On June 7th, 1979, those Scots not entirely fatigued by electioneering or preoccupied with what the new Conservative Government was doing were called upon to elect 8 members to a Parliament that was to sit beyond their shores; they were also being asked to take part in the democratic development of the European Community of over 250 million people. In this paper I shall discuss some of the issues affecting Scotland in the first year, but before doing so I shall outline how the Community’s institutions work.

The European Parliament, which sits at Strasbourg and Luxembourg, does not resemble the Westminster Parliament; indeed it cannot because no other parliament in the world is distinguished by having six official languages, representatives from nine nation states and sixty-one different political parties among its 410 members. Furthermore, the European Parliament is unlikely to resemble Westminster more closely in the foreseeable future. Its powers are strictly defined in the Treaty of Rome as “advisory and supervisory”. It does not initiate legislation but is consulted by the Commission and the Council on Community proposals. Though it does have some control of expenditure, as the joint budgetary authority with the Council of Ministers, it cannot raise taxes; its other main power is to dismiss all thirteen Commissioners but it would not have any say in their replacement. Where the European Parliament most significantly differs from Westminster is that it does not appoint an executive. The executive of the Community is the Council of Ministers which represents the member states of the Community. Since Parliament’s powers are limited by the Treaty of Rome it could only be with the approval of the Council and by subsequent amendment of the Treaty that any formal alteration of these powers could be made; this necessitates the agreement of the British Government and the Westminster Parliament to any such change.

But to compare the European Parliament too closely with national parliaments is not valid: comparisons are rendered all the more difficult because the European Parliament is not like national Parliaments, just as the Community is not a caricature of nation states. Thus, although it lacks sovereignty as that term is understood at Westminster, the European Parliament has extensive powers of inquiry into the operations of both the Council and the Commission. These are exercised through question and debate in plenary session and in committees which have been considerably enlivened following direct election.

The European Community in fact derives from three Communities: the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) established by the Treaty of Paris on 18th April, 1951, the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) which were both established by the Treaties of Rome on 25th March, 1957. In a Convention, annexed to the Treaty of Rome establishing the EEC, the six signatories agreed to create a single Assembly, Court of Justice and Economic and Social Committee for all three Communities. Later, on 8th April 1965 a single “Council of the European Communities” and “Commission of the European Communities” were created and came into force on 1st July, 1967 from which date the Council and the Commission, in the form that they are known today, began to operate. Finally, at their meeting in Paris in December 1974, the Community heads of government decided to meet three times a year with a view to making more rapid progress in Community policy, particularly in the field of political cooperation, and to ensuring overall consistency in the work of the Community. These meetings, convened irregularly, have become the supreme decision-making institution in the Community although there is no formal provision for them in the Treaty of Rome.

Within the institutional framework described above the European Parliament has to exist, contribute and suggest improvements. It is within the Council and the Commission that the European Parliament’s relationship is most sensitive. As the principal decision-making body of the European Community and the only institution which directly
represents the governments of the member states, the Council takes the final decisions on policy for the three Communities on the basis of proposals from the Commission, after taking into account the opinions of the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee, a consultative body consisting of representatives of the various categories of economic and social life in the Community. Its membership is appointed by the Council from lists of nationals supplied by the member states for a four-year renewable term. The European Parliament in the last 12 months has been pressing for a closer working relationship with the Council. This has been most evident in relation to the Community budget and will be dealt with later. But the secrecy of the Council’s work, the absence of any published rules of procedure and its refusal to make known the details of decisions reached, have strained relations with Parliament. Similarly, when the Community foreign ministers meet to discuss matters of political cooperation, that is matters not covered by the Treaties, cause for concern arises.

The European Parliament wishes more opportunities to express its views on, for example, enlargement and multilateral trade negotiations to the Council. In the last year the subjects of Iran, Afghanistan and the Moscow Olympics have all been ones about which the Council might reasonably have asked the European Parliament's views. It must also be admitted that the powers of national parliaments in these areas are inadequate. But unquestionably the position taken by the Conference of Foreign Ministers on world issues would gain strength from being complemented by that of the European Parliament.

The most important role of the Commission is to formulate proposals on which the Council of Ministers will decide. These proposals are produced only after consultation with experts in the national administrations as well as groups concerned with the matter at issue. At the heart of the relationship between the Commission and the European Parliament is the latter's right to be consulted on all proposals which have been submitted by the Commission to the Council, but in that sequence. It has become clear that whereas the Treaty of Rome designed the Commission to be in the political centre, that is not the case today. A better institutional balance needs to be created. By submitting its proposals to the European Parliament before the Council, the Commission would immediately know whether its proposals were acceptable or not. If not, then the Commission and the European Parliament would be in conflict; if yes, then the Commission would have an ally in any subsequent dispute with the Council of Ministers. Too often, the Council receives Commission proposals, alters them unilaterally, submits them to the European Parliament but then proceeds with scant respect for either institution. The Treaty of Rome is imprecise on the sequence of events; all it says is that the Council takes a decision "on the Commission proposal and after consultation with the Parliament". If it were to become the Commission's job to consult the European Parliament rather than the Council's two things of major importance would develop: firstly, the better balance at the epicentre of Community politics referred to above would be created and, secondly, without amending the Treaty of Rome and thereby involving national governments and parliaments, the European Parliament would be acquiring gradually the power to participate in drawing up Community laws. By joining with the Commission and trying to counteract the powers which the Council has taken for itself, in scant respect for the Treaty of Rome, the European Parliament would be working towards the achievement of its main long-term task which must be to create a more equal (but not an equal) position for itself in a triangle of power and responsibility with the Council and the Commission.

II

I have described so far the European Parliament, its powers and intra-institutional relationships; It is appropriate also to refer to the political campaign mounted by the four Scottish political parties to return the eight members from Scotland to the European Parliament. No politician, party manager or political observer quite expected the first direct elections to the European Parliament to produce the abysmal response from the Scottish electorate reflected in the turnout on 7th June. Under 35 per cent of those eligible to vote bothered to turn out, less than for a district election and substantially down on the regional turnout in 1978. The steady drizzle that fell in Central Scotland from mid-afternoon may have deterred some from voting and the counter attraction of a major football game on television
cannot be denied, but the electorate had been subjected to a campaign of sorts since the General Election on 3rd May. The powers and limitations of the European Parliament had been analysed modestly but fairly between 3rd May and 7th June and most people probably realised there was an election underway. However, after the referendum campaign and an unusually long general election campaign, enthusiasm for politics and politicians, especially of the European variety was not high. A nation-wide information campaign launched in mid-February at Glasgow Central Station by the European Commission was inevitably overshadowed by the closing stages of the referendum campaign. After 1st March and the subsequent vote of no-confidence, the information campaign had to be wound up until 3rd May. Thereafter, most people had had enough of politics.

On the basis of the results in Scotland on May 3, 1979, and given the traditional socio-political pattern in the central, industrial belt of the country, Labour could reasonably have been expected to win 5 of the new Euro-seats, leaving to the Conservatives the safe South of Scotland seat. Similarly it seemed that the battle lay between the Conservatives and the SNP in the North-East, and that in the Highlands and Islands the Liberals were faced with a strong SNP and Conservative challenge. As it was, Glasgow remained solidly Labour as did Strathclyde East, but three seats where Labour had confidently predicted victory on the basis of the General Election - mid-Scotland and Fife, Strathclyde West and the Lothians - all fell to the Conservatives. In the Highland and Islands, the SNP candidate, Mrs Ewing, was compensated for the loss of her Westminster seat forcing the Liberal candidate (Westminster member for Inverness) Russell Johnston into second place. The South of Scotland predictably voted strongly Conservative and the North-East, in spite of a spirited Liberal campaign by the experienced Lord Mackie of Benshie, fell to the Conservatives. This picture was evident throughout the United Kingdom and, in the reflected glory of Mrs Thatcher's triumph a few weeks earlier, 60 Conservatives were returned out of the UK's 81 Members of the European Parliament.

The Scottish M.E.P.'s were scarcely household names, with the exception of the resilient Mrs Winnie Ewing. Janey Buchanan of Glasgow is also known as Mrs Norman Buchanan of West Renfrewshire, a Strathclyde councillor and consumer lobbyist. Ken Collins of Strathclyde East was a college lecturer, although active in Labour constituency politics. The Conservative members' backgrounds were unexceptional, encompassing agriculture, journalism and banking. Only Mrs Ewing had sat at Westminster, three M.E.P.'s had experience of local government but none had yet taken a successful move towards election to the House of Commons.

In Scotland, as elsewhere, the campaign was marked by a low level of activity. Clearly, all the parties were exhausted, physically as well as financially, by the General Election. Neither the Labour nor Conservative parties mounted a conspicuously Scottish campaign. Scottish issues arose, such as the question of regional aid, grants from the European Coal and Steel Community, but probably as a reaction to the recent General Election campaign, efforts were organised on a UK basis. The Conservative Party did produce a booklet dealing with Scotland's involvement with the Community since 1973 but this was designed as a campaign aid for candidates, rather than for distribution to the electorate. SNP posters, used only a few weeks before, could be seen with the new Euro-candidate's name superimposed, election addresses were not sent to every household, canvassing was practically non-existent, public meetings were even more poorly attended than a few weeks before. The only organisation to attempt to engender some election fever into an exhausted Scottish electorate was the all-party Scotland in Europe, the Scottish arm of the European Movement, which bravely organised a series of meetings in some of the constituencies addressed by all the candidates. In Edinburgh at the last meeting organised by Scotland in Europe, over 350 people turned out to listen to the candidates for the Lothians constituency, but this interest was not repeated elsewhere.

III

Once elected the Scottish members of the European Parliament found themselves confronted by the rigours of commuting and the disruption caused by this peripatetic and therefore costly Parliament. The specialist parliamentary committees meet in Brussels, the plenary sessions of the European Parliament take place in Strasbourg and
occasionally Luxembourg, while meetings of the political parties can take place in any of the capital cities of the Community. Additionally, there are constituency duties to attend to and, inevitably for a new Parliament, procedural uncertainties demand extraordinary meetings or sessions, called at short notice which cut into the precious time allowed at home in the constituency. Moves are afoot to speed up the decision on a permanent site for the European Parliament. I believe however it is naive to imagine Strasbourg will abandon its claim in favour of Luxembourg and to move lock, stock and barrel to Brussels is to add anonymity to a struggling new institution's search for a place amongst the other institutions of the Community. At this stage of the European Parliament's development I believe it is wise to remain in Strasbourg. The Commissioners and their staff move there from Brussels for the week and are available much more easily than in Brussels; the Council of Ministers similarly are in Strasbourg for most of the week and although it is tempting to deal a blow at the French, to antagonise them unnecessarily by removing the site of the European Parliament from Strasbourg is to invite retaliation at a time of increasing crisis in the Community.

A member of the European Parliament enjoys at least one major advantage over his Westminster colleagues. He knows when he has to face the electorate. This should lead him to pursue a more rational approach to the problems he faces in the Parliament, even indulge in being considered "communautaire" and try to see things in the long view rather than in terms of what immediate political advantage can be sold to his electorate. So far there are signs, at times almost imperceptible but nevertheless there, that most Scottish M.E.P.'s recognise Scotland's interests lie in Europe. Debates on steel, shipbuilding textiles, coal and regional policy have concentrated the thoughts of Scottish M.E.P.'s on the parallelism that exists between their own constituency problems and those in other areas of the Community. That said, it is impossible after 12 months membership of the European Parliament not to feel a sense of melancholy, of foreboding at the way the climate of opinion in the U.K. is changing inexorably towards antagonism to the Community and its institutions.

Scottish M.E.P.'s interests are to some extent conditioned by the nature of their constituencies. Most however have to keep a watching brief on a huge range of subjects given the geographical and occupational diversity of the Euro-constituencies. Mail arrives as for a Westminster member but it is more likely to be from a group representing clear social, economic or professional interests rather than from an individual aggrieved on a particular point. There is one important exception. Many Scots have taken employment on the Continent but find on reading the small print after their arrival unfairness and discrimination in favour of the nationals of the host country. Teachers, architects and nurses have discovered this and written to their local M.E.P. The follow-up to a letter is very often to table a written or oral question to the Commission or Council or go and see a member of the Commission staff: all very like the House of Commons. Of course, having larger tracts to cover and bigger electorates an M.E.P. cannot get to know as many people in his constituency as a Westminster member, but most write in the local papers, vie with each other for time on television and radio and speak as widely as possible to different audiences to inform them about the Community, rather than giving purely party political speeches. The desire for knowledge of the Community and its workings exceeds that for a narrow political line on any European issue. In a way, that is a reflection of what the European Parliament should be: not a place to refight Westminster battles but to discuss, relatively free from confrontation, European problems and reach common solutions not predicated on national political ideologies.

IV

But what has happened in the Community - in any of its institutions - which directly affects Scotland? The running battles of the great lamb war between Britain and France through 1979-80 have stirred feelings, intensified arguments and confounded even the EEC's most seasoned experts so much that one scarcely sees the sheep any more. It did, however, allow us to indulge in everybody's favourite pastime, Francophobia, without the obligation of having to fight the French. If only the Marquis of Queensberry had been a Frenchman! Every institution got involved - the Court, the Commission, the
Council of Ministers, the European Parliament and the European Council – and at the end a sheepmeat regime was hammered out in the context of the agreement about the United Kingdom's excessive contribution to the Community Budget. The result was mildly advantageous to the Scottish primary producer and took account of the French Government's attitude to the sheep areas, where essentially national policy is to retain certain levels of population, rather than see agricultural land abandoned. The Scotch whisky industry too benefitted from the UK Budget solution and obtained restitutions totalling about £40 m to compensate for its having to purchase barley in the Community, where prices rose since 1973, rather than at home in a market free from the unsatisfactory Common Agricultural Policy. The marathon battle with the other Community members over a Common Fisheries Policy was intensified following the resolution of the UK's Budget contribution. Scottish Fishermen's hopes for a profitable future (or indeed, any future at all) depend on the outcome of negotiations between June and December 1980.

To talk simply of what Scotland has got out of the Community is to fall into the trap of thinking the Community is a cooperative society where profit is disguised as dividends paid to its members. Nonetheless it is true that we have continued to receive our disproportionate share of funds from the Regional and Social funds, the European Investment Bank and the ECSC. With less than 10 per cent of the United Kingdom's population Scotland gets over 25 per cent of funds from these sources to the United Kingdom. The method of their receipt and accounting by the central authorities for public expenditure purposes is legitimately a cause for concern - a policy pursued since 1973.

The European Parliament's single major achievement in its first year was the rejection in December 1979 of the Community Budget. The European Parliament was motivated by the ambition of its members to insert their institution into the vexed field of agricultural spending. British members, Conservative and Labour, were aware that the judicious use of the budgetary authority they shared with the Council of Ministers could influence policy and could be instrumental in helping to achieve a satisfactory outcome to the negotiations over the United Kingdom's contribution to the Community Budget. What united the forces in the European Parliament in Strasbourg last December was not that 80 per cent of the £12,000 m Community Budget was now being allocated to agriculture but that 60 per cent of that total was being given to farmers, many less than full-time, mainly on the Continent, to enable them to continue farming and produce a commodity for which there was no market but for which there was a guaranteed price through the mechanism of the Common Agricultural Policy's guarantee fund (FEOGA). The commitment to structural reform of the Budget involving the level and pattern of agricultural spending, now adopted by Giscard and Schmidt, can be traced back to December 1979, when the Budget was rejected and generally to the persistent voices of protest coming from the Parliament demanding such reforms. The satisfactory outcome to the United Kingdom's demands for a solution to its budgetary problems is a by-product of this European Parliamentary protest.

Historically aware Scottish members had thus been reminded at a beguilingly early stage in December 1979 of the similarity between 20th Century Strasbourg and mid-17th Century England. They could almost relive the battles of Parliament against the Stuart monarchs, except the parliament was European and not exclusively English and the monarchs were not dynastic but came under the guise of national Ministers of France. Sooner than expected and with a louder, more united voice than even its staunchest supporters dared hope, the latterday Pyms and Hampdens (with Mrs Ewing siding alone of the Scottish members with the "monarchs" in the Council of Ministers) rejected the 1980 Budget. But then, six months later, in spite of asking for a shift of resources from agriculture to regional and social programmes for industry, transport and energy, the European Parliament passed the 1980 Budget, relatively unaltered. Why? The answer is that the battle lines had been drawn and the European Parliament had announced that it was no longer willing to be a mere cypher for the Council of Ministers to take decisions on policy and agree when asked to pay for them. Dunkirk was certainly no glorious victory, but it paved the way for the Allies to reform and prepare for the Second Front in June 1944. By extending its budgetary con-
trol powers whereby monies normally automatically available to the Council of Ministers to part-finance the dairy surpluses could only be released by its approval, the European Parliament had for the first time brought agriculture into the budgetary process and made it accountable, through the European Parliament, to the electorate. The huge bulk of agricultural spending is still outside the competence of the European Parliament, because it is "obligatory" and has a legal base but even so by attacking and succeeding in destroying one previously automatic right of the Council of Ministers, progress was made.

But what of the wider dimension of Scotland in Europe. Can the Community and its institutions contribute to the well-being of Scotland? I believe they can and will. Alan Massie argued in "The Spectator" in January 1980 that Scottish Conservatives in the European Parliament should be Scottish Gaullists. Fine, but Gaullism is sustainable because benefits have accrued to France from suggesting and pursuing successfully a distinct line of policy within Europe. Until recently, benefits from Europe for Scotland (other than book-keeping exercises from the Regional and Social Funds, European Investment Bank and ECSC monies) were for the connoisseur at New St. Andrew's House, rather than the man who turns to the "Daily Record" or "Sunday Post" for guidance on events. Instead, and rejecting Gaullism and its implicit nationalism, I feel the time has come to strike out for higher ground where optimism exists and where the development of common policies can benefit the regions of Europe of which Scotland is one. This means being responsive to the new opportunity created by the solution to the United Kingdom's budgetary contribution. Europe is still one-dimensional after almost a quarter of a century of the existence of the Community. The Common Agricultural Policy is still its main achievement. The European Parliament is relevant because it can provide a forum to debate remedies to the relative de-industrialisation forced on the United Kingdom by her exclusion from the Community during those 12 prosperous years of 1961-73. During that time, Community growth was 50 per cent higher than in the United Kingdom, investment in manufacturing industry was 50 per cent higher and by the early 1970's, European output per

head was 50 per cent higher than in the United Kingdom from industrial machinery which was more modern and capable of manufacturing more up-to-date products to a better specification.

This lead to a steady decline in our share of world trade, complaints of long delivery dates, the relative obsolescence of our production and a growing propensity to import. One damaging social side effect has been that the relative decline of manufacturing industry has made it more difficult to find jobs for the workers from industries in decline throughout Europe and in Scotland (textiles, coal, steel, shipbuilding).

Energy is the crucial area which could act as the catalyst for industrial regeneration and help to overcome Scotland's disenchantment with the Community. The raison d'être of the Community was essentially that German industrial potential and French agricultural capacity were going to be rewarded and protected and common interests promoted to the benefit of all. Fine ideals but I suggest it is now time to add a further dimension in the changed economic and political circumstances since 1957 - the United Kingdom's energy capacity - and acknowledge it and exploit it as both a national and a European asset.

V

Successful governments in the United Kingdom have correctly adopted a policy of high oil prices but in spite of allowing our own refiners preferential prices and conditions we have not been prepared to give price or supply priority to our Community partners. By developing a European energy strategy recognising the needs of our partners yet predicated on our own energy-rich situation, this time we would be the drivers and not the frustrated passengers suffering from the vagaries of a Continental time-table designed in our absence and with scant regard for our travelling habits. Such an energy strategy would be aimed at reducing Europe's need for oil; building up reliable internal sources of energy; improving the efficiency of Europe's energy consumption; and developing a more effective external energy policy, particularly towards the oil producers of the Arab world. In such a strategy, a top priority must be to pool
Europe's research efforts into new and safer ways of producing energy whenever this is possible. Costs can be cut dramatically as can be seen with the Community's JET Project on nuclear fusion at Culham in Berkshire. Perhaps most important of all a common energy policy for Europe could lead to the development of new sources of energy.

But to do those things, a common energy policy needs money. A levy on imported crude oil, or oil product imports, a consumer or producer tax, or even a combination of the three have been discussed in the Department of Energy and the Foreign Office in recent years. However, the imprimatur of approval for the development of a European energy strategy was granted at the European Council in Venice on June 21st, 1980.

The logic of an oil levy is irrefutable. Why should oil imports be free of levy or tariff when nearly all other imports, agricultural or manufactured, are subject to a 6 per cent common external tariff, met by the European taxpayer and paid into the Community Budget. Furthermore, there is a precedent in the energy field. Since 1951, coal imported into Europe outside of the ECSC area has been subject to a 1 per cent levy. Table 1, from a paper prepared for the European Conservative Group by Madron Seligman, MEP., shows approximately the total amount which would be raised by a levy of 1 per cent or 6 per cent and compares it with net contributions by the member states to the Community Budget.

It would be difficult to argue conceptually with such a fund since by discriminating against third country imports it would be taking its cue from the sanctified common agricultural policy but there would be no question of intervention in oil production or the creation of oil lakes on present trends!

Assuming an equitable share of such a fund being used in the United Kingdom, it would not be fanciful to suppose Scotland could benefit. Further research could be done on the potential of peat in the North of Scotland and eventually, perhaps, peat could be used to replace small diesel generators supplying electricity to the remote communities. The spare heat generated might be diverted to develop, for example, fish farming, horticulture or heating systems for the smallest communities. The viability of whole city heating systems could be researched further. The Physical Planning Department of Lothian Region has shown that the waste heat from two of the four 300 megawatt sets at Cockenzie Power Station could supply 90 per cent of the heating for the centre of Edinburgh. To put hot water mains into the streets of Edinburgh, to utilise the waste heat produced by the burning of coal, to dig up the streets and the accompanying disruption exceeds, as an initial capital outlay, £100m. But the loss of the waste steam into the Forth estuary and the fact that power stations could use up to 60 per cent of their thermal energy capacity (instead of the present 35 per cent) by utilising waste heat is a reminder of the potential to be tapped. Scotland's immense coal seams will become more expensive to develop and our unique combination of wind, sun and wave could create additional energy sources at competitive cost. The challenge will not disappear; only the chances of resolving Europe's energy crisis if a common energy strategy is not vigorously pursued by the Community.

VI

Power is intoxicating; the merest suggestion of having it within reach even more so. In its first 12 months the European Parliament has experienced both the exhilaration of rejecting the Budget and the
frustration of being unable to advance meaningfully against the absurdity of the Common Agricultural Policy. A reorientation of the Common Agricultural Policy from price support towards direct spending therefore remains a top priority for all the institutions of the Community. As I have outlined already, I believe if Parliament is wise, it will see in the European Commission its natural ally. If the present imbalance persists, in favour of the Council against the Commission and the European Parliament, the outlook is not bright. What I fear might happen would be a revival of narrow nationalism in the Council and the European Parliament, increasingly frustrated, moving into a situation of non-cooperation. Either development would not help Scotland.

The European Parliament has an essential role to play in promoting progress in the Community. It must help to shame nationalistic governments into collective action by the moral and political force which stems from its direct mandate. The founding fathers did not see the Community as the preserve of Ministers and bureaucrats, but for the benefit of the people of Europe. Scotland has a lot to gain from the Community and the people of Scotland should expect its representatives in the European Parliament to play their role. After 12 months, the signs are there.