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Regional Resistance to European Integration: The Case of the Scottish National Party, 1961-1972

Andrew D. Devenney [*]

Abstract: *»Regionaler Widerstand gegen die Europäische Integration: Der Fall der 'Scottish National Party', 1961-1972«*. This article examines the evolution of Scottish National Party (SNP) attitudes, policy, and rhetoric toward European integration between 1961 and 1972. Initially lukewarm, even positive, toward the proposed British membership in the European Economic Community (EEC), the party became increasingly hostile to EEC membership and adopted an aggressive anti-EEC position. By the early 1970s, the SNP was the leading anti-EEC political actor in Scotland, and it was the SNP's efforts that helped turn an ignored British foreign policy issue into a Scottish domestic political issue that had wider implications for Scotland's relationship with the United Kingdom and Europe, as well as for the ongoing Europeanization of Scottish politics and society.

Keywords: Scotland, Scottish National Party, SNP, Scottish Politics, European Integration, Nationalism, European Economic Community, EEC.

Introduction

European integration, which has grown more prominent in the affairs of Europe since 1945, has long been a contentious issue for the political elites and the general public in the British Isles.[1] Partly the result of simple geography and partly due to the existence of a complex mixture of intertwined Anglo-Celtic identities that largely denied the inherent "Europeaness" of the region, responses in the British Isles over the years to various permutations of the so-called "European project" have ranged from reluctant acceptance to rabid resistance and everything in-between. During the early years of the process – when

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[1] The best recent works include Piers Ludlow, *Dealing with Britain: The Six and the First UK Membership Application* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); John W. Young, *Britain and European Unity, 1945-1999* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000); Alex May, ed., *Britain, the Commonwealth, and Europe: the Commonwealth and Britain's Applications to Join the European Communities* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001); Alan Milward, *The Rise and Fall of a National Strategy 1945-1963: The UK and the European Community*, Vol. 1 (London: Frank Cass, 2002); Oliver J. Daddow, ed., *Harold Wilson and European Integration: Britain's Second Application to Join the EEC* (London: Routledge, 2003); and Gary Murphy, *Economic Realignment and the Politics of EEC Entry: Ireland, 1948-1973* (Dublin: Maunsel and Company, 2003).

the Six (France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands) came together to form the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1951 and then signed the Treaty of Rome in 1957, creating the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EUROATOM) – debate mostly took place at the national elite level among government bureaucrats, foreign ministry officials, and a select few national parliamentarians in the United Kingdom (UK) and the Republic of Ireland. There were two reasons for this. First, elites in the UK and Ireland generally considered the question of whether to join Europe a foreign policy matter of interest only to them. Second, the general public, following the elite lead, exhibited little interest in the issue. That the UK and Ireland were not heavily involved in the negotiations over the Schuman Plan, the European Defense Community (EDC) in 1954, or the Treaty of Rome certainly contributed to this general disinterest. The general consensus was that it simply did not appear relevant to most peoples' lives in the British Isles.

However, in the 1960s/early 1970s, both elite attitudes and public interest began to change throughout the UK and Ireland. As various British and Irish governments considered and advanced applications to join the EEC (first in 1961, then again in 1967 and 1970), public interest and attention increased. With that growing engagement came public questioning, which went beyond the intricate, technical debates over tariff regimes, power-sharing, and subsidies that dominated official discussions and negotiations. Instead, increasingly vocal factions in both nation-states called into question the whole scope and underlying nature of the "European project" itself. Although they never used the term, these early opponents critiqued EEC membership because of what they perceived as the impact Europeanization would have on British and Irish society and culture in the future.[2] Often, they developed their critiques out of socio-economic points of view (e.g. Marxism) or culturally nationalist perspectives (and frequently a mixture of both), while still framing the wider issue in a national context. And most scholars view their efforts as reactive; that is to say, anti-EEC opponents did not drive the debates in the 1960s/early 1970s so much as respond to them.[3] Despite their vocal activism and more often because of their lack of monetary resources, these early skeptics of European integration failed to turn the public to their point of view, and both the UK and Ireland joined the EEC in 1973.

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[2] For more on the theories of Europeanization, see Ian Bache and Andrew Jordan, eds., *The Europeanization of British Politics* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 17-33; Kevin Featherstone and Claudio M. Radaelli, eds., *The Politics of Europeanization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 3-80; and Simon Bulmer, "Theorizing Europeanization," in Paulo Graziano and Maarten P. Vink, eds., *Europeanization: New Research Agendas* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 46-58.

[3] For instance, regarding the Irish debate, see Dermot Keogh, *Ireland and Europe 1919-1989* (Cork & Dublin: Hibernian University Press, 1989).

Nevertheless, despite its clarity and directness, there are some important omissions from what one might label the standard narrative account of European integration in the British Isles prior to British and Irish membership in 1973. First, while it is correct to note that national elites experienced and drove the EEC debates in both the UK and Ireland, this does not mean that regional (i.e. sub-national) political actors failed to participate or interject their own concerns. In fact, a closer look at the historical record demonstrates that between 1961 and 1972, the EEC issue increased in importance for regional elites, and how they debated the question took on several region specific frames. This is not particularly surprising. After all, the UK is not a unitary state, but is made up of several distinct regions (England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland), each with their own varied political dynamics and cultures. And Ireland, as well, has internal regional differences, particularly between Dublin and the more Gaelic areas to the west and south. This factor has important implications for how national elite political issues are received outside the confines of Westminster and Leister House. Second, the standard narrative account also diminishes the manner in which regional elites exerted influence over the contours of the EEC debate at both the regional and national levels. In fact, in looking at critics of European integration in Scotland and Wales, it becomes apparent that they had a far greater impact on how British national elites attempted to overcome their resistance. That is to say, regional resistance forced national elites to react and address regional concerns in the battle for public opinion, not the other way around.

Therefore, this article will investigate this dynamic more clearly through a case study examination of the most prominent anti-EEC political actor in Scotland in the 1960s/early 1970s: the Scottish National Party (SNP). It will explore the evolution of the SNP's attitudes, policies, and rhetoric towards the UK's potential membership in the EEC prior to 1973, arguing that it was the SNP's increasingly negative campaigning that helped turn what was initially an unimportant British foreign policy issue in Scotland into a domestic political question that had wider implications for Scottish and British politics. In conclusion, it will also discuss the ramifications for Scotland of the SNP's negative campaigning against European integration, looking specifically at the short-term electoral impact for the SNP and in the longer term the Scottish public's internalization of these negative attitudes toward European integration and Europe in general.

Scotland and European Integration in the early 1960s

To begin, what specifically was the response in the early 1960s in Scotland among political elites and the general public toward the issue of British membership in the EEC? Generally speaking, one can characterize the mood as a mixture of elite disinterest, public indifference, and isolated pockets of support

and advocacy. This resulted in public debate in Scotland on the EEC issue that rarely included Scottish perspectives or articulated Scottish interests (as distinct from British national interests). In terms of elite disinterest, one can see this manifested most clearly in the way Scottish Members of Parliament (MPs) approached the EEC issue. For much of the early 1960s, most Scottish MPs were rather uninterested in the EEC issue and made little to no effort to participate in the wider debate over British membership. This reflected a rather parochial outlook prevalent among many of them that foreign policy questions had little importance for Scotland. Among Labour members in particular the interest in foreign affairs debates was minimal, with only some left-wing MPs like Emrys Hughes and Jon Rankin and more establishment MPs like Arthur Woodburn participating in a more than cursory manner.[4] Because the Conservatives were in power during this period, more Scottish Conservative MPs, such as Lady Tweedsmuir Priscilla Buchan and Walter Scott the Earl of Dalkeith, exhibited greater interest in British and foreign affairs issues, though this was not necessarily replicated throughout the party.

One useful, but not wholly reliable metric for developing a sense of this apathy or lack thereof as it related to the EEC issue was the amount of cross-voting or abstentions on the two main Government EEC motions during the 1959-1964 Parliament. The first motion, which the House debated in August 1961, had only a few Scottish members vote against the party stance. MPs William Baxter and Emrys Hughes, both Independent Labour members and rather left-wing, opposed the Government motion, while only one Conservative, Sir James Duncan, failed to vote on the main motion (it is unclear what this meant since Duncan was present and voted against the Opposition amendment moments earlier).[5] The second division in November 1962 had no cross-voting or abstentions of note. Thus few Scottish MPs felt strongly enough about the issue to go against the party position in the Commons, and those that did, primarily on the Labour side, approached their dissention from an ideological and not a regional perspective.

Scottish MPs who did actively participate in Commons debates and questions on the EEC primarily argued from within the British national context. This is understandable, considering that the pull of British identity and nationalism would be strongest at the very heart of the British political system. For MPs like Labour members Arthur Woodburn, Jon Rankin, Emrys Hughes, and the Conservative MP Michael Clark Hutchison, foreign policy questions such as the EEC were national issues debated in a national forum where regional

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[4] James G. Kellas, *The Scottish Political System*, 3rd Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 83.

[5] For the source of these votes, see Philip Norton, ed., Dissension in the House of Commons: Intra-Party Dissent in the House of Commons' Division Lobbies 1945-1974 (London: Macmillan, 1975), 188-190.

interests played little to no part. For example, Jo Grimond, the Liberal Party leader at the time, often spoke in the Commons about the EEC, either to question ministers or participate in debates, but he rarely integrated Scotland specifically into his discussions, even going so far as to brush off Scottish-themed interventions from other Scottish members.[6] This is not to suggest that Jo Grimond did not consider the plight of Scotland important. Instead, it suggests that while in the Commons the British context appeared more prominent in his statements, particularly when it came to foreign policy issues like the EEC. In reading through Grimond's memoirs, one can see this dynamic played out even further on a wider scale. Here Grimond judiciously covers the experiences of Scotland during his lifetime, and specifically his Orkney and Shetland constituency. This reflects the sentiments of a man with deep respect and affection for his home and culture. And yet, when one turns to his treatment of the EEC issue, an issue that he and his Liberal colleagues were strongly supportive of from the beginning, it is striking how brief and exclusively British focused his treatment is.[7] Grimond was by no means alone in this. Many Scottish MPs of all parties displayed British-specific tendencies in how they approached issues at Westminster.

MPs in Westminster were not the only Scottish elites affected by conflict between their British and Scottish roles in the EEC debate; the political parties in Scotland also displayed this tension in their activities and rhetoric. On the surface, the party organizations in Scotland had rather clear-cut positions on the EEC issue – with the Scottish Conservatives and Liberals supporting and Labour wavering then rejecting support – but this did not mean that there were not also bodies of opinion within them that held an opposing view. However, the conflicting pull of British versus Scottish interests kept any one party from aggregating towards an overt nationalist EEC position. British political culture of the time subordinated regional interests to the national debate, especially regarding what was widely considered a national foreign policy issue. This was partly the result of Scottish party organization. The three national political parties had differing relationships with their Scottish party committees. On the one hand, the main Labour organ in Scotland, the Scottish Council of the Labour Party (SCLP), was not an independent party structure but rather an affiliated council that focused its activities primarily on Scottish affairs. Although it had its own annual conference, the SCLP was financially dependent on the Labour National Executive Committee (NEC) and therefore subject to its pres-

[6] During one debate in June 1962 over the Government's policy, Grimond brushed off questions about the dangers to the Scottish wood pulp industry in the Common Market from another Scottish member, Labour MP William Baxter, with a pithy comment, "I could not say in detail", before returning to his more general argument about EEC tariffs. *Parliamentary Debates*, Commons, Fifth Series, no. 661 (1962), 560.

[7] For his limited treatment of the EEC issue, see Jo Grimond, *Memoirs* (London: Heinemann, 1979), 205-212.

sures and dictates.[8] On the other hand, the Scottish Liberal Party had traditionally maintained its independence and status as a separate party since 1946, asserting its rights to run its own affairs, formulate its own policies, and organize its own conferences. Despite the levels of relative or actual autonomy, Scottish party committees found it difficult to reconcile a one-size-fits-all message from the national party with local Scottish concerns. Factions in both the Scottish Labour and Conservative parties at times expressed private frustration at their national executives' inattention to regional concerns. Sometimes, this boiled over into public criticism, such as when the West Renfrewshire Constituency Labour Party called for "more self-determination within the Scottish Council of the Labour Party" and demanded that the SCLP "should bring pressure to bear on the National Executive [of] the need to regard Scotland as a country, rather than as a region."[9] However, very little of this regional frustration interjected itself into the national EEC debate; by and large Scottish issues were unimportant to the wider question.

As the 1960s moved on, Scottish political elites began exhibiting a greater willingness to interject Scottish issues into the national EEC debate. This manifested itself in a variety of ways among both Scottish MPs at Westminster and the party committees in Scotland. For instance, during the May 1967 Commons debate over the Wilson Government's second application to join the EEC, Scottish questions caused a bit of stir on the second day of a three-day debate when several Scottish Labour MPs complained that the chair was systematically ignoring Scottish speakers in the debate.[10] On the following day, two Scottish MPs, the Conservative Michael Clark Hutchison and from Labour Jon Rankin, "caught the Speaker's eye" and gave speeches. In them, they both focused on various concerns for Scottish industry and the danger that regional inequities of economic investment between England and Scotland would be intensified by EEC membership.[11] In and of themselves, these limited interjects were hardly notable, but looking at the wider political context in Scotland, this slow shift in emphasis towards Scottish concerns in the EEC debate does not appear to have been arrived at on its own. Instead, Scottish political elites began shifting their approach to the EEC (or in some cases talking about it at all) because they were reacting to a changing political climate in Scotland. Issues of sovereignty and nationalism, supremely important yet minimally discussed up to that point in the context of the EEC debate, began to figure more prominently in Scottish political discourse. And it was the electoral emergence of the

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[8] For more information, see Frances Wood, "Scottish Labour in Government and Opposition, 1964-1979," in Ian Donnachie, Christopher Harvie, and Ian S. Wood, eds., *Forward! Labour Politics in Scotland, 1888-1988* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1989), 102-103.

[9] Labour Party (Scottish Council), Report of the Executive Committee to the 46th Annual Conference (Glasgow: SCLP, 1961), 39.

[10] Parliamentary Debates, no. 746, 1386.

[11] Ibid., 1565-1567.

SNP that heralded in this shift, one that profoundly changed politics in Scotland, and, more specifically, the contours of the EEC debate.

The Scottish National Party and European Integration in the early 1960s

The 1960s was a significant decade of change for the nationalist movement in Scotland. It was a time whereby the SNP transformed itself from, in the words of Christopher Harvie, "a resilient little sect" into an organized political party built to contest and win parliamentary elections.[12] Founded in 1934 by the merger of the National Party of Scotland, which advocated for full independence, and the Scottish Party, which argued for Home Rule, the SNP spent the next twenty-five years riven by internal disagreements, factional in-fighting, and negligible electoral impact, aside from isolated successes like victory in the 1945 Motherwall and Wishaw by-election.[13] The party's minor status in Scottish politics during this prolonged period in the wilderness helped fuel breakaway factions like the Scottish Convention (later the Scottish Covenant Association) in 1942 and also led to divisive expulsions of party members like the radical "55 Group" in 1955.[14] By the mid-1950s, the party's strength was at such low ebb that it only contested two Scottish seats during the 1955 General Election and five seats during the 1959 contest. The SNP's then leader Arthur Donaldson later quipped that if "all the activists of the SNP could have been the complement of a small passenger aircraft, and had they flown together and crashed without survivors, the cause of independence would have been lost to view for many years."[15]

By 1960, the party's fortunes began to look up, due primarily to several external and internal factors. For instance, the collapse of the rival Scottish Covenant Association upon the death in 1961 of the longtime Scottish nationalist leader John MacCormick left the SNP solely in control of the nationalist movement for the first time in twenty years.[16] Additionally, the unstable Scottish economy of the late 1950s and early 1960s created "a sympathetic envi-

[12] Christopher Harvie, Scotland and Nationalism: Scottish Society and Politics 1707 to the Present, 4th Edition (London: Routledge, 2004), 162.

[13] For more information on the SNP's early years and its precursor organizations, see Peter Lynch, *SNP: The History of the Scottish National Party* (Cardiff: Welsh Academic Press, 2002), 25-92. See also Jack Brand, *The National Movement in Scotland* (London: Routledge and Kegen Paul, 1978), 196-257.

[14] The 55 Group was a dissident group of young SNP members primarily from Edinburgh that challenged the existing party leadership for control and produced propaganda of a rabidly anti-English nature, such as their infamous *The English: Are They Human?* leaflet. For more information, see Lynch, *SNP*, 84-85.

[15] Andrew Marr, *The Battle for Scotland* (London: Penguin Books, 1992), 116.

[16] Brand, *National Movement*, 257-258.

ronment for the SNP."[17] This was aggravated by the fact that the Conservative Macmillan Government's muted response to Scotland's economic difficulties increased public sympathies for more direct Scottish control over its own affairs. Internally, a new collection of activists, led by the farmer and former RAF pilot Ian Macdonald and the businessman and scout leader William Wolfe, joined the party from 1958-1961 that brought new levels of professionalism, organization, finance, and policy analysis to the party structure. After his third-place showing, gaining eighteen percent of the vote in the Glasgow Bridgeton by-election in November 1961, Macdonald sold his farm and joined the party as a full-time national organizer, the party's first since the early 1950s.[18] Macdonald's efforts were systematic and thorough, and involved regular travel across Scotland to establish party branches; before 1962 the SNP had less than twenty branches, but by 1965 there were 140.[19] The party also stabilized its finances through the use of Alba Pools, a fundraising football pool that was rather popular both inside and out of the party.[20] With the party's second place showing behind Wolfe as their candidate in the West Lothian by-election in June 1962, outpolling the Conservatives by nearly five thousand votes, the SNP took tangible steps towards major party status in Scotland.

As it matured as a party, the SNP refined and adapted its attitudes and policy positions toward the EEC issue during the 1960s. This process led to the party moving away from a generally positive outlook toward European integration towards complete opposition by the late 1960s. As such, the public soon identified the SNP as the main anti-EEC opposition in Scotland. This turnaround in the party's position did not happen purely for internal reasons. After the Six formed the EEC in 1957, the perception grew throughout the UK that the EEC was an elitist, centralizing organization with undemocratic tendencies; for many in the SNP, these descriptions mirrored their arguments for Scottish independence, a connection the SNP leadership sought to exploit.[21] The fact that the UK had sought EEC membership without any apparent interest in accommodating or dealing with Scottish concerns in the negotiations contributed to the SNP's attitude shift.[22] There was also a burgeoning belief that Scottish entry on terms negotiated primarily for British interests would further damage the already weakened Scottish economy. This viewpoint was prevalent

[17] Lynch, *SNP*, 95.
[18] Harvie, Scotland and Nationalism, 166.
[19] Tom Devine, *The Scottish Nation: A History 1700-2000* (New York: Viking, 1999), 572.
[20] Marr, Battle for Scotland, 118.
[21] Peter Lynch, *Minority Nationalism and European Integration* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1996), 30.
[22] Ibid.

throughout both the party and the Scottish public and influenced the SNP's changing positions on the EEC.[23]

Nevertheless, EEC policy was not an important part of the party's campaign rhetoric in the early 1960s. This reflected both the relative strength of the nationalist cause at the time and the general Scottish disinterest in the EEC issue. When the party did comment on the EEC issue, it criticized Scotland's lack of direct representation in the negotiating process, not the notion of Scottish membership itself. At the 1962 Annual conference in Perth, the SNP passed a resolution that criticized the Government's EEC policy on typical nationalist grounds, stating that it was not competent to take Scotland into the EEC without Scottish representation.[24] The resolution also demanded "proper Scottish representation on all matters involving Scotland in the Common Market."[25] The party was not at this point anti-EEC per se, but rather targeted the critical issue (as far as they were concerned) of Scottish representation in the process. It was, in essence, an effort to connect or link Scottish independence with membership in the EEC, and served more as a rhetorical cudgel against the British. EEC membership or lack thereof was not necessarily the point. One can see this positive but muted attitude toward EEC membership in a party pamphlet published in 1963 that touched on the issue of fair trade for Scotland: "Free Trade is a mirage but freer and fairer trade will be favoured. This is fully possible only between countries having comparable standards of living. The European Common Market is a most attractive example but it would be most unwise to go in without our own Government to negotiate terms of entry and protect our interests after entry."[26]

The failure of the first British application contributed to this lack of vigor in the party's EEC policy. It was difficult for the SNP, and all other political parties, to expend time, energy, and money on an issue that was not moving forward because there was no firm date for British membership.[27] Little policy innovation took place from 1963-1965, with a resolution during the 1965 annual conference merely restating in slightly more trenchant terms the resolution of 1962.[28] By 1966, the SNP was still framing its arguments around a positive appreciation of eventual Scottish membership as an independent state. At the

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[23] One can see this exhibited in a variety of media, but letters to the editor of the major Scottish dailies, some clearly orchestrated by party activists, focused on this point considerably, especially during the debate over the first application period (1961-1963). See for instance letters in the *Scotsman*, 31 July 1961, 3 August 1961, 9 August 1961, 9 October 1961, and 25 October 1961 for representative examples.

[24] SNP 1962 Annual Conference Agenda, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Robert McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/78.

[25] Ibid.

[26] SNP pamphlet, *Scottish Nationalism*, 1963, NLS, Scottish Conservative and Unionist Association Archives (SCUA), Acc. 11368/80.

[27] Lynch, Minority Nationalism, 31.

[28] SNP 1965 Annual Conference Agenda, NLS, McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/79.

1966 annual conference, the party established a number of conditions for the UK in any future EEC negotiations, which included recognizing Scotland as a separate country and making Scotland's entry into the EEC conditional upon having a "separate voting status."[29] A four month recruitment drive organized by the National Secretary Gordon Wilson during late 1966 argued for the benefits to the British Isles if England, Scotland, and Wales all had individual memberships and voting rights in the EEC.[30]

1967: Turning Points

The year 1967 was a watershed for the SNP, as it finally made an impact on the Scottish and British political scenes. Building off its previous party reorganization, the SNP grew stronger at the ballot box. This growth took place in an advantageous political environment. The Labour Government's ineptitude and bad luck meant its promises to recast the economy by welding technological progress to national planning in the "white heat of the technological revolution" largely failed.[31] In March, the SNP polled twenty-eight percent in the Glasgow Pollock by-election, giving the Labour seat to the Conservatives behind the historian and television personality Esmond Wright; in May, the party's local elections performance rose from 4.4 percent to a little over eighteen percent.[32] But the biggest shock came later. In November, the party's young, articulate, and charismatic candidate for the Hamilton by-election, Winifred "Winnie" Ewing, overturned a 16,000 Labour majority in one of Labour's safest seats to become the party's first MP since 1945. According to Tom Devine, "The victory truly put the SNP on the British political map and attracted huge press and television interest. The success also sent shockwaves through the other political parties."[33] Accompanied by enthusiastic nationalist supporters, Ewing was driven to Westminster in a scarlet Hillman Imp from the Scottish Linwood assembly plant.[34] The SNP was now a credible force in Scottish politics. The momentum continued into 1968, where the party had its local election vote climb to thirty percent.[35]

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[29] SNP 1963 Annual Conference Agenda, NLS, McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/80.

[30] SNP Memorandum, Gordon Wilson to Provost James Braid, 26 July 1966, NLS, McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/91.

[31] The phrase comes from then Labour leader Harold Wilson's speech to the 1963 Labour Party Annual Conference, which is quoted in Labour Party, *Annual Conference Report, 1963* (London: The Labour Party, 1963), 139-140.

[32] Christopher Harvie, *No Gods and Precious Few Heroes: Twentieth-Century Scotland* (Edinburgh, University of Edinburgh Press, 1998 edition), 148.

[33] Devine, *Scottish Nation*, 574.

[34] Marr, Battle for Scotland, 119.

[35] Harvie, Precious Few Heroes, 148.

The year of Ewing's stunning victory at Hamilton also marked the beginnings of a shift in the SNP's attitudes and policy positions toward Europe. In part, it was the Labour Government's turnaround toward support for British membership in the EEC, and the months of hinting and pre-negotiations which preceded it, that stimulated the SNP's increased activity. The immediacy of the issue led to further activity on the part of the SNP. In January 1967, the Economics and Information sub-committee of the NEC had discussions regarding the party's attitude toward Europe and how best to educate party members on the issue.[36] As part of this effort, the committee considered drafting a memorandum on "Scotland's case in relation to the EEC," an effort subsequently supported by the full NEC.[37] The memo's purpose was to make a succinct and forceful case that an independent Scotland was imminent and that such an independent Scotland wanted friendly but non-committal relations with various European supranational organizations, such as the EEC, the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), and the Council of Europe.[38] In keeping with this, the memo served notice that an independent Scotland would not automatically honor treaty arrangements made by the British Government. This was not simply a statement for domestic Scottish consumption or for the Government in London. The intent, as William Wolfe later argued, was to demonstrate to the leaders of nearly twenty-seven European states the depths of nationalist feeling in Scotland.[39] It was also an effort to showcase Scotland's resistance to the UK "dragging" her into Europe against her will, a line of argument in keeping with previous policy. The statement that Scotland would not honor British treaty obligations had also been a previous policy position adopted at conference in 1963, only no one had paid much attention at the time.[40] From March to April, the NEC sub-committee crafted the memo (eventually entitled "Scotland and Europe"), had it translated into French, and prepared for its distribution, a rapid effort for which the full NEC congratulated the sub-committee.[41]

Released in June, the memo's impact was rather negligible. In his autobiographical account of the SNP's rise, William Wolfe used rather restrained language in describing the memo's importance. He wrote, "We are not likely to know the effect of that Memorandum until there are Scottish Embassies in Europe, but I believe that our action … at least let the English Government know, from unexpected quarters, that the Scottish National Party existed and

[36] SNP Economics and Information Committee Minutes, 15 January 1967, NLS, McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/93.
[37] SNP NEC Minutes, 10 February 1967, NLS, McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/93.
[38] SNP Economics and Information Committee Minutes, 19 February 1967, NLS, McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/93.
[39] William Wolfe, *Scotland Lives* (Edinburgh: Reprographia, 1973), 98.
[40] SNP 1963 Annual Conference Agenda, NLS, McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/78.
[41] SNP NEC Minutes, 14 April 1967, NLS, McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/93.

was active."[42] One modern commentator has even described it as a "gloriously pompous note" that contained echoes of a British film farce starring Peter Sellers, *The Mouse That Roared* (1959), which dealt with a poor, backward nation declaring war on the United States hoping to lose and gain foreign aid.[43]

SNP thinking on Europe altered further after Harold Wilson's announcement in early May regarding a renewed application for EEC membership. In a memo to the NEC entitled "Foreign Affairs: EEC," Gordon Wilson offered some pointed analysis regarding the party's assumptions about Europe. In all its subtle forms, the SNP's policy toward the EEC always returned to the issue of sovereignty, specifically the need for an independent Scottish Government. Gordon Wilson's memo, however, sharpened this goal further by connecting Scottish independence with an anti-EEC position. In it, Wilson acknowledged the limited tenor and mild character of the SNP's previous policy, noting that, "In the recent past the S.N.P. has not expressed any strong views on whether it would be advisable for Scotland to enter the Common Market as an independent state."[44]

Gordon Wilson argued that this strategy of criticizing the process but not the overall aims was wrong. Instead, the SNP should oppose the EEC itself, and not simply the process of accession. Wilson cited the economic effects of EEC membership on the Scottish economy, particularly the light and heavy engineering sectors, as one of the determining factors for this new attitude. However, he also very unequivocally stated his primary concern before that, namely the threat to Scottish identity. Wilson wrote, "I am convinced that if Scotland does go into the EEC on UK terms it will spell the beginning of the destruction of our national identity."[45] Wilson then argued for a hardnosed, aggressive campaign against the EEC that emphasized the EEC's impact upon Scottish independence. The "cardinal points" as Wilson described them were extensive and included arguments that entry was illegal under the terms of the 1707 Act of Union; that entry would lead to further loss of Scottish control to London and Brussels, higher food prices, and a flood of cheap immigrant labor; and that entry would destroy Scotland's national identity. What is interesting about his "cardinal points" is what he did not include, namely any kind of cultural nationalist goal, such as Gaelic language revival. This reflected the economic nationalism that underpinned the SNP's rise. Ultimately, Wilson believed this campaign "would be reasonably attractive in Scotland and practicable in European terms," but that the party had to deliver it with a "hard intransigent" atti-

[42] Wolfe, *Scotland Lives*, 98.
[43] Marr, Battle for Scotland, 132-133.
[44] SNP Memorandum, *Foreign Affairs: EEC*, 10 May 1967, NLS, McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/92.
[45] Ibid.

tude.[46] As he stated, "What we say and do is being studied and analysed, particularly after recent favourable election results. Any sign of weakness or hesitation will be noted. Our vigour and our intransigence will be embarrassing to the UK Government and will strengthen Scotland's position."[47] Wilson's specific campaign suggestions included an emergency declaration for the annual conference and a timeline outlining a series of propaganda steps throughout the summer and fall of 1967, including press releases, leaflet distribution, branch resolutions, a television broadcast showcasing the effects of the EEC on Scotland, and delegations to various European capitals.

The NEC ultimately never fully carried out Wilson's proposed campaign against the EEC; instead, they proposed a less aggressive campaign. One of Wilson's suggestions had been for a resolution during the annual conference in June to mark his proposed shift in position. The NEC subsequently submitted it, and the conference duly accepted it as party policy. The resolution reiterated the party demands that Scotland needed an independent Scottish Government to safeguard Scottish interests during any EEC negotiations; explicitly referenced the 1707 Act of Union, arguing that the UK could make "no material change" to the terms without Scottish consent, which presumably the Treaty of Rome would do; and also again threatened to "repudiate any [international] Agreement under which Scotland has no separate national representation."[48] However, what was interesting about the resolution was that it was not the one Wilson had suggested. Wilson's version included a more forceful negative analysis of the EEC, stating "[this conference] declares further that entry into the European Economic Community at the present time may prove disastrous to our heavy and light engineering industries, to out agricultural industry and to our successful exporting pattern."[49] It also included language intensifying the party's threat to abrogate treaties by specifically linking this threat to the Treaty of Rome.[50] The NEC removed both of these statements, demonstrating that there was still resistance to a full-fledged anti-EEC party line. Partly this was a hesitancy borne out of a lack of information. Party funds during the 1960s, while somewhat stabilized by Alba Pools and branch subscriptions, were always in short supply, and it was only in August 1968 that the party employed a full-time Research Officer.[51] Party volunteers and the overburdened NEC had traditionally carried out this function, often with great difficulty in lack of manpower and resources. As the party achieved more success in 1967 and the Scottish establishment paid more attention to them, the SNP needed a more

[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid.
[48] SNP 1967 Annual Conference Agenda, NLS, McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/81.
[49] SNP, *Foreign Affairs: EEC*, 10 May 1967.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Wolfe, *Scotland Lives*, 109-110.

rigorous vetting of party policy. This was especially necessary in light of a Scottish opinion survey the party commissioned that showed many Scottish people had negative opinions of the SNP leadership, viewing them as "unbalanced types" who were vague on policy matters.[52] Therefore, the NEC, in considering Wilson's memo, cautiously acknowledged that it needed more information before any campaign could take place and invited the executive vice-chairmen, under the direction of William Wolfe, to meet and consider Wilson's suggestions further.[53] In August, Wolfe's sub-committee reported back to the NEC on the proposed anti-EEC campaign for the autumn. The NEC accepted the report, which described a campaign in which "the constitutional position of Scotland would be kept in view" and "would be positive and not negative."[54]

Hardening the Line, 1968-1970

Despite this muted resistance, Gordon Wilson's anti-EEC position eventually became party orthodoxy between 1968 and 1970. Wolfe's campaign in the fall of 1967 included an increased proliferation of anti-EEC rhetoric, despite the NEC's desire otherwise. Partly this came from an implied understanding of the SNP position. The party's emergency conference resolution passed in June was not positive toward membership in the EEC, even with the NEC removing the more hostile language. It appeared to some critics that, by spending so much time erecting barriers and declaring warnings about Scotland's international relations, the SNP was merely covering up a greater philosophical hostility to the European project in general.

The Hamilton by-election campaign also helped increase this perception. From the first announcement of her candidacy, Winnie Ewing's campaign emphasized the EEC issue repeatedly, focusing on the need to keep Scotland out without consultation.[55] In her Wallace Day speech at the site of William Wallace's execution in London in 1305, Ewing drew an explicit connection between Wallace's struggle for freedom and Scotland's present-day fight to keep the UK from dragging it into the EEC, the implication being that Scotland would not join even if given the choice.[56] After Hamilton, according to William Wolfe, the SNP received more press coverage and analysis than ever before.[57] Its position on the EEC was no exception to this increased attention. One repre-

[52] SNP, Scottish Opinion Survey: Interim Report to the National Executive, 1 May 1967, NLS, McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/93.
[53] SNP NEC Minutes, 12 May 1967, NLS, McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/92.
[54] SNP NEC Minutes, 18 August 1967, NLS, McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/93.
[55] *Scotsman*, 2 August 1967.
[56] *Scotsman*, 21 August 1967. What is interesting about this is that Winnie Ewing was ostensibly in favor of Scottish membership in the EEC, but the party positions she reiterated did not necessarily bear this out.
[57] Wolfe, *Scotland Lives*, 108.

sentative example appeared in December 1967 in a regional newspaper, the *Falkirk Herald*, where an anti-SNP editorial criticized the party's position in somewhat rich and excited language. After claiming that the main case against the SNP was economic and comparing the highly developed industrial economy of Scotland with the more agrarian one of Ireland, it then noted that the implications of the SNP's anti-EEC position would be "customs barriers at Gretna and Berwick. Would the next step be compulsory Gaelic in Scottish schools?"[58] The editorial then argued that the "present narrow nationalism" typified by the SNP was part of a "pattern of frustration caused by the declining importance of James Watt's invention and the fact that we can no longer go out and govern India. Even the barren rocks of Aden are now outside our command."[59] The more prominent newspapers in Scotland also discussed the party's EEC position in terms similar to this, depending upon the political leanings of the editorialists in question. This was the impression the SNP's position was giving and made it very difficult for the party to change course, even if it so desired (which it did not).

What further cemented the party's anti-EEC position was the opportunity to campaign in new battlegrounds. With Winnie Ewing a MP in Westminster, the SNP had a new stage upon which to challenge the British Government and bring attention to its goal of Scottish independence. In the face of hostility and ill-treatment from all sides of the political spectrum, Ewing was prolific in submitting written and oral questions to ministers and participating in Commons debates.[60] One area she particularly focused on was the EEC. She repeatedly questioned Labour Government ministers, including the Prime Minister himself and the Secretary of State for Scotland Willie Ross, about whether the Government intended to produce a White Paper examining the impact of EEC membership on Scotland (the answer was always no) or whether there were any Scottish representatives involved in EEC negotiations (the answer was also always no).[61] Ewing was not alone in this effort to pin down the Government over a White Paper; MPs on both sides of the issue from across the party spectrum also felt strongly about this, but Ewing was particularly unrelenting.[62]

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[58] *Falkirk Herald*, 9 December 1967.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Ewing discusses this in depth in her autobiography: Winnie Ewing, *Stop the World: The Autobiography of Winnie Ewing*, Michael Russell, ed. (Edinburgh: Birlinn Limited, 2004), 63-103. One should note that Ewing's treatment at Westminster did not simply arise in a vacuum. As the former Labour MP and current Scottish Nationalist Jim Sillars has noted, Ewing's own attitude and style of confrontation often helped fuel the fires against her. Jim Sillars, *Scotland: The Case for Optimism* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1986), 26.

[61] Wolfe, *Scotland Lives*, 137.

[62] Labour, Liberal, and Conservative Scottish MPs all made questions on the White Paper issue at varying times. For instance, see Labour MP William Hamilton's written question of Secretary of State for Scotland Willie Ross on 21 December 1966 in *Parliamentary Debates*, no. 738, *317*. See also Conservative MP Teddy Taylor's oral question of Ross on 21

Between January 1968 and April 1970, Ewing sought written or oral answers related to Scotland and the EEC on nearly ten occasions, which appears more impressive when one considers that some Scottish Labour MPs found it almost impossible to question any ministers on any issue at all.

Ewing's parliamentary contributions also included participation in a Commons debate regarding EEC membership. In February 1970, the Labour Government had issued a further White Paper on the UK's membership in the EEC (Command Paper No. 4289). In the subsequent debate, Winnie Ewing was prolific, interrupting several speakers to make interventions regarding Scotland and the EEC and giving a speech on the first day. In it, she explained the SNP position on membership, often in the face of laughter, interruptions, and some rather raucous behavior. The speech itself was anti-EEC in tone and rhetoric, labeling the EEC as an "undemocratic community … controlled by bureaucrats."[63] At one point, she focused on the argument common at the time that the EEC did not fully represent Europe due to its Cold War divisions. She then claimed that her opposition to the UK joining was an extension of her internationalism. As she said, "Our going into the Community will be divisive.… I am an internationalist, which means that I believe in a relationship between nations. I speak for one nation, and I do not find it amusing that I am the only one in this House to do so".[64] After further questioning what the economic benefits were for Scotland and further arguing that the supposed benefits of membership for England were actually negatives for Scotland, Ewing finished her speech by stating, "The world recognises [sic] that the Scots are very good internationalists. We do not think that entry to the Common market by the United Kingdom will advance that cause in any respect whatsoever."[65]

SNP campaigning activities beyond Scotland included high level contacts with the EEC itself. In March 1970, the SNP leadership sent a delegation to Brussels and Amsterdam that included Senior Vice-Chairman George Leslie, Winnie Ewing, James Halliday, and Director of Communications Douglas Crawford.[66] The main purpose of the trip besides publicity was to inform the EEC about resistance to the British application in Scotland and about various Scottish specific interests or problems were the UK to join.[67] As George Leslie described it, the delegation focused on several points in its discussions with the

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June 1967 in Ibid., no. 748, 1716-1718, which prompted follow-up interventions from other Scottish MPs. There are, of course, more such examples peppered through the 1966-1970 parliamentary sessions, but again no one individually approached the proliferation of Winnie Ewing.

[63] Parliamentary Debates, no. 796, 1258.

[64] Ibid., 1083.

[65] Ibid., 1089.

[66] SNP Memorandum, Wolfe to Headquarters, 2 April 1970, NLS, McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/130.

[67] Wolfe, *Scotland Lives*, 137-138.

EEC, namely that "public opinion in Scotland was against entry and capable of being organised by us, that economic conditions in Scotland were entirely different from the rest of the United Kingdom and that the British government had no constitutional or legal right to speak for Scotland."[68] In addition to representative meetings, the delegation also conducted press conferences and television interviews with the continental European press and meet up with SNP supporters living in the Netherlands and Belgium.[69] By and large, the party leadership considered the trip a success on all fronts, despite its close resemblance to the party's less successful memorandum in 1967. In his report to the NEC analyzing the trip, William Wolfe wrote, "Obviously a very important step has been taken towards establishing in Europe in general, and in the EEC in particular, some recognition of the existence, aims and strength of the Scottish National Party."[70] The SNP Vice-Chair for Publicity, Michael Grieve also emphasized that the trip "apart from making an impact on EEC officials largely unaware of Scotland and the SNP, also achieved useful publicity in Britain."[71] It was perhaps these contacts more than anything else that altered thinking within the party, as for good or for ill they witnessed up close various EEC officials' levels of interest in national issues.

In terms of SNP attitudes toward Europe, their experiences were mainly negative. This was the impression the delegation gained from its trip. The delegation described the EEC representatives' attitudes and demeanor by stating that "the EEC representatives … 'showed an almost religious determination to end national awareness" and that they were "rather vague regarding the freedom of member countries to make their own financial and industrial policies."[72] Impressions like this influenced opinion within the party for a more hard line. According to William Wolfe, "The discussions with the Scottish National Party following the return of our delegation to Brussels clarified our view of the Common Market and consequently hardened our opposition to it. Ours was essentially a political view."[73]

Ewing's Commons speech in February 1970 and the party's presentation to the EEC Commission in March served as signs that the SNP's attitudes toward EEC membership had hardened. This movement is also reflected in internal party discussions and in the public statements made throughout 1969-1970. For instance, in early 1969, the NEC External Affairs Committee, under the direction of James Halliday, produced a foreign affairs policy review accepted by

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[68] SNP 1970 Annual Conference Agenda, NLS, McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/121.
[69] SNP Memorandum, Wolfe to Headquarters, 2 April 1970, NLS, McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/130.
[70] Ibid.
[71] SNP 1970 Annual Conference Agenda, NLS, McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/121.
[72] SNP Memorandum, Wolfe to Headquarters, 2 April 1970, NLS, McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/130.
[73] Wolfe, *Scotland Lives*, 138.

the NEC in late March. In it, the leadership described the attitudes and policy positions of a "free" Scotland in the conduct of its foreign policy. The document's suggestions included remaining in the British Commonwealth; seeking membership in the United Nations, the Council of Europe, and the Nordic Council; and undertaking the obligations of NATO membership while reserving the right to negotiate with the United States and the UK regarding foreign bases in Scotland.[74] The policy document also intimated that an independent Scotland would seek membership not in the EEC but rather in the EFTA, and then stated, "Future trading developments in Europe will be kept under constant review, and Scotland's attitude to the European Economic Community will be assessed in the light of circumstances prevailing upon the attainment of independence."[75] An undated party electoral handbill, most likely from early 1970, also displayed this shift by using rather excited political rhetoric. It stated: "These men (and their parties) are DANGEROUS! Heath, Wilson, Grimond. Heath and Wilson (and Grimond too) are hell bent on dragging us into the Common Market with neither choice nor voice . . . We would have NO VOICE at Brussels. THE COMMON MARKET IS NOT AN ELECTION ISSUE FOR THEM, BUT IT IS FOR YOU."[76]

In addition, aggressive statements by party leaders also cemented this change in party policy. At a speech in Paisley on 31 March 1970, the by then Party Chairman William Wolfe characterized the EEC and the political centralism its institutions represented as a form of "conglomerate fascism" that would transform Scotland into a dystopia on par with George Orwell's *1984*.[77] Wolfe argued that the EEC was not merely an economic trading bloc, but rather a major threat to Scottish national identity. Using the analogy of an iceberg in still waters, Wolfe stated:

The distinct shape of the political centralism which is now clearly over the horizon is an ice-berg, and we have seen only the tip of its dangerous and destructive might. It threatens to crash into Western Europe and destroy all the ideals of national freedom and national identity which Western Europe has developed, often painfully, over the last 700 years. The ideals, the principles of participating democracy and modern nationhood, were born in Scotland. We must defend them.[78]

He went on to describe pro-EEC supporters as apparatchiks who were "as doctrinaire centralist as their opposite numbers in the Kremlin in Moscow" and who had twisted "the noble vision of the founding fathers of the Common

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[74] SNP, *External Affairs Policy Committee Policy Recommendations*, dated March 1969, NLS, McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/93.
[75] Ibid.
[76] SNP Election Pamphlet (undated), NLS, Scottish National Party Archives, Acc. 7295/24.
[77] *Scots Independent*, 11 April 1970.
[78] Ibid.

Market … into a most frightening nightmare …"[79] It was this "frightening nightmare" of political centralism in the UK that had been "desperately damaging to Scotland's people and to her economy. The centralism of the Common Market would be a cancer which would eat the very heart out of Scotland with no hope or cure."[80] Vitriolic rhetoric and dire warnings of disaster had replaced the more cautious and tempered positions of the mid-1960s.

While the question of how specifically the SNP evolved towards a hardened anti-EEC attitude is interesting in and of itself, what matters here is that the SNP was the first political force in Scotland to articulate clearly Scottish interests in the EEC debate. This had important implications for how the EEC debate unfolded into the 1970s. Since other Scottish political elites proved unable or unwilling to engage the EEC issue in a Scottish context in the early 1960s, this provided the SNP with an excellent opportunity to further influence public opinion towards independence. By being first, they defined what those Scottish interests were on their rhetorical and political terms and in the process increased public awareness of the EEC as a domestic concern. In doing so, they also inadvertently created a linkage between being a nationalist and being against the EEC. At first this was beneficial. Political unionism was declining in influence as an ideology in Scottish politics. And, although there were plenty of individual exceptions, support for EEC membership came predominantly from unionist politicians in both the Labour and Conservative Parties.[81] Since unionism was what political nationalism was supplanting, it was sensible to adopt the opposite position on the EEC. Polling also demonstrated that public opinion in Scotland was moving against membership, with an astonishing seventy-three percent saying no in a 1971 poll.[82] Thus, the SNP clearly benefited from being an upstart populist political movement standing up for Scottish interests against an out-of-touch political establishment, and their EEC position was an important part of this. However, it later became a difficulty for the party. Being wedded to an absolute position on the EEC meant the party was unable to adapt when the Scottish political establishment responded to the nationalist challenge and sought to recast what Scottish interests were.

The Battle joined, 1970-1975

The nationalist challenge in Scotland forced the main British political parties to change course and adapt to a new political reality, one that placed greater em-

[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid.
[81] This included Scottish MPs such as the Conservatives Sir William McEwan Younger and Jock Bruce-Gardyne, and the Labour MP Arthur Woodburn.
[82] For more information, see Uwe Kitzinger, *Diplomacy and Persuasion: How Britain Joined the Common Market* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1973), 361-365.

phasis on issues of sovereignty, identity, and nationalism than previously. Because of internal divisions and ideological blockages among Labour and the Conservatives, their controversial and muddled attempts to wield the political cudgel of devolution to beat back Scottish nationalism (such as Conservative Party leader Edward Heath's 1968 Declaration of Perth that committed the Conservatives to a policy of Scottish devolution or Labour Prime Minister Harold Wilson's Royal Commission on the Constitution established in 1969) had the countervailing result that their emphasis on constitutional issues and the problem of sovereignty between England and Scotland actually increased public attention to these issues.[83] This in turn had an impact on the public's internalization of the EEC debate, specifically by increasing the public's hostility to the idea. Although there were few specific instances where the two debates – EEC membership and devolution – cross-referenced each other, there were points of overlap and connectedness stemming from the shifting contours of Scottish politics in the late 1960s/early 1970s. This was because both debates similarly dealt with political and economic problems vital to future Scottish prosperity. As such, they further brought into focus for political elites and the Scottish public questions regarding Scotland's role and sovereignty in the UK and Europe.[84]

Nevertheless, following Heath's surprise victory in the 1970 General Election, the new Conservative Government committed itself to pushing for British membership in the EEC. With the French President Charles de Gaulle no longer in power in France (he had been the brake on the two previous attempts by the UK to join in 1961-63 and 1967), the atmosphere within the EEC member states was more amenable to British membership.[85] Over the next two years, there was a protracted and contentious debate that revealed divisions within all the major parties over the issue and growing public apprehension. This forced the Heath Government to work hard to overcome public and parliamentary opposition, utilizing the support of British industry, pro-European pressure groups like the European Movement, the pro-European party committees like the Conservative Group for Europe, and most of the British media.[86] Regional issues featured more prominently in the overall debate. For instance,

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[83] For a more detailed examination of the nineteenth century origins of devolution, see James Mitchell, *Strategies for Self-Government: The Campaigns for a Scottish Parliament* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1996), 37-43. For an examination that focuses on Home Rule and the origins of the Scottish Labour movement, see Michael Keating and David Bleiman, *Labour and Scottish Nationalism* (London: Macmillan Press, 1979), 21-58.

[84] Keating and Bleiman argue that, more than anything, it was the EEC debate that kept the "constitutional question" alive as a political issue in the early 1970s. Keating, *Labour and Scottish Nationalism*, 161.

[85] For more information, see David Gowland and Arthur Turner, *Reluctant Europeans: Britain and European Integration, 1945-1998* (Harlow, England: Longman, 2000), 168-174.

[86] The best and most comprehensive account of the EEC debate from 1970-1973 is still Kitzinger, *Diplomacy and Persuasion* (1973).

during the important October 1971 Commons debate, the Government unofficially set aside one day of the six day debate for the consideration of Scottish and Welsh concerns about the EEC, which had not taken place in any of the previous EEC Commons debates. By and large, Heath was successful in lowering public opposition and in gaining parliamentary support for membership, often in the teeth of furious resistance and obstruction. In a key vote on 28 October 1971 approving the principle of membership, the Government achieved a majority of 112 with the support of sixty nine dissident Labour MPs. On 22 January 1972, the UK signed the Treaty of Accession with the EEC, and after a fierce parliamentary battle over the specific clauses of the European Communities Bill, the UK, along with Denmark and Ireland, officially joined the EEC on 1 January 1973.[87] Heath was victorious.

In Scotland, the main Scottish political parties suffered similar levels of divisiveness as the national parties. However, of all sides, it was the SNP that campaigned the most vigorously and consistently on EEC membership during the Heath Government. Their hard-lined opposition placed them as the party most committed to keeping Scotland out of the EEC. The SNP had been the only party to make EEC membership an important issue in their 1970 election campaign, and that emphasis carried over into their post-1970 activities. They campaigned vigorously against EEC membership, issuing leaflets, engaging the issue in the House of Commons, organizing local constituency referendums and petitions, and making it an important component of their 1971 by-election campaign in the Stirling and Falkirk constituency.[88] They also continued their international outreach by sending party officials to Brussels, Paris, and Norway several times between 1970 and 1972 to press the party's positions and connect with like-minded anti-EEC activists abroad.[89] Such efforts were rather similar in scope and outlook to the March 1970 delegation; in fact, the delegation in January 1972 to the EEC Commission delivered a memorandum nearly identical in tone and substance to their 1967 effort, including a self-important statement that the SNP was the only political body competent to speak for Scotland.[90] In addition, the party unofficially coordinated with the national anti-EEC campaigns through their lone MP Donald Stewart, who was an important

[87] For more specific information on the parliamentary battle over the European Communities Bill, see Kitzinger, *Diplomacy and Persuasion*, 371-399.

[88] The SNP came second in the by-election with 34.6 percent to Labour's 46.5 percent, a result which boosted the party's confidence after the disappointment of 1970. Lynch, *SNP*, 125. William Wolfe has speculated that the reason the party was unable to breakthrough was because they perhaps "confused the electorate … by campaigning on too many issues," one of which was the Common Market. Wolfe, *Scotland Lives*, 157.

[89] SNP NEC Minutes, 9 April 1971, NLS, McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/130.

[90] SNP Report of National Office-Bearers April 1972, NLS, McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/122.

member of the former Liberal and free trader Christopher Frere-Smith's Keep Britain Out (KBO) organization.[91]

The SNP's campaign activities against EEC membership ultimately failed. While the party felt it had "credibility" on the EEC issue, its efforts only succeeded in increasing the negative opinion the Scottish public had of the EEC, not in keeping the UK out of the Community.[92] There is also little evidence that the EEC played more than a cursory role in the party's second electoral breakthrough in 1974. This was because issues like North Sea oil, the deeply unpopular industrial policies of the Heath Government, and the dispute with the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) appeared more prominently in political discourse at the time. In addition, the SNP's hard-line opposition to membership in principle weakened the party's campaign. By adopting such a fixed and absolute position, it kept the party from adapting to changing political circumstances, particularly as pro-European factions used their monetary advantages to shift public opinion.

The party leadership quickly came to recognize this and attempted to recast the party's position on the EEC. In November 1970, Malcolm Slesser, a member of the party's NEC, produced a report analyzing the party's tactics and strategy towards the EEC. In it, he acknowledged that the SNP's present attitude was a problem that would "fail to impress, except by its consistent obstructionism" if the UK failed to make it into the EEC.[93] He also noted that the party's position would be weakened by the UK entering because of the perception that the SNP had no power to change anything: "For people to vote for use, we must be seen to be a force."[94] As such, Slesser advocated a series of tactical changes: one, highlight England's economic weakness and Scotland's economic strength, emphasizing that England needed to join the EEC to survive; two; point out that the British parties knew this and were covering it up with "aggressive British nationalism;" three, argue that the EEC was not a true and proper internationalist organization; and four, stop opposing the EEC on principle and show that Scotland has more options to stay in or out if independent.[95] Slesser argued that such a strategy allowed the party to appear "to be the reasonable, the international, the balanced party" while also demonstrating that the other British parties were "simply out to save England, even at the expense of the dignity of the English people and economic survival of Scotland."[96] The NEC subsequently debated the paper and accepted its conclusions, charging

[91] Kitzinger, *Diplomacy and Persuasion*, 245. Stewart had been elected in the 1970 General Election, the lone SNP bright spot as they lost Winnie Ewing's seat at Hamilton.
[92] Wolfe, *Scotland Lives*, 145.
[93] SNP Memorandum, *Common Market: SNP Attitudes, Tactics, and Strategy*, 25 November 1970, NLS, McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/130.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Ibid.

William Wolfe with implementing it.[97] However, this repositioning was ultimately problematic. It made the SNP's message more ambiguous and less effective; instead of being completely against EEC membership, the SNP message became bogged down in qualifiers and equivocations. While it may have been useful in smoothing over any disagreements between pro- and anti- factions within the party, it only served to make the party position more complex. This ambiguity would later cause the party more difficulty as the seemingly settled debate over British membership continued.

Despite the UK successfully achieving membership in 1973, the political battles over the UK remaining in the EEC continued to dominate the political scene for the next two years. The Labour Party, which had earlier called for renegotiation of the terms of membership and also a public referendum on the question, came back into power in 1974 and set about fulfilling their manifesto promise. In doing so, the stage was set for a rough-and-tumble EEC Referendum campaign to settle the question of British participation in the EEC, which took place in June 1975.[98] Opposition in Scotland remained high during 1973-1975, and the SNP thought to galvanize a coordinated campaign to have Scotland vote against remaining in Europe as a stepping stone to achieving Scottish independence. However, the SNP's campaign was a muddled, ambiguous affair rife with internal contradictions, a problem that reflected some growing divisions within the party over the EEC.[99] Nonetheless, after a referendum campaign dominated by the pro-European campaign's financial advantage – a phenomenon Winnie Ewing castigated as buying "Scottish votes with English gold" – the UK voted to remain in the EEC by sixty-seven to thirty-two percent (in Scotland the margin was fifty-eight to forty-one percent).[100]

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[97] SNP NEC Minutes, 12 December 1970, NLS, McIntyre Papers, Acc. 10090/130.

[98] The best two accounts of the politics surrounding the referendum campaign are two relatively contemporary accounts: David Butler and Uwe Kitzinger, *The British General Elections 1945-92: The 1975 Referendum*, Archive Edition (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan Press, 1999) and Philip Goodhart, *Full-Hearted Consent: The Story of the Referendum Campaign and the Campaign for the Referendum* (London: David-Poynter, 1976). For a more recent appraisal, see also Gowland and Turner, *Reluctant Europeans*, 198-213.

[99] Polling throughout the early months of 1975 showed a consistent fifty-five to fifty-eight percent of SNP supporters against continued membership, but a substantial minority of twenty-five to twenty percent who wanted Britain to stay in. These figures come from a series of *Glasgow Herald* polls in early 1975 and are quoted from a table in Butler, *1975 Referendum*, 151.

[100] *Glasgow Herald*, 26 May 1975. Ewing's choice of phrase was an allusion to the Robert Burns poem "Such a Parcel of Rogues in a Nation," specifically the lines: "The English stell we could disdain, / Secure in valour's station; / But English gold has been our bane- / Such a parcel of rogues in a nation!"

Conclusions

As this article argues, the emergence of political Scottish nationalism in the 1960s and its deliberate linkage with a hard-line anti-EEC position altered the shape of the EEC debate in Scotland, providing an opportunity for the expression of Scottish interests within it where little had existed previously. Thus, this relatively unimportant British foreign policy question became, in essence, a domestic political issue with national and international overtones that Scottish political elites and the public engaged on a fairly regular basis after 1967. One final question remains: what were the ramifications of the SNP's negative EEC campaign for Scotland beyond 1975?

In the short term, the Scottish result in the 1975 Referendum was an electoral snub to the SNP. Despite garnering over 800,000 votes in the October 1974 General Election, the SNP failed to mobilize fully its supporters for the No campaign. According to a report in the *Economist* after the vote, SNP supporters had split sixty-forty against membership, which meant a significant amount of its voters failed to follow the party's lead.[101] In terms of electoral impact in the short term, the SNP suffered no immediate repercussions, maintaining its polling support well into 1977.[102] Policy-wise, the party quietly dropped its opposition to the EEC and began moving in a more pro-European direction, emphasizing a positive message about Scottish representation in Community institutions.[103] This eventually resulted in the party's adoption in 1988 of its pro-European "Scotland in Europe" policy, which argued for Scottish independence within the context of the EEC.[104] However, the referendum result was a further demonstration that the party's overall electoral support was unstable. Despite the SNP's success in the 1974 elections, surveys had shown that a majority of the SNP's voters did not approve of its stance on independence or even identify themselves as SNP voters.[105] What this meant was that some SNP voters were protest voting against the two main political parties and were not solidly in support of the SNP per se; if and when other options came along, such as the Labour breakaway Social Democratic Party (SDP) after 1979, they were capable of abandoning the party.[106] Coming in the heady wake of the 1974 elections, the referendum result in some ways prefigured the SNP's unstable and declining electoral fortunes leading up to its collapse in the 1979 General Election.

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[101] Figures quoted in Goodhart, *Full-Hearted Consent*, 183-184.
[102] Butler, *1975 Referendum*, 283.
[103] Lynch, Minority Nationalism, 36.
[104] Richard J. Finlay, *Modern Scotland, 1914-2000* (London: Profile Books, 2003), 371-372.
[105] I.G.C. Hutchison, *Scottish Politics in the Twentieth Century* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), 125.
[106] Kellas, Scottish Political System, 113.

In the long term, the impact of the SNP's negative EEC campaign is less clear. On the one hand, the long national debate over EEC membership during the 1960s/early 1970s represented the beginning of a process of reintegrating a European dimension into Scottish society and identity. This had the potential, as the Labour MP John P. Mackintosh argued after the 1975 Referendum, to develop into "a European conscience [that would eventually] take the place of the British element in Scottish thinking."[107] Economic concerns partly drove this Europeanization. For example, groups like Europe in Scotland had attempted to bring investment and economic growth to Scotland's ailing economic sector from 1971-1974. After 1973, Scottish elites exhibited a keen interest in the benefits the EEC's regional development initiatives could bring to Scotland. Yet it was as much about mentality as anything else, and in this area the conclusions must be tentative. Europeanization in Scotland in the postwar era has been and still is an ongoing process that cannot be linked to one single event, and scholars have increasingly turned their attention to this.[108] What is rather clear is that prior to the 1960s, Scotland was more parochial in its outlook toward its European heritage, its horizons limited by its long-term adherence to British national identity and the British Empire after 1707. But after 1975, several years of probing debate about Scotland's place in Europe and the concurrent rise in nationalism had increased Scottish awareness of and connections with Europe. Subsequent political developments, such as the publicity surrounding the establishment of the Scottish Labour Party in 1976 and its push for Scottish independence in the EEC as well as participation in EEC institutions like the European Parliament, continued this long process of reintegration by maintaining awareness of European issues.[109]

On the other hand, the manner in which the early EEC debate took place in Scotland, with the SNP creating a linkage between nationalism and an anti-EEC position, seems to have worked as a countervailing force against the goals of Scottish nationalism. That is to say, the SNP's negative campaign actually inhibited Europeanization enough that it impacted the drive for Scottish independence. According to recent research by Paolo Dardanelli, which compared the politics behind European integration and devolution during both the 1979 and 1997 referenda in Scotland, attempts to "Europeanize" the self-government movement in Scotland failed in the 1970s, but succeeded in the 1990s, and this was a "key casual factor" in explaining the two outcomes.[110] Although Dardanelli broadened his scope to explore several different Scottish elite actors,

[107] Henry Drucker, ed., *John P. Mackintosh on Scotland* (London: Longman, 1982), 202.
[108] For instance, see Atsuko Ichijo, Scottish Nationalism and the Idea of Europe: Concepts of Europe and the Nation (London: Routledge, 2004).
[109] Murray Pittock, *Scottish Nationality* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001), 126.
[110] Paolo Dardanelli, *Between Two Unions Europeanisation and Scottish Devolution* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 2.

certainly the role of the SNP in pushing resistance to the EEC between 1967 and 1975 was vital in this failed Europeanization of the 1970s. And despite the SNP's subsequent turn to Europe after 1988, the party still holds its fair share of die-hard anti-Europe campaigners just as anti-Europe attitudes in the UK have remained high as well.[111] Thus the SNP's experiences serve as evidence that regional attitudes and experiences have had wider implications beyond the specific details of the European integration issue.

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[111] For example, see "SNP rebel calls for end to 'Scotland in Europe'" *Sunday Herald*, 7 July 2002.

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