

Ruth attacks SNP's 'week of chaos'

30 Apr 2017



Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson has attacked the SNP's 'week of chaos'.

It follows confusion from the party over the Common Fisheries Policy, wider EU membership and whether or not independence would be a key issue in the upcoming General Election.

The party's stated position is for a separate Scotland to have full membership of the EU, which – by definition – would include being part of the hated CFP.

However, days after deputy leader Angus Robertson confirmed this on television, two of his MPs signed a pledge describing Brexit as a "sea of opportunity" and committed never to return to the CFP.

In addition, while Nicola Sturgeon was denying independence had anything to do with the SNP's election strategy at First Minister's Questions, at that very moment her predecessor Alex Salmond was on camera saying the precise opposite.

Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said:

"This has been the SNP's week of chaos.

"First Nicola Sturgeon made a laughing stock of herself by claiming her campaign had nothing to do with independence. She was forced into a u-turn after Alex Salmond popped up to say that's all it's about.

"Two SNP MPs signed a pledge to leave the EU's failed Common Fisheries policy – just after Angus Robertson declared he wanted Scotland to stay in.

"The SNP failed to clear up its position on Europe and still can't say whether it wants an independent Scotland to become a full member of the EU.

"And to cap it all, Nicola Sturgeon says she's going to hide her next moves on independence until after the election – despite promising to be upfront with Scots.

"People are sick of the SNP's games.

"Nicola Sturgeon and Alex Salmond are trying to take us for a ride – and the Scottish Conservatives are going to use this election to lead the fight back against the SNP.

"To send them a message and say no to their divisive second referendum, vote Scottish Conservative on June 8."

On Monday, Nicola Sturgeon said she does not think this election is about independence

- **Nicola Sturgeon said the upcoming election 'won't decide whether or not Scotland becomes independent'.** 'People who want to make sure Scotland has got strong voices against the Conservatives in this election need to vote for the SNP because that's what this election above all else is about. The election won't decide whether or not Scotland becomes independent. We got a mandate for a referendum in the election last year so this is about Scotland's voice is heard and Scotland's interests are protected' (*Daily Telegraph*, 24 April 2017, [link](#)).
- **Sturgeon reiterated her belief this election is not about independence.** Following an appearance on Scotland Tonight, STV reported: 'The SNP leader...said the forthcoming vote "is not deciding whether or not Scotland is independent"' (*STV News*, 24 April 2017, [link](#)).

But Alex Salmond then contradicted his successor entirely – and said the election is about independence

- **Salmond said every vote the SNP receives in this election will strengthen their case for independence.** '[People] will know that they are voting to support the right of the parliament to decide on the holding of the Scottish referendum. The path is that the Parliament should have the right to hold a referendum through the section 30 order. She's looking to get another election victory which will indicate and support the right of the Parliament to decide these things' (*Politics Home*, 27 April 2017, [link](#)).
- **Salmond made clear he thinks a strong SNP performance in this election will push independence forward.** 'If we win the election it will do a number of things. It will be a vote from Scotland against hard Tory Brexit. It will show there's one area of these islands where the Tories are not riding roughshod over the people and it will reinforce the democratic mandate of the Scottish parliament to say there should be a Section 30 order and another independence referendum when the time is right. These are some of the huge issues at stake in Scotland, which is why we believe so many people will rally to the Scottish cause, to back the Scottish parliament and defend Scotland's interests' (*The Times*, 28 April 2017, [link](#)).

Then Sturgeon back-tracked and suggested the election is about independence

- **Nicola Sturgeon's spokesman said the SNP would use a victory in this election to push separation.** As The Telegraph reported: '[Sturgeon's] official spokesman said Theresa May would have "no basis whatsoever" to continue refusing another independence vote if, as expected, the Tories win fewer Scottish seats and votes than the SNP. But he also said that Ms Sturgeon will not drop her demand for a second referendum if the Unionist parties together poll more than the nationalist parties,

arguing that the election would also be fought over other issues' (*Daily Telegraph*, 27 April 2017, [link](#)).

To add to the chaos: the SNP still can't tell us if they want full EU membership

- **Sturgeon repeated she wants full EU membership.** 'I support Scotland being independent and being an independent member of the European Union' (Scottish Parliament, *Official Report: First Minister's Questions*, 27 April 2017, p20, [link](#)).
- **But SNP MPs signed a pledge which would mean withdrawing from full EU membership.** Eilidh Whiteford and Mike Weir signed the Scottish Fishermen's Federation pledge, which stated: 'We must avoid any policy, practice, regulation or treaty which could return us to the Common Fisheries Policy and the enforced giveaway of almost two-thirds of our fish stocks' Membership of the CFP is indelibly linked to full EU membership (*Press and Journal*, 26 April 2017, [link](#)).

And now the SNP have admitted a key part of their EU policy is unworkable

- **Pete Wishart admitted that even a special deal for Scotland from the EU is unlikely.** On Good Morning Scotland, when it was put to Wishart that the EU27 will not be willing to secure a separate deal for Scotland, Wishart said: 'I think that's absolutely right. There's lots of work to do' (*BBC Good Morning Scotland*, 28 April 2017, [link](#)).
- **But the SNP put a differentiated deal at the heart of their Brexit paper.** 'We have set out a clear proposition for how a differentiated position could work – in the event that the UK Government decides to leave the single market – drawing on examples from a range of countries and scenarios which demonstrate that differentiated relationships work elsewhere' (Scottish Government, *Scotland's Place in Europe*, 20 December 2016, p45, [link](#)).