

How the EU are planning their revenge on that `veto`

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Brussels taking revenge on David Cameron's worthless veto

[By Stuart Agnew](#)

Despite the triumphant homecoming following December's EU summit, the British prime minister's veto has only succeeded in ensuring that MEPS and officials plot against the UK – claims UK Independence Party MEP

• The latest buzz word in the European Parliament, when the subject of the euro crisis comes up is "solidarity". With the usual complacency, the architects of the euro disaster now feel that solidarity will save their beloved single currency. What they actually mean is that everyone else will have to cough up to repair the damage, assuming said damage can be repaired - which I seriously doubt.

David Cameron's so-called veto at the last European summit has been dressed up by the spin doctors as the British prime minister boldly standing up for the United Kingdom and, particularly, for the City of London. In reality, it was not a real veto, as there was no actual treaty available for him to block.

I am a substitute on the European Parliament's Constitutional Affairs Committee - or AFCO – and I have attended a number of its meetings, during which the intent to do everything possible to undermine Cameron has been made very clear. During a joint meeting of the AFCO and the economic committees on January 16, a European Commission representative - in answer to some tough questions from me about the legality of the EU's institutions spending money on developing the new economic arrangements for a new treaty following the summit in December - admitted that secondary legislation would be used to circumvent Cameron's veto. The key legislative areas are the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union articles 3.1c, 4.2 and 5.1.

The 22 to 26 countries partaking in the new intergovernmental conference can now simply forge ahead using any resources they may require from the EU. There will be no British presence at the meetings. The EU can correctly claim that it has competence in this area and can undertake all the necessary legislation through a series of directives and regulations. When presented to the European Council one by one, over the next three to five years, this legislation will only need a qualified majority to put them on the statute book. Cameron will have no power of veto in this arena and his triumphal return home from the summit now looks distinctly premature.

If this was not bad enough, his subsequent statement to the House of Commons that he wants the UK to remain permanently in the EU makes his claim to be a Eurosceptic utterly laughable. Not much more than a week after the Brussels summit and while everyone still thought that the veto was real, I attended an AFCO meeting and was appalled to find MEPs openly plotting against the UK. The meeting was in effect a conspiracy to find ways to undermine Cameron's position at the summit and should never have been held. One MEP passionately insisted that the commission should get involved. This is exactly what the veto is there to prevent.

At least, there were proper translation services at this meeting. I walked out of a previous meeting in protest at French only being spoken, with no translation. The AFCO has since selected three MEPs to take part in negotiations towards the new economic arrangements, while admitting that it has absolutely no political or legal mandate for involving itself in the negotiations - never mind selecting negotiators. I have made myself very unpopular in these meetings by demanding that the British veto be respected and challenging the committee to respect the rule of law. I told them that they might be high and mighty, but they are not above the law. Unfortunately, this committee has now had the last

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laugh. It is certainly true that the City of London does need saving from the clutches of the EU. The only problem is that Britain volunteered itself for supranational involvement in financial services as long ago as 1998. At the Cardiff summit of that year, Britain foolishly signed itself up to the development of the financial services action plan. A tidal wave of regulation ensued and we now have three EU-generated regulatory bodies covering banking, securities and insurance; all of which can be guaranteed to seek ever greater powers.

The EU is also cynically using the euro crisis as an excuse to tighten its grip over what it considers to be the lax and dangerous Anglo-Saxon financial markets. The union's rules-based culture will inevitably take over and Britain's influence will decline, unless it has the courage to leave. To put all this into perspective, during the financial year of 2009 - the financial services sector made a total tax contribution to the British exchequer of £53.4bn. It constitutes 11.2 per cent of total government tax receipts. The UK cannot afford to give this up and must fight to protect it. The British prime minister's much-vaunted veto has turned out to be worthless and he has lost out in three ways. He can have no executive influence on decisions that could involve taking money from British taxpayers. He has not repatriated a single power and he has made enemies who will seek revenge. Perhaps, his only consolation is that he has avoided the UK referendum that treaty change would have triggered.