

Point of Order

Sarah Wollaston Chair, Health and Social Care Committee, Chair, Liaison Committee (Commons), Chair, Liaison Committee

On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. It is very rare for this House to find a named individual in contempt of Parliament, and to agree unanimously to admonish them. It would surely be a disgrace for Dominic Cummings to be rewarded, despite being found in contempt, with a post as senior adviser to the incoming Prime Minister. In opening the debate on the motion to admonish on 2 April, the Government stated that they had

"full respect for the privileges of the House of Commons and will continue to uphold them. They are crucial to the independence of Parliament and the strength of our democracy." [Official Report, 2 April 2019; Vol. 657, c. 942.]

Together with the Chair of the Committee of Privileges, Kate Green, who unfortunately had to leave for another engagement, I seek your advice, Madam Deputy Speaker, on whether the appointment of Mr Cummings would undermine that commitment to respect the House.

Eleanor Laing Deputy Speaker (First Deputy Chairman of Ways and Means)

I thank the hon. Lady for her point of order, and for her courtesy in giving me notice of it. She will know very well that the appointment of persons to official positions at Downing Street or elsewhere is not a matter that can be addressed by the Chair, but resolutions of this House are a matter of concern to the Chair. I can confirm that the House passed a resolution on 2 April that said, in terms, that Mr Cummings

"committed a contempt both by his refusal to obey" a

"Committee's order to attend it and by his subsequent refusal to obey the House's Order of 7 June 2018" [Official Report, 2 April 2019; Vol. 657, c. 941.]

and the House therefore formally admonished him for his conduct.

The hon. Lady has drawn this important matter to the attention of the House and, indeed, the Government, and although I can give her no further help at this moment, I am quite sure that she will find a way of pursuing her concerns. Not least, the matter is in her own hands when she chairs the Liaison Committee. I am quite sure that she will find a way of taking this matter forward, which would be quite proper.

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