The Strange Death of Feminist Internationalism

Paul Kirby

The history of Labour's international development policy has long been intertwined with its views and aims on gender equality. Now, despite the Labour government drastically cutting the international aid budget, the case for a feminist internationalism is as strong as ever.

There's gender trouble at the border. Elected on a promise to halve violence against women and girls in the UK within a decade and close the gender pay gap, the Labour government is ambitious on equality at home. But abroad, it is committed to a controlled demolition of the aid budget, with potentially disastrous consequences for women and girls elsewhere. In summoning Britain to a war footing, Labour narrows the horizon of what 'security' can be and deserts its own traditions of internationalism and solidarity. The new case for rearmament and national toughness is not independent of gender politics but pressed in a moment when feminism is under attack as never before, blamed for national decline and renounced as woke excess. Martial masculinity is back, hoist up by some surprising allies.

Gender suffuses UK aid and development, with more UK-funded projects in the last years including gender than not.[1] The previous government organised its efforts into an International Women and Girls Strategy sub-divided by education, empowerment, and ending violence. Each category contained its own bundle of policies, from sexual and reproductive health and rights to regulating online misogyny to inclusive trade agreements.[2] A prime example is the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda encompassing the project of gender equality in all aspects of war- and peace-making, authorised by no fewer than ten resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and given effect in hundreds of

national action plans, dozens of regional and alliance strategies, and thousands of grassroots feminist networks and global NGOs. This is an agenda the UK government claims to have "championed [and] led" for twenty-five years.[3] Yet at its landmark birthday—and thirty years after the Beijing Platform for Action codified a many-fronted feminist mission—WPS faces an existential crisis, damaged first by Trump's annihilation of USAID and assault on the UN system, and then by copy-cat cuts across the Global North. Most of those have been implemented by right-wing governments or spoilers in coalition: the UK stands out not just for the depth and longevity of aid reductions, but for the reversal of Labour's legacy. In the wake of Tory cuts, a cross-party consensus on WPS – and the rest – is imperilled.

The threat is sudden and deadly. It runs counter to Labour's manifesto pledge to 'rebuild Britain's reputation on international development' and the commitment of many in the party to feminist internationalism.[4] There are several suspects, but their motives are muddled, even publicly disavowed. Most obviously there is the would-be King across the water, with his viciously anti-gender retinue, but we may also suspect the tribunes of Blue Labourism, or a failure of imagination after the shock of Russia's full invasion of Ukraine. Short-term measures keep fragments of the UK's gender equality efforts abroad going, but conditions are deteriorating rapidly. The coming death will be strange not just because of the identity of the killers but also because of the conditions in which this life briefly flourished. How have we arrived at this precipice? What does Starmerism augur for solidarity beyond our borders? And what new coalitions might revive a vision of global gender justice?

A Gun on the Mantlepiece

In February, Keir Starmer declared that the 'generational challenge' posed by Putin (and, unspoken, Trump) necessitated a revival of national martial power. To achieve it some £6 billion will be diverted from development to defence each year in perpetuity.[5] Having been one of the few countries to ever meet the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income on aid, the UK will fall below the OECD average. The government, meanwhile, uses nearly £3 billion a year of 'overseas' aid on asylum seeker accommodation in the UK, an accounting sleight of hand that may soon consume a quarter of the reduced budget, and which already outstrips spend on worldwide humanitarian assistance by over £1 billion.[6] Any return to prior aid levels is subject to Treasury tests so stringent that had they been in place since Tony Blair's first term, they would only have been met in one year.[7] To avoid any confusion, incoming development minister Baroness Chapman has announced the closure of the UK as "a global charity" and offered no special relief for women and girls.[8]

Such huge reductions in aid are inevitably reductions in gender equality efforts. Some Whitehall teams have been granted a year's reprieve, but there is no obvious route to the new aid level apart from sustained loss from 2027 onwards. Even 'protected' areas such as global health are seeing cuts as high as 46 per cent this year.[9] The reversal is dramatic. In international league tables, the UK has this century been one of the largest funders of gender equality.[10] While projects with some conceivable gender dimension accounted for two-thirds of aid spending under Boris Johnson, the trend is likely to hit a low in both absolute and relative terms this Parliament.[11] In truth, the proportion spent on gender equality as the *primary* objective never broke 7 per cent.[12] The totals for WPS are a pittance of that. Perhaps the best known of all UK WPS projects, the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative launched by William Hague and Angelina Jolie in 2012, currently has an annual budget of only £4 million.[13] Larger WPS spend is harder to estimate, as it is spread across multiple funds and merged with other foreign policy goals, but on a generous reading was about £22 million of the Conflict Stability and Security Fund in the latest figures, or just under 2 per cent.[14]

Over the decades, references to WPS and gender equality had crept into high-level foreign policy documents, reflecting the success, however circumscribed, of arguments for a broader, even emancipatory, meaning of 'security'.[15] In the latest conjoined Strategic Defence Review and National Security Strategies such language vanished, excised in the name of an undercooked but 'unapologetic' realism brimming with 'toughness' and 'lethality'.[16] In one foreword Starmer pledged himself "unashamedly for freedom, democracy and internationalism", though there is no trace of Labour's past experiments in feminism.[17] For all the rhetoric of sovereign independence, the strategic turn is better read as deeply in thrall to Atlanticism, which in its volatile Trumpist form requires the disavowal of anything reminiscent of diversity or solidarity.

Britain is not alone in withdrawing from global gender coalitions: Sweden and Germany have abandoned 'feminist foreign policy', the Netherlands is cutting aid to 0.44 per cent, and the OECD expects a drop in aid from its member states of as much as 17 per cent this year.[18] But there are two crucial differences: first, most of these cuts are being implemented by right-wing parties historically hostile to internationalism; and second, with the exception of the United States, none have sliced so deeply or comprehensively as Britain. If the plan was to govern as 'plain old Labour', true to the incremental ethos of Harold Wilson, it is now on only the most parochial terrain.[19]

The consequences will be dramatic. Just under half the women's rights organisations operating in conflict zones expected to close within six months of the DOGE gutting of USAID, with surveys answered largely before Starmer's announcement.[20] The feminist networks the government depends on for crisis

monitoring and programme delivery will be reduced to shoestrings. Labour cuts exacerbate Tory ones, which during Covid disproportionately hurt gender equality.[21] As much was clear from outgoing development minister Anneliese Dodds' resignation, in which she warned that "given the depth of the cut, the effect will be far greater than presented".[22] Just as damaging will be the reorientation of foreign office and defence staff time. All this as gendered insecurity reaches perilous heights, with nearly 700 million women living in proximity to conflict, the most ever recorded.[23] Feminist ideas had seeped in as a low hum in most of the grand rooms of state, only to be crowded out again by the comfortable machismo of geopolitics and lethality.

Prelude to a Murder Mystery

Labour's attitude towards feminism has always been dissonant. On the one hand, the party of full suffrage and equal pay, supplying the first female cabinet minister and securing much of the crucial anti-discrimination legislation of the twentieth century. On the other, a movement sustained in part by a certain idea of working-class masculinity, electorally disadvantaged by a blindness to women's social and economic conditions, and lagging behind the Conservatives in measures of political leadership.[24] Gender has been central to both the party modernisers and their left critics: for the former, in attracting the imagined 'ordinary women' concerned with family accounts while holding more radical feminisms at bay; for the latter, in reorienting left critique towards intersectionality and anti-essentialism.[25]

In domestic politics, Labour thus navigated a 'woman problem' in the late twentieth century, just as it was also laying the strongest claim as the party of feminist internationalism.[26] It was a Labour government that in 1964 created the Ministry of Overseas Development, with Barbara Castle as its first Minister, attending Cabinet. Castle's attitude towards feminism was itself complex, but her socialism rhymed with gender equality.[27] The ambition, if not always reality, for the new ministry was independence from instrumentalist foreign policy and trade considerations.[28] Wilson pressed for a developmentalist successor to empire, and though the analytics of gender was not yet a feature of public policy, the union of aid and security could already be made out: "[t]he dragon's teeth of poverty and hunger inevitably produce violence, for hungry men are dangerous men".[29]

In its first decades, 'development' was an obvious proxy for struggles over the end of empire and a possible British internationalism: downgraded and marginalised under Tory governments, resuscitated by Labour ones.[30] Judith Hart, thrice development minister under Callaghan and Wilson, argued in her *Aid and Liberation* that development need not be an imperialist or militaristic prop, was

instead a path to an egalitarian post-colonial order, and could support the emancipation of women in ways that would in turn fuel economic growth.[31] Castle and Hart were both to clash with the Foreign Office over its lukewarm support for International Women's Year in 1975.[32] As partial and marginal as these feminist forays were relative to what followed, Labour's development ministries nevertheless cultivated gender expertise through an emphasis on broader 'social' development.[33]

New Labour's creation of a Department for International Development (DfID) granted more independence and resources than ever before, at the same time that gender equality was becoming a prerequisite of left and centre-left internationalism.[34] Women were increasingly recognised as a force for peace, in Liberia, Guatemala, and Northern Ireland.[35] Early articulations of ethical foreign policy held that a Labour government could "not accept that political values can be left behind when we check in our passports to travel on diplomatic business".[36] The then-Foreign and Commonwealth Office's annual reports began to include chapters on women's rights.[37]

More significantly, DFID became the headquarters for sustained campaigns against poverty, gender-based violence, and global health inequalities. The first two Labour Secretaries of State for Development were feminists. Clare Short embedded gender equality into the earliest policy documents, including by recognising its nexus with conflict.[38] Though serving a much shorter term, Valerie Amos had built her reputation in part on an influential critique of white, Eurocentric, western feminism.[39] Where women were often treated as instrumental for poverty reduction in DFID strategies, there was a greater sensitivity to their rights to sexual and reproductive autonomy and freedom from violence.[40] These advances were drowned out by Britain's enthusiastic and calamitous participation in the Afghan and Iraq wars, even as women's rights were appropriated to justify them.

It was in this same period that feminism came to bear explicitly on development and security on the global scene. The UN women's conferences had culminated with Beijing and its Platform for Action in 1995, captured in (and by) Hillary Clinton's declaration that women's right were human rights, and vice versa. Feminist activists moved into the traditional geopolitical spaces of peacekeeping and the Security Council, culminating in Resolution 1325 in October 2000 and what would come to be the WPS agenda. It was an unlikely alliance of military and diplomatic actors with a grassroots peace movement, not without its frictions, a "revolutionary outcome that has yet to trigger revolutionary change".[41] The UK backed the initiative by Namibia, Bangladesh, and Jamaica and would go on to be the 'penholder' for WPS at the Security Council, as well as launching five national action plans of its own.

It was Labour governments that carved out bureaucratic independence for development, and Conservative ones that subordinated it to foreign policy, a choreography reaching its extreme when Boris Johnson folded DfID into the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office in 2020. The merger undermined whatever record of non-partisan aid DFID had built up, as was its purpose. Yet despite the subordination of all aid to political and security interests, Tory strategic blueprints held to the overlap of 'interests' and 'values' and repledged the government to international gender equality.[42] From 2014-24, Conservative governments provided $223 million to UN Women; for several years it was the most generous funder in absolute terms.[43] Though an aspiration since 1970, the 0.7 per cent aid target was put into law by the Conservatives, and they were also the only party of government ever to meet it. It was David Cameron's administration that amended the International Development Act to target gender inequality and while Rishi Sunak reduced aid as Chancellor, he also partly restored it within two years.

Under the first Trump administration it was possible for Labour campaigners, some now members of Parliament, to condemn the siphoning of aid budgets for military expenditure.[44] David Miliband advised as recently as 2021 that the UK should take up a feminist aid policy.[45] Starmer's Labour had initially promised a return to 0.7 per cent on aid and a "renewal" of leadership on empowering women and girls and conflict prevention.[46] Still, the new foreign policy doctrine of 'progressive realism' made no space for feminism, and within the year, the promise to go beyond 'mere' aid was to sour into barely any aid at all.[47] In government Labour have never gone so far as declare an international strategy 'feminist', despite (or plausibly because) it came closest under Jeremy Corbyn's tenure, when Kate Osamor sketched a 'feminist development policy' with openly political intentions.[48]

The current government's eulogy for 'charity' arguably has more in common with Margaret Thatcher's dismissal of 'hand-outs' as she made her own (relatively much lighter) cuts to the overseas development budget in the early 1980s.[49] Today's dismissiveness is the inverse of Castle's hopeful words of sixty years ago, the insistence that "overseas development was no longer to be regarded as a charitable donation from rich to poor but as an essential motor of world development", and the sort of sentiment Hart would have rejected as of "the suffocating and cosy political neutralism of well-meaning compassion".[50] The recent history thus reverses ideological commonplaces. Judged by funding and rhetoric it is Conservative administrations that have been the champions of feminist internationalism, and Labour that most threatens it.

The Haunting

Feminist internationalism has always been constrained. It was never hegemonic in Britain, nor spoken openly (as it was in Sweden or Canada).[51] It proceeded more furtively, finding in-roads via UN initiatives and the depoliticised discourse of 'women and girls', appealing where necessary to patriarchal protection fantasies. It could reasonably be accused of setting aside structural questions around capitalism and the state system.[52] Aid reviews found even flagship initiatives like PSVI lacking in thought and care.[53] Despite its self-image as a WPS champion, the British government often favoured bold announcements over sustained strategies and carved off the rights of women in conflict zones from that of refugees denied public funds and adequate protections.

The feminism of development and security is itself fraught. The postwar turn to development has continuities as well as ruptures with colonialism.[54] For many states in the Global North, saving victims of wartime sexual violence has been more comfortable than making room for the political agency of women. The success of feminist arguments in security spaces can be read as co-option as easily as liberation, even as the permission slip for conquest and militarism. When translated into humanitarian and military plans, WPS can seem as much a case of 'making war safe for women' as preventing war itself.[55] Far from being a novelty, the 'national security' case for gender equality has been made again and again. Gender has, if anything, been invoked too narrowly and instrumentally, which may at least have proven some protection in the new environment. 'Gender mainstreaming' has often been useful as an excuse to neglect dedicated programmes; and yet there is scant evidence that a sophisticated gender analysis has been integrated into foreign policy decision-making.[56]

Still, feminists established a foothold in foreign policy conversations, stable enough over decades despite the forces of populism and reaction exerted on them. They argued that gender mattered in itself (as a set of rights and a moral imperative), as a dimension of every conceivable 'threat' (arms control, climate change, migration, terrorism, cyber), and as a deep cause of what would otherwise only too late be recognised as a danger (that is, gender as a driver of conflict). Political scientists today speak of a 'suffragist peace' where gender equality is more determinative than democracy, economy, or religion in predicting which states go to war with each other.[57] Self-styled realists and pragmatists should therefore recognise that there can be no war scenario that does not entail gender. When coupled with its inclusion in so many institutions of liberal international order, gender equality would seem suited to Starmer's preference for 'mission' delivery. And despite the superficial popularity of aid cuts, two-thirds of the public (and upwards of a third of Reform voters) support the use of aid to reduce gender violence and protect women's rights abroad.[58] That there has been such a jettisoning instead speaks not just to a diplomatic-electoral

calculus, but to a profoundly unrealistic, anachronistic, and naïve view of the world beyond Britain.

A new coalition is needed to resuscitate feminist internationalism. For social democrats, WPS is an obvious cause, mixing gradualism at the United Nations with the bold promise of equality and freedom from gendered oppression and violence. As a really-existing policy agenda, WPS has been incremental, patient, even technocratic. Its institutionalism—for so many a frustrating limit—may also be a strength. In an era of resurgent nationalisms, WPS offers practical models for transnational solidarity: financial lifelines for women's organisations, expertise in documentation and accountability for war crimes, atrocity prevention, reparations measures, cadres of gender advisors, and more besides. It can reveal the connections between global misogynistic movements and violence at home, as the government had started to recognise before the cuts.

Far from a charitable extra, gender equality is at the heart of our collective defence against authoritarianism, our would-be anti-imperialism, and any residual sense of Britain as a progressive force in the world. Against a tokenistic internationalism, this will require a shift not just back to development aid business as usual, but to structures that can face the peril of the moment. In the immediate term, a coalition could mobilise to make meaningful whatever remains, for starters guaranteeing equality as a 'primary' objective for as many aid projects as possible, summoning maximum diplomatic resistance to roll-back, and agitating for full implementation of surviving policy promises (especially in more recalcitrant outposts like Defence). Over this Parliament the argument must be made for the restoration of the aid budget and its separation from the narrow national interest, in an independent ministry or with equivalent autonomy. The resources of aid should be paired with a feminist foreign policy that reckons seriously with the legacies of British statecraft.

Within Labour, WPS should be taken up in the development of bolder alternatives to a Farage-ist island kingdom. As the party bleeds electoral support to the liberals and the left, feminist internationalism can in its real-world benefits highlight the poverty of the new militarism, and chart options beyond it. MPs should organise in support of the Women, Peace and Security Bill currently moving through the Commons, and move to strengthen its provisions. Parliamentary Committees must press ministers on the consequences of the cuts, and the contradiction between decimating multilateral institutions and reviving liberal world order. In policy fora and think tanks, social democrats can make arguments for reform in specific policy areas: for multi-year core funding to women's organisations; for proper assessments of the risk that arms transfers will facilitate gender-based violence, in accordance with Arms Trade Treaty obligations; for the revocation of reservations to the Istanbul Convention which deny migrant women protections afforded to British citizens; and for the

expenditure of diplomatic capital to protect the agenda in multilateral institutions.[59]

There is time yet to call off the funeral. Twenty-five years after the first WPS resolution passed in the Security Council, the fundamental case for gender equality remains. If anything, it has become more potent for Britain as seemingly disparate insecurities become more entangled, and as Europe feels the effects of war more vividly. Given the advance of reactionary forces, the temptation will be to double down on instrumentalism, to plead the gender dimension of homeland defence alone. But that would be a trap: the self-interested case has offered scant protection thus far, and a broader political movement will be more resilient. The horizon is a Labour government for gender equality not as an imperious export or easy patriotic virtue but as one participant in a transnational liberation movement.

Paul Kirby is a Reader in International Politics at Queen Mary, University of London.

Notes

1. OECD, 'Official Overseas Development Assistance for Gender Equality Over Time: United Kingdom', www.oecd.org.
2. Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, *International Women and Girls Strategy, 2023-2030*, March 2023.
3. United Kingdom Government, *UK Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan 2023-2027*, 2023, p6.
4. The Labour Party, *Change: The Labour Party Manifesto 2024*, p124.
5. Comparison of 2023 overseas development aid with Office for Budget Responsibility projections for 2027. See Ian Mitchell and Sam Hughes, 'Breaking Down Prime Minister Starmer's Aid Cut', Center for Global Development, 26 February 2025.
6. 'UK continues to spend 20% of the UK aid budget on asylum seeker costs in the UK despite planned cuts', www.bond.org.uk, 3 April 2025, The level is currently 21-22% but will rise as the total aid budget falls. See Q29 of 'Oral Evidence: The Development Work of the FCDO, HC 531', International Development Committee, 13 May 2025.
7. The tests instituted in 2021 were (i) a sustainable current budget surplus and (ii) falling public sector debt as a percentage of GDP.
8. Q1, 'Oral Evidence: The Development Work of the FCDO'.
9. 'FCDO Annual Report 2025 paints a bleak picture for the communities who need the most help', www.bond.org.uk , 24July 2025
10. More often than not in the top ten countries for total spend on ending violence against women and girls and support to women's rights organisations. See OECD, 'Official Overseas Development Assistance for Gender Equality Over Time: Comparison', www.oecd.org.
11. OECD, 'Official Overseas Development Assistance for Gender Equality: UK'.
12. OECD, ibid.
13. £12.5 million for the now lapsed three-year strategy, now extended for 2025-2026. See

Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative Annual Review, September 2024, www.iati.fcdo.gov.uk/.

14. For more on accounting see my evidence to the International Development Committee inquiry on WPS, 26 May 2025, www.committees.parliament.uk.
15. E.g. references to gender equality as a human rights priority and WPS in United Kingdom Government, *Global Britain in a Competitive Age: The Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy,* March 2021, p48, p63.
16. Neither document contains any references to WPS, gender equality or sexual violence. The defence paper makes one reference to women in the workforce – Ministry of Defence, *Strategic Defence Review: Making Britain Safer: Secure at Home, Strong Abroad*, 2025 p67.
17. United Kingdom Government, *National Security Strategy 2025: Security for the British People in a Dangerous World*, June 2025, p4. This is the only appearance of 'internationalism' in 55 pages.
18. OECD, 'Cuts in official development assistance', www.oecd.org, 26 June 2025.
19. Nick Garland, 'Plain Old Labour', *Renewal*, Vol. 32 No. 4, 2024.
20. UN Women, *At a Breaking Point: The Impact of Foreign Aid Cuts on Women's Organizations in Humanitarian Crises Worldwide*, April 2025.
21. 'Equality Impact Assessment – International Development Committee', annex to Letter from the Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP to Sarah Champion MP, 19 July 2023
22. Anneliese Dodds to Kier Starmer, 28 February 2025, www.x.com
23. Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security and PRIO Centre on Gender, Peace and Security, *Women, Peace and Security Index 2025/26*, pp3-4.
24. E.g. Patrick Diamond, *The British Labour Party in Opposition in Power, 1979-2019: Forward March Halted?* Routledge, 2021, pp70-77; Amy Black and Stephen Brooke, 'The Labour Party, Women, and the Problem of Gender, 1951-1966', *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 4, 1997.
25. Angela McRobbie, 'Feminism and the Third Way', *Feminist Review*, Vol. 64, 2000.
26. See the discussion in Colm Murphy, *Futures of Socialism: 'Modernisation', the Labour Party, and the British Left, 1973-1997*, Cambridge University Press, 2023, chapter 3.
27. Anne Perkins, *Red Queen: The Authorized Biography of Barbara Castle*, Macmillan, 2003, pp334-335.
28. Perkins, *Red Queen*, pp190-200; Black and Brooke, 'The Labour Party, Women, and the Problem of Gender', pp438-439.
29. Harold Wilson, *The War on World Poverty*, Victor Gollanz, 1953, p23. See also Barrie Ireton, *Britain's International Development Policies: A History of DFID and Overseas Aid*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2013, pp20-21.. On the arrival of gender in development, see Ruth Pearson, 'The Rise and Rise of Gender and Development', in Uma Kothari (ed) *A Radical History of Development Studies*, Zed, 2019.
30. For the broader colonial and postcolonial parameters see Charlotte Lydia Riley, '"The Winds of Change Are Blowing Economically": The Labour Party and British Overseas Development, 1940s-1960s', in Andrew W.M. Smith and Chris Jeppesen (eds.) *Britain, France and the Decolonization of Africa: Future Imperfect?* UCL Press, 2017.
31. Judith Hart, *Aid and Liberation: A Socialist Study of Aid Politics*, Victor Gollanz, 1973. Hart's focus is predominantly on empire, capitalism and class without sustained attention to other axes of domination, except where she links reproductive rights to the liberation of women pp84-95.
32. Helen McCarthy, 'The Diplomatic History of Global Women's Rights: The British Foreign Office and International Women's Year, 1975', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 50 No. 4, 2015, pp841-843.
33. Jo Beall, 'The Gender and Poverty Nexus in the DFID White Paper: Opportunity or Constraint?', *Journal of International Development*, Vol. 10, 1998, p237.

34. As a percentage of Gross National Income, development aid was higher in the 1970s, but Blair inaugurated an upward trajectory in absolute spend and in progress towards the 0.7 per cent target. See Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office, *Statistics on International Development: Final UK Aid Spend 2022*, figure 1.
35. E.g. Elisabeth Rehn and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, *Women, War and Peace: The Independent Experts' Assessment of the Impact of Armed Conflict on Women and Women's Role in Peace-Building*, United Nations Development Fund for Women, 2002, pp76-79.
36. Robin Cook, 'Mission Statement for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office', www.theguardian.com, 11 May 1997.
37. E.g. Foreign and Commonwealth Office, *Human Rights Annual Report* 2004, pp230-235; Foreign and Commonwealth Office, *Human Rights Annual Report 2005*, pp229-231.
38. Beall, 'The Gender and Poverty Nexus in the DFID White Paper'.
39. Valerie Amos and Pratibha Parmar, 'Challenging Imperial Feminism', *Feminist Review*, Vol. 17 No. 1, 1984.
40. Juanita Elias and Lucy Ferguson, 'The Gender Dimensions of New Labour's International Development Policy', in Claire Annesley, Francesca Gains and Kirstein Rummery (eds.) *Women and New Labour: Engendering Politics and Policy?* Bristol University Press, 2007.
41. Nina J. Lahoud, 'What Fuelled the Far-Reaching Impact of the Windhoek Declaration and Namibia Plan of Action as Milestone for Gender Mainstreaming in UN Peace Support Operations and Where is Implementation 20 Years Later?', *Journal of International Peacekeeping* Vol. 24, 2020, p44. The broader history of WPS is told in Paul Kirby and Laura J. Shepherd, *Governing the Feminist Peace: The Vitality and Failure of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda*, Columbia University Press, 2024.
42. HM Government, *Global Britain in a Competitive Age: The Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy*, March 2021, p13, p48.
43. Author's calculation from data available at the UN Women Transparency Portal, www.open.unwomen.org.
44. Laura Kyrke-Smith, 'Making the Case for Aid: Trump and International Development', in Ian Kearns and Kate Murray (eds.) *The Age of Trump: Foreign Policy Challenges for the Left*, Fabian Society, 2017, p50.
45. David Miliband, 'The Reality of Being a Force for Good', in Royal United Services Institute, *Britain as a Force for Good: Six Ways to Turn a Slogan Into Reality,* Royal United Services Institute, 2021, p6.
46. The Labour Party, *Change*, p125.
47. David Lammy, 'The Case for Progressive Realism: Why Britain Must Chart a New Global Course', *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2024.
48. Charlotte Lydia Riley, 'Labour's International Development Policy: Internationalism, Globalisation, and Gender', *Renewal*, Vol. 27 No. 1, 2019. But see also Jonathan Dean and Bice Maiguashca, 'Gender Politics After Corbynism', *The Political Quarterly*, Vol. 92 No. 2, 2021.
49. Ireton, *Britain's International Development Policies*, pp43-44.
50. Barbara Castle, *The Castle Diaries, 1964-1970*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1984, pxiii; Hart, *Aid and Liberation*, p236.
51. Sweden officially adopted a 'feminist foreign policy' from 2014-2022; Canada still practices 'feminist international assistance' (i.e. development).
52. In this sense resembling the Third Way's containments of global feminism – McRobbie, 'Feminism and the Third Way', pp109-111.
53. Independent Commission for Aid Impact, *The UK's Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative: Joint Review*, January 2020.
54. Riley, '"The Winds of Change Are Blowing Economically"'.

55. The phrase is Cora Weiss'. See Laura J. Shepherd, 'Making War Safe for Women? National Action Plans and the Militarisation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda', *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 37 No. 3, 2016.
56. Pearson, 'The Rise and Rise of Gender and Development', pp172-175.
57. Valerie M. Hudson et al, 'The Heart of the Matter: The Security of Women and the Security of States', *International Security*, Vol. 33, No. 3, 2009.
58. YouGov / Care International Survey Results, 15-16 May 2025, www.careinternationaluk.com
59. On some of these policy suggestions see Paul Kirby, Hannah Wright and Aisling Swaine, *The Future of the UK's Women, Peace and Security Policy*, LSE Centre for Women, Peace and Security Policy Brief 07/2022.