

PRESS RELEASE

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SNP ATTACKS TORY'S "CHEAP SHOT"

Ian Hudghton MEP (Scottish National Party) has launched an attack on Scots Tory MEP, Struan Stevenson in advance of today's debate on Noise at Work in Strasbourg today. Describing recent press coverage over the issue as "sheer opportunism", Mr Hudghton has called on the Tory MEP to explain his motives in portraying health and safety at work proposals as a European bid to ban bagpipes.

Explaining the reasons for his anger, Mr Hudghton said:

"The legislation we are debating today is part of a package of measures designed to protect workers' health in the EU. It is NOT about bagpipes nor about playing of the pipes, and never has been. Mr Stevenson has achieved the very worst in euromythology by misrepresenting the results of many hours of debate and hard work put in by members of the Employment and Social Affairs Committee to what end? To achieve some cheap shot publicity for himself and to upset many thousands of Scots into the bargain.

It is this upset which has really raised my hackles. Over the last day or two I have received a number of letters from constituents who were, understandably, very upset and angry that our pipes might be consigned to the scrap-heap. I even have one letter suggesting we should declare war on our European neighbours because of Mr Stevenson's mischief-making threats! He should hand his head in shame for upsetting so many ordinary Scots out of sheer opportunism for self-publicity.

If Mr Stevenson thinks it's just a bit of a laugh to get cheap publicity out of misrepresenting a Committee's views, then he needs to give serious consideration to his own position as Chair of the Fisheries Committee. He has a responsibility not just as an MEP, but even more as Chair of a Committee to ensure that information, not misinformation, is available to the citizens of the EU. I will be asking the current chair of Employment and Social Affairs for his/her views on Mr Stevenson's misrepresentation of their committee's business.

In the meantime, I am not sure we should give any credibility to Mr Stevenson's future outpourings if his recent efforts are anything to go by."

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