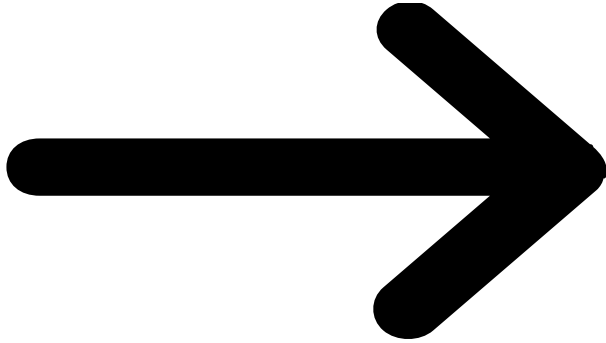


Sturgeon ramps up prospect of Labour/SNP deal

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Nicola Sturgeon has ramped up the threat of the SNP propping up Jeremy Corbyn in return for a second independence referendum in an interview on Radio 4's Women's Hour this morning.

Asked whether she would do a deal, she commented: "If the parliamentary arithmetic post the election supported this, I would want the SNP to be part of a progressive alternative to a Tory government."

She added "I'm talking something that would be...on an issue by issue basis."

With regards to the prospect of Jeremy Corbyn as Prime Minister propped up by the SNP, she said "It's no longer inevitable" that the arithmetic would not support it.

Paving the way for the deal, she positioned the SNP as trailblazing for Labour: "Jeremy Corbyn's manifesto...many of the key commitments in that, are policies that the SNP is already implementing in Scotland."

She also dismissed the idea that there should be no second referendum – even if unionist parties got over 50 per cent of the vote.

Scottish Conservative deputy leader Jackson Carlaw MSP said:

"It could not be clearer. The SNP are actively lining up to do a deal with Labour to get a second independence referendum – because they know that Jeremy Corbyn as PM is 'absolutely fine' with a second referendum.

"Across Scotland, only the Conservatives can stand up against the SNP now.

"So if you've had enough of Nicola Sturgeon, use your vote on Thursday to send Nicola Sturgeon a message she can't ignore: we've had enough – take a second independence referendum off the table and get back to the day job"

The BBC interview can be found here: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08sks0y>