



Written by [James Murphy](#) on July 10, 2018

U.K. Government Reels in the Wake of Brexit-related Resignations

The British government, led by the Conservative Party's Theresa May (shown), is in turmoil over the perceived betrayal of voters on the issue of Brexit. On Monday, July 9, Great Britain's Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson tendered his resignation. This followed the resignation of chief Brexit negotiator David Davis, as well as the secretary of Davis, Steve Baker. All the resignations occurred following a Chequers (the British prime minister's country estate) Summit last week, in which May laid out her plan for exiting the European Union (EU).



Davis called last week's summit an "ambush." May reportedly [ran the plan past German Chancellor Angela Merkel](#) last week, prior to showing it to her own party at the Chequers meeting.

In 2016, the British people voted to leave the EU, wishing to govern themselves free of the EU's burdensome regulations and machinations. The people of Great Britain, understandably, wished to have control over their own nation again. But as Johnson pointed out in his [resignation letter](#), "That dream is dying, suffocated by needless self-doubt."

Johnson's resignation came less than an hour before May presented the new Brexit plan to the full Parliament. At that meeting, May heard shouts of "resign" as she outlined the plan. May insisted that the plan was in keeping with the Brexit referendum. "This is not a betrayal," May said in response to outraged Brexiteers. May said she hoped that the agreement would provide "a deep and special partnership" with the EU, while allowing Britain to make its own laws.

The May government has been negotiating the exit from the EU, but seems reluctant to fully take back the reigns of British sovereignty. The deal currently on the table is what some are calling a "soft Brexit," in which the U.K. would remain in the Customs Union, which would continue to subject the U.K. to the very same EU regulatory and legal framework that it voted to leave.

"It now seems that the opening bid of our negotiations involves accepting that we are not actually going to be able to make our own laws," Johnson wrote. "Indeed, we seem to have gone backwards since the last Chequers meeting in February."

On Tuesday, July 10, two Tory (Conservative) Party vice chairs, Ben Bradley and Maria Caulfield, [announced their resignations](#) over the proposed exit deal.

Johnson has claimed his resignation was not meant to force May from office, but to make her reconsider the current Brexit plan, although the former may be what actually happens. Under Conservative Party rules, 15 percent of Conservative members of parliament (MPs) can write a letter to the [1922 Committee](#) requesting a vote of confidence in May. It is rumored that conservatives are very close to securing that 15 percent (48 MPs) already. Were May to lose that vote, she would likely not be able to



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stay on as Prime Minister.

Many in Britain have claimed that Johnson's resignation was a bit "over-the-top," as he apparently orchestrated photos of himself signing the resignation. Many believe the photo-op was done in an effort to keep Johnson, once the mayor of London, out in front of the Brexit issue and in line to take over as prime minister should May ultimately be ousted.

In fact, at least one prominent Brexit supporter, Jacob Rees-Mogg, has already backed Johnson, saying he would make a "brilliant" prime minister. Rees-Mogg is the choice of many Brexit supporters to become prime minister but has said, repeatedly, that he has no interest in the job.

President Trump, who will visit the U.K. later this week, has hinted that the tumultuous situation in Great Britain might be his most difficult task of the trip, which also includes meetings with NATO officials and Russian President Vladimir Putin. "So, I have NATO, I have the UK, which is in somewhat turmoil, and I have Putin. Frankly, Putin may be the easiest of them all," Trump said to reporters. "But the UK certainly has a lot of things going on." When asked if May should stay in power, the president remarked only that, "That's up to the people, not up to me."

The Brexit vote in 2016 was all about British sovereignty in the face of globalism. English voters did not like that their collective fate was no longer in their own hands, [but in the hands of EU bureaucrats](#) whose rules and regulations often hamper the U.K.'s ability to trade freely with other nations. May's "soft Brexit" plan is, indeed, a betrayal of the U.K.'s citizens who voted to completely leave the EU, not just "sort of" leave it.

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