

THREE RESPONSES TO THE 12.12.19 WESTMINSTER GENERAL ELECTION

- 1. Open Letter: Scottish Labour for Radical Democracy, 27.1.20**
 - 2. Statement from Gavin Lundy, National Convener, Young Scots for Independence, Director, Generation Yes**
 - 3. Statement from the Scottish Greens, 1.2.20**
-

1. Open Letter: Scottish Labour for Radical Democracy, 27.1.20

(<https://bellacaledonia.org.uk/2019/12/15/open-letter-scottish-labour-for-radical-democracy/>)

We demand radical self-determination for Scotland. The Scottish people have, in successive elections to both Holyrood and Westminster, elected majorities in favour of a new referendum on independence. Setting aside the arguments for and against independence, we must not allow a hardline Tory government – which has no mandate here – to override Scotland’s democratic will.

Should all attempts to secure a second referendum by legal and constitutional means be obstructed by the UK government, we support an escalating strategy of non-cooperation and civil disobedience against that government, pursued at all possible levels: from the Scottish Government legislating on, or refusing to cooperate with, matters ‘reserved’ to Westminster, to grassroots non-violent direct action within and outwith Scotland.

We support a deep and radical vision of self-determination, encompassing political, economic and cultural life. In particular, we believe that in spite of defeat, the policies put forward in Labour’s 2019 general election manifesto still offer a valuable starting-point for tackling the climate emergency and redistributing economic power to the working class, who produce Scotland’s wealth and have the right to control it. Successive Scottish Governments have failed to use the full range of devolved powers to transform Scotland in this direction, despite their repeated insistence on Scotland’s progressive consensus.

We also believe, however, that the limits of devolved power must not be treated as the closed horizons of Scotland’s future, and we demand that the Scottish political establishment begins to think and act ‘as if’ it has the requisite independence to radically address the overlapping crises facing working-class communities in Scotland, from the climate emergency and austerity to drug deaths, housing and the hostile environment.

We refuse to abandon the people of Wales, Northern Ireland and England to Tory rule, even if Scotland chooses to pursue its own road to socialism. We believe that real self-determination can only be achieved through cooperation between movements and across borders. We call on the left across the UK to back our demand for a second referendum on independence and to fight with us to secure a radical democracy for all the peoples of these islands.

Signatories:

Martin Le Brech, Aberdeen Central CLP / IWGB
Didier Alexandre, Aberdeen Central CLP
Scott Abel, Aberdeen South CLP
Reuben Duffy, Airdrie & Shotts CLP / GMB
Emma Milligan, Airdrie & Shotts CLP
Brendan Moohan, Almond Valley CLP / Unite
Graeme Hyslop OBE, Ayr CLP / EIS
Ryan John MacKenzie, Caithness & Sutherland CLP
Annette Thomson, Carrick, Cumnock & Doon Valley CLP
George Thomson, Carrick, Cumnock & Doon Valley CLP
Huw Sherrard, Clackmannanshire CLP, Social Media & Press Officer
Avar Wilson, Clackmannanshire CLP / IWW
Matthew Gallagher, Clydebank & Milngavie CLP / EIS
Ryan Bazga, Coatbridge & Chryston CLP, Social Media Officer / Unite
William McCabe, Coatbridge & Chryston CLP / Unite
Stella Rooney, Dundee CLP, Youth Officer / Unite, Chair of Young Members in Unite Scotland
Owen Wright, Dundee CLP / Unite
Drew Livingstone, Dundee CLP / Unison
James Thomson, East Kilbride CLP / PCS
Emily Talbot, East Lothian CLP / Unison
Alistair Craig, Eastwood CLP
Calum Barnes, Edinburgh Central CLP / Unite
Ian R Close, Edinburgh Central CLP
Paul Cumming, Edinburgh Central CLP / PCS
James Cameron, Edinburgh Eastern CLP
Matthew Beven, Edinburgh Eastern CLP / Unison
Tommy Martin, Edinburgh Eastern CLP / Unite
Ally McIntyre, Edinburgh Eastern CLP
Jessica Fenn, Edinburgh Eastern CLP
Robert Dransfield, Edinburgh Eastern CLP / Unite Community
Adam Knight, Edinburgh Eastern CLP
Claire Thomson, Edinburgh North & Leith CLP / Unite
Patricia Johnston, Edinburgh North & Leith CLP, Youth Officer / Unite Community
Paul Tait, Edinburgh North & Leith CLP / UCU
Oliver Goulden, Edinburgh North & Leith CLP
Mike Cowley, Edinburgh North & Leith CLP
Shaun Cassidy, Edinburgh North & Leith CLP
Morgan Tooth, Edinburgh North & Leith CLP / Unite
Lorcan Mullen, Edinburgh North & Leith CLP / Unison
James McPherson, Edinburgh North & Leith CLP / Unite

Finn Oldfield, Edinburgh Southern CLP
Rory Scothorne, Edinburgh Southern CLP / UCU
Magnus Gwynne, Edinburgh Southern CLP
Declan Prosser, Glasgow Anniesland CLP
Alana McKenna, Glasgow Anniesland CLP
Michael John O'Neill, Glasgow Cathcart / BECTU
Scott Lumsden, Glasgow Provan CLP / Unite
Oliver Robertson, Glasgow Provan CLP / Unite
Alice Bowman, Glasgow Provan CLP / GMB/Unite
Kyle Scott, Glasgow Provan CLP / Unite
Ryan Byrne, Glasgow Provan CLP / Unite
Stephen Campbell, Glasgow Provan CLP / Unite
Matt McDonald, Glasgow Southside CLP / Unison, IWW
Laura Dover, Glasgow Southside CLP / Unison
Ewan Gibbs, Glasgow Southside CLP / UCU
Tam Wilson, Glasgow Southside CLP, LGBT Officer / GMB
Jessica Shenton, Glasgow Southside CLP / Unison
Thomas Baylis, Glasgow Southside CLP / Unison
Mark Faulkner, Glasgow Southside CLP
Bruce Milne, Glasgow Southside CLP / Unison
Giancarlo Bell, Glasgow Kelvin CLP, Vice Chair / Unite
Ben McKinlay, Glasgow Kelvin CLP
Ross Clark, Glasgow Kelvin CLP
Hollie Cameron, Glasgow Kelvin CLP / Unite
Ewan Kerr, Glasgow Kelvin CLP / EIS
David Clayton, Glasgow Kelvin CLP / BMA
Rob Jones, Glasgow Kelvin CLP
Madison Plumridge, Glasgow Kelvin CLP / Unite
Duncan Hotchkiss, Glasgow Kelvin CLP
Clare Patterson, Glasgow Kelvin CLP
Paul Rolwich, Hamilton, Larkhall & Stonehouse CLP
Fraser Finlayson, Inverness & Nairn CLP
Mikey Reynolds, Kilmarnock & Loudon CLP / PCS
Dougie Main, Linlithgow & East Falkirk CLP
Gwen Wall, Maryhill & Springburn CLP, Fundraising Officer / BFAWU/GMB
Tessa Buddle, Maryhill & Springburn CLP / UCU
Cameron Thompson, Na h-Eileanan an Iar CLP / Unison
George Corner, North Ayrshire CLP / Unite
Malcolm Petrie, North East Fife CLP / UCU
Angus MacDonald, Orkney CLP
Lauren Gilmour, Paisley CLP / EIS/Unite
Simran Kaur, Renfrewshire North & West CLP / Unite
Rosaleen Leonard, Rutherglen CLP / Unison
John O'Neill, Perth & North Perthshire CLP / Unite
Tom Flanagan, Stirling CLP / CWU
Cian Lloyd Ireland, Stirling CLP / GMB/IWW
Matthew Ferrie, Stirling CLP / IWW
Daniel Deery, Stirling CLP / IWW
Callum McCormick, Strathkelvin & Bearsden CLP / EIS/UCU

William John McCabe, Uddingston & Bellshill CLP / Unite
Billy Stewart, Uddingston & Bellshill CLP / Unison

2. Statement from Gavin Lundy, National Convener, Young Scots for Independence. Director, Generation Yes

(<https://www.thenational.scot/politics/18190523.many-scottish-labour-activists-now-see-writings-wall/>)

Many Scottish Labour activists now see the writing's on the wall

MORE than a month has passed since the SNP swept Scotland – once again – in a UK General Election. SNP activists like me entered that election quietly optimistic, but we ended up doing better than any of us could have hoped or expected.

In the most youthful political circles, the election was characterised by an interesting phenomenon that I certainly didn't expect to see. A small but loud section of young people were drawn to campaign for **Labour** in urban central Scotland by the promise of Prime Minister Corbyn, a prospect that seemed ridiculous on December 1, as it does now.

What made this interesting, for me, was that many who (often at the last minute) decided to join the Labour party were experienced activists, trade unionists, and surprisingly, veterans of the 2014 **independence** referendum campaign.

I shouldn't overstate the scale of this phenomenon, and it was certainly exaggerated in urban lefty circles and comically overblown on Twitter. That said, it would still be unwise for indy activists friendly to, or members of, the SNP to pretend the trend didn't exist. I believe the new activists who campaigned for Labour in Scotland did so out of impatience; they wanted an overhaul of the system now with PM Corbyn, not after independence.

Yet let's be frank, Labour was decimated in England and Wales because it could not build a coalition of voters that spanned demographics and geography. There will be as many takes on why this was the case as there are members of Momentum, Blue Labour, and the Fabians. But at least the main lesson for Scottish Labour activists should be clear; the UK Labour project is at best a distraction for Scots, and at worst an instrument for the British national **Conservative** right to deny Scotland its right to self-determination. That means Scottish Labour now finds itself facing an existential crisis.

Three camps have emerged. The first are those who are beginning to approximate a sensible position, advocating either a softening of the position towards independence or another referendum. This camp is small but with voices like Monica Lennon **MSP** and Neil Findlay **MSP**, and ex-MP Ged Killen.

The second camp are the hard Unionists. They voice a rhetoric matching the worst of the Tory party's national Conservative right, frank about their beliefs that Scotland shouldn't have a choice and that the Scottish **Government** can be happily ignored by Johnson. Bizarrely, Jess Phillips MP has been the loudest of this camp – happy to tell an entire country what its future is to be, despite it being clear that she had never given the matter one minute's thought until launching her leadership bid.

Yet somehow the third camp, including Lisa Nandy, are those who have even less of a clue what they are talking about, those with no clear position at all.

As it stands, Scottish Labour are laying claim to the smallest voting bloc in Scotland – left-wing Unionists who don't care an awful lot for the EU. Those of a soft No persuasion will not appreciate their view that Scotland does not deserve a choice. This is a recipe for disaster.

I truly believe that in their heart of hearts, many Labour activists are starting to realise that the choice of independence or electoral oblivion will come soon. So, we must recognise that a coalition of SNP, Green, and the remaining Labour voters will deliver independence.

It's up to all of us in the independence movement, in the SNP, in the **Greens**, and in no party at all, to open our doors to those dyed-in-the-wool Labour activists who are beginning to see the writing on the wall but would never abandon their party. The independence movement remains, and will remain, bigger than the SNP.

A civic movement for choice must soon begin to agitate for another referendum. At least a section of Scottish Labour must be a part of that. Their voting constituency may be small, but it is composed of a group of people who straddle the boundary between No and Yes. A group of people, therefore, who will be of importance in taking us forward. The SNP may be the independence movement's leadership, but there is plenty of room for others to join us on this journey.

Gavin Lundy

National Convener, Young Scots for Independence

Director, Generation Yes

3. Statement from the Scottish Greens, 1.2.20

(<https://greens.scot/news/greens-launch-independence-campaign-on-brexit-day>)

“We are launching our Green Yes campaign on the same day to show that Scotland has a positive route back to the European table” Patrick Harvie

The Scottish Greens launched their campaign for Scottish independence on the day the UK leaves the European Union.

The party held a Green Yes rally in Glasgow to mark Brexit day to launch the campaign for Scotland to re-join the EU as an independent nation.

Among speakers were Ska Keller MEP, co-president of the Green/EFA group in the European Parliament.

Speaking ahead of the rally in Glasgow, Scottish Green co-leader Patrick Harvie said: “Yesterday’s opinion poll shows the mood for independence is shifting and today we mourn our EU citizenship. We are launching our Green Yes campaign on the same day to show that Scotland has a positive route back to the European table.

“We were told the clearest way to secure our future in the EU was to vote no in 2014. Those same people have brought us here, even though Scotland voted to remain in 2016.

“The campaign for independence must be cross-party and it must offer a radical vision of how Scotland could do things differently as a smaller European partner. We will be campaigning to convince as many as possible that a road back to the EU is possible and that independence can have a real purpose, helping us build a new, just and sustainable Scotland.”

Ska Keller MEP told supporters Scotland would be welcomed back into the EU.

“In this extremely sad moment, we need to see hope. It is a dark time for the UK... it is a big step backward for the environment and a big step backwards for social rights,” she said.

“It is up for the people in Scotland to decide on their future. It is not up to me, but if people in Scotland decide to become independent then Greens across Europe will do all we can to welcome Scotland back home.”

•