



EUROPEAN AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

AGENDA

20th Meeting, 2004 (Session 2)

Tuesday 30 November 2004

The Committee will meet at 2.00 pm in Committee Room 5.

- 1. Promoting Scotland worldwide - an Inquiry into the external relations policy, strategy and activities of the Scottish Executive:** The Committee will hear from Susan Stewart, First Secretary for Scottish Affairs, British Embassy, Washington D.C.

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The following papers are attached for this meeting:

Agenda Item 1

BRIEFING PAPER: "Written submissions of evidence for today's meeting – [EU/S2/04/20/1](#)
Promotion of Scotland Worldwide Inquiry"



**EUROPEAN AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS
COMMITTEE**

BRIEFING PAPER

**Written submissions of evidence for today's meeting – Promotion of Scotland
Worldwide Inquiry**

- 1 I attach at **Annex**, the written submission of evidence from today's witness, Susan Stewart. Most submissions received so far for this inquiry can be seen on the Committee's homepage within the Parliament's website:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/european/index.htm>

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ANNEX**SUSAN STEWART, FIRST SECRETARY FOR SCOTTISH AFFAIRS, BRITISH EMBASSY, WASHINGTON DC**

NB. This paper is an extract from the written submission made by the Scottish Executive to our inquiry. The full submission can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/european/index.htm>

SCOTTISH AFFAIRS OFFICE, BRITISH EMBASSY (WASHINGTON DC)**Background to post**

The decision to appoint a First Secretary, Scottish Affairs to work out of the British Embassy in Washington DC was announced by the then First Minister during Tartan Week in April 2001. Susan Stewart, formerly depute head of the Executive's press office, took up post on October 1 that year. At the time of the appointment the First Minister said: "This is an important role. It reflects Scotland's new position in post devolution Britain. Working with others in the Washington Embassy, the post will bring greater knowledge of contemporary Scotland to the work of the Embassy while at the same time benefiting Scotland by developing links across a wide range of sectors of importance to the United States and Scotland." Estimates of the number of Americans claiming Scottish heritage vary, but most agree that upwards of 20 million Americans have some ancestral links to Scotland. Many more are aware of, and feel warmly towards, Scotland through cultural and educational linkages (e.g. through taking part in Highland Games, and Scottish cultural festivals, or student exchanges).

Remit

The initial remit of the post was;

1. Promoting Scotland in the United States.
2. Liaison with all Scottish agencies working in the US (whether based there or not).
3. Outreach to Scottish-American organisations and societies.
4. Working with the British Embassy's press and public affairs network to provide information services about Scotland.
5. Organising the Executive's contribution to Tartan Day and other events, which promote Scotland throughout the US.
6. Assist with the organisation of visits by Scottish Ministers and senior officials to the United States and other Scottish visitors as appropriate (e.g. MSPs).
7. Assist with the organisation of visits by influential Americans to Scotland.
8. Promote educational, cultural and other exchanges between Scotland and the US.
9. Helping to market Scottish Universities to US scholarships and fellowship applicants.

The running costs of the office were initially set at £200k per annum and remain so. The DC office was supplemented by a full time secretary in February 2002, (currently

Carolyn Ritchie), and an Edinburgh based US policy officer was appointed in December 2002 (Stuart McLean). As part of his remit, Stuart keeps in regular contact with Scottish organisations active in the US (such as visitscotland, Scottish Enterprise, and the Parliament), as well as working in a cross-cutting way across Executive departments.

US STRATEGY; KEY AREAS OF ACTIVITY

1. Liaison with Scottish organisations

A wide variety of Scottish organisations and individuals have contacted the Scottish Affairs office for advice on planning their American activities and/or visits. The Scottish Affairs Office has been happy to work with them and has, on occasion, hosted receptions at the Embassy and/or dinner for them, often putting them in touch with relevant bodies in the US.

The office has worked closely with the FCO, Marshall Commission, British Council and Scottish universities to attract more Marshall Scholars to Scottish universities, as well as undergraduates and Junior Year Abroad students. Many of Scotland's cities and local authorities have utilised the Scottish Affairs office, and the First secretary has accompanied the Lord Provosts and councillors from Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dundee on US visits. Additionally, the First Secretary works closely with officials in the Scottish Parliament, ensuring that they receive information relevant to the Parliament to, and assisting with proposed US visits of MSPs. The First Secretary works with Scottish Development International in the US, and has attended and addressed several globalscot meetings in the US.

2. Liaison with Scottish American organisations

The First Secretary has built up a contact database of over 1000 individuals and organisations with an affinity to and interest in Scotland. Through periodic newsletters, they are kept abreast of innovation and the strengths of contemporary Scotland. She also facilitates contact between individuals and groups in the US and Scotland. The First Secretary is a frequent public speaker to a diverse range of organisations, ranging from St Andrews's societies, to business and educational audiences. The office averages around 300 e-mails and 150 phone calls per week. Many of these seek general information about Scotland, and some can be referred to more appropriate agencies and/or websites. That number has increased steadily as the existence of the office becomes more widely known about. Work is in hand to construct a Scottish Affairs Office website.

3. Work with FCO and Consulate network

The Scottish Affairs office worked with British Information Services, based in the New York consulate, to develop dedicated Scottish pages on www.britainusa.com, a public information website which currently receives around 10 000 hits per month. The site now also includes links to various bodies, including the Scottish Parliament and Executive. The office has also worked with others to identify gaps in the FCO's UK promotional material where information about Scotland is missing or inaccurate.

The office plays a role in keeping the Embassy and Consulate network abreast of Scottish policy and political development through regular briefings and newsletters. Working with colleagues in the Embassy and consulate network, the Scottish Affairs office advised the Friends of Scotland project, formerly run by the Scotland Office, helping to minimise duplication and maximise impact. Co-operative work with representatives of other devolved government continues, particularly with the DC based Northern Ireland Bureau, to build mutually beneficial links and share best practice.

Tartan Day: Scottish involvement in Tartan day (6 April) has grown over the past 3 years, as more Scots recognise the promotional opportunities afforded by this American celebration. The Scottish Affairs Office has had the lead role in coordinating the Executive's participation in Tartan Day events (including Ministerial participation) and liaison with American Scottish societies and Scottish agencies. The newly created Promotion of Scotland division in the Executive, within which the USA office sits, will continue to work with the range of Scottish organisations participating in Tartan Day. Tartan Day is a US celebration and is expanding rapidly; the Scottish affairs office has a key role in assessing that expansion to identify the most effective means and mechanisms of harnessing the reservoir of goodwill towards Scotland which resides in the US, to Scotland's long term benefit.

4. Contributing to Executive policy development/co-ordination and sharing of best practice

As resources permit, it is planned that the Scottish Affairs Office will have a role in identifying key US legislatures - both at state and city level - where meaningful policy exchanges can take place. The First Secretary's participation in the Embassy's Domestic policy Group ensures that others in Embassy and consulate are kept abreast of Scottish policy innovations and points of divergence from England and Wales. It also helps ensure Scottish representation in US/UK conferences (e.g. education and citizenship conference 2002) Working with Scottish Enterprise Glasgow, the First Secretary, chaired the 2002/03 US steering group of the inaugural Scotland: Young Leaders programme; this was a pilot programme designed to help develop international leadership and entrepreneurial skills in Scottish undergraduates. Twelve young people from Glasgow institutions were placed in a range of blue chip US companies, and also had a private tour of the US capitol and a familiarisation visit to the British Embassy in DC, facilitated by the First Secretary. The Scottish Affairs Office has identified opportunities for both Executive Ministers, and SE officials to meet counterparts in the US, and has assisted with the visits of Ministers, parliamentarians (from Scotland and Westminster), Executive and Parliamentary staff.

Scotland at the Smithsonian: The First Secretary played a key role in identifying opportunities for Scotland that would come with participation in the folklife festival. She acted as a liaison point for the Smithsonian curators, and sat on the leadership committee for the festival. The festival, held in summer 2003, drew upwards of 1 million visitors. A range of Scottish agencies worked together to present Scotland at the Smithsonian, a 6 months long series of events relating to Scotland: Scottish Executive, VisitScotland, Scottish Arts Council, National Museums of Scotland and Scottish Universities. The First Secretary hosted two Scottish evenings at the British

Embassy as part of the Smithsonian Associates programme sponsored by VisitScotland.

NB. This second paper has been provided by the Scottish Executive in its submission to the Committee. The paper was originally intended to inform members of its Scottish International Forum regarding Tartan Day, which is an important component of the work of the Scottish Executive officials in Washington DC.

TARTAN DAY 2004

Purpose

1. A discussion paper for the Scottish International Forum; focusing on Tartan Day, its purpose and the opportunities it affords for Scotland, the Scottish Executive, agencies and the public and private sectors and to suggest methods of delivery on both sides of the Atlantic.

Background

2. Tartan Day was established in the USA in 1998, with a Senate resolution sponsored by then Republican Leader Senator Trent Lott. The date, 6th April, was chosen because it is the anniversary of the Declaration of Arbroath, thought by many to have influenced the American Declaration of Independence.

3. Since then Tartan day has developed across the US, with many hundreds of celebrations of varying sizes. By far the largest and most publicly recognised celebrations are held on the East coast, notably New York City and Washington DC, although Chicago's celebrations have grown in recent years. The number of events, and the number of organisations marking Tartan Day increases every year, as does the number of individual states and cities officially designating Tartan Day.

4. Scotland - its government, agencies, and public and private sectors have grasped the opportunities offered by Tartan Day to promote the best of contemporary Scotland. Starting in 2000, each year the involvement of the Executive and its agencies has been larger.

5. Critically, Scottish agencies and organisations have only engaged in those areas where American Scottish organisations have already established Tartan Day and those areas which are priority markets for us.

6. However, although Tartan Day has been seen by organisations and individuals here in Scotland as an opportunity, it is important to always remember that Tartan Day is primarily an **American** celebration with both a date and a name that are fixed.

7. The events that have proved to be most successful those when Scottish organisations have both worked effectively together and in partnership with US organisations, sharing information and liaising carefully with them. The benefits of Scottish and transatlantic partnerships were also seen clearly in this year's Scotland at the Smithsonian celebrations.

8. To continue to utilise the opportunity of Tartan Day effectively we must strike the balance between our promoting Scotland overseas in line with our objectives and

working alongside the US organisations for whom Tartan Day has considerable significance.

Promoting Scotland

9. The First Minister has said that he wants to see Scotland viewed in the world as a good place to work and live, to do business with and to visit. A number of different activities are underway, both within Executive and elsewhere (such as the Fresh Talent initiative and Entente Cordiale), which aim to both promote Scotland and take forward key policy objectives. The Forum has previously identified the need to highlight themes which should be used in promoting Scotland overseas – these were;

- Pride and Passion
- Cultured
- Must Visit
- Skilled and Educated People
- Innovation
- Inclusion

10. Work on refining the messages which can be used for promoting Scotland is nearing completion, but these themes can offer a useful basis in helping determine the shape and extent of Scottish involvement in National Tartan Day 2004.

Engaging with the USA

11. A central objective for the Executive in public diplomacy is the effectiveness of our engagement with the USA. Our broad aim is to ensure a wide understanding in the USA of the new Scotland - in political, governance and cultural as well as in economic terms. It is for that reason, the Executive set up the Scottish Affairs Office in the British Embassy in Washington.

12. Scotland has many unique selling points and there are advantages in Scotland being understood as a distinct cultural and political entity within the UK. Helping to promote and reinforce that understanding is the work undertaken to foster educational and cultural promotion and exchange. This is carried through in partnership with other agencies, such as the British Council and examples of it are the forthcoming Marshall Scholar reception in early 2004 and the Tomorrow's Leaders Programme. The latter was initiated this year as a joint venture between the Scottish Executive and Scottish Enterprise Glasgow to encourage the development of leadership skills in Scotland's leaders of the future.

13. The Executive has priorities for its work in the USA, both overall in terms of the Scottish Affairs Office in Washington and those which are more specifically focussed for SDI or Visitscotland, in relation to their core business. Our aim is for these to sit alongside each other in a complementary and mutually beneficial way.

Tartan Day

14. Tartan Day provides a ready-made public diplomacy opportunity to promote Scotland in the US. It allows the Executive to articulate its vision of the new Scotland, and allows Executive agencies and other bodies to take forward their own priorities, within the overall Tartan Day context. Different key messages will be to the fore in different events and depending on the lead bodies.

15. But, as with the Executive's 'Scotland In' promotions, it is critical to ensure co-operative and complementary approaches, and a model of joint, integrated action. This is particularly true in the US. Scotland is a small country attempting to make an impact in a very large one. There are clear advantages over the 'Scotland In' approach in that local organisations and activity already exists and these allow Scotland to build upon a larger base each year.

Tartan Day 04

16. In its wider US strategy, the Executive is already focusing on science and technology - which is also a central theme in the UK's public diplomacy promotion. 'Skilled and Educated' and 'Innovative' are, therefore, the 2 key themes which are to the fore.

17. Because of the twin importance of partnership with US organisations and the advantages of building on Tartan Day branding, the Executive and its agencies will continue to focus primarily on those areas where substantial Tartan Day activity already exists – New York, Washington DC and to a lesser extent, Chicago. This makes sense because it allows us to take advantage of the critical mass available from the work and enthusiasm of others.

18. Experience in the US and elsewhere has shown us the critical importance of planning and preparation if we are to meet the objectives of the Scottish Executive and support other organisations to meet theirs. Between us we have agreed the 6 key messages that best promote Scotland, but each of us has our own 'core business' and each will have different measures for success. With preparation and planning we can secure the collaborative and complementary approach which allows us to effectively promote Scotland in a way that maximises impact by its unity and by the flexibility it allows each to meet discrete objectives.

19. For Tartan Day 2004, we are proposing three strands to our joint planning and preparation.

- Set up a sub-group of the SIF, involving interested parties - both public and private, and convened before end October. It is suggested that the group is chaired by John Henderson, of External Relations. The purpose of the group will be to share information and agree shared priorities for Scottish engagement in Tartan Day 04. The group will look at the most efficient way of delivering on agreed plans, including working with other organisations and commercial agencies. The Scottish Affairs Office in the US would liaise regularly with this group, providing background information and information on US plans as they develop.

- In the US the Scottish Executive's First Secretary, Susan Stewart, convene a meeting in New York and invite all interested parties including American Scottish organisations and Scottish organisations active in Tartan Day. The objective here would be to encourage organisations to share information and build on our successful attempts in 2003 to get disparate organisations and individuals to work together.
- To aid the planning process on both sides of the Atlantic and to provide a single information 'site, we propose that all contact with the FCO consulate network and with American Scottish organisations should be channelled through our Scottish Affairs Office in Washington. In this way, we can keep American organisations informed of Scottish plans, and the Scottish based group up-to-date with US plans as they emerge.

Media and Presentation

20. We can never begin our thinking and planning on this too early. In the past, Scotland has not made the most of Tartan Day opportunities, both with our home media but also and importantly, with the media in the US. So running parallel with the 3 strands, we suggest that the PR officers from all Scottish based agencies involved in Tartan Day meet regularly and share communications plans from an early stage. These can be fed into our Scottish planning group and through the Washington Office, to the Embassy press team.

21. Building our individual and shared media strategy will be critical to winning maximum impact from the opportunity of Tartan Day and a return which helps all our work in the months that follow.

Conclusion

22. That the Scottish International Forum agree;

- The main focus of Scottish involvement in Tartan Day should be New York, DC and Chicago
- The 6 themes which the Forum has already highlighted and Fresh Talent initiative, will form the context for Scottish involvement in Tartan Day
- A Tartan Day working group, chaired by John Henderson, be convened immediately

SUSAN STEWART
First Secretary (Scottish Affairs)
September 2003