

REFERENCE SECTION

SECTION 1

SUMMARY OF SCOTTISH OPINION POLLS RELATING TO VOTING INTENTION AND CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

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It is probably true to say that there has been more interest in Scottish opinion polls this past year than ever before. Nowhere was this more obvious than in the run-up to the referendum on the Scotland Act. Indeed one poll on devolution commissioned by the *Scottish Daily Express* was not immediately published and did not appear until a subsequent poll had been taken; presumably the reasoning was that the publication of the poll completed on February 22 might have harmed that newspaper's anti-Assembly campaign. This rare event illustrates the strength of the belief that polls have an effect on voter behaviour — a controversy which looks like being with us for some time.

The exceptionally high number of opinion polls carried out over the twelve months since the last edition of the *Yearbook* reflects the important political events of 1979 — the referendum on March 1, the General Election on May 3 and the Euro-elections on June 7. The sheer volume of opinion-poll material has made it necessary to leave out some interesting subjects and concentrate on the major areas of interest, namely voting intention at a General Election, voting intention for the referendum, and preference for various constitutional options.

Tables 1 and 2 are derived from System Three's invaluable monthly polls on Scottish voting intentions (published in the *Glasgow Herald*); the former gives an overview of the period between the October 1974 and May 1979 General Elections, while the latter gives the monthly countdown to the recent General Election. *Table 3* gives figures produced by other polling organisations on voting intention in General Elections. *Tables 4 and 5* concern the attitude of voters towards the Labour Government's devolution proposals (*Table 4* covering the years 1976 to 1978), which later took concrete form in the Scotland Act. *Table 5* gives voting intentions in 1979 for the referendum on the Act. (The last poll, it should be noted, was carried out on voting day itself). Finally *Table 6* — which it will be noted, includes one done on referendum day and one taken, after the referendum dust had begun to settle — gives voters' views in 1979 on various constitutional options. Within the category shown as

"Devolution" the number of different schemes is shown in brackets, but it should be pointed out that the wording varied from one polling organisation to another.

Two polls, each *sui generis*, deserve special mention in this record. One asked interviewees simultaneously how they would vote in a British General Election and in an election for the proposed Scottish Assembly. The answers were:

	General Election	Scottish Assembly
	%	%
Labour	45	45
Conservative	30	26
Scottish National Party	23	25
Liberal	2	3

(Poll carried out 12-14 February 1979 by MORI for "Weekend World" [London Weekend Television].)

The other poll of interest concerned the election to the European Assembly and was carried out by System Three Scotland between 26 May and 2 June 1979 for the *Glasgow Herald*.

	Poll 2 June 1979	Actual Result 7 June 1979
	%	%
Labour	47	33
Conservative	25	34
Scottish National Party	19	19
Liberal	9	14

(The "Don't know" category was very high in the poll — 42%).

Technical notes on the tables.

The date shown is the last date on which the questions were asked rather than the date of publication, which was typically two or three days later. Following past practice, percentages have been rounded and "Don't knows", "Won't votes" and "Refusals" have been disregarded. In the light of the Cunningham Amendment (or 40% rule) this might seem odd, but it is a fact that polling organisations are no more uniform in their approach to the question of those who could not be contacted or would not answer than is British electoral organisation geared to producing accurate figures of those who could (in a legal and practical sense) vote. (It is however significant that two polling organisations produced figures for the views of non-voters, the net result of which is that they might as well be disregarded since their views are not markedly different from those of the intending voters.)

The following abbreviations are used in the tables:

DM	The <i>Daily Mail</i>
DR	The <i>Daily Record</i>
DT	The <i>Daily Telegraph</i>
Gall	Gallup
GH	The <i>Glasgow Herald</i>
ITN	Independent Television News
LWT	London Weekend Television
Mar	Marplan
MORI	Market & Opinion Research International
NOP	National Opinion Polls
ORC	Opinion Research Centre
PSL	Professional Studies Ltd.
S3	System Three Scotland
Sc/m	<i>The Scotsman</i>
SDE	The <i>Scottish Daily Express</i>
SM	The <i>Sunday Mail</i>
Sun	<i>The Sun</i>
WW	"Weekend World"

Acknowledgements:

We would like to thank all the above-mentioned polling organisations, newspapers and television company for their kind permission to reproduce data, and I would like to express a warm word of personal thanks to all the individuals concerned for their readiness to provide me with assistance in compiling this appendix.

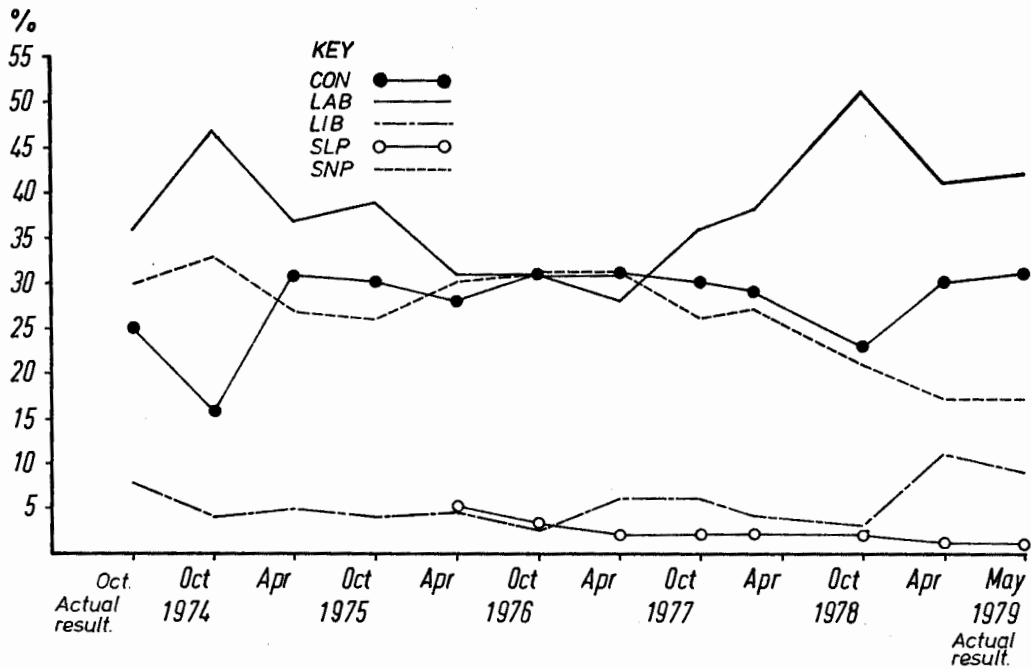


Table 1
 SIX-MONTHLY TREND, VOTING INTENTION FOR GENERAL ELECTION SYSTEM THREE, 1974-79

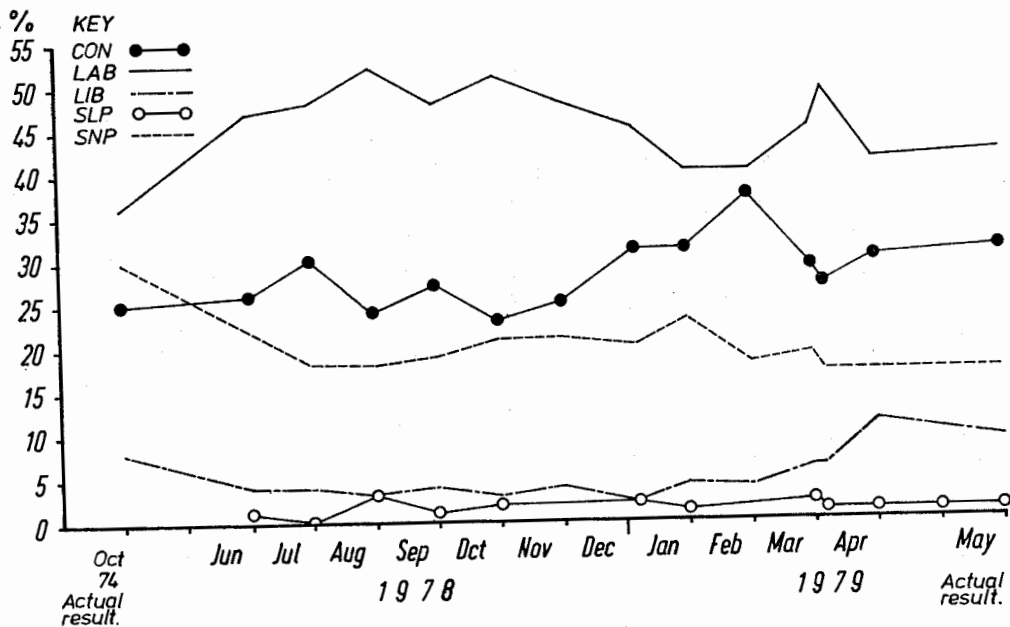


Table 2
 VOTING INTENTION FOR GENERAL ELECTION, MONTHLY SYSTEM THREE, 1978-79

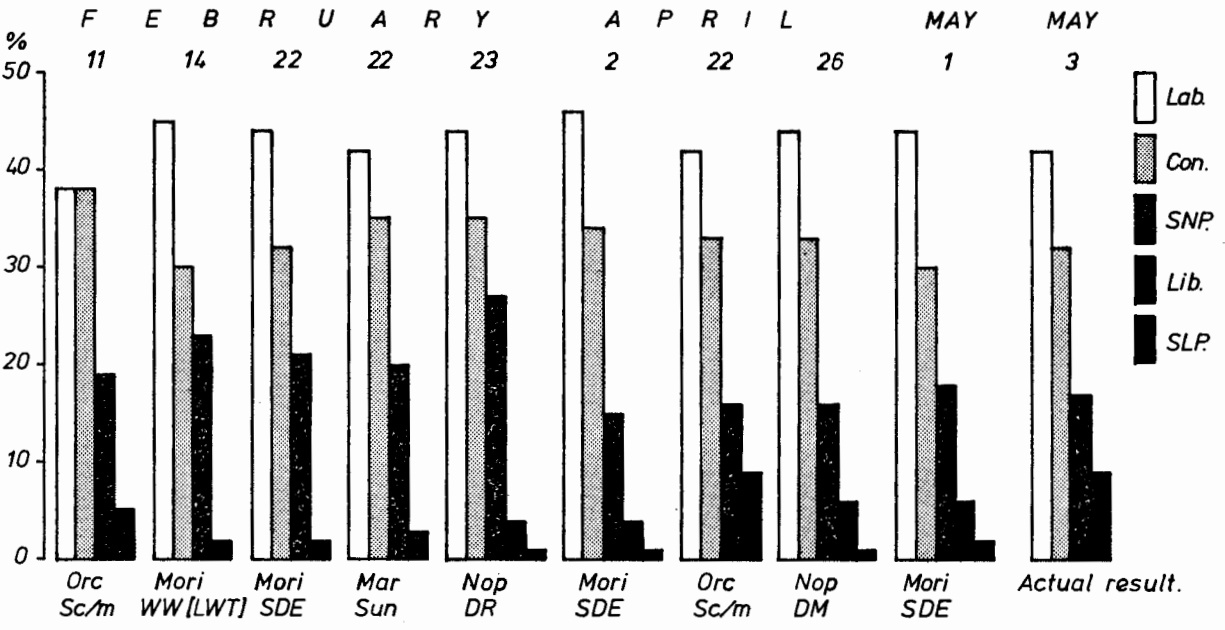


Table 3
VOTING INTENTION FOR GENERAL ELECTION 1979
POLLS UNDERTAKEN BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS

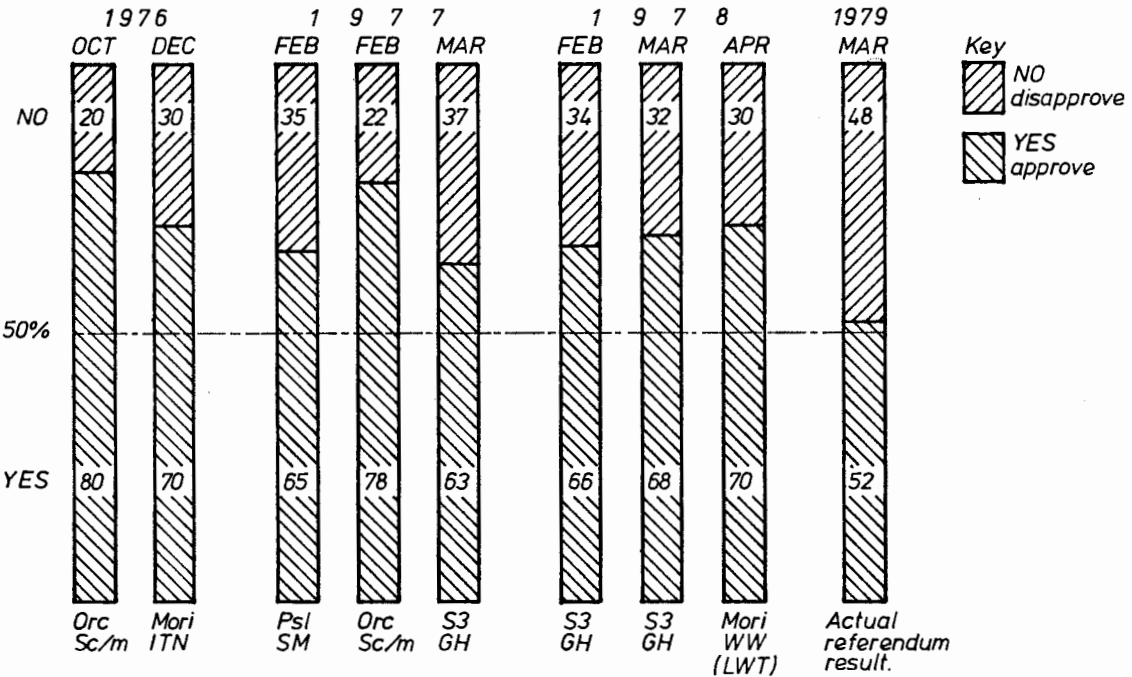


Table 4
ATTITUDE TOWARDS GOVERNMENT'S DEVOLUTION PROPOSALS: 1976-78

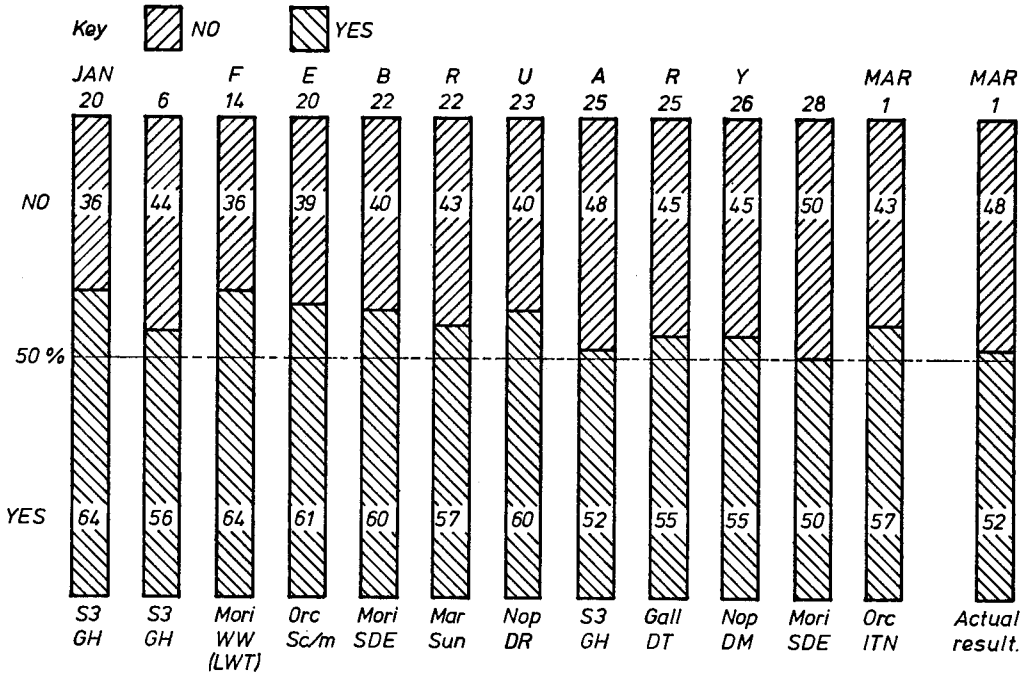


Table 5
VOTING INTENTION FOR REFERENDUM ON SCOTLAND ACT: 1979

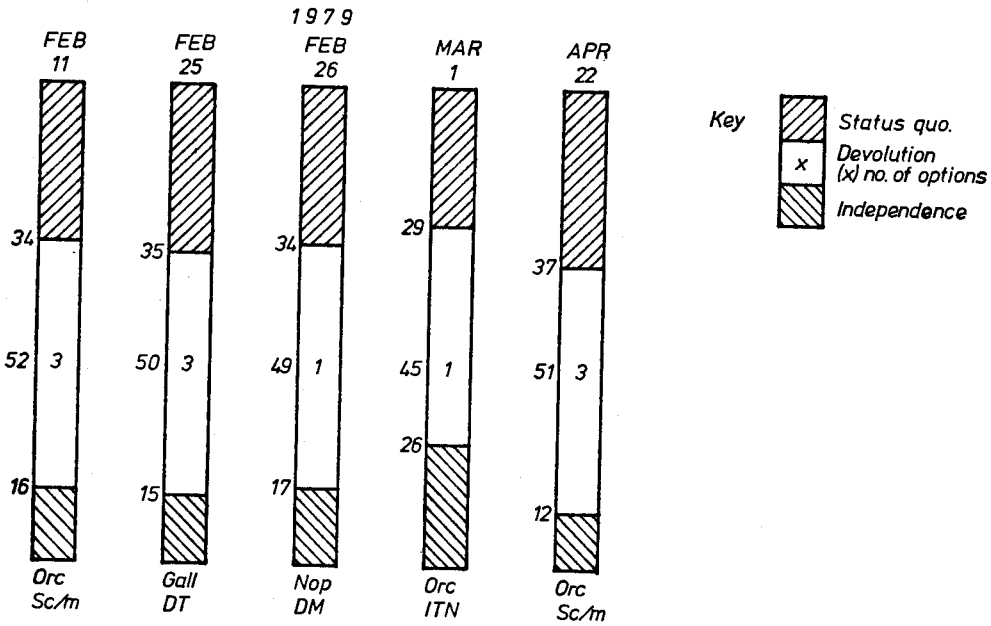


Table 6
CONSTITUTIONAL OPTIONS