

Coalition Update: 22-28 November

Lib Dem Influence and Maintaining a Separate Identity

David Cameron, we have a few questions for you (*Guardian*, 25 November)

"Further action on welfare reform. Perhaps the control of immigration. But I don't buy the argument that because it's a coalition it's an inactive government. It's a pretty rolled-up sleeves reforming government." This is David Cameron's response when asked what he would do different in a Conservative government.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2011/nov/25/david-cameron-answers-questions>

Nick Clegg strengthens Lib Dem team in Whitehall (*Guardian*, 27 November)

Nick Clegg has appointed half a dozen special advisers in an attempt to strengthen his party's clout in Whitehall, especially in the departments where his party has limited ministerial influence.

http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2011/nov/27/clegg-appoints-special-advisers?utm_source=twitterfeed&utm_medium=twitter

Nick Clegg insists Lib Dems will stop Britain repeating mistakes of the 1980s (*Observer*, 27 November)

Interview with Nick Clegg, in which he points out key Lib Dem policy successes during the coalition and claims that they show that you can have massive disagreements and still work together productively.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2011/nov/26/nick-clegg-coalition-lib-dems>

The coalition's Plan P (for Panic) owes a lot to Labour (*Guardian*, 27 November)

Jackie Ashley claims the Conservatives are attempting to "blur" the Lib Dem influence on policy, and that power no longer rests with the Quad, but is decided by teams of ministers in each party.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/nov/27/eurozone-collapse-coalition-labour-conservatives>

The Tories' latest frustration with the Lib Dems (*Spectator*, 27 November)

The Spectator claims Conservatives are irritated at Lib Dem attempts to paint themselves as the caring face of the coalition.

<http://www.spectator.co.uk/coffeehouse/7430013/the-tories-latest-frustration-with-the-lib-dems.shtml>

Want to know what the Lib Dems are for? (*New Statesman*, 28 November)

Lib Dem Richard Morris claims the "not a cigarette paper between us" strategy has been shown to be misguided and that the party needs to demonstrate it is more than just a "Tory handbrake".

<http://www.newstatesman.com/blogs/the-staggers/2011/11/lib-dems-tory-agenda>

The Process of Policy-Making

A small step towards lifting the burden (*Telegraph*, 23 November)

The Telegraph's leader writer is critical of the coalition passion for reviews and consultations, claiming the government is mistaken in thinking "it creates the impression of decisive action beloved by New Labour, but avoids the splits and squabbles that are the inevitable by-product of genuinely tough decisions".

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/telegraph-view/8910756/A-small-step-towards-lifting-the-burden.html>

The Battle for Beecroft... to be continued? (*New Statesman*, 25 November)

NS blogger Rafael Behr claims that many Tories see reviews as a way of preventing them implementing policies, as happened with the post-riots response.

<http://www.newstatesman.com/blogs/the-staggers/2011/11/lib-dem-beecroft-tories>

Managing the press in a coalition government

Tory anger at Lib Dem overspinning (*Conservativehome*, 25 November)

Tim Montgomerie discusses an anti-Tory quote given by a Lib Dem briefer, claiming that Olly Grender's press role is a problem. Because she is only working on a temporary contract, she has less incentive to build relationships and maintain good relations with Tory colleagues, he claims.

<http://conservativehome.blogs.com/thetorydiary/2011/11/tory-anger-at-lib-dem-overspinning.html>

Policy Differences

Cable denies hire and fire laws (*FT*, 23 November) **££**

Vince Cable has denied allegations he "caved in" to Conservative colleagues on the issue of employment rights, following his announcement of a consultation on the issue. He also said he would be "responsive" to Lord Heseltine's views on the matter.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/3798b28a-152d-11e1-855a-00144feabdc0.html#axzz1f6sYnYTS>

Row brews over tax credit job funding (*FT*, 24 November) **££**

Some Tories have lost a coalition argument, with the government to announce an inflation-related rise in benefits.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/247d4348-16b1-11e1-be1d-00144feabdc0.html#axzz1exQYFbwm>

Strategies for the next election

The party's back to front... (*LibDemVoice*, 24 November)

Mark Pack claims that the Lib Dem political strategy is wrong and that pointing to past achievements in government is insufficient to profit electorally from the coalition.

http://www.libdemvoice.org/?p=25941&utm_source=tweet&utm_medium=twitter&utm_campaign=twitter

Lib Dems rebranding to boost party's popularity (*Telegraph*, 27 November)

Brand advisers have told the Lib Dems to develop a long-term strategy and then discover "shorter-term themes, straplines and soundbites" in order to "support short-term political expediency".

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/liberaldemocrats/8918377/Lib-Dems-rebranding-to-boost-partys-popularity.html>