

Coalition Update: 31 May-6 June

Maintaining Separate Identities

Conservative Internal Politics Aides to Cameron want coalition to continue (*Times*, 31 May)
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Rachel Sylvester claims that key aides of the Prime Minister enjoy coalition with the Lib Dems. She claims that for modernisers "the Lib Dems are the ideal weapon to ward off the enemy within", adding that Cameron is pleased for the "political cover" they offer.

<http://www.timesplus.co.uk/tto/news/?login=false&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.thetimes.co.uk%2Ftto%2Fopinion%2Fcolumnists%2Frachelsylvester%2Farticle3045004.ece>

Operation Castrate-the-Right is under way (*Conservativehome*, 31 May)

Tim Montgomerie examines how David Cameron manages dissension within his party.

<http://conservativehome.blogs.com/thetorydiary/2011/05/operation-castrate-the-right-is-underway.html>

The Lib Dems Draw Blood (*Economist*, 2 June)

Bagehot warns that the Lib Dems cannot consistently act like an opposition within the government, adding that being coalition makes radical policy-making easier and more difficult at the same time.

<http://www.economist.com/node/18772880>

The Fox That Can't Be Shot (*Economist*, 2 June)

Analysis of the position of Defence Secretary Liam Fox; due to his appeal to the right wing of his party, and because to sack him for dissension whilst keeping Vince Cable would cause political problems in the coalition.

<http://www.economist.com/node/18774476>

ConHome identifies the most rebellious Tory MPs during the coalition's first year (*Conservativehome*, 2 June)

Philip Hollobone has been deemed the most rebellious Tory MP, with the motion opposing votes for prisoners, the issue attracting the most anti-government votes from Conservatives.

<http://conservativehome.blogs.com/parliament/2011/06/conhome-identifies-the-most-rebellious-tory-mps-during-the-coalitions-first-year.html>

It's time to buy shares in Andrew Lansley (*TotalPolitics*, 3 June)

Jerry Hayes claims Andrew Lansley will survive as Health Secretary, noting that he has at no point briefed against colleagues and has the support of his own backbenchers. His behaviour is contrasted with that of Liam Fox.

<http://www.totalpolitics.com/blog/159937/itand39s-time-to-buy-shares-in-andrew-lansley.thtml>

The Coalition Agreement

Why Conservative MPs ought to have rejected coalition (*Conservativehome*, 1 June)

Jim McConalogue claims that the Conservatives were wrong to enter into coalition because the coalition agreement was never submitted to the electorate. He calls the government "a dangerous unrepresentative machine parading as "unity in diversity" but which in principle, is undemocratic and against the national interest"

<http://conservativehome.blogs.com/platform/2011/06/jim-mcconalogue-why-conservative-mps-ought-to-have-rejected-coalition-government.html>

Policy Differences

Peers give Lords plans the thumbs down (*Times*, 31 May) **££**

The Times "understands" that senior ministers, including Theresa May, are concerned that Lords reform may derail other, more important policies related to public service reforms. Bernard Jenkin is amongst the backbenchers saying likewise.

<http://www.timesplus.co.uk/tto/news/?login=false&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.thetimes.co.uk%2Ftto%2Fnews%2Fpolitics%2Farticle3045259.ece>

Lib Dems warning to Government on faith schools (*Guardian*, 31 May)

Local Lib Dems, led by Evan Harris, are urging the coalition to rethink their policy on faith groups becoming more involved in public services.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/may/30/lib-dems-warning-big-society-faith-groups>

More ermine troubles for Clegg (*Spectator*, 1 June)

With as many as 50 Tories planning to rebel on Lords reform, Peter Hoskin claims David Cameron is unlikely to fight for the policy, given how he treated his own side during the NHS policy "pause".

<http://www.spectator.co.uk/coffeehouse/6991183/more-ermine-troubles-for-nick-clegg.html>

Lansley spin doctor silenced (*Independent*, 2 June)

Andrew Lansley's SPAD Jenny Jackson has been barred from briefing the media following alleged negative comments about Nick Clegg.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/health-news/lansleys-spin-doctor-silenced-after-briefing-against-clegg-2292041.html>

Cameron puts his privatisation plan on hold (*New Statesman*, 2 June)

David Cameron has postponed plans to open up the public services to more competition, following Lib Dem opposition. His position within his party is likely to be weakened, says George Eaton.

<http://www.newstatesman.com/blogs/the-staggers/2011/06/cameron-open-public-pledge>

The Liberal Democrats' best impact has been to raise the income tax threshold... (*Conservativehome*, 3 June)

A ConHome poll of Tory members rates the income tax threshold as the best Lib Dem policy change, with the retention of the Human Rights Act deemed the most pernicious result of coalition policy-making.

<http://conservativehome.blogs.com/thetorydiary/2011/06/liberal-democrats-best-impact-has-been-to-raise-income-tax-threshold-worst-impact-has-been-to-stop-h.html>

The view from the Tory grassroots (*Telegraph*, 4 June)

Tim Montgomerie discusses his Conhome polls of Tory members and says they identify seven key Cabinet ministers as effective, and are "basically happy" with the coalition so far.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/conservative/8557219/The-view-from-the-Tory-grassroots.html>

PM wins row with Nick Clegg over crackdown on Muslim extremists (*Guardian*, 4 June)

David Cameron has refused to yield to Nick Clegg's call for a more tolerant policy towards Muslims. Baroness Warsi is also believed to be unhappy with the plans.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2011/jun/04/pm-nick-clegg-muslim-extremists>

Miscellaneous

Profile: Lynne Featherstone (*TotalPolitics*, 30 May)

Lynne Featherstone claims Lib Dem ministers have "grown up very fast" and are "a lightning rod" for discontent with the government.

<http://www.totalpolitics.com/articles/159682/profile-lynne-featherstone.shtml>

I never said there should be a coalition after the next election (*Conservativehome*, 31 May)

Francis Maude denies that the merger of much of Number Ten and Cabinet Office has created a Department of the Prime Minister. He also denies that he favours a post-election coalition.

<http://conservativehome.blogs.com/interviews/2011/06/francis-maude.html>

Boundary change battle (*Guardian*, 5 June)

A boundary review designed to equalise constituencies and reduce their number by 50 "could force a mutiny in the coalition amid mounting evidence that the Liberal Democrats will fare far worse than predicted and with David Cameron facing further tensions with his backbenchers, some of whom are certain to lose their seats."

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2011/jun/05/boundary-change-battle-lib-dems?CMP=twtd>