

British politics after Theresa May

Notes & Cues:**Article:**

Theresa May strode out of the door of 10 Downing Street in a crimson business suit and bowed to the inevitable. Having failed three times to get her Brexit deal through a hopelessly divided parliament, and confronted with a Tory insurrection over her proposed fourth attempt, she announced on May 24th that she would step down as leader of the Conservative Party and Britain's prime minister.

The immediate trigger for Mrs May's departure was the failure of her revised withdrawal bill. But the bigger trigger was the general election that she called back in June 2017. Her instincts were right: increasing the Tories' majority would have allowed her to increase her bargaining power with her party and ensure that she was not hostage to pro- or anti-Brexit factions. But the election was a debacle.

British politics will now be consumed by the race to succeed Mrs May. The next leader will have to grapple with the same forces that have destroyed Mrs May: a country as well as a party that is torn over Brexit; a political system that is being pulled apart by the tension between representative and direct democracy; and a conflict with the European Union that, despite repeated statements to the contrary by Brexiteers, has most of the cards in its hand. Mrs May will not be the last prime minister to be brought to tears by Brexit.

Summary: