

Scottish National Party's Nicola Sturgeon goes warmongering in Washington

Steve James
23 June 2015

Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon's comments to the United States Council on Foreign Relations in Washington, DC, brook no misunderstanding. Asked in a question and answer session to elaborate on the Scottish National Party's (SNP) views on the European Union (EU) and Scottish relations with the US, Sturgeon explained:

"We would consider ourselves to be a key ally of the United States. We want to work constructively within the world community to make sure we are playing our part and resolving some of the conflicts and some of the issues of challenge that we live with in the modern world. We would want to be a continuing member of the NATO Alliance to play our part in collective security."

Asked her views of the UK policy on Ukraine, Iraq and Syria, Sturgeon stated, "Well, this is a good example on these issues where the Scottish government supports the UK position on Ukraine and Russia."

She continued, "We're supportive of the sanctions against Russia and have been a voice of support within the UK for the government's position and a voice of support wider than that for the international community's position."

Sturgeon is solidarising herself with a British government that has sent troops to Ukraine to train forces loyal to the right-wing government of Petro Poroshenko. Poroshenko was installed in Kiev following a coup instigated by the US and Germany and spearheaded by fascist militias. On a daily basis, British naval and air forces participate in military exercises and provocations designed to increase military and economic pressure on Russia.

Earlier this month, UK Foreign Secretary Phillip Hammond refused to rule out the return of US ground launched cruise missiles to British bases. US cruise

missiles sparked mass opposition when introduced to bases such as RAF Greenham Common in the 1980s.

"Similarly on ISIL [Islamic State] and Syria, Iraq, we support the efforts of the international community. The ISIL threat is one of the severest threats the Middle East faces," pronounced Sturgeon.

Islamic State, a product of the protracted and bloody US intervention in the Middle East, has been by turns backed and then opposed by the US and its allies. British imperialism's contribution to the efforts of the "international community" in Syria, now endorsed by Sturgeon, has been to tacitly encourage thousands of disoriented youth from UK cities to join the fight against the Syrian government of Bashar al Assad, only backing off from an air war against Damascus in 2013 at the last minute.

Sturgeon continued, "Do not think that the SNP and the Scottish government takes a markedly different position from the UK government on the vast majority of international issues. We don't. ... You will not find any great difference between our position and the position of the United Kingdom government."

Speaking of the 2014 referendum, Sturgeon said, "We set in the referendum campaign last year in very significant detail how an independent Scotland would configure its defence forces and how these defence forces would then work and cooperate with defence forces across the rest of the United Kingdom."

Scottish voters might have missed this being a prominent feature of last year's campaign. Most of the 45 percent minority who voted "Yes" to Scottish independence, and the even larger numbers voting for the SNP in May 2015, believed, wrongly, that the SNP represents a left alternative to the Labour Party. Not a few even swallowed the lie that a vote for the SNP was an anti-war vote. The SNP, after all, opposed the 2003

invasion of Iraq, on the basis of its orientation to Europe, and currently claim to oppose the renewal of Trident missiles.

Of the 2003 Iraq war, Sturgeon restricted herself to the mildest of remarks. The invasion and what followed was “the wrong direction,” she said. But Sturgeon hastily re-assured her Washington audience, “We will always be a responsible voice in terms of these international issues.” In this spirit of responsibility, she maintained a diplomatic silence over the hundreds of thousands of dead and the destruction of an entire society.

Regarding Trident, Sturgeon made comments shocking to any taking seriously the SNP’s promises to replace nuclear weapons with schools and hospitals. “The more that defence expenditure is taken up with Trident, the less expenditure we have on the conventional forces that the country really needs to secure itself and to contribute to defence internationally,” explained Sturgeon.

Sturgeon called for conventional re-armament and for global deployment and placed this explicitly in the context of a struggle against Russia:

“The UK doesn’t have maritime patrol aircraft. Towards the end of last year when there was a suspicion that Russian submarines were patrolling in our territorial waters ... we had to draw on help from elsewhere. So my view is that we need strong appropriate conventional forces that are capable of defending the United Kingdom, but also contributing positively and appropriately to international threats.”

Sturgeon’s comments make clear that the SNP leadership fully supports British participation in the global US-led military escalation, which has brought the world closer to a global war than at any time since 1945.

She was speaking during a four-day US tour, during which she also met with US Secretary of State John Kerry’s deputy, Anthony Blinken. Her aim throughout was to politically reassure Washington that the SNP, in or out of the UK, would function as an impeccably loyal ally.

Discussions with Blinken, a leading influence on US policy in Afghanistan and Pakistan, were, according to a spokesman for Sturgeon, “warm, friendly and constructive” and touched upon “the Scottish government’s support for continued membership of the

[European Union] and wider shared cultural, economic and social interests.”

With regard to the EU, there is a common line between Washington, London and Edinburgh. All three want Britain to remain in the European imperialist alliance.

Sturgeon gave a host of interviews seeking further US investment in Scotland and made a speech to the World Bank promising greater “competitiveness.”

She took time to meet with head of the International Monetary Fund, Christine Lagarde, along with the heads of investment agency Scottish Enterprise. A spokesman for Sturgeon described the conversation with Lagarde, a leading figure in the ruination being imposed by the European powers on the Greek working population, as having focussed on “improving the representation of women at all levels in business.”

On the same right-wing feminist theme, Sturgeon told the *New York Times* that she supported the election of Hillary Clinton as US president. This would be a “very significant moment for women worldwide,” she claimed.

Sturgeon’s unguarded remarks and her frank articulation of the right-wing character of the SNP are a stark exposure of the party’s army of pseudo-left apologists. The Scottish Socialist Party, Solidarity Scotland, the Radical Independence Campaign et al campaigned for a “Yes” vote in the 2014 referendum on Scottish independence and hailed the SNP landslide in May’s general election. The beneficiary of their efforts is a right-wing party of warmongers and advocates of brutal austerity.



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact