

Press release: Ian Davidson challenges Nick Clegg on referendum promise

Ian Davidson, MP for Glasgow South West, has today challenged Nick Clegg on his refusal to support a referendum on the Constitutional Treaty. In an open letter to the Liberal Democrat leader, Ian has called on Nick Clegg to back the idea of a two question referendum when it is discussed in the Commons next week.

The letter text:

Dear Nick – I was interested to see that you are now campaigning for a referendum on Britain's membership of the EU. My concern is that you are only calling for a referendum on "in or out of Europe" to cover up the fact you are against a referendum on the real issue in hand – the revived Constitutional Treaty.

As you know, there is no chance at all of the "in or out" vote being agreed. Nor is it a good idea. Most people in Britain don't want to see further centralisation of power in the EU – but at the same time they want to reform the EU, not leave it. Only offering people a polarising "in or out" referendum would be a dishonest attempt to push people into positions they don't hold.

However, I accept there are some arguments for a referendum going beyond simply the new Treaty. It's true the treaties passed since 1975 cumulatively amount to a big change in the way we are governed.

_So, why not have a two-question referendum? One question would ask people whether they supported the new Treaty, and the other would ask whether they wanted to remain in the EU.

_Personally, I would vote 'no' to the treaty and 'yes' to remaining in the EU.

Colleagues and I will be putting down an amendment for such a two-question referendum next week. _

_We hope that you and your parliamentary party will support this. Opposing it would make it clear that your real agenda is not to prompt a referendum on "in or out" - but just to stop a referendum on the Treaty.

_Best wishes, _ _Ian Davidson MP _