

Coalition Update: 15-22 November

Coalition Divisions

Nick Clegg clashes with David Cameron over Europe (*Guardian*, 15 November)

Article reporting a rather predictable division at the top about precisely what role (if any) Britain should play in the EU in the wake of the eurozone crisis.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2011/nov/15/clegg-clashes-cameron-europe>

Fresh review of extradition laws ordered by Clegg (*Telegraph*, 18 November)

Perhaps significantly, Nick Clegg has broken with government ranks and set up a Lib Dem inquiry into extradition laws after the official review – which was included in the Coalition's Programme for Government – concluded that existing arrangements were fair.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/8900059/Fresh-review-of-extradition-laws-ordered-by-Clegg.html>

News from the Centre

Cameron stamps on the SpAds (*Spectator blog*, 15 November)

The PM summoned all Tory special advisers for a meeting at No. 10, reportedly to warn them 'that too much of the coalition's internal workings were being briefed out to journalists'

<http://www.spectator.co.uk/coffeehouse/7394608/cameron-stamps-on-the-spads.shtml>

David Cameron's statecrafty revolution (*Guardian*, 16 November)

An outline of the tensions rumoured to be developing at the top of government between Steve Hilton and George Osborne – and why this is a good thing for Cameron.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/nov/16/divided-conservatives-david-cameron?INTCMP=SRCH>

The Strange Survival of the Liberal Democrats?

Tim Farron: Labour 'utterly dishonest' about state of economy (*Guardian*, 18 November)

In-depth interview of the Lib Dem party president, often referred to as 'the party's leftist leader-in-waiting, the ideal candidate to take over from Nick Clegg and cosy up to Labour if the coalition crashes and the Lib Dems need their own plan B after the next general election.' Farron is in an up-beat mood.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2011/nov/18/tim-farron-interview-andrew-sparrow?INTCMP=SRCH>

Cleggmania: Round Two? (*Dale & Co*, 20 November)

Ex-Labour General Secretary Peter Watts argues that Nick Clegg and his party might not be so doomed as people think come May 2015, and the election won't herald a quick return to two-party politics in Westminster.

<http://www.iaindale.com/posts/cleggmania-round-two>

How best to boost growth? Coalition debate sees Tories argue for supply-side reforms, Lib Dems pushing for new 'pension infrastructure fund' (*Lib Dem Voice*, 15 November)

Blog post suggesting that Lib Dem economic policies are winning greater support in the Cabinet than Tory recommendations.

<http://www.libdemvoice.org/lib-dems-boost-british-growth-25896.html>

The Lib Dem brakes are still on (*Politics Home*, 20 November)

Paul Waugh argues that on the 50p tax rate, reforming strike laws, and the Beecroft report, Lib Dems in the Cabinet have demonstrated the strength of their influence over government policy.

<http://www.politicshome.com/uk/article/39967/the-lib-dem-brakes-are-still-on.html>

The Future Shape of the Coalition

Will the Coalition crack under the strain? (*Telegraph blog*, 16 November)

Robert Colvile claims that since the main justification for the Coalition – saving the public finances – is now a nonsense, Cameron should consider ending the Coalition and calling snap elections.

<http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/robertcolvile/100117941/will-the-coalition-crack-under-the-strain/>

Andrew Lilico: The first phase of the Coalition is over. We no longer need Lib Dem backbenchers to govern (*ConservativeHome*, 19 November)

With the Lib Dem backbenchers having offered ‘neither threat nor contribution’, and the Conservatives perfectly able to govern with the support of the Lib Dem ministers alone, Lilico argues that it is time the Tory leadership stopped letting the Lib Dem tail wag the dog, and focused on purely Conservative issues.

<http://conservativehome.blogs.com/thecolumnists/2011/11/from-andrewlilico-the-first-phase-of-the-coalition-is-over-we-no-longer-need-lib-dem-backbenchers-to.html>

Coalition Loyalty

The Independent View: And then there was one... (Unmasked! The only backbench Lib Dem MP 100% loyal to the Coalition) (*Lib Dem Voice*, 18 November)

Surprise, surprise, it's David Laws.

<http://www.libdemvoice.org/the-independent-view-and-then-there-was-one-unmasked-the-only-backbench-lib-dem-mp-100-loyal-to-the-coalition-25914.html>