



Stewart Maxwell MSP

Scottish National Party

Representing you in the West of Scotland

JANUARY 2005

Contact Stewart

Parliament

By writing to:

Stewart Maxwell MSP
The Scottish Parliament
Room M2.20
Edinburgh EH99 1SP

By Emailing:

Stewart.Maxwell.msp@scottish.parliament.uk

By Phoning:

0131-348 5669

By Faxing:

0131-348 5737

Constituency

By writing to:

Stewart Maxwell MSP
14 William Street
Paisley
PA1 2LZ

By Emailing:

Stewart.Maxwell.msp@scottish.parliament.uk

By Phoning:

0141-887 2185

By Faxing:

0141-887 2183

Maxwell Calls For New Firearms Act

West of Scotland SNP MSP Stewart Maxwell called for powers over firearms to be devolved to the Scottish Parliament and a new Firearms Act to replace the current plethora of legislation in this area.

He said: 'Replica firearms that can be easily converted are readily available from army supply stores and the internet and are a particular problem in Scotland. The law has to be tightened as the safety of the public is at stake.'

'It is the responsibility of the Scottish Parliament to protect the Scottish public, and the only way to ensure that safety is for powers over firearms

to be devolved to the Scottish Parliament to be placed alongside the existing legislation dealing with knives and swords.'

'The West of Scotland faces the brunt of the firearm problem in Scotland. 80% of attempted murders and recorded robberies involving a firearm in Scotland, 64% of Firearms Act 1968 offences, 56% of reckless conduct with firearms and 50% of assaults with firearms occur in the Strathclyde area. However, the most shocking statistic is that every single murder involving a firearm in Scotland was committed in the Strathclyde police force area. It is simply unacceptable for the Scottish Par-

liament to avoid its duty in this area by allowing the law to be made elsewhere. Action is needed now before this problem gets any worse and the proper place for that action to be taken is Holyrood.'



Stewart Maxwell's Office Donates to Tsunami Appeal

Shadow Deputy Minister for Health Stewart Maxwell MSP, and his members of staff today banked the money they had donated to the UK Radio Aid Tsunami Appeal.

Mr Maxwell said, "We were all delighted to donate money to help the victims of one of the worst natural disasters of our time. What seems like a small amount of money can literally mean the difference

between life and death in a disaster zone."

"This tragedy has brought out the best in the people of the West of Scotland who have shown themselves to be incredibly generous. Scotland is leading the world in donations from members of the public and I am sure that the money given will be used to save lives and help start to rebuild shattered communities".

Maxwell Urges Executive To Introduce Up-To-Date Breast Screening Methods in Scotland

Shadow Deputy Minister for Health Stewart Maxwell MSP, has written to Health Minister, Andy Kerr, urging him to save lives in Scotland by introducing 2-view breast screening as the standard screening method at every session as soon as possible. Mr Maxwell said,

"England introduced 2-view mammography at every breast screening session in 2002/03 and in that year the rate of cancers detected increased by 13% on the previous year. More than 50% of these additional cancers detected were small cancers which are easily missed by self-examination.

In Scotland the rate of cancers detected in 2002/03 rose by only 1.2% on the year before. Mr Kerr has stated that he is awaiting the recommendation of the Breast & Cervical Screening Advisory Group before deciding whether or not to introduce 2-view mammography as the standard method in Scotland. This group will not make its recommendations until the end of 2005.

Once again Scotland's health service will lag, by years, behind England's. Women in Scotland will face ill-health and death merely due to the fact that they live in Scotland, rather than in England with its more up-to-date screening methods.

"I have contacted the Minister to urge the Executive to protect the health of the women of Scotland by seizing the initiative and introducing 2-view mammography as soon as possible, rather than procrastinating until the end of the year without making a decision".

Executive Continue to Abrogate Responsibility

Stewart Maxwell MSP again condemned the Scottish Executive for their continual use of Sewel motions, giving powers away to the Westminster government. Mr Maxwell said

"Once again we see the Scottish Executive hand over part of Scotland's tradition on the whim of a Westminster politician. The Serious Organised Crime and Police Bill is the latest piece of legislation affecting Scotland being passed without due scrutiny at Holyrood. It was only because of pressure from the SNP that the Executive withdrew plans to allow a law of trespass to be imposed by Westminster thus doing away with centuries of

Scottish tradition."

However the Serious Organised Crime Bill was only one of many examples of the weakness of the devolution process. We are constantly being told that Scotland is protected by the unionist MPs fighting it's corner down in Westminster. This fallacy was cruelly exposed during the recent debate on the creation of a UK Supreme Court. This was a crucial debate for the Independence of the Scottish legal system. So how many Scottish Labour MPs took part. Not one! The Liberals were exactly the same. As for the Tories, sorry Tory, Peter Duncan couldn't even be bothered to turn up. If Scottish union-

ist MPs are not willing to stand up for Scotland on such an issue as the independence of the Scottish legal system then how can we have any confidence on them to defend Scotland on anything that contradicts the will of Westminster.

"Scottish Ministers must stop giving away Scottish powers. Scottish matters should be dealt with in Scotland. Devolved issues must be dealt with in Scotland. Scots Law should be dealt with by Scots judges in Scottish courts. Anything less is unacceptable to the people of Scotland!"

Maxwell Remembers Victims of Holocaust

SNP MSP Stewart Maxwell put a motion to Parliament in remembrance of Holocaust Memorial Day and the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. Mr Maxwell said

"Now is a time to reflect on the horrors of the Holocaust and to do all in our power to ensure that people of all races and creeds respect and understand each other. This motion gives all members an opportunity to register their support for both the Holocaust Memorial Day and the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz."

"Days such as these reaffirm the need to educate and inform future genera-

tions of the horrors that can stem from ignorance and prejudice, and we must resolve to promote the values of respect and acceptance of others as an appropriate memorial to those who died in the Holocaust."

Since the motion was placed Stewart has had support from over 50 MSPs of all parties.

Stewart has also urged the First Minister to reopen a fund that enables places of worship to apply for money to strengthen their security. He said "When this fund, opened in the aftermath of the events of September 11th 2001, was originally in place only 47

locations received monies from this fund. I am sure that the First Minister will agree with me that an appropriate and very practical way of commemorating the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz would be for him to reopen the fund. This would allow more ethnic and religious minorities to access monies to protect themselves and their premises from possible attack by misguided people motivated by their abhorrent racist, bigoted or anti-Semitic views. What could be a more fitting tribute to Holocaust Memorial Day?"