

It's as if the government want to open the floodgates t...

Published: January 13, 2026, 2:54 am

As [Politico reports](#) this morning:

As the prime minister returns to Westminster, the news is quickly moving on to a remarkable attempt by Downing Street to use its parliamentary majority at a vote this afternoon to overturn the 30-day suspension handed to scandal-hit Conservative MP Owen Paterson. No. 10 appears to be plotting to crush the independence of the current system for investigating MPs' wrongdoing, by establishing a new committee with a Tory majority that would redraw the rules and leave the government open to the charge that it is marking its own homework.

As Politico also note, Tory MPs are claiming the House committee that sanctioned Paterson was wrong. They say he was acting in the public interest whilst promoting two companies to whom he acted as a paid adviser. So as Politico notes:

Playbook reread the standards committee report and the findings of the commissioner last night. On Paterson's side of the argument, Stone does appear to agree with him that he was acting in good faith and attempting to raise what he considered to be important public health issues with ministers and relevant bodies. She also finds Radox and Lynn's saw no immediate financial gain from his actions.

However, the emails from Paterson to ministers and the Food Standards Agency are extremely problematic. In the emails, Paterson does repeatedly seek meetings between ministers, officials and the companies, while in the same breath praising things like their "state of the art technologies" that he claims could "deliver dramatically better health outcomes." It is pretty clear why the commissioner and the committee judged he was acting as a paid advocate, lobbying on behalf of firms in breach of the rules.

In other words, a platform not noted for left-wing bias can spot the evidence on which he was found guilty of what amounts to taking cash for influence. In other countries we would call that corruption.

However, remember that on 17 October the [Law Gazette](#), amongst many others,

reported that:

A mechanism' to allow the government to introduce ad hoc legislation to correct court judgments that ministers believe are 'incorrect' will form part of proposals to reform the Human Rights Act, the lord chancellor [Dominic Raab] has revealed.

In one sweeping moment, that government announced that the rule of law was going to be brought to an end.

It now seems that they want to pave the way for that by ending the requirement that there be parliamentary standards that must be obeyed in the Commons.

It's as if they wanted to open the floodgates to corruption.