



Welcome to the 3rd issue. We Scots should be in no doubt that the biggest obstacle to Scotland regaining full political autonomy through independence is our addiction to voting Labour. The past has shown us that by voting Labour we are not sending MP's to Westminster to fight for the interests of Scotland but only to bolster the Labour parliamentary Party. The present crop of Labour MP's is testament to that and their voting record on issues that are important for Scotland proves that. This issue of our Newsletter concentrates on two important issues affecting Scotland, the most important of which is the election of the right wing Blairite, Jim Murphy as the new branch manager of the Labour Party in Scotland. He still likes to peddle the idea that Scottish Labour is a separate entity from the London Party which it is clearly not, but soon he will find out what limitations the London Party restricts him to, as did his predecessor.

Margaret Curran is an MP for one of Glasgow's poorest areas so she should know the needs of her constituents and how they are not being served by the present government. However it didn't stop her voting for a welfare cap with the Tories, while military spending continues unchecked. She also supports her Party's pronouncements of future austerity to pay for Labour's financial mismanagement of the country's economy under Brown and Darling. This will incur even more hardships on the very people she has been elected to represent. Lest we forget, Curran is the Labour MP who was seen cheering and applauding when the London based David Coburn became the first UKIP politician in Scotland, all of which tells us a lot about Margaret Curran. The next part of this issue looks more closely at her latest announcement of Labours tired old slogan.

Vote Labour: No longer Better Together WITH the Tories, but still a bit better THAN them! In the closing days of the Labour Party Scottish leadership, the Herald reported Shadow Scottish secretary Margaret Curran launching an attack on the SNP, rather slanderously claiming *'even Sturgeon believes Scots should vote Labour in 2015 to dump the Tories'*. However, the truth is that the influence which the Scottish votes have on the UK result overall is minimal (59 MPs out of a total of 650), and although Scotland has voted for a Labour government at every UK election since 1955, they have ended up with the Tories in 38 of the last 68 years. Therefore the strategy of voting Labour to dump the Tories is fatally flawed.

In any case a political party such as Labour should be pleading for votes on the grounds of what they stand for, and how good they will be for the electorate; not on the basis of being the lesser of two evils when compared with Tories. As the saying goes 'stand for something, or you will fall for anything'. At the minute Labour would appear to be sticking a finger into the wind to see which way it is blowing before formulating proposed policies. This is all very well to a degree, but it could be argued at times that the tail is wagging the dog. Furthermore, the messages coming from the Labour camp are somewhat conflicting to say the least. An example of this would be with Labour continually attacking the current Tory/LibDem coalition government on austerity, despite the fact that this is a policy which is set to continue if Labour are elected (assessment by the Institute for Fiscal Studies: Guardian).

It would seem that Labour have spent so many years in shadow government that opposition has 'become' them. There have been plenty of criticisms levelled at the current coalition government, not to mention a twitter storm demanding #CameronMustGo. However despite all of the issues it would seem that although Labour do criticism well, they are failing to capitalise on this, and are not managing to gain confidence with voters. It would seem that under this Labour set-up the Tories can't even throw it away.

So as a majority government starts to look less likely for next year, the main players have started to window shop the bit-parts to establish where they might find allegiances. Bookmakers at one stage stopped taking bets on a Tory-UKIP alliance, and it is thought that Cameron has actually been in talks with the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) – appeasing them by proposing to devolve Corporation Tax powers to Northern Ireland. Equally the bit-part-players have given thought to who they could and could not support in the event of a hung parliament. As expected, the SNP were quick to refute claims that they advocated a vote for Labour, with the First Minister Nicola Sturgeon going further in categorically denying she will ever help the Tories into power. Despite this view on the Tories, the SNP haven't ruled out working with a Labour minority government on an issue by issue basis to pass policies for the benefit of Scotland. However the First Minister has outlined (BBC) that the SNP would not lend support in respect of Trident renewal; which could be crucial given that this is to be voted for by the next elected parliament in 2016. It seems inconceivable to spend obscene amounts of money on nuclear weapons, as a deterrent warning of the damage we could inflict on others; instead of putting these billions to better use in improving the country for the better of our own people now.

It is true that we live in different times to those of the Labour founder Keir Hardie, however it seems that Labour are presently also working on completely different principles too. Therefore it is hardly a stretch to wonder in the present circumstances we find our country in today if Keir would have remained true to his party or his socialist principles. Perhaps he might have even gone as far as urging the electorate to dump Trident via a vote for the Scottish Nationalist Party.

In Tuesday 16th Decembers issue of The National, Alan McPhail, writer of the welcome in all our Bulletins has had a letter published. The "Scots must not reward Labours lies" is on page 24 & 25 and is very good piece and worthwhile read.



Jim Murphy was elected as the new leader of the Scottish branch of the Labour Party in what is being touted as a landslide majority. An election of the new Branch Leader was necessary after the very public resignation of Johan Lamont.

Jim started out on the road to politics at Strathclyde Uni where he spent 9 years studying politics, 9yr on a course he never passed and now he is the leader of Labour in Scotland. He has become an icon of aggressive politics in the years preceding his departure from Uni, but not in a good way. He has a growing reputation for being foul mouthed and hostile towards anyone who dares oppose him. Chris Howson writes in "A Just Church" how he was shouted at by Jim Murphy almost 20yrs ago. Chris had arranged an event where Murphy was to be a speaker, however, 2 of the speakers were in favour of Free Education, this opposed the then NUS presidents stance on the subject. Chris states that "*Jim saw them as a threat to Labour students, who were moving in a very right wing direction during the Blair leadership*". In another tirade he flew off the handle at Pete Wishart (SNP) in the House of Commons. Mr Wishart was in the voting lobby counting the Scottish Labour politicians who turned up to vote on the dreaded "**Bedroom Tax**" after a failure by the Scottish Labour MPs to turn up for a previous vote. Mr Murphy muttered something and somewhat sarcastically Mr Wishart replied "nice to speak to you Jim", Murphy flew off the handle, got right in Wishart's face and screamed "**** Off, **** Off, **** Off". At one point Mr Wishart was afraid that Murphy was going to swing at him. Of course we are all aware of Jim Murphy's antics during the independence referendum on his 100 towns, 100 days tour were he regularly lost the plot and screamed at pro independence supporters.

One of the first thing Murphy proclaimed after his leadership victory was, "I'll sort arrogant gutless Salmond" claiming that the ex First Minister lacked courage and was simplistic. He and his "leading light" new deputy Kezia Dugdale (see last issue) went on to say that they "Vow" (oh no not another one) to stand up for scunnered Scots fed up being ruled by David Cameron, and to stop the SNP hijacking the St Andrews flag, the Saltire to you and me. He also went on to attack Len McCluskey (Unite), who never backed him in the leadership contest, accusing him of insulting Labour supporters, showing a bit of his true colours again, he just can't stop himself. It appears that Jim is going to continue the Labour traditions of attacking the SNP and asking Scotland to vote for them to keep the Tories out of Westminster and to attack "ferociously" all who oppose him. Are we ever going to see real policies that benefit Scotland emanating from the Scottish branch of Labour?, in Mr Murphy it doesn't appear so.

What can we expect from Jim Murphy? Well he is a Blairite, he doesn't hide that fact, what does that mean to us? Well, he supported the war in Iraq and the continued war in Syria, he supports Israel in the bombing of Palestine. He voted **for** the Welfare cap, and for Uni tuition fees. He voted **against** devolving the Scottish elements of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, **against** devolving responsibility for railways that start and finish in Scotland, **against** laws to promote Human Rights and Equality, **against** transferring "**MORE POWERS**" to the Scottish Parliament. He **didn't** vote on the 2nd reading of the Scotland bill, devolving tax on quarrying and mining, devolving labelling on food content, devolving regulation of air weapons. Don't forget that it was Mr Murphy who shepherded the "*Abolition of Parliament Act*" enabling the Government to make laws without a vote. So we have a leader who supported Blair's war in Iraq, Browns Bailout of the bankers, Cameron's opposition to Scottish independence, votes for a lot of right wing policy and against left wing ones, has opposed devolving powers to the Scottish Parliament at every opportunity, supports Trident, opposes free education and flares every time something doesn't go his way. A man who was investigated for expenses (2012) and forced to pay over £3000 back, who still works around loopholes in expenses by claiming for a 2nd home in Glasgow while renting out his London home for £20000pa, Jim has claimed over £1m in expenses since 2001. So in summing up Labour Scotland Branch have elected a right wing, aggressive, war and austerity supporting, expenses fiddling leader, and ask us the Scottish electorate to support him and Labour. Anyone with an ounce of sense or decency will tell Mr Murphy and Labour Party where to go on May 7, 2015, for our sakes I hope that is not Westminster or Holyrood.

The next issue of "FREEDOM of INFORMATION" is 3 weeks from now on 7 Jan 2015

Have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

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