# Lord Hermer faces Labour backlash over immigration remarks and Nazi-era law references



Overshadowing recent political discourse, Attorney General Lord Hermer has faced intense scrutiny from Labour leaders over his remarks regarding immigration and international law. Accusations have been levelled against him for seemingly aligning with the anti-immigration narrative championed by Nigel Farage's Reform UK party, igniting debates that resonate deeply across the political landscape.

In a controversial speech, Lord Hermer invoked the disturbing parallels between modern discussions around international law and the early political climate of Nazi Germany. He referenced the legal philosophy of Carl Schmitt, a notable figure in Nazi ideology, warning against the dismissal of international treaties that govern the UK's interactions with the world. This reference elicited fierce backlash, with Labour MP Graham Stringer labelling it a "clumsy" invocation that discredits legitimate concerns about immigration. Stringer asserted that such rhetoric alienates Labour voters and aids the propagation of far-right narratives, insisting that "it is not far-Right and Nazi to raise genuine concerns about the scale of immigration and the cost of housing migrants."

The context of Hermer's contentious remarks arises amidst rising political tensions, particularly surrounding the Labour Party’s approach to immigration and national security. Lord Glasman, a Labour peer and proponent of the Blue Labour movement, added that these statements render Hermer "unfit for government office." He argued that a retreat from addressing the public's worries about immigration could embolden extremist political factions. This sentiment is echoed by many who feel that a significant number of voters regard Labour's stance on immigration as increasingly disconnected from their everyday experiences.

Despite the outcry, Lord Hermer defended his position, maintaining that adherence to international law is paramount for national security and the UK's standing in global politics. He expressed concerns over the potential ramifications of abandoning commitments to international treaties, suggesting that such a move would embolden adversaries like Russian President Vladimir Putin. This perspective aligns with his broader assertion that the UK must uphold a "rules-based order" to ensure stability in a rapidly changing geopolitical landscape.

The Attorney General's commitment to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) has also led to friction within the current administration. Labour's plans to manage illegal migration are reportedly at odds with his unwavering support for the ECHR, particularly regarding the protection of modern slavery victims amid new legislative proposals aimed at border control. Some governmental insiders have begun to question how His stance can coexist with measures that may infringe upon the protections granted under the ECHR, indicating a significant divide that could complicate Labour's approach to immigration reform.

Furthermore, critics within the Labour Party have underscored that Lord Hermer’s approach, while legally sound, may inadvertently sideline pressing domestic issues. His previous work on the controversial deal concerning the Chagos Islands has drawn critiques that his legalistic mindset overlooks political realities. This sentiment reflects a broader concern that reliance on legal frameworks may prove inadequate in addressing the urgent anxieties of constituents regarding immigration and national identity.

As discussions unfold, the leadership within Labour, including Prime Minister Keir Starmer, faces a pivotal moment to clarify their immigration policies while balancing the defence of human rights. While Hermer's firm stance on international law may resonate with parts of the party base and is emblematic of Labour's aspirations to strengthen the UK’s legal standing, it remains to be seen how these conflicting narratives will influence voter perceptions and the broader political landscape. Amidst these tensions, one thing is clear: the stakes in the discourse surrounding immigration and international law are higher than ever, with implications that could reshape party dynamics and influence future elections.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14768761/Lord-Hermer-Reform-ignoring-voters-immigration.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[4]](https://www.ft.com/content/1032d709-9f10-42cc-8c33-75358d7423de)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14768761/Lord-Hermer-Reform-ignoring-voters-immigration.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.ft.com/content/929a6597-28ab-4b44-bee3-b906c34e9e57), [[5]](https://www.gbnews.com/news/migrant-crisis-attorney-general-echr)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.ft.com/content/eadeb257-de36-4748-a6ea-1bd76806b8a0), [[6]](https://www.ft.com/content/3731eb2c-a3de-45bb-a9b3-ed936c4f6067)
* Paragraph 4 – [[5]](https://www.gbnews.com/news/migrant-crisis-attorney-general-echr), [[6]](https://www.ft.com/content/3731eb2c-a3de-45bb-a9b3-ed936c4f6067)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14768761/Lord-Hermer-Reform-ignoring-voters-immigration.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.ft.com/content/929a6597-28ab-4b44-bee3-b906c34e9e57> - Attorney-General Richard Hermer has strongly criticised Conservative leader Kemi Badenoch's suggestion that the UK consider leaving the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). In a lecture at the Royal United Services Institute, Hermer warned that abandoning international treaties would undermine the West and embolden adversaries like Russian President Vladimir Putin. He emphasised the necessity of adhering to international law and advocated for reforming international agreements rather than withdrawing from them. Hermer rejected Badenoch’s call to review all UK international agreements as dangerous and naive, arguing it conflates law with politics. While some critics accuse Hermer of prioritising international law over national interest—citing the UK's plan to hand over the Chagos Islands to Mauritius—he insists Britain's stance reflects 'progressive realism.' Supported by Prime Minister Keir Starmer, who has affirmed the UK’s continued commitment to the ECHR, Hermer maintains that international law is essential for maintaining state sovereignty. Despite Conservative criticism of Article 8 for complicating deportations, Hermer supports the ECHR and sees potential in reform, not withdrawal.
3. <https://www.ft.com/content/eadeb257-de36-4748-a6ea-1bd76806b8a0> - Britain will not thrive in a might-is-right world and must uphold the rule of law despite political evolution. The current attack on Lord Hermer, the attorney-general, highlights his firm commitment to the rule of law, which clashes with the populist right's desire to lift judicial constraints on the government. Hermer's staunch defence of international courts, human rights laws, and the ECHR is criticised by populists who see the UK’s role in international law as outdated given the power shifts. Critics argue that the UK's strength in global politics is diminished without adherence to established legal frameworks, which were originally shaped by the UK. Consequently, efforts to dismantle international law could lead to a more chaotic world order, leaving the UK at a disadvantage. Britain's self-interest lies in maintaining the rules-based order for economic and political stability, and Hermer's work, although contentious, is indispensable to this goal. Despite the political challenges, abandoning this commitment would leave the UK weaker and less influential on the global stage.
4. <https://www.ft.com/content/1032d709-9f10-42cc-8c33-75358d7423de> - Lord Maurice Glasman, a Labour peer, has demanded the resignation of the UK's Attorney-General Lord Richard Hermer, amid growing internal party conflicts. Glasman criticises Hermer for his progressive stance, claiming he relies excessively on legal solutions rather than political ones. This controversy arises primarily due to Hermer's involvement in negotiating a deal to return sovereignty of the Chagos Islands to Mauritius while leasing Diego Garcia for military purposes. Hermer defended the agreement, stating it balances various interests and respects international law. Despite the criticism, Prime Minister Keir Starmer stands by Hermer, citing national security priorities. The political tension occurs against a backdrop of rising support for Nigel Farage's Reform UK, influencing Labour's recent focus on immigration and security policies. Hermer's appointment was unconventional as he entered the role directly from legal practice, without prior parliamentary experience, making his position contentious.
5. <https://www.gbnews.com/news/migrant-crisis-attorney-general-echr> - Attorney General Lord Hermer has been accused of undermining Prime Minister Keir Starmer's plan to address the Channel crossing crisis due to his unequivocal support for the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Hermer's pledge that Britain would 'never withdraw from the European Convention rights' has sparked tension with provisions in the new bill that would exclude migrants with criminal records from modern slavery protections. Senior government sources have privately questioned how Hermer's stance can be reconciled with the bill's powers to disqualify potential victims of trafficking from support on 'public order grounds'. The conflict has led to concerns about potential challenges under human rights conventions, despite the government's determination to maintain tough border measures.
6. <https://www.ft.com/content/3731eb2c-a3de-45bb-a9b3-ed936c4f6067> - Lord Richard Hermer KC, the new attorney-general for England and Wales, has committed to restoring the UK’s reputation as a leader in upholding the rule of law. In his first interview since assuming office in July, Hermer criticised the previous Conservative government for actions that compromised Britain's legal standing, including attempts to breach international law over Brexit and the Rwanda asylum scheme. He emphasised the importance of trustworthy international agreements for encouraging investment. Hermer's focus also includes navigating several international and domestic challenges, such as the Israel-Hamas conflict and a significant backlog of criminal cases. His appointment, coming directly from the Bar, underscores Labour's intent to fortify the UK's legal and economic credibility. Despite the unexpected nature of his role, Hermer vows to ensure the government complies with all international legal obligations.
7. <https://dailysceptic.org/2025/01/19/why-is-lord-hermer-trying-to-politicise-the-rule-of-law/> - Raymond Wacks critiques Lord Hermer's attempt to politicise the rule of law by incorporating human rights into its definition. Wacks argues that merging human rights with the rule of law dilutes both concepts, weakening their effectiveness as checks on arbitrary power. He contends that human rights should be protected independently and that a substantive theory of the rule of law could be counterproductive, potentially leading courts to avoid comprehensive reviews during states of emergency. Wacks emphasises the importance of maintaining the rule of law as a constitutional instrument to contain arbitrary power and protect fundamental rights.