

ELECTION  
SPECIAL

# HOWL!

Be Vigilant



FREE

Issue 3

# BEFORE YOU VOTE!

## HERE ARE 5 FACTS TO REMEMBER:

**1** Scotland voted overwhelmingly for Labour in the general elections of 1979, 1983, 1987 and 2010 but ended up with a Conservative government.

**2** In 2010, Labour won 41 seats in Scotland out of 59 despite the undemocratic first-past-the-post system and we still got a Conservative government.

**3** The largest party always forms the government is a myth. In 2010 the Conservative party was the largest by 48 seats, a very small margin. They only became the government because the LibDems joined them. If the LibDems had joined Labour, as Labour wanted, then Labour would have been in power despite not being the largest party.

**4** In 1997 Labour had 418 seats at Westminster, 177 more than all other parties combined. The party promised to tackle tax evasion, abolish the House of Lords, reform the electoral system and wipe out zero hours contracts. Its main promise was Home Rule for Scotland.

**5** Labour currently has 40 Scottish seats in Westminster. Labour has not used this majority to fight for Scotland in the past five years. Instead its MPs have joined the Tories on key issues like cuts to public spending against the needs of the Scottish people.

## KEEPING SCOTLAND SAFE



The proposed renewal of Trident submarines has emerged as a key issue in the General Election. Trident is only one part of a defence system which serves Scotland badly.

### WHAT SCOTLAND NEEDS

Scotland's geographic position in the North Atlantic is of huge strategic importance. **Our key interests are in protecting our coastline, oil rigs and fishing interests, and patrolling our airspace.** We must also deal with terrorist threats and contribute to international defence and peace-keeping efforts.

To meet these needs we must have sufficient **naval personnel, aircrew and well-equipped land-based forces.** We require adequate support staff and security experts of all kinds, including cyber threats and counterespionage.

These needs determine the military hardware we require. Like our European neighbours, **the most likely danger is from terrorist attacks** in our towns and cities or on strategic infrastructure, such as airports, oil rigs and government buildings.

The occasional appearance of Russian submarines, aircraft and naval vessels in Scottish waters and airspace has caused concern recently. The threat from "rogue states", such as North Korea, is **largely theoretical** at present but can only be countered by international action.

All these situations require a wide range of conventional equipment and armaments. **They do not need a battery of nuclear weapons.**

### WHAT SCOTLAND GETS

At present, **Scotland contributes almost £3.5 billion annually to the UK defence budget, although defence spending within Scotland is less than £2.0 billion.** However recent cut-backs have left our coasts and maritime assets poorly protected. The UK government has closed RAF Leuchars and Kinloss, leaving a single air base in Scotland. Meanwhile it is reducing the British Army by a quarter, **cutting 20,000 jobs.**

### £100 BILLION ON TRIDENT

Despite the severity of the cuts and Scotland's vulnerability, all three Westminster parties propose to spend £100 billion on the renewal of the Trident system. In doing so they ignore three vital points:

- 1. Trident is useless for the real defence needs of our country.**
- 2. It's here on Scottish soil, 30 miles from our largest city, and we don't want it.**
- 3. Just imagine what positive things we could do instead with £100 million.**

# Why the biggest party DOESN'T always form the Government

We keep hearing that after an election “the biggest party forms the government”.

## Who says?

Well, the Labour Party and Jim Murphy.

## But it's not true!

Right. We have to go back to the elections of 1924 and 1951 to find a minority Labour and Conservative party respectively forming the Government but there is no rule preventing a smaller party or parties forming the Government

## So how does it work?

A government must gain the “confidence of the House of Commons” and win support from most MPs regardless of which party they represent.

According to the Cabinet manual produced by Lord Gus O'Donnell, Cabinet Secretary to the last three UK Prime Ministers, if there is no overall winner in an election then the sitting Government is entitled to try to win the ‘confidence of the House’ by gathering enough

support from MPs. If it cannot, then any party is allowed to try.

***So this is why Nicola Sturgeon says SNP MPs in the House of Commons will vote to exclude the Tory Party?***

Yes. And Labour knows it too. After the 2010 election, when no party had an outright majority, Labour tried to reach an arrangement with the Liberal Democrats in order to form a Government even though it had 48 fewer seats than the Tories.

At the time, MP for Paisley and Renfrew South, Douglas Alexander, said: “It is perfectly reasonable, indeed constitutional, that these discussions take place because somebody needs to be able to command a majority in the House of Commons.”

And Mr Murphy himself defended Labour's attempt to form a government. He said that Prime Minister Gordon Brown had a “constitutional and moral right” to try to form a government.

***Convinced!***

## OUR COUNCIL'S BUDGET

Despite claims that setting the budget was going to be a democratic process involving the community, nothing that came out of the community discussions made it into the final budget proposals by Stirling's Labour/Conservative administration.

For example, locals' wish to be able to make better use of the Wallace High School facilities for income generation was rejected, as were many other positive suggestions.

Items soundly rejected by communities last year were added to

the Council's proposals again, for example the decision to remove music tuition and PE teachers. Their inclusion caused unnecessary upset before they were rejected again. The Labour/Conservative Council administration also decided to cut more than £2 million from the road repair budget, just as our streets were getting into a reasonable state. SNP councillors have protected the roads budget as best they could, strongly believing that capital investments are needed to both protect and grow the local economy.

## NEW MAGAZINE FOSTERS OPEN DEBATE

iScot magazine is a new, independent publication about Scotland, its people, politics and potential as a fair and forward-thinking nation. Its aim is to create an intelligent platform for open debate about the future of the country and society.

iScot debates the issues that matter to the people of Scotland and holds elected representatives and public organisations to account. Its role is to celebrate the innovation, success and achievements of Scottish businesses while promoting Scottish interests, culture and influence to a domestic and world-wide audience.

The magazine is printed monthly and available from many newsagents in Stirling and by subscription. It is also available in digital format for use on Apple iOS, Android and Windows devices. Each issue contains 100 full-colour pages of high quality writing and images covering a variety of topics as diverse as: news & reviews, environmental features, business, lifestyle trends, technology, travel, health & well-being, property and politics.

For details of where to get your copy of iScot, visit their website [www.iscot.scot](http://www.iscot.scot)



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