



Source: The Scotsman {Main}
Edition:
Country: UK
Date: Friday 16, May 2008
Page: 16
Area: 268 sq. cm
Circulation: ABC 52993 Daily
BRAD info: page rate £5,410.00, scc rate £26.52
Phone: 0131 620 8620
Keyword: Ernst & Young

> durrants

Cherie 'should quit as judge over memoirs'

MARTYN MCLAUGHLIN

CHERIE Blair yesterday faced down calls for her resignation as a judge, amid claims that her candid memoirs "demean the legal profession".

The wife of Tony Blair, the former prime minister, refuted suggestions her newly published autobiography showed a "complete lack of any kind of decency" and was inappropriate for someone of her legal standing.

Mrs Blair, known professionally as Cherie Booth in her capacity as a QC and a recorder – a barrister appointed to serve as a part-time judge – has made several high-profile revelations in the book, *Speaking For Myself*, which has been serialised in a national newspaper and was released yesterday.

They include criticisms of Gordon Brown, the beleaguered Prime Minister, who she said was "rattling the keys" of Number 10 while her husband was still in office, and details of how her son, Leo, was only conceived because she was too embarrassed to take contraception to Balmoral.

Such candour, however, has not been well-received, with suggestions her only motivations for writing the volumes were revenge and greed, a charge made yesterday by Gerald Butler QC, senior justice at Southwark Crown Court for 13 years.

He said: "I don't think she should continue to sit as a recorder. If she wants to tread this path of making money by outrageous comments, that is up to her, but I don't think this is a job for a judge. It shows a complete lack of any kind of decency. It's the kind of conduct which demeans the legal profession. It is disgraceful."

An unrepentant Mrs Blair yesterday said she was "certainly would not" resign.

She added: "I intend to continue to practise. I'm sad [Mr Butler] feels like that but I also think so many comments about the book have been spoken only on the extracts. If anyone reads the book, I don't think they would draw that conclusion from it."

Lord Falconer, the former Lord Chancellor, said: "Cherie is highly respected in the legal profession and it is wrong to suggest writing her memoirs should make the slightest of difference to a job she does extremely well."

mmclaughlin@scotsman.com
BURNING ISSUE, PAGE 32



A portrait of Mrs Blair which features in the *Twenty One 21st Century Women* exhibition at **Ernst & Young** in London Picture: PA

