

EUROPARL



THE REGULAR NEWSLETTER OF SNP EURO-MP
IAN HUDGHTON

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OIL TANKER DISASTER PREVENTABLE

Commenting on the disastrous ecological effects of the recent 'Prestige' tanker sinking, Ian Hudghton MEP has called upon EU governments to act, so that this type of catastrophe never happens again. Mr. Hudghton said:

"The tragedy of the 'Prestige' disaster is that it could have been prevented. It is not as if we haven't been down this road before - just ask any Shetlander and they'll describe the hell of watching the environment blighted and livelihoods wrecked. But it seems that, ten years after the Braer disaster off our own shores, EU heads of states have learned nothing, and have allowed many miles of Europe's coastline to be ruined."



The SNP's Alasdair Nicholson accompanied Ian Hudghton MEP on a series of visits in Barra and the Uists. They visited the premises of Barratlantic, who specialise in scallop processing, as part of a fact-finding tour to hear the concerns of the scallop fishing industry arising from EU food safety rules.



Ian Hudghton MEP chaired the election of office bearers at the AGM of the SNP Mid Scotland and Fife Regional Association held in Burntisland. Elected office-bearers, pictured left to right above, are Alan Bath, Ernie Conner, Kris Murray Browne, George Kay and Helen Davidson.

NEW YEAR GREETINGS FROM IAN HUDGHTON MEP

Events in Europe and beyond during the past year illustrated the need for Scotland to restore an independent international voice.

New member states, some smaller than Scotland, will soon join the European Union, voting in the Council of Ministers (including on fisheries policy!!) while Scotland does not.

By this time next year Scottish Independence could be within reach, if we make the most of the opportunity presented by the Scottish Parliament and Council elections in May.

I look forward to joining with SNP campaign activities around Scotland, and wish everyone all the very best for 2003.



Photo-Associated Press

COD CRUSADERS CONFRONT FISCHLER

SNP MEP Ian Hudghton arranged for Fraserburgh based campaigners Caroline Bruce, Morag Ritchie and Carol MacDonald (pictured above) to meet Fisheries Commissioner Franz Fischler in Brussels. The delegation presented him with a video highlighting the dire consequences for families and communities of his proposals to drastically cut whitefish quotas.

SNP PLEDGE TO FISHING COMMUNITIES

Following a summit meeting in Edinburgh, SNP MSPs, MPs and MEPs have pledged that the Party will campaign to preserve Scotland's fishing communities, and contrasted the SNP's stance with the Labour/Liberal coalition's defeatist attitude to the pre-Christmas EU Council of Fisheries Ministers' meeting and its disastrous outcome for Scotland.

SNP parliamentarians who represent our fishing communities in the Westminster, Scottish and European Parliaments have pledged to launch a national campaign to save Scotland's fishing dependent communities, following the betrayal by the UK at the December talks in Brussels.

Since the Brussels sell-out, it has become clear that Jack McConnell and Ross Finnie are content to manage the decline of the fishing industry but the SNP are determined to save it, and ensure our industry and fishing communities remain sustainable. The industry's future is a national priority and all of Scotland is behind the efforts of our fishing communities to safeguard their future in the face of flawed and inconsistent decisions taken in Brussels with the backing of UK Ministers.

The SNP are drawing up a plan of action to safeguard tens of thousands of jobs throughout the country and will be taking the campaign to fishing communities the length and breadth of Scotland.





Orkney SNP representatives, John Mowat (right) and Duncan Goudie, arranged a number of visits for Ian Hudghton MEP including Kirkwall Harbour and the new ferry pier.



VIDEO PRODUCTIONS BY MEPS

The SNP MEPs have released two 15 minute information videos, in conjunction with their Group in the European Parliament. "Why a European Parliament?" answers many of the questions often asked about the functions of the EU institutions. "Scotland in the European Parliament" highlights Scotland's current position in Europe and discusses our future potential.

Copies are available free from Ian Hudghton's Dundee office at the address below.

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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.



WHAT NONSENSE!

SNP Euro MP Ian Hudghton has derided the European Commission, saying the decision to withdraw penalties against France for its illegal ban on British beef is "cynical in the extreme!" Mr. Hudghton, along with Westminster colleague Annabelle Ewing MP, raised questions over the illegal action earlier this year when Commissioner Byrne assured Mr. Hudghton that the Court of Justice could award financial penalties against France. Commenting, Mr. Hudghton said:

"The Commission has created a rogues market in which member states can simply choose which rules they want and which they don't, in the sure knowledge that they could escape penalties. Just so long as they fall into line at the eleventh hour before the Court of Justice is asked to decide what reparation is due. What nonsense!

"France was found 'guilty' as long ago as 13 December 2001. The case was cut and dried. Yet they have escaped a £100,000 per day fine! If this is justice European Union style, then you can keep it!

"No wonder that, when EU rules do not suit Scotland, some suggest that perhaps we could take a leaf out of France's book and defy the law for as long as we can get away with it!"



The SNP's Ian Angus and Ian Hudghton MEP met with concerned Portlethen residents who are campaigning for improvements to the town's playpark facilities.

BRUSSELS BRIEFING

Member Councils of the East of Scotland European Consortium held a very successful two day briefing session at Scotland House in Brussels, including a lively question and answer session with some of Scotland's MEPs. Pictured below are SNP Cllrs. Lynda Kenna, Jack Gibb and Donald Balsillie with Ian Hudghton MEP.



IAN HUDGHTON'S DIARY

16-21 DECEMBER

Plenary Session, Strasbourg

Council of Minister Fisheries, Brussels with Richard Lochhead MSP

29 DECEMBER

SNP Fisheries summit, Edinburgh

7-9 JANUARY

Group meetings, Brussels

9 JANUARY

SNP National Executive, Edinburgh

10 JANUARY

Meet with P6s at Dunnikier PS, Kirkcaldy

Constituency engagements

13-16 JANUARY

Strasbourg Plenary Session

17 JANUARY

Bantaskin Primary School, Falkirk

Constituency visits in Falkirk area with Michael Matheson MSP

20-21 JANUARY

Budgets Committee, Brussels

22-23 JANUARY

Agriculture & Fisheries Committees, Brussels

27 JANUARY

Constituency engagements

28 JANUARY

Fisheries Committee, Brussels

29-30 JANUARY

Plenary Session, Brussels

31 JANUARY

Abertay University, Dundee

Dundee SNP Burns Supper

3 FEBRUARY

Constituency engagements

4-6 FEBRUARY

Group meetings, Brussels

10-13 FEBRUARY

Plenary Session, Strasbourg

13 FEBRUARY

SNP National Executive, Edinburgh