

This is the time for some seriously grown up politics

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I don't, by any means, always agree with Andrew Rawnsley in [The Observer](#), but his conclusion this morning is this:

I am being generous when I say that it is disingenuous of Sir Keir and his loyalists to suggest that they were faced with an either/or choice between defence spending in the name of national security and non-defence spending in troubled and distressed places abroad. The UK is an affluent country that likes to think it can punch above its weight. Even when money is tight, this nation is wealthy enough to wield both hard power and soft power.

The face of Britain that the Starmer government is now presenting to the world is one that aspires to be more muscular while also looking meaner. Muscular is necessary in the scary new world order. Meaner is a myopic mistake that will render Britain less safe.

He is right, and this is a restatement of [what I have already said](#) this morning, but let me add a few more thoughts.

Sure, times are tough, but apparently not tough enough to tax the wealthy.

Sure, we face a political crisis, but we won't help carry the world through it when we are able to do so.

Sure, the young might be alienated because of the way in which they are being treated and are moving to the far right, which is the domestic version of the threat we are facing, but Starmer will keep pretending that there is nothing he can do about that.

And sure, times are hard, but made-up fiscal rules still matter more than anything else.

Let me be clear that they do not.

This is the time for some seriously grown up politics. Can Labour still do that?