



Written by [James Murphy](#) on December 12, 2018

Theresa May Faces No-confidence Vote Over Handling of Brexit

The debate over Brexit in the U.K. has now devolved into a question of leadership as the U.K.'s House of Commons will vote today on whether Prime Minister Theresa May should remain as the leader of the Conservative Party in Great Britain.

Members of the U.K.'s House of Commons have delivered the 48 signatures needed to trigger a vote of no-confidence in May. The leadership challenge has come about owing to dissatisfaction with May's handling of Brexit negotiations and her cancellation of a Tuesday vote on her deal with the European Union.



May's Conservative (Tory) Party is in the midst of a battle between more conservative elements, who believe that the Brexit deal she has negotiated ties the U.K. far too closely with the EU, and other Tories who back May's deal. The signatures were submitted to the Conservative Party's [1922 Committee](#), which looks after the interests of the "backbenchers," who are members of Parliament (MPs) who hold no government office.

May, however, has no intention of backing down, insisting that the deal she has negotiated with the EU over the past 18 months is the right thing to do for Great Britain.

"[1922 Committee Chairman] Sir Graham Brady has confirmed he has received 48 letters and there will now be a vote of confidence," May confirmed, then added, "I will contest that vote with everything I've got."

May was defiant amid the uproar. "A change of leadership in the Conservative Party now would put our country's future at risk and create uncertainty when we can least afford it," May said. "A new leader wouldn't be in place by the January 21 legal deadline, so a leadership election risks handing control of the Brexit negotiations to opposition MPs in Parliament."

One vocal Tory Party opponent of May's has been Jacob Rees-Mogg, who attempted to trigger a no-confidence vote two weeks ago. Rees-Mogg claims that May has already lost the confidence of her party. "Unlike the President of the United States, where the president is elected for a specific term, the Prime Minister only holds office as long as she maintains the confidence of the House of Commons. I think ... the Prime Minister lost that."

"Ask any Conservative MP privately if he wants Theresa May to lead us to the next general election, and you'll find that answer is a resounding no."

But May has supporters too. Tory MP Anna Soubry, who has praised May's Brexit plan, said, "I think this is a disgraceful move by a small group of people who are engaging in their ideological driven self-interest," after the no-confidence vote was announced.



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Soubry believes, however, that May is her own worst enemy in the debate. “Unfortunately, Theresa has been feeding this monster that now has turned on her and, in turn, eat her.... If she doesn’t sort these people out, then our party is doomed.”

Should May win the vote today, the rules say she will be able to serve for at least one more year without any challenges from within her own party. If she loses, a battle for Tory leadership will ensue. Leading candidates for the PM position would include ex-Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson, and former Brexit secretaries Dominic Raab and David Davis, all of whom [resigned in July](#) over May’s Brexit plan.

In a last-minute appeal to backbenchers in her party, May has reportedly told members that she will not seek reelection in 2022. The move is similar to that of Germany’s [Angela Merkel](#) who recently told members of her party that she will not seek reelection owing to dissatisfaction over her immigration policies of the past few years. May is clearly appealing for support of the Brexit deal in exchange for her promise to leave her leadership position prior to the next general election.

It’s a fast-moving day in Great Britain. The results of the no-confidence vote are being counted as this article is published. The future of Brexit hangs in the balance as politicians mince words and blow hot air at one another.



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