

Coalition Update: 23-29 August

Policy-making during coalition

By Christmas we should have a clear idea of Cameron's character (*Conservativehome*, 24 August)

Tim Montgomerie discusses how the Lib Dems use David Cameron's short attention span to block policies they dislike.

<http://conservativehome.blogs.com/thetorydiary/2011/08/by-christmas-we-should-have-a-clear-idea-of-camerons-character.html>

Steady Eddie is the brains behind David Cameron's Libya campaign (*Guardian*, 24 August)

Downing Street's Chief of Staff Ed Llewellyn is described by Allegra Stratton as the soothing voice guiding policy on Libya. When Cameron gets hot, Llewellyn "douses him down". Note difference in Clegg's style

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2011/aug/24/brains-behind-david-cameron-libya>

Defining government through argument (*Spectator*, 25 August)

James Forsyth claims the government will return from the summer recess and start picking policy fights with interest groups in order to define itself in the eyes of the public.

<http://www.spectator.co.uk/coffeehouse/7192223/defining-the-government-through-argument.shtml>

Cameron's leadership (*New Statesman*, 25 August)

Rafael Behr claims that David Cameron's leadership style is too hands off and that policy-making is chaotic, with Number 10 staffers in possession of overlapping briefs and little coherent policy direction.

<http://www.newstatesman.com/uk-politics/2011/08/prime-minister-cameron-holiday>

Tories and Lib Dems at odds over reform of human rights law (*Independent*, 27 August)

Tories have claimed the "Liberal Democrat tail is wagging the Coalition dog" and Nick Clegg has blocked a string of "true blue" radical policies.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/tories-and-lib-dems-at-odds-over-reform-of-human-rights-law-2344698.html>

In Conversation: Francis Maude (*TotalPolitics*, 29 August)

Francis Maude discusses his role as Cabinet Office minister generally, and how he is working with Nick Clegg and Danny Alexander specifically (among other things)

<http://www.totalpolitics.com/articles/229857/in-conversation-with-francis-maude.shtml>

Policy Differences

Ministers clash over rival plans to tackle gangs (*Independent*, 23 August)

Theresa May and Iain Duncan-Smith have differing views on how to deal with the issue of criminal gangs, with IDS attempting to launch a strategy on an issue outside his brief and inside Ms. May's

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/ministers-clash-over-rival-plans-to-tackle-gangs-2342154.html>

Riots policy warning from Lib Dem Home Office minister (*Guardian*, 25 August)

Lib Dem minister Lynne Featherstone has warned against quick policy-making in response to the riots, taking a similar line to her party leader.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/aug/25/riots-policy-warning-home-minister>

Nick Clegg: I will refuse to let human rights laws be weakened (*Guardian*, 25 August)

Nick Clegg writes on defending the Human Rights Act within government. He contradicted Theresa May on Article 8's definition and implicitly criticised Cameron's stance on the HRA.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/aug/25/need-uk-bill-of-rights>

Clegg paints the world yellow (*Spectator*, 26 August)

Nick Clegg's article is described as "a mesh of dividing lines" between him and Cameron. He is also described as having "played an adept hand to frustrate the Tories so far."

<http://www.spectator.co.uk/coffeehouse/7193758/clegg-paints-the-world-yellow.html>

With every passing day... (*Conservativehome*, 26 August)

Tim Montgomerie lists the ways in which the Lib Dems are forcing David Cameron to abandon manifesto commitments. Tackling over-regulation (favoured by Vince Cable) and family policy are just two of the areas discussed.

<http://conservativehome.blogs.com/thetorydiary/2011/08/with-every-passing-day-the-liberal-democrats-are-dragging-the-coalition-away-from-the-conservative-m.html>

Tax - the missing ingredient... (*Huffington Post*, 29 August)

Mark Pack claims tax is the one area where both wings of the coalition can be satisfied, despite a lack of Lib Dem consensus on which taxes they favour.

http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/dr-mark-pack/tax-the-missing-ingredient_b_939463.html

Coalition divided over Cable's plans for land tax (*Independent*, 29 August)

Tory MPs have dismissed Vince Cable's musings on a potential land tax.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/coalition-divided-over-cables-plan-for-land-tax-2345520.html>

Demonstrating a Separate Identity

Government by hissy fit will get you nowhere (*Times*, 24 August) ££

Peter Mandelson disapproves of the Lib Dems' current approach to being in government

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/opinion/columnists/article3143415.ece>

Is Nick Clegg getting back on the front foot? (*FT*, 26 August)

Nick Clegg's popularity with his party appears to be rising as a result of his recent attempts to carve out a distinctive Lib Dem voice

http://blogs.ft.com/westminster/2011/08/is-nick-clegg-getting-back-on-the-front-foot/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+ft%2Fwestminster+%28Westminster+Blog%29&utm_content=Google+Reader#axzz1VxU3Cuop

Attacks on Clegg cost us dear, admit Liberal Democrats (*Telegraph*, 27 August)

A Lib Dem report on the 2011 local elections claims that a failure to communicate their internal coalition victories, as well as Nick Clegg's personal profile, contributed heavily to their poor showing in May.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/nick-clegg/8726924/Attacks-on-Nick-Clegg-cost-us-dear-admit-Liberal-Democrats.html>

Clegg at odds with many Lib Dems over 50p tax rate (*Spectator*, 27 August)

David Blackburn claims that the coalition is split on the 50p tax rate, but not along party lines, adding that Nick Clegg's softening opposition to its removal is a sign that George Osborne is winning the internal fight on this.

<http://www.spectator.co.uk/coffeehouse/7196543/clegg-at-odds-with-many-lib-dems-over-50p-rate.thtml>

Rebellions and Internal Party Dissent

More Labour MPs have defied the whip... (*Conservativehome*, 24 August)

A study has shown that more Labour MPs have defied the whip than have Conservative and Liberal Democrat MPs combined (Labour 119, Conservative 86, Lib Dem 30).

<http://conservativehome.blogs.com/parliament/2011/08/more-labour-mps-have-defied-the-whip-than-conservatives-and-lib-dems-put-together.html>

Lib Dems seek candidates for police commissioner posts (*Guardian*, 29 August)

Tories have said Nick Clegg must deliver the police commissioners policy or risk the loss of David Cameron's trust as it was a key issue in the coalition negotiations.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2011/aug/28/lib-dems-seek-police-commissioners>

Miscellaneous

The Clegg report (*TotalPolitics*, 26 August)

Chris Bowers discusses the leadership of Nick Clegg, who, unlike Cameron, came into government without anyone to show him the ropes and lacking proper civil service support.

<http://www.totalpolitics.com/articles/229137/the-clegg-report.thtml>