

# Scottish Leaders' Debate

We did have the Scottish Leaders Debate on Sky to watch in late April but it was easy to miss as it was aired at 10.30am.

Who in their right mind would get up at such an ungodly hour to watch political debate? Well, there were a few in the audience at The Hub in Edinburgh for a start.

On one point Alex Salmond perhaps gave an insight into some inconsistency among The Scottish Government about the way in which prisoners have been released on compassionate grounds.

The First Minister stated that Thomas Hamilton, the gunman in the Dunblane Massacre, would not ever have qualified for release in the same way as the Lockerbie bomber did. The Scottish Justice Minister, Kenny McAskill, stated categorically at the time of releasing Abdelbaset Al Megrahi that the crime was irrelevant when assessing a prisoner for release on grounds of terminal illness, so perhaps that is questionable now?

In any case, and notwithstanding whether this is seen as a serious gaffe or not, Salmond is still assessed by the post-debate poll to have 'won' the day with 45% of the vote. Even Jim Murphy, the fresh-faced youth and Secretary of State for Scotland, could not match the First Minister of Scotland for his debating skills and statesmanlike demeanour. Pity then that Alex is not appearing at the other Scottish Leader Debates by other broadcasting companies. He has refused to take part as they are not to be aired across the entire UK.