

Trump Denied Parliamentary Address During State Visit, Says Lord Mandelson

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In a calculated move, Donald Trump's anticipated state visit to the UK in September 2025 is unlikely to include the honour of addressing both Houses of Parliament, according to Lord Mandelson. The timing of the visit, when Westminster is expected to be in recess, conveniently sidesteps potential protests while denying the former US president a privilege previously extended to leaders like Emmanuel Macron.

The invitation for President Donald Trump's second state visit, a rare distinction, was extended by Prime Minister Keir Starmer on behalf of King Charles during a February

meeting at the White House. Trump's first state visit in 2019 stirred significant controversy, and this time, left-leaning MPs have already mobilised to block him from addressing Parliament. Their campaign reflects ongoing tensions, with some Labour backbenchers vocalising their opposition through a petition.

In an exclusive interview with The Sunday Times, Lord Mandelson offered a surprisingly glowing assessment of Trump, describing him as a “phenomenon” who “dominates” Washington. “He’s not just a unique politician; he’s set to be one of the most consequential presidents in American history,” Mandelson remarked. He praised Trump’s decisiveness, noting, “He’s not a victim of analysis paralysis. There’s often a kernel of truth in what he says.” Mandelson also highlighted Trump’s admiration for Britain, insisting the visit should be marked by “respect, not sycophancy.”

In the parliamentary address, Mandelson was pragmatic: “I had assumed that at the time of the visit, Parliament wouldn’t be sitting.” The Commons is scheduled to reconvene briefly in early September before adjourning again for party conferences from the 16th, aligning with Trump’s expected itinerary, which includes a detour to Scotland to visit his golf courses. Speculation is rife that he may meet Starmer during this leg of the trip.

Mandelson’s comments reveal a nuanced view of Trump, whom he described as “more complex than people appreciate.” He recounted a light-hearted moment when Trump called him “handsome” during Starmer’s White House visit, a remark that reportedly endeared him to Washington’s MAGA circles. “They see me as a slightly exotic target of fascination,” Mandelson quipped.

Reflecting on the broader political landscape, Mandelson drew parallels between the UK and the US, suggesting both nations’ recent elections were driven by voter frustration. “People feel overlooked, taken for granted,” he said. However, he critiqued the Labour government’s struggles, noting that Britain has been “travelling through a long, dark tunnel for ten years” with little sign of progress. This subtle jab at Starmer’s leadership underscores a growing discontent with Labour’s inability to capitalise on its mandate.

Mandelson also addressed Nigel Farage’s rising influence, dismissing the idea of him becoming prime minister. In a conversation with US Vice President JD Vance, Mandelson argued that while populists like Farage can exploit public discontent, voters ultimately seek stability over protest. “Nigel may be peaking too soon,” he remarked confidently.

As Trump's visit approaches, the decision to withhold a parliamentary address signals a cautious approach by the Labour government, balancing diplomatic courtesy with domestic political pressures. Whether this move will temper or inflame tensions remains to be seen.

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