SECTION 3

CHRONOLOGY OF DEVOLUTION 1885 - 1978

1885 Secretaryship for Scotland established, with responsibility for education, health, poor law, local government, fisheries, police, prisons, roads and public works. (Secretary for Scotland Act).

1887 Scottish Trades Union Congress founded.

1912 Scottish Board of Agriculture founded.

1919 Scottish Board of Health founded, with Parliamentary Under-Secretary.

1926 Scottish Secretary becomes full Secretary of State.

1934 Scottish National Party formed.

1937 Gilmour Committee report on Scottish Administration (Cmd.5563).

1939 Scottish departments (Agriculture, Education, Fisheries, Health, Prisons) vested directly in Secretary of State.

1945 Motherwell won by SNP (Robert McIntyre) in April by-election, defeating Labour. Lost in General Election.

1946 Scottish Council (Development & Industry) formed.

1954 Balfour Commission report on Scottish Affairs (Cmd. 9212).

1955 Food, animal health, appointment of J.P.s transferred.

1956 Roads and bridges transferred.

1961 Bridgeton by-election, 16th Nov. SNP wins 18.7% of votes.

1962 West Lothian by-election, 14th June. SNP wins 23.3% of votes.

1965 Highlands and Islands Development Board founded.

1966 Plaid Cymru wins Carmarthen by-election.

1967 Pollok by-election, 9th March. SNP wins 20.2% of vote.

1968 May. Major SNP gains in local elections. They win 37.2% of vote in Glasgow.

1970 Ayrshire South by-election, 19th March. SNP wins 20.4% of vote.


1973 Scottish Economic Planning Department formed.

1974 February 28th. General Election. SNP contest 70 seats, wins 21.9% of vote, loses Govan but gains Argyll, Banff, Aberdeen East, Dundee East, Moray and Nairn, Stirling East and Clackmannan.

1975 September. Wheatley Commission reports on local government reorganisation (Cmd. 4150).

1976 Pollok by-election, 9th March. SNP wins 20.2% of vote.

1977 November. SNP wins 20.4% of vote.

1978 January. SNP wins 21.9% of vote.


June. Crowther Royal Commission on Constitution appointed.


August. Dumfries by-election, SNP wins 30.2% of vote.

September. Scottish Office takes over forestry, loses National Insurance.


December. Crowther Royal Commission on Constitution appointed.

1979 January. Scottish Office takes over education, health, poor law, local government, fisheries, police, prisons, roads and public works.
May. First elections to Scottish regions and districts.


June 22nd. Scottish Executive of Labour Party rejects devolution proposals.

September. Special Scottish Labour Conference overturns Executive decision.

October 10th. General Election. SNP wins 30.4% of vote, gains Angus South, Dunbartonshire East, Galloway, Perth and East Perthshire.

1975 Scottish Development Agency founded.

Industry powers transferred to Scottish Office.


1976 August. "Devolution to Scotland and Wales: Supplementary Statement" (Cmnd. 6585) published.

Main changes: at least two Assembly seats for all constituencies; Assembly alone to nominate Chief Executive; U.K. Government to be able to object to Assembly Bills only if causing "unacceptable repercussions" on non-devolved matters, and unable to take back devolved powers; judicial review of Assembly legislation to be allowed; Assembly power to surcharge rates dropped; SDA operations, administration of the courts, private law, regulation of teaching and legal professions to be devolved.

November 29th. Scotland and Wales Bill published.

December 9th. "Devolution — the English dimension" published.

December 16th. Bill given second reading by 307-263.

December 18th. Guillotine motion carried by 313-287.


1977 January 25th. Cunningham amendment that "if it appears to the Secretary of State that less than 40% of the persons entitled to vote in the referendum have voted "Yes" . . . he shall lay before Parliament the draft of an Order in Council for the repeal of this Act" carried 168-142.

Grimond amendment that if Orkney or Shetland vote "No" in referendum "the Secretary of State shall lay before Parliament the draft of an Order in Council providing that . . . the Act shall not apply to them, and providing also for the establishment of a commission to recommend such changes in the government of that area or those areas as may be desirable" carried 204-118.

February 14th. During report stage, Dalyell's new clause stipulating that if Parliament is dissolved before the referendum is held, it must be deferred until three months after polling day, approved 242-223.

Canavan amendment to remove "40% rule" defeated 298-248.

February 22nd. Bill given third reading by 297-257.

March 15th. Bill given unopposed second reading in Lords.

April 4th. During committee stage, Lords vote 155-64 for additional member voting system.

May 17th. Lords' committee stage ends, after Lords vote to withdraw from Assembly responsibility abortion, aerodromes, forestry and afforestation, inland waterways and road passenger service licensing.

July 26th. Lord President's statement in Commons: separate bills for Scotland and Wales in next session; head of Executive retitled "First Secretary"; premature dissolution of Assembly to be possible on vote of two-thirds of members; legislation on maladministration, teachers' pay and rent regulation to be devolved; block grant to be fixed for "a number of years" by percentage formula; "independent advisory board" on devolution financing; "Joint Council" between Government and Executive proposed.

"Devolution — Financing the Devolved Services" (Cmd. 6890) published.

November 4th. Scotland Bill published.

November 14th. Bill given second reading by 307-263.

November 16th. Guillotine motion carried by 313-287.


December 7th. Clause 40 (national pay policy) removed by 290-107.

1978 January 25th. Cunningham amendment that "if it appears to the Secretary of State that less than 40% of the persons entitled to vote in the referendum have voted "Yes" . . . he shall lay before Parliament the draft of an Order in Council for the repeal of this Act" carried 168-142.

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