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Tuesday 3 November 2015

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CONTENTS

	Col.
TIME FOR REFLECTION	1
TOPICAL QUESTION TIME	3
Homelessness (Children)	3
TRIDENT	6
<i>Motion moved—[Keith Brown].</i>	
<i>Amendment moved—[Claire Baker].</i>	
<i>Amendment moved—[John Lamont].</i>	
<i>Amendment moved—[John Wilson].</i>	
The Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities (Keith Brown)	6
Claire Baker (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)	12
John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con)	16
John Wilson (Central Scotland) (Ind).....	19
Christina McKelvie (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (SNP)	21
Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Lab)	23
Jim Hume (South Scotland) (LD).....	25
Kevin Stewart (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)	26
Sarah Boyack (Lothian) (Lab).....	28
Christine Grahame (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)	30
Jean Urquhart (Highlands and Islands) (Ind)	32
Christian Allard (North East Scotland) (SNP).....	34
Malcolm Chisholm (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (Lab).....	36
Stewart Stevenson (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)	39
Patricia Ferguson (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (Lab)	41
Clare Adamson (Central Scotland) (SNP)	43
Stuart McMillan (West Scotland) (SNP)	44
Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Lab)	47
Bill Kidd (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP).....	50
Chic Brodie (South Scotland) (SNP)	51
Alison Johnstone (Lothian) (Green).....	53
Annabel Goldie (West Scotland) (Con)	56
Alex Rowley (Cowdenbeath) (Lab).....	58
Keith Brown	61
DECISION TIME	66
HEALTHY START, HEALTHY SCOTLAND CAMPAIGN	74
<i>Motion debated—[Mark McDonald].</i>	
Mark McDonald (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)	74
Jenny Marra (North East Scotland) (Lab).....	77
David Torrance (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)	78
Mary Scanlon (Highlands and Islands) (Con).....	79
Bob Doris (Glasgow) (SNP).....	81
Jim Hume (South Scotland) (LD).....	83
The Minister for Sport, Health Improvement and Mental Health (Jamie Hepburn)	85

Scottish Parliament

Tuesday 3 November 2015

[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 leader today is the Right Rev Hugh Gilbert, the bishop of Aberdeen.

The Right Rev Hugh Gilbert OSB (Bishop of Aberdeen): Presiding Officer, ladies and gentlemen, before being a bishop, I am a Benedictine monk, and I lived in a monastery which, thanks to an act of the Scottish Parliament of 1560, became a ruin for 400 years. This Thursday, its restored church will be re-dedicated.

It is a privilege to be in this restored Parliament and to offer, simply, encouragement. Public service as a member of the Parliament, a legislator, perhaps as a member of the Government, is something worthy, generous and good. It is, to use an old word, noble. I hope that you hear that sometimes. Pope Francis has spoken of

“nurses with soul, teachers with soul, politicians with soul, people who have chosen deep down to be with others and for others.”

Cicero was a senator with soul and Robert Harris’s novels have been recalling him. He laid the foundations of our political, legal and linguistic culture. He coined the word “humanitas”, which is achievement enough. His “Republic” is a summons to political engagement:

“I simply state this ... nature has given to mankind such a compulsion to do good, and such a desire to defend the well-being of the community, that this force prevails over all ... temptations.”

Ignore the bugle of retreat, he says. Commit yourself. Do not listen to those who say that “most politicians are worthless”.

“The aim of a ship’s captain is a successful voyage; a doctor’s, health ... So, the aim of our ideal statesman is the citizen’s happy life—that is, a life secure in wealth ... and honourable in its moral character. That is the task I wish him to accomplish—the greatest and best any man can have.”

Next year, 2016, marks the 20th anniversary of the death of the Orcadian writer George Mackay Brown. His poem “The Storm” begins:

“For the islands I sing”

and this becomes “For Scotland I sing”

“For workers in field
and mill and mine”

and at last “Praise tinker and saint”.

Such was the scope of his poetry. It was about a service of the common good, and a way of being with and for that he kept to through battles with alcohol and depression. As a pastor, I am encouraged by that; perhaps parliamentarians can be too.

Culture, law and religion; poets, parliamentarians and pastors: my hope is that we can all be people of soul, and that we can sing—even while quarrelling—for Scotland, for humanitas, for tinker and saint, and that we can always honour what is deepest and truest in us, what Cicero called the divine spark and the bible the image and likeness of God.

Topical Question Time

14:05

Homelessness (Children)

1. Jim Hume (South Scotland) (LD): To ask the Scottish Government what its position is on reports that nearly 5,000 children will be homeless or in temporary accommodation at Christmas. (S4T-01151)

The Minister for Housing and Welfare (Margaret Burgess): Homelessness has been falling in Scotland—applications are down by 20 per cent since 2012—with further falls in the latest statistics. Much of that is down to the focus on the prevention of homelessness, which is a priority for the Scottish Government and its partners.

The numbers of children in temporary accommodation have also fallen since 2007. Although we do not want to see any families in temporary accommodation, our actions and strong legal rights for homeless households mean that families are placed in good quality temporary accommodation while suitable settled accommodation is found.

To help address the situation—against a challenging financial background—we are doing everything that we can to help increase housing supply. That is backed by more than £1.7 billion of investment in the lifetime of this Parliament.

We are on track to exceed our 30,000 affordable homes target. The target is not the height but the starting point of our ambition for Scotland's housing. We are not only increasing new supply, but working to protect existing supply through ending the right to buy, which will protect our housing stock by preventing the sale of up to 15,500 houses over a 10-year period.

The First Minister announced last month that, if re-elected, our target as a Government will be to build at least 50,000 new affordable homes in the next parliamentary session.

Jim Hume: A child in temporary accommodation loses on average 55 days of schooling. Among many other issues, they suffer anxiety and distress; speech problems can also occur. It sets them back at an early stage. Does the minister not think that part of the problem is because the Government has switched from its manifesto commitment to build 30,000 homes for rent—not, as the minister stated, affordable homes—and now insists that a third of those homes have to be bought with a mortgage instead? That does not help those 5,000 homeless children, does it?

Margaret Burgess: The vast majority of temporary accommodation used is well managed, good quality, furnished social housing stock. We know that most local authorities use their own stock for temporary accommodation. It is not different from that used by other households.

This Government has made a commitment to provide 30,000 affordable homes. We are delivering on that commitment and we have said that that commitment is not the height of our ambition: we will increase that number if elected to be the next Government.

Despite all the financial restrictions and difficulties that the Government has faced, we have built more houses for social rent than any Administration since the devolved Parliament was set up. We are outperforming the rest of the United Kingdom. We know that we have to do more; our ambition is to do more. That is what we are doing.

Jim Hume: I hate to disagree with the minister, but her own Government figures on new-build starts in the social sector show that 3,842 houses were built in the past year, whereas in 2006-07, when another Administration was in power, the figure was more than 5,500. The minister's words are not correlating with the Government's figures. The minister also needs to explain why there are—

The Presiding Officer (Tricia Marwick): Mr Hume, please let us have a question.

Jim Hume: There are 626 more children homeless this year compared with last year. The difference between 30,000 homes for rent and 20,000 homes for rent is clear to us: it is 5,000 children in temporary accommodation at Christmas. Have any of the families in temporary accommodation told the minister that they are in a position to get a mortgage and buy one of their own homes?

Margaret Burgess: Let us get the statistics correct. This Government has built more houses for social rent than any other Government. I will just give him the figures. In its seven-year term, the previous Administration, which his party was part of, built 28,988 houses for social rent. This Government has built 38,859 houses for social rent. If affordable homes help some people to get on to the housing ladder, that releases a home for social rent to people who might be in temporary accommodation. The previous Administration built 9,027 affordable homes, whereas this Administration has built 15,327. We are building more homes. I have said already that we need to and will build more, but at least we are delivering and doing more than any previous Administration.

Ken Macintosh (Eastwood) (Lab): Does the minister accept the verdict of Shelter Scotland, the

Chartered Institute of Housing and the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations that Scotland is facing a housing crisis? Does she accept that?

Margaret Burgess: I have said on more than one occasion in the chamber that we are facing challenges in housing. We are rising to those challenges and have done so with a target of 30,000 homes. We completed that ambitious target, which was based on what Shelter and other organisations were telling us at the time, but they have now told us that that target is not sufficient. We have indicated that we are increasing our target to 50,000 homes, which will be the baseline for the next Parliament. We are listening to what is being said. We know that we need to build more houses and we will get on and do that.

Christian Allard (North East Scotland) (SNP): I will go back to the question, which was on temporary accommodation. The issue is not only the numbers, but the quality of that accommodation. Can the minister provide an overview of the quality of housing that is used for families in temporary accommodation?

Margaret Burgess: As I said in a previous response, the housing that is used for temporary accommodation is from local authorities' own housing stock and is the same as the other housing stock that they rent out. The accommodation is generally furnished, with furnishings being replaced on a regular basis. The accommodation has to be within a family's local authority area and it has to be suitable for accessing the schools and services that the family needs. The temporary accommodation must be as close as possible to what a family would get if they were in settled accommodation. The temporary accommodation is good-quality local authority accommodation. It is right that the member raises the point that it is not about second-rate accommodation; the accommodation is of a good standard, and it is right that it should be.

Trident

14:12

The Presiding Officer (Tricia Marwick): The next item of business is a debate on motion S4M-14681, in the name of Keith Brown, on Trident, welfare or warfare. I call Keith Brown to speak to and move the motion. Cabinet secretary—you have 14 minutes.

14:12

The Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities (Keith Brown): Thank you, Presiding Officer. The Scottish Parliament, as you know, has debated nuclear weapons on a number of occasions over recent years. In the light of the importance of the issue to the people of Scotland, both morally and economically, it is right and proper that we do so again.

I start by refuting claims by others that we should not be discussing the subject: some people say that it is a reserved issue: unfortunately, we have reserved to us the dubious honour of having to host nuclear weapons in our waters. In addition, the matter is vitally important to our economy and public finances, and to many aspects of public policy in Scotland.

The Scottish Government has at this time sought another debate on the matter for a number of important reasons. First, further analysis of renewal of the Trident nuclear weapons system suggests a dramatic increase in estimates of the total potential cost of the United Kingdom Government's proposed successor programme. Secondly, there is speculation—and the potential—that the UK Government might be considering bringing forward the main-gate investment decision to before Christmas. Finally, in addition to our opposition to the possession of nuclear weapons, it remains our view that it is wrong for the UK Government to continue to work towards replacement of Trident while it is implementing welfare cuts that are impacting on the most vulnerable people in our society.

In our view, the first argument against nuclear weapons is, of course, the moral one: the idea that they are weapons of not just mass destruction but indiscriminate destruction. However, in argument against renewing Trident, I turn first to the cost of Trident. Many members will have seen the recent reports of the analysis by the office of Crispin Blunt MP, who is chair of the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee. That analysis estimates the total cost of the Trident renewal programme to be £167 billion over its lifetime. That is a massive increase on the previous estimate of

around £100 billion. It is telling that, in announcing the figure, Mr Blunt also said that

“The successor Trident programme is going to consume more than double the proportion of the defence budget of its predecessor ... The price required, both from the UK taxpayer and our conventional forces, is now too high to be rational or sensible.”

That is a Conservative MP saying that the price is “too high to be rational or sensible.”

It is not often that I find myself quoting a Conservative MP on nuclear weapons, although, for the record, I should perhaps make it clear that my position—and that of the Scottish Government—is that the possession of nuclear weapons cannot be justified at any cost, whether at £1 or at £167 billion. The question for those who still support the purchase of nuclear weapons at that cost is this: At what price would it be too expensive? Is there any price at which those who support the buying of a new Trident system would say, “That is too much money”? A number of Conservatives, a number of former Secretaries of State for Defence and a number of retired senior military personnel already feel that way, but at what point would MSPs who continue to support the renewal of Trident say that the price is too high?

It would, of course, aid the public’s and our understanding of the impact of spending on Trident nuclear weapons, on conventional defence and on wider public spending if the UK Government would publish its own figures on the total cost and the annual cost of its nuclear weapons system. Unfortunately, it does not do that.

In evidence to the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee on 14 October 2015, Jon Thompson, who is a permanent under-secretary at the Ministry of Defence, is reported to have described the project to replace Trident as “a monster”, and he added that it would be extremely difficult to estimate what the future costs of that programme would be.

Despite that, the UK Government remains in thrall to nuclear weapons and appears to be fixed on writing a blank cheque for their renewal. It seems set to do so without clarity or debate on the implications of that decision, whether for conventional defence forces and equipment or for wider public spending.

To inform our debate, I would like to set out the latest estimate for the cost of Trident renewal within the context of public spending in Scotland. Scotland’s 8.3 per cent population share of £167 billion equates to around £13.9 billion. To put it another way, at current prices that is the equivalent of about 10 Forth replacement crossing projects. Whatever the final bill for the next

generation of Trident may be, Scotland’s population share of the current annual running costs alone is estimated to be at least £125 million, and it could be much more than that.

It is the position of the Scottish Government that UK Government spending on nuclear weapons has significant implications for the UK’s conventional defence capabilities and for wider public spending, including for Scotland, and that the full costs of Trident renewal and the implications for other areas of public spending, including conventional defence forces and equipment, should be made clear before the UK Parliament debates the main-gate investment decision.

It is not only the Scottish Government that believes that renewal of Trident would have consequences for other areas of defence and security. In 2013, Professor Malcolm Chalmers of the Royal United Services Institute wrote that

“sharp increases in spending on Trident renewal in the early 2020s seem set to mean further years of austerity for conventional equipment plans.”

In 2014, the Trident commission said:

“Important defence projects currently in the pipeline will surely suffer delay or cancellation.”

Of course, there are those who, while promoting nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation for others, still say that the UK should retain and renew its nuclear weapons for as long as other nations have them. I do not accept that argument. The possession of nuclear weapons has not prevented conflicts between nuclear and non-nuclear states, and their continued presence maintains the threat that other countries may seek to acquire them. Moreover, at no point have I seen—nor do I expect ever to see—a conceivable scenario in which it would be acceptable for the UK to use its nuclear weapons. Their strategic purpose was designed for the cold war, and they have no relevance in deterring the threats that we face today.

We note that many others have voiced similar views on the irrelevance of Trident to our national security. Hans Blix has said that he does not think that Britain would be more protected by Trident, and that Germany and Japan seem to be managing without nuclear weapons. In 2012, former Secretary of State for Defence Michael Portillo described Trident as

“completely past its sell-by date”,

“a waste of money” and

“no deterrent for the Taliban”.

In the same year, CentreForum said:

“Replacing Trident is nonsensical. There is no current or medium-term threat to the UK which justifies the huge costs involved.”

Those are not people from the Scottish National Party; they include a former Secretary of State for Defence. I could mention others, such as Des Brown. Some Conservatives are saying the same thing.

As I indicated in my introduction, it is also the Scottish Government’s position that it is wrong for the UK Government to be contemplating building a new nuclear weapons launch system at the same time as it is introducing massive cuts to welfare. The UK Government has announced welfare cuts of £12 billion per annum by 2019-20, and about £1 billion of those cuts will impact directly on Scotland.

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Lab): I agree with the cabinet secretary on that point, but can he confirm that it is his policy that the money that would be saved would be spent on defence only?

Keith Brown: No. We have previously mentioned the impact of the Trident programme on conventional defence spending, and I think that it would help if we were not spending the money on Trident. However, as Neil Findlay will know, we do not currently spend any money on defence, so our previous statement related to spending on conventional defence equipment in an independent Scotland. There are many other purposes for which the money could be used, and it would depend on the decisions of future Governments. That is how such things tend to be agreed.

About £1 billion of the £12 billion per annum that is being cut by the UK Government will impact directly on Scotland. That puts the UK Government’s priorities into sharp focus. On the one hand, it seems to be intent on committing billions of pounds of taxpayers’ money to a nuclear weapons system that can never be used, while on the other hand it is reducing by billions of pounds many of the benefits on which the people who are most in need currently rely.

Let us be absolutely clear about Trident: these are weapons of mass destruction. They are indiscriminate in that they kill and destroy everything in their path, and their use would bring untold humanitarian suffering and environmental damage, with the effects being felt across the world. There can be no surgical strike with a nuclear weapon; we would take out entire civilisations if we were to use some of the weapons that are currently available. In a previous debate, I noted the comments of the former Secretary of State for Defence, Des Browne, which are worth repeating today. He said that

“even a small-scale nuclear exchange ... would affect at least a billion people and usher in colder temperatures than at any time in the past millennium”.

I turn to the amendments. I do not propose to accept either the Conservative amendment, which seeks to continue our spending up to £167 billion on nuclear weapons, or the Green and Independent amendment. However, I propose to accept the Labour amendment because it is important that the chamber speaks as strongly as possible on the issue. In the past few days, a number of people have said that Scotland’s voice on the issue does not matter and is irrelevant—that we should not even be discussing such things. There is the possibility of a very early decision on Trident and there is no question about who will make that decision: it will be the UK Government, which is currently a Conservative Government. In that context, it is important that the Scottish Parliament speak as loudly as possible about how it feels about that expenditure on nuclear weapons. For that reason I propose to accept the Labour amendment, despite having some misgivings about it.

Chief among my misgivings about the Labour amendment is the fact that, for whatever reason, it seeks to knock out the reference to the implications for welfare spending in Scotland. Nevertheless, it rightly highlights the people who are currently employed in the industry and diversification. In all the debates on Trident that I have spoken in over a number of years, I have referred to diversification. I have also spoken with people in the trade union movement and the Labour Party about the need for diversification among the people who are currently employed in the industry. In my view, we have in the past missed huge opportunities to secure that diversification. In 1990, at the fall of the iron curtain, everyone was talking about the peace dividend, but we never saw it. We should have done. That was the time to downscale defence spending and to upscale spending on ensuring that people in the industry would be gainfully employed if they lost their jobs.

I hope that the Labour Party acknowledges that I propose to accept its amendment despite having reservations about it, because it is important that we speak with one voice on the issue. I also hope that, if we pass the motion, having accepted the Labour amendment, that will be not the end but the start of a process of campaigning against the abomination of spending up to £167 billion on ever more powerful nuclear weapons. I hope that we can campaign to change the mind of the UK Government by whatever means.

Members may have noted a report that appeared last month in *The Daily Telegraph* that suggested that a vote on the future of Trident could be held in the UK Parliament before the end

of the year. It could happen in the next few weeks. The Scottish Government believes that the vote provides an opportunity for the UK Government and the UK Parliament to rethink their position on nuclear weapons—a stance that has not changed for almost 50 years.

In the Conservative amendment, it is interesting how much free thinking seems to be going on in certain sectors of the Conservative Party south of the border, but how slavishly adherent the Conservative Party in the Scottish Parliament is to the idea of more and more expensive nuclear weapons. I hope that that will change as a result of this debate. We believe that, in order to change the mind of the Conservative Party in the Scottish Parliament, the UK Government must be more transparent on the costs and consequences of spending on Trident. Perhaps that would happen if more Tory back benchers were aware of the costs and the Government was more open about the costs and consequences. Even before the latest increase, a third of the capital budget of the Royal Air Force, the Royal Navy and the Army was to be spent on nuclear weapons. That was before the cost went up to £167 billion.

The Pentagon has said that Britain cannot be both a nuclear power and an effective defence partner at the same time; it has to be one or the other. It said that because it has run the numbers and knows probably better than we do what Trident will cost, given the control that it will continue to exert over it. I ask the Conservatives—this may be a forlorn hope—to think about the consequences of spending that amount of the defence budget on nuclear weapons.

We call on the UK Government to explore and debate the opportunities that a change in its nuclear weapons stance could provide to other areas of defence and public spending, and for taking forward its commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

I look forward to the debate.

I move,

That the Parliament notes with concern new analysis by the Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee, which suggests a dramatic increase in the projected cost of the successor Trident nuclear weapons programme to £167 billion; believes that it is indefensible for the UK Government to commit billions of pounds of public money to nuclear weapons, particularly when individuals and families across Scotland and the UK are suffering from the consequences of austerity cuts, and calls on the UK Government to cancel plans for the renewal of Trident.

The Presiding Officer: We are four and a half years into this session. For three and a half years of it we have had follow-on debates, which means that when one item of business finishes we start on the next item of business. Everybody should be aware of that.

Three back-bench members came in late, after the minister spoke. They no longer have the prominent places that they had in the debate; they are now at the end of the list. Two front benchers who will be summing up in the debate also came in late. That is not acceptable behaviour. In the future, I will take stronger action by precluding you from speaking at all.

14:27

Claire Baker (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab): I suspect that this debate was scheduled with other events this weekend in mind, but I am happy to open for Scottish Labour.

Labour debated many issues at our conference at the weekend, of course. We spoke about college places, restoring the 50p tax rate and addressing the unacceptable cuts to the working families tax credit. However, the Scottish Government has chosen this issue for today's debate. Given its record on some issues, it is no surprise that it chose to debate a policy that we now seem to be in agreement on.

The renewal of Trident is an important issue. I accept that there is a range of views in the chamber, but I believe that, ultimately, there is more that unites us than divides us.

The Labour Party has always been a broad church. That is something to be proud of. A healthy political party sustains debate, and a democratic party accepts the outcomes of debates. The renewal of Trident has been actively debated in the party for a number of years, and over the years many members of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament have found a home in the Labour Party and argued their cause.

The debate at the Scottish Labour conference on Sunday showed the Labour Party at its best. Kezia Dugdale's decision to introduce a members day on which members and affiliates decided the debates that would take place, voting on the motions, was a positive move for the conference that showed a mature party that supports the discussion of a wide policy agenda. Party members delivered thoughtful, incisive and constructive speeches, and we listened respectfully to one another's views. It was fantastic to see lots of new members addressing the conference not just on Sunday, but across the whole weekend. Healthy political parties enable discussion of their positions, allow debate and are prepared to reflect those positions.

I have always said that the debate on Trident is complex. I outlined the arguments for and against a few weeks' back in a members' business debate, which the cabinet secretary also spoke in. Although there are a number of amendments in

this debate, I respect the views and arguments of other MSPs and their parties.

For Scottish Labour on Sunday, those who argued to oppose the renewal of Trident won the day because they presented a strong case for the renewal of Trident as the wrong choice at the wrong time. Beyond that, there was a strong fundamental argument against nuclear weapons. If used, those weapons would cause unimaginable destruction and death, and there can be no justification for deploying them. The risk to humanity that they pose and the belief that no democratic country in the modern world would use them call into question the necessity of nuclear weapons and nuclear capability.

Patrick Harvie (Glasgow) (Green): Will the member take an intervention?

Claire Baker: I thank the member, but I am trying to make progress. I might be able to let him in later.

There is on-going uncertainty over the cost of Trident. At a time of severe financial constraint, the project would cost billions of pounds over its lifetime—the SNP has spent that money many times over on different promises.

We must also acknowledge that cancelling the renewal of Trident will have direct consequences for our British workforce. I will come on to that later.

In arguing for a halt to the renewal of Trident, we need to consider the political and global reality of the world in which we live. We live in times that are very different from, and arguably much more complex than, those of the cold war. No one would deny that Britain and Scotland need strong defence forces, but the question is whether Trident is part of such a future.

The immediate threat no longer comes from big nation states having a public and clearly defined stand-off; the threat is increasingly from terrorism that is targeted and hidden. What does our country's nuclear capacity mean to a group that attacks without having a Government, a country or an army behind it? That is the threat of the future, and it is only right that our defence and intelligence community is able to adapt to the ever-changing dangers of the world. I accept that the future is unpredictable and we live in uncertain times, but can the future threat to the UK be addressed with nuclear weapons?

International diplomacy is about reducing nuclear weapons and discouraging other countries from developing nuclear capability. We have made progress. When it was in government, the UK Labour Party reduced nuclear weapons while playing a significant international role. The United Kingdom has signed up to gradual, negotiated

disarmament in line with other nations. We should recognise the steps that have been taken and the position that we are in now compared with the position 10 or 20 years ago.

The Minister for Transport and Islands (Derek Mackay): Will the member take an intervention?

Claire Baker: If it is brief.

Derek Mackay: Claire Baker talked about the position that we are in now. If the UK Labour Party was elected to office in the UK, would Labour renew nuclear weapons—yes or no?

Claire Baker: The member will know that Jeremy Corbyn, the leader, has said that we will have a review of defence. As I said at the beginning of my speech, the Labour Party is a broad church—I will not hide from that. Kezia Dugdale made the decision at the weekend that we would have a debate in Scotland, and we have a clear position in today's debate.

Since 1998, all the UK's air-delivered nuclear weapons have been withdrawn and dismantled. There has been a reduction of our nuclear forces by well over 50 per cent since the cold war peak, which is to be welcomed. A decision not to proceed with the renewal of Trident gives impetus to our commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and presents the opportunity to go further.

Our decision to cancel the renewal of Trident is not without significant consequences for the workforce and the communities who rely on the jobs. It would be unfair to the workforce and to workers' families to deny the reality of the challenges that they would face. I grew up in Fife and I know the impact of a key industry disappearing from a region's economic landscape. We should not underestimate what cancellation would mean for the communities of Faslane and Coulport.

The importance of committing to a strong defence diversification strategy was made clear at the Labour conference. There are thousands of Trident-related jobs in the defence sector in Scotland and more jobs are at stake in the rest of the UK. The workers are highly skilled in mechanical, engineering and scientific disciplines. It is vital that their skills are not lost, as they are important to the individuals and to our economy.

During the Parliament's most recent debate on Trident, Jean Urquhart made important points about jobs. She was right to press the cabinet secretary on the issue when she said:

"The debate over jobs at Faslane is a serious one and it inhibits the argument for getting rid of Trident. Could we start planning now, rather than making the mistake of arguing about whether we are going to spend the money on

nursing and public services or improving the traditional forces".—[*Official Report*, 8 October 2015; c 38.]

The concern that defence diversification is difficult is a legitimate one. Diversification has not always delivered as much as we have aimed for it to deliver. That is why we propose the establishment of defence diversification agencies at UK and Scotland levels. The challenges for the affected area and industries will be significant, and a task force or regional response would not be sufficient to meet them.

We must ensure that the skilled and experienced workforce continues to make a significant contribution to our economy, inside or outside the defence sector. We have a responsibility to those workers, and we should support the trade unions in seeking assurances on employment. Our amendment aims to be helpful by expanding the debate to include the reality of what the decision would mean for those communities, and I welcome the cabinet secretary's indication that the SNP will support it at decision time.

As always in such a debate, it is important to realise that the vast majority of people hope for the same outcome; all that we disagree about is the means of getting there. There is a deep-seated desire both inside and outside the Labour Party to see the end of nuclear weapons, and although disagreements may arise regarding the pace and scale of disarmament, it is wise to remember that we are all reaching for the same goal.

That is one reason why the Conservative amendment is disappointing. I feel that it is unfair to claim that those who support the renewal of Trident are the only ones who are willing to stand up and defend our country. That argument does a disservice to all involved. It is an accusation that we would not level at countries that have a defence system but do not have nuclear weapons, such as Australia, Canada and other European nations, and it should not be levelled at those who are against the renewal of Trident in Britain.

Opposing the renewal of Trident is not an immediate threat to our national security. Indeed, if we want to defend our country, there is a strong argument that it would be wiser to invest in equipment that fits us out for the threats that we will face in the future—equipment that is more suited to emerging technologies—rather than spending billions on missiles that we all hope will never be fired. That is why, in our amendment, we call for defence diversification and highlight the need to continue to deliver a UK defence sector that is equipped to deal with the world and the potential threats of the future.

I grew up during the 1970s and 1980s. I remember that my first visit to London was to take

part in a CND rally that was attended by more than 300,000 people and which ended in Hyde park. It was my first real political act and decision, and it was a cause that I was very passionate about. I was the youngest on an overnight bus travelling down from Fife, and it was full of Labour Party members, including our previous MEP Alex Falconer, Communist Party members, political activists and my family. That year, in London, there was a huge show of support for the public's rejection of the nuclear arms race.

That movement of ordinary men and women was important in changing the terms of the public debate, and progress was made with the subsequent global reduction in nuclear capacity and the focus on diplomacy and international negotiation. Scottish Labour has a clear position opposing the renewal of Trident and we will work with others to achieve what we seek.

I move amendment S4M-14681.3, to leave out from "believes" to end and insert:

"recognises the number of workers in the British defence system in Scotland and throughout the UK whose employment is linked to Trident-related activities and that firm commitments must be made to the trade unions on the retention of defence workers' jobs; believes that, in the event of the cancellation of Trident, the establishment of defence diversification agencies at Scottish and UK levels is essential to deliver a strong defence diversification strategy that provides workers with high quality employment through the retention of skills developed in the sector, while delivering a UK defence sector equipped to deal with the world and dangers that it possesses, and calls on the UK Government not to renew Trident."

14:37

John Lamont (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con): I stand up to defend what members on the SNP benches would have us believe is the indefensible. According to the Scottish Government, anyone who advocates the retention or replacement of nuclear weapons at Faslane is immoral, war crazed or trigger happy. Even worse, anyone who supports the retention of Trident is opposed to welfare, ending poverty and giving our children the best start in life.

The motion suggests that we have to choose between Trident and welfare, or between nuclear bombs and supporting vulnerable people. That is a false choice. My party supports the retention of Trident because we are the party of responsibility. The first responsibility of any Government is the defence and security of its people. That is why the present UK Government and all previous UK Governments of all political colours for the past six decades have retained an operational, independent nuclear deterrent. However, that does not mean that I do not also support welfare. To present the debate as a straight choice between protecting our country—the United

Kingdom—and providing support for vulnerable people, as the SNP is trying to do, is simplistic, cynical and an insult to the majority of Scots.

Derek Mackay: I ask John Lamont, as a good Conservative, to say at what point nuclear weapons, immoral as they are, would become too expensive even for him.

John Lamont: The effect and benefit of having a nuclear deterrent cannot be quantified in terms of cost. A nuclear deterrent is something that our country needs, not only to provide a deterrent but to provide the protection to our people that we have provided in the past and which we should continue to provide in the future.

The SNP constantly claims to stand up for Scotland, but voters do not agree with the SNP on this issue. Poll after poll show that more people favour the retention of the nuclear deterrent. The latest poll found that 53 per cent support the retention of nuclear weapons, with only 37 per cent saying that the UK should give them up completely. Is it now the SNP's position that those Scots who support the retention of nuclear weapons do not care for vulnerable people?

The motion refers to the cost of replacing the nuclear deterrent. Even if the lifetime cost of replacing it is £167 billion over 32 years, that is still only 6 per cent of the annual defence budget, and that budget accounts for only 5 per cent of UK public spending. Over the same period, spending on welfare is likely to be around £7,000 billion—welfare accounts for 29 per cent of UK public spending. By the SNP's own benchmark for how much money is spent on something, the UK Government is certainly choosing welfare over warfare.

That is only the start of the SNP's misdirection over this issue. The SNP has a fantasy shopping list on which to spend all the savings from scrapping Trident. Here are just a few examples from that list. The First Minister wants to spend all the money on extra nurses, teachers, schools and hospitals—and then spend it again, this time on tackling child poverty and increasing the welfare budget. Alex Salmond wants to spend it on our colleges, presumably to reinstate some of the 150,000 part-time places that the SNP has slashed. The money has been earmarked by Christine Grahame and Joan McAlpine for job creation, by Alex Neil for health and education, by Christina McKelvie for nurses and teachers, by Bill Kidd for welfare, by George Adam for school building and by Kenny Gibson for further defence spending.

The truth is that scrapping Trident will not save anywhere near as much as the SNP claims. For a start, the £167 billion figure stated in the motion is not based on any consideration of the actual cost

of replacing Trident; it is calculated by presuming that spending on defence will be maintained at 2 per cent of gross domestic product and that spending on Trident will be 6 per cent of that, which is the current figure. The figure is dependent not so much on the cost of replacing the nuclear deterrent as on economic growth and defence spending elsewhere. It is wrong to think that the cost of Trident will rise simply because the UK's economy is growing or because defence spending continues to increase, because the reality is that we do not currently know the cost of replacement, because the research and development work on the new system has yet to be completed.

We all want a world without nuclear weapons, but the SNP has failed to explain how unilateral disarmament—much less just kicking Trident down the road to England—would achieve that. What evidence is there that if we get rid of our nuclear weapons, others will get rid of theirs? Would the French give up their nuclear weapons? Would the Russians? Would a rogue state halt its efforts to obtain nuclear warheads simply because the SNP got its way? The truth is that by unilaterally getting rid of our nuclear deterrent, we would severely damage the UK's national security and might even encourage other states to acquire their own nuclear weapons as a consequence.

While the SNP cynically uses Trident as a political football, the Labour Party cannot decide what its position on Trident is. Labour's pro-Trident Scottish leader is not backed by her own party, and its anti-Trident UK leader was not allowed to debate the issue at the UK Labour Party conference. The SNP's position on Trident is cynical; the Labour Party's is simply muddled.

I move amendment S4M-14681.1, to leave out from "notes" to end and insert:

"recognises the UK's commitment to reduce nuclear arms and support global disarmament; agrees that the first priority of any government is to defend its people and that, in an increasingly dangerous world, having a nuclear deterrent protects against both foreseen and unforeseen threats; notes that the forecast cost of replacing the nuclear deterrent remains at between £18.6 and £24.8 billion for the overall programme and an annual running cost of £2 to £2.3 billion a year, which, spread across the lifetime of Trident, represents an annual insurance premium of around 0.13% of total UK Government spending; regrets that, by trying to present the debate over Trident as a simple choice between nuclear weapons and providing welfare, the Scottish Government is behaving in a cynical way, which insults the majority of Scots who favour the replacement of the UK's nuclear deterrent; notes that it has been the UK Labour Party's position for decades that Britain needs a credible independent nuclear deterrent, according to the shadow defence secretary, and suggests that the Scottish Labour Party should decide what its position is on the future of the UK's nuclear deterrent."

14:43

John Wilson (Central Scotland) (Ind): I thank the cabinet secretary for bringing this debate to the chamber. Trident, and the future of nuclear weapons in this country, is an important and controversial topic. Five weeks ago, we discussed the UK Government's plans to refurbish Faslane naval base—the refurbishment costs were an estimated £500 million.

I welcome the decision by Scottish Labour Party members at the weekend to vote to oppose renewing Trident, although whether the top brass of the party has the ability or the guile to go against its national party is yet to be seen.

The UK Government plans to cut tax credits for some of Scotland's and the UK's hardest-working and lowest-paid families. Those cuts will cost an estimated 3 million families more than £1,200 a year. In the same breath in which the UK Government claims that it cannot continue to support those families, that the budget must be balanced and that public spending must be reined in, it announces a commitment to spend billions of pounds of public money on a nuclear weapons system that simply serves to make the UK less equal, secure and safe.

Those who support the renewal of Trident consistently claim that Trident and the refurbishment of Faslane are necessary to secure jobs in the area and to protect our society. My amendment calls on the Scottish Government to support a funded jobs transition programme that would assist workers at Faslane in finding new work that utilises their engineering and other key skills to create a better, fairer and greener Scotland. However, unless the UK Government, or an independent Scottish Government, agrees to declare its waters a nuclear-free zone, that is all academic. Any decision by the UK Government, or an independent Scottish Government, to remove Trident and nuclear weapons from Faslane and Scottish waters is toothless. As long as we continue to allow NATO and its associated countries to house their nuclear weapons on our shores, we will continue to be in danger from those means of mass destruction.

On 19 September, the *Daily Record* reported that an American nuclear submarine capable of launching 24 ballistic missiles docked in Faslane. In the week of 8 October, a NATO military exercise—the largest military exercise in more than a decade—took place off the shores of Scotland. Those exercises included jamming global positioning system signals used by fisherman and sea trawlers. As long as the UK, or an independent Scotland, remains a part of NATO, it will continue to be required to support, directly and indirectly, nuclear weapons systems being used and docked in and around Scotland.

The NATO alliance is a cold war relic that is not suited to the realities of modern-day security threats. Nuclear missiles are indiscriminate weapons of mass murder. They have the potential to level cities, create destruction and destroy humanity on a scale that we cannot even imagine. It is time that Scotland stopped supporting nuclear weapons, both at home and abroad. We must spend our public money helping people, not harming them.

The Edinburgh conversations during the cold war helped to thaw tensions and reduce the military threat from both sides of the conflict. Scotland can build on that legacy and become a diplomatic, non-violent and anti-nuclear weapons country. Scotland can and should work with other nations in the European Union and north Africa to establish mutually beneficial defence agreements based on mutual co-operation and human security.

The security of all humanity is of the utmost importance. Nuclear weapons are one of the most controversial moral and ethical issues of our time. We must be serious about the need for disarmament and mindful of what we, as a nation, are trying to achieve and how we want to present ourselves to the world. We must move away from indiscriminate weapons of mass slaughter and destruction and remove them from our shores and from public spending.

If we are serious about creating not just a fairer Scotland but a fairer world—one that can lead individuals out of poverty and create a higher standard of living for all—we must lead the way. We can set an example as a nation that rejects the idea that, in order to secure their safety and future, nation states must spend vast amounts of money on weapons of mass destruction. Scotland, through diplomacy and disarmament, can protect itself and contribute to global peace. I urge all those who are opposed to Trident nuclear weapons and continued aggressive nuclear proliferation to support my amendment. Only by removing nuclear weapons and leaving NATO can we truly disengage from the nuclear arms industry and show an alternative, non-nuclear future for Scotland and the rest of the world.

I great take pleasure, on behalf of the Green and independents group in the Scottish Parliament, in moving amendment S4M-14681.2, to insert at end:

“, decommission the Vanguard-class submarines and declare the UK, and UK waters, a nuclear weapons-free zone; commits to a funded jobs transition for defence workers that utilises their engineering and other key skills, and agrees that the UK, or an independent Scotland, should both end its membership of NATO on the grounds of NATO's first-strike nuclear policy and seek alternative alliances based on mutual cooperation and human security”.

14:49

Christina McKelvie (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (SNP): “Bairns not bombs”, “welfare not warfare”—those are handy catchphrases that can help to focus people’s minds behind a concept. Like headlines in a newspaper, they can almost become part of the language so that we have an instant recognition factor. They are also a useful shorthand for an enormous issue of our time. At Faslane, we have the lethal capacity to wipe out half of the world. Each Trident missile has a range of up to 7,500 miles. The United Kingdom deploys 16 Trident missiles on each of its four Vanguard-class submarines, of which one is on patrol at all times. The destructive power of one Trident missile is estimated to be the equivalent of eight Hiroshima bombs.

I first joined CND at the age of 15. It was obvious then to me that the world neither needed nor wanted that level of destructive power. We have created a monster that stalks the world, growing ever more powerful and more threatening.

Apparently, the cost of this huge enterprise is of no consequence to some.

Alex Johnstone (North East Scotland) (Con): While the member is going through statistics, will she tell us what the only country ever to unilaterally give up its nuclear deterrent was and say what happened to that country within a few years?

Christina McKelvie: I think that I would rather talk about what we would spend £160 billion on in this country.

My point that the cost is of no consequence to some has just been proved, and we now understand that the son of Trident could come in at not £100 billion or even £120 billion but an eye-watering £167 billion. That is unlike the cost of meeting social need in our communities, or the cost in terms of the destruction of human quality of life, where a mere £30 million—sorry, £30 billion; I always mix up my millions and my billions—could at least restore some kind of justice. However, to some, it is fine to spend a total of £167 billion to achieve—what? The destruction of most of the world? The skills behind the fantastic technology, the precision engineering and the complexities of a Trident missile would, in my view, be better applied in other places.

What would a Ministry of Defence official or Tory lord or even some MPs understand about the struggles of a disabled father of two who takes his own life after a work capability assessment? The MOD paid out nearly £41,000 in data roaming charges for one mobile phone last year. That equates, roughly, to the cost of maintaining benefits for perhaps four or five people who are unable to work because they are chronically sick,

disabled or have been made redundant. I would suggest that the MOD should cut its phone bills instead of the Government cutting its social security bills.

It is heartening that Labour members have voted so emphatically against renewing Trident. The action has no doubt also raised members’ awareness of how frustrating it is to take a view that could be overturned elsewhere. As the SNP Government in Scotland is reminded pretty much daily, our actions are constrained. We want to develop a safer, fairer, better social security system that protects the most vulnerable, but we are not allowed to—at least for the moment. Labour’s Scottish members might have experienced a parallel feeling when they were informed pretty sharply by the shadow defence secretary that, since defence is not devolved, Labour policy would not be changing from support for the renewal of Trident. I urge my colleagues on the Labour benches to stick to their principles.

We would be foolish and irresponsible if we ignored the reality that the financial resources available to the Scottish Government are under the control of Westminster. As the cuts continue to bite ever more viciously, our budgets will be cut as well. The Scotland Bill might allow us some more control over how we spend our revenue, but it will not fundamentally change the fact that we can make changes only around the periphery. We cannot redesign the social security system so that it better meets the needs of our citizens any more than we can decide not to renew Trident. We do not have the power to do either. The Scotland Bill has confirmed that today.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced in August an additional £500 million to be spent on ensuring the continuation of the nuclear base at Faslane for the next generation of nuclear weapons. Alongside the projected £167 billion of running costs, we are watching the destruction of many lives here and now, in our communities. John Lamont cannot sit with me on the Welfare Reform Committee every Tuesday morning and not see that.

We are talking about money that could run our struggling national health service in Scotland for the next 10 or more years; £100 billion could pay the wages of 70,000 nurses or 60,000 primary teachers for the next 50 years. I say to Mr Lamont that, yes, I am still rooting for nurses and teachers. It strikes me as a distorted view that the United Kingdom Government considers it appropriate to spend those billions while people who are sick, disabled, young or pensioners in constituencies such as mine are having the food snatched from their tables.

Trident renewal is not only about the huge cost. Just as important is the moral price—or, rather,

the price of immorality—because the presence of weapons of mass destruction on our shores or any shores in the UK is an affront to any notion of moral or ethical behaviour.

Aggression is a fact of life. When we see hundreds of thousands of people trying to escape it and the consequences of extremist religious groups such as Daesh, what will we do? Will we send a nuclear bomb to blow them up? No, we should use diplomacy and use that £160 billion to support our people, not to buy bombs.

14:55

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Lab): At the weekend, the Labour party conference voted overwhelmingly to oppose the renewal of the Trident nuclear weapons system. I am proud of my party and my leader in Scotland for opening up our party and our conference to a member-led, open and democratic debate. I recommend that to other parties in the Parliament. It is a good thing.

Derek Mackay: It is not new.

Neil Findlay: It is not new, says Mr Mackay. I will crack the jokes, if he does not mind.

Stewart Stevenson (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP): Will Neil Findlay give way?

The Deputy Presiding Officer (John Scott): One at a time, please. Mr Findlay has the floor.

Neil Findlay: It showed us at our best and, just like the SNP, we will now use our position to seek to influence not only the UK Government but the UK Labour Party's policy review of Trident renewal. That is what politics is about: debating the big issues of the day, hearing the counter-arguments, influencing people and winning them over by the strength of our positions.

Patrick Harvie: I warmly congratulate Mr Findlay and his colleagues on the strong decision that was taken at their conference at the weekend. However, over the past couple of years, I have heard some Labour members criticise the SNP on the ground that getting rid of Trident while remaining inside the NATO nuclear umbrella is not a consistent position. That seems a fair criticism. What is his view of it?

Neil Findlay: We know Mr Harvie's position on that, and the Labour Party does not take that position at the moment. That is me answering him straight.

The task of the growing number of us who are opposed to Trident renewal is to influence others. The two biggest parties in Scotland are now opposed to Trident renewal. The Green Party is also opposed, as are the three independent members of the Parliament. That is real progress and a huge boost to the campaign to get rid of

Trident. I want the Liberals—the Liberal who is in the chamber and the Liberals in general—to join us in the campaign. As a socialist, I am always an optimist, so I even want the Tories to join us in opposition to renewal. Perhaps that stretches my optimism a bit far, but I will try, because some Tories are coming to that position.

We will not achieve that through moral indignation or superiority. The argument will be won when we are able to address people's concerns head on and when we can reassure the worried—whether they be workers on the Clyde, business owners around Faslane or people who are worried about the country's defences—that we have answers to their fears.

Christian Allard (North East Scotland) (SNP): I congratulate all the Labour Party members in Scotland on taking the decision that they took at the weekend. Will Neil Findlay address the fear that some people might have that the debate might be won too late because the decision will already have been taken at Westminster?

Neil Findlay: I absolutely accept that, but we must continue with our campaign. I stretch out my hand of friendship to Mr Allard. We have been in the same campaign for some time and will continue with that.

The arguments are there to be taken on and won, and the fears that people have are there to be taken on and allayed. The military argument grows weaker by the day. Ex-generals such as Lord Bramall and General Ramsbotham say that changes in international politics make Trident, not the debate over its future, an irrelevance. They identify cybercrime, climate change and terrorism as the major threats to our security. There is no longer a two-horse superpower race—thankfully, the cold war is over. As one of my colleagues mentioned in the debate on Sunday, Russian investment in the United Kingdom is at a record high and, similarly, the UK's business and financial links with China, India, Pakistan and France are all at record or near-record levels. That hardly makes us one of their top military targets. The military argument is not strong, and people such as Michael Portillo, Nick Harvey, Nick Brown and Crispin Blunt all agree with that.

For me, the jobs argument is important, because the workforce and communities that are affected by Trident are the key consideration in the debate. We have to give assurances to people in the supply chain, small businesses, engineers and fabricators that we have a real and genuine plan to create jobs—not imaginary jobs, but a guaranteed future. Surely with £167 billion we can do that. It is not beyond the wit of man to use that eye-watering sum of money for things that will benefit humanity, rather than for something that, if it were ever used, would destroy humanity.

I think that the minister said that our share of the money involved would be £13.9 billion. Mr Lamont questioned the figure of £167 billion. He might be right to question that figure, because it was a Tory member of Parliament who provided it, but let us take it at face value. If our share is £13.9 billion, we can create plenty of jobs with that. We should look at what happened in America when bases were closing and new jobs and infrastructure were created in a planned and strategic way. Surely we can replicate that with the eye-watering sums of money that are on the table.

15:01

Jim Hume (South Scotland) (LD): For the past 30 years, my party has been in favour of maintaining a minimum nuclear deterrent. I should be clear right at the start that the only reason why we have not already had the main-gate decision to replace Trident on a like-for-like basis is because the Liberal Democrats blocked it when in government. That is the only reason why this debate is possible. Labour and the Tories, in their 2010 manifestos, were in favour of like-for-like replacement of Trident. Between them, they got a majority of seats and of votes across the UK and across Scotland. I am proud that the Liberal Democrats when in government were able to prevent the main decision from being taken and insisted on a review that looked at other options, including our preferred solution.

Back in the 1980s, we were against Trident replacing the Polaris system, as it escalated the deterrent above the minimum. We were told that that was to allow missiles to penetrate Moscow's antiballistic missile defences. We did not believe that that was needed back then and nobody seriously thinks that it is needed now. It has always astonished me that, in 2010, Labour and the Conservatives thought that the Moscow-destroying option needed to be replaced.

We support having a minimum deterrent.

Colin Keir (Edinburgh Western) (SNP): Will the member take an intervention?

Jim Hume: Britain needs to step down the nuclear ladder, in conjunction with our NATO allies, and pursue and achieve multilateral disarmament.

I am sure that Colin Keir agrees that we should have disarmament across the world.

Colin Keir: Exactly what is the definition of "minimum nuclear deterrent" and why do we need it?

Jim Hume: We need to minimise the deterrent across the world and get to a position in which we do not need any nuclear deterrent whatsoever. To work towards zero in the future would be fantastic.

However, unfortunately, that is not on the order of business today. Today's debate is about using precious Scottish Parliament time to position political parties on the left before next year's elections. I do not think that the Parliament should be used as a debating society for that.

Derek Mackay: So we should not debate things.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Order.

Jim Hume: The minister might learn something if he keeps listening.

Today, the Tories have again been rather too enthusiastic about Trident. They need to remember that, through the non-proliferation treaty, the UK is under an obligation to disarm over time. As members have highlighted, Labour is all over the place on Trident. All parties have members with different views on nuclear weapons. The SNP, of course, lost three of its members to become independents as a result of its vote to sign up to nuclear NATO. Others, such as Sandra White, decided to stay.

Regarding welfare or warfare, Angus Robertson, SNP's Westminster leader, last week repeated his call for Trident money to be reinvested in conventional forces, so the position is actually warfare or warfare; it is not as clear and simplistic as the SNP motion suggests, which is disingenuous at best. People could be more respectful of the serious manner in which those with other views weigh up the matters before them.

We are discussing how best to prevent both nuclear war and conventional war—wars that those systems have possibly helped to prevent. We are all disarmers but unilateral action leaves Russia, the US, France and more with significant nuclear capabilities and Britain outside crucial nuclear talks, with no influence. It is pure tokenism for that not to be recognised and to think of Scotland in isolation, not as part of the world community.

Britain needs to step down the nuclear ladder in conjunction with our NATO allies. That is not an option on the table for this debate but, in reality, it is what is needed—and in the future, of course, we need multilateral disarmament.

15:06

Kevin Stewart (Aberdeen Central) (SNP): I welcome the stance that Scottish Labour Party delegates took at the weekend. I hope that they will be able to persuade their members of Parliament in the House of Commons and the shadow defence secretary, Maria Eagle, that Trident should not be renewed. I wish them well in that and I hope that they are successful. However,

at this moment in time, it seems to me that the vast bulk of Westminster politicians are in favour of renewal of the Trident system.

Philosopher and anti-nuclear campaigner Daisaku Ikeda has said:

“Japan learned from the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki that the tragedy wrought by nuclear weapons must never be repeated and that humanity and nuclear weapons cannot coexist.”

Is it humane for the UK Government to contemplate spending £167 billion on new nuclear weapons when vicious cuts are being made to our social security system? Is it morally right for politicians to slash tax credits for the working poor and spend billions on new weapons of mass destruction? Where is the humanity in adhering to the wrong-headed policies of austerity while being profligate in spending £167 billion on the weaponry of Armageddon that can never be used?

John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (Ind): Some people would consider it immoral to get rid of our own nuclear weapons but still be very happy to host other countries' nuclear weapons in every port in the land.

Kevin Stewart: Mr Finnie, that is the NATO argument and other NATO countries have banned nuclear weapons from their land, their airspace and their national waters. Norway is the best example. I think that we should follow suit.

I will move on to Mr Lamont's speech, which I found rather bizarre, to say the least. It was basically a speech saying, “Nuclear weapons at any price, no matter what the cost is to people”—a very interesting argument indeed. It seems really strange that any political party would put forward proposals that put the buying of weaponry ahead of its people but, then again, the Conservatives are a very strange political party.

£167 thousand million would pay for almost five years of the Scottish Government budget. It would pay for 41.75 years of additional tax credits if the chancellor were to drop his planned £4 billion cut or it would allow for 14 years of maintaining social security at previous levels rather than our most vulnerable people having to deal with Osborne's £12 billion annual cut.

Jim Hume: To go back to a point that I made earlier, does Kevin Stewart agree with the SNP leader at Westminster, Angus Robertson, who said that Trident money should be reinvested in conventional forces?

Kevin Stewart: There should be a debate about how the money is spent, although personally I would not spend it on conventional defences. Unfortunately, at present, we do not have the power to deal with that situation.

Our share of the £167 billion would be £13,861,000,000, or £13.861 billion. Scotland's share of the Trident replacement cost is equivalent to more than the cost of the entire Scottish primary school estate, and one and a half times the cost of the entire Scottish secondary school estate.

The cost of Trident to Scotland is more than the amount of money that we have spent to train every, nurse, consultant, general practitioner, teacher and police officer who currently works in Scotland, with £2.651 billion to spare.

What could be done with that money is absolutely mind-boggling, but instead of putting teachers before Trident, nurses before nukes or bairns before bombs, our UK political parties are adamant that £167 billion should be spent on weapons of mass destruction rather than on people.

I return to Daisaku Ikeda, who said:

“Our world continues to be threatened by more than 20,000 nuclear warheads—the capacity to kill or grievously injure all people living on Earth, and to destroy the global ecosystem many times over. We are impelled to ask what it is, exactly, that is being protected by this unimaginable destructive capacity.”

We should take the lead and start the process of eradicating nuclear weapons by saying no to new nuclear weapons in Scotland, scrapping Trident and investing in our people rather than in weapons that can never, ever be used.

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

Kevin Stewart: Let us choose humanity and rid these islands of nuclear weapons.

15:12

Sarah Boyack (Lothian) (Lab): I welcome the chance to speak in today's debate, especially in the light of my party's historic debate at the weekend. The issue of whether the UK should invest in the new generation of Trident submarines involves a moral decision and a strategic decision, and this debate is a chance for MSPs to highlight where we agree with each other rather than where we disagree. It is a chance for us to work together.

The Labour motion is not a “delete all and insert ...” motion; it would rightly keep the first line of the SNP Government motion on the cost of Trident, which is an absolutely breathtaking amount. Given the choice that is facing the UK, the huge cost of a weaponry system that can never be used because of its immense destructive power should cause us to reflect and take a different path.

My party worked hard under the previous Labour Government to support moves towards nuclear disarmament, and significant progress was made. The debate around Trident must focus

on the strategic choices that we must make not just to defend our own country, but to deliver peace in an increasingly uncertain and dangerous world. We need to think about global security for the 21st century, not for the post-war era.

I welcome the SNP's acceptance of the Labour amendment, which highlights the fact that we must plan for the future of the thousands of workers throughout Scotland and the UK whose jobs are linked to the Trident programme. In the past few weeks we have seen Scottish jobs falling like ninepins, with the loss of jobs in our energy industries—in oil and gas, at Longannet—and now, potentially, in our steel industry. Social and economic justice demands that we support action to support the welfare of those workers and their communities. That is why the Labour amendment calls for the creation of defence diversification agencies in Scotland and the rest of the UK. We need the Scottish Government to act and to plan for our future now. As Claire Baker said, we cannot afford to lose those skills and that knowledge.

Our amendment also calls on the UK Government not to renew Trident. Building consensus and working across parties is important not just within our country, but across other nation states too. That is what is important about our debate today, and that is how we will make progress. We must think about how we will build those bridges and persuade other countries that they need to consider nuclear disarmament by getting rid of their weaponry and choosing not to invest in it.

Non-replacement of Trident is hugely important. It is the right thing to do morally and strategically, but it requires that we rethink what we do, as was highlighted in the Labour Party conference motion on Sunday. The world of the 21st century is increasingly dangerous and uncertain and demands that we invest in peacekeeping, solidarity and human rights.

Political instability can come from a variety of sources; Neil Findlay mentioned the challenge of climate change. When crops fail and food prices rocket, that can lead to changes of Government. Lack of access to water increasingly leads to the creation of flashpoints across the world, especially in some of the poorest and most unstable countries.

Challenges are also posed by countries that do not respect international laws, democracy and human rights. We need to use economic power and sanctions when states do not respect international laws and the United Nations.

As Claire Baker also rightly said, we need to address the threats that are now being presented by terrorism. That means that we need to invest in

peacekeeping, we need to play our part in global humanitarian events and we need to invest in defence of our country, but that should not mean the replacement of Trident. The UK is and has been an important player in the world. We were a key nation in post-war Europe, and the Commonwealth has been a bridge between north and south. The price of renewing Trident will be that we do not get to play our full and potential part in leading the drive towards nuclear disarmament. We will not get to spend our resources on the peacekeeping and defence that are so crucial to the welfare of millions of citizens across the world whose lives are damaged by conflict. We need the hardware to do that.

We are talking about planning ahead and setting a new path for nuclear disarmament, which also has to be about supporting both the workers in our defence industries and the wider communities that they serve. We need to consider their livelihoods and we need to retain their skills and knowledge. We need to invest in their welfare and future because they are part of our country's future. We need to make a just transition.

I am keen to hear from the minister how he will take forward our proposals for a defence diversification agency in Scotland. That will be our path. It should be our way of playing our part in defence diversification and setting a new path.

This is a really important moment for us and we need to work together. I welcome Labour's amendment and hope that it will be accepted across the chamber this afternoon.

15:17

Christine Grahame (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP): I also welcome the recent decision of the Labour Party conference. The louder Scotland speaks for nuclear disarmament through a range of voices, the better.

There are few advantages to growing older, but sometimes individuals get wiser, even if Governments do not. I cannot recall the actual bombing of Hiroshima and that of Nagasaki that followed three days later but I certainly know about the years thereafter. There were immediate death tolls of 140,000 in Hiroshima and 74,000 in Nagasaki, and many people died later from the effects of the fallout and the horrors of radiation.

Instead of world powers learning from that, we have watched the steady progression of weapons of mass destruction to the present day and beyond. In 1943, Churchill and Roosevelt reached agreement on a larger nuclear programme—the Manhattan project. In 1946, collaboration ended, but the UK continued with an independent programme to develop an atomic weapon, which

we tested in 1952. In the same year, the USA tested the H-bomb. In 1958, a mutual defence agreement was signed between the USA and the UK: that is really the foundation of where we are now with Faslane and the Trident weapons system.

In 1980, the UK announced its decision to procure the Trident C4 missile system and to end the Polaris era in 1996. Now billions of pounds are to be wasted on that programme's replacement, just as millions were wasted on previous weapons systems, such as Blue Streak.

In principle, I oppose nuclear weapons just as I opposed atomic weapons in my youth. I will put that to one side and consider the deterrence argument. The issue about a so-called deterrent is that a person must be prepared to use it. If they bluff, they must be prepared for that bluff to be called. I wholly support Jeremy Corbyn. I admire his tenacity, which is unequivocal, in saying that he would not press the button. The argument that nuclear weapons are only a deterrent and that we would never use them is specious. Why have them if we are never going to use them? The deterrence argument has not been made.

Even worse, nuclear weapons have made the world not safer but more dangerous. Lessons must be learned not just from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but from the 1962 Cuban missile crisis. As a teenager, I recall the horror that we were on the brink of a nuclear war—there was real fear that it would happen. The stand-off between Kennedy and Khrushchev was real: at one point, it was too close to call. Headlines read "The world held its breath". Sometimes, headlines overegg the pudding, but that headline was true on that day. I do not want to revisit that close call.

The argument for multilateral disarmament is lost, if it was ever even valid. We cannot ask other nations to abandon their nuclear armaments while we cling to ours. There can be no faith in that argument.

The horrendous nuclear weapons have been given deceiving names. The Hiroshima bomb was called "Little Boy" after Roosevelt; the one in Nagasaki was called "Fat Man" after Churchill. They got smarter at selling the weapons. Decades later, they were given sexy and glamorous names that concealed the reality: Blue Steel, Yellow Sun, Blue Streak, Polaris and Trident. Those names sold them so much better than would have been the case had they been called weapons of mass destruction.

Tony Blair did not need to look abroad for weapons of mass destruction—they were here all the time, on Scottish soil, at Faslane on the Clyde, close to Scotland's biggest city.

Weapons of mass destruction are not just an obscene waste of billions of pounds, nor are they just outmoded in a world in which the possibility of a terrorist with a bomb on his back sitting next to us on the bus is much more of a threat than anything else. They are fundamentally immoral: they were immoral when they were dropped on Hiroshima and—my God!—they are immoral to this day.

15:22

Jean Urquhart (Highlands and Islands) (Ind):

First of all, I congratulate the Scottish Government. I am delighted that it has brought the debate to the chamber today.

I would like to go back to 2007 when there was, unusually, an open debate in the House of Commons, when the less-than-surprising decision was taken to go ahead to replace Trident—or at least, the decision was taken that the initial design and preparations, called "initial gate", should go ahead. The Labour Government committed to a further debate when the time came for "main gate" and the commissioning of production of the new system. I hope that the present UK Government will honour that commitment, and that the debate on Trident will happen in Westminster.

So much has changed since 2007. In 2008, we suffered a financial crisis. In 2010, the new coalition Government did not agree about the Trident renewal programme. The Liberals voted against it in 2007, so I suspect that we have the Liberals to thank for that. I agree with what we have heard today that we might have seen a majority Tory Government approve main-gate investment before now. We must be glad of that delay.

Now we are in a different place. The Tory Government seems to be keen to ignore the fact that it has no mandate to govern in Scotland. Whether it is a reserved matter or not, a sure 57 and possible 58 out of 59 MPs who represent the people of Scotland are opposed to the UK Government's plans for Trident's replacement. That cannot be ignored.

Everybody recognises that the United Kingdom is on a shoogly peg with austerity budgets for the poorest people, but not for the arms trade, with an in/out referendum on European Union membership, with Scotland's new political landscape and with English votes for English laws in the UK Parliament. The world has turned a few times since 2007, and the Tory Government should take cognisance of that fact. Politically, there is an issue that is not being recognised—never mind resolved.

The financial situation in the UK makes continuing with main-gate investment an outrage

for many, with the cost being £150 billion and rising. Yes: we need welfare, not warfare. Saying no to Trident brings its own workload, and maybe there is another welfare that needs a great deal of consideration—I appreciate that it has been mentioned in the debate by other members—which is the welfare of the workforces at Coulport and Faslane. It is imperative that we start now to plan for the non-nuclear defence of our nation and for alternative employment for those who work on nuclear submarines. That issue came up often in the debate on the referendum on independence for our country. It is imperative that those of us who want to see Scotland become independent reassure the people—take away the question marks for them—who are uncertain about removing Trident for reasons of defence of the nation.

The constitutional question of an independent Scotland is not settled. The Westminster Government must address the issue of signing off main-gate investment without knowing whether Scotland might become an independent country, which raises many problems with regard to continuing to have Trident in the Clyde.

People in Scotland need to hear a debate about a defence plan that includes asking whether we should be a member of NATO. We need clear proposals on that. What party will be the first to bring the debate on NATO to Parliament? Membership of NATO is often regarded as if it is membership of some club or other, but it is not about joining the brownies. It is a situation that we need to be clear about; people must understand the implications of being a member of NATO. Trident and NATO are linked and go together like fish and chips, so let us have a debate about NATO, too. Labour has been rightly praised for debating Trident at its conference, and I commend it for that. I look forward to the conference at which it is brave enough to debate membership of NATO.

We need more and more debate about these issues. I said at the opening of my speech that it was surprising that the then Labour Government had a debate on Trident at Westminster, because the fact is that we do not debate such issues enough. Deals are often done behind closed doors, and arms manufacturers thrive through deals that are made that we are in the dark about. We do not have enough information about such matters. We cannot in this country get information about the number of people who are involved in the arms trade. I welcome this debate on Trident as a start and I am delighted that we are having it. However, let us take it further and really look at how we defend our nation, which includes knowing who our enemies and potential enemies really are.

I say that of course it should be welfare over warfare, but we need a lot more information in order to feel truly confident about that and to spread that confidence throughout our country so that Scotland can become truly independent. Without that independence, there is no reason to debate Trident; because without that constitutional change, Trident will be there for our children and our grandchildren.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I call on Christian Allard, to be followed by Malcolm Chisholm. A little time has emerged, so there is now time for interventions.

15:29

Christian Allard (North East Scotland) (SNP):

I welcome the fact that we are having another debate on Trident. Jean Urquhart said that we cannot have enough debates about Trident but, to an extent, I wish that we did not have so many debates on the subject. I hope that, in the near future, we will not have to have any debates about Trident and that we will be able to close the book on weapons of mass destruction here in Scotland.

There are three points that I want to make before I come to the main part of my speech. My first point is on the Labour amendment. When I saw it, I was a bit surprised by it. I am happy to support it, but I would love it if Claire Baker—who I see has left the chamber—or whoever is to close the debate for Labour could tell us why they thought that it was a good idea to leave out the end of Keith Brown's motion. I do not understand what in the second part of the motion Labour could not agree with. I would love to get an explanation of that.

My second point is about timing and Labour's amendment. It is a very good amendment, but it contains nothing new. What has happened with the Labour position on Trident, on which there has been some debate? In April, the Scottish Trades Union Congress and Scottish CND published "Trident and Jobs: the case for a Scottish Defence Diversification Agency". That report gives all the answers that we need. I am surprised about the timing. I would love to have an explanation of why at this point in time it is a good idea to lodge such an amendment.

I understand that things have changed—the situation changed at the weekend. I congratulate all the members of the Labour Party in Scotland; I only wish that the Labour members in the rest of the UK would agree with them.

Sarah Boyack: We have reflected the motion that we passed at conference in our amendment, and we have added in the last clause of the Scottish Government's motion. We have tried to work co-operatively, and I very much welcome the

fact that the cabinet secretary accepted that in his opening remarks.

Christian Allard: That intervention was timely, because as I said my point is precisely about the issue of timing.

I will continue in that vein with my third point. When I intervened on Neil Findlay, I made it clear that it is good that a debate is taking place, but it needs to conclude before Westminster signs a cheque for the renewal of Trident, because if it does not, Labour members in Scotland will not understand why they had a debate if it had no consequences. We must ensure that the big change that took place on the back of what Kezia Dugdale said at the Labour Party conference actually happens, because Labour will not want me to come back to the chamber and say, “Plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose.” Words are okay, but what we need is action—that is the most important thing.

I want to talk about the support that exists across Scotland for getting rid of weapons of mass destruction. That view has been expressed in numerous public opinion polls, and it is shared by civic Scotland, including the STUC, which I mentioned, and Scotland’s churches, and by the Scottish Parliament. Most recently, it has been expressed at the SNP conference—we have always talked about Trident at the SNP conference—and the conference of the Scottish branch of the Labour Party. I have to put it like that, because nothing has yet shown me that the Labour Party is very much a party of Scotland. I know that the members have decided to take a level of independence; before I revise my opinion, I would love the elected members—the politicians—to take the same level of independence.

I am afraid that there are only six Labour members present. I would love it if Kezia Dugdale was here, because she said in Perth that she wanted her party to stop being a party of protest. I was surprised about that. She said that the Scottish branch of the Labour Party should not be about bumper stickers and T-shirt slogans. For the life of me, I cannot understand why she used that kind of language. I know many Labour members—I meet many Labour members because I am a member of Scottish CND. I say to Kezia Dugdale that she is wrong about the members of her party. They have bumper stickers and they wear T-shirts that say “Bairns before bombs”.

We need to address the issue of where we go now. We must ensure that that debate takes place and that everyone is allowed to take part in it. Claire Baker talked about protesting in the street. She said that she was wearing a T-shirt; she was maybe looking for a bumper sticker, too. I could tell members, including Neil Findlay, for example,

to come to Scottish CND’s annual general meeting next week. That might be a very good idea.

Neil Findlay: Mr Allard constantly goes on about people turning up at meetings. I probably attend more meetings of a range of organisations than many other members over the course of the year. It is not about turning up at meetings; it is about what we believe in and what we are going to do. Mr Allard should get over his fascination with people turning up at meetings, for God’s sake.

Christian Allard: I will tell Mr Findlay what happened at the most recent Scottish CND AGM. We talked with the STUC about the report that was launched in April. If he wanted to make any contribution on the report, he should have been there. He should have worn the T-shirt and got the bumper sticker.

I conclude by thanking Aberdeen and district CND for the fantastic work that it does and by offering thanks for all the support that it has received from SNP and Labour members and from civic Scotland. The north-east of Scotland is very much on the side of everybody in Scotland. We want to get rid of nuclear weapons, and we will wear the T-shirts and display the bumper stickers—bumpers before bombs.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Merci.

15:36

Malcolm Chisholm (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (Lab): For me, the arguments against Trident are moral, legal, financial and strategic, but I also take very seriously the concerns of those who are in Trident-related employment. We must take action to secure their future.

To those of us who have been opposed to nuclear weapons for decades, the moral arguments have been of supreme importance, but that should not lead to an attitude of moral superiority. I respect those who follow traditional deterrence theory, although I believe that it is now out of date.

We had a debate about the legal issues on 22 September, so I will not repeat them at length. However, it is interesting that a predecessor Leith MP who was also Lord Advocate, Lord Murray, is quite clear that renewing Trident is against international law. In particular, he believes that it is against the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, which was a bargain between the states with nuclear weapons and those without nuclear weapons. Indeed, Lord Bramall, a former chief of defence staff, has said that

“it is difficult to see how the United Kingdom can exert any leadership and influence on the implementation of the non-proliferation treaty ... if we insist on a successor to

Trident".—[*Official Report, House of Lords, 24 January 2007; Vol 688, c 1137.*]

From the point of view of multilateral disarmament under the non-proliferation treaty, we should not be renewing Trident.

The next issue is the issue of cost—I should say the opportunity cost. Crispin Blunt has bluntly reminded us of that in the past few days, saying that it is

“too high to be rational or sensible.”

I do not need to remind members that he is the Conservative chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee. Understandably, in its motion the Scottish Government says that it wants to spend some of the money that would be released on welfare, but we should not overstate that, because of the issue of conventional defence, which the SNP—most recently through Angus Robertson—has highlighted. Crucially, we also need to think about the jobs of those who would be affected. As I said, we need to deal with the employment of those in Trident-related work, and that should have the first call on any money that is released from Trident. I was pleased that Jeremy Corbyn made that point in his speech to the Labour Party conference on Friday. I thank the Government for accepting the Labour amendment—I will say more about that in a moment.

The strategic arguments are the most important. I accept that many people who take a different view are not going to be persuaded by the moral arguments, the legal arguments or, ultimately, the cost arguments. If someone seriously believes that Trident—indeed, nuclear deterrence more generally—is necessary, they will probably not be influenced by those arguments. Therefore, the strategic arguments are crucial. I believe that, rather than centring on the one Tory MP and the one former chief of defence staff whom I have quoted, we should build a big tent that includes Tories, generals and everyone who has looked at the issue again, seen that the world has moved on, recognised that deterrence theory is rooted in the 1960s and realised that we have to look at it afresh. Unusually, I pray in aid Michael Portillo, a former Conservative defence secretary who has made many pronouncements about Trident, the briefest of which was that it is “past its sell-by date”. I will settle for that today.

I will quote the generals in a minute, but I will also refer to certain Labour politicians, pre-eminently the late, great Denis Healey, with his vast knowledge and personal experience of military matters. He was formerly a supporter of nuclear weapons, of course. Latterly, he said:

“The only case is really a political one. I think the military case now for nuclear weapons has gone.”

Three senior generals—others could be quoted—said in a letter to *The Times*:

“Nuclear weapons have shown themselves to be completely useless as a deterrent to the threats and scale of the violence we currently face, or are likely to face”.

They said:

“Our independent deterrent has become virtually irrelevant except in the context of domestic politics.”

It is interesting that even Tony Blair, who obviously supported nuclear weapons, said in his memoirs that it was all to do with the United Kingdom’s status.

If a person is not persuaded by any of those arguments from a vast range of people, they should reflect on the fact that 147 nations in the world do not possess nuclear weapons. The logic of those who say that we cannot be safe without nuclear weapons is that all those 147 countries should possess nuclear weapons in order to be safe. Perhaps that is the most persuasive argument of all when we talk to ordinary members of the public.

The jobs argument is, of course, crucial, as I have already argued, so we should first reflect on the fact that there will be jobs consequences if we keep Trident. That is why to some extent the generals and other military people are so against Trident. They realise that it absolutely decimates the capital budget in particular in the coming decade or so. I think that the capital budget is projected to go to about £5 billion a year under Osborne’s plans and Trident will cost the capital side about £4 billion a year in the relevant period. Therefore, for example, the type 26 frigates that would be built in Scotland are unlikely to be built if Trident goes ahead, and there will be other consequences for the conventional defence programme. The SNP is therefore right when it says that, although it has not done so today. Angus Robertson was right to point to the consequences for conventional defence. However, the SNP should remember that the money cannot really be spent over and over again. For me, jobs have the first call on the money, and conventional defence is relevant, so let us not overegg the welfare consequences.

As our amendment says, we must have a defence diversification agency that works alongside a national investment bank. The defence diversification agency could help those with transferable skills—many defence workers have transferable skills—to move into other high-skilled roles in the growing energy and digital industries, for example. We must address the concerns of the people in Trident-related work and the unions that represent them. I am really glad that Labour in its amendment today and its motion at the weekend and Jeremy Corbyn in his speech

on Friday put that front and centre in our position, and I am glad that the SNP accepts our amendment.

15:43

Stewart Stevenson (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP): On the side of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt memorial, the founder of the US social security system is quoted as saying:

“The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.”

We simply cannot discount the fact that, when we choose to spend vast amounts of money on a particular item of defence, we choose to take money away from those in our society with the greatest need. I am not simply talking about radical social reformers such as FDR. Winston Churchill spoke of the tragedy of poverty and the tyranny of war. In Liverpool in 1951, he said:

“Evils can be created much quicker than they can be cured.”

That absolutely touches on today’s issue.

Like others, I very much welcome Labour members supporting an anti-Trident motion 48 hours ago. That was not the first time that Scottish members have done so, of course. I wish them well and give them every encouragement in capturing their whole party for their position, although the portents are not particularly encouraging. Perhaps too many parliamentarians south of the border are taking up entrenched positions before they have heard the arguments from the Labour Party’s Scottish conference. However, I wish those Labour members well.

Neil Findlay perhaps overegged the pudding a little when he talked about members’ freedom to choose the debate at the Labour conference. In something that I read today, he is quoted as saying that there is no debate in the SNP. I can tell him that SNP members choose the subject of our debates and have debated weapons of mass destruction on nine occasions since 2000, condemning WMD every time. However, it is not a competition. Every debate that takes the argument forward is worth having, wherever it takes place.

As we heard from the minister, Scotland’s share of the expenditure on Trident is £13.8 billion, and we hear that the overall cost will be £167 billion over the life of the system. In her speech on Sunday, Jackie Baillie suggested that 13,000 jobs depend on Trident. The MOD disagrees and says that the number is 520, but for the purposes of the argument—and solely for those purposes—I am prepared to accept Jackie Baillie’s numbers. I dispute Jackie Baillie’s numbers, but if we accept them, we must accept that the cost of providing a job in the Trident industry is more than 10 times

the cost of providing a similarly high-skilled job in another area of the economy.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Lab): Stewart Stevenson keeps referring to “Jackie Baillie’s numbers”. They are the MOD’s numbers, obtained through a freedom of information request. They are numbers that established economists came up with in relation to the local supply chain and the local economic multiplier effect. They are not my numbers; they are the numbers of credible organisations, as, I am sure, he agrees.

Stewart Stevenson: On the same generous basis, I hope that the member agrees that when we divide one number by the other, we end up with jobs that are 10 times as expensive to provide as the jobs that the highly qualified and gifted engineers who work in the nuclear industry could do in other areas.

The Conservative motion says:

“in an increasingly dangerous world, having a nuclear deterrent protects against both foreseen and unforeseen threats”.

A series of questions arise from that. Have our missiles—or, more properly, the United States’ missiles, which are carried on our submarines—been directed away from the former Soviet Union and towards new targets? Have the missiles deterred the Taliban, in their Afghan mountain fastnesses, from taking action? Were they a deterrent to Saddam Hussein, in his bunker in Iraq? Are they a deterrent to Daesh in Syria and Iraq?

Of course, the questions answer themselves. The missiles are no deterrent of any kind to the threats that exist in today’s world. They are merely a Potemkin village of a defence provision, which has nothing behind it that contributes to defence.

The difference between the Conservatives and the SNP is that the Conservatives would spend any sum of money, or so John Lamont tells us. I would not spend my last penny on something that delivers nothing and in any event is immoral, as other members argued.

Our nuclear weapons are not targeted at our enemies and never will be. They do not attack the military capabilities of those who would attack us. They are by design focused on civilian populations over the horizon—beyond our view, beyond our ken and beyond our care. They are focused, often, on people in totalitarian regimes, who have made no contribution whatever to decisions about peace or war.

I return to Churchill’s dichotomy. When we choose to spend our money on weapons of mass destruction we address neither the tyranny of war nor the tragedy of poverty.

15:49

Patricia Ferguson (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (Lab): I welcome the opportunity to take part in this debate on a subject of such significance to the future security of the UK and indeed the world, and I thank the Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities for bringing the matter to the chamber. It is essential that, as a Parliament, we attempt to arrive at a balanced and credible position that will positively inform any decision that our UK counterparts may take.

The Scottish Labour Party has adopted a policy position with which I whole-heartedly agree. We believe that there is no moral, social, economic or military justification for Trident renewal. It is Scottish Labour's view that a decision to reject Trident renewal would be the first, decisive step to be taken in the journey towards a world that is free of the dreadful threat of nuclear weapons.

No one in the chamber would seek to deny the threat to humanity's future that is posed by such weapons of mass destruction. It is estimated that each Trident warhead, of which there are 40 per submarine, would kill 1 million people outright if it was deployed. The vast majority of those killed would be civilians, and countless more would subsequently die from secondary radiation exposure.

The argument that is deployed by some proponents of the retention of nuclear weapons is that their possession is essential to national and international security but, on the contrary, they make the world more insecure. Whenever I hear that argument, I am immediately reminded of the words of former US Secretary of State Robert McNamara, who oversaw the build-up of US nuclear capability at the height of the cold war, yet who declared in 2004 that

"the indefinite combination of human fallibility with nuclear weapons leads to human destruction. The only way to eliminate the risk is to eliminate nuclear weapons."

To renew Trident would be to reject such wise counsel and instead continue down the road of nuclear weapons proliferation.

McNamara's view chimes with that of significant figures who have served in our armed forces at a senior level, such as former Field Marshal Lord Bramall, General Lord Ramsbotham, General Sir Hugh Beach, Major General Patrick Cordingley and Sir Richard Dannatt. All have expressed deep concern that Trident was excluded from the 2010 strategic defence review, and they have concluded that there is a

"growing consensus that rapid cuts in nuclear forces ... is the way to achieve international security."

We know that, strategically, senior military figures are increasingly challenging the logic of

decimating the defence budget in order to maintain weapons that serve no possible purpose and only exacerbate nuclear proliferation around the world. I believe that Major General Cordingley was correct when he said that Trident should not be ring fenced and that the costs should be weighed against those of new ships, planes, tanks and infantry.

It is necessary to support proper investment in our conventional defence capability to ensure our national security. We need properly equipped, modern armed forces, and such a course would improve our national security and provide budgetary flexibility in the Ministry of Defence and a more effective response to emerging security challenges in the 21st century. The soaring cost of Trident renewal would hinder such a rational approach, if not make it impossible. The latest estimate of the cost of Trident renewal is, as we have heard, a staggering £167 billion over a 30-year lifespan. That figure is almost as obscene as the weapons system itself.

The non-replacement of Trident alongside the establishment of defence diversification agencies at the Scottish and UK levels is the only rational and balanced option. The development of a strong defence diversification programme that is agreed with the trade unions will provide workers with high-quality employment through the retention of skills that have been developed in the sector.

The importance of that work cannot be overstated, and the vast economic savings of £167 billion over the system's lifetime make it eminently possible. They will also allow much-needed investment in conventional security as well as in a range of public spending priorities in health, education, housing and the development of our manufacturing sector. Such a course of action has moral, social, economic and military credibility, and it is a course that we must persuade Mr Cameron and his Government to take.

Today and in the vital coming months we must resist the temptation to indulge in petty political point scoring, because this grave matter is much too important for that. On that note, I am pleased that the Scottish Government will accept the Scottish Labour Party's amendment and help to unite the overwhelming majority in the chamber on this most serious of issues.

Nuclear weapons make us less, not more, secure. They divert much-needed resources from the priorities of our citizens and their welfare and they represent a real and present danger to humanity's survival. Let us vote today to support a course of action that will improve global security, not endanger it.

15:55

Clare Adamson (Central Scotland) (SNP): As a rugby fan, I was delighted to watch the world cup final at the weekend, albeit with thoughts of what might have been for Scotland. The All Blacks were worthy winners and I do not think that anyone could fail to have been moved by Sonny Bill Williams's generous actions following the final. I take the opportunity to congratulate New Zealand not only on its rugby success but on having been a nuclear-free country since the groundbreaking New Zealand Nuclear Free Zone, Disarmament, and Arms Control Act 1987.

The campaign for nuclear disarmament in New Zealand began in the 1950s. In 1959, in response to growing public concern following the British hydrogen bomb tests in Australia and the Pacific, New Zealand voted at the United Nations to condemn nuclear testing, while the UK, the US and France voted against condemning it and Australia abstained. It is interesting that we were prepared to export the danger of nuclear testing to the other side of the world.

The Mururoa atoll and its sister atoll in French Polynesia in the southern Pacific Ocean were established as nuclear test sites by France in September 1962 and 41 atmospheric nuclear tests were conducted there between 1966 and 1974. In 1976, more than 20 anti-nuclear and environmental groups, including Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth, met in Wellington in New Zealand and formed a loose coalition called the campaign for non-nuclear futures, which was opposed to the introduction of nuclear power and promoted renewable energy.

Following continued anti-nuclear protests, including some of Greenpeace's most iconic efforts, the then New Zealand National Party leader and Prime Minister Rob Muldoon faced rebellion from his own party. One maverick who was key to the non-nuclear policy being established was the feminist economist member of Parliament Marilyn Waring.

Under the New Zealand Nuclear Free Zone, Disarmament, and Arms Control Act 1987, the territorial sea and land of New Zealand became nuclear-free zones. It prohibited the

"entry into the internal waters of New Zealand"—

in a radius of 12 nautical miles—

"by any ship whose propulsion is wholly or partly dependent on nuclear power."

It banned the dumping of radioactive waste in the nuclear-free zone and said that it was prohibited for any New Zealand citizen or resident to

"manufacture, acquire, possess, or have any control over any nuclear explosive device."

I do not think that it is any coincidence that Marilyn Waring was key to that legislation being passed. She challenged our understanding and forced New Zealanders, and indeed the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, to take cognisance of women's contribution to the economy. She once said:

"The patriarchal economic paradigm is the theory and practice of economics that says that women's unpaid work is not worth anything at all. It's not that I want to estimate its monetary value. I want to make it visible for policy-making purposes, for fairness and equality."

That quote sums up how I feel about the debate.

I do not think that the current UK Government takes any cognisance of the plight of women, children and young people in its welfare reform. The Welfare Reform Committee conducted an investigation into that and published a report, "Women and Social Security", which states:

"the cumulative impact of the reforms has had a damaging and disproportionate impact on women"

and, in particular, on

"disabled women, lone parents, carers, refugee women and those experiencing domestic abuse."

Since 2010, £26 billion-worth of cuts have been made to benefits, tax credits, pay and pensions. According to the House of Commons library, 85 per cent of that £26 billion has been taken from women's incomes. That means that it has been taken from households where women are carers to children, disabled people and elderly parents.

It is that failure to recognise what is happening that illustrates the balance of today's debate. The debate should be about bairns and not bombs. We know that 74 per cent of those who are in receipt of carers allowance are women; those women make an essential contribution to society.

The committee heard of significant challenges that many carers face when they take on a caring role. What does a country of just 5 million people that has exerted its right to be a nuclear-free zone look like in comparison with the UK? On any measure of the OECD, whether it is the Gini coefficient of inequality or the further research that has been done by the OECD in its better life initiative, New Zealand is a fairer country than the UK. We can learn a lot—not just on line-outs and scrums—from what it has been doing.

16:01

Stuart McMillan (West Scotland) (SNP): Like many members here, I have previously spoken out against the renewal of Trident. Last year, when I previously spoke about the renewal plan, we believed that the cost would be a mere £100 billion. However, now that the chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee has highlighted that the

cost has spiralled to an eye-watering £167 billion, it should come as no surprise that I still advocate that we should dump the Trident renewal programme.

I found John Lamont's comments on the £167 billion interesting. He first tried to disregard the figure, before stating that we do not know the cost of the renewal programme. He indicated that money for renewal would be no object. I find that rather disturbing, to say the least.

Surely there are many other, better things that we can spend £167 billion on. Are we even confident that the latest figure is the final figure? Let us look back at recent political history. A report in *The Guardian* in 2006 saw Gordon Brown backing the renewal of Trident at an alleged cost of between £13 billion and £25 billion; that was later revised to around £20 billion. Now we find that the sum is even larger.

I am sure that we would all agree that £167 billion is an obscene amount of money to spend purely on indiscriminately killing our fellow human beings. The financial cost of the Trident renewal programme is staggering and I have no doubt that it will continue to rise.

What are the opportunity costs? What are we missing out on when we pour money down the financial black hole of Trident? Could we use that money more wisely to create public good rather than to fund destruction and death? What about the opportunity costs to our economy?

In a previous debate, I spoke of the possibility of a second oil boom, this time on the west coast of Scotland. We know that there is oil on the west coast and that Westminster Governments have refused drilling licences to extract that oil because of nuclear subs and weapons on the Clyde. We also know that to extract the oil requires huge investment in equipment, rigs and service vessels, not to mention workers and training. What kind of oil boom could we have generated in the past for Ayrshire, Inverclyde, Argyll and Bute, and West Dunbartonshire?

A joint report by the Scottish Trades Union Congress and Scottish CND highlighted that there is a viable future for Faslane. It demonstrated

"that the replacement of Trident will cost Scotland more jobs than it will provide and that, by contrast, the funds released by Trident cancellation would create a major opportunity for productive investment in Scotland's economy."

Many of those who are employed in roles that are directly related to Trident have mechanical, electrical and electronic engineering skills, for which there is a demand in the wider economy. The report demonstrated the inaccuracy of claims that upwards of 11,000 jobs would be lost to Scotland if Trident was not replaced. We know

from an FOI request that 520 jobs are directly involved with Trident.

Scrapping Trident would allow other job opportunities to be created. It would allow us to invest in the future and to create more jobs and better public services. The economic case for nuclear weapons does not stack up; indeed, nuclear weapons actually hamper job creation and investment.

More job creation and investment would certainly have a beneficial effect on social and welfare policies. What about the social cost? Instead of wasting billions on bombs, the UK Government should be abolishing its austerity agenda and investing for the future. That means ditching its tax credit cuts, which will see families losing an average of £1,300 a year. In Scotland, tax credits are overwhelmingly paid to working people, and 95 per cent are paid to families with children.

Neil Findlay: Since we are in a conciliatory mood, would the member like to give great credit to Kezia Dugdale for her announcement on tax credits at the weekend?

Stuart McMillan: As they say, the devil is in the detail. I have heard arguments in the chamber and in committee about air passenger duty, with suggestions that our scrapping APD will threaten airports in northern England. We will consider the detail when it comes forward.

Approximately half a million children in Scotland benefit from tax credits, but that will not be the case once the Tory cuts come through. Children will lose out under the cuts, yet funding is being reserved for nuclear weapons. The UK Government should not be spending billions of pounds on nuclear weapons while hundreds of thousands of people are relying on food banks.

I am sure that, sadly, many members from across the chamber have helped out at local food bank collections to assist volunteers who have established food banks, which help those who have fallen on hard times. Are we saying that we are willing to pay for nuclear weapons but not to pay to ensure that people have enough money to eat? Last year, I visited a food bank in Helensburgh, which is very much in the shadow of Faslane. My take on that was that Faslane was certainly not helping all the communities in the west of Scotland.

Figures from the Trussell Trust reveal that almost 120,000 people used food banks in Scotland in 2014-15—eight times the number who did so two years ago. That included 36,000 children who are relying on charity to feed them as the UK Government slashes tax credits and continues to enforce sanctions on benefit

claimants while having an open purse for nuclear weapons.

Every survey highlights the fact that the people of Scotland do not want nuclear weapons on our doorstep. I am sure that the latest costs for the Trident renewal programme will bring more people on board the campaign to ditch these weapons of mass destruction.

The Deputy Presiding Officer (Elaine Smith):

I ask members to ensure that their electronic devices are switched to silent.

16:08

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Lab): I thank my colleagues for the opportunity to participate in this debate. That stands in stark contrast to the SNP's control freakery, under which debate is not allowed and dissent is absolutely forbidden.

It will come as no surprise to learn that I believe in multilateral nuclear disarmament. I want all nations to give up their nuclear weapons, because my ambition is nothing short of global zero. I believe that that ambition is shared by the majority of people in the chamber. Where we disagree is on the mechanism to achieve that. Some who are opposed to Trident argue that we are unilaterally re-arming and cite the non-proliferation treaty. I respect that, but it does not reflect what is happening outside the UK. The United States, Russia, China, Pakistan and India are all renewing nuclear weapons systems. Those decisions are being taken around the world as we speak.

People rightly expect maturity and responsibility from politicians with regard to the choices that we make. They expect us to consider the consequences of our actions. That is what I want to focus my remarks on today, because Faslane is in my constituency and is the single biggest employer in the area. I do not think that any members will be surprised by what I have to say. I have, in fact, been saying it for more than 16 years. I think—I used to think—that consistency is sometimes considered to be a virtue.

There has always been much contention about job numbers. We have heard it again today from Stewart Stevenson. I would have a lot more respect for people if they grasped hold of the true numbers. I note that the Scottish CND and STUC report identified between 500 and 1,000 jobs. That is not a reflection of what the impact of cancelling Trident would be.

I will share the facts with the chamber. The MOD and its contractors directly employ 6,800 people at Faslane. My source for that figure is an FOI request that was made to the MOD in September last year. A study commissioned from EKOS identified an extra 4,500 jobs in the supply

chain and the local economy. That is 11,300 people. Because Gordon Brown decided that Faslane would be the base for all of the UK's submarine fleet, we expect about 2,000 more jobs by 2020, so we are approaching 13,000 jobs.

Faslane is the biggest single-site employer in Scotland. More than a quarter of West Dunbartonshire's full-time workforce is employed there in good-quality, well-paid jobs. If that is not enough, we need to consider the effect on shipbuilding. Rosyth, the Clyde and places as far away as Barrow-in-Furness benefit. What happens to the thousands of jobs associated with the Astute submarines that BAE Systems is building?

Cancelling the renewal of Trident would have a knock-on effect on shipbuilding, an industry that all members hold dear. There has already been a substantial decline in shipbuilding on the upper and lower Clyde. Cancelling Trident would make matters worse, and we need to have answers for that. I would be pleased to hear answers from the minister.

Derek Mackay: Jackie Baillie is not the only voice from that constituency. The SNP has an anti-Trident message and won the most recent Westminster election in that constituency, if memory serves me well.

The Government has just awarded a contract to return commercial shipbuilding to the Clyde, and it does not require nuclear weapons. Does Jackie Baillie agree that we can have huge employment at Faslane but it does not need to be dependent on immoral weapons of mass destruction?

Jackie Baillie: That resembled more a peroration than a question. With the SNP, it always boils down to votes. There are no indications of how it intends to protect the workforce. *[Interruption.]*

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Order, please.

Jackie Baillie: I will tell members what the workers at Faslane and Coulport say, because they know what the consequences are for their jobs. The convener of shop stewards told the Scottish Affairs Committee:

"if the submarines are not there, there is no work for us."

In effect, there is no strategic reason for having a naval base at Faslane.

There are people who genuinely believe that defence diversification is the answer, but the workers at the base do not think so. Derek Torrie, industrial trade union convener at the base, had this to say:

"My own work-life experience is that defence diversification was discussed for much of the 80s and 90s and produced nothing of note that would in any way replace

the quantity and quality of jobs required to replace those that we currently have.”

Adam Ingram, a Minister of State for the Armed Forces from 2001 to 2007 and, I think, the longest-serving defence minister, has told us that diversification has been tried before and has not worked. We had a defence diversification agency, but I do not think that we have one any more.

The SNP simply believes that moving Trident from the Clyde a few hundred miles south of the border to England is somehow acceptable.

Members: No.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Order, please.

Jackie Baillie: It is nimbyism on a national scale and the worst kind of gesture politics.

Kevin Stewart: Will Jackie Baillie give way?

Jackie Baillie: I am not giving way to somebody who practises the worst kind of gesture politics. [*Interruption.*]

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Order, please.

Jackie Baillie: We also heard from Stuart McMillan about the mythical oil fields. It is all talk and no evidence. I say to Mr McMillan, let us see them; they do not exist.

However, we should not worry, because the SNP has plans to base the Scottish navy at Faslane, together with the armed forces and the air force. That is the same Scottish navy that Alex Salmond promised to Rosyth. He thought that we would not notice that he had promised it to two different places at exactly the same time.

The SNP really does not have a clue. The truth is that the SNP members do not want to talk about jobs. There is not one mention of jobs in the motion; instead, SNP members make false promises. On the one hand, we have Angus Robertson promising that all the money would be spent on conventional defence—

Stuart McMillan: Will the member give way?

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The member is coming to a close.

Jackie Baillie: On the other hand, we have an array of back benchers, Stuart McMillan included, promising to spend it on their pet projects. The reality is that the SNP has spent the money at least 10 times over. The SNP is all about gesture politics and has no concern for the workers. Its concern is only for its position in the polls.

In conclusion, let me share with members—

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Could you do so quickly, please?

Jackie Baillie: Very quickly. It is about a Panelbase poll that was commissioned by none

other than Wings Over Scotland, the SNP's cybernat general. When we strip out the don't knows, we find that 55 per cent agree that the UK should continue to have nuclear weapons. I have not heard the SNP trumpeting that.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: You need to close, please.

Jackie Baillie: It is perhaps what the SNP might call an inconvenient truth.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Thank you.

I call Bill Kidd, to be followed by Chic Brodie. [*Interruption.*]

Christine Grahame: The Tories are clapping Jackie Baillie.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Order, please. Could we hear Mr Kidd?

16:15

Bill Kidd (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP): I am pleased to be allowed to speak today. I did not realise that we were having a summing-up speech from the Tory party before mine.

I have been arguing the case for nuclear disarmament for more years than are outwardly apparent. Like many members across the chamber, I believe that nuclear weapons make a dangerous world more, rather than less, dangerous. Let us not forget that, 70 years ago, we had one nuclear weapons state and now we have nine. That is a direct result of nuclear proliferation on the watch of the nuclear weapons states, including the UK, that signed up to the non-proliferation treaty in 1968, which was 47 years ago.

As those states said at the time, the treaty recognised the dangers of this deadly weapon to the future of humanity. However, not only do we still have nuclear weapons but Britain is—along with others, it is true—yet again intent on upgrading and replacing its nuclear arsenal, which, as Malcolm Chisholm mentioned, is in violation of article VI of the NPT. We are told that that will make the place a safer planet for the next 60 years, which is the extension time for the life of Trident. That is 60 more years of being told that we cannot live safely without nuclear weapons while all the time being told that we all want to get rid of nuclear weapons but we will just do it slowly and a wee bit at a time.

When will the world ever be considered safe enough to eradicate nuclear weapons? Remember that we, the world, banned chemical weapons in 1925 and banned biological weapons in 1972. We rightly praised Princess Diana, who was at the forefront of the campaign to ban landmines in 1997. We then banned cluster munitions in 2008,

although America, to its shame, has been trying to overturn that. What about nuclear weapons? Well, just as we have not yet banned poverty in a world of plenty, we seem thirled to the idea of big boys' toys that are a ruinous waste of scarce resources being an acceptable risk to human life.

Last December, I attended the Vienna conference on the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons, at which 158 national Governments were represented. Of those, 156 voted to support the Austrian pledge, which called on

"all States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to renew their commitment to the urgent and full implementation of existing obligations under article VI, and to this end, to identify and pursue effective measures to fill the legal gap for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons".

Although 156 nations signed up to the Austrian pledge, the UK and the USA refused to do so. They said that the conference of 158 national Governments and the decision that they took were simply distractions from the discussions that the nuclear weapons states and their nuclear weapons partners were having, which would make the world a safer place. Yet again, they state that nuclear weapons keep us safe. They were talking about the political choice to have 60 more years of Trident, and with that the greater chance that other nations will be free to develop a technology that has no other use than to blow us all back to the stone age.

Scotland's share of Trident's costs is billions of pounds. It is an awful lot of money to spend on a weapons system that is supposed never to be used. Is that what we really choose to do? It is an awful lot of money that would, if we choose, ensure the maintenance of conventional armed forces and real national security; it is an awful lot of money that would, if we choose, provide food and heating for vulnerable people and real human security.

We must stand together across this chamber and send the message to the world that Scotland's representatives are proud to stand alongside the 156 nations that voted for the Austrian pledge. We must vote against the idea that another 60 years of human catastrophe hang above us like a sword of Damocles.

16:20

Chic Brodie (South Scotland) (SNP): We have all been party to youthful exuberance and indiscretions. It makes us who we are. There is one youthful and positive indiscretion that I remember vividly. I remember quite clearly being lifted by one of Dundee's finest for being involved in a sit-in demonstration in City Square. I—along with others, and as chair of the local YCND—was exercising my right to demonstrate to ban the bomb. The motivation was this: I was already

committed to nuclear disarmament but I had just finished reading, yet again, John Hersey's book on Hiroshima. That created in me an anger that was vented against the backdrop of what I read of misery and death in Japan and the possibility of that happening in Scotland. As John Hersey wrote, at 15 minutes past eight on 6 August 1945, in Hiroshima, 100,000 people died. Read the story of Mrs Nakamura:

"She put the children in their bedrolls on the floor, lay down herself at three o'clock, and fell asleep at once".

Of course, the rest of the story, we know, is a harrowing one.

It does not matter how a package of abject misery is delivered. Be it by air or by submarine, such packages have the potential to create mass deaths, as witnessed, and certainly misery. They are harbingers of multiple deaths or misery for many. It is the latter case with the proposed renewal of Trident against the backdrop of wicked, wicked welfare cuts.

It is an economic nonsense that the UK, with a debt of £1.6 trillion and growing, and with interest payments at a base rate that costs £43 billion per year, should even consider spending £167 billion, with interest of £2.3 million per day, on replacing this weapon of mass destruction while cutting the welfare budget by £12 billion.

Let me, at this juncture, make two clear points. First, Trident is not the UK's independent nuclear deterrent. The command and control codes to exercise the completion of the firing of a Trident missile are fuelled by the USA. Cameron may be a bully on welfare cuts but he is a nuclear eunuch when it comes to Trident. Secondly, I make the point, as Bill Kidd just did, that this is not a case of winner takes all. It is not some kind of championship where we on this side of the chamber win because we have believed and do believe that if we were in full control of policy, Trident would be disassembled.

Rather, we appeal that the real match is death and misery versus care and compassion—a match between potential widespread desolation versus the removal of the worry and concern of the sick, the children in poverty and the disabled. That requires as many of us as possible to be on the winning side against Trident. Trident is not an effective deterrent in the face, for example, of an alleged attack from North Korea, for goodness' sake. Tony Blair and Alistair Campbell may argue that it is, but—as Malcolm Chisholm said—it is more a status symbol than anything else.

I come to Jackie Baillie's argument. Trident on the Clyde is not a deterrent, and neither was its predecessor Polaris. They were, and are, a deterrent to social justice and to a strong focus on

welfare, and to successful development—which we could have had—of the west coast of Scotland.

After four years' research, I now bore the pants off anyone who will listen about the actions of the Thatcher Government and its ministers—one of whom, regrettably, was the Tory MP for Ayr and Secretary of State for Scotland. He confirmed in September 1983 that he had been told by the oil companies that oil was in the Clyde and the Atlantic margins in exploitable quantities.

There was the building of Portavadie village for oil workers; special houses bought for special workers in Alloway in Ayr; capital investment in Ardrossan harbour and the purchase thereof; and, Ms Baillie—

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Through the chair, please, Mr Brodie.

Chic Brodie: There was a production licence—PL262—that would have created huge potential for jobs, wealth and secure welfare. However, it did not happen. Why? Another of Thatcher's ministers, Michael Heseltine, confirmed last year, after 30 years, in an interview with a national newspaper, that as Secretary of State for Defence he had stopped the drilling because of the need for a clear passage for nuclear submarines.

The Thatcher Government and its successor were guilty of denying Scotland jobs, social justice and meaningful welfare for all, and a Faslane dedicated at least to conventional weaponry and socially useful employment.

As Stuart McMillan mentioned, we could have jobs in shipbuilding on the Clyde, and in national infrastructure, using—I hope—steel made in Scotland. By diverting the money that is planned for Trident to other areas of public spending, we would create jobs, along with consequent wealth and a fairer distribution of that wealth, and we would be able to reduce inequalities and poverty and to look after and care for those who need to be looked after and cared for.

16:27

Alison Johnstone (Lothian) (Green): Welfare over warfare, of course—and the Green and independent group will vote for the Government motion and the Labour amendment, but we will oppose the Conservative amendment. Even if Trident was entirely free, we should continue to demand its end and removal because it is an abomination.

On Saturday just past I was delighted to be part of the conference that was held to celebrate 20 years of campaigning by the Campaign Against Arms Trade. The work of the campaign is crucial if so many other campaigns are to succeed,

because aggression is less likely if people cannot get their hands on the means to deliver it.

I am pleased to join the majority of colleagues across the chamber in calling for a shift in UK Government priorities away from funding weapons of indiscriminate mass civilian slaughter to investing in people. I am pleased to have the privilege, on behalf of the Green and independent group, of supporting my colleague John Wilson's motion calling for an end to the UK's membership of NATO, the first-strike nuclear alliance, and declaring the UK and its waters a nuclear weapons-free zone.

We can, by putting in place a properly funded jobs transition, and by moving to a clean low-carbon energy system and investing in new energies, provide more jobs than the entire arms industry. If we are serious about the security that we all want, it is imperative that we do so.

We must remember that security is not just about military matters. Real security will come from global action on a scale that has not yet been witnessed to address climate change and to cut our emissions urgently. We need to redesign our approach to defence from scratch. We need to develop our ability to promote diplomacy and peace, to lead in conflict resolution and to address threats to security such as pressures on food, water, land and energy. It really is time for the UK to get its priorities right and for us here in Scotland to set a good example.

We are focusing on the question of Trident today, but the debate provides an opportunity to analyse our spending priorities more broadly. UK-made weapons have been used in Israel's attacks on Gaza, the UK has supplied all sides in Libya's civil wars, we have armed Russia and the Ukraine, and our weapons have caused tens of thousands of deaths in Iraq and Afghanistan. Sometimes it feels as if increasing GDP is valued more than life itself.

Trident is all about the UK's obsession with punching above its weight. It is absolutely useless in helping us to tackle cyber crime, climate change and terrorism, as Neil Findlay pointed out. How secure do our citizens feel when they are juggling two or three zero-hours contracts, when the insecure roof over their heads eats up almost all their income, and when they have to visit yet another new local food bank because of an inhuman benefits sanction? Tell the parents of the one in four children who are living in poverty in the UK that investing in nuclear weapons increases their security.

As we debate more powers for Scotland, it is time to challenge the way that we do business and the business that we do. Why are Government agencies and public funds used to support firms

that make weapons for war? Most people in the UK would be appalled if they learned that we have the sixth-highest military spend in the world while one in four children in the UK is growing up in poverty. Priorities?

Lockheed Martin benefited to the tune of £2.5 million from the Scottish Government's regional selective assistance programme. That was not because it was required to protect jobs or because the firm was struggling. Lockheed Martin is the largest arms company in the world and 80 per cent of its work is for the US Department of Defense. It is moving to Glasgow to allow it to work more closely with the city's university. Through a freedom of information request from the National Union of Students Scotland, we have learned that Scottish universities, including Edinburgh, Glasgow and Strathclyde, have invested millions in arms companies. I congratulate and thank those students and others who are campaigning for the divestment of public pension funds from that trade.

Here in this very city, we have Selex-ES producing radar, drones, targeting and weapons control systems. It took part in the recent defence and security equipment international fair in London, attracting buyers from a range of countries that have poor human rights records. Not much of a fair, is it?

The use of such language normalises such activity but those people who work in such industries can have a productive and positive future in other industries, and it is up to us to make that happen. Our talented engineers have skills that will be needed in the industries of the future. The oil industry has told us that 5,500 wells and 10,000km of pipeline need to be decommissioned during the next 35 years. Whether they be in Government or Opposition, all politicians should promote a positive manufacturing strategy for Scotland that is based on promoting industries such as renewable energy, not companies that sell equipment to human rights abusers. Engineering UK estimates that the UK will need 87,000 engineers per year; last year, just over 50,000 were trained.

Scotland desperately needs more engineers. We need to invest in the industries of the future. Let us put their skills to positive and productive use. Let us reject bloated military budgets and prioritise skilled jobs and apprenticeships in a sustainable and ethical economy. "Jane's" online itself tells us that the world-wide defence market is worth \$1 trillion annually; the energy and environmental market is worth at least eight times that.

In closing, I remind members of the words of President Eisenhower that were recently brought to my attention by my colleague, Patrick Harvie. In

his famous chance for peace speech, Eisenhower said:

"Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed".

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Many thanks. I am aware that the Presiding Officer had to remind members of the need to be here for the start of the debate. I remind members of the need also to be in the chamber for the closing speeches when they have participated in the debate. I call Annabel Goldie.

16:34

Annabel Goldie (West Scotland) (Con): The debate has been, in some senses, predictably partisan, but there have also been some reflective observations. An issue such as this one will always raise strong passions. At the extremes are people who identify themselves as being absolutely against nuclear weapons, while others are absolutely in favour of them. The intelligent discussion is somewhere in between the two, and we have had a flavour of that this afternoon. Although I disagree with Malcolm Chisholm, I think that he made a very powerful and well-informed speech.

Let me deal with an unlikely area of common ground. I suspect that we all want a world where such weapons are redundant—where they are no longer needed, so they are no longer relevant. The real debate is about how we get there from where we are. I would welcome constructive discussion on that. Unfortunately, the motion as phrased offers little scope for such positive exploration. It polarises the options and in so doing presents a false choice, which is unhelpful. The motion advances the proposition that we have either nuclear weapons or fully funded welfare and social provision. I think that Governments have a dual obligation: one is to protect the security of our people and our country and the other is to provide affordable and sustainable welfare support. The choice is not either, but both. To pretend otherwise is either disingenuous or naive.

It became clear from various SNP speeches that whatever moneys would be released over the forthcoming 40 to 50 years if Trident were cancelled, they would be spent many times over. My party believes that paramount to defence is protection of our country and the safety of our citizens in a turbulent world where the evil of terrorism, sadly, is unpredictable, and the capacity of rogue dictators and states to develop nuclear capability is unquantifiable. That obligation is fundamental. Being in NATO is part of the defence capability. As an interesting dichotomy, the SNP appears to support being in NATO, which is a nuclear organisation. Mr Wilson, frankly, had a

different analysis. I disagreed with him, but at least there was candour in his analysis.

Stewart Stevenson: I am listening with interest to the member's speech. She mentioned rogue states. Can she give any example of any rogue individual or state that has been deterred by any country on earth holding a nuclear weapon?

Annabel Goldie: There is a very powerful argument that huge international influence from nuclear powers was brought to bear on Iran. We now see that Iran has agreed—thank goodness—to rein in its ambitions in that respect.

That takes me to the very point that I was about to make in my argument, which is that a position of defence strength enables us to do something else: it makes possible continuing and constructive discussions about multilateral nuclear disarmament. That process has commenced; it is continuing and major nuclear powers are contributing to it. In the present situation with threats that we do know about, embarking on unilateral nuclear disarmament would be a breach of obligation by the Government to state and citizens.

I thought that my colleague, John Lamont, spoke eloquently about the nature of deterrent, which is what we are talking about. It was surprising that when Christina McKelvie was challenged on the concept of deterrence she declined even to respond to that challenge; she did not address the question.

Apart from the Scottish Government motion presenting a false choice, it is glaringly incomplete in a manner that any observer would find disquieting. There are those who deplore nuclear weapons and want rid of them, but who are honest enough to accept that removal of Trident from Faslane would not make Scotland, the United Kingdom or the world a safer place. The people who hold that view are honest enough to argue that unilateral removal is not the way to deal with the situation; they are honest enough to concede that simply getting rid of nuclear weapons from Scotland would make no meaningful contribution to the wider debate about multilateral nuclear disarmament.

It is also very disappointing that the motion, apart from not encouraging either constructive or reflective debate, does not even pause, as some have observed, to reflect on the consequences for Faslane and the West Dunbartonshire economy of losing that nuclear submarine base.

Derek Mackay: Will the member take an intervention?

Annabel Goldie: I want to make progress.

No thought has been given to the thousands of skilled workers who would lose their jobs and have

no comparable alternative. I represent the area; I live in the real world and I know that there is a real and biting human economic cost to losing nuclear capability and the nuclear submarines. Claire Baker at least acknowledged that. Her solution is not credible to me, but at least she accepted that there is a problem, as did Neil Findlay and Sarah Boyack.

One thing that can be said of the Scottish Government's position is that it is clear. I disagree with it, but it is clear. The same cannot be said of the Labour Party's position. Labour is now in an astonishing position because it has a Labour leader in Scotland who believes in Trident when her party in Scotland does not, and whose UK leader does not believe in Trident but his party does. However, the overall message from the SNP and Labour is the same: they will hike up taxes and scupper the country's defences. To any workers in the defence industry in Scotland, there is a clear message: only the Conservatives will keep your taxes low and your defence jobs safe, and will fight for you in the real world and keep your country secure.

In many respects, this has been an interesting debate. I support my colleague John Lamont's amendment.

16:40

Alex Rowley (Cowdenbeath) (Lab): I agree that, by and large, this has been a very good debate, which I hope reflects the type of politics—the kinder politics—that we can have in Scotland, where we can debate big issues in a constructive way.

In terms of the motion and the amendments, the position of the Labour Party in Scotland is that we support being in NATO, so we would not be able to support John Wilson's amendment. We would not support the Conservative amendment, but interestingly it

“suggests that the Scottish Labour Party should decide what its position is on the future of the UK's nuclear deterrent.”

I say to the Conservatives that at the Scottish Labour Party's conference at the weekend, over 70 per cent of the delegates and affiliates voted to support the position that we would not renew Trident. So, our position is clear.

I thank the Government and congratulate it on agreeing to support the Labour amendment, and I hope that we can work together to make the arguments and the case for why it is not in Scotland's, the United Kingdom's and, indeed, the world's interest for the UK to renew its Trident weapons.

I have supported multilateral disarmament during most of my adult life and I believe that it is important that we negotiate on those terms. There have been successes in that regard. However, when it comes to renewal of Trident, it is legitimate for us to pause and ask whether, some 30 years on from the previous decision on the matter, it is right to renew our nuclear weapons.

As Claire Baker pointed out, the world is now a very different place and the threat in this world is very different. The threat to Scotland as a country, and the threat to us as part of the isles of the United Kingdom is very different from what it was. It is therefore legitimate to ask whether we should spend between £100 billion and £160-odd billion on replacing Trident nuclear weapons. I thought that Malcolm Chisholm highlighted very clearly in his contribution that that case has not been made, and I will come back to that.

Trident is an expensive status symbol that has no military value and drains resources from conventional defences and socially useful investment. Chic Brodie reminded us that Malcolm Chisholm quoted Tony Blair, who said that Trident was more about having a status symbol and a seat at the top table. I have to say that it is a fairly expensive seat, if that is all it is.

Derek Mackay: Does the member share our bewilderment at the position of the Conservatives, who are quite happy to cap families who have too many children but will not cap the cost of immoral and totally useless weapons of mass destruction?

Alex Rowley: That is the point. If it was proven beyond doubt that having a nuclear deterrent was absolutely necessary to safeguard the people of this country, we would not be arguing over the cost. The fact is that all the evidence suggests that it is not in our best interests to have a nuclear deterrent. Nuclear weapons have no military rationale; they are neither a deterrent nor a defence against the very real security threats that our nation faces.

In answering the Conservatives' question, I will quote the former Secretary of State for Defence, Michael Portillo. As he served in John Major's Government from 1995 to 1997, we might think that he knows a wee bit about such matters. Earlier this year, he said:

"Our independent nuclear deterrent is not independent and doesn't constitute a deterrent against anybody that we regard as an enemy. It is a waste of money and it is a diversion of funds that might otherwise be spent on perfectly useful and useable weapons and troops. But some people have not caught up with this reality."

That suggests that the Conservative Party has not caught up with that reality.

Christine Grahame: I press the member to go even further and to say whether he considers that

use of such a weapon of mass destruction is immoral. Does he agree that there is a moral argument against not holding such weapons, as well as the arguments about their not being a deterrent and their cost?

Alex Rowley: There are certainly strong moral arguments against investing in Trident and against use of Trident. The leader of the UK Labour Party has said that if he was Prime Minister, he would not press the button, so the moral argument against Trident has been made.

What I have found striking is the lack of debate on the issue across civic Scotland and civic society in the UK as a whole. I hope that the discussions on the issue that took place over the weekend, and the Parliament's agreeing to the amended motion, if that is what happens, will generate a wider discussion across the UK, with the result that people will examine the arguments that are being made for renewal of Trident. If people examined those arguments, they would think twice about it.

Several members mentioned polls, which they said indicate that there is support for renewal of Trident. Malcolm Chisholm talked about putting up a big tent. He quoted the late Denis Healey and generals and military people. The military leadership are, at best, neutral on the issue. Once we start to present the facts, which is what we must do, the public's position will change.

However, we are left with a real concern, which is what Labour is focused on here in Scotland. We accept that there are people who are in jobs that are dependent on Trident. That is why I commend the STUC's report, "Trident and Jobs: the case for a Scottish Defence Diversification Agency". There are those who simply dismiss that as pie in the sky, but the report gives examples of cases in which such a process has been done properly. It also identifies the UK defence diversification agency as an example of how not to do things. There are important examples for us to look at when it comes to diversification of jobs.

Malcolm Chisholm talked about the job consequences of keeping Trident and the threat that that poses to conventional defence investment. It is important that people do not raise scare stories for places such as Rosyth in my constituency. I would say that Trident is a bigger threat to jobs there and that we should be investing in conventional defence work there.

We have been keen not to identify lots of areas in which to spend the money that would be saved by not renewing Trident. As our UK leader has said, it is important that we look first at investment, diversification and protecting jobs in the defence sector.

I welcome today's debate. We need to move forward and make the case for not renewing the Trident nuclear weapons system across the rest of the UK, because if we look at the evidence, it points clearly in that direction.

16:49

Keith Brown: As Alex Rowley and Annabel Goldie said, it has been an interesting debate. It has also been potentially a significant debate, with an even more significant vote to take place shortly. With some justification, one or two Labour members spoke of their pride in their party's debate and the decision that it took to oppose Trident at its conference. I accept that statement of pride and hope that they, in turn, accept my pride in my party's steadfast, long-term opposition to not just Trident replacement but Trident itself and Polaris.

We heard a number of compelling arguments against nuclear weapons from Christian Allard, Christina McKelvie, Kevin Stewart, Jean Urquhart, John Wilson, Chic Brodie and many others.

Malcolm Chisholm made a good speech in which he laid out how it is possible to build support for the position of not renewing Trident. He pointed to the fact that the strategic and military arguments are more likely to persuade those, particularly on the Conservative side, who would otherwise not want to oppose renewal. It is an important point, and we can see how that tent can be opened to many other people—although that is perhaps less so for some Conservatives. Given the compelling arguments against strategic and military justification of Trident, it is possible for us to do that. I wish that I could say that we heard a compelling argument for the renewal of Trident, but I do not think that we did.

Jim Hume left me confused. He said that he is for a minimum deterrent and then described that minimum as zero. If that means that the Liberal Democrats' position is that they would not have nuclear weapons—I am genuinely not sure whether it does—I welcome them to the big tent. I was not sure whether he was saying that he would have a smaller number of nuclear warheads, but he said zero, so I assume that he is now on board, which is good news.

Jackie Baillie's speech was really nothing more than an anti-SNP rant. It did not do her or her arguments any credit whatever. The only people whom she will get any credit from are the Tories, who applauded her speech wildly.

Although I agree with Malcolm Chisholm that we must try to build support, I cannot see our having any success with the Scottish Conservatives, as there does not seem to be the diversity of opinion within the Scottish Conservatives that there is

within the wider Conservative Party across the UK. We heard about the statements by Michael Portillo and Crispin Blunt, and there are many other examples of that diversity, including among senior military personnel. However, today we got a new defence doctrine from the Tories: "It doesn't really matter what the price of the nuclear weapons is; we'll buy them anyway." They would not even ask the price. Derek Mackay asked John Lamont what price would be too expensive for nuclear weapons, and there was no price given. It does not matter to the Tories what the price of nuclear weapons is; they want them anyway.

Alex Johnstone: I am keen to understand the intricacies of the SNP's position. I recall that, 20 years ago, when the decision was made to give the Trident submarine maintenance contract to Davenport instead of Rosyth, the SNP described that as a betrayal and one of the reasons why Scotland should consider independence. How has the SNP's position managed to change so radically in that time?

Keith Brown: Alex Johnstone may be aware that one or two changes have taken place over the past 20 years. Our position is pretty clear from the motion. Perhaps if he had read it, he would not have had to ask about our position.

We have heard about the billions of pounds that Trident nuclear weapons have cost the taxpayer and about the untold billions that are still to be spent on them should the UK Government continue with its plans to construct and put into service another generation of submarines carrying Trident ballistic missiles. We have heard how spending that money on the successor Trident system would put conventional defence equipment programmes under pressure although there is no clear threat that justifies the possession of nuclear weapons. In a very good speech, Patricia Ferguson mentioned a number of senior military personnel who are against nuclear weapons for the good reason that spending on nuclear weapons squeezes out funding for conventional defence, including shipbuilding, which was mentioned by one or two other members. Although I am keen to take on board the views of senior military personnel, I am also quite interested in those of the average infantry soldier, sailor or member of air force personnel who is not at a senior level but who is sick to the back teeth of being cheated out of the proper defence equipment, whether boots or helicopters, because of spending on something like Trident. I can tell members from my own experience that it is not just senior military personnel who have no time for nuclear weapons and the huge extravagance that they represent.

Members have spoken passionately about the UK Government's prioritisation of welfare cuts,

which even the unelected House of Lords has questioned. I wonder whether the Tories and George Osborne would go as far as trying to squeeze through the renewal of Trident using a statutory instrument in the House of Commons when there is no reason why they should not open up the issue to much wider debate. There is huge support across this chamber for opposing the renewal of Trident weapons, and I hope that, when there is a debate on the issue in the House of Commons, it is a proper, reasoned debate.

Most important, we have heard again about the devastating and indiscriminate effects of nuclear weapons. I think that we all accept that even a very small nuclear exchange—I use that phrase advisedly—would have catastrophic humanitarian, environmental and, indeed, economic consequences. How much longer do we want to continue with the risk that one of those weapons may once again be used one day, whether by accident or design?

We have had quite a substantial debate about the jobs implications. I said recently during a members' business debate on spending at Her Majesty's naval base Clyde that the Scottish Government also welcomes investment in Faslane as a conventional naval base—we welcome investment in conventional equipment, facilities and arrangements that support our defence personnel and their families and our veterans, wherever they are based. We also play our full part in the firm base arrangements to ensure that both military and civil society in Scotland work together to care for and support our service community. Our disagreement is not with those who serve in the military, whether at home or elsewhere. Again, we call on the UK Government to explore how HMNB Clyde could be reconfigured for wholly conventional naval use.

I note with particular interest the findings of the STUC and Scottish CND, which found that a detailed breakdown of the skills involved in Trident-related work showed that many of those skills could be transferred to other non-Trident submarine or surface warship work or alternative economic development work. It is indefensible for the UK Government to consider spending £167 billion—I mention again the latest price—or whatever the final figure actually is on the renewal of unwanted nuclear weapons.

Christina McKelvie: On the £167 billion, does the cabinet secretary agree that the UK Government should at last take responsibility for the nuclear veterans who were exposed to radiation on Christmas Island once and for all before they die?

Keith Brown: The member makes a very important point, which has been debated in the Parliament with some credit on a number of

occasions. We are aware that a legal case is ongoing, but that is part of the legacy of the UK's development of nuclear weapons, and the UK Government should stand up to its responsibilities.

To conclude, the debate has been very significant.

The Presiding Officer (Tricia Marwick): You have three minutes.

Sarah Boyack: Will the minister take an intervention?

Keith Brown: I am told by the Presiding Officer that I can.

Sarah Boyack: Will the minister consider setting out a timetable for Scottish Government work on defence diversification and the key suggestion in our amendment on setting up a defence diversification agency in Scotland to focus on not just Trident, but other transferable skills? He mentioned that in his speech, which we very much welcome.

Keith Brown: The Labour amendment mentions diversification

“in the event of the cancellation of Trident”.

If the member is suggesting that we should think about that beforehand, I am more than happy to do that. I make an offer to the Labour Party—I am not sure whether it should be to Claire Baker—and, in fact, to any of the parties in the Parliament that are against Trident. The debate should not be the end of the discussion, and if the other parties want to discuss how we can campaign and how we look at jobs in relation an eventual cancellation of Trident, I am more than happy to involve them in that.

The debate has been important because a decision may be taken very quickly. It will be a huge decision whose impact will last for perhaps 60 years. However, if the vote goes as we expect it to, around two thirds of members will say, “Do not renew Trident”, including perhaps 57 out of Scotland's 59.

If Trident is renewed, it will be in Scotland. We will send out an extremely powerful message today if most of us support the request to the UK Government not to renew Trident. It is a hugely important decision, and this cannot be the last thing that we say about it. The decision could be taken very quickly, and we have to take the matter further and move on from the decision that we will take today and the agreed position between the two largest parties in the Parliament and some of the smaller parties. We cannot let the UK Government take a decision on the matter without letting it know exactly what Scotland thinks about it.

It is not only the parties or the majority of Scottish MPs who would be appalled by a decision to renew those nuclear weapons; the churches, the STUC and many people throughout Scotland would also be appalled.

I am delighted that we have managed to reach an agreement on the matter after many years of being at odds, and I hope that we will go from this debate, take the matter forward to the UK Government and ensure that we never again renew the Trident weapons of mass destruction.

Decision Time

17:00

The Presiding Officer (Tricia Marwick): There are four questions to be put as a result of today's business. The first question is, that amendment S4M-14681.3, in the name of Claire Baker, which seeks to amend motion S4M-14681, in the name of Keith Brown, on Trident, welfare or warfare, 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)
 Baker, Claire (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)
 Baker, Richard (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Baxter, Jayne (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)
 Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
 Biagi, Marco (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
 Bibby, Neil (West Scotland) (Lab)
 Boyack, Sarah (Lothian) (Lab)
 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)
 Chisholm, Malcolm (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (Lab)
 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)
 Dugdale, Kezia (Lothian) (Lab)
 Eadie, Jim (Edinburgh Southern) (SNP)
 Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (SNP)
 Fabiani, Linda (East Kilbride) (SNP)
 Fee, Mary (West Scotland) (Lab)
 Ferguson, Patricia (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (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)
 Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
 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)
 Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)
 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)
 Lyle, Richard (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 MacAskill, Kenny (Edinburgh Eastern) (SNP)

MacDonald, Angus (Falkirk East) (SNP)
 MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)
 Macdonald, Lewis (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Macintosh, Ken (Eastwood) (Lab)
 Mackay, Derek (Renfrewshire North and West) (SNP)
 MacKenzie, Mike (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Malik, Hanzala (Glasgow) (Lab)
 Marra, Jenny (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Martin, Paul (Glasgow Provan) (Lab)
 Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
 Maxwell, Stewart (West Scotland) (SNP)
 McAlpine, Joan (South Scotland) (SNP)
 McCulloch, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Lab)
 McDonald, Mark (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)
 McDougall, Margaret (West Scotland) (Lab)
 McKelvie, Christina (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (SNP)
 McLeod, Aileen (South Scotland) (SNP)
 McLeod, Fiona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)
 McMahan, Michael (Uddingston and Bellshill) (Lab)
 McMahan, Siobhan (Central Scotland) (Lab)
 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)
 Pentland, John (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Lab)
 Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
 Rowley, Alex (Cowdenbeath) (Lab)
 Russell, Michael (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
 Simpson, Dr Richard (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)
 Smith, Elaine (Coatbridge and Chryston) (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)
 Thompson, Dave (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)
 Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
 Urquhart, Jean (Highlands and Islands) (Ind)
 Watt, Maureen (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP)
 Wheelhouse, Paul (South Scotland) (SNP)
 White, Sandra (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
 Wilson, John (Central Scotland) (Ind)
 Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow) (SNP)

Against

Baillie, Jackie (Dumbarton) (Lab)
 Carlaw, Jackson (West Scotland) (Con)
 Davidson, Ruth (Glasgow) (Con)
 Fergusson, Alex (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
 Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Goldie, Annabel (West Scotland) (Con)
 Hume, Jim (South Scotland) (LD)
 Johnstone, Alex (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Lamont, John (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con)
 McArthur, Liam (Orkney Islands) (LD)
 McInnes, Alison (North East Scotland) (LD)
 Milne, Nanette (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Mitchell, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Con)
 Scanlon, Mary (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)
 Scott, Tavish (Shetland Islands) (LD)
 Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)

The Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 96, Against 17, Abstentions 0.

Amendment agreed to.

The Presiding Officer: In relation to today's debate, I remind members that if the amendment in the name of John Lamont is agreed to, the amendment in the name of John Wilson will fall.

The next question is, that amendment S4M-14681.1, in the name of John Lamont, which seeks to amend motion S4M-14681, in the name of Keith Brown, on Trident, welfare or warfare, be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

For

Carlaw, Jackson (West Scotland) (Con)
 Davidson, Ruth (Glasgow) (Con)
 Fergusson, Alex (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
 Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Goldie, Annabel (West Scotland) (Con)
 Johnstone, Alex (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Lamont, John (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con)
 Milne, Nanette (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Mitchell, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Con)
 Scanlon, Mary (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)
 Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)

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)
 Baillie, Jackie (Dumbarton) (Lab)
 Baker, Claire (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)
 Baker, Richard (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Baxter, Jayne (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)
 Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
 Biagi, Marco (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
 Bibby, Neil (West Scotland) (Lab)
 Boyack, Sarah (Lothian) (Lab)
 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)
 Chisholm, Malcolm (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (Lab)
 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)
 Dugdale, Kezia (Lothian) (Lab)
 Eadie, Jim (Edinburgh Southern) (SNP)
 Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (SNP)
 Fabiani, Linda (East Kilbride) (SNP)
 Fee, Mary (West Scotland) (Lab)
 Fergusson, Patricia (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (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)
 Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
 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)
 Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)
 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)
 Lyle, Richard (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 MacAskill, Kenny (Edinburgh Eastern) (SNP)
 MacDonald, Angus (Falkirk East) (SNP)
 MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)
 Macdonald, Lewis (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Macintosh, Ken (Eastwood) (Lab)
 Mackay, Derek (Renfrewshire North and West) (SNP)
 MacKenzie, Mike (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Malik, Hanzala (Glasgow) (Lab)
 Marra, Jenny (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Martin, Paul (Glasgow Provan) (Lab)
 Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
 Maxwell, Stewart (West Scotland) (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)
 McMahan, Michael (Uddingston and Bellshill) (Lab)
 McMahan, Siobhan (Central Scotland) (Lab)
 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)
 Pentland, John (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Lab)
 Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
 Rowley, Alex (Cowdenbeath) (Lab)
 Russell, Michael (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
 Scott, Tavish (Shetland Islands) (LD)
 Simpson, Dr Richard (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)
 Smith, Elaine (Coatbridge and Chryston) (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)
 Thompson, Dave (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)
 Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
 Urquhart, Jean (Highlands and Islands) (Ind)
 Watt, Maureen (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP)
 Wheelhouse, Paul (South Scotland) (SNP)
 White, Sandra (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
 Wilson, John (Central Scotland) (Ind)
 Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow) (SNP)

The Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 12, Against 101, Abstentions 0.

Amendment disagreed to.

The Presiding Officer: The next question is, that amendment S4M-14681.2, in the name of

John Wilson, which seeks to amend motion S4M-14681, in the name of Keith Brown, on Trident, welfare or warfare, be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

For

Finnie, John (Highlands and Islands) (Ind)
 Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
 Johnstone, Alison (Lothian) (Green)
 Urquhart, Jean (Highlands and Islands) (Ind)
 Wilson, John (Central Scotland) (Ind)

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)
 Baillie, Jackie (Dumbarton) (Lab)
 Baker, Claire (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)
 Baker, Richard (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Baxter, Jayne (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)
 Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
 Biagi, Marco (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
 Bibby, Neil (West Scotland) (Lab)
 Boyack, Sarah (Lothian) (Lab)
 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)
 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)
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)
 Davidson, Ruth (Glasgow) (Con)
 Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)
 Don, Nigel (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)
 Doris, Bob (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)
 Dugdale, Kezia (Lothian) (Lab)
 Eadie, Jim (Edinburgh Southern) (SNP)
 Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (SNP)
 Fabiani, Linda (East Kilbride) (SNP)
 Fee, Mary (West Scotland) (Lab)
 Ferguson, Patricia (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (Lab)
 Fergusson, Alex (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
 Findlay, Neil (Lothian) (Lab)
 FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)
 Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 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)
 Gray, Iain (East Lothian) (Lab)
 Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)
 Henry, Hugh (Renfrewshire South) (Lab)
 Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)
 Hilton, Cara (Dunfermline) (Lab)
 Hume, Jim (South Scotland) (LD)
 Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)
 Ingram, Adam (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)
 Johnstone, Alex (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Keir, Colin (Edinburgh Western) (SNP)
 Kelly, James (Rutherglen) (Lab)
 Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)

Lamont, John (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con)
 Lyle, Richard (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 MacAskill, Kenny (Edinburgh Eastern) (SNP)
 MacDonald, Angus (Falkirk East) (SNP)
 MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)
 Macdonald, Lewis (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Macintosh, Ken (Eastwood) (Lab)
 Mackay, Derek (Renfrewshire North and West) (SNP)
 MacKenzie, Mike (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Malik, Hanzala (Glasgow) (Lab)
 Marra, Jenny (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Martin, Paul (Glasgow Provan) (Lab)
 Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
 Maxwell, Stewart (West Scotland) (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)
 McMahon, Michael (Uddingston and Bellshill) (Lab)
 McMahon, Siobhan (Central Scotland) (Lab)
 McMillan, Stuart (West Scotland) (SNP)
 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)
 Neil, Alex (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)
 Paterson, Gil (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)
 Pentland, John (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Lab)
 Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
 Rowley, Alex (Cowdenbeath) (Lab)
 Russell, Michael (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
 Scanlon, Mary (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)
 Scott, Tavish (Shetland Islands) (LD)
 Simpson, Dr Richard (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)
 Smith, Elaine (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Lab)
 Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 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)
 Thompson, Dave (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)
 Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
 Watt, Maureen (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP)
 Wheelhouse, Paul (South Scotland) (SNP)
 White, Sandra (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
 Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow) (SNP)

The Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 5, Against 108, Abstentions 0.

Amendment disagreed to.

The Presiding Officer: The next question is, that motion S4M-14681, in the name of Keith Brown, on Trident, welfare or warfare, 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)
 Baker, Claire (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)
 Baker, Richard (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Baxter, Jayne (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)
 Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
 Biagi, Marco (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
 Bibby, Neil (West Scotland) (Lab)
 Boyack, Sarah (Lothian) (Lab)
 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)
 Chisholm, Malcolm (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (Lab)
 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)
 Dugdale, Kezia (Lothian) (Lab)
 Eadie, Jim (Edinburgh Southern) (SNP)
 Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (SNP)
 Fabiani, Linda (East Kilbride) (SNP)
 Fee, Mary (West Scotland) (Lab)
 Ferguson, Patricia (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (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)
 Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
 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)
 Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)
 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)
 Lyle, Richard (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 MacAskill, Kenny (Edinburgh Eastern) (SNP)
 MacDonald, Angus (Falkirk East) (SNP)
 MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)
 Macdonald, Lewis (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Macintosh, Ken (Eastwood) (Lab)
 Mackay, Derek (Renfrewshire North and West) (SNP)
 MacKenzie, Mike (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Malik, Hanzala (Glasgow) (Lab)
 Marra, Jenny (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Martin, Paul (Glasgow Provan) (Lab)
 Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
 Maxwell, Stewart (West Scotland) (SNP)
 McAlpine, Joan (South Scotland) (SNP)
 McCulloch, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Lab)
 McDonald, Mark (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)
 McDougall, Margaret (West Scotland) (Lab)
 McKelvie, Christina (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (SNP)
 McLeod, Aileen (South Scotland) (SNP)
 McLeod, Fiona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)

McMahon, Michael (Uddingston and Bellshill) (Lab)
 McMahon, Siobhan (Central Scotland) (Lab)
 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)
 Pentland, John (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Lab)
 Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
 Rowley, Alex (Cowdenbeath) (Lab)
 Russell, Michael (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
 Simpson, Dr Richard (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)
 Smith, Elaine (Coatbridge and Chryston) (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)
 Thompson, Dave (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)
 Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
 Urquhart, Jean (Highlands and Islands) (Ind)
 Watt, Maureen (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP)
 Wheelhouse, Paul (South Scotland) (SNP)
 White, Sandra (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
 Wilson, John (Central Scotland) (Ind)
 Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow) (SNP)

Against

Baillie, Jackie (Dumbarton) (Lab)
 Carlaw, Jackson (West Scotland) (Con)
 Davidson, Ruth (Glasgow) (Con)
 Fergusson, Alex (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
 Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Goldie, Annabel (West Scotland) (Con)
 Hume, Jim (South Scotland) (LD)
 Johnstone, Alex (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Lamont, John (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con)
 McArthur, Liam (Orkney Islands) (LD)
 McInnes, Alison (North East Scotland) (LD)
 Milne, Nanette (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Mitchell, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Con)
 Scanlon, Mary (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)
 Scott, Tavish (Shetland Islands) (LD)
 Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)

The Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 96, Against 17, Abstentions 0.

Motion, as amended, agreed to,

That the Parliament notes with concern new analysis by the Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee, which suggests a dramatic increase in the projected cost of the successor Trident nuclear weapons programme to £167 billion; recognises the number of workers in the British defence system in Scotland and throughout the UK whose employment is linked to Trident-related activities and that firm commitments must be made to the trade unions on the retention of defence workers' jobs; believes that, in the event of the cancellation of Trident, the establishment of defence diversification agencies at Scottish and UK levels is essential to deliver a strong defence diversification strategy that provides workers with high quality employment through the retention of skills developed in the sector, while delivering a UK defence sector equipped to deal with the world and dangers that it possesses, and calls on the UK Government not to renew Trident.

Healthy Start, Healthy Scotland Campaign

The Deputy Presiding Officer (John Scott):

The final item of business is a members' business debate on motion S4M-14431, in the name of Mark McDonald, on welcoming the healthy start, healthy Scotland campaign. The debate will be concluded without any question being put.

Motion debated,

That the Parliament welcomes the Royal College of Psychiatrists in Scotland's Healthy Start, Healthy Scotland campaign, which raises awareness about the importance of mental health for pregnant and post-natal women and their infants; understands that one in five women develop a mental illness during pregnancy or in the first post-natal year; notes the evidence that early intervention for mothers can encourage healthy cognitive and emotional development for infants; recognises that there is positive work being done by organisations across the public and third sector across Scotland, including in Aberdeen Donside, in facilitating early interventions, and commends the campaign's focus on breaking through medical barriers and working holistically with practitioners on many aspects of mother, infant and family care.

17:06

Mark McDonald (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP): I am being by expressing my gratitude to the members across the Parliament who supported my motion and enabled us to have this important debate. The healthy start, healthy Scotland campaign was launched at a meeting of the cross-party group on mental health, which I co-convene alongside Mary Scanlon and Malcolm Chisholm. At that meeting, I said that I would seek an opportunity to debate the issue in the chamber, and here we are. Never let it be said that I am not a man of my word.

The campaign is aimed at improving awareness among professionals and the public of maternal mental illness, reducing the stigma surrounding mental health problems for mothers and increasing professionals' confidence in detecting and treating maternal mental illness. To drive that forward, the Royal College of Psychiatrists in Scotland aims to hold public events with professionals, politicians and the media, and to ensure that practitioners who work with mothers and children are aware of the issues that relate to maternal mental health problems and work holistically to address them. It will seek to establish an interfaculty group and links to other royal colleges and to host a round table that brings together representatives of parents and children, voluntary agencies, statutory early years agencies and professional organisations to share best practice across Scotland.

One woman in five will develop a mental illness during pregnancy or in the first postnatal year and, beyond that, seven women in 10 will hide or

underplay the severity of their illness. One in two women who experience depression in the perinatal period will go undiagnosed—while one in five will develop a mental illness, only one in two will be diagnosed. The term “postpartum depression” is most commonly used, but maternal mental health problems can also include anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, bipolar disorders and postpartum psychosis.

We often talk about the baby blues, but those problems are considered to be separate from postpartum depression. The baby blues are a feeling that affects about 70 per cent of new mothers—a feeling of despondency that occurs after the birth of a baby. Often, however, the two terms are conflated, which can be unhelpful.

We know that inequality is correlated with poor maternal mental health. Postnatal depression can occur in any mother, regardless of income, but we know from Scottish Government figures that 6 per cent of the highest-income mothers were found to have poor mental health compared with 24 per cent of the lowest-income mothers.

The Scottish Government’s growing up in Scotland reports have shown that children whose mothers were emotionally well during their first four years have better social, emotional and behavioural development than those whose mothers had brief mental health problems, so as well as this being an issue for the mother, there is an impact on children that has to be borne in mind. About 5 per cent of children aged five to 10 are thought to display problems that merit mental health diagnosis, which is of concern to all of us. However, treatment is available for both mothers and children. We need to ensure first that people come forward for diagnosis and then, once they have achieved diagnosis, that the most appropriate treatment is available.

Work is being done with families across Scotland, and it is not just about treatment. I highlight a project that is being undertaken in Aberdeen and which merits a mention. One of our duties as MSPs is to highlight positive examples from our areas. Four organisations have come together in Aberdeen to form a family support network: the family learning team, Aberlour Child Care Trust, the Scottish Childminding Association and Home-Start Aberdeen. Their integrated working strategy has reduced duplication of services and enabled the third sector to work closely with national health service midwives and health visitors to ensure appropriate referrals and targeting of support.

Home-Start has supported 115 families since 1 April this year. It works closely with health visiting teams, which 80 per cent of its referrals come from. It provides support from peers who are

mostly parents, who are matched with an individual family who they visit weekly. More than 80 per cent of its referrals in Aberdeen are made as a result of a mental health issue arising or involve a mental health issue, more than 90 per cent of which are related to isolation, which impacts on the mother’s mental health and on the child, who does not have the opportunity to socialise with their peer group.

The Aberlour service supports parents who are affected by substance abuse issues and parents with learning disabilities. Referrals are made through social work. The Scottish Childminding Association provides a community childminding service; in Aberdeen, that allows parents to access up to 72 hours of free childminding to support them, which is invaluable for many families. The family learning team can provide one-to-one, in-the-home support for parents with children aged nought to three or support programmes in small groups for parents with children aged three to eight. Fantastic work is being done out there.

One thing that led me to bring the debate to the chamber was that I wanted to reflect my experience. Following the birth of our second child, my wife went through a period of postnatal depression and I saw at first hand the effect that that can have, not just on the individual but on the family unit. One of the difficulties, which I referred to when I talked about Home-Start, was that my wife became isolated. She lost the confidence to go out and interact with other family groups and, therefore, the opportunity to get my daughter into situations where she would meet other small children.

Two things helped. One was a local coffee morning, which my wife attended regularly and which enabled her to interact with others outside the home environment. When my son was in education and I was down here in Parliament, my wife found it difficult to get out of the house. The other thing that helped was a local toddlers group that we took our daughter to, which enabled her to have social interactions and meet her peer group.

That is why I was taken by the Scottish Association for Mental Health’s recent remarks in the press about the benefits and possibilities of social prescribing, which are particularly relevant to maternal mental health issues, where isolation, an inability to socialise and the feeling that they cannot reach out to other mothers for fear of stigmatisation can often grip those who are affected.

There are examples of good work out there. It is a question of making sure that the dots are joined up and that we in the Parliament do all that we can to support our constituents who are affected by

such issues and to ensure that they get the support that they deserve.

17:13

Jenny Marra (North East Scotland) (Lab): I congratulate Mark McDonald on securing this important debate, which brings a focus to this important area of mental health, and on sharing so eloquently his personal experience, which is never easy.

Every expert, every report and every piece of advice that we are given about tackling child poverty and other social injustices tells us that we should invest in the early years. The healthy start, healthy Scotland campaign has reminded us of the importance of the early months, weeks and days.

We know much more today than we did in the past about postpartum depression and anxiety and about the challenges that women face in the first year as a mother, often while feeling quite alone. Despite that, it is clear that we still face a significant challenge in ensuring that women have the support and care that they need, that the symptoms are noticed and that there is awareness of the issues.

It is estimated that

“One in two women who experience depression in pregnancy or the postnatal period will go undetected and untreated.”

We are only now discovering the full impact on children of mental health problems in that crucial time. The relationship between mother and baby, and the early bonds, are vital to the optimal development of the child’s brain and can shape social, emotional, cognitive and language development. Because of the nature of mental health problems at that time, it can be all too common for the signs to be missed and for care not to be in place to help both mother and baby. Awareness of and support for maternal mental health are vital to giving all children the best start in life.

We welcome this significant report by the Royal College of Psychiatrists and the broad support that it has received across Parliament. It contains a modest set of proposals that could make a big difference to families and to the lives of many women and children. I am sure that there is a broad consensus throughout the chamber for the actions that the report suggests. I look forward to hearing more speeches, including those from the Government benches, on what can be done. We are ready to work with the Government to achieve our shared goals.

17:16

David Torrance (Kirkcaldy) (SNP): I, too, congratulate Mark McDonald on bringing the motion to Parliament.

I commend the Royal College of Psychiatrists for its efforts to raise the issue of mental health among new and expectant mothers through its healthy start, healthy Scotland campaign. Although mental health is complex, those issues can be mitigated with the proper awareness and advocacy, which the RCP seeks to foster.

I would like to focus, in particular, on the problems surrounding the diagnosis and treatment of mental health issues affecting new mothers. I start with the diagnosis. The Royal College of Psychiatrists reports that

“One in two women who experience depression in pregnancy or the postnatal period will go undetected and untreated.”

According to the national health service, postnatal depression is one of the most common mental health issues affecting new mothers. Symptoms include inability to sleep, irritability, tearfulness and fear of failing as a mother. However, one of the main challenges surrounding postnatal depression is that those symptoms are not always noticeable to an observer or even to the mother herself. Women who are affected by the illness often perceive those symptoms as a product of exhaustion and stress and, because they do not connect their symptoms to postnatal depression, some women do not seek help. As a result, issues for new mothers persist much longer than necessary.

According to the Royal College of Psychiatrists, some women also fear the judgment of others—they are worried about the stigma that surrounds mental health issues and about being deemed unfit mothers. That is why it is essential that we raise awareness of prenatal and postnatal mental health. We can show mothers that help is available and reduce the social stigma.

The problems surrounding diagnosis connect to my second point: the treatment of mental health for mothers. I am proud to say that there are several organisations in my constituency that address the issue and support new mothers. Volunteers from Home-Start Kirkcaldy provide weekly support to any family in need, including mothers who are suffering from postnatal mental illness. Our local branch of Carers Trust Scotland provides further counselling and support. Fife Gingerbread provides not only support after the birth of a child but counselling during pregnancy to try to prevent mental health issues once a child is born. Those services are invaluable to those who use them.

I was concerned, however, to learn that primary support groups for postnatal mental illnesses have a larger presence in England than in Scotland. For example, the PANDAS Foundation, which runs support groups for mothers who are coping with postnatal mental illness, sponsors 31 support groups in England and only five in Scotland. It is clear that there is a need for greater awareness, advocacy and action on the issue in Scotland. I have no doubt about the dedication of the staff and volunteers of those organisations in Scotland and that, in the work that they do, they will continue to highlight this important issue and seek to develop their services even further. However, I feel that it is essential that community support be aligned with medical treatment.

Mental health requires professional care and treatment that can be given only by a physician. In fact, the RCP reports that 25 per cent of mothers who suffer from postnatal mental illness and do not seek help do not recover by the time that their child is one year old. That places a great deal of strain on the relationship between mother and child and can ultimately affect the child's development.

Early intervention and treatment facilitate recovery for a mother and a healthy start to life for a child. Additionally, it is crucial to involve physicians, mothers and family members in the treatment. In talking about the importance of early intervention, I draw attention to one of the RCP's action items regarding its healthy start, healthy Scotland campaign, namely its desire to establish links with other royal colleges in the United Kingdom. By co-operating with organisations such as the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists and the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, the RCP can better ensure that new mothers and infants will receive the care that they need. I believe that that move will increase cohesion in antenatal and postnatal healthcare, and will benefit mothers and children.

I fully support the RCP's healthy start, healthy Scotland campaign and its attention to the mental health needs of new and expecting mothers. I am pleased to see that the organisation is taking steps to provide essential care to help mothers, their families and their new babies.

We should send the clear message to all mothers that postnatal illnesses are easily preventable and treatable. Only by achieving greater awareness of mental health issues will we create a brighter, healthier future for Scotland.

17:21

Mary Scanlon (Highlands and Islands) (Con):

Like others, I thank Mark McDonald for securing this debate on improving the mental health of

mothers and babies. He gave a commitment at a meeting of the cross-party group in the Scottish Parliament on mental health to raise the issue in a members' business debate, and I say well done on that point. For my part, I committed to submitting parliamentary questions. I very much regret to say that the responses to my questions were disappointing and a bit dismissive. I only hope that we get a more favourable and positive response to today's debate.

I commend the Royal College of Psychiatrists in Scotland for its initiative and for stating that much needs to be done to support mothers and babies across Scotland in terms of improving maternal early years mental health as a clinical and mental health priority. The RCP states that the cost of not treating maternal mental illness is £8 billion, so any investment in diagnosis and support will be money well spent.

There is probably not much new knowledge in the briefing paper and the research. What is needed is the will to put the measures in place, get health professionals and others to work together and ensure that mental health, at this critical time in a child's development, becomes the priority that it has not been in the past.

It is understandable that depressed mothers find it difficult to give their babies the security that they need. There is also increasing evidence that social relationships in early life have a crucial influence on the infant brain—Jenny Marra alluded to that—and the relationship between infants' attachments and their brain anatomy and biochemistry is now well established. Brain development is dependent on strong, early bonds with the infant's main caregiver—most often their mother—and the relationships that an infant makes in early life form the bedrock of their future development.

We are currently considering legislation on attainment in schools. However, as can be seen from this debate, we do not need to wait until a child gets to school. Intervention at the antenatal and postnatal stages, with the appropriate support for mother and child, could bring many benefits. We have all heard of some children who are 12 months behind in terms of their development when they start school, which makes it difficult for them to catch up with the rest of the class. We know that it is in the first year of life that the interaction with the primary caregiver shapes the infant's social, emotional, cognitive and language development.

However, untreated mental health does not have only a financial cost. The longer-term effects on the child's cognitive and emotional development can hugely affect their educational attainment, their life chances and their opportunities. It is therefore surely preferable and more effective to prioritise early work with infants

and their mothers than it is to even attempt to reverse harm at a later stage.

The RCP states that one in two women who experience depression in pregnancy or the postnatal period will go undetected and untreated, and many for whom depression is detected are not offered the option of being accompanied by their babies if they require in-patient care. That is quite unacceptable, because they are supposed to have a right to be accompanied by their babies. However, it is also unacceptable that few mental health services in Scotland specifically address the needs of infants and focus on the mother-infant relationship.

I lost a very dear friend who struggled to cope with postnatal depression and left two very young boys. I am sorry to get emotional—today has brought it back to me. It was difficult for her. She worked in the NHS, had a staff of 20 or more people and, because she was so good at her profession, found it difficult to admit that she could have a vulnerability. She felt weak and something of a failure.

The royal college's campaign to improve awareness is welcome. The main thing is that it is not only the Royal College of Psychiatrists; it links with the other royal colleges in Scotland, such as the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, the Royal College of General Practitioners and the Royal College of Midwives, as well as the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health. The campaign brings them all together, which is needed to improve detection of mental health and attachment issues and look forward to the future.

There is not a good record of public agencies working together for seamless assessment and care. However, what the Royal College of Psychiatrists proposes can be made to happen. It does not cost a lot of money; it simply brings people together and makes mother and baby mental health the priority that it should be.

17:27

Bob Doris (Glasgow) (SNP): As others have done, I congratulate Mark McDonald on securing this important debate. I am proud to join the Parliament in welcoming the Royal College of Psychiatrists in Scotland's healthy start, healthy Scotland campaign.

I am deputy convener of the Health and Sport Committee and we have focused on the health of mothers. Perhaps we should focus on it more often, but we have considered aspects of it, whether the benefits of the family nurse partnership, our inquiry into teenage pregnancy and the impact that that can have on mothers' mental health or the groundbreaking work that

local authorities and the Scottish Government are doing together in the early years collaborative.

A lot of things are happening, but it is particularly poignant for me to take part in the debate, because I will be a father for the first time in February next year. My wife is due to give birth then, so I hope that maternal mental health will flourish and be positive for me and my family but, as Mary Scanlon points out, we can never take anything for granted in this life. None of us, whether mothers or others, should neglect our mental health. Therefore, speaking in the debate is of particular importance to me.

The campaign is an important initiative to raise awareness of mental health problems that many expectant and current mothers face each year. I was going to put a number of statistics in the *Official Report*, but they have been pretty well aired. Needless to say, unfortunately, not every pregnancy will be a positive experience. The emotional, physical and psychological stress of carrying a child, as well as the financial costs of pregnancy and of raising that child, can wreak havoc on the emotional wellbeing of pregnant and postnatal women.

The Centre for Maternal and Child Enquiries has established that mental illness is one of the leading causes of maternal death in the UK. That is why such a campaign is crucial in raising awareness and is worth prioritising. By encouraging and providing resources for early intervention, we can not only reduce rates of mental illness in mothers, but save lives.

I will mention an organisation that works in my locale and does fantastic work throughout the country: Home Start. It provides practical and emotional support for women, families and children under the age of five through volunteer visits that encourage families to widen their support networks and help them to take advantage of resources and opportunities that the community provides. It is a non-judgemental service and a non-statutory service. At its heart, Home-Start Glasgow North, which is the branch of Home-Start that I know best, is about building relationships. I was proud and privileged to speak at its annual general meeting just a few weeks ago. Its work to help mothers across the north of Glasgow—in Maryhill, Springburn, Royston and beyond—is exceptional.

A variety of organisations do equally fantastic work. I recently visited a parent and toddler group at Rosemount Lifelong Learning and, with reference to relationship building, I am pleased to say that some dads were there. There is also the positive Possilpark initiative, in which Barnardo's, Stepping Stones for Families and other agencies are getting together to prioritise families in the area.

In the short time that I have left, I want to put another couple of points on the record. I would not forgive myself if I did not talk about the mental health of those who lose their unborn child through miscarriage. We should put on record the psychological and mental health impact that that can have on families.

I should also mention the inequalities that befall certain women and which are not just economic. If somebody has a strong support network, that does not mean that they will have strong maternal mental health, but it gives them a fighting chance to do better than those who do not have that community resilience. We should bear that in mind, too.

Fittingly, next year is the international year of the dad—I did not know that until a few weeks ago when I attended Home-Start Glasgow North's AGM. Surely men have a significant role in ensuring that maternal mental health flourishes.

There is no rule book for being a mum or dad and there are no rights and wrongs. We learn from our mistakes. If we are lucky, we have a support network. Some people's mental health will be impacted, but that does not make them a bad parent; it makes them vulnerable and in need of support. The debate, which was so ably led by Mark McDonald, draws attention to that fact. I have been delighted to share my experiences with members.

17:32

Jim Hume (South Scotland) (LD): I, too, congratulate Mark McDonald on bringing the debate to the chamber and the Royal College of Psychiatrists in Scotland on its healthy start, healthy Scotland campaign. We should also congratulate in advance Bob Doris and his very much better half on their forthcoming parenthood.

I have raised on a number of occasions the lack of parity between mental and physical health in Scotland. During a Scottish Government debate back in January, I pointed out the lack of parity in law. Ten months later, we still do not have legislative provisions that place mental and physical health on an equal footing. I have not stopped raising the issue and, of course, I will take the chance to do so again today.

Our discussion on the mental health of pregnant and post-natal women points to the increasing importance of guaranteed good mental health for all. The healthy start, healthy Scotland campaign makes provision for the earliest possible preventative measures for mothers and their infants. The briefing paper from the Royal College of Psychiatrists states:

"The early time after childbirth is a period of greater risk for severe mental illness than any other time in a woman's life."

That can unfortunately translate into damaged brain development of the infant, whose relationship with its mother is absolutely vital at that early stage.

Given that one in five women develop mental illness during pregnancy or in the first post-natal year and that one in four people in the overall population develop a mental health illness at some point in their lives, it is clear that we need to address the problem head on. If it is left untreated, it can have the most tragic of consequences, such as those that I and many members, including Mary Scanlon, know about. However, the good news is that effective treatments are available, so I urge the Scottish Government to make those preventative measures available to all. The UK Government, in its 2015 budget, announced £75 million over five years for perinatal mental health. I would like that to be replicated in Scotland.

The responses to a freedom of information request that I submitted to health boards showed a rise in need for psychological support for new mothers. One board saw its cases nearly triple, and, to quote the board,

"the apparent rise in cases reflects the creation of the specialist perinatal midwife position in that year, which increased mental health awareness in the service".

We welcome that. That successful example of awareness and trust in the services for new mothers could be followed elsewhere.

The report marks a necessary step and, when it is adopted, it will have a positive two-fold effect. The first is good mental health for all, from the earliest start in life; the second is a gradual reduction in health inequalities that are compounded by poor mental health.

Mental health is not the starting point or the end point in reducing inequalities. It is, however, a major component that disproportionately affects people in the most deprived areas, who are five times more likely to have below average mental health than those in the least deprived areas. Yet, through deprivation, people still want to lead normal lives, work and have families. We need to ensure that every member of a family is able to access the right therapies at the right time.

Mark McDonald's motion correctly identifies the importance of working holistically with practitioners across medical specialisations. Breaking down the singular concern of mental health for mothers and infants should be the guiding principle of those actions. The healthy start, healthy Scotland campaign is making the call for the right time to be early on for infants and their mothers.

I want to end by renewing my call for parity in law between mental and physical health. It is the next step that Scotland must take if we are to provide meaningful mental health treatments for mothers and their babies.

17:36

The Minister for Sport, Health Improvement and Mental Health (Jamie Hepburn): I join others in thanking Mark McDonald for bringing forward this subject for debate. I echo Jenny Marra's comment that his bringing in his family's personal experience added to the debate. Similarly, Mary Scanlon spoke of the experience of her friend, which was understandably very difficult for her to do, but I want to thank her for doing so. As Bob Doris has gone public, I join others to make public my congratulations—previously privately expressed—to both Bob and his undoubtedly much better half, Janet, as they prepare for parenthood.

I also welcome the Royal College of Psychiatrists' healthy start, healthy Scotland campaign and I support the campaign's aims. This members' business debate continues the attention that our Parliament has focused on mental health. I am proud that we have that focus.

Mental illness, including perinatal mental illness, is one of the top public health challenges in Europe. With an estimated third of the population being affected by mental health disorders every year, it is rightly a topic that occupies us. We need to be as comfortable talking about mental ill health as we are talking about physical ill health. I think that the focus on debate and discussion in this Parliament is an important part of that process.

The Government agrees that good perinatal mental health is a vitally important issue. David Torrance spoke about how mental illness could affect new mothers. Of course, there is a common idea that when a woman gives birth, it is the happiest time of her life. We know that for many women, however, it can be an extremely difficult time.

Mary Scanlon mentioned that a couple of written parliamentary questions have been lodged of late, but she did not expressly say that I had answered them; I presume that I was the minister who answered them. If she feels that the written answers have been unhelpful and dismissive, that was certainly not my intention. That is never my intention with any answer that I give to a question and certainly not in this area, where I think that there is broad consensus, so I say to Mary Scanlon and any member who has particular concerns that if they want to discuss them with me anytime, they need only to ask.

My overriding expectation is that individuals will be treated according to their clinically assessed needs, with care and support put in place to respond quickly and appropriately to those needs. In Scotland, we ensure that general practitioners, midwives, health visitors and obstetricians have perinatal mental health education as part of their undergraduate training. NHS Education for Scotland will soon be launching a national resource—an online module on perinatal mental health that will have open access for staff in any sector. That, of course, is in addition to any local education that will be offered.

Our national mental health strategy and clinical guidelines for health professionals support mothers who are experiencing mental health problems and ensure that the NHS delivers safe and effective care to those who need it.

There is an issue with those who are not being identified, and Mark McDonald set out clearly the nature of the challenge. My expectation is that NHS boards should provide safe and effective care and services that support and respond to the needs of the individual. For women who are at high risk of perinatal illness, that includes the development of a detailed plan for their late pregnancy and early postnatal period. Psychiatric management of the plan should be agreed with the mother-to-be and shared with maternity services, the community midwifery team, the GP, the health visitor and mental health services in order to ensure that we take a cross-cutting approach.

Members including Mary Scanlon spoke about the importance of the connection between mothers and children. As a point of law, there is a duty on health boards to provide

“such services and accommodation as are necessary”

to allow women with postnatal depression to be admitted to hospital accompanied by their children under one year old. Under the Mental Health (Scotland) Act 2015, we have extended that right to mothers with any mental disorder. I think that Mary Scanlon suggested that the duty is not being complied with. I assure her that if she provides me with information on that—not necessarily during this debate—I will take the issue very seriously.

Mary Scanlon: I refer to the paper from the Royal College of Psychiatrists, which I have given to the official reporters. The paper notes that, although there is a right to them, the facilities to enable mothers to take their children in with them are not always available.

Jamie Hepburn: I am happy to reflect on that point, and if we need to do more in that regard I am happy to commit to looking at the matter.

While the general health of Scotland's population has been steadily improving, health inequalities have been growing—a point that Mark McDonald, Bob Doris and Jim Hume picked up. We know that poor mental health is more common in some segments of the population than it is in others, and in socioeconomically deprived groups in particular. Social inequalities in mental health are enduring and persistent. The causes of poor mental health are varied, but there is a statistical correlation along the lines of socioeconomic circumstances. We must address the underlying social determinants of ill health and the impact that they have on mental health. We must take action to support meaningful and secure employment, good-quality housing in neighbourhoods and high-quality education and childcare. Of course, we need to do more than that.

Mark McDonald: The minister will also be aware from my speech that isolation is a factor in the development of poor maternal mental health and in compounding it. I spoke of SAMH social prescribing, which can often help to tackle some of that isolation by directing individuals towards social opportunities. Does the minister support that and is he looking at ways that it can be taken forward?

Jamie Hepburn: I was hoping to turn to that later, but I will do so now because I see that I am running out of time. I support the concept of social prescribing. Earlier, I spoke of the need for a partnership approach among health professionals: that partnership approach to ensuring a positive sense of mental wellbeing is required right across Scotland, and not just between the NHS and other elements of social care. It needs also to involve the third and independent sectors, which are very innovative and are able to create positive examples of community support.

We have announced that there will be an additional £100 million for mental health services over the next five years.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: You have a little time in hand if you need it.

Jamie Hepburn: An element of that money will be for primary care. It will not necessarily be for general practice, although some will be. I have been very clear that some of it must be directed to the organisations that I alluded to and which can play a positive role. Social prescribing will be a part of that. Mark McDonald and Bob Doris spoke of the positive example of the Home-Start initiatives in their areas. I am always keen to hear about such examples in this type of debate, and to try to spread good practice.

Presiding Officer, I will conclude because I can see that I have gone quite a bit over my time. My commitment is that we have to move to being a

society with a reduced level of stigmatisation about mental health issues, and one that has a stronger collective sense of mental wellbeing. We know that getting it right early matters: that has to include support for good perinatal mental health. Mark McDonald, other members and the wider public can be assured of my commitment to working to that end.

Meeting closed at 17:45.

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