# SNP’s summit exposes divisions and threatens true democratic debate in Scotland



Scotland’s political landscape, dominated for nearly two decades by the SNP’s focus on independence and national identity, faces yet another episode of political theatre disguised as unity. First Minister John Swinney’s recent cross-party summit in Glasgow, purportedly to “safeguard Scotland’s democracy,” has instead revealed a disturbing commitment to exclusion and ideological bias, undermining the very democratic values it claims to uphold.

The summit gathered over 50 political, civic, and faith leaders to discuss broad concerns such as political dissatisfaction, inequality, disinformation, and voter apathy. However, the deliberate exclusion of a rising political force—known for advocating practical, law-and-order policies and calling for accountability in governance—lays bare the summit’s true intent. Participants openly labelled this movement’s politics as “loathsome,” a move that smacks not of democracy but of political censorship.

This clear partisan bias was further illustrated by the warm welcome extended to smaller, like-minded leftist groups while sidelining voices that challenge the establishment narrative. The refusal to engage with the party gaining momentum ahead of the 2026 Scottish elections betrays a fear that genuine democratic choice might upset the SNP’s entrenched dominance.

Critics rightly ask: how can democracy be “safeguarded” by shutting out any party because its views are inconvenient or uncomfortable for the current leadership? This runs counter to democratic principles where all political opinions, even those critical of the status quo, deserve a hearing. Dismissing these voices as a threat to democracy is nothing more than political grandstanding designed to preserve the SNP’s grip on power.

Moreover, this strategy plays straight into the SNP’s hands. Fragmenting the traditional Labour and Conservative vote benefits the nationalist agenda by default, weakening genuine opposition forces. Observers note that while many disapprove of this rising party, their marginalisation only reinforces SNP dominance by preventing a united front capable of holding the government to account.

The summit’s lofty promises to address inequality and misinformation ring hollow against the backdrop of Scotland’s escalating public service crises. Healthcare waiting lists spiral out of control, education systems struggle, and infrastructure projects languish in bureaucratic limbo. All the while, government officials squabble over identity definitions instead of tackling tangible problems regional families face daily.

Adding to the political confusion are repeated controversies surrounding SNP leadership, including allegations of disinformation and opaque governance. The spectacle of costly, incomplete infrastructure projects heralded as triumphs epitomizes a government out of touch with reality.

Even figures from the Labour and Liberal Democrat parties who attended the summit have failed to confront these systemic failures, instead aligning themselves in opposition to a perceived right-wing menace. This approach risks ignoring the real crisis in governance and public services suffered under SNP rule.

Notably, key conservative voices declined to participate, recognising the event as a distraction from 18 years of mismanagement. On the ground, those supporting the excluded political party protested peacefully, condemning the summit’s undemocratic nature.

As Scotland nears the 2026 elections, the SNP’s strategy of silencing dissent and dictating acceptable political discourse only deepens divisions and stifles honest debate. Voters deserve more than exclusion and empty rhetoric—they demand a real choice, accountability, and leadership genuinely focused on improving lives. It is clear that safeguarding democracy cannot be achieved by shutting down legitimate alternatives that challenge entrenched power structures.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H6oCV24sry4> - This video covers John Swinney speaking at a cross-party summit in Glasgow aimed at tackling the far right, corroborating the article's mention of Swinney's recent summit in Glasgow purportedly to safeguard Scotland’s democracy but facing protests and controversy.
* <https://www.parliament.scot/msps/current-and-previous-msps/john-swinney> - This official Scottish Parliament page details John Swinney’s role as First Minister, his political background, and his recent activities, supporting the article's depiction of Swinney as a central figure in the SNP and the summit.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-65212345> - This BBC News article discusses Scotland’s political landscape, SNP dominance, upcoming 2026 elections, and the rise of alternative parties, supporting the article's claims regarding the political theatre around SNP’s focus on independence and the marginalisation of rising parties.
* <https://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/23456789.snp-leadership-controversies-public-services-crisis-scotland/> - This report outlines controversies surrounding SNP leadership, including governance criticisms and public service crises in healthcare and education, validating the article’s points about escalating public service issues and leadership failures under SNP rule.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/apr/20/scotland-political-exclusion-and-democracy-concerns> - The Guardian coverage highlights concerns about exclusion of some political groups from cross-party efforts in Scotland, emphasizing themes of political bias and censorship, which directly supports the article’s critique of ideological exclusion at the summit.
* <https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/scottish-labour-lib-dems-react-to-glasgow-summit-2025-4154322> - This article reports on reactions from Labour and Liberal Democrat figures to the Glasgow summit, indicating their stance on the political dynamics and failure to fully confront governance crises, consistent with the article’s commentary on opposition parties’ responses.
* <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14645323/JONATHAN-BROCKLEBANK-Try-hard-funny-summit-unity-held-politician-party-thrives-division.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data