

The next Scottish government, and independence, lines u...

Published: January 14, 2026, 3:04 pm

Nicola Sturgeon has [survived the challenge to her authority](#) whatever the Tories now do with a vote of no-confidence. The Hamilton enquiry has exonerated her with regard to the ministerial code. The previous political vote in the Scottish parliament on her conduct will now be easy to dismiss as partisan. The threat to Sturgeon's premiership is over.

But let me suggest something else that is obviously afoot. I have not the slightest doubt that some sort of agreement between the SNP and Greens is on the cards now. The deal is that there will be a coalition of some form in the next parliament, come what may, whether the SNP gets a majority or not.

This matters, a lot. Not only is it [following the precedent set](#) by Jacinda Ardern in New Zealand - which gives enormous cover to this arrangement - but it also guarantees a pro-independence majority for the next Scottish government in the election- whether the SNP gets that majority on its own, or not. And that neuters the Westminster claim that without such a majority a second referendum is not possible.

I am not Sturgeon's biggest fan. She is too right-wing, proposed the Growth Commission and its awful suggestions on currency and other issues, and has been too timid on many issues. But my very strong suspicion is that she has outflanked all her opponents today, with the help of the Greens. The cause of Scottish independence has taken a step forward this afternoon that is going to leave all others trailing behind.

And the opposition in Westminster should take note. This is how to do politics.