

The Scottish Democratic Alliance (**SDA**) was formed in mid-2009 by a group of Scots with extensive experience in management and international affairs. We are unpaid volunteers, and our new party, which is registered with the Electoral Commission, has no commercial or other financial links or interests. We receive no money other than voluntary membership subscriptions and voluntary donations.

The formation of the **SDA** is an urgent and vitally necessary step in order to fill a large gap in the Scottish political spectrum. As Scotland is approaching a major turning point in its long and colourful history, an old order is coming to an end with the impending break-up of the United Kingdom. In addition, the world around us is changing at a rate that has never been seen before in human history.

### Scotland's Status

In the light of trends and developments over the past century, and even longer, we believe that independence for Scotland is going to happen and can no longer be prevented. We must therefore be comprehensively prepared for this happening. We must not be taken unawares by it.

The **SDA** believes that the United Kingdom has served its day, and that the Union is now seriously retarding the development of Scottish interests. We stand unequivocally for the resumption of Scotland's full constitutional sovereign independence, and for the establishment of a new relationship between the nations of the British Isles on this basis. We seek to achieve this in association with other like-minded groups in Scotland.

As an independent state Scotland will need a government suitable for a fast changing world. We are concerned that insufficient preparations are currently in hand for the governance of the new Scotland. We submit that Scotland needs a radically new and participative democratic system of government.

We see no need to defend this position. **We are the Scots: Scotland is our land.** In the final analysis this is the one and only justification we Scots require for taking the management of our

own affairs into our own hands.

## The Role of the SDA

We believe that radical ideas - radical in the sense of starting from fundamental principles - are necessary to correct the weaknesses and defects of our political system and help to prepare for and manage independence.

We believe that new ideas can be best developed, with contributions from as many people as possible, by a fresh and truly Scottish party, a party that has loyalties only to Scotland, but working initially as a think-tank.

While pursuing a high-level think-tank role in the meantime, we have, in due course, every intention of entering the electoral lists with a programme that will fill the existing large gap on the centre-right of the Scottish political spectrum. Meanwhile, we want to clarify the **SDA's** philosophical and policy basis, while avoiding splitting the pro-independence vote.

Our policies are presently in the course of development and are by no means complete. As can be seen, our programme is not concerned only with aspects of current government, but is also looking far ahead to a post-independence situation. There is therefore still ample scope for fresh minds to participate in the drafting and refining of the **SDA's** analyses and policies for the efficient governance of Scotland.

## The Future Scottish Political System

We support the Scottish National Party and other reputable organisations working for the independence of Scotland. We intend to supplement that work by seeking to engage with those persons who believe that Scotland should once again be independent but do not agree with all of the published views of the established Independence organisations.

We have no desire to compete against the SNP prior to independence, and will seek to avoid any collision of interests. Afterwards, however, we tentatively envisage a situation in which the **SNP** and the **SDA** will in time constitute the two main elements of the Scottish political system, on the centre-left and centre-right respectively.

## **A Fresh Approach**

The general lack of confidence in government and politics has resulted in almost half of the electorate declining to vote. This is not a healthy situation. The **SDA** submit that the decline in voter involvement in the political system must be reversed; that Scotland would benefit from more experienced parliamentary candidates of intellectual ability and moral integrity, and with relevant qualifications and previous experience outwith politics. We submit that candidates of proven competence are required to re-build voter confidence, encourage voters to re-engage in the political process, and help to raise standards of governance and administration at national and local levels. The **SDA** will therefore be paying particular attention to the selection and training of suitable candidates.

## **The People of Scotland**

The **SDA** recognizes Scotland's status as a nation and we will work to establish its international recognition as such. The Scots are one of the most ancient nations in Europe, with fifteen hundred years of experience as a political unit, living continuously within the bounds of their own territory. We have a well-earned, worldwide reputation for hard work, resourcefulness, innovation in adversity, and a wide range of cultural, artistic and technical skills. Our varied origins have blended us into a single nation with a unique and distinctive culture.

## **Our Sovereign Rights**

The United Nations General Assembly has repeatedly emphasised that the right to self-determination by identifiable peoples is a fundamental human right. We assert that the

Scots are a clearly identifiable people within the terms of the United Nations definition, and are thereby entitled to exercise the right to self-determination and apply for membership of the United Nations.

### **A Written Constitution for Scotland**

We submit that the current system of government, which has no written constitution allows parties in power to determine the style and structure of government on a day-to-day basis for their own advantage, and that this works to the detriment of the citizens who elect and pay the politicians.

We therefore submit that the people of Scotland have the right to a written constitution setting out and guaranteeing the rights and responsibilities of government and people. We believe that such a written constitution will enable all citizens to read, in one document, their fundamental rights and responsibilities, and those of the government.

We submit that the Constitution should be alterable only on the authority of the people, by a majority decision of the registered electorate voting in a referendum.

### **Towards a Vibrant Economy**

The **SDA** wants an administratively efficient, low cost tax country in which the tax payable by every household and business will be one of the lowest in Europe. Lower taxes, less red tape and fewer regulations should encourage economic growth and result in increased imports and exports while generating thousands of new jobs. The increased tax revenues generated would then be available to fund improved infrastructure such as roads as well as health, education and social services. With higher expenditure on research we should be able to manufacture a wider range of quality products for the domestic and global markets. We could recommence commercial shipbuilding on the Clyde; rebuild our fishing and farming industries and expand our own brand of tourism. **With control of our own resources we will be able to develop the industries that will bring jobs and investment into Scotland.**

### **A Participative Democracy**

We are starting as we intend to continue. Anyone who joins the **SDA** or otherwise supports us is welcome to submit new ideas and to comment on our published proposals. The people of Scotland themselves must decide the shape of the new independent Scotland. This is your opportunity to help us to shape our nation's future.

**Why not send us your comments? Even if you do not agree with everything that we currently propose, you are welcome to join us and work from within the SDA to develop an agenda for an Independent Scotland!**

**Contact: [info@scottishdemocraticalliance.org](mailto:info@scottishdemocraticalliance.org)**

**Revised Jan. 2010**