

Coalition Update: 25-31 October

Government Appointments

Appoint fewer ministers, MPs' committee warns (*BBC*, 31 October)

Public Administration Committee chair Bernard Jenkin has called for a reduction in the number of MPs appointed as Parliamentary Private Secretaries to make Parliament more independent of government.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-15516718>

Should Nick Clegg have held out for the Chancellorship? (*Dale & Co*, 31 October)

Mark Thompson discusses Nick Clegg's appointment as Deputy Prime Minister and whether or not he should have pushed for the Chancellor's role, examining how this would have altered the dynamics of the Cabinet.

<http://www.iaindale.com/posts/should-nick-clegg-have-held-out-for-the-chancellorship>

Policy Differences

Ken Clarke risks fresh row with Theresa May, this time over knives (*Telegraph*, 25 October)

Ken Clarke and Theresa May are reportedly at odds over the government's position on knife crime.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/law-and-order/8849068/Ken-Clarke-risks-fresh-row-with-Theresa-May-this-time-over-knives.html>

Osborne's anti-green agenda splits coalition (*Independent*, 26 October)

Chris Huhne is to attack George Osborne over his leadership of a government faction willing to sacrifice the green agenda in the name of the economy.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/green-living/osbornes-antigreen-agenda-splits-coalition-2375993.html>

The Lib Dems should become the guardians of workers' rights (*TotalPolitics*, 27 October)

Vince Cable is to resist proposals to eliminate unfair dismissal laws. Caroline Crampton claims Cable could secure a significant victory for his party and demonstrate their impact on government if he succeeds.

<http://www.totalpolitics.com/blog/268322/the-lib-dems-should-become-the-guardians-of-workersand39-rights.thtml>

In the battle of the knife criminals... (*Conservativehome*, 27 October)

Ken Clarke has yielded to a knife crime amendment following significant support from Tory backbenchers. Tim Montgomerie calls it another sign of the growing strength of the government backbenches.

<http://conservativehome.blogs.com/thetorydiary/2011/10/in-the-battle-against-knife-criminals-its-nickdebois-mp-400-and-ken-clarke-nil.html>

Lib Dem MPs rebel against proposals to cut legal aid funding (*Guardian*, 28 October)

Lib Dem Deputy Leader Simon Hughes has expressed support for his MPs considering rebelling on the issue of legal aid cuts.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/law/2011/oct/28/lib-dem-legal-aid-rebellion>

The EU Referendum Motion

Tory demands on EU powers are impossible for coalition, says Nick Clegg (*Telegraph*, 25 October)

Nick Clegg has said that the coalition could not survive government acquiescence to Conservative calls for repatriation of EU powers. He called the proposal "impossible" and "fanciful".

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/eu/8849273/Tory-demands-on-EU-powers-are-impossible-for-Coalition-says-Nick-Clegg.html>

David Cameron rocked by record rebellion.... (*Guardian*, 25 October)

The Government defeated Monday's motion on the EU, despite a significant Conservative rebellion to a three-line whip.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2011/oct/24/david-cameron-tory-rebellion-europe>

David Cameron, captain of a hostile team (*Guardian*, 25 October)

Tim Montgomerie claims the rebellion means Downing Street needs to change his method of governing, or face a disunited Conservative Party. He claims David Cameron has been "careless" about party management.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/oct/24/david-cameron-conservative-rebellion>

David Cameron will put the coalition first (*Telegraph*, 25 October)

Benedict Brogan, discussing the EU issue, claims that David Cameron is consequently considering a "revamp" of his personal staff, "too many civil servants, not enough visceral Tories, is one view". Brogan believes Number Ten is short of "gut Tories".

<http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/benedictbrogan/100113388/david-cameron-will-put-the-coalition-first-but-plans-changes-to-beef-up-his-leadership/>

Parliamentary nerds! Here be more facts for you! (*Ballots & Bullets Blog*, 25 October)

Philip Cowley and Mark Stuart report! Those who rebelled on Europe before rebelled again; more worrying: 5/8s of those who rebelled are from the new intake of Conservative MPs.

<http://nottspolitics.org/2011/10/25/parliamentary-nerds-here-be-more-facts-for-you/>

The Conservative Euro revolt: 10 points to note (*Ballots & Bullets Blog*, 25 October)

Cowley and Stuart (again): among the points to note—this was the largest Conservative European rebellion since the war, double the size of the largest Maastricht revolt. And there were signs that backbenchers are no longer willing to compromise; and this was not just a rebellion over Europe, but about the broader frustrations of the Tories.

<http://nottspolitics.org/2011/10/25/the-conservative-euro-revolt-10-points-to-note/>

Tory revolt was led by Thatcherite class of 2010 (*Independent*, 26 October)

The Independent comments on the number of Tory rebels from the 2010 election intake.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/tory-revolt-was-led-by-thatcherite-class-of-2010-2376001.html>

How the Government could break down over Europe (*Conservativehome*, 28 October)

Paul Goodman notes that a break-down of the government and a general elections is in the interests of neither coalition party, but warns that the differences on issues such as repatriation are so great as to make it a possibility.

<http://conservativehome.blogs.com/thetorydiary/2011/10/how-the-government-could-break-down-over-europe.html>

The Tories are forgetting the lessons of the past (*Telegraph*, 29 October)

David Cameron and Nick Clegg have reportedly agreed to avoid a "war" over Europe, according to Matthew D'Ancona's comments on the Conservative divisions on Europe.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/conservative/8857536/The-Tories-are-forgetting-the-lessons-of-the-past.html>

EU repatriation of powers... (*Mail*, 31 October)

Conservatives have lined up to criticise the Lib Dem influence on EU policy after Nick Clegg attacked Conservatives who favour leaving the EU. One said: "If I wanted to be a liberal, I'd join the Liberal Democrats". Another called for Nick Clegg's resignation.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/conservative/8857536/The-Tories-are-forgetting-the-lessons-of-the-past.html>

Internal Lib Dem Politics

Economic plan failing, grassroots Lib Dems say in first sign of revolt (*Guardian*, 31 October)

A "group of senior Lib Dem figures and former candidates have written to The Guardian to express concern at the government's economic strategy.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2011/oct/31/lib-dems-revolt-economic-policy?newsfeed=true>