

Allowing “Pro-Palestinian Protests”: Precarious P.M. Sunak Sacks Home Secretary Braverman. Cabinet Reshuffle, Former PM David Cameron is Back...

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Openly ignored by his incendiary, now ex-Home Secretary, Suella Braverman, UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak was left with few options. Retaining her would continue a process of blighting his already precarious prime ministership, suggesting weakness and a distinct lack of authority. Kicking her off the Cabinet front bench would, while reasserting some measure of control, permit her to foment discord on the backbenches.

In defiance of collective cabinet responsibility, Braverman roguishly [challenged his wisdom](#), and that of the Metropolitan Police she was meant to control, in permitting pro-Palestinian protests to take place on Armistice Day. Prior to that, she had also thrown some acid upon the [issue of homelessness](#) in Britain.

“The British people are compassionate. We will always support those who are genuinely homeless. But we cannot allow our streets to be taken over by rows of tents occupied by people, many of them from abroad, living on the streets as a lifestyle choice.”

In the end, Sunak went for the sacking option. But it was what followed Braverman’s banishment, rather than her demise, that got tongues wagging and eyes popping. Having been sighted at Downing Street, former Prime Minister David Cameron piqued the curiosity of a few press bloodhounds. A Cabinet reshuffle was probably in order, but no one suggested that he was going to emerge as Foreign Secretary, replacing James Cleverly, who promptly took over at the Home Office.

Here was the individual who had presided over a period of savage austerity cuts, many initiated during the time the Tories found themselves in coalition with the Liberal Democrats after 2010. Cameron was also instrumental in taking Britain to the 2016 Brexit referendum with brazen indifference to the consequences of leaving the European Union, losing it with

an airy complacency, then leaving British politics so as not to be a distraction to his successor. Seven years of chaos and four prime ministers followed.

In 2021, the oleaginous Cameron showed that he could emulate the ethically threadbare approach to politics and private interest so gleefully adopted by other Tory grandees. His name will be forever paired with the failed finance company, Greensill Capital. The company's boss, the Australian banker Lex Greensill, was given office space in Downing Street during Cameron's premiership, subsequently becoming Cameron's confidante and employer. The former PM had been a vigorous lobbyist for Greensill Capital's business efforts, [making £8.2 million](#) in the process. When it collapsed in March 2021, investors found that billions of dollars had vanished.

Cameron proved instrumental, if not a frightful nuisance, in lobbying senior civil servants to permit the supply chain company access to government-backed loans made through the Covid Corporate Financing Facility (CCFF). Using money obtained under the pandemic scheme (never ignore the personal and corporate riches a crisis can bring), Greensill would be able to [increase its loans to such borrowers](#) as GFG Alliance, controlled by the steel magnate Sanjeev Gupta.

Cameron's efforts paid off: the British Business Bank (BBB) [eventually authorised](#) Greensill to lend a smaller amount of such taxpayer-backed funds under the CLBILS (Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme). Unfortunately, Greensill proved gluttonous, evading the limitations imposed by the loan scheme and taking a particular shine to Gupta's company group. The threshold of loaning £50 million to any one single entity was contemptuously ignored: Gupta's companies received as much as £400 million across eight loans.

In being questioned by parliamentarians, Cameron [glowed with insincerity](#) to the accusation that he had, as Labour MP Siobhain McDonagh put it, "demeaned" himself and his position "by WhatsApp-ing" his way around Whitehall. The answer was very much in keeping with a political tradition celebrated by Tony Blair's New Labour. "I would never put forward something that I didn't think was absolutely in the interests of the public good, and that's what I thought I was doing for Greensill." Throwing in the idiot's card, he professed ignorance to the company's troubles when trying to lobby the government. Besides, lobbying was "a necessary and healthy part of our democratic process".

Labour strategists were shocked but delighted by Cameron's return. The party's National Campaign Coordinator, Pat McFadden, [suggested](#) that the move could finally put to rest any suggestions that Sunak was a prime minister keen on "change". "A few weeks ago Rishi Sunak said David Cameron was part of a failed status quo, now he's bringing him back as his life raft." And Cameron, for his part, had also [sniped](#) at Sunak for being short sighted in cancelling the Northern leg of the HS2 rail line between Birmingham and Manchester.

For those familiar with cricket – and how the English have historically played it – seasoned, long in the tooth veterans have been called upon to hold the fort in times of crisis. Wobbly teams always return to weathered experience. During the torrid tour of Australia over 1974-5, the battered tourists called upon the services of Colin Cowdrey who, despite not playing a Test for four years, was still considered one of the finest players of fast bowling in the country. That did not prevent the Australian press deriding the English cricket team as "Dad's Army," a term given to the volunteers of the British Home Guard during the Second

World War. Cowdrey's physical bravery against the Australian thunderbolts cast by Jeffrey Thompson and Dennis Lillee did not prevent a rout, but it was pugnaciously impressive.

Cameron, however, is no Cowdrey. While the cricketer stood up against one of the most fearsome red ball attacks in history, Cameron created a mess he exited with craven swiftness. His presence is unlikely to prevent a Tory defeat at the next election. It may, in fact, make it worse.

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