

ENGLAND SAYS ELON MUSK IS A GLOBAL DOUCHE BAG

(Bloomberg) -- Senior politicians on the UK right have privately contacted Donald Trump's allies, urging the US President-elect's team not to endorse British far-right activist Tommy Robinson, after billionaire Tesla boss Elon Musk called for him to be released from prison.

Several prominent Brexit-supporting politicians with links to Trump spent Thursday warning their Republican counterparts against following Musk's endorsement of Robinson, saying it was a step too far, according to people familiar with the views of both the Conservative and Reform UK parties, who requested anonymity discussing behind-the-scenes communications. They declined to publicly name the British politicians involved.

Musk — who is set to play a key role in Trump's incoming administration — began 2025 with a volley of posts on his social media platform X stating that Robinson, whose real name is Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, should be freed from jail, where he is serving a sentence after pleading guilty to contempt of court last year.

The purpose of the conversations was to provide additional information to senior Republicans about why Robinson, an anti-immigration activist who has a string of criminal convictions, was not supported by more mainstream British right-wingers including the Tories and Reform UK leader Nigel Farage, the people said.

The Conservatives and Reform declined to comment.

Farage, a personal friend of Trump whose own political career has been built on an anti-immigration stance, has sought to portray himself as the acceptable face of the British right, repeatedly distancing himself from Robinson. In 2018, he quit his former party UKIP saying it had an "obsession" with supporting Robinson, who he condemned as "entirely unsuitable" for party politics.

Robinson is currently in prison after admitting breaching a court order by repeating false claims about a Syrian refugee. He has previously been convicted of a range of other offenses from mortgage fraud to assault and traveling to the US on another person's passport.

Farage, who Musk has also repeatedly endorsed, would not benefit from being linked to Robinson, the British politicians told their US counterparts, according to the people familiar. The Reform leader in July finally secured a seat in the UK House of Commons at the eighth attempt, and has promised to mount a credible challenge at the next vote, due by mid-2029, in order to break up the historical stranglehold that Labour and the Conservatives hold as the UK's parties of power.

The outreach by British politicians to their US counterparts was triggered by the latest foray by Musk into British politics. Since Prime Minister Keir Starmer won the UK general election last July, the close Trump adviser has regularly criticized the new Labour government, called for a new election and urged Britons to back Reform.

This week, Musk sent a string of posts about a child sex abuse scandal in British towns in which many of those convicted were of Pakistani origins, including stating that a Labour minister should be jailed over the government's handling of the issue.

However, the talks between British right-wingers and their Republican contacts shows Musk's posting is not just becoming a headache for Starmer.

Many on the British right were sympathetic with much of what Musk had to say about the child abuse scandal and his wider criticisms of the Labour government, but endorsing Robinson was beyond the pale, one of the people involved in the outreach effort said.