

24th of November, The Times, Philip Webster

CORBYN'S LABOUR

Despair for Labour MPs as members show they still love Corbyn

Labour MPs may have wished they could go back to sleep after waking up this morning to [our poll in *The Times* showing that Labour members back Jeremy Corbyn by a two-thirds margin](#) while a big majority of voters don't think he should take the party into the next election.

He may have just endured a dire week, the hard left is reported to be engineering a takeover of constituency parties, the ruling body is trying to clamp down on criticism of the leader while reportedly still allowing "trolling" of his opponents, and the "party within a party" Momentum group is flexing its muscles.

But Corbyn sails on serenely in the eyes of the people who voted for him by such a large margin, making any attempt to get rid of him any time soon virtually impossible. The gap between the party and the people it needs to get elected has never been wider.

Corbyn was elected in September with 59 per cent of the vote. Now, according to the YouGov poll, 66 per cent of Labour members believe that he is doing "well".

As Sam Coates writes, the findings are a remarkable endorsement after clashes between the leader and his shadow cabinet, his questioning of the shoot-to-kill policy for terrorists, and confusion over the party's approach on austerity.

For the first time since the leadership election, YouGov polled all those who could have voted in the contest. Two thirds of the party's full members, registered supporters who paid £3 to sign up, and trade unionists approve of Corbyn's performance. This rises to 86 per cent among those who voted for him.

Corbyn's approval rating is higher than the 59 per cent who voted for him because he has impressed 49 per cent of Andy Burnham's supporters and 29 per cent of Yvette Cooper's. The poll suggests that any coup attempt would lead to Corbyn or a fellow left-winger being returned to office by members and supporters.

Nationally, the Conservatives have a 15-point lead over Labour, at 42 per cent against 27 per cent, according to ComRes — the highest lead recorded by any pollster since 2010.

The group polled by YouGov, which is seen as the "battleground" both by allies of Corbyn and his opponents in the parliamentary party, clearly continues to back him on a range of measures.

Less than a fifth of Labour members and supporters think that he should stand down now, compared with three in five members of the public. Meanwhile, 57 per cent of Labour members think that Mr Corbyn should take the party into the next election, against 28 per cent of the public.

The present cohort of Labour members and supporters also appear to back automatic reselection contests for MPs, which could mean ousting waves of mainstream MPs. Meanwhile Labour's national executive is looking at a new code of conduct that could clamp down on criticism of Mr Corbyn on social media. According to one account, "several NEC members raised the issue of the very harmful leaks to the media and the very damaging way in which social media is being used".

The Times also reports that Momentum, the nationwide network of Jeremy Corbyn's supporters, has [suffered a backlash after urging activists to lobby their MPs against supporting military action in Syria](#).

The organisation launched an online campaign declaring "Don't bomb Syria". A graphic on social media adds: "Support Jeremy Corbyn. Pressure your MP . . . Stop David Cameron's drive to war."

The Mail reports that [hard-left activists are plotting to seize control of local Labour parties across the country](#) to impose a 1980s-style anti-war, pro-unilateral disarmament agenda. Corbyn supporters are running "sectarian" campaigns to take control of every senior position in constituency Labour parties. The warning, contained in an email sent to backers of a moderate Labour campaign group Labour First, lays bare the civil war raging inside the party, it says.

Rachel Sylvester's column in *The Times* today begins with these words: "[It's no longer a question of 'if' but 'how', not of 'whether' but 'when'](#)". There has been such a fundamental breakdown of trust between Jeremy Corbyn and his MPs that it can be only a matter of time before they move against him."

That, without doubt, is an accurate reflection of the feelings of MPs. Now, even more, they know what they are up against.