

# ARCHIE FINDS

By Jo Perry

**L**OCAL landowner Archie Stirling has launched his own political party called Scottish Voice to fight May's elections.

# HIS VOICE

## Local landowner launches political party

The millionaire laird of the Keir Estate, pictured right, kicked off his political campaign in Edinburgh yesterday (Tuesday), saying he hoped his party would spark debate.

Mr Stirling, who is perhaps better known nationally for his eight year marriage to actress Dame Diana Rigg, told the Stirling Observer he intended to stand as a candidate himself for Central Scotland.

He said: "Scottish Voice will be a voice for all those disenchanted with the performance of those who have run the devolution ship aground.

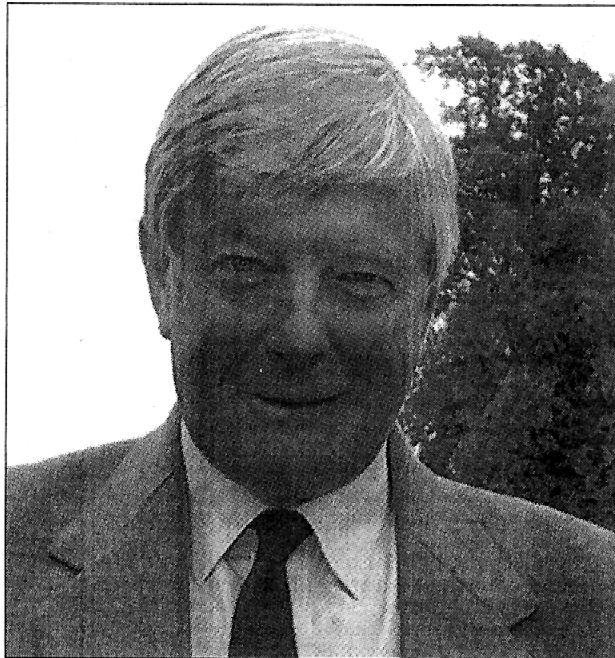
"Primarily we want to start a debate.

### Failing

"People can see that when it comes to health, education and criminal justice the politicians at Holyrood are failing.

"What we are hoping for is that people will give us their second vote on the ballot paper.

"If we can get four or five members elected, then that will be a great success as far as



we are concerned.

"We are essentially looking to get enough members elected to be a kind of audit committee in the Scottish Parliament,

holding the politicians to account."

Mr Stirling (65), whose uncle was Colonel Sir David Stirling, founder of the Special Air Ser-

vice, describes the new party as being "in the centre" of the political spectrum.

He acknowledged that his party would not be publishing a party manifesto but said he was committed to the idea of devolution.

### Lefty

He added: "If it's about a free National Health Service then I am very much a lefty but if the question is about business and what is needed in Scotland along business lines then you could describe me a centre right.

"This is not about me seeking publicity, it is about starting a debate.

"If on May 4 we have started that debate about the standards at Holyrood then this whole thing will have been a success."

● Scottish Voice was not the first name choice for the new party after the electoral commission refused permission for the name Scottish Democrats or New Scottish Democrats on the grounds of its similarity to other political parties.

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