

Politics

Leslie Evans and the Salmond Affair



by David Scott

Sunday, 7th February 2021

*My friend, the late **Robert Green**, wrote to me on 16 November 2018. It was one of the last communications I received from him, as shortly thereafter the illness that led to his death took hold.*

*His letter, like so much of his writing, was **ahead of its time**. It looked at the conduct of those who are **only now** are being examined by the mainstream media and the Holyrood parliament: Alex Salmond and **Leslie Evans**, the Head of the Scottish Civil Service.*

*In addition to raising questions over the conduct of Leslie Evans, questions still unanswered to this day, and to commenting, very wisely as it would turn out, on the allegations then facing Alex Salmond, Robert raised a further and most important issue. This was the conduct of the former Lord Advocate (chief law officer of the Scottish Government), **Dame Elish Angiolini**.*

*Dame Elish has recently provided a **report** entitled "Policing — complaints handling, investigations and misconduct issues: an independent review." Based on her work, the Scottish Government, and the present Lord Advocate, James Wolffe QC, have announced "**bold reform**".*

*From the grave, **Robert Green** asks us to examine whether we can trust any of those involved in this "boldness". His words highlight the depths of corruption in the Scottish state and the lack of any means for redress for the Scottish people. This letter, now posthumously published in full, highlights the pressing need for transparency and openness in Scottish public life.*

*Had the authorities in Scotland listened to Robert in **2010**, how much **pain** could have been avoided? Will those in power listen to him this time? We will see.*

David Scott

Since the news of sexual allegations made against Alex Salmond broke in late August [2018], intermittent speculation about this issue has been published from time to time.

When the matter first emerged, I was contacted by a wide range of individuals, asking if the allegations could have had any link with the former First Minister's **connection** with the **Hollie Greig case**.

My answer has always been that although I know nothing of either the complainants or the exact nature of their complaints, there is nothing that has been suggested that would lead me to suspect that any connection at all might exist.

Of course, those who have followed Hollie's case over the years would understand that I am **unlikely to be well-disposed** towards Mr Salmond. However, such feelings do not preclude me from raising concern about one aspect of the way Mr Salmond has been treated over this recent issue.

Of course, I have absolutely no knowledge about the basis for the complaints and, like almost everyone else, cannot possibly make any presumptions about Mr Salmond or the **ladies concerned**. What does bother me is the role of the Permanent Secretary, Ms **Leslie Evans**, in this case.

When the news first came into the public domain, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon went to considerable lengths to clarify that she had nothing to do with the decision to pursue the investigation [*of Alex Salmond*] and that it had been independently initiated by Leslie Evans. It may be that Ms Evans had justifiable reason to take the

steps she did, but such steps are surely inconsistent when compared with her evasions over what appears to be overwhelming evidence of probable criminal behaviour on the part of Elish Angiolini, former Lord Advocate and ministerial colleague of Mr Salmond.

In October 2015, I raised concerns to Audit Scotland over the funding of Mrs Angiolini's civil action against me, an action she took when fundamentally accusing me of wrongly stating that she was implicated in the Hollie Greig case. I already had evidence to indicate that my position was the correct one, in fact, including a letter copied to my MP, Health Minister David Mowat, by former Justice Secretary Kenny MacAskill that clearly stated that it was indeed Elish Angiolini who had personally blocked the investigation into Hollie's rape allegations, contrary to everything Ms Angiolini had previously asserted.

After a five-month investigation, Audit Scotland revealed that Mrs Angiolini had, as I suspected, been granted UK taxpayers' funds in order to pursue me in a matter that may lead to her own financial enrichment. The said funding had been authorised by Leslie Evans' immediate predecessor, **Sir Peter Housden**. The only possible way that Ms Angiolini could have persuaded Sir Peter to grant such funding to her was to convince him that she was telling the truth in that she was not involved in the Hollie Greig case, a position we now know to be utterly untrue.

Subsequently, in order to process this matter further, I asked Leslie Evans to provide copies of the correspondence between Elish Angiolini and Sir Peter that had led to his authorisation.

Leslie Evans refused to comply.

My [then] MP, David Mowat, took up my case, as it involved the very probable misuse of UK public funds (the matter is not devolved) and likely fraud.

Again, Leslie Evans refused to comply.

Mr Mowat was succeeded after the 2017 General Election by Labour's Mr Faisal Rashid. For the same reason as Mr Mowat, Mr Rashid also approached Ms Evans for copies of the relevant correspondence.

Once more, Leslie Evans refused to comply.

When the action was taken to investigate the allegations made against Mr Salmond, Nicola Sturgeon also emphasised how it demonstrated that no-one in Scotland was above the law.

Why then, is a former First Minister being pursued on the opinion of Leslie Evans, over sexual allegations made from some years ago, but a former Lord Advocate,

against whom there is overwhelming documentary evidence of grave financial misconduct, most probably of a criminal nature, and having been supplied by the Scottish Government itself, being actively protected by the very same individual — Permanent Secretary Leslie Evans?

Robert Green

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