

“An Absolute Bombshell”: Brexit Ministers Davis, Baker & Braverman Quit in Blow to Theresa May

By [Zero Hedge](#)

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Update 4: A second junior Brexit minister has resigned - **Suella Braverman** MP for Fareham. This leaves just two of the five person Brexit team remaining.



Update 3: Here is the full text of **Theresa May's letter in response to David Davis's resignation** as Brexit Secretary (highlights ours):

Dear David

Thank you for your letter explaining your decision to resign as Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union.

I am **sorry that you have chosen to leave the Government when we have already made so much progress towards delivering a smooth and successful Brexit**, and when we are only eight months from the date set in law when the United Kingdom will leave the European Union.

At Chequers on Friday, we as the Cabinet agreed a comprehensive and detailed proposal which provides a precise, responsible, and credible basis for progressing our negotiations towards a new relationship between the UK and the EU after we leave in March. We set out how we will deliver on the result of the referendum and the commitments we made in our manifesto for the 2017 general election:

1. Leaving the EU on 29 March 2019.
2. Ending free movement and taking back control of our borders.
3. No more sending vast sums of money each year to the EU.
4. A new business-friendly customs model with freedom to strike new trade deals around the world.
5. A UK-EU free trade area with a common rulebook for industrial goods and agricultural products which will be good for jobs.
6. A commitment to maintain high standards on consumer and employment rights and the environment.
7. A Parliamentary lock on all new rules and regulations.
8. Leaving the Common Agricultural Policy and the Common Fisheries Policy.
9. Restoring the supremacy of British courts by ending the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice in the UK.
10. No hard border between Northern Ireland and Ireland, or between

Northern Ireland and Great Britain.

11. Continued, close co-operation on security to keep our people safe.
12. An independent foreign and defence policy, working closely with the EU and other allies.

This is consistent with the mandate of the referendum and with the commitments we laid out in our general election manifesto: leaving the single market and the customs union but seeking a deep and special partnership including a comprehensive free trade and customs agreement; ending the vast annual contributions to the EU; and pursuing fair, orderly negotiations, minimising disruption and giving as much certainty as possible so both sides benefit.

As we said in our manifesto, we believe it is necessary to agree the terms of our future partnership alongside our withdrawal, reaching agreement on both within the two years allowed by Article 50.

I have always agreed with you that these two must go alongside one another, but if we are to get sufficient detail about our future partnership, we need to act now. We have made a significant move: it is for the EU now to respond in the same spirit.

I do not agree with your characterisation of the policy we agreed at Cabinet on Friday.

Parliament will decide whether or not to back the deal the Government negotiates, but that deal will undoubtedly mean the returning of powers from Brussels to the United Kingdom.

The direct effect of EU law will end when we leave the EU. Where the UK chooses to apply a common rulebook, each rule will have to be agreed by Parliament.

Choosing not to sign up to certain rules would lead to consequences for market access, security co-operation or the frictionless border, but that decision will rest with our sovereign Parliament, which will have a lock on whether to incorporate those rules into the UK legal order.

I am sorry that the Government will not have the benefit of your continued expertise and counsel as we secure this deal and complete the process of leaving the EU, but I would like to thank you warmly for everything you have done over the past two years as Secretary of State to shape our departure from the EU, and the new role the UK will forge on the world stage as an independent, self-governing nation once again.

You returned to Government after nineteen years to lead an entirely new Department responsible for a vital, complex, and unprecedented task.

You have helped to steer through Parliament some of the most important legislation for generations, including the European Union (Notification of Withdrawal) Act 2017 and the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018, which received Royal Assent last week.

These landmark Acts, and what they will do, stand as testament to your work and our commitment to honouring the result of the referendum.

Yours sincerely,

Theresa May

Update 2: Labour Party leader **Jeremy Corbyn** wasted no time in launching a full on attack on May, tweeting:

“David Davis resigning at such a crucial time shows @theresa_may has no authority left and is incapable of delivering Brexit. **With her Government in chaos, if she clings on, it’s clear she’s more interested in hanging on for her own sake than serving the people of our country.**”

David Davis resigning at such a crucial time shows [@Theresa_May](#) has no authority left and is incapable of delivering Brexit.

With her Government in chaos, if she clings on, it's clear she's more interested in hanging on for her own sake than serving the people of our country.

— Jeremy Corbyn (@jeremycorbyn) [July 8, 2018](#)

And in light of recent advanced by democrat socialists in the US, it probably wouldn't be too ridiculous for the UK to make a hard left turn next as well.

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Update 1: Confirming earlier rumors, Sky News reports that **Steve Baker**, Britain's junior Brexit minister, technically *the Brexit minister for “contingency planning”*, is the other (for now) conservative MP to resign alongside Davis.

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In what has been called “an absolute bombshell”, U.K. Brexit **Secretary David Davis** resigned from Theresa May's government late Sunday, one week before the UK is scheduled to present its demands to Brussels.

His full resignation letter is below (*highlights ours*):

Dear Prime Minister

As you know **there have been a significant number of occasions in the last year or so on which I have disagreed with the Number 10 policy line**, ranging from accepting the Commission's sequencing of negotiations through to the language on Northern Ireland in the December Joint Report.

At each stage I have accepted collective responsibility because it is part of my task to find workable compromises, and because I considered it was still possible to deliver on the mandate of the referendum, and on our manifesto commitment to leave the Customs Union and the Single Market.

I am afraid that I think the current trend of policy and tactics is making that look less and less likely. Whether it is the progressive dilution of what I thought was a firm Chequers agreement in February on right to diverge, or the unnecessary delays of the start of the White Paper, or the presentation of a backstop proposal that omitted the strict conditions that I requested and believed that we had agreed, **the general direction of policy**

will leave us in at best a weak negotiating position, and possibly an inescapable one.

The Cabinet decision on Friday crystallised this problem. In my view **the inevitable consequence of the proposed policies will be to make the supposed control by Parliament illusory rather than real.** As I said at Cabinet, **the “common rule book” policy hands control of large swathes of our economy to the EU** and is certainly not returning control of our laws in any real sense.

I am also unpersuaded that our negotiating approach will not just **lead to further demands for concessions.**

Of course this is a complex area of judgement and it is possible that you are right and I am wrong. However, even in that event **it seems to me that the national interest requires a Secretary of State in my Department that is an enthusiastic believer in your approach, and not merely a reluctant conscript.** While I have been grateful to you for the opportunity to serve, it is with great regret that I tender my resignation from the Cabinet with immediate effect.

Yours ever,

David Davis

Davis resignation comes two days after May received backing from her cabinet for a new “soft Brexit” plan which envisioned maintaining close ties with the EU after the UK’s departure from the block, news which was cheered the UK business lobby and which had set cable on an upward trajectory in early Asia trading, before the news hit which halted the pound’s ascent.

The cabinet signed up to the proposals, which were hammered out at Chequers – the country house of the UK Prime Minister – last week. May is due to unveil the plans tomorrow in parliament, before a potentially stormy meeting with her own MPs.

Davis had disagreed with May’s plans for keeping EU rules for goods and adopting a close customs model with the bloc, and his resignation threatens more political turmoil, this time in the UK, as moderates are set off against hard brexiteers.

However, some pro-Brexit Tories are angry about the plan, with speculation that it could end up in a leadership challenge.

As Sky News adds, some pro-Brexit Tories are angry about the plan and there is speculation it could end up in a leadership challenge. [Sky’s political correspondent](#) Lewis Goodall called the resignation of Mr Davis **“an absolute bombshell”**.

He said: **“To resign tonight after the emergency meeting at Chequers on Friday is really quite shocking when you consider, apparently according to the briefing we received, that every single member of the cabinet - admittedly some with their reservations - all agreed that they would support the prime minister’s proposals and they would defend them in public.**

“The big question now is, is David Davis going to be joined by any other figures? All eyes of course will be on Boris Johnson and other Brexiteers.”

According to BBC's Laura Kuenssberg, "Davis concluded he could not stay in post after a meeting" with Theresa May earlier today - "understand he was furious at Number 10 handling"

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— Laura Kuenssberg (@bbclaurak) [July 8, 2018](#)

Meanwhile, **Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson** reportedly described defending the plans as like "polishing a turd" during the Chequers summit, before eventually falling into line behind the prime minister.

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As a reminder, late on Friday Theresa May won approval at an all-day Chequers summit for a pro-business plan to keep Britain intimately bound to the EU single market and customs union, beating back Eurosceptic cabinet opposition to her new "soft Brexit" strategy, the FT reported.

May briefed the media at 6.45pm on Friday that the cabinet had agreed a collective position to create a "UK-EU free trade area which establishes a common rulebook for industrial goods and agricultural products". The plan would see Britain commit in a treaty to adopt new EU rules for goods— an approach viewed by some Tories as leaving the UK as "a vassal state". Parliament could break the treaty, but trigger severe market reprisals from the EU if it did.

May challenged critics including foreign secretary Boris Johnson to back the plan for a "UK-EU free trade area" in a confrontation seen by senior Tories as a decisive moment in the tortuous Brexit process.

Johnson and five other cabinet ministers met on Thursday night at the Foreign Office to plan a counter-attack to try to preserve a clean Brexit, but they eventually concluded they could not stop Mrs May's plan.

"People are not happy with what is being proposed but people are keen to keep the government together," said one of those at the meeting at Mrs May's country residence.

May's team had vaunted the prime minister's ability to face down the Eurosceptics, encouraged by pleas from mainstream Conservative MPs that the time had come for her to tell her critics to put up or shut up.

Davis' unexpected resignation threatens to further inflame cabinet tensions, especially in light of an earlier Mirror report that 42 lawmakers had formally expressed no confidence in Theresa May. **A leadership contest would be triggered if 48 Conservative MPs formally submit letters.**

May said on Friday that the proposals were "good for the UK and good for the EU" and would "deliver prosperity and security".

And while it remains unclear if there will be more resignation in Davis' footsteps, according to the BBC at least one more minister is on their way out:

Davis is taking at least one minister with him

— Laura Kuenssberg (@bbclaurak) [July 8, 2018](#)

Following the news, cable dipped modestly however it has since regained much of the losses and looks set to continue on its upward trajectory established last Friday. As Bloomberg's Mark Cranfield adds, "EUR/GBP will quickly unwind last week's drop and then climb further as David Davis' resignation leaves the U.K. without its most experienced Brexit negotiator. **This dramatically reduces the chances of Theresa May being able to push the Brexit White Paper through the U.K. parliament this week.**"

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