

MEETING OF THE PARLIAMENT

Wednesday 24 November 2004

Session 2

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Scottish Parliament

Wednesday 24 November 2004

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

Time for Reflection

The Deputy Presiding Officer (Murray Tosh):

The first item of business is time for reflection. Our time for reflection leader today is the Rev Elizabeth Clelland of Alloa North Parish Church and Clackmannanshire united prayer group.

The Rev Elizabeth Clelland (Alloa North Parish Church): Over the summer, my husband and I were blessed by the arrival of two beautiful baby boys into our family, as two of our daughters gave birth within eight weeks of each other. From the moment we knew that the babies were on the way, it was a wonderfully exciting time for us. We could hardly contain ourselves as we awaited their arrival in our midst. We had a real sense that life would never be the same again, and we were right because our lives have been transformed by these little ones. It is almost as if our family has been given a new lease of life and a new beginning.

On this coming Sunday, the Christian church enters the wonderful season of Advent. Each year at this time, I feel my spirits begin to soar. I think that it has something to do with the fact that Advent is such a time of expectation, hope and promise—it is a time of preparation and getting ready; a time to look forward to a new beginning; and a time to prepare our hearts once more to receive the Christ child into our midst.

One of my favourite readings in Advent comes from the prophet Isaiah, in some verses from chapter 9. They are words that proclaim the birth of a child who will be the Saviour of the world, a child whose birth, life, death and resurrection will transform the lives of those who despair; those who are broken in body, mind or spirit; those who are held captive; or those who walk in the valley of the shadow of death. That child is Jesus Christ, the Saviour who is Christ the Lord. Isaiah says these words to us:

“The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned ... For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government shall be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and for ever.”

Let us take a moment of quiet to pray for the light of Christ to shine into the darkness of our lives.

God of grace,
As we are loved by you,
teach us to love;
As we are forgiven by you,
help us to forgive;
As we are trusted by you,
lead us to greater trust in you.
As we welcome the coming Christ,
help us to reflect the living Christ
And so become channels of hope to our broken world.
We ask this in Jesus’ name.

Amen.

May this wonderful season of Advent be a time of blessing to you, as you await your Lord’s coming into your lives.

Green Jobs

The Deputy Presiding Officer (Murray Tosh):

The next item of business is a debate on motion S2M-2049, in the name of Jim Wallace, on a green jobs strategy, together with three amendments to the motion.

14:35

The Deputy First Minister and Minister for Enterprise and Lifelong Learning (Mr Jim Wallace):

I am pleased to have the opportunity to highlight the progress that we have been making in developing a green jobs strategy. At this point in the development of the strategy, I want to give members of the Parliament an opportunity to feed in their views.

There can be no doubt about our commitment to sustainable development, but today I would like us to focus on one particular aspect of the overall policy drive: the very real business opportunities that arise from the pursuit of sustainable development.

We published our discussion document in June. In it, we noted the very wide range of opportunities that exist to create green jobs in Scotland and we provided some leadership to show where we thought the greatest prospects might be. We called those prospects the potential big wins. Scottish ministers have set new targets for renewable energy generation and household waste recycling. Those targets will underpin and give confidence to new businesses that are established in those sectors. The fact that consumers are becoming ever more discerning and are demanding environmental credentials for the products that they buy gives a new impetus to the sound business case for greater resource efficiency.

Some people, perhaps even some members of the Parliament, want a green jobs strategy to be akin to some of the top-level theoretical university research that is going on around the world—they want it to be a sort of unifying theory of everything. That is not what we are about in the green jobs strategy. Of course, members will see the links with the Executive's work in other areas but, at its heart, the green jobs strategy is about identifying the practical steps that Government can take to help Scottish business to seize the opportunities that arise from new recycling and waste targets, from growing prospects for renewable energy and from more demanding consumer expectations.

If members want to embark on an intellectual exercise to define, to categorise and to theorise about green jobs, I am sure that they could put their name down for a seminar somewhere. However, if they want to contribute to a practical,

positive plan to boost the Scottish economy in a sustainable way, they will certainly have the opportunity to make a constructive contribution to the debate.

Bruce Crawford (Mid Scotland and Fife)

(SNP): I refer to a constructive way of taking forward the strategy to help business and, in particular, the consumer. What will the minister do about public procurement? How can public procurement be used much more proactively to stimulate responsible purchasing and to lever in investment that will contribute to the pursuit of a more sustainable economy?

Mr Wallace: Allan Wilson will deal with that issue, but I assure Bruce Crawford that the Executive's Scottish procurement directorate encourages good practice in the wider public sector in Scotland by maintaining an external website, which includes a section dedicated to green procurement. That website, which is a useful source of information for the public sector, includes guidance for suppliers and purchasers on incorporating green issues into procurement practice. For example, guidance is available on the use of recyclates.

I welcome the opportunity to mention that website, because it is useful for businesses that wish to enter the sector to know that there is a willingness on the part of the Executive to look at green procurement practice. That may well encourage them.

Mr John Swinney (North Tayside) (SNP): Will the minister take his comments in response to Mr Crawford's point a little further and address public procurement within local authorities? A number of us are enthusiastic to ensure that, within the design of some new public-private partnership school projects, including Breadalbane Academy in my constituency, a sustainability approach is taken to the heating system. However, there are many obstacles. Can the minister shed light on what work the Executive is doing to tackle those difficulties?

Mr Wallace: I hear what John Swinney says about local authorities. I indicated that, in respect of the Executive's responsibility, we take the issue seriously. We give guidance to business about how it can engage in and take forward green initiatives. Through the green procurement guidance, suppliers that can offer more environmentally friendly solutions are likely to gain competitive advantage.

As far as implementing the green jobs strategy is concerned, I take John Swinney's point on local authorities in the spirit of a constructive contribution to the debate.

I say to any members who are looking for Scotland's skills and ingenuity to be turned into

new industries that will create wealth and improve the quality of life that I hope and believe that a green jobs strategy will meet those ambitions. We have just completed a major public consultation exercise in which we have gathered the views of business, the public sector and environmental bodies on how the green jobs strategy should develop. Earlier this month, we held a successful consultative conference in Glasgow, which attracted around 100 delegates and generated lively discussion. Many delegates commended the good work that is happening in Scotland, but underlined the need to do more and to do it better. I am determined that our green jobs strategy will drive that process forward.

In 2003, following the election, this Government made it clear that growing the economy would be its priority. Members will be aware that that commitment is not a new one, but we recognise that economic growth must not be achieved to the detriment of the wider, or global, community now or in the future and the commitment to meeting that challenge is reflected across our policies. The "Framework for Economic Development in Scotland" sets out our strategic approach to economic development, and the refreshed smart, successful Scotland initiative provides direction for the enterprise networks. However, we also need a green jobs strategy to look in more detail at how we can best exploit the business opportunities that arise from a commitment to sustainable development.

Economic growth and environmental protection are not mutually exclusive. Developing green technologies, products and services, and marketing them successfully in Scotland and around the world, will boost our economy. In addition, promoting the take-up of resource efficiency measures will cut business running costs, safeguard employment and reduce pollution.

Mark Ballard (Lothians) (Green): Does the minister agree that economic growth can be to the detriment of the environment if it is concentrated in depleting finite resources?

Mr Wallace: Economic growth that did not in any way acknowledge the importance of sustainable development could run counter to the ideas of sustainable development, but we are committed to growth and sustainable development and we do not believe that they are mutually exclusive, as is sometimes put about in some parts; in fact, they can be mutually reinforcing. For example, our potential to generate energy from renewable sources is well established. Renewables can meet our current energy demand 10 times over, and the targets that the Executive has set reflect that potential: by 2020, 40 per cent

of the electricity that is generated in Scotland should come from renewable sources.

Together, we and the industry have taken significant steps since we made that commitment. Our forum for renewable energy development in Scotland—FREDS—has produced some excellent work and its report on developing the marine energy sector contains clear and detailed recommendations for action. FREDS has developed a range of doables on renewables, with more to come on biomass and hydrogen technology. We are determined to support the widest possible range of renewable technologies to achieve and maintain a diverse portfolio. That is why we have created a new fund to underpin our commitment to delivering and implementing the green jobs strategy, investing £22 million over the next three years.

Today, I am pleased to be in a position to announce that, as a result of the marine energy group's recent report to FREDS, we are putting in place another of the building blocks that will help turn the marine energy industry into a reality. A key recommendation from the group was that the Executive should, as a matter of urgency, commission a strategic environmental assessment of Scotland's entire coastline. We accept that recommendation whole-heartedly and will devote significant resources from our green jobs fund to taking forward the strategic environmental assessment. The SEA will examine the potential environmental impacts of developing marine energy in Scottish waters, which will ensure that the development goes ahead sustainably. Taking such measures will put Scotland at the global forefront of developing marine energy and enable us to signal to would-be developers where best to locate projects in Scottish waters. It is an essential step towards making Scotland the marine energy capital of the world.

There is real potential in waste and recycling, on which we announced in this year's spending review a further target of 30 per cent recycling and composting of municipal waste by 2008. It is encouraging to see the innovative approaches to waste that already exist in Scotland, and I have visited a number of impressive companies. One such company is Argent Energy Ltd, which is building an innovative biodiesel plant in Lanarkshire to convert used cooking oil and tallow into environmentally friendly fuel. During the summer, AEA Technology plc invited me to open its lithium-ion battery recycling plant in Golspie. That is cutting-edge technology, which supports high-value jobs in a rural area. In May, I visited the Caledonian Alloys Ltd facility in the Czech Republic. Caledonian Alloys is a rapidly developing Scottish company, headquartered in Livingston, which recycles high-value alloy

materials that are used in the aerospace, turbine and petrochemical industries.

There is scope for even more. Recycled glass has been used as a shot-blasting material, in water filtration systems, and even—dare I mention it—in golf-course bunkers. It can be used in decorative tiles, in brick manufacture and as a glass fibre insulation material. Recycled plastic can be used to make garden furniture, water and drainage pipes, fencing, boat hulls and fleece jackets.

New legislation, including the waste electrical and electronic equipment directive and the end-of-life vehicles directive means that more recyclates will be available. That in itself offers a huge potential resource for Scottish entrepreneurs.

Murdo Fraser (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con):

What assurance can the minister give us that the jobs that are being created in recycling are not displacing jobs elsewhere in the economy?

Mr Wallace: I cannot really see why they should necessarily displace jobs elsewhere in the economy. If Murdo Fraser has information on that, it would be interesting to read it. We are talking, however, about new opportunities. There are new opportunities under the WEEE directive to use items that would otherwise simply be waste products. Jobs can be created in that area through innovation and entrepreneurial spirit. I cannot see that, in doing that, we would be destroying or displacing other jobs. I believe very much that this is a win-win situation. It is a simple concept: through reducing, reusing and recycling waste, both business and the environment benefit.

We identified resource efficiency among the potential big wins. Scotland cannot expect to grow best-in-class businesses unless we use resources more wisely. Expert analysis shows that businesses and consumers waste about 20 per cent of Scotland's total energy spend each year. That represents £1.3 billion in resources lost to the Scottish economy on energy alone. A further £0.3 billion is lost annually through poor waste minimisation. We must conquer that if we are to be premier players in the global economy.

We are already delivering significant savings to the business and public sectors by promoting take-up of energy efficiency measures. In the last financial year, the Scottish energy efficiency office and the Carbon Trust conducted more than 600 energy audits in Scotland, identifying potential savings to Scottish businesses of around £15 million and carbon savings of 228,000 tonnes.

Earlier this year I announced £20 million of new money to implement energy efficiency measures across the public sector in Scotland. A strong focus on resource efficiency will not just contribute directly to improving economic performance; it will

provide business opportunities for companies whose products and services will be in demand.

Richard Lochhead (North East Scotland) (SNP): I hope that many of those measures will lead to new green jobs in Scotland, but what is our starting point? How many green jobs are there in Scotland as of today? When I inquired of Scottish Enterprise Grampian, it could not tell me how many green jobs there were in Grampian.

Mr Wallace: I think that Richard Lochhead was here when I said that we could spend an awful long time trying to define what is, and is not, a green job. For example, someone could work for a company that is part of the supply chain for providing widgets for the Vestas factory at Machrihanish, which makes wind turbines and towers. Part of that company's work might involve making widgets for Vestas; other parts of its work might involve making widgets for someone else. I am not sure how that person's job could be defined as a green job. We could spend a long time debating what a green job is, but that would be time wasted. Instead, we should get on and deliver the policies, help and support for industry that will create jobs while deriving environmental benefit at the same time.

Our vision is of a smart, successful and sustainable Scotland—a Scotland where economic excellence is not gained at the expense of our future. The opportunities in the renewable energy industries, in the waste, recycling and other sectors and in improving resource efficiency are tremendous. We should be ready to exploit those opportunities and to secure a leading role for Scotland. By working in partnership with Scottish business and by taking a practical approach, we can reduce our impact on the environment and develop a new generation of green jobs.

I move,

That the Parliament welcomes the Scottish Executive's commitment in *A Partnership for a Better Scotland* to work with business to develop and implement a green jobs strategy; notes the publication of *Towards A Green Jobs Strategy – Opportunities For Business* in June 2004; recognises the importance of sustainable economic development; notes the leadership given by the Executive in identifying potential "big wins" for Scotland, and encourages early publication of a finalised Green Jobs Strategy with an emphasis on action to secure for Scotland the positive benefits to both business and the environment arising from demands for more sustainable products and processes.

14:50

Jim Mather (Highlands and Islands) (SNP): There is much in what the Deputy First Minister said that I agree with. I want my contribution to this debate to be as practical as possible and to highlight some realistic steps that could deliver

and retain additional worthwhile and rewarding green jobs in Scotland.

My part of Scotland—the Highlands and Islands—has a good track record on protecting the environment. We are alert to the possibilities for local regeneration that sustainable development offers our part of Scotland, particularly given our dominance of the coastline. I therefore welcome the forthcoming strategic environmental assessment of the coastline.

I believe that the vast majority of people in Scotland accept the definition that the World Commission on Environment and Development spelled out in 1987 when it said that sustainable development is

“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

However, I am sure that I am not alone in thinking that we should amend that definition to read, “Development that meets the needs of the present and augments the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

A good example of a move in that direction is the work that has been done recently by Highlands and Islands Enterprise, which, in spite of the constraints and the unlevel playing field that the region faces, has tackled the issue with vigour. It recognises the elegant opportunity to base sustainable development on the solid platform of Highland aspirations, on our geography, winds and tides as well as on another key attribute: the attractiveness of the Highlands and Islands as a place to stay, to put down roots and to bring up families. That opportunity exists if people can overcome the three major inhibitors, which are finding the capital for good sustainable development projects—the Executive is making a move in that direction—finding a rewarding job and role in the area, and securing an affordable and adequate home.

HIE’s 10-point plan for sustainable development, with examples to illustrate practical progress to date in almost every conceivable sector, is a good start. The plan makes impressive reading, and I advise all members to visit HIE’s website and reflect on the progress that it is making and the further progress that can and will be made when, inevitably, the playing field is levelled. Local government in the Highlands and Islands is playing its part as a facilitator and promoter of local participation in new renewable projects.

The Highlands is even home to a company that I helped to get off the ground, although, regrettably, I no longer have a financial interest in it. It is a great little company called Global Recycle Ltd, which is based at Strathconon and provides an internet-based international trading platform—

globalrecycle.net—for scrap. Companies and public bodies can seek offers for scrap rail or scrap plastic bottles and get offers and close deals with companies from home and abroad. However, there is a problem, and it is the problem that permeates the Scottish economy—the ghost at the feast of the Executive’s top priority. I refer to the ugly fact that Scotland does not run its own economy.

As we all know, and as I have said repeatedly—I note the minister’s fatigue about that—Scotland has limited powers to compete and no target for economic growth. Sadly, therefore, Scotland is destined to lose out in terms of retaining the wealth and jobs that are created by some of the new sustainable developments, as it lost out in the old economy and in aspects of the new knowledge economy.

Mr Brian Monteith (Mid Scotland and Fife)

(Con): The member says that Scotland needs to control its economy if it is to be successful. Is it not the case that the economy of Hong Kong—a place with no obvious natural resources, other than people—was ultimately controlled from Westminster, yet its economic growth was unparalleled? It was an economy to be envied. Does the member not share with me the vision that we should turn Scotland into Hong Kong—a country that is run economically from Westminster but with economic growth rates to match?

Jim Mather: Although I have great admiration for Hong Kong as the valve through which much of China’s value flows, the idea of ripping Scotland from its tectonic plate and moving it to compete with Hong Kong is not a practical possibility. That is the nature of the member’s politics: it lacks practical possibilities.

Today’s debate, like any Executive focus on a specific part of the Scottish economy or social fabric, must recognise the hole in the Scottish economic bucket and the absence of the power to enhance and consolidate return on investment, to retain wealth and, crucially, to retain our population. I am talking about the steady trend of wealth and population migration that has been going on in our monetary and fiscal union for more than a generation, which was eloquently recorded this year by the University of Sheffield in its United Kingdom census atlas.

Global Recycle—a sustainable and viable business that is at the heart of the new sustainable development economy and the new knowledge economy—is now poised to be lost to the Scottish economy when it is becoming profitable. The owner will shortly open a company in British Columbia, a Canadian province that is—properly—obsessed by competitiveness, after which that company will buy the name and assets of the Scottish company, which will close.

Why is that great little company going? The reasons are lower living costs in British Columbia, a competitive tax regime, improved availability of houses, lower housing costs and—most important—a markedly higher level of economic activity, which affords the owners the potential to sell their trading platform software to many other users.

Is that scenario the likely outcome for much of our new sustainable development in the Highlands and the rest of Scotland, where many good things are undoubtedly being done? Sadly, if the situation is left as it is, the answer is yes, which begs us to ask the question: what can we do about that? What can we do in the short term?

The Deputy Minister for Enterprise and Lifelong Learning (Allan Wilson): I will pose the Hong Kong question, as it may well come to be known. The member quotes the example of British Columbia, where I was relatively recently. I met no one there or elsewhere in Canada, outside Quebec, who wants secession from the Canadian state as a model for economic development. Does the member propose the same economic model for Scotland as operates in British Columbia?

Jim Mather: Every Canadian province has much more autonomy than we have. Most political parties in those provinces have one aspect in common: they do not straddle the fence as we do; they are on the other side of the fence and want more power and more economic activity in their province. That is shown by the fact that provinces such as British Columbia not only compete with other Canadian provinces, but take full-page advertisements in *USA Today* to make the economic case for why people should move there. Unfortunately, the minister did not get that message when he was across there.

In the short term, we as sensible and frugal people must concentrate on investing in projects that are rooted here and which depend on local infrastructure, local conditions, local materials and local people. That also means that we must do something about the target issue—the powerless Government issue. As practical people, we must look after the important babies in the bath water that form our portfolio of sustainable economic activity. They include farming, fishing, aquaculture, forestry, tourism, research and development and, of course, education. In addition, we must focus on sectors such as our financial services sector and our legal and accounting firms, all of which can be sustainable and profitable and can help us and future generations to have a country and an environment of which to be proud.

If Scotland is serious about sustainable economic development, we need to support those important economic babies in the bath water. The best way to do that is to ensure that we bolster

their competitive advantage. That means backing practical strategies such as HIE's 10-point plan, supporting existing industries to achieve new and higher standards and supporting key industries such as our financial services sector. That sector has already formed its own industry body in the shape of Scottish Financial Enterprise to promote Scotland's most successful industry cluster, which directly and indirectly employs nearly 10 per cent of the Scottish work force.

That view is supported by Richard Dixon of WWF Scotland, who says:

"The sustainability of the whole economy is a serious issue needing to be addressed. It would be a wasted opportunity if this Green Jobs Strategy turned out to be only a strategy about green jobs, rather than a broader green strategy about jobs. It should represent a more fundamental attempt to make progress on making the whole economy more aligned with sustainability, with the ultimate aim of making every job a 'green' job in a 'green' economy."

That is great and is echoed in the response from the Business Council for Sustainable Development - United Kingdom, which said:

"The vision within the document is too narrow. This is a far bigger potential win for Scotland if it truly aspires to a sustainable development agenda."

The good news is that our existing strong financial services sector and other sectors mean that we are in a good position to adopt such a strategy and have such an ambition. Members can imagine what our financial services strategy could look like if we really had power and could add the fairy dust of our own competitive fiscal jurisdiction and an energised competitiveness—an economy that is obsessed with competition. That would allow us to capitalise on our international reputation for integrity and reliability, our proven track record in fund management, our world-class actuarial skills, our unique workmanlike legal system, our high standard of probity, our high-integrity banking and our willingness to do everything in our power to maintain our reputation and those attributes.

I move amendment S2M-2049.3, to leave out from "welcomes" to end and insert:

"recognises the need to have control over energy policy to better enable Scotland to control and capitalise on its natural resources and fully utilise its considerable research and development capability to develop new green technologies that promote green jobs and also recognises that, in order to achieve these objectives and successfully implement a green jobs strategy to the most comprehensive extent, Scotland needs to have the full range of fiscal powers with which to encourage investment, retain intellectual property and high quality jobs, thereby securing the long-term positive benefits for the economy and the environment arising from increased affluence, increased demand for more sustainable products and processes and increased 'green' employment."

14:59

Murdo Fraser (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con): I was not entirely sure whether I was at the right debate when I was listening to Jim Mather. I thought that we were here to debate green jobs and not the future of the financial services sector, but never mind.

The Scottish Conservatives welcome the opportunity to discuss opportunities for green jobs in Scotland. Indeed, there are many economic opportunities for Scottish businesses in green jobs in the future, some of which I will draw attention to shortly. However, I should say first that I was rather surprised that the minister's motion

"encourages early publication of a finalised Green Jobs Strategy",

because the minister has just told us that he is preparing that strategy. It is rather bizarre that a minister should lodge a motion in effect calling on himself to bring forward the green jobs strategy. Why does he not simply publish that strategy? What is the hold-up? Does he really require the Parliament to agree to the motion before publication? If so, that is most unlike the Executive's past record on such issues. One wonders what else the minister requires to ask the Parliament to ask him to do—perhaps whether he can have a haircut or buy a new suit. Perhaps he should explain his strange and uncharacteristic lack of self-motivation in the matter. He requires to ask the Parliament to ask him to take action. That is all very strange.

As I stated at the outset, there are great opportunities throughout Scotland for green jobs. I was pleased to hear what the minister said about encouraging marine energy, as that is an important growth sector. Members will be well aware of the Conservative party's scepticism about large-scale onshore wind developments. Nevertheless, when the Enterprise and Culture Committee was conducting its inquiry into renewable energy, committee members—myself included—visited Campbeltown and the Vestas-Celtic Wind Technology Ltd factory, which manufactures components for wind turbines. It was interesting to discover from the management that they foresee offshore wind farms rather than onshore wind farms as the growth sector. I do not think that the Vestas jobs are at risk, even from our policy on onshore wind farms. It is important to note that, despite the fact that Campbeltown was an unemployment black spot and is in a remote area, jobs have been created there. I hope that that success continues and that those jobs are secure for the future.

My colleague Alex Johnstone and I met BP representatives in Aberdeen last Friday. One of the issues that we discussed was future opportunities in the offshore oil industry. It is

widely understood that our oil reserves in the North sea are diminishing and that, although it is important not to overstate the case, we will see a gradual wind-down in activity in the North sea in the coming decades. As part of that, there will be a need to decommission the existing oil rigs and offshore structures.

We heard from BP that there are, in fact, tremendous business opportunities in that. Although some derogations may be granted, the current default position is that all those offshore structures are to be removed. Dismantling those structures, transporting them to the mainland and breaking them up will be a huge operation. Although the scrap value will be considerable, it will not come close to outweighing the cost of decommissioning. Perhaps the fabrication yards that were involved in constructing those structures will have opportunities to win some of the business of dismantling and decommissioning them.

We also heard from BP that there might be other opportunities for using the existing pipeline infrastructure under the North sea for carbon sequestration in the former oil reserves. That issue will be developed over the coming years and it is early days to talk about it, but it is an interesting possibility if we are discussing how to deal with CO₂.

I turn to our amendment—or, more technically, addendum—to the motion. One point must be borne in mind in the debate. We certainly do not see green jobs as morally superior in any way to jobs in traditional industries. Indeed, although economic development must be coupled with a responsible attitude to the environment, that must not lead to an excessive regulatory burden on business. As the Confederation of British Industry Scotland has pointed out, if the underlying cost base of Scottish firms is higher than that of competitors, they will be placed at an immediate disadvantage when they compete for new green business.

When I intervened on the minister earlier, I raised the issue of green jobs in some cases displacing jobs in traditional industries. That point was well made in a report entitled "Effect of Recycling Paper into New Paper Products on the Economic Management of Forests", which has just been published by three University of Aberdeen academics—if the minister has not seen that report, I will lend him a copy. The report warns that state subsidies for recycling paper have made waste paper so cheap that forestry companies cannot compete, with the result that both the environment and the economic sustainability of Scotland's forestry industry are damaged.

The wood that is used to make paper comes from the process of thinning—removing small trees in order to allow others to grow. Failure to do

that leads to forests becoming too densely wooded, which creates a poor habitat for animals and means that there is little chance for other plant species to grow. Accordingly, biodiversity is discouraged.

Rob Gibson (Highlands and Islands) (SNP): Does Mr Fraser recognise that the thinnings from forests can be used for biomass projects, which are needed in many schools and public buildings, and that they do not need to go into the making of paper?

Murdo Fraser: I am encouraged by Mr Gibson's expertise in the matter. I profess no expertise, which is why I am quoting from a report by three senior academics at the University of Aberdeen.

Rob Gibson: Why is Mr Fraser offering advice to the minister when he confesses to knowing nothing about the subject?

Murdo Fraser: I would have thought that that was pretty obvious. I cannot imagine that Mr Gibson is an expert on every subject under the sun. Is he saying that we should disregard a report that learned academics have produced on a subject in which they are specialists? Is he saying that we should debate only issues on which we are experts? If that were the case, only Stewart Stevenson would be allowed to speak in any debate.

Sarah Boyack (Edinburgh Central) (Lab): I take the point that we cannot all be experts, but it does not take a huge brain to work out that dumping paper in landfill sites throughout the country, rather than recycling it, is not good for Scotland's environment or its people.

Murdo Fraser: I am terribly sorry, but I did not hear what Sarah Boyack said.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I am happy to give you extra time if you want to ask Sarah Boyack to repeat the point.

Murdo Fraser: Yes. Could she repeat that, please? I did not hear it at all.

Sarah Boyack: I am delighted to repeat the point. I fully accept that we do not have to be experts on all aspects of the debate and that we need to draw on academic expertise. However, if we do not recycle our paper, we will dump it in expensive, unpleasant and environmentally dangerous landfill sites, which are filling up. We need to take a much more rounded view than is given by one report in isolation.

Murdo Fraser: I hear what the member says. I am not arguing against recycling paper per se; I am simply saying that we must be aware that, if we go down the road of recycling paper, the process will have side-effects on traditional industries.

Mr Wallace: Murdo Fraser makes a serious point, which should be addressed. Does he accept not only the point that Sarah Boyack makes—that if we did not recycle paper, we would commit it to landfill sites, with all the environmental difficulties that that brings—but that one of the challenges that we face is to create new markets? For example, animal bedding can be made from recycled materials. If we were talking simply about recycling displacing existing markets, he might have a point. However, the strategy is about being innovative and imaginative in trying to create new markets.

Murdo Fraser: The minister makes a fair point. I will pass on the report and he can study it and come up with a response. Learned academics who are involved in forestry are concerned about the impact of recycling on the industry. If we could create new markets for recycling, we would welcome that.

Mr Monteith: Is it not the case that growing new trees to order for the production of newsprint is more ecologically friendly than recycling newsprint and bleaching it for use thereafter?

Murdo Fraser: Presiding Officer, I profess no expertise in the matter.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: In which case, I will give you a couple of minutes to wind up.

Murdo Fraser: Thank you, Presiding Officer. I am obliged, although I am almost at the end of my speech.

If recycling paper is damaging both our forestry industry and, in some cases, our environment, the benefits of the recycling industry must be questioned. The Scottish Executive must bear such issues in mind when it finalises its green jobs strategy. I look forward to reading the published document in due course.

There are great opportunities for our country in the promotion of green jobs. The decline in the offshore oil industry and a greater emphasis on the environment mean that there must be new opportunities for the future. However, we have to protect our existing industries and ensure that the regulatory regime does not stifle many small businesses that are already struggling.

I move amendment S2M-2049.2, to insert at end:

"but urges the Executive to ensure that such green jobs are not created at the expense of jobs in other sectors of the Scottish economy."

15:10

Shiona Baird (North East Scotland) (Green): Green members would be delighted to instruct the Conservatives on paper recycling. Robin Harper

introduced the green jobs strategy to the Parliament in 2002, so he has a wealth of knowledge on the matter. Unlike Murdo Fraser, we welcome the debate. We are delighted that the Executive has taken on Robin Harper's strategy and has given us time to debate the issue today.

As ministers have said, there are three pillars of sustainable development, which ought to be balanced: social justice, the environment and the economy. The greening of the economy should be the overall aim. A green jobs strategy cannot simply be an add-on to existing economic development policy. The Executive needs to answer much larger questions to do with moving the whole economy towards sustainability—in particular, creating a low-carbon economy.

In the refresh of "A Smart, Successful Scotland", the contradiction at the heart of the Executive is clear. Growth is the top priority. The document states:

"sustainability is not about restricting economic development or adding extra burdens."

The big question that the debate poses for ministers is what their plan is to restrict the non-green, dirty, damaging economy. What about the building of traffic-generating motorways, the growth in air travel and the unrestricted dominance of the mega-retailers over the food chain? We need sustainability and green jobs to be written into the remits and accountabilities of every enterprise agency, every local authority and other agencies such as VisitScotland. Moves towards sustainable economic development need to consider that every job must be a green job.

This year, an independent report to the Scottish Parliament by CAG Consultants highlighted the contradictions at the heart of the Executive. It stated:

"The most significant weakness emerged in relation to the perceived need for economic growth and the failure to acknowledge the negative environmental impacts of such policies".

A number of significant reports by non-governmental organisations and even a think-tank chaired by Sarah Boyack say the same thing. Despite some welcome initiatives and some progress, attempts to deliver sustainability will be hamstrung if we persist with the obsession with economic growth at any cost.

The Executive's green jobs strategy is a start, but it will not resolve the contradictions. The Executive must see the contradictions in its major motorway programme or its current aviation growth fund, both of which encourage more traffic and pollution.

Richard Lochhead: If, for once, all parties represented in the chamber were to agree that

economic growth should be sustainable, why would that growth be a bad thing? Is the member suggesting that it is Green party policy that, every time new green jobs are created in Scotland, we should automatically close down another company, so that there is no growth in the economy overall?

Shiona Baird: I suggest that the member listen to his colleague Jim Mather's definition of sustainability. As we keep saying, the issue is all about economic development, but it must be the right sort of development. There can be growth but, if at the same time we are trashing the planet, we are not making progress. The member should listen to Jim Mather's explanation of sustainability, as that is the key. Whenever we mention sustainability, we must ensure that we understand fully what it means and adopt it as part of our economic development.

The Executive's policies are undermining attempts to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases through a renewable energy programme.

Mr Wallace: Shiona Baird attacked the air route development fund. Does she accept that one of the primary purposes of the fund is to secure direct air routes for Scotland? Is it not better that someone should fly directly from Edinburgh to the United States than that they should take two flights, flying Edinburgh to London and London to the US? That reduces the amount of air travel that an individual undertakes.

Shiona Baird: There is certainly no question but that short-haul flights create even more CO₂ emissions. We simply must address the amount of pollution that air transport creates. We have to work out what we want to achieve in our economic development. If economic development trashes the planet in the process and leaves future generations with a major problem to clear up, where is our responsibility in that?

Alex Neil (Central Scotland) (SNP): Will the member give away?

Shiona Baird: Will I get any extra time, Presiding Officer?

The Deputy Presiding Officer: We shall see.

Shiona Baird: I did not like that.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I am certainly not going to negotiate from the chair. The member must take her chances.

Shiona Baird: I have taken enough interventions.

We have to listen to the real interpretation of sustainability. There must be more leadership from the Executive on all emerging renewables, although I welcome the minister's comments today about the SEAs—that is a major step forward.

Scotland has a green energy potential that is the envy of the rest of Europe, but we need to move from the piecemeal, developer-led approach that has plagued onshore wind farms. We have world-leading expertise in wave power in Scotland and we must provide more support for such projects through development and commercialisation, in order to secure the 7,000 jobs for Scotland.

We must greatly improve our recycling levels and move away from waste creation to a job-creating, zero-waste policy. The Executive goes so far; we just want it to take that extra step to redesign waste out of the system.

The economic debate in Scotland suffers because of its obsession with gross domestic product. A different measure of economic progress is needed. The bizarre and laughable arguments over fractions of GDP growth do not face up to the real issues. We must get away from that sort of single-issue politics and address the anomalies of GDP as a measure. At present, disasters and pollution benefit GDP. Hurricane Andrew was a disaster for southern Florida, but in GDP terms it was a boon to the economy of \$15 billion. It is a nonsense.

An accurate indicator of real sustainable development might be through WWF's ecological footprint programme or alternative economic indicators such as the index of sustainable economic welfare. There are also social indicators, such as the one currently being developed in Wales. I urge the Executive to take that next visionary step to combine those indicators and create a real measure of the well-being of our country. I urge it to adopt the real deal green jobs strategy, instead of just using a glossy document to try to acquire a green sheen over business as usual.

I move amendment S2M-2049.1, to leave out from "welcomes" to end and insert,

" , while welcoming the Scottish Executive's commitment to develop and implement a green jobs strategy, recognises the importance of placing sustainability at the heart of development and the inherent contradiction in *A Partnership for a Better Scotland* between having economic growth as top priority and having environmental concerns at the heart of public policy; notes that the leadership so far shown by the Executive in identifying and securing 'big wins' in terms of green jobs for Scotland would be greatly enhanced if it broadened its conception of green jobs from jobs in the environmental sector alone to mainstreaming sustainability in all enterprise; notes that a broader conception of green jobs could help to resolve this contradiction in the Partnership Agreement, and encourages early publication of a finalised Green Jobs Strategy that covers all sectors of the Scottish economy."

15:17

Christine May (Central Fife) (Lab): I am pleased to open for Labour. As far as I am

concerned, the debate is about economic choice—economic choice for Government, business and communities.

I confess that I do not like the phrase "green jobs strategy", as the minister has probably heard before. I would far rather that we talked about sustainability, because that is a kinder message to business and it has fewer connotations of lentils, woolly socks and hugging trees—we will keep those for tomorrow's debate on food. That strategy is successful—

Shiona Baird: Will the member take an intervention?

Christine May: Give me a minute. The strategy has been successfully promulgated for years through European structural funds—those who know me well know that I could bore for Scotland on European structural funds, so I will not. If Scotland is to take advantage of the opportunities that are out there and if we are to comply with the legislation on emissions, water quality and the rest, it is essential that we adopt that strategy for sustainable business, sustainable communities and a sustainable land.

At a recent Eastern Scotland European Partnership conference, we launched three documents: "Linking Sustainable Development to Regional Development"; "Mainstreaming Sustainable Development in Regional Regeneration"; and a heavier one on equal opportunities, which I will not pick up in case I drop it. They all demonstrate what practical work has been done in Scotland on sustainability, which is precisely what we are talking about today.

I am delighted to pay tribute to those political groups and parties that have for years championed better records on sustainability. I have no compunction about stealing their ideas and their clothes.

Rob Gibson: Will the member advise us whether those weighty reports set any targets to be achieved in the areas that she mentioned or do they merely contain aspirations?

Christine May: Oh, no, they are not aspirations. In fact, they provide a report on our progress towards targets that were set for the 2000-06 structural funds programme, contain very useful case studies and talk about numbers. The documents are practical works of reference and I am very happy to send members links to them so that they may read them.

In its briefing to all members, Friends of the Earth Scotland spoke of the need for sticks and carrots. However, we have sticks in the form of the waste directive, the waste electrical and electronic equipment directive, which the minister mentioned, the emissions trading directive and the water

quality directive. Collectively, those set big challenges for industry and Government. Nevertheless, they also provide us with huge opportunities to find innovative ways of doing new things and doing the old things better. This morning, I heard the lovely saying, "One man's waste is another man's business opportunity." We must do what we can to reduce, for example, the impact of the dreadful process of recycling computer components in China, which was the subject of a "Newsnight" report that I saw recently. We need to consider how we can recycle that waste here and not simply send it abroad.

I know that my colleague Sarah Boyack will say more about the Sustainable Development Commission later, because she was heavily involved with it. However, I should point out that the commission has said:

"the Green Jobs Strategy should focus on long term opportunities which will move Scotland towards a low carbon, sustainable economy".

Who can argue with that? Indeed, I will return later to one of my favourite hobby-horses: coal.

The commission also commends the work of the business environment partnership, which has worked with Scottish Enterprise Fife and other enterprise companies to promote ideas of sustainable business and has particularly directed its efforts at small and medium-sized enterprises. The partnership has been running workshops to advise companies on how they can reduce energy use, on how they can bring in more sustainable investment and on how they can increase productivity and therefore profits in an environmentally friendly way. That all means better use of buildings and resources and using different purchasing methods and, indeed, different forms of stationery. I recall that the Parliament had a wonderful debate on recycled paper. I have to say that recycled paper is suitable for some, but not all, industrial and business uses. We should not get hung up about using recycled materials where they are not appropriate, although we should consider using them where they are appropriate.

Shiona Baird: Christine May referred to the business environment partnership, but she failed to mention the fact that it has limited resources. If ever a very worth-while project needed more resources, it is the business environment partnership and I urge the member to ensure that it receives the resources that it requires.

Christine May: Perhaps we ought to urge the minister to ensure that the resources are available. Perhaps I would do so if I could, but in this instance I cannot.

The Co-operative Party, of which I am a member and which sponsors me as an MSP, has

highlighted the opportunities for community co-operatives with regard to renewable energy and sustainable social businesses. Indeed, I have already spoken in the chamber about what Energy4All is doing to help communities with recycling and renewable energy schemes.

However, I will concentrate on examples from my constituency of what big business has done in that respect. Smith Anderson Packaging Ltd in Leslie runs the only United Kingdom recycling facility for Tetra Paks and can cope with a fifth of the country's Tetra Pak-recycling needs. In fact, they use that material to make folders for filing, so any pink or blue folders that members might have probably come from juice cartons that have been recycled in Fife. Diageo Distilling Ltd is not necessarily a company that we would associate with recycling and sustainability, but it has just invested £4 million in a new process at the distillery in Cameron Bridge in my constituency, which will use less water and energy and increase productivity and profits. In turn, that sustains jobs.

That brings me to my most important point—the effect on communities. We must remember that sustainability is also about jobs in our communities. People in our communities who are unemployed need to be able to take advantage of the opportunities. A further example of a firm developing sustainability is the Purvis group's Bowhill facility, which recycles building materials into road coatings, such as non-slip surfaces for dangerous bends.

On renewable energy, I have spoken previously of the potential of the former Kvaerner yard in Methil—also in my constituency—which we hope to turn into a renewable energy park. There are huge opportunities, such as the prospects of coal-firing, carbon sequestration, which Murdo Fraser spoke about, and making wind turbine blades. Moreover, there is the possibility of using wind turbines in schools. The draft Fife structure plan, which Fife Council is due to agree tomorrow, speaks of the potential in Fife for energy from biomass, not just for brownfield sites and regeneration areas, but as a business opportunity for farmers. In that context, I plead with ministers to reconsider an energy crop grant, such as is available in England. I believe that the fact that such a grant is not available in Scotland is detrimental to the biomass industry's prospects.

I return to my earlier point that sustainability is about economic choice for Government, business and communities. That is why I think that the Executive is right to proceed with its green jobs strategy. I wish the Executive every success in that and I will give it all my support. I support the motion.

15:27

Richard Lochhead (North East Scotland) (SNP): The debate is valuable because, unlike the curmudgeons on the Tory seats, it points the way forward for Scotland. I cannot believe how grudging their amendment is:

"insert at end 'but urges the Executive to ensure that such green jobs are not created at the expense of jobs in other sectors of the Scottish economy.'"

That is from a party that has voted against a smoking ban, breastfeeding and land reform, and is not that keen on creating green jobs in Scotland. We must give an important message to the Tories, which is that if we do not create green jobs, every other country in the world will, and we will end up having to buy in their technologies.

Murdo Fraser: I am sorry that the member has difficulty in understanding simple concepts. The point of our amendment is that we welcome new jobs, but we do not want new jobs that simply replace other jobs. It is funny that the member does not understand that.

Richard Lochhead: Any person outside the chamber who reads the Tories' amendment will notice that it is not exactly a ringing endorsement of green jobs. The Tories should waken up to the pressures on Scotland in the 21st century. The debate is not just about creating jobs, but about the environmental imperative that faces Scotland. For example, if Scotland was an independent country, only five other countries in the European Union would have a worse record for CO₂ emissions than Scotland. Of the 203 countries that the United Nations has measured for CO₂ emissions, only 22 countries have a worse record than Scotland. That is why the debate is so important.

Shiona Baird: I welcome Mr Lochhead's comments on CO₂ emissions, but does he take on board what we say about aviation travel? What are his views on whether we should grow that element of the economy?

Richard Lochhead: I think two things about that. First, the minister made a good point about cutting CO₂ emissions by having direct routes, which is important not only for tourism and the Scottish economy, but for Scotland overall, because the public desire such routes. Secondly, we must invest in clean technologies, which would affect aviation fuels and other issues. I will come on to that in a few moments.

Mark Ballard: Will the member give way?

Richard Lochhead: I have given way two or three times already. I will come back to Mr Ballard later.

The issue of what is and is not a green job is important and is not merely an academic exercise.

However, we must also know how many green jobs there are in Scotland. When I ask Scottish Enterprise Grampian how many renewables jobs there are in Grampian—after all, we are trying to swap from being solely reliant on oil and gas to having a diversified economy that is reliant also on renewables for jobs—it cannot tell me. It is important to know how many green jobs there are in Scotland because, if our economic strategy is to be based around green jobs, we must know where we are starting from and we must be able to measure success in the coming years. I make the important point to the minister that we should measure how many green jobs we create in Scotland compared with how many we have just now.

Many areas in which we can create green jobs have been outlined in contributions to the debate and include outdoor recreation, renewables, energy efficiency, waste management, the decommissioning of offshore installations and nuclear installations, transport and carbon sequestration. If we secure a lead over other countries in those areas we can create thousands of green jobs in this country.

It is important that we debate where Government and the public sector should intervene to ensure that we get ahead of other countries. Public procurement has been mentioned and is important, but perhaps the renewables sector presents our biggest opportunity to become Europe's greenest country. It is important that the new technologies that will be developed in the coming years should be owned in Scotland. A disadvantage of the wind energy sector is that wind-turbine technology must be imported from other countries, such as Denmark and we have lost out on many manufacturing and high-value jobs. We must not let that happen in relation to Scotland's other opportunities.

The marine energy sector comes near the top of that list of opportunities. Some of the leading academics in the field are based in Scotland and we must keep them here and ensure that they are not poached by other countries, particularly the United States or Spain, both of which offer more resources. We must also ensure that academic research is backed up and turned into commercial opportunities, which means that we must provide appropriate support. In answer to a parliamentary question, the Minister for Enterprise and Lifelong Learning was unable to tell me how much of that support we provide. We must address that and ensure that adequate research and development funds are available. A couple of weeks ago, I attended an oil company's presentation on the world's energy needs and learned that trillions of dollars will be spent on R and D in the energy sector in the next 20 years. That money will be

spent not in Scotland but elsewhere in the world. We must address that and ensure that R and D is funded and undertaken in Scotland.

We heard about the biodiesel plant that Argent Energy Ltd will build in Motherwell, which represents a big step forward. If the project goes ahead it will be the first such plant in the United Kingdom. However, the technology for the plant is being imported from Austria. Aberdeenshire Council is considering heating all its public buildings by wood fuel but would have to import the technology to do that from other small countries in Europe. I mentioned the fact that we are importing wind technology from Denmark.

To ensure that we capitalise on green jobs, we must address the gap in venture capital. I am told that entrepreneurs in the sector cannot secure the venture capital that they need to commercialise their projects and fund research. I want to know whether the minister has met the financial sector in Scotland to win its support, which is crucial if we want to get ahead of the game. Partly because we do not have the powers that we need in Scotland, we have been playing catch-up with other countries for far too long. It is time to stop playing catch-up and get ahead of the game.

15:32

Mr Brian Monteith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con): The debate about sustainable economic growth and green jobs has made me wonder whether we should still have horse-drawn carts, stable boys and manure, which even in the early 1900s would have been regarded as sustainable. However, what was sustainable then is not sustainable now, although some members of the Green party—or for that matter the flat-earth revolutionary front that my colleague Mike Rumbles leads; I see that he has left the chamber—would no doubt ban oil so that the horse-drawn carts might again offer a sustainable way forward.

The market economy decides what is and is not sustainable. When Governments intervene, Canute-like, to stop inevitable economic progress, the electorate determines which political party is or is not sustainable. The privatisation of the energy generation utilities was sustainable. The privatisation of the oil exploration and coal mining businesses was sustainable—setting industry free was a real strategy.

Alex Neil: Will the member give way?

Mr Monteith: I will make progress first and take interventions later.

Talk of a green jobs strategy is pure funk. As Murdo Fraser eloquently said, all jobs are equal.

Alex Neil: The member suggested that privatisation created sustainable companies. Would he describe the privatised British Energy plc as a sustainable company?

Mr Monteith: I did not specify companies. My point was that companies were free to meet their own success or demise. The market should be able to play. The privatisation of the utility companies, which the member clearly opposed, led to the success of Scottish Power plc, which resulted from the successful development of hydroelectricity. That was a success for Scotland and a success for consumers.

Robert Brown (Glasgow) (LD): Will the member give way?

Mr Monteith: No, I must make progress.

Talk of green jobs is funk. What about orange jobs? No, I do not mean jobs in Larkhall or Tranent, I mean the telecommunications industry. But no, all members opposite campaign tirelessly to halt cellular masts, even though their political lives are ruled by their mobile phones.

What about a blue jobs strategy? “Sorry,” says the Executive, “we would rather close down our fisheries, be they for haddock or scallops.” To paraphrase the Chelsea song, blue is not the colour, but Finnie is to blame.

Robert Brown: Will the member give way?

Mr Monteith: No, I must make progress. I am enjoying myself and I do not want the fun to stop.

What about pink jobs? What about a strategy for the pink pound? No, the Executive does not even have the guts to legislate for civil marriages here. It passed the buck to Westminster, so no pink strategy here either.

Then there is the black jobs oil strategy, which is very politically incorrect. Before we have even extracted all of what is left, the Government down south is ensuring that it is difficult to explore for and extract oil. It is taxing oil more and forcing people to keep their cars in their driveways. Is the Executive opposed to that? No, of course not, so we do not have a black jobs strategy either.

Let us go through the rainbow. What about golden jobs? On our world-class drinks industry, Westminster and Holyrood together wish to tax distillers with pointless strip stamps, and to force people to smoke at home, instead of going to pubs and enjoying a pint of amber nectar. What strategy is that for jobs? It does exactly the opposite of what it says on the tin.

What about purple jobs? Roseanna Cunningham and Rosie Kane would have us run our constitutional monarchy out of Scotland. How many jobs would that cost? I could go on, but I suspect that members catch the drift.

We could talk about tartan jobs. That really would be devolution at work—a truly Scottish colour. However, the Executive is seeing to it that our tourism industry continues to struggle from one year to the next.

Fortunately, we in the Conservative party are not colour prejudiced. We want jobs whatever their colour. We will take the lot, the whole spectrum, even those that are off the political spectrum, such as the ultraviolet and infrared jobs of the nuclear industries, which members cannot see and will not have because they are blind to their own political prejudices.

Richard Baker (North East Scotland) (Lab): Will the member give way?

Mr Monteith: All we say is that all businesses, be they for or not for dividend, should live within the law. It is through the law that we should seek to protect our environment. Governments should make charges when third parties are required to restore or clean up an industrialised landscape.

Christine May: Will the member give way?

Mr Monteith: I may yet do. I am watching my clock run down.

I look around the chamber and I see few people who have ever got their hands dirty running a business.

Shiona Baird: I object.

Mr Monteith: Very few, I said. Shiona Baird is clearly one of the few.

For most people here, a green job is the 17 weeks of gardening that they can do in recess, but creating jobs is no bed of roses.

Richard Lochhead: Will the member give way?

Mr Monteith: Markets change, customer needs and demands alter, more staff are needed and, sadly, some staff have to be released. Old businesses close and new businesses form. No job is truly sustainable. Only trade between individuals and people is sustainable.

Of course, members will not find the CBI or the Federation of Small Businesses saying boo to this particular green goose, for they do not wish to offend the Parliament or the Executive, but what businesses are saying up and down the country is simple: get the politicians off our back, reduce the burden of regulation and taxation that adds to our overheads, and leave us to work within the laws that affect the environment, then we can create jobs, be they green or whatever colour.

Mark Ballard: Will the member give way?

Mr Monteith: I recognise that I am already over my time.

Scotland needs not sustainability, but bounce-backability from this political morass that does not recognise how the economy works.

15:39

Sarah Boyack (Edinburgh Central) (Lab): It seems that there are two debates in the chamber today, one of which is taking place among Tory members. If we were a junior debating society, I would give Brian Monteith 10 out of 10 for his speech. The rest of us are having a serious debate about how we can make a difference to Scotland's economic prospects for the long term.

We need green jobs and we need sustainable jobs. The Executive's green jobs strategy gives us the chance to debate the different types of job that the country needs. We must invest in green jobs so that we can make the most of the huge environmental opportunities that exist in Scotland in waste, energy, transport, agriculture, forestry and tourism.

There is also an opportunity to make all the other jobs in our economy more sustainable. That must be good for business. The issue is about making our businesses more efficient through the better use of resources and the better management of production systems. That is good news for the workers in those industries, as their jobs will be made more secure in the long term, it is good news for the businesses themselves, because their costs will come down and they will become more competitive and, crucially, it is good news for our environment. By using scarce resources more wisely, we will reduce the adverse impact on our environment. That is not a question of adopting a morally superior approach; it simply makes good business sense. I am disappointed that the Tories are not even at the races in this afternoon's debate.

All the big companies around the world market themselves by explaining how they try to deliver economic development and to live up to their environmental responsibilities at the same time. We must push that sustainable development agenda by focusing on what is a win-win situation. That way, we will have a strong economy, we will look after our environment in the long run and, crucially, we will think about social justice issues.

A huge amount of progress has been made in this country over the past few years. At United Kingdom level, there is a focus on environmental incentives through our taxation system. Tony Blair has demanded a green industrial revolution and the amazing target of reducing our carbon use by 60 per cent by 2050 has been set. We face difficult challenges, but progress is being made. Carbon emissions trading is happening throughout the UK.

The nationalists and the Tories must look at the global challenge and the changes that are taking place at European level. To get a level playing field of tougher environmental regulations that everyone must live up to, we must acknowledge that we are part of a global, interdependent economy. Jim Mather's fairy dust will not be sufficient to fix our problems.

Richard Lochhead: Will the member give way?

Sarah Boyack: No, thank you.

We must think about the long-term issues.

Richard Lochhead: The member attacked the nationalists.

Sarah Boyack: On this occasion, I was not attacking Richard Lochhead. I was making a debating point with Jim Mather, to which we will return.

I agree with the nationalists that we should tally up the number of practical jobs that we have created in Scotland. I think that we would find that the figure was pretty impressive, both as regards the jobs that Jim Wallace has already created and the opportunities that are still to come. We should examine the situation sector by sector. We should tell industry and businesses about the huge investment opportunities that are available. Jim Wallace's speech gave a snapshot of some of the superb opportunities that are being picked up on in the waste and energy recycling industries.

All sorts of comments have been made about renewables developments, on which we are beginning to make serious progress. Christine May spoke about training. If I want to employ someone to install a mini-wind vane in my flat or to put in solar heating or solar power, there are few people in Scotland, never mind Edinburgh or the Lothians, who could do those jobs for me. Part of the Executive's green jobs strategy must involve a link with training. The enterprise companies must be got round the table and the further and higher education sector must be talked to. Although the Executive is to be commended for the exciting progress in research and development, that is not the only issue. We must examine the detail of who will install such facilities. That way, we will create good, local, high-skill jobs for our constituents, which, crucially, will be long-term jobs. Many of them will be in the small business sector, which we must support.

There are many opportunities. According to Friends of the Earth, the investment that we are making in public transport throughout Scotland will produce huge job opportunities. We should tally up the progress that is being made and identify future opportunities. Although we are moving in the right direction, we could do more, especially at Executive and local authority level, by using the

power of public sector purchase. The Executive's green guidelines on procurement are a superb start, but we need ownership in every local authority in Scotland. The knowledge, expertise and enthusiasm to put those guidelines into practice must be developed. That is perhaps what is missing. We need champions throughout the procurement sector. The Executive can give the lead on paper, but perhaps it needs to talk to people to identify the blockages and the obstacles to implementation. The prize for getting things right is huge.

Earlier this month, I attended the Dundee sun city conference. The people who are involved in the sun city initiative have, off their own bat, got the council, the local enterprise company and a huge number of local businesses to come together. They are asking, "What can we do to develop solar power in our city?" After all, Dundee, as one of our south-facing cities, is Scotland's sunniest place.

People in Dundee are looking at practical opportunities. Edinburgh is also using its building and planning system to look for opportunities to do more. We want to keep our high profile as one of Europe's top capitals—a place where people want to live and work.

Other members have mentioned the PPP projects that are being built across Scotland, including our new hospitals. A massive public building programme is under way at the moment and lots of houses are also being built. The green jobs strategy offers a wonderful opportunity to think about life cycle costs, the creation of green jobs locally, making an investment in the Scottish economy and—crucially—the role of the public sector in giving confidence to suppliers and local businesses. That is the message from London where the micro-renewables agenda has been taken on board. The Government is now requiring that that agenda be followed as a matter of course in all its building developments.

Although the prize of creating new green jobs is out there, we need to transform the opportunities for companies in Scotland. The Executive should be commended for the work that it has done so far, but it must have a twin-track strategy: it needs to ratchet up the measures it is taking. We need to think about all the positive opportunities that are open to us.

Although there is a real debate in the chamber and the majority of members are engaging in the opportunities that green jobs offer, we need to reflect on the blockages that must be overcome. Let us be clear about the political consensus that exists across the chamber on many of the issues. We can debate the ideological issues about whether Scotland should be independent or interdependent, but progress is being made and

people need to know where we stand. They need to know that we have confidence in green jobs and that the Executive will support them.

I support the Executive motion. The green jobs strategy is an exciting opportunity for Scotland; it is an exciting agenda. If members think about the progress that we have made in the few short years of the Scottish Parliament, I think that we will all see that the next five to 10 years could be even more exciting.

Once the green jobs strategy is published, let us have more debates about the progress that is being made. After all, we are talking not about theoretical jobs, but about real, practical jobs. The green jobs strategy is a massive opportunity for all of us.

15:47

Robert Brown (Glasgow) (LD): First, let me agree with every word of Sarah Boyack's speech. She made a significant contribution to an important debate.

The green jobs strategy brings to bear the position of Government and how it interrelates with private sector industries and supports the efforts of the private sector in this and other areas. I need only a sentence to deal with Brian Monteith's speech. I have never in all my life heard such a load of garbage as I heard from him earlier. Government has a role to play—it is one of support. The idea that the private sector exists on some sort of planet all by itself, totally unregulated and without any kind of involvement from anybody else is utter nonsense.

I know that Jim Wallace has been personally committed to the green jobs strategy over many years. Of course, the green thread that runs through the partnership agreement owes its origin to the Liberal Democrat manifesto and to the holistic approach that the Liberal Democrats take. I will continue on that entirely partisan line. I was delighted to attend the recent consultative conference in Glasgow at which Jim Wallace and Ross Finnie, the Minister for Environment and Rural Development, launched the strategy.

The Executive has made considerable strides to stimulate green jobs with its waste hierarchy; recycling targets; energy efficiency fund; renewable energy grants for homeowners; and the £143 million that was awarded through the strategic waste fund. Significant sums of solid cash back our commitment to green jobs and to the environmental agenda.

I want to talk about two things: first, the potential for renewable energy in cities and urban areas and, secondly, the opportunity to build sustainable industries in Scotland and to take advantage of the

substantial EU spending in central Europe that followed the changes that were made to the structural fund arrangements on the enlargement of the EU.

I have spoken about the potential of cities and urban areas in the chamber on previous occasions. Our cities and urban areas are the places where the bulk of energy is used industrially, commercially and domestically. It makes considerable sustainable sense, therefore, to encourage a massive use of renewable energies in combination with energy conservation measures in those areas.

As Sarah Boyack said, often the opportunities will be small scale. I am referring to the installation of solar panels, small windmills and so on. One issue on which I have spoken before was in the news again recently. I am talking of Brian Wilson's publicising of the Windsave mechanism, which he has had installed at his home.

Some of the good work in the area is being done in the main by housing associations. The Deputy First Minister will remember visiting one such project with me in Glasgow a few months ago. However, although we are forging ahead with the big hits of larger-scale wind power and recycling, my impression is that we need a fresh look at how to encourage smaller-scale community-based projects in urban areas.

As it happens, my discussion this morning with WWF Scotland on sustainable education turned to the school building renewal programme and eco-schools. I put to the minister the great potential to encourage the installation of solar panels as part of the schools renewal programme, which would fulfil several purposes: it would be a visible demonstration of eco-action to the children; it would save energy running costs for schools; and it would provide jobs for people in manufacturing and installing the items and grow the market, which is important. A linked issue is how we encourage and support more Scottish and British companies to get into the solar power sector, which is dominated to a significant extent by the Germans, while the wind power sector is dominated by the Danes.

That takes us back to the expertise and training point on which Sarah Boyack rightly touched. The people who draw up the specifications for new schools, hospitals and factories—whether they are to be built through PPPs or otherwise—do not always have the appropriate knowledge or confidence. The easy way out for them is to take no action. We must give a focused response, which is an issue on which central and local government can take action. Will the minister address the growth and provision of expertise, particularly in specifications and advice, in the right places?

Similar points apply to factories. Christine May talked about windmills in schools, but there is at least as big a potential for small-scale windmills in factories, as well as the acres of walls and roofs that are available for solar panels. The situation is a win-win one for industry: such developments provide the longer-term prize of lower costs, as well as greater environmental sustainability. The excellent briefing that members received from WWF Scotland states:

"The renewables industry has responded well to the opportunities in wind power but poorly to the emerging opportunities for other renewable energy technologies."

That echoes my rather more amateur and impressionistic approach to the differences that exist.

That brings me to my next point, which is about the opportunities for Scotland in the economies of central and eastern Europe. We are losing structural funding over time as a result of changes in that area, but some of the funding will go to the new EU countries. Jim Wallace rightly talked about the Czech Republic, but there are vast economic opportunities across the board in those countries. However, they can be taken up only if support with the export drivers, such as the expertise that I mentioned, is provided for companies and if companies are encouraged to get involved in the markets and technologies. We have not always been as successful at that as we might have been, which applies to universities and other developments.

The momentum in the field is growing. The Executive is entirely on the right lines in spotting the issue as a major one in which Government, local government and all of us in our various ways can help. The Executive's strategy is a considerable step, although nobody would suggest that it is the final one. It is an interim strategy, but it is significant nevertheless. I therefore support the motion and look forward to the on-going rush of development in the sector, which will provide powerful and important advantages for the sustainable economy that we are trying to create in Scotland.

15:53

Rob Gibson (Highlands and Islands) (SNP): Towards its end, my friend Jim Mather's amendment mentions

"increased demand for more sustainable products and processes and increased 'green' employment."

It is important that we recognise the big wins that can be had and which the minister underlined, but sustainable jobs will be created only by small steps being taken in the other part of the minister's portfolio, which is lifelong learning. Schools and the careers service must have a strong focus on

the potential for green jobs, but such a focus does not yet exist. The Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning Department and the Education Department have a major joint role to play in creating that focus.

About four years ago, the Centre for Alternative Technology in Wales produced "The Sustainable Careers Handbook", which lists a range of jobs that will be needed for as long as there are people on the planet. The range of jobs enables us to consider career options at all levels of qualification. There are case studies and there is a directory of jobs that sets out categories that the children in our schools should be encouraged to consider and discuss.

A careers adviser might say to a pupil, "Do you think you would like to become an accountant?" Perhaps if the pupil had the ammunition, he or she would be able to say, "Yes. I would like to become the accountant in a renewable energy firm." Pupils could gear their skills specifically to the kind of green jobs that we now require. I do not see any detail in the motion about how the policy is rooted in schools or the careers service. When I was a guidance teacher I would, when I was advising children, have benefited enormously from having the kind of information that is in the handbook that I mentioned. At this stage, in 2004, Scotland has a bit of catching up to do with the non-governmental organisation that produced the handbook four years ago.

An important aspect of green jobs is the creation of confidence in communities. The creation of such confidence through the creative arts is one of the best forms of continuous employment in the green jobs that currently exist. A project has just taken place in the Highlands that sets examples that could be used in other areas. The project is called 2gether and is about sustainability, citizenship and enterprise in education. It links schools, communities and businesses in the Highlands and Islands. A report on it was produced from research that was gathered at the end of last year, which was commissioned by Careers Scotland in the Highlands and Islands. The overall aim was to consider the concept of sustainability in relation to the citizenship agenda and enterprise in education. The research is wide ranging and encompasses global citizenship and the role of the arts in remote communities.

As I said, a range of jobs in the arts are coming into the new economy. Such jobs can create circumstances in which people will feel that where those jobs are is a place where they want to live, where they want to sustain jobs, where they want their children to grow up, and where they know that the work that they do now will sustain jobs in the future. As far as such confidence is concerned, it is clear from all the research that the concept of

sustainability must not be a bolt-on or an extra: there is no alternative. Therefore, in order to root sustainability in the behaviour of people in this country we must give them the cultural confidence to believe that it is a central part of their existence.

New ways to measure growth in the economy are important; Richard Dixon talked about that in his briefing to us. Gross domestic product considers only the monetary part of growth in the economy, but the value of environmental and cultural wealth and confidence are new measures that must be built into the calculation. Those new measures should be part of a targeting process that shows that we are making a start at one point and moving to another point. The new measures should reflect the extent to which people in different sorts of communities—whether inner-city areas or the most remote areas—feel better about living in their country. Sustainability cannot be something that people are told they must achieve; rather, they must feel that to do so is natural. Government must build sustainability into its selling of itself.

We have been resold “A Smart, Successful Scotland” by Mr Wallace, but unless the word “sustainable” is attached to the other three S’s, the document is completely meaningless. That must come out of the review; that word must be attached to the strategy. I hope that Allan Wilson will confirm in his summing up that it will be.

As far as I am concerned, the debate is a great opportunity to recognise that we build from the bottom in society. The Government’s ability to intervene in the education system, in our schools and in the careers service, over which it has power, can enable people to think in ways that will create a self-sustaining approach to sustainable jobs. That is why we built into our amendment the concept that having more fiscal powers and being able to encourage investment and so on would underpin our ability to go out and ensure sustainability. All members agree to an extent that until we have full power or—in the opinion of some members—greater powers to make such investments, we will not achieve sustainability or the mood that is required to create it.

Sustainability, social justice and subsidiarity—the right of people to make decisions locally and to have the autonomy to do so with confidence—are at the root of the debate. The sophistry of the Tory members shows them to be the kind of people who would demean a debate about green jobs on the basis of a pun. Such people are not fit for the Scottish Parliament or the Scottish people, and we should treat them with the contempt that they deserve.

16:00

Frances Curran (West of Scotland) (SSP):

The Fraser of Allander institute has calculated that Scotland’s natural resources—including its seas, lochs, woodlands and farmland—are worth at least £17 billion per annum to the economy. That raises the question why, with such abundant natural resource, such a country should lag so far behind countries such as Germany and Denmark on sustainable development.

Sustainable development involves consideration of economic and social factors, as well as environmental performance, but nowhere in the Deputy First Minister’s speech was there a clear, coherent policy on the impact of business on the environment. It is clear—all members agree—that clean technologies and renewable energy technology are growing rapidly worldwide. All speakers have said that they would like Scotland to have a share of that market and that we can train people, develop technology and have an effect in pushing sustainable technologies internationally. However, talk is cheap, so let us examine the actual situation.

Wind energy has become a multibillion pound worldwide industry. The Scottish Executive’s approach to it involves a target for renewables—a target that is somewhere in the ether—of 40 per cent of energy being provided by renewables without clear ideas of how we will achieve that. I ask members to contrast that with the actions of the Danish Government, which several years ago adopted an extremely coherent approach to developing wind power as a source of energy, and to developing the technology for it. Admittedly, the Danish Government did that by involving the state and the public in a partnership with the private sector—we cannot have everything—but there was a national plan and public money was invested. The Danish have developed the technology to the point at which it is now their fourth-biggest export earner.

Mr Ted Brocklebank (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con): Will Frances Curran give way?

Frances Curran: I will give way in a moment.

I do not want to go down the road of the private finance initiative or PPP, because the issues are political will and investment. I ask members to consider the approach in Britain, which the Executive supports. Over the past 10 years, £1 billion of public money—probably a lot more—has been invested in nuclear energy. Despite its being an extremely dirty technology, some members think that its use should be extended. In the most recent bail-out, which was the result of the mess at Torness, the nuclear industry was given £403 million, just like that.

If the Executive had the political will to make a similar investment in renewable technology and the rolling out of renewable plants, we would be in a completely different position in Scotland. We would be in a leading position internationally on wind technology and we would be able to export the technology and have a role in that market. Instead, we have a piecemeal approach. Wind farms, which are run by smaller companies—although the big ones are trying to get in on the development—are springing up all over the place and are polarising opinions in communities throughout Scotland.

In respect of capacity, the key is in offshore wind and wave technologies, which is where we will get the capacity that we need if we are to replace fossil-fuel energy. Those technologies need large-scale infrastructure, yet there is no plan to invest in them in any serious way.

I also want to touch on recycling. What is the plan for that? Ministers say that they are committed to recycling, but what action are they taking? Greengairs is the biggest landfill site in Europe, so Jack McConnell goes along there and says to the people, "Yes, it's terrible, yes, it's awful, yes, I'm going to do something about it," but then rubber-stamps an extension to the site. If the Executive was really committed to recycling, it would build a recycling plant to take care of the problems that the community at Greengairs face.

Ministers do not have to go as far as Germany or Denmark. Milton Keynes, down the road, has been recycling 80 per cent of its waste for several years, yet we are not prepared to make the same investment. Such an investment would create jobs. If 10,000 tonnes of waste are incinerated, that creates one job, and 10,000 tonnes of waste in landfill creates six jobs, but 10,000 tonnes of recycling would mean six jobs. Recycling, with its spin-offs, would result in job creation. I have other points to make on jobs, but I do not think I have enough time.

The Deputy Presiding Officer (Trish Godman): No—you can make your points if you wish.

Frances Curran: Thank you. According to a survey by the Southern Upland Partnership and a consultants' paper, there are at present 80,000 green sustainable jobs. However, there exists the potential for 50,000 more green jobs, according to the Executive's figures. Those could be created in recycling, solar water heating, marine energy, wave power, organic farming and other sectors. I stress that that is according to the Executive's own figures.

Where is the will and the investment to kick-start that? We are prepared to subsidise nuclear power, intensive farming and—as we heard from Shiona

Baird last week—road haulage. Are we investing in renewables? No. Are we investing in organic farming? No. Eco-tourism? No. Sustainable forestry? No. The national grid needs to be upgraded to connect it to renewable energy sources. How is that to be done with private companies? What answer can the minister give us about how we can integrate renewables into the national grid, so that we can use and develop them as a completely new type of energy instead of fossil fuels? I would like a publicly owned energy company for that purpose, using public investment. I would like planning in large-scale infrastructure and technology, particularly in wind and wave power.

Islay is wonderful. We all saw "Newsnight" the other night—if it is good enough for Islay, it is good enough for the whole of Scotland. Let us have that public investment, with the money coming back into communities.

16:07

Mr Ted Brocklebank (Mid Scotland and Fife)

(Con): I will concentrate my remarks on Jim Wallace's potential big wins for Scotland in pursuing a green jobs strategy, particularly in relation to the Executive's apparent obsession with onshore wind power. Recently, the planning committee of Fife Council turned down an application for a wind farm at Clatto hill in north-east Fife. The development would have comprised no fewer than 18 giant windmills, each half as big again as the Scott monument, which would have dominated the landscape in one of the most visually attractive parts of Scotland. North-east Fife, which relies heavily on tourism, was fortunate in that the majority of councillors saw sense, albeit at the 11th hour.

Fifty such wind farms will be necessary in equally beautiful places, such as Perthshire or Skye, if wind farms are to produce the miserable 8 per cent of the targeted renewable energy mix that the Executive is seeking. From a green perspective, such plans look to me like environmental vandalism.

Members should not get me wrong—I am all in favour of sustainable energy. Indeed, when few people were discussing what would come after carbon fuels, I was making a television series for Channel 4 called "The Energy Alternative", which dealt with all the renewables choices, including wind, wave, tidal, hydro and solar power, power from biomass and heat exchange as well as the great renewable hope, which is power from low-waste, clean nuclear fusion, rather than nuclear fission. That was back in 1990.

I tell Frances Curran that I filmed the biggest wind farm in the world: the 3,000 turbines at

Altamont pass in California. I filmed Europe's biggest wind farm, at Jutland in Denmark. That was heady stuff 15 years ago. Even then, however, it was clear that wind power would provide only a fraction of the renewable energy that is required, and that it would do so at massive cost. Now, both California and Denmark—despite what Frances Curran said—have admitted that they made a terrible mistake and that no further wind turbines will be erected in either place.

Onshore wind power is simply too expensive and too unreliable: it is yesterday's technology, which is the lesson on which the Executive is still in denial. I agree with Murdo Fraser, however, that there is still a considerable role for offshore wind power. It might be expensive, but it is at least reliable. I encourage the Executive to help to develop the Levenmouth area of Fife as an excellent fabrication and launch site for the giant turbines that will be required offshore, the blades for which are already being produced by NOI Scotland Ltd, which provides about 100 valuable jobs near Kirkcaldy.

Rob Gibson: We are talking about countries around the world that have onshore or offshore wind energy, but the member writes off such energy as being uneconomic. Does not he understand that many of those countries strike a balance between different forms of energy, including wind energy, and that they have put limits on the amount of power that each form should contribute? That is what we should do here in Scotland.

Mr Brocklebank: I accept the thrust of what Rob Gibson says; I will develop the point when I suggest what the Executive should concentrate on instead of the technologies that Jim Wallace mentioned earlier.

In many ways, water power—rather than wind power—is the key to providing green jobs in Scotland, and an extension of hydropower is urgently needed. Water can be stored and released to generate electricity whenever it is needed. It provides instantly accessible and reliable green power. Tidal power technology was developed at the University of Edinburgh and the first prototype is already working on Islay, as we heard. Such turbines can be located virtually anywhere around the coastline of Scotland and are virtually invisible. That technology is being taken up in the Faroes, Iceland and Norway, but in Scotland we simply have the prototype.

There are many developing renewable technologies that could provide jobs and opportunities for Scotland; for example, photovoltaic solar panels, which are widely used as roof shingles in the USA, and radiated solar energy, which provides central water-heating systems for whole towns in Sweden.

Christine May: I am grateful to Ted Brocklebank for taking an intervention, and equally grateful to him for his support for the Levenmouth area. Does he agree that the technologies that he spoke about, important though they are, are further from the market than the onshore wind industry? Does he agree that it is important for us to support onshore wind as a stepping stone to help companies to develop the newer technologies?

Mr Brocklebank: No. The problem is that we were in the van of onshore wind power 20 years ago. It was not Denmark that developed the technology; British people in physics developed the technology, but we missed out on it. We did not have a strategy at that time and we are moving too late into a technology that is expensive and unreliable.

I was giving a list of other things. Energy from waste—

Shiona Baird: Will the member give way?

Mr Brocklebank: No—I have taken enough interventions.

Systems that are being tested and tried in Denmark include systems that create energy from waste and even—would you believe?—systems that gather methane from flatulent cows. However, the biggest impact on saving electricity will come from making our homes more energy efficient through things such as triple glazing, better insulation, computerised temperature control and so on. Those measures are all part of the mix and they all produce jobs.

We are yet to see the Executive's green jobs strategy. I have no quarrel with the aspiration to produce more green jobs but, like Robert Brown, I am concerned about the Executive's apparent failure to look beyond wind power. Sarah Boyack claimed that we are not taking part in the main debate. I would dearly love to hear from Jim Wallace what role Scotland is playing in developing nuclear fusion, which uses salt water as a feedstock and is surely the carbon-free, low-waste energy source of the future. That view is supported by the Government's chief scientific officer, Professor King, and by virtually every leading physicist in the world. It is surely the real source of future green jobs and virtually limitless green energy. It is probably only 25 years away, and it will provide the breathing space while we phase out fossil fuels.

Mark Ballard: Will the member take an intervention?

Mr Brocklebank: I am just coming to the end of my speech.

How is Scotland contributing to the debate on nuclear fusion? Why do we hear so little about it

from the Executive? Why do we seem to concentrate so much on yesterday's technology? In my documentary of 15 years ago, we filmed the prototype nuclear fusion tank at Princeton in America. What a pity Jim Wallace and the Greens did not watch our television series then. Had they done so, that might have saved us from much of the nonsense that we keep hearing about the potential of onshore wind farms.

Mr Wallace: Did the Conservative Government of the day watch that programme? It had seven years in office after 1990. What did it do during that time to take things forward?

Mr Brocklebank: That is a very good question. At the time, we approached the Conservative Government and spelled out what we knew, but like all Governments—I make no excuses for the Conservative Government—it believed that oil and gas would last for ever. It did not get involved in developments then; that is the problem.

Alex Neil: That is not what the Conservatives told us.

Mr Brocklebank: That is what the SNP has continued to tell everyone else.

Had that development taken place, it might have saved us from much of the nonsense that we keep hearing about the potential of onshore wind farms, which are in many places as visually polluting as they are ineffective. What is more, in tourism, far from producing green jobs, such wind farms will be green jobs negative.

16:15

Mark Ballard (Lothians) (Green): The debate has been welcome and it has shown broad support for a green jobs strategy. However, it has also shown a fundamental difference in the understanding of what a green jobs strategy might look like.

The Tories still do not understand the seriousness of the environmental problems that we face or the opportunities that will arise if we respond timeously to those problems. I make an exception for Ted Brocklebank, because he began to show in his speech an understanding of some environmental problems. I am glad that he makes no excuses for previous Conservative Governments, but I ask him also to make no excuses for Brian Monteith's ramblings.

The green jobs strategy presents an opportunity to ensure that Scotland recognises the potential of the sectors that have been most talked about, which Jim Wallace called the big winners: renewable energy and recycling. That is welcome, but we must go beyond it. We should see the green jobs strategy as a way to green all jobs in Scotland. I was glad that, as well as my Green

colleague Shiona Baird, members from other parties, such as Jim Mather and Sarah Boyack, picked up on the next step, which is to make all jobs sustainable.

All jobs in Scotland rely on a quality environment. Jobs and businesses that damage environmental quality undermine not only their own future, but that of businesses around them. For the Scottish economy as a whole, the priority for the next decade must be to improve resource efficiency—to do more with less and to decrease inputs while maintaining utility and quality-of-life outputs. At the heart of a green jobs strategy must be the promotion of resource efficiency for the whole Scottish economy. That will be good for the environment and for jobs. I am disappointed that Brian Monteith and the rest of the Tories did not pick up on the importance of resource efficiency.

Of course, such an approach does not fit well with economic measurements such as GDP, which is a measure of resource use, not resource efficiency. To measure our progress towards a green jobs strategy, we must measure and target that efficiency. My answer to Richard Lochhead is that, as a measure of the flow of money through the economy, GDP is not useful for measuring economic progress and development. As it is not useful, it does not matter whether it increases, decreases or stays the same. We must measure the quality of life and resource efficiency to see how well our economy is doing.

My colleague Shiona Baird asked a crucial question in her motion and her speech that has not been sufficiently answered. What do we do about ungreen jobs—jobs that undermine all our efforts at sustainability? What do we do about sectors of the economy that are not the big winners, but the big losers for the environment?

Scotland's future will never be sustainable if we continue to base our economy on depleting finite resources. The oil economy and industry and the carbon-intensive economy can never be sustainable and will never be a way forward. As Shiona Baird outlined, building new motorways increases damage to the environment and does not generate the jobs that investment in public transport does.

That is also true of air travel. The big increase in air travel in the UK has been in short-haul domestic flights, but we need investment in public transport alternatives. We do not need longer train journey times between Edinburgh and London, which may be introduced, but shorter times so that people do not fly to London to take a flight to New York, but instead use a fast and efficient train service that takes them around the UK and Europe. There will be situations in which flying will be required, but we must minimise them.

We have heard about the potential for increasing employment through organic farming. We must reflect on the unsustainable food supply industry, which is damaging the environment and reducing employment in Scotland. We must think about what to do with ungreen industries, their future in the model of a green jobs strategy and how we can move away from ungreen jobs towards greener jobs.

Many good things have been said about some of the strategies. I am particularly pleased about the emphasis on considering procurement and ways of using the vast amounts of public expenditure more sustainably. The move away from the Tory model of cost pricing and considering how to get best value out of that public expenditure is a big cultural shift. There must be a lot of training—which was mentioned—and creative thinking. I have sat through seminars that have tried to explain how best-value procurement models work and there must be much more simplicity for people in local authorities and central Government who make decisions on how they can use such tools.

We also need some economic charges—I was surprised that even Brian Monteith seemed to refer to those. We need some taxes and some of the things that a Scotland that had more powers over its own economy would be able to introduce to move us towards a green economy. We need the stick—which Friends of the Earth has talked about—as well as the carrot. The powers of the Parliament mean that we can concentrate on some of the carrots, but we need sticks. We need taxes, such as carbon taxes on unsustainable resources, and we must incentivise the use of labour rather than always substitute labour with capital. We need the enterprise companies to focus much more on how they can wholly promote green jobs, rather than as a bolt-on green jobs strategy.

I read the Highlands and Islands Enterprise response to the proposed strategic environmental assessment bill. A lot of work needs to be done to provide the support for those enterprise companies to make the transition.

I will sum up. I was pleased that Jim Wallace referred to

“a smart, successful and sustainable Scotland”.

That indicates that a green jobs strategy could potentially be more than just a bolt-on. I look forward to a Scottish Executive publication that might be called “A Smart, Successful, Sustainable Scotland”, rather than those words simply being said in this green debate. I welcome the Executive’s progress on the issues and look forward to the green jobs strategy becoming the central part of the Executive’s economic strategy,

rather than a bolt-on. I urge members to support Shiona Baird’s amendment.

16:23

Nora Radcliffe (Gordon) (LD): I have enjoyed listening to the debate, which has been interesting and largely positive. It is a difficult debate to sum up, so I propose to pick out some points that members have made.

The one word that I would pick out from what Jim Wallace said is “confidence”. Confidence is the key to the development of the green jobs strategy. People need confidence to invest and to get involved. The Scottish Executive has generated confidence, which is underpinned by its commitments especially in areas such as renewable energy, waste and resource efficiency. A strong signal that there are serious, long-term commitments to sustainability in those areas will create an atmosphere in which people will want to get involved, invest and exploit all the opportunities that have been outlined in many speeches.

I welcome the announcement relating to the strategic environmental assessment of the entire coastline, which is necessary. That will be a major and useful piece of work that will be a precursor to developing and rolling out wave and tidal energy capture in a coherent—I think that that word has been used this afternoon—way and going in a sustainable way from our R and D advantage to an advantage in commercial exploitation.

Jim Mather gave a positive speech. His idea for an international, internet-based clearing house for scrap highlights the difference that the internet has made to where entrepreneurs need to be geographically. Geography is no longer a limiting factor. However, I did not understand what point was proved by the fact that the company of which he spoke was moving to British Columbia. He did not explain why it could not have stayed where it was.

Jim Mather: It relates to the point that is made subtly in the CBI’s submission, which calls for our businesses to enjoy the same level of support as that enjoyed by their overseas competitors. Many of those competitors have a tax advantage or a more vibrant economy, both of which root these green jobs much more in the local economy. That is what I was clamouring for.

Nora Radcliffe: I thank Jim Mather for that clarification. In many ways, his speech endorsed what the Executive is doing.

The exchange of views on the example that Murdo Fraser gave us of an academic paper on the effect of recycling paper on the forestry industry demonstrated the variety of issues

surrounding the subject. It is good to get evidence about the effects on industries, but we must realise that that is only one aspect of the debate and we must move on to discuss how the implications can be dealt with and what positive measures can be taken in response to those implications. That was an interesting exchange of views, which highlighted some of the issues to do with the roll-out of the green jobs strategy.

I have some sympathy with Shiona Baird's argument that we should consider how we define and evaluate economic development and the different elements thereof. Words are quite powerful tools, and some thinking on that might be effort well spent. Christine May echoed that in saying that there are sometimes unfortunate connotations attached to the phrase "green jobs", with the word "sustainability" perhaps carrying a more positive mindset. Christine outlined many of the initiatives that are being pursued successfully, some of them using what is one man's waste as another man's resource and others using fewer resources by refining working practices.

Richard Lochhead made the important point that, in renewable energy, we need to retain our R and D advantage and see it through to commercial advantage—in other words, to keep the head office in Scotland along with the profits and benefits.

The most positive thing that I can say about Brian Monteith's speech is that it was colourful. He said one sensible thing—that sustainability must be defined in terms that fit the modern world. That is true.

Sarah Boyack followed on from that in saying that sustainability is not a burden on business but is better for business. She made some important points. Her point about the need for training in the green jobs sector, so that we have the skills to meet the opportunities, is relevant. I recently had an aging central heating boiler replaced and had to persuade the expert who came to fit the new one that I wanted a condensing boiler—yes, I knew what I was talking about and no, I did not want to take his advice not to have one. I had to fight tooth and nail with that man to get a condensing boiler. When it was installed, he said, "This is wonderful. It's so efficient. It works brilliantly." So, to my credit, I have converted one plumber. There is a huge gap in training that needs to be addressed, and Sarah Boyack's point was well made. She was also right about the progress that the Scottish Parliament has made on this agenda over the past five years and the huge opportunities that there will be in the future.

Robert Brown highlighted the opportunities that the wider EU is opening up to us, which was a useful point to make. He also talked about the fact that most energy is used in centres of population

and the fact that the cumulative effect of lots of little initiatives will be a big impact. As the phrase goes, many a mickle makes a muckle; we should not forget that. Robert Brown was also right to point out the need for informed procurement by people who know their onions when they are setting the parameters according to which projects are tendered. Perhaps there should be a greater push in that area, which would be effective.

Rob Gibson made a strong point about getting the right information and encouragement to young people through careers advice. It would be valuable for us to pursue that. There are also real opportunities for older people who are changing jobs.

Frances Curran's speech was difficult to understand. She said that the Executive was not doing certain things, but went on to list all the things that it is doing. I take it that she supports what the Executive is doing, because she complained that it was not doing many things that it is doing.

Ted Brocklebank's speech was quite disappointing, as he was having yesterday's debate about wind energy. No one is seeking 100 per cent wind power. The point that he made about using hydrogen to store power would deal with some of the arguments that are made about the intermittency of wind power. However, he also spoke about the importance of energy efficiency, which cannot be stressed too much.

Largely, this has been a positive debate that has emphasised the breadth, depth and range of economic opportunities that arise from the growing awareness that we need to live and do business differently. The Executive is doing the right things, for which Liberal Democrats take some of the credit. The measures that have been taken have made a real difference. I look forward to our building on a good start and exploiting the huge opportunities that have been outlined in many of the speeches this afternoon.

16:31

Alex Johnstone (North East Scotland) (Con):

The debate has been an interesting ramble round the chamber and the subject of green jobs. We have covered the gamut. We have heard the extreme view that seeks to look into the distant future and to predict what the green jobs strategy may result in over a considerable period. We have also had the typical speech that looks back at the contribution that the Conservatives made when we were in Government more than seven years ago. Time is wearing on and, although that historic element to the debate is interesting, it is becoming less relevant as the years pass.

We also heard a number of members address the issues raised by the green jobs strategy—what it means to us now, what we can do to ensure that it affects Scotland's economy positively and what decisions we need to take now to ensure that it continues to succeed over time.

It was a surprise to me that one of the best speeches was the speech that opened the debate. In his opening remarks, Jim Wallace indicated that he knows exactly what point we have reached with the green jobs strategy. He did not look into the distant future or the distant past, but examined the green jobs strategy as something that is important to us now and seemed to be dealing with it on those terms. The problem is that the strategy carries the millstone round its neck of the commitment to 40 per cent of electricity generation coming from renewables by 2020. Such targets place burdens on ministers that will force them to make decisions that are not necessarily beneficial to the economy as a whole. The example of renewable energy was cited time and again in the debate in support of one or other side of the argument. We must try to step back from it. Renewable energy is an important factor, but it is not the only area in which we can produce green jobs.

We heard an interesting speech from Jim Mather, in which—as ever—the SNP wheeled out the usual arguments that everything would be much better in an independent Scotland. We would also have the benefit of white bunny rabbits, motherhood, apple pie and that sort of thing. However, the member did not provide much evidence that that would be the case. I had some difficulty with his argument when he extended it to the financial services industry and its contribution to the green economy. Was he telling me that Scotland's financial services industry should be restricted or governed into investing in green development, to the exclusion of other attractive investments?

Jim Mather: Does the member not agree that quality jobs in the financial services sector are sustainable, green, rewarding and profitable to the Scottish economy?

Alex Johnstone: The most attractive investment that we can make in the financial services industry would be to deliver stability in the development of green jobs throughout the Scottish economy. My problem is with whether we deal with that in terms of the chicken or the egg. Not only would placing restrictions on the financial services industry be damaging to financial services; it could be a precursor to policy decisions that, if taken in the wrong way, would damage our economy across the board. That is the next subject that I will speak about.

Mark Ballard: Will the member give way?

Alex Johnstone: Not at the moment.

Like many in the chamber, I believe that we should be pursuing green jobs. That is a valuable aspiration for politicians, but we must be careful how we target the growth of green jobs. As we have seen in many other industries, particularly in my own—farming—if we seek to place restrictions on industries that compete in an international market, whether in the United Kingdom, Europe or the rest of the world, we could make those industries uneconomic. When we compete in a global market, it is essential that we retain our competitive edge.

Therefore, as we pursue the green jobs strategy, it is essential to realise that, although we should aspire to be a world leader in the greening of the economy, we cannot afford to lead by too big a margin. If through government we impose restrictions on how we do things in Scotland, we could eventually introduce costs to the Scottish economy that would make our businesses and industries uncompetitive. The challenge to the green jobs strategy is to find ways to make it competitive as time goes by.

I mentioned that a commitment had been made in the debate to pursuing the renewable energy aspect of green jobs. However, it is worth while to look at some of the things that are going on that could restrict the opportunity to develop green jobs in Scotland. During an inquiry that the Environment and Rural Development Committee carried out last year, an obvious problem associated with an alternative means of managing waste in Scotland was discovered. The problem is caused by the restrictions of the planning system.

We were told by the First Minister in his opening statement after the summer recess that it is likely that we will have a review of planning law sometime before 2006. However, we need a planning system that will deliver the necessary changes. The problem that we have today is that although we object to landfill sites in our back yards, if the alternative happens to be a composting site, an incinerator or another kind of recycling plant, too often the argument against those is the same as the argument against the landfill site.

We need a dynamic planning system that can deliver the facilities necessary to make that change.

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

Alex Johnstone: I am sorry—I am in my last minute.

Another problem is that we are told that there are problems with the Scottish Environment Protection Agency's charges that are imposed on

composting activities in the paper mills of the north-east of Scotland. If legitimate activities exist to handle that kind of waste, it would be disappointing if ever-increasing licensing charges by SEPA were to restrict those activities with the result that that material went back into landfill when it could have been dealt with by composting.

It might have been Christine May who spoke about the differences in support for short-rotation coppicing. That is an activity that Scottish Coal wishes to pursue in order to provide the co-firing fuel for which it has a ready market. Unfortunately, Scottish Coal is at a disadvantage because of the way in which support is paid by the Scottish Executive compared with its counterpart in England. I support Christine May on that kind of policy decision. It is one that must be reviewed and considered to make green jobs in that area something that we can deliver in the short term.

16:39

Alex Neil (Central Scotland) (SNP): I hope that the rest of Scotland takes three messages from this debate, the first of which is that this Parliament believes in sustainability and will take the necessary action to pursue such policies not just in relation to the economy but in relation to other fields such as planning and the environment. The second message, on which I will concentrate most of my remarks, must be that we want to maximise the economic and employment opportunities that arise from a sustainable economic policy.

However, the third message must be that we are turning our backs on any form of luddism. For example, in today's economic age, it is complete nonsense to suggest that any new motorway is environmentally unsustainable. I live in Ayr and, without the M77 to Glasgow, the quality of life for many who live in and between those two places would certainly not be as good as it is today.

Patrick Harvie: Will the member give way?

Alex Neil: I will give way later.

Moreover, suggesting that there is something inherently wrong with air links to other parts of the world sends out entirely the wrong message. Scotland wants to visit the world and our tourism industry and our business links depend on having good air links with the rest of the world.

Shiona Baird: Will the member give way?

Alex Neil: I will in a minute.

I accept that there is an issue around the taxation of aviation fuel, which is not decided in London or Brussels but must form part of an international agreement. I also believe that many emergent aircraft technologies will begin

substantially to reduce CO₂ emissions and tackle the misuse of fuel in the aviation industry. However, Scotland's Parliament has to send a clear, positive message about sustainability and exploiting its economic benefits.

I want to concentrate on such benefits, because the bulk of this debate has been almost a rerun of the debate on renewable energy that we had two or three weeks ago. To some extent, that was inevitable. The real question that has to be addressed in any green jobs strategy is how we secure downstream activity. How do we get the jobs that can come from following a conservation and sustainability policy into the Scottish economy?

In that respect, I want to highlight some practical examples that I hope that the minister and the Executive will take on board. Before I do so, I should say that we will not realise our full potential until we are able to offer incentives that we currently do not have the power to offer. I will not dwell on that point; instead, I will dwell in a moment on some of the shorter-term, practical steps that need to be taken.

The minister says that the green jobs strategy is expected early in the new year; however, many members have pointed out that, in some cases, we have already missed the boat by years rather than months. As a result, this matter is now urgent. Furthermore, the strategy must be accompanied by an action plan. Although we are all signed up to "A Smart, Successful Scotland" as a long-term strategy, the problem is that people are not seeing any short-term benefits. We need more short-term and medium-term action to make any aims a reality.

My first suggestion to the minister is that, although I welcome his announcement of £22 million for the new green jobs fund over three years, that averages out—even by Brian Monteith's maths—at £7.33 million for each of those years. Quite frankly, as far as meeting requirements and realising potential is concerned, that is peanuts. Bearing in mind that a conservative—with a small "c"—estimate for the average cost of creating a new job in Scotland is about £10,000, setting a target of additional 50,000 jobs will require a total investment of £500 million. Clearly, the bulk of that cannot come from the public purse. It must come from private sector investment, spurred on and assisted by the public purse. Two things are required to make that happen. First, there must be more of a spark from the public sector by way of tax incentives, grants or whatever. Secondly, however, we must consider better ways of getting companies to invest in the technology.

Alex Johnstone: Will the member take an intervention?

Alex Neil: I will in a minute.

We must recognise that it will sometimes take a number of years before investors get a return on their investment. Therefore, in partnership with the private sector, we must provide loans and venture capital that are far greater than those that we currently provide in Scotland.

Alex Johnstone: I thank the member for taking an intervention. I accept what he says about tax breaks, or tax incentives, to encourage development. However, will he comment on the impact of the system of renewable obligation certificates and how that appears to be distorting investment in green technology in Scotland today?

Alex Neil: I commented on that issue in detail during the recent debate on renewable energy. I want to finish making my points, because they are important.

The scale of investment that is required from the private and public sectors to realise 50,000 jobs is substantially greater—by a mile—than £22 million over three years. We must face that fact and look at ways to close the gap. No one has mentioned the intermediary technology institute for energy—ITI Energy—which was set up primarily to act as a link between scientific research and the business community. It seems to me that one of the major opportunities for ITI Energy—or a major part of its remit—is to close the gap between what is possible and what is planned in relation to renewable energy and the jobs that come from it.

To underline Sarah Boyack's point about using public procurement to advance our sustainable agenda, about 18 per cent of the GDP in this country is bought by the public sector. Therefore, let us use the influence and levers that that gives us to promote sustainability and the jobs that go with it.

My final point, which I do not make as a party-political one, is that there is enough independent comment now to justify the need for the Executive to carry out an urgent impact assessment of the planned electricity transmission arrangements that are being agreed at a UK level and their effect on renewables in Scotland.

When the minister publishes his strategy, I urge him also to publish an action plan and to recognise the scale of the challenge. We can then go out there and say that we can deliver 50,000 jobs, which are much needed.

16:48

The Deputy Minister for Enterprise and Lifelong Learning (Allan Wilson): The debate has been interesting—not least the viewpoint of the previous speaker. I will reiterate the key points that my colleague Jim Wallace made, then I will

address points that members raised over the piece.

Jim Wallace made the fundamental point, which the Tories at least recognised: the Executive believes that economic growth in the 21st century must be sustainable. We are firmly committed to building a strong and competitive economy in Scotland, but it must be sustainable for the benefit of future generations.

Let me remind some members why a strong economy is so important. A strong economy is essential if we want first-rate public services, to which everybody in the chamber aspires; it is necessary if we want to tackle poverty and disadvantage, create training and employment opportunities and address issues of social exclusion; and, as Alex Neil just said, it is vital if Scotland is to compete alongside the best in the global economy.

However, allied to those key aims and objectives is the need, which we recognise for future generations, to protect the natural beauty and biodiversity of our environment. Indeed, there are economic spin-off benefits from that, through increased tourism et al. The drive towards sustainable development will generate significant business opportunities in Scotland. We are convinced that there is potential for Scotland to be a world leader in a number of the new green sectors that have been mentioned, such as marine energy, biomass, waste and recycling. We have signalled our commitment to those sectors by setting what are by anyone's standards demanding targets.

More than ever, Scotland needs innovative businessmen and women whose smart ideas for energy saving products and services help others to make the best use of their resources, thereby stimulating the economic growth to which I have referred. The challenge is not easy and will require industry's best brains, especially in the sectors that have been highlighted in the debate. However, I am sure members agree that it is crucial that we succeed in the task, which is vital for Scotland's future prosperity and environment and for the social cohesion to which we all aspire. In that context, Alex Neil was absolutely correct. We should consider not microcosms of what we are doing but the big picture about where we invest, what we invest and the objectives with which we invest.

At the start of the debate, John Swinney spoke about community and household renewables. We are supporting the installation and development of a large number of wood-fuel heating initiatives throughout the Highlands and elsewhere in Scotland and we support many other community renewables projects.

We have been quizzed about a separate Scottish energy policy. I respectfully submit that the devolved areas of policy that we are discussing demonstrate our clear commitment to a wide range of renewables, to increasing energy efficiency and to tackling and eliminating fuel poverty throughout Scotland. Where macroeconomic policy is properly reserved to the Westminster Government, we work co-operatively with Westminster to ensure that Scotland's interests are properly addressed. Biofuels, to which Alex Neil's colleague Richard Lochhead referred, represent a classic example of that. As members know, tax incentives to promote the greater use of biofuels are set centrally, but in Scotland we introduced investment incentives to companies such as Argent Energy Ltd to set up here. The fact that an Austrian company is establishing a renewable energy business in Scotland is a consequence of the sound business environment that companies find here, which welcomes such inward investment and is not in any way a failure, as it was portrayed. Of course there is also public support and assistance of around £1.2 million in regional selective assistance.

I was interested to hear about energy crops, given that I have moved out of that field into a new field—excuse the pun. I am happy to point out to my good friend and colleague Christine May that, largely as a consequence of common agricultural policy reform, which we debated in the Parliament, producers of energy crops other than sugar beet, on land other than set-aside or forage can claim an energy crop payment, whether the arable payments scheme or the single farm payment scheme is in operation. A flat rate of €45 per hectare is available for areas under energy crops that meet certain conditions.

I am keen that a level playing field should be established throughout the UK and Europe. Following representations made to me in respect of developments in Fife, and in Levenmouth in particular, we are anxious to ensure that the public procurement policies that we apply are at least as beneficial as those that apply in any other part of the European Union, in order that we can attract and retain some of the economic additional benefit that will accrue from entering into, for instance, manufacturing capacity for renewable energy development.

I give another example of how we have been successful. We have attracted from Portugal the investment in wave swing. Scotland is recognised internationally as a centre of excellence in new marine energy technology.

I am sure that Alex Neil would agree that the Green party in particular constantly carps and criticises that there are contradictions in our

approach to road building and sustainable development, but that myth was ably scotched by Alex Neil this afternoon. We have made it plain that the green jobs strategy should be positive and practicable.

Patrick Harvie: I am grateful to the minister for giving way and affording me the opportunity to ask him for exactly how long the ever-growing traffic increase can be sustained.

Allan Wilson: We have targets to reduce the ever-growing use of the nation's roads and to achieve a standstill in that growth in the foreseeable future. The point that I make, which Alex Neil ably made and which applies equally to air transportation and road transportation, is that good air links and road links are vital, not simply to our economy, but to our wider society. They are particularly important to our most remote and rural communities, which are a vital part of what I call the Scottish community. We have to balance the economic and social benefits that accrue as a consequence of such development against the damage that any development does to our environment.

Mark Ballard: Will the minister give way?

Allan Wilson: I would like to move on, although I am happy to take other interventions.

The Greens need to go back and look at what we are doing on recycling, for example. That is another issue on which we are criticised, but we are the first Government in Scottish history to take it seriously. We have invested tens of millions of pounds in supporting councils to increase the rate of recycling. More important, the Greens ignore the effort that millions of our fellow Scots are making to improve their personal recycling rate.

Shiona Baird: The minister misunderstands. We support what the Executive is doing, but we always want to push it that wee bit further. More needs to be done to achieve a zero-waste economy, which is what we are looking for from the Executive. We are not negating what the Executive has done already; we are applying positive pressure to get it to go further.

Allan Wilson: I do not think that the Greens are misunderstood. I understand—perhaps all too well—what is proposed, which would be detrimental to the wider social, economic and environmental interests of this country.

Ted Brocklebank virtually denounced onshore wind power. Perhaps if the Government of 20 years ago had been less concerned about closing coal mines and had invested in clean coal technology we might be in a better position and be less reliant on onshore wind power.

Mr Brocklebank: Since I was generous enough to accept that previous Governments did not pay

enough attention to what we were saying, will the minister be generous enough to admit that he realises that onshore wind power is not the way to go, that we are in danger of repeating the mistakes that were made in Denmark and California and that we should be vaulting beyond those techniques into new, alternative energy systems?

Allan Wilson: Ted Brocklebank is absolutely and completely wrong, which I say with all due respect. I say that to the Tories, but I also say it to the nats and, incidentally, to the Trots, who have become the party of the omnipresent "No". We cannot have green jobs without green projects. There is no point in talking green, but then turning yellow at the first whiff of grapeshot. If members support wind power, they must go out and argue for it in their communities. Far too many members are not prepared to do that when the going gets tough.

I have a final, very important point on the Tories. We had a measured speech from Murdo Fraser, but Brian Monteith's stream of consciousness—perhaps I should say semi-consciousness—missed the point. We do not have just green jobs; we have a rainbow of jobs. I am happy to quote from the *Daily Record* this week:

"Last month, the number of Scots claiming jobseekers' allowance fell by 600 to 90,400, which is 3.4 per cent of the work force and the lowest figure since 1975."

That is almost 30 years ago. The article goes on to say that

"The number of Scots in work rose by 20,000 over the same period",

meaning that the employment rate is

"the highest since 1992."

All those jobs and all that employment create economic opportunity and address the social exclusion that makes our communities unsustainable. The present situation contrasts starkly with the Tory record of the 1980s, when 3.5 million people were unemployed. Unemployment was a tool of economic management that was used to wider economic ends.

We reject those theories. The Executive's most important strategy is the delivery of sustainable employment and full employment. That objective is within our reach and green jobs will help us to get there.

Business Motion

17:02

The Deputy Presiding Officer (Trish Godman): The next item of business is consideration of business motion S2M-2054, in the name of Margaret Curran, on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, setting out a business programme.

Motion moved,

That the Parliament agrees—

(a) the following programme of business—

Wednesday 1 December 2004

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Ministerial Statement on REGLEG

followed by Public Petitions Committee Debate: Public Petition PE535

followed by Business Motion

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Thursday 2 December 2004

9.30 am Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Executive Debate: Aquaculture

12 noon First Minister's Question Time

2.00 pm Question Time—
Education and Young People,
Tourism, Culture and Sport;
Finance and Public Services and
Communities;
General Questions

3.00 pm Executive Debate: Efficient
Government

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Wednesday 8 December 2004

2.30 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Executive Business

followed by Business Motion

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Thursday 9 December 2004

9.30 am Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Scottish Socialist Party Business

12 noon First Minister's Question Time
2.00 pm Question Time—
Environment and Rural
Development;
Health and Community Care;
General Questions
3.00 pm Executive Business
followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions
5.00 pm Decision Time
followed by Members' Business

(b) that consideration of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Bill at Stage 1 be completed by 11 March 2005;

(c) that consideration of the Water Services etc. (Scotland) Bill at Stage 2 be completed by 21 January 2005; and

(d) that consideration of the Fire (Scotland) Bill at Stage 2 be completed by 28 January 2005.—[*Ms Margaret Curran.*]

Motion agreed to.

Parliamentary Bureau Motion

17:02

The Deputy Presiding Officer (Trish Godman): The next item of business is consideration of Parliamentary Bureau motion S2M-2053, on the approval of a Scottish statutory instrument.

Motion moved,

That the Parliament agrees that the draft Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 Modification Order 2004 be approved.—[*Ms Margaret Curran.*]

Decision Time

17:03

The Deputy Presiding Officer (Trish Godman): There are five questions to be put as a result of today's business. The first question is, that amendment S2M-2049.3, in the name of Jim Mather, which seeks to amend motion S2M-2049, in the name of Jim Wallace, on a green jobs strategy, be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

FOR

Adam, Brian (Aberdeen North) (SNP)
 Baird, Shiona (North East Scotland) (Green)
 Ballance, Chris (South of Scotland) (Green)
 Ballard, Mark (Lothians) (Green)
 Byrne, Ms Rosemary (South of Scotland) (SSP)
 Canavan, Dennis (Falkirk West) (Ind)
 Crawford, Bruce (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP)
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perth) (SNP)
 Curran, Frances (West of Scotland) (SSP)
 Ewing, Mrs Margaret (Moray) (SNP)
 Fabiani, Linda (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Fox, Colin (Lothians) (SSP)
 Gibson, Rob (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Grahame, Christine (South of Scotland) (SNP)
 Harper, Robin (Lothians) (Green)
 Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
 Lochhead, Richard (North East Scotland) (SNP)
 MacAskill, Mr Kenny (Lothians) (SNP)
 Mather, Jim (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Matheson, Michael (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Morgan, Alasdair (South of Scotland) (SNP)
 Neil, Alex (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Ruskell, Mr Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)
 Scott, Eleanor (Highlands and Islands) (Green)
 Sheridan, Tommy (Glasgow) (SSP)
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banff and Buchan) (SNP)
 Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Turner, Dr Jean (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (Ind)
 Welsh, Mr Andrew (Angus) (SNP)

AGAINST

Aitken, Bill (Glasgow) (Con)
 Alexander, Ms Wendy (Paisley North) (Lab)
 Baillie, Jackie (Dumbarton) (Lab)
 Baker, Richard (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Barrie, Scott (Dunfermline West) (Lab)
 Boyack, Sarah (Edinburgh Central) (Lab)
 Brankin, Rhona (Midlothian) (Lab)
 Brocklebank, Mr Ted (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 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 (Galloway and Upper Nithsdale) (Con)
 Finnie, Ross (West of Scotland) (LD)
 Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)

Glen, Marlyn (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Gorrie, Donald (Central Scotland) (LD)
 Henry, Hugh (Paisley South) (Lab)
 Home Robertson, Mr John (East Lothian) (Lab)
 Hughes, Janis (Glasgow Rutherglen) (Lab)
 Jackson, Dr Sylvia (Stirling) (Lab)
 Jackson, Gordon (Glasgow Govan) (Lab)
 Jamieson, Cathy (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (Lab)
 Jamieson, Margaret (Kilmarnock and Loudoun) (Lab)
 Johnstone, Alex (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Kerr, Mr Andy (East Kilbride) (Lab)
 Livingstone, Marilyn (Kirkcaldy) (Lab)
 Lyon, George (Argyll and Bute) (LD)
 Macdonald, Lewis (Aberdeen Central) (Lab)
 Macintosh, Mr Kenneth (Eastwood) (Lab)
 Maclean, Kate (Dundee West) (Lab)
 Macmillan, Maureen (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Martin, Paul (Glasgow Springburn) (Lab)
 May, Christine (Central Fife) (Lab)
 McAveety, Mr Frank (Glasgow Shettleston) (Lab)
 McConnell, Mr Jack (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Lab)
 McGregor, Mr Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 McLetchie, David (Edinburgh Pentlands) (Con)
 McMahon, Michael (Hamilton North and Bellshill) (Lab)
 McNeil, Mr Duncan (Greenock and Inverclyde) (Lab)
 McNeill, Pauline (Glasgow Kelvin) (Lab)
 McNulty, Des (Clydebank and Milngavie) (Lab)
 Milne, Mrs Nanette (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Mitchell, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Con)
 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)
 Pringle, Mike (Edinburgh South) (LD)
 Purvis, Jeremy (Tweeddale, Ettrick and Lauderdale) (LD)
 Radcliffe, Nora (Gordon) (LD)
 Raffan, Mr Keith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (LD)
 Robson, Euan (Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (LD)
 Rumbles, Mike (West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine) (LD)
 Scanlon, Mary (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 Scott, Tavish (Shetland) (LD)
 Smith, Elaine (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Lab)
 Smith, Iain (North East Fife) (LD)
 Smith, Margaret (Edinburgh West) (LD)
 Stephen, Nicol (Aberdeen South) (LD)
 Tosh, Murray (West of Scotland) (Con)
 Wallace, Mr Jim (Orkney) (LD)
 Watson, Mike (Glasgow Cathcart) (Lab)
 Whitefield, Karen (Airdrie and Shotts) (Lab)
 Wilson, Allan (Cunninghame North) (Lab)

ABSTENTIONS

Swinburne, John (Central Scotland) (SSCUP)

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 29, Against 77, Abstentions 1.

Amendment disagreed to.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The second question is, that amendment S2M-2049.2, in the name of Murdo Fraser, which seeks to amend motion S2M-2049, in the name of Jim Wallace, on

a green jobs strategy, be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

FOR

Aitken, Bill (Glasgow) (Con)
 Brocklebank, Mr Ted (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Davidson, Mr David (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James (Lothians) (Con)
 Fergusson, Alex (Galloway and Upper Nithsdale) (Con)
 Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Johnstone, Alex (North East Scotland) (Con)
 McGrigor, Mr Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 McLetchie, David (Edinburgh Pentlands) (Con)
 Milne, Mrs Nanette (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Mitchell, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Con)
 Monteith, Mr Brian (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Mundell, David (South of Scotland) (Con)
 Scanlon, Mary (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 Swinburne, John (Central Scotland) (SSCUP)
 Tosh, Murray (West of Scotland) (Con)
 Turner, Dr Jean (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (Ind)

AGAINST

Alexander, Ms Wendy (Paisley North) (Lab)
 Baillie, Jackie (Dumbarton) (Lab)
 Baird, Shiona (North East Scotland) (Green)
 Baker, Richard (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Ballance, Chris (South of Scotland) (Green)
 Ballard, Mark (Lothians) (Green)
 Barrie, Scott (Dunfermline West) (Lab)
 Boyack, Sarah (Edinburgh Central) (Lab)
 Brankin, Rhona (Midlothian) (Lab)
 Brown, Robert (Glasgow) (LD)
 Butler, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (Lab)
 Byrne, Ms Rosemary (South of Scotland) (SSP)
 Canavan, Dennis (Falkirk West) (Ind)
 Chisholm, Malcolm (Edinburgh North and Leith) (Lab)
 Craigie, Cathie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (Lab)
 Curran, Frances (West of Scotland) (SSP)
 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)
 Fox, Colin (Lothians) (SSP)
 Glen, Marlyn (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Gorrie, Donald (Central Scotland) (LD)
 Harper, Robin (Lothians) (Green)
 Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
 Henry, Hugh (Paisley South) (Lab)
 Home Robertson, Mr John (East Lothian) (Lab)
 Hughes, Janis (Glasgow Rutherglen) (Lab)
 Jackson, Dr Sylvia (Stirling) (Lab)
 Jackson, Gordon (Glasgow Govan) (Lab)
 Jamieson, Cathy (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (Lab)
 Jamieson, Margaret (Kilmarnock and Loudoun) (Lab)
 Kerr, Mr Andy (East Kilbride) (Lab)
 Livingstone, Marilyn (Kirkcaldy) (Lab)
 Lyon, George (Argyll and Bute) (LD)
 Macdonald, Lewis (Aberdeen Central) (Lab)
 Macintosh, Mr Kenneth (Eastwood) (Lab)
 Maclean, Kate (Dundee West) (Lab)
 Macmillan, Maureen (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Martin, Paul (Glasgow Springburn) (Lab)
 May, Christine (Central Fife) (Lab)
 McAveety, Mr Frank (Glasgow Shettleston) (Lab)

McConnell, Mr Jack (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Lab)
 McMahon, 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)
 Pringle, Mike (Edinburgh South) (LD)
 Purvis, Jeremy (Tweeddale, Ettrick and Lauderdale) (LD)
 Radcliffe, Nora (Gordon) (LD)
 Raffan, Mr Keith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (LD)
 Robson, Euan (Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (LD)
 Rumbles, Mike (West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine) (LD)
 Ruskell, Mr Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)
 Scott, Eleanor (Highlands and Islands) (Green)
 Scott, Tavish (Shetland) (LD)
 Sheridan, Tommy (Glasgow) (SSP)
 Smith, Elaine (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Lab)
 Smith, Iain (North East Fife) (LD)
 Smith, Margaret (Edinburgh West) (LD)
 Stephen, Nicol (Aberdeen South) (LD)
 Wallace, Mr Jim (Orkney) (LD)
 Watson, Mike (Glasgow Cathcart) (Lab)
 Whitefield, Karen (Airdrie and Shotts) (Lab)
 Wilson, Allan (Cunninghame North) (Lab)

ABSTENTIONS

Adam, Brian (Aberdeen North) (SNP)
 Crawford, Bruce (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP)
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perth) (SNP)
 Ewing, Mrs Margaret (Moray) (SNP)
 Fabiani, Linda (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Gibson, Rob (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Grahame, Christine (South of Scotland) (SNP)
 Lochhead, Richard (North East Scotland) (SNP)
 MacAskill, Mr Kenny (Lothians) (SNP)
 Mather, Jim (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Matheson, Michael (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Morgan, Alasdair (South of Scotland) (SNP)
 Neil, Alex (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banff and Buchan) (SNP)
 Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Welsh, Mr Andrew (Angus) (SNP)

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 17, Against 74, Abstentions 16.

Amendment disagreed to.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The third question is, that amendment S2M-2049.1, in the name of Shiona Baird, which seeks to amend motion S2M-2049, in the name of Jim Wallace, on a green jobs strategy, be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

FOR

Baird, Shiona (North East Scotland) (Green)
 Ballance, Chris (South of Scotland) (Green)
 Ballard, Mark (Lothians) (Green)

Byrne, Ms Rosemary (South of Scotland) (SSP)
 Canavan, Dennis (Falkirk West) (Ind)
 Curran, Frances (West of Scotland) (SSP)
 Fox, Colin (Lothians) (SSP)
 Harper, Robin (Lothians) (Green)
 Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
 Ruskell, Mr Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)
 Scott, Eleanor (Highlands and Islands) (Green)
 Sheridan, Tommy (Glasgow) (SSP)
 Turner, Dr Jean (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (Ind)

AGAINST

Aitken, Bill (Glasgow) (Con)
 Alexander, Ms Wendy (Paisley North) (Lab)
 Baillie, Jackie (Dumbarton) (Lab)
 Baker, Richard (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Barrie, Scott (Dunfermline West) (Lab)
 Boyack, Sarah (Edinburgh Central) (Lab)
 Brankin, Rhona (Midlothian) (Lab)
 Brocklebank, Mr Ted (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 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 (Galloway and Upper Nithsdale) (Con)
 Finnie, Ross (West of Scotland) (LD)
 Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Glen, Marlyn (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Gorrie, Donald (Central Scotland) (LD)
 Henry, Hugh (Paisley South) (Lab)
 Home Robertson, Mr John (East Lothian) (Lab)
 Hughes, Janis (Glasgow Rutherglen) (Lab)
 Jackson, Dr Sylvia (Stirling) (Lab)
 Jackson, Gordon (Glasgow Govan) (Lab)
 Jamieson, Cathy (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (Lab)
 Jamieson, Margaret (Kilmarnock and Loudoun) (Lab)
 Johnstone, Alex (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Kerr, Mr Andy (East Kilbride) (Lab)
 Livingstone, Marilyn (Kirkcaldy) (Lab)
 Lyon, George (Argyll and Bute) (LD)
 Macdonald, Lewis (Aberdeen Central) (Lab)
 Macintosh, Mr Kenneth (Eastwood) (Lab)
 Maclean, Kate (Dundee West) (Lab)
 Macmillan, Maureen (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Martin, Paul (Glasgow Springburn) (Lab)
 May, Christine (Central Fife) (Lab)
 McAveety, Mr Frank (Glasgow Shettleston) (Lab)
 McConnell, Mr Jack (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Lab)
 McGrigor, Mr Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 McLetchie, David (Edinburgh Pentlands) (Con)
 McMahon, Michael (Hamilton North and Bellshill) (Lab)
 McNeil, Mr Duncan (Greenock and Inverclyde) (Lab)
 McNeill, Pauline (Glasgow Kelvin) (Lab)
 McNulty, Des (Clydebank and Milngavie) (Lab)
 Milne, Mrs Nanette (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Mitchell, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Con)
 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)
 Pringle, Mike (Edinburgh South) (LD)
 Purvis, Jeremy (Tweeddale, Ettrick and Lauderdale) (LD)
 Radcliffe, Nora (Gordon) (LD)
 Raffan, Mr Keith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (LD)
 Robson, Euan (Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (LD)
 Rumbles, Mike (West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine) (LD)
 Scanlon, Mary (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 Scott, Tavish (Shetland) (LD)
 Smith, Elaine (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Lab)
 Smith, Iain (North East Fife) (LD)
 Smith, Margaret (Edinburgh West) (LD)
 Stephen, Nicol (Aberdeen South) (LD)
 Tosh, Murray (West of Scotland) (Con)
 Wallace, Mr Jim (Orkney) (LD)
 Watson, Mike (Glasgow Cathcart) (Lab)
 Whitefield, Karen (Airdrie and Shotts) (Lab)
 Wilson, Allan (Cunninghame North) (Lab)

ABSTENTIONS

Adam, Brian (Aberdeen North) (SNP)
 Crawford, Bruce (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP)
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perth) (SNP)
 Ewing, Mrs Margaret (Moray) (SNP)
 Fabiani, Linda (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Gibson, Rob (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Grahame, Christine (South of Scotland) (SNP)
 Lochhead, Richard (North East Scotland) (SNP)
 MacAskill, Mr Kenny (Lothians) (SNP)
 Mather, Jim (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Matheson, Michael (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Morgan, Alasdair (South of Scotland) (SNP)
 Neil, Alex (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banff and Buchan) (SNP)
 Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Swinburne, John (Central Scotland) (SSCUP)
 Welsh, Mr Andrew (Angus) (SNP)

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 13, Against 77, Abstentions 17.

Amendment disagreed to.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The fourth question is, that motion S2M-2049, in the name of Jim Wallace, on a green jobs strategy, 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)
 Baird, Shiona (North East Scotland) (Green)
 Baker, Richard (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Ballance, Chris (South of Scotland) (Green)
 Ballard, Mark (Lothians) (Green)
 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) (Ind)
 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)
 Glen, Marlyn (North East Scotland) (Lab)
 Gorrie, Donald (Central Scotland) (LD)
 Harper, Robin (Lothians) (Green)
 Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
 Henry, Hugh (Paisley South) (Lab)
 Home Robertson, Mr John (East Lothian) (Lab)
 Hughes, Janis (Glasgow Rutherglen) (Lab)
 Jackson, Dr Sylvia (Stirling) (Lab)
 Jackson, Gordon (Glasgow Govan) (Lab)
 Jamieson, Cathy (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (Lab)
 Jamieson, Margaret (Kilmarnock and Loudoun) (Lab)
 Kerr, Mr Andy (East Kilbride) (Lab)
 Livingstone, Marilyn (Kirkcaldy) (Lab)
 Lyon, George (Argyll and Bute) (LD)
 Macdonald, Lewis (Aberdeen Central) (Lab)
 Macintosh, Mr Kenneth (Eastwood) (Lab)
 Maclean, Kate (Dundee West) (Lab)
 Macmillan, Maureen (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
 Martin, Paul (Glasgow Springburn) (Lab)
 May, Christine (Central Fife) (Lab)
 McAveety, Mr Frank (Glasgow Shettleston) (Lab)
 McConnell, Mr Jack (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Lab)
 McMahon, 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)
 Pringle, Mike (Edinburgh South) (LD)
 Purvis, Jeremy (Tweeddale, Ettrick and Lauderdale) (LD)
 Radcliffe, Nora (Gordon) (LD)
 Raffan, Mr Keith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (LD)
 Robson, Euan (Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (LD)
 Rumbles, Mike (West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine) (LD)
 Ruskell, Mr Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)
 Scott, Eleanor (Highlands and Islands) (Green)
 Scott, Tavish (Shetland) (LD)
 Smith, Elaine (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Lab)
 Smith, Iain (North East Fife) (LD)
 Smith, Margaret (Edinburgh West) (LD)
 Stephen, Nicol (Aberdeen South) (LD)
 Swinburne, John (Central Scotland) (SSCUP)
 Turner, Dr Jean (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (Ind)
 Wallace, Mr Jim (Orkney) (LD)
 Watson, Mike (Glasgow Cathcart) (Lab)
 Whitefield, Karen (Airdrie and Shotts) (Lab)
 Wilson, Allan (Cunninghame North) (Lab)

ABSTENTIONS

Adam, Brian (Aberdeen North) (SNP)
 Aitken, Bill (Glasgow) (Con)
 Brocklebank, Mr Ted (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Byrne, Ms Rosemary (South of Scotland) (SSP)
 Crawford, Bruce (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP)
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perth) (SNP)
 Curran, Frances (West of Scotland) (SSP)
 Davidson, Mr David (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James (Lothians) (Con)
 Ewing, Mrs Margaret (Moray) (SNP)
 Fabiani, Linda (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Fergusson, Alex (Galloway and Upper Nithsdale) (Con)
 Fox, Colin (Lothians) (SSP)

Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Gibson, Rob (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Grahame, Christine (South of Scotland) (SNP)
 Johnstone, Alex (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Lochhead, Richard (North East Scotland) (SNP)
 MacAskill, Mr Kenny (Lothians) (SNP)
 Mather, Jim (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
 Matheson, Michael (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 McGregor, Mr Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 McLetchie, David (Edinburgh Pentlands) (Con)
 Milne, Mrs Nanette (North East Scotland) (Con)
 Mitchell, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Con)
 Monteith, Mr Brian (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
 Morgan, Alasdair (South of Scotland) (SNP)
 Mundell, David (South of Scotland) (Con)
 Neil, Alex (Central Scotland) (SNP)
 Scanlon, Mary (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
 Sheridan, Tommy (Glasgow) (SSP)
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banff and Buchan) (SNP)
 Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow) (SNP)
 Tosh, Murray (West of Scotland) (Con)
 Welsh, Mr Andrew (Angus) (SNP)

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 72, Against 0, Abstentions 35.

Motion agreed to.

That the Parliament welcomes the Scottish Executive's commitment in *A Partnership for a Better Scotland* to work with business to develop and implement a green jobs strategy; notes the publication of *Towards A Green Jobs Strategy – Opportunities For Business* in June 2004; recognises the importance of sustainable economic development; notes the leadership given by the Executive in identifying potential "big wins" for Scotland, and encourages early publication of a finalised Green Jobs Strategy with an emphasis on action to secure for Scotland the positive benefits to both business and the environment arising from demands for more sustainable products and processes.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The final question is, that motion S2M-2053, in the name of Margaret Curran, on the approval of a Scottish statutory instrument, be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

That the Parliament agrees that the draft Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 Modification Order 2004 be approved.

Lung Cancer

The Deputy Presiding Officer (Trish Godman): The final item of business is a members' business debate on motion S2M-2003, in the name of Irene Oldfather, on lung cancer awareness month. The debate will be concluded without any question being put.

Motion debated,

That the Parliament notes that November is Lung Cancer Awareness Month, the Macmillan Cancer Relief and the Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation's month-long campaign to raise awareness of lung cancer and highlight the message that early diagnosis saves lives; recognises that lung cancer is now the United Kingdom's biggest cancer killer with 94 people a day dying from the disease; recognises that people are 40 times more likely to survive if the disease is detected early on; congratulates NHS Ayrshire and Arran on its innovative Smoking in Schools scheme whereby health advisers visit secondary schools across North Ayrshire to educate them on the dangers of tobacco smoke and to offer cessation services for young people who have already taken up the habit; recognises the importance of educating our young people on the dangers of tobacco smoking; looks forward to the future development of this scheme, and welcomes the Scottish Executive's plans to increase support for those wishing to stop smoking and to ban smoking in public places, which will help reduce cases of lung cancer in Scotland.

17:09

Irene Oldfather (Cunninghame South) (Lab): I welcome to the public gallery representatives from Macmillan Cancer Relief, Action on Smoking and Health and the Royal College of Nursing.

I will return in a moment to the work that those groups do to promote awareness of lung cancer issues, but first I want to state some important facts. Lung cancer is the most common cancer in the world. I am sure that all members know someone—a mother, father, relative, neighbour or friend—who has been affected by the disease. Every single year, 40,000 new patients are diagnosed with lung cancer in the United Kingdom, which is one person every 15 minutes. During this debate, two people will be diagnosed with lung cancer. Anyone who has lost a loved one to lung cancer will know that the disease can have a devastating effect in a frighteningly short period. The average time from diagnosis to death is just four months and only two in 10 people with lung cancer live longer than a year. Those chilling facts demonstrate the disease's aggressive nature and give us an idea of the number of families that are devastated by its effects every year.

It is vital that work is done to raise awareness of the disease's symptoms and causes, which is exactly what lung cancer awareness month is designed to do. The campaign, which was pioneered jointly in the UK by the Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation and Macmillan Cancer Relief,

aims not only to raise general awareness of the disease, but to encourage those who may be at risk to identify the symptoms and seek help at an early stage. Knowledge of the symptoms of lung cancer is vital because the earlier the diagnosis, the better the prognosis. It is also crucial that patients have access to the best possible support services and treatment. I thank the Royal College of Nursing for its briefing on the issue, which made the important point that everyone who is diagnosed with the disease should have access to a specialist nurse.

I am sure that all members agree that prevention is better than cure and that factors such as healthy diet, exercise and, crucially, not smoking, substantially lessen the risk of developing lung cancer. Smoking and passive smoking cause nine out of 10 lung cancers in the United Kingdom, and a third of all cancer deaths in the western world are linked to tobacco use. I was an inaugural member of the Parliament's Health and Community Care Committee in 1999 and I recall that in the committee's initial meetings we agreed that tobacco, as the number 1 cause of ill health, would be one of the first major issues for inquiry.

Much progress has been made since then. One of the major steps forward in the battle was in April 2002, when the national health service in Scotland offered nicotine replacement therapy for the first time. Different health boards use the funding for smoking cessation differently and I am pleased by the commitment to increase that funding in the Executive's first tobacco action plan, which was published earlier this year. Representatives from the smoking cessation service in my constituency visit secondary schools to educate young people, who are possibly the most at-risk and vulnerable group, on the dangers of tobacco, as well as—tragically but importantly—offering cessation support to young people who have already begun smoking.

In the past few weeks, another major step forward in the fight against lung cancer has been taken with the announcement of a ban on smoking in public places. I congratulate the Executive on that bold move and I am confident that we will see the benefits in years to come. As a result of the proposed legislation on the issue, 10 or 20 years from now, lung cancer rates will reflect the prudence of our action. However, I do not believe for one minute that the road that will be travelled in the next year will be easy.

It would be remiss of me in a debate such as this not to mention briefly the hypocrisy of European Union tobacco subsidies. It is well known that I am a pro-European, but €1 billion per annum is spent on subsidising tobacco production. The subsidies result in the production of low-grade tobacco, which is unfit for consumption in the EU.

People will not smoke that tobacco in Europe, so it is exported to the third world, where lung cancer rates are increasing. In comparison, the European Commission has announced an anti-smoking media campaign that has a budget of €72 million. Think what a difference €1 billion per annum could make to health promotion and treatment strategies for diseases such as lung cancer.

I am being told that reform is under way and that changes will take place in 2006. I have to say that I have heard it all before. It is too little, too late, but I hope that the Parliament will be vigorous in monitoring the situation and ensure that the reforms take place. There is a clear lesson about policy connectivity, and I hope that we will not see such hypocrisy again. I know that within the EU I will fight that case.

Lung cancer is one of the biggest killers facing the Scottish population today. It is vital that people are aware of not only the causes of lung cancer but the symptoms, the treatment that is available and the importance of having a specialist and dedicated nurse to support patients. I hope that today's debate will keep the disease at the top of the health care agenda and high on the public's conscience.

I think that I speak on behalf of families throughout Scotland when I express gratitude to and admiration for NHS staff and Macmillan nurses who work tirelessly to care for and treat patients—and to assist their families—who have been diagnosed with lung cancer. I pay tribute to their dedication. I commend the motion to the Parliament and I thank members for their support.

17:17

Christine Grahame (South of Scotland) (SNP): I congratulate Irene Oldfather on securing this important debate.

I will share two images with members. One is from about a year ago when I shadowed various health professionals in the Borders, including the consultant radiologist at the Borders general hospital. A very fit-looking man who was tanned and cheery went in to be scanned. When he went through the scanning system, the radiologist looked at the material in front of him on the screen and said to me, "That man has three years to live." He had lung cancer. That was scary.

The other image is from a cafe next to my constituency office. It is a bit like the cafe in "EastEnders", as it is full of ordinary working folk and almost all of them smoke. An elderly man who had a hacking cough was in there. He was drinking coffee and was into the cigarettes, one after another. Nothing would stop him smoking; I suspect that even if he had stood beside me in the radiology unit, that would not have stopped him

because we are dealing with a horrid addiction. As I have been an addict myself I know how hard it is to kick the habit, but I managed it. Those images of the horrors of lung cancer remain with me.

I will focus on the fact that there is an element of social deprivation to cancers. How long someone lives and how soon they die can be a postcode lottery. It is a known fact that middle-class, wealthy women more often get breast cancer than working class women from deprived areas, but working class women from deprived areas are more likely to die from the disease. The same is true of lung cancer. There is no simple answer to the problem; the answers are complex. However, there is definitely a link between socioeconomic deprivation and cancers and survival rates. The link may be to do with diet or with culture, or it may be to do with the fact that there is nothing else for someone to do if they are unemployed and live in what we might call—it is an awful expression—a sink estate. I do not say that in order to criticise. There may be a link to heavy drinking or to the fact that someone's father or mother smoked. In some areas, it may be seen as macho for people to smoke cigarettes on the street or it may be felt that the sooner they smoke behind the legendary bike shed the better. The problem is that not only smoking but deprivation can kill.

When anti-smoking and early-intervention campaigns are being run and when treatment is being provided, I ask the Deputy Minister for Health and Community Care to consider targeting the funds at the areas in which they are most required.

This week, there was a cancer conference, at which I chaired a meeting. At that conference, there was an interesting contribution from Dr Una Macleod, who is doing research into the issue. She said:

"The reasons for these inequalities"—

in survival, detection and even becoming a cancer victim—

"are thought to be complex and may be due to a combination of patient related factors, previous and current health status, specific cancer types and ability of the individual to fight cancer".

Therefore, there is no simple solution. Dr Macleod went on to say:

"With respect to prevention, specific attempts have been made to address smoking as a cause of cancer and some early positive results have been demonstrated."

What follows is important:

"However, the assumption that reducing smoking will in itself be sufficient, even for smoking related cancers can be challenged. It can be demonstrated that in poorer communities the negative effects of smoking are greater than in more affluent areas. In addition, delay in presentation is greater in deprived groups for certain

cancers, so issues of access and of timely diagnosis need to be addressed."

That is why I, with my social justice remit, came into the debate. Lung cancer is one of those issues that people think must be a health issue, but it is not a health issue alone: in many respects, it is a poverty issue. I would therefore like the minister to advise me in her closing speech—or perhaps later, if she cannot do it then—how she would address lung cancer and whether she and the Scottish Executive Health Department would be sympathetic to targeting resources to those clearly deprived areas of Scotland in which survival and detection rates not only for lung cancer, but for other cancers, are most evidently low. The department might be doing that, but if so, I am not aware of it. If we do that, we will see the outcomes and find out whether the connection between those factors is so radical as to allow such interventions to make a difference.

17:22

Eleanor Scott (Highlands and Islands) (Green): I am happy to speak in the debate and to support the motion. I am aware that, in members' business debates, members tend to go to the same sources for their research, information and briefings, so I am aware of the need not to be too repetitive. However, I feel a bit as though as I am taking up the baton from Christine Grahame, simply because I was at the same conference as her, heard the same speech as her and was similarly impressed by it.

I will not repeat what has been said about the incidence of lung cancer in Scotland and how we have an unenviable rate, but I will underline some of what has been said about the connection between socioeconomic circumstances and a person's likelihood of contracting some cancers and, having developed those cancers, of surviving them. As Christine Grahame said, that effect was particularly strongly noted in lung cancer, a point that was very much to the fore at the conference. We also heard of a study, which, although it is quite old, still stands up and shows that those from deprived backgrounds suffered more ill-health effects than those from a wealthier background did from the same level of smoking.

We heard tonight and during the recent debate on smoking that smoking rates are worryingly high in young women. The trend is particularly worrying: the rates of lung cancer in women have risen to approach those in men and could overtake them, because the smoking rate in young women now exceeds that in young men. It would be quite interesting to think about the reasons for that, but I do not propose to go into that now, because I do not know the answers. I hope that the proposed smoking ban, which I fully support and supported

in the recent debate, will go some way towards addressing that problem by denormalising—if there is such a word—smoking. I hope that smoking will no longer happen in the areas where young women socialise and will therefore not be a normal thing to which they should conform. The ban will make smoking less a part of life, and I hope that that will have some effect.

The cancer conference that many of us attended on Monday was supportive of initiatives to encourage people to stop smoking, but it warned that any health initiatives, unless they are effectively targeted, tend to impact on those who least need them—the better-off and better-informed; I think that all members present are probably aware of that. Although the effects of health awareness campaigns might be to reduce whatever condition they target, they will also widen the health gap. The health gap, which was very much focused on at the conference, was returned to repeatedly in speakers' presentations. It is a real cause of concern in relation to many cancers, but particularly so with respect to lung cancer.

As Christine Grahame said, we need properly targeted initiatives if we are to achieve an impact on those who have the most to gain. The conference speaker who dealt with that subject, Dr Una Macleod, who is both a general practitioner and a lecturer in public health, had a list of recommendations. That list included some of the things that Christine Grahame mentioned, in particular the strengthening of primary care services in deprived areas so that people get the help and the support that they need early enough, and so that the other conditions that they might be suffering from get treated. As has been said, the effectiveness of targeted initiatives needs to be evaluated.

The speaker—I stress the fact that this was a doctor speaking at a health conference—ended by asking for a political, public debate about the redistribution of wealth. She felt that our health inequalities will be addressed only once our socioeconomic inequalities have been dealt with. The patterns of the incidence of and survival rates for lung cancer emphasise the effects of poverty on health and the need to eliminate poverty if we are to improve the health of the population.

17:26

Mrs Nanette Milne (North East Scotland) (Con): I congratulate Irene Oldfather on securing the debate, which highlights this month's campaign by Macmillan Cancer Relief and the Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation and raises the public's awareness of lung cancer. I add my thanks to those organisations for the extremely valuable work that they do.

As we know, lung cancer is still a major killer in Scotland. It is indeed the most commonly diagnosed cancer among men and the second most commonly diagnosed cancer among women, accounting for 30 per cent of all cancer deaths among men and 24 per cent of cancer deaths among women. Although male mortality rates have improved somewhat over the past 10 years, it is worrying that the rate is increasing for women, particularly as it is still fashionable among young women to smoke, either to be trendy or to keep their weight down.

Smoking is known to be the main aetiological factor in the development of lung cancer, and that sends out alarming signals for the future. As Christine Grahame and Eleanor Scott have pointed out, it is of concern that people in the most deprived areas are much more likely to develop lung cancer than those from the least deprived areas. They also have a significantly poorer prognosis. That combination in deprived areas of a higher incidence of lung cancer and a poorer outcome applies to most forms of cancer in Scotland, as those of us who attended Monday's Scotland against cancer conference learned from the excellent presentation by Michel Coleman. That is particularly noticeable in lung cancer.

Survival rates for lung cancer are significantly improved with early diagnosis. As much as possible must be done to make people, particularly smokers, aware of the risks that they face, so that they do not delay seeking help if there is any suspicion at all that they might be developing the disease. It is of the utmost importance to discourage people from smoking in the first place and to convince those who smoke of the health benefits of giving up. Educational programmes, such as the one in Ayrshire that has been described, are clearly of value in alerting young people to the danger of smoking and in helping those who have started smoking to kick the habit. I commend those programmes, and I welcome the Scottish Executive's plans to increase its support for those who wish to stop smoking.

As a doctor who worked in a thoracic unit and as a lifelong non-smoker, I feel as strongly as anyone that people should have the choice of a smoke-free atmosphere when they are in enclosed public places such as restaurants, pubs, buses and aircraft. I am pleased that so many establishments and organisations now have no-smoking policies. However, I am not yet totally convinced about the likely efficacy of the Executive's proposed total ban on smoking in public places. If such a ban sends smokers home to satisfy their habit, accompanied by more alcohol from the off-licence than what they might normally buy in the pub, that would be a bad thing. If such a ban were to deter young people from picking up the habit, it would

clearly have merit. For me, the jury is out on both those counts.

I know that members of my profession are largely in support of the Executive's proposed ban, but I wonder whether they are being realistic about the effect that it will have. I wonder whether a stepped-up, enhanced campaign to convince proprietors to enforce a voluntary ban on their premises would not be more effective. Many people—both smokers and non-smokers—already appreciate the pleasant atmosphere in pubs and restaurants that do not allow smoking. I suspect that public demand will drive the situation forward quite quickly, as the habit is increasingly seen as antisocial. I feel instinctively that choice is better than coercion and I think that that may be the case with smoking in public places. Having said that, I look forward to studying in detail the Executive's proposals for legislation and listening carefully to the debate, which will no doubt be lively and heated.

There is no doubt that smoking is the most important cause of lung cancer and I fully support the efforts of Macmillan Cancer Relief and the Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation to raise public awareness of this far-too-common killer disease.

17:30

Mike Rumbles (West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine) (LD): In Scotland, lung cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer for men and the second most common cancer for women. More than 4,000 people die every year from it. The Royal College of Nursing points out in its parliamentary briefing note that smoking is the primary cause of lung cancer and accounts for some 90 per cent of cases. If a person stops smoking, their risk of lung cancer goes down dramatically. There is also evidence to show that exposure to environmental tobacco smoke—or passive smoking—increases the risk of lung disease and cancer. As we heard, survival rates for lung cancer are not good. There have been improvements during the past 20 years, and one-year survival rates have increased from about 19 per cent to about 28 per cent, but five-year survival rates have shown less improvement. That is because patients with lung cancer tend to present at an advanced stage and are therefore less amenable to treatment.

I will say something controversial. Christine Grahame, Eleanor Scott and Nanette Milne, among others, focused on deprivation. In my constituency, West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine, we have the best health statistics in Scotland and fewer smokers than any other constituency, but 25 per cent of the population still smokes. I am a little wary of our focusing attention on the most deprived areas, because we must not forget that

this is a national problem that must be addressed nationally.

If smoking is the primary cause of lung cancer, it follows that a reduction in smoking throughout the country will result in fewer deaths and less disease from the effects of tobacco smoke. The British Medical Association estimates that the human cost of smoking in Scotland is huge, with some 13,000 deaths each year being attributed to smoking. The latest research from the University of Glasgow points to the fact that up to 2,000 deaths per year—I hope that Nanette Milne is listening to this—are related to exposure to environmental tobacco smoke. There can be no doubt, therefore, that exposure to environmental tobacco smoke must be a contributing factor in many cases of lung cancer.

I am disappointed that there are not many MSPs here for tonight's debate—there are about nine of us. That might be because the argument is won and we know what the issues are, but I had hoped that Brian Monteith would be here to engage in the debate, because it is important.

I am pleased that the Executive is taking a robust and comprehensive stance on legislation to change Scotland's culture as far as tobacco smoking is concerned. The legislative measure to ban smoking in enclosed public places should help the 70 per cent of smokers who want to quit. The BMA estimates that if and when the measure is implemented, tobacco consumption will fall by 30 per cent. Nanette Milne is simply wrong to say that the ban will increase the amount of smoking at home. The evidence is clear—particularly the evidence from Australia—and I ask her to look at it and join the rest of us in tackling the issue, which will save lives in Scotland.

When such a body as the BMA says that the medical profession is united in its belief that the plan to prohibit smoking in enclosed public places is the best possible measure that we in the Scottish Parliament could take to improve the nation's health, that must be right. I do not doubt that that action is right. It will save many lives and will reduce the number of people who suffer and die from lung cancer.

17:35

Mr Duncan McNeil (Greenock and Inverclyde (Lab)): When I first saw the motion on lung cancer awareness month, I wondered why on earth we needed to dedicate a month to raising awareness of the most common cancer in the world. However, as Irene Oldfather's motion says, early diagnosis is important and saves lives. If the disease is detected early, victims are 40 times more likely to survive. For that reason, I welcome

the opportunity that Irene Oldfather has given us to have the debate.

What are the barriers to achieving the goal? An article in the *BMJ* in June reported on research by Chapple, Ziebland and McPherson that gives voice to lung cancer victims. The research study finds that lung cancer patients feel stigmatised—especially those who have stopped smoking, who believe that they were affected by industrial pollutants in their working lives or who have never smoked. Whether or not they smoked, they felt particularly stigmatised because the disease is strongly associated with smoking.

It was found that many patients felt unjustly blamed for their illness. Some believed that the medical profession failed to take proper notice of their smoker's cough and put off diagnosis. A patient suggested that the Government allocates less money to screening for and research into lung cancer because of the link with smoking. Many spoke of feelings of guilt and shame. That led some patients to conceal their illness, which sometimes had adverse financial consequences or made it hard for them to gain support from other people.

If we are serious about raising awareness of lung cancer with the campaign, we need to understand why people do not report early and what part politicians and figures in the public health debate have played in the reluctance to report.

The scary statistics that are trotted out in hard-hitting advertisements and debates such as today's may have unintended consequences. The study to which I referred found that television advertisements that aim—rightly—to put young people off tobacco, but which also portray a dreadful death, may exacerbate fear and anxiety. One patient said that the ads upset her greatly because they made her fear a dreadful death by drowning. They affected her deeply and increased her fear and anxiety.

All that makes patients worried that diagnosis, access to care and research into lung cancer might be adversely affected by the stigma that is attached to the disease. We must raise awareness about lung cancer, but about all aspects. Tackling lung cancer involves more than just reaffirming the evils of tobacco. In the campaign month, we must recognise the shame and blame that lung cancer patients experience and adjust our attitudes accordingly.

17:39

Stewart Stevenson (Banff and Buchan (SNP)): I thank Irene Oldfather for providing the opportunity for members to speak on such an important subject.

I want to tell members about an ambition that I have, which I think that we would say that we all share, if we were being honest. I have an ambition to die healthy. That means that I want to go suddenly and to live an absolutely healthy life up to the end. I knew an 80-year-old lady who had had barely a day's illness in her life. She was climbing a Munro with a group of friends and dropped dead from her first illness in a couple of decades—she had not even had a cold in that time. That was a perfect way to go. People who are afflicted by the addiction that is tobacco can rarely choose when to die.

I have made some positive choices. I do not smoke now, although, like many others, I used to do so. When I was 51, my blood pressure was 140 over 90. Earlier this month, at age 58, it was 128 over 60, which is not too bad and is heading the right way. Coming to the Parliament has therefore been good for me, if not necessarily for anyone else. I also eat lots of fruit, as the Executive implores me to do.

When I was 17 and 18 and between school and university, I worked in a psychiatric hospital. I worked in the hospital ward, where the physically ill psychiatric patients came. During that time, I sat with someone who was dying of lung cancer. Believe me, there can be no greater spur to wanting to die healthy than my experience of 40 years ago.

Lung cancer in Scotland is, of course, a continuing concern. According to the statistics, its incidence is decreasing in males—we are slowly starting to get the message. The incidence of smoking and, with it, the incidence of lung cancer is falling over time. However, the statistics for females are rising. I think that that is partly because young females are beginning to act like young males used to act. They are beginning to be more assertive and to challenge the norms more, and they are more prepared to ignore warnings and make their own decisions.

The statistics also show that, although there have been improvements in one-year survival rates for younger patients, survival rates at five years have remained relatively unchanged over the past decade. Of course, Scotland's health record is among the worst in Europe.

Mike Rumbles referred to his constituency. There is little doubt that an element of deprivation is involved in the figures. Of course, it might be that the amount of tobacco smoking by smokers also varies as the number of smokers varies, but I do not think that there are good numbers on that matter—that is, there are some numbers, but it is not clear whether we can trust them. However, there is a good correlation between a person smoking more and their being more at risk.

I looked up the general numbers for health for my constituency and for a Glasgow constituency that has a lot of deprivation—I will not name it, as that is not the point. Using a standardised population, my constituency has a quarter of the alcohol-related admissions to hospital of the Glasgow constituency and under a quarter of its drugs misuse admissions. The figure for the percentage of data zones in the most deprived decile of the health domain in my constituency is 0 per cent. The figure for the other constituency is 66.23 per cent. The difference that deprivation makes can be seen.

The international comparisons that I have almost invariably show Scotland at the top of the table. Only Belgium beats our lung cancer incidence rates for males and nobody beats our rates for females. Sweden's figure is approaching a quarter of our figure. We are also at the top for mortality rates. Even countries such as Spain—or Greece, which is not normally thought of as a particularly wealthy country—are doing much better than we are. Factors other than deprivation are therefore at work. In addition, we can see that the issues arise in the Greater Glasgow NHS Board, Lanarkshire NHS Board, Argyll and Clyde NHS Board and, to a lesser extent, Lothian NHS Board areas.

I have one or two slightly off-the-wall comments to make to close my remarks. One of the poorest countries in the world is Bhutan. In Bhutan, only 1 per cent of the population smoke. Because of that, Bhutan was able to make tobacco illegal about 10 years ago, and the incidence of lung cancer there is almost nil. However, we must be cautious about drawing conclusions from that, as the diagnostic facilities are more limited there than they are here.

I have quoted James VI in other debates on smoking, and I shall do so again. James VI got it absolutely right 400 years ago when he took over the Crown and raised the tax on tobacco to a rate that today would be £30,000 per pound of tobacco. The fiscal option is certainly one that I would like the Executive ministers to encourage their colleagues at Westminster to rack up to an even greater extent.

Some years ago in India, I saw an advertising poster for a local brand of tobacco that used a slogan that encapsulates the problem. I do not think that the manufacturer saw the irony of the slogan, which was "The final choice". For too many people, smoking is the final choice.

I close with one suggestion that the Executive might take up. We had the finest medical schools in the world in Edinburgh because of the huge morbidity in the cess pit that was the old town. We may have a similar opportunity, because of our poor health and our high lung cancer rate, to invest more in understanding the problem not only for our own benefit, but for the creation of an

industry related to that and for delivering a benefit through improved health care for people who suffer from lung cancer in countries throughout the world. That would be to our economic benefit, to our social benefit and to the benefit of everyone around the world.

17:47

The Deputy Minister for Health and Community Care (Rhona Brankin): I congratulate Irene Oldfather on bringing the debate to Parliament. As she did, I welcome the visitors in the public gallery and commend them for the role that they play in work on cancer in Scotland. I will quickly go through the statistics again, although members have covered them already.

About 25,000 new cases of cancer are diagnosed each year in Scotland. Among those cases, lung cancer is the most common; it accounts for 17 per cent of all cancers and more than 4,100 cases are diagnosed each year. However, it is not all bad news. The incidence of lung cancer in males has been falling significantly since 1990. It has gone down by 23.7 per cent as a result of the substantial reduction since the 1950s in numbers of men who smoke. Nevertheless, as has been mentioned, women have not been so quick to give up smoking, and the incidence of lung cancer in women has increased by 14.7 per cent since 1990, although recent data suggest that that trend may now be stabilising. I will return to that later. The number of deaths from lung cancer among men has also declined by 25 per cent over the period, although the number of deaths among women has increased slightly.

Early detection and rapid access to treatment are important. For those who have symptoms that are suggestive of a cancer, the earlier medical advice is sought, the better. More rapid access to diagnosis and treatment for cancer patients is a national waiting times target, the aim being for patients by the end of 2005 to move from referral to treatment within two months. In response to the point that Irene Oldfather made, I agree that it is vital, following diagnosis, that patients have access to multidisciplinary teams.

Through our national peer-reviewed quality assurance programmes for cancer, we know that a great deal of excellent care is already provided day in and day out, but that does not mean that things do not need to change, nor that an already good service cannot be made better. Of the additional recurring £25 million for supporting the implementation of Scotland's cancer strategy, almost £1 million has been invested to improve lung cancer services specifically. There has also been additional investment in the modernisation of

imaging and radiotherapy equipment to help to improve access and to speed up diagnosis, treatment and follow-up. However, the best possible outcome is to prevent cancer from occurring in the first place.

None of us can fail to be aware of the devastation that smoking causes to the nation's health. As many members have said, it is the single greatest cause of premature death and ill health. Eighty per cent of lung cancer is associated with smoking tobacco and it is simply unacceptable for Scots to continue to die or to become ill from something that is wholly preventable. It is also unacceptable that people who live in some of our most deprived communities—where smoking rates are almost double the national average—have a life expectancy of only 63, which is some 16 years below the national average. Many of us have heard the statistics on the difference between Shettleston and Bearsden.

Smoking is only a factor in the inequalities that exist, but it is a crucial one. I agree absolutely with members who spoke about the need to target money. The new cessation money that has been calculated gives additional assistance to areas that have the highest numbers of smokers in low-income groups. Inequality targets have been set for tobacco control. New cessation targets have been set for pregnant women in low-income groups and for the general population in deprivation group 5, in order to close the inequality gap by 2008. We take on board the comments of Christine Grahame and other speakers. This is a huge challenge for us.

It is also completely unacceptable for our children and young people to continue to inherit the legacy of poor health and low expectation. That is why we published "A Breath of Fresh Air for Scotland", the first ever tobacco control action plan specifically tailored to meet Scotland's needs. The plan includes a commitment to review the communication and education programmes for our young people and to undertake research with young people to examine the factors that make them take up or resist smoking in their teens. Of course, young women will be a main target group for education and communication campaigns. I share other members' grave concerns about the number of young women who smoke.

The smoking in schools scheme that is being undertaken in North Ayrshire is an excellent example of the work that NHS Scotland is doing. The scheme is funded through the health improvement fund, has a budget of £291,000 over three years and is targeted at all pupils in primary 6 and 7 and girls in secondary 1 and 2. About 15 years ago, as a teacher in a secondary school, I

ran a smoking cessation group, so I know that there is a need for such work.

The NHS is also funding eight pilot schemes in a wide range of settings across Scotland that aim to establish best practice in providing smoking cessation support to young people. Those schemes vary from offering cessation support to young pregnant women and their partners in Argyll and Clyde, to examining different methods of cessation support for young people in Polmont young offenders institution. Irene Oldfather alluded to the fact that the tobacco control action plan confirmed that an additional £4 million will be made available for cessation services from next April. The extra money more than doubles existing investment and will help to ensure that there are more initiatives like the one in North Ayrshire.

However, there is no doubt that our decision to legislate to ban smoking in public places in Scotland will have the greatest impact. That decision was not taken lightly. We can no longer tolerate a Scotland that has the reputation of being the sick man of Europe. The Scottish Executive has made health improvements a key priority. We welcome Nanette Milne's professional expertise and experience, but like Mike Rumbles I ask her to listen to the evidence. The potential health gains from a smoking ban are enormous. Smoking rates in New York fell by 2 per cent in the year in which a smoking ban was introduced and there are already indications that there has been a similar impact in Ireland. I ask Nanette Milne to engage with us and to listen to the arguments, as I hope that we can take people like her with us on the journey.

I congratulate Macmillan Cancer Relief and the Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation on their campaign throughout November to raise awareness of lung cancer and to highlight the message that early diagnosis saves lives. By working collaboratively and in partnership, we can secure real and lasting improvements in services for people with cancer.

Meeting closed at 17:54.

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