# Michael Gove to Step Down, Conservative Party Faces Struggles Ahead of General Election



Housing Secretary Michael Gove announced he will not stand in the upcoming General Election, citing the "toll" of nearly 20 years in public office and the need for "a new generation to lead." This follows a post-war record of 78 Conservative MPs stepping down, surpassing the previous high of 72 who quit before Labour's 1997 landslide victory. Prominent figures among those stepping down include former Prime Minister Theresa May and former ministers such as Dame Andrea Leadsom and Nadhim Zahawi.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has launched a summer election campaign with a statement outside 10 Downing Street. However, his campaign faced a rough start with several gaffes, including a rain-soaked announcement and an awkward visit to the Titanic Museum in Belfast. Sunak's pledge to deport migrants to Rwanda faced setbacks, and his party trails behind Labour in the polls. Notable Conservative departures and internal disquiet have added to the party's challenging position.

Opposition leader Sir Keir Starmer has proposed lowering the voting age to 16 and 17, arguing that those old enough to work and pay taxes should have a say in how their money is spent. The Labour campaign has centered on economic stability, contrasting with Sunak's emphasis on hard work and tax adjustments.

Both leaders are engaging in nationwide tours to rally support, with Sunak visiting his Yorkshire constituency and Starmer campaigning in the Midlands and lower-league football clubs. The election's outcome remains uncertain, with both parties navigating challenges and public scrutiny as they approach the July 4 vote.