

Coalition Updates: 20-26 December

Lib Dem Influence in Government

Taxing Judgments (*Times*, 20 December) **££**

Times leader praising Nick Clegg for pushing Lib Dem policies in government

<http://www.timesplus.co.uk/tto/news/?login=false&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.thetimes.co.uk%2Ftto%2Fopinion%2Fleaders%2Farticle3262258.ece>

Who is the British Foreign Secretary? (*Spectator*, 20 December)

Daniel Korski claims that Nick Clegg has usurped the role of Foreign Secretary's role in several key areas, especially on the issue of Europe. Clegg has resisted calls for him to push for the job, due to his weak electoral position.

<http://www.spectator.co.uk/coffeehouse/7503763/who-is-the-british-foreign-secretary.thtml>

Clegg seeks role at next EU summit (*Telegraph*, 23 December)

Deputy PM Nick Clegg is reportedly seeking a place at the table during EU summits, a right accorded to no other coalition government in the bloc. Chris Huhne has also criticised Conservative absence from the European People's Party.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/nick-clegg/8976454/Clegg-seeks-role-at-next-EU-summit.html>

How a wealth tax would pay dividends for Nick Clegg (*Independent*, 24 December)

Andrew Grice discusses the problem of maintaining a separate identity during a coalition. He warns that some Lib Dem ministers wield "disproportionate power" but are in danger of becoming technocrats, disconnected from their roots.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/commentators/andrew-grice/andrew-grice-how-a-wealth-tax-would-pay-dividends-for-nick-clegg-6281281.html>

Policy Differences

Huhne: Tory right wants UK to be semi-detached member of the EU (*Independent*, 23 December)

Chris Huhne has criticised the isolationist, anti-EU approach of Conservative eurosceptics.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/huhne-tory-right-wants-uk-to-be-semidetached-member-of-eu-6280775.html>

Conditions critical as Coalition prepares for battle of the NHS (*Times*, 26 December) **££**

John Pugh, chairman of the [Lib Dem] health committee, said that the time had come for an up-front debate about the true motivation behind Tory plans for a massive reorganisation of the NHS.

<http://www.timesplus.co.uk/tto/news/?login=false&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.thetimes.co.uk%2Ftto%2Fnews%2Fpolitics%2Farticle3269263.ece>

Alternatives to coalition

The political stalemate in the UK is incredible... (*Guardian*, 23 December)

Deborah Orr claims that the Lib Dems need to leave the coalition and negotiate a confidence and supply agreement, but they won't because they "enjoy power", despite "the way the chief secretary to the treasury, Danny Alexander, and the business secretary, Vince Cable, are used as a human shield to protect Osborne from media appearances".

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/dec/23/deborah-orr-liberal-democrats-take-a-stand>

Labour and the Lib Dems

Lib Dems should leave the coalition and join us (*Independent*, 21 December)

Ed Balls has said that the Lib Dems should seek to build ties with Labour in advance of a coalition.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/profiles/ed-balls-lib-dems-should-leave-the-coalition-and-join-us-6279901.html>

Lib Dems laugh off Ed Balls' calls for a new coalition (*Independent*, 22 December)

Simon Hughes and Lorely Burt were among the senior Lib Dems to dismiss Ed Balls' coalition offer. Other Liberal Democrats said the party would stick with the Tories but "put out feelers" to Labour in the run-up to the next election.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/lib-dems-laugh-off-ed-balls-call-for-a-new-coalition-6280396.html?origin=internalSearch>

Are the Lib Dems and Labour testing out their own coalition? (*Independent*, 22 December)

Steve Richards discusses the preparations for the possibility of a post-2015 Labour-Lib Dem coalition, claiming that relations between the two are becoming more cordial as both recognise the need for a potential working relationship.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/commentators/steve-richards/steve-richards-are-the-lib-dems-and-labour-testing-out-their-own-coalition-6280280.html?origin=internalSearch>

Durability of the Coalition

GO'D predicts coalition will last until 2015 (*Channel 4*, 21 December)

Sir Gus O'Donnell has claimed that although contingency plans exist for the collapse of the coalition, he believes it is stable and likely to last until 2015.

<http://blogs.channel4.com/michael-crick-on-politics/god-predicts-coalition-will-last-until-2015/566>

Opinion: which twin is the Tory? (*LibDemVoice*, 23 December)

Lib Dem writer Simon Titley claims that those in both coalition parties who favour a long-term pact are wrong, as "the parties are separated by a fundamental difference of cultural values between 'drawbridge up' and 'drawbridge down'. This gulf makes any long-term arrangement with the Tories both impossible and pointless."

http://www.libdemvoice.org/?p=26310&utm_source=tweet&utm_medium=twitter&utm_campaign=twitter