



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Sir Bernard Jenkin MP
Chair
Liaison Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Wednesday 21st April 2021

Dear Sir Bernard,

I know that you share some of my concerns about recent revelations following the Greensill scandal, about a lack of transparency around commercial lobbying and cronyism.

Given this, I am sure that you will be as alarmed as I was, to see text messages between the Prime Minister and James Dyson revealed today. These appear to show that the Prime Minister, at the height of the pandemic, was attempting to use the power of his office to selectively target tax breaks to a personal friend and supporter of the Conservative Party.

These revelations seem to confirm a growing feeling that if one has access to a telephone number of someone like the Prime Minister or the Chancellor of the Exchequer, then they are able to gain special treatment, potentially even significant financial ones.

This is of course in stark contrast to the way the government have treated NHS nurses working on the frontline. Instead of being given a proper pay rise, they've received a real terms pay cut. The three million excluded from financial support during this pandemic by the Chancellor, could not secure a single meeting with him, never mind the notion he could fix rules for them.

While I am pleased to see that a number of Select Committees will now be looking closer at the Greensill scandal, the revelations from these messages today open up a new urgent corridor of inquiry about how this government and its Ministers conduct themselves – how they make decisions, for whom and why. Given the potential damage to public trust and the possibility of the implication of taxpayer funds, there must be an investigation into this as soon as possible.

This is also of urgency because the role of the Independent Advisor on Ministerial Standards still remains vacant after five months, and the much delayed Register of Ministers' Financial Interests has still not been published.

We are missing these two crucial tools for scrutinising Ministers, preventing conflicts of interest, and helping Parliament and the public to hold them to account.

RACHEL REEVES MP



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Given all of this I am writing to you today in your role as Chair of the Liaison Committee to ask you to urgently investigate the Prime Minister's conduct regarding this by requesting:

- The Prime Minister gives evidence before the Liaison Committee about the ongoing cronyism row.
- That all correspondence on the Prime Minister's phone about government business are released, as was promised in the House of Commons earlier today.
- For Number 10 to release details of any other communications between ministers, officials and external commercial lobbyists.
- For the release of all information and work carried out by civil servants at the request of both the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer relating to the tax breaks in the released text messages.

I hope you can offer some reassurance that the Committee is already getting wheels in motion to look at these most additional troubling revelations with your oversight.

I look forward to your response,

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Rachel Reeves".

Rachel Reeves MP

Shadow Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster

Member of Parliament for Leeds West