



## Political Notebook by George Pascoe-Watson

Whoever wins tomorrow's General Election must fly to Berlin on Saturday to mark the 65th anniversary of Victory in Europe in World War II.

It's a reflection of the brutal and immediate way power is handed over in the UK's first-past-the-post system.

Life goes on.

Outgoing ministers must swap their chauffeur-driven Jaguars and Toyota Prius for the bus, the Tube or even their bicycle.

And the next PM - Gordon Brown, David Cameron or Nick Clegg - will have to represent Britain in Berlin whilst putting the finishing touches to their new Cabinet.

Mr Brown goes into tomorrow's General Election with the backing of just one daily national newspaper - the Daily Mirror.

Almost every other daily title has backed Tory leader Mr Cameron, ranging from The Sun to The Economist.

Only The Guardian and The Independent have thrown their weight behind Mr Clegg's LibDems.

The polls seem to be predicting some sort of hung Parliament but many at the heart of politics are braced for a Conservative victory.

Senior figures in Whitehall privately expect Mr Cameron to become Prime Minister some time on Friday morning.

Many are forecasting he will even have a Commons majority.

The more bullish are saying his majority could be more than 25 seats.

Perhaps that's why George Osborne is described in the FT today as fully expecting to become Chancellor of the Exchequer by the weekend.

Some would say it's risky to be heard publicly preparing for office without a single vote cast.

But his remarks underline a confidence felt behind the scenes that momentum may just turn the map of Britain blue.

Mr Osborne is already letting it be known to The City's bible that his plans are in place.

The independent review of the public finances will be an immediate act, minute one, hour one, day one of a Cameron government.

Mr Osborne even prepares the ground for eye-watering cuts in public spending which will certainly mean state jobs going.

Describing the Red Book as "a work of fiction" means one thing. He plans to tear up its tables and present a far worse picture to a nation before prescribing not just medicine, but radical, life-saving surgery.

Osborne makes it clear the Tory remedy is to grow the private sector so the current size of the state - 48% of national income - diminishes quickly.

This emphasis on encouraging growth from industry will mean a significant reduction in red tape which hampers firms from starting up or expanding.

Mr Osborne has had a good election.

It was his high stakes gamble to persuade business leaders to condemn the rise in National Insurance - and make that the central theme of the Tory campaign.

Not only did it work, it was a vital weapon in the Conservative armoury just when the LibDem surge began and Mr Cameron needed a rival story.

My sources have been told to expect Prime Minister Cameron and Chancellor Osborne working together on the economy from Downing Street - not split between number 10 and the Treasury.

This radical proposal would be aimed at showing the world they are working as one - and to Treasury mandarins they cannot make Mr Osborne a prisoner of HMT.

One of his first moves would be to send a Treasury minister to Brussels to monitor the EU directive on hedge funds which is sending shivers of fear through the City.

Discussions are also well underway in number 10 about the future of Mr Brown's advisors.

It is a sad fact that some people who've spent many, many years in number 10 will have to leave with a new administration.

In their place will come mainly young men and women who've never actually set foot in the building.

The security service will be vetting a hand-picked group of individuals even as I write to ensure they can actually enter Downing Street before The Queen has asked a new Prime Minister to form a government.

The new PM cannot possibly enter number 10 without some friendly faces already installed and ready to welcome him inside.

Of course, there is still a chance of a hung Parliament - as there is of Mr Brown pulling off the near impossible and winning outright.

Key figures in the civil service and the Royal Household have already agreed that whoever governs Britain in the event of a messy hung Parliament will be sorted over the weekend.

The markets must not be spooked by political uncertainty and there's no appetite for political horsetrading in private rooms.

I have rehearsed what is most likely to happen in the event of no overall majority for Mr Cameron's Tories.

Here he would run a minority government until able to fight a second election in November this year or February 2011 where many predict he would win a comfortable working majority.

I'll be watching the events of the night unfold with Andrew Neil on the BBC's election boat and reviewing the newspapers on Sky News on Friday morning.

By then we'll know who is Britain's 53rd Prime Minister.

Join me in the build-up to the election on Twitter - [http://twitter.com/gpw\\_portland](http://twitter.com/gpw_portland)