# Veterans Minister Johnny Mercer criticises Downing Street's communication strategy



Veterans Minister Johnny Mercer has criticized Downing Street's communication strategy, suggesting more airtime should be given to popular Cabinet members like Penny Mordaunt and Kemi Badenoch. Mercer conveyed his concerns in a memo written during a train journey on May 6, 2024, that was photographed by a passenger and shared with the media.

Mercer indicated that No 10's focus remains on managing Prime Minister Rishi Sunak as if he still enjoys the popularity he had when he took office. He described the communication approach as "haphazard, un-themed and loose," faulting the decision to feature "average performers" such as Transport Secretary Mark Harper in key media slots.

The memo highlighted that both Badenoch and Mordaunt are more popular among Conservative members according to recent polls, with Sunak's rating significantly lower. Mercer, a long-time supporter of Sunak, also expressed frustration at the resistance from special advisers to his proposals, including one to allow veterans to use their IDs at polling stations.

Labour’s Shadow Paymaster General, Jonathan Ashworth, commented on the memo, suggesting that the internal dissent indicates a broader lack of confidence in Sunak's leadership.