

Jeremy Corbyn Is a Thoroughly Decent Man. Here's What His Victory Means

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Jeremy Corbyn's victory in the Labour leadership battle in Britain is a victory for decency and for political integrity. It is also a blow at a British establishment that has become ossified and out of touch.

Whilst the war in Syria, Brexit and the American election have been the biggest news items of the summer, there's been an election in Britain that ought to raise a combination of hope, fear and eyebrows. The Labour party have spent the last few months tearing themselves to bits over the leadership of Jeremy Corbyn.

Corbyn was elected to lead the party last year due to the overwhelming support of ordinary party members. The party establishment did not like this one bit. In the aftermath of Brexit and frankly to serve as a distraction from the publication of the Chilcot Report in which Tony Blair was condemned by the very establishment from which he used to hold power, Labour members of Parliament decided to challenge Corbyn to a leadership election, expressing a lack of confidence in his leadership. Initial challenger Angela Eagle failed to land and dropped out of the race early on leaving Corbyn to battle Owen Smith, a man so obscure, he once looked in the mirror and didn't see his own reflection. Corbyn has just re-won his leadership by a bigger margin than he did last year. But who is Jeremy Corbyn?



Jeremy Corbyn is unique in the world of electoral politics. He is for all intents and purposes, a highly consistent man, a principled man, an ideologically unambiguous man, an honest man and a decent man. He entered Parliament in 1983 and made a career as a member of the Bennite left wing of the Labour party. His positions are that of classic left-wing Labourism: he is anti-war, he is pro nationalisation of industries, generally in favour of wealth distribution and an expansion of public services. Like his policies or hate them, he's never hidden them. Jeremy Corbyn does what he says on the tin.

Therefore one would think that any challenge to Corbyn's leadership would be ideologically based. On the surface, this is what the leadership race was: a fight for the heart and soul of the Labour party. Was Labour going to be a democratic socialist party or a Blairite party which in effect was a neo-liberal and ultra-hawkish party?

The people have clearly had enough of Blairism and the Diet Blairism of his immediate two successors. But the election sadly was not fought on this basis, demonstrating that a Labour party once famous for serious, impassioned and at times long winded debates may have found its soul but lost its conscience.

Owen Smith himself was something of a stand-in as no true believing Blairite ended up having the guts to enter the race. Smith and Corbyn actually agreed on more than they disagreed on with the exception of Smith being a die-hard Europeanist and Corbyn stating that the Brexit vote must be respected. The Blairites had conceded the ideological battle to Corbyn's classical British socialism before the election even began, and instead resorted to personal attacks on one of the few nice people in modern politics.

The soft spoken and gentle Corbyn was called a bully; the long-time anti-fascist and anti-racist champion was called anti-Semitic; the veteran anti-war campaigner was painted as some sorted of traitor; the man whose economic policies are similar to those of latter day American icon Bernie Sanders and of many parties which are sweeping southern Europe and

beyond was painted as some sort of neo-Stalinist; and one of the few honest men left in politics was called unelectable.

The Blairites used to a fault every dirty trick in the book to discredit a man who is beyond corruption.

It remains to be seen whether Labour can remain united. There is a possibility that those on the right of the party may form a new neo-Liberal bloc, whilst Corbyn will consolidate around socialists.

But more importantly, it does just beg the question: is the four party system which has emerged in Russia something Britain and others could learn from?

My previous articles and interview on RT during the recent State Duma elections praised the diversity of ideas being debated in the Duma. The Duma has a Communist party on the left, A Fair Russia on the centre-left, and United Russia and the LDPR on the centre right (though to be fair many of United Russia's and the LDPR's economic policies are far to the left of those of most European conservative parties).

Perhaps in order to better reflect the ideological diversity of the British people a new British parliament could have the following: a Corbyn led left-wing party, a Liberal party which can remain a safe place for the Blairites to regroup, a centre-right Conservative party that can campaign for Diet Brexit, and a right wing UKIP campaigning for a 'hard Brexit'?

On paper it sounds like a fairly good idea, but the health of Britain's parties is not good.

UKIP having won the battle for Brexit seem to be losing the war, and the party may well disintegrate unless there's a big post-Brexit upheaval. The Liberal Democrats are something of a rudderless ship with little presence in Parliament. The Conservative party, once described by Benjamin Disraeli as 'an organised hypocrisy', is fast living up to that reputation, whilst despite Corbyn's consistency the Parliamentary Labour Party as a whole appears to be something of a disorganised hypocrisy.

So whilst the British party political system has seen days of better functionality, Corbyn's victory is a victory less for socialism than for honesty.

It's nice to see a decent man win. It doesn't happen very often.

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