, I was shown that I could not have been more wrong. Whether his appointment was based on an agreement with Tony Blair on the direction in which policy would evolve, so that he was bound against his better judgement, or he has no such judgement, or for other reasons or by including the drawing up of legislation by fascist Islamophobes in the Home Office, the inception of his term was met with an intensification rather than a reduction in the gravely deleterious process of *diktat* irrespective of proper juridical process that characterised the period of tenure of his predecessor.

I am in the position, having characterised myself in British political terms for some time now as being on the centre-left of the political spectrum, and by this fact, being on the centre-right of the Labour Party, that is belonging to a characterisation that in Europolitical terms might be said to be Social Democrat rather than Socialist, of seeing myself, on re-entering the Labour Party, as belonging to what might be called the People's Revolutionary Faction.

The dangerous process of centralisation, as evidenced in the process of decision-making on the Downing Street Maglev sofa, where respondents are transported to the superspeed heights of informal chat-decision with the Prime Minister, the corresponding practice of de-democratisation of processes of collective argument to form consensus, the secretive manipulation of debate, the reduction of discussion of fact and expert analysis of consequences to the media-manipulation of opinion, indeed the reduction of nearly all forums of debate to a media-circus, these to me are matters of concern.

I would now like to address an issue to you, both David and Ian, some aspects of which are local to Brighton. David, you have characterised the Greens as being 'libertarian conservatives'. If that characterisation is intended to exclude as irrelevant to any debate issues which you and I know by the word 'Green' – that is issues which in order to avoid the use of that word we commonly refer to as concerning

'sustainability' and the 'environment' – then I have strong grounds to believe this is not the case. I attended a very large audience lecture on climate change at the University of Sussex, which I later in the meeting discovered was attended by many members of the Green Party and fronted by Keith Taylor. For a public meeting it was a very deep discussion, and I conclude that the Green's environmental credentials are to be taken seriously. Whatever you intend to do on rubbishing Green councillors' decisions – or lack of them – I maintain there are important policy issues to be tackled and the electorate will not allow you to reduce everything about the Greens to personal issues.

Perhaps you would like a snapshot of ways people are thinking. This evening I phone a friend and tell him I have rejoined the Labour Party. He tells me half the country is watching the debate in Parliament on television. I tell him I don't watch television, and the only paper I have read today is Le Monde. He tells me the detainees are to be released on bail from Belmarsh, though technically they are not under arrest. He says the situation is Kafkaesque, but I tell him 'curiouser and curiouser' doesn't come from 'The Trial' but from 'Alice in Wonderland'. He also tells me that the Labour Party election slogan 'Forward not Backwards' is identical to the slogan used in the GDR by Erich Honecker. East Germans used to draw graffiti of the GDR car, the Trabant, under the slogan. The Trabant had the technical defect that the reverse gear did not work. I rack my brains over who was the leader of the PDS (Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus) after Egon Krenz – maybe they could give the Labour Party some advice? I come up with a slogan that is less susceptible to ridicule:

**SIDEWAYS NOT UPSIDE DOWN!**

Yours fraternally

Jim Adams ([jim-adams@supanet.com](mailto:jim-adams@supanet.com))