# Nicola Sturgeon seeks support after clearance in SNP police investigation



Scotland's former first minister, Nicola Sturgeon, has attempted to rally her supporters following her clearance in a controversial police investigation concerning the Scottish National Party (SNP) finances. Sturgeon's remarks came during a comedy show at the King’s Theatre in Glasgow, where she participated in “Books and Banter” alongside crime writer Val McDermid, showcasing her desperate bid for relevance amid an embroiled political landscape.

The announcement of Sturgeon’s clearance, announced by Police Scotland, confirmed that no charges would be brought against her or former party treasurer Colin Beattie. However, the timing is anything but convenient; on the same day, her estranged husband, Peter Murrell, faced courtroom allegations related to embezzlement from the very party she led. While Murrell has yet to enter a plea, this scandal weighs heavily on the SNP and calls into question the integrity of their financial practices.

The police investigation, known as Operation Branchform, which began in 2021, uncovered troubling allegations of £660,000 worth of misappropriation for a second independence referendum. Investigators have already conducted multiple raids, including at the SNP headquarters and their residence, further exposing the questionable financial governance underlying the SNP.

At her comedy appearance, Sturgeon attempted to maintain morale, claiming she would not have survived the last couple of years without her close friends. Yet, her self-congratulatory remarks did little to mask the reality that many voters are growing increasingly disillusioned with her party's leadership and capabilities. "So I just wanted to say, from the bottom of my heart, thank you for all your support," she declared, which seems more an appeal to her dwindling base than a reflection of true confidence moving forward.

In a moment meant to be humorous, Sturgeon expressed the indelible grip politics has on her life, quipping, “You can take the girl out of politics, but you can’t take politics out of the girl.” This captures not only her ambition but the fact that political turmoil continues to engulf her party, even at a light-hearted event.

Meanwhile, John Swinney, a senior SNP figure, sought to maintain a facade of optimism as he addressed party members about the supposed positive trajectory ahead. Stating that the conclusion of the investigation has bolstered their standing, he neglected to mention that this moment stains the party's credibility. His comments on financial governance and electoral preparations seem naive given the cloud of risk surrounding the SNP.

Sturgeon’s performance marks her first public appearance since being cleared in the inquiry; however, this fact won't shield her or her party from the repercussions of ongoing investigations. Her upcoming autobiography, tantalizingly titled “Frankly,” may provide some financial relief, but the cynicism surrounding her leadership and the party's financial mismanagement will be difficult to navigate.

As the SNP presses on with its political agenda, these recent events will likely jeopardize their standing and the public’s trust in the upcoming elections. With a clear alternative emerging in right-wing politics, the SNP faces not only a battle for survival but a reckoning regarding their prolonged failures and the message they wish to project to the electorate.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)