



British Conservatives Feel Political Pressure to Uphold Sovereignty

Prime Minister David Cameron [said what the party faithful were waiting to hear](#) at the Conservative Party Annual Conference in Great Britain. As the world watches the eurozone convulse in economic chaos and Chancellor Merkel of Germany get heckled in Greece for not doing more to help that bankrupt nation stave off the consequences of rampant spending, Cameron strongly backed a referendum on Britain's membership in the European Union.



"I said no, Britain comes first and I vetoed the EU Treaty" Cameron told Conservative Party activists at the conference. It is widely expected that Cameron will also demand a freeze in the EU budget next month and he will continue to oppose efforts in Brussels to "coordinate" the budget policies of the member nations.

The United Kingdom Independence Party or UKIP has been pressing Cameron's Conservatives for more. Polls have shown that UKIP is pulling more and more potential voters and that it could actually become the nation's third largest political party. Right now the Liberal Party, which is generally considered the middle of the road party between the Conservative Party and the Labor Party, is drawing 12 percent of the vote while UKIP is drawing eight percent of the vote.

UKIP, however, does not necessarily draw more votes from one major political party than another. UKIP is often compared in British political analyses to the Libertarian Party in America and to Congressman Ron Paul. Next month's regional elections in Britain, which are often a barometer of political sentiment, are viewed by UKIP leaders as an opportunity to show the degree of unhappiness Britons feel for politics as usual.

The UKIP is concerned with the sovereignty of Britain. It also supports a radical tax simplification, a flat income tax, the abolition of inheritance taxes, and a lower corporate tax rate. The party also is a strong supporter of small business as this statement suggests:

Small businesses are the backbone of a dynamic, entrepreneurial economy and society. They are the innovators, creators and activists, people who take an idea and run with it in the marketplace. They are the ones who do not rely on the state for handouts, they are "get up and go" people who put in long hours and take real risks.

Although it has been accused of "racism," something the UKIP flatly denies, the party does see great danger in open borders and supranational government:

As a member of the EU, Britain has lost control of her borders. Some 2.5 million immigrants have arrived since 1997 and up to one million economic migrants live here illegally. Former New Labour staff maintain that this policy has been a deliberate attempt to water down the British identity and buy votes. EU and human rights legislation means we cannot even expel foreign criminals if they come from another EU country.



Written by [Bruce Walker](#) on October 11, 2012

The UKIP leaders also view the European Union parliamentary elections in 2014 as a chance to increase its presence in that body and make more clearly a case for reducing the power and influence of Brussels in the lives of British citizens.

Professor Ford at the University of Manchester has studied UKIP, and he believes that it will continue to do well as a protest vote for middle class Britons:

I would expect UKIP to do extremely well in the next European Parliament election. In that sense they are going to be a very important feature of British politics in the next two years, but whether they then are able to convert that into a general election, that is when we will find if it is a flash in the pan or not. There is no evidence that they are building the basis of support.

In fact there is a danger here for the Conservatives, because if they tack too far to the right in an attempt to keep the UKIP vote down, then they may lose Liberal Democrat leaning voters at the other end. In fact, Labour can pick up more seats through Lib Dem voters switching to Labour than the Tories can lose through Tory voters switching to UKIP.

The 2010 General Election, which made Cameron prime minister, had 572 UKIP candidates contest the other parties for seats. UKIP, however, failed to win any seats, although it did receive almost one million votes and just over three percent of the popular vote. The party strategy had been to win enough seats in the House of Commons so that it could be indispensable to any Conservative government formed.

Nigel Farage has strongly criticized the Conservative Party's approach to the European Union, characterizing that policy as "Surrender, surrender, surrender." As the eurozone sinks into deeper and deeper crisis, with very little willingness to address the fundamental concerns of overspending, overtaxing, and over-centralization of power in Brussels, small but growing parties in nations such as Britain, Finland, and the Netherlands are making a strong case for a rejection of the "United States of Europe" idea which the European Union represents.

Photo: Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron speaks at Britain's Conservative Party Conference, in Birmingham, England, Oct. 10, 2012: AP Images



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