



Patel makes a Priti big mistake

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Last night, after much speculation, hours of journalists tracking her plane, Priti Patel, MP for Witham, resigned as international development secretary.





Patel, 42, who commands a massive majority of just under 19,000 had this summer flown to Israel on holiday.

Whilst there, she had meetings with several Israeli officials including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and centrist opposition Yesh Atid leader former journalist and finance minister Yair Lapid.

Meetings between British and Israeli officials aren't uncommon, just this week Netanyahu was in Downing Street. The two countries are important allies in finance and security.

Indeed, what she discussed wasn't controversial at all. She offered to help using the international aid budget to fund hospitals in the [Golan Heights](#). These [hospitals](#) have been used to treat those injured in the conflict in bordering Syria, both civilian and combatant alike.

It starts getting awkward when you look at the implications.

The British government has not recognised Israeli sovereignty over the Heights, meaning there is no legal framework for the money to be spent there.

Britain had in the summer suspended aid to the [Palestinians](#), over allegations that the money was used to pay the [salaries of terrorists](#).

The Golan Heights were captured by Israel in 1967, during the six-day war and unlike the Sinai Peninsula has remained under Israeli control. It is likely that if returned to Syria, the Druze communities living there will have been targeted by ISIS.

Though, even the most partisan of individuals would be hard pressed to complain if this money was going to genuine humanitarian causes.

Then comes the fact that Patel was accompanied by Lord Polak, honorary president of Conservative Friends of Israel, department business was discussed in the presence of a man, who, regardless should not have been there when it was discussed.

Then the Foreign Office and Downing Street were not aware that Patel was there. She lied and said Boris knew. In politics, the cover-up is often worse than the original scandal.

In doing so, she has helped no-one.

By conducting diplomacy without the permission or knowledge of her cabinet colleagues, she has undermined them.





Boris is having a tough time due to his comments on the [Nazanin Zagari-Ratcliffe](#) case. For a fellow minister to effectively behave as though she's better off conducting business without him makes him look weak and indecisive.

May, meanwhile, is also undermined in the same way. She's already lost Sir Michael Fallon, a senior figure in the cabinet in recent days. In a volatile situation for the PM, she's caused more turmoil, when May needs things to calm.

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The cabinet looks disunited, the credibility of her party shot.

At this moment in time, there's no evidence to suggest Israel was aware of Patel's freelance foreign adventures.

But it doesn't help them either.





A lot of people around the world in Britain, look upon the state with mistrust. There have been countless conspiracy theories about the nation. Covert meetings with foreign politicians do not change that view, it looks shifty, dodgy, and makes it look like everyone has something to hide.

Lastly, almost like a secondary school teacher, I have to point out, Priti Patel has let herself down.

To avoid this whole mess, all she had to do was clear it with the Foreign Office. All that and she would have avoided all this controversy and she'd still have a job, Boris and May would have less to deal with, and the government wouldn't look like disorganised and backstabbing.

Patel has been a rising star in the Tory Party, since becoming an MP in 2010, earmarked by Cameron as an A List Parliamentary Candidate, she had been involved with the party since the late 1990s.

An economics graduate, who has worked in public and media relations, Patel had built a reputation as a brave, outspoken member of the next generation of Conservative leadership.

She'd generated controversy in the past, as she's lobbied for big tobacco and been supportive of tobacco companies, but it hadn't had much effect on her reputation.

This will.

The careers of Liam Fox and David Davis, show it is possible to return to politics. Fox, resigned in 2011 following allegations of impropriety due to his relationship with Adam Werrity and Davis having lost the Conservative leadership election in 2005, turned down the opportunity to return to the cabinet in 2010, opposing plans on tuition fees and anti-civil liberty laws.

Both were considered to be yesterday's men, but returned in 2016 as International Trade and Brexit secretaries, respectively.

But, Fox and Davis benefited from the opportunities and need for fresh blood due to Brexit. Patel may miss the opportunity as she rebuilds her reputation. A staunch Brexiteer this was a time where she can stamp her authority and fulfill her ambitions.

She'll spend it on the backbenches, though. All she had to do was speak to Boris or May. I've never been a fan of her due to her relationship with big tobacco, but she was definitely a viable candidate for the Conservative leadership in the coming future, that won't happen now.

She displayed a pretty poor lack of judgement and no-one has come out the situation looking any better.

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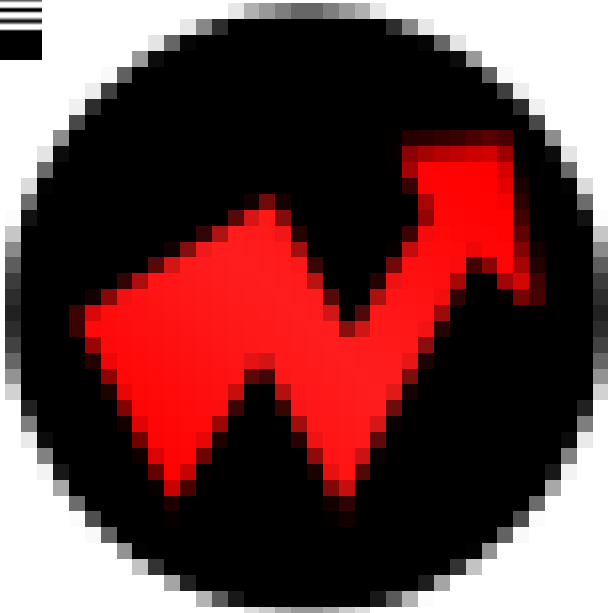


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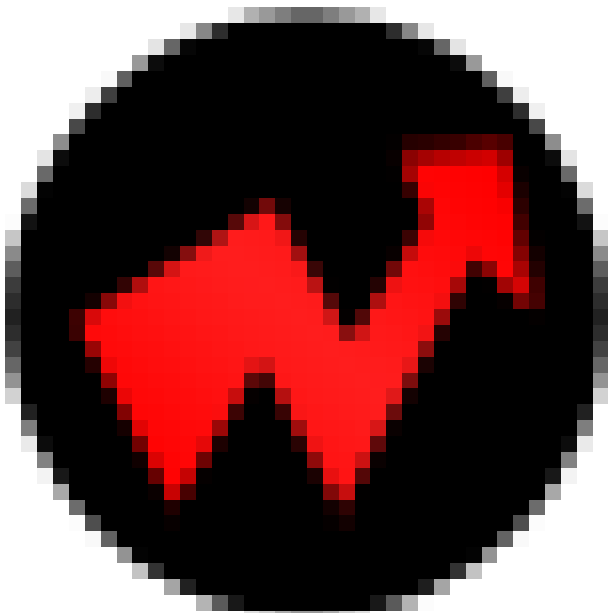


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