

The force dividing society that Sunak so obviously fear...

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Rishi Sunak must be really desperate. He must also know that he has already completely lost the youth vote in the forthcoming general election. How do I know? This is because he is proposing the reintroduction of national service for 18-year-olds.

The [FT report](#) on this proposal is considerably more useful than that in the Observer, and notes:

The move is part of what he said was an effort to provide security and opportunity in “an increasingly uncertain world”.

Sunak plans to require 18-year-olds to work with the armed forces on a 12-month placement or carry out community work, in a bid to reinforce his claim that he is best-placed to increase security in the UK.

“Generations of young people have not had the opportunities or experience they deserve and there are forces trying to divide our society in this increasingly uncertain world,” Sunak said.

There are, in other words, a whole mass of messages in here.

First, apparently fourteen years of Tory government has failed young people. Few of them would disagree, in my experience.

Second, the fact that they do not agree with him means that they are, in his opinion, a “force trying to divide our society”.

Third, they must, therefore, be forced back into line.

Fourth, this will apparently create certainty, otherwise known as mindless compliance with the orders of those who created this problem in the first place.

Politics in this country could do without stupidity on this scale when there are so many real issues requiring attention. But to address them would require Sunak to admit that

the force that has divided society is his own party, and that would never do.