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Official Report

MEETING OF THE PARLIAMENT

Wednesday 20 November 2013

Session 4

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Scottish Parliament

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[The Presiding Officer *opened the meeting at 14:00*]

Time for Reflection

The Presiding Officer (Tricia Marwick): Good afternoon. The first item of business this afternoon is time for reflection. Our time for reflection leader today is Peter Kelly, the director of the Poverty Alliance.

Peter Kelly (The Poverty Alliance): Thank you for the invitation to address the Parliament today.

As many members know, one of the main aims of the Poverty Alliance is to raise awareness and improve public understanding about poverty and inequality in Scotland. In doing that, we are often called on to give talks and presentations about the issues, and over the years we have spoken to thousands of people across Scotland, from school pupils to trade unionists, front-line workers, campaigners and, of course, politicians.

We are asked to talk about the impact on individuals and communities, or to highlight the root causes of poverty. Of course, we are always asked to identify the solutions. In our talks we often focus on trends and statistics. Members will be familiar with many of the numbers: the 200,000 children in Scotland who live in low-income households; the almost 1 million homes that are affected by fuel poverty; the 400,000 workers who are paid less than a living wage.

However, we know that what makes an impact is talking about the real lives behind the numbers—the people and not the statistics. People like the young woman I know in Fife. She is a lone parent who sometimes struggles to feed her family or heat her home. She is at college now and, in the long term, she will get her degree and continue to make a contribution to her community. Or the man from Glasgow we worked with, whose life had been scarred by drugs and crime but who is now clean and in recovery. He spends much of his time volunteering and helping others to make the journey that he has made.

There are hundreds and thousands of lives like that in Scotland, which confound our expectations of poverty and highlight that real change is possible for individuals and that people are not passive victims. Such stories remind us that labels such as skiver, scrounger or cheat just do not fit.

When it comes to what we do about poverty, we have choices to make. As our elected representatives, you have more say than most

over those choices. You will rightly debate how we use our resources and focus our energies. However, in those debates, never forget the people behind the statistics, because if we treat people who live in poverty with dignity, as we expect to be treated, rather than as mere numbers or problems, we will increase the chances of finding the lasting solutions to poverty that I know that we all seek.

Thank you very much. [*Applause.*]

Motion of Condolence

14:03

The Presiding Officer (Tricia Marwick): The next item of business is a debate that I know that we would prefer not to be holding. It is a motion of condolence, in the name of Johann Lamont, on the death of Helen Eadie.

This is another sad day for our Parliament as we pay our tribute to Helen Eadie, our friend and our colleague. In doing so, I welcome to the Parliament Helen's husband Bob, her daughters Fiona and Jemma, and their family and friends.

Helen had already announced that she would not stand at the next election. She wanted to spend more time with her family—more particularly with her grandsons, who brought her such joy. Sadly, that was not to be, as she was taken from them, and from us, much too soon.

I knew Helen for at least 25 years, from the time when she was a Fife councillor. We were both delighted to be elected as MSPs in 1999. Helen was quite unique. She was kind, caring and compassionate, not just to her constituents but to her colleagues. Many of us can tell of her personal kindness to us in times of illness or difficulty.

During her time as a parliamentarian, Helen served on many committees of the Parliament, including the Public Petitions Committee, the Equal Opportunities Committee and, latterly, the European and External Relations Committee and the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee, where she served as deputy convener. She worked tirelessly for her constituents and the communities that she served.

Helen was never afraid to be different or to be true to her own beliefs, even if that meant disagreeing with the prevailing view. She always argued her case with passion and conviction. We will all miss her.

14:05

Johann Lamont (Glasgow Pollok) (Lab): Presiding Officer,

I move,

That the Parliament expresses its deep regret and sadness at the death of Helen Eadie MSP; offers its sympathy and condolences to Helen's family; recognises her proud record in Scottish politics as a parliamentarian, a campaigner and a constituency MSP, and acknowledges her as a true champion for the Fife communities that she represented for 14 years.

I rise to move the motion of condolence with a heavy heart and a sadness at the loss of Helen Eadie that I know is shared across the chamber

and far beyond, and still shocked at the suddenness of her illness and her passing.

I know that Helen's family, who are here today, have been touched and moved by the warmth of the tributes to Helen and the support to them at this terrible, rawest time of loss, when they will so keenly feel the gap left by the passing of Helen.

I thank the party leaders, the Presiding Officers, members of the Scottish Parliament past and present, members of Parliament, councillors and folk from all airts and pairs—Fife and elsewhere in Scotland—who joined us at her funeral to mark her passing and celebrate the life of a woman who defied simple definition.

Helen was one of the class of 1999. She was part of that group who came together as the Scottish Parliament was created. She was marked out from the beginning as a woman of deep passion for a politics that was inclusive, and as a woman who was driven by a desire to create a better, fairer Scotland. She was spurred by a deep conviction that injustice, whether social, political or economic, could be tackled—it did not have to be this way.

From the start, it was evident that Helen, as a socialist and co-operator, did not simply talk about what she cared about; she campaigned, she championed and she got things done.

Born in Stenhousemuir, Helen had a lifelong commitment to the values of the Labour and co-operative movement. Leaving school at 15, she quickly became involved in trade union activity—and I understand that, equally quickly, she was sacked for that trade union activity. She went on to work for the GMB in London for many years and she influenced the Labour Party at its very heart and centre throughout the 1970s, an achievement that she was so modest about that most of us were not properly aware of what she had done.

When Helen and her family returned to Scotland in the mid-1980s, she was appointed to the post of manager of West Fife Enterprise, starting her new job on the first day of the miners strike in 1984. Her evident love for all of Fife's communities and her passion in support of the ex-mining communities in particular, working with the Coalfields Regeneration Trust among others, was shaped by the impact of that strike on the families and communities whom she tried hard to support through those times.

Helen's CV is a rich one of great achievement from a time when women were far less visible in political life than they should have been. She was a pioneer for women and a lifelong commitment to equality shaped her every action.

Helen was far more than her list of achievements. She was a woman of great warmth

and compassion and I was struck by the fact that the new members of our group after the 2011 elections all gave testimony to her warmth and her welcome to them when they first came to the Parliament at what was a very difficult time for the Labour Party. She could inspire great loyalty and affection, and that is no more evident than among her constituents. That, I believe, was because of her focus on making things happen. Not only did she talk about what she could do; she actually delivered. I understand that her commitment to childcare brought her to establish a co-operative nursery in London many years ago that is still going strong.

Watching Helen champion the cause of disabled workers at Remploy or speaking out on behalf of families without the proper care and support that they needed, I was always struck by the almost physical impact on her—the emotional drain on her of the desire to give them a voice. She did not simply represent people; she stood with them. Going beyond simple empathy, she felt their troubles and that gave her an even steelier resolve to get the help or action required. When, on occasion, she incurred the wrath of the Presiding Officer, it was always her overwhelming sense of injustice and her desire to make the case for action that led her to ignore the warnings from the chair to draw her remarks to a conclusion.

There is no doubt that some people underestimated Helen's capacities and abilities. She did not fit the stereotype of a politician. It is equally true to say that it was her unique, non-stereotypical approach to politics that engendered such love and affection from her constituents and all those who needed her to work as effectively as she did in the cross-party groups on which she served.

Helen was an unlikely rebel—and we all know how much party leaders love rebels. But rebel she did on occasion, always driven not by a desire to be noticed but by her absolute conviction of the right or wrong of an issue, which led her to act.

Helen was a fine parliamentarian, taking her role on committees seriously and tirelessly looking at legislation and interrogating ministers to ensure that they were held to account. She was an internationalist, proudly and fiercely pro-Europe when being so was not always in fashion in the Labour Party, and until her death championed the interests of people across eastern Europe, most recently Bulgaria.

Her constituents' love and admiration translated into political support at elections, not least in 2011 when many of us suffered electoral defeat and difficult times. I believe that that support was a harvest that she earned for the work that she did, but that harvest was not the purpose of her work. Her work, her motives and her campaigning were

not about securing votes but about making a difference in people's lives and I believe that that is one of the many lessons that we can take from Helen Eadie about how to do politics.

Helen was a woman with a twinkle in her eye and a woman of modesty, loyalty, great warmth and deep compassion, and I count myself privileged to have been for many years a recipient of her kindness and generous praise. Above all, however, she was a woman who knew love in her long and happy marriage to Bob and who in equal measure loved and was loved by her daughters, her son-in-law, her beloved grandchildren and her family. Those who attended yesterday's funeral and saw all those wonderful photographs of Helen's life must, like me, have been struck by how happy she always seemed, how warm and enriched her family life was and how much more bitter it now makes the loss that her family is to be denied her planned retirement, when she was going to be able to spend even more time with her precious boys.

I was asked what Helen Eadie's legacy would be. I think that it is this: that politics can be honest; that political action can be part of, not separate from, communities; that politicians doing their job can make the world a better place; that as a society we can co-operate, not compete; that it is possible to do things in a different way; and that injustice in all its forms should be refused. Above all, her legacy to her beloved family is to know and understand the values of equality, justice and community and to know what love really is.

We salute Helen in all her many facets; thank her for all she did; and mark the passing of a wife, mother, mother-in-law, sister and grandmother, whose loss to those who loved her most is beyond words.

Farewell, Helen. We shall miss you. [*Applause.*]

14:12

The First Minister (Alex Salmond): On behalf of the Scottish National Party and the Scottish Government, I join in supporting Johann Lamont's motion, paying tribute to Helen Eadie and, of course, expressing our condolences to her family, her husband Bob and her daughters Fiona and Jemma.

This is the third motion of condolence that we have had in this chamber in the past few months. We have had motions for Brian Adam, David McLetchie and now Helen Eadie, all three of whom were lost to cancer and all three of whom were members of this Parliament from its beginning in 1999. All three combined a deep sense of public service with a high level of personal popularity and, as part of this Parliament's founding generation, they helped to

establish it as a positive force in Scottish public life. They remind us that the many successes of this chamber—and there have been many—are due to members of all political parties.

Helen was committed to politics and the trade union movement from a young age. However, her greater service to public life came after her return to Scotland, first as a councillor and then as an MSP for Dunfermline East and, more recently, Cowdenbeath. She was a dedicated parliamentarian and a tireless constituency MSP who never shrank from championing her constituents and the causes they believed in. Those of us who were fortunate enough to be at yesterday's funeral service—and I say fortunate because of the wonderful insight that it gave us into Helen's life—were not surprised to hear that she worked on constituency business even from her hospital bed for as long as she possibly could.

As Johann Lamont has rightly said, that commitment was reflected in her popularity with her constituents. At the last election, she not only retained her seat but increased her share of the vote. In some ways, the ultimate test of any politician's connection with their constituents is whether they can do that against a prevailing tide or wind, and Helen succeeded marvellously in that at the last election. I did not necessarily think that at the time; nevertheless, she succeeded marvellously against the prevailing wind.

Helen's motivation for entering politics was her passion for social justice and desire to see everyone get a decent shout and a fair chance. She fed her commitment to the European cause and, in particular, her concern for the integration of eastern Europeans into Scottish society. Tam Dalyell, who is no mean judge of these things, defined Helen as

“the best kind of honourable and tolerant issue politician”

when he described how, in her 20s, she helped the Polish population of Fife to integrate into the local community. That interest endured throughout her political career and was underlined by her role as the honorary patron of the Scottish Bulgarian Association.

We were reminded yesterday at the funeral service that Helen could be stinging in her put-downs of political opponents. Who could forget that, in 2007, when she resigned two of her committee posts in protest at the appointment of a Conservative MSP as convener of the Equal Opportunities Committee, she described the move as putting Attila the Hun in charge of community care?

Helen's commitment to social justice did not ignore party boundaries, but transcended them. I will give two examples. Helen convened the cross-party group on industrial communities, reflecting

her concern for the people and communities who were most seriously affected by mining closures and industrial decline. It was an issue on which she had real authority, given her experience as a research assistant for her late father-in-law, Alex Eadie. I shared an upper committee corridor in the House of Commons with Alex Eadie and remember him coming in one day and telling us that we were breathing dead air. It turned out that the air conditioning system was attempting to suffocate the upper committee corridor and Alex, with his practical experience of mining, recognised the problem straight away. Helen came from a family background that gave her an insight that few had into the coal industry and industrial communities. Therefore, it was entirely fitting that her last speech in the chamber, in September, was on the harm that is caused by unrestored opencast mine sites.

Earlier this year, Helen served on the working group that Fergus Ewing chaired, the aim of which was to provide and share information on the support service for Remploy employees. Party affiliations were not an issue—Helen was committed to doing the right thing and finding solutions for people who needed help. Fergus Ewing testifies to Helen's exemplary approach to that cross-party group.

Most of all, the compassion that was apparent in Helen's politics was part of her personality. That was the insight that Johann Lamont correctly said that we got from the wonderful photographs that were displayed at the funeral yesterday. Helen was a caring, dedicated and warm-hearted individual, which is why she was held in genuine affection across the political divide and why the tributes of the past week have been so numerous and heartfelt. I hope that it is of some comfort to her loved ones to know the high regard in which Helen was held by all members of the chamber. She will be sadly missed by every member. *[Applause.]*

14:18

Ruth Davidson (Glasgow) (Con): The shocking suddenness of Helen's illness and loss has deprived Fife of one of its most dedicated servants in the chamber and of one of its most principled parliamentarians. Although we in this place are rightly talking about Helen's contribution to politics and public life, I recognise that it is undoubtedly as a wife, a mother, a grandmother and a friend that her loss will be most keenly felt. I extend the thoughts and prayers of myself and my party to Helen's family in supporting the motion of condolence.

In all the tributes to Helen Eadie over the past few days, two themes have emerged. The first of those is Helen's fundamental care for people.

Although I did not know her as well as other members did, it was evident to me that she was driven by a deep concern for others, be they her constituents, her colleagues or her family. That care for people and desire to help others shaped much of her career and many of her views. She was a vocal opponent of the local government reorganisation that introduced multimember wards largely because her experience as a councillor in Fife taught her that smaller wards allowed her to represent the interests of her constituents more effectively. Whether she was campaigning to improve the care of pensioners in Fife or working on behalf of the Polish and Bulgarian communities, Helen's priority was always her constituents rather than her career or status as a politician.

I was telling Johann Lamont that, when I first arrived here as an MSP, I was a little intimidated by Helen, which seems strange in retrospect. I knew that she had resigned from several committees in protest that a Conservative could take any sort of leadership role in equal opportunities. I had watched as Helen would raise herself in the chamber, trembling in paroxysms of anti-Tory ire on—well, actually, on almost any given subject that one cares to mention.

Helen caught me in the corridor a few weeks after I became leader and I have to say that I thought that I was for it. However, I was not, because in private Helen was both warm and kind hearted. She had stopped me to ask whether I would pass on a letter to a United Kingdom Cabinet colleague, because she needed help to help others in her constituency and wanted to know whether I would oblige.

That was not the only time that Helen asked me to help intervene on one issue or another on behalf of her constituents. I always did help, because her requests were so modest and her wish to help was so heartfelt. They almost became personal missions to her and she was always on the side of the weak and the poor—the people who just needed a big sister to wrap an arm around them and tell them, "Let's see if we can't make this better."

Neither the letters exchanged nor the back-door channels ever made it into the press, even when the situation was not resolved to Helen's liking. She was much keener to do whatever it took to help than to grandstand or gain credit just for trying. Not everyone in the chamber can say the same thing.

It has been said in newspaper tributes, at yesterday's funeral service and here again today that, even when Helen was confined to her hospice bed, she insisted on carrying on her duties as a local MSP, replying to correspondence and sending instructions to her colleagues—I hope

that members have all done what she asked. That sort of dedication is remarkable, but I did not think that it surprised anyone who knew Helen, as they would not be able to imagine anything else. Her life and career were characterised by absolute honesty, decency and integrity.

We have lost too many of our class of 99 this year. With every Scottish election, new people have the privilege of taking their seats in the chamber. Helen was an example to all who came after of what a people's representative should be and of how to put your constituents first. She showed that, although one can put one's argument with force and passion in the chamber, one can work with others as colleagues—no matter what party—to make a difference.

The story of Helen's indignation and subsequent resignations at my colleague Margaret Mitchell taking on the convenership of the Equal Opportunities Committee is legend and, as the First Minister mentioned, it came with a withering comment about Attila the Hun. Less well known is that under Margaret's guidance, that same committee produced an in-depth report on women in prison and their rights and treatment. Helen sought out Margaret especially to tell her what a fine and important piece of work that was. That was Helen's other side: completely supportive and generous with her praise when she saw someone else standing up for the overlooked, the oppressed and the vulnerable.

Helen had unshakeable political convictions and passion for expressing her beliefs with full force. One would be hard pushed to find a more decent, honest or principled parliamentarian than Helen Eadie. For me, her most abiding quality was to care: to care for her constituents, to care for the difference that she could make and to show care and respect for her opponents as well as her friends.

As our thoughts and prayers go out to Bob, Jemma, Fiona and the wider family at this time, we remember with affection one of Holyrood's most honourable members.

14:23

Willie Rennie (Mid Scotland and Fife) (LD): Yesterday at the service at Dalgety Bay we sang the hymn "Will Your Anchor Hold". The refrain was particularly apt. It talked about anchors that keep the soul

"Steadfast and sure while the billows roll,
Fastened to the rock which cannot move,
Grounded firm".

That summed up Helen Eadie extremely well. She was very firm. No matter what happened around her, she was determined to carry on and achieve what she had set out to achieve.

I shared a constituency with Helen for four years, and I saw at first hand the quality of service that she provided to her constituents. It was therefore no surprise when I turned up—early, I thought—at the service at Dalgety Bay and found that the hall was already packed. There were several rooms to go into, and people were standing outside. To me, that showed the respect that people in the constituency and in the Labour Party had for her. She attracted the great and good of the Labour Party, with a former Prime Minister making a tribute and her friend Baroness Ramsay making such a personal contribution to the service. We also had Cathy Peattie singing a beautiful song and members of her family doing a reading during the service. That showed that she had so many dimensions to her life, and there was clear affection from her constituents.

Like Ruth Davidson and many others, I feared Helen Eadie. It was not a secret that she did not really like Liberal Democrats. She did not like Jim Tolson—[*Laughter.*] Now, now. I do not think that she liked me too often, or certainly not my views on proportional representation, and I do not think that she was the greatest fan of the coalition between the Liberal Democrats and Labour, and she certainly let me know it. In what I think was her last speech in the Parliament, she accused me of several things, but the very next day she was out being kind and warm and smiling, with that huge grin that immediately put people at ease. She was able to separate the personal from the political. Some of us find that hard, because we have great passion for our politics, but not Helen—she could separate the two.

I remember once campaigning in Cardenden in the Glenrothes by-election when it was bucketing with rain. A car screeched to a halt, and I saw Bob Eadie in the driving seat, then Helen bounced out to berate me about my latest misdemeanour in the constituency. However, the very next day, she had a big smile and a kind heart—she recognised that we were politicians together and we had a battle together.

Helen was colourful. I have laughed many times and so fondly at some of her enterprises, such as her demand about the Equal Opportunities Committee and her escapade in Cowdenbeath when she challenged young people on an estate, managed to escape and then called for a curfew in Cowdenbeath. She had a one-woman campaign to ban the amber traffic light to bring Scotland in line with Bulgaria, which she loved so much. She was not afraid of sticking out, saying different things and being colourful. We need colourful politicians like Helen, as they contribute so much.

Helen was clearly a socialist. I am not a socialist, but her commitment to socialism inspired me. She was never cynical at all, and she always

believed and was optimistic. She was driven, passionate and optimistic and she cared for her constituents. I saw that at first hand as an MP in the constituency that we shared—she was often there before me on issues. She cared and she delivered results. She was a warm personality, with that huge big grin of hers.

Helen, today, we are celebrating your life. This is about you and, if you are watching, I hope that you appreciate it.

14:28

Margo MacDonald (Lothian) (Ind): The paths of my family and Helen Eadie's family crossed a long time ago, when Alex Eadie was a candidate in Ayr and my husband, Jim, was his election agent—that is a team, if members can imagine it. When Jim was elected to Westminster, he went to live with Helen, which is something that not everybody knows. He was there with a clutch of young members of Parliament, and she was the landlady. He says that, even then, her characteristics were kindness and consideration, which everybody has spoken about today.

I am glad that people have spoken about the fact that she could do one. When she heard some of the things that I said about Europe and the European Free Trade Association, she did one. However, I appreciated her, because she was that rare animal—she was loyal to her party, yet she walked to the beat of her own drum, which is a difficult feat to pull off.

Helen was a very admirable woman; she was a serious woman. A lot of people did not realise just how serious she was, but she was a mine of information on Europe, for example, because she took the research seriously and did not only read the first pages the way that most of us do.

We will miss Helen in the Parliament; she was so obviously a good person. She sought nothing more than to pursue what she saw as righteousness and people getting a fair deal. In that, I admired her, because she was never knocked off that course. Her intention in politics was to do good; she succeeded.

The Presiding Officer: I advise members that a book of condolence is available for members to sign in the black and white corridor. We will make sure that the book is passed on to the family as soon as practicable.

I now allow a short suspension before we move to this afternoon's business. The Parliament will resume at 14:45.

14:30

Meeting suspended.

14:45

On resuming—

Defence Industry

The Deputy Presiding Officer (Elaine Smith):

The next item of business is a debate on motion S4M-08348, in the name of Johann Lamont, on the future of the defence industry in Scotland. I advise members that we are tight for time in all this afternoon's debates.

Johann Lamont (Glasgow Pollok) (Lab): I am proud to speak in the debate.

In 2011, as a consequence of the reorganisation of the boundaries for Scottish Parliament elections, I was elected to represent the area that covers the Govan shipyard, which is a privilege that I know my predecessors Nicola Sturgeon and Gordon Jackson took very seriously. Across the water, Bill Kidd was given the honour of representing the area that includes the Scotstoun yard. On the opening of the Parliament, one of his predecessors—the late Donald Dewar—said:

"In the quiet moments today, we might hear some echoes from the past: the shout of the welder in the din of the great Clyde shipyards".

The twin centres of Clyde shipbuilding, and their sister yard in Rosyth, are a source of great pride, not just to those of us who are lucky enough to represent them, but to all of us who have a sense of Scottish history, an interest in our country's industrial heritage and the desire to create and retain high-skilled, well-paid jobs for our fellow Scots.

Gil Paterson (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP): I much appreciate Johann Lamont giving me the opportunity to intervene.

Does Johann Lamont think that democracy is an urgent issue for everyone in the world? Would she like to comment on the fact that the United Kingdom Parliament's representative for Govan has threatened the workers there by saying that if they exercise their democratic right to vote for independence, they will lose their jobs and livelihoods?

Johann Lamont: Ian Davidson stands second to none in championing the interests of shipyard workers. He has fought to secure jobs in the face of the threat that the commitment of Gil Paterson and his party to separate Scotland from the rest of the United Kingdom poses for those workers. Perhaps Gil Paterson and his party should be a little more honest about what their prospectus is.

Those black and white pictures of armies of working-class men flooding in and out of the shipyard gates, bending steel and metal against a backdrop of cranes and docks, and building

floating marvels, are iconic images that are integral to the history of Glasgow and Scotland.

Jimmy Reid famously said:

"We don't only build ships, we build men."

We only have to listen to two of those great men—Sir Alex Ferguson and Billy Connolly—to get a sense of the pride that was felt about those workplaces and the special people who made up the workforce. The fact that we in Scotland possess those amazing skills and expertise, which were once the envy of the world, is a source of great pride to all of us.

Sadly, our competitors in other countries did not just sit back and admire what we did in Scotland and across the UK; they, too, learned how to build such amazing ships. They invested in their industries and found any competitive edge that they could to take us on at that game.

At one point in the early 1900s, the Clyde built one fifth of the world's ships and, at its peak, shipbuilding in Scotland employed 100,000 people. Scotland still has a proud shipbuilding industry, but it is not what it once was—we know that. The days of thousands of young men leaving school and walking into an apprenticeship in the shipyards the very next day have gone, yet the industry is still a key one for Scotland. It provides not just thousands of jobs but, with them, good wages and high skills to boot.

The decision to go ahead with the aircraft carriers, ordered by a Labour Prime Minister from Fife, may have been viewed as controversial in some quarters, but it was not viewed as such by the thousands of men and women who set about that mammoth project in the knowledge that it would provide for their families in the coming years. It was a lifeline for those workers, but it was a project that had a clear end date and, sadly, that end date is close. There will no longer be enough work on the Clyde to sustain the workforce at its present capacity. The fact that the 800 workers affected knew that this day would come makes it no less of a blow to them and to our shipbuilding industry.

In responding to the news from the Secretary of State for Defence earlier this month, the Deputy First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, said much that I agree with. Yes, we are all saddened for the proud shipbuilders in Portsmouth, and we remember the solidarity that exists across the workforce, wherever it is based. It is beyond argument that there has been a steady decline in our shipbuilding industry over a long number of years, which should worry us all. I, too, am concerned about our reliance on naval contracts and the uncertainty that comes from the gaps in those order books.

The Minister for Transport and Veterans (Keith Brown): In the context of that last point about the decline in shipbuilding jobs, does Johann Lamont believe the promises to make the peace dividend pay for jobs in Scotland through the ending of the cold war, that Trident is useful Government expenditure and that both are missed opportunities in terms of safeguarding shipbuilding jobs?

Johann Lamont: I am not clear what point the minister is making.

We must recognise something about which the Government has done nothing. It spoke about diversification only last week, after the crisis emerged, rather than doing the work of Government in the long period beforehand.

Nicola Sturgeon has my full support in exploring any diversification routes that we can explore to move on from dependence on the Ministry of Defence for thousands of jobs, although it appears that BAE Systems is an obstacle to that. It does a particular kind of job and wants to continue doing it.

Perhaps we could have done more. We all knew that this day would come. Perhaps we should have come together across parties and Governments long before now and attempted to map a long-term future for our shipbuilding industry. However, it is not too late. We stand ready to engage in that debate, to learn from our neighbours the way that they once learned from us, to help to manage any change and to exploit future opportunities for the world-class skills and facilities that we have on the Clyde, at Rosyth and in our defence industries.

If Germany and our other neighbours in Europe can compete at the high end with Korea and China, let us understand what we have to do. Let us get round the table with the United Kingdom Government, the management and the trade unions and work together to save our shipyards. We can call it a summit, a commission, a task force or whatever, but it will have my full support and that of the Scottish Labour Party.

However, we must recognise that any change cannot and will not happen overnight. A diversification plan will take many years and much investment to implement. Scotland will not become a world leader in shipbuilding by sheer will alone or because the Scottish National Party says so.

If we are to have a future in shipbuilding, it will be possible only if we retain the skills and capacity that we currently have in Scotland. If the workers leave the shipyard gate with no prospect of returning anytime soon, the skills that have been passed down the generations will be lost with them. There will be no one to teach the next

generation how Scots built ships. The one thing that we have—our skills—will be lost.

If we are to retain those skills, we need to keep the jobs on the Clyde and, no matter how inconvenient it is for some, there is only one game in town: our only option for bridging the gap between the carrier project that kept Govan and Scotstoun open and any future plans for shipbuilding is naval contracts. Members should make no mistake: if naval contracts dry up, the skills and capacity on the Clyde will go with them and the shipbuilding industry will be lost to Scotland. No one in the chamber would welcome that prospect.

There is a serious prospect of more naval contracts coming to the Clyde. Philip Hammond has announced three ocean patrol vehicles and, of course, the big prize—type 26 frigates. Despite the conspiracy theorists, he has also insisted that the Clyde is the best place in the United Kingdom to build those ships. On commercial grounds, there is no contest.

There is now only one barrier to the future of Scottish shipbuilding: the referendum on Scottish independence. Let us be absolutely clear: complex warships such as the type 26 frigates will not be built in an independent Scotland. Common sense tells us that Governments of any stripe will ensure that high-end defence projects are built within their own territories.

Chic Brodie (South Scotland) (SNP): Is Johann Lamont saying that BAE has taken a commercial decision—which she has recognised—to invest more than £300 million on the basis of whatever constitutional arrangement there might be? It has never said that.

Johann Lamont: The exemption applies precisely because we are inside the United Kingdom. [*Interruption.*] Members cannot wish that away. The Clyde is the best place inside the United Kingdom but, if we are not in the United Kingdom, the contract will not be let to an independent Scotland. [*Interruption.*]

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Order.

Johann Lamont: I have acknowledged Nicola Sturgeon's work with, and commitment to, the shipyards for which she once acted and I accept that she has a good understanding of the challenges that the industry faces, so I am at a loss to understand some of the wild misrepresentations that she has offered over the past few weeks.

Nicola Sturgeon has said that the Clyde is the only place where we can build these ships now. Let us put aside the fact that she argued her case even when Portsmouth was still open, but she knows that the UK Government has made it clear

that the recent decision is reversible and that Portsmouth could be fired up in plenty of time to take on the work if Scotland were to leave the United Kingdom.

Nicola Sturgeon has said that the UK Government currently orders warships from Korea and collaborates with Australia on defence projects. The UK Government ordered a tanker from Korea and worked with the Australians on design work. That lack of candour and honesty has been the hallmark of the SNP's approach to the referendum. The SNP tells us that there are no consequences and no downside to a yes vote, even when it comes to people's jobs.

Mark McDonald (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP): Will the member give way?

Johann Lamont: For the avoidance of doubt, let us be clear that if Scotland votes yes next year, it will be the death knell of a proud industry. [*Interruption.*]

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Order, please.

Johann Lamont: That is not defeatism but the real world. If SNP members do not believe me, they should come and join the people in the real world who work in the industry. John Dolan of Scotstoun said:

"It is quite clear if Scotland votes yes, we will not be building ships for the UK Government"—

Mark McDonald: Will the member give way?

Johann Lamont: Listen to the men who work in the industry. We know what you think. You should understand what the people in the shipyards think.

Raymond Duguid of Rosyth said:

"If Scotland was independent, no one in Scotland could bid to build type 26. So that would, yes, decimate the industry"—

Gil Paterson: But he works for you.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Mr Paterson, order, please.

Johann Lamont: Duncan McPhee of Scotstoun said:

"we would be greatly reduced or completely finished as a shipbuilding industry".

John Wall of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions has said that, to his mind, there is no way on God's earth that under an independent Scotland we will any longer be in the fight. Eric McLeod, GMB convener at Babcock Marine Rosyth, said:

"No UK Ministry of Defence means no more shipbuilding jobs in Scotland."

Mark McDonald: Will the member give way?

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Mr McDonald, please sit down.

Johann Lamont: As Donald Dewar foretold, we have heard the shout of the welder in the din of the great Clyde shipyards, and it is time that the Scottish Government listened. The shipyard workers have spoken out to protect their industry. SNP members may condemn me, but they ought to listen to what these men have to say about the consequences of next year's vote.

When people come to vote on 18 September next year, they will do so for many reasons and this may be a factor. I suspect that there are people on the Government benches who care about the shipbuilding industry but privately accept that the closure of the shipyards would happen and is a price worth paying in order for Scotland to be independent. However, the least that they can and should do is to be honest with the people whom they represent about the consequences of such a decision.

Jobs on the Clyde are not the reason why I support the United Kingdom. I believe that our argument is far deeper and richer. However, I have to say in all seriousness that, had I been a nationalist over these past few weeks, I am sure that I would have at least paused for reflection on whether my commitment to my political project would come at the cost of people's jobs. At least be honest and tell them, "You may lose these shipbuilding jobs, but it is a price worth paying for Scotland to be separate"—

Gil Paterson: You are a disgrace to Scotland.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Order.

Ms Lamont, you are in your final minute.

Johann Lamont: The fact of the matter is that, in this debate, the people within the industry tell us the consequences and the people who support independence tell us that we should not listen to those voices in the industry. That is unacceptable. If people cannot speak truth to power, what is the point of this Parliament and what is the point of trade unionists who are committed to their industry saying what they believe to be the consequences?

Of course, there may be good things about independence and people are entitled to their view—although I am certain that there is a downside—but how can we have a real debate about our country's future in this climate when we are not even permitted to give voice to those who understand the industry, who understand the consequences and who are asking those who support independence to explain what they would do instead? The people of Scotland deserve honesty. The people who earn their living in the shipyards deserve honesty about their future. Let

us hope that we can have some honesty from the Government today.

I move,

That the Parliament regrets BAE System's announcement that it intends to cut 1,775 jobs across its UK shipyards and supports all efforts to minimise compulsory redundancies and to redeploy people where possible; welcomes, however, the confirmation by BAE Systems that the Clyde is its preferred UK location for the construction of the future Type 26 global combat ship; notes that Scotland plays a significant role in the UK, European and worldwide defence industries, including hosting the largest defence electronics manufacturing site in the UK in addition to its shipbuilding but notes the benefit to this industry of UK defence contracts, and therefore considers that the best way to safeguard the future of Scotland's defence manufacturing industry is to remain in the UK.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Before I call the minister to speak, I remind the chamber that although debates can be robust and members can have opinions on all sides of them, they must be conducted with respect and members must respect each other across the chamber. I hope that the debate will continue now in that fashion—*[Interruption.]* Order, please.

I hope that the debate will continue in that fashion for the rest of the afternoon.

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Lab): On a point of order, Presiding Officer. I wonder whether it is in order for a member to shout,

"You are a disgrace to Scotland",

to a member who is defending her constituency interests and who has a long record of doing so. Will you rule on that?

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I have just made the point to the chamber that members must be respectful of each other. That is what it says in the standing orders, so we should all reflect on that for the rest of the debate.

Neil Findlay: On a point of order, Presiding Officer. I wonder whether you would allow the opportunity for the member to withdraw that disgraceful comment. *[Applause.]*

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Order, please. I have made the point that members should be respectful of each other, which is what it says in the standing orders. I now expect the debate to continue in that fashion.

We have now lost time from the debate, so I will be extremely strict with time for all members. I call Keith Brown to speak to and move amendment S4M-08348.3.

15:01

The Minister for Transport and Veterans (Keith Brown): It is perhaps worth remembering that this debate takes place against the

background of the anxiety and insecurity of 835 people who are set to lose their jobs and livelihoods at Govan, Scotstoun, Rosyth and Filton, and of the 1,110 workers, including 170 agency workers, who do not feature in Johann Lamont's motion, whose jobs are to be lost at Portsmouth.

Drew Smith (Glasgow) (Lab): Will the member give way?

Keith Brown: No, I will not.

Our thoughts are with all those workers; it is worth taking time to think about that. Many of those workers and, indeed, their trade unions have asked—some have even pleaded—that their plight not be used as a political football. However, only a fortnight later we have this motion from Johann Lamont.

It is also worth saying that Johann Lamont's deputy leader said:

"Let's not make this a constitutional issue."

Worse still, on the very day that the announcement was made, Johann Lamont rushed on to the radio to blurt out:

"It's self-evident this decision is part of the union dividend."

She thinks that the 1,110 jobs and the 835 jobs that are being lost are part of the union dividend. It is Johann Lamont's obsession with Westminster control over these affairs and her proposition that everything is better under Westminster that I seek to challenge today.

Johann Lamont saw the job loss news as her latest opportunity to bang the drum for Westminster control over such decisions, but we should contrast that with the approach that has been taken by the Scottish Government. The focus of John Swinney, Nicola Sturgeon and the First Minister has been on working with the trade unions, the workforce and the management to safeguard as many jobs as possible, to help place those who need them into new jobs and to support the workforce. So, is Johann Lamont right that the UK is good for defence jobs?

Drew Smith: On a point of order, Presiding Officer.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Minister, will you resume your seat? I have a point of order from Mr Drew Smith.

Drew Smith: Thank you, Presiding Officer. The minister draws attention to the efforts of the Scottish Government to protect employment. Can he indicate to the chamber why there is no employment minister, never mind any of the ministers that he mentioned, even present in the chamber for the debate? Why is the transport

minister responding to this debate about employment in my region?

The Deputy Presiding Officer: That is not a point of order.

Over recent weeks I have noticed that when members from all sides of the chamber have not been able to get interventions on speeches, they have been making points of order in the middle of speeches. That is not particularly respectful of their fellow members.

Keith Brown: Thank you, Presiding Officer.

So, is Johann Lamont right that the UK is good for defence jobs? To test that proposition, I will look at three particular projects. First, on the two aircraft carriers that Johann Lamont mentioned, only one will be operational and that will be nearly a decade after the UK last had aircraft carriers; the other will be held on what is called extended readiness but most of us would call being mothballed. The taxpayer was told by the Labour Party that the budget for both aircraft carriers was £3.6 billion. In the technical language that is common to Philip Hammond, that figure has been rebaselined; to the rest of us that means that the budget has been blown out the water, because it is now £6.2 billion for the two aircraft carriers.

Iain Gray (East Lothian) (Lab): Will the member take an intervention?

Keith Brown: No, I will not. I think that I have been delayed enough already.

UK defence procurement is a shambles.

Let us look at the Nimrod MRA4 project, costing up to £3.6 billion. The money paid was taken over by a £0.5 million commission. Therefore, there was £3.6 billion for the cost of the Nimrods and £0.5 million for a commission to scrap the Nimrods, and for that we got scrap value of £1 million. So there was a cost of £3.6 billion, but we have no Nimrod aircraft to show for it. We also had 100 civilian job losses in relation to that project. UK defence procurement is a mess and is losing us jobs.

In relation to that second project, Johann Lamont quoted a number of trade union leaders. I would quote Bernie Hamilton, a national trade union leader, who said of the Nimrod project:

"The lunatics have taken over the asylum ... The decision ... is a betrayal of the workers".

UK defence procurement is not good for workers in Scotland.

Let us take the Labour Party's £150 million award of a contract for two ships at Swan Hunter in 2000. They finally cost more than twice as much as they were intended to cost—£342 million—were years late and had to be moved from Swan

Hunter to the Clyde. One of the ships, the RFA Largs Bay, was then sold to Australia for £65 million after only four years in service. UK defence procurement is a shambles and it is costing jobs.

Johann Lamont: Nicola Sturgeon and I agreed that sustaining jobs on the Clyde was a good thing. This minister seems to be suggesting that it was a bad thing and that, if we lose the jobs in a year's time, the decision was a bad thing anyway. Will he clarify whether he thinks that the decision on the Clyde was a good thing, notwithstanding—I have talked about this on many occasions—the direct consequences and impact on those people who have lost their jobs?

Keith Brown: Inventing things that I have said is probably not the best way for the member to advance her argument. I have never said that it was a bad thing in relation to the job losses on the Clyde.

Our vision for the defence industry and, within that, the shipbuilding industry in Scotland, stands in stark contrast to the UK's record of massive cost overruns, projects delivered years late—and sometimes not delivered at all—and the badly managed decline of jobs.

To come back to Johann Lamont's point, in less than 20 years the UK has seen Scotland's shipbuilding workforce decline by 35 per cent. That is some union dividend, supported by the Labour Party.

For our part, we would take the missed opportunities to diversify. Johann Lamont says that she does not understand the point about diversification. She may remember the commitments that her own party gave at the end of the cold war to diversify defence jobs. That never happened.

The cost of Trident, at £100 billion, could much more properly be spent on traditional defence procurement to the benefit of jobs in Scotland.

An independent Scotland will not require £6.2 billion aircraft carriers. However, we will need to address the fact that not a single major Royal Navy surface vessel is in Scotland at this time. We have a coastline longer than India's, and the UK has left Scotland very poorly protected.

BAE has recognised the unique skills of the workforce on the Clyde and at Scotstoun, and we will work with the company to safeguard and build upon that expertise. Babcock is already diversifying into renewables. Thales, another company in Johann Lamont's constituency, is already working with the Scottish Government on transport projects. We can do better than the UK Government has done.

The Scottish Government is working hard to support the industry in identifying new markets

and capitalising on our real strengths in highly advanced, complex warship design and fabrication. We are currently determining our defence procurement needs. Decisions on those, alongside support for international trade, will support the long-term future of the yards.

I know that hundreds of BAE staff are working with Babcock at Rosyth to complete the assembly programme for the aircraft carriers. Those companies are hugely important to the Scottish economy.

Iain Gray: Will the minister give way?

Keith Brown: I have lost a lot of time already.

As well as diversification, we need to see a change in defence technologies, driven by new forms of combat that have led to changes in product design and manufacture across the defence industry. I have mentioned Thales; I could also mention Selex ES.

We in the Government have faith in the ingenuity and expertise of defence workers in Scotland. Johann Lamont says that the big threat to that is the referendum. On that point, we perhaps agree: the referendum to take the UK out of the European Union is a far greater threat to defence jobs in Scotland than any referendum on Scotland's independence. The uncertainty of the EU referendum is surely a concern, especially for companies such as Thales and Selex ES, which are headquartered in Europe. We have had no mention of that from the Labour Party.

In relation to the type 26 contract, the approach of the no campaign seems to be totally different from the approach of the Scottish Government.

Willie Rennie (Mid Scotland and Fife) (LD): Will the minister take an intervention?

Keith Brown: The no campaign wants to put the brakes on the type 26 contract coming to the Clyde in the event of a yes vote, but they are not ABS—anti-lock braking system—brakes, although it does want to put an ABS twist on this: for it, ABS means anywhere but Scotland, and it is happy for the UK to consider working collaboratively with Australia, India, Canada Turkey and the United States.

Willie Rennie *rose*—

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Order. Mr Rennie, the minister is not giving way.

Keith Brown: Johann Lamont now supports the most sensitive and dangerous piece of defence equipment—Clyde nuclear weapons—being procured from, leased from and owned by a foreign power. She will not trust the same workers who are working on these contracts now to work on them after Scotland votes for independence. Scottish workers are currently building these UK

warships. They have shown their ability over many years. Despite what Johann Lamont says, according to Philip Dunne, the UK defence minister, the decision was taken on business grounds and had nothing to do with the referendum. That is why the business came to Scotland in the first place.

What we have now seen, of course, is Johann Lamont's local MP, Ian Davidson, dreaming up and advocating a break clause to deny the yards in his own constituency the type 26 contracts should Scotland decide to vote for independence in what Jamie Webster calls a "democratic vote".

Willie Rennie: Will the minister give way?

Keith Brown: No, I cannot.

Willie Rennie is trying to speak, but these are the words of Alistair Carmichael:

"If Scotland were to vote Yes ... you would think Portsmouth would be well placed in that circumstance."

Therefore, the Secretary of State for Scotland is promoting Portsmouth as the place that should get the type 26 contracts. I know that Alistair Carmichael got his job in a hurry, but surely he should have checked his job description first. His job is to promote Scotland in the Cabinet, not promote the Cabinet in Scotland. He should defend those Scottish jobs, and it is a disgrace that he has not done so.

Willie Rennie: Can the minister tell me how many British warships have been built outside Britain since the second world war, and can he name each and every one of them?

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I will reimburse the minister with 30 seconds.

Keith Brown: I have already answered that point, and I do not intend to go back to it. [*Interruption.*]

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Order, please.

Keith Brown: At one stage, Johann Lamont said that we should get round the table and work together. I wrote to her on 25 June to ask her to work with me to provide the reassurances that are required to ensure that the type 26 contract came to Govan, but she never even bothered to respond. That shows her commitment to those jobs.

I will conclude with a quote about the type 26 contract from the union convener of the Govan yard, Jamie Webster. He said that what will happen will be the result of a "democratic vote" and that, in that context, everybody in Scotland, "every ... politician of every section"

should work "to hell and back" to safeguard the jobs at Govan and on the Clyde. I am one

politician who will, after a yes vote, work to ensure that those jobs stay on the Clyde, and I think that every other politician in the Scottish Parliament should do the same.

I move amendment S4M-08348.3, to leave out from “but notes” to end and insert:

“; notes that independence will bring new opportunities for this industry, as for others, with naval procurement a key part of the future of Scotland’s shipyards, and further notes that freeing Scotland’s share of the estimated £100 billion lifetime cost of the Trident replacement programme would widen the choices that could be made to support increased diversification and take action to boost exports.”

15:11

Murdo Fraser (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con): I welcome the opportunity to debate the defence industry in Scotland.

The Scottish defence industry is one of our highest-value industry sectors. It employs nearly 40,000 people and is underpinned by the world’s fourth-largest defence budget—that of the Ministry of Defence. In my region of Mid Scotland and Fife, we have great companies such as Raytheon Systems in Glenrothes, which employs more than 500 people, and Rolls-Royce, which has a presence in Dunfermline. Elsewhere in Scotland, Vector Aerospace is in Perth, there is Babcock in Rosyth, which works on aircraft carriers, and there are great companies such as Selex ES, Thales, QinetiQ and, of course, BAE Systems on the Clyde. All those companies rely on exporting, of course, but they are underpinned by UK domestic contracts from the Ministry of Defence, and they are key components of the Scottish economy. The jobs that they support are often well paid, highly skilled and much sought after, and we should be very concerned about anything that threatens them.

Margo MacDonald (Lothian) (Ind): Is the member concerned in any way that we should be concentrating on defence work for the Clyde when we know that the Ministry of Defence will cut back the size of the navy even more?

Murdo Fraser: Margo MacDonald makes a perfectly fair point about the long-term future prospects for the Clyde, and Johann Lamont touched very effectively on that in her speech in talking about the need to diversify in the long term. However, we need to deal with what is happening in the next two, five and 10 years, of course, which is why the type 26 frigate contracts will be so important.

Willie Rennie: Will the member take an intervention?

Murdo Fraser: No. I need to make some progress, if I can.

The new development that the debate touches on is BAE’s announcement of job cuts. Keith Brown was entirely right to concentrate on the fact that that is very bad news for people in Portsmouth, and it is bad news for many of those who are employed in Govan, but it means that Govan will have a future, and we should welcome that. We should also welcome the fact that the UK Government has proactively brought forward three new offshore patrol vessels to fill the gap in work between the completion of the Queen Elizabeth class aircraft carriers and the new frigates. That point is covered in my amendment.

The key issue in the debate is what will happen if there is a yes vote in the referendum. The simple fact is that, since the second world war, no UK Government has ever had a complex warship built in any foreign country. That is the answer to Willie Rennie’s question, which the minister could not bring himself to answer. If Scotland votes yes, post the referendum Scotland will be a foreign country, and we know that the contracts for those frigates will not be signed until after September next year.

Maureen Watt (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP): Will the member give way?

Murdo Fraser: I will give way briefly.

Maureen Watt: Does the member accept that it was not the Government but BAE Systems that made the decision, and that it will have taken the future of Scotland, whatever it will be, into account?

Murdo Fraser: Of course it was BAE Systems that made the decision, but the UK Government will make the final decision on where the contracts are placed. Why would the UK Government break with convention and place the contracts anywhere outwith its own home country?

Let me pose a question to members on the SNP benches. If we imagine what would happen in an independent country, would the Government of an independent Scotland with a shipbuilding capacity ever place a warship contract outwith Scotland? No—it is utterly inconceivable that that would ever happen.

Jamie Hepburn (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP): Will the member give way?

Chic Brodie: Will the member give way?

Murdo Fraser: I have given way twice already. *[Interruption.]*

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Order, please.

If Keith Brown was the minister for defence procurement, can we imagine him coming to this chamber and announcing that a warship was to be built somewhere other than Scotland and that Scottish jobs would be lost? That would never

happen in a million years, so why would it happen in the rest of the UK post-independence?

Jamie Hepburn: Will the member give way?

Chic Brodie: Will the member give way?

Murdo Fraser: I am not giving way. I have made that clear.

Can members imagine the political reaction in the House of Commons if the Secretary of State for Defence got up and said, "We're going to place these contracts in a foreign country"? Can members imagine the reaction from the representatives of Portsmouth and elsewhere? It is utterly inconceivable. [*Interruption.*]

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Order, please.

Jamie Hepburn: Will the member give way on that point?

Murdo Fraser: No. I have given way twice already. Mr Hepburn will have his chance to speak.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The member has said that he is not giving way.

Murdo Fraser: I am sure that, in this debate, we will hear about the situation in Norway. We heard about it from the Deputy First Minister the other week. The most advanced frigate in the Norwegian navy is the Nansen-class frigate, which is currently being built in Spain under a €2.4 billion contract. It is true that Norway builds ships for the offshore oil industry, but globally new ship orders in 2012 were at their lowest level since 1998 and it is a difficult, competitive market.

We should be looking to diversify, but we should not underestimate how difficult that will be when we see commercial vessels that are required in Scotland today being built in the far east and elsewhere. Of course, if we are interested in diversification, the real question is why we did not start before now. Why did the Scottish Government not make efforts before today to start this very important work with a task force?

It is telling that, in his speech and his amendment to the motion, Mr Brown fell back on that old stalwart that is used whenever the SNP is in trouble and referenced Trident. Trident money is being spent again. According to my calculations, it has already been spent 20 times, but today we have it being spent for the 21st time, this time on defence procurement. What Mr Brown forgets is that Trident already supports jobs in Scotland and, if he scrapped that programme, those jobs would be lost.

Despite the protestations from the SNP benches, it is absolutely clear that the future of Govan is threatened by independence. Those jobs will be under threat if people vote yes in the

referendum in September next year. That is why I support the Labour motion and my amendment.

I move amendment S4M-08348.1, to insert after "Type 26 global combat ship":

“; welcomes the announcement by the UK Government that three new offshore patrol vessels will be built in Scotland, sustaining the workforce between the completion of the Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers and the new generation of frigates, securing the vital skills needed to build the UK's future warships”.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: We turn to the open debate. Speeches should be a maximum of six minutes.

15:18

Annabelle Ewing (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP): My heart goes out to all those workers who have lost their jobs—I am thinking particularly of those in Govan, Scotstoun, Rosyth and of course Portsmouth—and notwithstanding that we are currently part of the United Kingdom it is right and proper that the Scottish Government's first priority will be the workers who face redundancy in Scotland. There will therefore be a focus on the support of the partnership action for continuing employment programme in helping those skilled workers to find alternative employment.

Turning to the Labour motion, I find it encouraging that there is recognition that Scotland's defence industry already plays a significant role not just at the UK level but further afield at the European level and indeed globally. To what can we ascribe that success? I submit that it is due to the skills of the workforce on the Clyde, at Rosyth and in our many electronic and high-tech defence companies, many of which Murdo Fraser listed. That has ensured that our industries have had an important role to play and will continue to have an important role to play furth of our borders.

As far as the Clyde yards are concerned, the terms of the BAE press release of 6 November are worth noting. I quote:

“BAE Systems has agreed with the UK Ministry of Defence that Glasgow would be the most effective location for the manufacture of the future Type 26 ships.”

The press release went on to say:

“the Company proposes to consolidate its shipbuilding operations in Glasgow with investments in facilities to create a world-class capability, positioning it to deliver an affordable Type 26 programme for the Royal Navy.”

That vote of confidence in the Clyde was based not on sentiment but on hard commercial considerations, which reflect the excellence and significant experience of the workforce and the principal location of the key design team of naval architects and naval engineers. It is clear that such

a rationale will determine where the type 26 ships are built.

On “The Andrew Marr Show” on Sunday 10 November, no less an authority than the chief of the defence staff, General Sir Nicholas Houghton, confirmed that the Westminster Government

“will go and get our ships in the place where it makes the most sense”.

He went on to say that the BAE decision was

“very much a matter of a business rationalisation. In terms of raw business sense, it makes sense that the place where they have the greatest capacity and the best depth of skills, which is on the Clyde, that’s driven by a business decision.”

Johann Lamont: Will the member explain why she quotes so extensively from that person but chooses to ignore the words of the conveners in Scotstoun, Govan and Rosyth, who are telling her that the vote next year will have consequences for jobs on the Clyde? Why does not the member listen to the conveners? She is prepared to quote a man who happens to agree with her.

Annabelle Ewing: What the chief of the defence staff said is not irrelevant in the context of the debate. However, I remind the member that Jamie Webster said:

“If the situation is that Scottish people by democratic vote, vote Yes, I would expect, no sorry, demand, that every single politician of every section supports us to hell and back”.

I do not think that it could be made any clearer than the convener of the Govan shipyard union made it.

We should also consider what the UK Secretary of State for Defence did not say. When he announced the closure of the Portsmouth shipbuilding facility, he refused to contemplate the cancellation of the type 26 orders in the Clyde in the event of a yes vote next year, although he was repeatedly asked to do so.

There we have it. The ships will be built where it makes the most sense to do so. That is the key political message that is coming from the UK Secretary of State for Defence and the chief of the defence staff, and it is the only conclusion that makes commercial sense. Moreover, the Clyde will be the only place in these isles that has the capacity to build large warships.

Alex Johnstone (North East Scotland) (Con): Will the member give way?

Annabelle Ewing: I am sorry, I must make progress.

On the procurement rules, article 346 is quite clear in providing that

“any Member State may take such measures as it considers necessary for the protection of the essential interests of its security”,

in the context of military procurement, as defined. Therefore, if the UK Government considered it necessary for the protection of its essential security interests to award a contract to BAE, and BAE in turn could complete the contract where it was most economically advantageous to do so, there would be absolutely no restriction in European Union law in that regard. That has been confirmed by Andrew Murrison, the Westminster Minister for International Security Strategy.

Drew Smith: Will the member give way?

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The member is in her final minute.

Annabelle Ewing: Thank you, Presiding Officer.

On the basis of the evidence that is before us, we must conclude that decisions are made on the basis of hard commercial facts and what is in the interests of the rest of the UK. Where is the expertise? It is on the Clyde. This is a no-brainer. It is clear from an examination of the facts that naval procurement in Scotland will continue and that the type 26 ships will indeed be built on the Clyde.

What are the Scots to believe? Should they believe logical argument or the Labour Party’s project fear? I know where I put my faith—in the good sense of the people of Scotland.

15:24

Willie Rennie (Mid Scotland and Fife) (LD): The announcement was no surprise. People who are aware of the ebbs and flows of the defence sector and the warship sector were aware that the day was coming. The type 26 ships and the offshore patrol vessels were never going to make up for the huge activity that there was at the height of construction of the aircraft carriers and type 45 destroyers. However, although the announcement was not a surprise it has been hard for the workers involved.

The real question is why it has taken such an event for the Government to wake up to the need to diversify. My constituency covers the Rosyth dockyard, as did my previous Westminster seat, and I have been asking questions about diversification for years. Why has the Scottish Government not done that for the Clyde? A crisis seems to be required before this Government takes any action at all.

SNP members are making a brave attempt today, but sovereign capability has been an established principle in the Ministry of Defence and the UK Government—

Chic Brodie: Will the member give way?

Willie Rennie: Not just now.

That has been the case since the second world war, and we have not built any warships outside the UK. The vessels that went to Korea were fuel tankers, not warships, and they were built on a commercial contract.

Chic Brodie: Will the member take an intervention?

Willie Rennie: Not just now.

We have protected land-war vehicles, warships, and network-enabled capability and fixed-wing aircraft. That is regarded as sovereign capability. Why do we think that the SNP will, just because it says so, change decades of UK Government policy?

The yards in Portsmouth will not be closed—

Chic Brodie: Will the member give way?

Willie Rennie: Not just now.

The yards in Portsmouth will not be closed until after the referendum, and that is no coincidence.

Chic Brodie: Will the member give way?

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Mr Brodie, please sit down.

Willie Rennie: The orders for the type 26 frigates will not be placed until after the referendum. The UK Government is defending its—our—own defence interest. That is the reality.

Keith Brown: I refer Willie Rennie to the comments from the Liberal Democrat leader of Portsmouth City Council, who said in March 2012 that if a decision was not taken within the next year the skills would have gone.

The jobs cannot go to Portsmouth—your own Lib Dem leader is saying that. Do you not have faith in the Scottish workers on the Clyde to take on the job, or do you think that we should pay an expensive premium to go elsewhere?

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I ask all members to speak through the chair, please.

Willie Rennie: I think that I know Gerald Vernon-Jackson a little bit better than Keith Brown does, and I know that he is standing up for Portsmouth.

Keith Brown: That is what he said.

Willie Rennie: I am sure that the minister has read the statement in detail and discussed it with Philip Hammond. He will know that the orders for the type 26 frigates will not be placed, and the Portsmouth yard will not close, until after the referendum. That is the reality.

Members should look at Barrow, where the keep Barrow afloat campaign has been established. It is arguing that, in addition to the submarines, a

shipyard capability should be constructed in Barrow. It has the ability to do so, but everybody else seems to ignore that reality.

Chic Brodie: We are hearing about localisation and where ships will or will not be built. Willie Rennie says that there is an inconsistency between the SNP's demands to build British warships at the same time as endorsing the Scottish Global Forum's report "Securing the Nation—Defending an Independent Scotland", which he says

"recommends buying anything but British".

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I must hurry you along, Mr Brodie.

Chic Brodie: However, we now have a letter that says:

"It is ... important to observe the conclusions that you appear to have drawn from our work are not an accurate reflection of our findings."

Willie Rennie: I thank Chic Brodie for taking up half of my speech time.

If Mr Brodie looks at the report in detail, he will see that it refers to Danish, New Zealand, Irish and German vessels, and the Norwegian navy. The report talks about anything but British warships, and it has been endorsed by the SNP. One week the SNP is saying, "Let's buy British", and the next it says, "Let's buy anything but British." Chic Brodie should read the report more carefully.

What we have here is a range of contradictions. The SNP condemns British foreign policy on numerous occasions but demands to build the British Government's warships and all its vehicles, just as it campaigned for the Trident refit facility to be constructed in Rosyth in my constituency. The SNP wants those weapons of mass destruction—as it would call them—to be in tip-top condition, ready for war at any time, because it is prepared to put its principles to one side in such cases. That is the contradiction that we face with the SNP. It says, "We could be like Norway", but it opposes Norway's policy on the EU, which subjects Britain to the EU competition rules.

In 2005, Nicola Sturgeon told us that the fisheries protection vessels should be reclassified as warships so that they can be built in this country, but the SNP expects the UK Government to do the exact opposite. Is the SNP suggesting that the type 45 destroyers or the type 26 combat ships should be reclassified as fishing vessels in the future? Is that the kind of contorted logic and the kind of ministry of defence that we could expect in an independent Scotland?

The reality is that the SNP has been found wanting on the shipyards. It does not understand

how British foreign policy and defence policy have been developed over decades.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: You must close, please.

Willie Rennie: The threat is to the shipyards on the Clyde and on the Forth, and the SNP needs to wake up to that.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I remind members that they have a tight six minutes for speeches.

15:30

Michael McMahon (Uddingston and Bellshill) (Lab): Although it is undoubtedly welcome that BAE Systems has chosen the Clyde for the construction of the future type 26 combat ships, we should be in no doubt that that work will materialise in Govan and Scotstoun only if they, like the rest of Scotland, remain part of the UK or if the white paper tells us next week that an independent Scotland will see massive investment on a similar scale to the UK's future naval procurement for the newly created Scottish navy.

Somehow I doubt that we can expect that, so the reality we face is that Scottish independence will put at risk the Scottish defence industry and with it, the wider Scottish manufacturing sector. Before the scaremongering klaxon sounds, let me explain why the defence sector is so important to the wider manufacturing sector.

When I was a welder during the 1980s and 1990s, engineering in Scotland was going through a very difficult period. If we were not losing whole companies such as Caterpillar, Cummings, Findlay's and many others, we were seeing downsizing on a massive scale. Skilled tradesmen in Lanarkshire had to travel further afield to the oil-rig manufacturing yards or to defence contractors on the Clyde or at Rosyth in order not simply to find work but to retain their skills.

Recently, I was in discussion with union representatives at a major manufacturing company in my constituency, which has undergone a very difficult period of rationalisation, redundancy and short-time working. The unions expressed concern that many tradesmen had left that company rather than trying to continue to eke out a living under the financial constraints that were inflicted on them by the firm's circumstances. Those welders, platers and electricians were looking for some stability and they saw it in the shipyards, where defence work is being carried out at present and could be carried out in the future. Why then, when up to 90 per cent of the orders that are received by Scotland's shipbuilding industry are from the MOD, would the SNP want to

introduce a barrier to that trade and put at risk the job prospects of so many highly skilled workers?

Lodging an amendment that raises the issue of Trident, while making the SNP back benchers happy, does nothing to address the reality facing workers in the defence industry in Scotland. Academics have clearly said that as many as 16,000 defence jobs would be affected by independence, including those on the Clyde and at Rosyth, and yet the Government seeks to deflect attention away from that by throwing in an issue on which even it cannot agree any longer but which suits its purposes this afternoon.

Also, the SNP blithely promotes the idea that Scottish shipyards could be used to build submarines but rather than provide a well-considered answer to diversification, that idea merely illustrates the SNP's lack of knowledge about the defence sector and shipbuilding. Although Motherwell Bridge benefited from large contracts in the 1980s to build submarine hulls, not only has that work gone but the factory itself is now a housing estate. That company had the highest level of coded welders in Scotland at that time, as the skills that were required to build submarine hulls were so extensive. The shipbuilding workforce in Scotland does not currently have the specialist skills that are needed to build submarines. That is a sad reflection—it is an indictment—but it is a fact. In the longer term, such work could lead to the creation of good jobs, but acquiring those skills would be a lengthy and costly process; it would not be a short-term solution to the adverse impact of losing major defence contracts due to Scotland becoming independent.

That is why people who know a bit about these things, such as John Dolan, the GMB convener at Scotstoun, are not just sceptical about the SNP's defence contracting plans, but scathing about them. As John Dolan rightly points out:

“if Scotland votes yes, we will not be building ships for the UK Government”.

That is simply a fact, and yet, according to Nicola Sturgeon, as John Dolan went on to point out,

“we're the only shipbuilders capable of doing the work.”

Clearly, Nicola Sturgeon has never heard of an organisation called the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, which brings together the workforces of all the shipbuilding sites across the UK. It has 1.2 million members. That hardly suggests that there is no other place in the United Kingdom that can build ships. The very existence of those shipyards means that Nicola Sturgeon's claim that there is nowhere else for the work to go is either ill informed or deliberately misleading. The SNP

needs to stop playing with people's livelihoods in that way. It is far too important.

Next week, we expect the much-heralded white paper from the Scottish Government. Obviously, that will be after the media get hold of it first, as it will not be for the Parliament to have its place recognised. However, we will supposedly learn what we can expect in an independent Scotland. We will be expected to believe in what the white paper contains, because the Government says it is so. They are the Government's policies, and the white paper will tell us how things will be. When the UK Government and the UK-wide political parties state their policies, they are simply dismissed and denied if they do not sit with the SNP's view of the world. When Whitehall states that, post-independence, the rest of the UK would not award certain defence contracts to Scotland, just as it will not presently give them to foreign countries, we are told not to believe that. Not only will the white paper tell us what Scotland will do; it seems that it will also tell us what Scotland will tell other countries to do. That is not good enough for the workers on the Clyde. It is not good enough for the defence industry in Scotland. That is why we should support the Labour motion.

15:36

Stewart Stevenson (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP): Members might be rather sceptical about the idea, but there has been substantial consensus on some important things in the debate. The Labour motion mentions the skills of people in Scotland who are employed in the defence industries, and that aspect has attracted unanimity across the chamber. We have spoken about the need to consider diversification, and a recognition has been shared in speeches from across the chamber that relying simply and forever on defence alone is unlikely to be good enough.

Many of the issues that we are debating today are very far from new. I refer in particular to a decision that the UK Cabinet made on 19 May 1920 in relation to diversification in the defence industry. The Cabinet gave the Government's own Woolwich arsenal permission to take on private work, because the defence industry was no longer sufficient to keep employment there at its previous level. The Government paid off 1,500 workers—which might sound familiar—and it sought to diversify the factories concerned.

We have heard references to sovereign capability, specifically by Willie Rennie and indirectly, albeit without using those words, by Murdo Fraser, as well as by Michael McMahon. Let us examine the reality of the record. I start with the Fairey Rotodyne, which was an innovative UK project to build new vertical take-off bulk-carrying transport. Ultimately, that project was cancelled in

1962 by the UK Government. What did it buy instead? It bought Boeing Chinooks.

Willie Rennie rose—

Stewart Stevenson: I have lots more. I might come to Willie Rennie later.

Those Chinooks were to be deployed on the front line. Willie Rennie spoke about fixed-wing aircraft, and I will come to those as well, so he need not worry.

The Blue Streak missile was to be the missile to carry the independent nuclear deterrent for the UK. That proved to be unsupported by the Government of the day, and we now buy the missiles—rather, we lease them—from the United States, and we are not allowed to launch them against anyone without getting the codes enabling us to do so on each specific occasion. Sovereign capability? I doubt it.

Let me also mention the TSR-2, a fixed-wing aircraft that led the way in technology and capability. Once again, it was cancelled in the 1960s by the UK Government, which sought to buy American F-111s instead—although ultimately, of course, that is not what it bought. Incidentally, until it fell out of use 10 years ago, the F-111 had the unenviable nickname of “The Widowmaker”, which it had been given by the Luftwaffe and the United States air force. That was the aircraft that the UK Government wished to operate.

Finally, of course, there is the Harrier jump-jet, which was a gem and a piece of leading-edge technology. It is no longer manufactured here but is bought from elsewhere by the UK Government.

Willie Rennie: Mr Stevenson might be educating us about various items of equipment, but I have to point out that no one has ever said that all equipment must be bought in-country. The Labour Government's defence industry strategy and the defence and security policy that has been developed under the current UK Government have determined what the sovereign capability is, and it is the four areas that I identified in my speech.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I must hurry you, Mr Rennie.

Willie Rennie: Does the member not recognise that no British complex warships have been built outside the UK since the second world war?

Stewart Stevenson: I invite the member to examine the *Official Report* after the debate because he will find that he very specifically linked sovereign capability to fixed-wing aircraft such as the TSR-2, the Harrier GR5A and so on. It is absolutely clear that sovereign capability does not determine the purchasing decisions of the MOD and the UK Government; it all comes down to the

best place to get the best equipment, and Scotland will remain the best place to get much of the equipment that the UK Government and indeed Scotland will require in future.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: You are in your final minute, Mr Stevenson.

Stewart Stevenson: The Scottish defence industry is a feisty industry full of feisty people. We have heard quotes from a wide range of them, including the MOD itself and the workers whose voices must be heard in this debate. Those people have skills; indeed, I find it interesting that Michael McMahon chose to talk about Motherwell Bridge and how in a short space of time after it was closed down the same skills dissipated and could not be reconstituted. My friends in Portsmouth know that all too well in advance of the same fate being visited upon them. They certainly will not be in the same place that Scotland will be, whether under independence or not, to support the orders that there are.

Michael McMahon: Will the member give way?

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I am afraid that the member is finishing now.

Stewart Stevenson: Whatever the result of the referendum, I will support everyone on the Clyde—and everyone else must do likewise.

15:42

James Kelly (Rutherglen) (Lab): I welcome this opportunity to take part in a real debate on matters that affect people on the ground in Scotland. The motion notes with regret the job losses on the Clyde, mentions the importance of the sustainability of the shipbuilding industry and rightly points out the dangers of independence.

This is the kind of debate that the Parliament should be having, but the reality is that in recent times the SNP Government has not been interested in bringing forward proper debates. We had a two-and-a-half-hour debate looking forward to a golf tournament at a time when it was exposed that £30 million had been lost on the abandoned Glasgow airport rail link project. Next week, more public money will be wasted when a white paper is published in Glasgow instead of being introduced in its rightful place in this Parliament. This is an important debate, because it deals with real issues.

We must look at the benefits to Scotland's shipbuilding industry of operating in the UK market. After all, a third of the UK's shipbuilding jobs, including 3,000 on the Clyde and 2,000 at Rosyth, have been allocated to Scotland, and Scotland benefits from having 50,000 jobs in the defence industry. It is therefore naive to think that

voting for independence will not undermine those jobs and industries.

The reality is that we would be moving from a market of 63 million customers to a market of 5 million customers, which would undermine not only the shipbuilding industry but our ability to trade as a country. We need only look at the figures. Trade with England, Wales and Northern Ireland is currently worth £45 billion, compared with our £22 billion in trade with the rest of the world. The dangers of independence to that trading are absolutely clear.

The minister talks about promoting Scotland, but perhaps he could start with the contracts that the Government is responsible for. In the initial allocation of contracts for the Forth replacement crossing, only £72 million of the first £230 million was allocated to Scottish companies.

Stewart Stevenson: The debate is about defence.

James Kelly: This is about Scottish companies. More than 70 per cent of the contracts were allocated to non-Scottish companies.

Margo MacDonald: Let us get back to shipbuilding on the Clyde. Can the member explain why it should still be in the same perilous state that it was in 40 years ago, when I represented the constituency? It has been hanging on by its fingernails for 40 years. Does the member agree that it would be a good idea to try something else?

James Kelly: Members across the chamber have expressed regret at the decline of shipbuilding and, in her opening speech, Johann Lamont agreed that we should work towards a sustainable shipbuilding industry going forward.

We should not lose sight of the decision that we will take next year on independence. Annabelle Ewing spoke about the exemption under article 346 of the EU treaty, which allowed £3 billion of business to be allocated to Scotland between 2007 and 2011. If Scotland were independent, that exemption would not apply any more. We need to be alive to that type of exposure.

Annabelle Ewing: Will the member give way?

James Kelly: No, I am sorry but I am running out of time.

The wider issue is how we support workers across the United Kingdom. The words of Mick McGahey's speech to the 1968 Scottish Trades Union Congress are still relevant today. He argued against independence on the basis that he was not prepared to leave the mill workers of Manchester or the dockers of Liverpool on their own.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: You are in your final minute, Mr Kelly. I would be grateful if you would speak on the defence industry.

James Kelly: On the issue of looking after workers in the defence industry and all industries throughout the United Kingdom, I and my Labour colleagues will not support independence, unlike the SNP, who would be quite happy to abandon people in Sunderland, Ipswich and Portsmouth to perpetual Tory Government. [*Interruption.*]

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Order, please, Ms Ewing.

James Kelly: We will not do that. In summing up—[*Interruption.*]

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Order, please. The member is closing.

James Kelly: I support the Labour motion, which recognises the contribution to shipbuilding that the UK market makes in Scotland, the benefit of Scotland being in the UK and the fact that independence would be a liability to the future of the shipbuilding industry in Scotland.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I call Stuart McMillan, to be followed by Jamie Hepburn. I ask members to adhere to the terms of the motion and amendments.

15:49

Stuart McMillan (West Scotland) (SNP): This is an important issue not just for the future of the defence industry in Scotland but for all Scotland. It is therefore unfortunate that it has been turned into a constitutional issue by members of the no campaign. Some issues can be above the constitutional debate that is taking place. Unfortunately, in this instance, some members of the no campaign cannot rise above that. [*Interruption.*]

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Order on the front benches, please.

Stuart McMillan: Johann Lamont listed a number of individuals from the yards who have said that, if Scotland were to vote yes, shipbuilding on the Clyde would be lost. The men to whom I have been speaking over the past 10 days or so—men who work in the shipbuilding industry in Glasgow—understand that what the Labour Party has said up to now has been nothing short of scaremongering. They also know that the reason why work is going to Glasgow is the first-class workmanship, the excellent record and the better business case. If Scotland was to vote yes next year, type 26 orders could still come to Scotland.

Iain Gray: Am I right in understanding that Stuart McMillan is saying that the trade union conveners whom Johann Lamont quoted are not

representing the views of the workforce? If that is what he is saying, he should say it explicitly.

Stuart McMillan: I am saying that I have been talking to people who work in the industry—no doubt Iain Gray has done so, too. I can only inform the chamber of the discussions that I have had with individuals who work in the industry, which is the case for Mr Gray and Johann Lamont as well. The people that I have been speaking to know that what is coming from the Labour benches is scaremongering.

Margo MacDonald: I hope that Stuart McMillan thinks that it strengthens his argument to recall that Jimmy Reid decided that independence was the way forward.

Stuart McMillan: I could not agree more with Margo MacDonald.

I want to focus on two issues. First is the role of the defence industry in Scotland today, with a focus on shipbuilding. Second is the potential that awaits shipbuilding and the rest of the defence industry in an independent Scotland. I will also touch on Faslane and its future.

The motion before us raises some basic issues. We all believe that the defence industry is an important element of Scotland's economy, but, although we on the SNP benches are prepared to stand by the workforce in the Glasgow yards to protect jobs, other parties qualify their support for the workforce, dependent on how it votes in the referendum. Ian Davidson, the local Labour MP for the area, even wants to take the jobs away from his own constituents, as he is calling for a break clause to remove the work if Scotland votes yes next year.

Willie Rennie: Will the member take an intervention?

Stuart McMillan: No; I am sorry—I have taken two already.

The defence industry is important to Scotland's economy and it provides many highly skilled jobs. Many of the companies involved are leaders in their field and rely on their well-qualified and well-trained workforce. Shipbuilding is a key aspect of the industry, and it is one that has a long history in Scotland.

At one time, Clyde shipyards produced around one third of the world's shipping tonnage. From its peak in the 1920s until as recently as the 1950s there were around 100,000 shipbuilding jobs in Scotland. After years of mismanagement of the economy and the industrial sector by successive UK Governments of varying political colour, by 2011 there were only around 6,000 shipbuilding jobs in Scotland. With the recent job losses announced by BAE, the numbers in the Clyde yards were reduced by a further 800 or so, leaving

only around 2,300 jobs. *The Guardian* leader comment on Wednesday 6 November stated:

“That’s what happens when a whole political generation fails to develop an industrial strategy. It’s another blow to the coalition promise to rebalance the economy.”

Famous shipyards have been consigned to the history books. All that potential and all those jobs have been lost. The jobs went; all those shipyards are gone; all that industry has gone. The one yard that is left building ships on the lower Clyde is Ferguson Shipbuilders in Port Glasgow, and Garvel Clyde Ltd does ship repair in Greenock. The Scottish Government’s award of a £20 million order has allowed Ferguson’s to build ships again for the first time in five years, and that is very much a welcome addition.

Duncan McNeil (Greenock and Inverclyde) (Lab): Will the member give way?

Stuart McMillan: No, I have taken two interventions already. Sorry.

Incompetent UK Government ministers who had no industrial policy and politicians with a focus on the service sector—all of them have left us where we are now.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: You are in your final minute, Mr McMillan.

Stuart McMillan: The Clyde yards are being retained by BAE for one reason: they are the best place to build warships in the UK. The workforce’s skills, abilities and experience have ensured that BAE sees a future for those yards.

Politicians are still trying to undermine the contracts for the Clyde yards, despite the evidence to the Scottish Affairs Committee—evidence that it refused to publish in its reports—that there are no barriers to the MOD ordering ships from Scotland. When Vice Admiral Andrew Mathews, chief of material (fleet), was asked whether type 26 frigates could be built on the Clyde if Scotland was outside the UK, he said:

“That’s absolutely the case, it depends on the outcome of the referendum and the timing of the 26 order ... That is one of the options open to us.”

I have another quick point, Presiding Officer.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: It will have to be quick.

Stuart McMillan: The GMB union, in a letter of 5 March 2012, described the fact that the contract for the MARS—military afloat reach and sustainability—tankers went to South Korea as

“an Exocet to UK shipbuilding”.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: You must finish.

Stuart McMillan: I whole-heartedly support the amendment in the name of Keith Brown, and I certainly support shipbuilding in Scotland.

15:55

Jamie Hepburn (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP): I welcome the debate, although I regret some of its terms.

I recognise the importance of shipbuilding to our country. It would be an exaggeration to say that I grew up in the shadow of the yards, but it was not a million miles away—within earshot of the horn rather than in the shadow of the yards—so I know the importance of the industry to Glasgow and Clydeside. It is an important part of our country’s industrial heritage and it has to be an important part of our country’s industrial future. Like Stewart Stevenson, who made this point very well, I hope that that perspective is shared by all members.

I regret the conclusion of the motion, which seeks to make the debate a constitutional bun fight. We hear consistently from Labour members that the SNP has a constitutional obsession, but the motion is just another example of the inconsistency of that argument. I find that, actually, it is the Labour Party that most frequently brings up the constitution in the Parliament. Frankly, when a number of members state directly that yards will close and jobs will go in the context of independence, that can only be described as naked scaremongering.

Iain Gray: Will the member give way?

Jamie Hepburn: No, thank you, Mr Gray.

Anas Sarwar, deputy leader of the Labour Party in Scotland, has made the point that the issue does not need to be a constitutional one and we do not need a constitutional rammy. That point should have been heeded, but we are where we are, and I am happy to debate the issue in that context.

Johann Lamont said that she is keen to ensure that trade union voices are heard, and I am, too. Jamie Webster’s words have been quoted already, but his comment on “Newsnight Scotland” on the type 26 contract is worth hearing again:

“What I will say, and declare publicly: If the situation is that Scottish people by democratic vote, vote Yes, I would expect, no sorry, demand, that every single politician of every section supports us to hell and back”.

He is absolutely right to make that demand.

Drew Smith: Will the member give way?

Jamie Hepburn: No, thank you, Mr Smith.

Willie Rennie: Will the member give way?

Jamie Hepburn: No, thank you, Mr Rennie.

It is extraordinary that the local member of the UK Parliament called for a “break clause” in the contracts so that the MOD could withdraw work from Scottish yards in the event of a yes vote. Johann Lamont suggested that Mr Davidson is “second to none” in his defence of shipbuilding, but that is a peculiar form of defending the industry and his constituents. It is one of the most cynical calls that I have ever seen and it actively works against his constituents’ interests.

Willie Rennie: Will the member give way on that particular point?

Jamie Hepburn: No, thank you, Mr Rennie.

On the day of the UK Government’s statement on shipyards in the House of Commons, Mr Davidson made a quite extraordinary comment. He said:

“This has been an excellent day for shipbuilding and industry on the Clyde”.

That comment is still on his website. Of course, we all welcome the greater certainty for the future of the Clyde yards, but what Mr Davidson called an excellent day was a day on which more than 800 people in the yards lost their jobs. How excellent a day would they have felt it to be?

It is sad to reflect on the point that, as Johann Lamont and Willie Rennie said, we knew that this day was coming. To me, that speaks of the point that the issue is a long-standing one, as Margo MacDonald said. Under UK control, we have seen the managed decline of the shipbuilding industry in Scotland. Johann Lamont referred to the fact that 100,000 people worked in shipbuilding at the industry’s peak. More recently, in 1998, 10,100 people worked in shipbuilding in Scotland, and, in 2011, the figure was down to 6,600, which is a decline of one third in 13 years. The number will fall by a further 15 per cent as a result of the recent announcement.

The point about BAE Systems recognising the expertise of the Clyde yards has been well made. The Clyde yards are the place to build the type 26 frigates, which can and will be built there when we are independent. We should reflect on the fact that Scottish shipyards already build ships for countries outside the UK. Whatever the circumstances might be, they already do that. They were involved in £1.5 billion-worth of export contracts with BAE, including eight ships for Malaysia, Brunei and Brazil and the reactivation of five frigates for Romania and Chile.

The most important question is what the future for the yards is once the type 26 frigates are built. On the current trajectory, will we be looking at another day that we all knew was coming? Independence, far from threatening the yards, can help to secure their future.

I will compare our situation with that of Norway, which other members have mentioned. In Norway in 2011, 22,210 people were employed in the building of ships, boats and oil platforms. In 2012, 42 shipyards built more than 100 ships. Murdo Fraser set out how we have a competitive market, which is absolutely the case—I cannot disagree—but I have set out the reality of shipbuilding in Norway compared with the reality in Scotland.

When we are independent we will need the expertise of Scotland’s shipbuilding sector. Murdo Fraser inadvertently made that point when he said that he cannot conceive of the circumstances in which a Scottish Government would not award contracts to Scottish yards. He is saying that there will be work for the industry in an independent Scotland. He is absolutely right. Indeed, I have a copy of the Scottish Global Forum’s letter to Willie Rennie—incidentally, I think that he misrepresented its report; the forum certainly thinks that—which talks about the number of vessels that could be procured from the Scottish yards in an independent Scotland.

We should all get behind Clydeside and Rosyth no matter what our constitutional future is, but let us hear no more about independence threatening Scotland’s industries.

16:01

Drew Smith (Glasgow) (Lab): The announcement two weeks ago of significant job losses was not unexpected, but it remains a major blow, and it is not possible to talk about the issues raised in the motion without thinking of those who are at risk of losing their jobs.

The Clyde unions and management are to be commended for the constructive way in which they are negotiating with each other in the best interests not just of the current workforce but of those who we hope will work there in the future.

There is no better or more forceful advocate for the Clyde than those who work in the yards, and they should be listened to. I appreciate that Government back benchers have been handed their copy of Jamie Webster’s quote, which they have stuck to and dutifully read out during the debate. I do not disagree with Jamie Webster. In the event of a yes vote, of course we would have to get behind the Clyde yards. The problem is that I do not want to get behind them just when they are arguing for something when they are put in a difficult position; I want us to have influence over such things. That is the point that all the other union conveners have made.

Others have said that the crucial issue for the success of the Clyde yards is a healthy order book. In fact, there are two issues: orders and skills. The unions will be making the case for

apprentices, who have been a major source of pride for everyone who knows the Clyde yards. It is vital that training continues and that the yards continue to be seen as an attractive career choice for young people from Glasgow and far beyond, because only by maintaining skills and training new apprentices will the yards be able to take advantage of the UK's policy of procuring UK defence ships within our borders and to build the new orders that I wish to see, among which the most crucial is the order for the type 26 global combat ship.

The extra work on the Queen Elizabeth class, which is to be transferred from Portsmouth, is, as Murdo Fraser said, very welcome, as is the order for offshore patrol vessels. That work can bridge the gap in the period up to an order for the type 26.

The order for the type 26 is the next major order that could and should be placed with the Clyde yards, following those for the aircraft carriers and, before them, the type 45 destroyers. Those ships, the Daring class, are in British service now, and no one who has any interest in Clyde shipbuilding will have failed to have noticed HMS Daring arriving in the Philippines this week, bringing with it much-needed UK aid for the country.

I want to see HMS Daring, HMS Dauntless, HMS Diamond, HMS Dragon, HMS Defender and HMS Duncan, which were all commissioned by the previous Labour Government, joined by a new class of Clyde-built frigates that can play their role in the defence of the United Kingdom and in projecting British influence at sea—ships that Glasgow would be proud of.

BAE Systems has made clear that its preference is to build those UK defence ships in Glasgow. Therefore, the single biggest threat to that order coming to Scotstoun and Govan is the loss of the yards' status as domestic UK shipbuilders. As others have mentioned, UK yards are able to compete for the work under article 346 rules, which assist the UK to place orders for UK defence ships in the UK.

I listened with interest to what Annabelle Ewing said about article 346. The provision exists so that Governments can make decisions in their own interests as member states. She rightly said that a country must be a member state to benefit from the article.

Annabelle Ewing: Will the member give way?

Drew Smith: I can anticipate what Annabelle Ewing is about to say, so I do not think that I need to hear it, other than to say—[*Interruption.*] Okay, I give way.

Annabelle Ewing: It is kind of Drew Smith to let me intervene. Does he disagree with the MOD

minister who, when asked the very question whether a Clyde yard could receive work from the rest of the UK after Scotland has voted yes, said:

“I think the answer is technically yes, if it was in our national interests to do so”?

That is very clear.

Drew Smith: I successfully anticipated what Annabelle Ewing would say. It might be technically possible for something to happen, but that does not make it likely that any Government would make a decision that was against the interests of workers in the member state, as she put it. We need a bit of realpolitik in the debate.

The nationalists have tried, with little success, to convince the workers at the yards that all this will somehow not matter. It has been suggested that the Clyde yards could simply—and apparently immediately—diversify into other kinds of shipbuilding. Like Johann Lamont, I would support any intelligent ideas for new work. However, glib statements ignore the highly specialised nature of the yards as defence shipbuilders and forget that BAE Systems bought the Govan business from a Norwegian owner—Kvaerner—that tried to make exactly such a diversified business work on the Clyde.

I am not clear about whether the Scottish Government has urged BAE Systems to build commercial ships such as car ferries or tankers on the Clyde, but I would be interested to know BAE's response, given that it is a defence contractor.

Margo MacDonald: Will the member give way?

The Deputy Presiding Officer (John Scott): Drew Smith is in his last minute.

Drew Smith: If the response was not positive, can we presume that the Scottish Government believes that BAE should sell the Clyde yards to someone who might be prepared to make such a business work? The workforce is only too aware of the uncertainty that that would bring.

The only other suggestion—apart from the idea that the UK should buy Scottish, regardless of whether Scotland is in the UK—is that the yards will be kept busy building a Scottish navy. The SNP amendment seeks shamelessly to divert the debate from jobs in the defence industries to Faslane. That is probably the only case of a Government trying to distract attention from significant job losses by promising even more for a different group of workers.

We are told that the £163 million annual saving from Trident can be spent on building boats.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: You must draw to a close, please.

Drew Smith: However, we are not told how many boats would be built or how they would be procured, and we already know that that money is to be spent on resurrecting the historic regiments, international development, renewable energy, higher welfare benefits, earlier pensions, tuition fees and skills and training.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Mr Smith, you must close, please.

Drew Smith: I could go on, Presiding Officer—

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Do not.

Drew Smith: I will respect your entreaty not to do so.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Thank you.

16:07

Chic Brodie (South Scotland) (SNP): I share Annabelle Ewing's view on the proposed loss of jobs in the fine city of Portsmouth.

I will start by drawing a couple of pictures. In picture 1, the Labour motion

"notes the benefit to this industry of UK defence contracts, and ... considers that the best way to safeguard the future of Scotland's defence manufacturing industry is to remain in the UK."

I will help Labour members with some numbers. In 1921, there were 100,000 shipbuilding jobs in Scotland. In 1955, the figure was almost 100,000. In 1998—there was no SNP Government yet—the figure was 10,100. That was pure decimation. In 2011, the number was 6,600. In 2015, it will be 1,500. How can the SNP Government possibly be blamed for such decimation and destruction of an industry?

Here is picture 2. I have spent the past two and a half years researching why Westminster Governments had, as we suspected, denied in the early 1980s the opportunity that existed in the Firth of Clyde for oil and gas production. The Secretary of State for Scotland at the time, who was a local Ayr MP, said that resources were there in exploitable quantities. I have the confidential ministerial papers that show that the Ministry of Defence refused to allow drilling in specific areas because of "special circumstances", which we know means nuclear submarines.

Over 30 years, we have lost thousands of jobs—not just in shipbuilding—because of the cover-up. Can members imagine the jobs in oil-rig production and maintenance and in the supply chain in Govan if we had been allowed to go ahead with such drilling? Thousands of long-term jobs have been lost, and for what?

Our amendment refers to

"the choices that could be made to support increased diversification"—

that could have happened—

"and ... action to boost exports."

That is absolutely right.

Because of Westminster's obsequiousness, that £100 billion spend on nuclear submarines and now Trident means that we have lost that added value. Yet still Labour continues to attach itself to the seekers of the lost empire. That is what it is about. It is not just about UK defence contracts but about years of missed opportunity, a lack of vision and a lack of planning and strategy.

As Charles Harity, a senior GMB organiser—and a real person—said last week:

"I would say it's more a case of no planning, no strategy ... This is really about whether a British government ... has any kind of industrial strategy at all and the evidence of today shows that they haven't".

They never have. Still the Labour Party wishes to hitch itself to a Con-Dem boat that is steadily sinking.

Worse is the politicisation of what was clearly a commercial decision. The Government contracts with BAE Systems, not with another country. Surely the business and financial heads of BAE Systems are not going to invest hundreds of millions of pounds in upgrading a shipbuilding facility because of the constitutional situation; they will do so because of the skills, quality and rate of return on that investment that they will get for their shareholders. That understandable commercial judgment will now and in the future cross country boundaries. Joint procurement of defence contracts will allow the Clyde to compete and to work with the MOD in the UK; the Clyde will also be able to work with many other countries on many marine products. That should be our aspiration for the people on the Clyde. As part of a diversified industry in Scotland, there is no reason on earth why the Clyde should not be able to compete for business on a commercial basis and to work with other countries to do just that.

Drew Smith: Will the member take an intervention?

Chic Brodie: No. I am almost finished.

Collaboration and the development of specialisms are the secret to success. As the MOD said in January this year:

"In times of budget pressures for all nations, it makes sense to maximise economies of scale and work with our friends to get the best value for money on all sides."

Margo MacDonald: Will the member give way?

Chic Brodie: I cannot; I am in my last paragraph.

Many years ago, I was international production, procurement and distribution manager for NCR, and it never crossed my mind that collaborating and working in partnership with our sister companies in France, Switzerland and the United States of America to harness the best skills, quality and performance to meet our customers' needs was not the best way to build and sell a complete computer system or some of our security systems. The same will apply to the absolute protection for security modules on the Clyde. With product diversification, that is what the Clyde can do, and that is what the Clyde will do.

16:12

Sandra White (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP): I express my solidarity with the workers in Glasgow, Filton and Portsmouth who have been affected by the announcement. I know only too well how important such jobs are, and I will go on to explain why.

It is a well-known fact among SNP members—I am sure that the Labour Party also has a memory—that every single time there is a general election, the Labour Party comes out with the scaremongering story that we will lose our shipyards. That has happened at every general election during the 30 years that I have been involved in politics, but it did not work in 2007, it did not work in 2011, and it will not work in 2014. The people have seen through that ploy.

During last week's debate, I said that I was angry and sad about the announcement, and I still am. Labour members should take a look at themselves, because their mantra, which constantly belittles the people of Scotland, the people of Glasgow, the people of Govan and the people in my constituency, is wearing very thin.

Johann Lamont: Is Sandra White saying that John Dolan from the shipyards is belittling Glasgow and the people of Scotland when he expresses his concerns? What about the convener at Thales UK, who told me that it has moved from uncertainty to vulnerability? Is he belittling the industry that he cares deeply about?

Sandra White: I did not mention any of the names that Johann Lamont has mentioned. *[Interruption.]* Excuse me a minute, but Mr Smith should know that a lot of my constituents and family are affected by the announcement. If he would stop sniping from the sidelines, I could finish what I was saying.

I do not speak for the trade unions, but I speak for people in my constituency and people outwith it. They are not the only ones who talk to me and others. The Labour Party is not the only party that people go to to express their concerns. On Saturday, I was at a conference at Glasgow

Caledonian University at which a debate on independence was held. Out of all the people at the conference, only two—one of whom was a member of the panel—said that they would not vote yes in the referendum. All the rest of them said that they would vote yes. Afterwards, we spoke to people individually about the shipyards. A person who works in one of the yards, whom I will meet next week—I will not give their name, just in case Johann Lamont happens to speak to others—does not think that it will close. It is not the case that everyone in the yard says that it will close if people vote yes in the referendum. Johann Lamont should not tell me that the Labour Party speaks for every worker in the Clyde shipyards. It does not, and I am sure that others—both inside and outside the chamber—will agree with me.

I was born in Govan and my family—my father, my brothers and my uncles—worked in the shipyards. They were vital to the livelihoods of people in the area. Many other families worked in the yards, from Kvaerner to Harland and Wolff to Stephen and Sons to Fairfields, so I know only too well about the heritage of the Govan shipyards. I also know only too well that, as members such as Chic Brodie have said, they have been run down for many years. We should be diversifying and looking to the future. That is what the shipyard workers are telling us.

When we talk about the here and now, what gets to everyone is the fact that Labour is decrying the skills of the shipyard workers. Instead of supporting those workers, as the Opposition should, Labour is using a red herring and saying to them that if they do not stick by the union or by what Labour tells them, they will lose their jobs. Labour is not saying that they have great skills, that they are fantastic workers and that, if the defence jobs do not come to the Clyde yards, it will do everything that it can to ensure that their skills are used elsewhere. That is what we should be doing. That is why I repeat what I said to Opposition members last week: you should be ashamed of yourselves for constantly scaremongering. It is a disgrace.

I want to pick up on something that Chic Brodie mentioned: the suggestion that, if we vote for independence, defence work will never come to Scotland. The fact that the MOD is working with Australia on the type 26 frigates has been mentioned. The MOD press release that Chic Brodie cited says:

"Areas of potential co-operation include future frigates, with the Royal Navy's Type 26 design ... the first of many opportunities for future collaboration."

On 7 November, Jim Murphy, who is a member of Johann Lamont's party, said:

"Co-operation on defence procurement is critical, enabling us to maximise our ability"

to go forward. That is the view of someone in Johann Lamont's party, yet she argues against that.

Let us be grown up about this. Are all those on the unionist side really saying that a future UK Government would be so small-minded that if its nearest neighbour, an independent Scotland, had the best workforce, it would snub us by going elsewhere and having something much more expensive built?

Iain Gray *rose*—

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The member is in her final 15 seconds.

Sandra White: Thank you, Presiding Officer.

I say to those members: for goodness' sake, grow up and stop scaremongering. You have done it for long enough. As I said, it did not work in 2007, it did not work in 2011, and it will not work in 2014 either.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I call Duncan McNeil, to be followed by Mark McDonald. I remind members to speak through the chair.

16:19

Duncan McNeil (Greenock and Inverclyde) (Lab): Johann Lamont said that she has the Govan shipyard in her constituency, and I am proud to say that I have constituents who work for BAE Systems in the Govan shipyard and at Rosyth.

The road has been long and it has not been an easy one. There are many reasons why we are in a situation in which so little shipbuilding is done in Scotland. There is no doubt that it has been a difficult journey. The issues that have brought about the situation do not change. EU competition laws do not change—and will not change, whether people vote yes or no in the referendum. That means that it will be difficult.

It is a long time since we have won and built a merchant ship. We cannot even win the competition to build boats for CalMac Ferries. That is the scale of the challenge, and we cannot ignore it.

All the other countries that have been mentioned have gone over the years. They came and we taught them. They built up their own capacity and then they decided, as independent nations, that they would rather build the ships themselves.

We heard from the Deputy First Minister that we could overcome the issue and that, under independence, we could build Australian ships. I found that most offensive. I hope that it was not deliberately misleading and that she was badly

advised when she read out that statement. We have not built an Australian ship for 35 years. That is the reality, and we cannot overstate the scale of the issue.

About 15 years ago, when a Labour Government was in power, we got to a stage that was welcomed by all the trade unions and, I think, all the political parties. The shipbuilding industry was not the industry that we knew. It did not employ the tens of thousands of people that it had employed in the past, due to some of the things I have referred to: we could not compete effectively and we never invested effectively. We used to build out in the rain, whereas others built inside. Shipyards across Europe and in other countries now import the steel hulls. There are no steelworkers working in the shipyards in Germany. They import from Poland and exploit the cheap labour there. We have missed those chances to keep up, so we have a small number of people building ships.

We used to call it the rent book on the Clyde. The grey ships were the backbone—they were what we were guaranteed. I concede to the minister that they have been seen as a rent book and a subsidy for shipbuilding ever since. Those are the only orders that we can win, and that is why it is vital that we do not risk them. Regrettably, we do not have a plan in place that will carry the workforce, so we cannot risk having a situation in which the UK Government will not sign off the ships.

Sandra White: Will Duncan McNeil give way?

Duncan McNeil: No, thank you.

We have not diversified, but the threat is imminent. It is only a year until the ships will be signed off—or not.

Somebody mentioned Ferguson Shipbuilders, which was promised a ship in 2007. The Scottish Government and the previous Scottish Executive worked hard to get ships into Ferguson Shipbuilders. I am grateful for that, because the yard is in my constituency. However, we cancelled a ship in between. We promised Ferguson a ship and cancelled it. Do members know why we cancelled it? I suspect that we cancelled it because we came to the conclusion that we would be expending precious Scottish Government budgets to build in a shipyard that was not in Scotland. We had to wait two or three years until we finally got further contracts.

It is right that, if we have Government budgets to build smaller ships, we should take every advantage and pull every string to ensure that the orders go to Scottish shipyards. Every Government would do that and I argue that the Scottish Government, whatever its shape, would

do it in future. That is what the UK Government will do.

The really depressing factor that hits me as we discuss the matter today is that we knew that this was coming. We have talked about the gap in the orders. What have we done about diversification since then? What has Scottish Enterprise done to ensure that we build on the skills of the 800 ship designers who have designed a world-class product that people want to build?

Keith Brown: I am happy to lay out in my closing speech the work that we have done to help apprenticeships and training on the Clyde through Scottish Enterprise grants. However, does Duncan McNeil not think that the UK Government, which is in charge of defence, should have taken the lead on diversification? When has he criticised it for not doing so?

Duncan McNeil: I think that both Governments need to get together to discuss diversification in shipbuilding, with the defence contracts being used as a core or backbone.

We need to keep the First Minister, Mr Salmond, to his promise about the reindustrialisation of the Clyde. We need to deliver on renewable jobs. We need to re-equip the North Sea. We need to do all those things. There is no point in pointing to history and saying that it was all someone else's fault when in our time we are not doing any better. Where is our manufacturing strategy? That is the challenge to us today and in the future. Let us develop our manufacturing strategy, irrespective of whether people vote for independence or to remain within the union. That is our responsibility. Let us face up to it.

16:25

Mark McDonald (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP): Next week, as members have alluded to, we will see the Scottish Government's white paper. Unfortunately, this afternoon we appear to have seen Scottish Labour's white flag. Today, Labour members have made it clear that their support for the Clyde shipyards is conditional on the constitutional arrangement. I wonder what those Clyde workers watching the debate at home are thinking today as Labour politicians queue up to write out the post-independence redundancy notices for the workers on the Clyde. Here today, Labour members have declared that, unless Scotland votes no, the Labour Party sees no future for the Clyde shipyards. What an utterly depressing way for the Labour Party to conduct itself in Scotland.

During the debate, some have argued—Willie Rennie majored on this—that no UK warship has been built elsewhere. In what I thought was an excellent speech, Stewart Stevenson took Willie

Rennie to task on the issue of sovereign capability, particularly in respect of fixed-wing aircraft. According to *Hansard*, speaking about the issue of the type 26 contract, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence, Mr Gerald Howarth, said:

"My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has just returned from an extremely profitable visit to Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand and Turkey. All those countries have expressed interest in joining the United Kingdom in a collaborative programme".—[*Official Report, House of Commons*, 31 January 2011; Vol 522, c 575.]

That collaborative programme was to develop the type 26, so it is entirely conceivable that warships could be constructed outside the United Kingdom. The fact that it has not happened yet does not preclude such an opportunity in the future, as the under-secretary of state outlined.

Willie Rennie: Will the member give way?

Mark McDonald: I have a lot to get through, but I may come back to Mr Rennie in due course.

Margo MacDonald made the important point that no less a man than Jimmy Reid—he was second to none in his commitment to Scottish shipbuilding; he was certainly not second to Ian Davidson MP—supported Scottish independence. The very notion that a man with such a strong commitment to the Scottish shipbuilding industry would support independence without thinking that the Scottish shipbuilding industry could see a prosperous and better future as part of an independent country demeans the work that Jimmy Reid did throughout his life. The conclusion that he came to was that independence is the best way for Scotland to go.

We know that Ian Davidson MP is one to put out leaflets saying "Separation shuts shipyards". We know that the better together campaign has put out leaflets claiming that shipyard jobs are more secure as part of the UK. However, as my colleague Jamie Hepburn pointed out, the decline in those jobs while Scotland has been part of the union suggests that it is the United Kingdom that shuts shipyards and presents insecurity as the future of the shipbuilding industry in Scotland. Like the better together campaign's stories about losing the triple-A credit rating, that is yet another example of the reality belying the rhetoric.

I will back the Clyde workers whatever the vote next September, but it is disappointing that so many Opposition MSPs have written off the future of the Clyde yards in the event of a yes vote. Have they no ambition, no vision, no willingness to consider a better future? Interestingly, Duncan McNeil spoke about those other small independent nations that have developed and allowed their shipbuilding industries to thrive. Can he not make the causal link between what has been happening to Scottish shipbuilding as part of the union and

the ability of those countries to have control over their own futures and over their own industries? Can he not see that there may be a better future out there?

Michael McMahon spoke of the industrial decline in central Scotland. I understand entirely the pain that is felt in those communities from that industrial decline, yet still the Labour Party wants to cling to the very political system that delivered that decline.

As things currently stand at Westminster, that political system condemns Scotland to occasional rule by the Conservative Party even when the people of Scotland do not vote for that party. On James Kelly's remark that we would be condemning England to perpetual Tory rule, the Labour Party would still have won the 1997, 2001 and 2005 general elections if all Scottish MPs had been removed from the equation. The idea that England never votes Labour is a myth perpetuated by Scottish Labour MSPs as a sort of faux solidarity argument.

It has been argued that by removing Trident we would create economic insecurity. However, a 2007 report that was commissioned by the Scottish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and the Scottish Trades Union Congress—among those who compiled the report was one Claudia Beamish, who is now an MSP but was at that time the chair of Scottish Labour—concluded:

"Scotland would economically be a net loser from any decision to replace Trident. There would be serious consequences for its public services and for employment over a prolonged period of time."

Better together—ye couldnae make it up.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I now call Margo MacDonald. You have up to two minutes, please—no more.

16:30

Margo MacDonald (Lothian) (Ind): Ooh! Thank you, Presiding Officer.

I cannot make too many points, but I will say that I am absolutely in solidarity with Duncan McNeil, because his ambitions are the same as mine were and still are. Chic Brodie made the same sort of point, which is that, at the end of the day, it is the bottom line that counts. There is not a Government in Europe just now that can afford to pay over the odds, and the United Kingdom Government is particularly strapped for cash.

I therefore suggest that timing is all. A fortnight after the Scots vote for independence, it is just possible that there would be folk in England who might object if some warship orders for England were placed with a Scottish yard. That is a fortnight afterwards, but a couple of years

afterwards who cares? The rule of thumb will be how much it will cost in Scotland compared with elsewhere.

I talk about diversification with some bitterness because, when I was elected for Govan, it was in the same situation as it is just now, so I suggested that the yards could make liquid gas carriers, which was a market that was only just opening up. However, I have to be honest and say that the unions, led by Jim Airlie, laughed at me and told everybody that I was a silly lassie—I wisnae a silly lassie then and I'm no one now.

There are still things that could be built on the Clyde, but Duncan McNeil knows better than anybody else that the upper Clyde is limited in the type of ships that can be built there. As for diversification, it has been tried: Kvaerner did it when it built the upper structures for oil rigs. Lots of things have happened on the Clyde.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: You should be drawing to a close, please.

Margo MacDonald: It is a case of putting our minds to ensuring that things happen in a logical, planned fashion

The Deputy Presiding Officer: We move to closing speeches.

16:32

Alex Johnstone (North East Scotland) (Con): This has been a bad-tempered little debate. In fact, it has been not one debate but two. There has been one set of issues that those of us who wish to see the union continue have talked about, and a completely different set of issues that those in the party of government have talked about, and it seems never the twain should meet.

First, on behalf of the Conservatives, I take this opportunity to offer our solidarity with the workers in the shipyards, both those who are losing their jobs and those who will continue to have their jobs. If that requires us to make the commitment out loud so that everybody can hear it that we will do everything necessary to ensure that the type 26 frigates are built on the Clyde, whether before or after September next year, then we will make that commitment, just as I am sure that our friends opposite will make that commitment.

The problem that we have is that there is a lack of understanding as to who is responsible for what in this debate. If this debate is in any way a constitutional one, then who made it a constitutional debate? Whose bill is it that made us go towards a referendum in September next year? It is this Government that decided to make the constitution the number 1 issue.

Keith Brown, in his speech against the motion, chose to make a desperate and futile defence of his party's position, which he gave up only to replace it with a vicious attack on the UK Government. He went through all the things that have been done and all the things that he portrayed as failures, such as the cost of the aircraft carriers and the abandonment of the Nimrod programme. To tell you the truth, if that is the way he seeks to make friends, I wouldnae like to be one of his enemies.

However, Keith Brown went on to talk about other things. His amendment mentions Trident. The truth is that he tells us that these contracts could be won after Scotland became independent yet any such negotiation would take place at exactly the same time as his Government was trying to close down the Faslane naval base. If that is how he makes friends, I do not know what he intends to achieve through his negotiations. Give and take is how we negotiate traditionally. I suspect that he would not be willing to negotiate on that or many other points.

Many times during the debate, red herrings have been raised. The concept of us working jointly with countries such as Australia to develop the type 26 has been raised as an example of how we can, of course, work across international boundaries.

Other speeches, though, showed a bit more understanding about how joint defence procurement works. First, I do not believe for a minute that Australia intends to build any of those ships itself. Secondly, where joint defence procurement happens, it tends to be on the basis that contractor work is shared out among the customers. The idea that Scotland will indulge itself in joint procurement work with another country when it is not in fact a customer for those ships is a bit naive.

Chic Brodie: Will the member take an intervention?

Alex Johnstone: No, I will not.

I want to talk about BAE's decision to commit to the Govan and Scotstoun shipyards. It made that decision because the Govan and Scotstoun shipyards are the best place to build modern warships. It made that commitment because it believes that the staff at those shipyards are the best people to build modern warships. However, it also made that decision based on the key assumption that Scottish independence will be decisively rejected.

Chic Brodie: Will the member give way?

Alex Johnstone: I hear the constant whining from the SNP back benchers. During the debate, they have had the opportunity to express

themselves, make their case and set out why the rest of the United Kingdom might choose to build its ships here in Scotland. They have had the opportunity to make the commitment that has been asked of us by the trade unions and their leadership. We know that the Clyde is the best place for the UK to build its warships but they have chosen to put it at risk.

It is, without a shadow of a doubt, our duty to support the shipyards and their workers. I give the commitment that I will work to ensure that that work goes to the Clyde, but I will not delay the start of that commitment until the day after the referendum. It starts now. My commitment is that I will fight Scottish independence to protect those jobs.

16:38

Keith Brown: As Alex Johnstone said, this has been a fairly ill-tempered debate, which has, perhaps not unexpectedly, been dominated by the constitution. It is important to remember that we are talking about at least 800 people in Scotland losing their jobs; around 1,200 people elsewhere in the UK face the same prospect. At the root of the issue, we must remember that the support that the Scottish Government provides through PACE and other means is vital to ensure that those individuals have the prospect of further employment, if that is what they so wish. That is an important point—I take that point in Johann Lamont's motion.

Nevertheless, it is regrettable that the constitution has intruded in the way that it has. Despite what Alex Johnstone says, the Labour Party's motion makes this a constitutional issue. That is in stark contrast to the request by Johann Lamont's deputy leader that we should not make this a constitutional debate, and to the position of Jamie Webster, who said that the issue should not become a political football.

Instead, the motion quite clearly tries to identify the decision that was taken as a constitutional consequence. Incredibly, Johann Lamont has said—she will get the chance to clarify these remarks if I am wrong—that the decision was an example of the union dividend. The decision to cut 800-plus jobs in Scotland and many more in the rest of the UK was an example of the union dividend.

Chic Brodie: Is it not the case that, as soon as the announcement was made about Portsmouth, very skilled people there—engineers and what have you—would almost automatically and immediately have started to seek other jobs so that, by the time the decision would theoretically be changed because of constitutional

arrangements, there would be fewer skilled people in the Portsmouth area?

Keith Brown: That is a natural consequence. If people, especially at that skill level, knew that there was not the future that they would want at that yard, they would start to look for other opportunities. That is natural enough. It would, of course, have been useful had Willie Rennie acknowledged his political ally in Portsmouth, who mentioned that those jobs will be long gone by the time the contract has been awarded.

Johann Lamont made the point that the SNP should consider its arguments because of the consequences. That is not a bad discipline. Perhaps we would not do that in the course of this debate, but we should all from time to time check the arguments that we are deploying and the effects that they would have. Perhaps it is time for Johann Lamont to undergo a little bit of self-examination as well, because she is now ignoring her deputy leader's calls not to make the issue a political one and supporting her Conservative friends—I think that that was the phrase that Alex Johnstone used. Members should bear in mind, of course, that many Labour Party people outwith the chamber say that they do not have the stomach to work with the Tories but, obviously, all the Labour Party people here like working with them. Not a word of criticism has come from the Labour Party today about the Tory Government's various failures on defence; the criticism has all been directed at the SNP, of course.

Worst of all are the explicit—they were previously implicit—threats to the workforce on the Clyde. The Labour Party is telling people on the Clyde, "If you do the democratic thing and don't vote the way we want, your jobs are gone." It is a disgrace that it should do that. It is, of course, possible to say—as I think Alex Johnstone tried to say and we will say—that, whatever the outcome of the referendum, we will help people to try to retain those jobs.

I want to go back to a point that I made earlier, which I hope Johann Lamont will respond to in summing up. I wrote to her on 25 June to ask whether she could clarify whether Scottish Labour would commit to work with the Scottish Government to give our shipyards the best possible chance of winning this contract as soon as possible, thus safeguarding hundreds of jobs and the local communities that depend on them. I still have not had a response from her. Perhaps that colours my view of her call for cross-party working. I welcome the commitment from Alex Johnstone to cross-party working. The point is to provide reassurances from the UK Government, should they be required, that the type 26 contracts can, of course, be delivered in an independent Scotland. There is no question about that.

Duncan McNeil was looking back to what has not happened up till now on diversification as he saw it. I have pointed out to him the number of times—six this year, for example—that Scottish Government ministers have worked with BAE alone on improving productivity, modernisation, job opportunities and apprenticeships. Duncan McNeil has not said one word about the fact that, as I have pointed out, the UK Government is responsible for diversification, as it is responsible for defence. It has some responsibility, as well. As soon as I raised that issue, his response was, "Oh, don't look back." His first point was, "What have we done up till now?" All that I am saying is that we should be even-handed. The lion's share of the responsibility has to be with the UK Government. At the end of the cold war in the 1990s, the Labour Party said, "Let's make sure that we make the premium from this the fact that we can diversify arms jobs." That has not happened.

Duncan McNeil: I concede that I did not intend to take the minister back to that point. The point that I tried to focus on was that it is surely not beyond the Scottish Government, which has been in power for six years, to connect up the skills shortage in the North Sea with the overabundance of skills on the west coast of Scotland. We could have delivered renewables and manufacturing jobs, and we could be renewing vessels in the North Sea. Why is that beyond us after six years of SNP government?

Keith Brown: That is exactly the kind of work that has been going on. I will point to a couple of examples. On the North Sea and renewables, members will, of course, know that Babcock has diversified at Rosyth. It has already taken that position, and it is starting to do that. I think that we all know that BAE is much more explicitly a defence supply industry contractor—that is what it does—but where diversification can take place, we have tried to support that.

I note that Willie Rennie opposed the extension to the Rosyth base that Babcock applied for. He opposed the future opportunities in terms of the ferry terminal, so I take his support for diversification with a pinch of salt.

Willie Rennie: Will the minister give way on that point?

Keith Brown: No, I will not.

There was not enough mention in the debate of the impact of the extended overruns in UK defence procurement. They have been wished away and not mentioned by either side: the cost of aircraft carriers going from £3.6 billion to £6.2 billion, and £3.6 billion being spent on aircraft that never flew a mile—I would have thought that people would make a connection between those things and the jobs that are lost in Scotland. We

get only 5 per cent of the defence procurement jobs in the UK. I am sure that we could get an awful lot more if it was not for the huge overruns and wastage that we see within UK defence procurement.

Of course I am more than happy to discuss those things with the UK, but we cannot hide the facts, and we should not hide them. We should point them out. Can members imagine what would happen here? James Kelly has regularly debated the Glasgow airport rail link with me and he has mentioned £30 million that was spent but not then recouped. Today we are talking about the spending of £2.6 billion—that is £2,600 million—on the aircraft carriers and £3.6 billion on aircraft that never flew but were scrapped at a cost of £500,000 and had a scrap value of £1 million, yet there is not a word of criticism about that. I would have thought that James Kelly would make the connection in relation to that.

Much has been said about the people who work on the Clyde and everyone has a person that they can refer to. I will not repeat Jamie Webster's comments, but they are key. We seem to be getting something of a consensus around the fact that we should all commit to help out the workforce whether the Scottish people vote yes or no. We should all do that.

However, I should also mention somebody else—he is a former shipyard worker and TGWU official—who said:

"The industry has for years been far too reliant on Admiralty contracts for warships. What we need to do is diversify and build a range of craft like cruise liners, ferries and offshore patrol boats." [*Interruption.*]

I do not know why Duncan McNeil finds this objectionable.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: You must close, please, minister.

Keith Brown: He continued:

"What we must not do is allow all that skill, expertise and technology to disappear and I fear that is happening under Westminster. We need to be in control so that we make decisions here in Scotland that suit Scotland."

Those are the words of the former Labour Lord Provost of Glasgow, Alex Mosson, and I support them.

16:47

Iain Gray (East Lothian) (Lab): In closing the debate, I start by putting on the record again our concern, which has been expressed by members in every part of the chamber, for those workers who face redundancy in BAE shipyards and their families, for whom this will be a difficult time. I welcome the measures that the Scottish Government has taken in Glasgow and Rosyth to

help with that. I give the workers in Portsmouth a particular mention since, for them, this is more than the ebb and flow of contracts but rather the end of a shipbuilding era. We all, I think, regret that.

Yet this debate is about opportunity and the potential of a bright future for our defence industries, and rightly so, because they demonstrate what is possible if we seize the opportunities that the United Kingdom gives us. Contrary to the hand wringing that we have heard from SNP members, the UK defence sector is the second largest in Europe and Scotland's skills, ingenuity and reliability have always ensured that we punch above our weight in claiming a share of that. We have 10 per cent of the defence jobs. That equates to almost 12,600 people and is way above our population share. We have one third of the UK's shipbuilding, which is several times our population share.

The industry is not just involved in shipbuilding and is not just on the Clyde, as we have Rosyth, too, and the largest defence electronics site in the UK just down the road at Selex Galileo. Indeed, a third of all MOD sites are right here in Scotland and an estimated 50,000 jobs depend on the sector. Just as our electricity industry benefits from the single British energy market and our universities benefit from access to UK-scale research funds, so our defence industry can make the most of a UK defence budget of £34 billion.

By the way, the cost of Trident—the centrepiece of the Government amendment—is included in that defence budget, so an independent Scotland's share of that would already be in the £3 billion Scottish defence budget. It is not some extra lottery win to get us out of any fiscal hole that the Government finds itself in on any given day. As for using it for diversification, as the Government amendment suggests, many speakers spoke about the difficulty over decades of finding ways of diversifying in the defence industry. It is not enough just to say the word. We have to hear the actual plans and suggestions.

The one SNP idea for defence in the future that we know about is the plan to divert half a billion pounds out of the defence budget and put it straight into the coffers of the banks and the energy companies, by cutting their corporation tax. The SNP will replace 11,000 Faslane jobs with bigger bonuses for bankers and bigger profits for the energy companies.

Wide as our defence sector is, much of the debate has focused on shipbuilding, where the issues are starkest. That is no wonder. The industry's heritage looms large in our collective story, and not just for Clydesiders. I am not from Glasgow, as anyone who hears me can tell, but there was a shipyard at the bottom of my granny's

street in Leith and I remember being shepherded into the hall at primary school to watch the launch of the QE2 on the Clyde on television.

Four years ago, I was privileged to attend the launch of HMS Defender—a type 45 frigate—at Scotstoun. I defy anyone who has a soul not to shed a tear when they watch the chains slip away and 8,500 tonnes of steel slip away with them. The ships are a living testament to and symbol of our capacity to shape not just steel but our world and our destiny. For that reason, the industry's story echoes through our story, in prose, poetry and song, and in politics and this Parliament, as Johann Lamont illustrated when she quoted Donald Dewar's great speech on the day when the Parliament opened.

Our ships are more than artefacts of steel. They are packed with the most sophisticated technology ever devised. They are the pinnacle of human ingenuity. The industry therefore deserves rigorous and honest arguments, but it has not heard such arguments from the SNP benches today. We heard tankers being misrepresented as warships that have been built elsewhere. We heard the argument—absurd, in the 21st century—that a global corporation such as BAE could not recruit or transfer skills to build ships elsewhere in the United Kingdom. Of course it could. We heard design partnerships being misrepresented as agreements to build abroad. We even heard the argument that, because there have not been as many defence contracts in the past as we would have liked there to be, we should turn our backs on the contracts that are available today. What kind of argument is that?

Every SNP speaker has quoted Jamie Webster, who said:

"If the situation is that Scottish people by democratic vote, vote Yes, I would expect, no sorry, demand, that every single politician of every section supports us to hell and back".

Let us be clear about this—and this is Mr Brown's answer, on Johann Lamont's behalf. I have fought for shipbuilding jobs before. I did it in Whitehall when I worked for the Secretary of State for Scotland and, when I was Labour leader here in Holyrood and the carrier contracts were under threat, I suggested to Alex Salmond that we go together to fight for shipbuilding jobs. We did that, going all the way—not quite to hell but to Liam Fox's office, where we made the case and we won.

If by some chance there is a yes vote next year, I promise that I will stand shoulder to shoulder with Alex Salmond, Nicola Sturgeon or whoever—even Alex Johnstone—and argue that the type 26 contracts should stay on the Clyde. So will Johann Lamont and so will Mr Drew Smith.

Keith Brown: Will the member give way?

Iain Gray: No, minister. You would not give way to me.

Members should understand that, at the moment when we must make that case, we will be arguing against the whole peacetime history of naval construction in this country, which has never built a warship abroad. At that moment, we will be arguing against a Government that has a multibillion pound contract to award and the choice of spending it on jobs for its citizens or jobs for ours. We will be arguing against EU law, which says that a defence contract awarded externally must be awarded in open competition. We will be arguing with a Westminster Parliament whose Scottish representatives have lost all authority—*[Interruption.]*

The Presiding Officer (Tricia Marwick): Order.

Iain Gray: We will make those arguments, to hell and back, but by then those arguments will have all the staying power of the proverbial snowball in that place.

Margo MacDonald: Will the member give way?

Iain Gray: No—I am sorry.

We accept Jamie Webster's comments. Why is it, then, that when his fellow conveners' views are quoted in the chamber, in comments such as

"If Scotland was independent, no one could bid to build type 26",

"there is no way on God's earth"

that shipbuilding can survive in an independent Scotland, and

"no UK Ministry of Defence means no more shipbuilding jobs in Scotland",

they are dismissed by the likes of Stuart McMillan and Sandra White? Why are those TU conveners told to grow up and stop scaremongering?

Sandra White: Will the member take an intervention?

Iain Gray: No.

Sandra White: Will the member take an intervention?

Iain Gray: No—I have said no.

The Presiding Officer: The member is not taking an intervention—sit down, Ms White.

Iain Gray: We will make the case for the Clyde in any constitutional circumstance, but the tragedy is that this case is already won. The fight is over, and the type 26 contracts are heading for Scotland. The workforce on the Clyde have earned the right to these jobs, and the only thing that can threaten that—the only reason why we will have to go to hell and back and win the

argument again—is the SNP's independence project.

The problem is not Labour's motion but the SNP's referendum.

I am not suggesting that colleagues on the SNP side of the chamber do not care about those jobs. I am sure—

Stuart McMillan: Will the member take an intervention?

Iain Gray: No—I have said no.

I am sure that those nationalist MSPs are sincere in their wish to keep these contracts on the Clyde, and that those slipway chains tug at their heartstrings just as they did at mine. However, the trouble is that, whatever their hearts are saying, their souls belong to separatism. That is the reality that they cannot acknowledge; that is the credo that dare not speak its name. That is the inconvenient truth that they have tried to shout down all afternoon because they cannot face up to it.

No matter how important shipbuilding might be and how much these jobs matter to the SNP, independence matters more to it.

The Presiding Officer: You need to bring your remarks to a close, Mr Gray.

Iain Gray: Their ideology is wrong and damaging, but I would respect it more if just one of them had the guts to stand up and say that they believe that placing Scotland's shipbuilding industry at risk is a price worth paying for independence. That is the logic of their position, and if they really wish to transcend it, they should vote for the motion tonight and back those shipbuilding workers.

Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill: Stage 1

The Presiding Officer (Tricia Marwick): The next item of business is a debate on motion S4M-08327, in the name of Alex Neil, on the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill.

16:58

The Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing (Alex Neil): The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill will make a number of changes to the law on marriage and civil partnership, but the centrepiece is obviously the legalisation of same-sex marriage, which will allow all people in Scotland who love each other the same opportunity to have their marriage recognised in the eyes of the law. That will create a more tolerant society in Scotland and will mean that there are genuine equal rights in respect of marriage across the entire community.

The bill provides that married transgender people will be able to obtain gender recognition and stay married, thereby removing the need to divorce. That provision will make a huge beneficial difference to the lives of transgender people and their spouses. I will turn later to the detail of the bill and, in particular, to the points that the Equal Opportunities Committee's report raises.

Before doing so, I will give a brief general overview of the provisions in the bill. The bill contains a number of changes to marriage law that have been planned for some time, and some other changes to ensure that marriage ceremonies in Scotland continue to be carried out with due solemnity and dignity.

The bill also provides greater flexibility on where civil marriage ceremonies can take place; it will permit civil marriage ceremonies to take place at any location that is agreed between the couple and the registration authority, as long as that place is not religious premises.

The bill also clarifies the position of belief celebrants and puts them on the same footing as religious celebrants. That is a welcome change that acknowledges the role that humanists, for example, play in solemnising marriage in Scotland.

The bill will increase flexibility in relation to civil partnerships and will allow the religious or belief registration of civil partnership where the religious or belief body is happy to take part.

While providing greater freedom and flexibility for couples generally, the bill will also ensure that marriage procedures in Scotland remain rigorous. For example, the bill clarifies the offence of

bigamy, and a number of other provisions in the bill show that we in Scotland will not tolerate sham or forced marriages, which are real problems in Scotland today, so I pay tribute to registrars and others across Scotland who are vigilant in tackling those issues.

The bill will extend the normal notice period for marriage and for civil partnership from 14 days to 28 days. That reflects the reality of the length of time it can take to check that a person is eligible to marry or to enter into a civil partnership. It will also be a deterrent to sham marriages. The bill will allow district registrars to require specified nationality evidence when a couple is seeking to enter into a marriage or a civil partnership. Such information may be needed for a variety of reasons, for example for statistical reasons. Again, requiring such evidence could combat sham and forced marriages.

The bill will also empower ministers to make regulations on qualifying requirements for religious and belief bodies to meet before their celebrants can be authorised to solemnise marriages or to register civil partnerships. Scotland has a rich diversity of religious and belief bodies that can solemnise marriage. That is very welcome, but it also means that we need to make certain that the dignity and solemnity of the ceremonies are upheld. The qualifying requirements could cover such issues as the requirement not to carry out ceremonies for profit or gain and the requirement to have an awareness of forced and sham marriages.

We will consult widely with religious and belief bodies and with others before we make any regulations. I know that religious and belief bodies share our determination to ensure that marriage ceremonies remain dignified. Equally, though, the state must not interfere with the internal workings of religious and belief bodies, so we need to ensure that a reasonable balance is struck.

Chic Brodie (South Scotland) (SNP): What provisions are there in the bill to avoid situations in extremis that may occur when one party challenges the other, which could possibly force action that is contrary to article 9 of the European convention on human rights?

Alex Neil: I will go into detail on such issues later when I discuss the recommendations from the Equal Opportunities Committee.

I have already referred to same-sex marriage. Respect for religious beliefs and views has also been at the heart of our work on same-sex marriage and we have consulted twice. We have not consulted more on any bill that has passed through Parliament than we have consulted on this measure.

There has also, of course, been detailed examination of the bill at stage 1 by the Equal Opportunities Committee, led initially by Mary Fee and now by Margaret McCulloch.

Alex Johnstone (North East Scotland) (Con): Can the minister clarify at this point exactly how he intends to deal with the issue of the 4,100 consultation submissions that were—through no fault of his—apparently lost?

Alex Neil: We have found the submissions and we will put them on the website. As Alex Johnstone said, they were not lost through any fault of the Scottish Government. There was a technical hitch on the part of the people who submitted those 4,100 submissions.

I know that the detailed examination of the bill by the Equal Opportunities Committee has been challenging, so I pay tribute to all the members of the committee—in particular Margaret McCulloch and Mary Fee, who have been the two conveners of the committee during that period.

Throughout the consultations and the stage 1 process, the Government has acknowledged the diversity and strength of religious beliefs. In the foreword to the first consultation, my predecessor Nicola Sturgeon emphasised that

“This Government believes in religious tolerance and the freedom to worship.”

We recognise—although we disagree with them—that some people of faith sincerely believe that marriage should be between, and only between, one man and one woman. There is a vigorous and respectful debate on same-sex marriage in many religious bodies, as there is across society and in Parliament. Some religious and belief bodies wish to solemnise same-sex marriage, and the bill provides a balanced and fair package.

Richard Lyle (Central Scotland) (SNP): As the cabinet secretary knows, my wife and I adopted our daughter some 30 years ago. Would he agree with me that because my wife and I do not support same-sex marriage we would not be allowed to adopt today, or that questions would be asked of our suitability to adopt or even to foster? Where are the equal rights of people like us?

Alex Neil: Believing in or opposing same-sex marriage is in itself no barrier to adoption. I am happy to write to Richard Lyle to clarify the law on adoption in relation to same-sex marriage.

Murdo Fraser (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con): The cabinet secretary will know that a Roman Catholic adoption agency is currently having its charitable status threatened because it does not recognise same-sex couples. What guarantees can he give us that, if the bill is passed, faith groups and service providers that do not recognise

same-sex marriage will not, similarly, have their charitable status in any way questioned?

Alex Neil: That matter is currently under legal appeal. Therefore, it would be inappropriate for me to comment on that particular example. I am happy to clarify such matters more generally, either during tonight's debate or by writing to Murdo Fraser.

The bill establishes an opt-in system for religious and belief bodies in relation to same-sex marriage and civil partnerships, and makes it clear that there is no duty to opt in. The bill will impose no duty on any person who is an approved celebrant to solemnise same-sex marriages or to register civil partnerships. In addition, the United Kingdom Equality Act 2010 will be amended to protect individual celebrants who refuse to solemnise same-sex marriage from court actions claiming discrimination. Same-sex marriage will not be introduced in Scotland until the amendment to the 2010 act has been secured—as I believe it will be. We have reached agreement with the UK Government about the amendment to the Equality Act 2010, and we have published a detailed statement on what is planned.

As we have indicated, the amendments that will be made will also cover other persons who play an integral part in the religious or belief aspects of the marriage or civil partnership ceremony. They will protect persons who control use of religious or belief premises and who refuse to allow those premises to be used for same-sex marriage or civil partnership ceremonies.

Jamie Hepburn (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP): At present, the state dictates what the position of each religious denomination should be on the matter: it explicitly does not allow them to marry people of the same sex who wish to enter into a marriage. Does the cabinet secretary agree with me that the Government's approach is to empower religions to make a decision and that, in that sense, it is about the freedom of religion?

Alex Neil: Absolutely; a number of religious organisations and churches are very much in favour of the proposed legislation—the Quakers being a good example. Until now, they have not been allowed to carry out same-sex marriages, and they want to be allowed to do so.

We have carefully considered the need for wider protections across society as a whole. The issues are challenging ones, and we have to respect religious beliefs while ensuring that there is no discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities or individuals.

We need to avoid interfering with the employer-employee relationship. We need to balance parental rights in areas such as education with the right of the child to receive a full and

comprehensive education. Therefore, the protections that we are introducing more generally are a mixture of legislation and guidance.

The bill has provision at section 14 that makes it clear that the introduction of same-sex marriage will have no impact on existing rights to freedom of speech, thought, conscience and religion. In addition, the Lord Advocate has issued prosecution guidance that makes it clear that

“criticism of same sex marriage or homosexuality is not in itself an offence”,

and that

“Views expressed or comments made in relation to same sex marriage in ways which do not incite hatred or violence towards a particular person or group”

of people

“and which do not cause or intend to cause public disorder will not be the subject of criminal prosecution.”

Moreover, the vigorous debate on same-sex marriage during our consultations and while the bill has been with Parliament shows that freedom of speech is very much alive and well.

John Mason (Glasgow Shettleston) (SNP): Does the cabinet secretary agree with the Queen's counsel who told the Equal Opportunities Committee that legally the guidance will have no binding effect?

Alex Neil: I do not agree at all. The guidance is from the chief prosecutor to every prosecutor in Scotland. In my view, to say that it will have no impact is absolute nonsense. Of course it will have an impact—it says what will and will not be prosecuted in Scotland. I think that that is the right approach.

With regard to education, after seeking views on updating the guidance on the conduct of relationships, sexual health and parenthood education, we have received around 60 responses and are currently considering the points that have been made by those who have commented on the draft guidance. We have said that, where teachers have concerns about educational material that they might be asked to use, they should raise those concerns with the school or the local authority. We believe that to be the right local approach; after all, such detailed issues are best discussed and resolved at local level, rather than being dealt with through our trying to dictate from the centre. There is also existing guidance reflecting the professional standards that teachers have to meet when giving classes. Similarly, we have indicated that we are opposed to a legislative opt-out from same-sex marriage for civil registrars, and that any issues or concerns should be dealt with at local level by employers.

Turning to the Equal Opportunities Committee's stage 1 report, I note that the committee has

asked us to take account of stakeholders' views on matters such as protection of celebrants. We will, of course, do that. That we have kept an open mind throughout the bill process is, I believe, shown by the balanced package that we have put forward.

As for the committee's other recommendations, we will consider the point about the distinctions between religious marriage and belief marriage. As the committee noted, we considered those points following the second consultation, but coming up with designations that please everyone is not a straightforward matter. The committee has suggested that couples in a non-Scottish civil partnership should be able to change their relationship to a marriage in Scotland. Although we need to respect non-Scottish jurisdictions as well as to ensure that we do not cause confusion with regard to a couple's civil status, we will consider in detail the point that the committee has raised.

We have also written to a number of religious bodies to seek their views on a change to gender-neutral marriage ceremonies. However, we have concerns about the committee's recommendation on spousal consent. It is spousal consent to decide to stay in a marriage—and it takes two to stay in a marriage. As the committee has noted;

“spouses of people seeking gender recognition may find themselves in circumstances that are very difficult to face”.

That said, we will consider the point further with the aim of balancing everyone's rights.

On long-term transitioned people, we will seek to lodge an amendment at stage 2 to introduce provisions similar to those that were added to the UK legislation in the House of Lords. Finally, we will respond in detail with regard to lowering the age at which applications can be made to the gender recognition panel. We need more medical and psychological evidence of the potential effect of any possible change, but I recognise the points that were made in evidence to the committee and acknowledge the need for the Government to give further thought to the issue.

In conclusion, I strongly urge my fellow MSPs to vote for a bill that will make sensible improvements to marriage and civil partnership law, that provides greater flexibility for couples who are seeking to get married or enter into a civil partnership, and which will introduce same-sex marriage, which will further promote equality and diversity in our society while respecting the views of those who do not wish to take part.

I believe that the bill's provisions will improve our society in Scotland and make it much more civilised in its treatment of LGBT people. I look forward to the debate and ask my colleagues to

support the bill's general principles at the vote at 8 pm tonight. [*Applause.*]

I move,

That the Parliament agrees to the general principles of the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill.

The Presiding Officer: I remind people in the gallery not to applaud.

17:15

Margaret McCulloch (Central Scotland) (Lab): I welcome the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Equal Opportunities Committee, following our stage 1 report on the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill.

Before I introduce the report and speak about our conclusions, I extend my thanks to the clerks, all my committee colleagues and the members of the other committees that considered the bill—the Finance Committee and the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee. I also thank everyone who responded to our call for written evidence and all those who took part in oral evidence sessions in September and October. All of us on the committee recognise the validity, strength and sincerity of the views that we received on this clearly emotive issue. I am personally grateful for the sensitive and respectful way in which those views were presented by witnesses and then considered by committee members. I hope that the wider debate about same-sex marriage will proceed in the same dignified way.

The committee noted the differing views that were expressed in evidence on the meaning and purpose of marriage. We considered evidence from faith groups and from LGBT people on the perceptions and understanding of marriage, and we heard from a number of witnesses about rights-based arguments and social attitudes.

Margaret Mitchell (Central Scotland) (Con): Will Margaret McCulloch give way?

Margaret McCulloch: No—I do not have time. I have a lot to get through on the report.

Some witnesses emphasised the concept of complementarity between men and women. The Catholic parliamentary office, on behalf of the Bishops Conference of Scotland, wrote:

“The complementarity of male and female, and their unique role in the transmission of life, underscores the reality of marriage as a natural social environment for the birth and growth of every person.”

John Deighan, from the Catholic parliamentary office, described complementarity as the “inherent essence” of and “rational basis” for marriage. However, John Phillips, who was representing the

Religious Society of Friends—the Quakers—gave a different perspective. He said:

“For us, the crucial thing is the complementarity between two individuals who are making a committed relationship with each other”—[*Official Report, Equal Opportunities Committee*, 5 September 2013; c 1382.]

Tim Hopkins, from the Equality Network, said:

“Our view is that the bill is about love—and marriage is about love. I think if you ask most married couples what their marriage is about they will say that it is about love, a commitment to each other and, if they have children, their family. All those things apply to same-sex couples, as well.”—[*Official Report, Equal Opportunities Committee*, 5 September 2013; c 1382.]

Colin Macfarlane, from Stonewall Scotland, says that the bill is

“about much more than the complementarity issue”

and that it is

“about how gay people are viewed in society and about being equal in the eyes of the law.”—[*Official Report, Equal Opportunities Committee*, 5 September; c 1382.]

Indeed, we gave a great deal of consideration to equal recognition, human rights and public attitudes. Dr Kelly Kollman highlighted to us the “transformative” power of rights-based arguments in the debate.

I am aware that many of the responses to the Scottish Government’s consultation did not favour the bill. That point was made to the committee in written and oral evidence from John Deighan. However, Ross Wright from the Humanist Society Scotland commented that a consultation “not a referendum”. Professor John Curtice, from the University of Strathclyde, advised that we

“should not look to consultations as a way of understanding the balance of public opinion”,

but that we should instead look to

“the structure of public opinion”—[*Official Report, Equal Opportunities Committee*, 19 September; c 1516.]

and technical issues with bills and proposals. There was a huge amount of diversity as well as depth in the views that we received, so I hope that the whole range of opinions is adequately reflected in the report.

The committee also noted varying views among stakeholders on the approach that the bill takes to protecting celebrants of faith, as well as the freedom of religious organisations to conduct legal marriages that are in keeping with their own doctrines. We heard differing views on the opt-in approach for religious and belief celebrants, on protections for service providers and on concerns about attrition. In our report, we asked the Scottish Government to consider that range of views during the amending stages of the bill.

Under the Marriage (Scotland) Act 1977, there are two types of marriage ceremony: civil and religious. Since 2005, humanist celebrants have been authorised under a provision of the 1997 act that was designed for temporary authorisation of religious celebrants. The bill would retain two categories, but would redefine non-civil marriage ceremonies as “religious or belief” ceremonies, to capture a wider range of beliefs and to put religious and belief celebrants on the same legal footing.

Ephraim Borowski of the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities considers that there is a distinction between religious and belief ceremonies, and so believes that belief ceremonies should form a third category. The committee notes the Scottish Government’s explanation for why the bill retains two ceremony categories, but we have sought the Scottish Government’s views on an amendment to the bill.

The committee took a range of evidence on civil partnerships, including evidence on the difference between marriage and civil partnerships, the treatment in the bill of civil partnerships that have been registered abroad, and the future of civil partnerships in Scotland. We note that the Scottish Government plans to consider issues relating to reform of civil partnerships, including civil partnerships for opposite-sex couples, in its forthcoming review.

Should same-sex marriage be introduced, there would be a procedure for converting civil partnerships into marriage. We believe that couples who enter into civil partnerships abroad, who would have to dissolve their partnerships before marrying here, should have similar rights to that procedure as couples whose civil partnerships have been conducted in Scotland.

The committee noted the Scottish Government’s position that it has struck the right balance regarding gender-neutral ceremonies, and that allowing such ceremonies could cause problems for denominations that might not want to use gender-neutral marriage declarations. However, we believe that it should be possible to allow gender-neutral language, which is why we call on the Scottish Government to reconsider its position.

We note evidence that calls for the requirement for spousal consent to be removed from the gender recognition process. The spouses of people who seek gender recognition may find themselves in circumstances that are difficult to face and we have not received specific evidence from their perspective. However, we believe that the non-transitioning spouse’s personal choice is sufficiently protected by the automatic grounds for divorce that are triggered by his or her partner seeking gender recognition. We also believe that the requirement of spousal consent for gender

recognition, also known as the spousal veto, is unnecessary and should be removed.

We have drawn two further conclusions regarding gender recognition issues that were raised in evidence. First, we have welcomed the Scottish Government's willingness to consult on difficulties that are faced by long-term transitioned people, in particular around evidence requirements, with a view to amending the bill at stage 2. Secondly, we have noted representations that were made by the Scottish Transgender Alliance about lowering the age at which a person can secure gender recognition. We accept that it may not be possible to deal with those issues effectively in the bill, but I feel nonetheless that it is important to highlight them to Parliament.

The committee took evidence on how the bill could impact on other areas of life, including the education system and chaplaincy in public services. We heard from John Brown, from the Scottish Catholic Education Service, and Michael Calwell, from the Family Education Trust, who spoke about the conflict between different views of marriage and the implications that they fear it could have for teaching in schools. However, when asked whether the bill would have an impact on how teachers teach in the classroom, Stephen McCrossan of the Educational Institute of Scotland said:

"I do not think that the bill will have a significant impact on the way in which teachers teach in the classroom. We simply see the bill as another strand in equality and diversity, promoting equal opportunities and challenging discrimination."—[*Official Report, Equal Opportunities Committee*, 26 September 2013; c 1534.]

On behalf of the committee, I draw Parliament's attention to the views that were expressed regarding the relationship between the bill and public services, and to the recommendations that were made by the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee, which we note and support.

To paraphrase Robert Louis Stevenson, we agree to differ, for agreeing to differ is a form of agreement, rather than a form of difference. The majority of the committee supports the general principles of the bill and recommends that Parliament approve the bill at stage 1. A minority of the committee does not support the bill. Those members either disagree in principle or are not convinced that adequate protections are in place. However, we are unanimous in supporting the right of individual members to decide on the bill as a matter of conscience.

On a personal note, I know what my conscience tells me; I associate myself with the majority view that is expressed in the report. I back the general principles of the bill and I hope that there is a majority in favour of equal marriage when we vote at decision time tonight.

17:25

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Lab): I am pleased to participate in this stage 1 debate on the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill. At the outset, I commend the Scottish Government unreservedly—not something that I do terribly often—for its work on the bill. I also commend the members and clerks of the Equal Opportunities Committee for their diligence in scrutinising the bill at stage 1. I associate myself with the cabinet secretary's remarks about Mary Fee, the former convener of the committee, and Margaret McCulloch, the current convener.

Undoubtedly, there has been a volume of evidence in favour of and against the bill, and the committee's stage 1 report is a comprehensive record of that evidence and the process of the committee's consideration. The report notes that the majority of the committee supports the general principles of the bill, but the convener was right to remind us that the decision will be a matter for individual members, as I believe that all parties have agreed that there will be a free vote. Ultimately, it is a matter for each of us in the Parliament.

I therefore recommend that all members read the stage 1 report. I know that it is long, but it helpfully sets out the arguments and, where there are concerns, the scope for amendments. I will come on to consider some of those concerns. For me, though, the bill is about equality, fairness, social justice and the values that were instilled in me by my parents, my community and society. For many of us, the bill is also about how we see ourselves as a nation and how others see us. It is about the values that we hold and whether Scotland is indeed a confident progressive nation where equality is truly valued.

Most members will have received a considerable volume of correspondence on equal marriage, both for and against. Many of the arguments are detailed and the views are passionately held. Some members even received emails as we were walking into the chamber, never mind late last night. I thank people for giving their time and energy to inform the debate.

It is true that attitudes in Scotland are changing. The Scottish social attitudes survey in 2002 showed that 41 per cent of people were in favour of same-sex marriage and 19 per cent were against. In the same social attitudes survey, but this time in 2010, the proportion of people who were in favour of same-sex marriage had risen to 61 per cent. A shift of 20 per cent in opinion on any issue in such a short space of time is, frankly, astonishing. If we begin to unpack the detail, we find that support for equal marriage can be found in those who are religious, in people from across all income groups and all geographic areas of

Scotland. The support cuts right across our country and right across our society.

In the survey, 55 per cent of those who identified themselves as Catholic supported same-sex marriage and 21 per cent were opposed. Among Scottish Presbyterians, 50 per cent supported same-sex marriage and 25 per cent were against. Of those living in the most deprived areas, 67 per cent support same-sex marriage, while the figure for those who live in the most affluent areas is 63 per cent. Frankly, it makes no difference whether someone lives in urban or rural Scotland, because support for same-sex marriage is roughly the same and consistently above 60 per cent. There is no doubt about current public attitudes.

I read with much interest the evidence to the committee from Professor John Curtice, whom many members will know better for inhabiting television studios in the wee small hours of the morning, sharing his wisdom on elections and voting behaviour. He described to the committee a cultural shift in Britain over the past 30 years. According to Professor Curtice, in 1983, 62 per cent of the population believed that same-sex relationships were mostly or always wrong. That figure has dropped to 28 per cent, which is quite extraordinary. His explanation for that shift is that it is young people who increasingly support same-sex marriage. The Equality Network backs that up and tells us that support for same-sex marriage is highest among those who are under 55. I, like many in this chamber, take it as a compliment that being under 55 is still considered to be young. Joking apart, there is robust and credible evidence of changing views in our society and support for equal marriage.

It is also useful to consider what has happened in other countries that have legislated for same-sex marriage. In Europe, since 2001, we have seen the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Norway, Sweden, Iceland, Denmark, France, and, most recently, England and Wales, provide equal marriage rights for same-sex couples. In Canada, South Africa, Argentina, New Zealand, Uruguay, Brazil and 17 states in America, equal marriage is the norm.

I know Portugal quite well. Like Christian Allard, one of my parents was Portuguese. Eighty one per cent of Portugal's population describe themselves as Catholics, which is a huge proportion of any country and is, without doubt, a significant number. In 2009, Portugal passed its law to allow same-sex marriage. There is no doubt that that was hotly contested, and it was passed to the constitutional courts for review. In 2010, those same courts said that the law was perfectly legal and the then president, Cavaco Silva, signed it off

and there have been same-sex marriages ever since.

Interestingly, when I asked one Portuguese friend, who is quite religious, about the legislation he said, "It is about love. There should be no difference whether it is a man or a woman or they are the same sex; it is whether they love each other that really matters."

When the Parliament passed a law on civil partnerships, we took a huge step forward. Same-sex couples had the legal rights associated with marriage. However, I recognise that that, for some, falls far short of marriage in which their love and commitment is fully recognised. The Equality Network talks about a gold standard; for me, it is a matter of equality and fairness.

For a host of reasons, I believe that equal marriage is an idea whose time has come and I will support the general principles of the bill. That said, very few in this chamber are deaf to the concerns that have been raised. The principal area of concern appears to relate to the protections put in place by the Scottish Government. It is the case that no religious or belief body can be forced to perform a same-sex marriage. It is also the case that celebrants will not be forced to perform a same-sex marriage if it is against their beliefs. I agree. Those are matters of doctrine and belief that are properly for the church and not the state.

Mark McDonald (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP): Will the member give way?

Jackie Baillie: I will in a second.

Religions can and do refuse to marry people. That is a matter for them; it is not proposed that that will change.

Mark McDonald: The member has just made my point, which is that churches are already able to choose who they marry.

Jackie Baillie: I am never keen to give up time to the member, but I am glad that we are in agreement.

I welcome that point because it is important. However, I acknowledge that some people are concerned that even those protections might be challenged in the courts. I therefore very much welcome the arrangement between the Scottish and UK Governments to amend the UK Equality Act 2010. The 2010 act contains provisions about not discriminating when providing a service, with exemptions for religious and belief bodies that apply in certain circumstances. The Scottish Government has rightly sought the protection to be more comprehensive by asking for a further amendment that would help to allay fears about challenges being brought on grounds of discrimination. It is helpful that an agreement has

been reached with the UK Government on that point.

Concerns have also been expressed about whether it would affect someone's employment if they held views that were opposed to same-sex marriage. The example most often cited is that teachers would be somehow forced out of their job if they refused to teach about same-sex marriage because they were fundamentally opposed to it. I think that we all acknowledge that teachers deal with difficult situations every day in schools. In the main, they do so sensitively—they balance their beliefs with the needs of the child or children before them. It would be wrong to put something in the bill when education circulars and guidance have served us extremely well in the past.

Existing legislative provision allows parents to withdraw their children from religious education. Existing guidance allows parents to withdraw their children from sexual health education. I welcome the Scottish Government's proposal to update that guidance to reflect the introduction of same-sex marriage. Faith aspects of the curriculum in Catholic schools will continue to be a matter for the Scottish Catholic Education Service. However, it is important for the Scottish Government to review any suggested impact on education, to make doubly sure of the position. Like many other members, I have received thoughtful letters from teachers who support the proposal and teachers who are concerned about how to deal with same-sex marriage, so updated guidance will undoubtedly be helpful.

I have no doubt that amendments will be lodged with the aim of respecting the right of those who, as a result of their religious beliefs, take the traditional view of marriage as being between a man and a woman. Concerns have also been highlighted about freedom of speech. I note that the Lord Advocate has published guidance on the matter, which refers to provisions in the European Convention on Human Rights and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union on the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, along with freedom of expression. However, concerns remain. It is right for the Parliament to explore the subject again and ensure that the arrangements are robust.

The committee has also asked the Scottish Government to look again at the gender recognition provisions in the bill and at policy areas such as gender-neutral language and spousal consent for gender recognition. I have not had time to explore in detail all the issues that the committee raised but, Presiding Officer, you will have the fortune—or misfortune, depending on your view—to hear from me again in the closing speeches.

I hope that members will support the bill's general principles at decision time. We and the Scottish Government have work to do to improve the bill and make it more robust. We must have adequate protections that genuinely address people's concerns, but it is time for change. It is time to support equal marriage.

17:37

Ruth Davidson (Glasgow) (Con): The debate is not easy and it was never going to be. When areas of love meet the law and when belief, commitment and faith collide with legislation, the waters will always be difficult to navigate. I therefore commend all the contributors to the debate in the past months and years who have sought to make thoughtful comments, to elevate the ideas and to temper the language. People have displayed a respect for beliefs that differ from their own and have recognised that those beliefs are just as sincerely held. I hope that that temperance will continue this evening, to demonstrate that, although this may be a fledgling Parliament, it has maturity.

It is precisely because of the nature of the debate that I believe that the bill is a matter of conscience. That is why, like members of other parties, Scottish Conservative members have been given a free vote.

Today, I speak on behalf of only myself. I have no doubt that this could be the most personal speech that I will ever make in the chamber. I hope to explain why I support the broadest principle of the bill—the principle of extending marriage.

I believe in that principle because I believe in marriage. I believe that marriage is a good thing. I saw the evidence of that every day growing up in a house that was full of love. My family had the stresses and strains that are common to all, but there was never any doubt, question or fear in my mind that our togetherness was in any way insecure.

The bedrock of that stability and security was my parents' marriage. That stability helped me and my sister to flourish and have confidence that we could be whoever we wanted to be. After more than 40 years of marriage, my parents still love each other. I look at what they have and I want that too, and I want it to be recognised in the same way. That recognition matters.

Presiding Officer, from childhood, you have known without even thinking that if you found someone you loved and who loved you in return, you would have the right to marry them. The same unthinking right to marry extends to the cabinet secretary, the Labour Party leader and the Liberal Democrat leader. I want that right to extend to not

just me but the thousands of people across Scotland who are told that the law says no and that they cannot marry the love of their life. They are not allowed and, unless we change the law, they will never be allowed.

It does matter. It matters that a whole section of our society is told that they can have the facsimile of civil partnership but they cannot have the real thing. It is not for them. Their love is something different and something less. Their commitment is denied.

I do not want the next generation of young gay people to grow up as I did, believing that marriage is something that they can never have. With this bill, we have the opportunity to change that, and to change the attitudes and stigma that being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender can still evoke, and that can cause so much harm.

Jamie Hepburn: I thank Ruth Davidson for giving way during her very eloquent contribution; I am enjoying it very much. She spoke about the next generation. I am the father of two very young children. I do not know what their sexual orientation will be, but if they grow up and have a same-sex attraction, and if the Parliament fails to pass the proposed legislation that is before us today, what would the member suggest that I should say to them in future if they want to be married? How does she think that I could look them in the face and say that this Parliament missed the opportunity to give them that right?

Ruth Davidson: I would hope that their father would have helped to vote them that opportunity. Talking about the next generation is important because it is those people we must think about.

Last year, the University of Cambridge conducted a huge body of research called "The School Report". The researchers spoke to hundreds of LGBT pupils from across the UK who were open about their sexuality. The majority said that they were the victims of homophobic bullying and that it happened to them in their schools. More than half of the respondents deliberately self-harmed. Nearly a quarter had attempted to take their own life on at least one occasion.

These are our children and they are made to feel so much guilt, shame and despair. We have an opportunity today to make it better for them. At the moment, we tell these young people, "You are good enough to serve in our armed forces. You are good enough to care in our hospitals. You are good enough to teach in our schools. But you are not good enough to marry the person you love and who loves you in return." We tell them that they are something different, something less, something other, and that the dream and gold standard of marriage does not apply to them. They do not get to have it. That apartheid message, that

"same but different" or alien quality, and that otherness is reflected in every hurtful comment, slander, exclusion and abuse, whether it takes place in the school playground, on the factory floor, or in the local pub.

That is why the bill matters to those people who will directly benefit from it, such as those couples who are eager to commit their relationship in marriage and who should be allowed to do so. More than that, it matters to the future nature of our country. We have an opportunity today to tell our nation's children that, no matter where they live and no matter who they love, there is nothing that they cannot do. We will wipe away the last legal barrier that says that they are something less than their peers. We can help them to walk taller into the playground tomorrow and to face their accuser down knowing that the Parliament of their country has stood up for them and said that they are every bit as good as every one of their classmates. They will know that their Parliament has said that they deserve the same rights as everyone else.

I believe in marriage. I believe that it is a good thing and something to be celebrated, and I want everyone in Scotland to know that marriage is important to them. I support the principles of this bill.

The Presiding Officer: We now move to the open debate. I have 20 members who wish to take part in the debate. I am absolutely determined that those who have already indicated their wish to take part will be heard. The debate is unique because it is a free vote and I want as many voices as possible to be heard. To allow everyone to get in who has already indicated that they wish to speak, I can allow the first number of speakers to have six minutes, and thereafter, speeches will be five minutes. The Presiding Officer will tell you when that change occurs.

17:44

Marco Biagi (Edinburgh Central) (SNP): Thank you, Presiding Officer. I apologise for not noticing earlier that we were running slightly ahead of schedule.

As is becoming clear to everyone, the bill that we are debating is different from the bills about which we debate policy or the intricacies of law. Speaking personally, as Ruth Davidson did, I can only feel that the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill is much more immediate and more fundamental, and that it deals with the question of my civil rights. After consideration, I concluded that my remarks, too, ought to reflect that.

It will not come as a surprise to anyone that, when I was young and my classmates started to notice girls, I started to notice boys. I was afraid. I

looked at our society and I did not see myself looking back, whether in our institutions, such as marriage, in what was regarded in public debate at the time as good and moral, or even in how our society portrayed itself in fiction, in which any representation of same-sex attraction made the subject matter adult, to be ranked alongside pornography and violence. When all that I saw or knew of gay people was Julian Clary, Kenneth Williams or Graham Norton, I—a boy from a chip shop in Dunbartonshire—did not see myself. I could only conclude that I was different from normal and that what I was was less deserving as a result.

Today, this chamber can add a new tile to the great interlocking mosaic of our society that has been built up steadily, one piece at a time, since the Wolfenden report of 1957. Same-sex marriage will not be the last piece to be added to that mosaic. The bill is not the finished article, not least for the transgendered, but today we can further build a picture of our society that generations of young people to come can look at and see themselves in. People of faith, whether gay or straight, must see themselves in that image, too, because it would be perverse to expand the freedom to express sexuality only at the cost of the freedom to practise faith. Both are fundamental cornerstones of a humane society, and the dichotomy between them is a false one.

Amending UK equality laws puts beyond doubt any concern that churches could be forced to hold same-sex marriages by domestic law. Anyone can speculate about hypothetical European challenges, but the ECHR includes specific protection for freedom of religious practice. I quote:

“There would ... be a quite a hurdle and a strong protection under article 9 if churches can prove that they are not part of the state.”

“The Church of Scotland is not and has never been a department of the state”.—[*Official Report, Equal Opportunities Committee*, 19 September 2013; c 1495, 1494.]

Those are not my words, but those of Aidan O'Neill QC, when, as legal adviser to the campaign against the bill, he gave evidence to the Equal Opportunities Committee. If the Kirk is not classed as a department of state, which faith would be? The Equality and Human Rights Commission and Karon Monaghan, who is a human rights law specialist, formed part of the consensus that the protections were strong and that the freedom of religion was genuine.

However, we do not have to speculate. Nine countries in Europe have already legalised same-sex marriage and not one has seen churches being forced to hold such marriages. That fact was confirmed to the Equal Opportunities Committee

not once, not twice, but three times over by different witnesses.

Above all, we must not be drawn by the remote and hypothetical challenge to religious freedom to such an extent that we overlook the very tangible, very real and very much on-going violation of personal freedom that is the exclusion of people of same-sex attraction from expressing their love through marriage, which is the institution that our society considers to be the paragon of commitment.

Civil partnerships were a welcome step, but they remind me of the ladies degrees that were offered before women were admitted to Scotland's universities on an equal footing for the first time in 1892. Those degrees were progressive for their time—they opened the door—but who today would argue that a women-only degree was a substitute for allowing women to study on the same terms as men? Civil partnerships are “separate but equal”, which is always separate and never equal. They are not enough.

If we were to surprise everyone and to vote down the bill today, who would we be to continue to infringe the freedom of those progressive faiths such as Scotland's Quakers and Scotland's Unitarians that sincerely consider same-sex ceremonies to be part of their understanding of what marriage is and should be?

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (LD):

Is the member aware that last month marked the 50th anniversary of the publication of a book called “Towards a Quaker View of Sex”? That book said:

“Surely it is the nature and quality of a relationship that matters: one must not judge it by its outward appearance but by its inner worth. Homosexual affection can be as selfless as heterosexual affection, and therefore we cannot see that it is in some way morally worse.”

Does the member agree that that conclusion, which was unprecedented for its time, is still significantly more advanced and progressive than some of the views that some people have expressed during the debate on the bill?

Marco Biagi: I very much agree with the sentiment that was expressed, although I speak up for Unitarians, who have also been performing same-sex blessings since the 1950s. There is plenty of progress all round.

If we were to vote down the bill, who would we be to say that the understanding of the sacrament of marriage held by other faiths that do not share that view should be allowed and the views of the Quakers and Unitarians should be forbidden unless we somehow believed that same-sex relationships were intrinsically different, wrong and worthy of legal proscription?

I cannot bring myself to believe that any member subscribes to that view, but I will tell members a secret: I did once. The shame of those days has now given way to a shame that I fought those feelings for such a long time. Sadly, I know too many who still fight them—people young and old whose lives are a daily denial. I do not have to imagine how it feels to live like that because I remember it.

When I came out, I stopped looking at those around me and wishing that I was the same as them. Instead, I started to wish that I had the same rights as them—the same right to love, marry and dream of what might be.

The bill grants people throughout Scotland that right and the freedom to be true to their faith and to their love. I implore all members to join together and endorse it. For all those people, young and old, what a sign that would be.

The Presiding Officer: I remind members that the debate will be really tight if I am to get everybody in. I urge them—beg them, in fact—to keep to their time limits.

17:51

Mary Fee (West Scotland) (Lab): The debate is truly historic and long overdue. I am delighted to take part in it as a supporter of LGBT rights. It will also come as no surprise that I will be saying “I do.”

I pay compliments to the Equality Network, the Transgender Alliance, Stonewall Scotland and all the equality groups that played their part in the campaign that now results in the Parliament making its first vote on the bill that will make marriage equal in Scotland. The debate has often been contentious, particularly when played out in the media, and I am sure that all members will be sincere and courteous in their deliberations.

The Scottish Parliament was established to promote the values of social justice and tackle inequality. Since its inception, it has acted against social and moral inequality by repealing section 28, levelling the age of consent, allowing same-sex couples to adopt and foster, and introducing legislation to ensure that LGBT people are protected under hate crime laws. It is only right that we extend to LGBT citizens the rights and freedoms that many of us take for granted each day.

I ask the opponents of the bill who comment that civil partnerships were introduced for LGBT people whether the suffragettes were happy when the Representation of the People Act 1918 was introduced, allowing women over 30 to vote. No, they were not. They fought for a further decade to

enfranchise all women and equalise the voting ages of men and women.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender couples who wish to marry should be able to do so. They should not be told that they must accept the current two-tier discriminatory system. Adapting our marriage laws will end that discrimination with no impact on any other marriage.

Our society has become increasingly liberal since 1999, and attitudes towards the LGBT community are changing, even if it sometimes feels as though they are doing so at a snail's pace. Support for equal marriage is at an all-time high, and my vote will represent the majority of correspondence that I have received from constituents in West Scotland.

Although it is widely recognised and documented that attitudes are changing, the levels of stigma and discrimination towards LGBT people remain unacceptably high. Like many, I believe that same-sex marriage will help to tackle and reduce prejudice.

I will address the specifics of the bill and the Equal Opportunities Committee's stage 1 report. Changes still need to be made and it is likely that amendments will be lodged that improve the opportunity to increase equality. However, I welcome the consideration of the Scottish Government and the Equal Opportunities Committee to report on issues such as gender recognition difficulties faced by long-term transitioned people and civil partnerships performed in another country.

The committee report also raises questions about the meaning and purpose of marriage. Those who are against the bill argue that the complementarity of a man and a woman is the basis of marriage, but that suggests that the basis of marriage is really about procreating. As we know all too well, the ability to create a child does not automatically create a perfect parent or, indeed, an ideal family unit. It seems that some people are living in a different society from the rest of us, and outdated values give no justice to the children of today.

As I said earlier, we have become more liberal. The number of single-parent families is increasing, and they are becoming more accepted as the norm. Suggesting that marriage is the basis for a stable environment for raising a family adds to the stigma that many single parents feel and it does no service to the tremendous work and support that many single-parent families do and give every week.

Marriage is a commitment between two loving and consenting adults; whether to have children after being married, or indeed before or never, is a decision solely for the couple, no matter how the

family is created. The legislation allowing same-sex couples to adopt, which came into force in 2009, was long overdue, but it gave the right to offer a child a safe, stable and loving home.

Having been married for 36 years and having raised two children, I strive to understand how introducing the bill takes anything away from my marriage. I agreed with the First Minister, for probably the first and perhaps the last time, when he stated at the Scottish Government Cabinet meeting in Renfrew last year:

"I personally struggle to see whose freedoms are being infringed by the move towards this legislation."

It is right that freedom of thought, freedom of religion and freedom of speech are protected. However, at what point does one person's freedom override the equality of others? As many supporters of the bill have said, there are enough safeguards for people to express their view, as long as it is not seen to be hateful or discriminatory.

The bill is a step, if not a leap, towards ensuring equal rights for all Scots. I hope that it will add to the important and crucial work carried out to tackle inequality and discrimination. I look forward to casting my vote in support of the bill.

17:57

John Mason (Glasgow Shettleston) (SNP): I am very grateful to have the opportunity to take part in this debate today.

Clearly, we are dealing with a sensitive subject, and there has been a certain amount of strident language in the media from people at both ends of the spectrum. However, it was encouraging that in committee there was a generally reasonable tone from both committee members and witnesses. That tone was important because, whether Scotland is devolved or independent, we must be able to disagree among ourselves in a civilised way. I believe that that is what this Parliament is for.

We do not all need to be the same as each other and we do not all need to agree on one point of view. I want what I hope we all want, which is a pluralistic and inclusive Scotland that is made up of a wide variety of people and groups, and in which people of different backgrounds and orientations, and people with traditional faiths or none, can all belong and feel at home.

I think that we have to note as well that Parliament is not reflecting public opinion on this issue. We can argue about whether those supporting or those opposing the bill have the greater numbers on their side, but there is certainly not the overwhelming support outside this place for the bill that there seems to be inside.

Parliament therefore needs to tread wisely if it is to keep all the people of Scotland on board.

Patrick Harvie (Glasgow) (Green): Does the member accept that, as well as some people on both sides of the argument having strong feelings on it, there are an awful lot of people out there who are just puzzled that we have not got over this already?

John Mason: There are people puzzled because we have not got over it already, and there are people puzzled about why we are looking at it when they think that there are other things that are more important.

We need to deal with this subject sensitively—I think that Ruth Davidson gave us a tremendous example of that—as we are talking about personal relationships. We have people who have a relationship with a partner whom they love and who want the right to marry them; we have people in a loving marriage relationship who feel that the proposed changes could devalue that relationship; and we have people like me who have a relationship with Jesus and want to show our love for him. Let us all accept that and try at least to tolerate a range of views.

There are two main arguments against the bill: one is on the principle that marriage is between a man and a woman and the second is about whether adequate safeguards are in place for those who disagree.

The latter is a concern that comes on top of the feeling of some religious people that they are being increasingly marginalised in society. On the first, the argument is that the word "marriage" has had a recognised meaning for a very long time. Some would argue that Parliament cannot or should not change that meaning. By widening the meaning, it dilutes the value.

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con): Will the member take an intervention?

John Mason: No. I am sorry but I have to get on.

From a personal perspective, I have a lot of sympathy for that argument. However, that raises the question of how much my faith as a personal position should decide how I vote on an issue such as this. Coming from a Baptist perspective, I believe strongly in the separation of church and state. While state has responsibility for restricting some actions and behaviour, it cannot ultimately impose values on people.

For me, therefore, the crucial arguments are around the protections for those who disagree with same-sex marriage, whether they are denominations, celebrants, or public sector or other workers. We have assurances from the

Scottish and Westminster Governments that all is safe and full protection is in place. However, there remain a number of concerns.

First, the Equality Act 2010 does not say that all protected characteristics are equal; nor does it say how conflicts between different characteristics are to be decided. As a result, the courts have to decide which rights are most important. The perception among many religious people is that religion and belief often come at the bottom of the pile.

Secondly, the European Court of Human Rights can trump the UK and Scottish Governments. We heard at committee that the ECHR will not get involved if there is no such thing as same-sex marriage but, once same-sex marriage is permitted, will it switch to making it compulsory for churches and others to take part?

If churches are considered to be providing a public service, the courts could act against them for providing that service only to some and not to others. That is effectively what has happened with adoption agencies. At the time that adoption by same-sex couples was permitted, well-meaning assurances were given that no agency would be forced to take part. However, we now have the situation where the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator states that an agency cannot be a charity if it refuses to take part. Will permission turn to compulsion in a few years' time? That is the concern of many of us.

We looked at that issue in committee and received different legal views about what might happen in future. Members might have seen in the Equality Network's briefing that Karon Monaghan QC said that it is "inconceivable" that the European Court would overturn the protections. However, that is only one half of the story.

The other half is what Aidan O'Neill QC said, which was:

"if marriage is extended to same-sex couples, it will become a human rights requirement that there be equality of treatment and regard. In a sense, that is what is important about the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill—it shifts the position in that regard."

He went on to say:

"Therefore, I think that the Equality Act 2010 leaves open the possibility of conflict".—[*Official Report, Equal Opportunities Committee*, 19 September 2013; c 1500-01.]

Not for the first time, we get a variety of legal opinion from a variety of legal experts. There is doubt whether the protections in place are robust; there are certainly no guarantees.

In a similarly controversial area, namely abortion, there is specific provision for national health service workers to be able to choose whether to take part. That seems to me to be a

reasonable compromise. The NHS as a whole provides the service, but individuals are given reasonable accommodation. If the bill is to go forward, I would like to see similar increased protection for the individual conscience and belief of public sector and other workers.

I do not seek to impose Christian values on what is an increasingly secular society; nor do I seek to restrict the rights of anyone in society. I seek equality for each person in society, but I remain unconvinced by the assurances given and therefore I will vote against the bill.

18:03

Elaine Smith (Coatbridge and Chryston)

(Lab): A week past on Saturday, as the constituency member for Coatbridge and Chryston I hosted the Conforti Institute's intercultural dialogue conference here, which included delegates from home and abroad, gay, straight, Catholic, humanist, Protestant and pagan. They all recognised that we have to share this planet for the short time that we are here and that, while we may not all agree on issues such as same-sex marriage, we can surely disagree in a respectful fashion. Indeed, Alex Neil asked that the debate

"be conducted in a good spirit and civilised manner, with respect on all sides."

Since I indicated that I did not intend to support the redefinition of marriage, my religion has been disparaged, I have been branded homophobic and bigoted, I have been likened to the Ku Klux Klan and it was suggested that I be burned at the stake as a witch.

The irony is that I spent 12 years serving on the Equal Opportunities Committee, when we removed section 2A, permitted same-sex adoption and introduced civil partnerships. No one accused me of homophobia then—indeed, quite the opposite.

Most of the people who have engaged with me on the issue are not homophobic. They have the sincerely held beliefs that marriage means one man and one woman as the social construct that forms the basis of family life and that, by altering that reality, the state will fundamentally affect our society with as yet unknown consequences.

Catholics and other Christians who believe that marriage is a sacrament cannot support the redefinition. Of the 77,000 respondents to the Government's consultation, which is the biggest response ever, 67 per cent were against redefining it. Those people need a voice in the Parliament tonight.

As we have heard, amendments to the Equality Act 2010 will be sought to try to protect the clergy from legal action. That clearly recognises that

court cases are likely, but those protections should be for everyone. Freedom of worship and freedom of religion are two different things, and both need to be protected. Section 14 of the bill could be amended to give wider protection, but I am not convinced that that would be unassailable. In evidence, Alex Neil said:

“Sometimes, it depends on the judge.”—[*Official Report, Equal Opportunities Committee*, 3 October 2013; c 1597.]

Previously, we were given promises by ministers that they did not foresee unintended consequences of same-sex adoption and that Catholic adoption agencies specifically would be able to continue their work. I was in the chamber then and voted for the legislation on that basis. We now know that that is not the case, and the closure of agencies means that many children will suffer as a consequence.

The problem with the threat of legal challenges is that the churches cannot afford to fight them, even if they ultimately win. Both the Catholic church and the Church of Scotland have therefore stated that they may be forced to separate religious ceremonies from state ceremonies. The consequence of that would be that thousands of heterosexual couples would need to get married in a registry office and then seek a religious blessing so that a few same-sex couples would have the full ceremony in a church. Those who support the bill and think that it will have no impact on them and most of us who just want to live and let live need to understand that they may be directly affected.

The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Joe FitzPatrick): Will the member take an intervention?

Elaine Smith: I do not have time.

There are wider implications and consequences, both intended and unintended. Aidan O’Neill QC’s legal opinion says that parents with children in faith schools could be affected, and teachers, chaplains, registrars and other public sector workers may be subject to disciplinary action.

Despite Government promises, no additional measures have as yet been included to safeguard freedom of speech and religion. The Lord Advocate’s guidance to prosecutors for those who oppose same-sex marriage also gives cause for concern and suggests the expectation of legal challenges.

As the constituency MSP for Coatbridge and Chryston, I have been approached by hundreds of constituents who have asked me, either individually or as part of the numerous local religious organisations, to vote against the bill. It does not seem that many members will speak against it, but MSPs have a responsibility to

ensure to the best of their ability that they are not introducing legislation that will have consequences—albeit perhaps unintended—that will negatively impact on society.

Some members may believe that, as a result of signing a pledge, they must support the bill. Indeed, it is worrying that the director of the Equality Network claimed in *Holyrood* magazine a few weeks ago that

“Over two-thirds of MSPs have now signed the Equality Network’s ‘Equal Marriage Pledge’ committing themselves to voting in favour of same-sex marriage.”

It is important to clarify that signing a pledge and voting for legislation are two very different things. Members signed that pledge before they set eyes on the legislation or before they scrutinised the proposal. The bill may well have detrimental consequences for many people, and their representatives need to be clear about that when they vote.

The committee report deals with the oral evidence, but it seems to be silent on the vast amounts of written evidence, including mine. In my submission, I cited Professor Tom Gallagher, who is a gay man who lives with his partner of 31 years and is the author of “Divided Scotland: Ethnic Friction & Christian Crisis”. He had hoped to give oral evidence, but he was not called. He would like his remarks to be put on the record. He said:

“The arrival of gay marriage only benefits a small group of activists, who have the ear of part of the media, the civil service & of politicians who naively think there are a few votes in it for them. Some gays and lesbians feel they have been hi-jacked by these campaigners. Many more are bound to be upset by the hurt caused to un-bigoted fellow citizens as they see one of mankind’s most important social structures—marriage—become a battleground in schools & almost certainly the courts. This is no liberation for gay Scots: instead it creates unnecessary distrust between them and a large swathe of the population.”

Patrick Harvie: Will the member take an intervention?

The Deputy Presiding Officer (John Scott): The member is in her last minute.

Elaine Smith: In conclusion, my considered view is that, while attempting to tackle a perceived inequality, we will create the conditions for discrimination and legal action against many of our citizens. In perhaps striving for an enlightened position that makes everything for the best in the best of all possible worlds, the bill will bring consequences that will have a detrimental impact on our fragile society.

I hope that MSPs have not been bounced into voting yes because of the fear of being branded homophobic, because they signed a pledge or because they have not reflected on all the arguments presented to the Government and the committee.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: You must draw to a close, please.

Elaine Smith: I have no doubt that the majority of MSPs who vote for the bill will do so with good intentions, but unfortunately, as Karl Marx pointed out in “Capital” with regard to unforeseen consequences, the way to hell is paved with good intentions. I will be voting no this evening.

18:10

Kevin Stewart (Aberdeen Central) (SNP): First, I would like to thank all those folks who took the time to write to me and let me know their views on the issue. An overwhelming majority of those of my constituents who have corresponded with me have said that I should vote in favour of the bill today.

I would like to read part of an email that I received. It says:

“As a gay teenager I cannot state strongly enough the impact that marriage equality would have on me personally, and the wider community. The majority of the political spectrum in Scotland stand by the principle of equality. I ask only that you adhere to it now.”

That email made me think of my teenage years. I became a teenager the year after homosexuality was decriminalised in Scotland, I was a teenager at the time of section 28 and I was a teenager at the time when some horrendous things were said about HIV being a “gay plague”. Society seemed to me to be hostile towards gay people.

At that point, I decided to play it straight, or at least to try to. I denied my sexual orientation throughout my teens and most of my 20s. I only told some of my close friends at the tail end of my 20s that I was gay. I did not tell my parents that until I was 39, which is something that I really regret and feel guilty about. I kind of slighted them, because their reaction was the same as it had always been in life—unequivocal love.

I believe in traditional marriage. I think that it has served me well in terms of the parents that I have, the grandparents that I have, and had, and my brother and sister. It has served people so well that I believe it should be extended to all people. I think that that is only right.

On religious tolerance, I have great respect for all views and I can understand why some folk have taken the stance that they have taken. However, Mr Mason talked about religious folk feeling marginalised. I think that we have to take account of folk who have felt marginalised for oh so many years, and actually get this right here today. *[Applause.]*

I have absolutely no malice for those who intend to vote no or abstain today, but I urge them to think of their children and grandchildren, who may

well turn out to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. We should give them the right to share the happiness and love and the trials and tribulations of marriage. I urge members, please, to support the bill today.

18:14

Jim Hume (South Scotland) (LD): This is one of those historic days not just for the Parliament but for Scotland as a whole. The past years have seen a massive change in the perception of same-sex couples. It has been legal for some years now to be openly gay, whereas in previous generations people were at risk of persecution and conviction. Gay people can now serve openly in the armed forces and, of course, we are proud of all who are brave enough to do so to keep us safe at home. Same-sex couples can now adopt and have the joy and the responsibilities that that brings.

This is not just another bill. It is a reform that demonstrates that our Scottish society values everyone, whatever their sexuality and their relationships.

I will not argue that all Scotland or even all members of this Parliament think that we should allow same-sex marriage, but I think that Scotland is changing. In 2002, 41 per cent of the Scottish people agreed that same-sex couples should be allowed to marry, and just eight years later the proportion had risen to 61 per cent. The Equal Opportunities Committee’s call for evidence attracted 1,300 responses, and 75 per cent of respondents were positive about equal marriage—a clear majority. There is clearly growing support for equal marriage. If my bulging in-box is anything to go by, by far the majority are in favour of equal marriage. There is no unanimity of course, but there is a clear majority in favour.

It will not surprise members that Liberal Democrats will support the bill as it goes through the Parliament. Our constitution says:

“The Liberal Democrats exist to build and safeguard a fair, free and open society, in which we seek to balance the fundamental values of liberty, equality and community, and in which no one shall be enslaved by poverty, ignorance or conformity.”

We made equal marriage our party policy in 2010. I think that we were the first major party to do so. We submitted a positive response to the consultation, in which we said that Scotland can prove to the world that it is one of the fairest and most equal places in which to live.

The progress that we have made, for example by allowing gay people to serve in the forces, makes it more difficult to accept that there should be any barrier to a religious body that is willing to do so marrying two people who have religious

beliefs and who feel strongly enough to want to accord their relationship the sanctity of marriage.

I emphasise that the religious body must be willing. I know that there are concerns that religious bodies, whatever their denomination, might be forced on human rights grounds to marry people whom they do not want to marry, but I simply do not buy that. I am aware of churches that would not marry opposite-sex couples, for example because the couple were not regular attenders. I know of no case in which such a couple would take a church to court; they would simply go to a church that was happy enough to sanctify their relationship. I cannot envisage a same-sex couple having any joy in taking a religious body to court on human rights grounds. It is worth noting that the Scottish Human Rights Commission and the Equality and Human Rights Commission support the bill.

The bill makes clear that no religious body will be required to solemnise a same-sex marriage and that even if a religious body opts in, individual celebrants will be under no obligation to marry a same-sex couple. We believe in freedom of expression, which extends to religious bodies, whether they want to opt in or out of equal marriage.

I mentioned the Liberal Democrats' support for liberty, fairness and equality and said that we will support the bill. It is worth noting work that is going on elsewhere in the UK. Under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, a previous conviction for a homosexual act can be deleted. There has been a change to allow gay men to give blood and there has been an end to deporting gay asylum seekers to countries that would torture them for being gay. The UK Government encourages sports organisations to sign up to its sports charter, which calls for an end to homophobia and transphobia. There is also the UK Government's Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. I am sure that members—at least some of them, anyway—will applaud the positive difference that Liberal Democrats in coalition have made on equal rights for all.

I am proud to be a member of the Scottish Parliament while the bill is going through, albeit that we are not the first country in Europe to legislate for equal marriage. Westminster is ahead of us, and Belgium, France, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Spain and Iceland have legislated, as have 16 of the 50 states of the United States of America. The bill's progress today will prove that Scotland is a fairer and more equal country, in which we can all be proud to live.

18:19

Joan McAlpine (South Scotland) (SNP): I will vote for the bill, because I think that it is underpinned by tolerance, recognition and respect. It is about the fundamental human right to love and to express that love publicly, in a declaration of commitment that cannot be dismissed as second class or second best.

The bill is a mark of how far we have come on the issue of equality in a relatively short period of time. It is only a few decades ago, in my own lifetime, that homosexuality was criminalised, and people lived double lives and lived in fear of exposure, blackmail and sometimes even imprisonment. We should never forget that such hazards remain very real in other countries where human rights are denied on the basis of sexuality and often gender.

The language that is used by a small number of people outside the chamber in the wider debate on equal marriage has on occasion become polarised. We have heard the preposterous allegation that gay unions are tainted, and similarly we have seen those who have asked for reassurances in respect of their religious beliefs dismissed as homophobic. That language is not helpful, and I do not think that it reflects where the majority of the population stand on the issue.

I support equal marriage in principle, but one of my reasons for speaking in the debate is personal. Like many people of my generation, I did not, when I was growing up in a very religious Roman Catholic family in a small Scottish town, know anyone who was gay. My first encounter with homosexuality was in 1975, when Thames Television broadcast "The Naked Civil Servant" in which John Hurt portrays Quentin Crisp. Although it was a breakthrough in the sense that it was a sympathetic film, it gave a stereotyped and almost caricaturish portrayal of homosexuality as outrageous and eccentric: something that was outside the mainstream. However, within a few years of that film, everything had changed. Suddenly we all knew someone in our own family or wider circle of friends who was openly gay. In my case, my cousin and close childhood friend Cal came out at the age of 18, and through him I formed many firm friendships with gay men in particular that have lasted a lifetime.

It is perhaps not surprising, given my age and liberal outlook, that I was happy to accept my friend's sexuality. What is more significant is that the older people in our family, who had very strong religious beliefs and grew up in a far more socially conservative age in the 1950s and 1960s, also accepted his sexuality. I am not saying that it happened overnight or that there was no awkwardness—or that there were not aunties whispering in private, "I just wish he'd meet a nice

girl”—but there was public acceptance. There were joint invitations and Christmas cards, and family gatherings, and over time—as in many, many families—having a gay couple was utterly unremarkable. It was mainstream.

When my cousin Cal died of cancer at the age of 50 three years ago, we grieved as a family, and his male partner was treated with the same consideration and sympathy as any heterosexual partner who had suffered such a loss would have been. The family saw the devoted nursing care that he gave to Cal in his last weeks, and at the funeral he was the chief mourner.

That is not to say that the older members of the family, in their 70s, 80s and 90s, had abandoned in any way their strong religious beliefs, but, just as they said a silent prayer at the humanist funeral, they had reached an accommodation with the partnership that was based on love, and loyalty and basic human decency.

That is why I believe that those harsh voices speaking out against the legislation are not typical of lay members of the Christian church-going population. The vast majority of religiously observant people—even those in churches that are officially against equal marriage—will accept this change in practice, just as they have accepted their gay friends and family members. They judge people on the basis of their character, not their sexuality. They ask, “Are they kind, loyal, generous and fair?” and “Are they a good son or daughter?” That is what matters to most of us.

I welcome the fact that the Equality Act 2010 will be amended to further protect individual celebrants who do not wish to carry out same-sex marriage but who belong to a religious body that has opted to do so. That is about tolerance. Just as I do not believe that those with religious views opposing equal marriage should dictate the law, I do not believe that the law should impose my values on religious denominations.

I conclude by reflecting on Margaret McCulloch’s comment when she spoke for the committee earlier that the committee would “agree to differ”. As we move forward, I think that society as a whole will agree to differ, and in doing so they are agreeing to respect difference: difference in sexuality. That is a mark of our tolerance.

This piece of legislation is about the journey that we have made as a society. Although we have heard a lot today about marginalisation and alienation, and people feeling bullied and excluded, my personal experience is that the bill will bring the law into line with real life and real families. We are actually a much more tolerant society than this debate has sometimes given the impression we are.

18:24

Alex Johnstone (North East Scotland) (Con):

I have heard many of my colleagues who are in the chamber today being asked why they got involved in politics. The most common answer is that they got involved in politics because they wanted to change the world. My most usual answer is that I got involved in politics because I thought that the world was changing too fast and I wanted to slow it down a bit. Perhaps that is the definition of conservative with a small c.

When I look at the proposals contained in the bill I see some specific issues that I hope to have time to address later, but I also see a general principle, which is to change the way in which we view marriage and to extend that to a greater, more complete range of people in our society. That is a principle that, at heart, I believe to be sound. My problem, however, is with the effect on the overall balance of our views on marriage and with why we have chosen to act in this way at this time to the exclusion of other possibilities.

I view marriage as an important cornerstone of our families and our society as a whole. During my lifetime, I have seen society begin to fall apart. I have seen families in instability, and I have seen individual children raised in difficult circumstances as a result. That is why I would argue that one of the priorities of the Parliament should be to strengthen families, to find ways to reinforce marriage and to reverse the trends of half a century and more in order to gain that stability. That is why I worry that we are making this policy a wrong priority at the wrong time.

During the conduct of its inquiry, the Equal Opportunities Committee, its members and all those who came before it treated the whole issue with a very high degree of mutual respect and maturity. The evidence that was given and the debate that took place were of the highest standard, and I commend the report that the committee produced. However, during its preparation and while we were taking evidence, I found that I had to dispute one or two issues.

Professor Curtice spoke about the level of public support. True enough—opinion polls indicate that support for the change is growing rapidly in society. I believe that similar polls also indicate that that is largely because people no longer have the care to commit to a particular policy. It may not be that people care more; it may be that people actually care less.

We have spoken about the redefinition of marriage. Other members have mentioned traditional marriage as a key element of what we have discussed. I believe that traditional marriage can be undermined by the proposed change. As a result, I ask the minister to say something either

during the debate or before stage 2 about the other proposals that he has brought forward, such as the forthcoming review of same-sex civil partnerships. Is there any way that, during that process, he can consider how we might lend a hand to those people within families who require support to enjoy greater stability?

Elaine Smith raised the issue of tolerance. She was concerned that, once she had made her opinion public, she had suffered as a result. I have found that there is an extent, within the broader argument, to which that can happen—I have had some interesting emails—but that is just a measure of the passion that people hold within the debate. We need to promote tolerance through the debate, and we must ensure that it does not become a one-way street. It is important that that tolerance continues.

There is a requirement to protect the freedom of those who disagree with the change in legislation, whether they be religious bodies or staff in our public bodies, particularly teachers in our schools. I am worried that if we get this wrong we will create a situation that has certain parallels with the debate on section 28, which resulted in teachers, parents and pupils facing some very difficult circumstances.

John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (Ind): Will the member give way?

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I am afraid that the member is in his last minute.

Alex Johnstone: I am sorry—I am coming to a conclusion.

Although I will not support the bill as a whole, I am prepared to support a number of proposed amendments to it. However, I am concerned about proposals to lower the age at which the gender recognition process can begin. I will seek further information on the matter and will most likely oppose any change in the Government's policy in that respect.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: You should be drawing to a close, Mr Johnstone.

Alex Johnstone: I understand the equality and diversity arguments that are contained within and surround the bill, but I want to ensure that we also achieve stability and security in our families and our society and I believe that, by broadening the bill's perspective, the Government could achieve so much more.

18:31

Nigel Don (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP): I am grateful to the Equal Opportunities Committee for its careful consideration of the bill and the report that it has produced. Of course, for those

who are not on the committee in question, it is only when we get to see the stage 1 report that we get a sense of the issues that have generated discussion and the areas of detail that need to be addressed.

The committee heard a great deal of evidence that same-sex couples feel that they are discriminated against; indeed, the same point has been very well and movingly articulated by members this evening. That view has to be respected—and I do respect it. However, I ask members to bear with me while I take a slightly different tack from what has come before and see where it takes us.

It seems to me that what is being proposed is not very different from a civil partnership. The present differences between civil partnerships and marriages are helpfully outlined in paragraph 214 of the report and essentially relate to pension rights and international recognition. However, revising the law on marriage is not the only way of dealing with such issues. Of course, pension rights are reserved and can be worked through only in co-operation with the Westminster Government, and it is clear that a significant amount of work needs to be done to resolve the matter. International recognition is important, but I simply point out that a couple in a civil partnership who wish to move abroad ought to be in a position to marry there, if that is desirable, and I am not convinced that it is our duty to accommodate every nuance of other jurisdictions' law in our own.

Patrick Harvie: Will the member give way?

Nigel Don: The member must forgive me if I make some progress. I will come back to him if I can.

Having been around for millennia, the traditional view of marriage has worked rather well as the basis of family relationships in societies around the world. In the Christian faith, it is not just a practical policy but also hugely symbolic—and I want members to understand that. Jesus' death and resurrection are central to the Almighty's redemptive purpose for his people, while the church—that is, his people—is described as the bride of Christ many times in the Bible. The differences between the two parties could hardly be clearer; equally, their complementarity is evident from the fact that it is those very people—the Christian church—who demonstrate the outworking of Christ's love to each generation. That is why the so-called traditional view of marriage actually matters to the Christian church. Some will say that marriage is only a word—and they would be right. However, words have meaning and I am in no hurry to change the meaning of a word in our law when so much has been attached to it in our literature and liturgy.

Much of the evidence given to the committee relates to protections for those who do not want to have to celebrate same-sex marriages. I hope members will understand from what I have said that such views can be held without any feelings of homophobia; indeed, concern has also been expressed about the position of teachers.

I note first of all the general belief among witnesses that the proposed protections are strong but, secondly, the doubts that remain about the robustness of those protections, particularly in the context of European law and how that might develop over time. What is clear is that if the bill is enacted substantially as drafted the meaning of marriage will have been radically altered.

The cabinet secretary says that he will not regard his marriage as having been diminished by what is proposed. I understand his view and, indeed, hold a similar view about my own relationship with my wife. However, I remind members that a set is not defined by its present population but by its boundaries. What is being proposed will change marriage as an institution—and that will alter the context for everyone in the future. As Mr Spock would have put it, “It’s marriage, Jim, but not as we know it.”

Joe FitzPatrick: I respect the right of everyone of a religion to hold their views, but does the member acknowledge that the current legislation—the law—discriminates against me and other LGBT people in Scotland?

Nigel Don: I would prefer to acknowledge that it distinguishes, because heterosexual and homosexual relationships are dealt with differently. It seems to me—I had hoped that the member would have picked this up—that those differences are what we should address. Those issues of pension rights and international recognition should be dealt with. My concern is that we are focusing on this one word, and I hope that, from what I have said previously—I encourage members to read it in the *Official Report*—members recognise that there are reasons for being concerned simply about that word.

Patrick Harvie: Will the member give way?

Marco Biagi: Will the member give way?

Nigel Don: I will give way to Patrick Harvie.

Patrick Harvie: It is interesting that the member seems to place great emphasis on the value of that word in relation to his own marriage, whereas in discussing the merits of civil partnership he talks about not an essential difference, but a technical one. Why should those of us who place value in that word and to whose lives its cultural meaning is relevant not also enjoy the freedom to express it?

Nigel Don: I am absolutely clear that they can, and I think that they will. I am asking members to understand that there are reasons why, within a biblical theology, people in the Christian church feel that that word has another meaning—that is all. That is the historical position.

Kevin Stewart: Will the member give way?

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The member is in his last minute.

Nigel Don: Gosh! My speech is going to have to be shortened.

The future of civil partnerships is already under review. I wonder why we are in such a hurry to change the meaning of marriage at the moment, when many of the issues—some of which were picked up in the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee—could have been much more easily dealt with had we rationalised civil partnerships across same-sex and opposite-sex relationships. I encourage the minister to consider whether it might be better to do that before we implement the bill because, had that been done, it might have reduced some of the problems.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Sadly, we now have to move to five-minute speeches.

18:37

Drew Smith (Glasgow) (Lab): Members bring a range of experiences, ideas and beliefs to the chamber, but it is always worth reminding ourselves that, although they might not always seem to do so, our debates and judgments affect how real people live their lives, the opportunities that they have and their sense of the value that society places on them.

The issue of equal marriage rights was raised with me during the 2011 election campaign, when I strongly supported the references to it in my party’s manifesto. Nevertheless, I had perhaps not thought through the reasons why I felt that way about it—my response was instinctual. I was first asked my views on the issue a few days after the election and, over time, I have found myself being asked about it more and more often. As I thought more about it and listened to others expressing their views, I came to understand my own feelings about it a bit more clearly. In the course of the wider debate that led up to the introduction of the bill, I remembered someone whom I had not forgotten but the extent of whose influence on the view that I had thought was instinctual I had not realised.

Like the majority of the Scottish population, I strongly support the provisions of the bill. I have also, at various times, pressed the cabinet secretary—and, indeed, his predecessor—to hurry along. Therefore, I am very pleased that we have

got to this point and hope that we will follow the example of England and Wales and the many other countries that have created equal marriage. I believe that marriage rights are an issue of equality, and I feel strongly that the current position of civil partnerships, which I supported at the time and was proud of my party for having taken the lead in introducing, is not quite enough. Although there is little difference between civil partnerships and marriage in terms of legal rights, the fact that civil partnerships preclude the right of gay people of faith to commit themselves to each other in a religious service is discriminatory. I hope that one of the major achievements of the bill will be to remove that discrimination.

Equality does not mean that everything must be the same; equally, difference should not be imposed on identical things. Same-sex relationships may be different from opposite-sex relationships, but are all relationships not different and unique? Do they not all share the same basic principle: love for another human being and a desire to commit to spending your life with that person? I do not think that the state has the right to draw a distinction between human partnerships that human beings do not draw themselves, and to me that is fundamentally what the bill is about and why I support it.

In 2000, this Parliament repealed section 28—section 2A—which it did in advance of the rest of the UK. Looking back, we can see that the repeal of section 28 was a victory for equality, but it did not come without cost, just as the years of various discriminatory laws did not come without cost and just as that cost still exists in many parts of the world, as Joan McAlpine rightly highlighted. There are members in the chamber who will have celebrated that victory and they might also recall some of the pain of that debate: the things that were said that can never be unsaid and the people who pushed ahead and, in my view, have never been properly recognised for their efforts.

When section 28 was debated by the Parliament, I was still at school—a religious school—and I recall what was said. I recall talking to classmates about the leaflets that were going through our parents' doors, the newspaper headlines and the things that were said on the school bus.

I mentioned that I thought of someone in the context of this debate. I remember a girl—a young woman—in my year at school, who one evening appeared on the TV news, which was rather unexpected. She spoke out and, to many of us, she became the first person we knew to come out. She did it by asking a very simple and powerful question: what right do others have to make a judgment about me and my life or to make a

distinction about who I am and what I am? That was in the context of the section 28 debate.

There are many things that I could say about the detail of the bill, and others are rightly saying them. I celebrate the fact that this may be the last major legal change required to remove discrimination against lesbian, gay and bisexual people from our law, and I am very privileged to be in this place, at this time, to support it. I will follow the amendments at stage 2 and I will support efforts to improve the bill. It is probably not the last major piece of legislation for transgender people, but it is a significant step on the way.

I will oppose any change to the bill that could threaten a new section 28, however well intentioned people may be on that issue. I do not want a situation in which there is a campaign to come back to the bill because of a section that is inserted at stage 2.

I do not know whether the woman that I mentioned has sent one of us an email asking us to support this legislation or if she has put her activism behind her.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: You must close, please.

Drew Smith: However, I will vote tonight for her, as much as for any of the other good reasons—and I thank Ruth Davidson for giving a voice to those reasons. It is thanks to that woman and many people I have met in the course of this campaign that a generation of people will be able to grow up, fall in love and get married, not with the world not caring who they get married to, but with the world recognising the partnership that they make rather than differentiating their relationship.

I am very grateful to support the general principles of the bill.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Again, my apologies: we have to cut the debate back to five-minute speeches.

18:42

Christian Allard (North East Scotland) (SNP): I thank Mary Fee, the previous convener of the Equal Opportunities Committee, who welcomed me to the committee when we first considered the bill. A few months later, I welcomed Margaret McCulloch as our new convener.

Before I come to the detail of the recommendations that we made in our report, I thank all the members of the committee for their warm welcome and for the way that we worked together on the bill. I echo the words of Alex Johnstone and John Mason when I say that we agreed to disagree and then moved forward.

We made a couple of recommendations on registration of celebrants. The first came from the evidence of Ephraim Borowski of the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities, who addressed the definition of non-civil marriages, particularly in the context of humanist marriages. We feel that it is important to reflect the distinction between religious ceremonies and belief ceremonies, which is why we ask the Scottish Government its views on the suggested amendment on the redefinition of non-civil marriages.

Ross White of the Humanist Society Scotland gave evidence and commented on the Church of Scotland's preferential status in law. We ask the Government to clarify its view on the claim that the Church of Scotland has a privileged status in marriage law.

A lot was said about the Government's forthcoming review of civil partnerships and we heard the cabinet secretary today reassure us that the review will come soon. We note the Scottish Government's plan to consider issues relating to civil partnerships, including opposite-sex civil partnerships.

To understand better the reasons behind the bill, we did a fair bit of travelling when taking evidence. Believe me, the international perspective was always there. Under the bill, same-sex couples who have entered into a civil partnership in another country will have to dissolve their partnership before being permitted to marry here in Scotland. The committee feels that such couples should be able to convert their civil partnership to a marriage, just as couples whose civil partnerships were conducted in Scotland will be able to do.

The Scottish Government believes that allowing gender-neutral ceremonies could cause problems for denominations that might not want to use a gender-neutral marriage declaration when marrying an opposite-sex couple. We kind of disagree, and we would like the Government to reconsider. It should be possible to allow a choice of gender-neutral or gender-specific language for marriage declarations.

Professor John Curtice told us how much public opinion has changed regarding attitudes towards same-sex relationships. I am pleased that a lot of our work was to recognise the change of gender for married persons or civil partners, as I feel that attitudes towards transgender communities have not yet changed as much as I would like. James Morton of the Scottish Transgender Alliance told us about his proposal for an amendment to the bill to make sure that a spouse cannot stop his or her partner's gender recognition. James said that for someone to have their gender identity legally recognised and respected by their Government is

a human right and something that no one should be able to stop.

We considered how spouses of people seeking gender recognition might find the process difficult, although an important point is that we have not received any evidence from their perspective. After long consideration, we came to the conclusion that the non-transitioning spouse's personal choice is sufficiently protected by the automatic grounds for divorce that are triggered by his or her partner seeking gender recognition. In the report, we ask for the requirement for spousal consent for gender recognition to be removed.

We received evidence about lowering the age requirement to change gender. James Morton said:

"Transgender people aged 16 or 17 will remain discriminated against under the bill as drafted".—[*Official Report, Equal Opportunities Committee*, 5 September 2013; c 1391.]

We do not think that we have enough evidence on lowering the age requirement, which is why we have asked the Government to provide a detailed response on the issue in advance of stage 2.

To conclude, I would like to share a thought about how the world has moved on. As members must know by now, I was raised on a chicken farm in Burgundy in France. I clearly remember the day my father told me about one of his regular customers, a farmer who lived in the remote village with his partner. I was struck by the way that my father spoke about this couple, with great respect and in a friendly tone. I disagree with Elaine Smith, who talked about a small group of activists, because I would not consider that couple, deep in rural France, to be a small group of activists. I wonder what happened to them, and I wonder how much those two farmers—those two men—would have liked to get married, like every other farming couple in rural France many decades ago.

18:48

Patrick Harvie (Glasgow) (Green): Thank you, Presiding Officer, for the privilege of taking part in this debate. I also thank several of the speakers who have given a very personal take on the issue—Kevin Stewart, Marco Biagi and, in particular, Ruth Davidson. In 10 years as a member of the Parliament, I have never so enthusiastically applauded a Conservative speech. I am always open to a new experience, of course.

Members might be a little surprised that my personal circumstances place me in what I regard as impeccably neutral territory on the issue: I am single, I am bisexual, I have no idea whether I will have a long-term relationship with a man or a woman in future and I have no idea whether I

would want to get married. Certainly, I do not personally regard marriage as a gold standard; I regard it as one of the many options on family status that people will make a choice between on the basis of their values and not the values that we would impose on them.

The arguments that we have heard against the bill have been many and varied. Some have been frankly spurious and silly, such as the one that goes, “Well, you know, you can get married already, just to somebody of the opposite sex.” I cannot believe how frequently I have heard that nonsensical and demeaning argument.

Some arguments have been mischievous. There have been deliberate attempts to whip up ungrounded fears about ministers in the Church of Scotland being dragged off by the police, taken to the courts and prosecuted for refusing to marry same-sex couples.

Some of the arguments against the legislation have simply been curious, such as the view that, from the starting point of religious freedom, the law ought to tell churches who they may not be allowed to marry. It seems to me that the argument for religious freedom must be in favour of what the Government is trying to achieve with the bill, which is to permit but not compel.

Some arguments against the legislation are serious and we should not ignore them—quite the contrary. There has been serious opposition to pretty much every step that has been taken in the equalities story over many generations. Certain voices have opposed every step towards LGBT equality, from decriminalisation onwards. Those serious arguments absolutely must not be ignored but must be confronted and defeated because they assert, whether in religious or other terms, the lesser worth, dignity, status or value of LGBT people and our relationships. Those arguments should be and deserve to be defeated. In more than 20 years of volunteering, working or campaigning on many of those issues, I have in all honesty never heard a coherent moral argument in favour of the view that same-sex relationships are of lesser worth or status or that they are morally wrong. I have heard many such arguments rooted in homophobia but none in a coherent moral case.

Some of the arguments that I have heard fall under the heading “I’m not homophobic, but”. That amounts to someone saying that they are not homophobic but they are concerned that one day they might need to treat LGBT people as though they were their equals. On that basis, we have heard demands for so-called protections to be built into the legislation—protections from the indignity of having to treat other people as equals. If we look at the evidence that we heard on the call for those protections, were we to give in to the demands, that would amount to a rolling back of

10 or 15 years of legislative and cultural progress towards equality. We should hold the line against those demands absolutely.

I was proud of Scotland’s Parliament—not as an MSP but as a citizen—not only when it repealed section 28 but when it held the line against the forces of social conservatism and homophobia and did not give in to the demands for concessions. We should be equally proud today and over the months to come not only of passing the legislation but of holding the line against demands for amendments that would weaken the principle of equality. We should also listen seriously to the calls for amendments on issues that members have mentioned, such as the spousal veto, overseas civil partnerships, gender neutral language and gender recognition for younger people. If we do that, we will deserve the pride of many Scottish citizens when we pass the bill at stage 3.

18:53

Jim Eadie (Edinburgh Southern) (SNP): The bill before us concerns an issue that is deeply close to my heart, as it is for other members and for our fellow citizens who have joined us in the gallery this evening.

Ruth Davidson was right to say that the debate is a sign of the growing maturity of the Parliament. The bill is about marriage, but its passage into law will also represent the culmination of decades of struggle for equality for lesbians and gay men, as well as bisexual and transgender people.

Let us not forget that, as recently in our history as 1980, homosexual relations between two men remained illegal, while the very concept of relations between two women did not exist in law. In truth, to be lesbian or gay in Scotland—I can speak only from my experience—was to inhabit a cold and inhospitable place. To come out at that time was to face rejection from friends, family and work colleagues; it was also to risk opprobrium and, in some cases, violence. There were precious few positive role models in the media or in our communities, and it seemed that the further one travelled from metropolitan Glasgow or cosmopolitan Edinburgh, the harsher and the colder that climate became.

Many people chose to leave Scotland rather than stay to face the discrimination and prejudice that were, sadly, a hallmark in much of Scottish society at that time. Thankfully, the culture and temperature have changed. To have had this debate even 10 years ago would have been unthinkable. I believe that, in time, the passage of the bill will enjoy widespread acceptance in our society.

The challenge for those of us who make our laws is not to do what is popular—to stick our finger in the air and see which way the wind is blowing—but to represent our constituents, to listen to the voice of our conscience and to do what is right. I believe that the bill is right and that it commands the public's support.

In the years since 1980, much progress has been made towards equality through employment legislation, the lifting of the armed forces ban, an equal age of consent, adoption rights and this Parliament's introduction of a law to outlaw hate crime. However, the struggle for equality has not yet been won. That is why the bill and the debate are so important to so many of us.

In the context of the debate, the most significant change has been the introduction of civil partnerships, which have undoubtedly enhanced the lives of many same-sex couples across the country by conferring on them many of the rights that married couples enjoy. However, a civil partnership is a legal contract; it is not marriage.

My constituents have written in their hundreds to urge me to support the bill and I have been moved and humbled by their testimony. One woman wrote to say:

"I am a practising Catholic who is a strong supporter of same-sex marriage and would very much want my voice to be heard".

One man urged me to support the bill to end what he called

"government supported prejudice against gay people as second class Scots."

Another constituent contacted me to say:

"I simply cannot understand what harm it does to anyone if two other people decide to get married. What possible grounds can there be to object to the legislation?"

The reason cannot be freedom of religion, because the bill enshrines protection for denominations that oppose same-sex marriage on the ground of theology. At the Equal Opportunities Committee, I asked:

"Has your denomination been compelled to perform same-sex marriage in any of the countries that have introduced same-sex marriage?"

and the Catholic Church's representative said:

"The Catholic Church has not."—[*Official Report, Equal Opportunities Committee*, 5 September 2013; c 1432.]

Let us be clear: no synagogue, mosque, temple or church—whether of the Catholic or reformed tradition—will be forced to conduct same-sex marriages. The bill will not undermine freedom of religion. We will enhance freedom of religion by allowing faiths that recognise same-sex marriage as part of their understanding of God's love for all people to conduct such ceremonies.

The objection to the bill cannot relate to the need to protect traditional marriage, as marriage has evolved over time. Today, who would defend the subjugation of women in marriage as expressed in the 18th century by a Lord Justice Clerk, Lord Braxfield, when he said that "in law a wife has no person"?

Traditional marriage has evolved to recognise the rights of women and allow divorce and it has always evolved to reflect social mores.

The objection to the bill cannot be that it represents an attack on marriage. On the contrary, how can that be the case when it will meet the desire of thousands of loving couples to be brought within the ambit of marriage? Contrary to what Alex Johnstone said, the bill will strengthen marriage.

Scotland is no longer the cold and inhospitable place that I described. Tonight, we have the opportunity to take a further significant step as a society to recognise that love is love, whether it involves a man and a woman, a man and a man or a woman and a woman.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: You should draw to a close, please.

Jim Eadie: The bill offers a state and social affirmation of the right of two people who love each other to proclaim that love before the world. This is a wonderful opportunity for the Parliament to signal to the world the type of country that we want Scotland to be—one that is open, tolerant and generous to all.

The time for equality in Scotland has arrived.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: You must close, please.

Jim Eadie: The time for marriage equality is now.

18:59

Elaine Murray (Dumfriesshire) (Lab): I am pleased to speak in the stage 1 debate on the bill.

I am not a member of the Equal Opportunities Committee, but I have opposed discrimination that is based on people's sexual orientation since I was a student, which was about 40 years ago. That was in the bleak and inhospitable place that Jim Eadie just spoke about, where sex between men was still illegal, where lesbianism was not recognised because—apparently—Queen Victoria did not think that it could happen, where same-sex partners rarely dared to express their affection publicly, where coming out to the family was a major difficulty for many gay people, and where the popular terminology that was used to describe gay people was derogatory and offensive. I found

all that to be totally abhorrent, as were apartheid and racial segregation, which existed at the same time.

I have had many representations on the bill from constituents, many of whom have been supportive and many who oppose the bill. To constituents who have asked me to vote against the bill because it redefines marriage, I apologise, but I do not agree with their arguments, and I will explain why. To those who told me that they will not vote for me—well, that is their prerogative.

The view that marriage is solely the union of a man and a woman for procreation is outdated and simplistic; there has always been a lot more to marriage than that. For monarchs and powerful families, marriage created and cemented alliances. For others, it represented respectability and the division of labour and responsibilities between men and women. Until recently, as Jim Eadie said, women were the possessions of their husbands. Marriage signified that the woman belonged to the man so that no one else could have a sexual relationship with her and the man could be sure that the children were his.

In these more egalitarian times, marriage is a public declaration of love and of the intention that the relationship will be permanent. It might or might not involve children. If it does, those children might or might not be the biological children of both or either of the parents. Many of us—myself included—have been married more than once; indeed, my oldest lad was at my second wedding. Many other people have stable long-term relationships and bring up their families without feeling the need to be married. Many families consist of one parent bringing up their children with the support of relatives and friends.

The bill will enable people of the same gender who want to make that public declaration of love and permanence in a religious ceremony that reflects their faith to do so. I also support the Government's proposal for an opt-in process and I welcome the assurances that have been given. However, some of my constituents' representations have expressed concern about possible discrimination against people of faith. The cabinet secretary talked about circulating letters to certain members; I wonder whether he could circulate that information to all MSPs so that we can offer reassurance to constituents who have been in touch with us.

Other members have reflected on how far we have come in the past 40 years. If someone had told me 40 years ago that a Conservative Prime Minister in the UK Parliament would promote equal marriage, I simply would not have believed them. I am proud of Scotland's journey, I am proud that more than 60 per cent of Scots now agree with equal marriage, and I am proud that three

quarters of those who responded to the committee's consultation also agree.

As a young woman, I read books that described the experiences of gay people, including Radclyffe Hall's "The Well of Loneliness" and Gore Vidal's "The City and the Pillar". They were stories of tragedy, but the story of being LGBT today should no longer be a tragedy.

I remind people who say that civil partnerships should be enough of the 1976 hit by the Tom Robinson Band "(Sing if You're) Glad to be Gay", which, despite its cheerful title, spoke of police harassment, beatings, and insults, and ended with—I will not say the word—the b's

"are legal now; what more are they after?"

Well, like most people, they want equality.

I will support the bill at stage 1 and I hope that it makes its way through Parliament into legislation. It will not mean the end of discrimination against LGBT people, but it will be an expression by this Parliament of the will to treat people equally and not to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation or the sexual identity that a person is born with.

When I was young, people used to think that being LGBT was a choice, or something their mum or their school did, but people are born that way. A person who is born LGBT does not make the choice to be that, any more than I made the choice to grow to only five foot one. [*Applause.*]

The Presiding Officer (Tricia Marwick): Ms Murray, can you bring your remarks to a close please?

Elaine Murray: It is just part of the glorious diversity of human beings. Legislation should treat people equally and not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, any more than on the basis of gender, race or faith. The Government is getting that balance right. I am pleased to support the bill, and I am so proud of the progress that we have made in Scotland during my lifetime.

19:04

Linda Fabiani (East Kilbride) (SNP): That description

"of the glorious diversity of human beings"

from Elaine Murray just sums everything up. That was great.

I am pleased to take part in the debate today because I feel that it has been a long time coming, although that might be a mark of my own frustration about things. I looked back at the debate that took place during the passing of the

2004 legislation for civil partnerships, and at that time, I asked:

“How can anyone sit here and say that it is equality if same-sex couples are not allowed to manifest their faith in the same way that mixed-sex couples can”—[*Official Report*, 3 June 2004; c 8935.]

even if the minister is happy to carry out the ceremony? I still feel that way. I just cannot get my head round the idea that some people should be treated differently from others; it just very, very wrong.

However, it may well be that, although I saw civil partnerships as a temporary solution that ought to be quickly overtaken, it was right at the time that that step was taken, so that we could move on. The figures that Jackie Baillie cited on how social attitudes have changed perhaps indicate that it was correct to introduce civil partnerships.

I have been struck by the amount of personal testimony that has been given; members have been extremely brave. No one need get their notebook out—I am not about to say anything stunning—but I would like to illustrate how time moves on and attitudes change. Thirty-odd years ago, my standing up and saying, “You know what? I’m not married. I live in sin,” might have been as stunning as saying the things that we have heard some members say today. Now, no one cares about that. In the 1960s, it might have been stunning to hear an 11-year-old say, “You know what? My mum’s just run off with another man and my mum and dad are going to get divorced.” I was that 11-year-old. I hid that from people at school, from neighbours and from other people I met for a couple of years because I was ashamed of it. According to social mores at the time, a child’s parents getting divorced was extremely shocking.

What we are doing today is extremely important and represents a natural step forward. I hope that we get to the point—when I am no longer here—when someone, in the course of explaining to Parliament something that had been taboo for many years, says, “You’ll never guess what. It’s not that long ago that same-sex marriages were something that people found it really difficult to talk about. People found it hard to say that they were in a same-sex relationship because that was what was right for them.” To me, the issue is just about equality—straight, simple equality. It is about accepting people the way they are. Why cannot everyone just accept people the way they are if they are not hurting anyone else? It is extremely simple.

That brings me on to the spousal veto. I had intended to talk about it more, but I am aware that other members want to speak. I was pleased to hear the minister say in his opening remarks that he would look at the spousal veto on legal gender recognition, whereby the spouse of a person who

has been through the whole process can still prevent them from having their gender legally recognised. That must be looked at, so I am glad that the minister said that he would do so.

I would like to give due recognition to everyone who has worked so hard for same-sex marriage. There is a great wee book called “Six Reasons to Support Equal Marriage” by the Equality Network. What struck me when I looked through it was how happy everyone in it looks—it is such a happy document—and when we were standing outside in the wet mud getting our photographs taken earlier today, it struck me how happy everyone is that the bill is going ahead. Let us not lose that sentiment. We should be extremely happy that we are moving forward in such a way.

It is true that we still have a way to go, but what we are doing today is very good for Parliament and—in the longer term, even though some may not feel that way now—for everyone in it. It is also very good for Scotland, and we should celebrate that.

19:08

Margaret Mitchell (Central Scotland) (Con): In this important debate about same-sex marriage—which is more often referred to as equal marriage—it is worth taking a moment to set the debate in context. The Equal Opportunities Committee is the lead committee for consideration of the bill and it has the formal remit of considering and reporting on matters that relate to equal opportunities, which include the prevention, elimination or regulation of discrimination between persons on the grounds of, among other things, gender, marital status, race, disability, age, sexual orientation and religion.

The proposition that is before us today is that the belief that is traditionally, if not exclusively, held by members of the Christian faith and other religions—that marriage is a relationship between a man and a woman—discriminates against same-sex couples and therefore the law must be changed to allow equal marriage. That is a dangerous distortion of equality. Equal opportunities celebrates diversity. In that context, equality is not about seeking to make everyone the same but is, in essence, about elimination of discrimination and concentration on fairness and diversity. Equal marriage sets two equality strands—sexual orientation and religious belief—in competition with each other.

Mark McDonald: Will Margaret Mitchell give way?

Margaret Mitchell: My view is in the minority and, if Mark McDonald does not mind, I will use the time that is available to me to develop it coherently.

The decriminalisation of homosexuality in 1980 was an important milestone in tackling the historic discrimination against LGBT people, but same-sex couples in stable and loving relationships still had no legal rights vis-à-vis their partners for many years. If one partner was hospitalised, the other had no legal right to be given any information about their illness or care because they were deemed not to be a relative. The Civil Partnership Act 2004, together with the inclusion of same-sex cohabitants in the Family Law (Scotland) Act 2006, ended that terrible injustice. Provision was made to recognise legal rights to, for example, inheritance and property ownership for same-sex couples.

The point is that discrimination has been addressed, as I have described. In seeking to go further and to redefine marriage, the Government is blurring the distinction between state or civil provision, in which it has a role to play, and religious belief and teaching, in which it does not.

Furthermore, people who believe passionately in the sanctity of marriage between a man and a woman have felt empathy with the LGBT community and have supported and campaigned to eliminate discrimination against it. They did so because that is the fair and right thing to do, despite warnings and fears being voiced that marriage would be undermined. Those same people now find that there is little reciprocal empathy and, sometimes, little tolerance for their views.

With the attempt to redefine marriage, the pendulum has swung too far. Passing the bill will do nothing to address the totally unacceptable abuse of LGBT individuals, which still exists and includes, for example, instances of homosexuals within the Asian community being forced into heterosexual marriages.

However, if the bill is passed, people who oppose same-sex marriage and who already feel inhibited in expressing that view will, ultimately, be more apprehensive about expressing their religious beliefs—regardless of the well-intentioned proposals for safeguards.

There is nothing remotely fair about seeking to dismiss and diminish the deeply held convictions and religious beliefs of thousands of people in Scotland who attend church, temple or mosque, who work hard to do their best for their families and who go about their everyday business without imposing their views on anyone else. That is why I will vote against the bill.

19:14

James Dornan (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP): We are all hugely influenced by our early experiences. I was fortunate in mine: I come from a

conscientious, working-class, Irish Catholic family steeped in social awareness and was taught from an early age that perceived difference mattered not a jot and that we were all Jock Tamson's bairns.

That maxim has stood me in good stead over the years, and that is why I will support the bill at decision time. It is not because I have had a number of emails that say I should support it. If anything, on balance, I have probably had more against it than for it. I will vote on the basis of what I believe to be right and because of some personal experiences.

This is a huge step for the Parliament and for Scotland. We have talked about the bill being a good thing for the Scottish Parliament, but I think that it is a good thing for the country. We pride ourselves on our values of equality, fairness and social justice, as Jackie Baillie said earlier, and I think that the bill is a perfect example of those.

We have talked about safeguards and the bill has safeguards for celebrants, both religious and belief celebrants. We are not forcing anyone. The bill is about religious freedom, because it will allow certain religions to opt in or to opt out: they do not need to do same-sex marriages and nobody is forcing anyone. I have two sons who are both married and neither of them will feel less married if my brother can get married to his partner. That kind of argument is ridiculous.

I am a bit older than some of the earlier speakers who gave very eloquent speeches, such as Ruth Davidson, Marco Biagi and Kevin Stewart. I remember what it was like for people who were gay when I was growing up, although we did not really know who they were, because they were in the shadows. My brother Michael was 15 when he came out, but the situation was so bad in Glasgow and Scotland at the time that he never came out to us. He waited until he was 17, then he went down to London and started a new life. He met a guy and went over to Portugal with him. He had to do that because of the Scotland that we lived in at the time, yet people say that we should not be moving on.

The bill is a good thing. There are no losers in this; there are only winners. I completely understand that people have different views. I completely understand that people with a religious perspective might have concerns about the bill. The interesting thing for me is that Michael was more religious than me and kept his faith much longer than I did, even though he was being discriminated against by his church. Religion should not be a barrier to accepting the bill, which is highly important legislation.

Michael created a life for himself outwith his homeland. He is in Portugal with his partner of 39

years. I am delighted to say that I phoned him up last night and said, "Michael, guess what I'm doing? I'm going to use you in a speech in the Parliament tomorrow." He said "Oh, again. Right." So, he is comfortable with it.

He told me a wee while ago that he was thinking of getting married. He and his partner have been together for 39 years, which is a fairly long engagement, but they have decided that now is probably the time to get married. I suspect that part of the reason for that is that none of us is getting any younger, so they are looking to make sure that everything is right for when one of them goes, and so on. It is great that they are getting married but, unfortunately, they have to do it in Lisbon.

I hope that any member of my family, or anybody I know of a younger generation who is homosexual—gay or lesbian—will be able to get married in Scotland. I do not know whether the party whip is in the chamber. He is. Hello, Joe, I will speak to you. I will be looking for that day off to go to Lisbon to see my brother getting married. It would be much easier if he was getting married in Glasgow or Edinburgh. The bill is a great thing.

When I spoke to my brother last night, I said to him that I was going to use him in this speech and he said to me, "Oh? Okay. Coincidentally, James, I'm going in tomorrow to sign the papers so that we can organise the day that the marriage gets celebrated." His marriage is coming soon and same-sex marriage will be coming soon in this country. I am confident that we will vote yes tonight and I am confident that when we get to stage 3 the bill will become law. Scotland will be a much better place for it.

19:18

Anne McTaggart (Glasgow) (Lab): As an MSP representing the large, diverse and multicultural region of Glasgow, I believe that it is part of my duty to tackle prejudice, intolerance and discrimination in all forms, not only because prejudice impacts on the lives of those who experience it, but because it holds us back as a nation.

The passing of the bill will have both legal and symbolic significance for LGBT people and their families, who are often on the receiving end of prejudice and discrimination. As Ruth Davidson said in her eloquent speech, recent research tells us that one in four young people who identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual have seriously contemplated or attempted suicide. That figure is a disgrace in modern Scotland. I truly believe that by eliminating some remaining differences, we can remove the stigma that affects so many of our young people.

As has been mentioned, access to civil partnerships was a huge, commendable step forward, but it ensured that a division between same-sex and mixed-sex couples carried on into the 21st century. I believe that opening up the institution of marriage would achieve true legal equality for the first time. I recognise that equality does not mean that we all have to be the same, but in my view it means sharing the institution of marriage with those who have suffered discrimination, oppression and persecution for centuries.

I also believe that the principle of equality should be extended to heterosexual couples who would like their relationship to be recognised in a different way. I have argued that civil partnerships should be extended to mixed-sex couples who choose to celebrate their relationship in a civil or secular ceremony outside of traditional marriage. As a consequence of denying heterosexual people access to civil partnerships, we are, once again, segregating couples based on their sexual orientation. That is outdated and it is something that the bill should seek to remove fully from our society.

I recognise that the proposal of same-sex marriage is challenging to many people of faith and to some of our religious organisations. I have Christian values and I understand the view that marriage is an institution specific to the relationship between one man and one woman. Although I do not share that view, I passionately believe that those who hold it should be free to express it. That is why I am reassured to note that no religious organisation will be forced to perform same-sex marriages against its will and that religious freedoms will be protected by the bill.

Attitudes are changing. In Parliaments throughout the world, greater recognition for same-sex couples is high on the agenda. We should not be left behind on the issue and I look forward to being part of the Parliament that brought this long overdue legislation to the people of Scotland.

19:22

Richard Lyle (Central Scotland) (SNP): Presiding Officer, I thank you for the opportunity to take part in the debate.

I have been contacted by a large proportion of my constituents about the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill, the majority of whom are opposed to the bill. My constituent Ronnie Mathieson questions why we are redefining a word—marriage—that once meant one thing to mean something different. He suggests that all previous literature, text books, records, legislation, poetry, plays, songs and so on will have to be

dated and have footnotes to explain the change of Scottish terminology. He suggested in an email to me that there already appears to be a legal challenge to the watertight safeguards in the similar English legislation. Will this bill be watertight? I do not think so, and many others repeat that observation.

I heard from my constituent Mrs Morris, who is concerned that people who do not support same-sex marriage will suffer in the workplace. Other constituents, such as Ms Young, have concerns that ministers of religion could be prosecuted for refusing to marry same-sex couples.

I asked the cabinet secretary about adoption earlier. I had a letter from my constituent Anne McCool, who said:

"I would ask you to look very carefully at the introduction of safeguards for people who believe in the existing definition of marriage. There is a danger that foster carers or adopters may be classed as unsuitable because of their opposition to same-sex marriage. The government's suggested solutions for fostering guidance is not good enough. I would be grateful if you would highlight the following concerns.

(A) That a clause be inserted in the Bill that views on the nature of marriage should not be considered during the approval process for foster carers and adopters

(B) That a statutory safeguard should be introduced into the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill to ensure that what people think about same-sex marriage does not influence decisions on their applications to be adoptive parents."

As I said earlier, 30 years ago I was an adoptive parent and, because of my views, I do not think that I would have passed.

Margaret McCulloch: Will the member take an intervention?

Richard Lyle: No. I do not have time.

My wife's minister, the Rev Derek Hughes, recently emailed us stating that, as the bill stands, it will place supporters of traditional marriage in conflict with equality laws. He went on to say that, at the very least, amendments need to be introduced to the bill to protect ministers, chaplains, teachers and registrars, among others, who will find themselves in an uncomfortable situation when forced to choose between their deeply held religious views and the proposed new law.

In light of that, many of my constituents feel that the section of the bill that is meant to be designed to protect those who speak out against same-sex marriage is not fit for purpose and should be amended to specify clearly that it is not against the law to criticise same-sex marriage.

Rest assured that, when the bill is passed, it will be tested to the limit. Adoption will be tested, and

people who want to adopt will be questioned on their views, as I suggested earlier.

I remind members about the response to the specific question in the Scottish Government's consultation on whether same-sex marriage should be allowed. Some 64 per cent of responses from within Scotland said that it should not be. Furthermore, the Scotland for Marriage petition, which opposes the redefinition of marriage, has recently passed the 53,000 signature mark. That demonstrates the enormous strength of feeling on the issue. Based on the figures that have been given to members, Scotland does not support the bill.

The Presiding Officer: I am sorry, but you need to start to wind up.

Richard Lyle: I know that the bill will be passed eventually, but that does not prevent me from voicing my constituents' concerns. I intend to vote against the bill, conscious of the fact that I have stood up for my constituents and presented their views.

The Presiding Officer: John Finnie is the final member to speak in the open debate. You have four minutes, please.

19:26

John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (Ind): Thank you, Presiding Officer. I apologise to you and the cabinet secretary for missing the opening remarks.

I am a member of the committee that put together the report, which reflects a wide range of views. It is very important that all voices are heard.

My colleague John Mason, who is also a member of the committee, talked about the importance of the bill in negative terms, if I heard him correctly. For me, there is little more important than equality and fairness and, for that reason, I fully endorse the bill.

A number of members have talked about changed attitudes. That is reflected in attitudes to gender, disability, race and sexual orientation. As a police officer who commenced work in the mid-1970s, I learned laws about homosexuality that seem bizarre and are totally unacceptable nowadays.

The Equality Network's recent briefing says that marriage equality "matters to LGBT people". That is very apparent, and we have heard powerful testimonies from Ruth Davidson, Marco Biagi, Kevin Stewart, Jim Eadie and other members.

I have received many communications from people of faith and I hope that I showed that I was respectful of their views. Those views were clearly individual ones. There were individual

interpretations individually made from self-selected sources.

I am sure that the faith groups recognise that attitudes have changed, not least to things such as mixed-race marriages and divorcees. If members check the *Official Report*, they will see that Professor John Curtice talked about the

“liberalisation of attitudes even among regular worshippers.”—[*Official Report, Equal Opportunities Committee*, 19 September 2013; c 1518.]

It is clear that there is no requirement to marry same-sex couples and that protection is afforded to faith groups by article 9 of the ECHR. I, for one, commend the legislative co-operation with the UK Government on aspects of that. I hope that faith groups will participate at some future point, and I commend the humanists, Quakers, Unitarians, liberal Jews and others.

Not much has been said about registrars; I thought that more would have been said about them. They are public servants and should complete public duty. We would not tolerate people saying that they would not participate in conducting a mixed-race marriage so, frankly, they need to get on with it.

There has been a lot of talk about the nature of communications. Unlike Margaret Mitchell, I have not found opponents to be inhibited in any way in their contact with me. I have received individually written letters, mass postcards and personal representations. Some people have strange obsessions with physical acts. I found reading about some of them to be very uncomfortable. Like many others today, I got a communication that started, “Dear Frequent Sinner”. Uniquely, however, when I tried to explain things to someone in the range of other parliamentary work, I got back, “Nice work, Satan.” It is important to recognise that there are genuine, strongly held views on both sides and that those remarks are not representative of all the faith organisations.

Other members have touched on the issues that the Scottish Transgender Alliance raised; time will not permit me to go into them. I commend the cabinet secretary for his comment that he will think further about those issues. There are a number of issues and they are challenging to discuss, not least the age aspect, but I was reassured by what I heard from the cabinet secretary at the Equal Opportunities Committee and I look forward to those issues being addressed.

The future will not be without challenges, but it must be without prejudice. The bill will make Scotland fairer and more equal and, I hope, an enlightened and inclusive nation. Equality in love, and the opportunity for that love to be publicly displayed via marriage, must trump intolerance

and inequality, and that will happen if we support the general principles of the bill tonight.

19:30

John Lamont (Etrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con): Few matters in politics today have evoked such emotive engagement as the issue of same-sex marriage. Engagement has taken place at all levels and indeed across all parts of Scottish society. It has taken place between constituents and their elected representatives, between those elected representatives and, of course, between the people of Scotland. Wherever that engagement has taken place, we have found passionate, profound and deeply held views on all sides of the debate.

I speak today as a Church of Scotland elder as well as a Conservative. I therefore understand the anxiety that the proposals for same-sex marriage are causing churches and religious groups across Scotland, but I also understand and share the desire for religion to remain relevant in our modern, 21st century, progressive society. Religion is not, after all, afraid of change. It has responded in the past to changing conditions and standards, and the religions that many of us celebrate and enjoy in our lives today are products of the environment that they operate in.

We do not even have to go back as far as Leviticus and its proclamations on footballs made of pig skin, beard trimming and bowl-shaped haircuts to prove that point. In the New Testament, Mark is seemingly unequivocal in his opposition to divorce, as is Timothy in his prohibition of the wearing of pearls and gold. Religion has moved on from those times. Indeed, it has done so repeatedly, time and time again, and when it did it was right that the state recognised and facilitated that evolution. That is a point that I would like to stress.

I have heard opposition to the same-sex marriage proposals on the basis that they represent an unjustified and unwarranted interference in the affairs of religion by the Government, or by the state. That could not be further from being the case. If religions do not want to embrace this gradual tide of change, they will not be forced to do so. If anything, the bill will give religions greater freedom and greater autonomy by allowing them to pursue the agenda and the pace of change that they believe to be right when it comes to same-sex marriage.

If the change is no change, that would be, in my view, a sad state of affairs. I believe that our country, our society and our religions would be worse off for that, but I recognise that it is a religious and not a political decision. Our role as

politicians here today is limited to deciding whether we should enable that process of change, whatever it may be, to occur. I believe that such change is not only right but inevitable. Religion and the church do not exist in a vacuum. Indeed, they cannot if they are to remain relevant in our society and to continue to act as a credible force for good in our world.

That is why I urge those who oppose the proposals that we are debating tonight to seriously and critically examine the reasons for their opposition to same-sex marriage and to ask themselves whether they want their religion, their church and their society to fail to embrace change, the time for which has surely come.

Patrick Harvie: Will the member also acknowledge that most marriages that are conducted in Scotland are already civil or indeed conducted by the Humanist Society, and so even those who have concerns about the impact on religion should be supporting the bill because of the opportunity for people to have civil marriages on the basis of equality?

John Lamont: That is my point. The bill allows the religions and the churches to opt in or opt out as they require and as they want, and to develop at their own pace.

It remains my view that the proposal is about consistency more than it is about equality. Marriage is permitted for one set of individuals, and there has to be a very good reason if we are to exclude another set of individuals. I believe that, in order to be consistent, and because society accepts same-sex relationships, there is no good reason to exclude them from marriage—certainly not on the basis of what sex the person whom someone falls in love with happens to be.

When I travel around my constituency and visit schools or meet young constituents, the idea of opposition to the bill is met with what I can only describe as bafflement. My experience has been that the younger generation supports the proposal's aims in overwhelming numbers. If religion does not evolve, and if the state does not allow it to evolve when it wants to do so, we risk excluding those younger voices from a tradition that is woven intrinsically into the basic fabric of our society. In his eloquent speech in the debate on same-sex marriage in the House of Lords, the Earl of Courtown warned of the danger and implored his fellow peers to

“allow the next generation not to reject the traditions of yesteryear but to build the traditions of the future.”—[*Official Report, House of Lords*, 3 June 2013; c 1042.]

His words are as true here as they were in Westminster.

Our society has found itself at similar crossroads before now. In the past 20 years we

have debated, passionately and often robustly, section 28, the lowering of the age of consent, gay adoptions and civil partnerships. In each case, I am proud that our progressive democratic tradition eventually prevailed. Today, we in the Scottish Parliament have the opportunity to add our voices to that tradition and the privilege of contributing to our society's progress.

I will vote for the bill. It is the right thing to do for our country, it is the right thing to do for our church, and it is the right thing to do to strengthen the wonderful institution of marriage.

19:36

Jackie Baillie: In the main, this has been a good and mature debate. I was struck by many of the speeches, as I am sure that many members were. Some members spoke from a very personal perspective and others made humorous speeches. I have no time to mention them all, but I will attempt to cover some of the territory.

Ruth Davidson was right when she said that marriage is a good thing—I have been married for almost 30 years, and I keep telling myself that it is a good thing. She was right to talk about the value of extending marriage as an institution. She made a personal and powerful contribution to the debate, which should give us all pause for thought. What we do tonight matters for the future nature of our country and for our young people.

Marco Biagi talked about how he felt as he grew up. I know the area where he grew up, and it can sometimes be pretty unforgiving. He talked about how he was made to feel different and somehow less deserving. His testimony of his personal journey richly informed our debate.

I will disagree with Mary Fee, which is always a dangerous thing to do. She said that attitudes are changing at a snail's pace. I think that she is wrong. Society's attitudes are changing much faster than we are able to keep up with them. In the 2002 Scottish social attitudes survey, 41 per cent of people were in favour of same-sex marriage. By 2010, a mere eight years later, 61 per cent favoured same-sex marriage. A 20 per cent shift in opinion, on any issue, in such a short time is hugely significant.

John Mason talked about the importance of tolerating different points of view. Our debates in the Parliament are often robust, and rightly so, but we need to move forward together. His concern, which is shared by some people inside and outside the Parliament, is that the protections are not sufficiently robust. I might well think that they are sufficiently robust, but I know that the cabinet secretary will want to look at the matter, so that we are assured that the provisions that he makes with

the UK Government to amend the Equality Act 2010 are indeed sufficiently robust.

However, I am mindful that in the 10 European countries that I listed earlier—the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Norway, Sweden, Iceland, Denmark, France, and, most recently, England and Wales—which have all passed same-sex marriage laws, no religious or belief body or celebrant has been forced to conduct a same-sex marriage. I accept that same-sex marriage legislation was introduced only recently in England and Wales, but no such claim can be made of the other countries. Same-sex marriage legislation was passed in the Netherlands in 2001, in Belgium in 2003 and in Spain in 2005—I could go on, but just in the countries that I mentioned the laws were passed 12 years ago, 10 years ago and eight years ago respectively, which is quite a period over which to be able to judge whether the protections are sufficiently robust and whether any church or celebrant has been forced to do something.

John Mason: I take Jackie Baillie's point with regard to marriage specifically, but will she accept that some of the assurances for adoption agencies have proved not to be solid over time?

Jackie Baillie: Many countries are moving in the direction of wanting to ensure that there is more equality and are taking appropriate steps forward, but ultimately it is a matter of equality. Of course we need to ensure that protections are in place, but that does not remove the need to ensure that we operate as an equal nation.

Some members, such as Elaine Smith, Richard Lyle and Margaret Mitchell, have spoken against the bill. I respect their right to hold a different view, but I think that they are—quite simply—wrong. Margaret McCulloch spoke about agreeing to differ, and Joan McAlpine rightly picked up on that theme.

Our society is actually quite mature. We do not always agree with one another—one needs only to look at the chamber to see the truth of that—but we can walk out of the chamber and still work together.

Bob Doris (Glasgow) (SNP): Will the member give way?

Jackie Baillie: I will in a moment.

Joan McAlpine was right to reflect that our society will do just that. We are tolerant of one another, and we come to accommodations with one another—that is life, and that is how we live it.

I am happy to give way to Bob Doris.

Bob Doris: I have listened with interest to the vast majority of this afternoon's debate. Does Ms Baillie agree that the debate is not about the

competing interests of traditional and modern views of marriage? The reason why I will vote yes this evening is that this piece of legislation allows everyone's views of marriage to be reflected in statute in Scotland.

Jackie Baillie: I could not agree more. Jim Eadie, like Bob Doris, set out—in a very powerful speech—how the bill will expand freedom for belief organisations that want to marry same-sex couples, and how it will strengthen marriage. I agree completely with Bob Doris, which must be a first for him.

Drew Smith and Patrick Harvie spoke about repealing section 28 and our pride in doing so; I thank Drew for making me feel old and reminding me that he was at school then. He is right to remember that the repeal of section 28 was not without consequences—often serious—for members of the LGBT community, as they had to deal with some of the hysteria and homophobic bullying that surrounded it. We need to ensure that that does not happen again.

James Dornan mentioned the bill's ability to strengthen marriage and spoke about the experience of his brother Michael; we all look forward to receiving our invitations to the wedding in Lisbon, now that we know about it.

The debate has been extraordinarily interesting. Elaine Murray and Patrick Harvie remarked on how extraordinary it was that there was agreement across the chamber—indeed, Patrick noted that it was probably the first time that he has applauded Ruth Davidson with such enthusiasm. That may well be true for many of us. It is not often that I find myself in complete agreement with Alex Neil and Mark McDonald—and even, for goodness' sake, Kevin Stewart; it must be a truly historic day.

Elaine Murray was right to remind us about the glorious diversity of human beings, even those whom she described as being vertically challenged. We are all different, and that is what makes us all so interesting. Whatever that difference is, we should be tolerant of one another, but we should respect and celebrate our difference, because that is the tapestry of our nation.

For me, and for many members on all sides of the chamber, the legislation is about equality, fairness, social justice and values that I believe we all share. I know that some may be hesitating tonight, but I ask them to think for a moment. What if your son or daughter is unsure about their sexuality? What if they have a same-sex partner? Do you really want to deny them the opportunity to marry? I hope not.

I urge all members to support the general principles of the bill to ensure that the next generation can marry the person they love.

The Presiding Officer: I call on Alex Neil to wind up the debate. Cabinet secretary, you can continue until 7.56 pm.

19:44

Alex Neil: That will not be a problem, Presiding Officer.

I begin by reminding the Parliament what the Equal Opportunities Committee said in its report. The committee hoped that members of the Parliament would

“approach the Stage 1 decision with the same dignified tenor as our evidence sessions and with due respect for a diversity of views.”

Everybody who has spoken has tried to live up to that ideal, and I think that this has been one of the most powerful debates that the Parliament has ever held. It is a real tribute to the Parliament.

We have heard some wonderful speeches, from Ruth Davidson and many others, some of which have been very powerful indeed, putting the case for the bill. There have also been powerful speeches putting the case against.

I will begin by dealing with two fairly fundamental points that have been raised by those who do not feel that they can vote for the bill tonight. First, I emphasise that there are essentially two aspects to marriage: there is the religious aspect and there is the state law aspect. What we are dealing with tonight is the state law aspect of marriage. We believe that the state should recognise marriage between same-sex couples as well as between mixed-sex couples.

The bill does not in any way interfere with any religious or belief body’s approach to marriage. Indeed, there is only one way in which it even touches on it, and that is that churches and other religious organisations such as the Unitarians and the Quakers will now be able to have same-sex marriages, which they want to carry out, carried out on their premises under their religion. Those marriages will now be recognised by the state. Beyond that, the proposed legislation has no other impact on marriage as carried out by, defined by, exercised by or recognised by such bodies.

Secondly, we are not redefining marriage. I refer to Mary Fee’s point, and I have heard the First Minister say this—and many of us would agree: the bill does not in any way redefine our marriage. It does extend the eligibility for marriage, which is the key point of the proposed legislation. People in Scotland who have been ineligible for marriage will now be eligible for marriage and for that marriage, and the love that it represents, to be recognised by the state and by those religious bodies—and only those religious bodies—who want to recognise those marriages out of their own choice.

Jamie McGrigor (Highlands and Islands) (Con): I thank the minister for his usual magnanimity in allowing me an intervention.

I wish to put down a marker in this debate. A substantial number of my constituents in the Highlands and Islands have expressed to me their concerns that sections that are designed to protect teachers, parents, ministers, foster parents, registrars and public sector workers who hold what I could call traditional views will not be strong enough and that they might be open to legal challenge, including at European level.

What specific guarantees can the minister give that legal safeguards will be watertight? My constituents are very anxious for that reassurance. Can the minister give it to them?

Alex Neil: Absolutely. Let me explain exactly why.

We are giving four sets of guarantees. First, there are the guarantees in the proposed legislation itself. Probably the biggest single guarantee is that, in order to carry out same-sex marriage, any religious organisation, belief organisation or celebrant has to opt in. It is their decision to opt in, and they obviously cannot be forced to opt in.

That is the case not just for the organisation. As the bill states, if, for example, the Church of Scotland changed its mind and agreed to recognise, participate in and carry out same-sex marriages, but its own celebrants—its own ministers—did not wish to do so, those ministers would still have the right not to opt in.

The rights of the organisation, religious body or belief body, as well as those of the individual celebrant, are absolutely guaranteed under the bill, which is totally compatible with the European convention on human rights. If it had not been, the Presiding Officer would not have approved it as competent proposed legislation.

Secondly—and on top of that—there are the amendments that we have agreed with Jamie McGrigor’s own UK Government. Maria Miller and I have been working very closely on this matter, and we have agreed amendments to the Equality Act 2010 that will underline all the relevant protections for those who take a different view or do not want to participate in same-sex marriages. In fact, some aspects actually go slightly further than the protections that were built in during the passage of the UK legislation.

The third protection is in relation to education. My friend the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning is at this very moment consulting on the legislation’s impact on educational guidance. He will announce the outcome of that consultation within the next two to three months.

The final protection is the Lord Advocate's guidance to all prosecutors in Scotland, which has already been published and which absolutely, explicitly and unequivocally guarantees the rights of those people who are opposed to the principle of same-sex marriage and those who do not wish to participate in or carry out such marriages.

In short, we are providing not just one but four sets of protections specifically for this legislation. I believe that to be a very reasonable balance between extending the freedom and rights of those who are entitled to marry and extending and guaranteeing protections for those who disagree with the policy and do not wish to carry out same-sex marriages.

Annabel Goldie (West Scotland) (Con): Like John Lamont, I speak as an elder of the Church of Scotland and I propose to vote for the bill this evening.

I am concerned about the level of protection afforded to, say, an individual celebrant from a religious community that has opted in but who chooses to opt out. As I read it, the relevant amendment to the Equality Act 2010 says that a person controlling the use of religious or belief premises will not contravene the act by refusing to allow the premises to be used for a same-sex marriage or a civil partnership.

However, we might be talking not about a person within the Church of Scotland but about a collective entity such as a congregational board. It might also be that, after a request to participate in a same-sex marriage is declined, a subsequent request to use the church premises for a reception is also declined. Is that also covered by this protection?

Alex Neil: Yes, it is and I must also inform the chamber that I intend to issue the legal text of the proposed amendments to the 2010 act before the completion of stage 2. Obviously, we have to agree the legal text with the lawyers in London as well as the lawyers here, but if members look at the protections in our bill alongside the text of the amendments to the 2010 act, they will see that the protections are unequivocally unchallengeable with regard to the individuals and the churches in question. Indeed, the protections extend to organists, who are essential to a church ceremony. If an organist turns round and says, "I refuse to play the organ at a same-sex marriage ceremony", they, too, will be protected from any prosecution. This is the most comprehensive set of protections imaginable for any piece of legislation that we have ever introduced.

As a result—and I thank Jackie Baillie for emphasising this point—I think that we have achieved a balanced package. On the one hand, we are extending the freedom and rights of those

who wish to engage in same-sex marriage and, on the other, we are putting in place all these protections for people who are either against it in principle or who do not want to participate.

Hanzala Malik (Glasgow) (Lab): Will the cabinet secretary give way?

Alex Neil: Of course I will.

The Presiding Officer: As briefly as possible, please, Mr Malik.

Hanzala Malik: What protection can you guarantee if someone challenges our decision in the European Court and we lose?

Alex Neil: We are very clear that there is no chance of a successful appeal to the European Court. Apart from anything else, the European convention on human rights does not give someone the right to same-sex marriage in the first place. There are also other reasons, which I do not have time to go into tonight, why we are absolutely sure that any appeal to the European Court would not be successful.

In summary, I believe that the bill is—as Jackie Baillie and others have said—a balanced package that allows freedom and rights to be exercised by those who at present cannot exercise them, without in any way diminishing or threatening the rights and freedoms of those who take a different point of view.

More importantly, as many speakers have pointed out, it is not the text of the bill that matters but the message that it sends out about 21st-century Scotland. We are joining those 16 states in America, those nine European countries, our friends south of the border and all the other countries, including South Africa, that have already passed legislation to provide a modern framework of legislation relating to marriage that recognises the equality of all our people. As Rabbie said, we are all Jock Tamson's bairns, and all the bairns are entitled to exactly the same treatment throughout our law, now including marriage law.

This is a historic day for Scotland. Future generations will look back and congratulate the Parliament on passing this progressive piece of legislation. *[Applause.]*

Business Motions

19:56

The Presiding Officer (Tricia Marwick): The next item of business is consideration of business motion S4M-08355, in the name of Joe FitzPatrick, on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, which sets out a stage 2 timetable for the Landfill Tax (Scotland) Bill.

Motion moved,

That the Parliament agrees that consideration of the Landfill Tax (Scotland) Bill at stage 2 be completed by 28 November 2013.—[*Joe FitzPatrick.*]

Motion agreed to.

The Presiding Officer: The next item of business is consideration of business motion S4M-08356, in the name of Joe FitzPatrick, on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, which sets out a stage 2 timetable for the Tribunals (Scotland) Bill.

Motion moved,

That the Parliament agrees that consideration of the Tribunals (Scotland) Bill at stage 2 be completed by 21 February 2014.—[*Joe FitzPatrick.*]

Motion agreed to.

The Presiding Officer: The next item of business is consideration of business motion S4M-08364, in the name of Joe FitzPatrick, on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, which sets out a business programme.

Motion moved,

That the Parliament agrees the following programme of business—

Tuesday 26 November 2013

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Topical Questions (if selected)

followed by Ministerial Statement: Independence White Paper

followed by Stage 1 Debate: Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Bill

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Wednesday 27 November 2013

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Portfolio Questions
Finance, Employment and Sustainable
Growth

followed by Scottish Government Debate:
Independence White Paper

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Thursday 28 November 2013

11.40 am Parliamentary Bureau Motions

11.40 am General Questions

12.00 pm First Minister's Questions

12.30 pm Members' Business

2.30 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.30 pm Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body
Questions

followed by Scottish Government Debate: The
Independent Expert Review of Opioid
Replacement Therapies in Scotland

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

Tuesday 3 December 2013

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Topical Questions (if selected)

followed by Scottish Government Business

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Wednesday 4 December 2013

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.00 pm Portfolio Questions
Rural Affairs and the Environment;
Justice and the Law Officers

followed by Scottish Government Business

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Thursday 5 December 2013

11.40 am Parliamentary Bureau Motions

11.40 am General Questions

12.00 pm First Minister's Questions

12.30 pm Members' Business

2.30 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.30 pm Scottish Government Business

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time—[*Joe FitzPatrick.*]

The Presiding Officer: Paul Martin has asked to speak against the business motion. Mr Martin, you have up to five minutes.

19:58

Paul Martin (Glasgow Provan) (Lab): I rise on behalf of the Scottish Labour Party to oppose the business motion in the name of Joe FitzPatrick on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau.

Members will note that, next Tuesday, after great debate, there will be a statement on the independence white paper. However, the sting in the tail is that the Scottish Government will arrange for an inspired parliamentary question next Tuesday morning so that it can launch the white paper at an event in the Glasgow science centre, clearly sidelining the role of the Scottish Parliament.

The arrogance and contempt that the Scottish Government displays for the Parliament is beyond belief. It makes no sense to anyone other than the Scottish Government that, on the very day that it will apparently set out its vision for the future of Scotland, it will sideline the role of the Parliament.

I will make clear our position, which I understand is the position of the other main parties that are represented on the Parliamentary Bureau. Next Tuesday, there should be a statement to the Parliament first—[*Interruption.*]

The Presiding Officer: Order. Can we hear the member speak, please?

Paul Martin: There should be a statement to the Parliament first, with the white paper being launched and released to the Parliament at the same time. It is the Government's business if the First Minister wants to massage his already inflated ego by then presenting the white paper to a very carefully selected audience in the Glasgow science centre.

The Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities (Nicola Sturgeon): It is the media. [*Laughter.*]

The Presiding Officer: Order. Could members please settle down? We have just had the most fantastic debate, which was conducted in a great spirit of respect across the chamber, so could we now have the same kind of respect for members who are speaking?

Paul Martin: The chamber is not the Government's selected audience; it is elected democratically by the Scottish people. The principles that we stand for are written on the parliamentary mace before you, Presiding Officer: wisdom, justice, compassion and integrity. What we see before us in the business programme

ensures that the Government has no respect for those words. We oppose the business motion in the name of Joe FitzPatrick.

The Presiding Officer: I call Joe FitzPatrick to respond. You have up to five minutes.

20:00

The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Joe FitzPatrick): Thank you very much. That makes 10 minutes that we could have spent continuing the debate that we just had. It was a fantastic debate and a great advert for this Parliament. [*Interruption.*]

The Presiding Officer: Order.

Joe FitzPatrick: The language that has been used by some Opposition members about next week's business has been nothing short of ridiculous—although I could use other words—especially when we consider that, just last week, during the landmark passing of the Scottish Independence Referendum Bill at stage 3, they showed little interest in the referendum. Of the last nine speakers in last week's debate, none came from the no parties. They could have pressed their buttons, but they all sat on their hands. [*Interruption.*]

The Presiding Officer: Order.

Joe FitzPatrick: The rank hypocrisy of the Opposition on this issue today is further exposed when we look at their behaviour in the chamber just four years ago.

The Presiding Officer: Mr FitzPatrick, could you address the motion?

Joe FitzPatrick: Absolutely. I am addressing the motion and Mr Martin's speech.

The Government, which was then a minority, was delayed in holding a debate on a similar publication on Scotland's future because the Opposition voted to block it. That hypocrisy is there on the record for all to see.

To be clear, the Scottish Government is proposing that an inspired parliamentary question will be answered on Tuesday morning prior to the launch, which will be a press conference. The answer to the IPQ will include access for members to the full contents of the white paper and hard copies will be lodged in the Scottish Parliament information centre. The Deputy First Minister will then make a ministerial statement on Tuesday afternoon and on Wednesday there will be a full parliamentary debate, allowing the better together members to bring their combined wisdom to bear in the chamber. To any reasonable person, that would seem to be a comprehensive and balanced proposal.

On the opening day of this Parliament in 1999, Donald Dewar said many things that are often quoted. I will quote just one:

“A Scottish Parliament. Not an end: a means to greater ends.”

Perhaps the feigned outrage of the MSPs from the no camp is because they know that next Tuesday marks a significant milestone in Scotland’s journey to those greater ends: an independent Parliament with the powers to build a better—[*Interruption.*]

The Presiding Officer: Order. We will hear the member.

Joe FitzPatrick: —fairer and more prosperous Scotland.

The Presiding Officer: The question is, that motion S4M-08364, in the name of Joe FitzPatrick, be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

For

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)
 Adamson, Clare (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Allan, Dr Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)
 Allard, Christian (North East Scotland) (SNP)
 Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
 Biagi, Marco (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
 Brodie, Chic (South Scotland) (SNP)
 Brown, Keith (Clackmannanshire and Dunblane) (SNP)
 Burgess, Margaret (Cunninghame South) (SNP)
 Campbell, Aileen (Clydesdale) (SNP)
 Campbell, Roderick (North East Fife) (SNP)
 Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
 Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)
 Crawford, Bruce (Stirling) (SNP)
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)
 Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)
 Don, Nigel (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)
 Doris, Bob (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)
 Eadie, Jim (Edinburgh Southern) (SNP)
 Ewing, Annabelle (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP)
 Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (SNP)
 Fabiani, Linda (East Kilbride) (SNP)
 Finnie, John (Highlands and Islands) (Ind)
 FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)
 Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)
 Gibson, Rob (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)
 Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
 Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
 Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)
 Ingram, Adam (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)
 Johnstone, Alison (Lothian) (Green)
 Keir, Colin (Edinburgh Western) (SNP)
 Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)
 Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)
 Lyle, Richard (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 MacAskill, Kenny (Edinburgh Eastern) (SNP)
 MacDonald, Angus (Falkirk East) (SNP)
 Mackay, Derek (Renfrewshire North and West) (SNP)
 MacKenzie, Mike (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (SNP)
 Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)

McAlpine, Joan (South Scotland) (SNP)
 McDonald, Mark (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)
 McKelvie, Christina (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (SNP)
 McLeod, Aileen (South Scotland) (SNP)
 McLeod, Fiona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)
 McMillan, Stuart (West Scotland) (SNP)
 Neil, Alex (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)
 Paterson, Gil (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)
 Robertson, Dennis (Aberdeenshire West) (SNP)
 Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
 Russell, Michael (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
 Salmond, Alex (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)
 Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)
 Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow Southside) (SNP)
 Swinney, John (Perthshire North) (SNP)
 Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
 Urquhart, Jean (Highlands and Islands) (Ind)
 Watt, Maureen (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP)
 White, Sandra (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
 Wilson, John (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow) (SNP)

Against

Baillie, Jackie (Dumbarton) (Lab)
 Baker, Claire (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)
 Baker, Richard (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Baxter, Jayne (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)
 Beamish, Claudia (South Scotland) (Lab)
 Bibby, Neil (West Scotland) (Lab)
 Boyack, Sarah (Lothian) (Lab)
 Brown, Gavin (Lothian) (Con)
 Buchanan, Cameron (Lothian) (Con)
 Carlaw, Jackson (West Scotland) (Con)
 Chisholm, Malcolm (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (Lab)
 Davidson, Ruth (Glasgow) (Con)
 Dugdale, Kezia (Lothian) (Lab)
 Fee, Mary (West Scotland) (Lab)
 Fergusson, Alex (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
 Findlay, Neil (Lothian) (Lab)
 Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Goldie, Annabel (West Scotland) (Con)
 Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Gray, Iain (East Lothian) (Lab)
 Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)
 Henry, Hugh (Renfrewshire South) (Lab)
 Hilton, Cara (Dunfermline) (Lab)
 Hume, Jim (South Scotland) (LD)
 Johnstone, Alex (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Kelly, James (Rutherglen) (Lab)
 Lamont, Johann (Glasgow Pollok) (Lab)
 Lamont, John (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con)
 Macdonald, Lewis (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Macintosh, Ken (Eastwood) (Lab)
 Malik, Hanzala (Glasgow) (Lab)
 Marra, Jenny (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Martin, Paul (Glasgow Provan) (Lab)
 McArthur, Liam (Orkney Islands) (LD)
 McCulloch, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Lab)
 McDougall, Margaret (West Scotland) (Lab)
 McGrigor, Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 McInnes, Alison (North East Scotland) (LD)
 McMahan, Michael (Uddingston and Bellshill) (Lab)
 McMahan, Siobhan (Central Scotland) (Lab)
 McNeil, Duncan (Greenock and Inverclyde) (Lab)
 McTaggart, Anne (Glasgow) (Lab)
 Milne, Nanette (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Mitchell, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Con)
 Murray, Elaine (Dumfriesshire) (Lab)
 Pearson, Graeme (South Scotland) (Lab)

Pentland, John (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Lab)
 Rennie, Willie (Mid Scotland and Fife) (LD)
 Scanlon, Mary (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)
 Smith, Drew (Glasgow) (Lab)
 Smith, Elaine (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Lab)
 Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Stewart, David (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)

The Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 64, Against 54, Abstentions 0.

Motion agreed to.

Decision Time

20:04

The Presiding Officer (Tricia Marwick): The next item of business is decision time. There are five questions to be put. The first question is, that motion S4M-08347, in the name of Johann Lamont, on a motion of condolence for Helen Eadie, be agreed to.

Motion agreed to,

That the Parliament expresses its deep regret and sadness at the death of Helen Eadie MSP; offers its sympathy and condolences to Helen's family; recognises her proud record in Scottish politics as a parliamentarian, a campaigner and a constituency MSP, and acknowledges her as a true champion for the Fife communities that she represented for 14 years.

The Presiding Officer: The next question is, that amendment S4M-08348.3, in the name of Keith Brown, which seeks to amend motion S4M-08348, in the name of Johann Lamont, on the future of the defence industry in Scotland, be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

For

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)
 Adamson, Clare (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Allan, Dr Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)
 Allard, Christian (North East Scotland) (SNP)
 Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
 Biagi, Marco (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
 Brodie, Chic (South Scotland) (SNP)
 Brown, Keith (Clackmannanshire and Dunblane) (SNP)
 Burgess, Margaret (Cunninghame South) (SNP)
 Campbell, Aileen (Clydesdale) (SNP)
 Campbell, Roderick (North East Fife) (SNP)
 Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
 Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)
 Crawford, Bruce (Stirling) (SNP)
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)
 Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)
 Don, Nigel (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)
 Doris, Bob (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)
 Eadie, Jim (Edinburgh Southern) (SNP)
 Ewing, Annabelle (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP)
 Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (SNP)
 Fabiani, Linda (East Kilbride) (SNP)
 FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)
 Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)
 Gibson, Rob (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)
 Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
 Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
 Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)
 Ingram, Adam (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)
 Johnstone, Alison (Lothian) (Green)
 Keir, Colin (Edinburgh Western) (SNP)
 Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)
 Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)
 Lyle, Richard (Central Scotland) (SNP)

MacAskill, Kenny (Edinburgh Eastern) (SNP)
 MacDonald, Angus (Falkirk East) (SNP)
 Mackay, Derek (Renfrewshire North and West) (SNP)
 MacKenzie, Mike (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (SNP)
 Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
 McAlpine, Joan (South Scotland) (SNP)
 McDonald, Mark (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)
 McKelvie, Christina (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (SNP)
 McLeod, Aileen (South Scotland) (SNP)
 McLeod, Fiona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)
 McMillan, Stuart (West Scotland) (SNP)
 Neil, Alex (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)
 Paterson, Gil (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)
 Robertson, Dennis (Aberdeenshire West) (SNP)
 Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
 Russell, Michael (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
 Salmond, Alex (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)
 Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)
 Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow Southside) (SNP)
 Swinney, John (Perthshire North) (SNP)
 Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
 Urquhart, Jean (Highlands and Islands) (Ind)
 Watt, Maureen (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP)
 White, Sandra (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
 Wilson, John (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow) (SNP)

Against

Baillie, Jackie (Dumbarton) (Lab)
 Baker, Claire (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)
 Baker, Richard (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Baxter, Jayne (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)
 Beamish, Claudia (South Scotland) (Lab)
 Bibby, Neil (West Scotland) (Lab)
 Boyack, Sarah (Lothian) (Lab)
 Brown, Gavin (Lothian) (Con)
 Buchanan, Cameron (Lothian) (Con)
 Carlaw, Jackson (West Scotland) (Con)
 Chisholm, Malcolm (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (Lab)
 Davidson, Ruth (Glasgow) (Con)
 Dugdale, Kezia (Lothian) (Lab)
 Fee, Mary (West Scotland) (Lab)
 Fergusson, Alex (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
 Findlay, Neil (Lothian) (Lab)
 Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Goldie, Annabel (West Scotland) (Con)
 Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Gray, Iain (East Lothian) (Lab)
 Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)
 Henry, Hugh (Renfrewshire South) (Lab)
 Hilton, Cara (Dunfermline) (Lab)
 Hume, Jim (South Scotland) (LD)
 Johnstone, Alex (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Kelly, James (Rutherglen) (Lab)
 Lamont, Johann (Glasgow Pollok) (Lab)
 Lamont, John (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con)
 Macdonald, Lewis (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Macintosh, Ken (Eastwood) (Lab)
 Malik, Hanzala (Glasgow) (Lab)
 Marra, Jenny (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Martin, Paul (Glasgow Provan) (Lab)
 McArthur, Liam (Orkney Islands) (LD)
 McCulloch, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Lab)
 McDougall, Margaret (West Scotland) (Lab)
 McGrigor, Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 McInnes, Alison (North East Scotland) (LD)
 McMahan, Michael (Uddingston and Bellshill) (Lab)
 McMahan, Siobhan (Central Scotland) (Lab)

McNeil, Duncan (Greenock and Inverclyde) (Lab)
 McTaggart, Anne (Glasgow) (Lab)
 Milne, Nanette (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Mitchell, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Con)
 Murray, Elaine (Dumfriesshire) (Lab)
 Pearson, Graeme (South Scotland) (Lab)
 Pentland, John (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Lab)
 Rennie, Willie (Mid Scotland and Fife) (LD)
 Scanlon, Mary (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)
 Smith, Drew (Glasgow) (Lab)
 Smith, Elaine (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Lab)
 Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Stewart, David (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)

Abstentions

Finnie, John (Highlands and Islands) (Ind)

The Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 63, Against 54, Abstentions 1.

Amendment agreed to.

The Presiding Officer: The next question is, that amendment S4M-08348.1, in the name of Murdo Fraser, which seeks to amend motion S4M-08348, in the name of Johann Lamont, on the future of the defence industry in Scotland, be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

For

Baillie, Jackie (Dumbarton) (Lab)
 Baker, Claire (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)
 Baker, Richard (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Baxter, Jayne (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)
 Beamish, Claudia (South Scotland) (Lab)
 Bibby, Neil (West Scotland) (Lab)
 Boyack, Sarah (Lothian) (Lab)
 Brown, Gavin (Lothian) (Con)
 Buchanan, Cameron (Lothian) (Con)
 Carlaw, Jackson (West Scotland) (Con)
 Chisholm, Malcolm (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (Lab)
 Davidson, Ruth (Glasgow) (Con)
 Dugdale, Kezia (Lothian) (Lab)
 Fee, Mary (West Scotland) (Lab)
 Fergusson, Alex (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
 Findlay, Neil (Lothian) (Lab)
 Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Goldie, Annabel (West Scotland) (Con)
 Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Gray, Iain (East Lothian) (Lab)
 Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)
 Henry, Hugh (Renfrewshire South) (Lab)
 Hilton, Cara (Dunfermline) (Lab)
 Hume, Jim (South Scotland) (LD)
 Johnstone, Alex (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Kelly, James (Rutherglen) (Lab)
 Lamont, Johann (Glasgow Pollok) (Lab)
 Lamont, John (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con)
 Macdonald, Lewis (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Macintosh, Ken (Eastwood) (Lab)
 Malik, Hanzala (Glasgow) (Lab)
 Marra, Jenny (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Martin, Paul (Glasgow Provan) (Lab)
 McArthur, Liam (Orkney Islands) (LD)
 McCulloch, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Lab)
 McDougall, Margaret (West Scotland) (Lab)
 McGrigor, Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)

McInnes, Alison (North East Scotland) (LD)
 McMahon, Michael (Uddingston and Bellshill) (Lab)
 McMahon, Siobhan (Central Scotland) (Lab)
 McNeil, Duncan (Greenock and Inverclyde) (Lab)
 McTaggart, Anne (Glasgow) (Lab)
 Milne, Nanette (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Mitchell, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Con)
 Murray, Elaine (Dumfriesshire) (Lab)
 Pearson, Graeme (South Scotland) (Lab)
 Pentland, John (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Lab)
 Rennie, Willie (Mid Scotland and Fife) (LD)
 Scanlon, Mary (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)
 Smith, Drew (Glasgow) (Lab)
 Smith, Elaine (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Lab)
 Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Stewart, David (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)

Against

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)
 Adamson, Clare (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Allan, Dr Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)
 Allard, Christian (North East Scotland) (SNP)
 Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
 Biagi, Marco (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
 Brodie, Chic (South Scotland) (SNP)
 Brown, Keith (Clackmannanshire and Dunblane) (SNP)
 Burgess, Margaret (Cunninghame South) (SNP)
 Campbell, Aileen (Clydesdale) (SNP)
 Campbell, Roderick (North East Fife) (SNP)
 Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
 Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)
 Crawford, Bruce (Stirling) (SNP)
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perthshire South and Kinrossshire) (SNP)
 Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)
 Don, Nigel (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)
 Doris, Bob (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)
 Eadie, Jim (Edinburgh Southern) (SNP)
 Ewing, Annabelle (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP)
 Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (SNP)
 Fabiani, Linda (East Kilbride) (SNP)
 Finnie, John (Highlands and Islands) (Ind)
 FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)
 Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)
 Gibson, Rob (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)
 Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
 Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
 Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)
 Ingram, Adam (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)
 Johnstone, Alison (Lothian) (Green)
 Keir, Colin (Edinburgh Western) (SNP)
 Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)
 Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)
 Lyle, Richard (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 MacAskill, Kenny (Edinburgh Eastern) (SNP)
 MacDonald, Angus (Falkirk East) (SNP)
 Mackay, Derek (Renfrewshire North and West) (SNP)
 MacKenzie, Mike (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (SNP)
 Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
 McAlpine, Joan (South Scotland) (SNP)
 McDonald, Mark (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)
 McKelvie, Christina (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (SNP)
 McLeod, Aileen (South Scotland) (SNP)
 McLeod, Fiona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)
 McMillan, Stuart (West Scotland) (SNP)
 Neil, Alex (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)
 Paterson, Gil (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)

Robertson, Dennis (Aberdeenshire West) (SNP)
 Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
 Russell, Michael (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
 Salmond, Alex (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)
 Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)
 Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow Southside) (SNP)
 Swinney, John (Perthshire North) (SNP)
 Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
 Urquhart, Jean (Highlands and Islands) (Ind)
 Watt, Maureen (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP)
 White, Sandra (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
 Wilson, John (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow) (SNP)

The Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 54, Against 64, Abstentions 0.

Amendment disagreed to.

The Presiding Officer: The next question is, that motion S4M-08348, in the name of Johann Lamont, on the future of the defence industry in Scotland, as amended, be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

For

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)
 Adamson, Clare (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Allan, Dr Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)
 Allard, Christian (North East Scotland) (SNP)
 Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
 Biagi, Marco (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
 Brodie, Chic (South Scotland) (SNP)
 Brown, Keith (Clackmannanshire and Dunblane) (SNP)
 Burgess, Margaret (Cunninghame South) (SNP)
 Campbell, Aileen (Clydesdale) (SNP)
 Campbell, Roderick (North East Fife) (SNP)
 Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
 Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)
 Crawford, Bruce (Stirling) (SNP)
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perthshire South and Kinrossshire) (SNP)
 Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)
 Don, Nigel (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)
 Doris, Bob (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)
 Eadie, Jim (Edinburgh Southern) (SNP)
 Ewing, Annabelle (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP)
 Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (SNP)
 Fabiani, Linda (East Kilbride) (SNP)
 FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)
 Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)
 Gibson, Rob (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)
 Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
 Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)
 Ingram, Adam (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)
 Keir, Colin (Edinburgh Western) (SNP)
 Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)
 Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)
 Lyle, Richard (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 MacAskill, Kenny (Edinburgh Eastern) (SNP)
 MacDonald, Angus (Falkirk East) (SNP)
 Mackay, Derek (Renfrewshire North and West) (SNP)
 MacKenzie, Mike (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (SNP)

Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
 McAlpine, Joan (South Scotland) (SNP)
 McDonald, Mark (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)
 McKelvie, Christina (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (SNP)
 McLeod, Aileen (South Scotland) (SNP)
 McLeod, Fiona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)
 McMillan, Stuart (West Scotland) (SNP)
 Neil, Alex (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)
 Paterson, Gil (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)
 Robertson, Dennis (Aberdeenshire West) (SNP)
 Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
 Russell, Michael (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
 Salmond, Alex (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)
 Smith, Elaine (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Lab)
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)
 Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)
 Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow Southside) (SNP)
 Swinney, John (Perthshire North) (SNP)
 Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
 Urquhart, Jean (Highlands and Islands) (Ind)
 Watt, Maureen (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP)
 White, Sandra (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
 Wilson, John (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow) (SNP)

Against

Baillie, Jackie (Dumbarton) (Lab)
 Baker, Claire (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)
 Baker, Richard (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Baxter, Jayne (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)
 Beamish, Claudia (South Scotland) (Lab)
 Bibby, Neil (West Scotland) (Lab)
 Boyack, Sarah (Lothian) (Lab)
 Brown, Gavin (Lothian) (Con)
 Buchanan, Cameron (Lothian) (Con)
 Carlaw, Jackson (West Scotland) (Con)
 Chisholm, Malcolm (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (Lab)
 Davidson, Ruth (Glasgow) (Con)
 Dugdale, Kezia (Lothian) (Lab)
 Fee, Mary (West Scotland) (Lab)
 Fergusson, Alex (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
 Findlay, Neil (Lothian) (Lab)
 Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Goldie, Annabel (West Scotland) (Con)
 Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Gray, Iain (East Lothian) (Lab)
 Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)
 Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
 Henry, Hugh (Renfrewshire South) (Lab)
 Hilton, Cara (Dunfermline) (Lab)
 Hume, Jim (South Scotland) (LD)
 Johnstone, Alex (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Johnstone, Alison (Lothian) (Green)
 Kelly, James (Rutherglen) (Lab)
 Lamont, Johann (Glasgow Pollok) (Lab)
 Lamont, John (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con)
 Macdonald, Lewis (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Macintosh, Ken (Eastwood) (Lab)
 Malik, Hanzala (Glasgow) (Lab)
 Marra, Jenny (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Martin, Paul (Glasgow Provan) (Lab)
 McArthur, Liam (Orkney Islands) (LD)
 McCulloch, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Lab)
 McDougall, Margaret (West Scotland) (Lab)
 McGrigor, Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 McInnes, Alison (North East Scotland) (LD)
 McMahan, Michael (Uddingston and Bellshill) (Lab)
 McMahan, Siobhan (Central Scotland) (Lab)
 McNeil, Duncan (Greenock and Inverclyde) (Lab)
 McTaggart, Anne (Glasgow) (Lab)

Milne, Nanette (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Mitchell, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Con)
 Murray, Elaine (Dumfriesshire) (Lab)
 Pearson, Graeme (South Scotland) (Lab)
 Pentland, John (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Lab)
 Rennie, Willie (Mid Scotland and Fife) (LD)
 Scanlon, Mary (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)
 Smith, Drew (Glasgow) (Lab)
 Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Stewart, David (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)

Abstentions

Finnie, John (Highlands and Islands) (Ind)

The Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 62, Against 55, Abstentions 1.

Motion, as amended, agreed to,

That the Parliament regrets BAE System's announcement that it intends to cut 1,775 jobs across its UK shipyards and supports all efforts to minimise compulsory redundancies and to redeploy people where possible; welcomes, however, the confirmation by BAE Systems that the Clyde is its preferred UK location for the construction of the future Type 26 global combat ship; notes that Scotland plays a significant role in the UK, European and worldwide defence industries, including hosting the largest defence electronics manufacturing site in the UK in addition to its shipbuilding; notes that independence will bring new opportunities for this industry, as for others, with naval procurement a key part of the future of Scotland's shipyards, and further notes that freeing Scotland's share of the estimated £100 billion lifetime cost of the Trident replacement programme would widen the choices that could be made to support increased diversification and take action to boost exports.

The Presiding Officer: The next question is, that motion S4M-08327, in the name of Alex Neil, on the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill, be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

For

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)
 Adamson, Clare (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Allard, Christian (North East Scotland) (SNP)
 Baillie, Jackie (Dumbarton) (Lab)
 Baker, Claire (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)
 Baker, Richard (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Baxter, Jayne (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)
 Beamish, Claudia (South Scotland) (Lab)
 Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
 Biagi, Marco (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
 Bibby, Neil (West Scotland) (Lab)
 Boyack, Sarah (Lothian) (Lab)
 Brown, Keith (Clackmannanshire and Dunblane) (SNP)
 Buchanan, Cameron (Lothian) (Con)
 Burgess, Margaret (Cunninghame South) (SNP)
 Campbell, Aileen (Clydesdale) (SNP)
 Campbell, Roderick (North East Fife) (SNP)
 Carlaw, Jackson (West Scotland) (Con)
 Chisholm, Malcolm (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (Lab)
 Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
 Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)
 Crawford, Bruce (Stirling) (SNP)
 Davidson, Ruth (Glasgow) (Con)
 Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)

Doris, Bob (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)
 Dugdale, Kezia (Lothian) (Lab)
 Eadie, Jim (Edinburgh Southern) (SNP)
 Ewing, Annabelle (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP)
 Fabiani, Linda (East Kilbride) (SNP)
 Fee, Mary (West Scotland) (Lab)
 Findlay, Neil (Lothian) (Lab)
 Finnie, John (Highlands and Islands) (Ind)
 FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)
 Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)
 Gibson, Rob (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)
 Goldie, Annabel (West Scotland) (Con)
 Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
 Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Gray, Iain (East Lothian) (Lab)
 Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)
 Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
 Henry, Hugh (Renfrewshire South) (Lab)
 Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)
 Hilton, Cara (Dunfermline) (Lab)
 Hume, Jim (South Scotland) (LD)
 Ingram, Adam (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)
 Johnstone, Alison (Lothian) (Green)
 Keir, Colin (Edinburgh Western) (SNP)
 Kelly, James (Rutherglen) (Lab)
 Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)
 Lamont, Johann (Glasgow Pollok) (Lab)
 Lamont, John (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con)
 Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)
 MacAskill, Kenny (Edinburgh Eastern) (SNP)
 Macdonald, Lewis (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Macintosh, Ken (Eastwood) (Lab)
 Mackay, Derek (Renfrewshire North and West) (SNP)
 MacKenzie, Mike (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Marra, Jenny (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Martin, Paul (Glasgow Provan) (Lab)
 Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
 McAlpine, Joan (South Scotland) (SNP)
 McArthur, Liam (Orkney Islands) (LD)
 McCulloch, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Lab)
 McDonald, Mark (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)
 McDougall, Margaret (West Scotland) (Lab)
 McInnes, Alison (North East Scotland) (LD)
 McKelvie, Christina (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (SNP)
 McLeod, Aileen (South Scotland) (SNP)
 McLeod, Fiona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)
 McMillan, Stuart (West Scotland) (SNP)
 McNeil, Duncan (Greenock and Inverclyde) (Lab)
 McTaggart, Anne (Glasgow) (Lab)
 Murray, Elaine (Dumfriesshire) (Lab)
 Neil, Alex (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)
 Paterson, Gil (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)
 Pearson, Graeme (South Scotland) (Lab)
 Pentland, John (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Lab)
 Rennie, Willie (Mid Scotland and Fife) (LD)
 Robertson, Dennis (Aberdeenshire West) (SNP)
 Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
 Russell, Michael (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
 Salmond, Alex (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)
 Scanlon, Mary (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)
 Smith, Drew (Glasgow) (Lab)
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)
 Stewart, David (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)
 Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow Southside) (SNP)
 Swinney, John (Perthshire North) (SNP)
 Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
 Urquhart, Jean (Highlands and Islands) (Ind)

Watt, Maureen (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP)
 White, Sandra (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
 Wilson, John (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow) (SNP)

Against

Allan, Dr Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)
 Brown, Gavin (Lothian) (Con)
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)
 Don, Nigel (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)
 Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (SNP)
 Fergusson, Alex (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
 Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Johnstone, Alex (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Lyle, Richard (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (SNP)
 McGrigor, Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 Milne, Nanette (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Mitchell, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Con)
 Smith, Elaine (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Lab)
 Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)

Abstentions

Brodie, Chic (South Scotland) (SNP)
 MacDonald, Angus (Falkirk East) (SNP)
 Malik, Hanzala (Glasgow) (Lab)
 McMahon, Michael (Uddingston and Bellshill) (Lab)
 McMahon, Siobhan (Central Scotland) (Lab)

The Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 98, Against 15, Abstentions 5.

Motion agreed to,

That the Parliament agrees to the general principles of the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill.

[*Applause.*]

Meeting closed at 20:10.

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