

MEETING OF THE PARLIAMENT

Wednesday 27 March 2002
(*Afternoon*)

Session 1

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Scottish Parliament

Wednesday 27 March 2002

(Afternoon)

[THE PRESIDING OFFICER *opened the meeting at 14:30*]

Time for Reflection

The Presiding Officer (Sir David Steel): We welcome to lead time for reflection Dr Lloyd J Ogilvie, who is the chaplain to the United States Senate. Although he has come a long way today, Dr Ogilvie has also come from next door, in a sense, as he spent a year studying divinity at New College. He is no stranger to Edinburgh. Some of us look forward to seeing him again in a few days in Washington, where he is a prime mover in the tartan day celebrations. Dr Ogilvie, you are very welcome.

Dr Lloyd J Ogilvie (Chaplain of the United States Senate): Thank you, Sir David, for the privilege of being here today. It is very moving to be here in the Assembly Hall. I recall moderators such as John Baillie, James Stewart and Thomas Torrance, who were my beloved professors next door in New College. To be here is a great pleasure. Thank you.

As chaplain of the United States Senate, I have the opportunity to serve as a spiritual enabler and encourager of men and women who have the high calling of politics. Politics is accurately defined as the practice of government, the formation of public policy and the management of public affairs. I believe that politics is one of the highest callings. Martin Luther said that the very ablest youth should be reserved and educated not for the office of preaching, but for government, because in preaching, the Holy Spirit does it all, whereas in government, one must exercise reason in the shadowy realms of the ambiguous and the uncertain, where those things are the order of the day.

However, in preaching and in politics we are tempted to live on the level of talent, rather than through the gifts for supernatural leadership that the Holy Spirit endows. Apart from God's strength and courage, nothing of lasting value can be accomplished. The motto of my chaplaincy is, "Without God, we can't; without us, he won't." Many senators are discovering that beyond the levels of education, experience and expertise, they need the gifts of wisdom, knowledge, discernment, vision and prophetic communication of truth. An election far greater than the votes of the people

brought them to where they are. They need to depend on God and be riverbeds for the flow of supernatural wisdom.

What does the Lord require? In Micah, chapter 6, verse 8, the prophet thundered an answer to that oft-asked question:

"To do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with Thy God".

In Hebrew, to walk humbly means to walk attentively. Listening to God and the needs of people is the politician's primary vocation, which requires intimacy with God in prayer. Intimacy means proceeding from within, inward, internal. The Thou-I relationship with God that we were created to experience requires that the real I meets the true God of justice and righteousness in grace. Intimacy with God also involves integrity of life and congruity between what we believe and what we do, between the 10 commandments and our character, and between seeking guidance from God and obeying him. Intimacy and integrity result in intentionality. Lodestar leadership is saying what we mean and meaning what we say; it is pressing on with courage, knowing we have only God to please.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, in whom a thousand days are as yesterday when it has passed, source of supernatural gifts for dynamic leadership, bless the women and men of this Parliament. Grant them strength to think clearly, speak courageously, negotiate fairly, serve unselfishly and press on boldly. Replenish the wells of their souls with your limitless power. Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Point of Order

14:35

Tricia Marwick (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP): On a point of order, Presiding Officer. In November, I lodged two written questions asking the Scottish Executive about the process for announcing appointments to the membership of public bodies, when the procedures were introduced and on how many occasions since their introduction the procedures had not been followed.

Last Sunday, an article in *Scotland on Sunday* revealed that, in 411 cases, the political activity declaration had not been completed and the correct procedure had not been followed.

At 15:31 yesterday, I received a response to my written questions by e-mail from Andy Kerr. At almost the same time, a press release was issued in which the minister quoted in full his reply to me, but did not reveal the fact that it was my written question that had instigated the investigation in the Executive. I ask you to consider the release of the information to *Scotland on Sunday*, which I consider to be serious. I ask you also to consider all the facts and to record your displeasure at the gross discourtesy that has been shown by a minister to a member of the Scottish Parliament.

The Presiding Officer (Sir David Steel): I thank the member for giving me notice of the point of order, which allowed me to check up on the facts. The press release to which you referred was issued at 4 o'clock, which was nearly half an hour after you received the reply by e-mail. I have to say that the question of what is or is not contained in a press release is a matter for the Executive, not me.

Your complaint that the answers did not appear on the Parliament's website on the day on which they were answered is justified. I am sorry about that; it was a simple oversight for which the member should receive an apology. However, the matter is an internal one for the Parliament.

I do not know anything about the report in *Scotland on Sunday*. I do not know how closely it is related to the question, as I am afraid that I have not seen it, but I do not think that it is a matter for a point of order.

Tourism

The Presiding Officer (Sir David Steel): The next item of business is a debate on motion S1M-2941, in the name of Mike Watson, on tourism, and two amendments to that motion.

This is a matter of great interest and many members want to take part in the debate. I would therefore appreciate it if the opening speeches could be shorter than the allotted time.

14:39

The Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport (Mike Watson): It is important that we have this opportunity to debate tourism, which is one of Scotland's most important industries. That fact seems to be one of our best-kept secrets—it is certainly not divulged by many of our political commentators. However, it should be, because tourism accounts for about 8 per cent of Scottish gross domestic product, supports nearly 200,000 jobs and contributes an amazing £4 billion to the Scottish economy. By way of comparison, as a percentage of employment, while tourism contributes 8.7 per cent, the financial services sector contributes 4.4 per cent and the electronics industry contributes 1.9 per cent. The contributions of both the financial services sector and the electronics industry receive much more press coverage, however.

It is no secret that we are at the end of a difficult financial year for the industry. Tourism was hit hard in 2001, first by foot-and-mouth disease and then as a consequence of the dreadful events of 11 September in the United States. We do not yet have final figures—they are not available—but our best estimate is that the tourism spend in Scotland in 2001 will be shown to be around £500 million less than in 2000.

It will take the industry some time to recover fully from the effects of those unexpected setbacks, but there are grounds for optimism. The World Tourism Organization expects consumer confidence to return during this year. It has said:

“Renewed growth is expected, rooted in the economic improvement predicted by most international forecasting organisations for the second half of the year at the latest.”

It is also encouraging that the British Airports Authority has reported that passenger numbers at Britain's airports in February showed their first monthly increase since September and that the main Scottish airports all recorded rises compared to February 2001.

We can also learn from the World Tourism Organization's view that external events can have a severe impact on tourism. They can redistribute it geographically and affect its timing, but they

cannot bring it to a halt. The challenge for Scotland's tourism industry is to ensure that it benefits from any of that redistribution in tourism and travel patterns.

As is widely known, we published "A New Strategy for Scottish Tourism" in February 2000. Two years on, I can say confidently that that strategy is already working. The main results are: better marketing by VisitScotland and the area tourist boards; improvements in the use of information and communications technology throughout the industry; readily available advice to businesses about improving the quality of their product; and developing the skills of those who work in the industry and consider it a career choice. I am concerned that, up to now, tourism has not been considered a career choice to any significant extent. I want school careers officers to offer tourism as a real career choice.

All strategies need to be reviewed to ensure that they remain relevant and to take account of new developments. As you would expect, that is exactly what we have done. Just over two weeks ago, on 11 March, Elaine Murray and I launched the "Tourism Framework for Action 2002:2005". Although I have said this on many occasions, it appears that it is necessary to emphasise that that document is not a new strategy; it simply develops the existing one. However, it contains new actions.

Sarah Boyack (Edinburgh Central) (Lab): I welcome the fact that the minister has produced a framework to implement the strategy, but I draw his attention to the problem that was highlighted in the Edinburgh *Evening News* today. There is a danger that we will lose our sentries at Edinburgh Castle, which is in my constituency and which is one of our most popular tourist attractions. I have already been in touch with Adam Ingram MP at his Westminster offices. I ask the minister to liaise with his Westminster colleagues to get a sensible solution to avoid losing one of the most popular attractions at the castle.

Mike Watson: The first I knew of that was in the lunchtime editions of today's *Evening News*. It is a matter of some concern. Such matters are for the Army to decide, but there is clearly a tourism impact. I understand that Historic Scotland is meeting representatives of the Army this afternoon. I am hopeful that some resolution can be achieved. It is not yet clear whether the withdrawal of the sentries, which I agree are a great tourist attraction, is for this year only—there has been some mention of additional duties falling on the Army because of the Queen's jubilee—or for a longer period, which I hope is not the case. I am sure that it will be resolved through discussion.

As I stated, the framework for action has been maligned by political opponents as being just another glossy document. I have no doubt that Mr

Davidson will have something to say about that in due course. However, I draw members' attention to the fact that the front cover has the word "ACT" written on it. Perhaps it is almost subliminal, but it is there. The framework is an action document; it is not just a consultation or discussion document.

Alasdair Morgan may think that that is funny. It is not; it is a serious issue. The document is about actions to take forward the next stage of the tourism strategy. When we started the review, we were told by the industry's representative bodies—the tourist boards and the tourism forum—that the industry needed a greater involvement in decisions about its future. Businesses could and should take more action to improve the product that they offer and to market it more effectively. I welcome that approach. It is what forms the basis of the framework document, which involves actions by businesses supported where necessary by actions in the public sector.

Mrs Margaret Smith (Edinburgh West) (LD): What action is the minister intending to take to acknowledge the gateway status not only of Edinburgh, but of Glasgow? About 85 per cent of overseas visitors come into Scotland via those two cities. The amount of money given to them by VisitScotland, however, falls woefully short of what is required, to the extent that Edinburgh and Glasgow are subsidising the rest of Scotland—by more than £200,000 in the case of the Edinburgh and Lothians Tourist Board. Thirty per cent of inquiries received by the board—in terms both of the number of people inquiring and the number of inquiries—are about visiting other parts of Scotland.

Mike Watson: As Margaret Smith says, Glasgow and Edinburgh are the gateways. It is important that, when people come to Scotland, they go to more than just one place and do more than just one thing. We should encourage them to spread their visit as much as we can. Naturally, the airports of the two cities will be the most popular points of access.

While acknowledging what Margaret Smith says, I would point out that Glasgow and Edinburgh get a particularly large number of visitors, and that fact should be weighed in the balance when considering the benefit to those cities and to other parts of Scotland. That is what I and VisitScotland are doing and will continue to do with regard to the resources that are available.

I will return to the "Tourism Framework for Action". As many members will have observed, it lists three priorities. The first is to increase the awareness of Scotland as a tourist destination and to improve access to and within Scotland; the second is to ensure that businesses provide what their customers want; the third is to ensure that the importance of tourism to the Scottish economy is

recognised. The framework also takes account of developing across the Executive the policies that have a direct link to tourism, notably transport, enterprise and agriculture.

The document lists 55 actions. It is not appropriate to mention them all now, but I want to refer to some that relate to other matters for which I have ministerial responsibility: culture, sport, major events and the built heritage.

The public sector agencies, including the national institutions, are committed to working with each other and with the private sector to identify key products and to assess the opportunities that they offer. They will learn from international best practice and will share that knowledge. The national institutions, including Historic Scotland and sportscotland, will work closely with VisitScotland so that that product development and marketing are aligned, and so that we avoid duplication of effort wherever possible.

It is important to get such linkages right, and I am determined that we do that. I have given a commitment that the public and private sectors will both be involved in the steering group that I am to chair, to ensure that the "Framework for Action" document is implemented over the next three years.

Alex Neil (Central Scotland) (SNP): In the context of what he has just said about the role of the various public agencies, could the minister outline the role of Scottish Development International, which is a joint venture between the Scottish Executive and Scottish Enterprise? SDI now has a worldwide network of offices, notably in the United States. Will it too be given a role in promoting Scottish tourism?

Mike Watson: All those who are involved, whether they be in the public sector or in the private sector, will be encouraged to contribute to the review that I am setting up with area tourist boards and to contribute generally to selling Scotland in whatever way possible. The answer is that no doors will be closed, and nobody will be excluded.

The public agencies have been asked to make a commitment in their operating plans to the necessary actions that I outlined in the framework, and I will shortly be making an announcement about the launch of a joint-venture project. The proportion of tourism businesses using e-commerce, at only about 13 per cent, is far too low. The project, which will involve all the area tourist boards with the exception of Glasgow, will lead to a significant increase in that figure while benefiting both businesses and their customers.

Ian Jenkins (Tweeddale, Ettrick and Lauderdale) (LD): Will the minister take an intervention?

The Presiding Officer: No. The minister is in his last minute.

Mike Watson: I have already taken a number of interventions. I would give way if I had time, but I am up against the clock.

One of the best examples of tourism and culture coming together for the benefit of both can be found in the national tartan day celebrations in New York. I am very pleased to welcome Dr Ogilvie to the gallery today—we enjoyed his contribution at time for reflection. I know that he was influential in establishing tartan day in 1998. The event has grown and will continue to do so.

It is important that we take every opportunity to remind people in the United States of America that Scotland is a tremendous holiday destination. Of course we understand why, in the aftermath of the awful events of last September, fewer people are travelling, but this year's tartan day, which is next week, provides an ideal opportunity to showcase the best of traditional, as well as contemporary, Scottish culture, and I am determined that that is what tartan day will do. A great many Scottish artists, including contemporary artists, will be in New York next week, representing our thriving cultural scene and demonstrating what can be done.

There will also be home and away. I am referring not to the television soap opera, but to an innovative exhibition organised by the National Museums of Scotland. That will be presented on Ellis island, where many of the Scots immigrants first set foot in the new world. The tunes of glory march down 6th Avenue will present the traditional view of Scotland.

The First Minister and I will support all those events and use them to sell Scotland as a unique and unforgettable tourist destination. There will also be other events involving golf and our film industry, organised by Scottish Screen.

I want to conclude by saying something about major events. Building on our experiences of the Ryder cup and Euro 2008, on which we are working very hard to ensure a successful outcome, we are developing a major events strategy. Members of staff have been dedicated to that task. I can inform Parliament today that, to help to advance the work, I have agreed to the appointment of a company called Objective Performance Ltd. The people involved in that company—not least Mr Craig McLatchey, who was the driving force in the Sydney Olympic bid and was involved in the organisation of the millennium Olympics—have vast experience in the strategic approach to major events and event marketing. Mr McLatchey will be a great asset to us. Our aim is clear and ambitious—to secure Scotland's place as one of the world's foremost

event destinations. Once the groundwork is complete, Scotland will have assembled detailed knowledge of what it takes to be successful in capturing major events.

As the framework for action says, we are intent on building a tourism industry in Scotland that is internationally competitive. We want Scotland to be a must-visit destination. We can credibly claim to have made good progress so far. The framework for action will move us closer to our target. It maps out the way forward for our tourism industry. All those who share our aim will want to support the motion this afternoon.

I move,

That the Parliament welcomes the progress that has been made by the Scottish Executive in implementing *A New Strategy for Scottish Tourism* since its publication in 2000 and commends the *Tourism Framework for Action 2002:05* as the way to build on this and achieve a tourism industry that is internationally competitive and creates jobs and wealth for the people of Scotland.

14:51

Mr Kenny MacAskill (Lothians) (SNP): Yet again, Parliament is faced with self-congratulatory twaddle from the Executive.

The motion as it stands defies the reality on the ground. The tourism sector has had to face calamitous events and is still in difficulties. No one could have predicted foot-and-mouth or the events of 11 September, but to ignore them or to imply that they are or were factored in is absurd. The motion talks about a strategy having existed since 2000. Given seismic global events, to suggest that all was and is covered is ludicrous. Although the Executive cannot be blamed for those events' having occurred, it must take responsibility for the handling of the crises that followed. The words "belated" and "inadequate" spring to mind—too little was done, too late, for too many.

Today, reference has been made to a major events strategy. The Ryder cup and Euro 2008 have been mentioned. We have lost one of those and we are in danger of losing the other if the Executive continues in its current manner.

The motion goes on to commend the framework for action as the way ahead, but the impotence of that document is shown by the parliamentary answer that I received from the minister earlier this week. When we asked what additional funding would be made available for the marketing of Scotland overseas following the publication of the framework, we were told:

"The Framework for Action is not a new strategy. It contains new actions, mainly for the industry, that will meet our aims for this important sector of the economy. The public agencies who provide support to the industry, will be able to do so within existing and planned funding levels."—*[Official Report, Written Answers, 25 March 2002; p275]*

The events that the industry, our nation and the world have faced have been calamitous. To suggest that existing budgets are adequate is pathetic. This is not a solution; it is yet more spin from an Executive that ignores and undervalues our biggest industry. There will be no hardship fund for those most deeply affected.

The Deputy Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport (Dr Elaine Murray): Will the member give way?

Mr MacAskill: Not at the moment.

What is the reality? Foot-and-mouth disease and the events of 11 September have caused massive bleeding in the industry. The additional funding that has been provided is welcome but inadequate. The action that has been taken by agencies is welcome but piecemeal. We require an overarching strategy for making our land accessible to visitors and for marketing ourselves abroad. Sadly, the motion and the Executive's actions are deficient on both counts.

What is the situation and what needs done? First, there must be recognition of the underlying problems that the industry faces, in addition to the two calamitous events that have occurred. Action, albeit belated and inadequate, is being taken with regard to the latter, but nothing has been done to deal with the former. Scotland remains a high-price, high-cost destination because of the high pound and the high price of fuel. Those issues may be outwith the remit of this Parliament, but the Executive can neither wish them away nor avoid addressing them.

If the Executive is to be responsible for the health and welfare of both the industry and our people, it is obliged to take cognisance of those factors and to take what action it can to mitigate them. At the minimum, should we not indicate the significant damage that is being done to the industry by both the high pound and the high price of fuel, instead of taking the ostrich-like, head-in-the-sand attitude displayed by the Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport and his predecessors? Unless those two underlying factors are addressed, our industry will continue to require to fight a rearguard action in the face of overwhelming odds.

The industry does not need lectures; it needs action. If this Government would sort out what it is in charge of, the industry would be able to sort out what it is responsible for. The industry will sort out the quality aspects that are needed, but the Executive must sort out the fundamental matters that are crushing it. The Executive must stop lecturing and start delivering. The industry will cater for its clientele; the Executive's obligation is to help to persuade possible clients to come to our land in the first place.

Dr Winnie Ewing (Highlands and Islands) (SNP): Will the member give way?

Mr MacAskill: Not at the moment; I will let Winnie Ewing in in a minute.

Changes for the better have been made recently. Sadly for the Executive, that has been more by accident than by design. The new regime at VisitScotland has been impressive. Let us not forget, however, that the minister who previously had responsibility for tourism brought in another chief executive with great fanfare and promotion, only to ditch him within days at great public expense. Greater clarity and a clearer strategy are coming from VisitScotland, but the difficulties that have been forced upon the organisation remain.

Dr Ewing: Is the member aware that although the British Tourist Authority is responsible for 27 overseas offices, its recent document, "UK OK", misses out the Western Isles, northern isles, Moray, Aberdeen, Caithness and Sutherland, to mention but a few? How can anyone suggest that we are reaching out to those 27 overseas offices?

Mr MacAskill: I fully agree and I will go on to mention the fact that we should give VisitScotland our full support and encourage it—rather than the BTA, whose actions are inadequate—to act in Scotland's interests.

Rhona Brankin (Midlothian) (Lab): Does the member agree that vast numbers of tourists come to Scotland every year from the rest of the UK and that it is essential to work in partnership with the British Tourist Authority to ensure that Scotland gets the best of both worlds?

Mr MacAskill: The tourists who come from the other parts of the UK are encouraged to come here by the marketing strategy that VisitScotland has introduced. We have to promote VisitScotland, not undermine it by having it work with the ball and chain of the BTA around its feet.

There are matters of importance surrounding VisitScotland. There are political and ideological matters that it has to accept. E-tourism is vital, but why is there such hurry and, most important, why is a public-private partnership necessary? Yes, we have to outsource what is best dealt with by experts, but why do we have to sell out lock, stock and barrel? Were other forms of funding or venture capital considered? If not, why not? If they were ruled out, why was that done? What action will be taken to try to assuage the fears that have been intimidated by Eddie Friel at Greater Glasgow and Clyde Valley Tourist Board and by other area tourist boards?

There are two key priority areas: accessibility and marketing. I will move the amendment for those reasons, because they are critical. Our geography means that we need mechanisms and

a strategy to make our land accessible at an affordable rate. We need to prioritise air routes, for both low-cost and other scheduled carriers, but the Executive has no strategy for that. I asked the Deputy Minister for Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning what strategy and funding were available. He replied that there was no specific budget and left it to a variety of other public sector and private organisations to deliver. Tourism is a key priority; it is a national responsibility. We need a route development fund. The Executive must deliver on that.

The other priority is marketing. Despite a modest increase in funds, it is quite clear that Ireland still spends more on marketing than we spend on our entire budget for VisitScotland. Moreover, as any marketer would say, we need to maximise our USP—our unique selling point. The Executive sends out mixed messages. VisitScotland works overtime to sell Scotland; meanwhile the Executive and the member for Midlothian expect us to flog "UK OK". Until we realise that our product is distinct and must be sold as such, we undersell our industry and sell out our country.

The mantra from the Executive's back benchers is, "Where's the money coming from?" Without going into the tales about readdressing priorities or the Scottish Enterprise budget, why do we not simply take our share of the BTA budget and give it to VisitScotland for marketing and a route development fund? The resources are there. We would be better served by VisitScotland and an organisation in charge of a route development fund than we are by the BTA, the British Airports Authority and British Airways.

The leadership is not there. This is about marketing and accessibility. It is about selling Scotland as a unique product and creating a route development fund for aviation or maritime routes. So far, the Executive has issued many glossy brochures and given itself many pats on the back, but that is not what is needed. That is why the motion is deficient and why I move my amendment.

I move amendment S1M-2941.2, to leave out from "welcomes" to end and insert:

"notes the damage caused to the tourism industry by the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease and the events of 11 September 2001; further notes that the underlying problems of the high pound and high fuel costs remain; notes with concern that the Scottish Executive's *Tourism Framework for Action 2002:05* contains no additional funding; calls on the Executive to promote marketing and accessibility for the sector, and further calls for action to open new air routes to Scotland and to make VisitScotland, not the British Tourist Authority, responsible for marketing Scotland abroad."

15:00

Mr David Davidson (North-East Scotland)

(Con): This debate is long overdue. The industry has had five difficult years, culminating in the damage that was caused by foot-and-mouth disease and the terrible events of 11 September. Yet the industry has been given a report that is more like a briefing note that one would expect a civil servant to give to a minister. When Scotland's largest industry is in desperate need of strong leadership and a well thought out and meaningful strategy, the Executive appears to have done little more than gaze at its navel and wallow in self-adulation again.

For three years, I have argued consistently for a minister to represent tourism at Cabinet level. Lord Watson now has that responsibility, but so far all that he has done is allocate responsibility for the industry to all and sundry, while all that he intends to do is chair a steering group that will be advised by yet another group. That leaves Lord Watson as the mere figurehead of the ship—he is not the captain on the bridge.

The document that the minister praises is full of promotional material about why Scotland is a "must-visit destination". It does not focus on the challenges that are faced by the different regions in Scotland to promote tourism with a targeted marketing approach. The document contains nothing new and fails to deliver the detail of the marketing strategy in either the short term or the long term. The Executive has ignored the necessity of promoting innovative and creative solutions that will increase visitor numbers to Scotland.

I ask the minister where the money is to come from. The framework fails to outline the expenditure that has been committed to the action points and therefore fails to give the strategy any credibility. Rather than tell the industry what to do, the Executive should listen to what the industry needs. I tell Lord Watson and the Executive that, in my discussions with the industry, I have been listening carefully and have learned about not only the difficulties that the industry faces, but the action from the Executive that the industry believes is required.

Mike Watson: David Davidson seems somewhat confused. He began by blaming me for not doing enough and for simply telling the public and private sectors what to do. Now he accuses me of doing too much and of not allowing business to have a say. Which is it? In the action plan, I am saying that all sorts of actions have been outlined for both the public and the private sectors. They will take those actions together, whereas my role is simply to ensure that that work moves forward. Surely he does not want a more dirigiste approach.

Mr Davidson: Perhaps the minister has forgotten that he is supposed to be responsible for the remit of VisitScotland, which is the public agency that services tourism. Will the minister tell us today whether he accepts responsibility for giving VisitScotland a remit? Will he tell us what that remit will be and whether he will give VisitScotland the resources to fulfil its remit? The previous minister certainly ducked those questions at every opportunity. That is where leadership is required. Tourism is a unique industry. Most of its services are delivered by the private sector but the support systems are funded by the public purse. Those systems must be focused and strategic and we must be told exactly what is to be delivered.

The minister has taken responsibility for only 10 per cent of the points on the action list. That is not exactly a hands-on approach and I am asking the minister to take a hands-on approach to everything. On behalf of the Executive, the minister must deliver what the industry is looking for.

Maureen Macmillan (Highlands and Islands (Lab): Does David Davidson accept that, as well as the minister taking responsibility, the industry must also take some responsibility?

Mr Davidson: Absolutely. However, as I said, although the industry will deliver its product, it is looking for leadership for the public agencies that support the industry. Sadly, leadership from the Executive has been lacking in the past couple of years.

I ask the deputy minister to give us a simple assurance when she winds up the debate that members will learn exactly what remit has been given to VisitScotland and exactly how that remit will be supported. For example, will we be told what resources are to go into marketing? The minister accepted that the strategy was put in place two years ago, but we have moved on a lot since then. Mr MacAskill hit the nail on the head—the Executive has not reacted to the disastrous fallout from foot-and-mouth and from events in America.

All businesses need to know where their resources will come from so that they can plan ahead. However, area tourist board chief executives seem to spend about 70 per cent of their time seeking the retention of standstill budgets. That is no way to run any business and it is down to the minister to resolve that situation—ATB budgets are his responsibility because the ATBs are part of the public support system.

The truth is that the "Tourism Framework for Action 2002:05" is an empty document, because it does not define, in the style of a business plan, what the minister will deliver on behalf of an industry that we all agree is the largest in

Scotland. The industry needs support in marketing. We must have a distinct plan that deals with who will market Scotland, who will deliver resources and where they will deliver them, and who will help with training and how training will be accessed.

What does the minister have to say about access to the country? What involvement has the Executive had with direct air links, for example? What is the Executive doing about rolling out public transport?

Mike Watson: That is on page 11.

Mr Davidson: It is on page 11—fine. Will there be a budget for page 11? Has the minister said what he will do and will his ministerial colleagues back him on that? Will he deliver for tourism on behalf of the Executive? Will his colleagues cross over their budgets for him? Will they deliver public transport? Will there be any action? The document is supposed to be about actions. It is the minister's document and so far there has been a distinct lack of anything from the minister, other than acknowledgement of the problems. There is no plan for delivery.

The Deputy Presiding Officer (Mr Murray Tosh): Please move your amendment, Mr Davidson.

Mr Davidson: I would be delighted.

I move amendment S1M-2941.1, to leave out from "welcomes" to end and insert:

"recognises the distinct lack of performance by the Scottish Executive in assisting the tourism industry to be internationally competitive and create more jobs; considers that, after five months of consultation, the *Tourism Framework for Action 2002:05* spells out the obvious and provides no real vision for focusing on the real challenges faced by the different regions in Scotland in order to promote tourism opportunities through a targeted marketing approach, and believes that it is entirely unacceptable that the only role the Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport will play is to head a Steering Group while the Executive takes responsibility for a mere 10% of the actions outlined in the framework without allowing business input into the strategy behind the action plan."

15:06

Tavish Scott (Shetland) (LD): In 55 minutes, we will get a rant from the Tories on why we should have less government and less of the Parliament. I wish that the Tories would decide what they want. They have just lectured us on the need for ministers and the Executive to do everything. In less than an hour, we will receive a lecture to exactly the opposite effect. There we go.

Maureen Macmillan hosted a discussion with the tourism industry at lunch time. I am sure that David Davidson was not there for perfectly understandable reasons. At that meeting, I heard

about the need to talk up Scotland, rather than to talk it down. Once again, the two Opposition parties have given us a rather predictable series of points about all that is wrong—

Mr Brian Monteith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con): Will the member give way?

Tavish Scott: No, I will make progress first. We have heard quite enough from the Conservatives.

Mr Monteith: You're frit.

Tavish Scott: I assure the member that the truth is quite the contrary.

There are a couple of positive points. In his speech, the minister mentioned international events. I draw his attention to the international pool championships, which will take place in my constituency in June. Eleven hundred separate participants and 11 different nations will take part in an international sporting event. We must applaud and celebrate that, and congratulate the organisers.

One of the driving forces for tourism in my constituency is music and the ability to use music creatively—culturally and socially, as well as educationally—to enhance Shetland's status as a great product. The way in which we have been able to sell to the American market, through visitors on cruise liners every year, has been particularly important. That is an example of making the best of a small community that is a long way from the central belt of Scotland.

I have three brief points to make. On overseas marketing, we should not enter into a constitutional battle about the British Tourist Authority. Instead, there needs to be a rigorous service level agreement between VisitScotland and the BTA, so that Scotland—through VisitScotland—can obtain the services that it needs from that organisation. I saw a poster recently, which—on the back of foot-and-mouth disease and September of last year—had a promotion for the whole of the United Kingdom that consisted of Tower bridge and the Coldstream Guards, with a little strapline about Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Let us find ways in which to enhance the BTA's service. We should do that through a rigorous working arrangement, which could be to the advantage of VisitScotland and the Scottish tourism industry. That could be worked through in a concrete way and I encourage ministers to consider that potential. Instead of reinventing the wheel, we should take the best of the BTA's work and tackle the specific points that I raised. That would deal with Dr Ewing's point about the areas that are excluded from the BTA's campaign. If a service level agreement were in place, that problem would not arise.

On international connections, I share the aspirations of others, including Kenny MacAskill and David Davidson, for more international connections to and from Scotland. That is rightly part of the minister's action plan. The low-cost carriers provide a unique challenge. It must be borne in mind that it might not be in Scotland's tourist interests to promote a net outflow of potential domestic visitors, as is the case at the moment.

In discussions this morning, VisitScotland pointed out to me the potential market that is offered by the new destinations to which low-cost carriers fly direct from Scotland. I hope that those opportunities will grow. For example, if the low-cost carriers provided an Inverness to Milan link, areas of Europe that have not previously benefited from VisitScotland's marketing might open up. We should take advantage of that potential rather than talk it down. However, there are no guarantees with low-cost carriers, as we know from the Dublin to Edinburgh route, from which Go was in effect forced out by Ryanair in a hard price-cutting war. We would therefore need to reflect on that before targeting and marketing on the basis of the operations of the low-cost carriers.

Finally, I want to comment on the integration of tourism and information services. Tourist information centres play an important role in providing a range of services to visitors but, as the Parliament debated only last week, many areas of Scotland—indeed, all areas of Scotland—have considerable problems with post offices. I cannot believe that we could not pool tourist information centres, post offices and other community facilities that provide services to local people and visitors. By pooling those things, we could create what might be called community information centres, instead of simply tourist information centres, which would be facilities that were available to all. That is the kind of imaginative thinking that is needed to provide information for both local people and the important Scottish tourism industry.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: We come now to the open part of the debate. Members are aware that time is tight, so I will be strict about allowing only four minutes for speeches.

15:11

Mr Kenneth Macintosh (Eastwood) (Lab): When I was a kid on the isle of Skye, one of the favourite pastimes that I remember was riding on Uncle Lachie's boat, as he took the tourists across from Elgol to Loch Coruisk in the heart of the Cuillins. It was a magical experience. Those members who are familiar with the mountains will appreciate the drama and the beauty of the Cuillins. The boat trip with Lachie was very much part of that experience, but not necessarily

because of his conversation. In fact, most tourists considered themselves fortunate if they heard more than half a dozen words from him, which were usually of the "Well, well, well, it's raining again" variety.

Last year, I took my in-laws on the same boat trip but, this time, the boat was the Bella Jane, which had Donald Stewart at the wheel. How things have changed! These days, the tourists get tea, coffee and shortbread on the way across. Donald Stewart provides a running commentary on the passing flora and fauna, on the natural history of the island and on virtually any other subject or question that one cares to throw at him. People still come from far and wide for the same reason that they have done so since Sir Walter Scott's day—to marvel at the beauty of the Cuillins. However, Donald Stewart has added quality. He has recognised that customer care and the highest modern standards need not be compromised to allow people to get away from it all, which is something that most of us still enjoy.

Members who are familiar with Skye will also know the Three Chimneys restaurant. According to the papers only two weeks ago, the Three Chimneys is recognised as one of the top 20 restaurants not only in Scotland or the UK, but in the world. Again, quality is at the heart of that success story.

Supporting quality and high standards are what we must concentrate on if we are to build on the traditional strengths and appeal of our country. Without wishing to hark too much down memory lane, I remind members of what it used to be like to eat out anywhere in Scotland, especially in the Highlands and Islands: overcooked grey food, boiled meat, boiled potatoes and boiled cabbage. Today, the jetty in Elgol can provide a café latte to compare with any in Byers Road or, for that matter, Soho, New York or Paris.

The examples that I have mentioned are not large-scale attractions but are typical of most of our tourism industry, which often consists of small, family-owned businesses. Their success allows families to prosper and thrive in otherwise fragile communities but, as they are vulnerable to sudden down-turns in the tourist market, they have been badly hit by the events of the past year. It was a hard way to learn, but the impact of foot-and-mouth disease and of 11 September demonstrated the importance of tourism to our economy. Tourism businesses are vital not only to our local communities but to the economy more generally. That is now recognised.

Tourism is a large and expanding industry. I welcome the Executive's commitment to maintaining and building on the industry's success. That is exemplified by the appointment of Mike Watson as a Cabinet minister with

responsibility for tourism. There is no doubt that we have experienced difficulties in the past, but I believe that we have now identified the strategy, which will not be imposed from the top down but will build on the industry's support and so play to our strengths. The strategy develops the reputation that Scotland already enjoys as a tourist destination. The Executive will do what it can to build on our market position.

The strategy fully recognises the importance of the industry, both to small businesses the length and breadth of the country and to our national economy. It also works to improve what we already have to offer, drive up standards, improve quality of service and make the most of our most valuable asset—our people.

15:15

Roseanna Cunningham (Perth) (SNP): It must be something to do with spring that brings these debates around; I seem to recall our having a debate on tourism on almost exactly the same date last year, albeit in very different circumstances.

Last year, the impact of the tourism crisis on Perthshire was immediate. At the time, Perth and Kinross Council estimated that around £1 million was being lost in the area each week. That is obviously a lot of money and a lot of jobs were affected. The knock-on effects are still being felt this year—I suspect that that is true throughout Scotland. Tourism businesses in my constituency and across Perthshire are trying hard to be optimistic and, with most of them having just survived last year, they are working very hard to make this year's season as good as they can.

Others have spoken about the problems that the industry has suffered and about the difficulties that it still faces; I would like to concentrate on something a little different. I confess that I have not read "Tourism Framework for Action 2002:2005" in detail, because I want to raise a different document with the minister. Members may recall a very welcome recent document called "A Soundtrack for Scottish Tourism"—I am sure that the minister is well aware of it. It was published by VisitScotland together with the Scottish Arts Council. Members may even have signed my motion on it. For those who missed the document, I will say that those two bodies conducted a joint initiative—the traditional music and tourism initiative—from 1999 to 2002. As someone who is passionate about music, particularly music that flows from the indigenous tradition in Scotland, the initiative was—I am sorry about the pun—music to my ears.

The name of the game nowadays is diversification. Whether we are talking about

Perthshire or about Scotland as a whole, we are in a very competitive international market. My one concern when I read through the soundtrack document, with its catalogue of successful projects across the country, was that none of them was based on my patch. Cue immediate letters locally and an early meeting with the local area tourist board and its new chief executive. I had an extremely useful, constructive and entertaining meeting with the new chief executive, but I am sure that he would not contradict me when I say that he was lukewarm, to say the least, about the soundtrack initiative. As he was new in his post, it would hardly be fair to blame him for the lack of any Perthshire musical voice in the initiative, but the meeting highlighted for me one of the structural problems with the tourism set-up in Scotland, namely the extent to which—again, members will have to pardon the pun—we are able to get everyone singing from the same hymn sheet.

Perthshire is the home of some of Scotland's best traditional music. Niel Gow, the fiddler, came from there, as did the whole tradition of the Travellers and the world-famous Stewart dynasty, and as do Dougie MacLean, Jim Malcolm and Hamish Moore. There is a long list of music and musicians, past and present, on which to build a regional tourism initiative on the back of the national one but, so far, that has not happened. Much good work is done nationally and internationally to promote Scotland in a particular way, to sell the country to niche markets or to all markets, to market what is wholly indigenous to us, and to showcase what simply cannot be found anywhere else—obviously, traditional Scottish music will not come from anywhere else—but I am concerned that all that work can be defeated on the ground.

I had a very useful meeting this morning with VisitScotland and the Scottish Arts Council about the soundtrack initiative and they tell me that a review of the relationship between the area tourist boards and VisitScotland is going on and that the minister is visiting area tourist boards, partly with that relationship in mind. I make a plea that the minister's closing speech should contain some remarks on how that review is going and on how that relationship can be changed so that, across Scotland, we are genuinely trying to do the same thing at the same time.

15:19

Mary Scanlon (Highlands and Islands) (Con): I am pleased to speak in the tourism debate today. I could talk for four minutes about the poor state of the trunk and non-trunk roads in the Highlands, about the sedentary strategy of Highlands and Islands Airports Ltd in providing affordable and

available transport links, or about the fact that a private ferry operator—Pentland Ferries Ltd—can operate a better service to Orkney, at a fraction of the price, than the state-subsidised service. However, I am sure that others will raise those crucial transport issues.

Today, I would like to use my slot to talk about food. Given the surge of interest in food and the Europe-wide boom in gastro-tourism, I am relieved that Scotland's food is at least mentioned in the action plan, which says:

“Some of the finest food and drink in the world is produced in Scotland.”

Scotland has the healthiest food that anyone could eat and tourism provides a ready market for locally grown produce that is free from genetically modified organisms. A promotion of our food would benefit businesses of all sizes and would secure Scotland's reputation for excellence.

Given that we have a culinary tradition to be proud of, we should be far from happy with scoring an average of 14 per cent in a survey of German, French, Italian and Spanish tourists on “good places to eat out” and an average of 33 per cent for “local products to eat and drink”. I understand that there are proposals for a food and drink consumer magazine to help to promote the best in Scottish produce. I ask the minister to meet the people who are involved in the publication of the magazine to raise awareness of and promote the best Scottish quality produce here and abroad.

Mike Watson: I am happy to take up that offer, as I am sure Ross Finnie, who has responsibility for that area, will be. I also draw to Mary Scanlon's attention page 15 of the action plan, which states that we intend to

“Support uptake of the Food Quality Assurance scheme (FoodStars) and the Taste of Scotland award scheme.”

The document gives considerable importance to the fact that the quality of food that is available to tourists is an important part of their holiday experience.

Mary Scanlon: I noticed that that comment appeared later in the document and I welcome it. I would also like to welcome the positive comments about Skye made by the First Minister and by Ken Macintosh. The debate would not be complete without mentioning the great achievement of Shirley and Eddie Spear's Three Chimneys restaurant, which has been voted the 28th best restaurant in the world. I have spoken to Shirley Spear in the past few days and can say that she puts a large part of her success down to the use of local produce. She is full of praise for the food initiative on Skye, where businesses work together to co-ordinate buying and selling from one another. Recently, the island food link van won a national award. Could that initiative not be used as

a benchmark and rolled out to other islands and mainland Scotland to maximise the use of local produce?

Shirley Spear welcomes visitors, who seek her out from all over the world. She firmly believes that food is best served where it belongs. She serves fresh salad and vegetables from Glendale, cheeses from Achmore, mussels from Drumfearn, oysters from Carbost and wonderful seafood from surrounding lochs. The fact that there is no travelling time ensures peak freshness and making good use of local produce helps to promote and sustain businesses on Skye. The new box scheme, the food link van, the food festival and the Skye and Lochalsh Horticultural Development Association's bid to start a regular farmers market have all been successful. However, all those schemes need support in order to grow in strength. The food and drink co-ordinator's post at Skye and Lochalsh Enterprise has been invaluable. It has been funded with help from the LEADER programme, but I understand that no future funding is available. A similar initiative is taking place on Orkney, funded through the oil reserve fund. I must also mention Orkney salmon, lamb, oatcakes, cheese and fudge.

I hope that I have done my bit to talk up Scotland and to promote some of the best examples of Scottish food. I ask the Executive to ensure that Scottish food is given its rightful place at the top of our marketing strategy.

15:24

Irene Oldfather (Cunninghame South) (Lab): I would like to speak about a local tourism initiative, but first I will make a couple of general points. I welcome the fact that the tourism strategy mentions customer focus. A few weeks ago in Brussels, I took a taxi and the taxi driver spoke fluent English. I remarked how good his English was and he told me that he also spoke Spanish, French, German, Italian and Flemish. He made the important point that he has to be able to speak all those languages because it is part of his job. There is a challenge ahead of us to equip people in the tourism industry with the tools to do the job. I am pleased that the strategy makes a point about customer focus, as it is vital.

My second point is about the euro. It might not happen this year, or even next year, but it will not be too long before tourists from mainland Europe will expect visitor attractions, retail outlets, hotels and restaurants to accept the euro. We need to work in partnership with the industry to make progress on that issue.

My third point before I speak about local initiatives concerns access to and from mainland Europe. The new roll-on, roll-off ferry line from

Rosyth to Zeebrugge will bring tremendous opportunities for the tourism industry. VisitScotland and local tourist boards must be prepared to seize the initiative.

The improved access to Prestwick from Paris, Brussels and Frankfurt was not accompanied by promotional literature. Ayrshire MSPs have met regularly with the tourist board to ask that promotional literature in native languages be made available at those access points. We need to gear up on that so that we can take advantage of the opportunities that are going to come from the new ferry link.

Tourism generates approximately £300 million for the Ayrshire economy and 10,000 people rely on the industry for their livelihoods. In Ayrshire, we are rightly proud of our Burns heritage and our traditional attractions, such as Burns cottage, Brig o' Doon and Culzean Castle. However, there is also a great deal going on in local communities to attract visitors.

I take the opportunity to mention that Kilwinning is to host the British town criers championship in June. It is the first time that that championship has ever come to Scotland. Hotels in neighbouring towns are fully booked. Sponsors have come on board. Perhaps the minister could find time in his busy diary to attend. As I understand, Kilwinning is the only town in Scotland that has a town crier. We are very excited about the championship. We are also all excited that the town crier is going to lead the tartan day parade of 10,000 pipers in New York. That is certainly worth mentioning.

The community of Kilwinning has worked hard to develop such local initiatives. However, many doors remained closed to the community. It was looking for £400 for promotional postcards to take to New York to advertise the town criers championship. It has had no success in persuading any tourism organisation to assist it with that. I wonder whether the minister might be able to do something about that or to comment on it in summing up.

I have a brief point to make about the Scottish Maritime Museum, about which I have written to the Deputy Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport. The museum is crucial to the regeneration that is being undertaken at the tourism hub of Irvine harbourside with the Big Idea and the maritime leisure centre and to the local work that is being done to upgrade and regenerate the local economy. I would welcome it if the minister could say whether any assistance might be available to save jobs that are on the line.

I commend the motion.

15:28

Iain Smith (North-East Fife) (LD): I am not sure about the advertising for local constituencies that

is going on. You are never going to get that from me, Presiding Officer. [MEMBERS: "Go on."] Well, maybe a little.

I am disappointed by the negative speeches from Opposition members, who are talking down Scotland and the Scottish tourism industry. I hope that we get a more positive approach in the summing-up speeches because Scotland has much to offer and it is not all doom and gloom.

For example, the latest comparable year-on-year figures from north-east Fife for the first nine months of 2001 show a 4 per cent increase in visitor numbers, a 4 per cent increase in tourism employment, and a 5 per cent increase in tourism expenditure. Those nine months were meant to be all doom and gloom. That shows that there are opportunities for tourism in Scotland if we are able to take them. I accept that those increases were partly due to what was in effect the closure of Dumfries and Galloway and the Borders for much of that time. People came further north, and perhaps we gained from that.

Ian Jenkins: Through Iain Smith, I ask the minister whether he can confirm that his department made an allocation to VisitScotland to cover the tourism element of the Scottish Borders recovery plan. Will he instruct VisitScotland to follow up that money to Scottish Borders Tourist Board to enable it to access match funding for European objective 2—

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Mr Jenkins, you have made your point, but members are expected to intervene on other members' speeches to put points to those members.

Iain Smith: Ian Jenkins has made a valuable point. I raised the issue of the knock-on effect of foot-and-mouth disease on tourism in the Borders. I hope that the minister will address that in summing up.

The important point in north-east Fife is that businesses have invested in quality and are providing the public with what they want. That has been backed up by important public expenditure to ensure that we have, for example, award-winning beaches in places such as St Andrews and Elie, the coastal footpath network, and the cycleways network. That public investment has been important. In addition, last year we had the opening of the new pontoon facilities at Anstruther harbour to encourage sailing. There are other excellent tourism facilities, such as the Scottish Fisheries Museum at Anstruther, National Trust for Scotland properties such as Kellie Castle and Falkland Palace, the secret bunker at Crail, many golf resorts and facilities, excellent restaurants and, of course, Scotland's champion fish and chip shop. All those things bring tourists into north-east Fife.

Mr Monteith: I hear what the member says about the pontoon at Anstruther, which I presume anyone can use. What would he say with regard to public investment in the jetty on Eigg, which, as there are only 30 cars there, amounts to £260,000 per car? Only the cars on Eigg can use it, yet mainland taxpayers are paying for it. Does he agree that, given such public investment, all cars should be able to access Eigg through that new jetty in order to help tourism?

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The member is now in his last minute.

Iain Smith: I would like some injury time because of those questions, which were totally unrelated to my speech. I am not in a position to comment on the isle of Eigg and I have no intention of doing so.

The work that is being done by tourism businesses in Fife has been supported by the area tourist board. I hope that, in summing up, the minister will give his thoughts on area tourist boards. Some are doing excellent work—they are successful, efficient, and they work well with other tourist boards on joint projects and promotions—but there are concerns about the future of the network, so it would be useful if the minister could comment. There are also concerns about the PPP initiative for *visitscotland.com* and the national call centre, and the impact that they will have because of the loss of local knowledge. That is an important point, given the quality of information one can get from local tourist information centres compared with what one could get from a national call centre.

I will speak briefly about the number of overseas visitors. It is important to remember that, although they are important, the proportion of overseas visitors is small—92 per cent of visitors are from the UK, and only 8 per cent are from abroad. We can do things about that. Opportunities arise from, for example, direct flights and cheap flights, but they have to be backed up by investment in public transport, rail links at airports, and improved bus and rail timetables. Irene Oldfather mentioned the Zeebrugge to Rosyth ferry service. It is important to note that that is being promoted by VisitScotland, area tourist boards and the ferry companies.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: We do not really recognise the concept of injury time, especially when the injury is self-inflicted.

15:33

Richard Lochhead (North-East Scotland) (SNP): I will try to keep to my time limit.

It is disappointing that, almost three years into the session, we find that our income from tourism is down by £0.5 billion and we have many fewer

visitors to Scotland. That is an indictment of Liberal-Labour policies during the past three years. Not everything that has happened has been the Government's fault, but it is not blameless.

Thankfully, some of our tourist boards are trying hard to promote their areas. In particular, I welcome the initiative announced by Fife Tourist Board in conjunction with Grampian and Aberdeen Tourist Board and Angus and Dundee Tourist Board. I hope that that will be a successful initiative for that part of the world. I was disappointed to see that the Liberal Democrat Jamie Stone attacked that initiative in the press yesterday. How short-sighted and pathetic for an MSP from another part of the country to attack one region for having its own initiatives. He seems to be concerned that tourists might be attracted to the east of Scotland, as opposed to going to the Highlands and Islands, whereas I think that it is positive to attract as many people into Scotland as possible, on the understanding that once they are in Scotland they will visit various locations.

It is good that those tourist boards are promoting that part of Scotland, because no one else is. As Kenny MacAskill said, we cannot rely on the British Tourist Authority. The authority's brochure "Hidden Britain: A Touring Guide" is ludicrous. It should not have been printed, never mind funded by any Scots taxpayers. The document should have been called not "Hidden Britain", but "Hidden North-East Scotland", "Hidden Shetlands", "Hidden Moray" or "Hidden Western Isles". That British publication covers every English region, but much of Scotland is missed out. We should not give that publication one penny.

The minister wrote to me after that publication was brought to his attention and said that VisitScotland would call in all such documents and examine drafts. I welcome that response, but we should go one step further by not sending those people money and by publishing our own stuff.

During the summer, I bumped into an Irish tourism official who works in England. His job is to attract people from England to Ireland. Ireland does not rely on the British Tourist Authority, so why should we? He thought that our efforts were pathetic, because his industry was booming. Ireland manages to fully fund offices with many staff around the world. We should aim to do that.

We have a new minister, so we have new glossy documents, too. However, all that we have is the same old tinkering at the edges. As Kenny MacAskill said, we must deal with the fundamentals, such as the transport infrastructure. Today's issue of *The Press and Journal* contains an article about the advantages that Ryanair's new air route from Aberdeen to Dublin will have for the tourism industry, including the hotel industry, in north-east Scotland. Local hoteliers are launching

a publicity drive in Ireland to take advantage of the new route, but complaints are being made that the local tourist board does not have the money to launch such a drive. We must address that.

A few months ago, while I was on an overcrowded train from Edinburgh to Aberdeen, I spoke to disgusted Italian tourists. It is ludicrous that Scotland is in such a situation in the 21st century. We must deal with the rail network, all our rail strikes and the fact that our trains are overcrowded—what sort of welcome are they for people who visit Scotland?

I remind the minister that if the Parliament needs more powers to boost our tourism industry, we should call for those powers. I ask the minister to stop producing glossy documents and tinkering at the edges, as that will get the Parliament and the tourism industry nowhere.

15:37

Maureen Macmillan (Highlands and Islands) (Lab): I welcome the opportunity to speak in the debate. As Roseanna Cunningham and others have said, the last debate on tourism was held way back in May 2001, when the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease was having a serious effect on the tourism industry. Then, it was essential that the Parliament addressed the issues. It is right that the Parliament should address some of the long-term issues that affect the industry. According to the tourism operators whom I met at lunch time, much greater optimism is now being felt about the industry's situation.

This is the first tourism debate that the new Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport has initiated. Many in the industry called for a dedicated minister to represent the industry at Cabinet level, and I welcome him to his place.

The Government's "Tourism Framework for Action 2002:2005" is welcome because it sets out the priorities for the industry and makes it clear to every stakeholder in the sector who is responsible for delivering the programme of change. I hope that that will stop the buck passing of the past. It was welcome that the document was launched in Oban at the busiest tourist information centre in Scotland. That area depends on tourism more than most.

The three priorities in the document are key. The first is improving the industry's market position by developing a better and stronger approach with clearly defined brands and products. The second is consumer focus to drive up quality for visitors. The third is enhanced status for tourism to ensure that the industry's importance is recognised.

Quality is important. When I was in Tavish Scott's constituency of Shetland at the weekend, I

met Marcia Williamson, who has made a guest house business world renowned through attention to quality and the use of information technology. More than 50 per cent of her business comes from the internet and 25 per cent of that is repeat bookings. She has taken just about every quality assurance course that is available, because she realises the importance of that. In all her work, she has put quality at the top of the agenda. That is a good example of the attitude and commitment that must be encouraged.

I have said this many times, but it is worth repeating: word of mouth is one of the best forms of marketing. If a visitor to an area has a good holiday, they will be more inclined to return, and they will tell their family and friends about it. That is true of us and of other people from all over the world.

I recognise the Executive's desire to place a focus on niche markets, as Scotland has some exciting opportunities in that respect. However, there are people in my Highlands and Islands constituency who feel that the strengths of the environmental and outdoor holidays in which they specialise and of cultural tourism may be overshadowed by a concentration on niche marketing, such as golf and big events such as Euro 2008. I hope that the minister will address that point when he sums up.

In mentioning Euro 2008, I am reminded that we compare ourselves continually with Ireland. Euro 2008 offers a great Scottish-Irish venture. I hope to see such ventures develop, particularly in the field of tourism and especially given that the Ballycastle to Kintyre ferry will recommence next summer. That creates a real opportunity to jointly market Scotland and the Highlands.

I would also like to see a better-organised public transport system in the Highlands and Islands with a sophisticated through-ticketing operation. That would complement the European ferry from Rosyth, which will bring car passengers and passengers who will use public transport.

We must continue to monitor the progress of the framework. The cross-party group on tourism will examine closely it and other developments in the industry. I hope that the Executive will continue to work closely with all parts of the industry to ensure that quality and professionalism are delivered.

15:41

John Farquhar Munro (Ross, Skye and Inverness West) (LD): I welcome the recognition by the Parliament and the Executive of the necessity and importance of a debate on tourism. Particularly at this time, Scotland has much that the tourist can appreciate and enjoy—the country offers them an excellent holiday experience.

We cannot have a viable and vibrant tourism industry unless we are able to reverse the decline of tourism. That had begun to happen well before foot-and-mouth and 11 September. For us to attract an increasing number of tourists to Scotland, we must overcome the obstacles that stand in the way of people coming here, not least of which are the high cost of the pound, the refusal to engage in joining the euro, the high rate of VAT, petrol prices, airport taxes and business rates—I could go on, but I promised not to mention the Skye bridge tolls. All those factors add up to a strong disincentive to visitors.

Maureen Macmillan: Have the tolls on the Skye bridge had a bad effect on trade at the Three Chimneys restaurant?

John Farquhar Munro: That is a matter for debate.

If we are to attract tourists, we need to promote a programme of educating the major tour operators and travel agents about exactly where Scotland is on the world map. Most overseas visitors who book a holiday in Scotland will probably be routed through a London airport. Tourists, and the airlines, must be made aware of Scotland's excellent airport facilities, which are accessible from all major international airports. Tourists coming to Scotland will often arrive at Heathrow, only to find to their dismay that they have to traverse the city of London to secure their onward flights to the north. Such a situation has had a detrimental effect on our visitor numbers.

One way to help to overcome the problem would be to change fundamentally the role of the British Tourist Authority. Instead of it being the umbrella body that is set on top of the national tourist bodies, the BTA should take a back-seat role and function as a servicing organisation. VisitScotland, our own tourist body, needs to be able to promote Scotland in the United Kingdom, Europe and worldwide. We are best suited to do that and we should not have to leave the responsibility to others.

I add that no matter how well we are able to attract tourists, the experience that they have while they are in this country is what will make them go home and tell their friends that Scotland is the place to visit. That is why it is vital that we start to do something about our public services. We have to ensure that our transport system is first class and that our guest houses and hotels are open and welcoming and offer value for money. We must also ensure that our tourist attractions are worth visiting. I am sure that everyone agrees with that.

The problem that we face is that we have a tourism industry, but we do not yet have a tourism culture that goes beyond the visitor centres and

attractions. One area that needs urgent attention is the service that is offered by our so-called hospitality industry. We also need to take a hard look at the cleanliness of our cities and at the effectiveness of our transport system. Surely it is fundamental that tourists can get where they want when they want.

Given such challenges, marketing alone will not be enough to deliver a brighter future for Scottish tourism if visitors' basic expectations are not met. After 11 September, the only certainty is that the situation for tourism businesses will get tougher. Given that Scotland has been struggling for many years, now is the time to examine the fundamentals to ensure that we can compete in an increasingly competitive market.

I am delighted that the Executive and the Parliament have secured the time to debate such an important issue.

15:45

Mr Davidson: I start by making a correction for the record. I was not talking down Scotland in my opening speech. We are debating the Executive's role in supporting tourism and the industry's expectations, not the results that the industry is delivering. Furthermore, I point out that I was missing from today's briefing because I have had many briefings over the past few days with members of the tourism fraternity.

A number of important points have been raised. I note that Tavish Scott agrees that VisitScotland's remit needs clarity. He suggested a service agreement, but I believe that—unless he tells us otherwise—the minister is responsible for establishing the remits of such agencies and providing the resources for them. It is then up to the agencies to fulfil those remits.

Mary Scanlon, John Farquhar Munro and other members have mentioned access and transport links. It was also good to hear members highlighting quality, on which the industry's success is totally dependent. Mary Scanlon talked at such length about food that our mouths were watering. Other members raised similar important points. Although we have a world-class product in Scotland, we must ensure that everyone who delivers tourism does so to an equally high standard.

We are selling the diversity of Scotland, not saying, "Never mind the midges; come and see the sun." Scotland has something special to offer. The minister was right to talk about the links to culture and the built heritage. Although I welcome the public-private partnership element of the review, we must ensure that we have a partnership agreement. My criticisms today have focused on the Executive's side of the partnership,

and we hope that the minister kick-starts developments and proceeds at the speed that the industry requires. In spite of the past year's disasters, there has not been much of a response so far. Now is a good time for the Executive to play its part in the partnership.

Roseanna Cunningham mentioned the ATB review, which will be important. One of the issues that will emerge from the review is the clarity of ATB funding streams. E-tourism will be vital and, after project Ossian's false start, we have a new opportunity to deliver a good product. We must also realise that such developments will take away revenue flows that ATBs receive from providing support to tourism. I hope that, when she winds up, the minister will assure us that that issue will be taken into account in the review of the funding streams for ATBs.

The minister also raised the vital issue of encouraging people to choose a career in tourism. To do that, we must ensure not only that there is access to good on-the-job and information technology training, but that there is an acceptance that tourism is our biggest industry and that we should be proud of it. Schools, colleges and universities that specialise in teaching tourism practice, such as Robert Gordon University and the University of Strathclyde, must be given every possible support to ensure that our own people are taught how to deliver a world-class product.

Not surprisingly, the euro was mentioned during the debate. As we have said all along, we see no reason why a business should not decide to accept euros. That is a matter between the business and its bank. Indeed, similar arrangements have been in place for the dollar for generations.

I hope that the minister will say a little more about how she intends to deal with the issue of dispersal. Far too many tourists get tied up in the central belt, so we must ensure that the so-called Heineken effect is felt and that the tourism industry has the ability to reach the parts that other industries do not reach.

15:50

Alasdair Morgan (Galloway and Upper Nithsdale) (SNP): The minister and members spelled out clearly the importance of the tourism industry to Scotland. Tourism is arguably our most important industry and—more important—it is important everywhere in Scotland, which cannot be said of other industries. Tourism is particularly important for rural areas, because there are often no alternative industries of such size in such areas.

Many members alluded to the foot-and-mouth

crisis, which not only directly affected agriculture and tourism, but—ironically—affected farmers who had been seeking to diversify into tourism. We must take steps to ensure that if there is a future outbreak of foot-and-mouth—nobody can guarantee that there will not be—we minimise the effect.

We must consider our policy on the countryside. Last night, I was in the audience when Jim Walker said that one of the first things we had to do if we detected disease was to close down the country. I think what he meant was that we would need to close down the country to animal movements. However, his statement was characteristic of some of the things that were said during the foot-and-mouth crisis. I hope that one of the many non-public inquiries will make a recommendation about what is needed in relation to access to the countryside in that kind of situation.

The minister's speech was a bit disappointing. He said little that was new and much of what he did say could have been said five years ago when Labour came to power. We wonder why it was not said then. As my colleague Kenny MacAskill said, the key priorities are accessibility and marketing. John Farquhar Munro made the point about accessibility and I congratulate him on being on message, although I think it was the Scottish National Party's message rather than his party's message.

The problem is that for so many people, London is their first destination, because it is the only transport option available to them. We must take steps to change that situation. Kenny MacAskill made the point that the Irish spend much more on marketing than we do. One must ask why that is the case.

Let us consider some of the actions in the document "Tourism Framework for Action 2002:2005". Under the accessibility objective, business must apparently

"Lobby as a group to increase the number of direct access routes."

Who will they lobby? How will that change anything? Will the Executive or the Government be more responsive? The next time that business comes along to do some lobbying, which I presume they have been doing for years, they will say that they are doing it in response to a Government document.

On local access, the document states that business must

"Work, where appropriate ... with local transport operators" and

"Be aware of local public transport options and needs."

I suspect that businesses have been doing that for

years. The document goes on to say that local authorities and the Executive must

“Provide effective transport infrastructure and services for visitors and local residents.”

Since the Parliament was set up, we have had innumerable debates, asking the Executive to provide an effective transport infrastructure. Are we to believe that including that in the framework document will make everything change? I do not think that it will.

The problem with the tourism document is that, of the long list of actions, most are the responsibility of others and nearly all are self-evident and probably being done to some extent. None of the actions has any measurement attached; there is no method for us to assess whether the Executive is implementing its objectives successfully. The actions are woolly and vague. Without lifting a finger, the minister will be able to return to the chamber in a year and claim that he has carried out every one of the objectives.

Tourism is Scotland's most important industry. Would anyone listening to this debate have known that? I think not. The framework is self-congratulatory. I concede to the minister that the document has the advantage of not being glossy. Most of it is matt, with, as the minister pointed out, the simple word “Act” printed on the cover. I hope that he does act, because in a year people will be asking difficult questions about our most important industry.

The Deputy Presiding Officer (Mr George Reid): Dr Elaine Murray will wind up for the Executive. If she could finish as close to 16:00 as possible, that would be helpful.

15:54

The Deputy Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport (Dr Elaine Murray): Okay. Thank you, Presiding Officer.

The debate has been interesting. It started off with the usual old moans from the Conservative party and the SNP. Despite that, there were constructive comments from all parts of the chamber during the course of the debate, which was a welcome change.

I feel that Kenny MacAskill, Alasdair Morgan and David Davidson have a misconception about what the tourism document is about. We have been told to stop lecturing and start acting. The document is called “Tourism Framework for Action 2002:2005” and it is about actions. It is intended to provide a clearer sense of the way forward for the industry.

For the benefit of David Davidson, I point out that there was a full consultation exercise with the industry, which received 300 responses. The

tourism businesses were fully involved in the preparation of the framework through the representative bodies and their views shaped the document. That has been borne out by the fact that the document has been widely welcomed by the tourism industry, as Mike Watson and I found out when we attended the launches in Oban and Dumfries. The Scottish Tourist Forum and the area tourist boards said that it was exactly what the industry has been looking for. The British Hospitality Association said that the framework reflects the priorities of the industry and that the industry will work with the Executive to ensure that it is fully implemented. The Association of Scottish Visitor Attractions said that it welcomes the framework and fully endorses its vision for tourism and the collaborative approach that is suggested. There seems to be a high level of agreement about the necessity of going forward in this manner.

Mr Davidson: Will the Scottish Executive take responsibility for the remit of VisitScotland? What will that remit be and will the minister support it?

Dr Murray: I will come to that in a minute.

As the British Tourist Authority has been mentioned, I should make it clear that the BTA has statutory responsibility for the marketing of Britain overseas. The SNP talked about the fact that we do not give the BTA any money. That is correct. The Scottish Executive does not give the BTA any money; the British Government does. The BTA spends about £5 million marketing Scotland overseas. That money allows Scotland access to 26 offices in 11 countries. I doubt whether VisitScotland would be able to provide that should the UK Government decide to pass the £5 million to it, which is unlikely. The role of VisitScotland is to supplement the activity of the BTA and the two bodies have a regularly reviewed marketing agreement that specifies what each body will do.

I hope that that has clarified some of the issues, as I would like to talk about some of the constructive remarks that have been made today.

Tavish Scott made some useful comments about the need for community information centres. Such centres would provide a way in which to bring community activities together.

Mary Scanlon and Maureen Macmillan referred to the importance of Scotland's food and drink, which play an important part in the partnership between the tourism industry and other industries that promote Scotland.

Roseanna Cunningham is pushing at an open door with regard to the traditional arts. I was sorry to hear that she had had a problem in her area with the promotion of the soundtrack initiative. I know that it was successful in Dumfries and Galloway and I will be taking an active interest in

the review. I am sure that we will tell members more about the initiative in future.

Irene Oldfather referred to the need for customer focus, which is one of the main thrusts of the document. She made a pertinent point about the linguistic deficits of the British and the fact that we are not good at communicating in other languages. However, I am not sure what we might do about that.

Maureen Macmillan pointed out the opportunities that will be afforded by Euro 2008.

Rhona Brankin: I welcome the reference to support for major events in Scotland. Will the minister give us a commitment to support major women's events in Scotland? Specifically, will she give us a commitment to support the women's open golf championship in Scotland?

Dr Murray: I would be more than happy to talk to the member about that later, but I have only one minute left and a few other matters that I want to mention.

Irene Oldfather referred to redundancies at the Scottish Maritime Museum. I want to make it clear that those redundancies were due to the loss of the European structural fund training budget, which was worth £150,000. In 2001, the Executive provided £70,000 of emergency support, which was followed by a further £110,000 in December. That was in addition to £160,000 for three years from April 2001. The Executive has done its best to support that tourist attraction, which is in Irene Oldfather's constituency.

I have not had time to deal with all the points that have been raised but I would be happy to deal with them individually if members write to me. I notice that the SNP members are not paying any attention, so I presume that they have no points that they want to raise with us.

The implementation of the framework will lead to further improvements in marketing. We are developing methods of assessing progress. That is fundamental and seems to have been missed by some of the critics. The steering group that Mike Watson will chair will consider the way in which we monitor progress. That progress will be reported to the Parliament annually and members will be able to judge whether the framework for action has worked. The Executive believes that it will help to take forward tourism, which is a most important industry. Therefore, I ask members to support the motion and to reject the characteristically negative amendments of both Opposition parties.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I thank the minister for getting us back on schedule.

MSP Numbers

The Deputy Presiding Officer (Mr George Reid): The next item of business is a debate on motion S1M-2940, in the name of Patricia Ferguson, on the size of the Scottish Parliament, and an amendment to the motion.

16:01

The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Patricia Ferguson): The arrangements for elections to the Scottish Parliament, including the size of the Parliament, are a reserved matter. The effect of those arrangements as they stand is that the number of members of the Scottish Parliament would be reduced from 129 to around 106, probably in 2007.

The United Kingdom Government has always made it clear that it is prepared to revisit the matter in the light of experience. The Secretary of State for Scotland accordingly published a consultation paper last December that invited comments on whether the Scotland Act 1998 should be amended to allow the Parliament to remain at its current size. It is therefore right that we should debate the matters and make our views known to the UK Government before it reaches its decision.

I will first say a word about the relevant provisions in the Scotland Act 1998 and the thinking behind them. One aspect of the overall devolution settlement was Scottish representation at Westminster. Scotland has for some time been guaranteed not fewer than 71 seats at Westminster. The boundary review will reduce Scottish representation at Westminster from 72 seats to about 59 seats.

The UK Government also took the view during the passage of the Scotland Bill that it was important to retain the same constituency boundaries at Westminster as at Holyrood. Schedule 1 to the act provides for that. It also requires the Boundary Commission for Scotland to keep the ratio of constituency to regional seats as close as possible to the current ratio of 73:56.

In practice, that means that any reduction in Scottish representation at Westminster will result in an automatic reduction in the number of seats in the Scottish Parliament. The arithmetic suggests that having 59 or so Scottish constituencies for the purposes of the Westminster elections, which is what the Boundary Commission is minded to recommend, would mean a reduction in the total number of Holyrood seats from 129 to about 106. It is likely that that reduction would take place before the elections to the Scottish Parliament in 2007.

I will make it clear where the Executive stands. In our view there is a strong case for the Parliament to remain at its current size. We do not believe that the Parliament and its committees could function as well as they do with 106 members instead of 129. We believe that the force of that argument outweighs the desirability, which we acknowledge, of retaining common constituency boundaries.

As I said, the UK Government has made it clear that it is prepared to listen to representations from the Scottish Parliament. It is up to us to make the case as strongly and as convincingly as we can. In the remainder of my speech, I will set out the arguments as I see them for retaining the present size of the Parliament.

First and foremost is the need for stability. The present arrangements are working well. Reducing the size of the Parliament would change its dynamics considerably for the worse. It would amount to a considerable upheaval for no good purpose. With the exception of the Conservatives, who never supported devolution in the first place, I am aware of no one who argues for such a change on its own merits.

A reduction in the number of MSPs would have a particular bearing on the work of our committees, which already, as I know well, have a heavy work load. Our committee system has been widely praised; it is rightly regarded as one of the successes of devolution. We have 17 committees, which are all busy and hard pressed. We have already reduced the number of members serving on each committee from between 11 and 13 to between seven and nine and most back benchers serve on at least two committees. Reducing the pool of members available would make it almost impossible to retain the present committee structure.

Dr Winnie Ewing (Highlands and Islands) (SNP): I support everything that the minister has said. The reduction in the number of committee members has, on some occasions, made committees totter on the edge of being inquorate. On the Public Petitions Committee, for example, that means turning away people who come from all over Scotland with their respective causes.

Patricia Ferguson: I thank the member for that.

If the committee structure were to be jeopardised in such a way, there would be serious implications for the Executive's legislative programme and for the capacity of committees and back-bench members to introduce their own bills, as they have begun to do. The ability of committees to scrutinise proposals for legislation, to hold the Executive to account and to conduct independent inquiries would be severely curtailed. So too would the ability of individual MSPs to

serve the needs of their constituents. In short, the ability of the Parliament to function effectively would be compromised, in my view quite significantly.

The consultative steering group established the principles on which the Parliament is founded: accessibility, transparency, the sharing of power and equal opportunities. Those principles would be seriously jeopardised if we were to reduce the size of the legislature.

We have only one chamber, so the work of our committees takes on a particular importance. Their role in scrutinising Executive legislation is vital. So too is their taking of evidence from civil Scotland and the dialogue that they have around Scotland. All that would be jeopardised by a reduction in the number of MSPs.

Our commitment to equal opportunities could also be threatened by a reduction in the number of members. We are rightly proud of the number of women in this Parliament: at 32.7 per cent, we have the third highest proportion of women representatives of any Parliament in the world. If the number of MSPs were reduced, our ability to observe family-friendly hours would be threatened. That would impact not just on members, but on our accessibility to our constituents. The work that we do is not just about being in the chamber; it is also about our ability to visit community groups, to speak to individual constituents, to hear their views and to work with them in our communities.

That, in a nutshell, is the argument for retaining the Parliament at its present size. The present arrangements represent a consensus that emerged after much debate over a period of years, starting with the work of the Scottish Constitutional Convention.

The Parliament can, and does, hold the Executive to account, not only by scrutinising its proposals for legislation, but through parliamentary debates, questions and ad hoc inquiries. There is a proper democratic balance between the Executive and the Parliament.

What, then, are the countervailing arguments that led the UK Government and Parliament to reach the contrary view during the passage of the Scotland Bill? The key consideration was the risk of public confusion if there were two sets of parliamentary constituencies, one for Westminster and the other for Holyrood. There could also be practical difficulties for local authorities, returning officers and the political parties.

Those are legitimate concerns, but electors already have to contend with different boundaries for local, parliamentary and European elections, not to mention different voting systems. There is no evidence to suggest that has caused any serious problems. The electorate are increasingly

sophisticated and I see no reason why differences in parliamentary constituencies would cause any great difficulty in practice.

Dennis Canavan (Falkirk West): If we want Scottish parliamentary constituencies to be coterminous with the Westminster constituencies while retaining a proportionality and the Parliament's existing size, we could best meet all those objectives by introducing an election system using the single transferable vote. That would have the added advantage that all MSPs would be elected under the same voting system, in contrast to the existing hybrid system, which sometimes gives rise to conflict between regional MSPs and constituency MSPs.

Patricia Ferguson: I am sure that Mr Canavan will make those points in his submission to the consultation.

It would, of course, be possible for any problems that may arise—the kind of problems that Mr Canavan has mentioned and other problems that I have mentioned—to be dealt with by a UK-Scottish advisory commission after 2007.

During the passage of the Scotland Bill, the UK Government gave an undertaking that

“if the parliament took the view that its workings would be seriously undermined by a reduction in numbers—then it is open to the parliament to make representations to the Government of the day ... It would be open to the parliament, in the light of experience ... to say to the Government of the day, ‘Look, we think we have got a system which works well and effectively. It is in danger of being disturbed in a very deleterious way if this reduction takes place.’ ... The opportunity would not be lost, at some time in the future ... to reopen this question on the initiative of the parliament.”—[*Official Report, House of Lords*, 17 November 1998; Vol 594, c 1195.]

That is what we are doing.

It would be wrong to suggest that the Parliament has got everything right, but I believe that it will take more than the nearly three short years that have passed to judge it properly. In the meantime, we need stability to allow us to continue to move forward.

The Executive believes that there are compelling arguments for retaining the Parliament at its current size. The UK Government has made it clear that it is prepared to listen. I hope that during this debate the Parliament will set out the case as strongly and as clearly as it can. I hope and believe that the UK Government can be persuaded to accept those arguments and to table appropriate amendments to the Scotland Act 1998 in due course.

I move,

That the Parliament notes Her Majesty's Government's consultation paper on the size of the Scottish Parliament; acknowledges the positive progress made by the

Parliament and its committees, and considers that the number of elected representatives should remain at 129.

16:11

David McLetchie (Lothians) (Con): Conservative members are proud to stand alone today against the self-serving consensus of Labour, the Liberal Democrats and the SNP that seeks to preserve the status quo of 129 members of the Scottish Parliament and instead to argue for our proposals to reduce significantly the number of MSPs to between 106 and 108.

Rhona Brankin (Midlothian) (Lab): Will the member give way?

David McLetchie: I will not.

We want a leaner, more focused Parliament that concentrates not on the politically correct nonsense that has been our diet on far too many of the past 1,000 days, but on the issues relating to our public services that are of real concern to people in Scotland.

The Executive's motion offers no justification for maintaining the current number of MSPs. There was never anything magic about the number 129. It was a compromise that emerged from the political horse trading of the Scottish Constitutional Convention and that was designed to achieve reasonable proportionality in the overall election result. It was not a judgment on the appropriate number of members necessary to create an effective institution.

Rhona Brankin: Does Mr McLetchie agree that the number of MSPs that the Conservatives wanted was a big zero?

David McLetchie: I do. However, the fact that we have 19 Conservative MSPs is one of the few redeeming features of the Parliament.

Robin Harper (Lothians) (Green): Will the member give way?

David McLetchie: I will not.

We do not need 129 members. That is borne out not only by my experience, but by the experience of a former distinguished member of the Parliament, Mr Sam Galbraith. Ms Ferguson said that she knew of no one, apart from the Conservatives, who took a view contrary to that of the Executive, but Mr Galbraith does—and he is not someone whom I normally quote with approval. On 15 February, Sam Galbraith told *The Times*:

“I don't think it needs 129. It makes work and we need to always in all our lives instil some sort of discipline in ourselves.

I think a reduction would help that discipline to concentrate on the things in which we actually have responsibility and which are necessary.”

Is it not truly amazing what wisdom comes on laying down the burdens of office?

What the Scottish Conservatives propose is quite simply the implementation of the provisions of the Scotland Act 1998. It was the Labour Government that insisted on maintaining the constituency linkage and on Westminster's right to determine the size of this Parliament. Westminster's competence in that matter is not up for discussion at this time and forms no part of the consultation paper. Accordingly, we must make a judgment on the appropriate size of the Parliament in the context of the existing statutory framework.

As unionists, we recognise the benefit of MPs and MSPs working together in the interests of their common constituents, as that emphasises the partnership between the two Parliaments and should help to strengthen the United Kingdom, which we value and cherish.

A reduction in the number of MSPs will impose a new discipline on the work of the Parliament. It will stanch the relentless and unnecessary flow of Scottish Executive-inspired legislation. That is long overdue in a Scotland that is being strangled by laws, regulations and red tape.

Fiona Hyslop (Lothians) (SNP): I do not know whether David McLetchie understands the principles of the Parliament. We have the Executive, the Parliament and the people and there is meant to be equal power sharing between them. Would he not be better directing his angst about legislation at the Executive? He should keep the Parliament out of that and address the issue that is before us today.

David McLetchie: We have certainly long argued for an alternative programme for the Parliament to the one proposed by the Executive. I agree with Fiona Hyslop on that point.

We have plans in store for the Executive that the SNP will not have. We believe that the cuts in numbers should go beyond MSPs. There is a clear case for cutting the number of ministers as well. At present, there are 20 Scottish Executive ministers, plus two in the Scotland Office—22 in all. Before 1999, there were only five ministers in the Scottish Office. We would halve the number of ministers from 20 to 10. We do not need junior ministers or the recently created team of spear carriers and gophers who rejoice in the title of ministerial aides.

Brian Fitzpatrick (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (Lab) *rose—*

David McLetchie: Mr Fitzpatrick should listen to this. The Labour members' colleague Mr Martin O'Neill, the Westminster member for Ochil, said on 3 March:

"We should look at the number of Ministers at Holyrood. There is a danger that in the Scottish Parliament we shall

have too many chiefs and too few Indians."

Those are wise words indeed.

Cutting the number of ministers would free up more back-bench MSPs to serve on committees. One of the arguments that is made for keeping the number of MSPs at 129 is the so-called pressure on committees—what a load of self-serving nonsense. [*Interruption.*] Please listen to some sense.

Michael Russell (South of Scotland) (SNP) *rose—*

David McLetchie: I will not take an intervention.

By reducing the number of ministers and streamlining the committees from 17 to 13, in line with proposals previously made in the Parliament, we can improve the ratio of back-bench MSPs to committee places, knocking stone dead the argument about committee work loads. [*Interruption.*] Members are asking which committees should be amalgamated. I will tell them. We should amalgamate the Audit Committee with the Finance Committee and the Standards Committee with the Procedures Committee. We should have a single and larger justice committee and we should amalgamate the Social Justice Committee with the Equal Opportunities Committee. All those moves would provide a far more effective Parliament that was focused on the issues.

Patricia Ferguson *rose—*

David McLetchie: I will not take an intervention; I have given way enough already and answered plenty of questions.

It might be of interest to members of other parties to note that there are roughly 25,000 people per parliamentary politician in Scotland—MPs and MSPs.

Robin Harper: Will the member give way?

David McLetchie: No, thank you. I ask members to listen to the arithmetic. Under our proposals, that would increase to roughly 30,000 people per parliamentary politician. However, that is still far fewer people than in the ratio in Catalonia, Quebec and Bavaria, with which we are often compared. If they can manage, why cannot we?

Today we have argued the case for a smaller, less expensive and more efficient Parliament that focuses on the issues that really matter to people in Scotland. We have argued for a reformed Parliament and Government that people can have confidence in and regard with respect. We hear a great deal from the First Minister about doing less, better. For him that is a meaningless soundbite; for us it is a real political objective and a guiding principle. We should do less, we should do it

better and we can certainly do it with far fewer.

I move amendment S1M-2940.1, to leave out from “acknowledges” to end and insert:

“further notes public disillusionment with the performance of the Parliament to date; believes that reducing the number of MSPs to 108 in line with the provisions of the Scotland Act would be a welcome step towards establishing public confidence in the institution of the Parliament, and considers that a smaller, more focussed Parliament would better fulfil the objective of ‘doing less, better.’”

16:19

Fiona Hyslop (Lothians) (SNP): It is quite clear that the lean and mean Tories have never left Scotland. [MEMBERS: “Hear, hear.”]

The SNP has not lodged an amendment to the motion—a rare but not unheard of position for the SNP to take. It is important that the Scottish Parliament speaks with its strongest voice today. Our message is, “Let Scotland decide and let the Parliament get on with its work.”

The key reason why people wanted the Parliament in the first place was that they were fed up with London telling us what to do about our affairs. The size of the Parliament is our affair. The Scottish Parliament should decide its future. Let Scotland decide and let the Parliament get on with its work of serving the people of Scotland.

Patricia Ferguson set out the operational reasons for keeping the number of MSPs at 129. I agree with the points that she made and I will not repeat them in the limited time that is available to me. However, I want to make some points that have not yet been covered.

I was interested in the Executive’s argument that any reduction in the number of MSPs could reduce the amount of scrutiny of the Executive. That would be dangerous for democracy. It is also important to note that a reduction in the number of MSPs would undermine the principle of power sharing between the Executive, the Parliament and the people, which I mentioned when I intervened during David McLetchie’s speech. Any reduction along the lines proposed by the Tories would cut the proportionality of the Parliament and would mean that two parties that are currently represented in Parliament would not be represented in a future session of Parliament. Some people may not want them to be represented in the Parliament, but that is part of the argument behind proportionality in the Scottish Parliament.

We should all have a bit of humility. We should remember that the Parliament is for the people, not for the politicians. We are temporary members—some are more temporary than others, including those who continue with their anti-

Scottish rants. The Conservatives are firing at the wrong target; their criticisms are criticisms of the Executive, not of the Parliament. It is clear that the number of ministers can be cut without cutting the number of MSPs.

David McLetchie: Will the member take an intervention?

Fiona Hyslop: I will give way in a second.

The people will not thank the Conservatives for interfering with the Parliament that they voted for in 1999 after reading the leaflet that was delivered to each and every door and that clearly stated that they were to vote for a Parliament of 129 members.

David McLetchie: Is it the policy of the Scottish National Party substantially to reduce the number of ministers in the Scottish Executive?

Fiona Hyslop: There is a strong case for a review of the operation of the Scottish Executive. All questions of ministerial responsibilities would be up for consideration in such a review.

There are two reasons for this debate. First, the debate is a hangover from the Scotland Act 1998—a piece of legislation from Westminster. [Interruption.] Mr McLetchie would do well to listen to me. Some negotiations took place around the debates on the provision that introduced the boundary links. At the time, and subsequently, Donald Dewar, Henry McLeish, Lord Sewel and John Reid expressed the view that the Government would be open to a request from the Scottish Parliament to keep the number of MSPs at 129, should the Parliament, when it was up and running—as it is—reach the view that that number was necessary for the running of the Parliament.

The second reason is that the debate is, I fear, a work creation scheme for Helen Liddell. By holding this unnecessary consultation exercise, she may be pandering to some Labour MPs who suddenly realise that they are no longer the centre of attention. The only arguments that we hear for cutting the number of MSPs come from an unholy alliance of Scottish Tories, who did not want the Parliament in the first place, and Westminster Labour MPs, who resent its existence.

I have some positive proposals for what could happen. I repeat that my argument is that we should let Scotland decide. We could do so quite simply. Helen Liddell had three options. She could have introduced primary legislation in Westminster to end the boundary link—she has yet to do so. She could have introduced a statutory instrument to delay the inevitable boundary review that is to achieve coterminosity for the Parliament—that may be what she plans to do. I have serious concerns that she may be using a delaying tactic. Members should give serious consideration to

what her plans might be.

If Helen Liddell believed in devolution, she could easily have taken another option. Section 30 of the Scotland Act 1998 allows modifications to be made to schedules 4 or 5 to that act. She could introduce a statutory instrument—an order in council—to amend paragraph 4 of schedule 4 to give the Scottish Parliament the power to modify schedule 1. There is no need for primary legislation—let the Scottish Parliament decide. That is a serious option that can and should be considered.

The public do not want the Parliament to go through exercises on form and administration, such as we have in today's debate. They want us to get on and deal with the issues that matter to them. Let Scotland decide these issues. Let us get on with our work. Let us reject the wrecking of the Tories and the resentment of Westminster. Let us protect the delicate but trampled flower that is the Scottish Parliament.

16:25

Robert Brown (Glasgow) (LD): The issue that we are discussing should not be an issue. As even Mr McLetchie must recognise, there is a certain paradox in the fact that the leader of a party that did not want the Parliament, who does not sit on any of the Parliament's committees, is advising the Parliament on how it should reform its structures and committees.

I will give a personal view. I support the motion and the reasoning behind it, because it expresses the view of an overwhelming number of members of the Scottish Parliament, including Conservative members, and the view of civic Scotland. However, it is entirely unsuitable that the Parliament should be discussing an Executive motion on the issue. The issue is a parliamentary one. The Parliament must find ways of asserting its rights—which are separate and distinct from those of the Scottish Executive—to initiate resolutions on matters that go across party lines and express the will of Parliament as a whole.

I commend to the Parliament the support paper that the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body has produced. The paper is not political. It does not enter into discussion of the electoral system. Instead, it lays out—on behalf of the SPCB as members' parliamentary managers—the reasons why a Parliament of 129 members is necessary to do the job. The paper's arguments are firmly grounded in the Parliament's basic principles of accountability, accessibility, diversity and power sharing. A reduction would affect the Parliament's stability in its formative years. It would affect the work of its highly successful committees, the potential of many of the cross-party groups and

the amount and quality of the business that would be done. It would also affect the extent of the Parliament's representation of diverse geographic, political and social interests across Scotland.

Unlike the Westminster Parliament, the Scottish Parliament is elected on a fair basis. The Liberal Democrats do not think that the system that is used is the best system; STV, which Dennis Canavan mentioned, would be a better system. However, the system was arrived at consensually and was subsequently supported in a referendum of the Scottish people. That means that the whole of Scotland—including the Highlands, the Borders, the cities, the towns and the different political parties—has a proper voice in the Parliament. That inclusiveness, which was built into the Parliament at the beginning, gives the Parliament great potential to develop innovative ways of connecting with the people and with civic Scotland. The people voted overwhelmingly in the referendum for that sort of Parliament.

Those of us who live in western liberal democracies sometimes take our good fortune for granted. A glance at recent events in Bosnia, Zimbabwe or Afghanistan, to name but a few examples, should persuade us to take our civil and political liberties more seriously.

We have a lot more to do to give ownership of the Parliament to the people, to reform the balance in Parliament between MSPs and the party machines and to develop even better arrangements for participation by the people. We who were elected to the first Scottish Parliament hold our positions in trust for the people of Scotland. However, we are here not as delegates who reflect every populist whim and turn of the national press, but as representatives who exercise our collective and individual judgment on political and public affairs. That role is most effectively exercised through the committees, where evidence is taken, issues are developed and decisions are arrived at—mostly more dispassionately than is the case in the chamber.

As members have said, one of the Parliament's most important functions is to scrutinise the Executive's activities. We cannot do that by being supine supporters of the Executive of the day or by being knee-jerk oppositionists. MSPs must be prepared to take an independent and critical stand. That will not happen if the Parliament is reduced to a rump in which everyone is on the payroll as an official Opposition spokesman, a bag carrier or a cheerleader for one side or the other.

I heard David McLetchie on television last night. He was acting in much the same fashion as he did today—he was glib and condemnatory. His message boiled down to a revised version of the old Tory script that the Parliament, which his party opposed and frustrated for so long, is a waste of

space and an unnecessary cost to business and that everyone—except the Conservatives, presumably—is making a hash of everything. Although that sort of petty carping might have done well in Westminster, to where some of Mr McLetchie's colleagues seem desperate to depart, it will not do in the Scottish Parliament. This is a democratically elected Assembly, which, if it is the will of the people, is dismissible at the next election, when the electors can judge us individually and collectively.

Do not write off the Parliament. The Parliament belongs to the people and was brought into existence by their votes. Give us the tools to do the job by keeping the number of MSPs at 129.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: We have time for three speeches of four minutes or possibly four speeches of three minutes.

16:30

Henry McLeish (Central Fife) (Lab): I rise to support Patricia Ferguson's motion, because it is important for the Parliament and for the people of Scotland.

On David McLetchie's speech, it is with some disappointment and sadness that I say that never has so much rubbish been delivered in such a short space of time to this Parliament. I am disappointed with the Conservatives because, since 1997—and since 1999—they have failed to decide whether they will support this institution or carp from the sidelines. My advice is that the Conservatives should get honest with the Scottish people. They are in this Parliament because they were elected to do a job. They should not go scurrying around, belittling, criticising and carping about the Parliament, as they often do on the flimsiest of reasons.

Today's debate is more important than having a cockshy at the Conservatives. I do not believe that there is a case for changing the number of MSPs. I remember the days at Westminster, when I had to horse-trade with English Conservatives because there were no Scottish Conservative MPs. Thankfully, because of proportional representation, the Scottish Conservatives now have the chance to grace the democratic stage and once again represent people in this country.

There should be unity on the issue. The Parliament is not yet three years old. Although there is an automaticity in the way the Scotland Act 1998 links reductions in the number of MPs at Westminster to reductions in the number of members of this Parliament, there is no intellectual or political logic to that.

Phil Gallie (South of Scotland) (Con): Will Henry McLeish give way on that point?

Henry McLeish: I will not give way at this stage.

It is important to say that such a link might have logic for the political and administrative convenience of the parties and for electoral convenience and administration, but that is where the case starts and finishes.

The Parliament is working well, no matter some of the criticisms about its first 1,000 days. In policy, it is leading the United Kingdom. Its committees are doing a great job. Indeed, some committee performances after three years are as good as Westminster's after 300 years. A new heart and focus for politics rests with us in this capital city. For all those reasons, it would be odd for the people of Scotland to consider a change now. It is right that we say to our colleagues at Westminster that the figure of 129 is serving us well. That figure may not endure for ever, but at this stage we should say that 129 serves our purposes.

Part of the settlement was that legislation would come from Westminster, but any decision on the number of MSPs in this house should be a decision for this Parliament and for Scotland. That is not a narrow, nationalist perspective but a commonsense approach. After three years, it is surely right that politicians, political parties and the Scottish people should be secure in the knowledge that although we work closely with Westminster to effect change, this decision must be made in this country.

I hope that there will be unanimity on Patricia Ferguson's motion. Let us go forward and work with Westminster to ensure that it legislates to decouple Scotland from the change. If Westminster does that, that will allow us to develop as we want to develop. At some future time, let this Parliament decide on whether it wants a reduction in the number of its members.

16:34

Alasdair Morgan (Galloway and Upper Nithsdale) (SNP): Those of us on the SNP benches who were in the House of Commons during the passage of the Scotland Bill were deeply puzzled by the inclusion of the provisions the results of which we are debating today. As Fiona Hyslop said, all ministers, when pressed, said that the Government would be open to persuasion later if the Scottish Parliament said that the kind of change envisaged in the Scotland Act 1998 was found to be unsuitable. At the time, we asked, "Why put the provisions in the bill in the first place if you are prepared to change them later?"

Jim Wallace tabled some amendments—on 28 January 1998—that would have removed those features but, of course, he then had to withdraw

them because the Labour majority in the House of Commons would have voted them down. It is interesting to note that the first debate on that same day was on the millennium dome and that replying to the debate was Peter Mandelson. It is interesting how things move on.

The white paper that was published in the lead-up to the referendum, which provided the only information people had before voting, clearly stated that the Parliament would have 129 members. It was less clearly stated that the statutory minimum for Scottish representation at Westminster would be reduced. That that might lead to a change in the numbers in the Scottish Parliament was buried away at the back. In fact, the white paper said that

“changes in Westminster ... may also lead to consequential adjustments”

in Scotland. The statement was by no means clear, so everybody in Scotland expected to have a Parliament of 129 people for keeps.

I accept the need to reduce the number of Westminster MPs. I do not think that anyone argues about that. My only argument would be that the number is not being reduced by enough. The main point that people have raised has to do with the lack of proportionality that a change to this Parliament would introduce. The Parliament is already not truly proportional because the Labour party has more representation than its share of the vote entitles it to. Proportionality was a key element in getting the support of many groups in Scotland for the Parliament. The only benefit that I can see of reducing the proportionality of the Parliament would be a reduction in the size of the Tory party, but I am prepared to put up with that burden to keep this Parliament the way it is.

If we change things, the size of seats, especially in rural areas, will be too large. In the UK context, there is clearly an argument for having seats of roughly the same population size, but that has a negative impact on Scotland. We should recognise that, in Scotland, rural constituency members would have an impossible job trying to serve the kind of area that is required to take in a population of 70,000.

An argument for reducing the number of MSPs is that having different boundaries for this Parliament and for Westminster constituencies would be confusing. I do not know how it would be confusing. Every member of the public will have one MP and one MSP. I do not see how anyone would be confused if someone 100 yards down the road shared the same MP but had a different MSP. No one is interested in who someone else's MSP is; they are interested only in their own MSP. The only people to whom having different boundaries would present difficulties would be the

electoral registration officers and the political parties. I do not think that that is a valid argument for change.

We clearly need to reduce the number of politicians in Scotland. We need to reduce it by 72, and we can do that by becoming independent.

16:38

Donald Gorrie (Central Scotland) (LD): I would like to bury a few of David McLetchie's arguments—rather than bury him. He argues that if we have a smaller number of MSPs we will scrutinise the Executive better. That is the reverse of the truth. He argues—by some extraordinary logic—that if we have a smaller number of MSPs the Executive will produce fewer initiatives and less bureaucratic stuff. There is no connection between the two at all. The argument is absolutely false. He quotes somebody saying that we have too many chiefs and too few indians, then proposes that we should have fewer indians. That is just ridiculous. He argues that we have more elected representatives per head than other countries. That is simply not true. To the best of my knowledge, the countries that he mentioned have—if we consider all levels—far more elected representatives than we do. That is true of almost every country in continental Europe.

David McLetchie puts the argument for coterminous boundaries and says that they are essential if we are to work together. Which coterminous people do the 19 Tory list MSPs work with? They work across whole regions and coterminosity does not affect them whatsoever.

The arguments for keeping the number of MSPs at 129 have been well made. There is a good argument for stability. What is the point in destroying something that has been growing for only three years? The argument against coterminosity was well put by Alasdair Morgan, who was right to say that it is the individual voter who counts. Voters can tell us about their active local MP or MSP, but most of them would not know the name of their constituency. The activity of local members and their co-operation can cross boundaries and works perfectly well.

The proposal to reduce the number of members of the Scottish Parliament would seriously damage the Parliament and, as Robert Brown said, inhibit our effective scrutiny of the Executive, which is what we are here for. Let us not listen to the Tory rubbish, but get on and vote for the motion.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I apologise to the considerable number of members who wished to speak in the debate but were beaten by the clock. We now move to the winding-up speeches. I urge members to stick to their allocated times.

16:41

Sarah Boyack (Edinburgh Central) (Lab): Today's debate is all about ensuring that we have an effective and stable Parliament. Many members have made comments about the Parliament's founding principles, which are critical to our daily work. We have an open, transparent, accountable, modern, family-friendly Parliament that has a fairer electoral system without which only one member of the Tory group would be here. People voted for those core principles in the referendum and we depart from them at our peril.

I commend the report of the SPCB and suggest that members read it. It contains useful analyses of the work of the committees and puts the Scottish Parliament in an international context. It considers the experience in New South Wales, Catalonia and other parts of the world and provides a useful benchmark for improvement.

Almost everyone who has spoken has mentioned the Parliament's committees, which have a core role in holding the Executive to account, carrying out reviews and inquiries into key matters of Scottish public policy and, importantly, scrutinising legislation in detail. The Scottish Parliament does not have a revising chamber—we have to get it right ourselves. That makes the work of our committees vital.

Pre-legislative consultation must also be considered. If there are 20 per cent fewer MSPs, the task of inviting members of the environmental community, the business community, local and constituency community groups and so on will be that much harder. We must ensure that the Parliament remains accessible. We should acknowledge that our committees are already stretched, although we are still trying to develop the work that we do. For example, this week, the European Committee was focusing on how better to scrutinise the work of the Executive on the vast topic of our interrelationships at a European level. There is much still to do.

Post-legislative scrutiny is also important. We have spent most of our time passing bills—nearly 40 to date. The next stage is to consider how the acts are being implemented and how they might need to be revised in future. We have hardly begun that work.

The Tory argument has been about criticising the Parliament. The Tories might as well be politically honest about that. Their point is not that we are passing too many bills—they do not agree with many of the bills that we have passed. Why do they not come out and say that they think we do not need the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001, the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 or the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001? Those acts address the priorities of the people of Scotland and are the

topics on which we should be focusing.

David McLetchie: Will the member give way?

Sarah Boyack: No thank you. Mr McLetchie has already made his speech.

Today's debate is important because the Parliament needs stability. We have been here for only three years. Patricia Ferguson is right to say that we will need to review our Parliament in the future and see whether we can do better, but that is a job for further down the line—2007 or 2011. Our priority today is to maintain a stable Parliament that can deliver on jobs, crime, health and education—the priority issues that people sent us here to tackle. We need to get on with our task, rather than vote to clip the Parliament's wings. I urge members not just to support the Executive's motion, but to reflect on their experiences in serving their constituents and to put their views to Helen Liddell's consultation.

16:45

Michael Russell (South of Scotland) (SNP): I note from today's newspapers that the First Minister is calling on MSPs to work harder to gain Scotland's confidence. If I can borrow a mantra from his Minister for Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning, we need not only to work harder, but to work smarter. In other words, we need to think about why the Parliament has not lived up to the expectations of the people of Scotland and to do that in a positive and constructive way, not in the traditional carping Tory way that has been demonstrated again today by David McLetchie. Thatcher might be silenced but her anti-Scottish rhetoric lives on.

A clue to the problem might lie in this debate. There is no need for this discussion, which has been exploited not just by the Tories, but by the Parliament's traditional enemies. The Scotland Act 1998 was flawed. That flaw should have been put right quickly, without giving Labour dog-in-the-manger backwoodsmen such as Brian Donohoe, Jimmy Hood and Jimmy Wray the opportunity to attack this institution because they are unable to contribute positively to their institution. Nor should opportunity have been given to some sections of the press that have always argued against constitutional change but are being used as so-called impartial spokesmen. That was most notable in the BBC this week, which used Katie Grant and Alan Cochrane. We want to hear from people who want Scotland to succeed.

I do not blame the First Minister or Patricia Ferguson, but their party has brought us to today's debate and yet more navel gazing. We should be looking and aiming at the stars.

When I was a student, I had a Pan Am poster on the wall in my room in halls of residence. It

featured a cartoon figure looking over his shoulder, saying, "The real world isn't in here—it's out there." Every member of the Parliament must remember that. The real world is not in here. It is out there.

The real world is tired of internal debates about salaries and allowances and the number of MSPs. The real world wants to see an ambitious Parliament with a vision of a better Scotland and the ability to get it.

There are big questions to be asked by politicians in the chamber: questions about our ability—and the Executive's ability—to live up to the consultative steering group principles not just as a Parliament, but as political parties. However, to be fair—and we must be fair—the majority of members work hard. Throughout every party, they help ordinary people and they serve the communities they know.

The problems with confidence in democracy that we face in Scotland are common throughout Europe and the rest of the world. We in a new Parliament could contribute uniquely to solving those problems if we engaged with the people and excited them with a programme and a purpose that aimed to change their lives and country. As a nationalist, I espouse that programme—but I accept that others believe it is their programme too.

Whatever we disagree on, this afternoon we have to agree that the size of the Parliament has nothing whatsoever to do with the debate. Let us keep what we have got and tackle the real job of making a Scotland and a Parliament fit for the people we are here to serve.

16:48

Phil Gallie (South of Scotland) (Con): Mike Russell used the words "real world out there". I go along with that. That is why the Conservative party intends to put people's interests ahead of politicians' interests.

I want to pick up on several of the points that have been made. I congratulate Alasdair Morgan on at least making a constructive argument. Thereafter, virtually every member took pleasure in complaining about carping Tories rather than considering the points David McLetchie made.

When members read the *Official Report* tomorrow, they will see that there was no carping. They will find a list of suggestions that are worthy of consideration. When politicians who boast about a Parliament and believe that it is a place for debate see any form of opposition or talking against their views as carping, that says a lot about the Parliament—it suggests that it has a lot of growing up to do.

Patricia Ferguson initially said that there is no need to change and that we are not looking for improvement. I say that we should be considering improvement all the way along the line. We expect it of our businesses. Fiona Hyslop talked about "lean and mean" being the Tories' attitude. Those words are commonly used by politicians when we talk about our competitive industries. If we talk about our industries competing, we should also determine how we can become more efficient and more cost effective.

If the ideas that David McLetchie presented are examined, it can be seen that there would be cost benefits. If we trimmed the number of MSPs, there would be more than £2 million in savings. If we cut back on the number of deputy ministers, there would be another saving of £0.5 million-plus. That money could be spent on hospitals, education or other areas. By taking a closed view on this matter, the Parliament is saying that politicians' interests come first.

Bill Butler (Glasgow Anniesland) (Lab): Will the member give way?

Robin Harper: Will the member give way?

Phil Gallie: I will give Bill Butler a chance.

Bill Butler: I am grateful that I caught Mr Gallie's eye. Mr McLetchie talked in his ill-disguised and ill-judged rant about a reformed Parliament. Will Phil Gallie come clean right now and say clearly that the only reform that his party is interested in is the abolition of this Parliament?

Phil Gallie: I will be clear and say that the Tories did not want this Parliament, but are now attempting to make it work to the benefit of the people of Scotland.

Robin Harper rose—

Phil Gallie: There is no alternative. We will do nothing to undermine the Parliament under the current constitutional arrangement.

Henry McLeish had the audacity to challenge our comments on numbers, yet he was the minister with responsibility for taking forward the Scotland Act 1998. He was the minister who built into that act the requirement to drop the number of MSPs when the number of MPs was changed. Henry McLeish said that we are wrong, but I remind him of his own work. That says a lot about Henry.

Dennis Canavan: Will the member give way?

Robin Harper: Will the member give way?

Phil Gallie: I am spoiled for choice. I give way to Robin Harper, who has been trying to intervene for ages.

Robin Harper: Does Phil Gallie agree that Mr

McLetchie's selective mentioning of Parliaments and their sizes is contradicted by the size of the Swedish, Norwegian and Danish Parliaments, all of which make our Parliament seem undersized?

Phil Gallie: Sarah Boyack mentioned Catalonia. I will give the figures for Catalonia. With the revised figures that David McLetchie offered, we are talking about 30,706 persons per elected representative. Catalonia stands at 32,679 persons per elected representative. That is one example against which the number of representatives in Scotland—after implementation of the change that we propose—can be seen to be most reasonable.

I acknowledge the involvement and work load of most MSPs. They put their backs into their tasks, but let us not fool ourselves: when the Scotland Act 1998 was passed we increased the number of elected parliamentarians from 72 to 201. Surely there is a remit to re-examine why we need so many elected parliamentarians. Surely positive, constructive ideas, such as those proposed by David McLetchie, deserve more than just a rant against them.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: To respond for the Executive we have Euan Robson. Minister, finish as near to 5 o'clock as possible, please.

16:54

The Deputy Minister for Parliamentary Business (Euan Robson): This has been an interesting, if short, debate. I am sure that the Secretary of State for Scotland and the UK Government will take note of the points that have been made—or at least some of them—in coming to a decision on the way forward. As Patricia Ferguson explained, the Executive believes that there is a strong and convincing case for retaining the Parliament at its current size. We will be submitting a detailed written response to the Scotland Office consultation paper setting out that case, and it will be published.

In the meantime, I will sum up the debate on behalf of the Executive by setting out some of the key issues and arguments that lead us to believe that the Parliament should remain at its current size. Incidentally, we welcome the SNP's support for the motion.

First, there is a case for stability. The present arrangements work well. The Parliament has passed more than 30 bills that are on a range of issues that matter to the people of Scotland and which reflect the policies and priorities in the programme for government. The legislative process at Holyrood and particularly the committee system are widely regarded as a success.

That reflects the work that many people did for many years to shape the Parliament and its procedures. Issues such as the proper size of the Parliament, the legislative process and the committee system were debated by the Scottish Constitutional Convention, the white paper on devolution, the Scotland Bill and the all-party consultative steering group. We did not get where we are by accident and we should not lightly introduce a major, disruptive and unnecessary change so early in the life of our new Parliament.

Mr Brian Monteith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con): The minister says that the committees have been effective. One task that was set for the committees was providing checks and balances. We do not have a second chamber to do that. Will the minister give me a list of Executive bills that have been delayed by committees acting in that role?

Euan Robson: I am surprised that Mr Monteith feels that delaying a bill is helpful. The committees have made a major impact on many bills and many measures. As he should know, committees have also initiated bills, which is a marked change from the Westminster situation.

Michael Russell: When the minister reflects on the debate, will he check the record of Mr Monteith's attendance at meetings of the Education, Culture and Sport Committee? I think that the minister will find that Mr Monteith has not attended often enough to know what the committee has done.

Euan Robson: We can find out how many times Mr Monteith has attended meetings of that committee. I am sure that he has been to that committee more times than his leader has ever been to any committee of the Parliament.

My next point is about consensus, not just among the political parties but among a wider community of interests throughout civic Scotland. No one can seriously dispute that reducing the Parliament's size from 129 to 106 would have a substantial effect on the Parliament's nature and dynamics. It would amount to a significant constitutional change, which should not be made unless clear public and political consensus is in favour of it.

The case for maintaining the Parliament's present size rests as much on grounds of practicality and work load as it does on arguments of principle. [*Interruption.*]

The Deputy Presiding Officer (Mr Murray Tosh): Order. There is a great deal of conversation in the chamber. I ask members to hear out the minister's speech politely.

Euan Robson: The case for maintaining the Parliament's present size rests on grounds of

practicality and work load. MSPs discharge a wide variety of functions and duties, including constituency work, plenary business, membership of committees and other commitments such as cross-party groups, which are not to be underestimated. The Parliament is unicameral, so the role of MSPs and the committees is crucial in scrutinising, and improving the quality of, legislation.

If the Parliament had only 106 members, instead of 129, it would be impossible for MSPs and the Parliament as a whole to function as effectively. Constituencies would be larger, which would detract from the quality of service that we can provide to our constituents. Fewer MSPs would be available to serve on committees, which would detract from their effectiveness. It is amazing that the Conservative leader feels that it is a disadvantage for MSPs or MPs to represent a smaller proportion of the population.

David McLetchie: Does the minister acknowledge that New Zealand, which has a unicameral, sovereign Parliament, manages to get by with 120 members? Why does Scotland require 201 representatives in total?

The Deputy Presiding Officer: There must be no more interventions.

Euan Robson: Mr McLetchie misses the point again. Is it not an advantage that people have more representatives and that each MSP represents a smaller proportion of the population than Mr McLetchie thinks necessary?

It is inconceivable that anyone would argue for a reduction in the Parliament's size if it were not for the automatic link that the Scotland Act 1998 created between Westminster and Holyrood constituencies. There are reasons for that link, such as the reluctance to move away from common constituency boundaries. That is entirely understandable. But as Patricia Ferguson said, most of the 59 Westminster constituencies and 73 Holyrood constituencies could remain broadly similar. The Boundary Commission could be asked to maintain contiguous boundaries wherever possible and to respect historic boundaries, such as towns. As I think Robert Brown said, there is no reason to think that somewhat different boundaries will give rise to public concern or confusion or to insuperable administrative or practical problems.

In the view of the Executive, the case for maintaining the Parliament's present size is a clear and compelling one. The UK Government has undertaken to consider that case. I hope that the points that have been made by many speakers in support of the motion will send a clear and united message from the Scottish Parliament in support of a limited amendment to the Scotland

Act 1998 to maintain the Parliament at its present size.

Decision Time

17:00

The Deputy Presiding Officer (Mr Murray Tosh): There are no Parliamentary Bureau motions, so we come straight to decision time. I have five questions to put to the chamber as a result of today's business.

The first question is, that amendment S1M-2941.2, in the name of Mr Kenny McAskill, which seeks to amend motion S1M-2941, in the name of Mike Watson, on tourism, be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

FOR

Canavan, Dennis (Falkirk West)
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perth) (SNP)
 Ewing, Dr Winnie (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Fabiani, Linda (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Gibson, Mr Kenneth (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Grahame, Christine (South of Scotland) (SNP)
 Hamilton, Mr Duncan (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Harper, Robin (Lothians) (Green)
 Hyslop, Fiona (Lothians) (SNP)
 Lochhead, Richard (North-East Scotland) (SNP)
 MacAskill, Mr Kenny (Lothians) (SNP)
 MacDonald, Ms Margo (Lothians) (SNP)
 Marwick, Tricia (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP)
 Matheson, Michael (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 McGugan, Irene (North-East Scotland) (SNP)
 McLeod, Fiona (West of Scotland) (SNP)
 Morgan, Alasdair (Galloway and Upper Nithsdale) (SNP)
 Neil, Alex (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Paterson, Mr Gil (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Quinan, Mr Lloyd (West of Scotland) (SNP)
 Reid, Mr George (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP)
 Robison, Shona (North-East Scotland) (SNP)
 Russell, Michael (South of Scotland) (SNP)
 Sheridan, Tommy (Glasgow) (SSP)
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banff and Buchan) (SNP)
 Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Swinney, Mr John (North Tayside) (SNP)
 Ullrich, Kay (West of Scotland) (SNP)
 Welsh, Mr Andrew (Angus) (SNP)
 White, Ms Sandra (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Wilson, Andrew (Central Scotland) (SNP)

AGAINST

Aitken, Bill (Glasgow) (Con)
 Alexander, Ms Wendy (Paisley North) (Lab)
 Baillie, Jackie (Dumbarton) (Lab)
 Barrie, Scott (Dunfermline West) (Lab)
 Boyack, Sarah (Edinburgh Central) (Lab)
 Brankin, Rhona (Midlothian) (Lab)
 Brown, Robert (Glasgow) (LD)
 Butler, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (Lab)
 Chisholm, Malcolm (Edinburgh North and Leith) (Lab)
 Craigie, Cathie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (Lab)
 Curran, Ms Margaret (Glasgow Baillieston) (Lab)
 Davidson, Mr David (North-East Scotland) (Con)
 Deacon, Susan (Edinburgh East and Musselburgh) (Lab)

Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James (Lothians) (Con)
 Eadie, Helen (Dunfermline East) (Lab)
 Ferguson, Patricia (Glasgow Maryhill) (Lab)
 Fergusson, Alex (South of Scotland) (Con)
 Finnie, Ross (West of Scotland) (LD)
 Fitzpatrick, Brian (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (Lab)
 Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Gallie, Phil (South of Scotland) (Con)
 Goldie, Miss Annabel (West of Scotland) (Con)
 Gorrie, Donald (Central Scotland) (LD)
 Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Gray, Iain (Edinburgh Pentlands) (Lab)
 Harding, Mr Keith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Henry, Hugh (Paisley South) (Lab)
 Home Robertson, Mr John (East Lothian) (Lab)
 Hughes, Janis (Glasgow Rutherglen) (Lab)
 Jackson, Dr Sylvia (Stirling) (Lab)
 Jamieson, Cathy (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (Lab)
 Jamieson, Margaret (Kilmarnock and Loudoun) (Lab)
 Jenkins, Ian (Tweeddale, Ettrick and Lauderdale) (LD)
 Johnstone, Alex (North-East Scotland) (Con)
 Kerr, Mr Andy (East Kilbride) (Lab)
 Lamont, Johann (Glasgow Pollok) (Lab)
 Livingstone, Marilyn (Kirkcaldy) (Lab)
 Lyon, George (Argyll and Bute) (LD)
 Macdonald, Lewis (Aberdeen Central) (Lab)
 Macintosh, Mr Kenneth (Eastwood) (Lab)
 MacKay, Angus (Edinburgh South) (Lab)
 Maclean, Kate (Dundee West) (Lab)
 Macmillan, Maureen (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Martin, Paul (Glasgow Springburn) (Lab)
 McAllion, Mr John (Dundee East) (Lab)
 McAveety, Mr Frank (Glasgow Shettleston) (Lab)
 McCabe, Mr Tom (Hamilton South) (Lab)
 McConnell, Mr Jack (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Lab)
 McGrigor, Mr Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 McIntosh, Mrs Lyndsay (Central Scotland) (Con)
 McLeish, Henry (Central Fife) (Lab)
 McLetchie, David (Lothians) (Con)
 McMahan, Mr Michael (Hamilton North and Bellshill) (Lab)
 McNeil, Mr Duncan (Greenock and Inverclyde) (Lab)
 McNeill, Pauline (Glasgow Kelvin) (Lab)
 McNulty, Des (Clydebank and Milngavie) (Lab)
 Monteith, Mr Brian (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Morrison, Mr Alasdair (Western Isles) (Lab)
 Muldoon, Bristow (Livingston) (Lab)
 Mulligan, Mrs Mary (Linlithgow) (Lab)
 Mundell, David (South of Scotland) (Con)
 Munro, John Farquhar (Ross, Skye and Inverness West) (LD)
 Murray, Dr Elaine (Dumfries) (Lab)
 Oldfather, Irene (Cunninghame South) (Lab)
 Peacock, Peter (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Peattie, Cathy (Falkirk East) (Lab)
 Radcliffe, Nora (Gordon) (LD)
 Raffan, Mr Keith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (LD)
 Robson, Euan (Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (LD)
 Rumbles, Mr Mike (West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine) (LD)
 Scanlon, Mary (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)
 Scott, Tavish (Shetland) (LD)
 Simpson, Dr Richard (Ochil) (Lab)
 Smith, Elaine (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Lab)
 Smith, Iain (North-East Fife) (LD)
 Smith, Mrs Margaret (Edinburgh West) (LD)
 Stephen, Nicol (Aberdeen South) (LD)
 Stone, Mr Jamie (Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross) (LD)
 Thomson, Elaine (Aberdeen North) (Lab)
 Wallace, Ben (North-East Scotland) (Con)

Wallace, Mr Jim (Orkney) (LD)
 Watson, Mike (Glasgow Cathcart) (Lab)
 Whitefield, Karen (Airdrie and Shotts) (Lab)
 Wilson, Allan (Cunninghame North) (Lab)
 Young, John (West of Scotland) (Con)

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 31, Against 86, Abstentions 0.

Amendment disagreed to.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The second question is, that amendment S1M-2941.1, in the name of David Davidson, which seeks to amend motion S1M-2941, in the name of Mike Watson, on tourism, be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

FOR

Aitken, Bill (Glasgow) (Con)
 Davidson, Mr David (North-East Scotland) (Con)
 Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James (Lothians) (Con)
 Fergusson, Alex (South of Scotland) (Con)
 Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Gallie, Phil (South of Scotland) (Con)
 Goldie, Miss Annabel (West of Scotland) (Con)
 Harding, Mr Keith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Johnstone, Alex (North-East Scotland) (Con)
 McGrigor, Mr Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 McIntosh, Mrs Lyndsay (Central Scotland) (Con)
 McLetchie, David (Lothians) (Con)
 Monteith, Mr Brian (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Mundell, David (South of Scotland) (Con)
 Scanlon, Mary (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)
 Wallace, Ben (North-East Scotland) (Con)
 Young, John (West of Scotland) (Con)

AGAINST

Alexander, Ms Wendy (Paisley North) (Lab)
 Baillie, Jackie (Dumbarton) (Lab)
 Barrie, Scott (Dunfermline West) (Lab)
 Boyack, Sarah (Edinburgh Central) (Lab)
 Brankin, Rhona (Midlothian) (Lab)
 Brown, Robert (Glasgow) (LD)
 Butler, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (Lab)
 Canavan, Dennis (Falkirk West)
 Chisholm, Malcolm (Edinburgh North and Leith) (Lab)
 Craigie, Cathie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (Lab)
 Curran, Ms Margaret (Glasgow Baillieston) (Lab)
 Deacon, Susan (Edinburgh East and Musselburgh) (Lab)
 Eadie, Helen (Dunfermline East) (Lab)
 Ewing, Dr Winnie (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Ferguson, Patricia (Glasgow Maryhill) (Lab)
 Finnie, Ross (West of Scotland) (LD)
 Fitzpatrick, Brian (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (Lab)
 Godman, Trish (West Renfrewshire) (Lab)
 Gorrie, Donald (Central Scotland) (LD)
 Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Gray, Iain (Edinburgh Pentlands) (Lab)
 Harper, Robin (Lothians) (Green)
 Henry, Hugh (Paisley South) (Lab)
 Home Robertson, Mr John (East Lothian) (Lab)
 Hughes, Janis (Glasgow Rutherglen) (Lab)
 Jackson, Dr Sylvia (Stirling) (Lab)
 Jamieson, Cathy (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (Lab)
 Jamieson, Margaret (Kilmarnock and Loudoun) (Lab)

Jenkins, Ian (Tweeddale, Etrick and Lauderdale) (LD)
 Kerr, Mr Andy (East Kilbride) (Lab)
 Lamont, Johann (Glasgow Pollok) (Lab)
 Livingstone, Marilyn (Kirkcaldy) (Lab)
 Lyon, George (Argyll and Bute) (LD)
 Macdonald, Lewis (Aberdeen Central) (Lab)
 Macintosh, Mr Kenneth (Eastwood) (Lab)
 MacKay, Angus (Edinburgh South) (Lab)
 Maclean, Kate (Dundee West) (Lab)
 Macmillan, Maureen (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Martin, Paul (Glasgow Springburn) (Lab)
 McAllion, Mr John (Dundee East) (Lab)
 McAveety, Mr Frank (Glasgow Shettleston) (Lab)
 McCabe, Mr Tom (Hamilton South) (Lab)
 McConnell, Mr Jack (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Lab)
 McGugan, Irene (North-East Scotland) (SNP)
 McLeish, Henry (Central Fife) (Lab)
 McMahan, Mr Michael (Hamilton North and Bellshill) (Lab)
 McNeil, Mr Duncan (Greenock and Inverclyde) (Lab)
 McNeill, Pauline (Glasgow Kelvin) (Lab)
 McNulty, Des (Clydebank and Milngavie) (Lab)
 Morrison, Mr Alasdair (Western Isles) (Lab)
 Muldoon, Bristow (Livingston) (Lab)
 Mulligan, Mrs Mary (Linlithgow) (Lab)
 Munro, John Farquhar (Ross, Skye and Inverness West) (LD)
 Murray, Dr Elaine (Dumfries) (Lab)
 Oldfather, Irene (Cunninghame South) (Lab)
 Peacock, Peter (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Peattie, Cathy (Falkirk East) (Lab)
 Radcliffe, Nora (Gordon) (LD)
 Raffan, Mr Keith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (LD)
 Robson, Euan (Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (LD)
 Rumbles, Mr Mike (West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine) (LD)
 Scott, Tavish (Shetland) (LD)
 Sheridan, Tommy (Glasgow) (SSP)
 Simpson, Dr Richard (Ochil) (Lab)
 Smith, Elaine (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Lab)
 Smith, Iain (North-East Fife) (LD)
 Smith, Mrs Margaret (Edinburgh West) (LD)
 Stephen, Nicol (Aberdeen South) (LD)
 Stone, Mr Jamie (Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross) (LD)
 Thomson, Elaine (Aberdeen North) (Lab)
 Wallace, Mr Jim (Orkney) (LD)
 Watson, Mike (Glasgow Cathcart) (Lab)
 Welsh, Mr Andrew (Angus) (SNP)
 Whitefield, Karen (Airdrie and Shotts) (Lab)
 Wilson, Allan (Cunninghame North) (Lab)

ABSTENTIONS

Cunningham, Roseanna (Perth) (SNP)
 Fabiani, Linda (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Gibson, Mr Kenneth (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Grahame, Christine (South of Scotland) (SNP)
 Hamilton, Mr Duncan (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Hyslop, Fiona (Lothians) (SNP)
 Lochhead, Richard (North-East Scotland) (SNP)
 MacAskill, Mr Kenny (Lothians) (SNP)
 MacDonald, Ms Margo (Lothians) (SNP)
 Marwick, Tricia (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP)
 Matheson, Michael (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 McLeod, Fiona (West of Scotland) (SNP)
 Morgan, Alasdair (Galloway and Upper Nithsdale) (SNP)
 Neil, Alex (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Paterson, Mr Gil (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Quinan, Mr Lloyd (West of Scotland) (SNP)
 Reid, Mr George (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP)
 Robison, Shona (North-East Scotland) (SNP)
 Russell, Michael (South of Scotland) (SNP)
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banff and Buchan) (SNP)

Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Swinney, Mr John (North Tayside) (SNP)
 Ullrich, Kay (West of Scotland) (SNP)
 White, Ms Sandra (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Wilson, Andrew (Central Scotland) (SNP)

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 18, Against 75, Abstentions 25.

Amendment disagreed to.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The third question is, that motion S1M-2941, in the name of Mike Watson, on tourism, be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

FOR

Alexander, Ms Wendy (Paisley North) (Lab)
 Baillie, Jackie (Dumbarton) (Lab)
 Barrie, Scott (Dunfermline West) (Lab)
 Boyack, Sarah (Edinburgh Central) (Lab)
 Brankin, Rhona (Midlothian) (Lab)
 Brown, Robert (Glasgow) (LD)
 Butler, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (Lab)
 Chisholm, Malcolm (Edinburgh North and Leith) (Lab)
 Craigie, Cathie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (Lab)
 Curran, Ms Margaret (Glasgow Baillieston) (Lab)
 Deacon, Susan (Edinburgh East and Musselburgh) (Lab)
 Eadie, Helen (Dunfermline East) (Lab)
 Ferguson, Patricia (Glasgow Maryhill) (Lab)
 Finnie, Ross (West of Scotland) (LD)
 Fitzpatrick, Brian (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (Lab)
 Godman, Trish (West Renfrewshire) (Lab)
 Gorrie, Donald (Central Scotland) (LD)
 Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Gray, Iain (Edinburgh Pentlands) (Lab)
 Harper, Robin (Lothians) (Green)
 Henry, Hugh (Paisley South) (Lab)
 Home Robertson, Mr John (East Lothian) (Lab)
 Hughes, Janis (Glasgow Rutherglen) (Lab)
 Jackson, Dr Sylvia (Stirling) (Lab)
 Jamieson, Cathy (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (Lab)
 Jamieson, Margaret (Kilmarnock and Loudoun) (Lab)
 Jenkins, Ian (Tweeddale, Ettrick and Lauderdale) (LD)
 Kerr, Mr Andy (East Kilbride) (Lab)
 Lamont, Johann (Glasgow Pollok) (Lab)
 Livingstone, Marilyn (Kirkcaldy) (Lab)
 Lyon, George (Argyll and Bute) (LD)
 Macdonald, Lewis (Aberdeen Central) (Lab)
 MacDonald, Ms Margo (Lothians) (SNP)
 Macintosh, Mr Kenneth (Eastwood) (Lab)
 MacKay, Angus (Edinburgh South) (Lab)
 Maclean, Kate (Dundee West) (Lab)
 Macmillan, Maureen (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Martin, Paul (Glasgow Springburn) (Lab)
 McAllion, Mr John (Dundee East) (Lab)
 McAveety, Mr Frank (Glasgow Shettleston) (Lab)
 McCabe, Mr Tom (Hamilton South) (Lab)
 McConnell, Mr Jack (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Lab)
 McLeish, Henry (Central Fife) (Lab)
 McMahon, Mr Michael (Hamilton North and Bellshill) (Lab)
 McNeil, Mr Duncan (Greenock and Inverclyde) (Lab)
 McNeill, Pauline (Glasgow Kelvin) (Lab)
 McNulty, Des (Clydebank and Milngavie) (Lab)
 Morrison, Mr Alasdair (Western Isles) (Lab)
 Muldoon, Bristow (Livingston) (Lab)

Mulligan, Mrs Mary (Linlithgow) (Lab)
 Munro, John Farquhar (Ross, Skye and Inverness West) (LD)
 Murray, Dr Elaine (Dumfries) (Lab)
 Oldfather, Irene (Cunninghame South) (Lab)
 Peacock, Peter (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Peattie, Cathy (Falkirk East) (Lab)
 Radcliffe, Nora (Gordon) (LD)
 Raffan, Mr Keith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (LD)
 Robson, Euan (Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (LD)
 Rumbles, Mr Mike (West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine) (LD)
 Scott, Tavish (Shetland) (LD)
 Simpson, Dr Richard (Ochil) (Lab)
 Smith, Elaine (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Lab)
 Smith, Iain (North-East Fife) (LD)
 Smith, Mrs Margaret (Edinburgh West) (LD)
 Stephen, Nicol (Aberdeen South) (LD)
 Stone, Mr Jamie (Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross) (LD)
 Thomson, Elaine (Aberdeen North) (Lab)
 Wallace, Mr Jim (Orkney) (LD)
 Watson, Mike (Glasgow Cathcart) (Lab)
 Whitefield, Karen (Airdrie and Shotts) (Lab)
 Wilson, Allan (Cunninghame North) (Lab)

AGAINST

Adam, Brian (North-East Scotland) (SNP)
 Aitken, Bill (Glasgow) (Con)
 Canavan, Dennis (Falkirk West)
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perth) (SNP)
 Davidson, Mr David (North-East Scotland) (Con)
 Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James (Lothians) (Con)
 Ewing, Dr Winnie (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Fabiani, Linda (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Fergusson, Alex (South of Scotland) (Con)
 Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Gallie, Phil (South of Scotland) (Con)
 Gibson, Mr Kenneth (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Goldie, Miss Annabel (West of Scotland) (Con)
 Grahame, Christine (South of Scotland) (SNP)
 Hamilton, Mr Duncan (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Harding, Mr Keith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Hyslop, Fiona (Lothians) (SNP)
 Johnstone, Alex (North-East Scotland) (Con)
 Lochhead, Richard (North-East Scotland) (SNP)
 MacAskill, Mr Kenny (Lothians) (SNP)
 Marwick, Tricia (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP)
 Matheson, Michael (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 McGrigor, Mr Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 McGugan, Irene (North-East Scotland) (SNP)
 McIntosh, Mrs Lyndsay (Central Scotland) (Con)
 McLeod, Fiona (West of Scotland) (SNP)
 McLetchie, David (Lothians) (Con)
 Monteith, Mr Brian (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Morgan, Alasdair (Galloway and Upper Nithsdale) (SNP)
 Mundell, David (South of Scotland) (Con)
 Neil, Alex (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Paterson, Mr Gil (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Quinan, Mr Lloyd (West of Scotland) (SNP)
 Reid, Mr George (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP)
 Robison, Shona (North-East Scotland) (SNP)
 Russell, Michael (South of Scotland) (SNP)
 Scanlon, Mary (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)
 Sheridan, Tommy (Glasgow) (SSP)
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banff and Buchan) (SNP)
 Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Swinney, Mr John (North Tayside) (SNP)
 Ullrich, Kay (West of Scotland) (SNP)
 Wallace, Ben (North-East Scotland) (Con)
 Welsh, Mr Andrew (Angus) (SNP)

White, Ms Sandra (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Wilson, Andrew (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Young, John (West of Scotland) (Con)

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 71, Against 48, Abstentions 0.

Motion agreed to.

That the Parliament welcomes the progress that has been made by the Scottish Executive in implementing *A New Strategy for Scottish Tourism* since its publication in 2002 and commends the *Tourism Framework for Action 2002:05* as the way to build on this and achieve a tourism industry that is internationally competitive and creates jobs and wealth for the people of Scotland.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The fourth question is, that amendment S1M-2940.1, in the name of David McLetchie, which seeks to amend motion S1M-2940, in the name of Patricia Ferguson, on the size of the Scottish Parliament, be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

FOR

Aitken, Bill (Glasgow) (Con)
 Davidson, Mr David (North-East Scotland) (Con)
 Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James (Lothians) (Con)
 Fergusson, Alex (South of Scotland) (Con)
 Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Gallie, Phil (South of Scotland) (Con)
 Goldie, Miss Annabel (West of Scotland) (Con)
 Harding, Mr Keith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Johnstone, Alex (North-East Scotland) (Con)
 McGrigor, Mr Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 McIntosh, Mrs Lyndsay (Central Scotland) (Con)
 McLetchie, David (Lothians) (Con)
 Monteith, Mr Brian (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Mundell, David (South of Scotland) (Con)
 Scanlon, Mary (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)
 Wallace, Ben (North-East Scotland) (Con)
 Young, John (West of Scotland) (Con)

AGAINST

Adam, Brian (North-East Scotland) (SNP)
 Alexander, Ms Wendy (Paisley North) (Lab)
 Baillie, Jackie (Dumbarton) (Lab)
 Barrie, Scott (Dunfermline West) (Lab)
 Boyack, Sarah (Edinburgh Central) (Lab)
 Brankin, Rhona (Midlothian) (Lab)
 Brown, Robert (Glasgow) (LD)
 Butler, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (Lab)
 Canavan, Dennis (Falkirk West)
 Chisholm, Malcolm (Edinburgh North and Leith) (Lab)
 Craigie, Cathie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (Lab)
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perth) (SNP)
 Curran, Ms Margaret (Glasgow Baillieston) (Lab)
 Deacon, Susan (Edinburgh East and Musselburgh) (Lab)
 Eadie, Helen (Dunfermline East) (Lab)
 Ewing, Dr Winnie (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Fabiani, Linda (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Ferguson, Patricia (Glasgow Maryhill) (Lab)
 Finnie, Ross (West of Scotland) (LD)
 Fitzpatrick, Brian (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (Lab)
 Gibson, Mr Kenneth (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Godman, Trish (West Renfrewshire) (Lab)

Gorrie, Donald (Central Scotland) (LD)
 Grahame, Christine (South of Scotland) (SNP)
 Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Gray, Iain (Edinburgh Pentlands) (Lab)
 Hamilton, Mr Duncan (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Harper, Robin (Lothians) (Green)
 Henry, Hugh (Paisley South) (Lab)
 Home Robertson, Mr John (East Lothian) (Lab)
 Hughes, Janis (Glasgow Rutherglen) (Lab)
 Hyslop, Fiona (Lothians) (SNP)
 Jackson, Dr Sylvia (Stirling) (Lab)
 Jamieson, Cathy (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (Lab)
 Jamieson, Margaret (Kilmarnock and Loudoun) (Lab)
 Jenkins, Ian (Tweeddale, Ettrick and Lauderdale) (LD)
 Kerr, Mr Andy (East Kilbride) (Lab)
 Lamont, Johann (Glasgow Pollok) (Lab)
 Livingstone, Marilyn (Kirkcaldy) (Lab)
 Lochhead, Richard (North-East Scotland) (SNP)
 Lyon, George (Argyll and Bute) (LD)
 MacAskill, Mr Kenny (Lothians) (SNP)
 Macdonald, Lewis (Aberdeen Central) (Lab)
 MacDonald, Ms Margo (Lothians) (SNP)
 Macintosh, Mr Kenneth (Eastwood) (Lab)
 MacKay, Angus (Edinburgh South) (Lab)
 Maclean, Kate (Dundee West) (Lab)
 Macmillan, Maureen (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Martin, Paul (Glasgow Springburn) (Lab)
 Marwick, Tricia (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP)
 Matheson, Michael (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 McAllion, Mr John (Dundee East) (Lab)
 McAveety, Mr Frank (Glasgow Shettleston) (Lab)
 McCabe, Mr Tom (Hamilton South) (Lab)
 McConnell, Mr Jack (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Lab)
 McGugan, Irene (North-East Scotland) (SNP)
 McLeish, Henry (Central Fife) (Lab)
 McLeod, Fiona (West of Scotland) (SNP)
 McMahan, Mr Michael (Hamilton North and Bellshill) (Lab)
 McNeil, Mr Duncan (Greenock and Inverclyde) (Lab)
 McNeill, Pauline (Glasgow Kelvin) (Lab)
 McNulty, Des (Clydebank and Milngavie) (Lab)
 Morgan, Alasdair (Galloway and Upper Nithsdale) (SNP)
 Morrison, Mr Alasdair (Western Isles) (Lab)
 Muldoon, Bristow (Livingston) (Lab)
 Mulligan, Mrs Mary (Linlithgow) (Lab)
 Munro, John Farquhar (Ross, Skye and Inverness West) (LD)
 Murray, Dr Elaine (Dumfries) (Lab)
 Neil, Alex (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Oldfather, Irene (Cunninghame South) (Lab)
 Paterson, Mr Gil (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Peacock, Peter (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Peattie, Cathy (Falkirk East) (Lab)
 Quinan, Mr Lloyd (West of Scotland) (SNP)
 Radcliffe, Nora (Gordon) (LD)
 Raffan, Mr Keith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (LD)
 Reid, Mr George (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP)
 Robison, Shona (North-East Scotland) (SNP)
 Robson, Euan (Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (LD)
 Rumbles, Mr Mike (West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine) (LD)
 Russell, Michael (South of Scotland) (SNP)
 Scott, Tavish (Shetland) (LD)
 Sheridan, Tommy (Glasgow) (SSP)
 Simpson, Dr Richard (Ochil) (Lab)
 Smith, Elaine (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Lab)
 Smith, Iain (North-East Fife) (LD)
 Smith, Mrs Margaret (Edinburgh West) (LD)
 Stephen, Nicol (Aberdeen South) (LD)
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banff and Buchan) (SNP)
 Stone, Mr Jamie (Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross) (LD)

Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Swinney, Mr John (North Tayside) (SNP)
 Thomson, Elaine (Aberdeen North) (Lab)
 Ullrich, Kay (West of Scotland) (SNP)
 Wallace, Mr Jim (Orkney) (LD)
 Watson, Mike (Glasgow Cathcart) (Lab)
 Welsh, Mr Andrew (Angus) (SNP)
 White, Ms Sandra (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Whitefield, Karen (Airdrie and Shotts) (Lab)
 Wilson, Allan (Cunninghame North) (Lab)
 Wilson, Andrew (Central Scotland) (SNP)

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 18, Against 101, Abstentions 0.

Amendment disagreed to.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The final question is, that motion S1M-2940, in the name of Patricia Ferguson, on the size of the Scottish Parliament, be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

FOR

Adam, Brian (North-East Scotland) (SNP)
 Alexander, Ms Wendy (Paisley North) (Lab)
 Baillie, Jackie (Dumbarton) (Lab)
 Barrie, Scott (Dunfermline West) (Lab)
 Boyack, Sarah (Edinburgh Central) (Lab)
 Brankin, Rhona (Midlothian) (Lab)
 Brown, Robert (Glasgow) (LD)
 Butler, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (Lab)
 Canavan, Dennis (Falkirk West)
 Chisholm, Malcolm (Edinburgh North and Leith) (Lab)
 Craigie, Cathie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (Lab)
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perth) (SNP)
 Curran, Ms Margaret (Glasgow Baillieston) (Lab)
 Deacon, Susan (Edinburgh East and Musselburgh) (Lab)
 Eadie, Helen (Dunfermline East) (Lab)
 Ewing, Dr Winnie (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Fabiani, Linda (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Ferguson, Patricia (Glasgow Maryhill) (Lab)
 Finnie, Ross (West of Scotland) (LD)
 Fitzpatrick, Brian (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (Lab)
 Gibson, Mr Kenneth (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Godman, Trish (West Renfrewshire) (Lab)
 Gorrie, Donald (Central Scotland) (LD)
 Grahame, Christine (South of Scotland) (SNP)
 Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Gray, Iain (Edinburgh Pentlands) (Lab)
 Hamilton, Mr Duncan (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Harper, Robin (Lothians) (Green)
 Henry, Hugh (Paisley South) (Lab)
 Home Robertson, Mr John (East Lothian) (Lab)
 Hughes, Janis (Glasgow Rutherglen) (Lab)
 Hyslop, Fiona (Lothians) (SNP)
 Jackson, Dr Sylvia (Stirling) (Lab)
 Jamieson, Cathy (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (Lab)
 Jamieson, Margaret (Kilmarnock and Loudoun) (Lab)
 Jenkins, Ian (Tweeddale, Ettrick and Lauderdale) (LD)
 Kerr, Mr Andy (East Kilbride) (Lab)
 Lamont, Johann (Glasgow Pollok) (Lab)
 Livingstone, Marilyn (Kirkcaldy) (Lab)
 Lochhead, Richard (North-East Scotland) (SNP)
 Lyon, George (Argyll and Bute) (LD)
 MacAskill, Mr Kenny (Lothians) (SNP)
 Macdonald, Lewis (Aberdeen Central) (Lab)

Macintosh, Mr Kenneth (Eastwood) (Lab)
 MacKay, Angus (Edinburgh South) (Lab)
 Maclean, Kate (Dundee West) (Lab)
 Macmillan, Maureen (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Martin, Paul (Glasgow Springburn) (Lab)
 Marwick, Tricia (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP)
 Matheson, Michael (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 McAllion, Mr John (Dundee East) (Lab)
 McAveety, Mr Frank (Glasgow Shettleston) (Lab)
 McCabe, Mr Tom (Hamilton South) (Lab)
 McConnell, Mr Jack (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Lab)
 McGugan, Irene (North-East Scotland) (SNP)
 McLeish, Henry (Central Fife) (Lab)
 McLeod, Fiona (West of Scotland) (SNP)
 McMahan, Mr Michael (Hamilton North and Bellshill) (Lab)
 McNeil, Mr Duncan (Greenock and Inverclyde) (Lab)
 McNeill, Pauline (Glasgow Kelvin) (Lab)
 McNulty, Des (Clydebank and Milngavie) (Lab)
 Morgan, Alasdair (Galloway and Upper Nithsdale) (SNP)
 Morrison, Mr Alasdair (Western Isles) (Lab)
 Muldoon, Bristow (Livingston) (Lab)
 Mulligan, Mrs Mary (Linlithgow) (Lab)
 Munro, John Farquhar (Ross, Skye and Inverness West) (LD)
 Murray, Dr Elaine (Dumfries) (Lab)
 Neil, Alex (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Oldfather, Irene (Cunninghame South) (Lab)
 Paterson, Mr Gil (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Peacock, Peter (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Peattie, Cathy (Falkirk East) (Lab)
 Quinan, Mr Lloyd (West of Scotland) (SNP)
 Radcliffe, Nora (Gordon) (LD)
 Raffan, Mr Keith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (LD)
 Reid, Mr George (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP)
 Robison, Shona (North-East Scotland) (SNP)
 Robson, Euan (Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (LD)
 Rumbles, Mr Mike (West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine) (LD)
 Russell, Michael (South of Scotland) (SNP)
 Scott, Tavish (Shetland) (LD)
 Sheridan, Tommy (Glasgow) (SSP)
 Simpson, Dr Richard (Ochil) (Lab)
 Smith, Elaine (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Lab)
 Smith, Iain (North-East Fife) (LD)
 Smith, Mrs Margaret (Edinburgh West) (LD)
 Stephen, Nicol (Aberdeen South) (LD)
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banff and Buchan) (SNP)
 Stone, Mr Jamie (Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross) (LD)
 Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Swinney, Mr John (North Tayside) (SNP)
 Thomson, Elaine (Aberdeen North) (Lab)
 Ullrich, Kay (West of Scotland) (SNP)
 Wallace, Mr Jim (Orkney) (LD)
 Watson, Mike (Glasgow Cathcart) (Lab)
 Welsh, Mr Andrew (Angus) (SNP)
 White, Ms Sandra (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Whitefield, Karen (Airdrie and Shotts) (Lab)
 Wilson, Allan (Cunninghame North) (Lab)
 Wilson, Andrew (Central Scotland) (SNP)

AGAINST

Aitken, Bill (Glasgow) (Con)
 Davidson, Mr David (North-East Scotland) (Con)
 Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James (Lothians) (Con)
 Fergusson, Alex (South of Scotland) (Con)
 Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Gallie, Phil (South of Scotland) (Con)
 Goldie, Miss Annabel (West of Scotland) (Con)
 Harding, Mr Keith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Johnstone, Alex (North-East Scotland) (Con)
 McGrigor, Mr Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)

McIntosh, Mrs Lyndsay (Central Scotland) (Con)
 McLetchie, David (Lothians) (Con)
 Monteith, Mr Brian (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Mundell, David (South of Scotland) (Con)
 Scanlon, Mary (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)
 Wallace, Ben (North-East Scotland) (Con)
 Young, John (West of Scotland) (Con)

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 100, Against 18, Abstentions 0.

Motion agreed to.

That the Parliament notes Her Majesty's Government's consultation paper on the size of the Scottish Parliament; acknowledges the positive progress made by the Parliament and its committees, and considers that the number of elected representatives should remain at 129.

Hamish Henderson

The Deputy Presiding Officer (Mr Murray Tosh): The final item of business is a members' business debate on motion S1M-2885, in the name of Cathy Peattie, on Hamish Henderson.

Motion debated,

That the Parliament notes with regret the death of Hamish Henderson and wishes to place on record its appreciation of his lifetime devotion to international solidarity, peace and socialism, his many contributions to Scottish culture and politics, including his role in gathering traditional songs, his support for other artists and his authorship of the song that many believe should be Scotland's (inter)national anthem, *The Freedom Come All Ye*.

17:08

Cathy Peattie (Falkirk East) (Lab): Hamish Henderson—poet, singer, folklorist and socialist—died on Friday 8 March, at the age of 82. He was an internationalist with a strong Scottish cultural identity, as shown by his most famous song “The Freedom Come All Ye”. He was a political activist who supported the creation of a Scottish parliament and contributed his time and voice to causes in which he believed, such as the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament—for which he wrote “The Freedom Come All Ye”—and the anti-apartheid movement, whose campaigners were always pleased to hear his rendition of “Rivonia”.

When he was arrested in 1974 at a British Lions boycott protest, Hamish was fined £10 and asked if he wanted to say anything. He answered by singing a chorus of “We Shall Overcome”. He was a stalwart of the Scottish folk music scene for half a century and contributed greatly to the revival of Scottish traditional music. He was also a key player in the creation of the first Edinburgh people's festival, which was later reinvented as the Edinburgh fringe.

Hamish Henderson was a respected musical authority and collector of folk music. With Gaelic scholar Calum MacLean, he founded the school of Scottish studies at Edinburgh University in 1951. Like his friend Alan Lomax, who with his father John Lomax developed the archive of American folksong at the Library of Congress, Hamish set about taping singers and their songs throughout Scotland.

The collection included the songs and styles of the travelling people that Hamish would first have heard in the berry fields of Blairgowrie, which was the area where he was born. Hamish realised that other collectors had neglected those songs and styles and set about correcting that neglect, not as a curator, but as a friend. He had a commitment to the oral tradition and the way in which songs

evolved to reflect the lives of the people who sing them. Unfortunately, funds were short, tapes were expensive and the recordings were not always permanent.

The obituaries spoke of a feud with Hugh MacDiarmid and his biographer, Alan Bold. Hamish and Alan were banned from Milne's Bar for fighting. Passions had run high following a disagreement in the columns of *The Scotsman* about Hugh MacDiarmid's attitude to poetry. The feud is often remembered, but the cause has been forgotten. I believe that that cause is significant and worth revisiting, as it tells us much about Hamish's principles and the way that they permeated all his activities.

Hamish believed that poetry was not the preserve of the intellectual few, but was for the enjoyment and mobilisation of the many. He was more like Robert Burns than like MacDiarmid, who criticised Burns for fraternising with the masses. Hamish was a man of the people who believed that culture belonged to the people and should not be sanitised and packaged, but nurtured. He believed that culture should express people's lives and aspirations and evolve according to their needs and experience.

That brings us back to politics. Hamish always brought people back to politics. Most cite "The Freedom Come All Ye" as the song that Hamish most wanted to be remembered for. However, I have heard the same view expressed of the "John MacLean March." As I am allowed to sing only one verse during this speech, I will recite this verse from "The John MacLean March":

"Hey, Mac, did ye see him as ye cam' doon by Gorgie,
Awa ower the Lammerlaw and north o' the Tay?
Yon man is comin' and the haill toon is turnin' oot:
We're a' shair he'll win back tae Glasgie the day.
The jiners and hauders-on are marchin' frae Clydebank;
Come on noo and hear him, he'll be ower thrang tae
bide.
Turn oot, Jock and Jimmie: leave yer crans and your
muckle gantries,—
Great John MacLean's comin' back tae the Clyde!"

Politically, MacLean was like Hamish Henderson. Both were internationalists and both would have felt very much at home in a Scottish workers' republic. However, MacLean was a pacifist whereas Hamish was prepared to fight for peace. MacLean was a conscientious objector in the first world war, who went to prison for his stance. In the second world war, the threat of fascism was too great a challenge to Hamish Henderson's socialist principles and he enlisted. He served first with the Pioneer Corps, then he was an intelligence officer, serving in north Africa and with the partisans in Italy. He accepted and translated the Italian surrender.

His book of war poetry, "Elegies for the Dead in Cyrenaica", won him the Somerset Maugham

award. He doubled his prize money with a successful long shot on the Grand National. He gave up his job with the Workers Educational Association to travel to Italy, where he translated the prison letters of Antonio Gramsci.

In poetry and politics, Hamish was an authentic voice of Scotland. We would do well to remember his work and carry it forward into the 21st century. Hamish did not want "The Freedom Come All Ye" to be Scotland's national anthem; he thought of the song as an international anthem. Members should judge that for themselves. Sadly, I must recite some of the song, but I will sing the last verse:

"Roch the wind in the clear day's dawin
Blaws the cloods heelster-gowdie ow'r the bay,
But there's mair nor a roch wind blawin
Through the great glen o' the warld the day.
It's a thocht that will gar oor rottans
— A' they rogues that gang gallus, fresh an gay —
Tak the road, and seek ither loanins
For their ill-ploys, tae sport and play

Nae mair will the bonnie callants
Mairch tae war when oor braggarts crouselly craw
Nor wee weans frae pit-heid and clachan
Mourn the ships sailin' doon the Broomielaw.
Broken faimilies in lands we've herriet,
Will curse Scotland the Brave nae mair, nae mair;
Black and white, ane til ither mairriet,
Mak the vile barracks o' their maisters bare.

So come all ye at hame wi' Freedom
Never heed whit the hoodies croak for doom.
In your hoose a' the bairns o' Adam
Can find breid, barley-bree and painted room.
When MacLean meets wi's freens in Springburn
A' the roses and geans will turn tae bloom,
And a black boy frae yont Nyanga
Dings the fell gallows o' the burghers doon."

The Deputy Presiding Officer: We will be able to fit everybody in if we have speeches of around four minutes.

17:16

Linda Fabiani (Central Scotland) (SNP): I will not take four minutes, Presiding Officer.

Some time ago, we had a debate on the radical rising of 1820. I said at that time that I thought that it was sad that many people in our country did not know the history of the 1820 martyrs and that our history was not properly taught in schools. The same is true of our debate today. Hamish Henderson left behind a wonderful legacy, but comparatively few people in our country know about it. That is a mark of the fact that our history and culture have been largely submerged for a long time. Everyone in the Scottish Parliament should be making an effort to try to change that to some extent.

Cathy Peattie and I were on the Equal Opportunities Committee when it conducted its

inquiry into Gypsy Travellers. As Cathy Peattie said, Hamish Henderson collected a lot of that culture and tradition and put it on record for us all. In a meeting of that committee, Cathy Peattie made the point strongly that it was sad that the vast majority of people in Scotland did not know about Gypsy Traveller culture and that it would be a loss to us all if no one did.

“The Freedom Come All Ye” is my favourite song that has come out of our country, particularly the lines:

“Broken families in lands we’ve herried,
Will curse Scotland the Brave nae mair, nae mair”.

Those lines are a mark of the man’s internationalism, but they are also a mark of his nationalism. I look forward to our country being independent and being a country that can match that sentiment, and becoming the kind of country that other places all over the world will look up to because of our statement of peace and freedom. I thank Hamish Henderson for encapsulating that for me in so few words.

17:18

Ian Jenkins (Tweeddale, Ettrick and Lauderdale) (LD): I am grateful to Cathy Peattie for securing the debate. I apologise for the fact that I will have to make an early departure from the chamber, but I have something else to go to. I intend no disrespect by leaving early.

I regret to say that I did not know Hamish Henderson personally—I would not want to distort the truth by claiming some sort of familiarity—but I know something of his works and his important legacy. I want to pay a sincere tribute to his multifaceted talents and his eventful life, which has helped to shape the way in which we think of ourselves, our culture and our nation.

Hamish Henderson espoused campaigns and causes with great enthusiasm and commitment. We think of his internationalism, his socialism, his opposition to nuclear weapons and his work in the campaign against apartheid in South Africa—coming from the Borders, I am particularly aware of that as he was arrested in his attempts to stop the Springboks’ tour in the early 1970s, a campaign in which a different sort of politician, David Steel, was also a high-profile member.

I first became aware of the work and personality of Hamish Henderson in the early 1970s, when I was involved in a big birthday party in Glasgow for another left-wing thinker and protector of the folk song tradition in Scotland, Norman Buchan. Some of those who came to that party had been brought to public attention and to the awareness of folk singers and folk song lovers around the world through the work of Hamish Henderson. Many guests were there, including Billy Connolly as one

of the Humblebums. He was not connected to Hamish Henderson at that time. It was a memorable occasion when those people came together.

As Cathy Peattie said, Hamish Henderson was a poet, a songwriter and a folklorist. He has an honourable place among that group of poet-practitioners, which includes Burns, who cherished their roots and sought to conserve and protect the heritage that nourished them and placed them in a context wider than themselves.

In his collection and promotion of folk music, he became a powerful proponent of Scotland’s vernacular culture and recognised the extraordinary talent and the spiritual quality that is found among ordinary Scots, including the travelling people. In founding the school of Scottish studies, Hamish Henderson did us all a service. He increased our respect for the common man and woman and for our own heritage. We all remember the moment when Sheena Wellington sang “A Man’s a Man for a’ that” at the opening of the Parliament. I am sure that Hamish Henderson relished that moment, although he was not here, for he himself was a man of “independent mind” and an egalitarian. He knew well that

“The rank is but the guinea’s stamp,
The Man’s the gowd for a’ that”

and there was plenty of gowd in Hamish Henderson.

17:21

Mr Jamie McGrigor (Highlands and Islands) (Con): A country that does not know its history and folklore cannot truly possess a vision for its future. Hamish Henderson’s lasting legacy to Scotland will be not only his own poetry and songs but the countless songs and poems that he resurrected, recorded and catalogued for present and future generations of Scots. Everyone owes him a debt of gratitude for having undertaken and achieved so much in that field. Edinburgh should never forget that the people’s festival, which he helped to create in 1951, was the precursor of the present Edinburgh festival fringe, which brings so many benefits to the city.

Hamish Henderson was a founder member of the school of Scottish studies and realised the value of the folklore that the Scottish Travellers in particular had preserved. He realised the danger to Scottish culture and history should the songs, poems and stories die out or become forgotten. He also defended marginalised and pressured groups in our society because he realised that we cannot promote and protect a culture if we do not promote and protect the people who produce it.

I particularly admire how Hamish Henderson brushed aside the polite, clean image of Scottish

folk songs, which had been decontaminated to suit refined society, and dug out the real, raw, rude and vital roots of Scottish folk that had delighted and inspired the original recipients. That is what folk music is all about—the crude rough and tumble of ordinary life and the tragedies and comedies that mould the clay of humanity.

Hamish Henderson was human in his desire to stand up for a peaceful, harmonious world. He was a pacifist who realised that peace sometimes had to be steadfastly fought for in order that evil should not prevail. He risked his life for peace as a young man when working for the Quakers in Germany ferrying letters and messages under the noses of the Nazis. He was reduced to despair by man's inhumanity to man in the Spanish civil war. Amazingly, it was he who accepted the surrender of Italy from Marshal Graziani in 1943. He kept the signed document in his pocket until his dying day.

Hamish Henderson referred to himself and the poets of that era as having "grown up for war". His time in the Army during the second world war further exposed him not only to the songs of the soldiers but to the new flowering of written poetry in that era. He was intensely proud of being a Scot, but that national pride and an international outlook went hand in hand. He once said:

"I am definitely proud of being Scots, and incoming people with similar ideas are quite entitled to express it as well."

When Hamish won the coveted Somerset Maugham award of a travelling scholarship, he thought that it was an attempt by the establishment to get him out of the country. When he won that award in 1949, E P Thompson responded:

"I greet you with humility. You are that rare man: a poet, and you must not forget that your songs and ballads are not trivialities; they are quite as important as your elegies."

I was privileged to know and sometimes sing with another great folk singer, Hamish Imlach. One of his favourite songs was called "The D-Day Dodgers", which had been written during the second world war by a Major Hamish Henderson of the 51st Highland division in indignant response to an ill-considered comment by Lady Astor in the House of Commons. In a stupid speech, she had suggested that those soldiers who were stuck in Italy, and many of whom had died fighting the Germans in particularly bloody campaigns such as Cassino, were in some way dodging the D-day Normandy invasion. The song is great and it is long, and I find the last two verses particularly poignant:

"Forgotten by the many remembered by the few
We had our armistice when an armistice was new
One million Germans gave up to us
We finished our war without much fuss
For we're the D-Day Dodgers out here in Italy.

If you look around the mountains in the wind and rain
You'll find the scattered crosses some which bear no name
Heart break and toil and suffering gone
The boys beneath them slumber on
For they're the D-Day Dodgers who stayed in Italy."

17:26

Mr John McAllion (Dundee East) (Lab): I congratulate Cathy Peattie on securing the debate, and on the moving and fitting way in which she opened it. I particularly congratulate her on her singing. I once heard Willie McKelvie sing "Road to the Isles" in the House of Commons, and I can assure Cathy that he came nowhere near the high standard that she has set for this Parliament.

I do not claim to be an expert on the folk revival, on poetry, or even on Hamish Henderson, but I know enough about him to realise that, when an assessment is made of his contribution to the life of Scotland, he will stand head and shoulders above any of his political contemporaries who happened to get elected to Parliament at Westminster or Holyrood. It is fitting that we try to pay tribute to such a Scot, who was a giant of the 20th century.

As Cathy Peattie said, he was an intensely political man. That covers not just his CND and anti-apartheid activities. He marched against Chamberlain's appeasement at Munich in 1938 and he fought fascism itself during the second world war. When he came back from that war, he gave Marxist lectures through the Workers Educational Association to young students. He studied Gramsci and argued for communism against his Tory counterparts at the Edinburgh union. He struggled for home rule all his life, not as an end in itself, but as a means to his goal of ultimate independence for Scotland, which he always wanted to see.

Hamish Henderson joined the breakaway Scottish Labour Party under Jim Sillars, which was when I first came across him, as I had the privilege of joining that party too. Like me, he was a member of the Scottish committee of 100, whose members refused to pay the poll tax. He was very much a man of the left. Nowadays, that would be called the hard left, because these things have become very untrendy in modern times.

I remember reading a letter from Hamish to *The Scotsman*, in which he railed against the Wilson Labour Government of 1966-70, because of its failure to challenge the power of international finance. God knows what he would make of globalisation. He also argued against what he described as the servile complicity of Britain in the Vietnam war. He reminded everyone who read *The Scotsman* that that war was the first war in which 90 per cent of the casualties were civilians.

If only we had listened to him, because most of the wars since then have repeated that horror statistic.

I will always remember two of Hamish Henderson's letters, which I think are important and should be put on the parliamentary record. He wrote the first to the socialist newspaper, *Tribune*. He warned socialists against an over-reliance on what we now know as the parliamentary road to socialism. He reminded us that socialism

"will not be fashioned in a vacuum; it will be fashioned by the painful and difficult struggles of definite communities, in definite places; it will be achieved on farms and in workshops, in mines and in shipyards, and not only by courtesy of an Act of Parliament."

That is something of which all socialists should be mindful in these parliamentary times.

In another article, which was published in *The Scotsman* 10 years later, Hamish Henderson referred to the painful experiences of the Scottish Labour Party, when one third of the party was expelled for claiming to be revolutionary as well as socialist. He wrote:

"Any socialist worthy of the name wants, and works for, a revolutionary transformation of society. That is what he is striving for, that is his ultimate aim. If it is not so, then he—or she—should fly different colours."

In these days, when the words "socialist" and "revolutionary" have become non-words, all of us should keep that in mind.

Hamish Henderson wrote about the great John MacLean. He has become the great Hamish Henderson and it is fitting that Parliament should pay tribute to him tonight.

17:30

Robin Harper (Lothians) (Green): I add my congratulations to Cathy Peattie on securing the debate.

I picked up a liking for Scottish folk music, my guitar and membership of CND and the committee of 100 in the early 1960s. At that time, Hamish Henderson was a great name to me—a leader—but I did not meet him until I moved to Edinburgh. At Boroughmuir High School his daughter Janet used to grace my modern studies classes with her presence on a Friday afternoon, when I gave highly political—but supposedly objective—lectures on the state of Britain's politics. Like so many people, I became acquainted with Hamish in various bars, such as Sandy Bell's—where I had the honour of being recorded by Hamish—the Meadow Bar and others between Sandy Bell's and Hamish's home. It was a great honour to have met him on those few occasions and to have experienced his sheer vivacity, energy and commitment to politics and Scottish folk music. I have wonderful memories of that.

I would like briefly to reflect on and develop what Jamie McGrigor said. In the school of Scottish studies, Hamish Henderson leaves us with an institution that is a magnet for young people from all over the world. I meet many students at the University of Edinburgh who have come here specifically to visit the school of Scottish studies. Next week, a group of Estonians will visit the Parliament from the school of Scottish studies. They have come specifically to learn about Scottish folk music and to study the collection that Hamish left.

In those early days, Hamish Henderson's contribution to live Scottish folk music, which he tied into the political tradition of commentary on the human condition, was an inspiration to all writers. I think in particular of Matt McGinn and the lovely songs that he wrote about Glasgow. That tradition has continued to this day and I hope that it will continue into the future with writers of Scottish folk song.

Hamish Henderson made a double contribution—of an institution that I hope will be nurtured and treasured by the University of Edinburgh and by the Scottish nation, and of a live folk tradition that will continue into the future. If the Parliament does anything to honour his name, it should be to support that folk tradition and the institution that he has left us with.

17:34

Michael Russell (South of Scotland) (SNP): Like other members, I congratulate Cathy Peattie on securing this debate. I, too, lodged a motion on Hamish Henderson and I am delighted to take part in the debate.

I want to put on record—because otherwise the *Official Report* will not show it—the presence of the Lord Advocate in the chamber. Hamish was a man who had run-ins with the law from time to time. It will be appreciated immensely that the Lord Advocate is here to commemorate him.

Every mention of Hamish Henderson since his death on 8 March has been prefaced or followed by an anecdote. There is no doubt that he was, if not larger than life, then radically different from most of the people whom one has ever met. He wore his convictions, his passions and his appetites on the outside of his large and gangling frame. That meant that one got from him a very direct experience of a unique, great man.

In 1990, Hamish Henderson was invited to speak at the Celtic film and television festival in Douarnenez, a body of which I used to be the director. The festival was due to be held in a brand-new hotel, but the hotel was never built—a lesson for the Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport. As a result, it was held in a very old hotel on

the beach at Tréboul, which is the twin town with Douarnenez, just across the river. The hotel's last big booking had been during the second world war when the German officers stayed there. It had been decaying ever since.

The way to the rooms was from a boardwalk. On the first evening of the festival, crossing the boardwalk in the dark, I found Hamish slumped against the sand dune. I brushed him down and took him into the bar, which was probably a foolish idea, only for him to turn on me viciously within 10 minutes because I suggested in our conversation that "The Freedom Come All Ye" should be the national anthem of an independent Scotland. There was not much gratitude for the drink or for my having picked him up. He was determined to make the point. I have discussed the point with Cathy Peattie, because the wording of her motion says that "The Freedom Come All Ye" is an international anthem. That is fine; I still think that it would make a great national anthem, but he did not want it to be.

Hamish's presence at the festival was long term, because there were only two flights a week from the UK to Rennes. One was on a Monday and one was on a Thursday. He was due to speak on the Tuesday, but when I left on the Friday he was still there. He was apparently still there the following Friday. He missed the weather window no less than four times before they finally got him back on the plane.

I suspect that Hamish is still being talked about in Breton fishing villages. The reality is that he is still being talked about in Scotland, which is the important thing. He was a fixture in Edinburgh when I was a student of Scottish history and literature in the early 1970s. He had a reputation not just for extraordinary scholarship, but for his strong and constant advocacy, to which John McAllion referred, for those who could not speak for themselves or who could not be heard in the clamour of the capitalist 20th century.

He was first and foremost a poet. He did not just agitate and campaign as a politician; he thought and he felt. I always got the sense that the rawness of his feelings for the men and women around him drove him on.

There are still elitist enclaves in Scotland in which the study of folk song and tradition is regarded as a minor matter. However, Hamish Henderson was the greatest of a generation—and it was a great generation; one thinks of others such as Calum MacLean—who proved them wrong. His interest in travelling people, working people and people from the linguistic and cultural minorities of Scotland led to a huge body of recorded work and a huge development in understanding our mongrel nation and its cultures. Scotland is a different place as a result of those

people.

Like all cultural nationalists—in the best sense of the term—Hamish Henderson was also an internationalist. The two stances are indivisible. They both arise from a curiosity about and identification with the question of our humanity and our relationships with one another.

Hamish Henderson wrote the "Elegies for the Dead in Cyrenaica", which have been referred to and which are a remarkable and astonishing statement of humanity from a soldier. The first elegy starts with the line that rings in the mind, which is:

"There are many dead in the brutish desert".

That sets the scene. The poem goes on to say:

"There were no gods and precious few heroes.
What they regretted when they died had nothing to do
with
race and leader".

That was an anti-fascist statement, but it was a statement of enormous humanity. There are more accessible writings from Hamish Henderson, but it is sometimes possible to overlook and forget those early poems and their great impact.

The Times Literary Supplement in its review in January 1949 wrote about the former soldier's poems, reflecting upon his experience. It noted:

"Mr Henderson's compassion ... gives his poetry a rough humanity, a sincerity and an emotional truth that make it valuable."

Compassion, rough humanity, sincerity and emotional truth were words that defined Hamish's whole life and Scotland still has need of them.

17:39

The Deputy Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport (Dr Elaine Murray): I, too, start by congratulating Cathy Peattie on obtaining the debate and by congratulating the various contributors. This week, a certain rather vacuous female journalist on "Newsnight" referred, in her criticism of the Scottish Parliament, to the fact that we did such things as discussing Hamish Henderson, as if that were something that a proper Parliament does not do. I believe that commemoration of such an important Scottish figure and his contribution to Scotland's song and musical traditions is a worthwhile subject for debate in the Parliament.

As other members have said, Hamish Henderson grew up in Perthshire in poverty. In growing up in that part of our country, he inherited the rich oral tradition of which he made great use later on. Linda Fabiani and Cathy Peattie both referred to the importance that Hamish Henderson placed on recording forgotten people. The

recordings of the Gypsy Travellers are a source of an oral and cultural tradition that would have been otherwise much neglected.

Hamish Henderson's approach was not that of a detached observer. He had tremendous enthusiasm and, by transferring that enthusiasm to others, he encouraged them. One of the most famous people whom he encouraged to record was the singer Jeannie Robertson. As Ian Jenkins said, he followed in the tradition of many other Scottish poets and preservers of tradition. Robert Burns did much the same when he went around Scotland in the 18th century, collecting what might have become forgotten works and traditions and preserving them for posterity.

As Robin Harper reminded us, Hamish Henderson did not preserve songs for posterity alone. He also developed folk societies to sing and keep those songs alive. He recorded and, in some cases, wrote songs that were taken up by the most prominent folk singers of his time. Mike Russell reminded us that he was also a notable poet and songwriter in his own right. The poem "Elegies for the Dead in Cyrenaica"—that was difficult to pronounce—was highly regarded and the song "The Freedom Come All Ye" has attained iconic status.

Hamish Henderson supported many causes, including nuclear disarmament, the anti-apartheid movement, international socialism, home rule and, possibly, independence for Scotland. He saw no contradiction between being a patriotic Scot and being a believer in international solidarity. That is an important factor, because there is often a contradiction in people, who believe that, somehow, pride in one's nation or culture means that one cannot respect the traditions and cultures of others. That is not the case—it is through understanding, creating and caring for one's own culture that one learns to respect and appreciate the pride that others have in their cultures. That was an important gift that people such as Hamish Henderson gave our country. He was also a great linguist and a highly original translator of poetry. He often translated new poetry from Gaelic, French, German and Latin—often into Scots.

As Jamie McGrigor reminded us, Hamish Henderson made a distinguished contribution as an intelligence officer during the war. He gave shrewd advice on the invasion of Sicily and accepted the surrender of Marshall Graziani of the Italian army.

Hamish Henderson did not seek publicity and recognition for himself. His poems and ballads were often published obscurely—sometimes they were later attributed to other people or taken to be part of the folklore tradition. Unfortunately, the ballad "The D-Day Dodgers" is not always attributed to him although it was his work, as

Jamie McGrigor said.

Hamish Henderson was generous with his time and money for people of creative talent. He was even generous towards Hugh MacDiarmid—who came from my constituency—with whom he had a famous and public dispute, as Cathy Peattie said. How important the topic of that dispute is for us today. Poetry and all culture are there for the enjoyment of all people, not just for the enjoyment of a few privileged, educated people. Our culture belongs to all of us because it comes from all of us.

Michael Russell: The minister made an important point about what poetry is and about how people should feel that it belongs to them. I will make a point that has yet to be raised in the chamber. Will she join me in hoping that the new Scottish Parliament building will be a place not only where we can celebrate poetry but where we can celebrate Hamish Henderson and others? I offer the caution that we should remember Norman MacCaig's remark about commemorating Hugh MacDiarmid, when he said that we needed two minutes of pandemonium.

Dr Murray: That is an interesting point of view. I hope that when the Scottish Parliament finally gets its new building we will be able to commemorate those Scots who came before us and who helped us to attain the Parliament.

The traditional cultures of Scotland, along with the many other cultures that have enriched Scotland over the generations, are part of our national identity. They help us to understand and interpret our roots and our past. Traditional arts are not just about the past—those art forms can express our lives today and our hopes for our nation's future. They are also part of the uniqueness of Scotland and an important contribution to the richness of the experience of visitors to our country.

In an earlier debate, Roseanna Cunningham referred to a recent project that linked traditional arts and tourism. Our culture is an important aspect of the experience that a visitor can have of our country. Only in Scotland can one experience Scottish culture. One can experience many other sorts of cultures here, which one can experience elsewhere, but Scottish culture is unique and special to us. We should be proud to project our culture to our visitors from overseas. I am pleased that the Scottish Arts Council is giving greater recognition to the role of traditional arts and that more money has been devoted to the promotion of those arts. I am sure that traditional art forms will continue to flower in Scotland.

As John McAllion mentioned, Hamish Henderson campaigned for inclusion and social justice and was—perhaps above all—an

international socialist. He commemorated Scotland's socialist traditions in works such as "The John MacLean March", which Cathy Peattie recited. I recall looking all over the place for a copy of "The John MacLean March"—a task that seemed to be completely impossible—during my 13-year period of exile in the south of England.

Hamish Henderson's work will help us to appreciate the value of our living tradition. To appreciate and value our Scottish culture and traditional arts would perhaps be the greatest memorial to Hamish Henderson that we could create. In celebrating our culture and in celebrating Scotland, we celebrate him; in celebrating him, we celebrate our culture.

I congratulate everybody who took part in the debate.

Meeting closed at 17:46.

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