

= Gordon Brown =

James Gordon Brown ( born 20 February 1951 ) is a British politician who was the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and the Leader of the Labour Party from 2007 to 2010 . He previously served as Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Blair Government from 1997 to 2007 . Brown was a Member of Parliament ( MP ) from 1983 to 2015 , first for Dunfermline East and later for Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath .

A doctoral graduate of the University of Edinburgh , Brown spent his early career working as both a lecturer at a further education college and a television journalist . He entered Parliament in 1983 as the MP for Dunfermline East . He joined the Shadow Cabinet in 1989 as Shadow Secretary of State for Trade , and was later promoted to become Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1992 . After Labour 's victory in 1997 , he was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer , becoming the longest @-@ serving holder of that office in modern history .

Brown 's time as Chancellor was marked by major reform of Britain 's monetary and fiscal policy architecture , transferring interest rate setting powers to the Bank of England , by a wide extension of the powers of the Treasury to cover much domestic policy and by transferring responsibility for banking supervision to the Financial Services Authority . Controversial moves included the abolition of advance corporation tax ( ACT ) relief in his first budget , and the removal in his final budget of the 10 % " starting rate " of personal income tax which he had introduced in 1999 . In 2007 , Tony Blair resigned as Prime Minister and Labour Leader and Brown was chosen to replace him in an uncontested election .

After initial rises in opinion polls following Brown becoming Prime Minister , Labour 's popularity declined with the onset of a recession in 2008 , leading to poor results in the local and European elections in 2009 . A year later , Labour lost 91 seats in the House of Commons at the 2010 general election , the party 's biggest loss of seats in a single general election since 1931 , making the Conservatives the largest party in a hung parliament . Brown remained in office as Labour negotiated to form a coalition government with the Liberal Democrats . On 10 May 2010 , Brown announced he would stand down as leader of the Labour Party , and instructed the party to put into motion the processes to elect a new leader . Labour 's attempts to retain power failed and on 11 May , he officially resigned as Prime Minister and Leader of the Labour Party . He was succeeded as Prime Minister by David Cameron , and as Leader of the Labour Party by Ed Miliband .

Later , Brown played a prominent role in the campaign surrounding the Scottish independence referendum of 2014 , galvanising support behind maintaining the union .

= = Early life = =

Brown was born at the Orchard Maternity Nursing Home in Giffnock , Renfrewshire , Scotland . His father was John Ebenezer Brown , a minister of the Church of Scotland and a strong influence on Brown . He died in December 1998 , aged 84 . His mother , Jessie Elizabeth Brown ( née Souter ) , known as Bunty , died on 19 September 2004 , aged 86 . She was the daughter of John Souter , a timber merchant . The family moved to Kirkcaldy ? then the largest town in Fife , across the Firth of Forth from Edinburgh ? when Gordon was three . Brown was brought up there with his elder brother John and younger brother Andrew Brown in a manse . In common with many other notable Scots , he is therefore often referred to as a " son of the manse " .

= = = Education = = =

Brown was educated first at Kirkcaldy West Primary School where he was selected for an experimental fast stream education programme , which took him two years early to Kirkcaldy High School for an academic hothouse education taught in separate classes . At age sixteen he wrote that he loathed and resented this " ludicrous " experiment on young lives .

He was accepted by the University of Edinburgh to study history at the same early age of sixteen . During an end @-@ of @-@ term rugby union match at his old school , he received a kick to the

head and suffered a retinal detachment . This left him blind in his left eye , despite treatment including several operations and weeks spent lying in a darkened room . Later at Edinburgh , while playing tennis , he noticed the same symptoms in his right eye . Brown underwent experimental surgery at the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary and his right eye was saved . Brown graduated from Edinburgh with First @-@ Class Honours MA degree in history in 1972 , and stayed on to obtain his PhD degree in history ( which he gained ten years later in 1982 ) , titled The Labour Party and Political Change in Scotland 1918 ? 29 .

In his youth at the University of Edinburgh , Brown was involved in a romantic relationship with Margarita , Crown Princess of Romania . Margarita said about it : " It was a very solid and romantic story . I never stopped loving him but one day it didn 't seem right any more , it was politics , politics , politics , and I needed nurturing . " An unnamed friend of those years is quoted by Paul Routledge in his biography of Brown as recalling : " She was sweet and gentle and obviously cut out to make somebody a very good wife . She was bright , too , though not like him , but they seemed made for each other . "

In 1972 , while still a student , Brown was elected Rector of the University of Edinburgh , the convener of the University Court . He served as Rector until 1975 , and also edited the document The Red Paper on Scotland .

= = = Career before Parliament = = =

From 1976 to 1980 Brown was employed as a lecturer in politics at Glasgow College of Technology . He also worked as a tutor for the Open University . In the 1979 general election , Brown stood for the Edinburgh South constituency , losing to the Conservative candidate , Michael Ancram .

From 1980 , he worked as a journalist at Scottish Television , later serving as current affairs editor until his election to Parliament in 1983 .

= = Election to Parliament and opposition = =

Brown was elected to Parliament on his second attempt as a Labour MP for Dunfermline East in 1983 general election . His first Westminster office mate was a newly elected MP from the Sedgefield constituency , Tony Blair . Brown became an opposition spokesman on Trade and Industry in 1985 . In 1986 , he published a biography of the Independent Labour Party politician James Maxton , the subject of his doctoral thesis . Brown was Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury from 1987 to 1989 and then Shadow Secretary of State for Trade and Industry , before becoming Shadow Chancellor in 1992 . Having led the Labour Movement Yes campaign , refusing to join the cross @-@ party Yes for Scotland campaign , during the 1979 Scottish devolution referendum , while other senior Labour politicians ? including Robin Cook , Tam Dalyell and Brian Wilson ? campaigned for a No vote , Brown was subsequently a key participant in the Scottish Constitutional Convention , signing the Claim of Right for Scotland in 1989 .

After the sudden death of Labour leader John Smith in May 1994 , Brown did not contest the leadership after Tony Blair became favourite , deciding to make way for Blair to avoiding splitting the pro @-@ modernising vote in the leadership ballot .

It has long been rumoured a deal was struck between Blair and Brown at the former Granita restaurant in Islington , in which Blair promised to give Brown control of economic policy in return for Brown not standing against him in the leadership election . Whether this is true or not , the relationship between Blair and Brown was central to the fortunes of New Labour , and they mostly remained united in public , despite reported serious private rifts .

As Shadow Chancellor , Brown as Chancellor @-@ in @-@ waiting was seen as a good choice by business and the middle class . While he was Chancellor inflation sometimes exceeded the 2 % target causing the Governor of the Bank of England to write several letters to the Chancellor , each time inflation exceeded three per cent . In 2005 following a reorganisation of Westminster constituencies in Scotland , Brown became MP for Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath at the general election .

= = Chancellor of the Exchequer ( 1997 ? 2007 ) = =

In the 1997 general election , Labour defeated the Conservatives by a landslide to end their 18 @-@ year exile from government , and when Tony Blair , the new Prime Minister , announced his ministerial team on 2 May 1997 , he appointed Brown as Chancellor of the Exchequer . Brown would remain in this role for 10 years and two months , making him the longest @-@ serving Chancellor in modern history . The Prime Minister 's website highlights some achievements from Brown 's decade as Chancellor : making the Bank of England independent and delivering an agreement on poverty and climate change at the G8 summit in 2005 .

= = = Early economic reforms = = =

On taking office as Chancellor of the Exchequer Brown gave the Bank of England operational independence in monetary policy , and thus responsibility for setting interest rates through the Bank 's Monetary Policy Committee . At the same time he also changed the inflation measure from the Retail Price Index to the Consumer Price Index and transferred responsibility for banking supervision to the Financial Services Authority . Some commentators have argued that this division of responsibilities exacerbated the severity in Britain of the 2007 global banking crisis .

= = = Taxation and spending = = =

In the 1997 election and subsequently , Brown pledged not to increase the basic or higher rates of income tax . Over his Chancellorship , he reduced the basic rate from 23 % to 20 % . However , in all but his final budget , Brown increased the tax thresholds in line with inflation , rather than earnings , resulting in fiscal drag . Corporation tax fell under Brown , from a main rate of 33 % to 28 % , and from 24 % to 19 % for small businesses . In 1999 , he introduced a lower tax band of 10 % . He abolished this 10 % tax band in his last budget in 2007 to reduce the basic rate from 22 % to 20 % , increasing tax for 5 million people and , according to the calculations of the Institute for Fiscal Studies , leaving those earning between £ 5 @,@ 000 and £ 18 @,@ 000 as the biggest losers . To backbench cheers , Brown had described the measure in his last Budget thus : " Having put in place more focused ways of incentivising work and directly supporting children and pensioners at a cost of £ 3bn a year , I can now return income tax to just two rates by removing the 10p band on non savings income " .

According to the OECD UK taxation increased from a 39 @.@ 3 % share of gross domestic product in 1997 to 42 @.@ 4 % in 2006 , going to a higher level than that of Germany . This increase has mainly been attributed to active government policy , and not simply to the growing economy . Conservatives have accused Brown of imposing " stealth taxes " . A commonly reported example resulted in 1997 from a technical change in the way corporation tax is collected , the indirect effect of which was for the dividends on stock investments held within pensions to be taxed , thus lowering pension returns and contributing to the demise of most of the final salary pension funds in the UK . The Treasury contends that this tax change was crucial to long @-@ term economic growth .

Brown 's 2000 Spending Review outlined a major expansion of government spending , particularly on health and education . In his April 2002 budget , Brown increased National Insurance to pay for health spending . He also introduced working tax credits , and in his last budget as Chancellor , Brown gave an extra £ 3 billion in pension allowances , an increase in the child tax credit , and an increase in the working tax credit . These increases were followed by another £ 1 billion of support for increases in the child tax credit .

= = = European single currency = = =

In October 1997 , Brown took control of the United Kingdom 's membership of the European single currency issue by announcing the Treasury would set five economic tests to ascertain whether the

economic case had been made . In June 2003 the Treasury indicated the tests had not been passed .

= = = Other issues = = =

In 2000 , Brown was accused of starting a political row about higher education ( referred to as the Laura Spence Affair ) when he accused the University of Oxford of elitism in its admissions procedures , describing its decision not to offer a place to state school pupil Laura Spence as " absolutely outrageous " . Lord Jenkins , then Oxford Chancellor and himself a former Labour Chancellor of the Exchequer , said " nearly every fact he used was false . "

Between 1999 and 2002 Brown sold 60 % of the UK 's gold reserves shortly before gold entered a protracted bull market , since nicknamed by dealers as Brown Bottom . The official reason for selling the gold reserves was to reduce the portfolio risk of the UK 's reserves by diversifying away from gold . The UK eventually sold about 395 tons of gold over 17 auctions from July 1999 to March 2002 , at an average price of about US \$ 275 per ounce , raising approximately US \$ 3 @. @ 5 billion . By 2011 , that quantity of gold would be worth over \$ 19 billion , leading to Brown 's decision to sell the gold being widely criticised .

As Chancellor , Brown argued against renationalising the railways , saying at the Labour conference in 2004 that it would cost £ 22 billion .

During his time as Chancellor , Brown reportedly believed that it was appropriate to remove most , but not all , of the unpayable Third World debt . On 20 April 2006 , in a speech to the United Nations Ambassadors , Brown outlined a " Green " view of global development .

= = Run @-@ up to succeeding Tony Blair = =

In October 2004 , Tony Blair announced he would not lead the party into a fourth general election , but would serve a full third term . Political comment over the relationship between Brown and Blair continued up to and beyond the 2005 election , which Labour won with a reduced majority and reduced vote share . Blair announced on 7 September 2006 that he would step down within a year . Brown was the clear favourite to succeed Blair ; he was the only candidate spoken of seriously in Westminster . Appearances and news coverage leading up to the handover were interpreted as preparing the ground for Brown to become Prime Minister , in part by creating the impression of a statesman with a vision for leadership and global change . This enabled Brown to signal the most significant priorities for his agenda as Prime Minister ; speaking at a Fabian Society conference on ' The Next Decade ' in January 2007 , he stressed education , international development , narrowing inequalities ( to pursue ' equality of opportunity and fairness of outcome ' ) , renewing Britishness , restoring trust in politics , and winning hearts and minds in the war on terror as key priorities .

= = Prime Minister ( 2007 ? 10 ) = =

Brown ceased to be Chancellor and became the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom on 27 June 2007 . Like all modern Prime Ministers , Brown concurrently served as the First Lord of the Treasury and the Minister for the Civil Service , and was a member of the Cabinet of the United Kingdom . Until his resignation from the post in May 2010 he was Leader of the Labour Party . He was Member of Parliament for the constituency of Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath until he stepped down in 2015 . He is the sixth post @-@ war Prime Minister , of a total of 12 , to assume the role without having won a general election . Brown was the first Prime Minister from a Scottish constituency since the Conservative Sir Alec Douglas @-@ Home in 1964 . Not all British Prime Ministers have attended university , but of the ones that did Brown was one of only five that did not attend either Oxford or Cambridge , the others were , The Earl of Bute ( Leiden ) , Lord John Russell ( Edinburgh ) , Bonar Law ( Glasgow ) , and Neville Chamberlain ( Mason Science College , later Birmingham ) . Brown proposed moving some traditional prime ministerial powers conferred by royal prerogative to the realm of Parliament , such as the power to declare war and approve appointments to senior

positions . Brown wanted Parliament to gain the right to ratify treaties and have more oversight into the intelligence services . He also proposed moving some powers from Parliament to citizens , including the right to form " citizens ' juries " , easily petition Parliament for new laws , and rally outside Westminster . He asserted that the attorney general should not have the right to decide whether to prosecute in individual cases , such as in the loans for peerages scandal .

There was speculation during September and early October 2007 about whether Brown would call a snap general election . Indeed , the party launched the Not Flash , Just Gordon advertising campaign , which was seen largely as pre @-@ election promotion of Brown as Prime Minister . However , Brown announced on 6 October that there would be no election any time soon ? despite opinion polls showing that he was capable of winning an election should he call one . This proved to be a costly mistake , as during 2008 his party slid behind the Conservatives ( led by David Cameron ) in the polls . Disputes over political donations , a string of losses in local elections , and by @-@ election losses in Crewe and Glasgow did himself and the government no favours either .

His political opponents accused him of being indecisive , which Brown denied . In July 2008 Brown supported a new bill extending the pre @-@ charge detention period to 42 days . The bill was met with opposition on both sides of the House and backbench rebellion . In the end the bill passed by just 9 votes . The House of Lords defeated the bill , with Lords characterising it as " fatally flawed , ill thought through and unnecessary " , stating that " it seeks to further erode fundamental legal and civil rights " .

Brown was mentioned by the press in the expenses crisis for claiming for the payment of his cleaner . However , no wrongdoing was found and the Commons Authority did not pursue Brown over the claim . Meanwhile , the Commons Fees Office stated that a double payment for a £ 153 plumbing repair bill was a mistake on their part and that Brown had repaid it in full .

= = = Domestic policy = = =

During his Labour leadership campaign Brown proposed some policy initiatives which he called the manifesto for change .

The manifesto included a clampdown on corruption and a new Ministerial Code , which set out clear standards of behaviour for ministers . Brown also stated in a speech when announcing his bid that he wants a " better constitution " that is " clear about the rights and responsibilities of being a citizen in Britain today " . He planned to set up an all @-@ party convention to look at new powers for Parliament and to look at rebalancing powers between Whitehall and local government . Brown said he would give Parliament the final say on whether British troops are sent into action in future .

Brown said he wanted to release more land and ease access to ownership with shared equity schemes . He backed a proposal to build new eco @-@ towns , each housing between 10 @,@ 000 and 20 @,@ 000 home @-@ owners ? up to 100 @,@ 000 new homes in total . Brown also said he wanted to have doctors ' surgeries open at the weekends , and GPs on call in the evenings . Doctors were given the right of opting out of out @-@ of @-@ hours care in 2007 , under a controversial pay deal , signed by then @-@ Health Secretary John Reid , which awarded them a 22 percent pay rise in 2006 . Brown also stated in the manifesto that the NHS was his top priority .

On 5 June 2007 , just three weeks before he was due to take the post of Prime Minister , Brown made a speech promising " British Jobs for British workers " . Brown reiterated that promise at the Labour Party 's annual conference in September , which caused controversy as he coupled this with a commitment to crack down on migrant workers . The Conservative Party , led by David Cameron , promptly pointed out that such a commitment was illegal under EU law .

= = = Foreign policy = = =

Brown was committed to the Iraq War , but said in a speech in June 2007 that he would " learn the lessons " from the mistakes made in Iraq . Brown said in a letter published on 17 March 2008 that the United Kingdom would hold an inquiry into the war . He is also a member of the lobby group , Labour Friends of Israel .

Brown went to great lengths to empathise with those who lost family members in the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts . He has often said " War is tragic " , echoing Blair 's quote , " War is horrible " . Nonetheless , in November 2007 Brown was accused by some senior military figures of not adhering to the Military Covenant , a convention within British politics ensuring adequate safeguards , rewards and compensation for military personnel who risk their lives in obedience to orders derived from the policy of the elected government .

Brown skipped the opening ceremony of the 2008 Summer Olympics , on 8 August 2008 in Beijing . He attended the closing ceremony instead , on 24 August 2008 . Brown had been under intense pressure from human rights campaigners to send a message to China , concerning the 2008 Tibetan unrest . His decision not to attend the opening ceremony was not an act of protest , but rather was made several weeks in advance and not intended as a stand on principle .

In a speech in July 2007 , Brown clarified his position regarding Britain 's relationship with the USA " We will not allow people to separate us from the United States of America in dealing with the common challenges that we face around the world . I think people have got to remember that the special relationship between a British prime minister and an American president is built on the things that we share , the same enduring values about the importance of liberty , opportunity , the dignity of the individual . I will continue to work , as Tony Blair did , very closely with the American administration . "

Brown and the Labour party had pledged to allow a referendum on the EU Treaty of Lisbon . On 13 December 2007 , Foreign Secretary David Miliband attended for the Prime Minister at the official signing ceremony in Lisbon of the EU Reform Treaty . Brown 's opponents on both sides of the House , and in the press , suggested that ratification by Parliament was not enough and that a referendum should also be held . Labour 's 2005 manifesto had pledged to give British public a referendum on the original EU Constitution . Brown argued that the Treaty significantly differed from the Constitution , and as such did not require a referendum . He also responded with plans for a lengthy debate on the topic , and stated that he believed the document to be too complex to be decided by referendum .

== = Drug policy == =

During Brown 's premiership , in October 2008 , the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs ( ACMD ) recommended to the then Home Secretary Jacqui Smith that cannabis remain classified as a Class C drug . Acting against the advice of the Council , she chose to reclassify it as Class B. After Professor David Nutt , the chair of the ACMD , criticised this move in a lecture in 2009 , he was asked to step down by then Home Secretary Alan Johnson . Following his resignation , Professor Nutt said Brown had " made up his mind " to reclassify cannabis despite evidence to the contrary . Brown had argued , " I don 't think that the previous studies took into account that so much of the cannabis on the streets is now of a lethal quality and we really have got to send out a message to young people ? this is not acceptable " . Professor Nutt 's predecessor at the ACMD , Sir Michael Rawlins , later said , " Governments may well have good reasons for taking an alternative view ... When that happens , then the government should explain why it 's ignoring the particular advice " .

== = Global recession == =

Brown 's premiership coincided with the global recession , during which Brown called for fiscal action in an attempt to stimulate aggregate demand . Domestically , Brown 's administration introduced measures including a bank rescue package worth around £ 500 billion ( approximately \$ 850 billion ) , a temporary 2 @. @ 5 % cut in value @-@ added tax and a " car scrappage " scheme .

== = Plots against leadership == =

In mid @-@ 2008 , Brown 's leadership was presented with a challenge as some MPs openly called

for him to resign . This event was dubbed the ' Lancashire Plot ' , as two backbenchers from ( pre @-@ 1974 ) Lancashire urged him to step down and a third questioned his chances of holding on to the Labour Party leadership . Several MPs argued that if Brown did not recover in the polls by early 2009 , he should call for a leadership contest . However , certain prominent MPs , such as Jacqui Smith and Bill Rammell , suggested that Brown was the right person to lead Britain through its economic crisis . In the Autumn , Siobhain McDonagh , a MP and junior government whip , who during her time in office had never voted against the government , spoke of the need for discussion over Brown 's position . McDonagh was sacked from her role shortly afterwards , on 12 September . Whilst McDonagh did not state that she wanted Brown deposed , she implored the Labour party to hold a leadership election , she was sacked from her role shortly afterwards . McDonagh was supported by Joan Ryan ( who applied , as McDonagh had , for leadership nomination papers , and became the second rebel to be fired from her job ) , Jim Dowd , Greg Pope , and a string of others who had previously held positions in government , made clear their desire for a contest . In the face of this speculation over Brown 's future , his ministers backed him to lead the party , and Harriet Harman and David Miliband denied that they were preparing leadership bids . After Labour lost the Glasgow East by @-@ election in July , Harman , the deputy leader of the party , said that Brown was the " solution " , not the " problem " ; Home Secretary Smith , Justice Secretary Jack Straw , Schools Secretary Ed Balls and Cabinet Office Minister Ed Miliband all re @-@ affirmed their support for Brown . The deputy Prime Minister under Blair , John Prescott , also pledged his support . Foreign Secretary David Miliband then denied that he was plotting a leadership bid , when on 30 July , an article written by him in The Guardian was interpreted by a large number in the media as an attempt to undermine Brown . In the article , Miliband outlined the party 's future , but neglected to mention the Prime Minister . Miliband , responded to this by saying that he was confident Brown could lead Labour to victory in the next general election , and that his article was an attack against the fatalism in the party since the loss of Glasgow @-@ East . Miliband continued to show his support for Brown in the face of the challenge that emerged in September , as did Business Secretary John Hutton , Environment Secretary Hilary Benn , and Chief Whip Geoff Hoon .

On 6 January 2010 , Patricia Hewitt and Geoff Hoon jointly called for a secret ballot on the future of Brown 's leadership . The call received little support and the following day Hoon said that it appeared to have failed and was " over " . Brown later referred to the call for a secret ballot as a " form of silliness " .

= = = By @-@ elections and 2009 local and EU elections = = =

In the local elections on 1 May 2008 , Labour suffered their worst results in 40 years finishing in third place with a projected 24 % share of the national vote . Subsequently the party has seen the loss of by @-@ elections in Nantwich and Crewe and Henley as well as slumps in the polls . A by @-@ election in Glasgow East triggered by the resignation of David Marshall saw the Labour party struggle to appoint a candidate , eventually settling for Margaret Curran , a sitting MSP in the Scottish Parliament . The SNP , Conservatives and Liberal Democrats all derided Labour for their disorganised nature , with Alex Salmond commenting " This is their ' lost weekend ' ? they don 't have a leader in Scotland , they don 't have a candidate in Glasgow East , and they have a prime minister who refuses to come to the constituency " . Labour lost the constituency to the Scottish National Party 's John Mason who took 11 @,@ 277 votes with Labour just 365 behind . The seat experienced a swing of 22 @.@ 54 % .

In the European elections , Labour polled 16 % of the vote , finishing in third place behind the Conservatives and UK Independence Party ( UKIP ) . Voter apathy was reflected in the historically low turnout of around thirty three percent . In Scotland voter turnout was only twenty eight per cent . In the local elections , Labour polled 23 % of the vote , finishing in third place behind Conservatives and Liberal Democrats , with Labour losing control of the four councils it had held prior to the election . In a vote widely considered to be a reaction to the expenses scandal , the share of the votes was down for all the major parties ; Labour was down one percent , the Conservative share was down five percent . The beneficiary of the public backlash was generally seen to be the minor

parties , including the Green Party and UKIP . These results were Labour 's worst since World War II . Brown was quoted in the press as having said that the results were " a painful defeat for Labour " , and that " too many good people doing so much good for their communities and their constituencies have lost through no fault of their own . "

= = = 2010 general election = = =

In April 2010 , Brown asked the Queen to dissolve Parliament . The General Election campaign included the first televised leadership debates in Britain . The result of the election on 6 May was a hung parliament . Brown was re @-@ elected as MP for Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath with 29 @,@ 559 votes .

= = = Resignation = = =

Brown announced on 10 May 2010 that he would stand down as Labour Leader , with a view to a successor being chosen before the next Labour Party Conference in September 2010 . The following day , negotiations between the Labour Party and the Liberal Democrats to form a coalition government failed . During the evening , Brown visited Buckingham Palace to tender his resignation as Prime Minister to Queen Elizabeth II and to recommend that she invite the Leader of the Opposition , David Cameron , to form a government . He resigned as leader of the Labour Party with immediate effect .

= = Post @-@ premiership = =

= = = Return to the backbenches ( until 2015 ) = = =

On 13 May 2010 , in his first public appearance since leaving 10 Downing Street , two days after resigning as Prime Minister and Leader of the Labour Party , Brown confirmed he intended to stay on in Parliament , serving as a Labour backbencher , to serve the people of his Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath constituency .

Towards the end of May 2010 , Brown began writing Beyond the Crash , completing it after 14 weeks . The book discusses the 2007 ? 08 financial crisis and Brown 's recommendations for future co @-@ ordinated global action .

He played a prominent role in the lead @-@ up to , and the aftermath of , the 2014 Scottish independence referendum .

On 1 December 2014 , Brown announced that he would stand down from parliament in May 2015 and on that month he did .

= = = IMF speculation = = =

In April 2011 , media reports linked Brown with the role as the next managing director of the International Monetary Fund following the scheduled retirement of Dominique Strauss @-@ Kahn . Brown 's successor and Leader of the Opposition , Ed Miliband , supported Brown for the role while the Prime Minister , David Cameron , voiced opposition to this . Following the arrest of Strauss @-@ Kahn for alleged sexual assault in May 2011 , and his subsequent resignation , these reports re @-@ surfaced . Support for Brown among economists was mixed but British Government backing for his candidature was not forthcoming and instead supported Christine Lagarde ? the eventual successful candidate ? for the post .

= = = Other appointments = = =

Sir Tim Berners @-@ Lee , who had worked with the government during Brown 's premiership to



publish government data on the internet in the data.gov.uk project , subsequently invited Brown to become a board director of the World Wide Web Foundation to " advise the Web Foundation on ways to involve disadvantaged communities and global leaders in the development of sustainable programs that connect humanity and affect positive change " . On 22 April 2011 it was announced that Brown would be taking on an unpaid advisory role at the World Economic Forum . Brown was also appointed as the inaugural ' Distinguished Leader in Residence ' by New York University and has already taken part in discussions and lectures relating to the global financial crisis and globalisation .

In July 2012 Brown was named by Secretary @-@ General Ban Ki @-@ moon as a United Nations Special Envoy on Global Education . The position is unpaid .

In December 2015 , Brown took his first large @-@ scale role in the private sector since standing down as prime minister in 2010 , becoming an advisor to PIMCO . Any money earned from the role is to go to the Gordon and Sarah Brown Foundation to support charitable work .

= = Personal life = =

Brown 's early girlfriends included the journalist Sheena McDonald and Princess Margarita , the eldest daughter of exiled King Michael of Romania . At the age of 49 , Brown married Sarah Macaulay in a private ceremony at his home in North Queensferry , Fife , on 3 August 2000 . On 28 December 2001 a daughter , Jennifer Jane , was born prematurely and died on 7 January 2002 one day after suffering a brain haemorrhage . They have two sons , John Macaulay ( born 17 October 2003 ) and ( James ) Fraser ( born on 18 July 2006 ) . In November 2006 , Fraser was diagnosed with cystic fibrosis . The Sun had learned of the situation in 2006 and published the story . In 2011 Brown stated he had wanted the details of his son 's condition kept private and that the publication had left him " in tears " . The Sun said they approached Brown and that discussion occurred with his colleagues who provided quotes to use in the article .

Sarah Brown rarely makes official appearances either with or without her husband . She is patron of several charities and has written articles for national newspapers related to this . At the 2008 Labour Party Conference , Sarah caused surprise by taking to the stage to introduce her husband for his keynote address . Since then her public profile has increased .

Brown has two brothers , John Brown and Andrew Brown . Andrew has been Head of Media Relations in the UK for the French @-@ owned utility company EDF Energy since 2004 . Brown is also the brother @-@ in @-@ law of environmental journalist Clare Rewcastle Brown . Brown wrote a piece for The Independent supporting Clare 's current environmental efforts on behalf of Sarawak .

Whilst Prime Minister , Brown spent some of his spare time at Chequers , the house often being filled with friends . The Browns have entertained local dignitaries like Sir Leonard Figg . Brown is also a friend of Harry Potter author J. K. Rowling , who says of Brown " I know him as affable , funny and gregarious , a great listener , a kind and loyal friend . "

= = Religion = =

The son of a Church of Scotland minister , Brown has talked about what he calls his " moral compass " and of his parents being his " inspiration " . He has , at least ostensibly , been keen to keep his religion a private matter . According to the Guardian , he is a member of the Church of Scotland .

Speech to 2008 Lambeth Conference

On 24 July 2008 , Brown spoke at the ? Walk of Witness ? in support of poverty reduction worldwide during the Lambeth Conference . He called the march " one of the greatest demonstrations of faith this great city has ever seen . " Brown said that " at our current rates of progress , " the MDGs will not be met by the 2015 deadline . He told the Anglican Communion bishops , " I say to you that the poor of the world have been patient but 100 years is too long for people to wait for justice and that is why we must act now . ? The full speech can be read at Gordon

Brown Speech to the Walk for Witness Rally 24 July 2008 .

= = Titles , honours , and awards = =

= = = Styles = = =

Mr James Gordon Brown ( 1951 ? 1982 )

Dr James Gordon Brown ( 1982 ? 1983 )

Dr James Gordon Brown MP ( 1983 ? 1996 )

The Right Honourable Dr James Gordon Brown MP ( 1996 ? 2015 )

The Right Honourable Dr James Gordon Brown ( 2015 ? present )

= = = Honours = = =

In March 2009 Brown was named World Statesman of the Year by the Appeal of Conscience Foundation , an American organisation ' dedicated to promoting peace , human rights and understanding between religious faiths ' . The award was presented by Rabbi Arthur Schneier who praised Brown 's " compassionate leadership in dealing with the challenging issues facing humanity , his commitment to freedom , human dignity and the environment , and for the major role he has played in helping to stabilise the world 's financial system " .

= = Publications = =

Keir Hardie : Labour 's first leader . BBC Radio Scotland programme . September 2015 .

Beyond the Crash : Overcoming the First Crisis of Globalisation . Simon & Schuster . 2010 .

The Change We Choose : Speeches 2007 ? 2009 . Mainstream Publishing . 2010 . ISBN 978 @-@ 1 @-@ 84596 @-@ 632 @-@ 4 .

Britain 's Everyday Heroes . Mainstream Publishing . 2007 . ISBN 978 @-@ 1 @-@ 84596 @-@ 307 @-@ 1 .

Courage : Eight Portraits . Bloomsbury Publishing . 2007 . ISBN 978 @-@ 0 @-@ 7475 @-@ 6532 @-@ 1 .

Gordon Brown ; Tony Wright , eds . ( 1995 ) . Values , Visions and Voices : An Anthology of Socialism . Mainstream Publishing . ISBN 978 @-@ 1 @-@ 85158 @-@ 731 @-@ 5 .

Where There 's Greed : Margaret Thatcher and the Betrayal of Britain 's Future . Mainstream Publishing . 1989 . ISBN 978 @-@ 1 @-@ 85158 @-@ 228 @-@ 0 .

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