

Published for the Stiftung für Wissenschaft und Demokratie/Portal für Politikwissenschaft (Germany), Prof Dr Melanie Sully, PhD. wrote a piece on rebels in the British House of Commons.

In the House of Commons the main parliamentary groups see themselves as an umbrella under which different sub-groups can be found. Often these can be so well organised that they conform almost to a 'party within a party'. Whilst coalition government is not so common as in Germany, the parties in parliament embrace different coalitions of groups in which also specialised information can be exchanged. Leaders of the parties in parliament expect their MPs to support them in votes and on important issues go to some lengths to convince doubters that they should follow the party line. This can follow a carrot and stick principle in which certain privileges can be offered or withdrawn.

Here we look at the UK election system, rebels in both the Labour and Conservative parliamentary groups and draw some conclusions

<https://www.pw-portal.de/repraesentation-und-parlamentarismus/ueberblick/rebellen-im-unterhaus-des-britischen-parlaments>



An Article written by Prof Dr Melanie Sully

www.zparl.de

Sully, Melanie: The British Party System in Flux

The British party system has been historically defined by two major parties, the Conservatives and the Labour Party. Parliamentary and election rules have reinforced this dominance which in the twenty first century is facing major challenges. The increasing use of referenda cutting across party lines, electoral volatility and a loss of trust in political institutions mean that even small parties can aspire to break the traditional party system. Issues such as immigration, the environment and international crises further undermine domestic political stability. New parties such as Reform UK with its charismatic leader, Nigel Farage, and a populist agenda but with only an embryonic organisation, have the potential to undermine the two-party system as we know it. Britain is an increasingly polarised society which is reflected in intra-party conflicts. Disputes between party activists, the parliamentary group and rival personalities contributed to the Conservatives' electoral debacle in the 2024 General Election but the performance of the Labour Party flatters to deceive. A Labour Government that fails to deliver will also feel the wrath of voters. Reform UK poses a significant challenge to the two main parties yet it too has to contend with internal bickering which could thwart its ambition to expand its electoral base. (ZParl, Jg. 55, H. 3)

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