



Linlithgow & East Falkirk Constituency

Welcome

Westminster is now in recess until the 5th of September, when the new UK Prime Minister will be revealed. The current **ludicrous** campaign to appoint a new Tory leader - aka Thatcher tribute act - exposes how badly British democracy is broken. There are 11,000 members of the Scottish Conservatives taking part in this vote to choose from the final two candidates. In a population of 5.5million that means only one in every 500 Scots has a say in who will govern the country. Whoever wins, the only clear thing is that Scotland will lose. Thankfully another Scotland is possible. Democracy must prevail.

Westminster Update

Good riddance ... but not soon enough!

Boris Johnson clung on with all his might until finally being left with no option but to resign. This should have happened a long time ago. That the Tory party only acted when it became clear he had misled some of his closest colleagues laid bare all that is wrong with Westminster. Johnson was only the latest, and most potent, manifestation of a dysfunctional, broken, and corrupt Westminster system that has failed to work for Scotland in a long time. Farcically, he is still being enabled to remain in Downing Street to continue the chaos. Living in his narcissistic bubble he recorded a selfie-video flying a Typhoon Fighter Jet, whilst food and energy prices continue to soar - escalating the country's historic cost-of-living crisis - and our First Minister was launching the second of the Scottish Government's "Building A New Scotland" papers. As long as he stays in Number 10, he will remain missing in action and do only what he wants. Notably, one of his last acts as PM was to refuse the First Minister's request to hold #IndyRef2.

At his penultimate PMQs I asked "If the UK truly is a voluntary Union of equal nations, there must be a democratic way for any of those member nations to withdraw from it. Does the Prime Minister think that the role of the UK Government is to decide whether to respect the mandate given by the people of Scotland to their Government and endorsed by their Parliament?" His response was predictably trite. Welcome to know-your-place Unionism, which will be carried on by whoever wins the Tory leadership as both Sunk and Truss fall over each other to deny our democratic will to hold an independence referendum. Both served in Johnson's Cabinet and turned a blind eye to his lying and law-breaking. Indeed, Sunak was also fined. It is clear there will be no difference between the old and the new PM. The only way the people of Scotland can escape Westminster chaos and endless Tory PMs that we did not vote for is by becoming an independent country.



Government Contracts: Randox Laboratories

You may remember in my last Newsletter I mentioned former MP Owen Paterson, for whom Johnson tried to get the MP disciplinary process reviewed. This protracted debacle saw Paterson was a paid advocate for Randox, and that he arranged meetings with the then Health Secretary (Matt Hancock MP) in the Division Lobby - a place only MPs have access to and where it is impossible for civil servants to join. Without competition, Government contracts were subsequently issued to benefit Randox, seemingly overlooking that Paterson was a Randox paid consultant. Earlier this year I asked the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Health and Social Care (HSC) to explain how this was not institutional corruption. Adding "Nobody trusts this Government. They are rule breakers and system cheaters. Does this whole case with Randox not just prove that the Government are interested only in helping their friends?" Now it's confirmed. The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has released a report concluding that, due to poor UKG record-keeping, the Department of HSC's awarding of £777 million worth of contracts to the firm may not have been awarded properly. It found "obvious" potentials for conflicts of interest over the firm's employment of disgraced Paterson, and the extensive lobbying and gifts provided to the Health Secretary at the time. The whole thing stinks to the high heavens. This Tory government's record of sleaze, scandal, and corruption under outgoing, law-breaking Johnson has been well documented throughout his tenure. This is not an isolated incident but just one questionable Covid contract. Johnson might be going, but he and his cronies will be followed for decades by a legacy of sleaze and corruption at all levels of his government. No changing of the guard or tinkering around the edges will fix it, it's time for the people of Scotland to free themselves from this sinking ship and chart their own course with independence.

Active in the constituency

Helping to win Independence

Westminster might be in recess but working for my constituents carries on. That includes building a fairer, more prosperous society and securing our place in the EU with Independence. It won't have escaped your notice that the campaign is now well and truly under way, with the First Minister (FM) announcing at the end of last month the date that Scotland's Independence Referendum will take place: **Thursday, 19 October 2023**. The Scottish Government (SG) is working to ensure the referendum is lawful. If the UKG respected democracy, it would sit down with the SG and agree a process, including a Section 30 order, to give people in Scotland the choice – following 2014's precedent. In her letter to the PM, Nicola Sturgeon said she is "ready and willing to negotiate the terms of a Section 30 order" but she has also said she will never "allow Scottish democracy to be a prisoner of Boris Johnson or any Prime Minister". To ensure the referendum is "above reproach and commands confidence", the FM has set out steps to go ahead without a Section 30 order and Scotland's Lord Advocate has referred to the UK Supreme Court so that judges can settle whether MSPs could legislate for a vote on Scottish independence without Westminster's backing. Supreme Court judges have said they want to hear the full arguments from both sides before deciding. These will be heard on the 11th and 12th of October. If the Supreme Court rules the Scottish Parliament can't hold another referendum without Westminster's agreement, then the SNP will stand at the next Westminster election on the single issue of independence, meaning the next general election in Scotland would be "a de facto referendum".

Time and again, Westminster is making decisions the people of Scotland don't want and don't vote for, yet are forced to go along with. Scotland overwhelmingly rejected Brexit, but was ignored. Brexit is now backed by Boris Johnson and his successors, as well as Keir Starmer - whose policies on Brexit and freedom of movement are indistinguishable from the Tories. The UKG's Office for Budget Responsibility has warned that the long-term impact of Brexit is twice the impact of Covid. Every week we see how the Tories' Brexit obsession is costing Scotland; and every day Scotland is under Westminster control sees it suffering more disastrous consequences. New research by the Federation of Small Business shows that mounting overheads, staff shortages and economy concerns have led to Scottish business confidence being at the lowest level in two years. The Dover chaos is causing more damage to Scottish businesses who rely on the Channel crossing every day to get their world-leading fresh produce, such as seafood, to Europe and onto shelves the next day. Businesses were already struggling since Brexit due to higher costs, extra bureaucracy, workforce shortages and export delays. Travel expert Simon Calder has said the chaos at Dover was "inevitable" due to Brexit. Holidaymakers from Scotland are also bearing the brunt, whether through Dover or flying, as airlines have pointed the finger at Brexit for this summer's disruption at airports due to new immigration rules making it harder to recruit the staff they need. EasyJet boss, John Lundgren, says his company has turned down 8,000 job applications as candidates have been denied permission to work in the UK following Brexit. He was joined by Jet2 boss, Steve Heapy, who blames Brexit for "taking hundreds of thousands, if not millions out of the job market". While Ryanair Chief Executive, Michael O'Leary, told Sky News that the UKG "couldn't run a sweet shop." Escaping Westminster and becoming an independent country within the European Union is the only way Scotland can avoid the damaging chaos of Brexit. See here for ways you can help: <https://www.yes.scot/7-ways-you-can-help-us-win-scottish-independence/>



Links between Parliament and the constituency

Pressures on Passport Applications

Many constituents have contacted me due to delays they are experiencing when applying for a new passport or renewing an out of date one. As well as Covid travelling restrictions, Brexit has a role to play in this too as the rules have changed. You must now have at least 3 months left after the day you leave for holidays to Europe. However the [UKG recommends](#) a minimum of 6 months. Many other destinations require a minimum of 6 months validity and this is the standard UKG recommendation. If travelling to Europe, your passport must also have been issued within the last 10 years. If you renewed your current passport early and extra months were added beyond the standard 10 years then you should be aware that any extra months on your passport may not count towards the minimum period needed. If the time between your issue date and expiry date exceeds 10 years, it is likely that extra months have been added on and you should check its current validity for travel to Europe. The simplest way to find out if you need to renew your passport before travelling to Europe is to use the [UKG's passport checking service](#). You should check the [FCDO advice destination pages](#) for all other countries. If you need to renew your passport please do so as early as possible. The Passport Office advises it could be up to 10 weeks to receive your new passport. Some of my constituents have found it is often longer.

 Martyn Day
6 Preston Crescent
Linlithgow
EH49 6HW
 www.martynaday.scot
 martyn.day.mp@parliament.uk

 facebook.com/MartynDaySNP
 twitter.com/martyndaysnp
 instagram.com/martyndaysnp
 linkedin.com/in/martyndaysnp
 youtube.com/martyndaysnp

 01506 654415

SNP