

The SNP is forced to think again on the future Scottish...

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Regular readers of this blog will know that over the last couple of years or so I have become quite involved in debate about what might happen in Scotland if it were to become independent, and that led to [some involvement in recent discussion](#) in anticipation of the SNP conference yesterday to resolve whether, and when, Scotland should have its own currency at the time of independence, or soon thereafter. I am pleased to share [comment from Commonspace](#), from the Common Weal think tank, on the outcome:

ON 27 APRIL 2019, the grassroots of the SNP showed its mettle, and proved that the independence movement is a thinking, critical and truly independent force, willing to defeat their own leaders when necessary.

The Growth Commission motion passed, but only after a revolt from below which saw an enormous 781 delegates vote in favour of amendment D, with 729 against.

That amendment mandates the party to “take the steps necessary to enable the Scottish Parliament to authorise the preparation of a Scottish Currency as soon as practicable after a vote for Independence with the aim that the currency be ready for introduction as soon as practicable after Independence Day.”

The amendment scraps the annual Central Bank assessments proposed by the movers of the motion, but it doesn’t explicitly get rid of the six tests in which the assessments were supposed to be based on.

This was a stunning, and slightly unexpected victory and full marks to DEr Tim Rideout, who comments on this blog, for proposing this motion and getting it carried. That is the good news.

The bad news is that the SNP leadership say the six tests of when a currency may be introduced are intact, but Tim Rideout savaged them in his conference speech. And Commonspace said:

This leaves a battle of interpretation over the outcome, with an SNP press officer telling

CommonSpace afterwards that despite the movers of Amendment D trashing the six tests, the amendment was, in fact, “kind of in harmony” with the tests.

No one in the Edinburgh conference hall would have been thinking that when watching Tim Rideout propose Amendment D, and in a five minute contribution totally dismantle the case presented by the SNP leadership, including taking each test apart piece by piece. It was a virtuoso performance, which will have to be re-played repeatedly to those who deem to turn Amendment D into something it was most certainly not intended to be by its advocates. In fact, the safest interpretation of the vote for Amendment D, as opposed to B or C, was that it was the strongest and simplest in advocating for a Scottish currency as soon as possible.

Rideout’s speech was the highlight of what was a hugely precise and rigorous argumentation on the side of those in favour of the amendments to the currency motion - entirely made up of contributions from the grassroots of the party, who provided a major rebuke to unionist stereotypes of the rank-and-file of the independence movements as brainless droids. Surely no one could have come away from those contributions thinking anything of the kind.

I hope that is true, and having read Tim's speech I cannot see how it can be interpreted any other way. But this is politics. And the fight for sane economic policy seems to be a continuing battle. But victories have to be counted, and yesterday was one of them.