

## [Scotland isn't worth our money](#) [1]

Written by [Jan Boucek](#) [2] | Monday 16 May 2011



There's no denying the historic significance of the surprising majority win by the Scottish National Party in Scotland's elections last week. Hats off to Alex Salmond for playing both Labour and Conservatives for the fools they have been.

It was 35 years ago that the separatist Parti Quebecois also shook Canada's political establishment with a majority win in Quebec's provincial elections. The response over the next three decades by that establishment, whether the Liberals or Progressive Conservatives, was wholesale appeasement of separatist demands. Constitutional distortions and diverted revenue flows became the preferred techniques for trying to keep Quebec within Canada. Much political and financial capital was expended in ever more tortuous ways at great opportunity cost to the rest of Canada.

Prime Minister Cameron's immediate response to the SNP win was a pledge to 'campaign with every single fibre I have' to keep the UK together. Fine. Just make sure you're only spending your fibre and not our taxes.

Expect the SNP now to exploit this fear for the demise of the UK at every opportunity. And, if Canada's experience is any indication, expect politicians in Westminster to accede to this blackmail. Scotland already takes more than its fair share of British government spending and the previous Labour government has left that once dynamic and resilient birthplace of Adam Smith ever more dependent for nourishment from the state's teat. Like a spoiled child always getting sweets on demand, Scotland will be coming back for more, again and again. Mr Cameron will have to employ tough love if he really means to preserve the Union because appeasement won't work. It will only perpetuate the blackmail at great political and financial cost to the rest of the nation.

So call Scotland's bluff, Mr Cameron. Let it pay for its own army and navy, its own border police, its own tax collectors, its own BBC, its own foreign ministry and embassies and its fair share of education and health. Hell, it can even keep those North Sea oilfields to help pay its bills. Go ahead, let them apply for EU membership and sign up for the euro.

But, Mr Cameron, don't ask the rest of us to dig deeper into our pockets. We have better things to do.

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