

Our Union

I would like the Union of the United Kingdom to stay together. I only want volunteers in our Union.

I thought it right for the UK Parliament to grant Scotland an Independence referendum given the strength of feeling for independence in Scotland in 2014 and the successful political campaigning of the SNP. Before the vote I pledged that I would respect the result whichever way it went, and would in good faith have worked with my colleagues to secure as smooth an exit as possible for Scotland from the UK if they wanted to leave. The SNP for their part said they too would accept the verdict. All bought into the phrase the vote would be a once in a generation opportunity to decide Scotland's future. We also all agreed only Scottish voters would vote.

Today the SNP are trying to renege on all those promises. They now say they want an early second referendum on the same subject. They see no need to accept the last verdict as they claim there has been a material change of circumstance.

Their immediate argument is that as they won a majority of seats from Scotland in the UK Parliament on a ticket for independence it means opinion has shifted in Scotland so they should be able to try again.

Yet in the last General election the SNP, the one party proposing independence, got 45% of the vote. This is exactly the same percentage as voted to leave the UK in the referendum. This is scarcely evidence of a major shift in Scottish opinion.

Their other argument is Scotland voted to remain in the EU, so it should be allowed a vote to leave the UK to try and rejoin the EU. This is a curious argument, as Scotland voted to stay in the UK and part of staying in the UK was the acceptance that a decision like membership of the EU was clearly a decision for the whole UK, not a decision for parts of the UK to make differently.

It is also difficult to understand how they think it would work. The EU under Spanish influence would not be keen to foster independence movements within member states by offering Scotland, Catalonia, Padania and others easy entry into the EU as they left the UK, Spain, Italy and others. Presumably it would entail joining the Euro which the SNP have always been reluctant to propose.

The SNP are not believers in full independence. In the referendum they wished to stay in the UK currency union and remain with the Queen. The muddle at the heart of their campaign remains. Are they really just wanting devo max or do they eventually want to be properly independent? How does that square with being a small member of the EU if the EU would have them?

If I were a Scottish or English campaigner for independence I would want my

country to have its own currency and not to be locked into the EU and Euro. That after all was what the UK referendum was all about, where I did campaign for my country, the UK, to be properly independent.