



## Political Notebook by George Pascoe-Watson

Ed Miliband has emerged as hot favourite to win the Labour leadership after a last minute surge of support, I can reveal.

A last-minute rush of overnight betting on the younger Miliband is a clear indication that he is on course to seize Labour's crown tomorrow night.

There is growing confidence in the EdM camp and mounting despair in his brother's, according to my sources.

David Miliband's team believe his hopes have been dashed by hardcore, left-wing Labour Party members who have been won over by his brother's rejection of the Blair years.

The shadow Foreign Secretary's supporters are convinced books by Mr Blair and Peter Mandelson have portrayed David as a key part of the New Labour project.

And the effect has been to swing Labour's dwindling band of card-carrying members - half of whom are Londoners - behind his younger brother.

Until two days ago, David was thought to have crept ahead of his brother in the race for the Labour leadership.

But there has been a dramatic surge of support for EdM on the betting markets and it is clear he is now in pole position.

David's camp now believe they failed to get across their key message that only he can win a general election for Labour.

Crucially, I am told the relationship between the brothers is now so soured it is difficult to see David working in a major role under an Ed leadership.

EdM faces an exodus of influential Blairites unless he immediately abandons his left-wing rhetoric when he perches on Andy Marr's sofa on Sunday morning, assuming he wins.

There is a serious risk that remaining Blairites from all sections of the party will leave and withdraw their support - including party workers, donors and well-connected unofficial advisers.

He already has earned a reputation as a procrastinator who is unable or unwilling to take difficult decisions.

I am told David Cameron has ploughed resources into CCHQ in the event of an Ed victory - and will mercilessly expose Labour's lurch to the Left.

A Populus poll for today's Times says the mood the nation is clearly in favour of a David Miliband leadership thanks to his promise to stick to a centrist line.

The emerging likelihood of an Ed victory suggests this week's Labour Party conference in Manchester will cause a massive schism in the movement.

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