

Why Home Secretaries should not have used offshore

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The [Bahamas Leaks show that Amber Rudd](#), the UK's home secretary, has been shown to have had links with two Bahamas registered companies to which she had not made apparent previous reference. The details of what she and they did can be found elsewhere; I am concerned here with the consequence of this revelation.

It should be remembered that the Home Secretary's job, above all else, is to uphold the rule of law in the UK. I am aware that the Justice Ministry has a specific task in the regard now, but the Home Secretary has the overall charge. It is one of the great offices of state.

It is also appropriate to note that I define secrecy jurisdictions as places that intentionally create regulation for the primary benefit and use of those not resident in their geographical domain with that regulation being designed to undermine the legislation or regulation of another jurisdiction and with the secrecy jurisdictions also creating a deliberate, legally backed veil of secrecy that ensures that those from outside the jurisdiction making use of its regulation cannot be identified to be doing so. This understanding has become commonplace [since I first suggested it](#).

The contradictions between the task of the Home Secretary and the role of secrecy jurisdictions is immediately apparent: one is tasked with upholding the law that secrecy jurisdictions and their users seek to subvert. It is very hard to think of roles more juxtaposed. And now Amber Rudd holds the post of Home Secretary as someone who used tax havens and who did not reveal that fact when talking about David Cameron's father's activities in such places not that long ago.

If she had done so at that time and said she had changed her mind about their use and role her position now would be easy to manage: anyone is entitled to realise they have made a mistake, apologise and move on (assuming they have not broken the law) and expect the apology and change of heart to be accepted. But we have never heard that come from Amber Rudd, as far as I am aware. In that case questions as to whether she is now fit for office, given that she had a specific opportunity to make such apology in the recent past, are appropriate.

I will be explicit: you cannot, in my opinion, believe that secrecy jurisdictions like the Bahamas have a valid role when that role is to undermine the rule of law in other countries and also be UK Home Secretary. Your job as Home Secretary will be compromised if that is what you believe. It is a hard enough task for anyone to do. When your beliefs undermine your ability to undertake the task you have no chance of doing it properly.

It may be time for Amber Rudd to go.