

[MacAskill describes SNP's currency plans as 'not just lamentable, but laughable'](#)

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A former SNP frontbencher has described his party's plans for the currency of a separate Scotland as "not just lamentable, but laughable".

Writing in today's *Herald*, ex justice secretary Kenny MacAskill said that criticism of the nationalists will "turn to scorn" unless they can come up with a proper plan for the finances under independence.

The remarks come as Nicola Sturgeon gears up for the second of a two-day Holyrood debate on whether or not there should be another independence referendum.

But as the First Minister prepares a new break-up bid, she has repeatedly failed to address questions such as which currency an independent Scotland would use and how it would cope with huge debts, deficits and a massive shortfall in North Sea oil revenues.

Mr MacAskill said: *"The fundamental issues that lost the first referendum and undermine the case for a second – the currency and the economy – remain.*

"Failure to address the currency issue is becoming not just lamentable, but laughable. Action needs taken before criticism turns to scorn."

Scottish Conservative shadow economy secretary Dean Lockhart said:

"This is a cutting intervention from someone who, not that long ago, was at the heart of the SNP's separation campaign.

"If even Kenny MacAskill feels the nationalists' currency plans are laughable, you can imagine what the voters think.

"The SNP is rushing into this second campaign, and in the process is making all the same mistakes which lost the vote last time.

"The First Minister has recently changed the SNP's position from flirting with adopting the Euro to possibly using the pound, while other senior SNP ministers want to use a new currency altogether.

“With so much SNP confusion over a fundamental issue, how can voters be asked to make an informed decision in an independence referendum?”

To see the original remarks, visit:

http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/15173328.MacAskill__SNP_failure_over_currency_issue_becoming__quot_laughable__quot_/

[The astonishing amounts paid by NHS for locum doctors is another example of woeful workforce planning by Conservatives – Justin Madders](#)

Justin Madders MP, Labour’s Shadow Health Minister,

commenting on new figures which show that hospitals have flouted caps on locum pay, said:

“The astonishing amounts paid by the NHS for locum doctors is yet another example of the woeful workforce planning by the Conservative Government. There isn’t just a shortage of permanent medical staff, there’s now a shortage of available locums to plug the gaps.

“Patients want to know that taxpayers’ money is being spent on patient care, not padding out the profits of employment agencies. Jeremy Hunt needs to explain what he’s going to do to deliver a long term, sustainable workforce plan for the NHS.”

[The Road Investment Strategy was insufficiently planned, poorly thought out and unrealistically costed – Pat](#)

Glass

Pat Glass MP,

Labour's Shadow Transport Minister, responding to the National Audit Office (NAO) report into the Government's Road Investment Strategy, said:

"This report shows that the Government has made a huge error of judgment. The Road Investment Strategy was rushed out by George Osborne and David Cameron as a gimmick for the 2015 election. It was insufficiently planned, poorly thought out and unrealistically costed.

"This has raised expectations with motorists and businesses that Labour warned at the time could not be met and it is clear that the Department for Transport has questions to answer.

"The Government needs to seriously reconsider their plans, so that these crucial infrastructure projects are delivered on time and in budget."

After seven years of Tory failure on the economy, it's the super-rich who've gained at the expense of the rest of us – John McDonnell

John

McDonnell MP, Labour's Shadow Chancellor, commenting on the revelations by Equality Trust that the average FTSE chief executive earns 386 times more than a worker on the national living wage, said:

"These shocking figures show that after seven years of Tory failure on the economy, it's the super-rich who've gained at the expense of the rest of us.

"It also exposes the Tories' rigged economy, where despite real earnings still being lower than before the crash and public services like the NHS experiencing their worst-ever crisis, they are handing out £70 billion in tax

giveaways to the super-rich and big corporations. At the same time the Tories are cutting in-work benefits to the low paid.

"Only Labour will deliver a fair economy that doesn't hold people back by introducing a £10 an hour Real Living Wage, a fairer taxation system, and by tackling excessive boardroom pay with fairer distributions of rewards within companies."

[Replacing one prison with another prison doesn't deal with the overcrowding crisis – Richard Burgon](#)

Richard Burgon MP, Labour's Shadow Justice Secretary, commenting on the Tory Government's plans to build four new prisons, said

"We need modern prisons fit for the modern age. But simply replacing one prison with another prison doesn't deal with the overcrowding crisis. No amount of press releases can distract from that."