

## [EU referendum lock](#) [1]

Written by [Felix Bungay](#) [2] | Tuesday 14 September 2010



Today the Coalition has announced its 'EU referendum lock' bill. The legislation is designed to prevent any more power being transferred to the EU without first having a referendum on the transfer of said powers. While this may be the intention of the legislation it already seems to be falling apart under scrutiny.

The first point to note is that since the passing of the Lisbon treaty the EU has no further need of any treaties (which would trigger a referendum under the bill) due to its self amending clause. This makes the bill all but worthless. However the bill will still cover the so-called 'ratchet clauses' which allow the EU to erode national veto's and steadily gain more powers.

Douglas Carswell, Roger Helmer and Bill Cash have all attacked the bill for being largely worthless, and it will be interesting to see what amendments Eurosceptic's put down later in the bill's passage.

Carswell has blogged that the Coalition has already failed to stop numerous important powers being ceded to the EU, 'since we promised this 'lock', the EU has 1) established a diplomatic corps, which we voted through the Commons, 2) given Eurocrats control over the City, 3) extended the EU arrest warrant, and 4) agreed to an inflation-busting EU budget increase. We've hardly stopped giving the EU more powers since May, have we??

This is the real point of the matter, that if powers are to stop being given away ministers must learn to say 'No?', 'Non?' and 'Nein?'. The successive 'give away' of money, power and sovereignty to Europe can only be stopped if ministers have the backbone to pick a fight, and none do. Cameron has always been keen to avoid confronting the European 'issue' and the presence of the Europhile Lib Dem's in the coalition will only solidify this position.

Ultimately Carswell asks 'Do ministers take us for fools??' The answer is clearly 'yes?'.  

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