
UK: LABOUR PARTY TO VOTE ON KEEPING SECOND BREXIT REFERENDUM

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Britain's opposition Labour Party will vote this week to keep a second Brexit referendum on the table if Prime Minister Theresa May fails to pass her plan to leave the European Union through parliament, media reported.

Earlier, Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn said he would back a second Brexit referendum if his Labour Party voted to pursue the move, heaping pressure on May, whose plans for a divorce deal with the EU have hit an impasse.

He also said he preferred a new election to a new referendum on Brexit, reluctant to back growing demands to support a "People's Vote" on Britain's decision to quit the EU for fear of losing those Labour members who voted to leave.

After about a five-hour meeting of party members, Labour will vote on a motion that according to the BBC and Guardian newspaper, says: "If we cannot get a general election Labour must support all options remaining on the table, including campaigning for a public vote."

Labour's finance spokesman John McDonnell repeated that Labour was getting ready for an election.

"We believe general election is the best solution because people can then have a wide-ranging debate and also then choose the team that would then do the negotiations," McDonnell told Sky News.

He said a second referendum would be on the deal itself rather than a repeat of the question posed in 2016, whether to remain in the EU or to leave.

New election?

May has vowed to hold her nerve in the talks, pressing the EU to come up with an alternative proposal to her Chequers plan, named after the prime ministers official country residence where a deal was hashed out with her top ministers in July.

However, the standoff with the EU has prompted some to predict an early election, with local media reporting that Mays team has begun contingency planning for a snap vote in November to save both Brexit and her job.

Brexit Minister Dominic Raab again ruled out any new election later this year, describing the suggestion as being for the birds. He said Britain will not flit from plan to plan like some sort of diplomatic butterfly.

We are going to be resolute about this, Raab added.

While saying she will stick to her guns, May might have little choice but to change tack after a party conference where the deep divisions over Europe that have riven her Conservatives for decades will be plain for all to see.

A senior pro-EU Conservative lawmaker, Nicky Morgan, said May will have to give ground on trade and customs arrangements to overcome the biggest obstacle to a withdrawal accord – the prevention of a hard border between the British province of Northern Ireland and Ireland, a member of the EU.

I am not sure there is life left in Chequers, Morgan, chair of Parliaments Treasury Select Committee and a former Cabinet minister under Mays predecessor, told Sky News.

We want to see a deal. The question I think that has to be answered now by the government, by the EU leaders, is, What room for movement is there, how do we move on from where we ended up last week?

Kaynak/Source: