

## Winston Churchill's Election Address at Usher Hall, Edinburgh, 14<sup>th</sup> February 1950

The prime minister, Mr. Attlee, has made it clear that his intention is to establish a Socialist State in this island at the earliest moment. He intends to create a society in which the state will control and own all the means of production, distribution and exchange. We have had one instalment of this during the last four and a half years, and now we are asked to vote whether we want to take a second plunge into this immense social and economic revolution. ...

This attempt to establish a Socialist State in Great Britain affects the relations of England and Scotland in a direct and serious manner. The principle of centralisation of government in Whitehall and Westminster is emphasised in a manner not hitherto experienced or contemplated in the Act of Union. The supervision, interference and control in the ordinary details of Scottish life and business by the Parliament at Westminster has not hitherto been foreseen, and I frankly admit that it raises new issues between our two nations.

If England became an absolute Socialist State, owning all the means of production, distribution and exchange, ruled only by politicians and their officials in the London offices, I personally cannot feel that Scotland would be bound to accept such a dispensation. I do not therefore wonder that the question of Scottish home rule, and all this movement of Scottish nationalism has gained in strength with the growth of Socialist authority and ambitions in England. I would never adopt the view that Scotland should be forced into the serfdom of socialism as a result of a vote in the House of Commons. It is an alteration so fundamental in our way of life that it would require a searching review of our historical relations.

But here I speak to the Scottish Nationalists in words, as diplomatic language puts it, of great truth and respect, and I say this position has not yet been reached. If we act together with our united strength it may never arise. I do not believe that the British nation or the English people will accept the Socialist State. There is a deep fund of common sense in the English race and they have all sorts of ways, as has been shown in the past, of resisting and limiting the imposition of state autocracy. It would be a great mistake for Scotsmen to suppose that Mr Attlee's policy can effectively be imposed upon us at the present time. And here in this election, so momentous in its character and consequences, we all have the opportunity of inflicting a shattering defeat upon this menace to our individual liberties, and to the well understood, and hitherto widely-admired British way of life. I most strongly urge all Scotsmen to fight one battle at a time. We have every hope that the socialist schemes for netting us up and tying us down will be torn in pieces by the votes of the British people. We shall know more about it after February 23. It may indeed be a turning point in our island story. Scotsmen would make the wrong decision if they tried to separate their fortunes from ours at a moment when together we may lift them all to a higher plane of freedom and security.

It would indeed be foolish to cast splitting votes or support splitting candidates, the result of which might be to bring about that evil Whitehall tyranny and centralization, when by one broad heave of the British national shoulders, the whole gimcrack structure of Socialist jargon and malice may be cast in splinters to the ground.

...

The Socialist centralization menace has however advanced so far as to entitle Scotland to further guarantees of national security and internal independence. These can be provided effectively by new additional representation at the centre and at the summit, which, if the Conservatives and Unionists are returned to power, will be accorded to Scotland, by a Unionist Cabinet. Besides strengthening the establishment of Under-Secretaries of State, we shall advise the creation of a new office of Minister of State for Scotland. He would be a minister of Cabinet rank and will be deputy to the Secretary of State. Such an appointment would enable a senior member of the Cabinet to be constantly in Scotland. Because of the large changes in economic and financial affairs which have come about in recent years, we shall appoint a Royal Commission to review the whole situation between Scotland and England, and we shall take good care that this does not become an instrument of delay upon practical action.

■ 5. The 1979 Referendum: NO

## THE REFERENDUM

# Think it out for yourself

THINK of the cost of the Assembly.  
THINK of the extra burden on your rates.  
THINK of another layer of government.  
THINK of a thousand more civil servants in Scotland.  
THINK of more controls, laws, regulations and directives.  
THINK of how the parliamentary power of Scotland's MPs would shrink.  
THINK of the bickering and quarrels between Edinburgh and London.  
THINK of the slide to separation.  
THINK of the break-up of Britain.

## AND THEN TRY TO THINK

of a single certain way in which the Assembly would bring the smallest real benefit either to the United Kingdom or to Scotland or to your region or to your district or to your friends or to your family or to yourself

## AND THEN THINK

WHO are pressing hardest for the Assembly;  
WHY they want it; and  
WHAT it would do for them

## AND THEN

WHEN THE REFERENDUM COMES  
ON MARCH 1<sup>st</sup> MAKE SURE THAT

SCOTLAND  
SAYS **NO**



■ 6. The 1979 Referendum: YES



Referendum 1st March  
*Vote positively*

# YES

FOR FURTHER TO THE POLLS, CALL 556 2655

Now or never. That stark choice faces every Scot. On March 1st we decide for all time whether we have a Scottish Assembly.

All time? That's it. Scotland for over a century has sought some measure of home rule. Now Westminster has ordered a referendum to prove we really want the Assembly.

The vote is unique. If Scotland says "NO" after years spent demanding devolution, we will never be taken seriously again. Scotland will be universally ridiculed. A laughing stock. All bark, no bite.

Our self respect demands that Scotland resumes responsibility for key areas of domestic policy. The Assembly helps us work out our own solutions to make Scotland flourish.

Referendum Day is different. Each of us holds the future of Scotland in our hands. We can make or break — send Scotland surging forward or settle forever for the second rate.

Vote positively. "YES" — it is truly now or never!

Published by 'Yes for Scotland' Campaign

## Dual Identities, 1982

The striking feature of the table below is that they who are foremost in claiming their Britishness are those whose link to Britain is the most fragile – and the least accepted by the rest of the kingdom.

National identity in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

Think of self as	England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland	
				Protestant	R. Catholic
	%	%	%	%	%
British	38	35	33	67	15
Scottish	2	52	–	–	–
Welsh	1	–	57	–	–
English	57	2	8	–	–
Ulster	n.a.	–	–	20	6
Irish	1	1	–	8	69
Other, mixed, don't know	1	10	2	5	10
	100	100	100	100	100

Sources: For Scotland and Wales, data supplied by survey directors from their respective machine readable files: J.A. Brand and W.I. Miller, *Scottish Election Survey 1979* (Glasgow: University of Strathclyde); and Denis Balsom and P.J. Madgwick, *Welsh Election Survey 1979* (Aberystwyth: University of Wales). For Northern Ireland, see E. Moxon-Browne, "Northern Ireland Attitude Survey: an Initial Report" (Belfast: Queen's University, duplicated, 1979), p. 9. For England, data supplied by the Gallup Poll, London.



Last updated  
3 Aug 2021

# National identity

The 2011 census asked people what country or countries they felt an affiliation to.

National identity is not tied to [ethnicity](#) or [country of birth](#). A foreign citizen living in Scotland is free to choose 'Scottish' as their national identity.

## Scottish identity

**82.7% of people said they had some Scottish national identity.**

That's 4.4 million people.

Scottish national identity was most common in:

- North Lanarkshire
- Inverclyde
- East Ayrshire
- West Dunbartonshire

Around 90% of people in each of these areas said they had some Scottish national identity.

70.5% of City of Edinburgh residents claimed some Scottish national identity. This was the lowest in Scotland.

### Scottish identity only

**62.4% of Scotland's population said they were 'Scottish only'.**

3.3 million people had Scottish identity only. This was most common in 10 to 14 year olds, at 71.5%.

It was least common among 30 to 34 year olds, at 56.7%.

18.3% of the population said their national identity was 'Scottish and British identities only'.

### Ethnic groups

**28.2% of people in minority ethnic groups said they had some Scottish identity.**

This could be either Scottish only, or in combination with another identity.

59.9% of people from a mixed ethnic background had some Scottish identity, along with 50.0% of people from the Pakistani ethnic group.

Scottish identity was least common in African ethnic groups, at 21.2%.

## British identities

**8.4% of the population said they had 'British identity only'.**

443,000 people said they were British only. This was most common in the 50 to 54 age group, at 9.7%.

2.3% of the population had 'English identity only'.

## No UK identity

**4.4% of people said they had no UK identity.**

234,000 people said they had 'other identity only'. This was most common among young adults aged 20 to 34.

**Table 13.1 Trends in forced choice national identity**

	1974 (%)	1979 (%)	1992 (%)	1997 (%)	1999 (%)	2000 (%)	2001 (%)	2002 (%)	2003 (%)	2004 (%)	2005 (%)	2006 (%)	2007 (%)
<b>Scottish</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>British</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>20</b>

*Source:* Scottish Election Studies 1974-97; Scottish Social Attitudes Survey, 1999-2007. Data for 2007 are provisional.

**Table 13.2 Trends in Moreno national identity**

	1992 (%)	1997 (%)	1999 (%)	2000 (%)	2001 (%)	2003 (%)	2005 (%)	2006 (%)	2007 (%)
Scottish not British	19	23	32	37	36	31	32	33	26
More Scottish than British	40	38	35	31	30	34	32	32	30
Equally Scottish and British	33	27	22	21	24	22	22	21	28
More British than Scottish	3	4	3	3	3	4	4	4	5
British not Scottish	3	4	4	4	3	4	5	5	6

*Source:* Scottish Election Studies, 1992, 1997; Scottish Social Attitudes Survey, 1999-2007. Data for 2007 are provisional.

# Devolution: A beginner's guide

**Since 1999, the way the United Kingdom is run has been transformed by devolution - a process designed to decentralise government and give more powers to the three nations which, together with England, make up the UK.**

The United Kingdom is made up of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Devolution essentially means the transfer of powers from the UK parliament in London to assemblies in Cardiff and Belfast, and the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh.

## **When did it begin?**

Public votes were held in 1997 in Scotland and Wales, and a year later in both parts of Ireland.

This resulted in the creation of the Scottish Parliament, the National Assembly for Wales and the Northern Ireland Assembly.

Devolution applied in different ways in each nation due to historical and administrative differences.

## **What powers are devolved?**

The table below gives an overview of the main powers given to the Northern Irish and Welsh assemblies, and the Scottish Parliament.

### **MAJOR DEVOLVED POWERS**

<b>SCOTLAND</b>	<b>WALES</b>	<b>N. IRELAND</b>
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	Agriculture, forestry & fishing	Agriculture
Education	Education	Education
Environment	Environment	Environment
Health	Health & social welfare	Health
Housing	Housing	Enterprise, trade & investment
Justice, policing & courts*	Local government	Social services
Local government	Fire & rescue services	Justice & policing
Fire service	Highways & transport	
Economic development	Economic development	
Some transport		

\*Scotland has always had its own legal system

### What powers are not devolved?

The UK government is responsible for national policy on all powers which have not been devolved.

These are known usually as "reserved powers" and include foreign affairs, defence, international relations and economic policy.

This table gives an overview of the main non-devolved powers.

#### MAJOR NON-DEVOLVED POWERS

SCOTLAND	WALES	N. IRELAND
Constitution	Defence & national security	Defence & national security
Defence & national security	Economic policy	Foreign policy
Foreign policy	Foreign policy	Nationality
Energy	Energy	Energy**
Immigration & nationality	Immigration & nationality	
Trade & industry	[see footnote +]	
Some transport		
Social security		

\*\* - specified as "nuclear energy & installations"

+ - Non-devolved powers in Wales are by implication all those not set out in the 2006 Government of Wales Act

The Westminster Parliament is technically still able to pass laws for any part of the UK, but in practice only deals with devolved matters with the agreement of the devolved governments.

5:45AM

# THE SCOTSMAN

FRIDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 1997

SCOTLAND'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER

PRICE 42p

## YES 74% FOR A SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

## YES 63% FOR TAX-VARYING POWERS

# A nation again

## Dewar hails 'great day' as voters give massive support to home rule

PETER MACMAHON

Scottish Political Editor

THE people have spoken. Emphatically and unequivocally it was Yes. Yes to a Scottish parliament with tax-varying powers.

The words of the late John Smith, repeated so often in the past few weeks, were proved to be true.

Home rule is the settled will of the Scottish nation. The unfinished business will be finished.

Victory was claimed in the early hours by Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, for whom the result was a personal triumph. The devolution referendum his Government had insisted on before it would legislate to return a parliament to Edinburgh after nearly 300 years had produced the mandate some feared the people would not deliver.

Sighting the end of the long, hard home-rule road on which he has travelled for more than 30 years, Mr Dewar declared: "This is a great day for Scotland, one of the most important days in our country's long history. The people have seized the moment."

Unlike the ill-fated referendum of 1979, Scotland was united in its support for the principle of devolution. From Dumfries and Galloway in the far south-west to Orkney and Shetland in the north the people voted Yes to the first question on the principle, with only a few areas rejecting the proposition that the parliament should have tax powers.

At 5.43am the final result from the Highlands put a seal on the historic night with 72 per cent voting Yes for a parliament and 62 per cent for tax powers.

Tony Blair, who was roundly condemned when he insisted on the referendum as leader of the opposition, welcomed the result. The Prime Minister said: "I am absolutely delighted that the Scottish people have backed our plans. I said that we would deliver what we promised - and we have."

Mr Blair indicated that the result in Scotland would now point the way to more constitutional reform in Britain. A referendum on devolution in Wales will follow next week and there are other constitutional

reforms, including of the House of Lords, to follow. The Prime Minister said: "A new modern constitution is an essential part of the new politics and the new Britain we want to build."

The Scottish Secretary claimed victory after just two results when it became clear that the Scots had voted by three-to-one for the principle of a devolved parliament and by a comfortable majority to give it tax-varying powers with a respectable turnout of about 60 per cent. Just over 2.4 million people voted.

Legislation will now be introduced in Westminster in the autumn and a devolved Scottish parliament seems certain to be sitting in Edinburgh by the new millennium.

The Scottish Office minister Brian Wilson said: "It's not just a victory, it's not just Yes, it's a moral authority and the settled will of the Scottish people has been established."

"That is important to the parliamentary process in the short term and the authority of the constitutional settlement."

Mr Dewar said: "The people recognised the moment, we have done the business." He said that they had endorsed the Government's proposals for a Scottish parliament with real powers. It was, he added, a proud day for him, especially after the decision in the 1979 referendum and the following 18 years of Tory government.

The Scottish Office would today, he promised, begin to put together the Scotland Act and that the parliament would be up and running by the year 2000.

"For the people of Scotland that will be our celebration. A new Scotland for a new millennium."

As the trickle of results from the 32 councils across Scotland became a torrent, the Tories lost the election. A former Tory minister, Lord Mackay of Arbroath, admitted that he had known that the Tories would lose. He said: "I am absolutely delighted - this is what my party has been campaigning for a hundred years."

Tories from south of the Border were this morning repeating their warnings that devolution would inevitably mean



Scottish Secretary Donald Dewar hears the first declaration - overwhelming support for Yes, Yes - with Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Alistair Darling.

Picture: Ian Walde

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wiped out at the general election the Scottish Tory deputy chairman, Annabel Goldie, reflected on a further election setback: "By any standards it is a historic moment for Scotland. It is really quite breathtaking."

As only the second result came in, from South Lanarkshire, where 77 per cent had backed a parliament, Alex Salmond, leader of the Scottish National Party, was predicting that Scotland was on the way to independence. He encouraged his members to "carry the country onwards to independence". He said: "We have embarked on

a journey and the end of this journey will be independence."

For the first time in 300 years we are going to have a parliament in Scotland. Scotland has done it with a bang and not whimper. However, he denied that independence would necessarily follow swiftly on the heels of a Scottish parliament.

At 12.45am, Clackmannanshire became the first council to declare a result, delivering a resounding Yes to both questions. By 3.37am the Yes vote had achieved a majority of the total votes on the first question as the total passed the 1.2 million with the declaration from Fife. At 4.07am a clear majority emerged for the question which the opponents said would never be passed, to give the parliament tax powers. The "tartan tax" had won the support of the people.

By the early hours of the morning, only Orkney and Dumfries and Galloway had rejected the part of the devolution package, voting No to the tax

powers but reversing the anti-devolution result in the isles in 1979.

The final turnout figure was seen as effectively spiking the guns of the opponents of devolution who had counted on basing their opposition to home rule on a lack of a mandate from a low turnout.

Before the campaign proper began, Mr Dewar had privately expressed the hope that the turnout would be above 60 per cent in order to demonstrate that devolution had the clear support of the Scottish people. A turnout which exceeded 60 per cent with a Yes/Yes result will be seen as delivering a clear mandate for the Government to press ahead and legislate for devolution.

Last night, the Tories' constitutional spokesman, Michael Ancram, conceded that his party would accept the referendum result. He said: "I think we should respect that democratic verdict and say that the will of the people has prevailed."

beginning for Mr Dewar. He said that he felt that he had been campaigning for devolution for the last 100 years.

It was singularly appropriate that when Mr Dewar formally acknowledged victory, Mr McIntosh was declaring the West Lothian result. That area has been synonymous with the devolution debate for two decades in a negative sense. Now at last it may be remembered for something more positive.

Soon afterwards East Renfrewshire, once a Tory heartland, said a double Yes. The blue rinse brigade even backed the tax powers. The fat lady was tuning up. It all seemed

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## THE SCOTSMAN

### A triumph of the settled will

THE turn-out could have been a little better, perhaps, but not by much. The result itself, the sweeping triumph for reform, could scarcely have been surpassed.

The consequences of defeat yesterday were unthinkable but in a free and fair election, Scotland chose home rule. What the late John Smith called the "settled will of the Scottish people" held to the last. Hour after hour this morning the huge, crushing majorities for reform poured in despite an out-of-date electoral register that reduced the notional electorate by perhaps 10 per cent. Granted, some may have concluded that the referendum was a foregone conclusion and neglected to vote. Others may have believed that Labour's crushing general election victory was the real plebiscite. The No campaign, it seems, may have persuaded rather too many of its natural supporters to stay at home.

In the end, none of it mattered. At 3.36 am the Kingdom of Fife sealed the issue and ended the dispute. In the year 2000, as a new century begins, Scotland will have its parliament.

The home rule programme will now survive any assault thrown at it in the Commons or in the House of Lords. Edinburgh's parliament will be legitimate beyond all question. Overwhelmingly, it has the mandate it required. Yesterday the Scottish people seized their moment and made a claim on history.

If the voters, at first, seemed not to be wildly enthused, nevertheless, the campaign itself - often dull, generally tedious, rarely inspiring - will not have helped. The Yes side got off to the worst possible start, what with the stench of Labour sleaze from Paisley and elsewhere. Attacks on tax-varying powers by various members of the business community seemed, at first, to trouble a large number of voters.

Yet the No campaign proved its own worst enemy.

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JOHN PENMAN

AS THE cheering rang out around the hall, Donald Dewar allowed himself a little smile - but that was all. Despite the temptation to savour the moment, he held back.

The Scottish Secretary's reluctance was understandable. The architect of the plans for

Scotland's first parliament in almost 300 years is a politician with a legendary cautious nature.

It is a caution borne out of experience. Almost 20 years ago he believed another Labour government was on the verge of delivering home rule for Scotland in another referendum.

This time, Mr Dewar was determined to deliver, but as the first signs emerged that his efforts would bear fruit, he refused to get carried away. The clock was heading towards 11am when a burst of drums signalled the first result. To those in the main hall of the Edinburgh International Con-

ference Centre, the wait had seemed to last forever.

In the front row, Mr Dewar sat beside the devolution minister, Henry McLeish. In the moments before the declaration, the two men perhaps considered all they had to gain, or lose. This first test of public opinion would go a long way to determining their place in history.

Mr Dewar admitted later that while standing in the rain outside a Glasgow polling station yesterday afternoon, he had harboured doubts.

Cautious to the end. As the drums faded, Neil McIntosh, the man charged with declaring the results,

strode to the centre of the stage and announced that Clackmannanshire had voted emphatically for a Scottish parliament.

The television screen behind him switched from images of Scotland's history and instead proclaimed the result. The screen also read "31 to come". One result does not a parliament make but Mr Dewar said he betrayed the emotions bubbling beneath his calm exterior raising arms aloft like a victorious footballer.

Mr McLeish, who once was an actual if rarely victorious footballer, moved towards the Scottish Secretary and for a second it appeared that two grown Scottish men would hug

in front of a television camera. They thought better of it.

In an instant, Mr Dewar's caution returned and he waved away nearby photographers. The memories of 1979 flooded back and the man charged with finishing the business of devolution would wait until the outcome was more secure.

The rest of the hall absorbed the impact of the first result, 80 per cent in favour of a Scottish parliament, not much less than that for the tax-varying powers, and caution all but disappeared.

It took just one more result to signal the beginning of the end for the No campaigners, and the end of a very long

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# New dawn is just the beginning

IAN BELL

**The achievement of a dream is only the start. Scotland is setting out on a journey that has never been travelled before**

OUT of the darkness, as James Connolly said of another, less civilised, insurrection, and into the dawn. We begin anew.

But daybreak is often a misty time, the shape of things is not always clear. The truth is that no-one yet knows what the future holds for Edinburgh's parliament.

How will Scotland's four-party politics operate in a parliamentary setting under a proportional system with fixed terms? This has never been attempted before. Labour has never had to deal with a Nationalist opposition and the Nationalists have never had to conduct themselves as a potential party of government.

Equally, we have yet to see a parliament with a civilised number of women. We have yet to see how relations with Westminster will be handled. We do not yet know if London will leave the established funding formula intact. The possibilities are all but endless.

Besides, there will be scope for previously undreamed of alliances within the new parliament. Labour promises to abjure increases in taxation; the SNP and the Liberal Democrats show no such resolve. In the mid-term of a Blair government, the presumption of Labour dominance could begin to look questionable if other parties created the sort of alliances which turned the Yes campaign into a juggernaut.

Besides, and most important of all - yesterday was not the end of the constitutional story.

The choice between devolution and the status quo has been made finally, but at no time was the multi-option referendum demanded by the Nationalists ever in prospect.

That was probably just as well. The chances are that the Scottish vote would have split three ways and Think Twice would have won by default. Nevertheless, the demand for independence has yet to be tested. Paradoxically, Alex Salmond has done his party most good by bailing out a campaign he does not, in principle, favour.

Clearly, however, the argument moves on. The SNP will settle for nothing less. It could agree, for its own reasons, that Scotland needed a parliament in which to debate its future. But its ambition to make that parliament sovereign and independent remains.

This is logical, whatever your politics. With the status quo destroyed, we will have to decide, sooner or later, whether the new parliament is indeed the precursor to independence or a way to make us love the Union a little more. There is, in that sense, only one agenda.

Yesterday, Labour carried the day but it cannot afford to be complacent. It knows perfectly well that several constitutional time-bombs lie buried within the foundations of the parliament. It also knows - or ought to know - that the candidates it selects for Edinburgh will be the front-line troops in the defence of the Union.

By common consent Alex

Salmond scarcely put a foot wrong during the referendum campaign. In its early stages, indeed, he placed Labour in his debt when the smoke from Paisley threatened to become a brush fire running out of control. He is, perhaps, the most skilled politician in Scotland. Given the ball in the parliament, he will run with it. Edinburgh, for him, will be the central project, not a distraction from Westminster.

Labour has thus far been more concerned with ensuring that the grubby sweepings of local government in the west of Scotland do not become the public face of home rule. It will need to do much more. At every turn, and for obvious reasons, it will be the vulnerable party, the one attempting to defend Chancellor Brown's stonings, the one struggling to conceal constitutional anomalies, the one that has to explain why Edinburgh can be trusted with the theoretical power to perhaps

raise a fraction of its revenues, but cannot ever do more.

Besides, if the referendum campaign has enhanced Scotland's sense of nationhood, what might the parliament do? What will those Labour voters who say they are sympathetic to independence conclude when they realise that home rule has not made the sky fall in?

The first step is the hardest - when the road ahead is hard to see. The second step will be easier to take.

None of this will happen overnight. Several years will pass before the parliament proves its worth or is discarded. Some Nationalists fear, indeed, that an efficient parliament will go a long way towards destroying their case, just as Labour claims. Perhaps it will.

But unless and until Tony Blair summons up the courage to turn Britain into a properly federal state, Edinburgh will be caught in a mesh of contradictions. The SNP will exploit

each and every one. The ramshackle nature of the British constitution is its best, least secret weapon. Devolution is a hybrid scheme, a compromise that will only work if enough people, English and Scottish, of every party, want it to work. The Nationalists will not be wreckers, as is so often alleged, but they cannot be expected to be mute if the parliament runs into difficulties.

What is the SNP answer, for example, during a second Blair term when Labour's majority depends on its Scottish MP and the Tories raise the West Lothian question? Perhaps rivalry between England and Scotland and a constitutional crisis will follow.

What might the Nationalists say? Doubtless that devolution has indeed created a palpable unfairness for which there is no real solution - short of independence, amicably agreed, for Scotland. English voters might just be inclined to agree.

It may be, nevertheless, that a crisis will not be necessary. One notable aspect of the referendum campaign was the failure of either side to make much of a case for the United Kingdom. The No side seemed to have no argument; the Yes side seemed to concentrate on the flaws in the existing settlement. The drive for home rule could not have been anything other than a nationalist wish with a small 'n' laffair.

Identity, culture, history, Scotland's rights, these are meat and drink to the SNP. Is it possible to believe that such self-awareness will cease when the new parliament opens its doors and when Nationalist politicians cease to operate on Westminster's fringes? Hardly.

Alex Salmond's party will settle for incremental progress, as always. For the SNP, one side in the argument has been destroyed, one yet remains. Nationalism presses on regardless.

## Let's smash mould of petty party bickering

ALAN COCHRANE

**Scots have the chance to make a parliament that is as distinctive as they are by demanding the highest standards of politicians**

We've done it. Now what? We have voted ourselves a parliament, but does anyone have any idea what kind of parliament? Who will tell us how to do it?

The answer is simple: none. There is nobody but ourselves now to decide how we should run our own domestic affairs, no model we should slavishly copy, no institution we require to ape.

It is all up to us now. In the bowels of the Scottish Office (by the way, what will we call that now?) there are detailed plans laid. Civil servants always have contingencies for everything.

But this is our parliament and until we have seen what they intend our legislators to do and until we have approved them, they must keep their hands on the drawing board.

If this is our first parliament in 300 years, we must take a collective pride in it. We must make it distinctive and we must ensure that it remains our - and not the politicians' or the civil servants' - parliament. I hesitate to call it the people's parliament. Tony Blair has pre-empted so many aspects of life in this country with the word people's that he has all but devalued the word.

However, that should be the essence of what we are about. Scotland's parliament must be a unique thing. We are a distinctive people and we have thought so long and hard about all that we must make sure that we create something which mirrors that distinction. We have contributed so much to the legislatures of the rest of the world. Westminster - most especially, that when it comes to our own we must take particular care.

This parliament has come

about hesitantly, slowly and, even in this moment of final decision, for many people extremely reluctantly. But it has happened, and like the whips of Westminster's wing in a few years' time. We have made our bed and must lie in it.

So, what will it look like? I want a parliament which smashes every accepted political nostrum. I want a parliament where party politics is not the be all and end all of public life, where the iron hand of the whips' office does not hold sway, where the black book traditionally kept by the whips of members' private foibles is not even begun.

It often sounds a hopelessly idealistic thing to say, but party politics, as exhibited in the British parliament, has often been one of the greatest hindrances to the work of the whips. Decisions are taken in the name of the people, but are actually implemented for partisan party reasons. The public good plays second fiddle to the greater good of the party.

The whole basis of British politics has been run that way, except in time of war, for 150 years. Can we not at least try to break that mould? David Owen tried it and foundered on the rock of traditional party allegiance. But, in the wake of his massive general election majority, Mr Blair is trying to build a consensus. He is giving the Liberals their first taste of power and influence since the war by allowing them to take a small part in his decision-making process.



The Scotsman devolution debate in Edinburgh this week. Parliamentary seats must be taken by people who see politics as a public service, not a career. Picture: Malcolm Cochrane

We are right to be suspicious about his motives - but the principle of consensus and co-operation is sound. What price we in Scotland picking up that ball and running with it?

Is there no chance of our politicians taking decisions which affect us all on the basis of what will bring the greater good, rather than what is most advantageous for their party? Those who would call me naive do their country a disservice. This parliament must work. It cannot be allowed to founder amid a welter of petty party bickering.

Three of the parties that will be represented in the Scottish parliament, Labour, the SNP and the Liberal Democrats, have had the experience of working together on the referendum campaign and two of them worked in tandem on the Constitutional Convention. It is true that having experienced these bouts of co-operation many of our current crop of politicians cannot wait to get their hands on each other's throats again. That is in the nature of the beast and in a

singularly disputatious nation, is only to be expected.

But while we cannot expect all the politicians to agree with each other all of the time, we can at least insist that they fall out over their different perceptions of what is good for the country, rather than disagree because their whips tell them to.

The present lot of politicians are probably beyond help. Old lags of the system which has developed Tammany Hall - or should I say George Square - style down the ages, most of them owe much of their prominence in local and national government to their blind obedience to the party, than for any good any of them might have done their country.

That is what must change. If we are to change the politics, we must change the politicians. The signs are not all that encouraging. The first crop of members of the new parliament will be no different from their elders. Labour's case, they might have washed behind their ears and have been forced to take loyal oaths, but they will still be party hacks.

The Scottish Tories will be no different. While their leaders have been railing against the inequities of a devolved parliament, a huge number of activists have been working out how to get on this new parliamentary gravy train. After so long out of power and influence they want, yet again, to give us the benefit of their experience in running failed businesses and getting value for money in local services, which usually means leaving potholes in the road and axing school buses.

There have always been armies of Scot Nat parliamentary aspirants, but not enough Westminster seats to go round. They are bursting to flex their muscles and do everything they can to prove that a devolved parliament cannot work - by making it unworkable.

And the Liberals? Well, they are only there because Labour likes them. I could all be so different. We desperately need real quality in our first parliament, quality of a sort which sees membership of that parliament as a public service, not a career. We need people

with something to offer their country, rather than people who want something - a salary - out of it.

We need people who have achieved, who have run things, who have organised and employed people. We don't need the local government droppies whose main interest is where they draw their expenses.

And we need accessible politicians. We are a small country - there is no reason why our politicians should be remote from their constituents. We need to know them intimately: know what they are doing, what they are thinking, and that means ministers, too, not just MPs.

The structure of the new parliament must be as open as possible, consistent with efficient working practices. There must be not just public access to all of its deliberations, but encouragement of the public to attend and participate in the decision-making processes. Young people, through schools and colleges, must be encouraged by our politicians to take a pride in their parliament and its

workings and be convinced that it is operating for their benefit.

This involvement of the public must be at the root of all the parliament does. Its watchword must be to tell the people. Instead of being obsessed, as Whitehall has been, with the maxim "Why should we tell the public anything?" ours should be "Why shouldn't we tell them everything?"

And if our politicians must change, then so must our new bureaucracy. Scotland has provided some of the UK's finest officials and we should be in no doubt that the parliament will be ably served by its civil service. However, we must make sure they shake off the predilection for secrecy and the "we know best" attitude which has so bedevilled much of their behaviour down the years. They must be as the politicians, must take the people with them.

But if we demand and expect that our politicians and civil servants change, we must also be prepared to change as a people. Much of what we will now do, we will do for ourselves. We are taking the English. At last,

largely out of the equation. In the past, they have often been the only thing to unite us and without them to concentrate our minds, we have turned in on ourselves - often with disastrous results.

We cannot let that happen this time. We have demanded this change and we have simply got to make it work, together as one people. Local and regional rivalries and animosities will die hard but, in the end, we must always be aware of the collective good of the country.

I have been no great enthusiast for this new venture on which we are now embarked upon. But here it is. And there is now no point in asking whether the new parliament will work. It must work.

We must ask a lot of it. We must demand the highest standards from our politicians and those we charge to run this country of ours. But most of all we must ask a great deal of ourselves. Only we, the Scottish people, can make or break this thing. That is both our opportunity and our greatest challenge.

## Parliament will give Scots Tories a new foothold

ALLAN MASSIE

**Conservatives, still reeling from their election thrashing, have a role to play supporting Labour as defenders of the Union**

SOME things are clear. There was a comfortable majority for a Scottish parliament among those who voted.

But the opposition to it is still considerable, and not confined only to those who voted for the Conservatives at the general election.

Other things are less clear. We don't know whether this was a vote for the white paper or for much more than it promised.

We don't know how many of those who voted Yes would vote for independence. We don't know because the alliance between Labour and the SNP meant that many of the arguments advanced were arguments for independence, not for devolution. Awareness of this was manifest in Alastair Darling's lame performance in Tuesday night's Scotsman Bank of Scotland debate.

The Tories were bruised in the campaign, though perhaps less seriously wounded than if the party had campaigned vigorously as a party, or if leading figures like Michael Forsyth

and Malcolm Rifkind had felt able to take an active part.

The Tory position is still uncomfortable, and the party will take some time to commit itself to a course of action. There will be bitter argument too. Some will point to the size of the No vote as evidence that the field should not yet be abandoned. Pride and self-respect will hold others back from anti-devolutionary line. They think what is proposed a bad scheme for Scotland, and they will therefore argue against it till it becomes a reality. Supporters of devolution may find this hard to credit, but it will happen.

There are after all still a handful of Labour MPs who argue for socialism - with no more chance of success.

More pragmatic Tories will, however, conclude that the verdict of the people has been delivered, and they must accept it. They may still deplore the inadequacy of a pre-legislative referendum, the dishonesty of which they resent, and despise, and they may argue, as I am sure Tony Dailly will, that a second referendum should be held on the act of Parliament; but they will do so without any hope of success. Some of the dihardes - the

most Jacobite among them - may be prepared to fall honourably in the last ditch. A few years ago, I suggested in a paper that that would be a crowded place. Now I am not so sure. Many Tories are weary of the struggle. They are tired of being unpopular. They are fed up with being described as anti-Scottish. They are probably ready to accept that the parliament is coming and won't be removed.

Both dihardes and pragmatists will of course contest the elections for the parliament. There is nothing wrong in even those most bitterly opposed to its existence standing for election. Nor would such behaviour be unprecedented. Both the SNP and Labour fought European parliamentary elections in the years when their party policy was to leave the European Parliament.

In one sense the Tories' position has been improved, though this will not be noticeable immediately. They need no longer be lonely. They can

come into the body of the Kirk of Scottish politics. And this will be all the easier because the fault line in Scottish politics has shifted, or will very soon shift. For twenty years we have had three parties committed to the Scottish parliament and one opposed to it. Now we have three parties committed to the Union and one against it.

That could make for some unexpected alliances, no stranger, and more fundamental, than the marriage between Mr Dewar and Mr Salmond which is now heading for divorce.

However this reality may be masked for a time, because the Tories are still so critical of the devolution proposals. Their immediate duty, once they have accepted devolution, is to try to correct its defects in the interests of the Union. This means first insisting that the West Lothian Question can't simply be ignored in the hope that it will go away. It is no good just shrugging marriage off and saying that it's a Question for the English and not for us. To say that is to indulge in dishonest evasion: the question

only exists because we Scots have put it there by our determination to have a parliament of our own.

Answering it is going to be difficult. But if no attempt is made to do so then it is not a question at all. Scottish Nationalism that will ensure that, in Tam Dalyell's phrase, "devolution is a no-way-out to independence with no exits" it will be English Nationalism.

The SNP has quite properly no interest in the West Lothian question. Labour quite properly expresses no interest in it. It is up to the Scottish Tories to see that they do. They must rub salt in the wound. It is Labour's nose in it. Labour has created the question in its own interest; it must try to answer it in the Union's.

In time, though not till the parliament is up and running, the Scottish Tories must press for new financial arrangements that will compel the responsibility of raising the money it spends. This will not be agreeable, but it will be necessary.

But the advocates of devolution have been living in dreamland too. They have pretended it would be cost-free, all gain and no pain.

It isn't going to be like that. It is now up to the Scottish Tories to get the electorate to face up to that reality. That is the only way by which devolution can be that "fair and just settlement for Scotland within the framework of the United Kingdom", which Donald Dewar has promised.

The alternative is that long a journey away from Britain. It may be, nevertheless, that a crisis will not be necessary. One notable aspect of the referendum campaign was the failure of either side to make much of a case for the United Kingdom. The No side seemed to have no argument; the Yes side seemed to concentrate on the flaws in the existing settlement. The drive for home rule could not have been anything other than a nationalist wish with a small 'n' laffair.

# It's time to make a difference

## COMMENTARY

IAIN MACWHIRTER

**Grandiose ideas will have to wait – our parliament must restore people's faith in politicians first**

THE Scottish voters remained inscrutable to the end. As the final hours passed, and the streets remained quiet, the suspicion grew that the opinion polls might only have been telling the media what it wanted to hear.

That, after all, was what happened in 1979. Might Scotland have turned 'heart' again at the last minute – as it did 18 years ago?

Nae danger. History did not repeat itself. By one o'clock after only two results, the BBC's head of political research and number-cruncher in chief, Bill Bush, pronounced a decisive victory.

A massive three to one majority for a Scottish parliament, and even more remarkable, a projected two to one majority for tax-raising powers.

This was way beyond the wildest hopes of the Yes/Yes campaign. The activists and politicians milling around the Edinburgh International Conference Centre wandered around trying not to believe it. It was early days, after all. No triumphalism. Don't count chickens.

Like hell. 'Scotland had come home to home rule,' said the Liberal Democrat MP Ming Campbell. Eighteen years of hurt effaced in 100 hours of hectic campaigning.

The result of the Yes campaign had not dared to hope for a seismic and historic affirmation of constitutional change. The icebreaker had crashed through the apathy and cynicism and settled the matter once and for all. Scotland has its parliament again, after 300 years.

And yet, there remained the puzzle: only hours before, walking through the drizzle of Edinburgh's Princes Street, the mood of the populace wasn't exactly triumphant. If the nation was awakening, it was taking its time getting out of bed. There was little sense of history around the Scott Monument, where people were still picking around the improvised Cairn of Remembrance. The Battle of Stirling Bridge wasn't like this.

One Yes/Yes campaigner, selling balloons at the foot of the Mound, bemoaned the professional politicians. 'They're all sitting in their offices drinking coffee,' he said. 'Instead of getting out on the streets to help.' However, a smiling woman and her daughter in a car plastered with Yes/Yes stickers disagreed. 'It's marvelous. I think Scotland's going to surprise us all.'

I wish I'd taken a note of her name, because that bright lady had the broad smile worth

a lorry-load of pundits. Scotland had managed to surprise itself, just as Britain surprised itself on May 1st. This result is a direct descendant of that historic election victory. Another quiet revolution. There's no point asking why there wasn't rapture on the streets yesterday. Electoral behaviour is generally unrepresentative these days. It was exactly the same before the general election last May.

The politicians have their part to play. But the reality is that constitutional issues simply don't grip the popular imagination in the way that 'real' issues like employment, health and education do. That's politics. However, that didn't mean that they were indifferent. Clearly, people had made up their minds long ago, just as they had before 1 May.

There was no buzz because there was no argument. People were patiently and quietly waiting to deliver a decisive break with the past.

We can now draw a line under this inglorious period of Scottish history.

Since the inconclusive 1979 result, devolution has been an irritating irritant in the national psyche – an embarrassing memory which won't go away. Now it is exposed.

This will be surely the end of referendums and equivocation – at least for the next couple of decades. If the constitutional status of Scotland is every again to be put to the vote, it will not be devolution that is on the ballot paper, but independence. That, I believe, will be a very long time coming, if ever.

Scotland will now settle down to its new life in Calton Hill, or Leith, or wherever the assembly finally comes to rest. It will be up to the 129 members of the new parliament to prove to the Scottish people that they have indeed made the right decision; that self-government, however limited, can make a real difference to ordinary people's lives.

One of the enduring themes of the campaign – such as it was – was the widespread scepticism among Scots about the likely quality of the future Scottish members of parliament. Everywhere you went, the same suspicions were aired: they'll be no-hopers, interested only in expenses and freebies, who will use the parliament to further their careers rather than further the interests of Scotland as a whole.

Any thoughts that the May day landslide, and the success



Two jubilant Scots celebrate at Edinburgh's Calton Hill vigil as news of the devolution vote filtered through this morning.

Picture: Denis Straughan

## Clearly, people had made up their minds long ago

of Tony Blair's administration, had cured the voters of their cynicism was clearly premature. The Scots fully expect their legislators to be another Parrot's 'Show me a politician – and I'll show you a liar', said one Scot in one of the many vox pops on the radio.

This will be the first duty of the Scottish parliament: to rehabilitate politics in the public mind. To restore people's faith in the democratic process. This will be a hard task, but not an impossible one.

Scotland will not share the gloom about the calibre of Scottish politicians. Sure, there is no shortage of nupties clogging up the council chambers of West Central Scotland, but there are also many really good people in local government, far more than we have any right to expect given their miserable stipends and the public apathy about what happens in Town Hall.

But improvements there will have to be. Labour has already promised to do introduce more rigorous candidate selection, by setting up a vetting panel to ensure that people who stand for the Scottish parliament in 1999 can at least show some evidence of joined-up thinking.

It is long overdue, but we have every reason to believe

Labour are sincere. The summer of sleaze has profoundly shaken the party's self-confidence. The Labour leadership in London are rightly incensed that the rotten boroughs of Scotland have dumped the new government in sleaze within months of it having won a historic general election victory on an anti-sleaze ticket.

Tony Blair is not going to tolerate any return to the old order in Scotland, and Keir Hardie House knows it.

Proportional Representation will help. But it is not a magic formula in the end, civic culture depends upon responsible citizens. No-one can do it for us. It is up to the Scottish people as a whole to ensure that their parliament does not lapse into an eventide home for party apparatchiks. The assembly must reach out to the people, but the people must also get involved – even if it's only keeping a line open to their MSP.

The excuse that politics is too remote to no longer be viable.

Westminster will no longer be making the decisions about education, the administration of the health service or crime.

Scottish education is in urgent need of reform and revitalisation.

During *The Scotsman's* devolution debate in the Royal High building on Tuesday, the principal of one of Edinburgh's oldest schools complained that the reforms envisaged in the Howie Report in 1982 had never seen the light of day. He seemed to be arguing that devolution was a distraction from real issues like that.

But as the Treasury Secretary Alistair Darling pointed out to

## Before the parliament starts raising taxes or trying to wrest more powers from Westminster, it will have to prove itself

him in reply, this is precisely what a Scottish parliament is there for. The Howie Report sank without trace because Westminster had no time to debate it properly. With our own legislature in Edinburgh, there will at last be a body which has the time and the means to make educational reform a reality.

Before the Scottish parliament starts raising taxes or trying to wrest more powers from Westminster, it will have to prove itself to the Scottish people. It will have to make concrete and realistic reforms be-

fore it can start getting grandiose ideas about further amendments to the constitutional relationships.

To this end, the SNP – above all – is going to have to come down to earth after its heroic election campaigning. It may be that Scotland will, at some future date, decide that it wants to treat for full independence (though personally I doubt it). But in the meantime, the Na-

tionals, as well as Labour and the Liberal Democrats, are going to have to show that they can be competent legislators. Perhaps a revived Conservative opposition will be able to play a role here, provided that it can escape from its unionist negativity.

This parliament is a learning process, or it is nothing. That might be too mundane a prospectus for some in the Scottish political classes. It might at times make the Scottish parliament appear as if it really is self to be incompetent, unre-

sonable, or out-of-touch with the people it is supposed to represent, then it will rapidly degenerate into the ineffectual tartan talking shop that its detractors have always forecast.

The new parliament will do well to learn from the success of the New Labour government. The people elected to run it in 1999 will, to paraphrase Tony Blair, be not the masters but the servants of the people.

The Scottish parliament will have to start from there: the people are, not where they are, but where they might like to be. It will have to proceed cautiously, deliberately, modestly even, to establish the new democratic structures and practices which, for all the wisdom of Donald Dewar's white paper, are by no means clearly mapped out.

If these appear to be curiously downright reflections on what should be a heroic day, then that is no bad thing. We've heard endless talk about what the parliament should be like. Now we will see the reality. The people who were going about their business in the streets of Edinburgh yesterday, so unmoved by the great constitutional rhetoric, are not easily persuaded that they really have made the right choice.

## Defining image eludes desperate TV reporters

ALAN COCHRANE

They tried their best, but television presenters had to manufacture their own excitement as Scotland refused to get carried away by the events early this morning.

Time and time again, the BBC's main presenter, Kirsty Wark, took her viewers to reporters around the country looking for scenes which would set her broadcast alight.

Unfortunately for her reporters, including senior men shipped up from London such as John Sopell and John Pienaar, there was not much excitement about. Mr Pienaar looked forlorn as he tried to find some fervour outside the vigil for a Scottish parliament, opposite the Scottish Office.

There was none on offer and he was reduced to trying to whip the thing up himself by reporting that more and more people were turning up at his site – drawn largely by his TV cameras and lights, rather than anything else that was going on.

Poor John's star-turn was being able to find someone who confessed that the only reason he had joined the vigil had been

## West Lothian

Parliament?	
Yes	56,923
No	14,614
Maj	42,309
Tax Powers?	
Yes	47,990
No	23,354
Maj	24,636
Turnout	62%

Neil Mackintosh, the chief counting officer, announces the West Lothian result on television earlier this morning.

that he was enthused by the film *Braveheart* with its Australian Mel Gibson playing the part of William Wallace.

Also in Edinburgh, John Sopell had the unfortunate job of reporting the huge excitement at the main Scotland Forward party. Unfortunately, his electronic paraphernalia to inject some technological excitement into proceedings.

Unfortunately, his swingmeters and 'predicometers' just would not work in the different circumstances of a Scottish referendum in the way that they do in a general election.

Nevertheless, the all-action Mr Snow has become since the essential component to any election-night broadcast that it would have been unthinkable not to have him there.

What he added to the sum of human knowledge last night, however, remains in doubt. Every now and then, Kirsty

took us back to 'that' party, where Mr Sopell enthusiastically reported that unbridled joy had not yet been seen, but folk singing there still was plenty.

And poor Mr Pienaar could find solace in his own misery, as he found a Welsh lady who lambasted the Scots for being so 'calm' about what was happening in their country.

It had begun to rain as an embarrassed and forlorn Mr Pienaar desperately interviewed people playing guitars.

In the Glasgow studio, various Scottish politicians failed to manufacture any ferocity or bitterness towards each other.

For any of that sort of stuff you had to go to BBC's Welsh studios, where Peter Hain, Simon Hughes and John Birtwood really looked like they didn't like each other.

And the BBC also took us to Cornwall and to the north-east of England, where they found heated arguments for and against regional assemblies for those parts of the world. By contrast, the Scottish politicians looked like people who either have been working with each other or who will be working with each other in the very near future.

It may well have been our date with destiny, but in the wee sma' hours of this morning, the TV bosses down in a big way, in terms of generating excitement for their cameras.

But, then, excess display of emotion has always been a fairly vulgar way to behave. Especially if you have just got your own parliament.



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# DEVOLUTION IN SCOTLAND: THE 1997 REFERENDUM

## A victory for all of us

**R**ARELY can a nation's will have been more settled. With two thumping majorities, which surpassed the hopes of even the most optimistic campaigners, the Scots showed they are the people who like to say yes. They wanted a parliament, they wanted it to pay its way, and now they have granted their own wish. A sense of pride has been stirred, captured by the Scotsman newspaper's triumphant headline: "A nation again." But there is much to celebrate across the union — not all of it obvious.

For one thing, a political truism has been broken. The 63.5 per cent of Scots who voted for their new parliament to have tax-varying powers defied the rule which states no electorate will ever freely choose to shell out more of its hard-won earnings to the public coffers. Their decision suggests that when voters can picture their money being spent closer to home, by people they choose, they can think the unthinkable — even voting for what might be higher taxes.

The more direct consequence of the double Yes vote is a surge in momentum for the Government's most radical idea: the spreading out of power. As Tony Blair said on his victory tour last week, "the era of big centralised government" is over. The torch now passes to Wales, which this week will have the chance to get a more democratic grip on the way it is governed. The Yes campaign there has argued that Wales must not get left behind, becoming the only part of the UK still ruled by London diktat. After the Scottish result, that argument has even greater force.

Still, there is cause for caution. The sheer scale of the Yes majorities — with 80 per cent in some districts — has led to quiet fears that a tide of nationalistic feeling has been unleashed that mere devolution alone cannot satisfy. This leaves Labour with a challenge. They have to prove that their campaign rhetoric about strengthening the union was sincere. In short, they must make devolution work. Otherwise Scottish Nationalist Party — and Conservative — warnings of "instability," with endless London-Edinburgh rows about budgets and jurisdiction, will be vindicated and the demand for full-blown separation enhanced.

Labour has to be mindful, too, of the sensitivities of English public opinion. A Scottish parliament will clear the air for touchy questions that were buried during the decades of central control. Many English voters will raise not just the West Lothian question — why should Scots have a say over us when we cannot have a say over them — but also prickly matters of subsidies and hand-outs. Whatever the real numbers, plenty of English men and women imagine they pay Scotland's bills. They will be less willing to do that now. That might translate into a demand for more decentralisation in England: perhaps regional assemblies or an English parliament. But it could also inflame a more brutal English nationalism.

*The Guardian Weekly 21/9/97*



## VOTE OF DESTINY

Scots have given voice to their hearts

Scotland has spoken. Westminster must respond. There could be no clearer mandate: a general election that swept Conservatives from every seat in the country, followed by a referendum that allowed Scots to vote on each aspect of devolution. The nation wants its own parliament, with the power to change taxes. There is no question now of an assembly or a "tartan tax" being imposed on the people of Scotland.

This was a decision that came as much from the heart as the head. Although the White Paper was widely distributed before the poll, most voters had made up their minds long ago. They were not waiting to be swayed by the minutiae of the First Minister's powers or the merits of the electoral system to be used.

The mood was more visceral than that. This was a moment of truth, people felt, a chance to demonstrate Scotland's confidence as a nation — a moment to be seized, for the offer might never be made again. Many were impatient even at the notion of a referendum; they thought that they had made their views known already, on May 1. But, for such a momentous constitutional change, it was right for them to address the specific questions. The referendum, conceived as a defensive measure by the Labour Party in opposition, will now become a necessary cement in the building of a new settlement.

The "yes, yes" campaign had many of the brightest tunes and most of the best musicians. The alliance of Labour, Scottish Nationalists and Liberal Democrats represented the vast majority of political views north of the border and, save for the odd maverick, all its MPs. They could talk of giving Scotland a voice, of renewing faith and trust in the people, of revitalising democracy, of dates with destiny. They

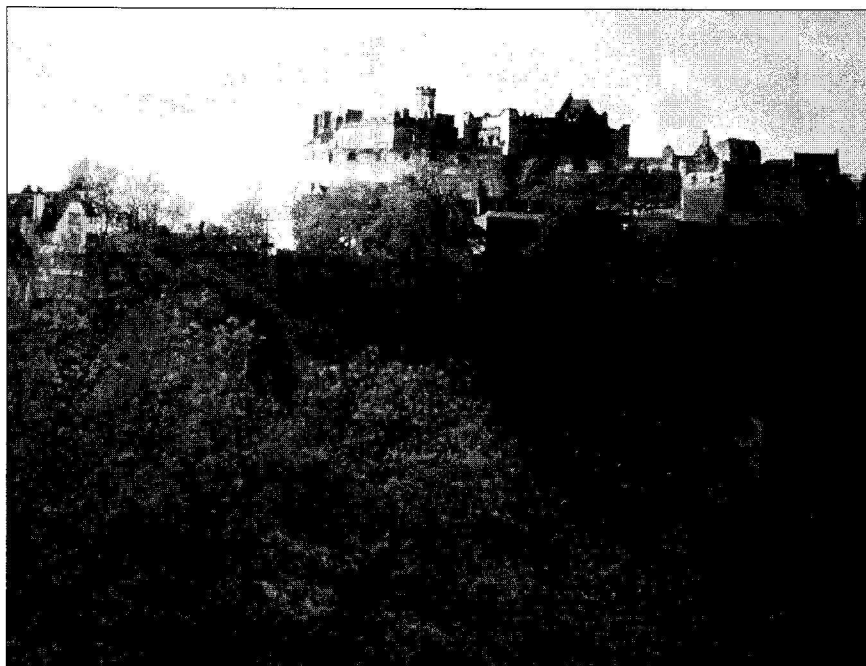
needed merely to mention "poll tax" or "Margaret Thatcher" to win support. They could co-opt *Braveheart* and Sean Connery to their cause. And they could point out that no other country with its own legal system lacks the power to make its own laws.

On tax-varying powers, the arguments were less high-flown, though just as important. "No representation without taxation" became the line: the parliament would be a "Mickey Mouse" assembly, a "talking shop" if it lacked the most important power of all. Its impotence would lead it to blame Westminster at every opportunity, fuelling resentment and giving succour to nationalists. If Scotland wanted to put into practice its more collectivist views, it had to be able to offer its voters the chance to pay more tax for better public services.

The real surprise was the lacklustre nature of the "Think Twice" campaign, which tried to persuade people to vote "no" to both questions. It was almost wholly negative in tone, concocting nightmare visions of the Union breaking up and industry fleeing to England. No positive arguments were made for the status quo, nor was any alternative form of governance offered that might be an improvement on Labour's version. And those who argued most fervently and persuasively against devolution before the election — such as Michael Forsyth and Malcolm Rifkind — were nowhere to be seen.

In the past few months, Scots have been offered two readings of their future: one optimistic, the other pessimistic. They chose to run with the former, and only events will prove them right or wrong. But for now, it is time for Westminster to enact Scotland's "settled will" in a fashion that makes those potential nightmares least likely to be translated into reality.

# THE STATE OF SCOTLAND



## A nation once again?

EDINBURGH

**The elections to the new Scottish Parliament on May 6th are the culmination of a quiet revolution**

ASK people in Edinburgh where the Royal Museum is, and you are liable to get puzzled looks. To get directions to what the banners outside the building say is the Royal Museum, it is better to ask for the National Museum of Scotland—because that is what it really is, and is how most Edinburgh citizens think of it.

For Edinburgh is a capital city, with national galleries of art, the headquarters of big banks and the Scottish legal system, a shiny new financial district, and a main street—Princes Street—providing a balcony view across a green valley park to a venerable castle. All in all, this is a city which stands comparison with most other European capitals. And it is soon to be adorned by a new and powerful symbol of nationhood—a Scottish Parliament.

It is not just the Parliament's law-making and tax-raising powers which suggest that it represents a significant step in the reinvention of a nation, but also the way in which the Parliament will fit snugly into Scottish history and culture. It will be temporarily

housed in the assembly hall of the Church of Scotland, just across the road from the hall in which the last Scottish Parliament voluntarily voted itself out of existence in 1707.

And when the Parliament eventually moves into its permanent home, it will go to a site opposite Holyrood Palace—the ancient seat of Scottish monarchs—but in an adventurously modern building designed by Enric Miralles, an architect from Barcelona. The choice of a Catalan architect symbolises the growing Scottish desire to muscle on to the European stage, as Catalonia has done as a powerful region within Spain, and maybe eventually even further into the spotlight as a European nation like, say, Ireland.

If this is indeed the rebirth of a nation, it is coming about in the most extraordinary way. Save for some odd, and hapless, individuals, there have been no underground armies or even platoons of separatist terrorists; no campaigns of civil disobedience aimed at unseating governments; not even any mass demonstrations by a fed-up populace, apart from one rather genteel, well-

behaved affair seven years ago.

This has been perhaps the first revolution (how else do you describe the re-establishment of a nation's government?) that has been conducted by pen-pushing committees of lawyers, clergymen and accountants rather than cells of bearded radicals. And, unless someone cut themselves on a paper-clip, it has been achieved without a drop of blood being spilled.

So it is not surprising that this is also a revolution which—unlike that which divided Czechoslovakia—falls short of achieving full nationhood for Scotland. Parliament at Westminster, to which Scots will continue to elect MPs, will control defence and foreign affairs, macroeconomic policy, taxation and social security. The Scottish Parliament, however, will be able to make laws over health services, education, local government, housing, criminal and civil justice, and economic development. It also has limited tax powers: the ability to raise or lower basic-rate income tax by no more than 3p, and it can levy charges, such as road tolls.

### A civic nationalism

There are reasons for this semi-independent state. Unlike Québécois or Flemish nationalism, there is no language motive to Scottish nationalism; Gaelic is spoken by only about 80,000 of the 5.1m inhabitants of Scotland. Religion plays no discernible part; while the Roman Catholic minority used to fear independence as being liable to result in a Protestant hegemony, a recent MORI poll for the *Sunday Herald* found that a higher proportion of Catholics (39%) supported independence than did Protestants (32%).

And unlike East European or Balkan nationalism, the Scottish variety has very little to do with ethnicity. While there have been sporadic outbreaks of anti-English behaviour—sad stories of English families driven out of their homes, usually in small villages rather than in big cities—the Scottish National Party (SNP), which is often accused of fomenting anti-English hatred, frowns on such behaviour and expels any member who engages in it.

Alex Salmond, the SNP leader, who last wore a kilt when he was four years old, says that his party's nationalism is entirely civic in nature. "The Scots," he says, "are a mongrel nation." There are no campaigns to oust the directors of the national galleries and museum, both Englishmen, and while the fervour of the "tartan army", the followers of the national football team, is renowned, the team itself often sports players whose English accents are more noticeable than their Scottish ancestry.

## THE STATE OF SCOTLAND

Thus in Scotland today there are none of the conditions which fomented rebellion in Ireland and led to Irish independence in 1922, the last great rupture in the political union of the British Isles. Scottish nationalists do look longingly at Ireland, particularly at its phenomenal economic growth over the last decade. But for most Scots, the Irish experience does not seem to be a particularly appealing model—perhaps because it is associated in some minds with republican terrorism.

What does motivate Scottish nationalism, and has also been the driving force behind demands for devolution of power from London over the past century, is the strong Scottish attachment to the country's civil institutions. In this respect, Scotland is very different from Wales, which was forcibly incorporated into England over 400 years before the Scots signed a voluntary Act of Union in 1707. Distinctive Welsh institutions, apart from those concerned with the Welsh language, are hard to pinpoint. By contrast, Scotland's institutional landscape was well established by the time of political union with England.

These institutions—schools and universities with their own curriculum and exam structures, a legal system with its own codes and rules, a church independent of the state, a distinctive system of local government—were left untouched by the union. But they were unable to cope with the vast social change in the 19th century generated by the industrial revolution. Westminster, preoccupied with the British Empire, was unresponsive to the demands for the separate Scottish legislation needed to allow Scottish institutions to adapt to a rapidly urbanising society.

Agitation by the fast-growing middle-classes led to the establishment in 1885 of a government department dedicated to Scottish affairs—the Scottish Office—which has steadily grown in size and ministerial clout ever since. Now, its 3,650 bureaucrats manage a budget of £14 billion (\$22.5 billion) and another 10,081 civil servants in other agencies such as the Scottish Prison Service.

This administrative devolution might well have continued working happily had it not been for significant social and political change. First, the SNP, which had campaigned quite ineffectively since it was founded in 1928, became a significant political force when it latched on to the discovery of North Sea oil in the 1960s to argue that an independent Scotland could escape from the economic decline caused by the collapse of traditional heavy industry.

Second, the Tories steadily lost support in Scotland, going down from 31% of the vote and 22 MPs in 1979 to 18% and no MPs in 1997—and yet ran Scotland throughout that period, courtesy of their majority at Westminster. Gradually, this became seen as an affront to Scottish sensibilities, so much so that by the time of the 1997 devolution refer-

endum, Scotland's political and civic leaders (apart from the defeated Tories and a few businessmen) were pretty much united in their determination to have a Scottish parliament to handle domestic affairs. Voters were happy to follow their lead.

### Hoping for Enlightenment

The creation of a Scottish parliament should dissipate Scottish discontents, at least for the foreseeable future. But it is also propelling British politics into a new and unfamiliar decentralised political system. Westminster's writ no longer runs north of the border, at least as far as things like education and health are concerned. Equally, the Scots can no longer blame a distant government in London for all their problems.

If it works then devolution, far from being the harbinger of the break-up of Britain, should bring fresh vitality to national life



### The Scottish effect

1997 figures	Scotland	Britain
Unemployment, %*	7.5	6.1
GDP per head, £	10,975	11,768
Population, m	5.1	59
Govt. spending per head, £†	4,826	4,049
Male life expectancy	72.6	74.2

\*ILO definitions, three months to Jan 1999 †Year ending Mar 1997

outside London. The new confidence in Edinburgh, which is experiencing an economic boom and basking in the media attention of the election campaign, is self-evident. The swelling number of restaurants are busy most nights even in the depths of winter, and chic fashion shops are opening in George Street, tempting citizens away from traditional navy and gaberdine garbs.

The challenges of running a country may also stimulate Scottish intellectual life. Many Scots fondly dream of a new "Scottish Enlightenment", like the one the country enjoyed in the 18th century when Scottish

thinkers like David Hume and Adam Smith were at the centre of the philosophical revolution which swept through Europe. The French philosopher Voltaire remarked, only slightly sarcastically, that if one wanted to learn anything from gardening to philosophy, one had to go to Edinburgh.

The Enlightenment was partly stimulated, some think, because political union with England ended the Scottish preoccupation with battling against its more powerful southern neighbour and opened northern eyes and minds to the possibilities, both intellectual and commercial, arising in a fast-changing world in which Britain was then playing a decisive imperial role.

Some hope that devolution, by creating a more self-reliant and confident Scotland, will provoke another intellectual flowering. Just as the Enlightenment thinkers had a strong practical bent, producing many advances in medicine for example, so too do today's Scottish scientists. The Scottish geneticists who produced Dolly, the world's first cloned sheep, are now using that biotechnology to devise new treatments for disorders such as cystic fibrosis and emphysema.

Scottish entrepreneurial spirit, which appeared to have all but died in the 1970s as many native firms succumbed to takeover or closure and as international firms closed their factories north of the border, appears to be making a comeback. Companies such as Stagecoach, built from nothing 15 years ago into a world-wide transport firm, or ScottishPower, a privatised utility now expanding into the United States, are displaying a new corporate strength and confidence. Ironically, given the vehemence of the Scottish reaction against Thatcherism, both companies grew out of Tory-inspired privatisations.

But the politicians in the Scottish Parliament will first have more mundane matters than Enlightenment to deal with. Although the Scottish economy has improved markedly—and Scotland has spent much of the past decade closing the wealth gap with the rest of Britain—the gap between rich and poor parts of the country has also increased. The economic map of Scotland, says Jeremy Peat, chief economist at the Royal Bank of Scotland, is severely lop-sided with the parts around the eastern cities of Edinburgh and Aberdeen being 60% richer than the poorest parts—west and central Scotland, the Borders and the Highlands and Islands. He says that 20 years ago the figure was only 18%.

These disparities are provoking political tensions. Glasgow, which is reeling at the prospect of losing one of its few remaining shipyards, Kvaerner Govan, and 1,800 jobs, is clamouring for departments of government to be shifted west from Edinburgh; a political party devoted only to the Highlands and Islands is contesting the elections; and politicians in the Borders are agitating for aid to deal with recent blows to the tex-

tiles and electronics industries.

There are plenty of social problems too. Graham Leicester, director of the Scottish Council Foundation, a think-tank, says that Scotland has one of the highest rates of child poverty in Europe—one in three children are growing up in households where welfare payments are the main source of income. Despite the fact that the government spends 26% more on health per head in Scotland than in England, parts of the country still have a dreadful health record. Average life expectancy in Bearsden, an affluent Glasgow suburb, is about eight years longer than in nearby Drumchapel, a district of municipal housing and high unemployment.

Tackling these matters will force Scottish politicians to admit that their traditional solution to such problems—squeezing more taxpayers' cash from the Treasury in London—is not the answer. It will also mean swallowing a bit of national pride and admitting that some prized assets, such as the widely-admired Scottish education system, are not as good as many Scots like to think. Lindsay Paterson, professor of educational policy at Edinburgh University, says that while Scotland is at the top of the European league for numbers of young people with degrees and other higher qualifications, it is towards the bottom of the league for secondary school teaching of maths and science. Facts like these have tended to be ignored as Scots have taken solace in the knowledge that at least their education system is generally better than England's. This comfort blanket should now be removed as the Scots gain control of their domestic affairs and as responsibility for failings will not be so easily passed to Westminster.



Adam Smith enlightens the Scots

## A done deal?

EDINBURGH

OPINION polls for the Scottish election on May 6th suggest that Labour will easily win the most seats—but will fall just short of an overall majority. That may lead to another innovation in British politics; a coalition between Labour and the Liberal Democrats.

At present both Donald Dewar, Labour's leader in Scotland, and Jim Wallace, the leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats, insist that they are keeping their options open. Labour could form a minority government; the Lib Dems might do a deal with the SNP.

But careful readers of a just-published biography of Peter Mandelson, one of Tony Blair's closest advisers, may conclude that a coalition deal has already been done. The book's author, Donald Macintyre, says that a five-a-side meeting in early 1996 between senior Labourites, including Messrs Mandelson, Blair and Dewar, and senior Lib Dems, led by their leader, Paddy Ashdown, discussed the

prospect of a Scottish coalition. Mr Macintyre says that among other things, the two sides agreed that they would work towards a Lib-Lab coalition if Labour did not have an overall majority, or had an unworkably small one.

When quizzed about this by *The Economist*, Mr Dewar neither confirmed nor denied that the meeting took place, but insisted that he has no deal with the Lib Dems. Mr Wallace of the Lib Dems says the same thing—but he is already making his coalition negotiating stance known. He says, for example, that he may drop his opposition to Labour's policy of charging students tuition fees.

A Lib-Lab coalition in Scotland would be a handy pilot project for Mr Blair, whose "project" is often said to revolve around the idea of fusing Labour and the Lib Dems into an unbeatable centre-left force. Having a working model in Labour's Scottish heartlands would help him sell the plan to his party.

It is often predicted that this new political world will cause problems in England. After all, Scottish MPs will continue to vote on English domestic affairs while English MPs will have no comparable say in Scottish affairs. Just as the Scots throughout the 1980s lamented being governed by English politicians they had not elected, so the English—in time—may resent the Scottish say over their affairs. But this anomaly, the so-called "West Lothian question", may cause less irritation than is assumed, for two reasons.

First, Tony Blair's government would still have a thumping majority even if there were no Scottish or even Welsh MPs at Westminster. True, the time may come when England votes for a Tory government but does not get it because of Scottish Labour MPs. But then, second, it is not true that Scottish and English affairs are now completely separate. Because of the way the Treasury's block grant to the Scottish Parliament is determined, when Westminster MPs vote on changes to the English health and education budgets, they will also be determining changes to the Scottish budget.

That gives English MPs a say in Scottish business, and Scottish MPs an acute interest in English matters. Indeed this intertwining may eventually cause a political headache if, say, the British government decides it wants to switch from the present tax-financed health service to one more dependent on revenue from private health insurance, but the Scottish Parliament stubbornly refuses to contemplate such a move.

However, such a policy change seems

unlikely, at least in the medium term. And in the meantime, both parliaments and the British taxpayer ought to benefit from greater policy experimentation and variety of experience. The introduction, for example, of a General Teaching Council to regulate the English teaching profession follows the experience of a similar long-established and Scottish body which has helped to raise standards in teacher training. More such learning and borrowing ought to be possible.

Indeed, while some feared that the newly elected parliament in Edinburgh would spend its time arguing for yet more power to be passed from Westminster, so far at least such arguments have been absent from the election campaign. Even the SNP, much attacked by opponents as separatists, have concentrated on domestic policy issues. The dawn of complete Scottish independence, far from having been brought closer, seems to be as far away as ever. The SNP remain isolated advocates of it, and until Scotland's powerful civic institutions see something better in independence than they currently get from the union with England, they are unlikely to be lured into the Nationalist fold.

Instead, what seems to be arising is a different Scotland, and a different Britain. Britain's centralised political culture will be changed, probably irreversibly. It will be replaced by a more diverse sort of politics, in which different regional and national identities will be given new encouragement and expression. They may even co-operate, rather than clash.

## **Tony Blair: Speech to the Scottish Parliament 9 March 2000**

Some believe the programme of decentralisation and devolution is wrong. I disagree profoundly. You do not judge these changes in days or months, or even a short space of years. You judge them in the broad sweep of history. There is an historical movement away from centralised government. As democracy matures, so does the desire of the electorate for decisions to be taken closer to them. So does the desire for diversity. When people point to differences in devolved policy and ask me, "isn't this a problem?", my response is that it is devolution. Not an accident. But the intention.

Other people mistakenly say it represents the end of Britain. The truth is quite the opposite. Our identity as Britain is a matter of our values and our interests. It is not about fossilizing institutions and refusing to change them.

Indeed it would be failure to modernise that would lead to the end of Britain. That is why this Government is bringing our constitution up to date. To make sure that it does give effect to our continuing values in fast changing circumstances.

Britain's values and interests are enduring. They have grown up from our history and our shared experience. They reflect the shared experience of countries coming together in common interest to form a diverse but strong union. These values are deep rooted and powerful. They bind together Scotland and the rest of Britain. They are expressed in the partnership which we are forging today between the Scottish Parliament and the United Kingdom Parliament.

[...]

That is why I stand before you today, deeply conscious of the historical significance of this occasion. Our country is changing. The institutions of the 19th Century will not serve us in the 21st.

Ours is a union that is evolving. We see it in our relations with Europe. We see it in the creation of a Welsh Assembly. We see it in the popular will yearning for devolved government in Northern Ireland. We see it in the strengthening of local identity in the regions of England. And perhaps most of all, we see and feel it here in this Scottish Parliament.

When they locked the doors of the old Scottish Parliament nearly three hundred years ago, they said it was "the end of an auld sang". I am here to celebrate with you the beginning of a new one, and of a new era of partnership within the United Kingdom.