

Your Party leadership elections put Corbyn in charge

Time for a revolutionary opposition

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Your Party's leadership election confirmed the political character of the organisation: a vehicle for advocating timid reforms, driven by Jeremy Corbyn and a narrow clique of ex-Labour Party officials.

The results were a rout for the opposed Grassroots Left faction led by Zarah Sultana. Its declared aim of pushing Your Party to the left, rejecting a Labour Party 2.0 in favour of building an anti-Zionist, anti-imperialist party dedicated to nationalising the economy, suffered a bruising rejection.

Corbyn's faction, The Many, secured 14 of the 24 seats available on the Central Executive Committee leadership body, including Corbyn and former Labour MP and current independent councillor Laura Smith as public office holders. Sultana and Grace Lewis, a former Labour councillor turned independent, take up the other two public office holder posts. Across the 24 seats, however, Grassroots Left won only seven positions.

The unavoidable conclusion is that Your Party's members are overwhelmingly satisfied with Corbyn's perspective for the organisation to serve as his vanity project and a meek participant in a loosely defined anti-Reform UK "left", including not only Zack Polanski's Green Party but also sections of the Labour Party.

If, as is expected, Keir Starmer is removed as leader, there is nothing preventing a wider "tactical alliance" with Labour.

Corbyn and his allies can now implement any policy decisions they see fit. The Many, led by Corbyn's witch-hunter in chief Karie Murphy, has already been using its control of the party's apparatus to suspend and expel the more prominent members of pro-Sultana groups, such as the Socialist Workers Party. It will now inevitably extend this purge.

The Many's manifesto declared existing "proto-branches" illegitimate, "run by the Socialist Workers Party and other sectarian groups... seeking to exert control of the party through control of the branches" and leaving "ordinary individual members... effectively excluded". They will be replaced by "official" branch structures.

Corbyn's camp also immediately announced that he would assume the position of the party's "leader in parliament", despite no such position existing under its constitution.

This is the shape of things to come. Corbyn currently leads an Independent Alliance group of five MPs including Your Party

figures Shockat Adam and Ayoub Khan, and two others, Iqbal Mohamed and Adnan Hussain, who left the party last year in protest at the Sultana faction—one of whom is now reportedly considering rejoining.

Demonstrating a wilful blindness to this reality, Grassroots Left's response statement spoke of the proto-branches being "recognised immediately", of "no more witch hunts or stitch-ups", the "reinstatement of the expelled" and "building a culture of mutual respect".

The most significant statement in Sultana's personal response was the insistence that "now is the time to work together." Her message also concluded, "The work continues—together."

The Socialist Workers Party, the largest outside group active in Your Party and whose membership has suffered the most expulsions, made Sultana's declaration appear grounded. *Socialist Worker's* post-election article was headed, "After Your Party leadership results, time to get the project back on track". The phrase takes up The Many's own slogan, using it to advocate a course from now on of "welcoming all socialists".

To minimise Grassroots Left's defeat, the SWP clutches at the straw that Corbyn "was endorsed by both slates". They cite uncritically his cynical statement, "We have a precious opportunity to unite our movement around a bold vision for this country," as if this includes them.

The *Socialist Worker* speaks politely of The Many having a "more moderate vision" and of "two dangers": that the leadership continues with "the methods of Labourism that were once directed against them" and that it "institutionalises the factional dynamics that have paralysed Your Party and alienated supporters for months".

The SWP calls for a line to be drawn in the sand and the CEC to "seek from day one to unite Your Party behind a collective leadership that works together and with members on the ground to immediately start pushing outwards."

Once again Britain's pseudo-left has confirmed that nothing will push them to conflict with the wider labour and trade union bureaucracy, waging a serious struggle for a socialist alternative to Starmer's government of austerity and war.

Corbyn's victory has a pyrrhic character, however. He heads a rump organisation with most of those initially attracted having long since turned their backs on it.

The wave of enthusiasm generated by the announcement of Your Party last July, which saw 850,000 people express an interest in joining, was, by the time of the founding conference in late November, whittled down to a declared 55,000 members. The leadership elections saw 25,000 people vote, out of 41,000 validated members.

This is the most precipitous decline ever in organised support for any newly formed party. It has left behind a largely ageing membership of former Labour voters who saw Corbyn as their natural leader and had little time for Sultana and Grassroots Left's more radical phrases.

As for its wider constituency, 18 percent of Britons suggested they would be willing to vote for Your Party in July, down to 12 percent in November, and according to a recent poll—to barely 1 percent today.

It has been heavily eclipsed by the Green Party, which has grown to nearly 200,000 members since Polanski was elected leader last September, and seen polling figures rise from 10 to 16 percent.

The Greens' rise was underscored within hours of the Your Party leadership results being announced, as its candidate, Hannah Spencer, won the Gorton and Denton by-election, more than tripling the party's vote share to 41 percent, halving Labour's total to 25 percent and comfortably beating Reform UK on 28 percent.

Polanski is a political operator who began his career in the Liberal Democrats and whose recent left-wing line is without genuine political foundations. His ability to win support is down to the total absence of competition by the largely discredited and supine Corbyn.

Novara Media, which has backed the Greens since Polanski's leadership victory, was scathing: "If Your Party thinks it can build a second national movement on the cult of Corbyn, it has another thing coming. There is a new left populist leader [Polanski] in town, one who has caught the zeitgeist... Corbyn's continued visibility within Your Party will rally some old faithfuls back to the flag... but will struggle to draw in anyone new."

As richly deserved as Corbyn's declining political stature is, more is at stake for the working class. Once again, Britain's pseudo-left, in gravitating around Corbyn, Sultana and Your Party, has worked to disorient those seeking a genuine socialist alternative, perpetuating rather than remedying the crisis of leadership and perspective facing the working class.

From 2015 they held up Corbyn's leadership of the Labour Party as heralding its transformation into a force for socialism. For the last six years, they have lobbied for Corbyn to assume his role as the only viable leader of a new left opposition to Starmer's Labour Party. They have not changed their tune by a single note in the aftermath of this latest debacle.

In contrast, the Socialist Equality Party has argued that the working class needs a new party of an entirely different character: a revolutionary socialist party opposed to the Corbynites and to illusions that social gains can be defended through a programme of protest politics and parliamentary pressure—however radically presented.

"The development of globalised production during the 1980s," we wrote:

fatally undermined all parties, trade unions and other organisations rooted in the nation state, destroying any possibility of securing reforms through limited trade union action and parliamentary reform. In every country, parties and trade unions committed to the defence of the capitalist profit system responded by abandoning reforms, demanding instead endless sacrifices by workers in the name of global competitiveness and carrying out an endless series of betrayals.

This "did not lead automatically to workers breaking from reformist illusions, but the turn by millions away from their old bureaucratic leaderships evidenced the unprecedented objective opportunities to win workers to a genuine socialist perspective."

The SEP, we explained, "understood this as the essential basis for the construction of a new revolutionary internationalist leadership, whereas the SWP treats it as a political hiccup presenting no way forward other than for workers to search again and again for a new reformist road."

Amid the factional conflict between Corbyn and Sultana, we insisted that "the issue facing workers was whether to support a programme and party based on reformist delusions or build one dedicated to the struggle for socialist revolution. The pseudo-left stands unambiguously for the promotion of reformist delusions."

We urge workers and students to examine the following articles published by the SEP and take the decision to **join and fight** for it:

- ? Corbyn's new left party—What it is and what it isn't
- ? The UK's "Your Party" implodes—build the Socialist Equality Party
- ? An open letter to supporters of Corbyn's Your Party
- ? Your Party's factional warfare: The real issue for workers is reformist delusions or revolution
- ? Jeremy Corbyn's Your Party founding conference: Witch-hunts and expulsions against the left
- ? Jeremy Corbyn attacks Zarah Sultana's demand for nationalisation against the billionaires
- ? The "Your Party" debacle, Socialism AI and the fight for a revolutionary party
- ? Corbyn's anti-socialism, Sultana's reformism and the necessary revolutionary alternative
- ? Jeremy Corbyn: Britain's anti-socialist witch-hunter



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