

## **Vernon Coaker**

Minister of State for Defence of the United Kingdom

Vernon Rodney Coaker, Baron Coaker, is a British politician and life peer currently serving as Minister of State in the Ministry of Defence since 2024. A veteran member of the Labour Party, he represented Gedling as Member of Parliament from 1997 to 2019, becoming the first Labour MP to win the seat. Educated at Drayton Manor Grammar School and the University of Warwick, where he studied Economics and Politics, Lord Coaker began his professional career as a teacher and school leader before entering full-time politics. He served as a district councillor in Nottinghamshire for over a decade and held numerous ministerial and shadow cabinet positions throughout his parliamentary career, including Minister of State for Policing, Crime and Security (2008–2009), Minister of State for Schools and Learning (2009–2010), and Shadow Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and Defence. After losing his parliamentary seat in 2019, he was elevated to the House of Lords in 2021 as Baron Coaker of Gedling.

A strong advocate for national defence, NATO, and the modernization of the UK's nuclear deterrent, he is also active on issues related to home affairs and modern slavery policy, for which he was awarded an Honorary Professorship by the University of Nottingham in 2020. He is a member of Labour Friends of Israel, supports shooting sports and angling, and has been recognized with the Freedom of the Borough of Gedling.