

Coalition Update: 6-12 December

The Coalition and Europe

Cameron backs Clegg on referendum (*Times*, 6 December) **££**

David Cameron has rebutted Iain Duncan-Smith's claim that Britain should have a referendum on the EU, defending Nick Clegg for ruling out such a prospect.

<http://www.timesplus.co.uk/tto/news/?login=false&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.thetimes.co.uk%2Ftto%2Fnews%2Fpolitics%2Farticle3249144.ece>

Nervous Lib Dems toe the line on Europe (*FT*, 9 December) **££**

The FT claims Lib Dem MPs are "nervous", but following the leadership on the EU veto, because they trust Nick Clegg on the issue, as a man with considerable understanding and experience of the organisation. MEPs have been more outspoken in their outrage.

<http://blogs.ft.com/westminster/2011/12/nervous-lib-dems-toe-the-line-on-europe/#axzz1g3T93Tpw>

Can the Coalition survive David Cameron's veto (*Telegraph*, 10 December)

Iain Martin questions whether the coalition can survive the EU veto. He notes that Clegg could not oppose the veto entirely without risking the coalition, which looks secure for now. He claims it will last no further than 2013.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/eu/8948425/Can-the-Coalition-survive-David-Camerons-veto.html>

Clegg rages at spectacular Cameron failure (*Independent*, 11 December)

Nick Clegg appeared on television to criticise the use of the UK veto as sources close to him claimed he was angry at its deployment. They claim he had not agreed to an ultimatum, and that had he been there, things would have gone differently. Lord Oakeshott and other senior Lib Dems are now demanding that the Lib Dem ministers force Cameron to "fix" his mistake.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/clegg-rages-at-camerons-spectacular-failure-6275512.html>

The coalition's latest anxiety attack (*Spectator*, 11 December)

Peter Hoskins discusses the coordinated response of senior Lib Dems to the EU veto, claiming the party is "scared of annihilation" due to the effects of coalition on its credibility and pre-election commitments.

<http://www.spectator.co.uk/coffeehouse/7472763/the-coalitions-latest-anxiety-attack.thtml>

Can Nick Clegg and Ed Miliband now come together on Europe? (*Guardian*, 11 December)

Jackie Ashley discusses the possibility of Clegg and Ed Miliband coming to an agreement on the issue of Europe, made more likely that the Lib Dems daren't risk forcing a general election by leaving the coalition.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/dec/11/nick-clegg-ed-miliband-europe>

EU veto no threat to coalition (*Guardian*, 12 December)

Lib Dem Deputy Leader Simon Hughes and Cabinet minister Danny Alexander have denied the EU veto is a threat to the coalition agreement and defended Lib Dems (such as the

Deputy Prime Minister and party President) who expressed disappointment in its deployment.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2011/dec/12/eu-veto-no-threat-coalition>

Nick Clegg retreats into Euro fantasy land (*Telegraph*, 12 December)

A Telegraph leader claims that Nick Clegg is a hostage to the europhile left wing of his party and that he spoke out on the veto, despite such comments being electorally damaging, because he had no choice.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/telegraph-view/8950108/Nick-Clegg-retreats-into-Euro-fantasy-land.html>

High-handed approach that has exposed the Coalition's Faultline (*Independent*, 12 December)

David Owen criticises David Cameron for deliberately pushing Nick Clegg into a "blind alley". Owen calls this a miscalculation, due to the loss of the power of dissolution, as when a no confidence vote comes, more Lib Dems will go for it than might have done before Friday.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/commentators/lord-owen-highhanded-approach-that-has-exposed-the-coalitions-faultline-6275764.html>

The coming war of attrition (*Economist*, 12 December)

The Blighty column warns that recent Lib Dem comments on the veto are "setting dangerous precedents for the doctrine of collective cabinet responsibility." He predicts a war of attrition between europhiles and eurosceptics that could force an early election.

<http://www.economist.com/blogs/blighty/2011/12/coalition-tensions-over-europe>

Policy Making

Winston Churchill made history - David Cameron never will (*Telegraph*, 6 December)

Iain Martin, calls David Cameron a "manager" with no strong desire to be a consequential Prime Minister, a quality that has governed his position on Europe in recent months. He likens him to the last non-war coalition leader, Stanley Baldwin.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/8935868/Winston-Churchill-made-history-David-Cameron-never-will.html>

No 10 changes its tone over lobbyists (*Independent*, 7 December)

Downing Street has confirmed that lobbyists can influence policy "where we think they have legitimate concerns", following an Independent investigation into lobbyists' influence and practices.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/no-10-changes-its-tone-over-lobbyists-6273279.html>

David Cameron has been infected by Europe's technocratic disease (*Telegraph*, 8 December)

Fraser Nelson claims that David Cameron's "zeal" for governing has evaporated, turning him into a technocrat.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/columnists/fraser-nelson/8943589/David-Cameron-has-been-infected-by-Europes-technocratic-disease.html>

Policy Differences

Hands off our land (*Telegraph*, 6 December)

A large number of Lib Dem MPs and peers are putting pressure on Nick Clegg to water down changes to the planning regime.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/hands-off-our-land/8938063/Hands-Off-Our-Land-Now-Nick-Clegg-is-under-pressure-from-his-MPs-and-peers-to-reject-plans.html>

Clegg warns Tories not to demonise the public sector (*New Statesman*, 8 December)

Nick Clegg gave a speech chiding Conservatives who "demonise" the public sector.

<http://www.newstatesman.com/blogs/the-staggers/2011/12/public-sector-private-workers>

MoD suppresses Lib Dem report review... (*LibDemVoice*, 8 December)

CND General Secretary Kate Hudson accuses the MoD of suppressing the Lib Dem-led Trident Alternatives Review, which is not to be published.

http://www.libdemvoice.org/?p=26141&utm_source=tweet&utm_medium=twitter&utm_campaign=twitter

Parliamentary Defeats and Rebellions

Coalition government suffers first Commons defeat (*Guardian*, 7 December)

The coalition has suffered its first defeat in the Commons, on a motion related to the UK economy. A whip called the vote "meaningless" as it took place unexpectedly, due to opposition Parliamentary tactics.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2011/dec/07/coalition-government-first-commons-defeat>