



After the brilliant performance of Nicola Sturgeon on the UK leaders debate it was only a matter of time before an attack was launched to discredit Sturgeon and the SNP, we just didn't expect it so quick.

On Thursday 2nd of April Nicola Sturgeon wowed not just her supporters in Scotland but many thousands of people from all over Wales, N Ireland and England, people who don't even have the chance of voting for the SNP. Twitter nearly went into meltdown with the number of comments **praising Nicola** and the SNP, with the underlying message "**I wish I could vote SNP**". As well as Twitter, Google experienced a high volume of searches asking "can I vote SNP" and or "how can I vote SNP" and in the snap polls carried out during the debate Sturgeon **won by 8%** over her nearest rival. Therefore it was essential that the unionist Parties and media righted this perceived wrong and derail the SNP threat to their way of life, the Telegraph duly obliged on Friday with an alleged leaked Scottish Office Memo.

The Headline screamed "Nicola Sturgeon secretly backs David Cameron". The article claimed that a Memo written by a Civil Servant (they are at it again) states that Nicola expressed her opinion to a French Ambassador that she would prefer Cameron to win GE15 as Miliband was not PM material. The Telegraph never contacted either Sturgeon or the Ambassador for comment (obviously) they just ran with the story.

Simon Johnson Tweeted, 3 April, "*exclusive by me and @peterdominiczac Sturgeon tells senior diplomat she wants Cameron to "remain" in Downing Street*". Nicola Sturgeon immediately Tweeted back, "*your story is categorically, 100%, untrue...which I'd have told you if you'd asked me at any point today*". Of course the unionist Parties were all over it, none more so than Labours Scotland branch. Ed Miliband stated "*I think these are damning revelations. What it shows is that while in public the SNP are saying they don't want to see a Conservative government, in private they are actually saying they do want a Conservative government*". Kezia Dugdale Labour Scotland Branch Deputy also jumped all over it, Tweeting, "*everyone knew the Tories wanted the SNP to win, but now we know SNP want Tories to win*". Her Dad Jeff Dugdale Tweeted his response, "*@kdugdalemsp Check facts before opening your mouth, Kezia*". Jim Murphy could stop talking about it and campaigners in East Lothian pinned the Daily Mail (an out and out Tory paper) to their street stall. You get the gist, it was like all three unionist parties and their supporters had died and gone to Heaven.

BOOM, the French diplomats who were in the room for the meeting with Nicola (yes there were 2 of them) **categorically deny** the statement was ever made. Shock horror, it just **wasn't true** now how could that have happened? Derek Bateman sums it up in a few paragraphs from his blog An Online Dialogue, "*opinion has infected its (Telegraph) reporting, never more so than under Alan Cochrane and Simon Johnson in Scotland. Cochrane admits in his diary of the referendum spiking stories that Alistair Darling felt were damaging to the No side. This is anti journalism and the opposite of what reporting is about – disclosure. It shows the Telegraph will abandon principle when confronted with a political influence. It can't be trusted. Then there is the resignation of Peter Osborne as chief political commentator who decided the paper was selling its soul to appease HSBC in order to keep its advertising contract*".

The Telegraph is owned by Frederick and David Barclay, **billionaire tax dodgers**. They also own the Spectator, (a right wing magazine edited by Tory, Scot Fraser Nelson) Andrew Neil (BBC) is chairman of their holding company, all involved shared the memo story **all are anti-SNP**. But that is not the only paper that is anti-SNP, the Mail, the Express, the Guardian and of course our very own favourite the Daily Record to name but a few. Just like in the Independence Referendum **all UK press** with the exceptions of the National and Sunday Herald are pro Westminster and anti-SNP. It therefore, will come as no surprise that smear campaigns and/or stories like this **will become the norm** between now and May 7th, the SNP are a threat to the big three and a perceived threat to democracy, the fact that the SNP do have an opportunity to **have a say** in how the UK is run is in fact Democracy in action.

It doesn't stop there though, it turns out the memo originated from the Scottish Office. The office that is the responsibility of Scottish Secretary Alistair Carmichael (LibDem). Not only that Carmichael claims to know who leaked the document but refused to tell anyone who it was, instead he stated, "*this is the middle of an election campaign, these things happen*". In a damning response Sturgeon said: "*I think Alistair Carmichael really needs to question his whole approach to politics if he thinks dirty tricks and smear campaigns are just how things are done in elections. I take a very different view. I think elections should be a battle of positive ideas and that's how I'll continue to campaign*". Ms Sturgeon has demanded an inquiry, Sir Jeremy Heywood has obliged.

During the smear campaign the BBC asked Alex Neil (SNP) who he would prefer to win in an interview for the BBC's The Politics Show. Neil speculated on how a Conservative government elected at Westminster may impact on Scotland, pointing out how it could lead to an upsurge in support for independence due to growing hostility towards the Tory Government.. However, the programme then **claimed** that this showed Neil had expressed a preference on who he wanted to win the election. The broadcast sparked a furious backlash from the SNP and prompted Neil to make a **written complaint** to MacQuarrie, demanding an apology. MacQuarrie **did apologise** saying, "*let me apologise on behalf of BBC Scotland for the error in suggesting that you had*".

We could go on and on about just this one smear against the SNP but we won't, we will save our keyboard for the next attempt to discredit the Scottish National Party **we are pretty sure it won't take too long**, in fact I imagine they are conjuring something up as I type. I wonder if it will have anything to do with the Scottish leaders debate on STV on Tuesday night? Predictions to FOI@virginmedia.com or our website www.FreedomofInformation.scot/get-in-touch/

Don't be taken in by the media and their smear, always research the facts and find out the truth, if you don't Scotland may regret it.

WHAT YOU SOW SO SHALL YOU REAP For many years there has been a growing desire in Scotland for more control of our own affairs ranging from Devolution to full Independence. This increasing restlessness has been resisted by the British Establishment determined to maintain its control over Scotland. They have insisted that the growing momentum for autonomy north of the border is manipulated by a hostile 'Anti-English' Nationalist government. That argument has very little support here in Scotland but the Establishment have been aiming their propaganda much further south. That tactic has been fully endorsed by the Westminster Parliament and the puppet British Media and seemed to be working until just a few days ago.

Now the people of England have been given an opportunity to hear Scotland's First Minister speak at length with the three main Unionist leaders and she was outstanding. Not only did she own the stage but she was able to make the British public aware that the three main Unionist parties are offering them the **same old policies** but from slightly different angles. She would have given the millions of traditional Labour voters in the rest of the United Kingdom a glimpse of what **a real caring politician** looked like. She would have reminded them of a different era when their own Labour politicians actually gave a damn. Whilst the three main Unionists were preaching **painful** but necessary **Austerity**, Nicola Sturgeon and her counterparts in Plaid Cymru and the Greens were offering a fairer and more balanced plan that included asking the rich to take their fair share of the pain. The Unionist Establishment pulled out every stop and called in every favour from their lapdogs in the British Media in an effort to demonise and smear the First Minister. They intended to shoot her down in flames but instead she went down a treat with the very people they wanted to despise her. The English people had far more grace and manners than their elected representatives and they allowed the women to speak. Then they realised that they recognised the values she was expressing from a bygone age when they too had compassionate and dignified politicians.

The sheer horror of the British Establishment was clear for all to see and the fear was just as palpable as they realised their planned smear campaign had backfired. With as much haste and folly with which they embarked on plan A they executed plan B and clumsily conspired to assassinate her character accusing her of confiding in the French Ambassador that she secretly preferred David Cameron in number ten as opposed to Ed Miliband. With equal speed those accusations were shot down in flames by the French Embassy and the French Ambassador who insisted that Nicola Sturgeon said no such thing. By that time it was already too late as the British Media controlled by the Establishment had ran with the story regardless of whether it was true or not. David Cameron, Ed Miliband and Unionist politicians all the way down the food chain continue to slander the First Minister of Scotland despite the fact those allegations have been **totally discredited** by the French Ambassador and the First Minister.

Instead of turning the people of Scotland against the Scottish Nationalists and their leader the arrogance and aggression of the British Establishment has made the entire electorate of the United Kingdom aware of their **deceit** and disgraceful contempt for the democratic process. It is against all protocol for any Civil Servant to intervene in the democratic process in favour of one side against the other. However, the fact that a Civil Servant from the Scottish Office has **deliberately** leaked a private memo to the media with the intention of damaging one political party in the campaign is **against the rules** of conduct. The fact that the private memo has been shown to be false is far more serious and implies that the British State is **sabotaging our democracy** in favour of one outcome. The First Minister is used to this type of dirty politics and state interference following the despicable behaviour of Westminster and its hired helpers in the British Media during the Scottish independence referendum. Rather than silence the Scottish First Minister and the Scottish National Party Westminster and their partners in crime from the Civil Service and the **corrupt and bias** British Media have given them an opportunity to reach and enlighten a much wider audience. That will prove to be a very costly mistake by Westminster and its co-conspirators which they will realise to their cost much sooner than they think.

Chic Macgregor

Help spread the Freedom of Information message by photocopying or printing some copies and posting through friends and neighbours letterboxes. The more bulletins in circulation, the greater chance Scotland has of winning more seats.

To My Unknown Kin We have never met. I have never heard your voice or accent. We haven't looked each other in the eye or shared a personal memory of joy, or regret. Nor a joke between friends, or the loss of a loved one. Yet we are bound to each other?

What I have with you is a small part, a crucial part, in a large and growing aspiration. We have the same role that we play within a movement which has already etched itself into the proud history of the country which forms part of the very fabric of our souls. Our home of birth or our home of choice. This is our being. The country of our future and our children's future. We have never met, and yet you are my brother and my sister. I find that you are my companion, a confidante, and when needed, my counsel!

We are one and will never be strangers again because we share something that many of our forefathers shared - the greatest of dreams. A belief. The knowledge that we are part of the most wonderful journey our country has known in over 300 years. We are a privileged band of brothers and sisters who share a struggle.

We are close and getting closer to realising our vision of a socially democratic country that puts people before pounds; bairns before bombs; and hope before fear. We will not rest.

Hopefully many years from now when our lives are nearing their end, we will have our shared memories of the pain of loss of a referendum, but joy in being part of the rise of a growing band of patriots who would not diminish or relinquish. Most of us will reminisce with our children on the battles lost, but freedom that was eventually won.

There will be commonality in our contributions and the efforts we made to achieve the ultimate goal. We will share more than similar recollections and more than many people who are kin could ever do in a lifetime.

Good evening to you my brothers and sisters, for I am blessed to share all of this with you all, now, and when we have arrived at our destination.

Raibeart MacPhàrlain

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