

MEETING OF THE PARLIAMENT

Wednesday 12 May 1999
(*Afternoon*)

Volume 1 No 1

£5.00

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Scottish Parliament

Wednesday 12 May 1999

[THE TEMPORARY CLERK *opened the meeting at 09:30*]

The Temporary Clerk (Paul Grice): Welcome to this, the first meeting of the Scottish Parliament established under the Scotland Act 1998. We are gathered on this day and at this time and place, in accordance with The Scottish Parliament (First Ordinary General Election and First Meeting) Order 1999. As provided by the standing orders, my role is to preside over the proceedings to enable the oldest qualified member to take the oath or make a solemn affirmation.

Oaths and Affirmations

The following member made a solemn affirmation:

Dr Winnie Ewing (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)

Dr Winnie Ewing (Oldest Qualified Member): Oath taking by members will take place from 9.30 am and the election for the position of Presiding Officer will take place at 2.30 pm, with the two elections for the positions of Deputy Presiding Officer occurring thereafter. An official photograph of all members will be taken in the chamber afterwards.

The following member took the oath:

Donald Dewar (Glasgow Anniesland) (Lab)

Mr Alex Salmond (Banff and Buchan) (SNP): The Scottish National party parliamentary group's primary loyalty lies with the people of Scotland, in line with the Scottish constitutional tradition of the sovereignty of the people. I know that all members of this Parliament will share that view.

The following members took the oath:

Mr Alex Salmond (Banff and Buchan) (SNP)
David McLetchie (Lothians) (Con)
Mr Jim Wallace (Orkney) (LD)

Dennis Canavan (Falkirk West): I want to make it clear that I believe in the sovereignty of the people of Scotland rather than in the sovereignty of any monarch. My allegiance, therefore, is to the people of Scotland. However, in view of the legal requirement that must be met to enable me to represent my constituents, I shall make the affirmation.

The following member made a solemn affirmation:

Dennis Canavan (Falkirk West)

Robin Harper (Lothians) (Green): The Green party would have preferred to add the following

words to the affirmation:

"and faithfully serve the people of Scotland."

The following member made a solemn affirmation:

Robin Harper (Lothians) (Green)

Tommy Sheridan (Glasgow) (SSP): Before making the affirmation, I would like to declare that as a democratically elected socialist, my vision for Scotland is of a democratic socialist republic, where the supreme sovereignty lies with the people of Scotland, not with an unelected monarch. I therefore make this affirmation under protest.

The following members made a solemn affirmation:

Tommy Sheridan (Glasgow) (SSP)
Brian Adam (North-East Scotland) (SNP)
Sarah Boyack (Edinburgh Central) (Lab)
Scott Barrie (Dunfermline West) (Lab)
Rhona Brankin (Midlothian) (Lab)
Christine Grahame (South of Scotland) (SNP)
Robert Brown (Glasgow) (LD)

The following members took the oath:

Bill Aitken (Glasgow) (Con)
Ms Wendy Alexander (Paisley North) (Lab)
Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Lab)

Roseanna Cunningham (Perth) (SNP): I assert that my primary loyalty is to the people of Scotland.

The following member made a solemn affirmation:

Roseanna Cunningham (Perth) (SNP)

The following members took the oath:

Colin Campbell (West of Scotland) (SNP)
Ms Margaret Curran (Glasgow Baillieston) (Lab)
Cathie Craigie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (Lab)
Ms Patricia Ferguson (Glasgow Maryhill) (Lab)
Lord James Douglas-Hamilton (Lothians) (Con)
Mr David Davidson (North-East Scotland) (Con)
Alex Fergusson (South of Scotland) (Con)
Karen Gillon (Clydesdale) (Lab)
Helen Eadie (Dunfermline East) (Lab)
Phil Gallie (South of Scotland) (Con)
Miss Annabel Goldie (West of Scotland) (Con)
Fergus Ewing (Inverness East, Nairn and Lochaber) (SNP)
Ross Finnie (West of Scotland) (LD)
Donald Gorrie (Central Scotland) (LD)
Rhoda Grant (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
Iain Gray (Edinburgh Pentlands) (Lab)
Mr Duncan Hamilton (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
Mr Keith Harding (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Mr Sam Galbraith (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (Lab)
Mr John Home Robertson (East Lothian) (Lab)
Janis Hughes (Glasgow Rutherglen) (Lab)
Gordon Jackson (Glasgow Govan) (Lab)
Fiona Hyslop (Lothians) (SNP)
Dr Sylvia Jackson (Stirling) (Lab)
Dr Richard Simpson (Ochil) (Lab)
Adam Ingram (South of Scotland) (SNP)
Alex Johnstone (North-East Scotland) (Con)

The following members made a solemn affirmation:

Malcolm Chisholm (Edinburgh North and Leith) (Lab)
 Bruce Crawford (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP)
 Susan Deacon (Edinburgh East and Musselburgh) (Lab)
 Linda Fabiani (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Mr Kenneth Gibson (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Mrs Margaret Ewing (Moray) (SNP)
 Trish Godman (West Renfrewshire) (Lab)
 Hugh Henry (Paisley South) (Lab)
 Cathy Jamieson (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (Lab)

10:13

Dr Ewing: We will now take a short break.

10:38

Dr Ewing: We will now resume.

I should let everyone know that I intend to make a short speech at 2.30 pm. [*Interruption.*]

I am advised that I should not do that. In order to assist the clerks, it would be far better if I made my speech at the end of the morning. I am very anxious to keep in with the clerks.

The following members took the oath:

Marilyn Livingstone (Kirkcaldy) (Lab)
 Margaret Jamieson (Kilmarnock and Loudoun) (Lab)
 Lewis Macdonald (Aberdeen Central) (Lab)
 Ian Jenkins (Tweeddale, Ettrick and Lauderdale) (LD)
 Mr Nick Johnston (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Dorothy-Grace Elder (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Irene McGugan (North-East Scotland) (SNP)
 Maureen Macmillan (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Paul Martin (Glasgow Springburn) (Lab)
 Mrs Lyndsay McIntosh (Central Scotland) (Con)
 Mr Duncan McNeil (Greenock and Inverclyde) (Lab)
 Ms Margo MacDonald (Lothians) (SNP)
 Angus Mackay (Edinburgh South) (Lab)
 Pauline McNeill (Glasgow Kelvin) (Lab)
 Mr Frank McAveety (Glasgow Shettleston) (Lab)
 Michael Matheson (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Mr Tom McCabe (Hamilton South) (Lab)
 Mr John Munro (Ross, Skye and Inverness West) (LD)
 Mr Jamie McGrigor (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 Alex Neil (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Mary Scanlon (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 Ms Irene Oldfather (Cunninghame South) (Lab)
 Bristow Muldoon (Livingston) (Lab)
 Mr George Reid (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP)
 Mrs Mary Mulligan (Linlithgow) (Lab)
 David Mundell (South of Scotland) (Con)
 Mr Alasdair Morrison (Western Isles) (Lab)
 Euan Robson (Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (LD)
 Mr Lloyd Quinan (West of Scotland) (SNP)
 Mr Andy Kerr (East Kilbride) (Lab)
 Mr Brian Monteith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Peter Peacock (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Mr Keith Raffan (Mid Scotland and Fife) (LD)

The following members made a solemn affirmation:

Richard Lochhead (North-East Scotland) (SNP)
 George Lyon (Argyll and Bute) (LD)
 Kate MacLean (Dundee West) (Lab)
 Johann Lamont (Glasgow Pollok) (Lab)

Tricia Marwick (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP)
 Mr Michael McMahon (Hamilton North and Bellshill) (Lab)
 Elaine Thomson (Aberdeen North) (Lab)
 Mr Kenny MacAskill (Lothians) (SNP)
 Dr Elaine Murray (Dumfries) (Lab)
 Fiona McLeod (West of Scotland) (SNP)
 Mr John McAllion (Dundee East) (Lab)
 Mr Jack McConnell (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Lab)
 Henry McLeish (Central Fife) (Lab)
 Alasdair Morgan (Galloway and Upper Nithsdale) (SNP)
 Mr Kenneth Macintosh (Eastwood) (Lab)
 Ian Welsh (Ayr) (Lab)
 Shona Robison (North-East Scotland) (SNP)
 Nora Radcliffe (Gordon) (LD)
 Des McNulty (Clydebank and Milngavie) (Lab)
 Mr Andrew Welsh (Angus) (SNP)
 Cathy Peattie (Falkirk East) (Lab)

11:11

Dr Ewing: I would like to announce a short break.

I shall make my speech at the end of the morning.

11:31

Dr Ewing: We shall now resume.

When this part of the proceedings is over—which I think will be early—and before we break for lunch, I will say a few words. It will not take many minutes, so do not be alarmed.

The following members made a solemn affirmation:

Nicola Sturgeon (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Iain Smith (North-East Fife) (LD)
 Kay Ullrich (West of Scotland) (SNP)
 Mike Watson (Glasgow Cathcart) (Lab)

The following members took the oath:

Tavish Scott (Shetland) (LD)
 Elaine Smith (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Lab)
 Mr Mike Rumbles (West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine) (LD)
 Mrs Margaret Smith (Edinburgh West) (LD)
 Michael Russell (South of Scotland) (SNP)
 Ben Wallace (North-East Scotland) (Con)
 Mr Gil Paterson (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Sir David Steel (Lothians) (LD)
 Mr Jamie Stone (Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross) (LD)
 Ms Sandra White (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Mr John Swinney (North Tayside) (SNP)
 Karen Whitefield (Airdrie and Shotts) (Lab)
 Andrew Wilson (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 John Young (West of Scotland) (Con)
 Mr Murray Tosh (South of Scotland) (Con)
 Allan Wilson (Cunninghame North) (Lab)
 Nicol Stephen (Aberdeen South) (LD)

11:52

Dr Ewing: We are indebted to the clerks, who have been masters of efficiency throughout this long and difficult day. [*Applause.*]

I have the opportunity to make a short speech and I want to begin with the words that I have always wanted either to say or to hear someone else say: the Scottish Parliament, which adjourned on 25 March 1707, is hereby reconvened. *[Applause.]*

I could not say those words until all members had been sworn and the Parliament really had been convened.

This is an historic day and, after a long time in politics, I am aware that we owe a debt to many who are not here, who did not live to see the promised land. I would like to mention a few people from across the parties: Arthur Donaldson, Robert McIntyre, Alick Buchanan-Smith, Johnny Bannerman, Emrys Hughes, John Mackintosh and John Smith—today is the fifth anniversary of his death. I would also like to mention my colleague Allan Macartney, who so nearly lived to see the day. There are many others, but I have been able to mention only the people who have been my friends. Many people are named in the history books; many are not, but all of them have made this moment in history possible. I give my thanks to every one of them.

As everyone knows, I have been a member of two Parliaments. I spent eight years in the House of Commons and I have spent 23 years in the European Parliament—which does not sound so long if it is said quickly. Until July, I will be the mother of the European Parliament. I hasten to add that I am not the oldest member of that Parliament, although I am the oldest one here, which is very disconcerting—I think they must have made a mistake on my birth certificate.

I have several practical and sincere hopes for the Parliament. The first is that we try to follow the more consensual style of the European Parliament and say goodbye to the badgering and backbiting that one associates with Westminster.

Secondly, in the House of Commons, I found that there was a Speaker's tradition of being fair to minorities. I am an expert in being a minority—I was alone in the House of Commons for three years and alone in the European Parliament for 19 years—but we are all minorities now, and I hope that the Presiding Officer, whoever that may be, will be fair to each and every one of us.

My next hope is that this Parliament, by its mere existence, will create better relations with England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and I believe that to be in the hearts of the peoples of all of those countries.

My last practical hope is that everyone who was born in Scotland, some of whom, like me, could not help it, and everyone who chose Scotland as their country, will live in harmony together, enjoying our cultures but remaining loyal to their

own.

In Europe and in the wider world, there is a bank of good will towards Scotland. I was privileged to visit 28 third-world countries as a member of my third world committee. I met many heads of state of struggling countries with problems who asked what was taking the Scots so long. I know that there will be a great deal of good will from all those countries.

I have served on the Lomé assembly, which is made up of the European Parliament plus half of the world. One of our proudest moments was when Lomé came to Inverness and we agreed the declaration of Inverness, which became part of international law. In that declaration, we swept away the last vestiges of apartheid. Thus, we played a constructive role on the international stage, earning the admiration of everyone who attended the assembly, from Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

On behalf of my party, I pledge to make this Parliament work. All of us here can make it work—and make it a showpiece of modern democracy. It is no secret that, to members of the Scottish National party, this Parliament is not quite the fulfilment of our dream, but it is a Parliament we can build a dream on. Our dream is for Scotland to be as sovereign as Denmark, Finland or Austria—no more, no less. However, we know that that dream can come true only when there is total consensus among the people of Scotland, and we accept that.

I will end by quoting from the debate of 1707. I have chosen a passage by Lord Belhaven, who was an opponent of the treaty:

“Show me a spurious patriot, a bombastic fire-eater, and I will show you a rascal. Show me a man who loves all countries equally with his own and I will show you a man entirely deficient of a sense of proportion. But show me a man who respects the rights of all nations while ready to defend the rights of his own against them all and I will show you a man who is both a nationalist and an internationalist.”

It was said that 1707 was the end of an auld sang. All of us here can begin to write together a new Scottish song, and I urge all of you to sing it in harmony—*fortissimo*. *[Applause.]*

We shall now break for lunch, which is welcome news. As all members have been sworn, we will resume at 2.30 pm, when the voting period for the election of the Presiding Officer will commence. The nomination period for Presiding Officer runs from 12.30 pm to 2.15 pm.

Presiding Officer

14:30

Dr Winnie Ewing (Oldest Qualified Member):

The voting period for the election of the Presiding Officer is now open. The following valid nominations for the position of Presiding Officer have been received:

Mr George Reid
Sir David Steel

Will each of the candidates, in order, please stand up to identify themselves.

Mr George Reid (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP) stood.

Sir David Steel (Lothians) (LD) stood.

Dr Ewing: The election shall proceed in accordance with rule 11.9 of the standing orders of the Parliament. Members should wait in their seats until a clerk indicates to them that they should collect their ballot paper from the back of the chamber. Two tables have been set up for this purpose. The table on my left-hand side should be used by members with surnames beginning with the letters A to M—but not Mc or Mac—while the table on my right-hand side should be used by members whose surnames begin with Mc, Mac or the letters N to Z. Members should give their names to the clerk, who will hand them a ballot paper. Members should then proceed to one of the four voting booths, where they should vote by marking an X on the ballot paper. Members should then put the folded ballot paper in the ballot box, which is situated in the well of the chamber, before returning to their seats.

Each candidate can nominate one scrutineer to monitor the counting of votes. Will candidates ensure that the name of their scrutineer is notified to the clerks at the tables at the back of the chamber at the time that they collect their ballot paper. I shall announce the names of the scrutineers and invite them to the vote counting table in the well of the chamber at the end of the voting period.

The clerks have assured me that this vote is absolutely untraceable and the votes will be counted openly on the table in front of me.

Dennis Canavan (Falkirk West): On a point of order, Dr Ewing. Will you give us guidance on whether we can have an open, recorded vote rather than a secret ballot? We have waited for our first Scottish Parliament for nearly 300 years—indeed, this is our first ever democratically elected Scottish Parliament—and the Parliament was supposed to herald a new era of open democracy, but our first vote is to be a secret one. That seems rather strange. Surely we should behave like an

open democracy, rather than a secret society.

I realise that we are operating under draft standing orders, which were handed to us by a statutory instrument of the House of Commons. As I understand it, there was little, if any, debate on that statutory instrument in the House of Commons. I have been critical of the way in which things are done there, but even in the House of Commons there is an open, recorded vote on every occasion, including the election of the Speaker. Would you be prepared to accept, from me, a motion that we have an open recorded vote rather than a secret ballot on this important, historic, first vote of our first ever democratically elected Scottish Parliament?

Dr Ewing: My heart is with you, but the standing orders are against you. At the moment, I will obey the standing orders. If there is any other person who wants to say that we should not obey the standing orders, perhaps they should enter the discussion now.

There is no one else so, Dennis, while my heart is with you, the standing orders have to settle the matter for now. Perhaps in future we can reform ourselves.

Members voted by secret ballot.

14:42

Dr Ewing: There is one minute remaining in which members can vote.

14:43

Dr Ewing: The voting in this round is now closed.

Please will the following members come to the well of the chamber to scrutinise the counting of the ballot papers: Mr Colin Campbell for Mr George Reid, and Margaret Smith for Sir David Steel.

In the election for the position of Presiding Officer, the total number of votes that were cast for each candidate was:

Mr George Reid	44
Sir David Steel	82
Abstentions	3

[*Applause.*]

Accordingly, as Sir David Steel received more votes than the total number of votes received by all other candidates, and since more than 25 per cent of the members voted, Sir David Steel is elected as the first Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament.

Before I invite Sir David to take the chair, Mr Reid would like to say a few words of congratulation.

Mr George Reid (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP): I congratulate Sir David. I have known him personally for 44 years. I am pleased by the appointment and I am sure that Sir David will ensure that the Parliament is open, accessible, accountable, strong on equal opportunities and works in partnership with civic Scotland.

The Presiding Officer (Sir David Steel): I thank members for the honour and the responsibility which I have been given. I undertake to set aside party affiliation and to be the servant of the whole Parliament.

Last week, William McIlvanney, in a poem, talked about the Scottish lion becoming a kitten again, which must be cherished. We must cherish this Parliament. This is the start of a new sang.

The elections for the positions of Deputy Presiding Officer will take place in the chamber at 3:40 pm. Members who wish to make nominations for either or both positions of Deputy Presiding Officer should pick up nomination papers from the clerk in my office on the first floor of the Assembly Hall.

Nomination papers must be signed by the nominee, the member nominating and the seconder. Completed papers must be handed to one of the clerks in my office not later than 15 minutes before the time I have set for the vote. In other words, there can be no nominating within 15 minutes of the vote. Members may nominate from 3:10 pm.

Dr Ewing: I move, That the meeting of the Parliament be adjourned until 3:40 pm.

Question agreed to.

Meeting adjourned at 15:00.

15:40

On resuming—

Deputy Presiding Officers

The Presiding Officer (Sir David Steel): This time, members should remember to insert their cards in the machines, not only if they want to speak, but if they want to vote. The voting period for the election of the Deputy Presiding Officers is now open. The following valid nominations have been received:

Ms Patricia Ferguson
Mr George Reid
John Young

Will each of the candidates please stand to identify themselves?

Ms Patricia Ferguson (Glasgow Maryhill) (Lab) stood.

Mr George Reid (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP) stood.

John Young (West of Scotland) (Con) stood.

The Presiding Officer: The election will proceed in accordance with rule 11.9 of the standing orders. I do not need to read that out, as it describes the same procedure that we have just followed—members will not have forgotten it already. Candidates should each nominate a scrutineer to monitor the counting of the votes; they should notify the clerks at the back of the chamber of their scrutineer when they collect their ballot papers. At the end of the voting period, I shall announce the names of the scrutineers and invite them to the vote-counting table in the well of the chamber.

Members voted by secret ballot.

15:51

The Presiding Officer: The voting time for this round is now closed. The following members should come to the well of the chamber to scrutinise the count of the ballot papers: Mr Jack McConnell for Ms Patricia Ferguson; Colin Campbell for Mr George Reid; and Miss Annabel Goldie for John Young.

16:04

The Presiding Officer: In the first round of voting in the election of the first Deputy Presiding Officer, the number of votes cast for each candidate was as follows:

Ms Patricia Ferguson	54
Mr George Reid	54
John Young	17
Abstentions	1

Spoilt papers 2

Accordingly, as no candidate received a majority of the votes cast, and as John Young received the fewest votes, he is eliminated from the election and a second round will take place with Ms Patricia Ferguson and Mr George Reid as candidates. There will be a short delay while new ballot papers are printed. So that there are no further spoilt papers, I remind members that they should vote for one person only.

16:06

The Presiding Officer: The voting period is now open. The voting procedure is as before.

16:12

The Presiding Officer: Members have one minute remaining in which to vote.

16:13

The Presiding Officer: The voting time for this round is now closed. The two candidates and their scrutineers should now come to the well.

16:25

The Presiding Officer: In the second round of voting in the election of the first Deputy Presiding Officer, the number of votes cast for each candidate was as follows:

Ms Patricia Ferguson	66
Mr George Reid	59
Abstentions	2

Accordingly, as Ms Patricia Ferguson received more votes than the total number of votes that were received by the other candidate, and as more than 25 per cent of the members voted, Ms Patricia Ferguson is elected as a Deputy Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament. [*Applause.*]

The following members are candidates in the first round of voting in the election of the second Deputy Presiding Officer:

Mr George Reid
John Young

There will now be a short pause while new ballot papers are printed, but I understand that that will be done almost instantly.

16:26

The Presiding Officer: The voting period in the first round of voting in the election of the second Deputy Presiding Officer is now open.

16:42

The Presiding Officer: In the first round of

voting in the election of the second Deputy Presiding Officer, the number of votes cast for each candidate was as follows:

Mr George Reid	72
John Young	34
Abstentions	22

Accordingly, as Mr George Reid received majority support from those members who voted, and as more than 25 per cent of members voted, Mr George Reid is elected as a Deputy Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament. [*Applause.*]

The business for today is now concluded. However, before I close this meeting, I remind members that we will meet tomorrow at 2.30 pm to select the Parliament's nominee for appointment as First Minister. I also remind members that nominations for this post need to be submitted to the clerk no later than 30 minutes before the voting period begins. From 9.30 am onwards, nomination forms will be available from the chamber office in the Parliamentary Headquarters at George IV Bridge, where nominations may be lodged with the clerk.

Finally, as members will be aware, at the close of today's business an official photograph will be taken of all members who have taken the oath or who have made the affirmation. Members should remain in their seats while the photograph is taken.

I now close this meeting. [*Applause.*]

Meeting closed at 16:44.

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