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IN THE ELECTION COURT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

**NOTE OF ARGUMENT FOR  
THE PETITIONERS**

in the petition

under the Representation of the People Act 1983

of

**TIMOTHY MORRISON & OTHERS,**

PETITIONERS

against

**ALISTAIR CARMICHAEL MP & ANOTHER,**

RESPONDENTS

**Introduction**

1. This Note of Argument has been prepared for the Petitioners in advance of the preliminary trial on their petition which has been set down for 7 & 8 September 2015. The issues raised at this stage of proceedings relate to the construction to be given to section 106 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (the "Act"). This note deals with these issues, and not with the general background to the petition or the conduct and nature of parliamentary election petition procedure<sup>1</sup>. It is also the statement required under Rule of Court 69.13 (1) of the matters on which the petitioners intend to lead evidence.

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<sup>1</sup> Summarised in Erskine May, 24<sup>th</sup> edition, pages 29-31; and for historical background see Morris, *Parliamentary Elections, Representation and the Law*, 2011, pages 80-99 (Advocates Library, shelf KD 4329).

2. Section 106 of the Act provides as follows (words and phrases discussed below are underlined):

*“(1) A person who, or any director of any body or association corporate which—*

*(a) before or during an election,*

*(b) for the purpose of affecting the return of any candidate at the election,*

*makes or publishes any false statement of fact in relation to the candidate’s personal character or conduct shall be guilty of an illegal practice, unless he can show that he had reasonable grounds for believing, and did believe, the statement to be true.*

- (2) A candidate shall not be liable nor shall his election be avoided for any illegal practice under subsection (1) above committed by his agent other than his election agent unless—*

*(a) it can be shown that the candidate or his election agent has authorised or consented to the committing of the illegal practice by the other agent or has paid for the circulation of the false statement constituting the illegal practice; or*

*(b) an election court find and report that the election of the candidate was procured or materially assisted in consequence of the making or publishing of such false statements.*

...

- (5) Any person who, before or during an election, knowingly publishes a false statement of a candidate’s withdrawal at the election for the purpose of promoting or procuring the election of another candidate shall be guilty of an illegal practice.*
- (6) A candidate shall not be liable, nor shall his election be avoided, for any illegal practice under subsection (5) above committed by his agent other than his election agent.*
- (7) In the application of this section to an election where a candidate is not required to have an election agent, references to an election agent shall be omitted and the reference in subsection (6) above to an illegal practice committed by an*

*agent of the candidate shall be taken as a reference to an illegal practice committed without the candidate's knowledge and consent."*

3. The section is complex, and several significant words and concepts are undefined. It is important at the beginning to note that there are a number of matters of fact and of interpretation which are undisputed and clear. It is not in dispute that the first respondent made certain statements in April 2015 as described in the next paragraph; that this was *'before or during an election'*<sup>2</sup>; and that he was at that time a candidate in that election. Nor is it disputed that the statements in question were false, in that (at the least) he *'misstated his awareness'* of certain matters. The particular issues raised in relation to the construction of section 106(1) of the Act in the present case are (1) whether section 106 is engaged by *"self-talking"*<sup>3</sup>, i.e. where the person making the statement and the candidate in relation to whom the statement is made are the same individual; (2) whether the statements in issue in this case relate to *'personal character or conduct'*; and (3) whether the making of the statements in issue in this case was *'for the purpose of affecting the return of any candidate at the election'*. The petitioners position is that all three questions can be answered 'Yes' at this stage; that failing, the third question should be sent for proof as described below.
  
4. The factual background to the case should be substantially uncontroversial, and is here summarised. In February 2015 a meeting took place between the First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon MSP, and the French Ambassador. In March 2015, a memo as to what was supposedly said at that meeting came into existence in the Scotland Office, of which the first respondent was, from 7 October 2013 to 8 May 2015, the responsible minister (it had been created by a civil servant of that department not present at that meeting). Its contents are not significant for immediate purposes, (and are in any event

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<sup>2</sup> Parliament had been dissolved on 30 March 2015.

<sup>3</sup> This is a neologism of the first respondent's invention, not a term of art.

admitted by the first respondent to be ‘*not correct*’<sup>4</sup>) but were highly politically significant in the 2015 general election campaign, which took place from 30 March to 7 May 2015 and at which the first respondent was a candidate for election in the Orkney and Shetland constituency. That memo was drawn to the attention of the first respondent by his special adviser, Euan Roddin. They discussed ‘*sharing the memo with the press*’<sup>5</sup> and on 1 April 2015 Roddin did so with the agreement of the first respondent by leaking it to the *Daily Telegraph*, which published it<sup>6</sup>. It is inconceivable that the first respondent would have authorised this without ascertaining the contents of the memo. Roddin could not consistently with the Cabinet Office Code of Conduct for Special Advisers<sup>7</sup> have done so without express authority from the first respondent (and would not have done so without that authority); the first respondent was, and must have known he was, responsible for Roddin’s conduct. The memo’s accuracy was promptly denied by all participants in the meeting and attention was then focussed on how, and by whom, it came to be leaked. On the afternoon of 4 April, the Cabinet Secretary instigated a Cabinet Office inquiry as how the memo came to be written and leaked. As Roddin had used his official mobile phone to contact the *Telegraph*, it was inevitable that this inquiry would establish his responsibility for doing so. The first respondent was informed of this inquiry. He then made a number of statements denying knowledge of, and responsibility for, the leak: a position he and his party leadership on his behalf maintained publicly until 22 May 2015. Thus, in an interview with the *Daily Record* on 5 April<sup>8</sup>, he suggested that a civil servant was responsible and said he was “*first made aware of the leaked memo on Friday afternoon when he was contacted by a journalist from the Daily Telegraph...The first time I saw the memo was in the pages of the Telegraph.*” During an interview with

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<sup>4</sup> Letter by first respondent to First Minister, 22 May 2015.

<sup>5</sup> Quotation from Cabinet Office press release of 22 May 2015, published at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/scotland-office-memorandum-leak-cabinet-office-inquiry-statement> and produced.

<sup>6</sup> ‘*Nicola Sturgeon secretly backs David Cameron*’ (*Daily Telegraph*, 3 April 2015); produced.

<sup>7</sup> See paragraph 3 (ix), 5, and 11 to this effect.

<sup>8</sup> ‘*Scottish Secretary Alistair Carmichael: ‘I know who wrote Nicola Sturgeon memo but I’m not telling*’ (*Daily Record*, 5 April 2015) produced

Channel 4 News on 5 April, the First Respondent stated “*the first I became aware of [the leak] ... was when I received a phone call on Friday afternoon<sup>9</sup> from a journalist making me aware of it*”<sup>10</sup>. These denials and statements, described by the First Respondent in his Answers as a “*mistate[ment] of his awareness*”<sup>11</sup>, were in fact false, as he has admitted<sup>12</sup>. The Cabinet Office inquiry continued until after the general election, publishing its conclusions by way of press release on 22 May<sup>13</sup>. These were then accepted by the first respondent. At that point, but not before then, the first respondent admitted publicly his knowledge and “*full responsibility*” for the leak, which he rightly described as “*a serious breach of protocol*” and a resigning matter<sup>14</sup>.

5. For the reasons more fully set out below, the Petitioners submit that all three questions posed at paragraph 3 above are to be answered in the affirmative in this case. These appear at present to be the only matters in dispute in this case. There is no suggestion that, if they are so answered, the election would not be void. It would follow that, on so finding, the election court should certify accordingly to the Speaker of the House of Commons in terms of section 144 (2) of the Act.

**(1) Whether statement maker and candidate can be the same individual**

6. The first respondents note of argument suggests that ‘*authorities to date have supposed*’ that they cannot. In fact, however, the question has never been argued (unsurprisingly given how few cases there have been) and has never required to be decided. In *Erlam & Others v Rahman* [2015] EWHC 1215 (QB) (“*Rahman*”), paragraph 104, it was

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<sup>9</sup> I.e. 3<sup>rd</sup> April.

<sup>10</sup> Petition, stat 5. There is a video of the interview at <http://news.channel4.com/election2015/04/05/update-931>.

<sup>11</sup> Answer 9.

<sup>12</sup> Thus he has apologized “*without reservation*” for not “*being truthful*” about the leak: *The Orcadian*, 26 May 2015, p 5, produced.

<sup>13</sup> Produced.

<sup>14</sup> See quotations collected, and photographed letter, in ‘*Lib Dem Alistair Carmichael admits responsibility for anti-Sturgeon leak*’, *Guardian*, 22 May 2015 ; produced.

rightly held that “the wording is wide enough to encompass a false statement made in favour of a candidate (for example, that he was a substantial philanthropist or had been awarded a medal for bravery) which might affect his electoral chances, albeit positively rather than negatively”; but that is of course not binding on this court. Accordingly, it is necessary to return to first principles and to common sense in answering this question.

7. It is clear that the person making the statement may be another candidate, or an election agent of any candidate, or a member of the public<sup>15</sup>. Section 106(1) of the Act applies “to any person who makes or publishes a statement and not just to candidates or their agents”<sup>16</sup>. The wording of the provision is “deliberately wide”<sup>17</sup>. Thus, in a three-cornered contest, the election agent of candidate A might make a false statement as to candidate B, or candidate C, or candidate A. And it is also clear that such a statement might be about more than one candidate, or indeed all three. Thus, for example, candidate A’s agent might say “A is the only candidate in this election who has never been convicted of fraud”; and this might be false in relation to A or to B or to C, or even all of them. In each case, it would obviously be within the section.
  
8. It is also clear that the statement in question must be false, in the sense of incorrect rather than deliberately dishonest; but it need not be defamatory; ‘this statute is not a graft upon the law of defamation’<sup>18</sup>. There is no reason why it should not encompass a false statement made in favour of a candidate (e.g. that he is “a substantial philanthropist”<sup>19</sup> or a war hero<sup>20</sup>) as much as one made against him.

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<sup>15</sup> Indeed, even a person with no connection with the constituency; see the facts of *Fairbairn v SNP*, 1979 SC 393 where the statement was originally made by a *Sunday Mail* journalist. Section 106 (2) makes a distinction of no relevance for this purpose between statements made by a candidate or election agent, and statements made by others.

<sup>16</sup> *R (Woolas) v Parliamentary Election Court* [2012] QB 1 (“*R (Woolas)*”) at p 30H para [85].

<sup>17</sup> *Rahman* at [104].

<sup>18</sup> *North Louth*, (1911) 6 O’Malley & Hardcastle 103, page 166.

<sup>19</sup> *Rahman*, quoted above.

<sup>20</sup> A picaresque example (although of course section 106 does not apply in the United States) is Douglas Stringfellow, who was elected to the US Congress having claimed to be the sole survivor of an OSS unit which was captured and tortured in a concentration

Indeed, some false statements will be both in favour of a candidate with some electors and against him or her with others: consider the examples in *North Louth* of a claim that a candidate has accepted judicial office and in *Sunderland*<sup>22</sup> of a claim that a candidate sabotaged a fox-hunt; even more obviously, a statement that a candidate is or is not a practising Muslim<sup>23</sup> or Catholic<sup>24</sup>, or that he or she is or is not anti-Semitic or homophobic. The provision catches false statements of any kind made by “any person”, in respect of “any candidate”: its limitations are otherwise (that it must be before or during the election; that it must be in respect of personal character or conduct, and that reasonable grounds may be shown for believing the false statement to be true). The effect of subsection (2), that a false statement not even authorised by the candidate or their election agent will void an election if it procured or materially assisted the election result, highlights that the primary purpose of the provision is to protect the election rather than to punish the candidate involved.

9. In light of (i) the fact that section 106(1) applies to positive as much as to negative false statements, and (ii) the obvious point that the person with most temptation to make a false statement in relation to a candidate is the candidate with most to gain from it, it would be curious if, as the First Respondent suggests, the person who might be most likely to make that statement is the only person in the world who could not be caught by the terms of this provision. Other sections of the Act clearly strike at ‘false statements’ made by a

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camp after parachuting into Germany in World War II to kidnap a prominent Nazi nuclear scientist (none of which was true). This ‘intrepid tale aided him in upsetting [a] six-term incumbent’ in 1952: see House of Representatives Archives at <http://history.house.gov/HistoricalHighlight/Detail/36418> . On the first respondents argument, this farrago of ‘self-talking’ would not be a relevant false statement. Consider further, among famous British 20<sup>th</sup> century fraudster MPs, Ignaz Trebitsch-Lincoln who was elected MP for Darlington in 1910 and Horatio Bottomley who was elected MP for Hackney South in 1906: notoriously, on the whole they lied about themselves rather than about others.

<sup>22</sup> *Sunderland (Borough of); Storey v Doxford* (1896) 5 O’M & H 53.

<sup>23</sup> Notoriously made against President Obama, see for example ‘Smears 2.0: The Internet helps fuel the ugly insinuation that Obama is a stealth Muslim, reviving an ancient hate’ (Los Angeles Times, 3 December 2007).

<sup>24</sup> See the passages from *Meath North*, (1892) 4 O’M & H 185, and *Meath South*, (1892) 4 O’M & H 130, quoted in *Rahman* at paragraphs 155-156.

particular person of themselves: see sections 62, 62A, 65, 65A as examples. Support for the proposition that they would be so caught can also be found in (i) the terms of subsection (2) of section 106, which provision makes clear that the candidate's election agent *would* be caught; and (ii) in section 67(2) of the Act, which allows a candidate to appoint himself as his own election agent, and provides that, upon doing so, a candidate "*shall, so far as circumstances admit, be subject to the provisions of this Act both as a candidate and as an election agent, and, except where the context otherwise requires, any reference in this Act to an election agent shall be construed to refer to the candidate acting in his capacity of election agent.*" It would be not merely curious but absurd if an election agent who was not the candidate could be found liable for a false statement made or published contrary to section 106(1), but an election agent who was also the candidate could not be so found. Such an absurd result cannot be one which was intended by Parliament in enacting section 106(1) of the Act, and the First Respondent's suggestion that it does not apply to "*self-talking*" (or self-publishing) accordingly ought to be rejected.

## **(2) Whether statement one relating to personal character or conduct**

10. There is a broad distinction between 'political' statements which Parliament "*trusted the good sense of the electorate*"<sup>25</sup> to be able to discount, and those relating to a candidate's personal character or conduct, the truth or otherwise of which the electorate might be "*unable to discern*"<sup>26</sup> in the middle of an election campaign. The ability to make false private or personal statements about a candidate works against free elections, on the basis that the effect created by such statements may not be able to be countered in proper time (if at all)<sup>27</sup>: that is why the consequence is that the election is declared void.

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<sup>25</sup> R (*Woolas*) at p 39F-G para [110].

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, and *North Louth* at page 166-7.



11. Some statements are self-evidently personal, such as those relating to a candidate's family, sexual conduct, personal honour, or religion or belief: e.g. the (false) statement that President Obama is "*a stealth Muslim*", and indeed all the examples in paragraph 8 above. Others are obviously political, such as statements as to a candidate's supposed support for a foreign enemy in wartime<sup>28</sup>. Whilst it has been said that a statement must be either political or personal, and that "[i]t cannot be both"<sup>29</sup>, it is obvious that there is "*no sharp dividing line separating what is personal from what is political*"<sup>30</sup> and there may be statements as to which there is room for differences of opinion. Nevertheless, whether a statement relates to personal character and conduct should be apparent on its face; the thought processes of the person making the statement, or of members of its audience, are not relevant, because the test must be objective. A statement which goes to the heart of the candidate's personal reputation is a statement as to his personal character and conduct. When a candidate is accused of corruption in political office, that is a statement to the effect that the candidate is personally dishonest and thus as to his personal character and conduct<sup>31</sup>. "*The only difference between corruption and wilful and dishonourable breach of duty is one of degree, not principle*"<sup>32</sup>. The mere fact, in short, that there is a political background does not disqualify something from being 'personal': consider the personal nature of the politically explosive revelation that an MP is having an affair with another MP's wife<sup>33</sup>. In *North Louth*<sup>34</sup>, it was taken as an archetype of a statement as to personal conduct that a minister had "*betrayed Cabinet secrets to a foreign friend*": it would be no better if the betrayal was to a British journalist, which precisely describes the conduct of the first respondent and which he falsely denied. And while the first respondent might say that the leak of the memo was political, his denial of personal responsibility was purely personal.

<sup>28</sup> *Cockermouth Division of the County of Cumberland* (1901) 5 O'M & H 155.

<sup>29</sup> *R (Woolas)* at p 39H para [111].

<sup>30</sup> *North Louth*, p 158.

<sup>31</sup> *R (Woolas)* at p 40E para [114]

<sup>32</sup> *North Louth*, p 158.

<sup>33</sup> *Ahmed v Afzal* [2008] EWHC B5 (QB) and the example cited at para [20].

<sup>34</sup> At page 158, adopted in *R (Woolas)* at paragraph 107

12. In the present case, the First Respondent was *personally* dishonest in stating that he first became aware of the leak after it happened, and so bore no personal responsibility for this dishonourable act<sup>35</sup>. That the First Respondent's "*(mis)state[ment] of his awareness*" was untrue was only made clear by the findings of the Cabinet Office investigation, in which the First Respondent confirmed that he had, in fact, been asked by his Special Advisor for his view on sharing the memo with the press before its release, and that he had agreed that its release should occur; and that is now common ground between the parties. He did not commit this dishonesty in his capacity of a Cabinet minister; if he had, no Cabinet investigation would have been necessary. He committed it in his capacity of a person who was a candidate at the upcoming election.
13. As a deliberate attempt to conceal the truth as to Mr Carmichael's knowledge of and involvement in the release of the memorandum, this false statement cannot be said other than to relate directly to Mr Carmichael's personal character and standing, namely his integrity as an individual. This he appears, rightly, to accept: thus his correct admission "*...my behaviour has done damage to the relationship of trust... I've certainly damaged my own standing*"<sup>36</sup>. His false statements were not of the nature of a political promise reneged upon; they were an attempt by a candidate to cover up his personal involvement in and responsibility for an attempted smear. This went to his honour and personal character: it was a false denial of dishonourable conduct. That is as much within the section as a false allegation that he had betrayed Cabinet secrets would have been; and the impugned statement being a false statement of fact in relation to the "*personal character*" of Mr Carmichael, accordingly falls within the scope of section 106(1), a finding to that effect ought to be made.

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<sup>35</sup> Torcuil Crichton & Alan McEwen, '*Scottish Secretary Alistair Carmichael: "I know who wrote Nicola Sturgeon memo but I'm not telling"*' (Daily Record, 5 April 2015 at 10:00pm; (copy produced).

<sup>36</sup> *The Orcadian*, 26 May 2015, pages 5 and 6, produced.

**(3) Whether statements made for the purpose of affecting the return of any candidate at the election**

14. By way of preface to this chapter of the argument, the first respondent phrases this question as whether “*the averments in the petition disclose a relevant offer to prove that*” they were so made. But nothing in the Act imports what he describes as “*the conventional Scottish approach to testing ... relevancy*” (whatever that may be). Such an approach would be inconsistent with Rule of Court 69.13 and 69.14, which makes plain that the matters which may be the subject of evidence are the totality of those averred in the pleadings and those set forth in the parties Statements of Issues under that rule: thus, (a) the petition and (b) this Note (unless in accordance with that Rule the first respondent has also lodged such a statement). These must, of course, between them give fair notice.
15. In any event, the question here is: why did he falsely deny his responsibility for the leak? What end did he have in view when he did so? If it was not for the purpose of affecting the election, what was its purpose? It is very significant, indeed decisive of this question on the material before the court, that he makes no suggestion that he had any other purpose than affecting the election; if he did, he could have said so. Why, then, should the obvious inference not be made, that it was for the purpose of affecting his own prospects of return? In the absence of direct evidence as to the purpose of a given statement of this kind, the question whether it has been made or published ‘*for the purpose of affecting the return of any candidate at the election*’ is necessarily one of inference. His ‘purpose’ is the issue; not his ‘motive’ as the first respondent suggests. In the present case, the context in which the impugned statement was made is of central importance. That context is now set out below; while it is largely factual, it is not understood to be disputed or said to be materially incomplete by the first respondent (if it was, he would have said so in his note of argument, where he says however it is “*largely undisputed*”).

16. In the build up to 7 May 2015, there was well known to be a 'surge' in support for the Scottish National Party. Polling data consistently suggested that the SNP would win more than 50 seats<sup>38</sup> in Scotland, possibly every seat, including the hitherto 'safe' Liberal Democrat seat of Orkney and Shetland<sup>39</sup>. Further, more former Liberal Democrat voters were shown to have switched to the SNP since 2010 than to either the Labour Party or the Conservative<sup>40</sup>. These suggestions were within the knowledge of the first respondent. He repeatedly and correctly stated publicly that his own constituency had effectively become "*a straight fight*"<sup>41</sup>. His own election literature emphasised "*It's Alistair or the SNP*"<sup>42</sup>. It will further inevitably have been within his knowledge that, other things being equal, the electorate prefers candidates who it perceives as honest and honourable to candidates it does not so perceive; he has rightly admitted this<sup>43</sup>. As he himself said (in commenting on the Woolas case)<sup>44</sup> "*No-one would expect candidates to spend their time highlighting their opponents' virtues but to suggest any smear is justifiable must be wrong. Most worryingly it betrays an attitude that I had hoped would have been eradicated by the expenses scandals of the last parliament – namely that different rules should apply to MPs than apply to the rest of the population. If Tesco tried to smear the Co-op in the same way it would soon be in trouble. Why should politics be different?... The right to freedom of speech is a fundamental one but it does bring a responsibility with it to tell*

<sup>38</sup> See e.g. Harry Lambert & Tom Monk, 'Ashcroft polls show sensational surge for SNP and suggest they will win more than 50 MPs in May' (May2015.com, 4 February 2015): "*Lord Ashcroft's seat-by-seat polls of Scottish constituencies have confirmed what national polls have suggested for months: the SNP are set to win more than 50 Scottish MPs (out of 59), and redraw the political landscape. The polls findings show an SNP surge beyond the expectations of an even the most optimistic nationalists, and confirm that a hung parliament is a near inevitability. Ashcroft's polls, leaked ahead of schedule late last night, surveyed 16 of Scotland's 59 seats, and put the SNP in front in 15 of them ...*".

<sup>39</sup> Shetland Times, 'Predictor puts SNP ahead in running for Northern Isles seat' (Shetland Times, 7 April 2015).

<sup>40</sup> Severin Carroll, 'Lib Dems will have to rely on tactical voting to hold off SNP, says Ashdown' (Guardian, 20 March 2015).

<sup>41</sup> See for example Press and Journal, 26 March 2015; The Orcadian, 9 April 2015.

<sup>42</sup> 'Northern Isles News', spring 2013, and 'Orkney and Shetland shortchanged by the SNP', produced.

<sup>43</sup> The Orcadian, 26 May 2015, produced.

<sup>44</sup> 'Letter from Westminster', Shetland Times, 12 November 2010.

*the truth. The right to smear an opponent is not one we should be defending."*

17. On 3 April 2015 at 1.47pm, the statement which he had been responsible for putting into the public domain (viz. that the First Minister would prefer David Cameron to remain as Prime Minister) was described by her on Twitter as "*categorically, 100%, untrue*"<sup>45</sup>. The day after, a spokesman for the French Ambassador confirmed Ms Sturgeon's position, telling ITV News that Ms Sturgeon did not "*touch on her personal political preferences with regards to the future Prime Minister*" during their meeting in February<sup>46</sup>. It thus appeared that, as the first respondent has now accepted<sup>47</sup>, the contents of the memo were in this regard untrue: its publication was a smear of the kind he had rightly condemned in 2010.
18. Against that background, the day after Ms Sturgeon's Twitter denial had been corroborated by the French Ambassador and the Cabinet Secretary had announced his inquiry, the First Respondent gave an interview to Channel 4 News in which he stated "*the first I became aware of this [assumed to be a reference to the leak] ... was when I received a phone call on Friday afternoon from a journalist making me aware of it*". The same day, the First Respondent told the *Daily Record*<sup>48</sup> that the type of conversation which had taken place between Ms Sturgeon and the French Ambassador was one which "*take[s] place between government officials and diplomats all the time and it's important people can have confidence in the confidentiality of them*": this statement was true (albeit it could not honestly be made by someone responsible for breaching that confidentiality). When asked if the memo was then an example of a "*dirty trick*", the First Respondent said "*[t]hese things happen from time to time. I think it's regrettable*". He rightly did not demur from the phrase "*dirty trick*" as descriptive of the leak; but he denied responsibility, stating "*This is not somebody in public life, it's*

<sup>45</sup> <https://twitter.com/nicolasturgeon/status/584094997890359297>.

<sup>46</sup> ITV News, 'French ambassador: Sturgeon did not discuss PM "preference"' (ITV News, 4 April 2015 at 12:51am).

<sup>47</sup> First respondent's letter to First Minister, 22 May 2015, produced.

<sup>48</sup> See footnote to paragraph 11 above.

*a civil servant – so he’s entitled to the inquiry being done properly*”. In doing so, his only plausible purpose can have been to protect his own reputation until the election was over and so affect his prospects. He was aware of the Cabinet Office inquiry; he was aware that this would inevitably discover the truth; he was aware that unless he admitted his responsibility this would become public knowledge only after the election. Why then delay revealing the truth until after the election: were the delay, and the election, unconnected? The first respondent has nothing to say in answer to this, he leaves it to inference, but the question answers itself.

19. Against the background of a well-regarded leader of a popular party having been shown to be the victim of a smear<sup>49</sup>, it may reasonably be inferred that the First Respondent, in “*mis[stating] his awareness*” of the leak, was attempting to conceal the truth about his personal dishonesty in order to protect his chances of being elected to Parliament, and to prevent his losing any sympathy votes to the party which his own campaign material identified as the real threat in his constituency<sup>50</sup>; it was calculated to have that effect. Having written what he had in 2010<sup>51</sup>, he would have been open to serious charges of hypocrisy on it becoming known that he had done what he had so eloquently condemned. On 7 May 2015, the First Respondent was elected having secured 9,407 (41.4%) votes, as compared to the 8,590 (37.8%) for the runner-up SNP candidate, 2,025 (8.9%) for the Conservative, 1,624 (7.1%) for Labour, and 1,082 (4.8%) for UKIP candidates: a majority for the First Respondent of 817 (3.6%) votes, down from 9,928 (51.3%) votes in 2010 (when he took 11,989 votes, 62.0%).

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<sup>49</sup> As the *Daily Telegraph* article on the leak explained “*The disclosure of her private comments may undermine Miss Sturgeon’s new-found popularity, after she was judged by snap opinion polls to have “won” Thursday night’s general election debate with six other party leaders*”.

<sup>50</sup> A Liberal Democrat flyer distributed in the Orkney & Shetland constituency on behalf of the first respondent and to his instructions in the campaign, and which was headed “*The Choice for us on May 7th*”, showed three boxes: the left hand box contained the name “*Alistair Carmichael*” and a series of ticks; the middle (smaller) box contained the word “*OR*” in capital letters; and the right hand box contained the phrase “*A Nationalist who will take his orders from Edinburgh*” followed by a series of crosses.

<sup>51</sup> ‘*Letter from Westminster*’, *Shetland Times*, 12 November 2010, quoted above.

20. In the whole circumstances, the only reasonable inference which may be drawn from the timing, content, and context of the statement in issue is that he made it for the purpose of affecting the return of a candidate at the election—the First Respondent himself, but for that matter also his rivals—and a finding to that effect accordingly ought to be made.
21. The petitioners however accept that it is in the nature of this question that it involves a consideration of the factual context. Because this does not appear to be materially disputed, it is their primary position that it can nevertheless be answered at this stage without the need for a further hearing. If however the first respondent were to put material facts in issue, and if he were to suggest that he had some other purpose when he made his false statements, it might well be that this question would require to be resolved after proof. In that case, the petitioners would submit that (while Rule of Court 69.13 - 14 deals with how fair notice should be given of the evidence to be led) it would be appropriate for the first respondent to be ordained to set out precisely what facts and inferences in this Note he says are in issue, and why; and also to set out what he says was his purpose in making these statements.
22. The first respondent argues that under section 106 of the Act there is a burden of proof on the petitioner to the criminal standard, by reference to the case of *R v Rowe, ex parte Mainwaring* [1992] 1 WLR 1059. That concerned the more serious category of ‘*corrupt practices*’; section 106 creates only an ‘*illegal practice*’ which may be excused as inadvertent under section 167 of the Act, cannot be prosecuted on indictment, does not result in the same penalties, and is thus distinguishable. But more fundamentally: these are civil proceedings, as shown by sections 123 (2), 146, and 157 (3) of the Act in particular. From that it must follow that the ordinary rule in civil proceedings when the commission of a criminal offence is in issue should apply: that this is subject to the ordinary civil standard

(*Mullan v Anderson* 1993 SLT 835; *Scottish Ministers v Stirton* 2014 SC 218, *Re SB (Children) (Care Proceedings: Standard of Proof)* [2010] 1 AC 678; the authorities to this effect all postdate the decision in *ex parte Mainwaring*). *Jugnauth v Ringadoo* makes all this plain as a general proposition: paragraphs 16-20. Note also section 157 (2); this imports the pre-1868 practice in this regard of the House of Commons, and there is no suggestion this ever applied the criminal standard to the question before it. But of course the question as to the burden of proof is a question as to the proof of disputed facts; if, as appears to be the case here, there are no disputes as to the material facts it has no relevance. Accordingly, this argument does not require to be resolved at this hearing.

**JONATHAN MITCHELL, QC**  
**LESLEY IRVINE, Advocate**

**28 August 2015**



IN THE ELECTION COURT

**NOTE OF ARGUMENT FOR  
THE PETITIONERS**

in the petition

under the Representation of the  
People Act 1983

of

**TIMOTHY MORRISON &  
OTHERS,  
PETITIONERS**

against

**ALISTAIR CARMICHAEL MP &  
ANOTHER,  
RESPONDENTS**

2015

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Press release

## Scotland Office memorandum leak: Cabinet Office inquiry statement

**From:** Cabinet Office (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/cabinet-office>) and Scotland Office (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/scotland-office>)

**First published:** 22 May 2015

This statement follows the completion of an inquiry into a leaked Scotland Office memorandum.



Following the leak of a Scotland Office memorandum that formed the basis of a story in the Daily Telegraph on 3 April, the Cabinet Secretary instigated a Cabinet Office-led leak inquiry to establish how this memo came to be written and how it got into the public domain. The inquiry process is now complete.

### The memo

The investigation team interviewed the civil servant in the Scotland Office who produced the memo. He confirmed under questioning that he believed that the memo was an accurate record of the conversation that took place between him and the French Consul General, and highlighted that the memo had stated that part of the conversation between the French Ambassador and the First Minister might well have been “lost in translation”.

Senior officials who have worked with him say that he is reliable and has no history of inaccurate reporting, impropriety or security lapses. The Cabinet Secretary has concluded that there is no reason to doubt that he recorded accurately what he thought he had heard. There is no evidence of any political motivation or ‘dirty tricks’.

### The leak

In investigating the source of the leak, the investigation team searched all relevant official phone records, emails and print logs. Those who had access to the memo were asked to complete a questionnaire on what they did with the memo when they received it. They were then interviewed.

The investigation established the following facts:

- an official mobile phone was used to make telephone calls to one of the authors of the Daily Telegraph story. This phone was held by Euan Roddin, previously Special Adviser to the then Secretary of State for Scotland, Alistair Carmichael
- Mr Roddin confirmed that he provided a copy of the Scotland Office memo to a Daily Telegraph journalist on 1 April 2015, and discussed the memo with the journalist on a number of occasions. He told the investigation team that he acted in what he saw as the public interest and that in his

view the public needed to be aware of the position attributed to the First Minister

- Alistair Carmichael confirmed that he had been asked by Mr Roddin for his view of the possibility of sharing the memo with the press. Mr Carmichael agreed that this should occur. He recognises that, as a Secretary of State, he was responsible for his own conduct and that of his Special Adviser. He could and should have stopped the sharing of the memo and accordingly accepts responsibility for what occurred
- no-one else had any involvement in the leaking of the memo

The investigation team has therefore concluded that Mr Roddin, with the assent of Mr Carmichael in the circumstances described above, was the direct source of the Daily Telegraph story. The Cabinet Secretary has accepted their findings in full. Mr Carmichael and Mr Roddin have also accepted the conclusions.

Neither Mr Carmichael nor Mr Roddin will take their severance pay.

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## Nicola Sturgeon secretly backs David Cameron

The SNP leader told the French Ambassador in February that she would prefer that "David Cameron remain" in Downing Street, according to an official account of their conversation seen by The Daily Telegraph.

By Simon Johnson, and Peter Dominiczak

9:30PM BST 03 Apr 2015

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**READ: The Nicola Sturgeon memo in full**

---

Nicola Sturgeon, the SNP leader, has privately said that she would "rather see" David Cameron win the general election because Ed Miliband is not "prime minister material", a leaked memorandum seen by The Telegraph has revealed.

The **SNP** leader told the French Ambassador in February that she would prefer that "**David Cameron** remain" in Downing Street, according to an official account of their conversation seen by this newspaper.

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**Nicola Sturgeon denies the claim and calls for inquiry into leaked memo**

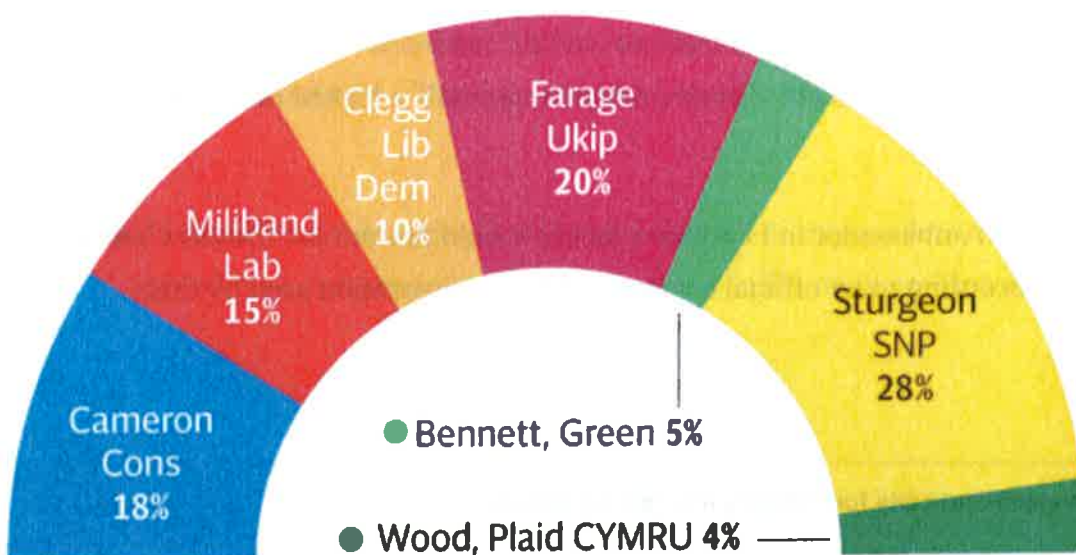
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The disclosure undermines public claims made by Miss Sturgeon this week that she wants to build a "progressive" alliance with Ed Miliband and other left-wing parties to keep the Conservatives out of office.

It appears to confirm growing speculation in Scotland that the SNP would privately favour another Conservative-led Westminster government - which it could campaign against in a bid to stoke up anti-English sentiment and make an "out" vote more likely in another referendum.

## Who won the debate



The Telegraph has seen the official British Government memorandum which includes details of a private meeting between Miss Sturgeon and Sylvie Bermann, the French Ambassador to the UK.

---

### Here comes the women's revolution at Westminster

---

The memorandum which was written by a senior British civil servant, dated March 6th, states: "Just had a telephone conversation with Pierre-Alain Coffinier (PAC), the French CG [consul-general]. He was keen to fill me in on some of the conversations his Ambassador had during her visit to Scotland last week. All of this was given on a confidential basis."

It continues: "The Ambassador...had a truncated meeting with the FM [Nicola Sturgeon, the First Minister] (FM running late after a busy Thursday...). Discussion appears to have focused mainly on the political situation, with the FM stating that she wouldn't want a formal coalition with Labour; that the SNP would almost certainly have a large number of seats... that she'd rather see David Cameron remain as PM (and didn't see Ed Miliband as PM material)."



The civil servant appeared so surprised by the private admission made by Miss Sturgeon that he questioned whether there might have been an issue with the "translation" during the conversation.

However, it was later established that the conversation took place in English as all the French officials

are fluent.

It is a common diplomatic courtesy if an ambassador to the UK visits one of the three devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland for the British Government to be given an official readout of the conversation although the SNP leader, who has only been in position since the autumn, may have been unaware of this formality.

The disclosure of her private comments may undermine Miss Sturgeon's new-found popularity, after she was judged by snap opinion polls to have "won" Thursday night's general election debate with six other party leaders.

**Read a full profile of Nicola Sturgeon here**

**Read a full profile of Ed Miliband leader here**

**VIDEO: Nicola Sturgeon: SNP leader in 60 seconds:**

A number of Labour MPs openly praised Ms Sturgeon's performance and said that her success made the prospect of a power-sharing agreement with the SNP more likely.

But some backbenchers were privately furious that Mr Miliband did not do more to challenge her.

Responding to the claims, a spokesman for Ms Sturgeon said: "As the First Minister has said, this story - which is based on a UK government document - is categorically, 100 per cent untrue. It must be a belated April fool.

"As Nicola has said on numerous occasions, she wants to see the back of a Tory government which is decisively rejected by the people of Scotland and, unlike Labour, the SNP is the only party that had promised to lock David Cameron out of Downing Street."

A spokesman for the French Embassy claimed that the meeting with Ms Sturgeon "**did not touch on her personal political preferences** with regards to the future prime minister".

Yesterday, Miss Sturgeon was mobbed after she returned to Scotland in scenes reminiscent of the "Cleggmania" recorded after the Liberal Democrat leader's success in the 2010 general election debates.

In other developments in the election campaign on Friday:





Mr Miliband was being urged by senior Labour MPs to consider pulling out of a second debate with Miss Sturgeon and other minority parties amid concerns that they will "hang the issue of austerity around his neck".

It was disclosed that Nigel Farage's suggestion during the debate that foreigners with HIV should not be treated on the NHS was a carefully planned move to fire up Ukip's core vote, a strategy insiders have dubbed "shock and awful".

George Osborne, the Chancellor, and Michael Gove, the Chief Whip, repeatedly refused to rule out a power sharing agreement with Ukip in the event of a hung parliament.

A senior City figure warned of the damage that an uncertain election campaign may have on the financial markets

Despite official statistics saying that living standards are improving, Labour will release a campaign poster this weekend claiming that Tory policies cost families £1,100 a year

Miss Sturgeon's comments may threaten the SNP's huge opinion poll lead in Scotland, which is built on the support of traditional Labour voters who have grown disillusioned with the party but remain hostile to the Tories.

Yesterday, unaware that the memo had been leaked to the Telegraph, she continued to openly back Mr Miliband.

"If the SNP and Labour combined have more MPs than the Tories do - if there is an anti-Tory majority - we can lock David Cameron out of Downing Street," she said.

"I've challenged Ed Miliband, and I do so again: if we have that anti-Tory majority, the SNP has said we will vote to stop a Tory government even getting off the ground."

Jim Murphy, the Scottish Labour leader, and Willie Rennie, the Scottish Liberal Democrat leader, said the "astonishing" account of her comments proves that the SNP really wants a Tory Government with few or no MPs in Scotland, allowing the party to push the case for a second independence referendum.

Mr Murphy said: "This is a devastating revelation that exposes the uncomfortable truth behind the SNP's General Election campaign. For months Nicola Sturgeon has been telling Scots she wants rid of David Cameron yet behind closed doors with foreign governments she admits she wants a Tory Government. It's déjà vu all over again - the SNP say one thing in public but another private."



Mr Rennie said: "It is astonishing that Nicola Sturgeon can look people in the eye and declare the SNP would never support the Conservatives in government when in private she secretly wants them to win.

"Despite her fluffy, positive words about working with the rest of the UK this reveals her sole ambition is to break up the UK. I've no doubt that the Tories in government alone would fuel the Nationalist fires. She is open with foreign diplomats about her wishes now she needs to end the chicanery and be open with the voters."

Ms Sturgeon's stated views in the document come after a number of opinion polls showed that Mr

Cameron has significantly higher approval ratings in Scotland than Mr Miliband.



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News Politics [Nicola Sturgeon](#)

# Scottish Secretary Alistair Carmichael: 'I know who wrote Nicola Sturgeon memo but I'm not telling'

22:00, 5 APRIL 2015 BY [TORCUIL CRICHTON](#), ALAN MCEWAN

CARMICHAEL says that a Scotland Office civil servant is behind the leaked memo, but refused to go into further detail.



Alistair Carmichael says a Scotland Office civil servant

A SCOTLAND Office civil servant was behind [the leaked memo that claimed Nicola Sturgeon wants David Cameron to remain as Prime Minister](#).

Scottish Secretary Alistair Carmichael [has fingered an official](#) in his own department for writing the note.

But the Lib Dem refused to name the individual now at the centre of a Whitehall inquiry and a furious political row.

Carmichael, who remains in charge of the Scotland Office during the general election campaign, said yesterday: "I know the person involved but I'm not going to go beyond that.

"This is not somebody in public life, [it's a civil servant](#) – so he's entitled to the inquiry being done properly."

The leaked memo claimed that [First Minister Sturgeon](#) privately told French ambassador Sylvie Bermann the [SNP](#) would rather see a Tory government – and that she didn't see Labour leader [Ed Miliband](#) as "prime minister material".

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Sturgeon immediately dismissed the report as "100 per cent untrue" and called for a high-level probe into the leak.

And responding to Mr Carmichael's comments, the First Minister 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."

The UK's top civil servant, Cabinet Secretary Sir Jeremy Heywood, has since launched an inquiry.

Sturgeon has accused Whitehall of "dirty tricks" over the leaked memo.



And yesterday, SNP deputy leader Stewart Hosie said Carmichael's admission that he knows who the culprit is had to be reported to the investigation.

Hosie said: "Alistair Carmichael is a UK Cabinet Minister and so must be in no doubt about the seriousness of the probe now ordered by the UK's top civil servant."

"If Mr Carmichael has information about who produced a document containing this false account or indeed about who then leaked it - whether it is from within his own civil service department or elsewhere - then he must provide that information to Sir Jeremy Heywood as a matter of urgency."

Carmichael said it was "absolutely right" that Heywood had launched an inquiry into the leak - but he flatly refused to identify the civil servant who drafted the document.

The Scottish Secretary acknowledged that the inquiry may take some time to report but said: "I see no reason it shouldn't be done fairly quickly."

He added: "These conversations take place between government officials and diplomats all the time and it's important people can have confidence in the confidentiality of them."

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"The Cabinet Secretary is the person to hold an inquiry and it's important that he gets on to do his job now.

"This is routine procedure within government when these things happen.

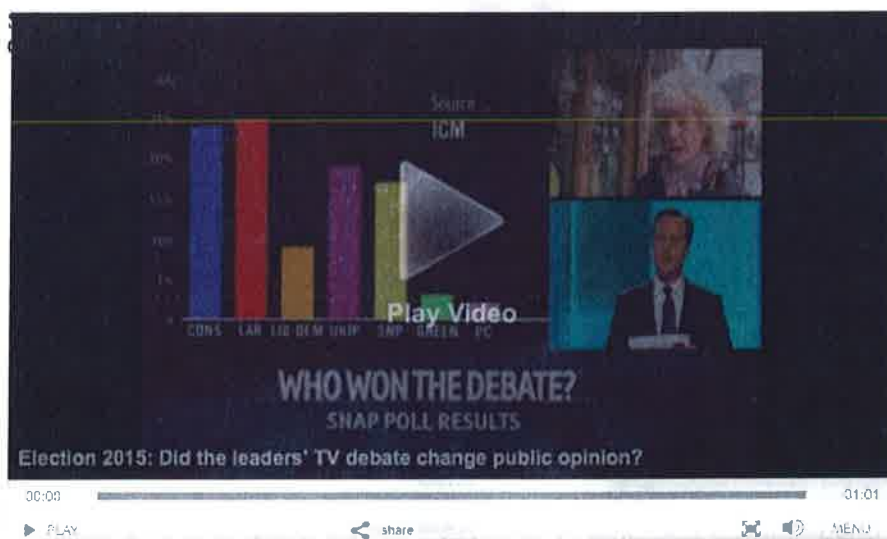
"It's absolutely not my job to tell him how to do his.

"I can't second-guess what he's going to want to ask or do.

"I don't think the inquiry should be conducted through the pages of news-papers or television screens."

Carmichael said he was first made aware of the leaked memo on Friday afternoon when he was contacted by a journalist from the Daily Telegraph.

He added: "The first time I saw the memo was in the pages of the Telegraph."



Asked if the memo was an example of "dirty tricks" during the election campaign, Carmichael said: "These things happen from time to time. I think it's regrettable."

He added: "I have no idea what Nicola Sturgeon said. We had a third-hand account of it.

"But we know Nicola Sturgeon would like to have the Conservatives in Government on their own at Westminster.

"The one thing that matters more than anything else to the Nationalists is getting independence and they would see that as an opportunity to create a wedge between

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Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom.”

**Scottish Labour deputy leader Kezia Dugdale** said last night: “The last 24 hours have been dominated by suggestions that Nicola Sturgeon wants David Cameron to remain Prime Minister.

“The real question is, what does **David Cameron** want?

“And it’s pretty obvious what the answer to that one is.

“It’s not really a surprise that David Cameron wants the SNP to do well.

“It would be strange if he didn’t because he knows his best chance of clinging on to power is Scotland voting SNP on May 7.”

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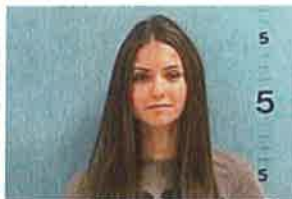
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## Alistair Carmichael rejects calls to resign over leaked memo

# 'The worst five days of my life'

There are people whose trust and confidence in me has been damaged and I have to rebuild that. I don't rebuild that by resigning . . .



ANDREW STEWART

"These have been the worst five days of my life", said Northern Isles MP Alistair Carmichael this week.

But speaking in *The Orcadian* on Tuesday, he reiterated that he has no intention of resigning as MP and has been receiving words of support from both constituents and members of the House of Commons.

Last Friday, Mr Carmichael accepted responsibility for a leaked, pre-election memo that led to an article in *The Daily Telegraph* claiming that Scotland's First Minister would have preferred that David Cameron remain in Downing Street.

Leaked in April, the Scottish Office memo — which claimed that Nicola

Sturgeon had made the comments to the French Consul General in February — resulted in a Cabinet Office inquiry, the findings of which were released at the same time as Mr Carmichael's admission.

The conversation was denied by Mrs Sturgeon and the French Ambassador, and the leaked document led to the inquiry.

The civil servant responsible told the inquiry that he believed the memo was an accurate record of a conversation he had with the Consul General, and highlighted that the memo stated that part of the conversation might well have been "lost in translation".

According to the Cabinet Office, "there is no reason to doubt that he [the civil servant] recorded accurately what he thought he had heard. There is no evidence of

any political motivation or 'dirty tricks'."

Mr Carmichael confirmed to the inquiry that he had been asked by his advisor for his view on sharing the memo with the press and that he had agreed this should occur.

The Cabinet Office concluded: "He recognises that, as Secretary

of State, he was responsible for his own conduct and that of his special advisor.

"He could, and should, have stopped the sharing of the memo and accordingly accepts

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# 'I could have stopped it, should have stopped it and didn't

\*\*\*\*\*  
From front page

responsibility for what occurred.

Speaking to *The Orcadian* on Tuesday afternoon, Mr Carmichael admitted he had "candidly, let down" his supporters, but that he was determined to prove he can still do his job.

Unsurprisingly, Mr Carmichael's admission led to considerable media attention and calls for him to stand down as MP.

High on the list of criticisms was the fact that he had denied, on record, having any knowledge of the leaked memo.

On April 4, Mr Carmichael told Channel Four news: "I've told you - the first I became aware of this, and this is already on the public record, was when I received a phone call on Friday afternoon from a journalist making me aware of it."

The same day, he told the *Daily Record* that: "The first time I saw the memo was in the pages of the *Telegraph*."

Asked this week why he had, in effect, lied about his part in the leak, Mr Carmichael replied: "I made a serious error of judgement. For that, I have apologised to the First Minister, to the French ambassador, and I also apologised to the local people here in Orkney and Shetland, not just for what I did, but because I wasn't wholly truthful about it."

"I'm not going to hide from that, not going to deny it, and I'm not going to obfuscate."

"I understand the damage that has been done to the relationship of trust that I have with my constituents, and my determination is now to prove I can still do the job that I have done for the last 14 years - that this was a one-off aberration, and that my constituents can still trust me to do the job that they have elected me to do."

"I am not underestimating the scale of the challenge, and the difficulties I'm facing, but that is what I'm going to do."

As to why he waited until after the General Election before admitting responsibility, Mr Carmichael said he had

done so in the interest of the process behind the inquiry.

"First of all, there was a process, which was the inquiry headed up by the Cabinet Office," he said.

"That inquiry was not just into the circumstances of the leak, but also into the writing of the document as well."

"I co-operated with that inquiry, as did my special advisor, and he told them that he had been responsible for putting the document into the public domain."

"I told them that I had known about it, and accepted that I could have stopped it, and didn't. So, once the process was under way, I thought it was important that it was allowed

to complete its course and, as I say, I co-operated entirely with that process."

By Tuesday afternoon, Mr Carmichael had already stated he had no intention of resigning as MP.

He repeated this to *The Orcadian* - categorically confirming, once again, he would not stand down.

When asked how he would respond to the calls for his resignation, he said: "I've been down the street today and I've had a lot of emails, some of which say they think I should go."

"Most of the people who contact me locally say they think I should stay, but I fully accept that there are people whose trust and confidence in me has

been damaged, and I now have to rebuild that."

"I don't rebuild that by resigning; I rebuild that by getting on and doing the job that I've done for 14 years and demonstrating that this was an aberration in the way that I do, and have done, this job."

"Whether they are loudly protesting or quietly disappointed, I know that I have damaged my standing in the eyes of a lot of people."

"I also think that there are a lot of people who do see this in a bigger context, and I've had some fantastic emails from people that I have helped over the years - people I've helped with immigration problems; people I've helped with their fight for compensation over

contaminated blood supplies - and people have said things to me like 'We wouldn't have achieved what we did without your help, and we achieved it because you care about the way you take on your work as a constituency MP. I absolutely do, and I always have done.'"

"I have had messages saying 'Whatever you have done, you've accepted your responsibility for it; you've apologised for it and we're prepared to continue supporting you.'"

"Now, these are not necessarily people who are going to protest or support, but they are there."

"I've been out on the street today; Orkney is my home, my kids go to school here, my wife has her business here. I'm not

going to hide. "I've accepted my responsibility for it and I will explain myself to anybody who requires it."

He was then asked how he would respond to those who feel that calls for a "second chance" should not be up to him, but should be decided through a by-election.

He said: "I've made a mistake. People in all sorts of walks of life make mistakes all the time, and I am not trying to hide from that, I've been elected for a term and that's what I intend to do."

"Other people, in other parties, have made mistakes at

\*\*\*\*\*  
Continued on page six

## Crowdfunder tops £27k in 24 hours

In response to what has been dubbed "memogate", silent protests were held in both Orkney and Shetland, with around forty people attending each.

The protest in Orkney, organised by the Yes Orkney campaign group, took place outside Kirkwall's St Magnus Cathedral on Saturday afternoon, with another planned for this weekend.

On Monday, Yes Orkney - the campaign group which called for a Yes vote in the 2014 referendum on Scottish independence - announced that they would be instigating a crowdfunding appeal to raise money for legal representation, which would "hold Alastair Carmichael accountable for his behaviour before, during and after the election campaign."

At the time *The Orcadian* went to press, the appeal had raised over £28,000 of their targeted £60,000, with the web page having gone live on Tuesday morning. Over 1,700 individuals had donated.

The appeal is no longer under the Yes Orkney group, with the members now acting as individuals in order to

"legitimise" the campaign, according to the chairwoman of Yes Orkney, Fiona MacInnes. Speaking on Monday, while the crowdfunder was still under the Yes Orkney banner, Mrs MacInnes explained why the group's members felt the need to launch the appeal:

"It's a local issue with regard to what happened with the local General Election contest in Orkney, and it's a national issue as well, about access to justice and how we expect MPs, or those who seek to be MPs, to behave."

"Can you really allow shades of lies in a democracy? I think we've all become a bit normalised to the bad behaviour of those in public office: people committing crimes from expenses, battering people, paedophiles. It's pretty bad what's been going on, and I don't think by accepting any lesser bad behaviour we help make politics better."

"I think everyone, no matter what party you belong to, and I think people in all parties, would agree that you have to keep clapping away to maintain high standards."

"I'm very much of the view



The silent protest outside St Magnus Cathedral on Saturday. (www.thaorcadianphotos.co.uk)

that it is not a party political thing.

"For us, it's very much about the quality of the democracy and the importance of transparency."

If the crowdfunding appeal

is successful, the group will raise an election petition in the courts, which could begin a process to have the result of the UK General Election in Orkney and Shetland overturned.

However, the petition has

to be lodged within 21 days of the General Election - making the deadline tomorrow, Friday, May 29.

For more information, see [www.thaorcadianphotos.co.uk/projects/the-people-versus-carmichael](http://www.thaorcadianphotos.co.uk/projects/the-people-versus-carmichael).

## WEATHER FORECAST

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Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
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Thursday bright, with scattered occasionally heavy and possibly thundery showers. Moderate to fresh northwest winds.

Friday bright, with sunny spells and fewer showers, though still the chance of the odd heavier one. Easing winds.

The weekend mainly dry and bright, with moderate W'y winds falling light for a time.

Strengthening S'y winds bringing rain on Sunday. The following week possibly starting showery, but becoming drier and brighter as fresh SW'y winds ease.

### FORECAST

Daytime highs of 9° to 12° Celsius. Overnight lows of around 6° Celsius.

THURSDAY 28th: Brighter, with sunny spells and showers, occasionally heavy with the risk of the odd

rumble of thunder. F4-5 W to NW'y winds.

Sea State: Mostly moderate, with a 2 metre W'y wind-swell.

FRIDAY 29th: Bright, with sunny spells and showers, still the chance of a heavier one. F4-5 NW'y winds.

Sea State: Mostly moderate, with a 2 metre NW'y wind-swell.

### 10-DAY OUTLOOK

Temperatures 10° or 12° Celsius by day and 6° Celsius overnight.

SATURDAY 30th: A rather cloudy start, with showers, but becoming mainly dry and bright as moderate NW'y winds become light W'y.

Sea State: Slight to moderate, with a 1 to 2

metre NW'y wind-swell. Highest in the west.

SUNDAY 31st: Starting mainly dry and bright, with light winds then S to SE'y winds strengthening, with rain reaching Orkney around midday. The rain clearing to showers later as winds veer fresh to strong SW to W'y.

Sea State: Perhaps slight to moderate, with a 1 to 2 metre S to SE'y wind-swell.

MONDAY 1st - SATURDAY 6th: The week perhaps starting and ending with some rain or showers and fresh SW'y winds, with a drier and brighter interlude with lighter winds midweek.

Sea State Monday: Possibly moderate to rough, with a 2 to 3 metre SW to W'y wind-swell.

### HIGH WATER AT KIRKWALL (GMT)

Deduct 1 hr 20 mins for Stromness and Barriers (west side). Add 1 hr for Barriers (east side).

Thursday 28 May	0624	1936
Friday 29 May	0718	1946
Saturday 30 May	0803	2007
Sunday 31 May	0845	2100
Monday 1 June	0825	2144
Tuesday 2 June	1204	2221
Wednesday 3 June	1344	2200
Thursday 4 June	1425	2338

### SUNRISE & SUNSET TIMES (GMT)

Thursday 28 May	0415	2202
Friday 29 May	0414	2234
Saturday 30 May	0412	2236
Sunday 31 May	0411	2207
Monday 1 June	0409	2259
Tuesday 2 June	0408	2211
Wednesday 3 June	0407	2212
Thursday 4 June	0406	2234



# The admission that thrust Orkney politics into the national spotlight

ANDREW HAMILTON

Within hours of his admission on Friday, calls for the resignation of Northern Isles MP Alistair Carmichael escalated among rival politicians. In the national media, and on social networking sites.

Mr Carmichael's fellow Liberal Democrats were quick to jump to his defence, though, and on Saturday the party ruled out any disciplinary action against the former Secretary of State in Scotland.

However, the Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards in the House of Commons has confirmed that Mr Carmichael's actions are being considered.

Although First Minister Nicola Sturgeon accepted an apology from Mr Carmichael on Friday, she said that he should consider his position as MP for the Northern Isles.

Ms Sturgeon was responding to the letter she received

from Mr Carmichael, apologising for his part in leaking a Scottish Office memo that led to a pre-election newspaper article claiming the bad said she wanted David Cameron to remain in Downing Street.

In his letter to the First Minister, Mr Carmichael said that he accepted the memo's publication was a "serious breach of protocol" and that its contents were not correct.

He added, "I am clear that this was an error of judgement on my part and wish to offer you my sincere apologies for the embarrassment caused to you and the French Ambassador."

Later on Friday, independent Highlands and Islands MSP Jeau Urquhart condemned Mr Carmichael for not taking responsibility for the leaked memo before the findings of the Cabinet Office inquiry were released.

Mr Urquhart said: "Mr Carmichael's actions go far beyond a simple 'error of judgement' — this was a calculated

and deeply cynical attempt to undermine the integrity of Scotland's First Minister during the election campaign.

"It was a deliberate attack on a fellow politician, and this incident seriously calls into question Mr Carmichael's fitness to continue as MP for Orkney and Shetland."

She added: "Politics is all about best judgement and integrity, and he has failed his constituents on both counts — by falsifying the memo and leaking it in the first place, and by delaying his admission of guilt until after the election."

Mr Carmichael is the Liberal Democrats' last man standing in Scotland — but only as a result of intentionally destroying claims about his role in the unauthorised attempt to undermine Nicola Sturgeon.

Mrs Urquhart, who was visiting Shetland last week, said she has spoken to a number of residents who were "shocked and appalled by Mr Carmichael's behaviour".

She said: "It is incredible that he believes he can continue to represent the constituents he has openly misled."

Also last week, a poll by The Scottish Times had 96 per cent of 10,444 voters saying Mr Carmichael should resign, while a Press & Journal poll, on whether Mr Carmichael should resign, stood at 92 per cent saying yes.

In addition to Facebook users voicing concern, Friday's events led to the Carmichael-misled fashing on Twitter.

Adding to her earlier comments on Friday, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said, as well as the original dirty trick, which was bad enough, Mr Carmichael then tried to cover it up — and is only admitting it now because he got caught.

"He needs to seriously reflect on that — and reflect on whether his actions, and attempts to cover them up, are consistent with his position as an honourable member of the House of Commons."

Then, on Saturday, the SNP backed calls for a formal investigation by the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards.

Stewart Hosie MP, the SNP's deputy leader, said: "Mr Carmichael has no credibility in continuing as an MP, and in my opinion he should stand down. It is appropriate for the Standards Commissioner to get involved and arrive at her own conclusions, having investigated the full facts."

"This dirty trick has all the appearance of being pre-arranged when Alistair Carmichael was an MP before the election campaign."

Mr Carmichael went on TV after this bogus story broke, denying that he had anything to do with the dirty trick. He said that he knew nothing about it until he got a call from a journalist. We now know all of this to be 100 per cent untrue.

"The dirty trick was bad enough — but his blatant attempt to cover it up until after the General Election is ten times worse."

Mr Hosie added: "Had Alistair Carmichael admitted the truth before polling day, he would have been a discredited candidate and the result may well have been different — it is possible he would have gone the same way as twenty other Lib Dem MPs in Scotland and been carried out by the waters."

"Mr Carmichael's majority plummeted from nearly 10,000 to just over 800, and there appears to be a very strong reaction in Orkney and Shetland against him. This



First Minister Nicola Sturgeon posted a copy of Alistair Carmichael's letter to Twitter on Friday afternoon. While she said she accepted his apology, she said she should consider his position as MP for the Northern Isles.

"The people in his constituency deserve to know the whole truth, and in my view would be best served by Mr Carmichael standing down."

Silent protests were held in Kirkwall and Lerwick on Saturday, calling for Mr Carmichael's resignation.

In Orkney, the protest, attended by around 40 people, took place outside St Magnus Cathedral and was organised by Yes Orkney — the campaign group which called for a Yes vote in the 2014 referendum on Scottish independence.

However, on Sunday, amid increasing calls for a resignation, the leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats, Willie Rennie, said the Northern Isles MP deserved a second chance.

"I have discussed the serious nature of the publication of the Scotland Office document with Alistair Carmichael," he said.

"He fully understands the impact it has had on his reputation. He deeply regrets his actions, has accepted responsibility for his error of judgement, apologised to Nicola Sturgeon and the French Ambassador, and declared his ministerial severance payment."

Mr Rennie continued: "I have

known Alistair for almost 30 years, and have worked closely with him in Parliament for almost a decade. I have always been impressed by his energy, dedication and professionalism.

"He has served Orkney and Shetland for 14 years, and has been elected on four separate occasions. It is clear to me that recent events are an aberration.

"As a Liberal, I believe that people deserve a second chance. I hope fair-minded people would agree that Alistair Carmichael should be given that second chance."

Yesterday, the Scottish Liberal Democrat Party Executive met and gave Alistair Carmichael its support. He has my support too."

Sir Malcolm Bruce, the former deputy leader of the Liberal Democrats, also defended Mr Carmichael.

"Speaking on BBC Radio 4 earlier this week, he said: 'Alistair has recognised he has made a mistake. He has apologised, and I think people in public life are entitled to make a mistake and move on.'

"He has foregone his severance pay Carmichael had mis-conducted himself as a minister and he has apologised for that.

## View from WESTMINSTER



### 'My apology is comprehensive and without reservation'

When being interviewed by this paper earlier this week, I was asked if this was the hardest time I had ever known.

It was not a difficult question to answer. Yes. I have already said this in interviews and statements, but since this article is online, and the words here are not edited by anyone but me, let me say it again. I understand that my behaviour has done damage to the relationship of trust that I have with many of you as your Member of Parliament.

I regret that more than I can say, and I am truly sorry for what I have done — not just giving my agreement to the disclosure of the Scotland Office memo, but also for not subsequently being clearer about it.

My apology is comprehensive and without reservation. I have been Member of Parliament here for fourteen years. We have made our home and raised our children here. This is a community in which there is no hiding place — even if I wanted one, which I do not.

The impact of my behaviour is felt not just by me but by my family, friends and supporters. To them, I offer my particular apology. Over the fourteen years that I have been MP, I have been able to use my position to help many local people and to support many causes to which I believe. That has always been my priority and it will continue to be so.

I have received a lot of criticism over the last few days. I make no complaint about that. I have, however, also received a lot of support from local people who have

to know me and worked with me.

Some of them have said that they never voted for me but have respected the work I have done as MP, and that they do not want me to go.

One lady in particular contacted me through Facebook and told me: "I don't know about memos, political games or the nonsense going on just now, but I do know you changed our lives by supporting my husband with his difficulties with the Home Office. I know we are just two of countless people you have helped in the last years with a huge variety of issues."

I hope that you will stay as our MP, but whatever you decide I want you to know we will always be grateful for all your help, support and advice.

I confess that I brought a lump to my throat reading it. You can brace yourself for the criticism and the abuse but it is often the random acts of kindness that catch you unawares.

One of my biggest regrets about my current position is that I have inevitably contributed to the already low esteem in which politics is held.

My experience of an entire adult life spent in political activism is that most people involved in politics are in it for good reasons and because they want to make a positive difference to our country.

To be in public life is to be judged. I have always known that. I ask only that you judge not just this one incident but also what I have done for the fourteen years before it.

## Greens condemn social media abuse but add to resignation calls

While distancing itself from the "hysterical and abusive comments on social media" aimed at Alistair Carmichael over the past few days, the Orkney group of the Scottish Green Party believes he should resign and force a by-election, allowing the people of the Northern Isles to judge his behaviour.

"This is not a party political issue as far as we are concerned, nor a piece of political opportunism," said a spokesman. "It is simply a basic belief that our elected representatives should not act in a dishonest way, and that integrity is the most basic quality of an MP."

"He has at least admitted his behaviour but that is not a reason for him not to resign with immediate effect. The fact that he initiated an expensive investigation, while knowing full well his own guilt, merely compounds his culpability. No amount of self imposed censure and 'time' will make up for his behaviour in this matter."

"Alistair admitted that if he was still a member of David Cameron's cabinet, he would have resigned the post. We believe the people of Orkney and Shetland deserve the same consideration as the Prime Minister."

That does not prejudice his capacity to be a first-class MP. The Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards in the House of Commons confirmed on Tuesday that an investigation into Mr Carmichael's actions was being considered.

A spokeswoman said that the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, Kathryn Hudson, would decide whether the complaints received since Mr Carmichael's admission of responsibility regarding the leaked memo justified the launch of a full investigation.

Meanwhile, Orkney's MSP, Liam McArthur, backed his Liberal Democrat colleague while launching a counter-attack on the SNP, whom he accused of having double standards.

"I have known Alistair for more than a decade, and had the good fortune to work with him closely over the last eight years," Mr McArthur said, in a statement released on Tuesday afternoon.

"Over that time, I have seen how hard he has worked for the people of Orkney and Shetland."

"I recognise that Alistair's error of judgement has left constituents feeling let down. It is right that he has apologised for what I believe was an aberration on his part, and I hope that this will now be accepted so that we can move on."

"I know Alistair remains committed to getting on with doing the work he was elected to do, serving the people of Orkney and Shetland, as he has done with great diligence over the last 14 years."

Mr McArthur added: "At the same time, I find it difficult to understand why national politicians and members of the Yes campaign appear to believe that others should be held to higher standards than those they happily tolerate amongst their own."

The Orkney Liberal Democrats added their support in a statement issued on Wednesday morning: "We understand the disappointment felt in Orkney; however, we believe that Alistair Carmichael has been an excellent advocate for Orkney and Shetland and a hard-working and effective constituency MP for the last 14 years."

"He has rightly appointed to the people of Orkney and Shetland, to the First Minister and the French Ambassador. He is committed to getting on with the job he was elected to do."

"He represents a liberal voice many in these islands still wish to be heard, and we believe he is the right man to represent these islands in the UK Parliament."

# 'I will be getting on with the job I've been elected to do and I'm not looking beyond that'

From page four

different times – for example, Alex Salmond, when he said that he had had legal advice on the position of an independent Scotland in the European Union and he didn't.

Nicola Sturgeon, at that point, didn't call for him to stand down. She said that "im-minded people would give him a chance. I think I'm entitled to the same type of treatment."

Asked if he would stand if there was a by-election, Mr Carmichael said that he would not answer that question, describing it as speculation.

"I will be getting on with the job I've been elected to do and I'm not looking beyond that."

Mr Carmichael was asked whether he had experienced anything like the fallout from his admission before.

"It has been the worst five days of my life. If I could undo the things that I've done, I would, but I can't."

"This is a type of situation that people from all walks of life find themselves in from time to time – you make mistakes, and you have to face up to them and take the consequences."

"It's hard for me. There's nothing worse than making a mess of things and knowing you have only yourself to blame for it."

"But also it's difficult for my wife, for my kids, for my friends, and it's difficult for the people who have supported me."

Candidly, I do feel I've let a lot of these people down. I now feel I have a real responsibility to demonstrate that this was an aberration, and that I'm still capable of doing the job that

I have and giving the isles the representation they need."

Following Friday's admission, the SNP General Election candidate for the Northern Isles, Danus Skene, questioned Mr Carmichael's ability to do his job as an MP, in particular how effective he could now be in Parliament.

In response, Mr Carmichael said: "First of all, it's no great surprise that the man who was my SNP opponent – who never wanted me to have this job in the first place and fought very hard to stop me getting it – would seek to undermine the position that I have."

"But I think I will be able to demonstrate, in time, that he is not right about that and, for what it is worth, I've had people from all parties in the House of Commons get in touch with me, saying that they realise that I've made a serious error but that I still have a contribution to make."

On the subject of the cost of the inquiry, the figure of £1.4 million has been widely claimed.

Mr Carmichael said he didn't know where this figure could have come from, but that he thought it had been "plucked out of the air", and that he would be "astounded" if the cost was anything near £1.4 million.

He said the actual figure was not something he knew – as he had not conducted the inquiry – but felt the £1.4 million was "not even slightly" accurate, and had "no foundation in fact".

He said that, as far as he knew, the investigation was carried out by Cabinet Office staff, and "other staff" were not brought in to do the job.

Immediately after this

month's General Election, when interviewed by *The Orcadian*, Mr Carmichael hit out at the use of smear tactics – mostly with reference to social media. He said that smear tactics had been used against him, and that it was a feature of politics he had not seen before in Orkney.

Asked this week if smear tactics were part of modern politics, he said: "It depends what you regard as a smear. I think a smear is where you say something about somebody else that you know not to be true."

"What I had was a memorandum, which has now been carefully examined by the Inquiry in the Cabinet Office."

The statement put out by the Cabinet Secretary said that there was a memorandum which recorded a conversation which happened between the French Consul in Edinburgh and a civil servant in the Scottish Office.

"That civil servant is a reliable civil servant, who has a lot of experience in these matters, and who wrote, faithfully, what he thought he had heard."

The content of that memo, in its substance, has been denied by the French Ambassador and the First Minister and I have to accept that."

He added: "There's a difference between information being put into the public domain which you believe to be true, and information being put into the public domain that you know to be false – that would be a smear."

"I had no reason to disbelieve it, and, on the face of it, that memo disclosed a number of areas which contradicted public statements."

"That was why it was suggested to me, and I agreed that



Alistair Carmichael following his re-election as MP in Lerwick earlier this month.

(View from orcadian.co.uk)

the release was in the public interest to be disclosed.

"I'm not justifying it, or pretending that it was the right thing to do, but it would be wrong to say it was irrational and it was the wrong thing to do."

Asked whether he regarded the release of the memo as a smear tactic, Mr Carmichael replied "No".

Claims have also been made that other Members of Parliament knew about the release of the memo – for example, the leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats, Willie Rennie MSP, and David Mundell MP, who is now the Secretary of State for Scotland and who served in the Scottish Office prior to that recent appointment.

Mr Carmichael said he had no reason to believe that either

of them knew about it.

He said that he had seen in the national press that Mr Mundell had acted angrily to the suggestion, adding that there would have been no reason for Mr Rennie to have known about it – having not been in the Scottish Office.

This month's General Election saw the Liberal Democrat presence in Westminster slashed from 57 to just eight.

The Holyrood elections take place in May next year, when it is possible that the SNP will see a similar result as they saw in the General Election.

Mr Carmichael was asked if he felt his actions had harmed the chances of either Tavish Scott, MSP for Shetland, or Liam McArthur, MSP for Orkney.

"I think I've certainly damaged my own standing," he

said. "I don't see why that would have an impact on the standing of Liam McArthur or Tavish Scott, both of whom, I think, have served Orkney and Shetland respectively, absolutely brilliantly. I hope it won't have affected their chances."

So, what's next for Alistair Carmichael?

"I get back on and do the job. I will be open with anybody who wants to discuss this with me."

"I'm not going to hide from it, but this is the most important job that I've ever had – more important than being in the Cabinet is being MP for Orkney and Shetland."

"I care a lot – too much – about the communities that I'm part of to let this get in the way of the job that I have."

## Issue now is the 'proper representation of the Northern Isles' – Danus Skene

ANDREW STEWART

The SNP candidate for Orkney and Shetland at the recent General Election has said that Alistair Carmichael should "do the honourable thing" and resign.

Speaking on Monday, Mr Skene said: "I think he should resign, to be perfectly honest. I do accept a measure of distinction between a ministerial resignation and a resignation as MP, but we're now going into a long dark tunnel."

"The process for a parliamentary investigation by the Standards Commissioner, followed by a lot of jumping up and down by constituents and everything else, is several months. It's a complex process."

"It's perfectly possible that he could survive this process, but that is not a service to his constituents, and I think he should do the honourable thing."

"I wasn't saying that as recently as Friday or Saturday when this first broke, but it has now become clear to me that he is in a very compromised position."

"From the Lib Dems point of view, are they seriously talking about rebuilding themselves in Scotland when this sole MP is this compromised and isolated figure in the Commons?"

He added: "The point I'm trying to keep my focus on is the proper representation of the isles. We have a very particular job for our representatives, whether in Edinburgh or London, because we have a very distinctive agenda of things that have got to be taken account of, in terms of decisions made, results achieved."

He added: "I could have a personal gripe about the whole cover-up business, and what the electorate didn't know, but that's not the point – the point is that we now have a lame duck MP who is not only in the situation of being regarded as dishonourable but, much more importantly, is ineffective. How can this man actually do the job? That's my main concern."

Mr Skene was asked whether he thought the fact that Mr Carmichael had won the Northern Isles seat by a much smaller margin – only 817 votes – made the issue more prominent.

"It doesn't affect the principle. It obviously

the result or approach the prospect, I think there would have been less of a sense of urgency to this if his majority had gone down from nine thousand to four or five thousand, but it went down to a marginal three-figure number. Yes, it's a reality that affects people's attitudes, but it's not a sour grapes issue. That's not the central point at this stage."

"Clearly, the SNP has a right to feel we've been hard done by but that is the rough and tumble of politics to some extent. There's no point in speculating whether we would have won the election if this had been known earlier."

Finally, Mr Skene was asked if he thought smear tactics were a reality of modern British politics, and if the leak of information, investigation aside, was wrong. He replied:

"The leak and his authorising of it, stark, but I do accept that it has almost become a joke. Those things happen, a wrong decision was made, in a hurry, and he has apologised for that."

"What is much worse than the original provision is the cover-up, the lie that he was not involved, and the expense that has been involved – I think most importantly of all, the way the thing was kept under wraps until after the election."

The Lib Dems represent, as far as I'm concerned, a highly honourable tradition in British politics, which has been compromised by the way they've behaved in coalition and which is fatally compromised by this sort of thing. This is shoddy. We deserve better."

● Donna Heddie, convener of the Orkney branch of the SNP, also reacted to Friday's news.

She said: "The many SNP members and activists who took part, in good faith, in the recent election campaign will not be the only people in Orkney and Shetland who are appalled by the behaviour of Alistair Carmichael."

"The people in Orkney and Shetland who actually voted for him, under the impression that he was a man of integrity, were surely mistaken."

"He has admitted his guilt in leaking a memo casting aspersions on the First Minister and the SNP, which he acknowledged was factually incorrect."

"That is bad enough, but the cover-up is worse. He should apologise to his constituents

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# Postbag



- The publication of submitted letters is NOT GUARANTEED. Brief letters of debate, and commentary, will always take precedence.
- All submissions MUST include the full name, postal address and telephone number of the writer — no aliases or noms de plume. Anonymous letters WILL NOT be considered for publication.
- The OrCADIAN reserves the right to edit letters for reasons of length, clarity and to comply with legal restrictions.

## A sorry affair

I write on Tuesday morning, while it looks like our MP is still determined to ignore the shame and embarrassment he has brought on himself, his party and his constituents.

If he has indeed resigned by Thursday, this letter will be redundant, but even so I will explain why I think he is right in doing so.

We are told that our MP admits he made a mistake, has apologised, and therefore we should all move on. But what mistake is he referring to? Only that he did not read a memo in the weeks after receiving it? Or that, not having read it, he then authorised it to be published? Why would anyone agree to publish a memo they had not read?

He has apologised now to the person whom this leak was most likely to have damaged, and then to another person whose reputation (who happened to be a leading French diplomat) was "accidentally" tarnished.

He has not apologised to anyone who thought at the time that he was behind the leak, or to us in Orkney.

He seems now to be relying on the inherent kindness of Orcadians to forgive and forget, but what is at stake if this is so?

I believe Mr Carmichael was leant on to publish this memo, which, if he is to be believed (and his credibility now and for the future is one of the moot points), he didn't

know precisely what it contained (which he should have, being the Secretary of State for Scotland, not a junior ministerial post), and he must certainly have been aware that it contained material very likely to damage the First Minister of Scotland (again, not a junior ministerial post) otherwise what was the point of publishing it?

Right there is the crossroads where he traded his soul. For musicians, the myth is that the reason for bargaining with the devil is to become a better guitarist! What was the carrot or stick offered to Mr Carmichael?

Does he genuinely abhor the First Minister so much that he would want to damage her reputation in this way?

Does he genuinely fear independence so much that he would wish to influence the outcome of a General Election in his own favour?

Is he now so in thrall with David Cameron who appointed him as Secretary of State, that he would simply comply with anything he was asked to do?

Please let us not ignore some absolutely fundamental principles. We are not talking about accidents and emergencies. This was a very carefully considered plan designed to be released at the time most likely to cause damage.

The people involved are not insignificant, but holders of the highest public office.

Mr Carmichael knew full well that he was doing wrong (he is on record for stating that public smears during campaigning are wrong) but calculated it was worth the risk.

This is what we should be reflecting on.

The rest of the fall-out — that he repeatedly denied any knowledge of the affair; that he allowed a vast amount of money to be spent in trying to find out the truth of the matter, which he could have saved the public purse; that he only apologised when the inquiry was published — are only ripples of the stone being thrown.

I repeat, how does this man deserve our trust?

The irony is that, had Mr Carmichael kept to his own principles, he really would still have a role to play — I do believe there are still some Liberal ideals worth promoting. But I also believe the Coalition has done more than sap the nation's spirit, it has actually corrupted an erstwhile fine character and politician.

The only way that Mr Carmichael can truly apologise for this sorry affair is to resign.

ELAINE HENDERSON  
8 Alfred Street, Stromness

## Astonishing

On March 6, a civil servant in the Scotland Office phoned a French diplomat, who had been present at a high-level meeting, and then from what was gleaned on the phone, wrote a third-hand account of that meeting.

A month later, the account was leaked to the press during the General Election to attempt to damage the SNP and Labour.

But crucially, as Alistair Carmichael now admits in his May 22 letter of apology to Nicola Sturgeon, "the details of that account are not correct."

Did Mr Carmichael seek to check the accuracy of the document before authorising its leak? Far from it.

In his May 22 confession on BBC TV, Mr Carmichael said he'd "never actually seen this document you know, be quite clear about that."

This is astonishing.

For the Scottish Secretary of State to authorise the leaking of a document without inspecting the limitations of its origin and content is either incompetent, the action of a fool, or the action of someone being used by his political superiors in Westminster as a tool.

The Cabinet Office inquiry statement, covering a single page, taking 48 days to produce and disgracefully not published until 15 days after the election, doesn't enlighten us as to why Mr Carmichael had not even

seen the document he permitted to be leaked by his adviser.

But whether Alistair Carmichael, on this particular occasion, acted as fool or tool, for party political advantage or to obey the Prime Minister, there can be no doubt that he fell from the diligent standards he displayed in the earlier years of his time in Parliament.

He used the power of high office to assist in an unfair election during a General Election in order to damage the reputation of opposing parties, and then chose to mislead the public, including local electors, about his complicity in that action.

The Lib Dem leader in Scotland, Willie Rennie, says he deserves a second chance.

But that is not a question for Willie Rennie to decide, and certainly Alistair Carmichael is deeply mistaken if he thinks he can simply await that second chance to himself.

Only the electors of Orkney and Shetland can adjudicate on whether Alistair Carmichael deserves a second chance.

And, for that to happen, he has to resign his seat immediately and submit himself to scrutiny in a by-election.

JOHN ABERDEIN  
Quoy, Hoy

## Authorised?

Mr Carmichael states that he

"authorised" the release of the memo.

Language is so important, and he seeks here to legitimise his actions, authority equates to legitimate in Mr Carmichael's mind.

It was not legitimate to release the private conversation between the First Minister and the French Ambassador.

Mr Carmichael admits that he didn't even read the memo, which, from all accounts, was a third-hand account, so he took his special advisor's word on its content.

He created a situation in which the injured parties had no chance to give their account and bring some balance to the issue, until after publication.

Mr Carmichael obviously thought he had found the smoking gun to damage the First Minister and the SNP election campaign. Instead, with his DNA all over the alleged weapon, he has only served to damage the Lib Dem cause and his personal standing.

The Lib Dems claim he should be given a second chance, based on Lib Dem values.

What are Lib Dem values? Dishonesty, deviousness, wasting public money on a needless investigation, wasting civil servants' time?

Stay or go, it's your decision Mr Carmichael, but either way you are a political lame duck.

FRAZER CAMPBELL  
Tylee, Stromness

## Learn to forgive

Alistair Carmichael has served these islands very well in his 14 years in office.

I find it disturbing to think of him being penalised for his diligence the way the mob are treating him.

If Nicola Sturgeon, and the French Ambassador can accept his apologies, then surely we should all be able to do the same.

If this sordid episode carries on, people get bitter and it causes divisions, Orkney is a beautiful restful place, where people work together.

Just learn to forgive and you will be surprised how much more happiness you will receive.

Let Alistair get on and do the job he is paid to do.

PAM KEMP  
Quoyhanks, South Ronaldsay

## Don't give up

Alistair Carmichael should resign for lying. Likewise Nicola Sturgeon, who falsely claimed that top EU bids told her that an independent Scotland would be automatically in the EU with fabricated opt outs.

Alistair don't give in to the black-shirt thugs

K. C. GOOCH  
7 Scapa Court, Kirkwall

## It's not the Orkney I knew

When I left Orkney, some 35 years ago, I would not have believed that I would, one day, be writing to the *The OrCADIAN* commenting on "Jingotson", "Lynch Mob" and "Hate in the Community".

I'm not a particular fan of social media, but my wife is, and she points out to me the various rants associated with the recent misgivings of Alistair Carmichael.

Mr Carmichael is a seasoned politician, and had this situation arisen in the course of normal politics, then it is an error of judgement he would simply have to weather.

But Nationalism is not a basis for conformal politics, it is one the representative of a cult following. Sadly, the tide of Jingotson easily provides for the satirical and self-righteousness of the lynch-mob mentality, and Alistair is now up against a baying horde, whose misguided sense of social justice will not abate until they behold their "Jihad John" moment.

It was stamped at the level of vitriol in some of the social media posts and, as I've worked offshore for many years, I'm no stranger to the odd foul-mouthed diatribe. But here the hatred being expressed is somewhat frightening!

Since it is now clear that we can expect an SNP whitewash in the Scottish elections next year, the suicide of democracy in Scotland has begun.

Thankfully, the list system will help avoid a complete single party state, but still, their overall numbers will more than satisfy the psychotic needs of the "Hate Brigade".

Their core edict of "Pernicious Albion" well overshadows any true commitment to a better Scotland, but rather it inspires the pestation and subsequent proliferation of a sub-culture of pure bile.

This is not the Orkney I knew!

BRIAN GORN  
19 Land Street, Keith

## THE GIDDY LIMIT

Alex Leonard No. 509



More Postbag  
on page 32



# Postbag

## Time to reflect

I read David Partner's letter (*The Orcadian Postbag*, May 21), which he begins with an implied comparison of the SNP with Nazism and continues with a display of contempt for the voters of 1945, and, by extension, the democratic system which allowed them to elect a Labour government in preference to Winston Churchill and the Tory party.

It has caused me to reflect on the astonishment and dismay he must feel now the Liberal Democrat MP for Orkney and Shetland, and former Secretary of State for Scotland, has been forced to admit to the sackable offence of passing classified government documents to a newspaper in order to smear a political opponent — a tactic history would show to be much used by right-wing European parties trying to seize power in the 1930s.

**JOHN SCHOLLAY**  
49 Kirklands Road,  
Kirkwall

## Taking a tilt

In the week that Orkney celebrates Norwegian Constitution Day, your regular correspondent, Mr Partner, with no hint of irony, takes a tilt at Nationalism (*The Orcadian Postbag*, May 21).

A retired history teacher knows, or should know, that

National Socialism was neither national nor socialist.

Rather it was, as early as the publication of *Mein Kampf* in 1924, a fiercely racist ideology bent on expansionist imperialism; they even called their state 'The Third Reich' ('Empire' — the clue's in the title), hardly the aspirations of a party comfortable within its borders.

They came to power by exploiting the very attitudes to be found in the BNP, Britain First, UKip, some conservatives and an embarrassing number of Labour politicians, who lay the blame for every perceived wrong on foreigners (the EU, immigrants) and 'slackers' (the disabled, the unemployed).

Even the Lib Dems were perfectly happy to campaign alongside those people during the Referendum, and they, too, conveniently forget that nationalism comes in many forms.

True, there have been violent nationalisms, mostly as in Ireland in the early 20th century, in a competition of squalid violence with the benevolent British state.

To some extent that period, like the nationalist Risorgimento of Garibaldi, has passed into history as noble struggle.

There have also been nationalisms, like the Passive Resistance movement of Mohandas Gandhi that, despite such provocations as the Amritsar Massacre, symbolise a better way to sort out our differences.

Mr Partner also chooses to ignore the nationalism, then known as the principle of self

determination, which followed the Great War and started to shape modern Europe. Nor does he mention the flowering of nation states, some of which had never previously been nation states before, after the break-up of the Soviet Union.

Some of these, like Belorussia, have fallen into dictatorship, but by far the majority in Eastern Europe have become vibrant democracies with thriving economies.

Leave it to the educated people of Scotland, though, to conceive a nationalism that is neither racist, violent, small-minded nor incompetent.

The Civic Nationalism now being developed by the SNP and encouraged by the Greens, Socialists, many former Labour supporters, even some Lib Dems and conservatives, is based on justice, fairness and inclusivity, something that used to be the central precept of the Liberals in times gone by.

In the face of this wave of enthusiasm, Mr Partner blames an ungrateful electorate, who failed to accept that the Lib Dems had bravely defended our rights through five years of rampant Thatcherism.

Perhaps the voters are more sophisticated than you think.

Perhaps they could work out that, without the enabling presence of the Lib-Dems, a minority Tory government could not have enacted the savage legislation it did.

To accuse the most informed and engaged electorate in a 'western' democracy of ingratitude is possibly a little arrogant, don't you think?

With his simplistic list of nationalist methodology, Mr Partner manages to describe pretty well the modern Westminster plutocracy, which likes to identify itself with 'the State', openly controls the media, and has a cosy, if not symbiotic relationship, with wealthy industrialists/city financiers.

They have no charismatic figure, of course, and their propaganda is pretty poor, but lying appears to be popular, particularly this week.

I'm sure Alistair Carmichael has spent too long in the company of the Tories and that some of their dubious morality must have rubbed off.

Thankfully, he now has an opportunity to put that behind him and use his talents elsewhere.

To his great credit, he made a strong statement at the hustings in Stromness extolling the

value of immigration to this country; I hope he can develop those sentiments and find a new career championing the displaced peoples of this world.

**LINDSAY HALL**  
Seaview, Longhope

## Still going

The Yes Orkney group, who had ample opportunity to harangue the good people of Orkney for many months prior to the referendum last September, are still going on, it seems.

Despite a "show" of winding down the general Yes campaign by its SNP backers-in-chief — albeit somewhat belatedly at the turn of the year — it appears that didn't happen.

Doesn't it seem a bit odd, from such seeming defenders of democracy and fair play, that, despite being rebuffed by two thirds of the Orkney electorate just a few months ago on a simple yes/no question in a free and fair election, they are intent on defying the democratic outcome by continuing as though we hadn't yet had the vote?

It is difficult to avoid the question as to whether they are truly just outraged local individuals, or whether they are just carrying on their relentless campaign.

Like door-to-door salesmen who keep chapping at your door, time after time, even after being politely refused, until you buy some of their unwanted goods.

**DENNIS GOWLAND**  
New Horries, Deerness

## Crofting Commission

I refer to the article in last week's *The Orcadian* (entitled "Crofting was nearly unviable in the past," says Orkney assessor, "but now it's completely unviable").

It is unfortunate that the article did not reflect the Crofting Commission's remit as the regulatory body of crofting.

The provisions of the Crofting Reform (Scotland) Act, which was passed by Parliament in 2010, created the Crofting Commission with the primary function of regulating crofting. The Commission

does not have the responsibility for crofting grants, and this lies with the Scottish Government's Rural Payments and Inspections Division.

The Crofting Commission has regulatory duties and powers to work with crofters and crofting to communities to:

- ensure crofts are occupied by a tenant or owner-occupier crofter;
- prevent misuse and neglect of the land;
- ensure the crofts are cultivated or put to other purposeful uses.

Crofts and common grazings are a valuable resource that should be available, both now and in the future, for existing crofters and new entrants to crofting, to use productively, and the Commission is working to protect the crofting system.

The Crofting Commission covers all of the crofting communities with a unified approach when considering its decisions on regulatory applications.

In line with Section 58A(7)(b)-(e) of the Crofters (Scotland) Act 1993, the Commission must have regard to:

- the interests of the estate which comprises the land to which the application relates;
- the interests of the crofting community in the locality of that land;
- the sustainable development of that crofting community;
- the interests of the public at large.

Orkney is unique as a crofting region in that a majority of crofts are owned.

We know that there are parts of the legislation that have caused difficulties for both owners and tenants, and we have been working with other stakeholders to identify these areas and suggest solutions. The output of this work is a report that is now with Scottish Government.

We are committed to securing the future of crofting across the crofting communities.

**CATRIONA MACLEAN**  
Chief Executive  
Crofting Commission

## On to the wavewall

I wonder how many of your readers read the planning applications on page 30 of last week's *The Orcadian*, regarding

a wavewall from Hatston to Shore Street?

While we have, rightly, been concerned about the changes to Broad Street, Palace Road and Castle Street, this wavewall plan has also been ongoing.

The proposal is to "construct a concrete and stone-faced flood wall, including fixed and demountable flood gates and section of metal railings and associated street works."

It stems from the disastrously severe flooding of some years ago, probably the greatest depth of flooding Kirkwall has experienced.

The Government quango SEPA has decreed this wall must be built.

The plan surfaced two or three years ago, and recently an exhibition of the plans was held in the Town Hall.

The wall, amongst other things, would go across the Corn Slip, and go round the back of the shipping offices to link with the wall at Shore Street.

As far as I can remember, the plans have not appeared in the press to give much greater publicity to what is intended.

Nor has there been any public meeting.

So, come on OIC, I challenge you to put the plans in the press and be a lot more communicative about things that affect us and the town.

The number of what could be described as serious floods on the scale of those on mainland UK in Kirkwall over the last three hundred years can be counted on one hand.

This is another scheme Kirkwallians will say is unnecessary.

**DAVID PARTNER**  
10 Torness, Kirkwall

*Editor's note: An artist's impression of the proposed phase 2 flood wall at the Kirkwall Basin was published in The Orcadian of January 29 as part of an article highlighting the proposal and the subsequent public exhibition.*

*The planning application was approved last week, and I have a follow-up article in the pipeline to appear in the next few weeks.*

*Meanwhile, the planning application (15/120/PP) is available at the OIC website (<http://goo.gl/1DGrMR>) or can be viewed at the council offices.*

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## The joy that is Folk Festival

The final chord has been struck, the last note has been sung, but we will surely remember, for many a day, the joy that was this year's Folk Festival.

Stromness was again at the centre of a fun-filled weekend of tunes, songs, laughter, high linn and good craic.

It was so heartening to see the streets of the town thronging with people.

Old friends met up again, after a time apart, as new friendships were kindled amongst the reels and slip jigs that blurred out onto the streets from the lively pub sessions.

The assembled musical talent was awe-inspiring, and I suspect there may be many who will take up an instrument on the strength of what they saw over the weekend.

Especially so when the guests of the folk scene take to the streets to join an impromptu session outside the Berry Inn, as Sharon Shannon did, much to the surprise and delight of those she joined for a tune.

Invited onto the stage by rising country stars Ward Thomas.

It was so good to see Orkney's home-grown talent, many well established in their own right, with others new to the scene, rubbing shoulders with some of the giants of the current national and international folk scene.

Tips on how to play before an audience were shared, as well as techniques on how to play.

I suspect these are the memories that will linger for many here at home. Weekends such as these simply do not happen without the generous support of our funders and sponsors.

On behalf of Orkney Folk Festival, I would like to thank them all for helping us to stage the events.

Without their support we would not be able to bring so many talented musicians to Orkney, to share their music with us and to inspire those new to the scene to take up an instrument or to develop their voices.

Special thanks go to the many volunteers who man the doors, stage manage events, sell the raffle tickets,

show folk to their seats, make tea, man the box office and so very much more — without you, none of this would be possible.

With almost every event a sell-out, it's clear that the Folk Festival is in good heart and, judging by the comments on our Facebook page, clearly loved by those who have attended for many years and by those for whom 2015 was their first (but surely not their last!) time.

The festival would not survive without its very faithful audience, its patrons, volunteers and sponsors — and as we extend our gratitude to you all — we are fast considering how we can top the experience of this last weekend.

Keep an eye on our website and Facebook page as we consider how to make 2016 even better, and haste ye back!

**ELAINE GRIEVA**  
Chairwoman  
Orkney Folk Festival

# Lib Dem Alistair Carmichael admits responsibility for anti-Sturgeon leak

Calls for MP to resign after admission about memo of private conversation in which SNP leader purportedly said she wanted David Cameron to remain PM

**Andrew Sparrow** Senior political correspondent and **Libby Brooks** Scotland reporter

Friday 22 May 2015 17.14 BST

Alistair Carmichael, the Lib Dem former Scottish secretary, has come under pressure to resign as an MP after admitting being responsible for an election leak intended to damage Nicola Sturgeon.

Carmichael said he authorised his special adviser to release a memo about a private conversation in which Scotland's first minister purportedly said she wanted David Cameron to remain as prime minister. As a consequence neither he nor his adviser would be taking the severance pay they were due, the Lib Dem MP for Orkney and Shetland said.

Describing his action as "an error of judgment", Carmichael said he had apologised to the SNP leader and that, if he had still been a minister, this would have been a resigning matter. He added that he accepted the memo was wrong about Sturgeon being pro-Cameron.

But Sturgeon said Carmichael should consider quitting parliament because, after the incriminating memo was published in the Daily Telegraph, he lied about his involvement in its release.

The memo was potentially hugely damaging to the SNP leader because it suggested she was misleading voters about her preferred election outcome. The document was a note taken by a Scotland Office civil servant recording a conversation with the French consul general in which the envoy recounted the contents of a private discussion between Sturgeon and the French ambassador.

According to the note, written in March 2015, Sturgeon said she would "rather see David Cameron remain as PM" and "didn't see Ed Miliband as PM material".

Sturgeon denied ever saying this after the story was published near the start of the election campaign and her account was corroborated by the French embassy.

She also asked Sir Jeremy Heywood, the cabinet secretary, to conduct a leak inquiry, and Carmichael went public with his confession and apology after the findings of that inquiry were published on Friday afternoon.

The Cabinet Office discovered that an official mobile phone belonging to Euan Roddin, Carmichael's special adviser, had been used to contact one of the reporters who wrote the



Telegraph story. Roddin then confirmed that he had given the memo to the newspaper, arguing that the leak was in the public interest.

Carmichael told the investigation team that he had discussed the leak with Roddin and that he had authorised it, but that he now recognised this was wrong.

Speaking to the BBC, Carmichael said: "It was something that I could have stopped and very much should have stopped. That was an error of judgment on my part, I deeply regret it, and for the consequences of that error of judgment, I've apologised to the first minister and to the French ambassador.

"If I were still a cabinet minister at this point, I would tender my resignation; obviously the Liberal Democrats are no longer in government, so I've not. But I have said to the cabinet secretary that I will not accept the ministerial severance payment that is normally offered to ministers when they leave office."

Losing their severance pay will cost Carmichael £16,876, and Roddin at least £15,500.

After the leak was published, the Lib Dems were widely suspected of being to blame, partly because Carmichael controlled the Scotland Office and partly because the party had much greater interest in halting the SNP surge than the Tories, who were only defending one seat in Scotland and were keen to see the SNP destroy Scottish Labour. Cameron even publicly suggested that the Lib Dems were the culprits.

At the time Nick Clegg, the then Lib Dem leader, said that was silly, and Carmichael said he did not know anything about the matter until he was contacted by a journalist.

Sturgeon said on Friday that while she accepted Carmichael's apology, he should consider standing down as an MP.

"I accept his apology, but the real issue is that he should be apologising to the people of Orkney and Shetland, because he clearly contested the election on false pretences," she said.

"Mr Carmichael said at the time that the first he was aware of this matter was when he received a call from a journalist, but we now know that this is simply untrue. As well as the original dirty trick, which was bad enough, Mr Carmichael then tried to cover it up - and is only admitting it now because he got caught. He needs to seriously reflect on that - and reflect on whether his actions and attempt to cover them up are consistent with his position as an honourable member of the House of Commons."

Although Sturgeon and the French embassy have always denied that she said she favoured Cameron as prime minister, other parts of the conversation recorded in the memo - including her saying she had no idea "what kind of mischief" Alex Salmond, the former SNP leader, would get up to at Westminster - have not been denied.

The Cabinet Office investigation concluded that the civil servant who recorded his conversation with the French consul general was reliable and had acted in good faith. But it also pointed out that the envoy admitted in the memo that part of his conversation may have been "lost in translation".



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## Smears 2.0

*The Internet helps fuel the ugly insinuation that Obama is a stealth Muslim, reviving an ancient hate.*

December 03, 2007

The Great American Smear is back. In 2000, the victim was Republican presidential candidate Sen. John McCain, and the vector for transmission was telephone lines and leaflets left on windshields in church parking lots. This year, the victim is Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Barack Obama, and the vector is e-mail messages that appear to have originated in evangelical networks. As always, the smears play to the ugly underside of American politics: prejudice and hatred.

The 2000 rumor was that the white McCain had fathered a dark-skinned child out of wedlock. In the end, it did not matter that he and his wife had adopted the child from Bangladesh. The then-front-runner lost the South Carolina Republican primary to George W. Bush, whose campaign has always denied any involvement in the "push polling" that propagated the smear. It worked partly because the mainstream media didn't report what was happening until after the election. But mainly it worked because of the persistence of the prejudices that prompted the South's old anti-miscegenation laws.

So it's worth considering the persistence of the Internet rumors that Obama, well known to Chicagoans as a Christian, is actually a stealth Muslim, a "Manchurian candidate" who would take the presidential oath with his hand on the Koran.

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The rumors first surfaced during Obama's run for Senate but took off in a viral e-mail campaign in 2006. One e-mail called Obama "The Enemy Within." GOP strategist Ed Rogers also pointedly mentioned Obama's middle name, Hussein. In January, the Obama campaign was forced to denounce Fox News for repeating a false *Insight* magazine report that he had spent four years in an Indonesian madrasa, an Islamic school. Though CNN sent out a reporter who found that the school Obama had attended had nothing in common with the Pakistani incubators for jihadists, and though his campaign has set the record straight repeatedly, last week the *Washington Post* ran a front-page story about Obama's "Muslim ties."

That the rumors are false and vile is self-evident. That they persist in the face of the facts speaks to the power of the underlying calumny -- that Muslim Americans in positions of power in the United States represent a fifth column, an internal security threat of the sort believed to have been posed by Japanese Americans during World War II.

It also speaks to the post-9/11 revival of the ancient Christian loathing of Muslims that predated by centuries the 1529 Ottoman Siege of Vienna. Today, Muslim peoples are frequently stereotyped as mobs or hordes who are particularly prone to violence and generally supportive of terrorism. And an ugly undertone of the immigration debate has been the insinuation that efforts to restrict illegal immigration should focus on keeping out the "bad" Muslims who have overrun Europe, not the "good" Mexicans who only want to work here.

It's true that many American voters probably aren't ready for a Muslim president, as they once weren't ready to elect a Catholic to the highest office. But there are now believed to be more than 2 million Muslim Americans in the United States, and one of them is a member of Congress. Rep. Keith Ellison (D-Minn.) won election without hiding his religion and did, in fact, swear the oath of office on the Koran. This tolerance of religious diversity is a founding American principle, and one that we hope will continue to distinguish the United States from theocracies such as Iran and Saudi Arabia.

Presidential candidates of both parties have a duty to denounce not only the smear against Obama but the bigotry that underlies it.

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## Historical Highlights

# The Controversial Career of Representative Douglas Stringfellow of Utah

September 24, 1922



image, *Congressional Pictorial Directory, 83rd Congress*

A one-term Member from Utah, Douglas Stringfellow's political career ended abruptly after he admitted he lied about his war record.

On this date, Representative [Douglas Stringfellow](#) of Utah, who later stunned the nation when he admitted he had lied on national television about his World War II service record, was born in Draper, Utah. Stringfellow, who enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1942, was wounded by a French land mine in 1944 and thereafter walked only with the aid of a cane. He returned home a war hero, claiming to have been the sole survivor of an Office of Strategic Services (OSS) espionage unit, captured and then tortured in a concentration camp after parachuting into Germany to kidnap a prominent Nazi nuclear scientist. In 1952, Stringfellow's intrepid tale aided him in upsetting six-term incumbent [Walter Granger](#) for a House seat representing most of Utah, bringing the district over to the GOP column for the first time in nearly two decades. During his campaign for re-election in the fall of 1954, Stringfellow appeared on the television show *This Is Your Life* to re-tell his story, prompting several Hollywood directors to bid for the movie rights. But the *Army Times* challenged his account, citing contradictions raised by a few "doubting Thomases" within the ranks. Stringfellow initially dismissed his naysayers as politically motivated and appealed to the [Dwight D. Eisenhower](#) administration to open classified records to support his claim. In a stunning turn of events, on October 16, Stringfellow went before a television audience and tearfully admitted the story was a hoax, woven over a series of speeches and maintained because he reveled in his rise in popularity. "I fell into the trap, which in part had been laid by my own glib tongue," the contrite lawmaker confessed. "I became a prisoner of my own making. . . . I have made some grievous mistakes for which I am truly sorry." He offered to withdraw from the election, prompting Utah GOP leaders to call an emergency meeting. The

Republican State Central Committee accepted his decision to bow out of the race, nominating Utah State Agricultural College professor [Henry Dixon](#) in his stead. Stringfellow returned to his previous career in broadcasting in Utah, where he remained until his death on October 20, 1966, at age 44 from a heart attack.

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FEATURED, NEED TO KNOW | 4<sup>th</sup> February 2015

## Ashcroft polls show sensational surge for SNP and suggest they will win more than 50 MPs in May

*Lord Ashcroft's seat-by-seat polls of Scottish constituencies have confirmed what national polls have suggested for months: [...]*



Photo: Getty

By [Harry Lambert](#) and [Tom Monk](#)

Lord Ashcroft's seat-by-seat polls of Scottish constituencies have confirmed what national polls have suggested for months: the SNP are set to win more than 50



# MAY2015

The polls findings show an SNP surge beyond the expectations of an even the most optimistic nationalists, and confirm that a hung parliament is a near inevitability.

Ashcroft's polls, leaked ahead of schedule late last night, surveyed 16 of Scotland's 59 seats, and put the SNP in front in 15 of them. Many of these seats are long-time Labour heartlands where the party have majorities of 30-40 per cent. And yet Ashcroft gives the SNP leads in almost all of these seats. Only Glasgow North East, which Labour won by nearly 16,000 votes in 2010, is set to remain in Labour's hands.

The graphic below lists the fifteen seats where Ashcroft has put the SNP ahead, and compares the majorities he is showing for the SNP with the way each seat voted in 2010.

Seat	2010 majority (%)	Ashcroft majority (%)	Second party	Poll date
SNP win 15 seats				
Coatbridge, Chryston and Bellshill	49.75	3	LAB	17/01/2015
Glasgow South West	46.16	3	LAB	15/01/2015
Glasgow North West	39.22	6	LAB	17/01/2015
Airdrie and Shotts	34.81	6	LAB	22/01/2015
Paisley and Renfrewshire South	41.54	6	LAB	29/01/2015
Dumbartonshire West	41.19	9	LAB	22/01/2015
Glasgow Central	35.43	10	LAB	10/01/2015
Motherwell and Wishaw	42.89	11	LAB	22/01/2015
Glasgow North	13.8	12	LAB	10/01/2015
Glasgow East	36.81	14	LAB	06/01/2015
Glasgow South	32.35	15	LAB	16/01/2015
Gordon	14.05	17	LIB	29/01/2015
Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Kirkcaldy East	33.43	18	LAB	22/01/2015
Inverness North	18.83	29	LIB	29/01/2015
Dumfries and Galloway	19.6	34	LAB	30/01/2015

TA

This includes the seat of Douglas Alexander, the shadow foreign secretary and Labour [Read More](#)

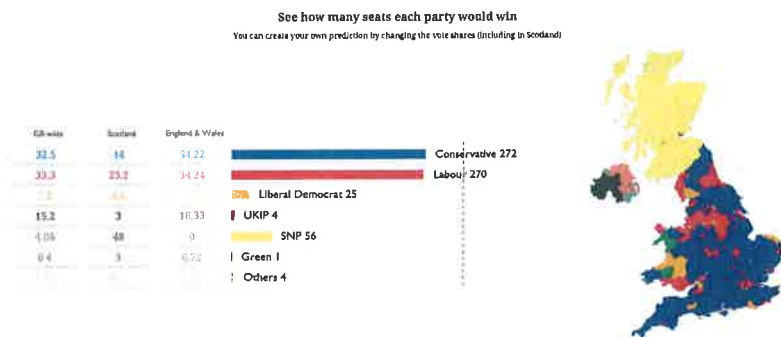


# MAY2015

(Inverness Nairn Badenoch and Strathspey).

Danny Alexander’s political career appears to be the over: Ashcroft put the SNP ahead by 29 per cent in his seat. Douglas Alexander’s seat is still winnable for Labour, but he won his seat by nearly 17,000 votes in 2010. For the SNP to now to be ahead in seats like his has no historical precedent.

The swing from Labour to the SNP across Labour-held seats is 25 per cent, which means majorities of up to 50 per cent could be overturned in May. If we apply that across Scotland, *May2015* estimates that the SNP would win 56 of Scotland’s 59 seats.



If we apply Ashcroft’s polls across Scotland, the SNP is projected to win 48 per cent of the Scottish vote, and Labour just 23 per cent. That is a complete reversal of 2010, when Labour won 42 per cent and the SNP 20 per cent.

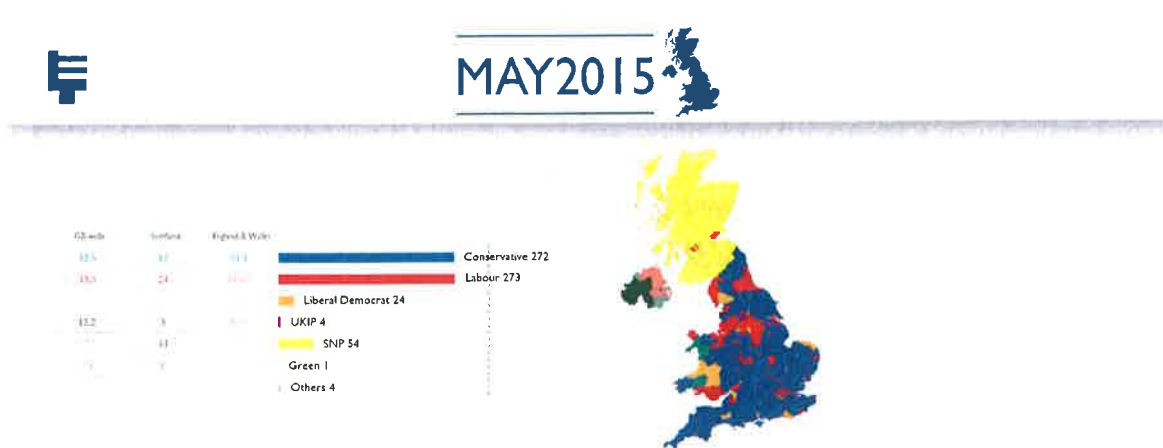
This also confirms recent Scotland-wide polls. Since the referendum the SNP have polled a low of around 40-42 per cent, up to a high of 50-52 per cent.

This projection – for the SNP to win 56 seats – lines up very well with the projection our model makes if we just

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Despite these national polls, all four of the forecasts [tracked on May2015](#) have until now forecast the SNP would only win 31-40 seats.

That will now change. Academic forecasts like Election Forecast will discount these polls and may not show the SNP winning as many as 50 seats, but nationalists now seem almost certain to be the third largest party in Westminster after May.

This is what [May2015's election-forecasting machine](#) now predicts:

	IMPLIED BY POLLS	ASHCROFT SEATS	Polls as of Feb 3 OVERALL PREDICTION
Conservative	236	36	272 (-35)
Labour	212	58	270 (+12)
Liberal Democrat	9	16	25 (-32)
UKIP	2	2	4 (+4)
SNP	41	15	56 (+50)
Green	0	1	1 (0)
Other	22	0	22 (+1)
RESULT	HUNG PARLIAMENT, CON LEAD BY 2		

The graph below, via the [Guardian](#), lists Ashcroft's 16 polls, which together account for 26 per cent of Scottish voters.

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# MAY 2015

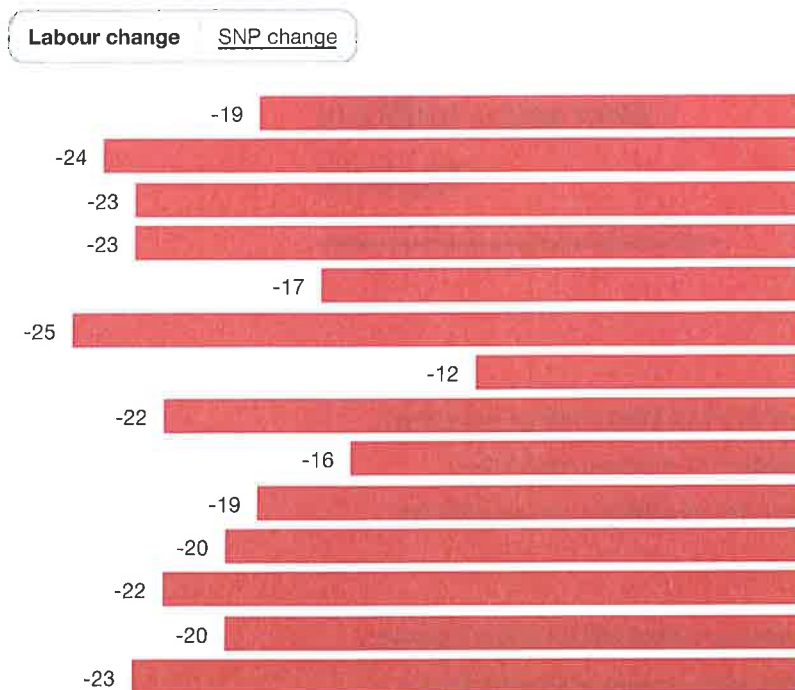


Glasgow East	Margaret Curran (Labour)	51	37	1	4
Glasgow North	Ann McKechn (Labour)	45	33	4	5
Glasgow North East	William Bain (Labour)	39		1	4
Glasgow North West	John Robertson (Labour)	44	38	3	7
Glasgow South	Tom Harris (Labour)	48	33	2	9
Glasgow South West	Ian Davidson (Labour)	45	42	2	4
Gordon	Malcom Bruce (Lib Dems)	43	14	26	11
Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey	Danny Alexander (Lib Dems)	50	13	21	10
Motherwell and Wishaw	Frank Roy (Labour)	50	39	1	5
Paisley and Renfrewshire South	Douglas Alexander (Labour)	48	40	2	6
West Dunbartonshire	Gemma Doyle (Labour)	47	38	1	6

You can see how the vote has changed in those seats since the 2010 election using the graphic below.

## Change in vote share since 2010 election, Labour-held seats (Ashcroft polls)

The Labour vote has collapsed across the board in Scotland, as national polls have long suggested and Ashcroft today confirmed.



Source: [Ashcroft](#) [Get the data](#)

Created with [Datawrapper](#)

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MAY2015 

Alexander's seat, Ashcroft polled the Lib Dem seat of Gordon, which former SNP leader (and former MP) Alex Salmond is contesting. Ashcroft put Salmond ahead by 17 points. (In 2010 the SNP lost the seat to the Lib Dems by 14 points.)

The Lib Dems had been hoping the local popularity of their MPs – the so-called 'incumbency effect' – might save them in Scotland, where it's clear the national party is as unpopular as in England.

But Ashcroft picked up a fairly weak incumbency effect in these two Lib Dem seats (+5 points in both seats), when he has picked up very strong incumbency effects [for the party in England](#). In

Gordon, the Lib Dem – Sir Malcolm Bruce – is actually standing down, and we are only talking about two of the Lib Dems' eleven Scottish seats (Ashcroft has not polled the other nine), but incumbency clearly doesn't seem likely to save Danny Alexander.

There was also no incumbency effect for Labour MPs in the fourteen Labour-held seats. Labour MPs like Tom Harris, Margaret Curran, Jim McGovern and Anas Sarwar are not having any personal effect, and are all set to lose

their seats. (We can measure incumbency because Ashcroft asks two questions – an abstract [Read More](#) and one

*Ashcroft picked up a fairly weak incumbency effect in these two Scottish Lib Dem seats, unlike in England.*

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# MAY2015

Click through for a full list of [Ashcroft's polls](#).



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## Predictor puts SNP ahead in running for Northern Isles seat

*37 comments, 07/04/2015, by Shetland Times, in Headlines, News*

A new scientific election predictor suggests that the SNP are ahead in the race for the Orkney and Shetland seat in next month's UK General Election.

According to statistics from Electoral Calculus the SNP have a 56 per cent chance of winning the Northern Isles constituency, compared to the Liberal Democrats' 41 per cent.

The figures for Orkney and Shetland put the SNP on 37.8 per cent of the vote, with the Lib Dems on 35.5 per cent.

Electoral Calculus predicts British General Election results using scientific analysis of opinion polls and electoral geography, and apparently was the most accurate pre-poll predictor at the last General Election in May 2010.

However, SNP candidate Danus Skene has given a cautious welcome to indications that the SNP campaign in the Northern Isles is having a positive impact.

He said: "This is only one set of figures, and predictions of a 56 per cent likelihood of an SNP win, against 41 per cent for the Lib Dems need to be treated as just one view from one organisation.

"However, with little over four weeks to go until polling day it appears that the momentum is with the SNP and my teams in Orkney and Shetland will be doing all they can to get the positive message across to voters that having an MP who is part of a strong team of SNP representatives at Westminster can only be good for the islands."



**SNP candidate Danus Skene.**

TAGS: [Danus Skene](#) [Electoral Calculus](#) [Liberal Democrats](#) [Orkney and Shetland](#) [SNP](#) [UK General Election](#)

# Lib Dems will have to rely on tactical voting to hold off SNP, says Ashdown

Former party leader Paddy Ashdown admits that polls show Lib Dems face losing many of their 11 key seats in Scotland

**Severin Carrell Scotland correspondent**

Friday 20 March 2015 19:12 GMT

Paddy Ashdown has conceded that the Scottish National party has taken a lead over the Liberal Democrats in many of the party's key seats, forcing the Lib Dems to rely on tactical voting to survive.

The former Lib Dem leader admitted that his party's private polling shows that Alex Salmond, the former first minister and SNP leader, was ahead in the fiercely contested seat of Gordon, where the long-standing Lib Dem MP and deputy leader Sir Malcolm Bruce is standing down.

With the party facing a wipeout at the hands of a substantial SNP advance, Ashdown said it needed to rely heavily on Labour and Tory voters swinging behind the new Lib Dem candidate, Christine Jardine, to defeat Salmond in Gordon. Bruce held the seat with a 6,748 vote majority over the SNP in 2010.

"I'm very confident that the private polls in Gordon are right and they put us within reach of winning, provided people realise including third and fourth parties in Gordon, that the right way to ensure that Mr Salmond does not end up in parliament is to vote Liberal Democrat," he said.

That gloomy message was reinforced when party leader Nick Clegg told Scottish Lib Dem activists meeting in Aberdeen that the party would need to show the same "incredible resilience" it had demonstrated in government to defeat Salmond in Gordon and the SNP more widely.

Implying he knew his party was behind, Clegg said: "That resilience will see off the SNP challenge in the seats we hold. And it will wipe the smile off Alex Salmond's face in Gordon too. I've heard the the predictions. I've seen the polls. But let me tell you this: we will do much better than anyone thinks ... [It] won't be easy, but winning shouldn't be."

Insisting that tactical voting was an entirely normal and justified strategy to pursue, Ashdown also implied that tactical voting by non-Lib Dem supporters would be needed to hold Sir Menzies Campbell's seat of North East Fife.

Speaking after the latest Scottish poll, by Survation for the Daily Record, put overall Lib Dem support at just 4%, Ashdown said: "We're clearly facing a challenge from the SNP,

given the situation in Scotland.”

Polling evidence shows that more former Lib Dem voters have swung behind the SNP since 2010 than to Labour or the Tories. Lib Dem strategists have told the Guardian the entire Lib Dem election campaign in Scotland is focusing solely on holding its 11 current seats, rather than running a Scotland-wide campaign.

“We’re fighting all of them to win,” Ashdown said. “I have seen the polls; we’re fighting to win all of those. I believe we’re winning in some or even, if you want, most, but we’re within reach of winning the rest.”

Salmond, who has already served at Westminster as MP for the neighbouring seat of Banff and Buchan, is expected to play a leading role in the SNP’s national election campaign, with the party seeking to win dozens of seats across the country.

Party officials remain extremely worried about Danny Alexander’s chances of holding his Highlands seat of Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey against the SNP challenger and Highlands council leader Drew Hendry.

Faced with a long-term collapse in the Lib Dem vote, which has ebbed away since Clegg went into coalition with David Cameron’s Tories in 2010, they would not be attempting to win new seats. Activists in other areas have been told to raise their own money and organise their own campaigns.

The Lib Dems’ 11 Scottish seats include constituencies held by three current and former UK cabinet members: the current Scottish secretary Alistair Carmichael in Orkney and Shetland, his predecessor Michael Moore in the Borders, and Alexander.

Moore’s seat is under heaviest threat from the Tories. In addition, the party is fighting to hold seats held by two former UK party leaders, Charles Kennedy in the Highlands and Campbell, who is standing down from his seat in North East Fife. Of its Scottish seats, only Carmichael’s and Kennedy’s are regarded as secure.

Lib Dem anxieties have been heightened by constituency polling by Lord Ashcroft which showed that the SNP would win Gordon, Alexander’s Inverness seat and Kennedy’s seat of Ross, Skye and Lochaber, plus the Lib Dem seat of West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine held by Sir Robert Smith.

Party strategists insist, however, that Ashcroft’s polling is wrong because he refuses to name local candidates in polling questions. When local voters are reminded who their Lib Dem MP is, the Lib Dem score will rise significantly, they say.

While Ashcroft shows the SNP are 19 points ahead of the Lib Dems in West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine, Lib Dem polling puts their vote ahead of the SNP if Smith is named. Frequently, voters are unable to name or recognise the SNP candidate.

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NEWS

# General Election: Carmichael expects SNP battle in northern isles

26 March 2015 by Calum Ross



Alistair Carmichael

Scottish Secretary Alistair Carmichael has admitted he is facing a battle to hold onto the Liberal Democrats' northern isles stronghold in May.

Orkney and Shetland is often described as the safest Lib Dem seat in Scotland, with Mr Carmichael winning 62% of the vote in 2010.

But the senior UK Government minister indicated yesterday that he believed the SNP surge was evident on the islands.

He predicted that the Nationalists would be his main challengers – and claimed they were already running an "unpleasant" local campaign.

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Speaking to journalists at Westminster, Mr Carmichael said: "I've no doubt it's going to be a pretty straight fight between myself and the Scottish Nationalists.

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Asked if he expected it be a closer battle than at the last UK Parliament election, Mr Carmichael said: "I would expect it will be, yes."

He added: "It would ironic to say the very least if the northern isles, which returned some of the most emphatic No votes, were then to find themselves with a Nationalist MP.

"But that's the choice that people now face."

SNP candidate Danus Skene defended his campaign last night.

He said: "We are looking forward to an uplifting and positive campaign focused on Orkney and Shetland having a strong voice at Westminster by returning an SNP MP, as part of an SNP team.

"The only person sounding a negative note is Mr Carmichael.

"People across Orkney and Shetland are fed up with the Lib Dems' history of broken promises – and I will work hard to persuade people to put their faith in the SNP to empower Scotland, and make sure that Orkney and Shetland's voices are heard loud and clear at Westminster."

Mr Carmichael secured 11,989 votes in 2010, almost 10,000 more than his nearest challenger.

Just 29 votes separated the Labour, SNP and Conservative candidates in second, third and fourth place.

In May, Gerry McGarvey will contest the seat for Labour, Donald Cameron is the Conservative candidate, and Robert Smith will represent UKIP.

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## Minister dismisses UKIP candidate's RET claims as 'a silly conspiracy theory'

ANDREW HAMILTON

The UKIP parliamentary candidate for the Northern Isles has accused the Scottish Government of cheating the Northern Isles over the Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) — the setting of ferry fares on the basis of the cost of travelling an equivalent distance by road. However, Robert Smith's

claims have been dismissed as 'a silly conspiracy theory' by the Government's transport minister, Derek Mackay.

According to Mr Smith, from South Ronaldsay, a report commissioned by the SNP and published in 2011, 'unequivocally' showed that ferry fares from Orkney and Shetland (to mainland Scotland) would fall significantly if RET were applied. This, he said, is despite

recent claims from the SNP that applying RET would increase fares on the islands' lifeline ferry services.

In a letter to *The Orkadian* this week, Mr Smith said: 'To be clear, the original SNP formula to calculate RET gave the islands a huge fall in ferry fares — so the SNP changed the formula so that it didn't.' Mr Smith said.

He added: 'Do you ever

get the feeling you've been cheated?'

However, according to Transport Scotland, the formula used in the 2011 evaluation was 'out-of-date' and related to information from 2008.

The RET formula was reviewed and amended in 2012 and, according to the Scottish Government, it has been updated in subsequent years to reflect the standard inflationary fare increases applied elsewhere in the Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Services network.

In response to Mr Smith's claims, a spokesperson for the transport minister said: 'Mr Smith's silly conspiracy theory is rooted in his obvious confusion about why the RET formula was actually updated.'

'Firstly, the formula used in 2011 dated back to 2008 and needed to be revised to reflect rising costs and standard inflationary increases.'

'The updated formula was applied in 2012 as part of the Ferries Plan and showed that introducing RET would continue to increase fares on a number of services.'

'The Ferries Plan confirmed that RET will be introduced to the Northern Isles over a much longer time frame, in order that

### Orcadia due in Orkney next week

CRAIG TAYLOR

A ferry named *Orcadia* is set to serve in Orkney waters for the first time in 25 years.

Pentland Ferries has renamed its latest acquisition, the mv *Saturn*, which previously operated on the west coast of Scotland, *Orcadia*.

Pentland Ferries' managing director Andrew Banks said on Wednesday that *Orcadia* seemed a very appropriate name for the vessel, as it was the same name of ships which had served in the North Isles for many years in the past.

He also said that work was progressing well with the vessel and, depending on how planned sea trials go next week, the ship could arrive in Orkney later in the week.

He also added that further maintenance work would continue on the vessel after the ship arrives in Orkney from Garvel on the Clyde, but it is planned that the ship will enter service in time for the busy summer season.

The vessel was previously owned by Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL) and is now being refitted and repainted by Pentland Ferries on the Clyde, before the ship makes the journey to Orkney.

## The eagles have landed . . .



. . . and it looks like they're here to stay

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## 'Flabbergas'

It is never a good idea to criticise the NHS, the sacred cow we all rely on and love in UK. I owe my life to the NHS and their talented doctors, surgeons and nurses, and even humorous cleaners to cheer you up.

To save money, the SNP Government is now forcing Orkney's NHS to join up with OIC's social care as an Integrated Joint Board (IJB) and presumably this could well mean less SNP funds in future — after the election of course.

Orkney's NHS chief executive spent half a page in last week's *The Orcadian* ginning and gaping on how terrible it was that members

of Orkney's public could complain to their democratically elected councillors about concerns they have on this SNP reorganisation of our health and care.

Part of our council responsibility is to listen to public opinion and support this where we can. Orkney's highly paid NHS executives could learn a lot from this democratic process, listening and not just assuming the boss is always right.

How long has it taken the local NHS to provide a scammer to Orkney to spend up essential treatment. Mike Craigie raised this four years ago, against all the local executive denials and only now do we have a better local service — and a lot less flying down to Aberdeen.

In last week's paper, she firstly gins on that her pet "lead agency model" with her leading was ditched by the SNP and OIC, then flabbergases on about myself and several other councillors, voicing concern at possible future cuts in SNP spending for the new joint Orkney health and care IJB.

Do we then cut back our health and care services to folk here or get OIC to use our old funds to prop up the SNP cuts in funds.

And despite words denials from our local NHS executives, the local NHS has been short of funds and millions overbudget for many years now, meeting their planned spending for the first time this year — so far.

Who funds local overshot NHS budgets in future? SNP cutbacks or OIC oil funds, SNP

in Edinburgh know local councillors would find it hard to refuse such an essential service funding. A cheap way of passing the buck to local control, again.

NHS using words like "barking" and "childish" doesn't help the new joint working IJB. The local NHS board and OIC councillors surely have their differences — one is non democratic, the other publically elected — but all must work together with a healthy respect to ensure a healthy joint future.

Let's get on with it.

**COUNCILLOR MAURICE DAVIDSON**  
Springfield, Stronness

## Deliberately inflated fares?

It has been the SNP's constant position that if Road Equivalent Tariff was applied to the Northern Isles, ferry fares would increase.

This is completely at odds with a report commissioned by the SNP published in 2011. It unequivocally shows that, in fact, fares would fall significantly.

Passenger fares from Aberdeen to Lerwick would fall by 19 per cent.

Passenger fares from Kirkwall to Lerwick would fall by 16.5 per cent.

Passenger fares from Stromness to Scrabster would fall by 65.7 per cent.

Car fares from Stromness to Scrabster would fall by 47.1 per cent.

Commercial vehicles from Stromness to Scrabster would fall by 62.5 per cent.

I furnished all the local press outlets with this bombshell, but they decided not to feature it after hearing from the SNP that they had changed the formula used to calculate RET.

To be clear, the original SNP formula to calculate RET gave the islands a huge fall in ferry fares — so the SNP changed the formula so that it didn't.

The full report can be found at: [www.gov.scot/resource/doc/9335/0115577.doc](http://www.gov.scot/resource/doc/9335/0115577.doc)

Do you ever get the feeling you've been cheated?

**ROBERT SMITH**  
(Prospective Parliamentary Candidate UKIP)  
Shoreside, South Ronaldsay

*Editor's note: Mr Smith contacted The Orcadian on this subject last Wednesday morning.*

*Due to our Wednesday printing deadline we were unable to publish details, and the subsequent response from Transport Scotland, in last week's paper.*

## Dirty tricks and smear campaigns

Just two weeks ago, on Thursday, March 26, Alistair Carmichael was quoted in *The Press and Journal* saying of the election campaign in Orkney and Shetland: "I've no doubt it's going to be a pretty straight fight between myself and the Scottish Nationalists."

And it's pretty obvious from the letters columns of the local newspapers that we can expect a pretty unpleasant, personalised, negative campaign. Personally, I don't think that's the way people on the islands like to do our politics.

I have no idea to which letters Mr Carmichael was referring, or whether they came from SNP members. However, whatever their content, I suggest that they pale into insignificance compared to the way that he has conducted himself around the revelations that a false memo, attempting to smear First Minister Nicola Sturgeon, came from his office as Secretary of State for Scotland.

At the very best, if it is true that the first time he was aware of the memo was when he was phoned by a journalist on Friday, Mr Carmichael is guilty only of not being in control of the Scotland Office, rather than having a direct role in the leaking of inaccurate information.

Either way, Saturday's *Telegraph* story based on the memo, when previewed on Twitter on Friday evening, unravelled within a couple of hours and so was dead by the time it hit the newsstands.

This begs the question why, when it was clear that the memo was inaccurate, did Mr Carmichael feel it appropriate to continue to assert that Nicola Sturgeon "would like to have the Conservatives in Government on their own at Westminster" in a story published on Sunday?

And as for Mr Carmichael saying of the whole shambolic incident that "this is the middle of an election

campaign, these things happen", then I can only agree with Nicola Sturgeon that he 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.

The real question now must be whether someone whose staff — with or without his knowledge — have been complicit in such a cack-handed attempt to discredit the First Minister of Scotland is really who the people of Orkney and Shetland want as their MP?

I look forward to the remainder of the election campaign being a much more constructive battle of positive ideas.

**ROBERT LESLIE**  
2 Lynnside, St Ola

## Support renewables

A recent YouGov poll, of over 1,000 people, showed that 79 per cent of the people of Scotland support renewable energy and want the next Westminster government to alter and strengthen its present policies by showing greater support for renewables.

In the same poll, 63 per cent of those asked want the next Westminster government to do more to tackle greenhouse gases and climate change.

In 2014, 50 per cent of electricity used in Scotland came from renewable sources, up from 44 per cent, in 2014.

Clearly there is widespread support, throughout Scotland, to strongly support the renewables sector, along with the jobs and investment it creates.

The Beauly to Deuny transmission line has been upgraded. Work is proceeding on laying subsea transmission cables from south-west Scotland to Lancashire, from east Caithness to Aberdeenshire and from eastern England to mainland Europe.

The missing link in this chain, is the prospect of a transmission cable, or interconnector, from the west of

Orkney to northern Caithness.

We have already seen future development of wave energy projects cancelled and greater use of wind energy curtailed.

The future development of tidal energy in Orkney will be strangled over the next few years, unless there is progress in the laying of a new Orkney to Caithness link.

The tidal energy Meygen project off Stroma and Gills is proceeding, while there is no similar action in Orkney.

Alex Salmond, when First Minister, visited Orkney several times to share his and the Scottish Government's enthusiasm and belief in our renewables sector, along with the jobs and prosperity it has the potential to bring.

Lib-Dem coalition energy minister, Ed Davey, has proved ineffective at grasping the renewable energy issue. Along with close colleague and friend, Alistair Carmichael, coalition whip and Scottish Secretary of State, they have not been able to influence their own Government's and Ofgem's thinking.

The Highlands and Islands have huge potential to generate large quantities of electricity from tidal, wave, wind, hydro and other sources. However, this abundant green energy cannot be used under the present Ofgem charging regime, which penalises distance from London.

Unlike in Orkney, there are no strong winds, strong tides and big waves to generate abundant power anywhere near London.

Governments in Scotland and Europe understand this issue.

People, here, can cast their votes at the coming General Election, to send a message to the Tories, Lib Dems and Ofgem on the future of renewable energy.

**JOHN MOWAT**  
Springfield Drive, Kirkwall

## Hampshire memorial

I may have picked things up wrongly, but when this project was first mooted I was left with the distinct impression that it was being done because the sailors on the *Hampshire* had never been commemorated.

This, of course, is not the case.

The names of the sailors "who have no known grave" except the sea are inscribed on the Royal Naval Memorial in Portsmouth, HMS *Hampshire's* home port. A similar memorial of 23,000 names exists on Plymouth Hoe to the sailors whose home port was Plymouth. The memorials refer to both World Wars.

The sailors whose bodies came ashore are buried in Lyness Naval Cemetery with individual headstones. And there is a monument too. It also seems most probable their names are inscribed on the war memorials in the communities from whence they came. The wall idea for Birsay thus seems a bit superfluous.

Maybe the society is against the idea of a monument to one single person. Well, there are hundreds of them in the UK and the Commonwealth.

Kitchener was the War Secretary, and thus vitally important to the War Cabinet. He was likely to carry more clout than anyone else with the Tsar of Russia. It was vital to keep Russia in the war and so keep Germany's armies divided on two fronts.

The importance of this division became all too clear after Russia withdrew from the war after the revolution. Now that they had all their forces concentrated on the Western front, the German Spring offensive of 1918 nearly broke the Franco-British lines. Only the arrival of vastly superior numbers of fresh combat soldiers from the US stopped the advance and ended the war.

Kitchener was thus an extremely important person and it was only appropriate a monument was erected to him and it deserves to stand alone, as it has done for 90 years.

As for the intrusion of war into a lovely corner of our islands. Try talking to the villagers of the picturesque villages of Northern France, the townspeople of Ypres or the inhabitants of the villages on the Somme Salient to find out about real intrusion of war.

**DAVID PARTNER**  
10 Torness, Kirkwall

## Progress

Following some past letters on the subject of home deliveries in Orkney, there is an alternative view that this is progress that may make living in Orkney a little easier for a number of residents.

For busy mums, trying to balance their time between family and work, the elderly some who find it difficult

## THE GIDDY LIMIT

Alex Leonard No. 502





# Election 2015

## On the matter of the economy . . .

In the run-up to the May 7 General Election, *The Orcadian* will be asking the five candidates for 500 words on a topic of local importance. This week, we look at the economy.



### Danus Skene — SNP

The recession, through the Coalition's austerity programme, has cut five per cent from the UK's Gross Domestic Product — £1,500 for every man woman and child.

That is why it doesn't feel as if we have received anything from LibDem claims to have given us better tax allowances, and pension improvements.

In fact, with tax relief at the top end, it is the poorest who have lost most through a combination of cuts and tax and benefit changes.

To preserve some impression that public services are being maintained, the Chancellor, by March 2016, is likely to have borrowed £160 billion more than he planned.

By his own yardstick, austerity has failed as a means of ending recession.



You do not get out of a hole by removing the means to climb out, while at the same time digging deeper.

You invest in the future. Those are the successful economics of John Keynes.

It is how Roosevelt steered the USA out of the Great Depression.

It is how the post-War Labour Government led Britain out of debt and destruction, founding the NHS, and enabling the years of Macmillan's "You've never had it so good."

The SNP knows well that we have to drag our society out of its indebtedness.

But it must and will be a gradual process linked to moderate increase in public investment and which leaves spending power in the hands of the general population.

No growth would mean no recovery, and we cannot and will not tolerate the Tory plan to use austerity as an excuse to cut the contribution of the wealthy and increase inequality.

Inequality does not help growth, but it divides our communities.

We must use the tax and benefits system to redistribute the country's wealth, with fair taxation reflecting ability to pay, and the reduction of sneaky indirect taxes, including VAT, which relatively hit the poorest hardest.

Food Bank Britain is not acceptable. And here in the Isles our food banks are getting ever busier.

The SNP seeks to enable "real jobs", not low paid seasonal work based as often as not on "Zero hours contracts".

Without transfer of minimum wage management and

various investment powers to Scotland, we will struggle to succeed.

But I intend to go to Westminster with specific objectives, including:

- Securing large capacity connection of Orkney to the National Grid.

- Doing everything possible to encourage training opportunities in Orkney for jobs that give skilled people opportunity here.

- Encouraging new house-building, and expansion of programmes, such as the HEEPS contract to Firefly, that will improve the quality and efficiency of existing homes.

- Good access by Orkney

farmers and fishermen to EU support, and promotion of their products.

- A supportive environment for small businesses, including craft producers. (Orkney's jewellers are something special!)

- High-profile promotion of Orkney, tourism, with a particular eye to extending the season.

The SNP offers fairness and hope as we build for the future.

### Alistair Carmichael — Liberal Democrats

When the coalition government was formed, in 2010, the UK had an economy on the brink.

Our banking system had had to be rescued from collapse, unemployment had spiked and government borrowing was out of control.

Five years on, we have an economy that is growing again; unemployment has fallen back to the levels we had before the crash of 2008; the deficit which had been over ten per cent of our total economy is now halved; inflation is at an all-time low; we have had sustained low interest rates and incomes are now at last growing faster than prices.

That is not to say that the job is done — far from it.

It does, however, show that the difficult decisions that we have had to take as a government were right and necessary and that they are working.

There are two fundamental choices in this election — do we continue with the economic plan that is working or do we go back down the same path that took us to the crash of 2008 — as the Labour Party and SNP suggest?

Having a strong economy offers us opportunities.

The new tax year started on Monday of this week.

This saw the raising of the tax-free earnings limit to £10,600 — up from under £6,500 at the start of the parliament.

This was a Liberal Democrat policy taken straight from the front page of our manifesto. It is a tax cut that is worth most to working people on low incomes.



It is possible to do this because we have a strong and growing economy.

This autumn we shall again see the minimum wage increased from £6.50 per hour to £6.70 — a second consecutive year of rises well above inflation.

I want to see that pattern continue.

By raising the income tax allowance and the minimum wage it should be possible in the next parliament to get the minimum wage to a level where it is a living wage.

This again is only possible if we stick to the plan that is delivering our stronger economy.

Independent experts tell us that the NHS will need £8 billion in the next parliament just to cope with the demands of an ageing population and medical advances, Liberal Democrats are able to commit to making that expenditure because we have a strong and growing economy.

That is where we differ from the Conservatives. Liberal Democrats will finish the job of eliminating the deficit and then we shall grow public spending in step with the growth of our economy.

The Conservatives, on the other hand, want to keep on cutting public spending even after the deficit has gone.

A stronger economy is at the heart of tackling inequality in our community.

By getting more people into work at a decent wage, and allowing them to keep more of the money they earn, we allow people to lift themselves out of poverty.

Our economy is on the way back to full health. This is not the time to put that at risk.

### Donald Cameron — Conservative

In my day job as a lawyer, I see, time and time again, how too much bureaucracy and state intervention can strangle growth and small-scale enterprise.

Small or medium-size businesses are often managed by a few individuals and just don't have the luxury of large cash balances and staff support that huge corporations possess.

And yet these smaller businesses are the real engines of the economy. I believe they should be nurtured. One thing I want to achieve as an MP is to help the many small — often family-run — businesses in Orkney, which I know are the backbone of the local economy and which continue to suffer from too much red-tape.

It's easy to forget, or dismiss, what the Conservative-led coalition government of the last five years has done.

Labour said that the economy could not grow and jobs would be lost if we stuck with our plan. But the deficit is down by half. And there are more people in work than ever before; that's an incredible fact.

In addition, Britain was the



fastest growing major economy in 2014.

The economic improvements have been felt in Scotland too — unemployment is down in Scotland by 56,400 since the last General Election.

Employment is up in Scotland by 174,000 since the last General Election.

And for every lost public sector job, three private sector jobs have been created...

In addition:

- The Job Seeker Allowance claimant count in Scotland is down 56,700 (42 per cent) since the last General Election.

- There were 105,000 children living in workless households in Scotland for the period April-June 2014.

That's a drop of 39,000 compared to the same period in 2010 and the lowest since records began in 1996.

- The Department of Work and Pensions work programme has helped 32,620 people in Scotland escape long-term unemployment and get into lasting work.

- We have cut income tax for 2.32 million Scots and 261,000 people have been taken out of income tax altogether.

- And in 2014 there were 37,600 more businesses in Scotland compared to 2010.

Those are very significant achievements and I am proud of that record of government.

Of course, it's not been easy and hard decisions have had to be made.

Nor am I complacent that the economy is yet in full health — there is much more to be done.

That's why a vote for the Conservatives would help us continue on the road to economic recovery.

Our long-term economic plan is working.

Let us finish the job!

**WIN 4 CINEMA TICKETS**

Director

the pickaquoof centre

Tickets must be collected from the Pickaquoof Centre and used within three months of the issue date.

Last week's winner: Melvin Stacey. Answer on Page 23 in the October 16, 2014 issue.

EMAIL: [findingscheem@orcadian.co.uk](mailto:findingscheem@orcadian.co.uk) — send all information to the subject line of the email — you must include page number and where possible the date in which you saw the Cheem. (John Seavey — 4/1/14) — Page 17 — Small in April. POST: Write to 102, 103 and 104, the Finding Cheem Committee, The Orkney, 10/11, 1st Ave, Commercial Centre, Kirkwall, Orkney, KW15 1SU. Please remember when posting notices that they have to arrive before the Tuesday 2pm deadline. DROP OFF your entry to either: The Orkney Bookshop, 50 Albert Street,

## FINDING CHEEM

in association with the pickaquoof centre

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Religious Notices

**The Church of Scotland EAST MAINLAND**  
 Sunday School & Worship  
 11am  
*Traidcraft Stall*  
 Visitors welcome  
 Flev Wilma Johnston  
 www.eastmainlandchurch.co.uk  
 East Mainland Parish SCO19770

**KIRKWALL EAST CHURCH, Church of Scotland SCO018002**  
 Upper Room, King Street Halls  
 SUNDAY, 12th APRIL  
 11.15am  
 in the Upper Room  
 All-age Sunday Club  
 All welcome  
 www.orkneycommunications.co.uk

**THE PEEDIE KIRK U.R.C. PALACE ROAD, KIRKWALL**  
 Peedie Kirk United Reformed Church  
 Charity No: SCO12028  
 SUNDAY, 12th APRIL  
 Easter Sunday Service 11.15am  
 Students from URC Colleges  
 Lunch after the service  
 Everyone welcome

**KIRKWALL BAPTIST CHURCH**  
 VICTORIA STREET  
 SUNDAY, 12th APRIL  
 11.15am Morning Service  
 6.15pm Evening Service  
 All warmly welcome  
 Registered Scottish Charity No: SC086003


**CATHOLIC CHURCH OUR LADY AND ST JOSEPH**  
 Junction Road, Kirkwall  
 HOLY MASS  
 EVERY SUNDAY  
 11am  
 All welcome  
 For weekday Mass times  
 Tel: 01856 872462  
 Registered Charity No: SC005122


**STROMNESS PARISH CHURCH**  
 Reg Charity No: SCO03099  
 SUNDAY, 12th APRIL  
 11.15am Morning Worship  
 2.30pm St Peter's House  
 All warmly welcome  
 TEL: 01856 850203


**ST MAGNUS CATHEDRAL**  
 (Church of Scotland)  
 Scottish Charity SCO 05322  
 SUNDAY, 12th APRIL  
 11.15am  
 Morning Service  
 of Celebration

**STROMNESS BAPTIST CHURCH**  
 Meeting at Stromness Town Hall  
 Sunday Worship 11.15am  
 Crèche and Sunday School  
 Fellowship with tea and coffee  
 Everyone very welcome  
 Tel: 01856 761769

Tenders Wanted

**NORTH RONALDSAY PIER WAITING ROOM & TOILET**  
  
 Orkney Islands Council invites quotations from suitably qualified and experienced individuals or suppliers for the provision of cleaning services at the following property:  
 1, North Ronaldsay Pier Waiting Room & Toilet  
 The property shall be cleaned to a specification provided by the Authority. All materials and equipment will be provided. Start date is expected to be 1 June 2015. Contracts will run for 24 months with an option to extend for a further 12 months. It is estimated that the contract value will be in the range of £1,000 to £1,500 per annum.  
 An Invitation to Quote document can be obtained from Jordan Low, Procurement Team, Council Offices, Kirkwall at tel 01856 873535 extension 2363 or Jordan.Low@orkney.gov.uk  
 The deadline for the receipt of quotations is Monday 20 April 2015 at 12 noon. Late submissions will not be considered.

**PROVISION OF A STUDY INTO THE 'FUTURE OF ABATTOIR SERVICES IN ORKNEY AND POTENTIAL MARKETS FOR ORKNEY BEEF AND LAMB': OIC/PROC/0369**  
  
 Orkney Islands Council invites quotations from suitably qualified and experienced contractors for the provision of a study into the future of abattoir services in Orkney and potential markets for Orkney beef and lamb.  
 Orkney Islands Council has a budget up to a maximum of £30,000 for the study, which excludes VAT (where applicable).  
 An Invitation to Quote document can be obtained from Jordan Low, Procurement Team, Council Offices Kirkwall at tel 01856 873535 extension 2363 or Jordan.Low@orkney.gov.uk. The deadline for the receipt of quotations is Thursday 7 May 2015 at 12 noon. Late submissions will not be considered.

**PROVISION OF A LASER SCAN OF THE ST MAGNUS CATHEDRAL**  
  
 OIC/PROC/0370  
 Orkney Islands Council invites quotations from suitably qualified and experienced contractors to undertake a laser scan of the St Magnus Cathedral.  
 Orkney Islands Council has a budget up to a maximum of £30,000 for the laser scan of the St Magnus Cathedral, which excludes VAT (where applicable).  
 An Invitation to Quote document can be obtained from Jordan Low, Procurement Team, Council Offices Kirkwall at tel 01856 873535 extension 2363 or Jordan.Low@orkney.gov.uk. The deadline for the receipt of quotations is Thursday 7 May 2015 at 12 noon. Late submissions will not be considered.

**SHAPINSAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL**  
 SUB-LET OF SMITHY CAFE/RESTAURANT  
 Balfour Village, Shapinsay  
 The opportunity has arisen to operate this vital community cafe/restaurant facility in the heart of Balfour Village. The sub-lease would start as soon as possible, initially for the summer period, with a longer lease being negotiable thereafter.  
 Arrangements can be made for equipment to be provided if required.  
 For further details please contact: Mrs Ghysla Lesse, Tel: (01856) 711389 or 711218 Email: ghyslalesse@tdotermot.com  
 A letter of interest should be sent to Mrs K. Baird, Shapinsay Community Council, Democratic Services, Orkney Islands Council, Kirkwall, KW15 1NY. Email: k.baird@orkney.gov.uk Tel: (01856) 873535.  
 EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST INVITED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.  
 DEADLINE OF MONDAY 20 APRIL 2015.

Public Notices

**COMMUNITY LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT**  
  
**Spring programme of evening and daytime classes 2015**  
**Book now to ensure your place!**  
 Full details of all classes on offer are available on [www.orkney.gov.uk/Service-Directory/E/Evening-Classes.htm](http://www.orkney.gov.uk/Service-Directory/E/Evening-Classes.htm) or you can pick up a programme from OIC Customer Services, Orkney Libraries, or from various other locations.  
**Booking for many classes will close on 17 April 2015.**  
 For further information or to make a booking please contact Orkney Islands Council, Customer Services –

Public Notices

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS**  
  
 Planning Applications listed below together with the plans and documents submitted may be examined at the address below between the hours of 9am – 1pm and 2pm – 5pm Monday – Friday. They can also be viewed online at [www.orkney.gov.uk](http://www.orkney.gov.uk) – follow the link to Planning in the box to the left side of the home page.

**TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED)**  
**Town and Country (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 Notice Under Regulation 20**

Planning Ref	Development Location	Proposed Development
15/087/PP	Airfield (Land Near), North Ronaldsay	Erect a terminal building incorporating a fire garage
15/090/VR	Flaya, Shapinsay Road, Harray	Vary condition 2 of planning permission 13/470/PP to use black profiled tiles instead of black non-profiled tiles (retrospective)

Comments may be made on the above developments within 14 days from the date of publication of this notice.

**PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND BUILDINGS IN CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997**  
**Application(s) Affecting the Character or Appearance of a Conservation Area**  
**Application(s) for Listed Building Consent**


Planning Ref	Development Location	Proposed Development
15/129/PP & 15/130/LB	25 St Catherine's Place, Kirkwall	Install replacement door, add double glazing in existing sash and case windows and paint walls
15/147/LB & 15/148/PP	West End Hotel, 14 Main Street, Kirkwall	Reinstate chimney, replace cast iron rainwater goods and replace existing rooflights with conservation rooflights
115/149/LB	Kirkwall East Church, King Street Halls, King Street	Remove church bellcote

Comments may be made on the above developments within 21 days from the date of publication of this notice.

Submit any comments to the Planning Manager, Development Management, Orkney Islands Council, School Place, Kirkwall, KW15 1NY or alternative reply email your comments to [planning@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:planning@orkney.gov.uk)

**LIAM McARTHUR and SANDAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL**  
 will hold a **PUBLIC MEETING re AIR AMBULANCE PROVISION**  
 (Senior representatives from the Scottish Ambulance Service will be present to answer questions)  
 on **MONDAY, 13th APRIL, 2015**  
 in **THE HEILSA FJOLD CENTRE**  
 2.00 - 3.30pm  
*Everyone welcome*

**BIRSAV COMMUNITY COUNCIL ELECTION**  
**NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING**  
**THURSDAY, 16 APRIL**  
 at 7.15pm in **BIRSAV COMMUNITY HALL**  
**ONE VACANCY**  
 A Public Meeting shall be held at the time and date specified above to fill ONE vacancy on Birsav Community Council.  
 All electors entered on the current Register of Electors for the Birsav area have the right to vote and are invited to attend the Public Meeting.  
 Candidates must be entered on the current published Register of Electors for the Birsav area. Candidates must either be present at the meeting or in advance of the meeting, have submitted a written request indicating that they wish to stand for election. Written requests should be sent to Democratic Services at the address below.  
 All candidates must be nominated by two electors who are on the current register and present at the meeting.  
 The following persons have already been validly elected to serve on Birsav Community Council:-  
 Martin May, John Johnston, David Scarff, Allan Spence, Kenneth Spence and Steven Spence.  
 The standard rules governing Public Meetings to fill vacancies on Community Councils is available on Orkney Islands Council's website or can be obtained from Democratic Services, Orkney Islands Council, School Place, Kirkwall, KW15 1NY. Tel: 01856 886354. Email: [karnz.bairst@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:karnz.bairst@orkney.gov.uk)

  
**Alistair Carmichael**  
 Liberal Democrat Candidate  
**will be campaigning in Stromsay**  
 Saturday, 11th April  
**May, Flotta and Firth**  
 Wednesday, 16th April  
**Sanday and Eric**  
 Thursday, 16th April  
 Printed by The Orcadian. Published and promoted by Ruth Williams on behalf of Alistair Carmichael.

**To place your advert in FARMING FOCUS**

**The Orcadian**  
 Contact Julie on 01856 879000  
 or email [adverts@orcadian.co.uk](mailto:adverts@orcadian.co.uk)

**3 for 2** on all adverts placed in OUT & ABOUT



**FREE** Northern Isles Spring 2015  
**NEWS**  
 Delivered free to homes in Orkney and Shetland

**REVEALED:**  
 The SNP independence obsession that's putting local services at risk. See back page

With just weeks before the Northern Isles goes to the polls...

# ALISTAIR CARMICHAEL IS SETTING THE PACE

The choice for us...



With less than two months to go until the next election local Liberal Democrat MP Alistair Carmichael is setting the pace in the Northern Isles.

Alistair said, "It has been an enormous privilege to represent Orkney and Shetland in the House of Commons. I have never taken the support of local people for granted and

I don't intend to start now. The Liberal Democrats will be fighting a strong, positive campaign from now to May 7th."

Shetland MSP, Tavish Scott added, "In so many areas, Alistair Carmichael has done for local people in government what he campaigned on in opposition. Winning a lower level of fuel duty for the isles, blocking the closure of

Shetland Coastguard Station, keeping the emergency tug stationed in Orkney, reform of the Crown Estate - just to name a few."

"Shetland council house tenants have benefitted from his winning a deal that wrote off our historic housing debt. They were facing rent rises of up to 35% after the SNP in Edinburgh withdrew our housing support grant."

Liam McArthur commented, "As MSP for Orkney, I have worked closely with Alistair and have seen how phenomenally hard he works for local communities. The choice for us this time is between Alistair - a hard-working local MP who has delivered for local communities - or a Nationalist who will take his orders from Edinburgh."

## Alistair Carmichael's record of action

### Income Tax DOWN

23,600 workers in the Northern Isles have benefited from a significant income tax cut. The first £10,000 you earn is free of income tax and in April this will increase to £10,600. That's an extra £120 in your pocket! David Cameron said it wasn't affordable, but the Liberal Democrats made him do it, and they want to cut income tax further by another £100.

### Pensions UP



increases in line with inflation, earnings or 3.5% - whichever is highest.

That's a record £275 pension increase in 2012 and increases totalling £990 since 2010. The next year's increase will be double the rate of inflation.

The state pension is now £910 higher than it was at the last election. Thanks to the Liberal Democrat "Triple Lock" guaranteeing

### £2000 tax break to help with childcare costs

From the autumn, working parents will receive a tax break of up to £2000 towards the cost of childcare for each child to help with the cost of living.

### Fuel duty DOWN

Fuel duty increases totalling 24p per litre cancelled as well as a lower rate of duty for island communities, saving you 25p per litre every time you fill up your car.

### Investment for superfast broadband and better mobile phone coverage

300 more jobs in Orkney & Shetland since 2011



Northern Isles News

## Comment

### The local choice in May

We are now just weeks away from the next general election on 7th May.

The question for local people then will be - who will really get things done for the Northern Isles?

Some opinion polls are showing a nationwide surge in support for the SNP. Here in Orkney and Shetland the only possible winners will be the Liberal Democrats or the Nationalists.

The SNP has only one objective in May - to win independence by the back door. Nothing else matters as much to them as independence. That is why they took their eye off the ball in government and neglected vital public services like health and education while they campaigned for independence.

They also insist on controlling everything from Edinburgh. Nationalist MSPs always support this centralisation and never stand up for us against it. A Nationalist MP will be expected to toe the Edinburgh line.

Local Liberal Democrat MP, Alistair Carmichael, on the other hand, has a record of standing up for local communities and getting things done. As a government minister he has won a better deal for local communities. Taking local interests to the heart of government, he has a solid record of local achievements.

Local people know he can be relied on to stand up for them and to get things done.

# Biggest ever rise in state pension



## Liberal Democrat 'triple lock' on pensions has seen a year-on-year rise since 2010

**T**he Liberal Democrats in government have delivered an inflation-busting rise in the level of the state pension.

Despite difficult economic circumstances, they have restored the link between pensions and earnings broken by the Thatcher government in the 1980s. In fact they have gone even further than that by introducing a "triple lock" on the state pension. This

guarantees an annual increase either in line with inflation, average earnings or 2.5% - whichever is highest.

As a result the state pension is now £800 a year higher than it was in 2010.

Alistair Carmichael commented, "Dealing with the consequences of the financial crash in 2008 has meant having to take many difficult decisions on public spending. Pensioners, however, needed particular

protection. They do not have the choices available to rest of us.

"This is something that only happened because we were part of the coalition government. The Conservatives did not want to do it. The Labour Party had thirteen years to do it but didn't.

"I would like to see the next government write the "triple lock" into law."

## SNP Give All The Cash To The Central Belt - Again

**S**cottish Government plans to give all the money for helping children from poorer families to councils in the central belt have been slammed by Northern Isles politicians.

Orkney and Shetland Liberal Democrat campaigner, Alistair Carmichael said, "This is hard to believe. The nationalists seem to think that poorer families either don't exist or don't need help outside the central belt.

"South of the border the Liberal Democrats have invested £2.5 billion in the "pupil premium". Money here goes to every child receiving free school meals so no child who needs help will miss out. It is a system that has won wide-spread

"The nationalists seem to think that poorer families either don't exist or don't need help outside the central belt."

praise and is already making a massive difference to what children from poorer

backgrounds can achieve."

Orkney MSP, Liam McArthur added, "This is now one more area where the "postcode lottery" will apply. You should get help if you need it. It should not depend on where you live."

Tavish Scott MSP commented, "When the SNP were desperate to win in the Western Isles they introduced Road Equivalent Tariff. Now that they are desperate to win seats in the Central Belt all the cash is going there."





# Liberal Democrats make extra money for the NHS their top priority

**T**he Liberal Democrats are working hard to safeguard the future of our NHS, though funding has gone up in the rest of Britain.

They have announced a fully-costed plan to increase NIS funding across the UK over and above inflation.

The independent and highly respected health think tank, "The King's Fund", recently estimated that the NHS will need an extra £8 billion over the next parliament. The Liberal Democrats are so far the only party to commit to spending that money.

Liberal Democrats have improved services across the NHS in England, with 6,000 more doctors, lower waiting times and 55,000 people having access to cancer drugs they were denied under the last Labour Government.

Sadly the same can not be said for Scotland, where the NHS is run by the Scottish SNP government.

Independent studies have shown that the Scottish SNP Government has let NHS funding drop in Scotland in the last few years even

In this parliament the coalition government has protected the NHS budget so that it has continued to rise in line with inflation. We have done this despite having to make cuts in other public spending.

Commenting on the plans, Alistair Carmichael said: "In the face of changing demands and needs, our NHS needs significant further investment for it to maintain its status as a world-class health service."

That's why if the Liberal Democrats are part of any future government they will increase funding by at least £8 billion by the end of the Parliament. This means more money for Scotland, with mental health and local services being the top priority.

The Liberal Democrats are able to make this commitment because our economic plan is working and our economy is growing. Spending more money on healthcare is our priority for the proceeds of that growth.



▲ Only the Liberal Democrats have a plan to invest in the NHS across the UK, which will increase the money available in Scotland.

Lib Dem	Labour	Tories	SNP
<b>£8bn extra for the NHS.</b>	<b>£2.5bn extra to 2018 - but no further increase</b>	<b>No specific real terms funding plans.</b>	<b>Health funding in Scotland has fallen.</b>

**Who will really deliver for the NHS?**

# Scott Slams SNP's NHS Cash Grab



**F**igures showing that local health services have been seriously underfunded, despite SNP promises, have drawn an angry response from Shetland MSP, Tavish Scott.

He said, "Last month the Scottish Government insisted that all health boards would be brought within 1% of parity of their funding formula. They even

boasted they were hitting their target a year early.

**£1.5m less cash for the NHS in the Northern Isles**

"This month, we learn that this is not true. NIS Shetland is still being short-changed by £900,000, whilst NHS Grampian, which provides key services to Shetland patients, has been short-changed to the tune of £17m.

"This funding is needed to help deliver vital health services to Shetland patients. They, along with the NHS staff in Shetland deserve to know why, in the space of five weeks, Scottish Ministers have gone back on their earlier promises."

Liam McArthur MSP added, "In Orkney the figures show that we are being underfunded by some £600,000. In a community like ours that sort of money could make a huge difference."

## Shetland Ambulance Service "creaking at the seams"

**S**hetland MSP, Tavish Scott, has warned SNP Health Minister, Shona Robison, that ambulance cover in Shetland is "creaking at the seams".

Acting on problems brought to his attention by local ambulance staff, Mr Scott wrote to the Health Minister demanding that she act to deal with Shetland's unique problems.

He said, "Shetland is the only part of Scotland that does not have the 24/7 cover enjoyed by the rest of Scotland. Even the Western Isles and Orkney are better served than we are. This is simply unacceptable."

Alistair Carmichael MP commented, "Tavish has done a great job for local people and ambulance staff. I wish that the Nationalist MSPs, who visit Shetland from time to time would follow his lead and stand up for local patients. Unfortunately they seem interested in putting the SNP case to Shetland rather than putting Shetland's case to their SNP colleagues in government."