Coalition Update: 22-28 February

Lib Dem-Tory Tensions

Green Investment Bank: Osborne Goes Missing (LibDemVoice, 22 February)

Mark Pack discusses the Treasury's continuing opposition to the green investment bank, championed by Nick Clegg, noting that George Osborne is "curiously absent from the scene".

Ashdown Goes Fox-Hunting (Spectator, 22 February)

James Forsyth comments on Paddy Ashdown's attack on the MoD's conduct of the Strategic Defence Review, calling it "brutal criticism of a serving secretary of state from one of Nick Clegg’s closest political confidants."

Free Councils to Keep Bulk of Cash Raised Through Business Rates (Guardian, 23 February)

An article examining coalition negotiations on a new policy on local government funding, noting the key points on which the Lib Dems ceded ground.

The coalition's stance on peaceful protest exposes its inherent frailty (Guardian, 25 February)

David Mead claims that the Government's policy on the right to protest is a microcosm of the coalition government: a compromise that will please supporters of neither party.

Internal Lib Dem Tensions

Will the Old Labour wing of the Lib Dems try to sabotage Cameron’s public services revolution? (Telegraph, 22 February)

CenteForum's Julian Astle discusses the increasingly apparent differences in ideology between the Lib Dem leadership and its members. He predicts a "day of reckoning" in the near future.

Lib Dems must fight Tory plans for NHS reform (Times, 28 February) ££

Senior Lib Dem Shirley Williams has declared that she cannot support the coalition's plans for reform of the NHS.

Internal Tory Tensions

Conflicts of Tory loyalties (Guardian, 22 February)

Editorial contending that recent debates about the ECHR will leave the Conservative party with two policies on the issue come the next election: that of the government and that of the party.
The AV Referendum

**Voters might not give two hoots about AV - but David Cameron should** *(Telegraph, 23 February)*

Benedict Brogan discusses the potential impact of the AV referendum on the coalition, focusing on how it will affect the Conservatives.

**Voting reform will not cause more cuts, Treasury insists** *(Independent, 27 February)*

Danny Alexander has denied claims that AV would be prohibitively expensive at a time of public spending cuts.

Number 10 and the Centre

**The New 10 Downing Street** *(ConservativeHome, 24 February)*

Tim Montgomerie discusses the recent organisation of Downing Street, which includes new policy and press units.

Conservative-Lib Dem similarities

**Did the Orange Book Pave the way to Coalition with the Conservatives?** *(Telegraph, 24 February)*

Julian Astle denies that the Orange Book wing of the Lib Dems had a pro-Conservative bias prior to the 2010 election, claiming that they could easily have worked with Labour ministers such as Andrew Adonis and Alan Milburn.

Democratic deficit?

**The coalition has sneaked a coup on a sleeping public** *(Guardian, 27 February)*

John Harris claims that the coalition's public reform programme suffers from a democratic deficit due to the inclusion of a number of key measures not included in either party's manifesto and the dropping of key election promises by both parties.

The potential for merging the parties

**Danny Alexander: We're not giving nice cover to nasty Tory cuts** *(Times, 26 February)* ££

The Times contains an interview with Danny Alexander, in which he defends government spending decisions, but denies that there is much prospect of a joint coalition electoral platform.

**Coalition parties train to fight each other in May local elections offensive** *(Times, 28 February)* ££

Both coalition parties are to strategise on how to best take on the other at local elections set for May.
Parliamentary rebellions

Labour's rebellious streak (BBC News, 25 February)

Feature on the number of rebellions by Labour MPs, claiming that the problem is not confined to the coalition parties.