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Steven, Martin H.M. (2003) *The political influence of the Church of Scotland, post-devolution : public policy-making and religion in Scottish politics.* PhD thesis.

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The political influence of the Church of Scotland, post-devolution: public policy-making and religion in Scottish politics

by

Martin H. M. Steven

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy to the Department of Politics, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Glasgow

August 2003

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Abstract

The research is an in-depth, empirical study of the political behaviour of the Church of Scotland; it is primarily intended as a contribution to the territorial field of Scottish politics. The most important aim of the thesis is to assess the overall effectiveness of the Church of Scotland when it takes part in political activities. More generally, the research has three key themes: first, it examines the place of religion in politics by analysing churches as political pressure groups rather than simply looking at voting behaviour; second, it looks at the development of the new Scottish political system, post-devolution; third, it explicitly compares the political behaviour of the Church of Scotland with the Scottish Catholic Church. Chapter two focuses on the political behaviour of the Church and Nation Committee of the Church of Scotland and concludes that its effectiveness is limited, primarily due to a shift in societal values. Chapter three focuses on the political behaviour of the Board of Social Responsibility of the Church of Scotland and concludes that it possesses more potential for influence than the Committee, due to the nature of the issues it is concerned with. Chapter four compares and contrasts the political behaviour of the Church of Scotland with the Scottish Catholic Church, and concludes that the latter is often more effective than the former when they act as political pressure groups. Chapter five analyses the results of the elite survey questionnaires and interviews; one of its main conclusions is that while most Scottish politicians believe the Church of Scotland to be influential, they do not perceive themselves to be personally influenced. The thesis argues that the political influence of the Church of Scotland is varied, depending on which area of policy is being addressed, and the place of religion generally in Scottish politics is becoming increasingly peripheral.

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisors, Professor James G Kellas (1999-2001), Professor William L Miller FBA, FRSE (2001-2002) and Dr Barry J O'Toole (2001-2002). Professor Kellas was an enthusiastic supervisor, who enabled me to structure my preliminary thoughts and ideas, and who has helped me in an informal capacity since retiring in the summer of 2001. Since then, Professor Miller's encouraging and positive support has consistently helped my self-confidence, while Dr O'Toole's thorough and meticulous advice was invaluable - both gave me the sort of time and attention all PhD students would hope for.

I would also like to thank Professor Christopher Berry, David Stansfield and Pamela Flynn, and the Department of Politics generally, for providing such excellent facilities in which to work. Thanks also to Fraser Duncan and Craig Smith for their friendship over the last four years. Room T216 in the Adam Smith Building, and its environs, was a stimulating and enjoyable place in which to work, and I valued the opportunity to share ideas and opinions with them, on a variety of topics, academic and otherwise. I am also grateful to the MSPs, MPs and others who were willing to participate in one of my interviews, and answer my research questions.

Finally, I'd like to thank my family - my mother Allison, my father Harold and my brother Andrew – and Kathryn, for all their support, and for giving me the inspiration which I needed to complete my studies on time. I could not have done it without them, and it is to them this thesis is dedicated.

Martin Steven

Glasgow, August 2003

Chapter 1 – The Church of Scotland and politics today

1.1 Objectives and themes of research

In essence, this thesis is a study of the relationship between religion and politics in Scotland. This is a somewhat neglected area of research despite its obvious relevance and importance. More specifically, the primary aim of the study is to examine the political influence of the Church of Scotland, the denomination to which most Scots adhere[1]. It will attempt to assess the effectiveness of the two national Church committees/boards which often act like political pressure groups – the Church and Nation Committee and the Board of Social Responsibility. The conclusions drawn concern the devolved Scottish political system i.e. the system which has existed from the summer of 1999 onwards, up to the end of 2002 when the primary research was concluded.

As well as analysing the political influence of the Church of Scotland, the research has two other main objectives. First, the thesis aims to use the specific conclusions drawn with regard to the Church of Scotland in order to evaluate the potential influence of other pressure groups in the new devolved Scottish political system. One of the central aims of the Scottish Constitutional Convention (1995: 24) was that the new Parliament be characterised by "accountability, accessibility, openness and responsiveness to the people". How successful has the new legislature been in achieving those objectives? The focus of this thesis is limited, but wider conclusions about the new Scottish political system can still be drawn from its findings.

Second, the research will look at the place of religion generally in modern Scottish politics and try to evaluate its future role. While the thesis is mainly about the effectiveness of the Church of Scotland's ability to impact on public policy-making, the political influence of the Scottish Catholic Church will also be examined for comparative purposes. Religion has traditionally played an important part in the Scottish political system in a similar, if less extreme, way to Northern Ireland, due to a shared history. While organised religion appears to be in decline, the levels of adherence to churches in Scotland remain significant enough to make them social institutions still worthy of analysis in this context. This will be a recurring theme

[1] See section 1.5.

throughout the thesis, and will be discussed extensively. Nevertheless, while it is true to say that religion still holds a recognisable place in the Scottish political system, this is not the same as stating that churches continue to have significant political influence – a disparity the thesis will explore.

In pursuing these research aims, the thesis has three main themes: first, while there already exists a substantial amount of research on the influence of religion on voting behaviour, both in the UK and elsewhere, there is significantly less on the influence of religion, in the 'institutional' sense of that term. This is certainly the case in the Scottish political system where no substantive body of social science literature exists on the political behaviour of the Church of Scotland or the other main denomination, the Catholic Church, despite the historic links between religion and politics that have always existed in Scotland. While much political science research has been conducted on pressure groups, and much conducted on religion, little has been carried out in Scotland on religious organisations when they *act as pressure groups*, despite the fact they often adopt this role. The thesis argues that this an important aspect to the relationship between politics and religion and one that is under-researched, particularly in the context of Scotland. Section 1.3 of this chapter will discuss the literature which already exists on the relationship between religion and politics in western democracies.

The second theme concerns the way in which the new Scottish political system is developing. The decision to set up a Public Petitions Committee in the Parliament, which exists solely to look at public campaigns in Scotland, exemplified the sentiment that the Westminster system could substantially improve its level of contact with ordinary voters. As the final report of the Scottish Constitutional Convention states (1995): "From this process, we have emerged with the powerful hope that the coming of a Scottish Parliament will usher in a way of politics that is radically different from the rituals of Westminster; more participative, more creative, less confrontational...a culture of openness which will enable the people to see how decisions are being taken in their name, and why". The devolution White Paper is also quite explicit: "The government expect that the Scottish Parliament will adopt modern methods of working; that it will be accessible, open and responsive to the needs of the public..." (Scottish Office 1997: 30). As Brown argues, the "demands for a parliament in Scotland were always closely connected to a vision of how it would operate" (2000: 542) and that "demand was not just for a new legislative body but for one which had a specific ethos and way of working" (2000: 545).

The existence of Scottish pressure groups was one of the many factors behind Scotland regaining its Parliament in 1999 – 'home rulers' argued that if Scotland had its own legal system, its own education system, its own Church, its own media, and its own civic society, then why could it not have its own Parliament? Post-devolution, MSPs are able to maintain contact with these groups in a way that Scottish MPs are not – Edinburgh's Royal Mile and The Mound are filled with politicians, journalists and lobbyists interacting with one another. While the Church of Scotland is an unconventional pressure group in many respects, section 1.2 will explain why it can still be studied from this perspective. The Church is an interesting Scottish political institution to study in depth while Scottish politics is an exciting territorial research area for political science at present. Hassan and Lynch describe it as a "world of complex, multi-layered politics and governance, just as likely to confuse as to clarify" (2001: vii). It is therefore worth testing whether some aspects of clarity can be achieved.

The third theme of the thesis involves an explicit comparison of the Church of Scotland with the other main Scottish denomination, the Catholic Church. The 1990s witnessed a change in the way institutional religion interacted with Scottish politics. Cardinal Thomas Winning, the leader of the Scottish Catholic Church, developed a public profile for himself that no other Scottish churchman had managed in the twentieth century. At a time of significant decline in church attendance across Western Europe, how did a Catholic Cardinal manage to become one of the best known public figures in Scotland? The political behaviour of the Scottish Catholic Church will be covered throughout the thesis for comparative reasons, and particularly in chapter four. However, it was felt that it would be practicable to focus only on one denomination, and less political science research had been conducted on the established Church in Scotland, which is in any case the largest denomination, than on the Catholic Church. Together, however, the Church of Scotland and Catholic Church in Scotland can be viewed as two active interest groups in the Scottish political system, where the role religion plays in politics continues to be a highly topical issue.

1.2 Methodological and theoretical framework of thesis

The research has involved an in-depth, empirical study of the political behaviour of the Church of Scotland. The Church has **not** been chosen as the central focus of the thesis in order to advance the theoretical study of pressure groups; the thesis is primarily a contribution to the territorial field of Scottish politics and if the central focus had been another interest group (of whatever nature) or political institution, the methodological

approach would have been significantly different. Nevertheless, pressure group theory helps to provide a framework for the thesis, while section 1.3 focuses on the relationship between religion and politics in western systems. It is perhaps worth restating the opening paragraph of the thesis – in essence, this is a study of the relationship between religion and politics in Scotland.

McGarvey argues that post-devolution texts on Scottish politics predominantly lack a theoretical framework and instead choose to adopt "journalistic" or overly "institutional" approaches (2001: 438). While this is a valid criticism, and one which this study hopes to avoid, it is equally important not to be critical of the institutional approach per se. Lynch's *Scottish Government and Politics* (2001), for example, while occasionally lacking in depth and detail, does broadly follow in the descriptive-inductive tradition of Kellas's *The Scottish Political System* (1989) in its structure and objectives, and a broadly similar approach is employed in this study. As Rhodes highlights, the "study of political institutions displays a preference for 'letting facts speak for themselves' matched only by its distaste for theory" (1995: 44). While the latter half of the sentence is perhaps articulated a little strongly, the spirit of the first half is accurate.

Rhodes also argues that the "institutional approach remains a defining characteristic of the British school of politics" (1995: 55) and has always been "part of the political science mainstream" (1995: 54). To an extent, Jordan's criticism (1990) of March and Olsen's "new institutionalism" (1984) is valid – that there appears to be little substantively 'new' about it, particularly from a British perspective. However, Hall's claim that his new definition of institutionalism involves informal organisational networks is perhaps less enigmatic than March and Olsen's account. With Taylor, he argues that there are actually three "new institutionalisms" – historical, rational choice and sociological – all of which "paint quite different pictures of the political world" (Hall and Taylor 1996: 936). Historical institutionalism, while continuing to assign importance to formal political institutions, has developed a wider-ranging account of which institutions matter and why. Rational choice institutionalism was originally an American phenomenon, which developed in the late 1970s out of a desire to explain why there continued to be stable Congressional legislative majorities when there simultaneously existed "multiple preference-orderings of legislators and [a] multidimensional character of issues" (Hall and Taylor 1996: 942). Sociological institutionalism focuses on the link between bureaucratic institutions and culture, contending that many institutional procedures are 'culturally specific' and depend on national context.

Hall and Taylor propose that these different schools should attempt to have a "more open and extensive interchange" as "each has something to learn from the others" (1996: 957). This is sensible, and the thesis places itself firmly in the "institutional" tradition that all of these schools generally embrace. They may differ in detail but they also "share a great deal of common analytical ground" (Hall and Taylor 1996: 936). In particular, they all comply with March and Olsen's argument that institutions are "political actors in their own right" (1984: 738) and should not be downgraded in importance. That is also the premise this thesis starts from - the focus of the research is the political behaviour of a significant Scottish institution – the national Church. What follows is not a test of one particular theoretical policy model, but an institutional study of one aspect of the Scottish political system.

Methods

The research methods used can be divided into four categories. First, there has been a review of literature, with an analysis of the key pieces of work in the sub-fields of Scottish politics, the study of the relationship between religion and politics, and pressure group studies. Second, primary/archival research has taken place, with scrutiny of church documents, parliamentary statutes (both at Westminster and Holyrood) and social science statistics and data. Two visits were paid to the Church of Scotland headquarters in Edinburgh (one to the Church and Nation office, one to the Board of Social Responsibility offices) to examine church documentation and administrative records e.g. written correspondence, reports and publications. Third, elite interviews have been conducted with church representatives while questionnaires and follow up telephone interviews have been carried out with Scottish MPs and MSPs – qualitative analysis followed by quantitative analysis. Although not the centrepiece of the thesis, the various responses to the surveys sent out, both written and oral, were an important part of the research and a chapter has been allocated to analyse the data, garnered from those interviews. Last, internet and media analysis has been important, including an informed look at the Scottish quality press and broadcast media.

Is it legitimate to look at the political activities of a state church as if it were merely a "cause" or "sectional" pressure group (Stewart 1958: 25)? The thesis argues emphatically that it is, primarily because of the remits of the two church committees/boards which provide the case studies for chapters two and three. The Church and Nation Committee's official 'mission statement' compels it to consider

"what action the Church from time to time may be advised to take to further the highest interests of the people", while the Board's equivalent recommends (perhaps less dramatically) putting forward these [political] "judgements at all levels of influence" (Church of Scotland 2001a: 29). According to Grant (albeit speaking of the Church of England), when the established Church attempts to apply pressure on government over a certain issue, it is a "secondary" pressure group. Its "main purpose is that of a religious organisation: to provide facilities, buildings and clergy for worship and the administration of the sacrament in accordance with its doctrinal beliefs, and to propagate its interpretation of the Christian gospel" (2000: 16). When it does speak out, however, it is both a "promotional" group, in the sense that it makes pronouncements on social and political issues, and a "sectional" group, when it, for example, criticises the Government for not exempting its ministers from the Community Charge. It is not unreasonable to look at the 'established' Church of Scotland in this way as well – the prime purpose of the Church of England/Scotland is, then, "a religious one, but it has a secondary function as a pressure group seeking to influence public policy" (Grant 2000: 16).

In an earlier chapter (1984: 125), Grant admits that "it is more difficult to distinguish between a pressure group and other kinds of voluntary organisation than it is to distinguish between a pressure group and a political party". In other words, while definitions of different types of groups can vary, "common-sense" (1984: 124) helps us to identify one from a political party: their range of interests tends to be narrower and they do not seek to hold political office. Grant's discussion in this context is not particularly helpful – he does not attempt to provide clarity when it comes to distinguishing between a primary and secondary pressure group, and also admits some organisations e.g. the CBI, have as broad a range of interests as a political party (1984: 124). Nevertheless, the implication is that a secondary pressure group is any association or organisation that seeks to exert political influence, but which does not exist solely for that purpose. When such an organisation enters the political arena, in an attempt to obtain political influence, its effectiveness can be analysed in the same way as that of a "primary" pressure group. Section 1.3 will look at how Warner's treatment of the Catholic Church as an interest group (2000) can be compared with this thesis's analysis of the Church of Scotland.

As the research involves an in-depth, institutional study of the Church of Scotland, it is difficult to compare effectively its subject matter, in any detailed way, with other interest groups. Indeed, as section 1.1 has already mentioned, it is not feasible to look at the

Catholic Church in equivalent depth either – while comparing the two churches is one of the themes of the thesis, no attempt is made to specifically analyse the Catholic Church on its own terms. The nature of secondary interest groups make them individualised organisations and it would not necessarily be particularly helpful to repeatedly contrast the churches with other groups in the Scottish political system. Other comparable organisations will be mentioned briefly in the course of the thesis but only when it is considered helpful to the specific aims and objectives set out in section 1.1, and not in any methodical way. Section 1.3 will show how this approach is in keeping with other writers in the field e.g. Moyser (1985) and Warner (2000). Again, it is important to stress that this thesis is not an analysis of a certain type of Scottish pressure group but a detailed and multidimensional study of the Church of Scotland's political behaviour. Nevertheless, by applying pressure group terminology when looking at the Church's activities, conclusions can be drawn about its overall effectiveness in this respect.

Section 1.1 described the aims of the thesis, including the central objective of analysing the political influence of the Church of Scotland. Measuring political influence precisely is problematic, but gaining an overall picture of the effectiveness of a particular pressure group is not. The Church of Scotland consistently attempts to exert political influence and so it is a valid question for a political science thesis to ask – does it succeed? In chapter six, the conclusions of the thesis do not reveal the precise level of political influence of the Church of Scotland – rather, they evaluate (amongst other things) whether or not the Church is an effective pressure group, which is not an unrealistic objective. As Baumgartner and Leech put it, scholars "may be right to avoid questions that cannot be answered, but then again it would be preferable to rephrase the questions so that they could be answered" (1998: 14).

Even this, however, is difficult and, as Grant points out, often depends on perspective and context (2000: 194). For example, the CBI had much more interaction with the Labour government of 1974-1979 than it did with preceding and succeeding Conservative administrations but only because the organisation viewed Wilson and Callaghan's policies as more threatening and so tried to do more to influence them. Coxall agrees with Grant (2001: 160-1), arguing that the "nature of government, as well as the multiplicity of goals pursued by many groups, hinders attempts at objective assessment". He also states that the success or failure of groups can be partially explained by the "prevailing political culture" (2001: 160). For example, if a government is committed to increasing economic growth, the goals of environmental groups, for example, will be moved down the list of priorities. Overall, the difficulties

in discussing political influence are threefold – defining measures of effectiveness, distinguishing between 'power' and 'influence', and generally gaining access to the policy-making process. While the thesis draws a distinction between *measuring influence* and *analysing effectiveness*, these difficulties must still be overcome if the thesis is to achieve its set targets.

Chapter two discusses in more detail the question of evaluating pressure group effectiveness, including Baumgartner and Mahoney's large-scale project (2002) analysing lobbying behaviour in the United States. Writers in the field have tried to address the difficulties involved, although as Whiteley and Winyard argue, "the question of interest group effectiveness is probably one of the least adequately researched aspects of the study of pressure groups" (1987: 111). With regard to the first difficulty, there is no definitive answer. However, as Grant correctly states, it is often easier to assess the ineffectiveness of a pressure group, or a change in its levels of effectiveness, than its effectiveness per se (2000: 211). In other words, while we cannot definitively sum up how influential the Church of Scotland is, we can draw conclusions about whether it is as influential as it would like to be, or indeed should be, based on its resources and assets.

The second and third difficulties, however, can be overcome more easily. There exist numerous definitions of 'power' and 'influence', with Grant (2000: 193), for example, arguing that "power may be said to refer to the exercise of authority", while influence "rests on the power to persuade". Thomas disagrees, arguing that the "exact difference between *influence* and *power* has yet to be satisfactorily operationalised" and consequently advocates that the two terms be used interchangeably (1993: 24). However, Grant's distinction is undoubtedly helpful in clarifying the sort of political activity interest groups are involved in and so in this sense, it is 'influence', more than 'power', that the thesis is concerned with. In terms of the third difficulty, Whiteley and Winyard state that it is important to speak to the pressure groups themselves to ask them if they think they are effective, even if that is only a second-best solution to directly observing the decision-making process (1987: 114). This has been done in the thesis, although the potential is always there for individuals to exaggerate their own importance. Speaking to the decision-makers is even more effective, as they know who influenced them - hence, the elite survey questionnaire.

The questionnaire was sent to all 129 MSPs and 72 Scottish MPs, asking their views on relevant issues and these results (along with the contents of follow-up telephone

interviews) are contained in chapter five. The precise nature of the survey design will be discussed and justified in that chapter (section 5.2), but it is important in this first chapter to briefly explain why, in principle, such an approach is appropriate. It would be deficient for a thesis written in the immediate post-devolution period to ignore the first intake of MSPs at Holyrood, and simply speak to Scottish Executive civil servants, a majority of whom previously worked at the Scottish Office[2]. Taking the views of these new parliamentarians is particularly important when one considers the emphasis the Parliament's Consultative Steering Group placed on the powers of committees (Consultative Steering Group 1998: 5), with the explicit aim that the 'new politics' would not simply be like 'old Westminster'. McGarvey criticises Lynch's study for not explaining fully enough why modern policy-making is no longer the preserve of civil servants and ministers (2001: 433), but this is patently the case. A back-bench MSP is more influential than his or her Westminster equivalent, as is the Parliament as a whole compared with the House of Commons' relationship with Whitehall. Parliamentary committees effectively fulfil a dual function, akin to a merged version of both the standing and select committees at Westminster, thus making their role close to that of a second chamber. Handing real power to MSPs, rather than just Executive Ministers, is one of the key principles of the new Parliament (Consultative Steering Group 1998: 5) and chapter six will argue that it has been relatively successful.

Theory

The research methodology outlined above was influenced by a pluralist theoretical approach. By analysing the Church of Scotland from a pressure group perspective, the thesis accepts the premise that pressure groups have a significant role to play in the Scottish political system, if not necessarily a consistently influential one. Smith describes pluralism as an "enigma" (1995: 209) of a theory, but that does not mean it is entirely without coherence. Broadly, much of the pluralist case rests on the premise that access to the political system is relatively straightforward and that forming a pressure group which will have some sort of influence is not especially difficult. While flaws can be found in these assumptions (more so in Britain than in the United States, where government is less fragmented), the theory still has much to recommend it, particularly in its neo-pluralism form, which has gone some way to update the original principles as well as making them more applicable to the UK.

[2] Nine Scottish Executive civil servants were contacted (see appendix I).

The pluralist model can be broadly applied to the new Scottish political system, perhaps more so than the UK as a whole. As Midwinter, Keating and Mitchell state, "the smallness of the Scottish political arena means that personal acquaintance is easier and civil servants may be more accessible than their Whitehall counterparts, though this further tilts the balance of influence in government and weakens political control" (1991: 77). There are numerous examples of autonomous policy communities[3] in areas such as education, housing, health and planning. These communities are then "reinforced where there are distinctive Scottish institutions, for example in the legal system, education and the church establishment" (Brown, McCrone and Paterson 1998: 108). The thesis argues that the size of the Scottish population, and the close links which exist between prominent individuals in its civil society, means that non-governmental organisations and pressure groups have the potential for genuine influence. The cities of Edinburgh and Glasgow host a contained network of political elites, constantly interacting with one another and setting the policy agenda. Brown, McCrone and Paterson conclude that, in a policy-formulation sense at least, Scotland has become "less and less British since the 1970s" (1998: 117). As a consequence, "Scottish elites are closer to Scottish popular feeling than the central UK state tends to be, simply because many of them are in touch with Scottish professional organisations" (Brown, McCrone and Paterson 1998: 117-118).

Pluralists like Polsby and Dahl typify the dominance of American literature in the field but their central theories can still be applied to the Scottish political system. Polsby (1980) rejects Hunter's stratification argument (1953) that in any one community, a single group must necessarily dominate due to its economic superiority. From his classic New Haven study (1961), Dahl also determined that the distribution of influence was not determined solely by economic wealth. Neither the Scottish Executive nor the Scotland Office can be identified with any one major lobbying organisation or interest group. Roma Menlowe, the head of the Civil Law Division in the Justice Department, Scottish Executive, stressed the inclusive nature of consultation that takes place in all aspects of policy-making, particularly since devolution (Interview with author, 2nd May 2003). Consultation depends on the relevance of the group to the issue, not on the perceived influence of the group. For that reason, the potential exists for Scottish churches to exert as much political influence as any other interest group if the context is appropriate so studying the Church of Scotland's attempts to achieve this is not a futile exercise.

[3] The concept of "policy communities" will be discussed in section 1.4.

Pluralism tends to focus on the exercise of power, rather than its sources. Polsby argues that policy outcomes must be studied empirically in order to determine the real patterns of influence (1980: 113). This view follows on from Dahl's fundamental assumption that power only truly exists when it is exercised (1961: 272). The in-depth and empirical study of the Church of Scotland in this thesis is within this tradition. The case studies and fieldwork contained in chapters two and three provide a methodical focus on the political behaviour of the Church and do not simply make a priori assumptions about its influence. The thesis attempts to gauge the effectiveness of the Church of Scotland's political behaviour by identifying political issues and then determining the role of the Church in the subsequent policy outcome.

These methodological assumptions are by no means out-dated. Neo-pluralists like Lindblom (1977) and more recently Lowery and Gray (2000) argue that there is much to be recommended in the pluralist approach, albeit in a form which takes into account elitist, Marxist and New Right criticisms. While Lowery and Gray (2000: 13) concede that this new perspective is a "pale reflection" of Truman's original form of pluralism (1951), they also contend there exist sufficient similarities to merit comparison. According to Lowery and Gray, there are six distinct characteristics of neo-pluralist perspectives on policy-making: emphasising the importance of analysing a wide range of *institutions* (2000: 15); acknowledging the different types of *competition* which exist between groups (2000: 15); analysing the *context* of the particular policy process (2000: 17); acknowledging the existence of *uncertainties* in policy-making (2000: 18); being aware of *linkages* between the different stages of the policy-making process (2000: 19); and emphasising the *two-way* nature of the flow of policy (2000: 20). As with classical pluralism, all these features can be contrasted with the economic/elitist view that government will always be captured by organised or corporatist interests regardless of the specific circumstances. There may well exist state bias towards business interests and economic policy in the neo-pluralist model but it also continues to stress the importance of groups and competitive policy areas. The unashamedly pro-enterprise policies pursued by the Scottish Executive since 1997 fit this model to an extent, as the approach has not necessarily come at the expense of trade unions or public bodies.

The most compelling criticism of the pluralist approach in the context of this thesis comes from Bachrach and Baratz (1962, 1970) who criticise the pluralist approach for simplistically ignoring what they label the "second face of power" (1970: 3). Their "non-decision-making" model (1970: 9) sees controversial items being deliberately kept

off the political agenda by political elites. In terms of the thesis, chapter four's study of the way the Scottish Catholic Church attempts to wield influence goes into more detail on this, with an analysis of the way the Church effectively defends denominational education by excluding it from the political agenda. Lukes (1974: 23) goes even further than Bachrach and Baratz, arguing that the power can also be exercised by "influencing, shaping or determining" the entire political climate, so that individuals are not even aware they are being influenced. This "third" face of power cannot be any more empirically proved than Bachrach and Baratz's second face but that does not entirely invalidate it or make it irrelevant to the context of the thesis.

In the same way as groups can keep issues off the political agenda, they can also keep them firmly on the agenda. In particular, Baumgartner and Jones's "punctuated equilibrium" model (1993) can be applied to the Scottish political system. For Baumgartner and Jones, the policy-making process is characterised by long periods of instability interspersed with major changes. When there is instability, groups have access to the agenda, with the instability often caused by the media "directing" and "shifting" attention to different issues (Baumgartner and Jones 1993: 103). This particular model of agenda-setting is the most 'pluralist-friendly' and therefore the most relevant to this study. Policy sub-systems are shown to be more 'fragile' than theories that stress the influence of large organisational interests, albeit with a tacit acknowledgement that elite groups are better at setting the agenda than others. In particular, Baumgartner and Jones's focus on the influence of the media is significant. As the next three chapters will illustrate, the Scottish press plays a central role in the political influence of the churches.

The next three sections will reflect the three strands of the thesis respectively: *religion and politics*, *pressure groups*, and *Scottish politics*. This will provide background and context to the focus of the thesis: the political behaviour of the Church of Scotland.

1.3 The place of religion in western political systems

This section focuses on the way religion and politics interact in western democracies, in particular comparing the contexts of Europe and the United States. It is important to place the immediate focus of the thesis against the wider backdrop of other frames of reference. Section 1.2 stated that the thesis views itself primarily as a contribution towards the sub-field of Scottish politics, with pressure group models being helpful in providing a structure for analysis. However, the review of literature in this section will

indicate what sort of contribution the research can make towards the other relevant area of focus – that of the relationship between religion and politics. In Western Europe, the way religion primarily impinges on the political world is through parties and voting behaviour, whereas in the US, the relationship now manifests itself ostensibly through interest groups. Due to the US's pluralist political system, interest group literature contains an American bias and that is particularly the case with religious group literature. After looking at the different ways religion affects political systems in the US and Europe, the section will turn to the closer context of Scotland.

Politics and religion in the United States

Religious interest groups are influential voices in the American political system, although no one church is formally linked to the State. Since the 1970s, "religious interests", particularly on the political right, have "become highly visible forces in American politics" (Guth et al 1995: 55). The two most important religious right organisations of that period were both founded in 1978 – 'Christian Voice' and the 'Moral Majority'. The main focus of 'Christian Voice' was campaigning against pornography and homosexuality while the 'Moral Majority', led by the controversial Reverend Jerry Falwell, presented itself as the voice of conservative Christianity throughout America. As Wilcox states, the 1976 Carter Presidential campaign "mobilized the evangelicals as no candidate had done before" (1992: 11). Carter made his 'born again' Southern Baptist faith central to his campaign, and won many votes as a consequence. However, from a secular and liberal perspective, there was concern over such an uncompromising expression of religious values in politics, and there was also concern from churches that an involvement in politics would lead to a dilution of their moral authority (Guth et al 1995: 58).

By the 1980s, the 'religious right' had become nationally prominent. In 1987, the television evangelist Pat Robertson decided to run for the Republican nomination for President. However, despite spending what Bruce calls an "unprecedented sum" (2002: 215) he failed to win a primary election. Other religious right figures like Pat Buchanan and Gary Bauer have also run for the Republican nomination since then, and fared equally badly. In 1994 the Christian Coalition[4] succeeded in delivering the Party's convention nomination for the governorship of Minnesota to Allen Quist, an anti-abortion activist, although he too was eventually beaten in the primary election by the

incumbent, Arne Carlson. By the 1990s, the campaign tactics used by religious right groups had become highly sophisticated. As Ivers states, "the Christian conservatives who came to Washington in the late 1980s were better organised, more sophisticated in their political and legal capabilities, and better financed than ever before" (1998: 294). For example, during the Clinton budget dispute in 1996, the Christian Coalition aired television advertisements in the districts of undecided Democrats. According to Goldstein, viewers "sick of high taxes" were asked to call a special number which automatically added the name of that person onto the Coalition's list for future campaigns (1999: 67). Callers were also sent out a package of Christian Coalition materials.

In addition to the prominent role of religious interest groups, correlations between religion and voting behaviour have also traditionally been strong in the United States. As Guth et al state, "denominations were the…institutional connection to national politics. Ethnic ties, lifestyle concerns, and the philosophical worldviews generated social and political ideologies that bound the denominations to one political party or another" (1995: 56). Throughout the twentieth century, white Anglo-Saxon Protestants were the backbone of the Republican Party, while Catholics and Jews provided the core for the Democrats (Guth et al 1995: 56-7). As religiosity has weakened (Bruce 2002: 207), however, so too have these alliances and the relationship between religion and politics has altered in character. The differences are now to be found between the religious and the irreligious, as opposed to between the different denominations, and even that distinction does not appear to be strong. Christian right mobilisation was credited with helping the Republicans win the 1994 Congressional elections (Guth et al 2002: 161) but in 2000, while Guth et al's data analysis showed that the most visible correlation was still between the religious right and the Republican Party, it was much reduced.

After George W Bush became President in 2000, the political role of religious groups became even more prominent, and also more controversial. Bush is the most overtly American religious leader since Carter but post-September 11th, that feature of leadership now has an added potency. Bush's "crusade" against terrorism, the "axis of evil", and Osama Bin Laden – "a man without a soul" – is heavy with biblical connotations (Fraser 2003: 26). David Frum, a former Bush speech-writer, describes how prayer is a regular feature of meetings at the White House, with Bible studies led by

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[4] Robertson set up the evangelical, anti-abortion Christian Coalition after his unsuccessful

Cabinet members (Fraser 2003: 26). Soon after the President took office, he launched a flagship drive to provide public funds for churches and religious organisations involved with social care. He established the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, as well as faith-based "centres" in five Cabinet-level federal agencies to assist with its work. He also ordered the removal of "bureaucratic barriers" regulating public funds for religious group (Wilson 2003: 30). In implementing these changes, Bush fundamentally altered the way church and state is traditionally separated in the United States, and opponents of the "charitable choice" principle, as it is known, argue that this should raise cause for concern (Wilson 2003: 29).

Terms such as 'faith-based organisation' (FBO) and 'faith-based initiatives' have also been introduced to the UK. In 2002 for example, the British Government appointed a "faith tsar", John Battle MP, to act as an "extra channel of communication between faith groups and the Prime Minister" (*The Scotsman*, 2nd July 2002). It would be wrong to label the Church of Scotland an 'FBO' as the term applies to religious interest groups, not national denominations or churches, but the thesis will still discuss 'faith-based' initiatives and groups depending on the specific context. Furthermore, while the Church of Scotland is not an FBO, it can still be analysed from an interest group perspective if it is effectively acting like one. Having looked at the relationship between politics and religion in the United States, the next section will examine it in the context of Western Europe.

Politics and religion in Western Europe

In comparison to the United States, the place of religion in Western European political systems is more multidimensional. Here, there exist (a) official links between Christian churches and the state and (b) major political parties whose origins are religious and who reflect continuing correlations between religious denomination and voting behaviour.[5]

(a) The contrast between the United States and Western Europe is particularly stark with regard to the formal relationship of church and state. It has already been mentioned that

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Presidential bid.

[5] For an excellent analysis of the contemporary place of religion in European politics, see the January 2003 special edition of West European Politics, vol. 26, no.1, co-edited by Enyedi and Madeley. See also Madeley's edited volume (2003) *Religion and Politics* (Dartmouth: Ashgate). For a more detailed analysis of the relationship between religion and voting behaviour, see

in the American political system, the total separation of the secular and the spiritual has always been closely protected. However, a number of modern European political systems continue to sustain state churches and therefore formal links between the worlds of religion and politics. Meny and Knapp discuss the European tradition of a "dominant" church or religion continuing to "mark" the political systems of Italy and the UK (1998: 26) with the Scandinavian nations also falling into this categorisation.

The history and geographical placing of the Catholic Church both contribute towards its pivotal position in the Italian political system. Nevertheless, since 1984, the state has become more secularised with the public financing of the Church being replaced by voluntary contributions from individuals and religious teaching in schools becoming optional. In Scandinavian political systems, the official state religion remains Lutheran. In Denmark, for example, the Evangelical Lutheran Church is the National (or Folk) Church and is still supported by the state under Point 4 of the Danish Constitution. In Norway, the national Parliament in Oslo has a major input to the affairs of the Church (http://www.philtar.ucsm.ac.uk/encyclopedia/christ/cep/lcn.html, accessed 25th November 2001). Scotland and England are by no means out of line with the rest of Western Europe in still having 'established' or 'national' churches.

(b) A glance at modern election results reveals that religion appears to continue to play a high-profile role in west European politics - Italy, France, Germany, Greece, Belgium and The Netherlands all have recent experience of being governed by Christian Democrats. According to van Kersbergen, Christian Democracy is concerned with a "religiously inspired model of social reform which is both social and capitalist" (1996: 42). Indeed, he argues that "religion accords the movement an unparalleled opportunity to adapt to changing circumstances" (1996: 31) due to its "bipolar" and "multidimensional" profile (1996: 37). Often accused of lacking ideological clarity, Christian Democrats nevertheless tend to be associated with the centre-right of the political spectrum. One does not need to be religious to vote Christian Democrat but party programmes do continue to stress the legacy and values of the Christian Church.[6] As Meny and Knapp highlight (1998: 72), parties continue to place great stress on the values of education and morality, even if Catholic Church law on marriage, divorce and contraception no longer automatically dominate sections of party programmes. Dutch

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Broughton and ten Napel's edited volume (2000) *Religion and Mass Electoral Behaviour in Europe* (London: Routledge).

[6] While the Christian democratic parties are not exclusively Catholic e.g. the Scandinavian ones are essentially Protestant, and the CDU in Germany is a mixture, it is in Catholic countries that they are most firmly rooted.

confessional parties regarded the Bible as a "direct guide" to policy-making up until the 1960s and today, the CDA "accepts modern secularised culture only very reluctantly" (Lucardie and ten Napel 1996: 65).

While significant links remain across Western Europe between religion and voting, the decline in church attendance has inevitably led to some decline in the strength of that specific correlation – the pattern is now less uniform. Catholic Bavaria is still dominated by the CSU and practising Catholics still vote for right wing parties by a proportion of three or four to one (Knapp and Wright 2001: 6). However, Mitterrand's Socialists made some of their largest gains in the 1980s in the Catholic east and west of France, while Italy's Christian Democrats were convincingly beaten by the Northern League in Lombardy and the White Veneto in 1992. The DC subsequently fell apart and today there exist only Christian Democrat splinter parties. As Dalton argues (2002: 134), the emergence of a "new politics" has meant post-materialist issues like environmental protection and women's liberation have replaced the old "cleavages" of religion and class, in terms of factors which condition voting behaviour. Lipset and Rokkan (1967) had been the first to note the importance of religious cleavages in politics. They argued a "hierarchy of cleavage bases" (1967: 6) existed in every country, including class, religion, political values, which vary in prevalence over time. However, while these cleavages are now significantly less rigid, they can still be found more in Europe than in the United States as a factor influencing voting behaviour (see Miller and Niemi 2002: 171).

So far, the discussion of the context for the thesis has emphasised the differences between the United States and Western Europe in this area of study: religious interest groups are prominent in the American political system while state churches and parties with religious heritages are to the forefront in Western Europe. However, it has neglected another important part of the way religion and politics interact – that is, when mainstream churches act as interest groups in order to try and exert political influence. As section 1.1 mentioned, the thesis argues that this an important aspect to the relationship between politics and religion and one that is under-researched, particularly in the context of Scotland.

Warner's analysis of the political behaviour of the Catholic Church in Europe is one of the few contained studies that analyses a mainstream church as if it were a 'conventional' pressure group. *Confessions of an interest group: the Catholic Church and political parties in Europe* (2000) starts from the same two premises as this thesis –

that this specific aspect of religion and politics interacting is important, and that it is possible to apply interest group characteristics to churches. In the same way as this thesis analyses the political behaviour of the Church of Scotland, Warner's research is "a study of the Catholic Church's strategic behaviour" (2000: xi). She argues that "the Catholic Church is an interest group whose actions can be modelled as if it were a firm in a market seeking a supplier of goods" (2000: 4). Warner uses interest group theory *but* has not chosen the Catholic Church in Europe simply to *test* an interest group theory. Her motivation is the same as the present author's – in her words, to rectify the fact that the "Church's actions in the context of democratic political systems are poorly understood" (2000: 4). Furthermore, she does not attempt to compare the Catholic Church with any other type of interest group – like this thesis, her research is essentially an in-depth study of religion and politics, as opposed to a comparative study of interest groups.

Warner adopts a different approach from the thesis in some ways – her study spans different countries and its main focus is how the Catholic Church impacts on the electoral behaviour of the Christian Democrats. She also uses economic and rational choice terminology to present her case. Nevertheless, her approach justifies the idea of evaluating the role of a church as it tries to achieve influence in the political system. Once again, it is important to note that is this is not the same as attempting to accurately measure political influence – it is assessing whether or not the church can be said to be effective in this assumed role. Individual chapters on the Catholic Church's "mobilisation techniques" and its close "alliance" with Christian Democrats attempt to do this. In Warner's words, the "Church has lobbied democratic governments, via political parties and other means, to retain its monopoly over education and to have the costs of it paid for by governments; it has lobbied them to impose its morals on society through legislation; it has lobbied governments to gain or retain preferential tax status; and it has lobbied to keep some of its employees from being conscripted....To put it bluntly, the Catholic Church is, in addition to being a religion, an interest group" (2000: 6-7).

Moyser's study (1985) of the political influence of the Church of England - *Church and Politics Today: The Role of the Church of England in Contemporary Politics* - adopts a similar approach. Moyser edits a number of chapters written by political scientists, theologians, clerics and a Member of Parliament, including four case studies on the Church of England's attempts to influence public policy. These studies, on nuclear weapons, immigration, education policy and economic policy, provided a point of

reference for this thesis' case studies on the Church of Scotland. The chapters are not written with quite the same emphasis as the case studies in this thesis – they are more concerned with describing how the Church of England goes about trying to influence policy in these areas, rather than attempting to evaluate its effectiveness. In other words, they are not critical analyses of how effective the Church of England is when it tries to exert political influence – more a chronicling of its political activities. These four chapters are written respectively by a lecturer in social ethics, a Church race relations field officer, a cathedral dean, and a economist, so it is perhaps not surprising that the approach is not exactly the same as that of this thesis.

However, chapter four of the first part of the book – *Lambeth palace, the bishops and politics* – co-written by Moyser, does take the same approach in this respect. It critically assesses the way senior figures in the Church, notably the Archbishop of Canterbury, act when they involve themselves in politics and whether or not they are effective in this role. Generally, studying Moyser's approach has been useful to this research – it looks at the political behaviour of the Church of England in an in-depth and empirical way. Like Warner (2000), it is essentially a study of the relationship between religion and politics, and does not make any attempt to explicitly compare the Church with other interest/pressure groups in the political system. However, it does lose some of its critical impact with the chapters written by clergymen or politicians as they tend to lack academic rigour. While a variety of interesting and disparate conclusions are drawn about the Church of England at various points in the book, there is a lack of over-riding focus to the study and no clear conclusions.

Meny and Knapp's analysis of "church and society" also looks at the way churches try to convert their values into political action but it is a very brief section of their text on West European politics and concentrates mainly on the Catholic in France, Italy and Germany (1998: 29-32). Bakvis's *Catholic Power in the Netherlands* (1981) takes a similar approach to Warner (2000) although restricting his focus to the Dutch political system. While Bakvis places significantly less emphasis on interest group literature, like Warner, he also focuses on the relationship between the Catholic Church and the Christian Democrats. Truman's *Catholic Action and Politics* (1959) looks at the political behaviour of the Catholic Church in Australia. While not a European text, it is worth mentioning in order to emphasise the lack of up-to-date literature on the political activities of churches in western political systems. Truman's text is now some forty years old but was written for those "who are bemused by the partisan and sectarian controversy concerning the relation of the Catholic Church to politics and would like the

subject illuminated by an objective enquiry based on evidence" (1959: vii). The aim of this research is not substantially different – it is to provide an up-to-date account of the relationship between politics and religion in Scotland.

Politics and religion in Scotland

Having discussed the way religion and politics interact in the United States and Western Europe, in order to provide background and context, it is now time to focus on the way this occurs in the more immediate setting of Scotland. Unlike the American political system, there are no high-profile influential religious interest groups in the Scottish political system. There are also no political parties like the Christian Democrats whose origins are religious, as there are in other parts of Europe. However, there does continue to be a correlation between religion and voting behaviour in Scotland, albeit in a weakening form. This section will (a) discuss this correlation in more detail and (b) look at the merits of the relevant literature.[7]

(a) This section will explore the correlation which exists in Scotland between voting Labour and being Catholic, and voting Conservative and being Protestant. It will also examine the reluctance shown on behalf of the Catholic community to vote SNP, although not necessarily to support the concept of independence. What are the origins of these electoral correlations? Any discussion of the relationship between politics and religion in Scotland should also consider, comparatively, the relationship between politics and religion in Ireland. The politics of Northern Ireland is the source of there being a correlation between religion and voting in Scotland in the first place. Gladstone's decision to support Home Rule for Ireland in 1886 led to Catholics becoming part of the Liberal and subsequent Labour coalition while Protestants became identified with the Unionist cause. From then on, the politics of Ireland were played out in miniature across the Irish Sea in Scotland, albeit with the raison-d'etre of nationalism absent, and thus also the extremities of violence.

In 1920s Scotland, economic decline was blamed by many on the large numbers of Irish immigrants, in a similar way the large numbers of Turkish immigrants to Germany had a negative impact on inter-cultural harmony in that nation at the end of the twentieth century. In the early 1930s, Protestant parties became successful political forces in the central belt – the Scottish Protestant League in Glasgow, Protestant Action in

Edinburgh. Furthermore, as it was unlikely that early to mid-twentieth century Catholics would view the British Conservative and Unionist Party as the natural party for them to vote for, it also became an overwhelmingly Protestant party, in terms of its support. That phenomenon was reinforced by West Coast Protestants becoming increasingly anti-Irish/Catholic as a result of the influx of immigrants, and they also become more 'Unionist', in the Ulster sense of the term. In 1912, the Conservatives changed their name to become the Unionist Party, deliberately setting out to tap into popular anti-immigration sentiment. A number of prominent Conservatives at that time were also members of the Orange Order.

However, the Scottish political system has not been dominated by religion on the same scale as its equivalent in Northern Ireland. Elections in the Province are a product of their political system – different parties, representing the two sides of the religious divide, battle for the vote of their own people[8]. The Ulster Unionists fight the Democratic Unionists for the Protestant vote while the Social and Democratic Labour Party fight Sinn Fein for the Catholic vote. Only the Alliance Party offer a non-sectarian vote option and none of the mainstream, mainland parties are significantly active. In Scotland, however, the situation is quite different. There is no segregation of the electorate on religious lines, no political parties which attract the votes of only one section of the community, and no large scale voting along religious lines.

Indeed, even the correlation between religion and party allegiance in Scotland is weakening. Most surveys reveal there remains only slight residual evidence of older voting traditions. For example, one of the main reasons the Conservatives won back the Ayr constituency in the 2000 Scottish Parliament by-election (their first Scottish by-election victory since Glasgow Pollok in 1967), was the fact the area had such an elderly and active Church of Scotland population – evidence of the continuation of the long-standing connection between the Protestant middle-class West coast 'establishment' and the Scottish Tories. That phenomenon, however, is rapidly dying out – for example, at Westminster, Ayr is held by a female Labour member, Sandra Osborne (albeit the wife of a former local Church of Scotland minister). The decline in active church attendance amongst young people can be compared very closely with the decline of young Scots

[7] Section 1.5 will discuss the formal relationship the Church of Scotland has with the Scottish political system.
[8] See Hancock et al (2003: 44-45).

who vote Conservative[9]. Just as church attendance is in a downward spiral[10], so too are the fortunes of the Scottish Conservative Party, the bulk of support for which comes from the over 55s (Brown et al 1999: 58).

Further evidence of the declining link between religion and electoral choice can be seen in Larkhall, Lanarkshire, a Protestant community, where the MP, Helen Liddell (the Secretary of State for Scotland), and three out of its four councillors are Catholic. This is because, while Larkhall is overwhelmingly Protestant, it is also overwhelmingly working-class, and that factor now matters more than religion, in terms of modern British voting behaviour. Put crudely, people in Larkhall find the idea of voting Conservative more of an anathema to them than voting for a Catholic, and while voting SNP is seen by some as a viable alternative to Labour in this respect (e.g. the 1992 Monklands East By-Election), that has not yet developed into a correlation. The working-class West Coast 'Orange' vote is now split between Conservative and SNP, but the Nationalists have been careful to do nothing to encourage that putative link, and the influence of religion generally is not strong enough for a transition from Conservative to SNP to be completed neatly.

Indeed, while it has continued to attract a high proportion of Catholic voters, the Scottish Labour Party has consistently demonstrated the capacity to gain support from both sides of the religious 'divide'. In other words, Catholics overwhelmingly vote Labour but Labour is not overwhelmingly Catholic. There is no evidence of significant numbers of Protestants being reluctant to vote Labour, because they perceived it as a Catholic party, and that has been a major factor in helping Labour stay dominant in Scotland for so long. Indeed, a number of writers believe that the decline in active attendance of Church of Scotland members is one of the main factors in the decline in fortunes of the Scottish Conservative Party since the 1960s e.g. Seawright and Curtice (1995), Brown et al (1999: 61). From that period onwards, the class cleavage effectively cut across religiosity, and affected the Protestant working-class vote i.e. people who did not vote Conservative for economic reasons, but for cultural/moral motives. In 1965, the Unionists changed their name back to "Conservative", but it is unclear if that accelerated its decline, or was merely a symptom of it. This can be compared with Labour's prolonged capacity to hold on to middle-class Catholics, whose social and economic circumstances had improved, but who remained loyal to the party.

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[9] For the most up-to-date figures, see Steve Bruce and Tony Glendinning's chapter in *Devolution: Scottish answers to Scottish questions,* edited by Bromley et al (2003). Their project focused on the 2001 Scottish Attitudes Survey.

Today's post-devolution Scottish Conservative Party is a very different organisation from its various previous incarnations. For example, it was actively involved in the Scottish Parliament's attempt to repeal the Act of Settlement, which bans Catholics from ascending to the British throne, or from marrying the British monarch. One of its senior MSPs, Lord James Douglas-Hamilton, and the former Scottish Secretary, Lord Forsyth of Drumlean, initiated the debate in the Scottish Parliament, and the House of Lords, in 1999. However, it would be naïve to believe that these two politicians actively involved themselves in the process because they believed so passionately in it – if that was the case, they could have done something about it when they were both Government Ministers. More realistically, their motivation was probably the same as the SNP's Michael Russell, who co-proposed the Scottish Parliamentary debate - to demonstrate to the Scottish electorate their party was now inclusive to all faiths, and none – but they may still have to do more. For example, many felt the leading involvement of Donald Findlay QC in the team campaigning against the creation of a Scottish Parliament in 1998, was an attempt to attract the residual 'Orange vote', as at the time, Mr Findlay was Vice-Chairman of Rangers Football Club. The late leader of the Scottish Catholic Church, Cardinal Winning, was very much a moral 'conservative', even if his political allegiances lay with the Labour Party. The present Government's reforms of abortion and contraception laws brought the Cardinal into conflict with Tony Blair, and gave him much in common with many right-wing British politicians.

The Scottish National Party has always been viewed with some suspicion by the Catholic community. It was perhaps no surprise in the mid twentieth century that the SNP's early brand of Scottish patriotism found no favour in a community which still viewed itself as essentially Irish, and the Labour Party, with its brand of international socialism became the party most Scottish Catholics felt comfortable with. This lack of trust in the SNP by the Catholic community lasted until relatively recently. In 1989, Kellas wrote that the "Catholic voter contributes in no small measure to the continuity of Labour support in Scotland and to the weakness of the SNP" (1989: 110). However, that reluctance on the part of Catholics to vote SNP created an interesting electoral paradox, in which both the Conservatives and the SNP share the same electoral base of support, religious denomination-wise. This is particularly relevant today in contemporary West Central Scotland, where the working-class Conservative vote has collapsed and the SNP are viewed as the only credible alternative to Labour.

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[10] See section 1.5.

Today, there continues to be disagreement between academics in this field over how popular the SNP and their main policy, independence in Europe, are with Catholics. Some, like Brown et al, argue that there is still a tendency for the Catholic community to be suspicious of the Nationalists, and this is why the party subtly tried to appeal to that section of Scottish society in the 1990s e.g. Alex Salmond's close relationship with the late Cardinal Winning, or Mike Russell's attempt to repeal the Act of Settlement (Brown et al 1999: 68). Murray comments on the significance of the "extent to which the origins of the debate comes from a party traditionally linked with the non-Catholic community" (2000: 134). This perception of the SNP is supported by poll and survey evidence, some of which are/have been detailed in this section. On the other hand, there are those, like Bennie, Brand and Mitchell, who argue that the evidence suggests Catholics are now more likely to vote for independence than Protestants, and feel less British than Protestants generally (1997: 119). The only credible conclusion one can draw from this is that, while Catholics are not against the concept of independence, they still have a problem voting for the party which advocates it. This can be confirmed by looking at evidence from the 1999 Scottish Parliament Election Survey results. Paterson et al argue that the attitude of Catholics and the irreligious towards independence now leaves "Church of Scotland members lagging some way behind in their enthusiasm" (2001: 87). However, they also point out that "across all models, religion plays an important part in distinguishing between Labour and SNP support, Roman Catholics being less likely to vote for the SNP" (2001: 63). Under Alex Salmond's leadership, the SNP became consciously more 'Catholic-friendly'. Although this was never a policy officially acknowledged by the party hierarchy, it has been confirmed by a number of SNP MSPs (Anonymised telephone interviews, September/October 2001). As has already been mentioned, in the 1990s, Mr Salmond struck up a cordial personal relationship with Cardinal Winning, writing a weekly article in *The Scottish Catholic Observer*. The SNP leader viewed Winning as good for Scotland – effectively 'Scotland's Cardinal'. Furthermore, the appointment of Peter Kearney as the Catholic Church's press spokesman in 2000, an SNP activist who stood in Coatbridge and Chryston at the 2001 General Election, was also viewed as significant by some – a number of Labour MSP and MPs also referred to this in telephone interviews (Anonymised telephone interviews, September/ October 2001).

Interestingly, the SNP are the beneficiaries of a shift in national identity on behalf of young Scots. Prior to the mid-1980s, the SNP were viewed as being as 'Protestant' a political party as the Conservatives e.g. their leader, William Wolfe, controversially

opposed the visit of the Pope to Scotland in 1982, whereas the Labour Party was seen as being on the side of the working-class Catholic.[11] The reason most Catholics voted Labour was because it was the least Scottish/British/nationalistic of the parties, and was also their economic champion. However, drops in Church of Scotland membership[12], a raising of the profile of Cardinal Winning, and a concerted attempt by the SNP to appear more Catholic friendly, have all led to the nature of Scottish nationalism changing. The SNP still provides a home for those who are anti-Union, but because the intrinsic nature of 'being Scottish' has changed, they are now winning votes from all sections of society. Various studies suggest Catholics now feel more Scottish than Protestants - Bennie, Brand and Mitchell (1997: 118), Brown, McCrone and Paterson (1998: 212). The SNP are the Official Opposition in the Scottish Parliament; voting for them is a genuine electoral option for a new generation of Scottish Catholics, because being Scottish is no longer closely associated with being Protestant.

Labour's ability to attract voters from both sides of the religious divide has always benefited the party, but the future fortunes of Scotland's political parties will not be influenced by the electorate's religious behaviour. Just as the decline in fortunes of the Scottish Conservatives, and the various churches, seems irreversible, so too is the decline in the relevance of religion and class to voting behaviour. In their analysis of the 2001 Scottish Attitudes Survey, Bruce and Glendinning highlight that 37% of respondents considered themselves to be of "no religion", 1% more than the largest denomination, the Church of Scotland. They argue that this statistic represents a growth in secularisation of 50% in 25 years (Bruce and Glendinning 2003). Young Scots simply do not vote along religious lines any more – the language of sectarianism is alien to them in any meaningful sense. They may chant bigoted sentiments at football matches at Ibrox and Celtic Park, but they go home to their partners of different faith/cultures at the end of the game. Nevertheless, this section has shown that religion and politics continue to be connected in Scotland. As Paterson et al point out, it is interesting to note that the long-established correlation between being Catholic and voting Labour in Scotland has not yet been severed by the "new politics" of devolution (2001: 63).

(b) The preceding discussion of the place of religion in European political systems concluded by arguing that there existed a void in the literature on the political behaviour of churches i.e. churches acting like interest groups. This is particularly the case in the

[11] Mr Wolfe continues to sit on the party's National Executive Committee.

context of the Scottish political system. There is a significant lack of academic literature looking at the relationship between religion and politics in Scotland generally, let alone looking at the specific political behaviour of churches. This thesis argues there is a genuine need for contemporary research of this kind.

Of perhaps most significance is the 1990 book co-edited by Walker and Gallagher, *Sermons and battle hymns: Protestant popular culture in modern Scotland.* It contains chapters written by academics from a variety of backgrounds, although mainly historians and sociologists. Of most relevance is the chapter written by the editors on the place of "Protestantism" in Scottish politics (1990: 86-111). While this effectively involves an analysis of the Church of Scotland from a political science perspective, it primarily looks at the historical influence of the Church on society rather than on contemporary public policy-making. Its conclusion - that the "kirk's quiet but persistent influence on different aspects of corporate and social life in Scotland should not be discounted" – is true but a more rigorous approach to judging that influence is necessary. In any case, the chapter was written thirteen years ago and is now dated. Boyle and Lynch's *Out of the Ghetto: The Catholic Community in Modern Scotland* (1998) can be compared with the Walker/Gallagher study. It is also an edited volume but this time the chapters focus on the place of the Catholic Church in Scottish society and politics. The same criticisms can be directed at it, however, as can be directed at the Walker and Gallagher text, and for that matter the Moyser study. There is a lack of overall focus and cogent conclusions about the political behaviour of the Scottish Catholic Church. The different chapters are not linked sufficiently thematically to provide the reader with any firm answers about the influence of the Church.

Forrester's 1993 article - *The Church of Scotland and public policy* – is the only other comparable piece of academic political research on one of the mainstream churches in Scotland. The approach adopted here was more methodical than the one adopted by Walker and Gallagher, using case studies of the Church and Nation Committee to evaluate the role of the Committee in six different areas of policy-making: North Sea Oil, Scottish Nationhood, Central Africa, Nuclear Deterrence, Housing, and Distribution of Wealth, Income and Benefits. Like the thesis, Forrester's conclusions are concerned with the effectiveness of the Committee's political activities, although he neglects the activities of the Board of Social Responsibility which are often as 'political' as those of Church and Nation. He argues that its annual reports lack "consistency" and that its

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[12] See section 1.5.

impact on a policy area has only been effective when it "has had access to special sources of information, or has expertise and research developed elsewhere at its disposal" (1993: 80). Forrester also suggests that the Committee is unsure about what it is trying to achieve – informing public debates or directly influencing politicians. The present author agrees with these points, as well as with the opening line of Forrester's conclusion: "it is unfortunate that no proper academic study has yet been made of the work and influence of the Church and Nation Committee (1993: 80). This is the aim of the thesis although its scope also covers the Board of Social Responsibility of the Church and does not just concentrate on Church and Nation.

Some writers have touched on the topic in the course of wider studies. Bennie, Brand and Mitchell's *How Scotland Votes* (1997) devotes a whole chapter to the topic of religion and politics, arguing that religion continues to matter to Scottish voting behaviour. While the focus of the book is on electoral behaviour, the chapter is wide-ranging in its scope, and covers the history of the relationship between religion and politics in Scotland. Kellas' *The Scottish Political System* (1989) approaches the topic from a more traditional institutional perspective, the Church of Scotland being one of his 'holy trinity' of pillars of the Scottish system. However, his is more of an overview and its final edition is now some thirteen years old. Nevertheless, both the political behaviour of the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Catholic Church are included in the chapter on "organisations and interest groups", which gives examples of issues on which the two institutions have lobbied e.g. licensing laws, divorce laws, abortion laws. The book which claims to be the successor to Kellas's landmark work, Lynch's *Scottish Government and Politics – An Introduction* (2001) only mentions religion once, stating that it is no longer as significant a factor in the way people vote as it once was. This is a rather over-brief analysis of the place of religion in Scottish politics, something of a surprise as the author co-wrote in 1998 *Out of the Ghetto: The Catholic Community in Modern Scotland.*

The former editor of *The Herald* newspaper, Harry Reid, was commissioned by the Church of Scotland to write an objective, if not academic, analysis of its place in modern Scotland, which was published in 2002. Reid was influential in starting the public debate which led to the publication of *Scotland's Shame* (2000), after the composer James MacMillan made his controversial speech against bigotry in Scotland at the Edinburgh Festival in 1999. Reid's findings generally make for interesting reading, but the approach is journalistic, not academic, and is also not solely focused on the political behaviour of the Church. It is important to re-stress, therefore, that the aim of the thesis

is to make a contribution towards the examination of religion and politics in Scotland, an area of academic study which continues to be severely under-researched.

1.4 The function and role of political pressure groups and lobbyists

Pressure groups

Sections 1.2 and 1.3 both explained why it is possible to treat the Church of Scotland as a political pressure group; but if it is to be analysed from this perspective, there is a need for clarity in the terminology used. Grant states that "the study of pressure groups is the study of organised interests". A pressure group is an "organisation which seeks as one of its functions to influence the formulation and implementation of public policy..." (2000: 9). Essentially, pressure groups aim to bring about some form of social change, without becoming part of government themselves. Truman (1951: 37) disliked the term "pressure group", preferring "interest group" – a "shared attitude group that makes certain claims upon other groups in the society. If and when it makes certain claims through or upon any of the institutions of government, it becomes a political interest group". Some organisations also dislike the term "pressure group" because it somehow implies an improper exertion of influence. As later chapters will highlight, when it is suggested that churches do not have much political influence, there is a tendency for leading figures to say that they have no desire to be viewed as pressure groups anyway, as if it somehow implies something negative. Many groups would prefer the title "non-governmental organisation", but as Grant points out (2000: 8), "other than they are independent of government, it is difficult to give a precise definition of what a non-governmental organisation is".

The American literature generally uses the term "interest group", only referring to organisations that exist solely to influence political decisions as "pressure groups". However, British writers use "pressure group" more generically and the thesis will generally follow this approach, although not exclusively. In any case, as more and more groups have been drawn into politics in order to protect their interests, the American distinction has become less meaningful. Nevertheless, Stewart's categorisation (1958: 25) of "sectional" groups and "cause" (or "promotional") groups remains important. While sectional groups represent a section of the community, cause groups represent some belief or principle (Stewart 1958: 25). As Jordan and Richardson explain (1987: 21), sectional groups tend to advance more limited, specific objectives, and hope to avoid public controversy, while cause groups require a wider public participation in

order to achieve their aims. Another approach is Grant's insider/outsider distinction (1978), which focuses more on the receptivity of government to the afore mentioned strategies. Insider groups are regarded as legitimate by government, and consulted regularly, while outsider groups do not receive, or do not wish to receive, the same recognition. These definitions are particularly useful when categorising the Church and Nation Committee and the Board of Social Responsibility of the Church of Scotland, and are discussed in more depth in chapter two, section 2.1. Grant's typology is pertinent to the thesis because its central focus is whether or not groups interact effectively with ministers and civil servants – whether they are able to "talk their language…to present a case, and…to bargain and accept the outcome of the bargaining process" (Grant 2000: 20). In other words, Grant believed that studies of pressure groups should be concerned with how government perceives pressure groups, and what strategies groups deploy to gain influence. This thesis is concerned with how the Church of Scotland tries to exert influence, but it is also concerned with how successful it is, and Grant's classification generally provides a helpful framework for achieving this.

Section 1.2 discussed Lowery and Gray's "neo-pluralist" analysis of "organised interests" (2000), explaining how the thesis viewed itself as adopting a broadly pluralist approach. Lowery and Gray's article was itself a response to Baumgartner and Leech's 1998 "pessimistic assessment of the state of interest group research" which they argue is fraught with "avoidance and confusion" (1998: 174). Such debates centre on the American context for interest groups and as such lie outside the central concerns of this study. However, while the study of pressure groups is dominated by American literature, British writers have also developed distinct frameworks of analysis. Richardson and Jordan's discussion of "policy communities" (1979) marked a turning point in the analysis of the role of pressure groups within the British political system. Their central point was that rather than strong boundaries existing between government and pressure groups, the significant boundaries which existed were between the different policy areas/subject matters; within a policy area/subject matter, intimate, stable "communities" existed, comprising government ministers, civil servants and interest groups. The two most prominent elements of the UK policy process are therefore consensus and consultation: "…the main feature of the British system is that ongoing problems and constraints force successive governments into very similar policy positions. Problems are handled similarly irrespective of what government is in power. Agreement will be sought within the community of groups involved…" (1979: 43).

The concept of "policy communities" was broadly accepted by British writers, for as Grant later put it, "as an analytical proposition, the idea of policy communities clearly provides a good fit with the available empirical evidence on how decisions are made in British government" (1989: 31). In addition, some writers, most notably Rhodes (Rhodes 1988; Marsh and Rhodes 1992; Rhodes 1997), sought to develop it further, arguing it is more pertinent to talk of policy "networks", of which a policy "community" is just one type. Policy networks vary in characteristics depending on the degree of integration within the policy-making process – policy communities are obviously highly integrated while at the other end of the scale, "issue networks" represent a much less intimate set of interests and generally lack stability. The term "issue network" was actually first introduced by Heclo in his 1978 essay on interest groups in the American political system. In it, Heclo criticised the notion of stable and exclusive "iron triangles" of participants whose primary motivation when legislating was their own economic interest. He argued that by looking "for the few who are powerful, we tend to overlook the many whose webs of influence provoke and guide the exercise of power" (1978: 102). He labelled those webs "issue networks", criticising those who ignored the multi-faceted and inclusive nature of modern policy-making (1978: 102). The spirit of Richardson and Jordan's concept of a "policy community" and Heclo's concept of an "issue network" is similar, but Rhodes argued more detail was necessary, placing the former at one end of a scale of "interdependence" (Marsh and Rhodes 1992: 13), and the latter at the other.

Richardson and Jordan's policy community model, or "metaphor", as Richardson would have it (1999: 193), is essentially pluralist in its assumptions, but also recognises many of the criticisms levelled at classical pluralism. It accepts that certain groups are often excluded from the policy process and that "perfect competition" rarely exists (1979: 13). However, crucially, they also stress that the way these groups interact with government varies between different areas of policy-making. In other words, they maintain there are no monopolies of power, policy communities themselves are not stagnant and that the growth of groups has led to structured relationships disintegrating. Richardson and Jordan should not be classified as "neo-pluralists" as they do not go as far as some of the American writers mentioned in section 1.2. Nevertheless, in his important 1981 article, *Iron triangles, woolly corporatism and elastic nets: images of the policy process*, Jordan criticises those who argue forms of corporatism exist in British policy-making. He stresses the advantages of the "loose and elastic concept" of networks (regardless of specifics), compared with the more "unambiguous" and hierarchical nature of corporatism (1981: 121). More recently, Jordan and Schubert have argued that the

distinction between "pluralist" and "corporatist" is now too crude a distinction for modern policy-making, and that the terms should simply be replaced by the more "generic label" of "network" (1992: 10).

In terms of the thesis, the network approach discussed above will be referred to, when analysing the political behaviour of the Church of Scotland. Stewart's cause/sectional terminology (1958) and Grant's insider/outsider categorisation (1978) are also helpful in distinguishing between the different roles of the Church and Nation Committee and the Board of Social Responsibility, as they stress the rather complex organisational structure of the Church of Scotland. However, it is also pertinent to mention Dudley and Richardson's "arena without rules" model (1998: 746) when analysing the political activities of the Church. They argue that a new style of policy-making has developed in Britain, where outsider groups can penetrate traditionally stable networks and bring about radical policy-change: "interests not part of the inner core, or policy community, [can] introduce new knowledge and ideas into the policy process...to challenge existing policy" (1998: 729). This concept of a "new politics" (1998: 747) consciously identifies with Heclo's criticism of "iron triangles" in the American political system as being "disastrously incomplete" (1978: 88). It also has overtones of Baumgartner and Jones's "punctuated equilibrium" model (1993) mentioned in section 1.2. Dudley and Richardson use the area of policy concerning major British road construction to illustrate their point, arguing that Finer's classic study of the roads lobby in Britain (1958) now has to be seriously revised. New interests and a "wider market for policy ideas" have resulted in "fundamental changes" taking place in policy approaches (1998: 728).

The insider/outsider division continues to be useful when analysing British policy-making, but as the case studies in chapters two and three will show, sometimes the Church acts as an "insider", and sometimes as an "outsider", and even the Committee and Board respectively are often perceived differently depending on what issue they are addressing. Dudley and Richardson's argument advocates a departure from thinking purely in terms of rigid divisions between insider and outsider groups. It follows on from Maloney, Jordan and McLaughlin's argument that a more meaningful "cleavage" can be drawn between those groups who have "real influence" and those who do not (1994: 37). They stress the continuing importance of group consultation in British policy-making, and are critical of writers who over-emphasise the relevance of the choice of strategy made by different groups (1994: 32). This issue will be discussed in more detail in chapter two, where the question of how the Church of Scotland tries to

exert influence first arises. However, the present author agrees that, while the insider/outsider classification can be used in analysis, the dichotomy is not always stark.

Lobbying

Finer, who labelled British pressure groups the "anonymous empire", actually preferred the term "lobby" to "pressure groups", as he felt the latter do not always have to "apply pressure" to politicians to make them listen (1966: 3). Today, however, "lobbying" is effectively a generic term for attempting to directly influence politicians. According to *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Science*, although the origin of British lobbying concerned only attempts to influence Parliament, the contemporary meaning is broader, "referring to the practises of interest groups, directed not only at seeking support from elected members, but also from political parties, public bureaucracies and other public bodies, and from the general public through the mass media" (Bogdanor 1991: 337).

Compared with American literature, there is something of a lack of academic work on lobbying in Britain. It is a sub-field which has tended to be dominated by practitioners and politicians e.g. Davies (1985), Miller (1987, 2000), Dubs (1989), Lattimer (1994), Curry (1999), rather than political scientists. Even Jordan's study of commercial lobbyists (1991) is an edited volume with half the chapters written by lobbying consultants and a Labour MP. There has perhaps been more academic activity with regard to lobbying in the EU e.g. Mazey and Richardson (1993), Greenwood and Aspinwall (1998). This can be contrasted with a number of large-scale studies of lobbying behaviour in the United States e.g. Heinz et al (1993), Baumgartner and Mahoney (2002).

The final report of the Consultative Steering Group of the Scottish Parliament highlighted the need for the role of lobbying to be clearly defined, post-devolution (Consultative Steering Group 1998: 8). The life of the new Parliament had barely begun when in the autumn of 1999, *The Observer* newspaper alleged that lobbyists had gained preferential access to some Labour MSPs. In a secretly filmed video tape, employees of Beattie Media appeared to claim they were able to arrange direct access to a number of Scottish Executive Ministers, including one its former employees, Jack McConnell, now Scotland's First Minister. The affair became known as "Lobbygate", and the powerful Standards Committee of the Parliament stated that it had been "damaging to the public image of the new institution" (Lynch 2001: 67).

The fact the Committee also ruled that no code of conduct had actually been breached did not stop the reputation of lobbyists in Scotland being substantially tainted, and re-emphasised that direct access to government is not always inherently ethical. As Coxall states (2001: 80), "public concern has arisen about some of [the lobbying industry's] activities, including whether the former government 'insiders' it employs (civil servants, party advisers) enable it on occasion to exploit their close relationships with government unfairly on behalf of particular clients". Directly lobbying politicians is a major part of a modern pressure group's activities. As chapters two and three will show, the Church of Scotland often actively participates in lobbying in different parts of the Scottish political system, even though senior representatives dislike the term "lobbyist" being applied to them.

1.5 The Church of Scotland and the Scottish political system

Section 1.3 examined the relationship between religion and politics in western democracies, while pressure groups and lobbyists were the focus of section 1.4. This final section will discuss the institution which is the principal concern of the thesis: the Church of Scotland. Scotland's historic status as a nation is well documented, as are the various 'political' institutions which have survived intact since the Act of Union with England in 1707 – the legal system, the education system, the royal burghs, and the Presbyterian Church (the focus of this thesis). Taylor writes that there are "obvious institutional examples of the perseverance of Scottish identity: the Church of Scotland, deliberately protected in the Act of Union and now providing temporary shelter to Scotland's new Parliamentarians in the General Assembly building on the Mound in Edinburgh..." (1999: 16). Before significant political power was devolved to a new national Parliament in 1999, these political institutions provided the evidence that home-rule campaigners pointed to, in order to show that Scotland was more than just a northern region of England and required its political system to be complete once again. So what of one of the pillars of the Scottish political system – the Presbyterian Church? Exactly what kind of political institution is it?

Crucial to any understanding of the political nature of the Church of Scotland is a knowledge of its internal organisation. As the government of the Church is Presbyterian and not Episcopal (hierarchical), there are no permanent leaders or bishops to impose their personality on the way the Church is managed. However, every year, one minister is nominated to chair the proceedings of the General Assembly, the annual decision-

making forum of the Church. The Moderator, as he is known (there has never been a female Moderator – something of a 'stained glass ceiling'), also provides the Church with ceremonial leadership throughout his year in office, representing it at public events at home and internationally. The 2002 Moderator, the Very Rev Dr John Miller, labelled the office the "embodiment of distrust" because a minister is only allowed to do it for a year (*The Scotsman* 10th June 2002). However, while the internal government of the Church dictates that all ministers are equal, there does exist a hierarchy of church courts or governing organisations. The lowest court is the Kirk Session, the ruling body of every parish church, which ranks below Presbytery, the ruling body of a group of churches in an area. The General Assembly is the highest court of the Church, and meets once a year in May for a week - it is the Church's law-making body, passing motions, or "deliverances" as they are known, for the year to come. Every presbytery sends commissioners to the Assembly, who must be either ministers or elders ('ordained' lay men and women, who sit on the Kirk Session).

As the Church has no leader to assume control of any public campaign, how does it 'speak out' politically, if not through a national head? The answer is through its national committees and boards, and in particular, the various conveners of these arms of the Church. The Church has eighteen national boards and committees, all concerned with different aspects of how the Church is managed e.g. the Board of Practice and Procedure looks after the general administration of the Church, the Board of World Mission is concerned with missionary work, the Board of National Mission is concerned with its work at home, and so on. The two committees/boards which monitor public policy-making the most closely, are the Church and Nation Committee and the Board of Social Responsibility. The Church and Nation Committee is concerned with monitoring overtly 'political', or 'public', matters e.g. the treatment of asylum seekers, social justice, the banning of nuclear weapons, while the Board of Social Responsibility is concerned with more 'moral', or 'private', matters, like human sexuality, abortion, euthanasia, and alcohol consumption. The Board is also responsible for the running of the Church's various care facilities.

As the next two chapters will explain, these two bodies take radically different approaches to their political activities. More generally, the Church of Scotland has within it, a wide range of theological views. In terms of doctrine, it places less emphasis on the ceremonial or symbolic (e.g. communion) than the Roman Catholic or Anglican churches, and substantially more on reading scripture and preaching. While Presbyterianism has its origins in Switzerland, where the Reformed leader, John Calvin,

lived, it was the type of church order which John Knox carried to Scotland that is now practised around the world. The Church of Scotland is the original Presbyterian Church, and St Giles' Cathedral in Edinburgh the mother church of Presbyterianism world wide. St Giles' categorisation as a cathedral is a misnomer, a legacy of its time as an Episcopal place of worship – in Scotland, medieval cathedrals nominally retain their Episcopal title even though they are no the longer seats of bishops but their official designation is that of "High Kirk".

There are 1240 parish churches in 46 presbyteries across Scotland, as well as churches in England, continental Europe, and overseas (Church of Scotland 2003: 5, National Mission report). Parishes range from the wealthy self-supporting congregations of suburban areas to those dependent on central church funds serving socially impoverished housing estates. In rural areas, there are often many parishes formally linked to one another, with one minister in charge of a number of congregations. In urban areas, some churches have team ministries, with a number of clergy looking after just one church. The Church is a multi-million pound organisation, and a major property and land owner in Scotland. In 2002, however, it was hit badly by the global downturn in financial markets, and it was estimated that the value of its stock market investments slumped by around £67 million (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/2172220.stm, 4th August 2002). As chapter three will discuss, the Church's care facilities have also been badly hit, with a number of elderly care homes being forced to close. The 2003 annual report by the Board of Stewardship and Finance asked the General Assembly to take note of the "magnitude of the financial problems facing the Church" (Church of Scotland 2003). More positive statistics come from the Church's publishing arm – the Saint Andrew Press. It reported a net sales increase of 36% in 2002/2003. Its monthly magazine, *Life and Work,* is the largest selling Christian magazine in Britain, with a circulation of 46,000 readers, while the web-site of the Church attracted some 5 million 'hits' in 2002/2003 (Church of Scotland 2003: Board of Communication).

The number of members of the Church of Scotland has been in steady decline since 1956, while the number of 'members' of the Catholic Church has remained more constant. In 1956, 1,307,573 people were communicant members of the Church of Scotland (Church of Scotland 1958: 27). In 1976, this figure had dropped to 1,020,403 (Church of Scotland 1978: 327). In 2001, there were only 590,824 'members' of the Church of Scotland, compared with the Catholic Church's 692,444 'members' (Roman Catholic Church 2002b: 546; Church of Scotland 2002b: 310). However, the Catholic Church regards all people baptised by it to be 'members' for life, regardless of whether

or not they attend church after that event, whereas the Church of Scotland only counts adults who have actually 'joined' the Church. The Catholic Church does release a statistic of the average mass attendance every year - 222,956 - which could be compared with the Church of Scotland's membership figure mentioned above (Roman Catholic Church 2002b: 546). In Bruce and Glendinning's analysis of the 2001 Scottish Attitudes Survey, 36% of respondents regarded themselves as Church of Scotland, compared with 14% who regarded themselves as Roman Catholic. 5% considered themselves "Christian, but of no specific denomination", while only 3% considered themselves Episcopalian (Bruce and Glendinning 2003). In terms of attendance patterns, the third Scottish Church Census was conducted on 12th May 2002, with all local churches in Scotland participating. Since the first census was conducted in 1984, very similar trends in the attendances of the Church of Scotland and Catholic Church can be identified. In 1984, 361,340 people attended a Church of Scotland service on the day of the census; in 1994, that figure had fallen to 293,170, and in 2002, it had fallen again to 228, 500. In terms of the Scottish Catholic Church, 345,950 people attended mass on the day of the 1984 census, 249,720 in 1994, and 202,110 in 2002 (http://www.scottishchristian.com/features/0305census03.shtml, accessed 3rd June 2003).

Only three churches have ever had any formal links with the Scottish political system – the Catholic Church (pre-Reformation, if one excludes denominational schools), the Episcopal Church (post-Reformation-1689), and the Presbyterian Church (1689-). There is some debate over whether the present Church of Scotland can be described as "established" due to the nature of its structure, and the way it is linked to the British State - its correct designation is simply the "national Church" of Scotland. However, the religious historian, Callum Brown, goes further, talking of the "myth of the established Church of Scotland", and arguing that it was effectively disestablished by four Acts of Parliament between 1921 and 1933 (Brown 2001b: 50). As Bochel and Denver put it (1970: 210), the Church of Scotland "cannot be regarded as 'established' in entirely the same way as the Church of England".

It is also a very different kind of state church from others in Western Europe: it is free from all state interference, and has full autonomy over the running of its affairs, including legal exemption from certain Acts of Parliament concerning employment rights. The 1921 Church of Scotland Act stipulates that the Church alone can fully adjudicate in all matters of doctrine, worship, government and discipline in the Church, and is therefore "subject to no civil authority" (Linklater and Denniston 1992: 80). Its

links with the state are therefore essentially symbolic, rather than political – the contact is with the Crown, in the person of the monarch, not her Ministers of State. Senior Church of England clergy actually legislate in Parliament – i.e. the bishops or lords spiritual in the House of Lords – and the Prime Minister chooses each Archbishop of Canterbury, as well as all other bishops. The Church of Scotland, on the other hand, is free from such practical political interference. Dyson describes it thus: "the Church of Scotland's constitution has been ratified and confirmed, rather than conferred, by the State, and establishment…is compatible with complete spiritual autonomy" (1985: 299).

There are four fundamental features of the Church of Scotland's national status: first, it is the 'public' religion of Scotland, according to parliamentary statute – the British monarch is Anglican when he or she is in England, and Presbyterian when he or she is in Scotland. Every year at the General Assembly of the Church, HM The Queen is represented by her Lord High Commissioner, a distinguished politician or person in public life, who has links with the Church. However, to symbolise the Church's political independence, he or she is only permitted to watch proceedings from the gallery, and has to enter and leave by a side entrance. Nevertheless, for General Assembly week, he or she holds the status of a King or Queen of Scotland. Occasionally, the Sovereign will appear in person, for example The Queen in her 1977 Jubilee year, and for her Golden Jubilee in 2002. In 2000, the Prince of Wales was the representative of the Crown. All royal chaplains in Scotland (the Ecclesiastical Household) are ordained Church of Scotland ministers – no other denomination is included. The Dean of the Order of the Thistle is always the minister of St Giles' Cathedral in Edinburgh. All local authorities have a "Kirkin'", a civic service held annually in a local parish church to dedicate the work of its councillors. In 2002, the serving Moderator of General Assembly said prayers at both HM The Queen's Golden Jubilee thanksgiving service in St Paul's Cathedral, and the funeral service for HM Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother in Westminster Abbey.

Secondly, the Church operates a territorial parish system – local ministers have responsibility for everyone in their congregation's geographical area, regardless of what denomination they belong to. Its parish system does not just depend on where members of the church happen to live or who are their members. While the Catholic Church operates a similar system, the boundaries of a Church of Scotland parish have their origins in local government organisation. Until the late nineteenth century, the Church of Scotland had a substantial amount of influence administratively – local authority boundaries actually grew out of parochial borders, but the 1929 Reorganisation Act

modernised local government. Thirdly, Church of Scotland ministers are not allowed to be Members of Parliament, without giving up their ordained status. In other words, they must cease being ordained clerics permanently, and give up the right to call themselves 'Reverend'. Fourthly, the Moderator of the General Assembly ranks above the Prime Minister and the Dukes, and equal to the Lord Chancellor, in matters of constitutional precedence, for the duration of General Assembly week in May (Church of Scotland 2001: 65). The links between the Church and the royal family are still taken seriously. In 2001, the editor of its monthly periodical, *Life and Work*, wanted to publish an article on the possible marriage of the Prince of Wales to Camilla Parker Bowles, but was told by senior church officials that it "put a strain on relationships between the Kirk and St James's Palace". If it appeared in print, she was told that the Principal Clerk to the General Assembly would have to write "to the palace and also make a public statement" (*The Herald*, 23rd September 2002).

Nevertheless, almost all of these features of the Church of Scotland's established status have the appearance of outdated anachronisms, and do not seem to hold much in the way of real political significance. Compare them, for example, with the overtly political elements of the Church of England's established status: The Queen is head of the Church of England - the "defender of the Protestant faith", as opposed to simply an observer (by proxy) at an annual assembly; senior Bishops have the right to sit in the House of Lords and actively legislate, and are appointed by the Prime Minister of the day; parish councils are influential civic bodies in the lives of local communities. Indeed, the Church of England is even represented in the House of Commons, through the Church Estates Commissioner, who is responsible for church-state relations in Parliament. The present Commissioner is Stuart Bell, the Labour MP for Middlesbrough.

A good example of the way the Church of Scotland holds an unusual political status came in December 1999, when the Scottish Parliament debated whether or not the Act of Settlement should be repealed. The Act, which dates back to 1701, prevents Catholics from ascending the throne, or from marrying the monarch. However, the Church of Scotland feigned disinterest at the public debate – its official position was that the religion of the King or Queen was an irrelevance, as they were not the head of the Church but simply an onlooker at its General Assembly (*The Herald*, 20th October 1999). While the Principal Clerk of the General Assembly, the Rev Dr Finlay McDonald monitored the debate closely, if a future Queen or King were Catholic, it would have little direct effect on the Church of Scotland. Thus, the public profile of the

Church of Scotland is one of ambiguity – part of the establishment, but free from political interference simultaneously.

This chapter began by stating that the thesis was essentially a study of religion and politics in Scotland. Section 1.1 explained the main objective of the thesis: to analyse the political behaviour of the Church of Scotland, and subsequently its effectiveness. It also explained the two subsidiary aims: to evaluate the levels of openness and accessibility in the new, devolved Scottish political system; and to discuss the future place of religion in Scottish politics. Section 1.1 also described the three themes of the research, which effectively provide the justifications for conducting it: first, the thesis examines the political behaviour of churches, from a pressure group perspective - an important aspect to the relationship between politics and religion and one that is under-researched, particularly in the context of Scotland; second, it looks at the way the new Scottish political system is developing, post-devolution – it is an exciting time to be a student of Scottish politics; third, it compares the political behaviour of the Church of Scotland with the Scottish Catholic Church – the role religion plays in politics continues to be a topical issue in Scotland. The methodological approach taken in the research was detailed and justified in section 1.2. Section 1.3 compared the role of religion in the context of the Scottish political system with that of other parts of Western Europe, and the United States. Section 1.4 clarified the pressure group terminology which will be referred to at different points in the thesis, while section 1.5 described the profile, structure and resources of the Church of Scotland.

Chapter 2: The Church and Nation Committee of the Church of Scotland

2.1 Introductory section: the Committee

Prior to devolution, opinion amongst political scientists was divided over whether Scotland had its own political system. Kellas's seminal 1973 work *The Scottish Political System* (4th edition 1989) was regarded by some in the years following its publication – most notably Midwinter, Keating and Mitchell (1991) - as an incorrect description of the way power was devolved in the British State. Pre-devolution, Midwinter, Keating and Mitchell argued that there existed nothing more than a series of policy networks in Scotland. However, Kellas's "maximalist" approach, as Hassan labels it (1999: 11), was based on sound principles and essentially accurate. As Kellas argued, Scotland did maintain and nurture a political system of a kind, despite a long-established union with its much larger southerly neighbour. From the nineteenth century onward, the existing political institutions (Scots law, education system, royal burghs, church) were steadily augmented with newer ones, to the extent that today, Scotland possesses its own tax-raising legislature and executive, as well as separate non-departmental public bodies, trade unions, pressure groups, and a national media. The Scottish political system is once more complete, if not independent from the rest of the United Kingdom.

It was noted in chapter one that the many 'devolved' pressure groups in the Scottish political system have traditionally played a significant role, and had a substantial amount of contact with Scottish MPs and civil servants, both at Westminster and in Edinburgh. Even before the new Parliament was inaugurated by HM The Queen in the Church of Scotland's Assembly Hall on 1st July 1999, the existence of a distinct 'civic society', separate from London, had always been apparent - a nation within a state, as opposed to a subordinate region of England. The central belt of Scotland was like a miniature Greater London, where the decision-makers live and work, and the political pressure groups have their offices. Today, post-legislative devolution, the route a Scottish pressure group follows, in order to attempt to influence public policy, is even more localised and specific.

One of the most prominent actors in Scottish civic society over the last century has been the Church of Scotland's General Assembly Committee on Church and Nation. Chapter one went into much detail about the internal organisation of the Church of Scotland, explaining its lack of hierarchy, and historic predilection for committees and courts. While a number

of the Church's national General Assembly boards and committees have a political aspect to them, by far the most overtly so is the Church and Nation Committee. Its remit, which dates back to its establishment in 1919, is to "watch over developments of the nation's life in which moral and spiritual considerations specially arise" and to "consider what action the Church from time to time may be advised to take to further the highest interests of the people" (Church of Scotland 2001a: 12). Its web-site states that, "in undertaking these tasks, the Committee tries to keep in touch not only with parliaments in Edinburgh, London and Strasbourg, but also with life in Scotland - national and local, civic and political" (http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/boards/churchnation/churchnation.htm, accessed 4th May 2002). It is the contention of this thesis that an organisation with the above remit could belong to a "cause", or "promotional", political pressure group, to use Stewart's terminology, and this is how the Church and Nation Committee will be categorised for the purposes of this chapter. According to Stewart, cause groups "represent some belief or principle...[and] seek to act in the interests of that cause" (Stewart 1958: 25). The membership of the Church of Scotland does not dictate the way the Committee operates, in the way that the membership of "sectional groups" do. While the views expressed by the Committee represent the official stance of the Church of Scotland, they do not attempt to protect the interests of individual Church of Scotland members. First and foremost, the Committee is an elite-led campaigning organisation and often its views are not shared by many of its members, something which will be discussed more in the case studies.

In recent years, the appropriateness of churches in Britain involving themselves in political matters has been questioned, as has the wisdom of high-profile politicians talking publicly about their faith. In Scotland, the declining importance of religion to contemporary society has been a major factor in leading some politicians to argue that religion and politics should be kept separate. Stephen Maxwell, of the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, argues that the churches have a "strong tradition as independent and forceful contributors to Scottish public debates" (1999: 135). The Conservative-run Scottish Office of the 1980s and 1990s was frequently irritated by what it perceived to be the 'left-wing' pronouncements of the Church and Nation Committee. However, any debate over the appropriateness of the Committee's remit, and of the political activity of other churches, illustrates its continuing political importance, if not necessarily the level of its political influence. Church and Nation Day at the General Assembly continues to be attended by the 'great and the good' of Scottish political and civic society, who sit up in the Lord High Commissioner's gallery, and follow the proceedings of the most high profile standing committee of the national Church. For example, when the former Moderator, the Very Rev

Dr Andrew McLellan, was appointed Chief Inspector of Prisons in July 2002, BBC News online reported that he had often been critical of the privatisation of prisons when he had been "convener of the Kirk's influential Church and Nation Committee" (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/2144204.stm, 22nd July 2002).

The Church of Scotland retains what Callum Brown describes as the "legacy of collectivism and democracy in its internal organisation", and this can be seen in the way the Committee decides what stance it is going to adopt over a certain political issue (Brown 1992: 72). During the Church and Nation debate, the convener presents the Committee's annual report to the Assembly for approval. The report includes summaries of the work carried out by the Committee over the last year, as well as proposals concerning action the Committee might take on behalf of the Church in its relevant areas of public policy-making; to reiterate from chapter one, these typically involve issues like social justice and international development. These proposals are voted on by the commissioners to decide whether or not they are officially endorsed by the Church, therefore becoming 'deliverances'. The General Assembly may add its own new deliverances to the report, as well as command the Committee to look into certain additional areas for the following May. The number of deliverances has remained relatively constant in the last twenty years, usually between forty and fifty. Forrester (1993: 74) claims that working through Committee reports is an "unrewarding" experience, because of the desire to represent simultaneously contemporary public opinion and traditional Calvinist philosophy, but the content is always professional and wide-ranging.

The Committee has nearly 60 members (half clergy, half elders), all of whom have other jobs away from Church and Nation. It has a convener, a vice-convener, and a full-time administrative secretary. The Church of Scotland has a national Nomination Committee, which brings before the General Assembly names of people who wish to serve on its boards and committees, while around a third of the total members are appointed directly by their local presbyteries. According to the Rev Dr David Sinclair, the Committee Secretary, an individual member's political beliefs are not considered important but the Committee executive does attempt to maintain a balance between male and female, and between ministers and lay members (Interview with author, 14th May 2003). Appointments to the Committee are normally of around three to four years. The current convener is the Rev Alan McDonald, a parish minister in St Andrews. A number of prominent Scottish politicians have served on the Committee; in recent years, these have included the Jim

Wallace, the current Deputy First Minster, Sam Galbraith, the former Scottish Executive Minister, and Gordon Wilson, the former leader of the SNP.

The Committee has four sub-committees – Holyrood, Westminster, EU and International. In themselves, the names of these sub-groups say much about the nature of Church and Nation's work. The full Committee normally meets seven times a year, as do the sub-committees, although they may meet more often depending on the nature of their work at a given time. It was not possible to gain access to the minutes of these meetings, but according to David Sinclair, the secretary to the Committee, increasingly more time is spent working on the production of the annual report (Interview with author, 14th May 2003). Dr Sinclair sees a change in the nature of the day-to-day work of the Committee in recent years – whereas in the past, the report to the General Assembly was mostly a record of the work of the Committee, today, production of the report *is* mostly the work of the Committee. Dr Sinclair attributes this to more outside scrutiny being focused on what the Committee has to say about topical public issues. Once approved by General Assembly, the report is sent to over 250 different organisations and bodies, as well as every MSP, Scottish MP, MEP and relevant executive and government departments. Indeed, as the case studies will show, the Committee is also in regular contact with other groups who share their policy interests, and have similar political aims.

It has already been argued that, for the purposes of the case studies, the Church and Nation Committee should be categorised as a "cause" pressure group. As a corollary of the type of political issue the Committee is interested in, it can also be classed as an "outsider" pressure group, to use Grant's terminology (1978). As the case studies in this chapter and the next will show, the different nature of the issues which concern the Committee and the Board respectively are such that the way they are treated by executive and legislative representatives can often be radically different. The Board of Social Responsibility is the largest provider of social work in Scotland after the State, and has many interests to protect – care homes, drug and alcohol addiction centres, homeless hostels – while the Committee has no such commitment. As a consequence, the relevance of the Board's involvement in a certain area of public policy-making is not questioned as much as the Committee's – it is very much an "insider" group. This is not to argue that the Board is more influential than the Committee, simply that this is a difference in the nature of their work. As Grant stresses (2000: 29), "we undervalue the contribution of outsiders to our democracy at our peril". Chapter one has already mentioned Dudley and Richardson's "arena without rules" model (1998: 746), which argues that "interests not part of the inner core, or policy

community, [can] introduce new knowledge and ideas into the policy process...to challenge existing policy" (1998: 729); as the case studies in this chapter will show, while the Committee tends to act as a conventional "outsider", its role is ever changing, depending on which issue is being addressed.

Chapter one discussed the three main themes of the thesis, and these themes will feature throughout this chapter. In terms of the first theme – looking at religious organisations as pressure groups - the chapter will use four individual case studies of the Committee's work to try to evaluate the effectiveness of its political behaviour, post-devolution. They will concern its involvement in the campaign for Scottish devolution (amongst other reasons, in order to provide context), its continuing work on homelessness, its 2002 General Assembly report on sectarianism, and its 2002 report on the West's "war against terrorism" after the September 11th terrorist attacks. Case studies have been chosen for a variety of reasons, with one of the most important factors being the contemporary nature of the issue – for example, the reports on sectarianism and September 11th were the main focus of the Committee's work in 2001/2002. With regard to the second theme, this chapter will help in understanding more about the post-devolution political system in Scotland as the Church and Nation Committee is often perceived as one of the more prominent organisations in Scottish public life. The third theme, which involves comparing the influence of the Church of Scotland with the Scottish Catholic Church, will also be relevant, as the chapter will start to explore the differences between the two churches' internal structures.

Chapter one concurred with the established view of interest group experts that measuring political influence is far from straightforward, and that trying to gauge precise levels of effectiveness is especially difficult. In his 1985 study of the Church of England and public policy-making, Moyser makes no attempt to assess the overall influence of the Church in his case studies, choosing instead to analyse the nature of its political behaviour at the time. Likewise, Warner's 2000 study of the Catholic Church in Europe does not try to reach any conclusions about its level of political influence generally. Nevertheless, both critically analyse the political behaviour of their respective churches, each assessing the role of the church in the political arena. As chapter one explained, the primary aim of this thesis is the same: to critically analyse the political behaviour of the Church of Scotland, and assess its role in the political arena. While it is impossible to measure precisely how much political influence any pressure group has, it is still feasible to conclude whether or not the group has achieved its objectives. Chapter one discussed the importance of speaking to the pressure group activists and the decision-makers to ask their views, and this has been an

important part of the thesis, particularly in chapter five. However, in addition to this, the case studies in this chapter and chapter three require a framework for analysis if they are to avoid falling into the trap of Moyser's edited volume (1985), which lacks a certain academic rigour. Therefore, in order to assess the effectiveness of the political behaviour of the Church and Nation Committee in section 2.6, three criteria will be applied:

1. Was the Church of Scotland (through the Committee) fully consulted by the Scottish Executive, or relevant Government Department, in order to establish its opinion on the issue?
2. Did the Church of Scotland (through the Committee) speak out in a consistent and clear way on the issue?
3. Did the Church of Scotland (through the Committee) achieve its ultimate objectives concerning the issue?

This set of criteria is not intended to be a scientific test of influence and will not be explicitly referred to in the four case studies. However, it is an attempt to focus on the question of whether the political behaviour of the Church of Scotland can be considered to be effective in a methodical way. In terms of the first point, being consulted by the decision-makers is a visible sign that a pressure group possesses genuine potential for influence, and of course, no influence can be achieved if there is no contact with civil servants and government ministers. Gaining access to the corridors of power is the very minimum any group can hope for but it is vital nevertheless. Baumgartner's latest study of the political influence of lobbyists in the US focuses almost exclusively on the question of how effectively groups can "gain government allies" (Baumgartner and Mahoney 2002: i). Using case studies and large numbers of interviews, Baumgartner's project team start from the premise that "a simple count of the number of federal government officials actively advocating or opposing the views of a given perspective" can reveal much about how effective different groups are at lobbying (2002: 16). Baumgartner and Mahoney are not trying to scientifically measure influence, but to explain more clearly the behaviour of political interest groups and policy-making.

The second point is essentially a reference to 'good practice' – the group in question must ensure it acts in a way that does not jeopardise its chances of success. Baumgartner and Mahoney state that "most authors agree that resources are the foundation of all advocacy activity" (2002: 9). Here, the writers are using the term "resources" as a synonym for "strategy". Independent of what the decision-makers feel about a certain policy, the group

must use their resources effectively, in order to gain access to the consultation process. Chapter one mentioned Maloney, Jordan and McLaughlin's misgivings (1994) about discussing the "strategies" pressure groups deploy in the British context, when it is not clear how vital such factors are in gaining influence. However, when discussing the Church of Scotland – a very individualised secondary pressure group – such a discussion seems almost unavoidable, as the case studies will highlight. With regard to the third point, while definitively linking the outcome of a policy debate with the actions of a pressure group is extremely difficult, the fact remains that unless a group achieves some or all of its objectives, its political behaviour cannot be regarded as entirely effective. Generally, concluding that the Church is politically effective or ineffective is one thing; concluding as to why or why not is another. Grant (2000: 195) argues there are three factors which affect pressure group effectiveness: "features of the proximate environment", which are essentially concerned with what type of pressure group it is, "resources" e.g. its internal structure and choice of strategies, and "features of the external economic and political environment" e.g. which political party is in office at the time, economic circumstances. This approach is also helpful and will be referred to throughout chapters two and three, although it should be pointed out that the thesis views Grant's second factor as an end, as well as a means.

2.2 The Campaign for Home Rule

Although the Scotland Act, the piece of legislation which devolved power to Edinburgh, was passed in 1998, an analysis of the influence of the Church and Nation Committee over the campaign for home rule is not just a historical exercise. With the new Parliament still very much in its infancy, and 'renting' its debating chamber temporarily from the Church, there are still a number of relevant contemporary issues to be examined in this area of constitutional reform generally, issues which have a bearing on the role of the Church and Nation Committee as a promotional pressure group. Indeed, such was the level of commitment the Committee showed throughout the path to devolution, it is appropriate to begin this chapter with a discussion of it. If one issue epitomised the involvement of the Church of Scotland[1] in politics, it was the national campaign for a Scottish Parliament.

The egalitarian nature of the organisation of the Church of Scotland was highlighted at the end of the introductory section of the chapter, and it has been well documented that, prior to

devolution, the Church's General Assembly was often viewed as the closest institution Scotland had to a Parliament. This comparison complements the Assembly's representative and national nature, and its ability to discuss a wide range of issues, many of which are political. However, the supposed similarity between the Church's highest court and a political legislature did not prevent the Church from officially supporting the cause of Scottish devolution for some fifty years before it finally came to fruition in 1999. The Church grounded its support for the cause in reformed theology, and argued that the reconvening of the Parliament would bring power back closer to the Scottish people. However, it did this with no real thought for how devolution would affect its own relationship with the Scottish political system.

The Church of Scotland's role in this area of public debate was certainly committed. According to Callum Brown (1992: 74), there was a "growing trend [from the 1950s onwards] for clergy of the Church of Scotland to see themselves as upholders of Scottish identity", which may explain why its Church and Nation Committee was so in favour of devolution, at a time when many Scots were still undecided. In a similar vein, Marr offers the explanation that the "Kirk's struggle to define its own role, which has a real input on the rest of the Scottish political establishment, [was] also about rediscovering its own history" (1992: 33). The Church and Nation Committee made regular contributions to the ongoing constitutional debate, particularly around periods when calls for reform were at their loudest - the late 1970s, the late 1980s and the mid 1990s. In 1979, however, the unanimous verdict of academic observers was that the influence the Church of Scotland had on the referendum vote was "marginal" (Shanks 1996: 23). This was due largely to the lack of coherence the Church displayed over the issue, with a number of prominent churchmen personally opposed to a national assembly, despite the official position of the Committee. Through the Assembly Commission, a former Moderator, the Very Rev Dr Andrew Herron, blocked a Church and Nation letter urging members to remember to vote, and consider the position of the Church, from being read out in pulpits across Scotland the two Sundays before polling. Dr Herron, an old-style West of Scotland Unionist, argued that it was implicitly telling members to vote "yes", which was not in the Church of Scotland's tradition of letting its members make up their own minds about politics.

In 1989, however, the Church and Nation Committee began to make a concerted effort to root its devolutionist stance in some sort of theology, and the official Church of Scotland

[1] The terms "Church and Nation Committee" and "Church of Scotland" will be used interchangeably throughout the chapter – this is because, when the Committee is participating in political activity, it

approach generally became more unified. That year, the Committee presented a major report to the General Assembly, entitled *The Government of Scotland*, which talked of the need to create a "stable rational ground for our Scottish democracy". It called for a referendum on the issue so that there could develop the "democratic control of Scottish affairs through a Scottish Assembly established with the support of the Scottish people" (Church of Scotland 1989: 151). The report promoted the view that over-centralised power went against the Calvinist tradition. It was widely read, and was seen by many as a positive contribution to the devolution debate.

After 1989, the Church's influence in this area grew tangibly. The inaugural meeting of the Scottish Constitutional Convention in March 1989, which launched the document *A Claim of Right for Scotland*, took place in the General Assembly Hall, was opened with a prayer, and included a contribution from the Rev Maxwell Craig, the then convener of Church and Nation. The 1989 Assembly instructed the Church and Nation Committee to continue its "reflection in co-operation with the other bodies which are discussing the constitutional future of Scotland, including the proposals set out in *A Claim of Right for Scotland*" (Church of Scotland 1989: 138). The Convention returned to the Assembly Hall on St Andrew's Day in 1995 to launch *Scotland's Parliament, Scotland's Right*, where again, the serving convener of Church and Nation made a contribution. The convener at the time was the Rev Andrew McLellan, who formally welcomed the members of the Convention to the Assembly Hall. When the Convention agreed to appoint a Constitutional Commission to look into various future recommendations, a former Moderator, the Very Rev Prof James Whyte, of St Andrew's University, was appointed one of its members.

Regardless of how much political influence the Church and Nation Committee exerted on the devolution process, the campaign for home rule drew heavily upon Scotland's Protestant heritage, although there is some ambiguity over how intentional this was. Paterson argues that the "religious origins are unmistakable, and indeed Church of Scotland theologians in particular were eloquent in their contribution to the debate, modernising the Knoxian idea that the people have the right to overthrow unjust rulers" (2002: 118). He also suggests (1998: 145), the notion of a "claim of right" has its origins in the tradition of covenanting, while Brown, McCrone and Paterson highlight the Constitutional Convention's intention to "evoke the radicalism of the religious reformers who issued the two previous claims: the Free Church...in 1843, and the Presbyterians...in 1688." (Brown, McCrone and Paterson 98: 66). Furthermore, the repeated use of the Church of Scotland

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personifies the Church in that particular context.

Assembly Hall for set-piece Constitutional Convention resulted in it also being used as the temporary home of the Parliament, until the Holyrood site is completed – something Taylor labels "neat symmetry" (1999: 46). In both 2000 and 2002, MSPs were happy to vacate the Hall for General Assembly week, with no public criticism being made that the Parliament was 'more important' than the Assembly. During the official opening ceremony of the Parliament by HM The Queen in June 1999, the 129 new parliamentarians sang the Old Hundredth Psalm, 'All People That On Earth Do Dwell', the archetypal Scottish Presbyterian hymn[2]. The Convention did include representatives from the Catholic Church, as well as the General Secretary of the Council of Churches (the fore-runner of ACTS), the Episcopal Canon, Kenyon Wright, who eventually become the Convention's chairman. Wright himself argues that "all three Claims of Right are rooted in the Declaration of Arbroath, addressed to the Pope, and long before the Reformation. The Catholic Doctrine of Subsidiarity is also part of the foundation for the 1989 Claim of Right at least" (Letter to author, 6th March 2000). Nevertheless, not long after its inauguration, the Catholic Church's representative on the Convention, Bishop Joseph Devine of Motherwell, resigned amidst rumours that he felt uncomfortable with the tone of proceedings, although his official reason was "pressure of other commitments" (Edwards 1989: 2).

In the view of the late First Minister, Donald Dewar, the personal influence of the Rev Norman Shanks, who replaced Maxwell Craig as Church and Nation Convener in 1988, and subsequently became a member of the Constitutional Convention's executive, should not be underestimated. Shanks, a former Scottish Office civil servant under William Ross and Bruce Millan, regularly tried to use his 'contacts' to exert church influence, and according to Dewar, was "consistently helpful and constructive" in "hammering out agreement on the powers and responsibilities of a Scottish parliament" (Letter to author, 26th Aug 1996). With people like Norman Shanks, the Church still has personalities whom the 'establishment' is keen to involve. The Scottish political system is often likened to a village, for example, Schlesinger, Miller and Dinah include an insightful 'map' of the way countless Scottish politicians are personally linked to figures in the media and the arts (2001: 3). Kenyon Wright, whose involvement in the home rule campaign was pivotal, gives the Church of Scotland the most credit in terms of all the churches' general contribution to the devolution debate (*The Herald*, 31st August 1996).

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[2] Perhaps ironically, the orchestra that day was conducted by James MacMillan, the world-renowned Scottish composer. As the section on sectarianism will discuss, in the summer of 1999, Mr MacMillan spoke out against the continuing existence of bigotry in Scotland, arguing that the Reformation had been the cultural equivalent of Mao's "Year Zero".

However, political commentators vary in their opinion of how big an overall contribution the Church of Scotland made to this debate. In 1992, Marr stated "[in] Scotland's history and its current political battle, its national church has a special place". He concluded that "any Scot who reads the serious papers or watches television recognises that the Kirk today aspires to play an active, indeed provocative, role in the developing argument about the nation's future" (1992: 32). In the introduction to his edited volume (with Tom Gallacher), Graham Walker concurs (1990: 6), claiming that it is "tempting to agree with a recent *Times Higher Educational Supplement* editorial that the Church of Scotland's role in re-emerging nationhood is pivotal." Others, however, are less enthusiastic. Journalist Ian Bell, of *The Observer*, claims that the "pretence that Scotland is a Christian country...tends invariably to skew democracy and distort our culture", while Peter Jones of *The Economist* has commented that "the Convention has been incomparably dull, which is where we have to blame the clergy" *(The Scotsman*, 29th December 1990). Historian Callum Brown feel there is little in the way of evidence to suggest the Scottish people identify the Church of Scotland with a "revived nationhood" (1992: 75).

Who is correct? The evidence in this chapter suggests that, through the Church and Nation Committee, the Church of Scotland was centrally involved in the most important contemporary Scottish political issue of the 1990s. While it was not a government led exercise until after 1997, the Labour and the Liberal Democrat parties, the main driving force of the Constitutional Convention, realised that a wide range of organisations had to be involved in the process, if it was going to be viewed as democratically legitimate. However, the fact the national Church was so committed to the concept of home rule was significant. The Church and Nation Committee had been consistently in favour of devolution since 1951, and could not be criticised for sending out a mixed message, and this was in contrast to the hierarchy of the Scottish Catholic Church appearing decidedly lukewarm at times to the workings of the Constitutional Convention. As later case studies will show, this was an interesting reversal of the normal position, where the views of the Catholic Church often appear to be clearer than those of the Church of Scotland. In simple terms, the Church of Scotland, through the Church and Nation Committee, achieved its stated objectives. Despite its support being just one part of the overall movement, it did play an important role in the campaign throughout the 1990s, certainly in comparison with other churches.

2.3 Homelessness

It was the mid-1980s which witnessed the beginnings of what is now an annual activity for the Committee - producing reports on issues of social justice, and what it perceives to be the unfair distribution of wealth in Scottish, and British, society. The tone of the Committee's pronouncements changed dramatically when the Rev Maxwell Craig took over from the Rev John McIndoe as convener in 1984. While Dr McIndoe was very much an establishment figure who later served as Moderator of General Assembly in 1996, Mr Craig, then the minister of Wellington Church in the West End of Glasgow, was an Old Harrovian with radical left wing views. He shaped the ethos and image of the Committee in a way that can still be seen today, and this remains an area of public policy-making where the Committee invests considerable time and effort in trying to influence.

The Church of Scotland's stance on poverty and injustice in society has always been politically controversial, because its pronouncements are often interpreted as being left-wing, even though it would not recognise that description of itself. The most vivid example of this came in 1988, when the Church of Scotland demonstrated it was still a major national institution with which politicians had to deal. The Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, came to the General Assembly to deliver her now famous "Sermon on the Mound", following a long line of premiers like Wilson, Heath and Callaghan. It is worth considering whether she would have bothered to do so if the Church of Scotland was a political irrelevance, and her choice of 'sermon' was interesting. Unlike her predecessors, who talked about vague political matters, Mrs Thatcher decided to tell the Church how she interpreted her faith as a Christian. Quoting St Paul, she stated "if a man shall not work, he shall not eat", and concluded that it was not the "creation of wealth that is wrong, but the love of money for its own sake." The response of the assembled theologians' was mixed. Marr (1992: 168) called it the "great symbolic non-meeting of minds", because as Callum Brown explains, the Church of Scotland really did "attack the policies of the Thatcher administration after 1979 as alien and inappropriate for Scotland", and Mrs Thatcher was not entirely unaware of this (1992: 9). The Moderator that year, the Rt Rev Prof James Whyte, decided simply to present the Prime Minister with her own copy of *Just Sharing: A Christian approach to the Distribution of Wealth, Income and Benefits*. This book was produced after the 1984 General Assembly had called for a major study of the distribution of wealth in Scotland. Its basic tenet was that the distribution of wealth in society was just as important as the creation of it in the first place, and called for higher taxation to reduce the levels of poverty in Britain. The book received considerable coverage by the media, got

a number of mentions at Westminster, and resulted in two Scottish conferences to discuss the recommendations being held in Glasgow and Edinburgh. This may have been on Mrs Thatcher's mind.

One of the central concerns the Church and Nation Committee has had in this area of policy-making is the issue of homelessness in Scotland. In 1993, the central bodies of twelve Christian denominations in Scotland came together to set up the Scottish Churches Housing Agency. The fact all the Scottish churches speak with one voice as a political pressure group on the issue of homelessness highlights an increasing trend towards closer co-operation amongst the different denominations when entering the political sphere. While this case study will not focus on the individual work of the Church and Nation Committee, but instead on the central role it often plays in the Churches Housing Agency, it is a good example of the nature of much of the Committee's contemporary work. No longer capable of acting alone over such issues, the Committee has realised it has more chance of exerting political influence if it works closely with the other mainstream Christian denominations in Scotland. Homelessness in Scotland is an archetypal Church and Nation concern, and the fact the Agency Chairman is the Rev Maxwell Craig, the former Church and Nation convener, is significant. The personal influence of Mr Craig over the work of the Agency is considerable, and he takes his job of chairman as seriously as he took his term in charge of Church and Nation.

From the start of 2000 until June 2001, the Scottish Churches Housing Agency was actively involved in the Scottish Executive consultation process over its new Housing Bill, the largest piece of legislation yet to go through the Scottish Parliament. Part of the Agency's mission statement reads, as follows: "The Scottish churches are united in the view that homelessness is an unnecessary feature of Scottish life. The Agency carries this view to government and others, and promotes a vision of a Scotland free of homelessness". In terms of the Housing Bill, the Scottish Churches Housing Agency made clear its belief throughout the process that "more thorough changes [were] needed if homelessness is to be a thing of the past". During the passage of the new Act through the Parliament, the Agency campaigned to:

1. "Abolish the priority homelessness rule, which means that 'non-priority' homeless people get little or no help.
2. Abolish the 'intentionality' rule, which means that some homeless people suffer from mistakes they made in the distant past.

3. Give councils the job of assessing people's need for support, as well as for accommodation when they are homeless" (http://www.scotchho.org.uk/page_4.html, accessed 3rd February 2001).

The Agency gave evidence at a session of the Social Justice Committee of the Scottish Parliament on 22nd November 2000. Members of the Committee spent forty five minutes asking Agency co-ordinator, Alastair Cameron, along with representatives from the Church of Scotland and the Salvation Army, to justify their written response, submitted during the Bill's consultation process. The delegation emphasised their main priority was to have the notion of "intentional homelessness" removed from the Bill. As Col John Flett, of the Salvation Army put it during the meeting, "we all know that the prodigal son could easily have been labelled 'intentionally homeless'" (Scottish Churches Housing Agency *Newsletter*, winter 2001). The Scottish Churches' Parliamentary Officer, the Rev Dr Graham Blount, a former secretary of Church and Nation, helped the Agency prepare for the session[3].

Throughout the consultation process, the Agency's position was that the Bill should not be a "missed opportunity", and that too much of the legislation was concerned with peripheral housing issues, and not enough with the immediacy of the problem facing people who were already homeless. In January 2001, Alastair Cameron shared a public forum with Johann Lamont MSP, convener of the Social Justice Committee in the Parliament, where he again reiterated the idea of legislation which tackled homelessness on its own, and not as a side issue. Alastair Cameron and Maxwell Craig also had a meeting with the Homelessness Task Force, set up by the Executive and chaired by the Social Justice Minister, on 25th June 2001, where they concentrated on the issue of intentionality. Both Cameron and Craig realised the importance of having a clear message, but not too many unrealistic demands, when they were lobbying MSPs. They also appreciated they had to approach the issues from a perspective where they had expertise, in order to make their position distinctive from other interest groups such as Shelter and the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations[4]. They gave a presentation at the meeting, but were disappointed that no discussion followed. In April 2002, the Agency Executive met with David Belfall, the

[3] ACTS (Action of Churches Together in Scotland), the ecumenical organisation which includes all the main Scottish denominations, appointed Dr Blount, then a Church of Scotland minister in Falkirk, in 1998 to the position of Parliamentary Officer, to act as a link between faith-based organisations and the new Parliament. There is also a Catholic officer, and an Evangelical Alliance officer. Dr Blount was the first clergyman to lead the Time for Reflection in the Parliament in the autumn of 1999, the weekly session of prayers in the chamber.

senior Scottish Executive civil servant, two months after the Task Force had published their report.

Was the Scottish Churches Housing Agency successful in its objectives? Alastair Cameron believes that they were not, and that even where minor changes were made to the legislation, it is unclear whether it was the Agency, or pressure groups like Shelter, who can take the credit (Interview with author, 26th February, 2002). However, does this mean the Agency (and therefore the Church and Nation Committee) was not effective? While ultimately, the Scottish Executive did not do what the Agency wanted, it was happy to listen to the opinion of the churches, and take on board their views and criticisms. According to Dr James Cant, a civil servant in the Homelessness Team at the Development Department of the Scottish Executive, the Agency's emphasis on homelessness, as opposed to other housing matters, was significant as "certain amendments tabled by backbenchers reflected the arguments of the Agency" (Interview with author, 1st August 2003). While Dr Cant was not suggesting that these MSP amendments were definitely influenced by the churches, he felt it was worth noting that this was certainly a possibility. Furthermore, the former Social Justice Minister, Jackie Baillie, hinted at a meeting of the Task Force that the concepts of intentionality and priority will be phased out in due course, while the longer term aims of the Task Force Report were welcomed by the Agency. Also, when the Executive published its second Housing Bill, this time based on the work of the Task Force, in September 2002, the Churches Housing Agency "enthusiastically endorsed" it (Scottish Churches Housing Agency, *press release*, 17th September 2002). As Grant (2000: 18) points out, when trying to assess the political influence of a pressure group, it is important to consider the status a pressure group has in the political system, as well as its own objectives.

In this sense, the Scottish Executive regards the Churches Housing Agency (and the Church and Nation Committee) as important organisations in their "issue network", to use Heclo (1978) and Rhodes's (1988) terminology. There is no intimate policy "community" regarding housing and homelessness in Scotland – the network is large, with a wide range of opinions contained within it, and executive consultation is not automatic. Nevertheless, both the Scottish Executive and its predecessor, the Scottish Office, have shown they value the views of the churches in this area of policy, and are happy to listen to their practical experiences, when consulting over legislation. In June 2002, for example, Alastair

[4] The current Director of the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations is David Orr, a former Deputy Warden of the Iona Community, the Church of Scotland's ecumenical movement.

Cameron was appointed to sit on an advisory group for research into rent and deposit guarantee schemes commissioned by the Scottish Executive. According to James Cant, of the Homelessness Team at the Scottish Executive, the SCHA is in "fairly regular contact with the Team. We receive their newsletter and have had specific contacts during the Homelessness Bill over issues they wished to pursue" (Interview with author, 1st August 2003).

The relatively recent phenomenon of the Church of Scotland co-operating closely with other churches over Church and Nation-type issues is significant. While the Church's view on issues such as human cloning or Section 28 is often radically different from other churches' positions, on social and political issues there is usually broad agreement. As Sleeman states in Moyser's edited volume on the political influence of the Church of England, "opinions on economic and social issues held by Anglicans are not easily distinguishable from those of members of other Churches, in particular the Methodists, the Church of Scotland, the United Reformed Church and indeed many Roman Catholics" (1985: 257). The Scottish Churches Housing Agency is probably the best example of this – all the churches feel the same about homelessness, and want to do something about it – theology does not really come into it. As Alastair Cameron puts it, modern day lobbying is all about "building alliances" (Interview with author, 26th February, 2002). Put simply, the Church of Scotland can no longer act alone over these issues as an independent cause pressure group. It can take the lead over these issues, and often does, but it has to work with other churches, and housing groups in their issue network. For example, the Church of Scotland's representative on the Agency Board, the Rev Graham Dickson, convened a study group on homelessness which reported to the General Assembly of 2000, but it did not recommend any independent action without going through the Agency. This approach is perhaps a consequence of the very inclusive way the Scottish Executive now consults on relevant policies. According to Joyce McVarrie, a policy adviser in the Civil Law Division of the Justice Department at the Scottish Executive, civil servants will tend to first contact the two umbrella organisations – ACTS (Action of Churches Together in Scotland) and SIFC (Scottish Inter-Faith Council[5]) – rather than individual denominations, if they feel their input is appropriate (Interview with author, 2nd May 2003). Nevertheless, the Church of Scotland is usually the most committed and influential church in these areas of public policy-making. It is significantly more interested than the Scottish Catholic Church, which tends to be more concerned with traditional moral questions like abortion. According to Peter Kearney, the Church's press spokesman, while the late Cardinal Winning was

[5] SIFC is funded by a Scottish Executive grant, and meets annually with the First Minister.

personally very interested in social justice, generally the Catholic maxim towards such intrinsically political questions is "render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's" (Interview with author, 25th March 2002).

Prior to the creation of the Churches Housing Agency, the success of unilateral Church of Scotland campaigns on homelessness was mixed. In 1985, the Committee was instructed by General Assembly to establish an "independent and detailed investigation of Scotland's housing", and a commission was set up, chaired by Mary Millican (Forrester 1993: 78). Its 1988 report was well received in professional quarters, and the Scottish Office, as it then was, saw fit to prepare a detailed response, which both contested some of the wider recommendations of the report, and acknowledged much common ground. As in 2001, the Committee was critical of the Housing (Scotland) Act of 1988, for not doing enough for the homeless, but despite the discernible contact between St Andrew's House and the Church of Scotland, the evidence suggests that the latter's input to the Act was ultimately negligible. The reaction of the Committee to the passing of the Act suggests that it did not feel it had been successful in its influence itself (Church of Scotland 1988: 86). In 1990, a report was produced entitled *The Church and Scotland's Poor*, following on from where *Just Sharing* left off, but it was not as widely read or examined by politicians as the 1980s equivalent. In 1993, the Committee was asked to present a submission to the Government's Consultative Paper on Sustainable Development, and met with the Secretary of State the following year as well, to discuss unemployment.

The type of consultations mentioned above do indicate some level of 'influence' in terms of policy formulation at early stages, even if the more public campaigns produced little in the way of positive 'results'. Any substantive policy changes as a result of meetings between the Scottish Office/Executive and the Church are an unrealistic aim, but the potential for less fundamental, but still significant, alterations always exist. In positive terms, the issue of homelessness is an area of public policy-making where the Church of Scotland can speak out, through its Church and Nation Committee, and the Scottish Churches Housing Agency, with confidence that it has a moral base to its arguments. Despite the middle-class nature of its membership, the Church has a tradition of standing alongside the underprivileged, and its pronouncements have an authority about them as a consequence. While it is technically through the Board of Social Responsibility that the Church of Scotland provides services and facilities for those in need, the Church and Nation Committee still benefits from being part of the one whole. Due to its proximity to the services provided by the

Board of Social Responsibility, the Committee has the advantage of being considered by politicians and civil servants to be an important 'player in the game' in Scotland in this area, and the churches generally receives political respect. James Cant, of the Homelessness Team at the Scottish Executive, states that the "approach of the Scottish Churches Housing Agency is like that of other groups – they have a good understanding of the political and legislative processes and contribute through the established channels…their contribution in the field of homelessness is understood and respected" (Interview with author, 1st August 2003). This is an issue about which the Church and Nation Committee has campaigned consistently for over twenty years, despite making itself unpopular with some politicians. However, in terms of the actual results of that campaigning, the conclusions are less clear cut, and this despite the New Labour social inclusion agenda, and the post-Craig/Shanks conveners seeking to be less confrontational towards government.

2.4 Sectarianism

When *VisitScotland*, the revamped Scottish Tourist Board, is promoting Glasgow to foreign travellers as a holiday destination, it focuses on the vibrancy of the city, the friendliness and humour of its people, and the attractions of its nightlife. Needless to say, it does not mention some of the less savoury aspects of Glasgow and the West of Scotland's way of life, of which religious sectarianism is an aspect. This chapter will not explore the history of this feature of west central Scotland society – chapter one goes into some detail on this, and chapter four will expand upon it even further. However, the issue of sectarianism is one which the Church and Nation Committee has sought to address on a number of occasions, most recently at the 2002 General Assembly, and this case study will examine the impact it has made on the public debate and related legislation.

A number of contributory factors came together to make the Committee produce a report on sectarianism for the 2002 General Assembly. First, as section 2.2 mentioned, in the summer of 1999, the world-famous Scottish composer, James MacMillan, spoke out against what he perceived to be the continued existence of anti-Catholic bigotry in his home country. In a key note speech at the Edinburgh Festival, he argued that there existed a common assumption that all Scotland's present culture originates from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, neglecting the fact that before 1560, Scotland was a Catholic country. A lengthy public debate followed, with *The Herald* newspaper launching a series of articles

on the topic, which eventually became an academic volume, edited by the modern historian, T. M. Devine (2000).

Secondly, as chapter one described in some detail, only a matter of months after The Queen had officially opened the new Parliament, two MSPs tabled a motion calling for the repeal of the Act of Settlement, the law which prevents Catholics from ascending to the British throne, or from marrying the monarch. In doing so, the SNP MSP Mike Russell, his party's Education Spokesman, and list member for the South of Scotland, backed by Lord James Douglas-Hamilton, the Conservative Business Manager, and list member for the Lothians, made sectarianism one of the first major issues to be debated in the new Parliament. From a non-Scottish perspective, it appeared incongruous for Holyrood to devote a great deal of time to a matter of royal protocol which it had no power to repeal in the first place, but as chapter one argued, these issues still appear to matter in Scottish politics. Chapter one also argued that the move to repeal the Act was motivated by electoral factors and the Labour Deputy Health Minister, Frank McAveety, was also of this opinion. He ironically thanked Lord James and Mr Russell in the Parliament for "standing up for the poor Catholics of Glasgow" (*Official Report*, Scottish Parliament, 15th December 1999). Cardinal Winning may have welcomed the move, describing the Act as an "insult" to his community, but some Catholics felt they had been exploited for political gains (*The Scotsman*, 16th Dec 1999). The motion was carried with an overwhelming majority, but Downing Street paid little attention. The Prime Minister, whose wife and children are Catholic, and who himself attends mass with them, expressed a typically English puzzlement that the new Parliament had chosen to debate such an academic matter, and stated repealing the Act would be "complex in the extreme" (*The Scotsman*, 16th Dec 1999). In typically ecumenical fashion, the Church and Nation Committee, working in close conjunction with the Principal Clerk, the Rev Dr Finlay Macdonald, stated it would welcome the repeal of the Act[6] (*The Scotsman*, 16th Dec 1999).

Thirdly, the Church and Nation Committee was very concerned with the findings of the book by Harry Reid, the former editor of *The Herald*, who was commissioned by the Church of Scotland in 2001 to assess the institution's current state. He concluded that the Church was consumed by guilt at its behaviour in the 1920s and 1930s, when it was openly anti-Irish and anti-Catholic, and endorsed enforced repatriation for the many Irish Catholic immigrants in west central Scotland. At the General Assembly of 1952, commissioners

[6] The Principal Clerk is effectively the chief executive of the Church of Scotland – he is the head of administration, and normally legally qualified.

were still being warned of the threat of "the growth of Roman Catholicism" (Church of Scotland 1952: 328). However, since then, the Church's record has improved. In the late 1970s, for example, Glasgow Presbytery directly challenged Rangers Football Club to explain why no Catholic players were allowed to play for the club, and, generally, establishment figures in the Church in Edinburgh, have ensured that relations with the Catholic Church in Scotland remain good-natured (Gallacher and Walker 1990: 140). The Moderatorial year of Andrew McLellan in 2001 saw him strongly condemn bigotry and sectarianism at services in Edinburgh's Catholic cathedral, and at the Carfin Grotto memorial in Lanarkshire.

Fourthly, the Committee has been heavily involved in the consultation process for the private member's Bill lodged in the Parliament in 2001, which aimed to outlaw sectarianism. It was initiated by the Liberal Democrat MSP for Central Scotland, Donald Gorrie, a Church of Scotland elder, and while it was not possible to gain access to the minutes of Committee meetings, archival research reveals that its Holyrood sub-group met in the autumn of 2001 to decide how to proceed. The objective of Mr Gorrie's 'Protection from Sectarianism and Religious Hatred' Bill was to make sectarianism and religious hatred a criminal offence, and give courts powers to impose additional penalties. As a result of this, the Scottish Executive set up a working group, chaired by the then Deputy Justice Minister, Dr Richard Simpson, to consider whether a new law was needed, and their conclusions were expected in the summer of 2002. However, in July 2002, Mr Gorrie complained that the parliamentary process was taking too long, and made clear his intention to instead table amendments to the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Bill, which was already before the Parliament. In September 2002, Mr Gorrie also criticised Glasgow City Council for failing to ban merchandise from being sold outside Ibrox Stadium and Celtic Park, which was sectarian in nature, and he had also previously stated that "society might be better off" if Catholics schools were abolished in Scotland. In September 2002, the Catholic Bishop of Motherwell, Joseph Devine, argued that while denominational schools did contribute towards sectarianism, it was "a price worth paying" for a "coherent system that has the academic curriculum and moral and spiritual life in tandem" (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/2274383.stm, 22nd September 2002).

The Church and Nation General Assembly report in 2002 had 4 key recommendations in this area:

"Recognising that sectarianism is not someone else's problem, commend the report to the Church for study and encourage congregations to set up local working groups to look at the issue within their own communities.
Instruct the Church and Nation Committee to set up the working group recommended in the Report, and to seek to do this in partnership with the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission.
Commend the Nil by Mouth Charter to congregations and individual Church members.
Commend all those who seek to combat sectarianism in Scotland today" (Church of Scotland 2002, Church and Nation section, p1).

The Nil by Mouth Charter was set up by Cara Henderson, after a school friend at Glasgow Academy, Mark Scott, was murdered at an Old Firm game in 1995. A motion was also passed expressing regret over any part which the Church had played during the past in sectarianism and "affirming our support for future moves towards a more tolerant society" (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/2014961.stm, 29th May 2002).

The Church and Nation Committee has been consulted fully by Mr Gorrie, and by the Scottish Executive Task Force over the proposed legislation. On an issue of this nature, the Church and Nation Committee of the Church of Scotland is going to be centrally involved, and an important part of the legislative process. In the first case study on devolution, the Committee did not necessarily have a right to be directly involved, but still managed to be successfully so regardless. In the second case study on homelessness, it was noted that the Committee found it easier to be directly involved in policy-making, but only through co-operation with other groups, and its association with the Board of Social Responsibility. With this issue, the Church and Nation Committee finds itself in a relatively unusual position – politicians approaching it, asking for its input, rather than the other way around. In that sense, if bigotry and sectarianism are still issues of importance to MSPs and Scottish MPs, then the churches are still important political institutions in this respect. This fits with Dudley and Richardson's "multi-arena" model of policy-making, with the Church and Nation Committee acting differently depending on the issue it is addressing (1998: 747).

The Committee has enthusiastically supported the legislation process, and unambiguously apologised for any stance it may have adopted over the issue in the past. The Committee

has worked closely with Mr Gorrie, and is to be commended for taking such a clear stance, and apologising so profoundly and publicly for its past behaviour. General Assembly deliverances are usually timely, never shying away from controversial issues, and their 2002 report is no different. Christine Dora, a policy executive in the Justice Department of the Scottish Executive, was involved in the production of the final report of the working group. In an interview with the author, she noted that while the Catholic Church was deeply concerned that the focus would turn to the issue of denominational education, the Church of Scotland expressed no specific concerns (15th May 2003). The Church of Scotland often fails to reach a unified conclusion, and can appear to be 'sitting on the fence', but that was not the case here, and its detailed and professional contribution to this piece of legislation will be crucial in it reaching the statute books. It is difficult to judge whether or not the Church and Nation Committee has been successful in lobbying about the Gorrie Bill, as the process is ongoing. Also, as they agree with what Mr Gorrie wants to achieve, and the Bill directly concerns the Church of Scotland in the first place, it is not clear how much credit the Committee could take if the Bill does become law. In that sense, this is a different type of case study from the one on homelessness.

Nevertheless, generally, this issue has gained momentum – for example, in September 2002, the then chief executive of Celtic Football Club, Ian McLeod wrote to all season ticket holders asking them to refrain from singing pro-IRA chants at matches. Soon after, Rangers decided to withdraw their controversial orange away strip from sale, only months after it had first been unveiled. On 16th October 2002, First Minister Jack McConnell met with Ian McLeod, and his counterpart at Rangers, John McLelland, to discuss ways of continuing to move forward (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/2331639.stm, 16th October 2002). Both clubs agreed to take part in anti-bigotry projects in schools, and clamp down on street traders who sell paramilitary paraphernalia outside their grounds. In a lengthy article in *The Sunday Herald*, Mr McConnell stated his intention to "stamp out sectarianism", before it became "synonymous with Scotland", revealing that he had personally experienced bigotry, when he first became a Lanarkshire MSP. He states categorically that "doing nothing is not an option, and if it takes legislation from our parliament to remove this stain from Scotland's reputation, then that is what we will do" (*The Sunday Herald*, 13th October 2002). The Church of Scotland, through its Church and Nation Committee, has contributed towards the groundswell of opinion compelling the Scottish Executive to take action.

2.5 The War against Terrorism

Studying how much influence the Church and Nation Committee of the Church of Scotland has exerted over the British reaction to the September 11th terrorist attacks in the United States may at first seem slightly incongruous. The uninformed observer might well query the rationale of the Committee spending time and resources on this issue, when it is extremely unlikely the British Government is going to pay any attention to their opinion. However, this case study very much typifies a large proportion of the Committee's work – making moral pronouncements on areas of public policy which, realistically, they have a negligible chance of having an input over, but feeling they have a moral duty as the national Church to speak out anyway. The same can be said for the Church and Nation Committee's long-held stance on nuclear weapons – for nearly twenty years, it has strongly protested against the presence of Trident on the Clyde at Faslane. Along with CND Scotland, and radical politicians like George Galloway and Tommy Sheridan, the Committee believes it provides a valuable dissenting voice in this area of policy, but would also readily acknowledge their chances of changing national government defence policy are slim.

The Church of Scotland, through the Church and Nation Committee, was the only mainstream church in Britain to speak out against the war in Afghanistan, after the events of September 11th, receiving a considerable amount of media coverage, as a result. In the aftermath of the attacks, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, supported military force in Afghanistan, and said that it had "nothing to do with religion" (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/1911264.stm, 4th April 2002). However, a month or so after the attacks on New York and Washington, the Church and Nation Committee was warning it was "unconvinced" that the use of military force against the Taleban regime could be justified. The convener, Alan McDonald, stated that war was the "extreme result of the failure of politics", and called for justice to be administered in an international court of law under the United Nations (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/1579480.stm, 4th October 2001). The Anti-War Coalition was in regular contact with the Committee, viewing the Church of Scotland's stance as helpful to their cause.

The Committee also subsequently took a firm stance on the proposed military action in Iraq. Archival research reveals that Tam Dalyell, the Labour MP for Linlithgow, wrote to Jack Straw, the Foreign Secretary, on 30th May, enclosing the Church and Nation Committee's newly published annual report. On the 18th June, Mr Straw replied, informing

Mr Dalyell that he would speak to the Prime Minister, and on the 5th July, the Prime Minister wrote to Mr Dalyell, outlining the Government's position in response to the points raised by the Church and Nation Committee. On 6th August 2002, the then Moderator of General Assembly, the Rt Rev Dr Finlay Macdonald, wrote to the Prime Minister voicing his concerns, arguing that no British troops should be committed to fight alongside any American force without a clear US mandate and the support of a majority of MPs. This has also been the public position adopted by the SNP. Archive research shows that the Foreign Office Minister, Mike O'Brien, replied to the Moderator on 23rd August. Indeed, when Dr Macdonald preached the sermon before Mr Blair and The Queen at Crathie Kirk the following week, he may well have made reference to the international situation.

In September, Alan MacDonald wrote to all MPs reiterating the points made by the Moderator. Section 2.2 mentioned the Catholic maxim towards such intrinsically political questions being "render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's", and it is hard to imagine a Catholic bishop in Scotland writing such a letter. The controversial stance did not go unnoticed by the UK Government. Each year on St Andrew's Day, executive members of the Committee travel down to Westminster to meet with all Scottish MPs, accompanied by the serving Moderator of General Assembly, with valuable political contacts often made as a result. According to the Convener, Alan McDonald, the 2001 meeting was "stormy", with many Labour MPs unhappy with the Committee's views on the war on terrorism. After the meeting, the Armed Forces Minister, Adam Ingram, the MP for East Kilbride, contacted the Committee, asking whether he could address their January 2002 meeting. The Committee agreed, and in a meeting which lasted three hours, he tried to convince the members that their position on the war was wrong. Brought up in the Church of Scotland, although now not a member, Mr Ingram has also served as Minister of State in Northern Ireland, where he perhaps learned the importance of placating churchmen. Indeed, Alan McDonald was told that Tony Blair was personally unhappy at the Church of Scotland's stance, and sent Ingram to speak to the Church and Nation Committee.

The 2002 report also addressed to question of asylum seekers in Britain, conscious of the increase in refugees coming to the country after September 11th. In November 2001, the Committee asked the then Moderator, the Rt Rev Dr John Miller, to set up a meeting with the Home Secretary, David Blunkett, over the Labour Government's voucher scheme proposal for refugees. Significantly, this was at the request of the Refugee Survival Trust, who felt the Church and Nation Committee was a voice to which the Government listened.

While the Home Secretary pulled out at the last minute, the Moderator still met with Lord Rooker, the Minister of State, at Whitehall. Alan McDonald believes that while the Church of Scotland cannot take credit for the voucher scheme idea eventually being scrapped in 2002, his Committee added to the "cumulative effect" of public opposition to the proposal (Interview with author, 19th March 2002). In recognition of its activities in this area of policy-making, the Church and Nation Committee is a represented member of the cross-party group on refugees in the Scottish Parliament.

Indeed, the Church of Scotland has a history of adopting a controversial stance over asylum seeking. In 1996, the General Assembly overwhelmingly passed deliverances stating that parish churches should break the law and "offer sanctuary to people threatened with deportation when this would put them in danger of their lives or seriously harm their families". The Church and Nation Committee strongly condemned the 1996 Act which tightened up the law by removing benefits for those in the country waiting to hear if they had been permitted entry. The Committee felt the Government could not "justify the lack of compassion and the hostility with which those seeking asylum...have all too often been treated, or the increasingly punitive approach being adopted" (Church of Scotland 1996: 11/9). Significantly, other churches in Britain subsequently adopted an even more radical, anti-government position over the issue, with the United Reformed and Methodist churches, in particular, being highly critical, but they received far less news coverage, and no incensed government response in the way the Church of Scotland did.

However, perhaps it is worth emphasising that just because a national committee or board of the Church holds a certain view on a particular political matter, does not necessarily mean everyone in the Church of Scotland agrees with it. One of the most visible divisions in opinion in the Church of Scotland involves an issue related to the topic of this case study - nuclear weapons. It has already been noted that the Committee takes a radical approach towards Trident's presence on the Clyde – it is resolutely against it, and has protested as such. However, while that is the official position of the Church of Scotland, it is not overwhelmingly endorsed, with the Committee on Chaplains to Her Majesty's Forces taking a more supportive attitude towards Faslane. Trident aside, this Committee traditionally adopts more of an 'establishment' line over defence issues, and is certainly not pacifist, the de facto position of the Church, as expressed repeatedly through the Committee.

This is an example of the Church of Scotland being no less an elite led institution than the Catholic Church, when its bishops speak out on an issue – for example, many parish ministers in the Dumbarton area would be unwise to publicise the official position of the Church, when so many of their parishioners work at Faslane. The concept that the Church of Scotland is inherently "democratic" is not entirely true. Certainly, its structure is not hierarchical, and the way its General Assembly votes on issues, in order to make the laws of the Church, is commendable, but ordinary Church members do not have a vote – presbyteries send delegates to the Assembly to vote for them. This leaves the Church open to accusations of "oligarchic" tendencies, albeit in the modern rather than the Platonic sense of the word - rule by elites, if not necessarily rule by a single leader. The thesis argues that the Church of Scotland's internal structure does result in its public pronouncements being more reflective of the views of ordinary members, than the Catholic Church's more dogmatic approach. However, it cautions against reaching the conclusion that every stance the Church adopts always accurately reflects 'grass roots' opinion, as this particular case study perhaps demonstrates.

What conclusions can be drawn regarding the Church and Nation Committee's position on military action, post-September 11th? The Committee's views on the war against terrorism did not change British government policy, but the evidence does suggest the national Government listened to the views of a pressure group which was very much an outsider to this policy community. That is a significant achievement, and showed the Church and Nation Committee still possesses the capacity to cause the occasional 'political stir'. The general area of international affairs is probably the most typical topic the Church and Nation Committee attempts to address. It is a campaign group, an outsider, and when, as with this issue, the political debate is British, not Scottish, it finds itself even more marginalised. However, the fact Scotland has her own media, with two quality daily newspapers, means the Church of Scotland never really has to struggle to get its views printed or broadcast. The media recognises the importance to them of Scotland having her own national Church, and that helps the Church of Scotland to get its views widely aired, views which have been consistent and committed from the start of the public debate.

2.6 Conclusions

As section 2.1 outlined, in order to analyse the effectiveness of the political behaviour of the Church and Nation Committee, three criteria will be applied:

1. Was the Church of Scotland (through the Committee) fully consulted by the Scottish Executive, or relevant Government Department, in order to establish its opinion on the issue?
2. Did the Church of Scotland (through the Committee) speak out in a consistent and clear way on the issue?
3. Did the Church of Scotland (through the Committee) achieve its ultimate objectives concerning the issue?

While the case studies showed the Committee had made positive contributions to a number of political debates, it is important that appearances do not deceive – ultimately, the chapter has discovered little evidence of the Committee achieving its objectives. Indeed, the Church and Nation Convener, Alan McDonald, is "amused" when newspapers prefix the name of the Committee with the words "powerful" and "influential" – he feels this is an example of a "residue of expectation", and believes Church and Nation now has "very little" power or influence (Interview with author, 19th March 2002). McDonald also argues the job of his Committee is not to "actively lobby" politicians, yet conversely, he states that the Committee does hope to have political influence. This statement exemplifies a problem the Committee has – it is happy making moral pronouncements, and hoping the Government will listen, but it does not want to see itself as an active political 'lobbyist', as if the term has negative connotations. Sarah Davidson, the director of the Holyrood project team, and a Church and Nation Committee member, also makes this point, arguing that the Church of Scotland sees itself as "speaking to a wider platform of church members and the citizenry in general, including the decision-makers" (Interview with author, 8th May 2003).

However, this perception seems contradictory when one considers that in September 2002, the Church and Nation Committee co-ran a training event "on influencing political decisions" for the benefit of Scottish faith-based organisations. According to its advertisement, "an impressive list of participants [will] guide you in talks and workshops through the process of lobbying at both Holyrood and Westminster, and through campaigning and working with the media". With regard to the fourth case study on the war on terrorism, archival research shows that Alan McDonald even tried to arrange a meeting with President Bush in February 2003 over the pending conflict in Iraq. Mr McDonald was in Washington for a meeting with US church leaders, and clearly thought his Committee's "influence" was large enough to persuade the President to meet with him. Indeed, all the case studies also show a variety of approaches being taken to achieve the specific objectives. Paul Smart, the head of the Race Team in the Equality Unit of the Scottish

Executive, argues that while civil servants have got better at consulting "stakeholders" like the Church of Scotland, post-devolution, the Church also has to improve its methods of contacting civil servants (Interview with author, 15th May 2003).

In terms of the first question, the Church and Nation Committee's main weakness lies in the way it is often on the outside of a close-knit policy community – the last case study on the war against terrorism the best example of a typical Church and Nation issue. The Committee may have got some press attention for its stance on the war, but it predictably made no impact on government policy, other than being part of the general coalition of opposition. While being an "outsider" group does not inevitably lead to less influence, it does in the case of the Committee. This is due to the personnel of the Committee – while they repeatedly show commitment to bringing about some form of social change, they seem more comfortable concentrating on public campaigning, than on pro-actively lobbying. They still appear to view the latter as morally inferior to speaking out in the press. In terms of the second question, the Committee cannot be faulted for its consistency over issues, but it suffers from the fact that its opinions are not always the same as other parts of the Church of Scotland, including its core membership, whose views are not nearly so radical. This problem will be explored in greater depth in the next two chapters. The third question is difficult to answer, but generally, the Church and Nation Committee does not achieve its objectives.

The late Lord Mackay of Ardbrecknish, the former Conservative Minister of State at the Department of Social Security, and an elder at Glasgow Cathedral, told the author that the Church and Nation Committee did not approach him when he was in office, to discuss relevant issues. He concluded that the Committee would be better off if they "had been more interested in influence rather than in political posturing. As a pressure group on government, it gets few marks, and could use the advice...of those who lobby successfully" (Letter to author, 3rd Oct 1996). Seven years on, this remains a valid criticism of the Committee; that it still subconsciously views passing a deliverance as being the end of the matter, rather than the start. In a follow-up interview, Jim Murphy, the government whip and Labour MP for Eastwood, singled out the Committee's annual visit to the House of Commons for particular criticism:

"Unfortunately, in recent years, this has been an opportunity for the Committee members to lecture Members of Parliament on the morality or immorality of recent conflicts.

Personally, I have found their approach unhelpful and counterproductive in the pursuit of their objectives" (Interview with author, 20th May 2003).

In a telephone interview, Michael McMahon, the Labour MSP for Hamilton North and Bellshill, stated that church representatives were the "amateurs of the amateur league" when it came to lobbying (Interview with author, 9th October 2001), and chapter five includes many similar comments made in the follow-up elite interviews. The Committee seems happy to 'decorate' public debates with its opinions, but then not necessarily act upon them effectively.

The effectiveness of the Church and Nation Committee as a pressure group is at its most potent when politicians acknowledge it as having a role to play in a specific debate. However, it is rarely an "insider" group, in the true sense of Grant's term. With regard to the campaign for home rule, the status of the national Church was recognised throughout by the organisations and parties involved in the Constitutional Convention, and its subsequent influence was as strong as it could have been. However, the devolution process was a unique political issue, and the case study on it was included as much to provide context, as to illustrate effectiveness. Nevertheless, through the Church and Nation Committee, the Church of Scotland was heavily involved in the process, and was a consistently enthusiastic supporter for devolution, even during periods when public demand for it faded. Furthermore, in terms of social inclusion issues like homelessness, the Committee's voice is still listened to, because the Church of Scotland as a whole (like many churches) is directly involved in providing care facilities for the underprivileged. On issues of this kind, government doors are open to the Committee at an early stage of policy formulation, and the Church of Scotland as a whole is an insider pressure group in this context.

However, in terms of having political influence in the future, there are some fundamental concerns for the Committee, with the third "external environment" factor of Grant significant (2000: 196). The remit of Church and Nation, quoted at the beginning of the chapter, was drafted some eighty years ago, and is now decidedly over-optimistic - as a nation, Scotland no longer feels the need to be "watched over" by the Church. While the role the Committee adopts in economic and social issues is commendable, modern politicians do not listen to the churches if they do not feel they have a relevant role to play. With fewer people attending church[7], the capacity of the Committee to tackle political issues where its involvement is not immediately obvious, is therefore significantly

[7] See chapter one, section 1.5.

curtailed. In his 1967 study of trade unionism, R M Blackburn argued that one of the criteria for the effectiveness of the unions was their "completeness" i.e. how many members they had (1967: 14). Section 1.5 of the first chapter described the decline in the traditional relationship between religion and voting in Scotland, itself a result of a decline in religious affiliation, and this also has a direct effect on the political influence of the churches individually.

As an organisation, the Church and Nation Committee is increasingly struggling to find a role for itself, and is having to content itself with ecumenical campaigns on issues it has little hope of influencing the decision-makers over. As the next chapter will show, the political issues which concern churches are increasingly becoming the domain of the Board of Social Responsibility, rather than of the Committee. Politicians appear increasingly less likely to see the relevance of the Church and Nation Committee in their areas of legislating, but they still recognise the role of the Board. The Board is the voice of the Church on issues where even the most fervent atheist would concede churches still have a role to play – for example, genetics, human sexuality, abortion, euthanasia. In comparison, the Church and Nation Committee resembles a rather narrow-based, radical cause group. Any peripheral influence the Committee may have had, with regard to the new Housing Act, was in large part due to the day-to-day work of the Board. The decline in influence of the Committee, which section 2.3 argued was epitomised by the way it no longer acts alone over social issues, exemplifies the decline in influence of the churches in Britain generally. The importance of religion in Western European societies generally is diminishing[8], and politics in Britain has become moderate and middle-of-the-road – two 'conservative' parties battle it out for the middle ground, and as a corollary, power. There is little room for an organisation like Church and Nation which a) represents an organised religion, and is therefore inherently anachronistic, and b) seems to advocate an old-fashioned brand of politics – left-wing, anti-nuclear, and not really respected by the mainstream.

Indeed, since 1997, the Church and Nation Committee has not had a Conservative government to criticise, and this has also meant a drop in its public profile. In the past, the Committee's overtly political remit meant it almost personified the relationship between Church and State in Scotland, and considering the Church of Scotland represents a broad cross-section of Scottish society, friction between it and the Conservatives in the 1990s was inevitable. Now there is a government which the Scottish people voted for, Committee pronouncements have appeared less news-worthy. As Mark Douglas-Home, the editor of

[8] See Ashford and Timms (1992)

The Herald, notes, much of the work of the Committee is now "superfluous" because it has much less to focus criticism on (Interview with author, 21st April 2003). There has also been a change, concurrently, in the approach taken by the leadership of the Committee. While radical, left-wing conveners in the 1980s put it firmly at odds with Mrs Thatcher's Conservative administration, recent conveners have become more consensual in their approach to politics. As the case study on homelessness mentioned, the first of the radical conveners was the Rev Maxwell Craig, and he was followed by the Rev Norman Shanks, at the time a lecturer in practical theology at Glasgow University. However, his successors, the Rev Andrew McLellan, and Dr Alison Elliot, were both moderates. The current incumbent, the Rev Alan McDonald, appears to be more in the Craig/Shanks mould, with his Committee's controversial stance on the war in Afghanistan a good example of this.

Grant's internal "resources" factor is also relevant to this discussion (2000: 196). He argues that the correct choice of strategy used by a group in a certain context is important, in terms of its overall effectiveness. While the Committee often advocates radical solutions to social problems, the language used is always circumspect, while the sheer breadth of topics it seeks to address annually often neutralises its overall impact. Iain Smith, the former Scottish Executive Minister, and Liberal Democrat MSP for North-East Fife, mentioned this factor in an follow-up interview. He argued that the "very wide range of work carried out...means that there are always going to be more specific 'experts' in each of the areas of international aid, inner-city work, social care etc..." (Interview with author, 5th June 2003). This comment also has overtones of the point about "relevance" made earlier. In this sense, the Church of Scotland's internal structure is not well suited to modern day political lobbying. The fact it has a variety of different committees and boards means that it also has a variety of different spokespersons, and this is another political disadvantage. Both the media and politicians like dealing with the same people - winning influence in public life is about building up recognition, credibility and respect, and organisations and pressure groups require leaders to do that. The Church of Scotland is at a considerable disadvantage, compared with hierarchical churches, and most other pressure groups, due to its lack of coherent structure. Not only does the Church have a number of 'leaders', those leaders are temporary - the conveners only serve four year terms of office, so no momentum can be built up.

The Church does not possess an organisational structure geared towards twenty first century media management, a crucial part of political campaigning. Conveners of national boards and committees are not well placed to comment on media stories or reports when

their views cannot be officially ratified until General Assembly meets in May. In comparison, the Scottish Catholic Church's media department is more sophisticated. It has two key figures – Ronnie Convery, the Archdiocese of Glasgow's chief press spokesman, and the Media Office Director, Peter Kearney, a former SNP National Executive Committee member, who is also based in Glasgow. Their ability to provide clear quotes to journalists, explaining the position of the Catholic Church on a political issue, is to be contrasted with the 'semi-detached' approach of the Church of Scotland's press office. The fact the Scottish media is based in Glasgow (with the exception of *The Scotsman* newspaper) does not help the very Edinburgh-orientated national Church either. There have occasionally been calls for the Church of Scotland to reform its internal structure, perhaps to have a permanent Moderator as its head. These calls grew more frequent in the 1990s, when Cardinal Winning became a major figure in public life in Scotland, but they have never come to fruition. A permanent head combined with the Church of Scotland's breadth of political interest, and established status, would perhaps be a more effective political institution, but that would be to abandon Presbyterianism, and the very essence of its values.

Chapter 3: The Board of Social Responsibility of the Church of Scotland

3.1 Introductory section: the Board

The internal structure of the Church of Scotland makes it possible for many of its General Assembly committees and boards to interact quasi-autonomously with other institutions in the Scottish political system. Chapters one and two have explained how the egalitarian tradition of the Church means that there is no one central figure-head, and its different component parts function in a very de-centralised manner. With this fact in mind, chapter two argued that one of the most prominent pressure groups in Scotland's political system was the Church and Nation Committee of the Church of Scotland. Its political influence may now be more limited, but its recognition factor with Scottish politicians remains high. However, while the Committee has traditionally been the best known of the Church of Scotland's national boards and committees, there is another part of the Church's organisation, which has an equally high profile in Scottish public life today - its national Board of Social Responsibility.

While the Church and Nation Committee's remit is concerned with 'public' political issues, as described in the case studies in chapter two, the Board of Social Responsibility is more concerned with 'moral', or 'private', matters, e.g. human sexuality, genetic engineering, abortion, and euthanasia. In modern Scotland, however, it is as 'politically active' as the Church and Nation Committee, dealing with the sort of policy issues all churches and faith-based organisations try to monitor carefully. The Board came into being in 1976, uniting the work of the Church's Social Service Committee, Moral Welfare Committee and Women's Social and Moral Welfare Committee, and the names of these former bodies give some indication of its tripartite political role:

1. "To offer care and help through the varied establishments and projects it operates, and to encourage and enable caring work at parish level.
2. To offer to the Church informed opinion on contemporary social, moral and ethical issues.
3. To encourage balanced judgements on these issues in the light of the Christian faith, and to put forward these judgements at all levels of influence" (Church of Scotland 2001a: 30).

The third point explicitly describes the Board's duty to try to exert political influence, and as was the case with the Church and Nation Committee in chapter two, this chapter will analyse its effectiveness in this respect. As the previous chapter touched on, however, the Board of Social Responsibility is a different kind of institution from the Church and Nation Committee. It is a major Scottish care provider, employing over 1600 people nation-wide in its homes for the elderly and the terminally ill, and centres for drug addicts, alcoholics and the homeless. As well as having a convener, the Board also has a full-time Director of Social Work, and three deputy directors, who oversee its practical work. It has a multi-million pound budget, as well as its own headquarters in the north-east of Edinburgh. This can be compared with the Church and Nation Committee's very modest budget and two rooms in the Church of Scotland's New Town central offices. The Board's functions are so extensive they require to be divided into four - Central Services, Operations, Planning and Development, and Social Interests – with the last of these the most relevant to this study. The annual report to General Assembly is a weighty document, invariably the largest of any of the reports, and is divided into numerous sub-sections, including study group and project findings that come under its jurisdiction. While the Board is in regular contact with groups and bodies that share its policy interests, as the case studies will show, it is less dependent on 'building alliances' when trying to influence decision-makers. This is mainly due to the more individualised nature of the topics involved e.g. the Church of Scotland's view on abortion is different from the Catholic Church's, whereas the two churches' views on social justice are broadly similar.

The Board has 96 "members" (half appointed by General Assembly, half by presbyteries), a Social Interests Officer, a Public Relations Officer, a Congregational Liaison Officer and a Development (Finance) Officer. The full Board only meets three times a year, but the sub-committees meet on a more regular basis. The minutes of these meetings are not currently made public, but there is a putative plan to post them on the internet in the near future. Members normally serve on the Board for a four year term. The current convener is the Rev James Cowie, a parish minister in Haddington. Until his retirement in 2002, the Director of Social Work was the long-serving Ian Baillie CBE. After eleven years in charge of the Board, Mr Baillie's personal influence was

substantial, and he was well respected in his professional field by the Scottish Executive.[1] Mr Baillie has recently been replaced by Ian Manson.

If the radicals in charge of Church and Nation are 'left-wing' liberals, the radicals in charge of the Board are 'right-wing' evangelicals. The first convener of that mould was the Rev Bill Wallace, a parish minister in Wick, who was in charge from 1993 until 1997. He was succeeded by Ann Allen, a minister's wife from Chryston, who came from the same religious tradition. The present convener is also conservative evangelical in his theology. It would appear that the nature of the different remits of the Committee and the Board attracts these sorts of divisions between personnel. Also, if as chapter two argued, conveners of Church and Nation have become less radically 'left-wing', then Board conveners have become more evangelical, something which could be said of ministers of religion generally. It is now estimated that between a third and one half of all Church of Scotland ministers are evangelical in theological outlook (*Life and Work*, August 2002). While Mr Cowie is still building his public profile, conveners like Wallace and Allen proved consistently good 'quote-fodder' for sections of the Scottish media looking for conservative church spokesmen to speak out against modern, liberal Scottish society.

Kellas (1989: 179) argues that Scotland has historically been more morally conservative than England, as a direct result of the alliance of Presbyterian and Catholic lobbying impinging on the legislative process. Midwinter, Keating and Mitchell agree (1991: 10), stating that "Presbyterian and Catholic influences have converged to make Scotland less of a 'permissive society' than England". Divorce and abortion rates remain lower on average in Scotland than in England, although more recent reports suggest the latter is at its highest rate in seven years (*The Herald*, 16th November 1999). In terms of licensing laws, however, there can now be said to be no real difference between Scotland and the rest of the UK. While there used to be a distinction in opening hours, the liberal tide of the 1960s and 1970s was too much for the Church of Scotland to cope with, with the 1976 Licensing (Scotland) Act opening pubs on Sundays, and granting new hours of business to off-licences (Carnie 1986: 57). However, there is some evidence that the residues of difference continue to exist between Scotland and England over 'observing the Sabbath'. When it emerged in July 2002 that the high street retailers, Argos, were

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[1] Mr Baillie is not actually a member of the Church of Scotland - unlike other churches, one need not be a communicant member of the Church to hold an important appointment within it (although there is normally a requirement to show some sort of 'Christian commitment').

forcing their staff in Scotland to work on a Sunday, the convener of the Church and Nation Committee, Alan McDonald, wrote to the then Scottish Secretary, Helen Liddell, asking her to intervene in the matter. Robin Cook, the then Leader of the House of Commons, stated that he "deeply regretted" Argos' decision, and in November 2002, the superstore agreed to review their decision (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/2407891.stm, 6th November 2002).

Chapter one explained why Grant's insider/outsider division (1978) continued to have much to offer to interest group studies. Chapter two concluded that while the Committee normally acted as an "outsider" group when attempting to influence political decisions, the Board of Social Responsibility, in comparison, tended to be regarded as an "insider" organisation. Chapter two also argued that, while the Church and Nation Committee was a "cause" (or "promotional") group, to use Stewart's term (1958: 25), the Board had more of the characteristics of a "sectional" group, due to its responsibility for the Church's care facilities. These differences between the Church and Nation Committee and the Board of Social Responsibility not only symbolise the decentralised nature of the internal structure of the Church of Scotland - they also make summarising the overall effectiveness of the political behaviour of the Church difficult. Chapter two also referred to Dudley and Richardson's "multi-level, multi-arena" theoretical model (1998), arguing that utilising such narrow definitions as "insider" and "outsider" is not always helpful in the modern era of policy-making. Pressure groups do not always act in uniform ways, and often change their approach depending on their strategy or arena. The different nature of the work of the Committee and the Board will become even more apparent in this chapter.

Chapter two also used a three-part set of criteria in an attempt to achieve some form of evaluation, with regard to the effectiveness of the Church and Nation Committee's political activities. This set of criteria will be utilised again in section 3.6 of this chapter, and throughout the case studies. The case studies in this chapter will look at the role of the Board in the debate over the repeal of Section 28, its work on human genetics, its traditional stances on gambling and drinking, and its 2002 campaign against the Scottish Executive's plans to freeze funding for the long-term care of the elderly. In terms of the first general theme of the thesis, the chapter will again take the approach of analysing one of the Church of Scotland's national committees in a political pressure group context. With regard to the second theme, the chapter will hopefully provide a fuller picture of the new Scottish political system after it has studied the Board's political

behaviour, as well as the Church and Nation Committee's. The three case studies in this chapter will also make further comparisons between the behaviour of the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Catholic Church, the third theme of the thesis.

3.2 Section 28

The single biggest controversy the Scottish Executive has encountered in its three year existence surrounded its plans to repeal Clause 28, Section 2A of the Local Government Act 1988, which prevented the "promotion" of homosexuality in schools. The Act had been introduced by Mrs Thatcher's Conservative Government, after it enjoyed a third successive General Election victory in 1987. It stated that a local authority shall not "intentionally promote homosexuality or publish material with the intention of promoting homosexuality" and prohibited the "teaching in any maintained school of the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship" (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/608794.stm, 20th January 2000). Upon starting the process of repeal in late 1999, the Labour/Liberal Democrat coalition administration quickly realised repealing the Act would not be as straightforward as first thought. A close alliance was established between Brian Souter, the evangelical Christian owner of Stagecoach, Cardinal Thomas Winning, the Archbishop of Glasgow, and the *Daily Record*, Scotland's biggest selling newspaper[2]. By the start of 2000, a national debate about the merits of the "Section 28", as it was labelled, was taking place across Scotland, with Winning given "star treatment", as MacWhirter puts it, by the *Daily Record* (2000: 19).

In January 2000, Cardinal Winning made front-page news when he branded homosexuality "perverted", and he was also forced to apologise for drawing comparisons between the gay lobby in Britain, and Nazis in wartime Germany (*The Herald*, 18th January 2000). In May 2000, Mr Souter personally funded a national 'referendum', asking every Scot on the electoral register what they thought of the Executive's plans, and while the subsequent result was overwhelmingly in favour of retaining the clause (1,094,440 compared with 166, 406 voting to repeal), only a small proportion of the Scottish electorate actually voted, an act of defiance encouraged by anti-clause campaigners. In attacking "New Labour Islington morality", Brian Souter was attempting to evoke a quasi-nationalist sentiment in the Scottish people over the Section 28 issue. At one press conference, he resorted to his native Perthshire dialect to

[2] Mr Souter is also a prominent supporter of the SNP.

get his point across about the legislation – "We didnae vote fur it, and wur no hoving it". The message was unambiguous – in *Daily Record* parlance, supposed 'real Scots' wanted to 'keep the Clause'.

The Church of Scotland's attitude toward repeal was significantly more positive, with the 2000 General Assembly voting to back abolition of the Act, provided fresh safeguards were put in place which continued to emphasise the importance of marriage[3]. The Board of Social Responsibility and the Church's Department of Education consulted closely with one another, before confirming that while they did not support "blanket repeal", they agreed there was a need for the Clause to be "replaced" (*Life and Work*, May 2000). This was despite the fact the official view of the Church on homosexuality, as expressed through the Board's 1996 Study Group Report, is that the homosexual act is contrary to what the Bible teaches. It declared it was of the "unequivocal view that heterosexual marriage was the appropriate context for the rearing of children [as] it is important to have role models of both genders." (Church of Scotland 1996: 450). However, the Church of Scotland has also been careful to state that it "deplores all prejudice against...people because of their sexual orientation", and it was that approach which prevailed, with regard to Section 28 (*Life and Work*, May 2000).

Nevertheless, the Church of Scotland has often taken a distinctly ambiguous stance over the general issue of human sexuality. In 1958, the General Assembly passed a deliverance stating its firm opposition to the legalisation of homosexuality, yet totally revised its thinking ten years later, backing the extension of Leo Abse's Bill in 1968. Abse, a reforming Welsh Labour MP, had originally decided not to try and reform the law in Scotland, commenting, "I had no wish to promote more trouble than I already had on my hands" (Cook 1978: 104). However, Carnie suggests that when the Church of Scotland changed its stance on homosexuality, there began "some tentative liberal pressure for reform...in Scotland" (1986: 63). In 1976, the Lord Advocate paved the way for reform north of the Border with his Consolidation of Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act, and eventually, a young Labour MP called Robin Cook, managed to get the crucial legalising clause included in the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 1980. Cook argues the Church of Scotland had become an irrelevance by the late seventies, and the eventual

[3] Generally, as with the previous chapter on the Church and Nation Committee, the terms "Church of Scotland" and "Board of Social Responsibility" will be used interchangeably, as like the Committee, the Board also personifies the Church, when it acts as a political pressure group. However, in this case study, the views of the Board did not represent the official view of the Church, and it was forced to consult with other relevant committees before the official stance was finalised.

change was the result of a "new social confidence and political aggressiveness", not because of any anti-religious feeling (1978: 104). In 1994, the Church of Scotland was openly opposed to the Conservative MP Edwina Currie's proposed amendment to the Criminal Justice Bill to bring the age of consent for homosexuality down to sixteen. However, its influence was clearly not sufficient to stop the age being lowered to eighteen, and evidence also suggests few Scottish MPs listened to its views. While James Cran, the Scots Conservative MP for Beverley, in Yorkshire, and Phil Gallie, then MP for Ayr, both explained in television interviews how their reasoning behind voting against sixteen as the level, had been influenced by the Church of Scotland, 53 Scottish MPs proceeded to vote in favour. In 2000, the Church made no contribution to the public debate over the legislation that proposed lowering the age of consent further to 16, which was eventually passed by Parliament.

With regard to 'Section 28', on one level, the Church of Scotland was fully consulted over the Executive's plans. As the national Church, with representatives on every local authority education committee, and responsibility for the conduct of religious worship in non-denominational schools, its opinion was considered important and relevant. In terms of contributing towards to final piece of legislation which went through the Parliament, the Board was very much part of the policy community which exists within the Scottish education system, and deals with these types of issues. Furthermore, sections of the Scottish press were keen to know where the Church of Scotland stood on the matter, after Cardinal Winning had been so vocal in his criticism of the Executive's proposals. However, there can be little doubt the Church was let down by its non-hierarchical structure, one of Grant's "internal resources" (2000: 195). At one point at the height of the debate in the spring of 2000, the Church of Scotland apparently had three different views on the matter. The then Moderator of the General Assembly, the Rt Rev John Cairns, strongly supported a repeal of the clause, the Department of Education supported the concept of repeal but had reservations, while the Board of Social Responsibility was opposed to it completely. Indeed, Ian Baillie, the Board's Director of Social Work, describes the Church's Education Department's response at the time as "mealy-mouthed" (Interview with author, 31st August 2001). Such confusion prior to the General Assembly working out an internal compromise was in stark contrast to the uncompromising stance taken by Cardinal Winning and the Scottish Catholic Church.

This confusion in Church of Scotland policy epitomises the ambiguity surrounding the status of the Assembly Committees and Boards outside Assembly week in May. As Forrester puts it (speaking of the Church and Nation Committee), "it is by no means clear whether the Committee's role is simply to advise the Assembly, or whether it can take action and issue statements on behalf of the Church while the Assembly is not sitting" (Forrester 1993: 73). The official position of the Church on any given issue is finalised every year at the General Assembly, and if it is a matter that involves consultation between two or more committees/boards, that duly happens, and an appropriate deliverance is passed. However, while that works in theory, and is very much in keeping with the Presbyterian nature of the Church, it does not work for pressure groups. While most of the time, the issues dealt with are not as high-profile as Section 28, there remains a need for more immediate clarity in these situations, and the Church failed to achieve that over this issue. The Church of Scotland web site states that "when asked for an opinion on important issues, the Moderator is expected to have in mind the views of the General Assembly or the relevant Church board or committee" (http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/servingscotland/moderator.htm, accessed 7th October 2000). While that expectation seems reasonable, it is not always obvious which particular board or committee the Moderator should pay attention to. While they eventually agreed a compromise over Section 28, the initial lack of co-ordination between the Education Department and the Board was unfortunate, and recourse to excuses attributed to the workings of a 'broad Church' did not really convince. The ability to compromise and hold internal debates are admirable qualities in any organisation, but failing to express a clear view on an issue it is trying to exert influence over, is counter-productive. As chapter five will discuss, while Scottish politicians appear to prefer the Church of Scotland's 'considered' approach to issues, compared with the Catholic Church's perceived lack of flexibility, they still criticise it for a frequent lack of coherent message.

Nevertheless, the Church did achieve its stated aims. While the Scottish Parliament repealed the Act in June 2000, the Executive's new proposals included a requirement that local authorities should regard the "value of a stable family life in a child's development" (www.scotland.gov.uk/library2/doc16/sess-02.asp, accessed 30th June 2000)[4]. How much credit the Church of Scotland can take for this on its own is uncertain, and the word "marriage" is not explicitly mentioned either. Richard

[4] An attempt was made to speak to a Scottish Executive Education Department civil servant, but the author was told that "given the sensitivity of the subject matter it would not be appropriate for [one] to participate" (Letter to author, 4th July 2003).

Holloway, the former Episcopal Bishop of Edinburgh, argues the unequivocal views of Cardinal Winning did more harm than good to the "Keep the Clause" campaign, but ultimately, it was those views, forcefully put, together with Mr Souter's referendum, which probably had the most effect politically (Interview with author, 1st May 2002). While the Catholic Church viewed the outcome of the debate as a failure, its ability to co-ordinate a high-profile media campaign was probably more politically influential than any 'back-room' input the Church of Scotland may have had. To be clear, the legislation was not watered-down because of the Church of Scotland's considered and thoughtful approach to the debate; it was significantly altered because of the high profile and sustained national campaign co-run by the Scottish Catholic Church. The very fact the Catholic Church was dissatisfied with the ultimate compromise is itself a sign that it has high expectations of success when it comes to applying pressure to government.

Generally, in these areas of public moral debate, the Board's role is prominent, with the issue's lack of party political rivalry allowing it to lobby cross-party support, if it so chooses. In this type of public policy-making, politicians actually take advice from churches, as opposed to waiting for the churches to come to them. In particular, churches are often the first place politicians who are Christians go to for advice. Furthermore, the language used by the Board of Social Responsibility is significantly more tempered than the emotive terminology often adopted by the late Cardinal Winning. For example, Evans accuses Winning of "legitimising homophobia" with his "vituperative interventions" over Section 28 (2000: 124). Nobody could ever lay such a charge at the door of the Church of Scotland. Nevertheless, while the Board is an important actor in this particular area of moral debate, it appears to have had little influence over politicians in the last decade. This is the result of two factors: first, despite the confusion over the issue in the 1960s, the Church has still not learned how to deal with public debates of this kind in a decisive, clear-cut way. Secondly, the issue of human sexuality is a divisive one in the twenty-first century, even within churches. For example, prominent Church of Scotland elders like Sir David Steel and Chris Smith MP were in favour of the age of homosexual consent being lowered to sixteen in 2000, and for as long as there is that deep division in opinion, it will be difficult for the Church to successfully lobby Parliament. Indeed, the Executive Minister in charge of repealing the Section 28 legislation was Wendy Alexander, a daughter of the manse. While the churches are viewed as being entitled to their opinion, and experts in this area of public morality, they are not necessarily listened to.

3.3 Genetic Engineering

Modern science is moving at a fast pace, but along with such dramatic progress in the development of new forms of technology, come questions of morality, and ethical considerations. Genetics is an area of scientific research which has captured the attention of the British media in recent years, with a number of high profile stories making the news headlines. The development of the practice of cloning animals by the Roslin Institute at Edinburgh University made Dolly the sheep a global celebrity in 1997, while the growth in production of genetically modified foods has been continuously in the media spotlight. Never before has science been able to do so much, and never before have politicians had so many complicated ethical questions to consider, when legislating.

In 1970, the Church of Scotland decided to set up its Society, Religion and Technology Project (SRT), in order to "provide informed comment and debate on ethical questions facing our society from current and future technologies" (Society, Religion and Technology Project, *newsletter*, 1998). While the work of SRT technically comes under the auspices of the Church's Board of National Mission, in recent years it has worked more closely with the Board of Social Responsibility[5]. Indeed, it has only been from the late nineties onwards that SRT has really gained any sort of significant public awareness, and this is mainly the result of its pioneering work on genetics. Its slogan is "Today's Church looking at Tomorrow's technology," and its main aims are:

1. "To foster an informed understanding in society of the issues confronting it as a result of emerging technologies; to bring a voice of balance into complex issues.
2. To provide opportunities for scientists and technologists to reflect on the ethical and societal implications of their work.
3. To respond with considered judgement to government and other national bodies on major technological issues.
4. To inform the churches of Scotland and the UK about key developments.
5. To contribute actively to European and international debates on these issues.
6. To act as a Christian witness to the world of science and technology" (Society, Religion and Technology Project, *newsletter*, 1998).

[5] As SRT is a subordinate body of the Board, any conclusions reached about it also apply to the Board.

The third point emphasises the importance SRT places on maintaining contact with government and politicians over these issues. Based at John Knox House in Edinburgh, the Project's director is Dr Donald Bruce, a chemist by training, who often appears in the national press, and has gained an international reputation for his work with SRT. He has published a variety of books and reports in this area, by far the most successful being *Engineering Genesis* (1998), which was widely acclaimed when it was first published in 1998. It is regarded by many as being the most balanced book available in the area of non-human genetic engineering, and includes contributions from a number of leading British scientists. In 1999, SRT won the UK Templeton Award for "exploring the frontiers between faith and technology". In her opening speech at the 2002 General Assembly, The Queen made special mention of the work of the Project, noting its "high profile contributions on ethical issues such as genetic engineering" (http://www.srtp.org.uk/srtpage3.shtml#WhatsNew, accessed 1st June 2002). While SRT comments on many scientific topics, including issues such as the environment and energy production, this case study will concentrate on the area of genetic engineering, and in particular the issue of human gene cloning. In the 2001 Board of Social Responsibility report, SRT claimed to have been at the "forefront of national and international ethical debate over cloning and stem cell technology" (Church of Scotland 2001: 24/59). This is a bold claim, and it would be interesting to see if there is any substance to it.

It was the arrival of Dolly the sheep onto the world stage in 1997 that first signalled the start of intense media interest into the practice of cloning animals. However, the production of Dolly was not the main aim of the work of the Roslin Institute at Edinburgh University, merely a by-product. The main aim of the research programme, under the leadership of Dr Ian Wilmut, was to find better ways of genetic modification using fewer animals, by growing a living creature from genetically modified cells. Nevertheless, it was Dolly who made the front pages of the newspapers, and a public debate began on the ethics of cloning living creatures, as this had implications for similar research concerning human genes. According to the 1997 Board report, while the Church is not against "human therapeutic cloning" i.e. cloning human cells, it is against "human reproductive cloning" i.e. cloning human beings (Church of Scotland 2001: 20/53). In December 2000, MPs voted two to one in favour of allowing the "selective" use of embryos for research, leading the Board to conclude that "Parliament has agreed that humans may, in principle, be cloned" (Church of Scotland 2001: 24/43). The month before the House of Commons debate, the Board's Human Genetics Group

had written to all British MPs, asking them to consider delaying voting for the fresh legislation recommended by the Donaldson Report (Church of Scotland 2001: 20/16). While that did not work, and the recommendations became law in January 2001, the Board was "heartened by the responses from some MPs, who had clearly thought hard about the ethical issues and had come to a conscientious decision" (Church of Scotland 2001: 24/18).

This case study is subtly different from the previous one on Section 28, where the 'pressure group dynamics' were relatively straightforward i.e. government proposes a change in the law, the Church tries to prevent it, and so on. The British Government does not have any desire to clone humans or give scientists the right to experiment in an irresponsible way, so their objectives are the same as the objectives of the churches. The only differences are on matters of methodology or scale, many of which are not even relevant yet, due to the relatively new nature of this whole area. Examining the way the Church of Scotland acts in this area of public policy-making is still worthwhile, however, in order to judge whether the Board is sophisticated enough politically, to be able to participate in the complexities of modern public policy formulation. On the evidence of this case study, the Board and the Project do approach this issue with professionalism.

The Society, Religion and Technology Project has been at the forefront of the Scottish churches' involvement in this issue. As a consequence, the Board of Social Responsibility claims to have been the first organisation to give a "clear ethical basis for what is now a near universal rejection [of human cloning]" (Church of Scotland 2001: 20/53). This is particularly significant when one considers that the Catholic Church is often perceived to be more concerned with questions of the sacredness of life, for example abortion, than the Church of Scotland, which can often seem to be more concerned with matters of a less theological nature, for example reforming the constitution, eradicating poverty, and so on. However, under Donald Bruce, the SRT Project has shown itself to be competent in its approach towards monitoring scientific ethics. Rather than putting the Project in the hands of a minister, or even a legal expert, the Church of Scotland was wise to put a scientist in charge, as Dr Bruce's contacts in the science world are extensive, and he speaks out with a background knowledge a minister would not necessarily possess.

In June 2002, Dr Bruce was appointed to the new Scottish Science Advisory Committee. established by the Scottish Executive to provide it with advice on "science strategy, science policy and science priorities" (http://www.srtp.org.uk/srtpage3.shtml#WSSD, accessed 1st June 2002). Membership of the Committee includes some of the most respected scientists working in Scotland. In September 2002, he was part of a six person delegation representing Scottish civic society at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, invited personally by Jack McConnell, the First Minister. In this area of policy-making in Scotland, the policy community is particularly intimate, and it is very positive for the Church of Scotland and its Board of Social Responsibility that it has representation right at its heart.

Genetic engineering is the single biggest new issue for SRT and the Board of Social Responsibility to address. Issues like the relaxing of licensing laws, gambling laws, pornography laws are almost anachronistic in this context, a lost cause for churches. The new moral issues for the churches to monitor are scientific – the question of whether scientists should 'play God', and how far science and technology should go generally. As with other political issues the Board monitors, this is an area of public policy-making where politicians tend to admit they are not experts, and are happy to take advice from scientists and ethicists/church representatives. They are not bound by party whips, and the ability of churches to influence is potentially much greater as a result. However, less positive is the fact that these issues tend to be dealt with at Westminster, and are not devolved to Scottish politicians to legislate on, so the individual level of influence of the Church of Scotland is not necessarily as high as it was over Section 28, for example. Furthermore, the evidence suggests that the churches work together ecumenically when addressing these human genetics questions, as they tend to agree on the broad questions, and realise they have more power when they speak out together. While the Church of Scotland's views on human sexuality are subtly different from the Catholic Church's, for example, and dramatically different on other topics, there does seem to be broad agreement in this area.

While the Board failed to stop MPs voting for the Donaldson Report recommendations at the end of 2000, its standing in the eyes of government departments, national ethics bodies and the cloning research community is high. According to the 2001 Report, it has been given numerous opportunities to give a Christian view to these organisations at the "highest levels", and has twice been invited to speak to MPs at the House of Commons. In the Donaldson Report, for example, specific responses are made to issues

highlighted by the Board, which claims to have earned a "rare position of trust, both as to the understanding of the science and the ethics" (Church of Scotland 2001: 20/16). The Board of Social Responsibility's involvement in the political issue of genetic engineering has been effective, and it is to be praised for building up such obvious respect from the political decision-makers. Its lack of success in getting MPs to do precisely what it wants should not overshadow its potential influence in this area. There is a close policy community in this aspect of policy formulation, and the Board, through SRT, is recognised by the Government as an important part of that community.

3.4 Licensing and the Lottery

True to its Presbyterian heritage, the Church of Scotland is against the excessive consumption of alcohol, as well as social activities such as gambling, and has always carefully scrutinised legislative activity in this area. If abortion is the Catholic Church's perceived 'favourite' topic of political debate, the Church of Scotland continues to be more interested in matters of a less fundamental nature, such as restricting licensing hours. For example, while the Church has an extensive portfolio of shares invested in the London stock market, it does not deposit any of its money in the tobacco, alcohol, armaments or gambling sectors. Also, even though the Scottish Parliament is presently renting the Assembly Hall from the Church, no alcohol is allowed to be consumed in the building by MSPs or their staff. The Church of Scotland's opposition to such activities is often caricatured as merely dour Presbyterianism, motivated by a desire to stop people having fun, rather than by anything constructive. While that accusation is harsh, there is nothing concrete in the Bible that suggests either playing games for financial remuneration or drinking to excess, is sinful, and the history of such a position is more to do with cultural factors, than any theological considerations. However, the Church has had to contend with post-sixties liberalism, and this section is included primarily as an illustration of how difficult it is for all the churches to exert 'control' in Scottish society today.

National Lottery:

Even though Britain has had a National Lottery since 1994, how it operates remains a live issue for the Board of Social Responsibility, which has been one of its most consistently fierce critics. In the 2001 General Assembly Report, it reiterated its opposition to the Lottery, on the grounds that it is "addictive", encourages "under-age participation", "negatively affects" giving to charity, and creates more poverty in

society, than wealth (Church of Scotland 2001: 24/11). It argues that while there are many Lottery millionaires, there are ultimately many more losers, with people playing to escape a poverty trap, and becoming addicted: "One of the achievements of government in the twentieth century has been the regulation of gambling. The National Lottery threatens...to dismantle these regulations" (Church of Scotland 1994: 466). The Board believes the Lottery has altered the status of government, from regulator of gambling, to chief proponent of it. The 2001 report points out that the number of people gambling generally has increased since before the Lottery was introduced (Church of Scotland 2001: 24/13).

However, not only did the Church of Scotland not succeed in keeping a State Lottery from being introduced in Britain in the early 1990s, it has also failed to stem its expansion since then. There is now a mid-week draw, as well as two subordinate draws to the main event at the weekend. The Lottery is so much a part of British society, it is difficult to imagine what life was like without it, and office syndicates are as common as people playing by themselves. Despite Camelot admitting in May 2002 that ticket sales had fallen for the fourth successive year, four in five Scots continue to play the Lottery on a regular basis, so ordinary church members do not listen to the Board any more than the Government does, over this issue (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/1346266.stm, 24th May 2002). Indeed, the Church does not stop individual congregations being able to receive Lottery funds for projects and building restoration. The 1996 General Assembly decided it was acceptable for parish churches to use Lottery funding, after the West Kirk of Dumbarton was successful in its application to receive funding to build a new hall (Church of Scotland 1996: 475). The Board, then, even seems to be at odds with the rest of the Church over this issue, a division of opinion reminiscent of the Section 28 confusion.

There have been some minor successes for the Board in the last eight years. The churches generally have led the criticism aimed at the Government, and can therefore take some of the credit for ensuring Britain's Lottery is more 'socially conscious' than other European lotteries. The Secretary of State who introduced the Lottery, Virginia Bottomley, made a number of reassuring statements in the press, claiming she was concerned with children playing illegally, and the potential for addiction to scratch-cards. Indeed, the former Board convener, the Rev Bill Wallace became something of a British churches' spokesman on the issue, quoted extensively in the British press, and writing articles in newspapers, a sign of a respected campaigner. Other anti-gambling

groups asked the Church of Scotland if they could use their "professional" research, when they were lobbying Parliament. St. Andrew's House also requested to know why the Board was so vehemently against the Lottery, in order to answer questions on it in the House of Commons. When a spokesperson for Camelot, Louise White, had to resign in 1996, after admitting gambling addiction had increased because of the Lottery, the Church of Scotland even claimed some of the credit, mentioning her departure in the June edition of *Life and Work.*

All this, however, amounts to little in the way of solid influence by the Board. Like many of the Church and Nation Committee's issues, the introduction of the National Lottery was a policy where the Board could not have been realistically expected to change the mind of government, and the issue's lack of exclusive 'Scottishness' meant that Scotland's national Church was even more sidelined. Also, the National Lottery was a highly successful policy for the previous Conservative Government, so it did not need to listen particularly carefully to the Church of Scotland's strong criticism. While governments have always consulted the Church extensively over gambling generally e.g. it made a major submission to the Royal Commission in the late 1970s, and has also been consulted by the Scottish Executive over newer gaming laws, the Board has been kept at 'arm's length' over the Lottery. Its failure to block the 1968 Sunday Entertainment Act, when it argued a Scottish Sunday was "much different from Sunday in England and Wales" (Kellas 1968: 72), perhaps signalled the beginning of the end of any substantial influence in this policy area.

Alcohol consumption:

Prior to the 1970s, alcohol consumption was an issue many observers pointed to as evidence of the Church of Scotland being able to ensure Scottish culture was different from south of the Border, but the 1976 Licensing (Scotland) Act effectively ended that, with the opening of public houses on Sundays. Indeed, as Carnie puts it, "a strong Calvinist anti-drink tradition" used to be evident in Scotland but so too was a "disproportionately high incidence of alcohol related problems" (1986: 57). At this time, the Church was against the opening of public houses on a Sunday, as well as new opening hours for off-licenses, but it failed to launch its public campaign until after the decision of the Parliamentary Committee, when most MPs had gone public on their position and were unable to be 'converted'. The then Scottish Secretary, Willie Ross, agreed that the Government should restrict alcohol availability, but according to Carnie,

Scotland was "no longer prepared to tolerate the Calvinist orthodoxy towards drink and the ineffective late lobbying by the Church was virtually ignored" (Carnie 1986: 60).

Today, the Board still finds itself in conflict with the Government over the issue. Every year, "alcohol and drug dependencies" is mentioned in detail in the Board's Assembly report, due to its responsibility for the Church's care facilities (Church of Scotland 2002). In 1990, the Government asked the Church of Scotland to "comment on the working of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 1976", and when it expressed concern over the idea of off-licenses opening on a Sunday, the Scottish Office "acknowledging the large number of representatives from churches and the public and the courts, decided not to proceed with its proposals" (Church of Scotland 1991: 405). Since then, however, off-licenses have opened on a Sunday, and generally, the Board has had mixed results when campaigning on this issue, in the last decade. As Baillie puts it, unless the Church can get support from industry to campaign more responsibly, its influence in public awareness campaigns is going to be limited (Interview with author, 31st August 2001).

The days of Scotland being distinct from England over drink, due mainly to the Church of Scotland, are effectively gone, with the liberalising tide of the 1960s and 1970s too much for the Church to cope with. However, while the Scottish Parliament has not dealt with a significant piece of legislation in this area, it would be surprising if the Scottish Executive did not continue to regard the Board as part of this policy community in Scotland. The Church of Scotland provides a number of residential care facilities for people who have suffered as a result of misuse of alcohol, and so can speak with confidence about its effects. Government considers it appropriate to consult the Church on legislation connected to this area, and that is a crucial difference between the Church and Nation Committee and the Board of Social Responsibility. It could be argued it is a church's 'social work' that keeps it relevant in the twenty first century. The message that inspires many Christians to help the less fortunate may well be becoming less relevant, but the practical work of 'loving thy neighbour' is as respected as ever.

This is not an area of public policy-making which brings the Church into serious conflict with government any longer; all the debates about restricting drinking hours, and keeping Sundays "special" have been lost. In November 2002, the Government announced plans to allow pubs and clubs to open twenty four hours a day, seven days a week (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/2479609.stm, 15th November 2002). Nevertheless, Scottish 'alcohol consumption' has been included in this case study to

again illustrate the fundamentally contradictory nature of the Church of Scotland, when it is acting through the Board. On the one hand, it has little general influence on government or society, both of which pay little attention to its moralising. On the other hand, when it comes to formulating legislation of this type, the Church is always consulted by government, as it still has an important role to play. There is a disparity between the potential influence of the Board, and its actual influence.

Conclusions:

There has not been a significant amount of post-devolution activity in this area of policy-making, although as the two case studies have shown, it remains a topic which the Board monitors carefully, and produces annual reports on. In terms of alcohol consumption, it remains part of a policy community in Scotland, along with health care professionals, but with regard to the National Lottery and gambling, it now has all the characteristics of an "outsider" group, and not a particularly effective one. Generally, the Church has always been consistent in its stance on these issues, but its actual influence is now very limited, mainly due to the liberalisation of British society.

3.5 Care Homes

The question of how society looks after its older members has become an important political issue in recent years, with greater numbers of elderly people living longer, and less State funding available for their care. In Scotland, there has been an ongoing public debate in this area of policy-making, since the Sutherland Report recommended in March 1999 that there should be free State provision of care for the elderly in long-stay nursing homes. This was the main proposal of the Royal Commission, which was set up by the Scottish Executive, and chaired by Lord Sutherland of Houndwood, the then Principal of Edinburgh University. Controversially, however, the Executive took until June 2001 to accept the Report's recommendations, and the subsequent legislation did not come into effect until July 2002. As the new Act applies only to Scotland, there now exists a significant difference between the component parts of the United Kingdom in the way old people are cared for. The new proposals led to private care home organisations, of which the Church of Scotland is by far the largest, raising concerns over its future levels of government funding.

As section 3.1 has already described, the Board of Social Responsibility is responsible for the running of all the Church of Scotland care facilities – its drug and alcohol

dependency centres, its residential schools for children with learning disabilities, its centres for people with mental illnesses, and the homeless. Its largest area of care provision involves the elderly – it runs 33 homes for 1,300 older people across Scotland. The Scottish Parliament's new legislation will have a major impact on its work, as local authorities and the Scottish Executive try to determine the boundaries of their responsibilities towards caring for the elderly. According to its 2002 annual report to the General Assembly, the Board regards itself as being "in the midst of one of the greatest periods of change in recent social care history". It goes on:

"In recent years, it has not been possible to report to the General Assembly without a major comment on the Financial Care Gap which arose because local and central government failed to fund properly the residential care of older people. As has been explained regularly, the only resolution to the problem was a major review of the funding provided through the public purse; the alternatives to such a review were that the Church required to carry the deficit or decide to close the Board's homes, making up to 1,000 old people homeless and up to 1600 staff unemployed" (Church of Scotland 2002: part 1, section 2).

For some time, the Church of Scotland decided to "accept the deficit while protesting to government and trying to secure a change in funding". However, in June 2001, the Board decided that the Church had "fulfilled more than its responsibility and that the deficit funding at the existing level could not continue" (Church of Scotland 2002: part 1, section 2). Another piece of legislation, the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act (2001) stated that individuals once in care should not be moved out, if their care needs increase, and this had further financial implications for the Board. In September 2001, following threats to withdraw residential care opportunities by the private sector, the Scottish Executive set up a National Review Group, consisting of representatives from the NHS in Scotland, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, Scottish Care (the private sector umbrella organisation), the Voluntary Sector and the Scottish Executive. The Group aimed "to conduct a review of the costs associated with providing nursing and residential care for older people in Scotland and to determine appropriate fee-funding levels for application from 1 April 2002" (Church of Scotland 2002: part 1, section 2). As part of the Scottish Care delegation, Ian Baillie, together with a Board Depute Director, were involved in the work of the Group, which eventually produced a "Report on Care Home Costs for Older People in Scotland". The report was presented to the Minister for Health and Community Care, Malcolm Chisholm MSP, in November 2001.

In January 2002, Mr Baillie wrote to Mr Chisholm, stating that the Church of Scotland could no longer afford to subsidise its care home residents, and that its homes were threatened with closure. He argued that his Board required an extra £2.5 million a year to keep them open and functioning. This made the front pages of a number of national newspapers, with Mr Baillie telling BBC Scotland: "I am optimistic that there will be a resolution, although we can't say whether they will come up with all the money...But if the government does not resolve this issue then homes will have to close" (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/1758543.stm, 13th January 2002). Mr Baillie argued that the Church of Scotland had been supporting local and central government for the last decade by paying about £100 of the weekly cost of each of their resident's care. His tactics worked. He involved the media, and spoke in drastic terms of the future of his organisation's care provisions. The Scottish Executive responded quickly, stating that it was "doing everything possible to bring this matter to a satisfactory conclusion". Malcolm Chisholm stated that "action will be announced soon" (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/1758543.stm, 13th January 2002). A few weeks later, in February 2002, following a meeting of the Scottish Executive and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, Mr Chisholm wrote directly to the Board of Social Responsibility:

"I understand that there will be frustration within the Church of Scotland that progress has not been quicker...However, the Executive's commitment to resolving this, in terms of both effort and finance, is considerable. Raising care homes fees is a priority for us and I wanted to see that reflected in increased fees for care homes in both the voluntary and independent sectors, and a secure future for older people, as soon as possible...There was a commitment by everyone round the table to ensure that funding for care homes, for the future, is sustainable...Furthermore the fee levels recommended by the National Review Group on which we are all agreed, suitably uplifted, will be paid in full from 1 April 2003." (Church of Scotland 2002: part 1, section 2).

The Scottish Executive decided to commit an additional £24 million to be applied as from 1 April 2002. In addition, £11 million has been added to an earlier £10 million in order to pay a level of back dated fees to 1 July 2001. While, in April 2002, the Board was forced to close eight of its homes, still blaming a lack of central and local government funding, it can be pleased with the campaign's overall success. The First Minister, Jack McConnell was even prompted to state: "I think the closures of a very

small number of homes is a decision they have had to take and one we would want to discuss with them in due course" (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/1758543.stm, 1st March 2002).

This final case study records a relative success story for the Board. As with the previous case studies, the Board was heavily involved in the policy-making process, an "insider" group working closely alongside government. The Scottish Executive met regularly with the Board, and other interested parties, to try to resolve the disagreement in policy formulation, with the Board very much at the heart of the policy community. This section shows the Board of Social Responsibility leading a successful and unified political campaign to receive better government funding for its care homes, and central to the negotiations throughout. Some cutbacks have had to be made, but significant concessions were made by the Scottish Executive, which responded to the Board immediately, when approached. Ian Baillie states quite perfunctorily that whenever he had a concern over any issue as Board Social Work Director, Malcolm Chisholm and Susan Deacon (Mr Chisholm's predecessor as Health Minister) would always "make themselves available" (Interview with author, 31st August 2001). According to Frances Wood, the head of the Community Care Policy Branch of the Health Department at the Scottish Executive, the Board was "very professional" in the way it put forward its case against the closures to civil servants, and can be favourably compared with other 'stakeholders' in this respect (Interview with author, 13th August 2003).

In some ways, the issue of care homes closures is unique, particularly in the sense that the entire Church of Scotland was united in opposing them. Nevertheless, the level of organisation the Board has demonstrated in its political campaign is very positive. The experience of Ian Baillie was fundamentally important to Scottish Care's case, as well as being an example of the Church of Scotland acting like an effective political pressure group – using its contacts, responding to consultations, forcing the agenda. In having a full-time 'chief executive', the Board of Social Responsibility has something no other part of the Church of Scotland has - a permanent figure-head, who can take the lead over political issues, and build up professional relationships with Scottish politicians and civil servants. Furthermore, Mr Baillie's personal respect at the Scottish Executive meant he took the lead in all discussions involving Scottish Care. In numerous newspaper articles and television reports, Mr Baillie featured as much as Joe Campbell, the head of Scottish Care. This was not simply because the Board is the biggest organisation in Scottish Care – it was because Ian Baillie is an effective political leader. The retirement of Ian

Baillie as Social Work Director in 2002 will leave a substantial gap in the future political profile and influence of the Church of Scotland.

3.6 Conclusions

The concluding section on the Board of Social Responsibility will apply the same three criteria of effectiveness that chapter two used, when analysing the Church and Nation Committee:

1. Was the Church of Scotland (through the Board this time) fully consulted by the Scottish Executive, or relevant Government Department, in order to establish its opinion on the issue?
2. Did the Church of Scotland (through the Board) speak out in a consistent and clear way on the issue?
3. Did it (through the Board) achieve its ultimate objectives concerning the issue?

In answer to the first question, leading members of the Board have substantially more contact with government departments and politicians, compared with their colleagues on the Church and Nation Committee. This is primarily due to the different nature of their work, and the fact the Board acts more often as an "insider" group than the Committee. As chapter two argued, while greater political influence is not necessarily the consequence of being an "insider" group, in the case of the Church of Scotland, it is an advantage, due to the wrong choice of strategy its leading representatives often deploy i.e. making public pronouncements, rather than attempting targeted lobbying. When it is the Government that approaches the Church, rather than vice versa, at least it has no option but to respond. In all four case studies, the Board was consulted by the relevant government department or agency over the legislation in question, and often extensively.

According to thesis survey responses, many Scottish politicians perceive the views of the Board to be directly based on its practical work, and less idealistic (and tacitly party political) than those of the Committee, whose role in a certain policy area is not always immediately obvious[6]. In particular, the continuously high level of contact the Board has had with the Government over the issues of human cloning and care homes is impressive, and demonstrates an effective application of political pressure. According to

[6] As with the last chapter, the precise contents of the survey responses and follow-up telephone interviews will be analysed in chapter five.

the Board's 2002 annual General Assembly report, it has been sent thirty four consultation documents by the Scottish Executive or local authorities, over the course of the last year (Church of Scotland 2002 Board appendix). There was no perception in the 1980s and 1990s that the Board was anti-Conservative in the way there often was of the Church and Nation Committee, effectively because whenever the Board speaks out critically over an issue, it tends to target politicians of all parties. Grant's first factor of "proximate environment" is salient here, therefore – the characteristics of the sort of interests the personnel of the Board are trying to represent, result in them potentially having more political influence, in this respect, than their colleagues at Church and Nation (2000: 195).

If the first question prompts a comparison with the Church and Nation Committee, the second question cannot avoid one with the Scottish Catholic Church. In simple terms, the national Church can no longer be said to be the leading source of moral authority in Scotland, and the case studies on 'Section 28', the National Lottery and alcohol consumption illustrates this decline. The Catholic Church's ability to voice its concern on matters like abortion and family values clearly, through its Glasgow-based media office, means the views of the national Church are often left in the political background. Even though Dr Donald Bruce has built up a successful public profile for SRT over human genetics, the Catholic Church still achieves a greater public prominence over these types of moral issues. While this part of the thesis has not explicitly involved a comparative study of how the political behaviour of the Church of Scotland contrasts with other churches on moral matters, the Church of Scotland could learn much about public relations from the Catholic Church in Scotland. This is to be contrasted with the findings of the last chapter, which concluded that, despite its shortcomings, the Church and Nation Committee was still often the most prominent faith-based organisation in Scotland, in terms of the issues it deals with.

In terms of the third question, as chapter two concluded with regard to the Church and Nation Committee, it is equally apparent that rarely in post-devolution Scottish politics can the Board of Social Responsibility be considered to have made a genuine impact over a specific piece of legislation. In the four case studies, any detectable change in government policy was shown to be marginal. The Board's role in campaigning against the Scottish Executive's policy over care home funding was objectively the most successful example of it trying to exert influence, but the evidence of the chapter as a whole does not point to an especially effective political pressure group. As a result of

the different answers to questions one and two, the Board of Social Responsibility of the Church of Scotland is an ambiguous political institution. On the one hand, the evidence suggests that politicians are happy for the Board to speak to them about matters of public morality, principally because moral issues are non party-political, but also because they acknowledge the general expertise of the Board in this type of policy-making. On the other hand, examples of the Board successfully influencing government policy directly are infrequent, even though unlike the Church and Nation Committee, it is often presented with an open door to the centre of political decision-making. The case studies on genetics and care homes showed success, the ones on Section 28 and the National Lottery/licensing showed failure.

After all, while the Church of Scotland as a whole achieved the outcome that it wanted over Section 28, the Board did not; it showed itself to be out of step with what the rest of the Church felt about the issue. Chapter two has already explained how unlike the three main hierarchical churches in Britain, the Church of Scotland has numerous spokespersons, as opposed to one dominant figure. This is not without its political advantages, for example, Rosie argues the "General Assembly is listened to in a way that the General Synod of the Church of England is not", because its decisions are taken more democratically (1992: 78). However, if the Church of Scotland could compel its various leaders to co-ordinate themselves, its political activities would perhaps be more effective. Nevertheless, Grant's third factor of "external" environment should not be ignored either (2000: 195). As chapter two argued, the liberal tide in personal morality, which swept Britain in the 1960s, has had a damaging long-term effect on the political influence of all churches. Politicians do not listen particularly closely to the comments of church spokespersons, unless they think there are substantial amounts of votes to be lost. For example, while the Scottish Executive did not change its mind over its plans to repeal Section 28 simply because of the views of Cardinal Winning, according to survey responses, the Scottish Labour Party was privately concerned the policy would harm its close relations with the Catholic community.

However, more positively, and perhaps more than in the last chapter, the case studies in this chapter illustrate how much a part of the political establishment the Church of Scotland remains. As Richard Holloway, the former Episcopal Bishop of Edinburgh, notes, the Church of Scotland as a whole remains at the heart of Scottish society (Interview with author, 1st May 2002). He gives the example of the late First Minister Donald Dewar's lifelong friendship with the Rev Douglas Alexander, who conducted his

funeral service at Glasgow Cathedral. Mr Alexander went to Glasgow University with Mr Dewar, and remained a life long close friend. Donald Dewar also retained old friendships with Scottish Conservatives like Lord Mackay and Ross Harper, and nationalists like Professor Neil McCormick. As Holloway puts it, "Scotland is a village", and to extend the metaphor a little further, the Church of Scotland is still the parish church in the village square (Interview with author, 1st May 2002). Harry Reid, the former editor of *The Herald*, calls the power of the Church of Scotland a "behind the scenes" influence, the sort personified by Ian Baillie (Interview, 2nd April 2002).

Parry states that "Scotland's scale produces a much more intimate leadership structure" (2002: 145). He argues that, as a corollary, connections between different individuals or groups as a result of "accidents of education, social context or mutual interests are greater therefore in Scotland" (2002: 145). Roma Menlowe, the head of the Civil Law Division of the Justice Department, Scottish Executive, also refers to "scale" when arguing that churches have significantly more opportunities for consultation in Scotland than their counterparts in England or Wales (Interview with author, 2nd May 2003). The way the Board of Social Responsibility's Director of Social Work built up a close "insider" working relationship with the Scottish Executive and other Scottish politicians epitomises the intimate nature of the Scottish political system. The Church of Scotland continues to be an important Scottish political institution and its senior representatives remain part of the establishment of the nation.

Chapter 4: The Cardinal rules – lessons in lobbying from the Archdiocese of Glasgow

4.1 Introductory section: the Catholic Church and the Scottish political system

This chapter will compare the political behaviour of the Church of Scotland with that of the Scottish Catholic Church. While the thesis, as a whole, is concerned with the Church of Scotland, an explicit comparison with the Catholic Church is helpful, so that the more implicit comparisons made elsewhere can be explored in depth. The influence of the Church of Scotland can be analysed more clearly, if it is compared with that of a similar institution in the same political context. Other writers have taken this approach with their case studies e.g. Whiteley and Winyard's analysis of the poverty lobby in the UK (1987) has already been referred to in previous chapters, and there is also Lowe and Goyder's (1983) analysis of the environmental lobby, as well as Ryan's (1983) account of the penal lobby. The various typologies which exist in pressure group studies also illustrate the importance of analysing organisations within a comparative structure. The introduction of terms such as "policy communities" (Richardson and Jordan 1979) and "issue networks" (Heclo 1978; Rhodes 1988) have emphasised the way pressure groups are often closely linked to one another in the British political system. As Baggott argues (1995: 27), the "development of new frameworks of analysis such as policy networks, for example, has enabled us to make more sense of case study material".

The purpose of this chapter is not to analyse the Catholic Church in the same way as chapters two and three analysed the Church and Nation Committee and the Board of Social Responsibility respectively. Instead, it aims to discuss three aspects of pressure group activity in which the Catholic Church in Scotland, and in particular its Archdiocese of Glasgow, demonstrates more ability than the Church of Scotland. As sections 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 will explain, these aspects are referred to by numerous writers in the field as important factors which contribute towards the overall effectiveness of a pressure group. The chapter will start by looking at the Catholic Church's ability to lobby 'strategically' when contacting public policy-makers. It will then examine the career of the former Archbishop of Glasgow, Cardinal Thomas Winning, in order to emphasise the importance of strong leadership, a factor particularly associated with the work of Max Weber, in terms of modern democratic theorists. This will be followed by a section on the Catholic Church's public relations' ability when political campaigning.

As Jordan puts it (1998: 327), "Protest without media coverage is like a mime performance in the dark: possible, but fairly pointless". Comparing the political behaviour of the two largest churches in Scotland can reveal more about the new Scottish political system, and the way non-governmental organisations operate within it. The third theme of the thesis will feature particularly prominently throughout this chapter.

A number of formal links between the Catholic Church and the Scottish political system continue to exist. The most obvious of these are denominational primary and secondary state schools, but the Church has other political dimensions to it, particularly at a British level. First, as the Vatican State is an independent nation state, it has an ambassador to the United Kingdom – the Papal Nuncio, at the time of writing Archbishop Pablo Puente. The Pope is thus not just a church leader – he is also a head of state, and the Catholic Church often holds a unique 'political' place in many nation states around the world. For example, when the Archbishop of Glasgow, Cardinal Thomas Winning, died in the summer of 2001, he 'lay in state' as a prince of the Catholic Church, before being buried in the bishop's vault beneath the metropolitan cathedral by the River Clyde. While the Act of Settlement, the law which prevents the British monarch from being a Catholic, is a constitutional anachronism, it is also an illustration of how the British State acknowledges the political status of the Catholic Church – no other religion is singled out for this discrimination, only members of the "see or Church of Rome". Constitutionally, the Catholic Church holds a distinct and recognisable place in the British political system, more so than any of the other 'non-established' denominations.

In Scotland, when the Most Rev Mario Conti was installed as the new Archbishop of Glasgow in February 2002, the scene in St Andrew's Cathedral resembled a Church and State occasion, with the Scottish First Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, the Secretary of State for Scotland, and the Speaker of the House of Commons all present. This was partly because two of the four mentioned are practising Catholics from the West of Scotland, but the pomp of the occasion was nevertheless impressive, as it had been at the funeral service for Cardinal Winning six months earlier.[1] Such are the close links between the Labour Party and the Catholic Church in Scotland, as discussed in chapter one, that these services take on a political aspect which they would not in England. As the Labour Party has been the 'establishment' party in Scotland for nearly

[1] The Secretary of State for Scotland, Helen Liddell MP, and the Speaker of the House of Commons, Michael Martin MP.

forty years, taking over from the Conservatives as having the largest number of MPs at the 1964 General Election, the Catholic Church also benefits from that political success.

In terms of the British State, the Catholic Church in England and Wales is considered a "Privileged Body" by the Crown, which means its senior bishops have audiences with HM The Queen at Buckingham Palace – other privileged bodies include local civic dignitaries, the ancient universities, the armed forces, and both established churches. In January 2002, Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, the Archbishop of Westminster, preached before the Queen at Sandringham, the first time a Catholic bishop has given a homily in the presence of a British monarch since the Reformation. His predecessor, the Ampleforth-educated Cardinal Hume, was personally close to members of the Royal Family, and was made an Order of Merit shortly before he died in 1999. At the wedding service of the Prince and Princess of Wales in 1981, Cardinal Hume said a prayer, and sat on the chancel with the Anglican clergy, and the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. Indeed, the hierarchical structure of the Church of England, with bishops, dioceses and cathedrals, corresponds exactly with the Catholic Church pre-Reformation. The Reformation in England was not as theologically comprehensive as its equivalent in Scotland - the Church of England was established by Henry VIII essentially in order to stop the Pope impinging on the British sovereign's territory.

Like the rest of the United Kingdom and Western Europe, Scotland was a Catholic country until the Reformation in 1560, and some parts of the country – upper Banffshire, Aberdeenshire, and parts of the Western Isles – were left unaffected. Islands like Barra and South Uist are today still almost entirely Catholic in their population. The common modern perception that Catholicism is intrinsically linked with 'Irishness', rather than 'Scottishness', is historically inaccurate - for example, the romantic Highland tradition of Jacobitism, and loyalty to the Royal House of Stuart, is closely linked with Catholicism, rather than Presbyterianism. However, the vast majority of the 692,444 Catholics in Scotland today are descended from Irish immigrants of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, who began coming to Scotland after the great famine of 1845, and the identities of 'Irishness' and Catholicism remain closely connected in a Scottish context (Boyle and Lynch 1998: 4). As Reilly has pointed out, in Scotland, the terms 'Catholic' and 'Irish' are interchanged as if they have the same meaning (Reilly 1998: 145).

Such a large immigration into a relatively small country had a substantial impact on the culture of Scotland, and made it much less religiously homogeneous - a significant minority culture was implanted within the dominant indigenous one. According to Maver, this "constitutes the main sociological problem of modern Scotland" (1996: 270). As the previous paragraph mentioned, there is an estimated Catholic population of 692,444 in Scotland, out of a total population of 5,119,200, 14% compared with only 8% in England and Wales (Roman Catholic Church 2002b: 546). While this figure is not as high as the 38% of Catholics in Northern Ireland, the concentration of Catholics in west central Scotland has proven to be an important phenomenon (Tritton 2000: 552). An estimated three-quarters of Scottish Catholics live in West Central Scotland and Greater Glasgow, making the Catholic Church the de facto 'establishment' church in Scotland's largest city, and providing the Church with a powerful popular base from which to enter the political system (Roman Catholic Church 2002: 546). The Church's media office is also based in Glasgow, rather than Edinburgh, and the city was very much the late Cardinal Winning's personal domain.

As chapter one mentioned, the number of members of the Church of Scotland has been in steady decline since its peak year in 1956, while the number of members of the Catholic Church has remained relatively constant. The Catholic Church is now technically the largest denomination in Scotland, with 692,444 'members' compared to the 590,824 'members' of the Church of Scotland (Roman Catholic Church 2002b: 546; Church of Scotland 2002b: 310). The 2001 Census included, for the first time, a section dealing with the population's religious beliefs. The fact the State now feels the need to assess the breakdown of religious 'affiliation' in Scotland says much about the way the country's cultural heterogeneity has developed. Many had criticised the original decision by the Scottish Executive to continue omitting the question, and it was only in the 1991 Census that a section was included for the first time entitled "ethnic groups". Some seemed to believe it was an attempt by the Executive to avoid fuelling racial tensions in west central Scotland by restricting official information on the number of Asians living in greater Glasgow (*The Herald*, 11th January 2000). Protestant-Catholic divisions aside, there are parts of the South Side and West End of Glasgow which have large Asian populations. Schools like Shawlands Academy and Bellahouston Academy have substantial numbers of Asian pupils. The Giffnock area of Glasgow has a large Jewish population, with Hutcheson's Grammar School, a leading independent school in the same area, holding separate Jewish assemblies due to the large numbers of Jewish pupils. There is also an independent Muslim primary school, Iqra Academy, in the same

part of the city. Much of twenty first century Scottish society is post-Christian and multi-cultural.

Despite this, differences in the levels of homogeneity of population offers the main explanation for the disparity between Scotland/Ireland and England/Wales, over the continuing importance of religion in their respective political systems. The religious divide impacts on voting behaviour, and, as a corollary, the party systems. In England and Wales, however, there is no substantial division of the population along religious lines, and has already been explained, the overwhelming majority of people are, in simple terms, Protestant. The Church of England is by far the biggest denomination in the country, and while Wales disestablished the Anglican Church in 1920, the various Protestant denominations still outnumber the Catholic population. In some parts of inner-city London, or the Leeds/Bradford conurbation, there is are substantial numbers of different ethnic populations, with their own traditions, but generally, the cultural influence of the Church of England remains inherently intact. The appointment of the Most Rev Dr Rowan Williams as the new Archbishop of Canterbury in July 2002 was still the top British news headline the day it was announced.

Having established the political background, the chapter will now turn to the three main aspects of pressure group activity, in which the Scottish Catholic Church has shown particular effectiveness – choice of strategy, leadership, and public relations. First, its ability to lobby strategically:

4.2 The importance of strategic lobbying

It is worth restating the definition of "lobbying" at the start of this section, as discussed in chapter one. "Lobbying" is effectively a generic term for attempt to directly influence politicians. According to *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Science*, the contemporary meaning is broad, "referring to the practises of interest groups, directed not only at seeking support from elected members, but also from political parties, public bureaucracies and other public bodies, and from the general public through the mass media" (Bogdanor 1991: 337). Nevertheless, while the term "lobbying" has acquired a broad meaning, it is not simply a synonym for all types of political activity, and the emphasis in this section will be more on the way the churches make direct contact with decision-makers, than on public campaigning.

Applying again Grant's typology of pressure groups (2000: 19), the Catholic Church can be considered to often act as an "insider" pressure group like the Church of Scotland or Church of England, due to the links it has with the State through its schools, and care facilities. As Kellas argues (1989: 179), while not established, the Scottish Catholic Church is a "quasi-governmental body". More specifically, while it depends on the sort of issue being addressed, the Catholic Church can often be considered the same sort of political institution as the Board of Social Responsibility i.e. a "sectional", rather than simply a "cause" group. As the structure of the Catholic Church is hierarchical, it does not make sense for the thesis to analyse its political activities, in the same way as the Church of Scotland's. There are no quasi-autonomous boards or committees in the Scottish Catholic Church, but as a consequence, it is also easier to gain more of a holistic impression of how effective its political activities are.

Furthermore, as a result of some of the factors discussed in introductory section 4.1, the Scottish Catholic Church takes a fundamentally different approach to lobbying government and political decision-makers from the Church of Scotland. In particular, its Archdiocese of Glasgow frequently shows an awareness of the importance of 'strategic' lobbying. Whiteley and Winyard state that, when it comes to political activity of this type, "effectiveness [is] a matter of group strategies as well as the environment within which groups operate" (1987: 147). Coxall agrees, arguing that the choice of an "appropriate strategy can be an important factor in pressure group success" (2001: 149). Grant writes that the "choice of an appropriate strategy and tactics can be an important determinant of pressure group success, although there is a sense in which the adoption of unsophisticated strategies may be a reflection of ineffectiveness rather than its cause" (2000: 205). In other words, not having a clear strategy may not ultimately damage a group's chances of success, but it is not good practice. The Archdiocese's capacity to act as an effective pressure group, in this respect, manifests itself in three ways: focusing on the right issues, targeting the right politicians and mobilising popular support.

First, while the Church of Scotland speaks out on a wide range of political issues, often as an "outsider" pressure group through its Church and Nation Committee, the Catholic Church is much more disciplined in the areas in which it tries to exert influence. It tends to be more interested in narrow moral issues – abortion, contraception, human sexuality, bio-ethics – rather than constitutional settlements or macro-economics. The late Cardinal Winning was personally interested in social deprivation and poverty, but he did not seek to base that concern in any sort of theology, and part of his leadership style was

that he often spoke out more in the fashion of an Old Labour back-bench MP, than as an archbishop. No carefully worded reports were produced, detailing why it was morally wrong that there was not enough redistribution of wealth – for Winning, it was simply about standing up for the less fortunate members of his community: "I let my conscience and my instincts guide me", he once said (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/1393183.stm, 17th June 2001). While previous chapters have discussed the breadth of opinion from conservative evangelical to liberal which exists in the Church of Scotland ministry, there is not the same range of views in the Catholic priesthood in Scotland, and this factor influences its political behaviour. The Catholic Church has a firm set of beliefs, which are contained in the Catechism, and its clergy and media spokesmen convey those beliefs to politicians, when they feel a public policy concerns the Church. Unlike the Church of Scotland, they do not rely on deliverances passed each year by delegates at a General Assembly.

As way of illustrating this distinction between the churches, Peter Kearney, the Catholic Church's Media Office Director, offers the example of the Rev Erik Cramb, a Church of Scotland minister in Dundee, and a former vice-convener of the Church and Nation Committee. Mr Cramb often speaks out in the press in his capacity as an industrial chaplain, calling for more money for the socially deprived, and people living in housing estates. However, as Kearney points out, there is little point in "picking a fight you cannot win" (Interview with author, 25th March 2002). The British Government is not going to reassess how much it taxes the middle-classes because of the comments of a minister in Dundee. As chapter two mentioned, the Catholic Church takes the approach that one should "render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's" and not involve itself in maters of macro-economic policy (Kearney, interview with author, 25th March 2002). In this respect, the public pronouncements of the Church of Scotland are somewhat naive – its pressure group strategy often appears to be to speak out on whatever issue it feels like addressing, but then be laissez-faire about the prospects of actually achieving its objectives.

Second, the Catholic Church's personnel will actively contact politicians who they know to be Catholic, however broadly one wishes to define that term, when attempting to gain support for their position over a particular policy. The Church contacts elected representatives who they view as sympathetic to their beliefs, in the hope that they are more likely to help and respond positively to a request for consultation. The Catholic hierarchy in Scotland does not speak out on issues, and then leave the politicians to

make up their minds, like the Church of Scotland frequently does. Unlike the Rev Alan McDonald, the Church and Nation Convener, the Catholic Church in Scotland does not view political lobbying as an occupation with a bad reputation (Interview with author, 19th March 2002). The Church of Scotland does not follow the principle of contacting its own members, i.e. "networking", when lobbying, and is not interested in how many of its adherents are MSPs, MPs, journalists. While this is partly because it is the national Church, and summing up how many 'cultural members' it has is more difficult, it also highlights a difference in approach between the two churches. The Scottish Catholic Church understands an important rule of lobbying – building alliances. Leading members of the Church of Scotland appear not to appreciate that acting like a political lobbyist, but then not wanting to be perceived as one, is essentially contradictory.

According to Kenny Farquharson, the political editor of the *Sunday Times Scotland*, Monsignor Tom Connelly, Peter Kearney's predecessor as Catholic media spokesman, was adept at keeping in contact with Catholics in Scottish politics and the media. A former journalist, Mgr Connelly was a well-known figure in Scottish public life before his death two years ago, as the spokesman for the Catholic Church, and would use his contacts to try to influence news stories, and politicians' decision making. For this reason, Farquharson believes that the death of Connelly was as much a blow to the future political influence of the Scottish Catholic Church, as the death of Cardinal Winning (Interview with author, 19th March, 2002). Harry Reid tells of how together with Winning, Connelly would regularly take Scottish politicians and newspaper editors out to lunch in expensive Glasgow restaurants, and discuss their political concerns informally with them (Interview with author, 2nd April 2002). In his account of the home rule campaign, BBC political editor Brian Taylor highlights the deliberate way the Scottish Catholic hierarchy campaigned to have the issue of abortion devolved to Holyrood, in the hope that it could have more political influence in that area of moral legislation (1999: 140). In a chapter written in 2000, journalist Ian MacWhirter even felt it was necessary to point out that "it is Donald Dewar who is First Minister, not Cardinal Winning" (2000: 19). Telephone interviews with MSPs indicate that the Catholic Parliamentary Officer, John Deighan, knows precisely which members at Holyrood are Catholic, and contacts them first, when lobbying over an issue[2]. Graham Blount, the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Officer, on the other hand, states that he views his role

[2] As mentioned in previous chapters, the elite survey questionnaires and interviews will be analysed in detail in chapter five.

as more of a "facilitator" for all churches and politicians to work with (Interview with author, 24th November 1999).

Third, the Catholic Church has an advantage over the Church of Scotland, with regard to mobilising popular support. Grant's first "proximate environment" factor is particularly relevant to this discussion, as he argues that the "characteristics of the potential membership being organised or represented" directly affects pressure group effectiveness (2000: 195). Traditionally, the "Catholic vote" has been a very homogeneous block in the Scottish political system, and the Labour Party was the beneficiary. While evidence outlined in chapter one suggests that such a correlation is diminishing, it still exists, particularly within a certain age bracket, and most Scottish politicians are sensitive to that phenomenon. In an article in *The Scotsman* on the fragile Northern Ireland peace process on 8th October 2002, Alison Hardie wrote that Dr John Reid, the Secretary of State, "could not be pigeon-holed as a part of Scotland's so-called left-footed mafia of Catholic MPs" (*The Scotsman*, 8th October 2002). The use of the word "mafia" may be over-stating the level of linkage, but such perceptions mean that not only does the Catholic Church have political influence over its own members, it also has influence over Scottish politicians, anxious not to lose any section of their vote. This does not mean that the Scottish Labour Party does not do anything to offend the Catholic Church – the repeal if Section 28 is proof of that. However, the Catholic community remains a more homogeneous voting group, than the Protestant population.

One of the most sensitive political issues in Scotland today is the future of Catholic schools. The 1918 Education Act, which transferred control of denominational schools to the State, directly links the Catholic Church with the Scottish Executive, by statute. As has already been mentioned, Kellas (1989: 179) calls the Roman Catholic Church a "quasi-governmental body" as a result of the Act, which was motivated by the discrimination immigrant Irish people were suffering at the hands of some parts of the majority Protestant community. Gaining employment in parts of Scotland's traditional industries was almost impossible for many Catholics at the start of the last century, and a separate education system was seen as the answer to the new problem of religious sectarianism. Despite fierce opposition at the time from those who styled it "Rome on the rates", it was an early form of positive discrimination in Britain.

Scotland is the only nation state in Western Europe, which has a predominantly Protestant population but Catholic state schools, a very visible reminder of why the

schools were created in the first place – in order to provide educational protection for a sizeable minority community which was financially poor. Today, all four major parties in Scotland hold the same public position on them – as long as Catholic parents want denominational schools, the Scottish education system has a duty to provide them. One MSP told the author that it is still viewed as politically insensitive to speak out publicly against Catholic schools, even though it is acceptable to argue that the creation of separate Muslim schools are a bad idea, something many Asian parents would welcome (Anonymised telephone interview, 28th September 2001). Already, Catholic schools are attended by a number of Muslim children, who view their religious ethos as the next best option to separate Islamic schools. As will be noted in the next chapter, the elite telephone interviews with MSPs and MPs produced very carefully worded responses to the question: "what is your opinion on denominational education?" In particular, many of the interviewees felt that, ideally, there should not be separate schools, but that it was important Catholic parents had the choice at the same time.

While a number of different surveys have produced varying degrees of support for separate schools in Scotland, there is evidence that Catholic parents have always been ambivalent towards them. Analysing the 1999 Scottish Parliament Election Survey, Paterson et al note that 42% of Catholics want an end to the public funding of denominational schools, while 11% do not care (2001: 150-151). The writers also note a link between Catholics who favoured greater powers for the Scottish Parliament and those who wanted to abolish Catholic state schools (2001: 157-158). Kellas (1989: 281) points out that as far back as 1967, 63% of Glasgow Catholics favoured integrating the two sectors. In 1992, 48% of Catholics surveyed wanted to see their schools phased out (Bennie, Brand and Mitchell 1997: 111), and in 1998, 47% (Boyle and Lynch 1998: 79). On the one hand, there are Catholics who view the schools as evidence of their church's special status within Scotland – only their Church has its own schools, they produce good results, and any calls for their abolition, are an attack on the Catholic community itself. Bruce suggests that the schools are the "most striking and visible symbol of the Catholic presence in Scotland" (as quoted in Finn 2000: 76). On the other hand, there are Catholics who believe separate schools are actually a way of ghettoising Catholics, that is to say, segregating them from mainstream 'normal' schools, and a reminder that at the start of the last century, they were viewed as social outcasts. As Bennie, Brand and Mitchell point out, when the 1918 Bill was being drafted, the main source of controversy was the proposal to "abandon the ad hoc basis for the local organisation of education", and there was actually concern over whether or not Catholics would accept

the settlement at all (1997: 109). The only body that has always stood totally behind the schools is the hierarchy of the Catholic Church itself.

Privately, many Scottish politicians believe that if bigotry is largely a thing of the past in Scotland, and evidence from the respected historian Tom Devine (2000) suggests it is, then the raison d'être of Catholic schools in Scotland has gone as well. There have always been Scottish politicians who have been sympathetic to the idea of abolishing them, but they have survived for two reasons. First, because they are a success story, and have fulfilled their objectives of bringing the Catholic community "out of the ghetto", to use Boyle and Lynch's phrase (1998), and into mainstream Scottish society. Paterson (2000: 149) suggests that when "attainment and progression are examined separately for people from different social classes, the Catholic schools come off better than in the raw averages." No profession is closed to Catholics now, and there are influential Catholics in many walks of Scottish civic and public life. As Bennie, Brand and Mitchell correctly state, "it is difficult to view the [1918] Act as anything other than a success" (1997: 110).

Second, however, and more interesting from the present perspective, Catholic schools have survived because politicians have appreciated how strongly the Catholic Church protects them, and how sensitive it is towards criticism of them. The Catholic Media Office cleverly equates any public attack on Catholic schools as a public attack on Catholics personally. For example, when Donald Gorrie, the Liberal Democrat MSP whose sectarianism Bill was discussed in chapter two, suggested in February 2002 that Scottish society would be "better" if there were no denominational schools, his comments prompted an angry reaction from John Oates, of the Catholic Education Commission. Mr Oates said: "I find it quite insulting really to associate Catholic education and particularly Catholic schools with sectarianism and bigotry" (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/1805542.stm, 6th February 2002). As well as politicians, if a newspaper editorial goes as far as to hint that denominational schooling is not the best system of education, the Catholic Church also swiftly and vigorously defends itself. One of the main pieces of evidence the composer James Macmillan offered in defence of his argument that Scotland was still a nation blighted by bigotry, was his claim that for many years, *The Herald* newspaper had systematically argued for the abolition of Catholic schools. Harry Reid strenuously denied this accusation, making it clear that as long as Catholic parents wanted them, *The Herald* has always

supported their right to have them (Interview with author, 2nd April 2002). In Macmillan's opinion, however, this was as good as arguing for their abolition.

Chapter two mentioned the concerns the Catholic Church had that the focus of the Scottish Executive's working group on religious hatred would turn to the issue of denominational education (Christine Dora, interview with author, 15th May 2003), while section 1.2 of chapter one introduced Bachrach and Baratz's concept of "non-decision-making" (1962, 1970). They argue that controversial items can be deliberately kept off the political agenda by political elites. In other words, "demands for change in the existing allocation of benefits and privileges in the community can be suffocated before they are even voiced; or kept covert; or killed off before they gain access to the relevant decision-making arena; or, failing all of these things, maimed or destroyed in the decision-implementing stage of the policy process" (1970: 44). The Catholic Church in Scotland's defence of its denominational schools has overtones of the "non-decision-making" model. It views the public discussion of separate schooling as being the equivalent of calling for their abolition and does not enter willingly into the debate. However, what is significant is the fear that many politicians have of losing the Catholic vote, imaginary or not, which leads them to concur with the wishes of the Church hierarchy. In other words, the non-decision-making has two parts – the political elite wants the issue kept off the agenda, and the decision-makers comply.

Only one group does not appear to fear speaking out against Catholic schools, and that is the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), which has regularly shown signs of frustration that Catholic teachers have an in-built advantage over their non-denominational colleagues, when applying for jobs in Catholic schools. While "non-Catholics" can teach in Catholic schools, they are unable to hold promoted positions. Appointments of teachers are made in accordance with the wishes of the Church representatives on the local authority education committee, and a Catholic content is retained in the curriculum. The EIS stance dates back to 1979, when a motion was passed at the EIS conference, calling for integration. The EU and employment rights lawyers have shown an interest in the case and since 1999, the EIS has resolved to "formulate a policy on campaigning for denominational schools' abolition – subject to the consent of churches and parents" (Devine 2000: 163).

Nevertheless, the Catholic Church's stance on this issue has been a success. Devine believes that no Scottish politician will try to abolish Catholic schools in the foreseeable

future, as it would always be viewed as an attack on the Catholic community (Interview with author, 30th May 2002). Even politicians who would be expected to be in favour of their abolition choose their words carefully. Phil Gallie, a South of Scotland Conservative MSP, stated in an telephone interview that he has grown "more sympathetic" towards Catholic schools in recent years (Interview with author, 21st September 2001). At the 1999 General Assembly, the Church of Scotland softened its long-held stance on Catholic schools – that they lead to segregation in society - to the same position held by the four political parties – if Catholic parents want them, they have a right to have them (Church of Scotland 1999: 27/9).

This section has discussed the first way that the Scottish Catholic Church is a more effective pressure group than the Church of Scotland – its choice of strategy when lobbying. However, it is also worth noting at this point that the responses to the survey questionnaires revealed an interesting contradiction in the way the lobbying ability of the Catholic Church is viewed by Scottish politicians. While these will be discussed in depth in chapter five, it is also relevant referring to them in this context. While there was an acknowledgement by a number of MSPs and MPs that the Catholic Church was a better political pressure group than the Church of Scotland, this did not necessarily transfer into those same politicians always being personally influenced. Two back-bench Labour MPs stated that they disliked the tactics used by the Catholic Church to try and influence them, and resented the implication that being a Labour MP in Central Scotland meant that they were expected to listen carefully to the views of the Catholic Church. Furthermore, one Catholic Lanarkshire Labour MSP explained how he considered changed his mind over repealing Section 28 – he had previously been in favour of retaining it – after feeling the Catholic Church was trying to tell him what to do (Anonymised telephone interviews, October 2001, March 2002). No MP or MSP would accuse the Church of Scotland of trying to use such tactics.

While Scottish politicians are more impressed by the way the Catholic Church organises itself as a lobbying organisation, many are not prepared to be 'bullied' over matters which they have their own opinions about, including practising Catholics who are anxious not to be portrayed as being in too close contact with their Church. The purpose of this chapter is to show how the Catholic Church is better at acting as a pressure group than the Church of Scotland, primarily in three ways. However, that does not mean its tactics are to everyone's 'tastes'. Nevertheless, the way the Scottish Catholic Church defends its denominational schools epitomises how it uses strategic lobbying to achieve

its objectives. It fully exploits the fact that the Catholic community is still a relatively homogenous community, especially in the West of Scotland, and its hierarchy knows that it can continue to influence the votes of a significant number of its members at election time. Scottish politicians still recognise that there continues to be a 'Catholic vote' of some kind, and that it is important not to alienate potential voters. As Harry Conroy, the managing editor of the Scottish Catholic Observer, notes, "while Scottish politicians are often happy to ignore the Christian message on issues like cloning or sex education, they do not have the confidence to do the same when it comes to denominational education – and that is because of votes" (Interview with author, 12th June 2003). While the Church of Scotland does not represent the same sort of homogenous group of voters, it could still learn from the way the Scottish Catholic Church operates as a political pressure group, in this respect, as well as the other strategies mentioned at the start of this section.

4.3 The importance of clear leadership

Coxall (2001: 147) states that "good leadership matters to the success of pressure groups," and that the "internal organisation of a group may be a key factor in accounting for its relative success" (2001: 161). Baggott agrees (1995: 58), stating that "good leadership is essential if a pressure group is to make maximum use of its resources". Chapters two and three have already mentioned the decentralised and egalitarian internal structure of the Church of Scotland, and this section will explicitly compare it with the organisation of the Scottish Catholic Church, in order to show why strong leadership is so essential to modern pressure group activity. Weber's writings on authority are helpful to this discussion, with his description of "charismatic" leadership particularly relevant to the analysis of the role of the late Cardinal Winning (1978 translation: 1111-1117).

The Scottish Catholic Church underwent a major change of public image in the 1990s. While there remained a discernible public perception that it represented a community which was still not fully part of the Scottish establishment, it finally found its political voice, through its influential Archdiocese of Glasgow. Today, the Catholic Church is a major institution in the Scottish political system, with a powerful presence in the national media, and that is due, in large part, to Cardinal Thomas Winning. While Winning was originally made Archbishop of Glasgow in 1974 at the age of 49, and was known to hold strong views on a variety of issues, it was only from 1994 onwards, after

he was elevated to the College of Cardinals, that his public recognition factor rose significantly. The new Cardinal, only the second in Scotland since the Reformation, was a different type of prelate from his predecessor, Cardinal Gordon Gray of Edinburgh, who had died a year earlier. An unassuming man, Cardinal Gray made few public pronouncements in the media, and having not been reared in the West of Scotland, was also more ecumenically minded than Cardinal Winning.

Winning may have been a Prince of the Catholic Church, but he also had a 'common touch' as well as the "self-imposed inner determination" of a "natural leader" (1978 translation: 1112). He realised that the Scottish press listened to his public pronouncements – "a very savvy media operator", according to Douglas Fraser, the political editor of the *Sunday Herald* (Interview with author, 24th June 2003). With the national Church of Scotland without a permanent head, and often a coherent message as a consequence, Cardinal Winning's unequivocal public comments received even more media attention. He was the most recognisable clergyman in Scotland – in many ways, the public face of Christianity in the nation. Parry describes him as the "overwhelming religious presence in recent years" (2002: 145). By the time he died of a heart attack in June 2001, he was one of the best known public figures in Scotland – his recognition level was higher than most Scottish politicians, particularly after devolution. It was a significant achievement for the 'leader' of such a conservative institution to achieve celebrity in what Callum Brown describes as a predominantly "post-Christian", Western European country (Interview with author, 24th July 2002). However, in a sense, he was the voice of the past, the voice of conservative Christianity, and the personification of opposition to liberalism in Scotland. He was the 'man of the people', who spoke out on political issues others dared not to, able to channel his "gift from above" into providing direction and leadership to his 'organisation' (1978 translation: 1112)

Cardinal Winning was often given the sobriquet "leader of Scotland's Catholics" by the media, but according to Peter Kearney, the director of the Catholic Media Office in Scotland, this was incorrect. Cardinal Winning may have been the most senior Catholic cleric in Scotland, but he was not the 'leader', as no such position technically exists. The Catholic Church in Scotland is divided into six dioceses (Aberdeen, Argyll and the Isles, Dunkeld, Galloway, Motherwell and Paisley) and two archdioceses (Glasgow and St Andrews & Edinburgh). It has two archbishops, and six bishops, who meet together six times a year for the Bishops' Conference of Scotland, the permanently constituted body which runs the Church (Interview with author, 25th March 2002). While Winning

was elected President of the Bishops' Conference (indefinitely) in 1985, that did not make him the Church's "leader", and while Archbishop Keith O'Brien, of St Andrew's & Edinburgh, is the current acting President of the Bishops' Conference, he is not the acting leader either. According to Kearney, it was merely a coincidence that Cardinal Winning was President as well as being the most senior cleric – in theory, Bishop Ian Murray of the small Argyll and the Isles diocese could hold the position.

Moderators of General Assembly are also often given the title "leader" by sections of the Scottish press, and that is equally inaccurate, as chapter one has already explained. When it was announced in January 2002 that Mario Conti was to become the new Archbishop of Glasgow, most parts of the Scottish media reported this as Conti being named the next leader of Scotland's Catholics. For example, BBC Scotland News Online reported that the "new leader of the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland is to be formally installed at two ceremonies in Glasgow" (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/1833603.stm, 21st February 2002). While such a mistake is understandable, particularly when Glasgow is by far the largest Catholic diocese in Scotland, unless Archbishop Conti is made a Cardinal, he will remain equal in status to Archbishop Keith O'Brien of Edinburgh. As with the Church of Scotland's internal structure, the hierarchical organisation of the Catholic Church is not without its idiosyncrasies either.

The point of etiquette Peter Kearney describes actually typifies a deeper rooted problem Cardinal Winning faced when he was acting politically. Within his own church, Winning was not universally liked, with many feeling he enjoyed the glare of publicity too much, and conveyed an unsympathetic image of the Catholic Church to the rest of Scottish society. The leading historian, Professor Owen Dudley Edwards of Edinburgh University, a Catholic, was a prominent critic of Winning's moral conservatism, and argued in a *Scottish Affairs* article (2000) that the real leader of the Scottish Church was Archbishop O'Brien of Edinburgh, as he was the head of the oldest archdiocese. In the same way, Peter Kearney states his hope that the Church can avoid in the future having one dominant personality as its main spokesman in Scotland. He argues that all eight bishops have responsibility for a different area of the Church's work, and should all have an equally high profile e.g Archbishop Conti of Glasgow is President of the Christian Doctrine Commission, Bishop Mone of Paisley is President of the Justice and Peace Commission, Bishop Devine of Motherwell is President of the Communications Commission - there are thirteen commissions in total. In particular, he would like to see

Archbishop O'Brien, and the new Archbishop of Glasgow, Mario Conti, viewed as equals by the Scottish media, and implies that many in the Church did not like the "personality cult" of Cardinal Winning (Interview with author, 25th March 2002). While Kearney's hope is a positive one, such a situation might dissipate the church's overall political influence. This problem may be related to Weber's view of what happens to the leadership of an organisation, 'post-charisma', as it were. Administration requires to be "routinised", or there is the possibility of a lack of cohesion occurring in leadership (1978 translation: 1114).

Semantics aside, Cardinal Winning, as the most senior cleric in the Scottish Catholic Church, provided firm leadership to his clergy and community, and was a personality with whom Scottish politicians and civil servants could engage. No Church of Scotland minister could rival Winning's public recognition levels, or possessed the same amount of personal respect from politicians. In political pressure group terms, Winning was a very effective chief executive of his organisation. Grant (2000: 199) argues that pressure groups "have to develop decision-making structures that take account of the different interests and viewpoints of their members whilst being able to develop effective policies and to respond to changing events". While the Scottish Catholic Church does not attempt to represent the views of its members, it does have a very effective leadership structure, and this is more important factor. Grant gives the example of the CBI which suffers from "stifling breadth" because it attempts to represent everyone who comes under its auspices – small firms, large firms, manufacturers, financiers and retailers. He compares this to Greenpeace's internal structure which is very hierarchical, with the "rank and file" excluded from all decision-making, but which maintains a very unified public face (2000: 199).

Cardinal Winning enjoyed a close personal relationship with a number of leading political party figures, most notably Alex Salmond, the former leader of the SNP. That friendship is credited with helping to make the SNP more 'Catholic-friendly' in the 1990s, and leading to a rise in the number of Catholics in favour of independence[3]. One incident in particular exemplifies the closeness of the relationship between Salmond and Winning. When preparations were being made for the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales in 1997, the then Church of Scotland Moderator, the Rt Rev Dr Alexander MacDonald was given the most prominent position on the chancel in Westminster Abbey, along with clergy from other denominations. Only the Dean of the Abbey took

[3] See section 1.3.

part in the service. Cardinal Winning was not invited onto the chancel, as Cardinal Hume was, but instead had to sit in the congregation. Alex Salmond publicly criticised the exclusion, arguing that Winning was equal to Hume, and not subordinate to the "English" Cardinal. While the pair's friendship was genuine and sincere, it was also expedient for both parties. Winning gained the ear of one of the most influential politicians in the country, while Salmond drastically changed the image of his party from being "anti-Catholic", to being the party for "New Scots", including Catholics, Asians, and even the English.

However, while Cardinal Winning possessed a large amount of personal influence, there is no example of a government Bill which was shelved because of his public pronouncements. For example, despite the heated public debate over the repeal of Section 28 in 2000, which chapter three analysed in depth, Peter Kearney argues the Catholic Church regards the outcome of the debate as a failure. The legislation was watered down slightly, and the combined campaigning of Winning, Brian Souter and the *Daily Record* contributed to that change, but the 'Clause' was still repealed, and the Church did not achieve its objectives, according to Kearney (Interview with author, 25th March 2002). Furthermore, Winning's numerous strongly worded public statements also suggest he was not as politically astute as many believed. Some of his pronouncements were ill-advised e.g. his comparing the gay lobby in Britain with Nazis during the Section 28 controversy, and the way he handled the Bishop Roddy Wright affair was not especially deft either. The Church hierarchy had originally tried to cover up the Bishop's affair with a married woman in his diocese, before the tabloid press published the story, and the question of celibacy in the Church was once again re-opened. Winning possessed the ability to gain access to the networks of influence, but whether he ever changed the mind of a Scottish politician over a certain issue is uncertain, and cannot be measured. Also, as Bruce and Glendinning argue (2003), "when pronouncements on personal sexual behaviour are least popular with churchgoers and very unpopular with the rest of the population, frequent press attention to the Church's teachings in these areas may have done nothing to improve its popularity". Parry also hints at this paradox, alluding to Winning's "attention-grabbing comments on the issues of the day and his fearlessness in mixing it with politicians, virtually none of whom could align themselves completely with his mix of theological conservatism and social radicalism" (2002: 145).

By far the biggest campaign Winning mounted in his period of office as Archbishop of Glasgow was the Pro-Life Initiative he set up in 1997. Highly controversial at the time, it involved the Archdiocese of Glasgow paying mothers to keep their babies, and not have abortions, as well as providing financial support to bring the child up. It was a revolutionary scheme, and one which Winning's successor as Archbishop has vowed to continue to support. In March 2002, Mario Conti opened the Pro-Life Centre in Glasgow which will help to continue the work that has already been done. To date, 431 women have given birth to children, after approaching the Church, including a twelve year old girl who was given financial support after falling pregnant. The issue of abortion is one which the Catholic Church in Scotland has always involved itself in passionately – it is one of its most sincerely held beliefs, and in contrast with the Church of Scotland's position, significantly more unequivocal. According to its 1985 deliverance, the Board of Social Responsibility accepts that there are occasions when abortion is the only answer for the mother after the "exhaustion of all alternatives" (Church of Scotland 1999: 24/19). However, despite Winning's initiative, there has been no change in the law in Britain. Abortion remains legal, and health care experts do not recommend following the example of countries like Ireland.

Section 4.2 described how the Scottish Catholic Church is excellent at sustained strategic lobbying, but it also has the same problem as the Church of Scotland – its core message is perceived as out of date by much of modern society. Grant's "external environment" factor mentioned in chapters two and three can also be applied to the Catholic Church – church attendances in Britain are falling[4], and the political influence of church leaders is also in decline. Furthermore, with regard to Grant's internal "resources" component (2000: 195), the fact the internal structure of the Catholic Church in Scotland is hierarchical, and the Church of Scotland is not, is due to theological considerations, and not because the former wanted to have an internal organisation better suited to political lobbying. That these institutions are different in this way is only politically significant if the leader of the hierarchical structure is good at his job. Despite changes in societal values, Cardinal Winning was an effective leader of the Scottish Catholic Church at a time of great change in the political system.

[4] See chapter one.

4.4 The importance of effective public relations

The fact that Scotland has its own "strongly differentiated mass media network", as Kellas puts it (1989: 197), means that the workings of the Scottish political system is covered in great detail by the national press. It is important for political pressure groups to have influence in the media, as public debates often lead to a change in policy direction. Whiteley and Winyard's research on the poverty lobby in the UK shows that the correct use of publicity by a group can reinforce its influence with government and politicians: "the critical variable...will be the ability of poverty groups to get coverage in quality newspapers" (1987: 151). However, attempting to evaluate how much influence the Scottish churches have over the media is not straightforward, and an assessment of how much a newspaper or television programme has paid attention to the agenda of any one given group has to conform to certain established social science guidelines. As Hutchison explains (1987: 240), it is vital that we recognise a "range of factors" influence the way a paper presents the news; its political stance, its core readership, as well as market forces. Political science in Britain has always been interested in the influence of the media; from *The Sun's* claim that it was it "wot won" the 1992 General Election for the Conservatives, (*The Sun*, 10th April 1992)) to devolution campaigners in 1979 claiming the Scottish press had a negative effect on people voting 'yes', (Bochel, Denver and Macartney 1981: 119) the role of the mass media in politics has been carefully analysed.

While many comparisons can be made between the Catholic Church and the Church of Scotland within the context of the research, the one area that the former is significantly superior to the latter is with regard to influencing the Scottish media. This is due to two factors. First, as an institution, the Scottish Catholic Church attempts to keep itself in the public eye far more than the Church of Scotland. It has an agenda of change, including sustaining the progress it has made since the first half of last century to its position today as the largest denomination in the country[5]. Secondly, the Catholic Church's internal structure allows it to use more effective media tactics, which the Church of Scotland simply cannot. This section will begin by exploring these two aspects in more detail.

First, the Scottish Catholic Church's determination to keep its public profile high. In 1998, Cardinal Winning used the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination as a priest to

[5] Although, see section 4.1 also.

argue that in another fifty years, there would once again only be one church in Scotland – the Catholic Church (*Scotland Today*, Scottish Television, 10th October 1998). This was not necessarily a vision of the future every Scottish Catholic shared, but it did illustrate the desire of many in the Church hierarchy to continue to gain parity with the Church of Scotland, and correct the perceived wrongs of the discrimination they suffered in the last century. Indeed, some observers go as far as to argue that this historical background also poses indirect problems for the Church of Scotland. According to Harry Reid, the former editor of *The Herald*, the Church of Scotland is "very worried about [saying] anything which might be offensive or perceived as aggressively Protestant", because it still feels guilty about its early twentieth century anti-Catholicism (*The Herald*, 21st January 2002).

The evidence for this, however, is not entirely convincing. Senior positions in the Church of Scotland are occupied by middle-class, well-educated ministers, who have little interest in West coast sectarianism, or trying to have a higher profile than the Catholic Church. Reid's theory that the Church of Scotland is scared of coming across as "aggressively Protestant" in the media is contentious, as it implies those who run the Church have a higher awareness of the interests of the Archdiocese of Glasgow on a daily basis than they do in reality. Reid believes that it was the duty of his book *Outside Verdict* (2002) to highlight the anti-Catholicism of the early twentieth century Church of Scotland. However, in many ways, Reid labours the point. Guilt of past bigotry is not the root of all the Church of Scotland's present problems, and to imply that it is, is greatly to overstate the case. Associating the Church of Scotland with the Orange Lodge and Rangers Football Club is not something the majority of church members across the country would feel especially comfortable with. Nevertheless, Reid's point aside, the determination of the Scottish Catholic hierarchy under Cardinal Winning to continue the regeneration of their church in Scottish public life and civil society has been unambiguous. It remains to be seen whether the new Archbishop of Glasgow will adopt a similar approach to his predecessor. Mario Conti comes from a different social and geographical background than Winning, and has already spoken out strongly against sectarianism. In his installation as Archbishop, he stated that people must try to "answer the question as to how we are to face the challenge of residual sectarianism and bigotry which unfortunately at times still mar the face of this great city" (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/1834896.stm, 21st February 2002). One of the main criticisms made of Cardinal Wining was that he was too steeped in the culture of West Central Scotland to be able to help eradicate bigotry.

The second point mentioned at the start of this section concerned the Catholic Church's internal structure. According to Peter Kearney, the difference in public relations practise between the two churches can be attributed to one main factor – the lack of coherence of the Church of Scotland's beliefs, compared with the Catholic Church's (Interview with author, 25th March 2002). Since much of Catholic teaching is contained in the Catechism, there is little room for deviation from the official Catholic position. When Cardinal Winning spoke out on an issue, his view was often based on what was written in the Catechism, and his press office had the simple task of telling the media about it. For example, on abortion, article 5.1 of the Catechism states that "human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of contraception", and that "from its conception, the child has the right to life". On the issue of human sexuality, part three (section two, chapter two, article 6) states that "among the sins gravely contrary to chastity are...fornication, pornography and homosexual practices" (http://www.vatican.va/archive/catechism/p3s2c2a6.htm#IV, accessed 8th July 2002). While the Catechism clearly does not have the capacity to go into depth or detail about contemporary British political issues, the moral principles which are outlined do give a clarity and conviction to the public pronouncements of leading Catholic clergy.

The Church of Scotland does not have a Catechism, and so the definitive viewpoint of the Church on various issues is contained only in the deliverances of General Assembly. These deliverances, however, are often subject to change, unlike the Catechism which was updated in 1992 for the first time since 1546. When a Moderator speaks out on an issue, he often has to make it clear it is only his own personal viewpoint, and when a convener of a board or a committee speaks out, they do so only in confidence, if their view has already been ratified by General Assembly. While the Bishops' Conference of the Scottish Catholic Church meets six times a year to discuss a variety of issues, the basic "moral laws" of the Church remain unchanged. Also, even if a policy issue arises which is not specifically mentioned in the 1992 Catechism, for example, genetic engineering, it is still possible for Catholic leaders to refer back to it for general guidance on "respect for human life" (http://www.vatican.va/archive/catechism/p3s2c2a5.htm#I, accessed 8th July 2002).

The result of this disparity is that the media office of the Scottish Catholic Church can be more pro-active in putting out press releases, compared with its equivalent in the Church of Scotland, as it is always conveying the official view of the Church, rather

than the opinion of a board/committee convener. This means that there is no potential for controversy or ambiguity over the stance it has adopted on a political issue. As chapter three mentioned, a considerable amount of confusion surrounds the level of autonomy General Assembly boards and committees possess throughout the year, and a consequence of this is a paralysis of public relations. The Catholic Church possesses an astute media unit, that makes sure views of its senior clergy are effectively communicated to as wide an audience as possible - in comparison, the Church of Scotland's press office looks old-fashioned and unsure of its role. Even Lynne Robertson, the editor of *Life and Work*, describes the Catholic media office as a "very capable and committed media team whose names trip easily off the tongues of the Scottish press corps and can be contacted at any time" (Interview with author, 1st May 2003). Ronnie Convery, the Archdiocese of Glasgow's press spokesman, describes how the main objective of his office is to be "pro-active, and maintain control over a news story concerning the Church" (Interview with author, 24th April 2002). However, as Peter Kearney points out, the hands of Pat Holdgate, the Church of Scotland's experienced press officer, are tied. He feels she has to stick to anodyne stories like "Moderator comes back from Australia", and "play safe", so as not to upset any of its members (Interview with author, 25th March 2002). The Catholic Church is not a democratic institution – the leadership speaks for it, technically following the 'Vatican line'. There is no room for debate, but no room for an incoherent political message either.

According to Peter Kearney, his office carefully analyses around twelve newspapers every day, cutting out articles and stories of interest, and instantly sending out press releases commenting on them. The Church of Scotland does not take this approach – if one visits the part of the Church's web-site which contains the press releases, they are infrequent and non-contentious. Unlike the press office of the Church of Scotland, the Catholic Media Office, along with the press office of the Archdiocese of Glasgow, are constantly attempting to influence the media, and are not averse to using political 'spin' to achieve their aims. If Scottish newspapers want a quote from a church spokesperson with regard to a news story, they go to the Peter Kearney at the Catholic Media Office first, and often do not even contact the Church of Scotland for their view on the matter. The Catholic Media Office is excellent at providing short 'sound-bites' which contain their stance on the issue in question. The Church of Scotland's press office has a propensity to respond to news events, rather than to set the agenda. It comes under the auspices of its Board of Communication, as does the staff of the monthly periodical *Life*

and Work, still the biggest selling Christian magazine in Britain. In 2000, the Board of Communication was fundamentally altered, in terms of structure and personnel, an admission that it had not been operating at its full potential for some time. Neither Pat Holdgate, the Church's press officer, or Brian McGlynn, its Director of Communication, were prepared to be interviewed for the purpose of this research, yet both Peter Kearney and Ronnie Convery of the Catholic Church were happy to participate.

The factors discussed in sections 4.2 and 4.3 are also relevant to this discussion. The media likes simple, clear messages from recognisable personalities, and the Scottish Catholic Church, under the 'leadership' of Cardinal Winning, was perfectly positioned for good coverage. A strong leader in charge of a traditional (but often controversial) institution makes for a high media profile, something Winning was not unaware of. Regardless of how sophisticated the Catholic Media Office is, its influence over the Scottish media, post-devolution, will be significantly diminished. Neither Mario Conti nor Keith O'Brien have shown any inclination to be outspoken or seek publicity, and it seems the Church is about to enter a more low-profile period. The Church of Scotland's lack of permanent head means it has no one person the media can easily identify with. Forty or fifty years ago, the media made an effort to get to know the current Moderator, and, for that matter, the convenor of the Church and Nation Committee. Nowadays, no such effort is made, with individual ministers only making an impact because of their own, personal campaigning judgement, or ability to maximise their positions effectively. Some years a Moderator does make an impact, for example James Whyte in 1988, or Andrew McLellan in 2001, but their year in office passes quickly. As Ronnie Convery admits, the net result of this is that the Catholic Church "punches above its weight" in Scottish politics, in relation to its population, while the Church of Scotland punches below its (Interview with author, 24th April 2002).

If church leaders like Winning and Richard Holloway, the former Episcopal Church Primus, did appear to be significantly better at handling the media than Church of Scotland leaders, there is a good reason for this. Due to the permanent nature of their status, bishops like Winning and Holloway become used to dealing with the media on a regular basis, and even have experienced journalists to help them. For example, Ronnie Convery is a former Scottish Television news reporter, who acts as the Archbishop of Glasgow's press spokesman. Mr Convery was Cardinal Winning's personal aide, often writing articles for him, and speaking on behalf of him to the media. His office is actually separate form the Catholic Media Office, run by Peter Kearney, which is also

based in Glasgow. The Church of Scotland national board and committee conveners are only part-time, and know little about influencing politicians and pressmen. As Ken Cargill, the former head of news and current affairs at BBC Scotland, puts it, a "permanent head would be able to develop not only a higher recognition factor/media profile but also greater media/PR skills through experience" (Interview with author, 18th June 2003). The conveners do not have the longevity of office to gain confidence or sophistication when dealing the media. They have four years to make their mark, and often, with a parish to run as well, their work as convenor is significantly curtailed. The press office of the Church of Scotland is therefore more a facilitator of comment, than a commentator itself, unlike its Catholic equivalent. The Church of Scotland does not require a spokesman for a permanent head, and a Moderator is in office for a short time. Every presbytery does not need to have its own press office, as there are forty or so, compared to the seven dioceses of the Scottish Catholic Church.

Speaking at the launch of a book on Scottish sectarianism, Harry Reid stated *The Herald* listens more intently to what the Catholic Church has to say about political issues than the Church of Scotland, because through Cardinal Winning, it communicated its views simply and clearly, while attempting to decipher what the Church of Scotland thinks about something is much more difficult. Furthermore, he expressed admiration for Cardinal Winning personally, stating how he regarded him as an "extremely sophisticated media operator" (*The Herald*, 12th April 2000). These comments fit with what Lynne Robertson, the editor of *Life and Work,* labels as Winning's capability at "the hard-nosed side of having the ear of newspaper editors" (Interview with author, 1st May 2003). Two major factors made Winning effective with the media: first, an awareness of the importance of getting his church into the news ahead of the 'competition', rarely turning down an opportunity to be on the television or radio, or in the papers, and second, holding strong opinions on controversial matters.

Cardinal Winning's traditionalist stance towards issues such as contraception, abortion, and celibacy makes him 'good copy' for journalists. Bishop Richard Holloway's very liberal and modern views on sex and drugs have the same effect. Parry talks about how Bishop Holloway's "mastery of the media and taste for controversial pronouncements secured him wide recognition" (2002: 145). The fact that these two men always stand by their views when challenged is significant, as well. A number of the journalists interviewed for the purposes of the research accepted that the Scottish media often used Winning for their own gains. Mark Douglas-Home, the editor of *The Herald*,

commented that the late Cardinal was a "news editor's dream" because of his strong views (Interview with author, 21st April 2003), while Katie Grant, *The Scotsman* columnist, agreed that Winning was effectively "used" by newspapers (28th April 2003). However, while this may well be the case, that does not mean that Winning was not also having the effect he desired. As Brian Taylor, the political editor of BBC Scotland, points put, politicians are "inclined to experience indirect influence from the fact that an individual is widely quoted in the press" (Interview with author, 2nd June 2003). This is a view that Roma Menlowe, the head of the Civil Law Division of the Justice Department at the Scottish Executive concurs with, and points to the Section 28 controversy as an example of extensive press coverage directly influencing policy decisions (Interview with author, 2nd May 2003). Influence over the media can lead on to influence over politicians – something the Catholic Church in Scotland understands very clearly.

4.5 Conclusions

This chapter argues that the Catholic Church is more effective than the Church of Scotland at acting like a political pressure group, in three ways. First, its ability to lobby strategically: section 4.2 discussed the Church's capacity to only target issues it has a genuine interest in, and to not be 'ashamed' of actively lobbying conventionally, including networking with MSPs and MPs who they know to be sympathetic. This strategic lobbying also includes mobilising its community as a voting mass, nurturing its close, historical links with the Scottish Labour Party, and fiercely protecting its schools, when it views them as under threat. Second, its internal organisation allows it to be led by a senior figure who can impose his personality on the institution, and choose the political direction in which he wants it to go. Third, its media office has shown an ability to keep the Church in the public eye, and make its views widely and clearly known, a vital factor in exerting political influence. The office appreciates the importance of short 'sound-bites', and building up personal contacts with individual news editors and journalists - again the importance of "networking".

However, the Catholic Church is entering a period of transition. As Peter Kearney acknowledges, the personal influence which Cardinal Winning possessed has been indefinitely lost, and it is questionable whether Archbishop Conti or Archbishop O'Brien will be able to fill that vacuum (Interview with author, 25th March 2002). Do either of them have the three elements that Winning possessed? First, Winning had a

real interest in politics - it was often said that had he not become a priest, he would have become a Labour politician. Both archbishops are less interested in having such a role. Second, Winning had a drive for self-publicity - he enjoyed being on the front pages of the newspapers, and on the television. Again, both archbishops are less robust public figures than the Cardinal. Last, he had the deep held desire to conquer the bigotry which he experienced growing up in Lanarkshire in the thirties and forties. Archbishop Conti, on the other hand, is an Italian who grew up in Elgin, while Archbishop O'Brien is an Irishman, with an East coast archdiocese - they have no interest in the sectarianism of West Central Scotland.

The future political influence of the Scottish Catholic Church is likely to decline, as a result of a lack of high-profile leadership from Conti or O'Brien. As Weber argues, leadership qualities are personally unique, and cannot be replicated. (1978 translation: 1111-1112) Through his "charismatic" personality, Cardinal Winning brought the Catholic Church firmly into the mainstream of Scottish society to the extent that today, it often appears to be more part of the political establishment than the Church of Scotland. If the way Scottish politicians talk about the future of Catholic schools is indicative of influence, the Catholic Church continues to be a powerful political institution. In the late Victorian and Edwardian eras, the Conservative Party began to challenge the Liberals' historically strong links with Presbyterianism, with the new Labour Party also attempting to claim the more radical-thinking Protestant as its own. Today's Scottish political parties make no attempt to tap into popular Protestant culture, or to attract Protestant voters, but they do continue to be sympathetic to the political behaviour of the Catholic community, something of which the Catholic Church in Scotland is not unaware when acting as a pressure group.

Chapter 5 – Worthy of praise? The policy-makers' view of the political influence of the Church of Scotland

5.1 Introductory section

The primary aim of the research is to analyse the political behaviour of Scotland's national church, with one of its central themes the assessment of the role of religion in the Scottish political system from an institutional perspective. This chapter looks at how Scotland's elected parliamentarians regard the Church of Scotland in a political context – are they influenced in their policy formulation by any of the main churches when they act politically? The chapter focuses on the results of the elite survey questionnaires sent out to all 129 MSPs and all 72 Scottish MPs as well as on the follow-up telephone interviews, in which a large number of the politicians agreed to participate. It compares the perceived influence of the Church of Scotland over public policy-making, with the influence of the Catholic and Episcopal churches (the three main religious denominations in Scotland) by analysing the responses of the politicians to the questions asked in the survey and interviews.

As chapter one explained, one of the other main objectives of the thesis is to analyse the level of accessibility and openness in the new Scottish Parliament and the types of responses received will contribute towards a better understanding of the way the new Scottish political system is developing. The results of the survey questionnaires and content of the follow-up interviews contain information about the way MSPs and MPs operate when dealing with the Scottish churches which may be of interest to other non-governmental organisations and interest groups. Asking the decision-makers themselves whether they believe the churches are influential makes a significant contribution towards the overall picture of the thesis. Alderman's 1984 study of British pressure groups, for example, relied heavily on interviews with politicians and civil servants, as well as pressure group activists, while Moyser's 1985 study of the Church of England's political behaviour included a chapter written by a senior Labour MP.

Section 1.2 of chapter one stated that the research approach was broadly pluralist, so this ostensibly 'reputational' analysis may at first seem to be at odds with that methodology. However, the two approaches are not mutually exclusive. The case studies of chapters two and three are firmly in the pluralist tradition of Dahl and Polsby but they can still be augmented by the data analysis and qualitative research of this chapter. Hunter's over-reliance on the reputational approach (1953) was flawed as it lacked a methodical accuracy.

Different people have different concepts of power and influence and the thesis would also resist any suggestion that policy-making in Scotland must be dominated by one political elite. Nevertheless, asking MSPs and MPs their views on the political behaviour of the main denominations is not pointless. Indeed, as section 1.2 of chapter one argued, it would have been very wrong for a post-devolution Scottish politics thesis to ignore these new parliamentarians and their views, not least because of the significant role in framing legislation given to them by the Consultative Steering Group in its final report (1998: 5). Analysing their answers quantitatively is particularly worthwhile when correlations can be cautiously identified.

A number of civil servants were also contacted for the purposes of the research and their perspectives on how churches act, in comparison with other pressure groups, have been included mainly in the case studies in chapters two and three. The views senior policy executives hold on the way the churches try to exert political influence are interesting, and make a worthwhile contribution to the research. However, it would wrong to rely solely on their views and assume that MSPs (and MPs for that matter) have no power unless they hold ministerial office. An MSP is as much of a "policy-maker" as a civil servant – indeed, the thesis would argue that the former's views are of more use and value to research of this kind than those of a Scottish Executive civil servant. It is perhaps useful to repeat the three aims of the thesis at this point: to analyse the effectiveness of the political behaviour of the Church of Scotland; to assess the openness of the devolved Scottish political system; and to evaluate the place of religion in Scottish politics generally. Asking civil servants what they think of these issues is only of limited use; in particular, many of the individuals who were contacted were only prepared to comment on some aspects of the political behaviour of the churches and understandably felt restricted by the quasi-sensitive nature of the issues involved. With its high response rate, the survey questionnaire project has been successful in obtaining the views of a large number of senior politicians, on the relationship between religion and politics in Scotland. It was a sensible methodological decision to make the project the main focus of the fieldwork, rather than merely concentrating on civil servants. MSPs and MPs are as capable as civil servants at providing a comparative perspective on the political behaviour of the churches – the former come into as much contact with other pressure groups as the latter. It is not the sole reserve of Scottish Executive employees to be able to provide perspective and context.

The survey also attempted to quantify the presence of its members and adherents amongst Scottish politicians. This is not because an MSP or MP who is a member of the Church will always 'toe the party line' when it comes to voting, nor because an individual who is an

atheist will always disagree with everything the Church has to say. However, such information still gives an indication of the potential influence the Church of Scotland has, post-devolution, because "networking" is an important part of pressure group activity. As Baggott states when speaking about lobbying MPs, groups "must recognise their friends and enemies in the House" (1995: 146). While the overall picture of church representation in politics is likely to broadly reflect the Scottish population as a whole, to discover the precise 'pattern' of representation is still worthwhile. How active is church membership? How 'high up' does that representation go? How many committed members of the Church of Scotland are in the Scottish Executive, or Cabinet?

Most information about public figures tends not to reveal whether they hold religious beliefs, unless they list it specifically under their private interests. The traditional method of looking at which school an individual attended is only of use in the context of the West of Scotland, and the state school sector in the rest of the central belt. For example, looking at the school attended by Junior Education Minister Nicol Stephen is futile, since he comes from Aberdeen. To add to the lack of clarity, in Edinburgh, there are no private Catholic schools, as there are in Glasgow, so many Catholic pupils attend the fee-paying schools, which are essentially Church of Scotland, or Anglican, in ethos[1]. Indeed, even if MSPs attend state schools in the central belt, it is still unclear whether they are Church of Scotland, or another Protestant denomination, or have no affiliations, in terms of cultural background. A questionnaire is the only definitive way of finding out this information.

Before the survey results are analysed, however, there will be a description of the methodology used in the project, as well as a brief look at the political make-up of the Scottish Parliament and the Scottish constituencies at Westminster.

5.2 Elite survey project methodology

As the introductory section mentioned, the elite survey questionnaire was sent to all 129 MSPs, as well as to all 72 Scottish MPs. While anonymous, a number in the top left-hand corner allowed a record to be kept of which survey had been sent to which politician. No attempt was made to disguise the number, as it was important that a private record was kept of which survey was completed by which MP or MSP – if some politicians agreed to do a follow-up interview, for example, there had to be way of identifying them. Only five respondents scored out, or cut off, the number, and only one MSP, a Scottish Executive

[1] St Aloysius College and Fernhill School are two leading independent Catholic schools in Glasgow.

Minister, enquired as to why it was there in the first place. The survey was sent by conventional post, using university-headed paper, as a small pilot using e-mail had not produced effective results. Out of the seven MSPs contacted by this latter method in February 2000, three did not reply at all and one of the four who did, failed to answer the questions fully. Whereas parliamentary assistants will routinely deal with letters, passing them to the MSP or MP at an appropriate juncture, the direct nature of personally e-mailing politicians can be construed as slightly intrusive, akin to telephoning them directly. A survey carried out by a British training and recruitment firm in August 2002 found that only 10% of MPs conduct a quarter or more of their correspondence via e-mail (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/2195253.stm, 15th August 2002). A well-produced covering letter looks more impressive, and, in the survey, each letter was subtly different, with the differences relating to the MSP/MP to whom it was sent (see appendix II).

The introductory letter gave as much information as possible, and in order to take into account the busy life an MSP/MP leads, the survey itself was intentionally short, and fitted onto two sides of A4. The order of questions was also intentional, with the first three questions the main source of interest, and the questions about personal religious affiliation placed at the end. While asking about electoral behaviour and the establishment of the Church of Scotland was regarded as being relatively worthwhile, the main objective of the questionnaire was to discover what the politicians thought about the lobbying power of the Church of Scotland, compared with the other two main denominations. Follow-up letters were sent out to politicians who had not responded to the first survey sent to them, and this increased both MSP and MP response rates substantially (see appendix I).

The survey deliberately did not contain a question on Catholic schools, even though discovering the views of Scottish politicians on denominational education would be very interesting. As chapter four discussed, the future of Catholic schools remains a sensitive issue in Scottish politics, so there was a desire not to lower the number of response rates due to politicians suspecting there was a 'hidden agenda' in the research project. Ultimately, this thesis is about the political behaviour of the Church of Scotland, and while the issue of Catholic schools is relevant, that was not considered a good enough reason to risk a lower survey response rate. Indeed, generally, the questions were broad-based and covered wide themes – they were not intended to be controversial or pointed, and the high response rate (see section 5.4.1) is probably the best justification for the approach taken. More detailed and specific questions were asked in the follow-up telephone interviews.

The data from the questionnaire results was statistically analysed, while follow up interviews asked the politicians further questions based on their responses to the survey. The qualitative approach has been widely used by political scientists in the past - for example, pressure group activists have been interviewed extensively by researchers interested in policy communities (Grant and Marsh 1977, Mills 1993, Smith 1990). Devine argues that intensive interviewing of this nature allow the "informants to elaborate on their values and attitudes and account for their behaviour" (1995: 138) and this was the case with the follow-up telephone interviews. They produced many interesting insights into the views of 29 senior Scottish politicians on the question of religion and politics, and added value to the survey questionnaire results.

5.3 Scottish Parliamentarians

Before analysing the questionnaire results, it is worth taking a brief look at the political make-up of the Scottish Parliament (prior to 1st May 2003), as well as at Scottish representation at Westminster, in order to gain a general picture of the individuals who have participated in the survey. Scots are directly represented in three parliaments – the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh, the British House of Commons at Westminster, and the European Parliament in Strasbourg. There are 129 Members of the Scottish Parliament, 73 having been elected to constituencies through the first-past-the-post voting system, and 56 elected by regional lists through proportional representation. After the first elections in 1999, Labour were only 9 MSPs short of an overall majority, having won 56 seats overall, compared with the SNP gaining 35, the Conservatives 18, and the Liberal Democrats 17. However, before the end of the year, the Labour MSP for Ayr, Ian Welsh, resigned his seat for personal reasons, and the subsequent by-election in March 2000 was won comfortably by the Conservatives' John Scott. The death in October 2000 of Scotland's First Minister, Donald Dewar, did not affect the balance of seats, however, as Labour's Bill Butler won the subsequent by-election in Glasgow Anniesland. When Alex Salmond resigned as SNP leader in 2000, he also subsequently decided to leave the Parliament, but remain as an MP at Westminster, and his Banff and Buchan seat was retained in June 2001 by the party's Stewart Stevenson. The Education Minister, Sam Galbraith also retired as an MSP and MP at the 2001 General Election, and Labour retained his Strathkelvin and Bearsden seat, through Brian Fitzpatrick. When the Conservatives' Nick Johnston stood down as a list member for Mid Scotland and Fife in August 2001, he was instantly replaced by Murdo Fraser. In May 2002, the SNP's Dorothy-Grace Elder, a Glasgow list MSP, resigned from the party, after a disagreement with the leader, John Swinney, but remained in the Parliament as an independent. The state of the parties in October 2002 was:

Party	FPTP	List	Total
Labour	52	3	55
SNP	7	27	34
Cons	1	18	19
Lib Dems	12	5	17
Inds	1	1	2
Greens	0	1	1
SSP	0	1	1

The Executive of 22, 12 of whom form the Cabinet, is made up of 16 Labour MSPs, 2 Labour-supporting Law Officers, and 4 Liberal Democrat MSPs. Jack McConnell was widely criticised for the way he drastically changed so many of the Executive personnel, after he replaced Henry McLeish as First Minister in October 2001. McLeish resigned after financial irregularities in his Central Fife constituency office (when serving as an MP) came to light in the Scottish press. In May 2002, Wendy Alexander resigned as Minister for Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning, a diverse and heavy portfolio, and was replaced by Iain Gray, the MSP for Edinburgh Pentlands. As David McLetchie, the Conservative leader, pointed out at the time of Ms Alexander's resignation, there were only 8 Labour MSPs who had never held posts as ministers, committee conveners, or ministerial aides.

With regard to the House of Commons, there are 72 Scottish MPs at Westminster - 56 Labour, 10 Liberal Democrat, 5 SNP, and 1 Conservative. They are all directly elected by the first-past-the-post voting system. From 1997 until 2001, Scotland did not have a single Conservative MP, but the party is once again represented in the form of Peter Duncan, the member for Galloway and Upper Nithsdale - the SNP losing a seat in 2001. The Scotland Office is the British Government department which deals with non-devolved matters north of the Border, with its Ministerial positions filled entirely of Labour MPs, although that is due to Labour having a majority at Westminster, and not as a result of the party holding 78% of Scottish seats.

5.4 Elite survey project results

The survey had six questions (only five for the MP version, as question three did not apply). The survey results are presented in the form of tables in sub-sections corresponding to each question (see appendix II), and are also often cross-tabulated with the respondents' political party and religious background. Percentages have been rounded up. Each sub-section also

includes additional written comments from the surveys, as well as comments made during the follow-up telephone interviews[2].

5.4.1 Survey response rate

The survey response rate was high and the project can be considered a successful exercise. The overall response rate was 71% of MSPs, and 63% of MPs, excluding government ministers (58% of all Scottish parliamentarians). Many of the politicians who declined to take part gave "holding ministerial office" as their reason, although a small number of ministers decided to complete the survey anyway, while a number responded at a time when they were still back-benchers. A glance at table 5.1, and the Scottish Labour Party appears to have been the best party at responding to the questionnaire - in fact it was the worst in this respect. Only 43% of Labour MPs and MSPs responded positively to the survey, compared with 62% of SNP parliamentarians, 56% of the Scottish Liberal Democrats, and 90% of the Scottish Conservatives. Letters were sent out to all four party headquarters asking for their permission to send the survey to their members - the Liberal Democrats and SNP responded positively, while the Conservatives did not respond at all. However, the then Labour Business Manager in the Scottish Parliament, Tom McCabe, wrote back stating that he "strongly recommended" to his MSPs that they do **not** respond to surveys generally, and this would have been a factor in the relatively low Labour response rate. Nevertheless, the number of politicians willing to take part in the project was very encouraging.

The sensitive nature of aspects of the survey's topic may also have been a contributory factor in preventing an even higher rate of response. For example, the Secretary of State for Scotland, Helen Liddell wrote in her letter of reply: "I regret that it is not appropriate for me to fill in questionnaires, especially on such a subject". Mrs Liddell was the Labour candidate in the infamous 1992 Monklands East by-election, when the ongoing role of religion in Scottish politics was very apparent. In his letter of reply, Charles Kennedy, the Liberal Democrat leader, expressed a common mistrust of surveys generally: "The risk of being misunderstood when giving brief answers about complicated issues is great, and even though you have offered complete anonymity, it is easier to have a hard and fast rule rather than to judge each case on its merits". As has already been mentioned, being a Government Minister was an oft-quoted reason for declining to answer the questionnaire, but the junior Scottish Executive Minister, Lewis Macdonald, still provided an interesting letter in response: "You may...wish to make contact with the Xian Socialist Movement, for influences on Labour. In

[2] These interviews were not taped, but extensive written notes were taken, and a number of the

the context of 21st century Scotland, Moslem and Jewish as well as Xian influences may be of interest". Indeed they may be, but perhaps another thesis will deal with those suggestions.

For the purposes of the survey data analysis, Sir David Steel, the Presiding Officer of the Parliament, was regarded as an independent MSP, while George Reid and Murray Tosh, the deputy presiding officers, were regarded as members of their own parties (SNP and Conservative, respectively). While Sir David never sat with his Liberal Democrat colleagues in the chamber to vote on motions (prior to his retirement), the other two did so. Also, despite her new political independence, Dorothy-Grace Elder was still regarded as an SNP MSP in the data analysis, as this was her status when the survey results were being processed.

Table 5.1 - Response rate

	Number of responses	Percentage of total respondents (%)	Percentage of respective party (%)	Percentage of all MSPs/Scottish MPs (%)
Labour	48	43	43	24
SNP	24	21	62	12
Conservative	18	16	90	9
Lib Dem	15	13	56	8
Green	1	1	100	1
Independent	2	2	100	1
No Response	5	4	N/A	3
Total %	**113**	**100**	N/A	**58**

The questionnaire contained a box at the bottom of the second page, which could be ticked if the MSP/MP was willing to take part in a follow-up telephone interview. 33 (30% of respondents, 16% of all MSPs and Scottish MPs) agreed to take part in an interview, with 29 ultimately doing so - 12 Labour, 7 SNP, 4 Conservative, 5 Liberal Democrat, and 1 Green. The interviews involved picking up on points made in their individual responses to the survey questions, with telephone interviewing a good method of getting full and honest responses from individuals. Most of the interviewees were happy to waive their anonymity, and have their remarks quoted in the thesis. In addition, two of the interviews were conducted face to face, at the request of the politicians – Ann McKechin, Labour MP for Glasgow Maryhill, and Ian Davidson, Labour MP for Glasgow Pollok.

respondents were sent formalised versions, in order to verify the accuracy of their comments.

5.4.2 The perceived political influence of the churches

The first question was concerned with how the MP or MSP in question regards the political influence of the three main denominations in Scotland. Did they think the respective churches were "very influential", "influential" or "not influential" in Scottish politics? Only two MSP/MPs decided that scale was not detailed enough, and added their own points of measurement, which were then interpreted accordingly. Section 5.2 explained the rationale behind the format of the survey, arguing that the questions were deliberately broad-based, in order to induce the highest possible response rate (assessing the results, an effective strategy). However, no approach is without its disadvantages and this first question does contain an ambiguity due to the general nature of its wording. It is not always clear whether a MSP or MP thinks that a certain church possessing influence is good or bad and that has implications for any conclusions subsequently drawn. In other words, a politician may perceive the Church of Scotland to be politically influential but not necessarily be influenced themselves. However, the second question of the survey asks the respondents their position on this – "have they ever been personally influenced" – so as long as the conclusions drawn deal with questions one and two together, there should be no ambiguity overall. The word "influence" may mean different things to different people but that is an unavoidable problem with survey question wording.

Table 5.2 shows that, while a combined 86% of respondents thought the Church of Scotland was at least "influential", 94% felt this way about the Scottish Catholic Church. Furthermore, 25% thought the Catholic Church was "very influential" compared with a mere 6% who felt that way about the Church of Scotland. As a result, a larger proportion of respondents felt the Church of Scotland was not politically influential, than was the case with the Catholic Church.

Table 5.2 - Political influence of the churches

	Church of Scotland (%)	**Catholic (%)**	**Episcopal (%)**
Very influential	6	25	0
Influential	80	69	24
Not influential	13	5	74
No response	1	1	2
Total %	**100**	**100**	**100**

What did the politicians who took part in the follow-up telephone interviews, as well as those who made written comments, say in their answers to this question? Generally, the respondents felt that both the Church of Scotland and the Catholic Church were politically "influential", but for a variety of different reasons. However, interestingly, a number of the politicians felt very strongly that while the Catholic Church undoubtedly possessed influence in the Scottish political system, this was not necessarily a positive phenomenon, and this ties in with what has already been said about analysing the answers to questions one and two together.

In a lengthy face to face interview, Ian Davidson, the MP for Glasgow Pollok, made clear his strong belief that his party continued to defer to the Catholic Church in the West of Scotland. In his view, the Catholic Church was "much better organised and directed" than the Church of Scotland. It had a "clear sense of self-interest", a "supreme self-confidence" when acting politically, and exuded a clear expectation that politicians would "do the right thing by the Church". If not, it was quick to "put pressure upon individual MPs who disagree by mobilising its flock; it draws support from, and succours, tribal divisions in the West of Scotland". He explained that most politicians did not like "falling out" with people, in case they lost votes, and many individuals in the Labour Party hierarchy were Catholic, or simply did not wish to "have a row" with the Catholic Church. For example, in Mr Davidson's opinion, following the Section 28 controversy, the Scottish Executive adopted a less liberal line on the availability of the morning after pill from the one taken by the Department of Health in England and Wales. He also claimed that when Cardinal Winning complained at the lack of Catholics in the Scottish Labour leadership, the "situation was soon amended to his satisfaction".

Two other Labour politicians agreed with Mr Davidson's views. One was equally unequivocal in his view of the negative power of the Catholic Church - "many of my colleagues are spineless, and many in the Scottish Labour hierarchy are spineless". He labelled a number of his Scottish Labour colleagues "unreconstructed bigots", and "opportunists". He also told the story of the late Cardinal Winning telling a Labour candidate who had failed to get selected for a Glasgow council seat to "stick in", and he would get it next time around. A Scottish Labour MP stated he believed the Catholic Church was "influential" because it exerted a "conservative moral influence on Scotland". Over the issue Section 28, the MP felt that Scotland had shown itself to be a "land of a million bigots", and that such a referendum result would not have happened in England. He thought the Catholic Church had had a negative effect on public policy-making in Scotland, because Cardinal

Winning's views had been damaging to Scottish society, and the media had seemed unable to criticise him.

However, while Ian Davidson was critical of the Catholic Church's 'strong-armed' tactics, he was no more complimentary towards those deployed by the Church of Scotland. Too often, it seemed satisfied to speak out on issues, and then "make no serious effort to have its views either taken seriously or implemented", and appeared "unwordly or naive", as a consequence. While the Church of Scotland was still a "moral leader" in Scottish society, it did not "give any impression of having a coherent strategy". Martin O'Neill, the MP for Ochil, and chairman of the House of Commons Trade and Industry Select Committee, agreed, stating that he did not believe the Church of Scotland to be "influential" at all in Scottish politics, because it simply "doesn't try hard enough". He felt the Church did not "punch its weight", apart from over issues like social care. For example, in his opinion, there was no coherent Church of Scotland line on matters of social justice. On the other hand, Mr O'Neill believed the Catholic Church to be "influential", because it was still able to exert influence over its own members, and was good at "getting its views across" when lobbying. It was, in Mr O'Neill's words, a "force to be reckoned with".

An SNP MSP who wished to remain anonymous also picked up on the difference in approaches by the two churches. He felt the Catholic Church was "very influential", because its members were more "committed" – when they were contacted by their Church over a political issue, many did as they were asked. The Church of Scotland, on the other hand, had no control over its church members, and also tended to lobby quite timidly, unlike the Catholic Church. The MSP went on to argue that while many politicians disliked Catholic schools, because they thought they were "sectarian and inefficient", it would not be "politically expedient" to argue for their abolition. As a result, all the parties took the same view on them – as long as parents wanted them, they could have them - even though many Muslim parents also want Islamic schools, and their request is ignored. These comments, along with those made by the Labour respondents, tie in with chapter four's discussion of Bachrach and Baratz's concept of "non-decision-making" (1970: 9).

Michael Matheson, the SNP MSP for Central Scotland, felt that the Catholic Church was "very influential" in Scottish politics, because it was prepared to stand up on moral issues, and "take a lead" - for example Cardinal Winning was very outspoken on a number of controversial issues. Mr Matheson felt the Church of Scotland was "influential", because it was the establishment church, but that, unlike the Catholic Church, it had taken a step back in recent years from adopting a clear line on moral matters. David Davidson, the Conservative

MSP for North-East Scotland, agreed, stating he believed the Catholic Church was "influential" because it "sticks to its principles". Alastair Carmichael, the Liberal Democrat MP for Orkney and Shetland, believed that the Labour-led Scottish Executive "softened its view" on Section 28, after heavy criticism from Cardinal Winning and the Catholic Church.

Tables 5.3 and 5.4 indicate a further breakdown of the politicians' views on the influence of the Church and Scotland and the Catholic Church, by their party affiliation and religious background. In terms of the party cross-tabulation, the only significant difference from the average in table 5.2 is that no SNP respondent felt the Church of Scotland was "very influential", although 6% more felt the Church was at least "influential". Table 5.4 is also not radically different from table 5.1. While 97% of Catholic politicians felt their own church was at least "influential", 83% of Church of Scotland members felt their church was at least "influential". Conversely, 87% of Catholics felt the Church of Scotland was at least "influential", while 90% of Church of Scotland politicians felt this way about the Catholic Church.

Table 5.3 - Political influence of the Church of Scotland and the Catholic Church (by political party)

	Labour (%)	SNP (%)	Con (%)	Lib Dem (%)	Green (%)	Ind (%)	No response (%)
CoS - very influential	6.3	0	6	7	100	50	0
CoS – influential	73	92	72	93	0	50	100
CoS – not influential	19	8	22	0	0	0	0
CoS – no response	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total CoS %	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
RC – very influential	29	29	22	13	0	0	20
RC – influential	63	67	78	73	100	100	80
RC – not influential	6	4	0	13	0	0	0
RC – no response	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total RC %	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Table 5.4 - Political influence of the Church of Scotland and the Catholic Church (by religion)

	Church of Scotland (%)	Catholic (%)	Episcopal (%)	Another (%)	None (%)
CoS – very influential	3	0	50	0	25
CoS – influential	79	87	50	100	63
CoS – not influential	17	10	0	0	13
CoS – no response	0	3	0	0	0
Total CoS %	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
RC – very influential	28	20	0	0	25
RC – influential	62	77	100	100	75
RC – not influential	10	0	0	0	0
RC – no response	0	3	0	0	0
Total RC %	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

5.4.3 The personal reactions of politicians to the churches

The second question asked the respondents if they had ever personally been influenced by any of the churches. Here, the Church of Scotland was split into the sub-categories of the Church and Nation Committee and the Board of Social Responsibility - this was considered sensible, when there are individual case study chapters in the thesis on these two bodies. The answer was a simple yes/no tick box. They were also asked to go into detail about the way in which they had been influenced. The politicians were given the option of answering the Church of Scotland part as one, if they did not know the difference between the Committee and the Board, and some chose to do that. One or two respondents suggested that they had been "informed" by the churches, but not influenced. Four respondents indicated that while they had been influenced by the churches, it had been in a negative way i.e. they took the opposing view over an issue, because of what the church in question had said about it.

In terms of the results, the Church and Nation Committee of the Church of Scotland and the Catholic Church achieved approximately the same kind of responses – 36% of the politicians had been influenced by the Committee, 37% by the Catholic Church. Despite the conclusions drawn in chapter three, the Board of Social Responsibility of the Church of Scotland seems to have a lower recognition level, with only 23% of MPs and MSPs stating that they had been positively influenced by it. What is interesting, however, is the Catholic Church seemed to inspire more irritation from politicians than the Church of Scotland – 4% to 1% negatively influenced, or provoking a mixture of reaction. The MSPs/MPs who answered this way were all Labour, including 3 from West Central Scotland, and seemed annoyed at the idea that they

were told what to do by the Archdiocese of Glasgow. Some of these feelings were picked up in the follow-up telephone interviews, and have already been touched on in question 1.

Table 5.5 - Personal influence on politicians by the churches

	Church and Nation Committee (%)	Board of Social Responsibility (%)	Catholic (%)	Episcopal (%)
Influenced	36	23	37	12
Not influenced	61	74	57	81
Negative influence	1	0	3	0
Mixed influence	0	0	1	0
Informed only	2	2	2	2
No response	0	2	1	4
Total %	100	100	100	100

The same theme comes through virtually all of the interviews, with regard to this question: while the politicians are happy to admit they have often 'taken on board' the views of the churches, they are reluctant to state that they have been directly influenced by them. In other words, the respondents seemed keen to show they were independent thinkers and not 'controlled' by any church. While this is understandable, it is perhaps also indicative of an awareness on the part of many elected politicians that the traditional links between certain parties and denominations are not generally viewed as being positive feature of the Scottish political system.

In her follow-up interview, Rosemary McKenna MP stated that while she was brought up a Catholic, she was also brought up with "a mind of her own", and that was why she had never been personally influenced by any of the churches. Michael McMahon MSP stated that while he was a practising Christian, and was sympathetic to the views of the churches, it was the local community which had influenced him over the Section 28 issue, as he would have had "no credibility" if he had merely done what the Catholic Church had told him. He had originally been in favour of repeal, but changed his mind after meetings in his constituency. Hassan and Lynch rather arbitrarily highlight Mr McMahon's perceived close links with the Catholic Church in their *Almanac of Scottish Politics* (2001: 187). There is no evidence to suggest he has closer links than many west of Scotland Labour politicians, although he did admit that the Catholic Church "made life very hard" for him originally. Ann McKechin MP had been personally influenced by the Catholic Church over issues of social justice, and as a Catholic, was also opposed to nuclear weapons because of the Church's view on them.

However, on moral issues, she tended to disagree with the Church hierarchy, and felt the Church of Scotland was more "in tune" with its own membership.

One anonymous MP stated that she had listened to the Church and Nation Committee over "progressive, radical and controversial" issues, concerning poverty and unemployment, and respected their views. She never listened to the views of the Catholic Church, because of its stance on abortion and contraception, although she had listened to the Episcopal Church over international development issues. Another MP stated he had never personally been influenced by the churches because he was an agnostic, and because he disliked the "gaucherie" of churches. He questioned why the Church of Scotland has never had a female Moderator, and also argued that when the Church and Nation Committee met with MPs in London over Afghanistan, they appeared unsophisticated and MPs had "pulled them apart". However, Lord Thurso, the Liberal Democrat MP for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross, believed the Church's view was listened to, which showed its continuing relevance to political debate. Also more positively, a Scottish Executive Minister stated that the Church and Nation Committee was instrumental in the campaign for home rule, because, along with Canon Kenyon Wright, it gave the process an intellectual side, with its "claim of right" based in theological concepts. He has also listened to the Catholic Church's views on social justice, because of his own religious background.

The comments from the SNP politicians were generally more positive. Linda Fabiani MSP stated that she had listened to what the churches had to say on social issues e.g. the Church and Nation Committee reports on poverty, and Cardinal Winning's views on social inclusion. Michael Matheson MSP stated that the Catholic Church and the Board of Social Responsibility knew his views on the Adults with Incapacity Bill, which went through the Scottish Parliament in 2000 and was concerned with voluntary euthanasia, and were pro-active in offering him information. Mr Matheson listed three more examples of pieces of legislation where the churches had influenced him: Section 28 – he supported repeal, but felt there was a need to have better guidelines; the Private Member's Bill concerning same sex couples having equal housing rights – he opposed it; the Bill seeking to outlaw the smacking of children – he felt it was an intrusion into family life. While the Catholic Church did not influence the vote of Brian Adam MSP over Section 28, he admitted he was not absolutely certain as to how to vote before hand, and his faith had informed his views on issues concerning human sexuality, as well as the Adults with Incapacity Bill. Irene McGugan, the MSP for North East Scotland stated that, as a church elder, she liked to be "aware" of what was the official line of her church, even if she "disagrees with it on occasions". The personal

faith of Colin Campbell had influenced him a great deal – he was made a Church of Scotland elder at the age of 28.

The Catholic faith of Conservative MSP David Davidson was equally important to him – "it is how I was brought up", and he felt too many politicians were politically correct. He had read some Church and Nation annual reports, but felt they were often not "focused enough". Phil Gallie MSP had been influenced by the Church and Nation Committee over moral issues, but not social issues, where he felt they had a "blinkered" view of matters. Mr Gallie was influenced by the Board of Social Responsibility over the care homes issue, because that was a moral issue. He was an admirer of Cardinal Winning, and always found himself in broad agreement with the Catholic Church over issues e.g. Section 28. He also regarded the Episcopal Church as a strong lobby group over issues like international development, where Rt Rev Idris Jones, the Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway, had forceful views on such matters. However, Mr Gallie was not as active a Church of Scotland elder as he used to be, because he was disillusioned with the Church of Scotland's "liberalism".

Equally disillusioned was David McLetchie MSP, the leader of the Scottish Conservatives. He stated that "while the Catholic Church offers strong leadership with considered and principled positions on social policy issues – the other churches are weak by comparison, afraid to speak out for fear of giving offence and obsessed with political correctness. They act more like a secular lobby group than a religious organisation". This last comment seems to suggest that Mr McLetchie felt the Church of Scotland already knew how to lobby conventionally, but that it should not try to. Annabel Goldie, the Conservative MSP for the West of Scotland touched on a familiar theme: "at the end of the day, politicians do have to have minds of their own and be prepared to do what they think is best in the public interest". Ben Wallace MSP did not believe in listening to churches, even though he was a member of the Church of Scotland. He also felt the Church of Scotland rarely presented its case very clearly – "it depends on which minister you speak to".

Lastly, the comments of the Liberal Democrats: an anonymous MP stated that while he always read the Church and Nation Committee reports, they had never directly influenced him. He had also never been influenced by the Catholic Church, although their position on Section 28 heightened his interest in the debate. Lord Thurso MP stated he had never personally been influenced over a policy by any of the churches. While he "took into account" what they said, he had never "shifted" his position as a consequence. Alastair Carmichael MP stated that while he had not been "massively" influenced by any of the churches, he tended to listen to people with whom he broadly agrees. As a Church of

Scotland elder, he had numerous contacts in both the Church and Nation Committee and the Board of Social Responsibility. Mr Carmichael named the issue of international development as a policy area he had been influenced positively over in the past by the churches. Robin Harper, the Green MSP, stated he kept the Church and Nation Committee annual reports on his desk for reference. He also made clear he was a "believer anyway", suggesting that the Committee's views were broadly similar to his own.

As with the first question, the answers given to question 2 were cross-tabulated by political party and religious background. In table 5.6, 42% of SNP respondents stated they had been personally influenced by the Church and Nation Committee, compared to only 36% in the overall figures in table 5.5. Furthermore, 54% of SNP politicians were influenced by the Catholic Church, compared with only 37% in table 5.5. Previous survey results have shown that the SNP attracts the most number of 'atheists/agnostics', yet their MSPs seemed more willing to listen to the views of the churches, than the Labour Party (Brown et al 1999: 68; Brown; McCrone and Paterson 1998: 158; Harrop and Miller 1987: 155). In table 5.7, there is a natural tendency for the politicians who responded to be influenced more by their own church, than by any other.

Table 5.6 - Personal influence on politicians by the churches (by political party, and excluding the Episcopal Church)

	Labour (%)	SNP (%)	Con (%)	Lib Dem (%)	Green (%)	Ind (%)	No response (%)
C&N – informed only	2	0	0	0	0	0	20
C&N – influenced	31	42	22	60	100	50	20
C&N – not influenced	65	58	78	40	0	50	60
C&N –negative influence	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total C&N %	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
BSR – informed only	2	0	0	0	0	0	20
BSR – influenced	21	29	17	40	0	0	0
BSR – not influenced	75	71	83	60	0	100	80
BSR - no response	2	0	0	0	100	0	0
Total BSR %	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
RC – informed only	2	0	0	0	0	0	20
RC – influenced	38	54	39	20	0	0	20
RC – not influenced	52	46	61	80	0	100	60
RC – negatively influenced	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
RC – mixed influence	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
RC – no response	0	0	0	0	100	0	0
Total RC %	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Table 5.7 - Personal influence on politicians by the churches (by religion, and excluding the Episcopal Church)

	Church of Scotland (%)	Catholic (%)	Episcopal (%)	Another (%)	None (%)
C&N – informed only	3	0	0	0	0
C&N –influenced	40	33	75	50	25
C&N – not influenced	55	67	25	50	75
C&N –negatively influenced	2	0	0	0	0
Total C&N %	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
BSR – informed only	3	0	0	0	0
BSR – influenced	26	23	50	25	13
BSR – not influenced	69	77	25	75	88
BSR - no response	2	0	25	0	0
Total BSR %	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
RC – informed only	3	0	0	0	0
RC – influenced	33	53	25	50	25
RC – not influenced	57	47	50	50	75
RC – negatively influenced	5	0	0	0	0
RC – mixed influence	2	0	0	0	0
RC – no response	0	0	25	0	0
Total RC %	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

5.4.4 The churches parliamentary offices

The third question only applied to the 77 MSPs who responded to the survey, and asked them to quantify how much contact they have had the two church parliamentary offices: the Action of Churches Together in Scotland. (ACTS) representative who is a Church of Scotland minister and has responsibility for all the main denominations in Scotland, and the Catholic officer. Despite being a member of ACTS, the ecumenical umbrella organisation, the Catholic Church decided to appoint its own officer. These churchmen are effectively full-time lobbyists for their churches, positions which had not previously existed at Westminster. Appointing the parliamentary officers was recognition that the Scottish churches viewed devolution as a development which affected their political activities, and something to which they needed to respond to positively. The existence of the officers are the most high profile sign that Scottish faith-based organisations view the political process as relevant, and that they recognise there is a need to engage with it on the politicians' terms. So how effective are they as lobbyists, and to what extent have the new MSPs had contact with them – "a lot",

"some", "little" or "none"? The respondents were also asked to specify what sort of contact they have had with the church officers.

The broad-based coalition of all the Scottish churches in ACTS appears to have made more of an early impact on the MSPs than the Catholic Parliamentary Office (CPO). On each of the three levels of contact, the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office (SCPO) came out ahead, while in the 'no contact' section, the Catholic Office achieved 27% compared with only 12% for the SCPO. The SCPO, headed by the experienced Church of Scotland minister, the Rev Dr Graham Blount, has its headquarters across the road from the Parliament chamber in an Episcopalian church office. The Catholic Church's decision not to be part of that office, and instead set up its own equivalent, was understandable, as it would not be happy being represented by a Church of Scotland minister, but the survey results question whether that has been a success. It would appear from comments on the surveys and in the follow-up telephone interviews, that in this specific respect, the Church of Scotland (for it is by far the major partner in the SCPO) is actually more sophisticated at lobbying than the Catholic Church. There are two probable explanations for this.

First of all, personnel. Graham Blount is an experienced parish minister, who practised as a lawyer before he was ordained. A former honorary secretary of the Church and Nation Committee, he is excellent at one-to-one dealings with MSPs. He was chosen as the first clergyman to perform the 'Time for Reflection' in the Parliament in the autumn of 1999. His Catholic counterpart John Deighan, however, is relatively young, and a lay person from the Archdiocese of Glasgow. He only became Parliamentary Officer when his short-lived predecessor, Lynn Macmillan (wife of the composer James) was deemed ineffective by the late Cardinal Winning. Many believed this was because Mrs Macmillan was too independent a thinker for the Cardinal's liking, while Mr Deighan is/was very much the Cardinal's eyes and ears at Holyrood. His main aim appears to be to keep in contact with all MSPs who are Catholics, regardless of how active, and try to persuade them to vote the way their Church would like. The SCPO approach is more facilitatory. Secondly, the survey results again demonstrate one of the contradictions in the political behaviour of the two churches. While the Scottish Catholic Church aims to be politically influential in a way the Church of Scotland does not, it also seems to 'irritate' some Scottish politicians, Catholic and non-Catholic alike, who dislike the idea of being told what to do. This is an example of the perceptions of politicians being different from their own experience – they believe the Catholic Church is influential, but they are not influenced by it themselves.

Table 5.8 – Level of contact with the Churches Parliamentary Offices

	Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office (%)	Catholic Parliamentary Office (%)
A lot	12	8
Some	40	30
Little	34	30
None	12	27
No response	4	5
Total %	100	100

With regard to the question of how professional the Churches' Parliamentary Officers are at lobbying, the comments of the MPs and MSPs were mixed. Their harshest critic was Labour MSP Michael McMahon, who had no hesitation in calling both the "amateurs of the amateur league". He stated that their crusading style of campaigning was "well-meaning, but naïve", and that they did not understand how real politics worked. However, a Scottish Executive Minister disagreed, and felt that the Churches Parliamentary Officers were quite professional, while another Minister believed the Churches' Parliamentary Officers were "better than they used to be". He stated he had a "positive relationship" with both Graham Blount and John Deighan, but also believed the Catholic Parliamentary Office's "preoccupation with Section 28" did not help its image with MSPs.

The SNP's Linda Fabiani MSP felt the Churches Parliamentary Officers were very professional, with Graham Blount singled out for his work on issues like asylum seekers and international development. Lloyd Quinan MSP also felt that Graham Blount was very professional, because he almost took a "secular" approach, echoing David McLetchie's comments, but that the same effort had not been made by John Deighan on a personal level. While Mr Quinan felt the Church taking such an approach was a good thing, and Mr McLetchie a bad thing, it is interesting that both identify a level of professionalism. Colin Campbell MSP felt that the Churches Parliamentary Officers provided a lot of "written material" for MSPs, while Irene McGugan MSP stated that she was in "regular personal contact with Graham Blount". The Conservative MSP Phil Gallie felt that Graham Blount had not had a high enough profile, while Ben Wallace felt that the Catholic Office was active to begin with, but not now. Annabel Goldie MSP stated that she could not recall contact with the SCPO, even though she was an elder of the Church of Scotland, while Mike Rumbles MSP stated he had only been contacted once by the Catholic Parliamentary Office, even though he was a Catholic.

An examination of tables 5.9 and 5.10 again reveals that the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office seemed to be perceived by MSPs as being more effective than the Catholic Office.

Table 5.9 – Level of contact with the Churches Parliamentary Offices (by political party)

	Labour (%)	SNP (%)	Con (%)	Lib Dem (%)	Green (%)	Ind (%)	No Response (%)
SCPO – a lot	15	13	0	11	100	50	0
SCPO – some	15	46	41	56	0	50	75
SCPO – little	50	25	41	22	0	0	25
SCPO – none	20	13	6	11	0	0	0
SCPO –no response	0	4	12	0	0	0	0
Total SCPO %	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
CPO – a lot	10	8	12	0	0	0	0
CPO – some	15	42	24	22	0	50	75
CPO – little	30	25	41	33	0	0	25
CPO – none	45	21	18	22	100	50	0
CPO – no response	0	4	6	22	0	0	0
Total CPO %	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Table 5.10 – Level of contact with the Churches Parliamentary Offices (by religion)

Level of contact	Church of Scotland	Catholic	Episcopal	Another	None
SCPO – a lot	13.2	10.5	25	0	16.7
SCPO – some	42.1	31.6	50	0	33.3
SCPO – little	23.7	47.4	25	50	50
SCPO – none	15.8	10.5	0	50	0
SCPO – no response	5.3	0	0	0	0
Total SCPO %	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
CPO – a lot	2.6	21.1	0	0	16.7
CPO – some	31.6	26.3	25	50	33.3
CPO – little	21.1	31.6	25	0	50
CPO – none	36.8	21.1	50	50	0
CPO – no response	7.9	0	0	0	0
Total CPO %	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

5.4.5 Political campaigning

The fourth question is concerned with voting behaviour. While politicians may not necessarily be experts on voting behaviour, or electoral statistics, there was a desire to explore their opinions on why there have existed voting correlations in the past between political parties and religious denominations in Scotland. There was a need to put a time limit on the question, and making it the mid-seventies provided the respondents with an opportunity to introduce an historical angle, rather than just asking about the nineties. The MSPs and MPs were also invited to specify how they felt parties went about trying to attract different sections of the community on religious grounds.

There seems to be little doubt that both Labour and the SNP have targeted different denominations since the mid 1970s. The figure for Labour – 33%, and for the SNP – 41%, suggests that over a third of respondents believed these two parties have tried to attract voters from one particular denomination at some point. The fact the Conservative figure is much lower – only 21% - is an acknowledgement that the Scottish Tories have distanced themselves in recent years from the 'Orange vote'. However, it is a very different situation with Labour and the SNP. Since devolution, Labour has recognised that the SNP is a government in waiting. Most Labour respondents took the opportunity to point out that the SNP has tried, in recent years, implicitly and explicitly, to win the "Catholic vote". Furthermore, while there was an acknowledgement of the close relationship between the Labour Party and the Catholic Church, some Labour respondents were also keen to point out that they appealed to all religions, and none. Perhaps more so than in any of the other questions, the "no responses" figure was significant. This was probably the most sensitive of the six questions, and many chose not to answer it at all. Asking a politician whether their party had used less than transparent methods to attract voters, on the basis of their religious denomination, is not going to illicit many honest or full responses, despite anonymity, but some did, and their perceptions of the behaviour of other parties also made interesting reading.

Table 5.11 – Religious denominations targeted by the political parties

	Labour (%)	SNP (%)	Conservative (%)	Lib Dem (%)
Targeted denomination	33	41	21	3
Did not target	52	38	55	70
Unsure	4	8	7	11
No response	11	13	17	17
Total %	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Many of the comments concerning voting behaviour focused on the SNP's alleged attempts to win support from the Catholic community in west–central Scotland. Rosemary McKenna, the experienced Labour MP, felt that the SNP, under Alex Salmond's leadership had "unquestionably tried to attract Catholic voters". Bill Tynan MP agreed that Alex Salmond had made an attempt to attract Catholic voters to the SNP, by writing in *Flourish*, the Catholic newspaper. Indeed, Mr Tynan argued that Salmond "articulated" Cardinal Winnings' views on many issues. He also pointed to the recent appointment of Peter Kearney, an SNP activist, as the Catholic Church's press spokesman. Michael McMahon MSP argued that the SNP had a very "definite strategy" to attract Catholic voters in recent years, because they realised they had to "get that constituency of support in west central Scotland", and that a secret memo existed urging members to try to recruit more Catholic voters.

On the same theme, Ann McKechin MP believed the SNP was essentially a "Presbyterian" party until the 1970s, until it realised it had to make "seismic" attempts to win Catholic votes. Ian Davidson also argued that the SNP recognised it "had to make an electoral breakthrough in the West of Scotland". He felt it took a "very simplistic view that if it could gain the support of the church hierarchy, then Catholics would transfer to its banner, particularly in circumstances of the time, when the then Archbishop was seen to be having disputes with Labour on a number of moral issues". He also felt their defence of Catholic schools was "entirely opportunistic", and believed that Jim Sillars, one of their most prominent figures, deliberately adopted an anti-abortion stance in the 1988 Govan by-election, in order to win the Catholic vote. A Scottish Executive Minister argued that the SNP's stance on Catholic schools was part of a "determined drive to court Catholic Church on a range of social issues". An anonymous Labour MP stated that the SNP showed "contradictory behaviour over repeal

of Section 28", arguing for repeal on one hand, but trying not to offend Catholic voters on the other. Interestingly, Martin O'Neill MP believed that the SNP had not made a "fantastic breakthrough", when attempting to attract Catholic voters, despite Winning and Salmond's close friendship.

The SNP did try to attract Catholic voters in the Salmond years – a "misguided policy", in the view of the SNP MSP Linda Fabiani. Michael Matheson MSP also conceded there was an "element of truth" in the idea that his party had tried to attract Catholic voters in recent years, but did not accept it was a "strategy". He pointed out that the SNP had been co-founded by a Catholic (Compton McKenzie), and that Alex Salmond had been genuinely close to Cardinal Winning. He felt it suited Labour to portray the SNP as a "Protestant" party. An anonymous SNP MSP also argued that Labour was very good at "playing the two ends off against one another". Another MSP argued that around half the members of the SNP were Catholic, again arguing that it has suited Labour to portray the SNP as anti-Catholic. In many ways, he felt the Labour Party was anti-Protestant. Colin Campbell MSP argued the SNP appealed to all types of voter. In the 1989 Euro elections, one of the SNP candidates was accused of being anti-Catholic in Clydebank, while in Kirkintilloch, was accused of being anti-Protestant. Another MSP stated that his party "deliberately stressed the inclusive nature of contemporary nationalism, with regard to the Act of Settlement debate". Nevertheless, Lloyd Quinan MSP felt the ability of the SNP to eat into the Catholic vote in west central Scotland was "absolutely essential", and so it "courted the Catholic hierarchy" as a result. Robin Harper, the Green MSP, felt the SNP "hedged its bets" over Section 28, because despite its official position of supporting repeal, a number of prominent Catholic MSPs in the party made clear they did not agree, and Mr Harper felt this was no coincidence.

One anonymous MSP held very strong feelings on the topic:

> "If I told you what really happens, my life would be made even worse than it is. Some of us have long reached the point of near despair. Politicians jump to it when they clock numbers. Some of this intake have had little job experience outside of politics and next time round it could be worse...people who ask too many questions or make a stand over some matters, internally especially, risk not even getting through vetting to be candidates next time. I can only say that as a person who has tried to fight for the public and tried 'umpteem' times to fight injustices you won't know of behind the scenes, and tried to uphold basic Christian values, I have suffered. I have never known anything like it".

The Labour Party's traditional links with the Catholic community was the other main topic referred to by interviewees: one Scottish Executive Minister strongly refuted the notion that there was a "Faustian pact", in his words, between the Scottish Labour Party and the Catholic Church. He believed that most politicians were "liberal", reflecting the changing patterns in society - Catholics vote on many issues now, not just abortion. The idea that politicians could be told how to vote by the Catholic Church was "absurd", in his view. He gave the example of Glasgow City Council battling with the Catholic Church in 1997/98, because the Church felt disproportionately more Catholic schools were being closed, than non-denominational schools. However, senior Liberal Democrat Mike Rumbles MSP felt the Labour Party had been influenced by the Catholic Church over Section 28 - individual MSPs in the central belt had pressure exerted on them, in his view.

5.4.6 The link between Church and State

The politicians had a simple yes/no tick box question next – did they think the Church of Scotland should continue to be established?

A significant majority of MSPs and MPs wanted to see the Church of Scotland disestablished – 52% - compared with 30% who wanted the status quo. In a sense, the most surprising aspect of this question was how high the number of those who wanted the status quo was – after all, this issue is not as sensitive as the question of abolishing Catholic schools. The other significant figure is the combined total of "don't knows", "don't cares" and "no responses" (which, if the figure for the previous two is significant, one could also interpret as "don't know" or "don't care"). The combined total is 27% - over a quarter of respondents had no strong view on the matter. Indeed, there were also a number of west central belt Catholic Labour MSPs and MPs, who were keen to point out that they had no problem with the Church of Scotland still being the national Church.

Table 5.12 – Should there be an established church in Scotland?

Response	**Percentage of respondents (%)**
Yes	30
No	52
Unsure	9
Don't care	7
No response	11
Total %	**100**

In all the parties, there was a division in opinion on the question. Labour's Rosemary McKenna MP felt the Church of Scotland should be disestablished, because its members were no longer the majority of the population, and that there should be a separation between Church and State in any case. However, Bill Tynan MP, a Catholic, stated that he felt the Church of Scotland should continue to be established, because that was what the majority of people wanted, and there was a need for it in Scottish society. Martin O'Neill MP believed the Church of Scotland should not be established, but did not really care, as it was "barely established" anyway, and it would take up too much important parliamentary time to implement reforms.

A Scottish Executive Minister felt the Church of Scotland should be disestablished "for fairness". However, another Minister believed the Church of Scotland should continue to be established, because of its historic role. He was relaxed about the Church of Scotland being linked to the State and liked the fact that the Scottish Parliament's temporary home was the Church of Scotland's General Assembly Hall – as a Catholic, he would not have been welcome there 100 years ago. A back-bench Labour MSP argued that "to disestablish the Church would send out an anti-church, anti-religious message, which I consider inappropriate at the moment". Some more Labour comments - "it is part of the fabric of Scottish society", "it is rather an anachronism, given the multicultural nation which is Scotland today", "it is important to have an input into the nation's affairs", and "historical continuity is important".

The SNP MSP, Lloyd Quinan, argued the Church of Scotland should not be established, as it was not fair that one church got preferential treatment. However, Irene McGugan MSP argued in favour of establishment "because of the distinctive history, traditions and culture of Scotland, as reflected in our church". Another SNP MSP said that, as a nationalist, she did not like "established things". More SNP comments on the issue – "Scotland is multi-faith – there should be no established church today", "it is counter-productive to campaigning for change", "I did not ever see it as an established church in sense of Church of England", and "this is a multi-faith, but essentially secular society".

The Conservatives' David Davidson MSP did not believe there should be established churches "in this day and age", while Phil Gallie MSP felt the Church of Scotland should continue to be established, because it was "our heritage and a force for good". Ben Wallace MSP felt an established church was a good thing – "an anchor" to society. Annabel Goldie MSP stated that "there has to be some focal church lead within Scotland". More Conservative comments – the Church brings "constitutional stability", and "its philosophy

allows the other churches to co-exist". Perhaps worringly, one Conservative MSP, a Church of Scotland elder, stated he was "unaware of the meaning of 'established' church".

The Liberal Democrats' Alastair Carmichael MP felt the Church of Scotland should be disestablished because it would allow it greater freedom to speak out politically, although that applied more to the Church of England. He felt that, doctrinally, it was bad for churches to be established. Mike Rumbles MSP also believed the Church of Scotland should be disestablished, because the concept was out of date. However, Jamie Stone, the Liberal Democrat MSP for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross felt that the Church of Scotland "seems more in touch with Scotland, and can be a force for the good". Dennis Canavan, the Independent MSP for Falkirk West felt that "Scotland was now a multi-faith society", and that the Church should be disestablished.

As section 5.2 mentioned, the survey did not contain a question on denominational schools. However, many of the respondents wanted to talk about the issue anyway, and their comments will be dealt with here, as this section has dealt with the way the Church and State are connected. While there was a split in opinion amongst politicians of all parties, the overall attitude towards denominational education appeared quite positive:

Labour's Rosemary McKenna MP stated her support for Catholic schools, because "the majority of people wanted them", and argued sectarianism would not disappear with the abolition of denominational schools. Martin O'Neill MP argued that if you give a group of people rights, you could only take them away again with their consent. However, he agreed that in an ideal world, they would not exist, and there should be more integration. Ian Davidson MP stated his belief in integrated schooling, and was hostile to the concept of education "perpetuating the tribal divisions that scar Scottish society". A Scottish Executive Minister felt the schools had a right to exist, as did Muslim schools, but in an ideal world, they would be abolished. A Labour MP stated he supported Catholic schools "for the moment", but there should be more integration, and any change should be "gradational". Another Scottish Executive Minister felt Scotland should be proud of the 1918 Act, because it has been positive for Scotland. Catholic families should "have the choice" – he sent his own children to a Catholic school.

The SNP's Linda Fabiani MSP argued that Catholic schools were a right, and that they should only be abolished if religion was taken out of schools completely. The Conservatives' Jamie McGrigor MSP was in favour of Catholic schools – if people wanted them, then they should be able to have them. Ben Wallace MSP thought that there should be a choice – the State

should counterbalance Catholic schools. Having served with the Scots Guards in Northern Ireland, Mr Wallace felt very strongly that schools should teach religious tolerance. The Liberal Democrat's Mike Rumbles MSP stated he was in favour of "diversity in education". Alastair Carmichael MP also believed in freedom of choice in education, but that the existence of Catholic schools in West Central Scotland emphasised the division in the community – "in an ideal world, they would not exist".

An examination of table 5.13 reveals that the party most in favour of retaining a national church were the Conservatives, the party least in favour the SNP. Table 5.14 shows that even a majority of Church of Scotland politicians believed the Church of Scotland should be disestablished.

Table 5.13 – Should there be an established church in Scotland (by political party)?

	Labour (%)	SNP (%)	Con (%)	Lib Dem (%)	Green (%)	Ind (%)	No response (%)
Yes	33	13	50	33	0	50	0
No	50	54	22	53	0	50	40
Unsure	2	13	22	0	100	0	0
Don't know	6	8	6	7	0	0	0
No response	8	13	0	7	0	0	60
Total %	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Table 5.14 – Should there be an established church in Scotland (by religion)?

	Church of Scotland (%)	Catholic (%)	Episcopal (%)	Another (%)	None (%)
Yes	36	20	50	50	25
No	41	63	25	25	50
Unsure	12	3	25	0	0
Don't know	3	3	0	25	13
No response	7	10	0	0	13
Total %	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

5.4.7 The religiosity of Scottish politicians

The last question was divided into two parts. It asked the politicians about the religious tradition in which they had been brought up, and about how they would describe themselves

today. In terms of the first part, the three main churches were listed plus "another" and "none". It was felt that there was no other denomination worth listing explicitly, due to substantially lower membership levels. With regard to the second part of the question, there were four categories – "very active church member", "active church member", "not very active church member", and "not a member". There was potentially a problem with some respondents being an active church member in a different denomination from the one they grew up in, but that was unavoidable, and only actually applied to 3 respondents.

There appears to be a slightly larger proportion of politicians who are Catholic in the two Parliaments, than there are Catholics in the Scottish population at large – over 1 in 4 – and there also seems to be less Church of Scotland 'members' represented in the parliaments than one might have thought – just over 50%. 7% of the respondents claimed not to have been brought up in any religion. The 4 "anothers" included 2 Congregationalists, 1 Presbyterian Church of England member, and 1 "mixture of different Protestant faiths".

Table 5.15 – Religious tradition in which respondents had been brought up

	Total number	Percentage of total number of respondents (%)	Percentage of total number of MSPs/Scottish MPs (%)
Church of Scot	58	51	29
Catholic	30	27	15
Episcopal	4	4	2
Another	4	4	2
None	8	7	4
CoS/Epis	2	2	1
CoS/RC	1	1	1
CoS/Free	1	1	1
CoS/None	1	1	1
No response	4	4	2
Total	**113**	**100**	**N/A**

A high number of MSPs and MPs seem to be uninterested in attending church. Over half were not even church members, and 75% of the total number were either not very active, or not a member at all. Only 22% were active (combined "active" and "very active") church members. As previous chapters have argued there exists a direct link between group membership and group influence, this does not bode well for the political influence of churches in the future, even if the politicians are merely reflecting the societal trends

discussed in chapter one. However, one Conservative MSP did state that he was "not as active as he would like to be", perhaps articulating a common feeling amongst a group of professionals who are notoriously busy.

Table 5.16 – Religious activity today

	Total respondents (%)	Percentage of total number of respondents (%)	Percentage of total number of MSPs/Scottish MPs (%)
Very active church member	5	4	3
Active church member	20	18	10
Not very active church member	26	23	13
Not church member	59	52	29
No response	3	3	2
Total	**113**	**100**	**N/A**

Table 5.17 is concerned with whether the correlation between the Catholic community and the Scottish Labour Party is still accurate, particularly in the post-devolution context. However, rather than look at the question of whether Catholics vote still Labour (which has been covered already in section 1.3 of chapter one), the table is more concerned with the theory that senior Labour politicians are predominantly Catholic. Looking at the figures, there is an exact 50/50 split between Church of Scotland and Catholic, amongst Labour MSPs and MPs, and that epitomises one aspect of the strength of the Labour Party in Scotland: part of its success is not based on the fact it is a Catholic Party – it attracts people from across the political divide in equal amounts, including proportionally more Catholics than there are, per head of the Scottish population. What is surprising is the very low percentage of SNP politicians who are Catholic – only 13%, perhaps indicating that party has some way to go before it is completely trusted by the Catholic community. Table 5.18 shows that the Liberal Democrats are the party with politicians who are most religious, while Labour is the party has the least number of active church attenders.

Table 5.17 – Religious tradition in which respondents had been brought up (by political party)[3]

(weighted figures in brackets)[4]

	Labour	SNP	Con	Lib Dem	Green	Ind	No response
Church of Scotland	42% (46)	58% (23)	67% (13)	53% (14)	0% (0)	50% (1)	60% (N/A)
Catholic	42% (46)	13% (5)	17% (3)	7% (2)	0% (0)	50% (1)	40% (N/A)

Table 5.18 – Religious activity today (by political party)

(weighted figures in brackets)

	Labour	SNP	Con	Lib Dem	Green	Ind	No response
Very active church member	2 (2)	8 (3)	0 (0)	7 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	20 (N/A)
Active church member	13 (14)	13 (5)	28 (5)	33 (9)	0 (0)	50 (1)	0 (N/A)
Not very active church member	21 (23)	17 (7)	39 (8)	20 (5)	100 (1)	50 (1)	0 (N/A)
Not church member	65 (72)	54 (21)	33 (7)	33 (9)	0 (0)	0 (0)	80 (N/A)
No response	0 (0)	8 (3)	0 (0)	7 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (N/A)
Total %	**100 (111)**	**100 (39)**	**100 (20)**	**100 (27)**	**100 (1)**	**100 (2)**	**100 (N/A)**

[3] Table 5.17 has only included the statistics for Church of Scotland and Catholic members.
[4] The figures in Tables 5.17 and 5.18 have been 'weighted'. Unlike percentages, these figures represent more accurately the actual number of politicians in the Parliament.

5.5. Conclusions

There are a number of conclusions to be derived from the analysis of the survey data and follow-up telephone interviews, which can be compared with conclusions already drawn in the three previous chapters. First, the Scottish politicians who took part in the project perceived the Catholic Church to be more influential than the Church of Scotland. As section 5.4.2 detailed, 25% of respondents felt the Catholic Church was "very influential" in Scottish politics, compared with only 6% who felt that way about the Church of Scotland. However, there was also a perception that both churches continued to have some influence in the Scottish political system – only 13% of respondents felt the Church of Scotland was "not influential" in Scottish politics, and only 5% felt that way about the Catholic Church.

Somewhat contradictorily however, most Scottish politicians did not consider themselves to have been personally influenced by either the Catholic Church, or the Church of Scotland. 61% of the politicians stated they had never personally been influenced by the Church and Nation Committee, while 74% and 57% stated the same about the Board of Social Responsibility and the Catholic Church respectively. Compare these responses with the answers to the first question, and it would appear that the MSPs and MPs believed their political colleagues were influenced, but that they were not themselves. Comments made during the follow up telephone interviews also suggested that there was much disagreement amongst Scottish politicians about why they thought the churches were influential – often their answers were less than clear, talking in vague terms about "history" and "influences in society". This distinction between a perception of general influence, and being personally influenced, has already been touched upon, as has the fact that some politicians do not view the level of influence the churches have as being entirely positive.

In particular, the Catholic Church's "confrontational" approach towards lobbying was not always well received by politicians either, judging by the responses to some of the questions. While chapter four argues that the pressure group activities of the Catholic Church are generally more effective than the Church of Scotland's, it is not clear whether that always translates into more political influence, or instead sometimes produces a negative reaction. While overall, this strategy leads to politicians being very aware of what the Church thinks about an issue, and shows an ability to engage with decision-makers, it is also an approach which some MSPs and MPs find too combative. Nevertheless, the 'latent' political influence of the Catholic Church was very apparent amongst the responses. A majority of politicians felt that the SNP had deliberately targeted the Catholic vote in the last decade, something a number of leading nationalists also admitted, but which the party continues to deny officially.

Meanwhile, Ian Davidson MP painted a vivid picture of individuals at all levels in Scottish Labour continuing to be heavily influenced by the views of the Archdiocese of Glasgow. The general conclusion from the survey responses and telephone interviews appears to be that religion still has a place in Scottish politics, with churches continuing to have a role to play, but that the majority of Scottish politicians appear to be no longer personally influenced by their views.

Chapter 6 – Faith in the future: politics and religion in 21st century Scotland

6.1 Introductory section – the conclusions of the thesis

The evidence gathered in the chapters on the Church and Nation Committee, the Board of Social Responsibility, the Scottish Catholic Church and from the survey questionnaires, suggest that the importance of religion to Scottish politics has steadily declined since the 1960s, mainly as a result of falling church attendances, and a general secularisation of society[1]. Indeed, previous chapters have argued that the contemporary influence of all faith-based organisations and religious groups in Scotland is representative of their declining influence over societies in Western nation states generally. In drawing this conclusion, the thesis is not arguing that religion no longer has a role to play in politics in Scotland, or belittling the respect which many leading politicians have for the views of the different churches. However, with regard to analysing general trends, the evidence points to a decline in the political influence of institutional religion in Scotland.

This chapter will not summarise all the individual conclusions reached in the thesis so far but will aim to answer the three main questions of the research: first, how effective are the political activities of the Church of Scotland, post-devolution? Second, how open and accessible is the new Scottish Parliament? Third, what is the future place of religion generally in Scottish politics? This final chapter will discuss the conclusions drawn concerning these three aims in three different sections.

6.2 The political influence of the Church of Scotland, post-devolution

Previous chapters have already discussed the problems which exist when examining the influence of political pressure groups. As chapter one argued, proving that a change in policy occurred as the result of the actions of a group is almost impossible. Nevertheless, many writers argue that it is still feasible to construct a framework for assessing the effectiveness of groups, by looking at the way they operate e.g. Baumgartner and Mahoney (2002), Heinz et al (1993). The tripartite set of questions applied to each case study in chapters two and three, the comparison between the two churches in chapter four, and the elite survey questionnaire in chapter five, together

[1] See chapter one.

provided the framework for analysis in this thesis. The conclusions of previous chapters have been based on the premise that it is possible to assess the effectiveness of the Church of Scotland, when it tries to exert political influence. The eight case studies of the thesis covered a variety of topics and issues, ranging from the Church and Nation Committee speaking out on the war in Iraq, to the Board of Social Responsibility campaigning against the reduction in the level of government funding for its care homes. Examples of the Church of Scotland achieving its political aims and objectives, through these two boards/committees were few in number, and did not match the Church's own ambitions for obtaining successful influence either. However, in reaching this verdict, there is no attempt to deny that the Church can, from time to time, act in a way that exerts some form of influence over public policy-making.

One of the most significant conclusions of the thesis concerns the difference in influence between the Church and Nation Committee and the Board of Social Responsibility. Politicians today want to know the pertinence of an interest group's involvement in a policy area, before they pay attention, and a religious organisation speaking out on matters where they have no obvious expertise no longer appears to be respected. By their own admission, leading members of the Church and Nation Committee have found it increasingly difficult in recent years to make their voices heard in the corridors of power (Alan McDonald, Interview with author, 19th March 2002). The Board, on the other hand, is the voice of the Church on issues where 'faith-based' organisations still very much have a role to play – social care, human cloning, human sexuality, euthanasia, and so on. When government is legislating in these areas, they approach the Board of Social Responsibility, along with the representatives of other churches, to obtain their opinion on the issue. The Church and Nation Committee, in comparison, more often than not, has to approach the politicians in a campaigning manner, in order to get noticed – it has less of an automatic right to consultation through a policy community, because its immediate relevance is no longer recognised so readily. The survey evidence in chapter five may seem to suggest that the Board does not yet enjoy the same level of public profile as the Committee, but even that is perhaps simply a sign that media campaigns are not as effective as 'behind-the-scenes' consultation participation.

The findings of the case studies, therefore, suggest that the level of political influence the Church possesses directly depends on the immediate context or "arena", to use Dudley and Richardson's term (1998: 747), which is involved. However, there also

exist aspects to the political behaviour of the Church of Scotland. where it could make attempts to improve its effectiveness, and Grant's "resources" criterion of effectiveness is also relevant here (2000: 196). All churches in Britain have been forced to adapt to a modern era of politics, and be prepared to participate in the active lobbying of government ministers and MPs, and some have made the transition more successfully than others. Chapter four argued that the Scottish Catholic Church had done so more effectively than the Church of Scotland, because it has acknowledged that making a public pronouncement on an issue is not sufficient to impact on the related piece of legislation. While this has not necessarily resulted in it gaining more political influence than the Church of Scotland per se, generally it is superior at participating in pressure group activity. The research has discovered that the Church of Scotland can often show a lack of focus when it tries to exert political influence. If it could combine the conviction which the Scottish Catholic Church shows in its views when it tackles a political issue, without perhaps copying its over-zealous lobbying techniques, then it could become a substantially more effective 'pressure group'.

This comes across in the survey responses from the politicians. Most MSPs and MPs do not want the Church of Scotland to start behaving like the Catholic Church in the way it tries to tell them what to do, but they would like know what it actually thinks unambiguously about important policy issues. The oft repeated criticism made of the Church of Scotland in the surveys and interviews was that it did not take a clear stance on issues of public debate and this cannot be attributed to a desire to listen to the views of its membership. The presbyterian structure of the Church may well be more democratic than any episcopalian equivalent, but that does not mean its deliverances accurately reflect the views of all its membership. However, that same structure does noticeably lead to a lack of clarity in message and undermines the Church's explicit objectives. To reiterate, not only is it valid for a political science thesis to analyse a Church as if it is an interest group e.g. Warner (2000), it is also the stated aims of the Church of Scotland that it exert political influence and therefore resemble an interest group.

Furthermore, it is telling that senior figures in the Church of Scotland itself do not view their organisation as "influential". Interviews with the Convener of the Church and Nation Committee, the Director of Social Work of the Board of Social Responsibility, the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Officer and various other prominent Church of Scotland figures all reveal that there is no sense that they have influence in Scottish

politics. For example, as chapter two mentioned, the Rev Alan McDonald, the convener of the Church and Nation Committee, stated in an interview with the author that he believed the Church had "very little" influence, and that the best one could say was that there existed a "residue of expectation" that it had a role to play in Scottish politics (Interview with author, 19th March 2002). However, speak to representatives of the Scottish Catholic Church, and they draw the same conclusions. Both Peter Kearney, the Director of the Catholic Media Office, and Ronnie Convery, the Director of Communication of the Archdiocese of Glasgow, argued in interviews that their Church also had negligible political influence (Kearney, Interview with author, 25th March 2002, Convery, Interview with author, 24th April 2002). Due to the nature of their Church's close links with the Labour Party in west central Scotland, one could sense a desire on the part of both men that they should play down any genuine influence. Nevertheless, even if some of their comments betrayed a slight false modesty, the Catholic Church generally views its political influence as being as varied as the Church of Scotland's.

Much of where the Church of Scotland does possess political influence is a direct result of its national status i.e. the fact it is the established Church of Scotland, and has the largest number of adherents in the population. If the Catholic Church commands political respect because it can still influence some of its members to vote a certain way, the Church of Scotland is held in equal regard, due to the way it technically represents a large section of the Scottish population. Also, its traditional interest in a broad range of political issues, motivated by what it senses to be the weight of responsibility to "watch over" the nation's morals, means it can never be portrayed as simply looking after its own interests. Much of the Scottish Catholic Church's influence has its origins in its hierarchical structure, and the fact it has a permanent head, as well as its close links with the Labour Party in west central Scotland. However, as a result of these different types of reason for being effective, it would be difficult to conclude that one church was significantly more influential than the other.

Overall, the Church of Scotland is a very ambiguous political institution, with chapter two in particular discussing the public relations problems related to a lack of permanent figurehead. As Parry notes, the "Kirk's leadership structure – with Moderators changing annually and selected to provide a background within the church – is now militating against the building of a profile for its leaders" (2002: 145). Due to its internal structure, it is difficult to sum up the Church of Scotland 'politically', in a way that it is not with the Scottish Catholic Church. The conclusions drawn in chapter three about the Church

and Nation Committee are quite distinct from the conclusions drawn in chapter four about the Board of Social Responsibility, although there are recurring themes which apply to both. The fact that this thesis has drawn different conclusions about the effectiveness of the Committee compared with those drawn about the Board epitomises how the Church of Scotland operates – it is so decentralised that to attempt to evaluate its overall success, one has to look at its component parts. It is not a unified political institution, and that is in stark contrast with the Catholic Church in Scotland. The Church and Nation Committee speaking out on asylum seekers is a quite different pressure group from the Board of Social Responsibility speaking out on licensing laws, yet both come under the aegis of the Church of Scotland. Both represent the official views of the Church, yet both have different roles, different strategies, and often as a consequence, different levels of success.

6.3 The Scottish Parliament – "accountable, accessible, open, responsive"?

This is an exciting period to be a student of Scottish politics, and a number of the research's conclusions also concern the workings of the new Parliament. While the thesis has only analysed the political behaviour of the Church of Scotland and the Catholic Church, and has not looked in detail at any other pressure groups in Scotland, its findings are relevant to the question of how groups are treated post-devolution, compared with the pre-1999 political system. The research has looked in depth at the way two interest groups operate within it, and the nature of the contact they have with the new Parliament and Executive. Mitchell points out that "many home rulers and advocates of 'new politics' have tended to focus on the Parliament as a whole, often ignoring the distinction between it and the Scottish Executive" (2000: 607). The wording in the title of this section is perhaps also guilty of this, but it is simply trying to address the pertinent question of whether the Parliament lives up to the Scottish Constitutional Convention's aim that it be characterised by "accountability, accessibility, openness, and responsiveness to the people" (1995: 24). The Consultative Steering Group, attempted to design parliamentary procedures which would "make possible a participative approach to the development, consideration and scrutiny of policy and legislation" (1998: 3). Indeed, as McFadden and Lazarowicz note (1999: 31), it was the Consultative Steering Group rather than the Scotland Act, which established the important place of parliamentary committees in the new system. But how have the procedures developed in practice? Grant (2000: 225) states that "new subnational forms of government in Scotland may create forms of political debate which are closer to the

citizen". Has this been the case? The final report of the Consultative Steering Group outlined four guiding principles for the new Parliament:

1. Power-sharing
2. Accountability
3. Openness
4. Equal opportunities (1998: 3)

This section will try to assess whether or not the third principle of "openness" (the "most challenging principle" according to David Millar, a former member of the Expert Panel on Procedures and Standing Orders in the Scottish Parliament) has been achieved (2000: 20). In 1998, Scotland's First Minister 'in waiting', Donald Dewar, wrote: "I am genuinely anxious to...make sure that people get a parliament with open doors and open procedures" (1998: 8) The majority of MSPs do indeed devote much time and effort to making their new Parliament appear open and accessible. Numerous comments made by the new parliamentarians in the course of researching the thesis reflected a desire to show that devolution was working, and that they were not just representing their party, but the Parliament as a whole, when they interacted with the public. Lucy McTernan, of the SCVO, notes "the evident enthusiasm of individual parliamentarians to engage with their communities" (2000: 142). The high response rate of MSPs to the elite survey questionnaire indicates a willingness on their behalf to be transparent in their work, and the general level of communication between MSPs and the author was very positive. There is an informality about the way the new Parliament operates, which makes contact with its politicians more convenient. In the chamber, the atmosphere is different from the House of Commons – there are no historic traditions or terms which date back hundreds of years. The emphasis is less on the set-piece debate, and more on consensual committee work.

The intimacy of policy communities which exist in Scotland, mentioned in previous chapters, are also matched by the high level of contact that exists between Scottish politicians, primarily because the whole scale of the system is smaller. This is shown in the way the new MSPs interact with the Scottish public, and access to decision-makers is more straightforward as a consequence. As chapter two mentioned, the Scottish political system is often likened to a village, with Schlesinger, Miller and Dinah designing an insightful 'map' of the way countless Scottish politicians are personally linked to figures in the media and the arts (2001: 3). For example, a few months after

Henry McLeish resigned as First Minister in November 2001, he tried to articulate why he felt he had never been totally accepted by the Labour Party: "I'm not Catholic, I'm not Protestant, I didn't go to Glasgow University, and I'm not part of the Lanarkshire mafia" (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/1861055.stm, 8th March 2002). The implication was that if you were one or more of these things, your chances of political advancement in Scottish Labour were higher, and the mention of religion at the start of the statement is interesting from the perspective of this research. For Mr McLeish, politics and religion were still closely linked in Scotland, and nepotism also still existed.

However, prior to devolution, the levers of power were in the control of only a handful of politicians at the Scottish Office, and the opportunity for lobbyists to make contact with them was limited. Now there are 129 politicians, of different political parties, and 21 Ministers, who work in Edinburgh full-time, as distinct from four or five who spend half their week in London, as was the case prior to 1999. The political system is complete, and the chance for Scottish pressure groups to contact government has dramatically increased. As Chris Deerin, executive editor of *Scotland on Sunday*, puts it, "a mere physical proximity means a greater opportunity to exert influence…national debates have a higher profile and therefore the potential to influence those debates is greater" (Interview with author, 6th August 2003). Sarah Davidson, the director of the Holyrood project team, agrees with this, pointing to the daily contact the Scottish Churches Parliamentary officer has with MSPs (Interview with author, 8th May 2003). Nevertheless, a willingness to help with the research of the thesis was more prevalent amongst Liberal Democrat, Conservative and SNP members, than with the main party in power, the Labour Party. Despite the novelty of a new legislature, Labour is used to being the party of government in Scotland, and does not have the same impetus to 'win friends'. As the last chapter mentioned, the Labour Business Manager at the time, Tom McCabe, strongly recommended to his MSPs not to take part in the survey questionnaire. Ministerial office was also frequently used as an excuse to not answer the questionnaire. When total anonymity is offered, ministerial office becomes less relevant, and no collective responsibility is needed over the questions asked in the survey in any case. Nevertheless, the overall responsiveness of MSPs to the request for survey responses and interviews was good, and better than the MP response rate – 71% compared with 63%.

All the church representatives interviewed also stated they liked the proximity of the Parliament to them. Many of the arguments put forward about the benefits of a Scottish

Parliament can be taken issue with, but one advantage is prominent – it has brought political power closer to the Scottish people. The Scottish political system is, in that sense, more democratic, post-devolution, and pressure groups and civic organisations can use their personal contacts much more effectively. This is not necessarily always desirable, and can lead to accusations of 'croneyism', but from an interest group perspective, it is an advantage. In his interview, Ian Baillie, the outgoing Director of Social Work at the Board of Social Responsibility, stated that the Board had "300%" more contact with MSPs than it used to have with MPs, because there were "far greater opportunities to meet with them". He gave the example of Health Minister Malcolm Chisholm, as well as his predecessor, Susan Deacon, "making themselves available" when he wished to meet with them (Interview with author, 31st August 2001). The Rev Alan McDonald, the Convener of the Church and Nation Committee, stated that the new geographical proximity of the MSPs was a "bonus", and that was why the Committee decided to set up the ecumenical Parliamentary Office, across the road from The Mound, in order to be in constant contact with the new politicians (Interview with author, 19th March 2002). Ironically, however, he suggests that the Committee may still have more political interest in what occurs at Westminster than in Edinburgh, as many of its concerns are still reserved matters – for example, asylum seekers, nuclear weapons, and public spending.

The Rev Dr Graham Blount, the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Officer, stated that devolution allowed the churches to be involved in the political process earlier in the formulation stage – in other words, the have become more effective at lobbying government departments, rather than just launching political campaigns. As the Parliamentary Officer, he was able to co-ordinate the various campaigns of the Church and Nation Committee and Board of Social Responsibility, to make sure they were having an input on matters which concerned them, and were not missing opportunities to exert influence (Interview with author, 24th November 1999). In his interview, Alastair Cameron, the co-ordinator of the Scottish Churches Housing Agency, felt that having a Minister for Social Justice was a step forward in itself, and to have a Scottish Executive which represented the Scottish people's views, rather than those of a minority Conservative administration, was an improvement (Interview with author, 26th February 2002). Peter Kearney, the director of the Catholic Media Office, stated he felt there was definitely more "scope" for political influence, because like the Church of Scotland, the Scottish Catholic Church was limited geographically – the Vatican regarded Scotland as a separate country, and devolution fitted in with this political concept (Interview with

author, 25th March 2002). He gave the example of there being no Catholic Parliamentary Office at Westminster, as there is now at Holyrood, because the different branches of the Church in England, Wales and Scotland could not co-ordinate their strategies effectively enough. Now that power is devolved, the different parts of the Church can act unilaterally and decisively. Ronnie Convery, the director of communication at the Archdiocese of Glasgow, stated the Catholic Church would inevitably be more influential now there was devolution, with the "seat of power much closer". He made the point that the Catholic Church was more powerful in Scotland than at a UK level, so devolution was good for the Scottish Catholic Church, in this sense (Interview with author, 24th April 2002).

When considering the way the new Scottish Parliament would operate, the Consultative Steering Group did not wish to see what they perceived to be the less effective aspects of Westminster replicated in Edinburgh. It decided that the work of committees should be regarded as more important than the set-piece debates in the chamber. As Lynch stresses (2001: 69), "it was a deliberate reversal of the Westminster norm, where the committee system was seen to be weak and contributed to executive dominance and a lack of effective legislative scrutiny". At Holyrood, committees would effectively fulfil a dual function, akin to a merged version of both the standing and select committees at Westminster, thus making their role close to that of a second chamber. Their functions would be:

1. "to consider and report on the policy and administration of the Scottish administration"
2. "to conduct inquiries into such matters or issues as the Parliament may require"
3. "to scrutinise primary and secondary legislation and proposed European Union legislation"
4. "to initiate legislation"
5. "to scrutinise financial proposals and administration of the Scottish Executive"
6. "to scrutinise procedures relating to the Parliament and its Members" (Consultative Steering Group 1998: 5)

In total, the Parliament has eight mandatory committees, eight subject committees, the Business Committee and the Conveners' Liaison Committee. One of the mandatory committees is particularly important in this context - the Public Petitions Committee - which deals exclusively with local and issue-led campaigns aimed at MSPs. This was a

modern initiative, and has been beneficial for Scottish pressure groups, who have a guarantee that their concerns will be listened to by the Parliament. For example, there were 244 petitions lodged between June 1999 and July 2000, and around half of them made parliamentary progress. Electronic petitions can also be submitted to the Parliament via the International Democracy Centre.

In terms of the Scottish Executive, Paterson et al argue that Ministers have consulted more widely than their Scottish Office predecessors, in particular reaching social groups "that have not usually been influential in the past" (2001: 5). Interestingly, they point to the Section 28 debate, as evidence of the Executive being happy to reach a compromise with the different interest groups. Hassan (2002: 38) suggests this "compromise" was actually the result of senior Labour figures like Jack McConnell, Henry McLeish and Tom McCabe realising that it would be politically astute not to alienate senior figures in the Catholic Church, and this would be a view shared by the author. Lucy McTernan, of the SCVO, argues that "the number and range of civic bodies that have been called to give evidence is impressive" (2000: 141). However, others disagree. Macintosh notes how the Church of Scotland, the Catholic Church and St Mary's Episcopal Primary School, Dunblane were all left less than satisfied by the way they were consulted by the Scottish Executive over the new Education Bill. The groups felt the process was less than transparent, and that the Executive had come with a "pre-determined agenda" (2000: 54). Lynch argues that many Executive consultation exercises have failed to go beyond the "usual suspects", and even suggests that "clientelism" rather than "pluralism" has characterised the new system so far; he specifically accuses the Local Government Committee of acting more like a lobbyist for COSLA, than a parliamentary committee (2000: 73).

So who is correct? In March 2003, the Procedures Committee of the Parliament published its report into whether or not the Parliament had lived up to its founding principles, as outlined by the Consultative Steering Group. In terms of openness, access and participation, it is stressed that the principles of the CSG apply to the Executive as well as the Parliament, which is coupled with a recommendation that it should try to "widen further the circle of political participation in Scotland" (http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S1/official_report/cttee/proced-03/prr03-03-vol01-01.htm#2, accessed 30th May 2003). With regard to the work of MSPs on The Mound, recommendation 3 urges members to develop a "strategy" to enhance participation and access, with recommendations 5, 6 and 7 specifying particular attention be paid to

"disadvantaged social groups" and "non-organised individuals" (http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S1/official_report/cttee/proced-03/prr03-03-vol01-01.htm#2, accessed 30th May 2003). Recommendations 8 and 23 make special mention of the role of Scottish Civic Forum, the organisation set up specifically to provide a link between the Executive, Parliament and interest groups. They urge that that link be "pursued vigorously", along with communications with other "gateway organisations" (http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S1/official_report/cttee/proced-03/prr03-03-vol01-01.htm#2, accessed 30th May 2003).

As Brown notes (2000: 555), the decision by the Scottish Executive to fund Civic Forum was a "welcome development" for those who were keen to see as open and participative a devolved system as possible. The Forum is an umbrella organisation for a large number of interest groups and organisations. It exists to "ensure that the partnership between parliament and people is sustained...believing that there is more to democracy than casting a vote every four or five years" (http://www.civicforum.org.uk/introductions/intro_whatisscf.html, accessed 4th April 2003). However, Jordan and Stevenson (2000) question whether the existence of Civic Forum does indeed create a "better democracy" in Scotland. They dispute the simplistic notion that smaller organisations should always be able to "have their say" in national policy-making, when groups that have a "valuable role" will already "be well established in their policy niche" (2000: 184). This is a reasonable point, and the Forum has also come in for criticism from those who feel it still does not successfully include voices from outwith the policy elite (Brown 2000: 555). Nevertheless, procedural criticisms should not hide the willingness on the part of the Executive and Parliament to make a success of Civic Forum, and contribute towards the development of the system of governance in Scotland.

Paterson urges caution when it comes to judging the first four years of the Scottish Parliament (2000: 10), and the present author would agree. The new devolved political system may well not be as open or as accessible it possibly can be, but the very existence of a tax-raising legislature and an organisation like Civic Forum is an improvement on the pre-1997 system, and that should not be under-stated. The various pillars of Kellas's Scottish political system remain in place (1989: 2), and have now been substantially augmented by a parliament, which in turn has increased the opportunities for Scotland's multifarious interest groups to exert political influence.

Major decisions about health, education, personal income and the environment are now being taken in Edinburgh, and that is good for democracy in Scotland.

6.4 The future place of religion in Scottish politics

The third stated objective of the thesis was to discuss the future place of religion in Scottish politics, and based on the findings of previous chapters, this final section will try to map out the longer term prospects for the churches in the Scottish political system. Chapter one described the historic links between religion and politics in Scotland, and used that relationship as an important basis for conducting the research. While the specific question the thesis addresses concerns the political influence of the Church of Scotland, the wider question ultimately concerns the place of religion as a whole in modern Scottish politics. For this reason, one of the themes of the research has been an explicit comparison of the Church of Scotland with the Scottish Catholic Church, in order to see if the two behave in similar ways, and the conclusion has been that this is not the case.

First, what kind of future influence over public policy-formulation can the churches expect to have? In the areas of policy formulation where the Church of Scotland does lack influence, some of its problems are rectifiable, while others are not. For example, chapters two and three argued that the political influence of the Church was closely linked to its influence over Scottish society, and that has been in steady decline for most of the second half of the last century. This is particularly significant when one considers that the elite survey questionnaires and interviews produced a significant number of comments from Scottish politicians about the way parties continue to be conscious of voting behaviour, and in particular, the "Catholic vote". Senior members of the SNP admitted that their party had initiated a deliberate strategy of trying to attract Catholic voters away from the Labour Party in west central Scotland in the last ten years, and comments from many of the Labour respondents suggest they were wise to do so. The close links between Labour and the Catholic Church in the West of Scotland remain strong, according to a number of back-bench Labour MPs, and the SNP is still perceived as being a Protestant party by an older generation of voters. However, it is this last point which is crucial – it is a perception which exists amongst the over-60s, in the same way as it is this generation of politicians who perpetuate the ties between the party and the Church. Younger generations of Scottish politicians have less interest in such links, and that change is likely to result in all churches having less political influence in the future.

Admittedly, it is questionable whether there are numerous examples of Scottish politicians in the 1940s and 1950s doing precisely what conveners of Church of Scotland boards wanted. Indeed, Callum Brown argues that the Church of Scotland only became interested in influencing national political debates in the last fifty years – prior to that, it was simply concerned with exerting influence at community level, through its involvement with local education committees (Interview with author, 24th July 2002). There was no political culture of the churches making public pronouncements in the national media, and no attempts to actively lobby Westminster. However, while it is not entirely clear that the Church of Scotland ever possessed the ability to drastically change the minds of Scottish politicians, the values of Scottish society, including those of individuals serving in public life, were once closer to those of the national Church. Historian Callum Brown and sociologist Steve Bruce have both written extensively about the process of secularisation which occurred in Scotland over the course of the twentieth century, and are convinced that the process is an irreversible one (Brown 2001; Bruce 1995, 2002). More people may attend church on Sunday than attend football matches at the weekend, and church membership may still be larger than that of any political party, but Brown argues the influence of churches over society is in "free-fall" (Interview with author, 24th July 2002). The last chapter mentioned Baggott's point about lobbying Westminster, that pressure groups must "recognise their friends and enemies in the House" (1995: 146). Social trends suggest that the British churches will have less friends, and perhaps more enemies, in the future.

If this is the case, politicians in Scotland will become less wary of speaking out on issues like denominational education, Section 28 and contraception, as the fear of an electoral backlash will have dissipated. While the Church of Scotland does not exercise the same leverage over its members as the Catholic Church does, with regard to voting behaviour, it is likely to suffer from the same decline in influence. Fewer Scottish politicians attend church – the survey responses showed that 75% of MSPs and Scottish MPs were either not very active church members, or not members at all. An analysis of the survey responses also showed that, while a clear majority of Scottish politicians were happy to "listen" to the views of the Church of Scotland, they did not then necessarily act upon what they heard. More positively, very few MSPs or MPs who responded, indicated that they thought the Church of Scotland was a political irrelevance. Indeed, the majority indicated respect for the values of the Church of Scotland, and its right to voice its opinions in the public realm. However, few stated that they have ever done what the

Church has advised them, or changed their mind on an issue because of something the Church had said. As previous chapters have pointed out, few government policies or pieces of legislation would appear to have been altered because of political pressure from the Church of Scotland.

So far, this section has argued that the influence of churches in society is crucial to their political influence, and for as long as the former continues to become peripheral, so too will the latter. However, that is not to say that there could not be an improvement in the influence of the churches in the short term, if they were to improve their lobbying strategies in certain ways. The Church of Scotland must appear more unified in its views, when it speaks out on political issues, while the Catholic Church has to be appear less "bullying" towards Scottish politicians. However, the internal structure of the Church of Scotland makes speaking with a unified voice difficult, and it is unlikely that this structure will change in the foreseeable future. The Church is proud of its egalitarian, non-hierarchical organisation, and many leading figures would rather have no political influence, than change it. Periodically, calls are made for a permanent Moderator, with the former *Herald* editor, Harry Reid, echoing this view in his recent book on the state of the Church, but it is unlikely this would happen in the near future (2002: 73). It would effectively mean the Church stopped being Presbyterian, and abolish one of its core beliefs.

Nevertheless, there is one factor which will help prevent the decline of the Church's political influence. Devolution has brought Scottish politicians into closer contact with Church representatives, and the advisory presence of the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Officer in Edinburgh has helped improve the level of the Church's lobbying ability. The Office helps to keep the Church up to date with any piece of legislation going through the Parliament which is of concern or interest to it, guiding its representatives though the complex policy-making procedures. Indeed, as section 6.3 explained, devolution has brought political benefits for all churches and interest groups. The fact the Parliament has 129 new politicians, based solely in Scotland, and dealing with exclusively Scottish issues has meant that the potential for influence for all types of pressure group in Scotland has significantly increased. The greater the number of politicians and civil servants there are, the greater number of opportunities to there are, to try to exert some influence. It remains to be seen whether the Church of Scotland can take advantage of these greater opportunities.

While the emphasis of the thesis has been on policy-making, the way voting behaviour in Scotland continues to be influenced by religion has been frequently mentioned. This is because the correlations which continue to exist between parties and denominations, albeit in a much reduced form, appear to impact on the way Scottish politicians formulate public policy. Nevertheless, the established link between voting and religious denomination in Scotland is also likely to continue to diminish, and that trend looks irreversible. Most younger people are not religious, and do not follow such voting patterns. People under 35 are far less inclined vote at all (Brown et al 1999: 58, Bruce and Glendinning 2003). Indeed, religion was not really the factor which influenced Scottish voters at election time anyway, but cultural background. Scottish Catholics did not vote Labour, because they were Catholic, but because the majority were financially poor and descended from Irish immigrants. Their religious denomination was not the crucial factor. As Bruce explains, most Catholics may vote Labour, but most Scots vote Labour too (Interview with author, 25th August 2002). Nevertheless, the survey questionnaires appeared to back up the view that the SNP still requires to win more Catholic voters, and the questionnaires also obtained some interesting admissions about whether parties have ever tried to target particular voters of one religion in recent years. However, it is unlikely this practise will be followed in the future. The only political party which truly needed to break down religious barriers was the SNP, but in the long term, it need not worry about the Catholic vote.

Despite this, however, the issue of Catholic schools will remain a sensitive one for some considerable time. There are still a substantial number of votes to be won or lost over the issue of their existence, and the survey questionnaires suggest that Scottish politicians continue to tread carefully towards the topic as a consequence. It is unlikely they will be abolished in the foreseeable future, but they will gradually change in character, as local authority funding becomes tighter, and shared campuses become more widespread. Greater co-operation between the two sectors is already increasing – non-denominational and Catholic schools share facilities and resources, particularly in Edinburgh and away from the west central belt. In Edinburgh, the convener of education is Councillor Ewan Aitken, until recently a Church of Scotland parish minister, who believes firmly in the denominational and non-denominational sectors working more closely together (Interview with author, 25th April 2002). The schools are vulnerable to the accusation they discriminate against non-Catholic teachers, something the EU monitors closely, but they remain a potent cultural symbol for Scottish Catholics, and do not depend on active church attendance for their continued existence.

In terms of the other way religion is linked to the State in Scotland, section 6.2 argues that the 'national' status of the Church of Scotland is crucial to its political influence, and central to the way it interacts with the political system. However, how secure is the Church's unique constitutional status? The New Labour administration has shown a fondness for constitutional reform: a Parliament with tax varying powers has been re-established in Scotland, assemblies have been established in Wales and Northern Ireland, a mayor and an assembly have been devolved to London, the House of Lords is to be reformed, and the European Union Convention of Human Rights has been incorporated into UK law. The political landscape in Britain has been irrevocably altered, but will these constitutional changes also eventually affect the way religion is linked to the State? It is probable that the Church of Scotland will be disestablished, although not in the foreseeable future. The common perception by many that the Church is not properly "established" in the first place helps the security of its political status, and any reform of this nature will probably begin with the Church of England. South of the Border, there is a tangible perception of the power of the Church of England, as a result of its fully-established status, which many view as being as much an anachronism as the old House of Lords.

However, legislative reform also requires popular impetus, and there is no ground swell of public opinion against the Church – fundamentally, few care. MPs and MSPs have more important things to worry about, with other bills much higher up their list of priorities on the legislative agenda. In a similar way that the reform of the House of Lords is very much a 'chattering classes' topic, it is not an issue on which elections are won or lost, and does not directly affect ordinary people. 27% of both MPs and MSPs who responded to the survey, answered that they were not interested, or held no view, on the issue of establishment, which would be indicative of the Scottish public's interest in the topic as well. The Church of Scotland's special constitutional status is secure as long as the Scottish people accept it, but the twenty first century will probably see most State churches in Western Europe disestablished. EU law makes it increasingly unacceptable for a member state to 'discriminate' in favour of one particular group of people. Bennie, Brand and Mitchell (1997: 109) argue that the "historical context is important in understanding the relations between church and state". Unfortunately for the churches, it is in the history books that the place of religion in Scottish politics is increasingly located.

Appendix I

Interviews with civil servants

Dr James Cant, Homelessness Team, Development Department, Scottish Executive, 1st *August 2003*

Sarah Davidson, Director, Holyrood Project Team, *8th May 2003*

Christine Dora, Policy Executive, Justice Department, Scottish Executive, *15th May 2003*

Sir William Kerr Fraser, Permanent Under-Secretary of State, Scottish Office, 1978-1988, *6th May 2003*

Joyce McVarrie, Policy Adviser, Civil Law Division. Justice Department, Scottish Executive, *2nd May 2003*

Roma Menlowe, Head of the Civil Law Division, Justice Department, Scottish Executive, *2nd May 2003*

Emma Sinclair, Working Group on Hate Crime, Criminal Justice Division, Justice Department, Scottish Executive, *15th May 2003*

Paul Smart, Head of Race Team, Equality Unit, Scottish Executive, *15th May 2003*

Frances Wood, Head of Community Care Policy Branch, Community Care Division 1, Health Department, Scottish Executive, *13th August 2003*

Interviews with journalists

Ken Cargill, former Head of News and Current Affairs, BBC Scotland, *18th June 2003*

Chris Deerin, Executive Editor, *Scotland on Sunday, 6th August 2003*

Mark Douglas-Home, Editor, *The Herald, 21st April 2003*

Kenny Farquharson, Political Editor, *Sunday Times Scotland, 19th March 2002*

Douglas Fraser, Political Editor, *Sunday Herald, 24th June 2003*

Katie Grant, columnist, *The Scotsman, 28th April 2003*

Harry Reid, Editor, *The Herald*, 1998-2001, *2nd April 2002*

Brian Taylor, Political Editor, BBC Scotland, *2nd June 2003*

Interviews with academics

Professor Callum Brown, Department of History, University of Strathclyde, *24th July 2002*

Professor Steve Bruce, Head, School of Social Science, University of Aberdeen, *25th August 2002*

Professor Tom Devine, Director, Research Institute for Irish and Scottish Studies, University of Aberdeen, *30th May 2002*

Dr Peter Lynch, Lecturer, Department of Politics, University of Stirling, *13th June 2002*

Interviews with church representatives

The Rev Cllr Ewan Aitken, Convener, Education Committee, Edinburgh City Council, *24th April 2002*

Ian Baillie, Director of Social Work, Board of Social Responsibility, Church of Scotland, 1991-2002, *31st August 2001*

The Rev Dr Graham Blount, Scottish Churches Parliamentary Officer, *24th November 1999*

Alastair Cameron, Co-ordinator, Scottish Churches Housing Agency, *26th February 2002*

Harry Conroy, Managing Editor, *Scottish Catholic Observer, 12th June 2003*

Ronnie Convery, Director of Communication, Archdiocese of Glasgow, Roman Catholic Church in Scotland, *24th April 2002*

The Rt Rev Richard Holloway, Primus, Scottish Episcopal Church, 1992-2000, *1st May 2002*

Peter Kearney, Director, Scottish Catholic Media Office, *25th March 2002*

Robert Kernohan, Editor, *Life and Work*, 1972-1990, *11th June 2002*

The Rev Alan McDonald, Convener, Church and Nation Committee, Church of Scotland, *19th March 2002*

The Rev Stuart MacQuarrie, former Labour Glasgow City Councillor, *21st March 2002*

Lynne Robertson, Editor, *Life and Work, 1st May 2003*

The Rev Dr David Sinclair, Secretary, Church and Nation Committee, Church of Scotland, *14th May 2003*

Canon Kenyon Wright, Chair, Scottish Constitutional Convention, 1989-1997, *6th March 2000*

Follow-up interviews with MSPs and MPs, based on elite survey questionnaires

Labour

Ann McKechin MP, *26th September 2001*
Michael McMahon MSP, *9th October 2001*
Bill Tynan MP, *12th October 2001*
Rosemary McKenna MP, *18th February 2002*
Martin O'Neill MP, *22nd March 2002*
Ian Davidson MP, *9th August 2002*
Jim Murphy MP, *20th May 2003* ***GOVERNMENT MINISTER**
Anonymous, *8th October 2001*
Anonymous, *8th February 2002* *** GOVERNMENT MINISTER**
Anonymous, *13th February 2002*
Anonymous, *18th February 2002* ***GOVERNMENT MINISTER**
Anonymous, *26th March 2002*

SNP

Brian Adam MSP, *17th September 2001*
Colin Campbell MSP, *18th September 2001*
Michael Matheson MSP, *25th September 2001*
Lloyd Quinan MSP, *27th September 2001*
Linda Fabiani MSP, *18th December 2001*
Anonymous, *15th August 2001*
Anonymous, *28th September 2001*

Conservatives

David Davidson MSP, *19th September 2001*
Phil Gallie MSP, *21st September 2001*
Jamie McGrigor MSP, *27th March 2002*
Ben Wallace MSP, *11th June 2002*

Liberal Democrats

Lord Thurso MP, *4th February 2002*
Mike Rumbles MSP, *6th February 2002*
Alastair Carmichael MP, *6th February 2002*
Iain Smith MSP, *5th June 2003* ***GOVERNMENT MINISTER**
Anonymous, *27th September 2001*

Greens

Robin Harper MSP, *21st September 2001*

Appendix II

ACADEMIC SURVEY

1. How would you rate the following churches on their influence over politics in Scotland?

The Church of Scotland
- Very influential ☐
- Influential ☐
- Not influential ☐

The Roman Catholic Church in Scotland
- Very influential ☐
- Influential ☐
- Not influential ☐

The Anglican/Episcopal Church in Scotland
- Very influential ☐
- Influential ☐
- Not influential ☐

2. Do you feel that you have ever yourself been influenced in your approach towards a public policy by each of the following? If yes, please specify how. If unaware of difference between **a)** and **b)**, simply answer as one.

a) The Church of Scotland (Church and Nation Committee)? Y ☐ N ☐

____

____

b) The Church of Scotland (Board of Social Responsibility)? Y ☐ N ☐

____

____

c) The Roman Catholic Church in Scotland? Y ☐ N ☐

____

____

d) The Anglican/Episcopal Church in Scotland? Y ☐ N ☐

____

____

3. What sort of contact have you had with the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office and the Catholic Parliamentary Office?

	SCPO	CPO
A lot	☐	☐
Some	☐	☐
Little	☐	☐
None	☐	☐

If contact, please specify how.

PTO

____

4. Turning now to electoral behaviour, in your opinion, have each of the political parties ever consciously tried to attract voters of one particular religion since the mid –1970s? If yes, please specify how.

Scottish Labour Y ☐ N ☐

____

____

Scottish National Party Y ☐ N ☐

____

____

Scottish Conservative Y ☐ N ☐

____

____

Scottish Liberal Democrat Y ☐ N ☐

____

____

5. Do you think The Church of Scotland should continue to be an Established Church? Please give reasons.

Y ☐ N ☐

____

____

6. **a)** Which religious tradition were you brought up in, if any?

Church of Scotland ☐

Roman Catholic ☐

Anglican/Scottish Episcopal ☐

Another - Please specify below ☐

None ☐

____

b) How would you describe yourself today?

Very active church member ☐

Active church member ☐

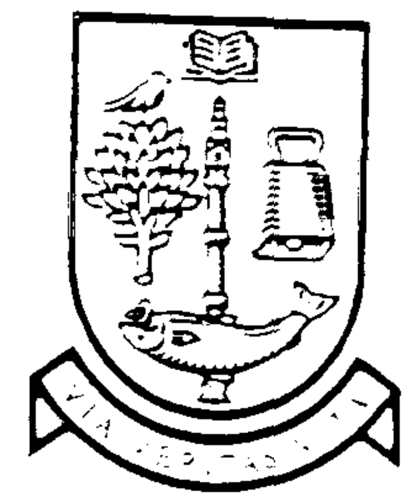
Not very active church member ☐

Not church member ☐

If a church member, please name church eg St Columba's Parish Church of Scotland, Stirling.

____

*Would you be prepared to take part in a follow-up telephone interview? Y ☐ N ☐



UNIVERSITY
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GLASGOW

8th August 2001

Brian Fitzpatrick MSP
Labour – Strathkelvin and Bearsden
The Scottish Parliament
George IV Bridge
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Academic Survey

I am a PhD student in Scottish Politics at Glasgow University, my area of research being the influence religion has on public policy-making.

I am contacting every Member of the Scottish Parliament.

I hope you will be willing to answer the short survey attached. It should only take a few minutes, and to have your view, as a newly elected MSP, would be very valuable to my research.

All replies will be treated as confidential. Results will only be used, without attribution, for statistical analyses.

If you have any queries regarding this survey, please contact myself (9343061s@student.gla.ac.uk, Tel Ext 0500) or Professor Bill Miller (W.L.Miller@socsci.gla.ac.uk, Tel Ext 4680).

Yours sincerely

Martin Steven
PhD student, Scottish Politics

William L Miller FBA, FRSE
Professor of Politics

Enc

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS
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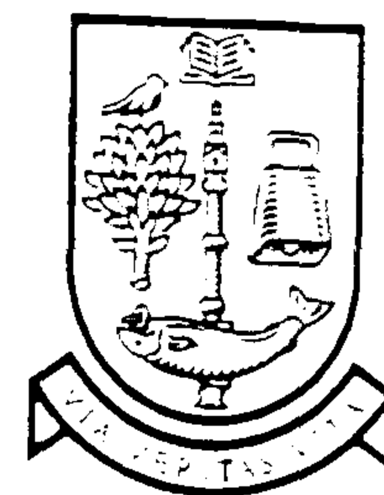
Email: A.J.Johnstone@socsci.gla.ac.uk



UNIVERSITY
of
GLASGOW

10th December 2001

Alex Salmond MP
SNP – Banff and Buchan
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Academic Survey

A number of months ago, we sent you a questionnaire about the influence religion has on Scottish public policy-making. We have already had a very positive response from MPs of all parties, but are anxious to get as many replies as possible. We do not seem to have had a response from you, so we have sent you another copy, in the hope you will be able to complete it when you have a moment.

It should only take a few minutes, and to have your view, as the former leader of the SNP, would be very valuable to the research.

All replies will be treated as confidential. Results will only be used, without attribution, for statistical analyses.

If you have any queries regarding this survey, please contact myself (9343061s@student.gla.ac.uk, Tel Ext 0500) or Professor Bill Miller (W.L.Miller@socsci.gla.ac.uk, Tel Ext 4680).

Yours sincerely

Martin Steven
PhD student, Scottish Politics

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