

Coalition Update: 2-8 August

Parliament

A good year for Parliament? (*Lords of the Blog*, 2 August)

Lord Norton sums up the first year of the Coalition in parliament

<http://lordsoftheblog.net/2011/08/02/a-good-year-for-parliament/>

Steve Richards: MPs find their voice at last (*Independent*, 4 August)

New Labour wanted a Parliament that caused it not a flicker of concern. Such manoeuvring is impossible now

<http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/commentators/steve-richards/steve-richards-mps-find-their-voice-at-last-2331227.html>

The Lords

Lords reform 1911–2011 (*Mark Pack's blog*, 3 August)

Mark Pack's notes on a fringe session at the Lib Dems' spring conference: Lord Norton and Lord Marks discuss the potential for Lords reform

<http://www.markpack.org.uk/23299/lords-reform-1911%E2%80%932011/>

Not the usual suspects after all? (*Ballots and Bullets blog*, 3 August)

Excellent analysis of the passage of the parliamentary voting system and constituencies bill in the Lords: the filibuster was initiated and carried out by a genuinely concerned group of Lords who intended to scrutinise a highly controversial bill assisted by a trio of ex-whips and ministers intent on trouble.

<http://nottspolitics.org/2011/08/03/not-the-usual-suspects-after-all/>

Conservative 'distinctiveness'?

Tory voters believe cuts should only be temporary (*Independent*, 3 August)

Just 31 per cent believed it was vital the Government cut spending and reduce taxes

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/tory-voters-believe-cuts-should-only-be-temporary-2330907.html>

Tories have reverted to type on public sector workers (*Guardian*, 3 August)

In 2006, Cameron attacked Labour for scapegoating public sector workers – yet they have never been so reviled as now

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/aug/03/public-sector-workers-tories-cameron>

Andrew Lansley condemned over HealthWatch scheme (*Guardian*, 3 August)

Health secretary's decision to launch groups designed to champion views of patients leads to complaints

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2011/aug/03/andrew-lansley-condemned-healthwatch>

Conservative party unease grows as young rebel MPs take on coalition (*Guardian*, 6 August)

Frustrated by governing with the Liberal Democrats, new MPs seek to take a stand for 'true Tory policies'

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2011/aug/06/conservative-party-rebels-young-mps>

Lib Dem distinctiveness

Liberal Democrats want inquiry into decriminalising drug possession (*Guardian*, 4 August)

The call for the inquiry serves a wider purpose for the Liberal Democrats who need to restore their radical credentials with younger voters alienated by the party's support for trebling of tuition fees.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2011/aug/04/liberal-democrats-decriminalising-drug-possession>

Why decriminalisation of drugs could create a headache for Clegg (*FT Westminster Blog*, 5 August)

Nick Clegg has been busy telling people recently that the Lib Dems are becoming known as a trustworthy party of government, more responsible on the economy than Labour and more compassionate than the Tories. What he doesn't want is a load of headlines painting the party as a campaign group pushing fringe issues

<http://blogs.ft.com/westminster/2011/08/why-decriminalisation-of-drugs-could-create-a-headache-for-clegg/#axzz1UKQyAP40>

Osborne plans to cut 50p income tax rate (*Independent*, 5 August)

David Cameron and George Osborne are discussing plans to cut the 50p rate of income tax, but the Liberal Democrats fear that reducing the top tax rate will be unpopular with the party's core voters who will see it as giving "tax breaks to fat cats".

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/osborne-plans-to-cut-50p-income-tax-rate-2332150.html>

Lib Dems to press for 'sweetener' in exchange for 50p tax rate cut (*Telegraph*, 5 August)

The Liberal Democrats will keep the pressure up on George Osborne next month by using their party conference to press for a "sweetener" in return for agreeing to cut the 50p high rate of tax.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/personalfinance/consumertips/tax/8684305/Lib-Dems-to-press-for-sweetener-in-exchange-for-50p-tax-rate-cut.html>

Nick Clegg is chasing women (*Independent*, 7 August)

The Liberal Democrat leader wants to kickstart his party by emphasising its distinctive appeal and by targeting female voters.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/nick-clegg-is-chasing-women-2333274.html>

Laws redux?

Exes scandal MP David Laws to be minister again (*The Sun*, 5 August)

David Laws is lined up for a surprise return to Government in the autumn

<http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/3734792/Exes-scandal-MP-David-Laws-to-be-minister-again.html?OTC-RSS&ATTR=News>

The Coalition has kept us afloat - but we need tax cuts to move forward (*Telegraph*, 6 August)

Tim Montgomerie calls for Laws to replace Cable as Business Secretary

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/columnists/tim-montgomerie/8686145/The-Coalition-has-kept-us-afloat-but-we-need-tax-cuts-to-move-forward.html>

Coalition unity

Global debt crisis vindicates coalition policies, says Nick Clegg (*Guardian*, 8 August)

Deputy prime minister says ECB appears to be calming markets and crisis backs coalition's sweeping spending cuts

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2011/aug/08/global-debt-crisis-nick-clegg>

Polls

Which party supporters are most right about the next election? (*Politicalbetting.com*, 4 August)

Conservatives and Labour think their own party will win small majorities; Lib Dems think the Conservatives 50-32

<http://www2.politicalbetting.com/index.php/archives/2011/08/04/which-party-supporters-are-most-right-about-the-next-electionthe-next-election/>

End of term polls: Cameron and the Conservatives not damaged by Hackgate, continued grassroots support for the Coalition, and Labour's unconvincing fiscal message (*ConservativeHome*, 6 August)

<http://conservativehome.blogs.com/thetorydiary/2011/08/end-of-term-polls-review.html>

Miscellaneous

Ministers go to war with green charities over planning shake-up "smears" (*Telegraph*, 6 August)

But growing concerns also expressed by backbenchers from both Coalition parties over new planning rules

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/greenpolitics/planning/8686085/Ministers-go-to-war-with-green-charities-over-planning-shake-up-smears.html>