

Nicola Sturgeon isn't offering Scotland a say, she is offering false hope.

By Kez Dugdale

Just over two years ago, Nicola Sturgeon used the pages of the Daily Record to tell readers that improving Scottish education would be the driving and defining priority of her government.

So much for that, then.

After her speech yesterday, here is my message to Nicola Sturgeon : [Our country is divided enough, it should not be divided again.](#)

The vast majority of Scots don't want to replay angry arguments between family and friends.

Nicola Sturgeon should think back to those bitter arguments before she tries to divide us again.

Specifically she should think about how wrong she was then and how wrong she is now.

The SNP said the only way to have a fairer Scotland, to end austerity, was independence.

That argument has now fallen apart. The SNP's estimates for oil for the first two years of an independent Scotland were out by £21billion.

That's more than our country's annual health and education budgets put together. This isn't just about the black stuff – it's about the future of our schools and hospitals.

Labour warned that the SNP's plan was reckless at the time. The SNP Government agreed with us. In secret.

An official analysis paper prepared by the civil service for them outlined the cuts that would happen with independence.

Rather than release the paper, the SNP tried to hide it. The SNP knew the sums didn't add up. But they offered false hope, especially to the poorest in our country.

Nicola Sturgeon told people independence could end austerity, knowing that wasn't true. She knew it would mean even bigger cuts to our public services and told people the opposite on doorsteps.

That's not clever PR, that's misleading the country on an industrial scale.

Thousands of Scots voted Yes on the basis of a lie the SNP knowingly sold them. Nicola Sturgeon should be ashamed.

Two years on, she is ready to do it again.

None of the fundamental questions of 2014 have been answered. The SNP still don't know what currency an independent Scotland would have. They still can't explain how they would pay for pensions and there is still no reply to how our public services would cope with unprecedented cuts.

Even if oil revenues had not fallen through the floor, an independent Scotland would still have faced public spending cuts much worse than whatever the Tories have been planning. With thousands of Scots in need of a payrise, the SNP can't say what their wages will be paid in – and if they would be worth the same as they are today.

Having campaigned to remain in one political union last year, the SNP now can't explain why we should leave one which is four times as important to our economy and through which we built the NHS and the welfare state.

Just over two years ago, our country debated independence. It was the biggest democratic exercise in history. For two years there wasn't a pub, coffee shop, workplace or Facebook timeline without people having their say.

And after those two years of debate. A record turnout saw a staggering 85 per cent of people vote in the referendum and the answer was clear: Together, we're stronger.

That is why Scottish Labour MSPs will vote against a divisive second independence referendum at Holyrood next week.

We should be using the new powers of Holyrood to look to the future, which is why Labour will hold a People's Constitutional Convention to chart Britain's course for the next generation.

Labour want to see a radical federal solution that will mean more powers for the Scottish Parliament while keeping the security and opportunity that comes with being part of the UK.

That is a plan to unite our divided country. An alternative answer that will mean more powers influence and control not just to our Scottish Parliament but down to our own communities and right across the UK.

More than 200,000 children in Scotland live in poverty. Attainment in our schools is falling. Our NHS does not have enough doctors and nurses. Our economy is sluggish, jobs are too often low-pay, low- skilled and short-term.

None of these problems is addressed by a second independence referendum.

Only a nationalist could think they are, because their obsession with winning independence trumps everything else – even telling people the truth about independence.

The questions of 2014 remain unanswered.

The economic case of independence, which was tissue-paper thin in the first place, has collapsed.

Nicola Sturgeon isn't offering Scotland a say, she is offering false hope.

This article first appeared in the Daily Record on 14/03/2017

Agree with Kez? Sign the pledge against #indyref2

here: <https://www.togetherstronger.scot/>

[News story: Veterans UK Customer Satisfaction Survey 2017](#)

At Veterans UK (part of Defence Business Services) we are always trying to improve the services we deliver to our customers. One of the best ways to understand how we can make improvements is to ask the people who use our services how we can do better.

If you would like to tell us about your experiences, please complete our [Customer Satisfaction Survey 2017](#)

For more information on the services we deliver and how you can contact us, please see [Veterans UK](#).

[Scottish Labour will vote against another independence referendum](#)

Responding to Nicola Sturgeon's speech calling for another independence referendum, **Scottish Labour leader Kezia Dugdale said:**

"Scotland is already divided enough. We do not want to be divided again, but that is exactly what another independence referendum would do.

"Two years ago, 85 per cent of Scotland's voters took part in the independence referendum and the result was a clear vote to remain in the UK.

"With our country facing all of the uncertainty around the Tories' reckless plans for a hard Brexit, the last thing we need is even more uncertainty and division.

“A clear majority of the people of Scotland voted to reject the SNP’s false hope and lies, and backed working together with the other nations of the UK.

“The reality is that leaving the UK would mean turbo-charged austerity for Scotland, putting the future of our schools and hospitals at risk.

“Labour believes that together we’re stronger. That is why we firmly oppose a second referendum and Scottish Labour MSPs will vote against the SNP’s proposals next week. We will stand up for the people of Scotland, who do not want a second independence referendum.

“Nicola Sturgeon could have made a passionate case for bringing powers from Brussels to Edinburgh, instead she did what she always does: sought grievance and division.

“Scotland deserves better than this. Nicola Sturgeon’s government is presiding over an education system with a growing gap between the richest and the rest, a health service that doesn’t have enough doctors and nurses, and an economy which sees more than 200,000 Scottish children live in poverty.

“Scotland would be a better place if the First Minister stopped dividing the country and started actually governing the country.”

If you agree with us, visit www.togetherstronger.scot to back our campaign against a second independence referendum.

[Sturgeon’s indyref2 call ‘utterly irresponsible’](#)

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13 Mar 2017



Nicola Sturgeon’s decision to hold another independence referendum has been branded “utterly irresponsible” by Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson.

Earlier today the First Minister announced she wanted to hold a second independence referendum next year.

This is despite previously saying she would only do so if the majority of Scots wanted another vote, and that it was a “once in a generation” decision.

Repeated polling has shown not only opposition to independence, but widespread objection to another referendum.

Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said:

“Nicola Sturgeon has today given up acting as First Minister for all of Scotland.

“People have said time and again they do not want to go back to the division of a second referendum.

“Nicola Sturgeon promised the 2014 referendum would be ‘once in a generation’.

“Today she has ignored the majority in Scotland who do not want a referendum and has decided instead to double down on division and uncertainty.

“The First Minister’s proposal offers Scotland the worst of all worlds. Her timetable would force people to vote blind on the biggest political decision a country could face.

“This is utterly irresponsible and has been taken by the First Minister purely for partisan political reasons.

“Both No and Yes voters have been urging her to put this to one side – but because of her own rash decision to use Brexit in a bid to lever support for independence, she has ignored them completely.

“Quite simply, today the First Minister has failed in her job to act in the interests of all of us.”

[News story: Advice on coming to court](#)

You can use our [Court & Tribunal Finder service](#) to find local court or tribunal contact details, facilities provided, parking information, and opening hours.

You should also be aware of [our security advice](#) on items that are not allowed in our buildings.

If you have any concerns about coming to a court or tribunal and what to expect please speak to a member of staff. If you are interested in visiting the court before your hearing, staff may be able to arrange that for you. Staff can advise you on procedures, give you the forms you need. They cannot give you legal advice. If you need legal advice you may be able to get it free from a law centre, Citizens Advice or a consumer advice centre or you can contact [Community Legal Advice](#) (tel 0845 345 4345).

Who are the people in court

We know that coming to court as a witness or to give evidence can be a daunting experience. To help put you at ease we have created these short videos to introduce you to the people you will see in the courtroom.

[The magistrates' court](#)

[The Crown Court](#)

[The County Court](#)

[Citizens Advice Witness Service](#) provide free and independent support for both prosecution and defence witnesses in criminal courts in England and Wales. Victims and witnesses are entitled to visit the court before the trial date to familiarise themselves with the building, the court room, and to try any special measures that have been agreed. You can arrange these visits via the [Witness Service](#).

Most courts and tribunals have separate waiting areas for victims, witnesses and jurors if applicable.

As you may be at court for a while on the day of the trial, you may like to bring some things to help you pass the time, like a book, newspaper or magazine.

Help available for customers with a disability

If you have a disability and would like help to access our information and services, please contact a member of staff at the court or tribunal you are visiting to discuss what help you need. If you are a textphone user you should dial 18001 before the relevant court or tribunal telephone number:

Code of practice and Witness Charter

There is a [code of practice](#) governing services to be provided in England and Wales to victims of criminal conduct which occurred in England and Wales.

The [Witness Charter](#) sets out how you can expect to be treated by the police if you are a witness to a crime or incident, and if you are asked to give evidence in a criminal court.

Juror advice and help

For information on when to arrive on the first day, please see your confirmation letter. For the days that follow, you will be told when to arrive at court. The court normally sits from 10am to 4:30pm each day. Sometimes the judge may ask you to sit more or less hours, depending on the way the trial progresses. Court staff will tell you about times for lunch.

Court staff might ask you to provide a contact name and number of a family

member or friend in case they need to speak to someone in the unlikely event of an emergency.

Find out more about [jury service](#).