

# EUROPARL



THE REGULAR NEWSLETTER OF SNP EURO-MP  
**IAN HUDGHTON**

5 FEB-25 MAR 2002

ISSUE 30



Banff & Buchan MSP Stewart Stevenson and Ian Hudghton MEP recently visited Ferg Stephen's family farm near Peterhead to be updated on the many challenges facing Scotland's agriculture industry.

## SNP SECURES DEBATE ON TORY "CHEAT" COMMENTS

SNP Euro MP Ian Hudghton MEP this month secured a debate in the European Parliament on recent comments by a Scottish Tory MEP who had branded Scottish fishermen "cheats". Conceding that his comments were made in his personal capacity as a Tory MEP and not as Chair of the Fisheries Committee, Struan Stevenson accepted that the Committee could have a full discussion on the matter at a future meeting. Mr Hudghton commented:

"I'm delighted that SNP pressure on this issue will lead to a full and open debate. These comments caused deep offence in Scotland's fishing communities at a time when they are experiencing great hardship.

"The debate will give the SNP an opportunity to defend our fishermen from these wild accusations. Struan Stevenson ought to be defending them too - instead of making ignorant speeches aimed at pleasing the Tory party faithful."

## TORY HOT AIR ON BAGPIPE BAN

Ian Hudghton MEP has assured constituents that the EU is not planning a ban on the highland bagpipe! Pouring scorn on recent rumours, Mr. Hudghton said:

"It is deplorable that a Scots Tory MEP can seek self publicity by making false statements about the nature of debate in the European Parliament. The recent Noise Directive refers only to protection of workers in workplaces, in working hours, and would measure excessive noise levels over a 40 hour period, with the music industry being specifically excluded."

## FARMERS' RAISE NVZ CONCERNS WITH MEP

Ian Hudghton MEP recently met with members of the Banffshire and North East Region National Farmers Union in Banff. The NFU had sought an urgent meeting with the Euro-MP to voice their concerns over measures the Scottish Executive are proposing that farmers must implement in order to comply with legislation on Nitrate Vulnerable Zones.

Many river basins throughout the North & East of Scotland have been designated NVZ's following European legislation designed to prevent high concentrations of nitrates building up in rivers and other waterways. The NFU in the North East believes that the Scottish Executive's interpretation of the European legislation is too restrictive and that some of the proposed measures are unnecessary, and will result in crippling costs for farmers faced with their implementation.

Describing the meeting as "a constructive exchange of views", Mr Hudghton said:

"Union representatives arranged this informal meeting so that they could voice the views of their members to me face-to-face and I was glad to have the opportunity to hear, at first hand, just what the proposed Scottish Executive regulations mean to the industry."

"The European Directive sets out broad objectives, but it seems that the detailed implementation proposals in Scotland fail to take account of existing controls on fertiliser application, such as those which are mandatory under the Scottish Quality Cereals scheme."

"At the meeting I was able to confirm that I had already written to the Minister for Rural Affairs, Ross Finnie MSP, calling on him to take heed of the views which have been expressed at consultative meetings up and down the country. I will continue to press Mr Finnie to give farmers' concerns on NVZ the consideration they deserve."



## FALKIRK WHEEL VISIT BY MSP & MEP

Michael Matheson MSP and Ian Hudghton MEP (above) have seen for themselves the progress being made on one of the world's most ambitious engineering and construction projects.

The giant wheel will lift boats up and down levels, enabling the Union Canal to be linked to the Forth & Clyde Canal at Falkirk. The multi-million pound facility is the first construction of its kind in the world and has the potential to be a major attraction to visitors.

The two Parliamentarians also visited Graeme High School where they were quizzed by modern studies students, and met with Falkirk Council to discuss topical issues.

## MEP ISSUES WARNING AFTER GM TRIAL VISIT

SNP MEP Ian Hudghton has issued a warning to Scotland's communities about field trials of genetically modified crops. The MEP, pictured below with Rob Gibson, visited the Black Isle to meet with local people who are campaigning to have field trials at Munlochy stopped. Following his visit, Mr Hudghton warned other communities where field trials are planned – currently North-east Fife and Aberdeenshire – to continue lobbying local politicians to get the trials cancelled, stating that the safety of GMOs is far from certain. Mr Hudghton said:

"I was struck by the intense anger the wider community feels about having GM crop trials right on their doorstep when issues of public safety are far from resolved. Ordinary folk are showing their resentment in a number of ways with many displaying banners in their gardens and by backing the actions of the vigil."

"Why should Scotland ditch its reputation for wholesome, natural produce and replace it with genetically modified products which consumers prefer to avoid? Scotland's food production industry would, I believe, gain commercial advantage from being GM Free."



*On a visit to his ward recently Aberdeen City SNP Councillor Kevin Stewart accompanied Ian Hudghton MEP to investigate housing and social exclusion problems in the area. The MEP commented: "It is ironic that the oil capital of Europe is considered too rich to qualify for European structural funding and yet suffers from urban decay, poverty and social exclusion problems just like so many other communities in Scotland."*



*Pictured above are P4-7 Abernethy Primary School pupils during a recent visit. Ian Hudghton MEP had been invited to answer a wide range of questions as part of the class project on Europe.*



Above, pictured at Blairgowrie High School, are 6th year student Elspeth Miller, Ian Hudghton and Cathie Young, Modern Studies Principal Teacher.

Following a highly successful all-Party Question Time Panel event at the School, the MEP briefed Elspeth and Cathie on their study visit to Brussels which he had arranged for them. Elspeth is writing a dissertation on Europe as part of her advanced higher modern studies.

### Colleges Visit European Parliament

A 20-strong group of students from Angus College visited the Parliament during the Strasbourg session recently, while student primary education teachers from Aberdeen University's Faculty of Education, led by David Denoon visited the Parliament in Brussels. Both highly successful visits were sponsored by Ian Hudghton MEP.

## IAN HUDGHTON'S DIARY

22 MARCH

Mackie Academy S5 Modern Studies Q & A, Stonehaven

Aberdeen University Student Nationalists assoc.

23 MARCH

Official opening of The Space, Dundee College

24 MARCH

North Tayside SNP AGM, Birnam

25 MARCH

Aberdeen Central CA, selection meeting

26-27 MARCH

Fisheries Cttee, Brussels

29 MARCH

Robert Gordons University, EU studies dept., Aberdeen

1 APRIL

Dundee East CA, selection meeting

2-5 APRIL

Group meetings, Brussels

7 APRIL

Angus SNP Council Vetting, Arbroath

8-11 APRIL

EP Plenary session, Strasbourg

12-13 APRIL

Visit Western Isles, including SNP Selection mtg.

14 APRIL

Ochil SNP Selection mtg. Alloa

15-16 APRIL

Fisheries Cttee, Brussels

16-17 APRIL

Budgets Cttee & Agriculture Cttee, Brussels

19 APRIL

Dundee West C.A. SNP Adoption mtg., Irene McGugan MSP

### Ian Hudghton

Scottish National Party  
Member of the European Parliament

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This newsletter is published by Ian Hudghton and distributed free of charge to keep constituents in touch with developments in the European Parliament and the work of the SNP Euro-MP.

