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Staying on the land: The search for cultural and economic sustainability in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland

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STAYING ON THE LAND:
THE SEARCH FOR CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY IN
THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS OF SCOTLAND

by

Mick Womersley
B.A. The University of Montana, 1994
presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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Recently much academic attention has been paid to the problem of sustainability. In the Highlands and Islands over recent decades a concerted government economic development program has attempted to solve a similar "Highland Problem." The goal of this effort was, in effect, to achieve aspects of cultural and economic sustainability. The need for this modern development program can be traced back to 1746, when the conquest, colonization, and privatization of the previously tribal Highland region began in earnest.

Although originally concentrating on the goal of reducing rapid depopulation, this "Highland Development" program was soon adjusted (after population began to grow again in the 1970s) to concentrate on economic revitalization, in concert with a reinvigoration of the indigenous Gaelic culture. Highlanders' experience with this successful development program informs the issue of sustainability elsewhere. Economic sustainability was necessary to solve the Highland Problem's first symptom, depopulation, and both cultural and environmental sustainability was necessary in order to not violate the constraint imposed historically by the bulk of those who have chosen to live or remain in the Highland region: the desire to maintain traditional cultural values and those objects and lifestyles which represent such values.

This study examines these attempts, made over many decades, to implement economic development programs to sustain the Highland culture and economy. The need for government intervention is traced back to 1746 and before. Both primary and secondary sources have been consulted and used as the basis for a critical exposition, primarily of the activities of the foremost institutional initiative launched by the UK Government in 1965, the Highlands and Islands Development Board (HIDB). In this history of Highland Development, three successive eras of economic development theory are argued for, a Privatization Era, a Progressive Era, and finally an Environmental Era. Each is recognized by successive reformulations of the Highland Problem. In each era, both government agencies and private interests formulated a theoretical answer to the Highland Problem, designed a typical form of Highland Development, and created Highland Development institutions to implement that theory. It is argued that in the latest Environmental Era, the Highland experience with cultural renewal and small scale decentralized economic development most informs sustainability theory.

It is also argued here that since the early 1980s development scheme money is now primarily made available as an adaptation to the decreasing need, throughout Britain, for people to actually make things in the economy when machines -- or the denizens of poorer countries -- now do most of the labor. Environmental Era Highland Development is, therefore, to be seen as an adjustment to structural unemployment.
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I) Introduction

THE HIGHLAND SETTING

This study is a "report from the field," a case-study of an existing program attempting to ensure "environmental and cultural sustainability" in a "hinterland region" of a northern developed nation. That nation is Scotland, itself part of the United Kingdom, which these days is nominally part of the European Union. The hinterland region is the Scottish Highlands and Islands.

A romantic idea of the Highlands and Highlanders has been made popular recently -- not for the first time -- by movies such as Braveheart and Rob Roy. The mistaken idea of the Highlander portrayed as noble savage dates at least to the eighteenth century, to the works of Samuel Johnson, Daniel Defoe, Sir Walter Scott and others.

The reality of the Highland geography is easily romanticized. The Highlands are the northern land mass of Scotland. The Highland mainland is surrounded by over five thousand small and medium-sized islands. Together, the Highlands and Islands contain around one sixth of the land within the United Kingdom, a little over nine million acres (Thompson and Grimble, 1968, p 97) most of which land -- as the name suggests -- is highland, or mountain land (refer to map in appendix). A coastline indented by several major, and dozens of minor fiords or sea-lochs (an anglicized Gaelic term best translated as sea-lakes) contributes to the difficulty of communication, and creates large peninsulae, some of which are semi-wild, and whose human populations may be reached only by boat or on foot.

^Funding was obtained under the generous auspices of the International Eco-Development Institute (IEI), via a larger grant proposal incorporating five linked studies under the working title: Environmental and Cultural Sustainability in Hinterland Regions of Asia and Developed Nations. IEI is a foundation owned by proprietor Akira Yamaguchi of Kinoshiro Taisetsu corporation, based in Hokkaido, Japan.
The geographical remoteness of the Highlands assists in the romanticization of the Highland way of life and the Highland people. There are not very many Highlanders actually living in the region today, although a massive Highland diaspora assisted in the peopling of many other countries, including the United States. This is an emigration that continues to flow, albeit more slowly.

The total population of the region is 368,280. In these Highlands, less than one per cent of the people of the United Kingdom live on 16 per cent of its land. This population density is presently an average of 9 persons per square kilometer (km$^2$), roughly 28 people per square mile, compared to 65 persons per km$^2$ for Scotland (160/mile$^2$) as a whole and 233 persons per km$^2$ (574/mile$^2$) for the entire United Kingdom (HIDB, 1990). The seat of regional government and largest town is Inverness, with a population of 42,600 (HIDB, 1990). There are eleven medium-sized "market" towns with populations between 6,400 and 11,700. A total of 134,700 people live in these towns, leaving a balance of 233,580 in small townships and scattered homesteads (HIDB, 1990). Life is predominantly rural in character. One aspect unique to the region is that 100,000 people live on 90 inhabited islands, using ferry and other water transport to link them to a remote mainland (HIDB, 1990).

The weather is wet and windy for much of the year, and the land is extremely rugged and infertile, except in small patches, and for these and other more political reasons, the pre-capitalist north European economic institutions of the communal village with its open-field farming system were able to survive in part. There are today 17,684 such "crofts." Crofts are small farm units that each have a share in a common grazing in addition to a portion of a township’s arable land. They are managed under a collection of statutes, traditions, and regulations; such that one commentator has described the croft as a "small

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2 These and subsequent population statistics are for the area covered by the major development agency (HIDB), not the mountainous region as a whole, which is somewhat larger, or the Highland Regional Council area, which is somewhat smaller.

3 Refer to appendix for population charts and graphs.
parcel of land entirely surrounded by regulations." (Hunter, 1995). Despite this statutory interference, crofts function. Crofts are an institution fundamental to the Highland culture and way of life.

The population that survived with this way of life is called Gaelic. The people, *ab origine*, are descended culturally and linguistically from Celtic folk of the Goidelic branch. Close cousins are found in Eire (Ireland), whose indigenous Gaelic language and culture are recognizable to the Highlanders. Less close relatives are the Welsh, Cornish, and Bretton (French) Celtic peoples, who belong to a differentiated cultural and linguistic grouping termed Brythonic Celts (the "Ancient Britons" of schoolroom history). However, strong manifestations of the two core Celtic values of community and place are found in the Brythonic Celtic lands as well as in the Highlands and in Eire. (Chadwick, 1971, pp 17-63). A modern immigration, helping to stem depopulation, has brought in south Britons of less ancient Anglo-Saxon roots (Chapter 7, also Jones *et al*, 1984, 1984b, 1985).

A descendant of the way of life practiced in these Celtic villages since prehistoric times is alive and well in the Highlands, despite modernity and anglicization. Celtic ideals and a recognizably Celtic approach to the economy have somehow prevailed over more utilitarian approaches imported from the south. This study briefly tells the story of the survival of this way of life. More completely, it relates the history of how this way of life found a place for itself in modern society. It finally makes the claim that this is an example of environmental and cultural sustainability, an example so clear as to lead the author to claim here that the Highlands has entered an Environmental Era of development.

THE HIGHLAND PROBLEM

The problem that this Environmental Era resolves is two hundred and fifty years old this year. It started out as a problem of colonialism, a struggle between Highland society, an imposed colonial administration, and an imposed colonial economy. The Gaelic, village-
based social institutions were placed under extreme stress during the eighteenth and
nineteenth centuries, when a colonialist scheme of so-called improvements and land
clearances, accompanied by much brutality, scoured the land of indigenous people and their
villages, privatized communal resources, and placed these resources in the hands of
aristocratic landlords. Preceding these Highland Clearances, two hundred and fifty years
ago in 1746, a Highland rebellion that had threatened the very heart of enlightenment
England and its Hanoverian dynasty was put down, again with much brutality. This was
followed by a protracted period of heavy and often forced emigration and declining
population, which is known today as the Clearances. The problem of colonialism was
partially resolved, beginning in 1886, by a system of reservation of land for communal
villages. This was the first of many Progressive schemes to aid Highlanders. With this
partial resolution came a partial reformulation of the problem from the Highlanders' point
of view. The problem of how to climb out of poverty was added to the original problem of
how to survive colonialism and the privatization of communal resources. This was the first
of several distinct reformulations of this "Highland Problem."  

These two historical events, the defeat of the Highland military and subsequent
imposition of a colonial economy, have gone down in Quixotic legend. They were, from
the Highlanders' perspective, a Holocaust, an attempt to rid the Highlands of Highlanders,
of their communal farming, and their Highland culture. The legends of this subjugation and
exploitation, heavily romanticized, serve today to fuel a considerable and long-lived
campaign of activism on behalf of the Highlands and Highlanders, on behalf of that
remnant of communal farming that has tenaciously clung to the Highlands, and on behalf of
the Gaelic-based culture that is also still surviving in the Highlands. It was -- and is -- a

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4 In recognition of the fact that the Highland Problem assumed a life of its own
throughout the decades covered in this study, the phrase "Highland Problem" will be
capitalized throughout. Also, since the solution to the Highland Problem was always one
of many successive forms of "Highland Development," that phrase also will be treated as
a proper noun.
general campaign to resolve the Highland Problem.

The Highland Problem is and was always one of sustainability. It is a problem that is reflected in a very contemporary discourse about sustainable development in other hinterland regions across the world. The campaign to resolve the Highland Problem contained within it an environmentalist imperative closely linked to sustaining the Gaelic culture, particularly to what has often been claimed is a special Gaelic relationship to nature and community. It has in effect been a two and a half century campaign for cultural and environmental sustainability. This campaign found startling success in recent years through the adoption of economic development techniques driven by Gaelic indigenous values, a combination of the utilitarian and the romantic. In this success, it is claimed, are the foundations for an Environmental Era of development in the Highlands.

What, then, does this study do with the Highland Problem? It collects, collates, and distills textual material about the various economic development theories that were used in these two hundred and fifty years, and describes their effects on the landscape and culture. Particularly, it provides a critical exposition of the effects of these theories, based on Highlanders' own critiques of economic development theory, borrowed from their literature, music, poetry and words. Some of these theories caused the problem, some tried to resolve it and failed, others tried to resolve it and succeeded. Either way, we can be sure that Highlanders were -- and are -- rarely silent on the matter. On the contrary, in keeping with a traditional Gaelic eloquence, they were and are vociferous. However, Highlanders' own discourse of Highland Development was recorded not in economic development texts, but in their own traditional texts: poetry, music, books, plays, and conversation. This discourse has rarely been available to economic development researchers. The mission of this research study is to distill out of the Highlanders' economic development experience, recorded in these texts and in government and historical archives, whatever can be learned about cultural and environmental sustainability generally, and to present that distillation in
METHOD

The objective is to broadly review the record of Highland Development, particularly the less well-examined period after 1965. There were two methods employed to achieve this. The first method was a literature review, including an extensive in-country library search for "secondary sources," including both cultural and technical documents. The history and discourse discovered by this first method was grounded -- tested and either rejected or verified -- by the second method, ethnographic interviews and direct observation, "primary sources," from two Highland communities. Over three years, three research and document-collecting expeditions were made to the Highlands for a total of four months, interspersed with considerable periods of reading and collating the various materials collected. Both the primary and secondary material is used as the basis for a historical narrative which is accompanied by a critical exposition. In most cases, the history of a development theory is closely followed by a critical exposition based on Highlanders' own views of the effects of that development theory. Necessarily, this history and critical exposition is primarily of the activities of the foremost institutional development initiative launched by the UK Government in 1965, the Highlands and Islands Development Board (HIDB). This is informative to sustainability discourse since the HIDB has been studied least of all, and since this agency had most to do with the evolution of a mature Highland Development theory that is at the heart of the successful campaign for Gaelic cultural and environmental sustainability.

To describe the historical method used in more detail: two Highland Development archives were consulted extensively, the National Library of Scotland, and the Business Information Source, a private library at the headquarters of Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) in Inverness. Other historical sources were available from various

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5The name of this second archive is misleading, since most of the documents there
American and Canadian libraries. A considerable amount of historical material collected was not used. In some cases, such as the resettlement period, it was possible to rely heavily upon the work of other authors for portions of the history. Other portions of the history presented are pieced together from government documents and other sources. In the case of the former, the history presented is conventional, in that it presents scholarship acknowledged as reliable by the college of Highland historians. However, a considerable problem of romanticism and bias is also acknowledged by these historians. This bias and romanticism is exposed and described, and an attempt is made to understand the role that it played in the milieu of Highland Development.

In the case of history that I have myself pieced together, the problem of bias will also exist. This problem is addressed, if not confronted, by the use of a method or theory of academic discourse sometimes described as "deconstructionist" or "post-structuralist." Within this theory, it is acknowledged that in academic work of this kind there will always be a difficulty with world-view, or epistemology, and with the reliability issues that stem from various ontologies (Wright, 1992, pp 23 -60). As a critical exposition, written in an age which recognizes the discursive nature of all knowledge (and especially of history and ethnography), this study makes no attempt to be "objective." It is, and necessarily can only be, a statement from the perspective of this writer. What it does claim to be is honest.

That is, to the greatest extent possible in the historical study, authoritative sources have been used and synthesized in ways which seek consistency and "reflective equilibrium." This following John Rawls in A Theory of Justice. (Rawls, 1971, p 19), and Bryan Norton in Towards Unity among Environmentalists (Norton, 1991, pp 90-91). Reflective equilibrium requires the balancing of logic and intuitions. Further information or were collected by HIDB, who set up an extensive information management system in 1965. The original HIDB archive was conceived as an academic collection. Since the U.K.'s Conservative Government re-organized HIDB into HIE (Highlands and Islands Enterprise) in 1990, this collection has been part of HIE's business research service.
reflection for either factor may cause "us to adjust our principles." The writer has his own "thesis" which he argues for, using as much evidence as can be amassed. The findings are substantiated, therefore, by the marshalled evidence. Quite obviously, subjectivity intervenes in the selection of evidence (just as it does in the selection of questions to be addressed). Since no position built on history and ethnography can be incontrovertible, the evidence must be considered "in bulk" as it were. Reliability is achieved by weight, or mass of evidence.

Further reliability is achieved by the use of the second method, ethnography and "grounded theory" (Glaser and Struass, 1967). Grounded theory is theory generated from observations, interviews, and other qualitative data sources within a given "case." Grounded theory applied in a case study aims to generate an explanation of the "causal texture" of social organization. "At bottom, the logic of the case study is to demonstrate a causal argument about how general social forces take shape and produce results in specific social settings." (John Walton, in Ragin and Becker, 1992, p 122). Social organization is rarely revealed for formal, empirical observation or measurement. It is instead embedded in the words and actions of individuals and groups within a society. Grounded theory method relies on these words and actions as evidence to construct and refine explanations of this causal texture as they appear to the people involved, not as they appear to a distant theorist who may be blinded by abstraction and out of touch with the people who are actually doing the social organizing that is to be described.

Accordingly, to facilitate this "groundedness," grounded theory method rejects the laboratory-based, experimental convention of positivist science -- theory-hypothesis-method-experiment-results-conclusion -- as an effective model for qualitative social science research, in favor of an iterative process of theory formulation claimed more useful in the messy, qualitative world of social relations. Grounded theory aims for a "more sophisticated theoretical yield" through the use of critical and comparative tools designed to
systematize the collection and analysis of qualitative data (Glaser and Strauss, p 16). One form of data is collected, analyzed, used to generate ideas about causal texture, which are then "grounded" again, and again in successive rounds of data collection and analysis. The process repeats itself in iterative, circling, fashion until a robust agreement is reached within the data. Nonetheless, conclusions, (as with conclusions in experimental science) remain tentative; that is, accepted only until displaced or disproven. This study collates primary and secondary sources of qualitative data, texts from Highlanders own discourse on Highland Development, and systematically uses them in iterative, circling fashion to review the successes and failures of the various economic development theories and construct a grounded, Highlanders' perspective (or theory) of how and why mature Highland Development evolved.

To be more specific about the second method used, after two visits (1993 and 1994) to the Highland region to collect documents and talk to leaders in the economic development process, I felt that the most significant thing that Highlanders had so far told me about Highland Development (through both interviews and written sources) was that there had been a dichotomy within Highland Development theory as practiced by development agencies in the 1960s and early 1970s. This dichotomy had resolved itself by the late 1970s, and in this resolution, it seemed, the Highlands had chosen a decentralized and small-scale path to economic development, rejecting an alternative path known as growth pole theory. Deciding that here was an event that informed general sustainability theory, I planned a third round of data collection, aimed more directly at investigating this dichotomy and its resolution. I purposefully visited two districts where the divergent theories had been extensively practiced. In these districts, I interviewed a selection of Highlanders, some of who were "leaders": entrepreneurs, activists, development agency executives, local government officials, and academics. Selection of this first group was done using a "snowball" technique, in which one interviewee recommends several others, until a critical mass of data (sensed by the onset of repetition) has been collected.
Ordinary Highlanders in the two chosen districts were selected using a computer-generated system of random numbers to pick from numbered lists of streets and houses, a "stratified random sample." The quality of randomness was desirable not for obtaining a "legitimate," quantitative sample, but to collect a wide range of qualitative comments, views and ideas about Highland Development. The nature of the sample was not, it was felt, as important as doing the emotionally difficult work of getting into the field and talking to Highlanders. This random method was halted after fifty people had been interviewed because interviews were not revealing new information on the progress of Highland Development. In addition to these interviews, I collected other ethnographic and literary sources or texts on Highland Development. These included songs, poetry, plays, movies, newspapers, even a children's story-book. Each of these texts had something to add to the mix of sources used.

This third round of data collection was followed by a final survey of the historical literature on Highland Development, purposefully looking for discussion about the dichotomy that I had perceived in Highland development theory. At the end of these iterative rounds of data collection and evaluation, I felt that a causal explanation had revealed itself in sufficient clarity to report in this document. This explanation was of the dichotomy in Highland Development theories during the 1960s and 1970s, and an explanation of the eventual resolution of this dichotomy in the 1980s and 1990s.

I have reported my methods in the context of the study itself, not as if they were somehow two entities entirely separated by linear thought structures. While this might appear unconventional to a reader adjusted to the formal style of experimental science, it is not so unconventional from the points of view of both "reflective equilibrium" and "grounded theory." According to these alternative and still-emerging conventions of social inquiry, no study can be considered divorced from its context. This is a time of contextualism and also a time of deliberate self-consciousness. Perhaps the most that can be
claimed is that this study "fits" within its time.

THESIS # 1: THREE ERAS OF HIGHLAND DEVELOPMENT

This study has two major generalizations or theses. The first thesis that surfaced from my immersion in text and discourse on Highland Development is that the history of Highland Development may be analyzed by breaking it into three eras. The title of each era reflects the theory that drove development efforts at the time, and sums up the political and regulatory environment that that each theory produced. The first era was one of efforts to further privatization of Highland resources through the colonization of the Highlands, the second was an era of efforts to redress the negative effects of privatization through Progressive government action, the third and present era is one of environmentalist development that consolidates earlier efforts to redress privatization and colonialism. We have then, a Privatization Era, a Progressive Era and an Environmental Era. This formulation closely follows that of John Walton, from his Western Times and Water Wars a study of the effects of an Expansive State, a Progressive State, and a Welfare State in the Owens Valley of California. (Walton, 1992, pp 198-200).6

In each era, agencies and interests formulated a theoretical answer to the Highland Problem, designed a typical form of Highland Development and assembled Highland Development institutions to implement that theory. In each era, the Highlanders' own problem was constant, how to maintain their traditional cultural links with the land and each

6 It has to be said that "privatization" is weak terminology to describe the period known as the Highland Clearances. "Genocide" or "conquest" followed by 'ethnic cleansing" are terms that might be more accurate and/or satisfying. However, the reader should understand that in abstracting from these events, it is the act of privatization and its effects (Marx's "primitive capital accumulation") that I have chosen to isolate for analysis. Subsequent chapters emphasize deprivatization, the rise of local control and local access to resources. Privatization is defined in this Highland context as the taking of resources previously managed by communal Gaelic institutions, by private landlords employing a legalized form of theft.
other. That their response to development was qualified by this concern is demonstrated in this work by extracts of the record of Highlanders' behavior during each of these three eras, and by Highlanders' own words in their talk about development recorded during field research.

**THESIS # 2: THE EVOLUTION OF MATURE HIGHLAND DEVELOPMENT**

By tracking the Highlanders' own discourse on development over two hundred and fifty years and three subsequent eras of development, it is also possible to track the evolution of a mature Highland Development theory out of an earlier dichotomy of Highland Development theories. The key characteristics of mature Highland Development are that it is small scale and decentralized, permitting the Highlanders' traditional links to the land and to small communities to flourish. Development that did not allow for this continuity was and is problematic. The evolution of this mature Highland Development theory took at least two hundred and fifty years.

The first form of development imposed on the Highlands was privatization. After the Battle of Culloden in 1746, Highland land became the setting for a wrenching process of privatization of communal resources. In this Privatization Era, throughout the years of the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, one communal resource after another was appropriated by industrial, capitalist Britain as it colonized the Highland region. For the Highlanders, a struggle to stay on their own land and maintain their subsistence agriculture became the primary response to Highland Development. Their development discourse of the time dealt with the problem of land, how it was taken from them, how to get it back, and how to stay on it. By staying on the land to make their living, in the face of great opposition, they remained Highlanders, and could maintain cultural values and ideals. They were able, through various forms of struggle, to maintain their crofts and communities. Meanwhile, a parallel exploitive economy removed the
"goods" from the land. Each successive exploitation in this era took some resource that Highlanders had formerly used, leaving them with less to live on than before.

Eventually, the power of the colonial idea waned as the Progressive political movement grew. The Highland Problem and question of an appropriate form of Highland Development were both reformulated in a Progressive Era. It was thought that government could take action to correct depopulation and poverty in the Highlands through progressively promoting intensified industrialization and centralization, under conditions imposed by both the theory of comparative advantage and the assumed necessity that development take advantage of economies of scale.

However, from the beginning of the Progressive Era, a "second string" set of development initiatives, predominantly led by maverick philanthropic or advocacy organizations, occasionally led by government, began to organize small-scale, decentralized developments such as the Harris Tweed industry. For decades, but particularly after 1965, there existed two competing, or dichotomous strategies of Highland Development. The presence of the small-scale, decentralized enterprises in the milieu of Highland Development meant that some Highlanders could stay on their land, in their villages and be prosperous. It also meant that other Highlanders could see that it was possible to stay on the land, in the village, and be prosperous. In this way, an indigenous understanding of the appropriate form of development began.

During this Progressive Era, development schemes proliferated, including late in the period, in 1965, the extremely influential Highlands and Islands Development Board (HIDB). The HIDB set out at the onset to follow both strategies deliberately. It tried to invest in centralized industrial "growth poles," and it tried to invest in small-scale enterprises out on the land and in the villages. As time went on, market and other forces, design problems, and lack of interest on the part of Highlanders forced the HIDB to abandon large-scale "growth poles," leaving the small-scale decentralized approach as the only approach. HIDB slowly realized that the latter had been the appropriate approach all
along. In particular, it realized that there was geographic convergence between the development of small-scale, decentralized enterprises, and the extensive, decentralized settlement pattern of Gaelic villages committed to part-time farming. The HIDB also realized that there was cultural convergence between these kinds of enterprises and Gaelic cultural preferences for the idealized life of a part time farm in a semi-communal farming village, for work that included a mix of activities and paces, and for enjoying the compensations that come from living in a functional community in a pleasant environmental setting.

In the latest Environmentalist Era of Highland Development, the small-scale, decentralized approach is deliberately and enthusiastically pursued. The theory that development should be based on theories of comparative advantage and the need to take advantage of economies of scale is no longer taken for granted. Development schemes, including the HIDB and its successor, Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), consciously search for a good cultural "fit" from the start. A theory of what is and isn't a good fit has emerged and has its own discourse and network of practitioners, people who staff development agencies, who start small businesses, and who run non-profit organizations in the Highlands. In this small world of Highland Development practitioners, advocates, bureaucrats, and entrepreneurs, it is taken for granted that decentralized, small scale schemes are the correct fit for Highland Development. Although government money is still available for Progressive projects under the auspices of a Thatcherite "enterprise state," there are hardly any remaining "top-down" development schemes.

It is also argued here that since the early 1980s development scheme money is now primarily made available as an adaptation to the decreasing need, throughout Britain, for people to actually make things in the economy when machines -- or the denizens of poorer countries -- now do most of the labor. A system of "enterprise welfare" has erupted; a system which is possibly a case of a "distributive economy" (Prattis, 1979).
However, to understand the Highland present, we must understand the Highland past, particularly the effect of colonialism. For the purposes of this history, the colonial period is taken as beginning in 1746, the year of the defeat of the Highland military in the Battle of Culloden and the onset of the subjugation of Highland clans and the clan (or tribal) system generally. Culloden was the major turning point in the fortunes and misfortunes of Highland ideas of community. The values and mores of the Highland culture that survived Culloden and colonization must, in turn, be understood in the context of the pre-colonial Celtic society before Culloden. Chapters III and IV deal with the pre- and post-colonial contexts respectively. The following chapter, however, first provides an anecdotal introduction of the dichotomy in Highland Development theories, as revealed in the lives and experiences of two contemporary young Highlanders.
II) Two Young Men

"I've been on the housing list for 16 years, but I'm a single man. Unless you have a job.... 10 years, I was working solid...now I'm working nine or ten months a year. You need to be married or have a kid." "Donald"

In the summer of 1995, in two different rural districts in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, I was privileged to spend more than a few hours in the company of two very different young Highland-born men. The difference between these men and their home villages mirrors the dichotomy of Highland Development. These were separate meetings, arranged by chance and the probabilities of social science research. One man had been chosen at random, his house picked from a numbered list by a computer program. The other man had been recommended by other community members as a leader in his community and as having a special interest in culture, ecology and the way that economic development schemes had worked out in the Highlands.

We were peers. They were close in age and close to my own age. Both had been dramatically affected by the experience of their working lives so far. Both of their working lives had been dramatically affected by the economic development process -- the interplay of history, agency, culture, and possibility that is at the center of this work. Since leaving high school, both had been busy working, or trying to find work. When they had found work, it was with companies that had been set up with the aid of the same development schemes. With companies that had been supported, funded, and to a certain extent, even designed by the development agencies.

One had come out of the experience well, to judge by his own description. He was the owner of his own, creative, credit-worthy small business, a carpenter and a builder of traditional small wooden boats. To judge by what others told me of him, he was a force to be reckoned with in the local economy. He'd been involved in his and other businesses,
had participated in the organization of various public events, gala days and the like. He’d also assisted with some quite large projects requiring diplomacy, promotional and organizational skills, such as an annual visit by a large group of military officers from an Arabian Gulf country to a local outdoor center, to receive a course in outdoor activities. There were several ways in which he made his living. Even a purist American or British environmentalist would consider his various occupations to be more sustainable compared to the greater British society, in the way that environmentalists typically -- and rather arbitrarily -- judge sustainability in economic activity. As a wooden boat builder and an organizer of community events, he was squeaky clean on that account. However, he didn't consider himself an environmentalist. In fact, as he pointed out, the word environmentalist has become tainted in some Highland communities. By his own admission, he does interest himself in local environmental issues, such as the new bridge from the mainland to his island. But he is much more concerned with the direction of his life and that of his community in a greater sense than that considered by the mainstream of modern environmentalism.

His is a view that includes the economy of his place, the place itself and its various qualities of quietness, beauty, remoteness, and an appreciation and understanding of the people that live there. In this traditional, and maybe very Celtic sense, he is in agreement with a class of radical environmentalists who would prefer us to reduce our dependency on concentrated industrial systems and attempt instead a more perfect synthesis of economy, aesthetics and ecology. This is a "minority....which denies that ...factories need be ugly", or disconnected from the communities that they serve.7 He is in disagreement with that...

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7This following Aldo Leopold's formulation of categories of environmental ethic, which I take to presage Arne Naess's Deep and Shallow Ecologies (1973), and which is represented in the Highlander's own understanding of their traditional environmentalism and confirmed by the work of James Hunter(1995, pp 15-16). See Chapter VII for details.
class of mainstream environmentalists who sees large scale, intensified "economic productivity as an unpleasant necessity, to be kept, like a kitchen, out of sight." This is a category of conservation activists that has come into increasing conflict with Highlanders in recent years, a category that appears to Highlanders to treat the land as if it were its own private playground, a scenic wilderness, when in reality, it has been used and occupied by people for millennia (Hunter, 1995, pp 15-16). For this second category, "[a]ny encroachment on the parlor of scenic beauty is quickly resented, sometimes in the name of conservation." (Leopold, 1933, pp 421-422).

I talked with the boatbuilder in the office of his boat-house, a crude and utilitarian loft overlooking the workshop. There were boat designs on the wall, a computer on the table, a phone, a fax machine. The workshop was clean, tidy, in the midst of a break from work. It was equipped with both traditional hand tools and modern power saws, not unlike many rural shops in my own adopted home in Montana, except, of course for the small clinker-built rowboat waiting on the trestles. As I talked with him, he was preparing to take a second small boat, a sailing-boat of traditional design, to another island some fifty miles away to participate in a historical re-enactment. Two hundred and fifty years ago in 1745, a young rebel leader had landed in just such a vessel on one of these small islands to lead the ultimate phase of a protracted and disastrous revolt. The re-enactment was sponsored by the makers of Drambuie. That this ancient rebellion was sufficiently important in his and other Highland people's eyes to stage such a display is one story. That this re-enactment would be supported by the makers of an expensive liquor is another. As in most social situations, there is layer upon layer of meaning and symbolism, from the deeply personal story of the struggle to find work in a depressed area, to the perhaps crass, certainly commercial interest of the liquor company.

The other young man I met in his parent's house, where he had lived all his life when not working on the road. His town was one of several that had been badly affected in the development process. It had first lost much of its character in the pursuit of work. The
industrial economy had then run the course of its need for this town. When I visited it, it lacked both work and character, and was visibly trying to regain both.

This young man had trained as a scaffolder, and when he'd had work, it was in a fabrication yard a few miles out of town, a hugely industrial complex of machines, dykes and embankments, sea and steel that makes production and exploration platforms or "rigs" for the discovery and exploitation of North Sea oil. When people picture the Scottish Highlands, the last great European "wilderness," fabrication yards are usually far from the scene. It goes without saying that as far as nautical enterprises are concerned, a rig yard is several orders of magnitude beyond a one-man wooden boat-shop. Yet both were aided by the same development agencies, had been set up in part with government planning and using government money. And the level, if not the scale of involvement, the depth of interest on the part of the government had been surprisingly similar, extending in both cases to the provision of accommodation, finance, advice, technical assistance, and other forms of help; and then, at some point, leaving the operation to sink or swim in the marketplace, stepping back in if it was thought necessary to take things to the next stage, letting the whole thing crash if enough things went wrong. At the time of my visits, the obvious difference, apart from scale, was that one of these enterprises was working and the other was not.

The second young man invited me up to his room, the only private space available in his mother’s house, one of many semi-detached public housing units in the town that had been deliberately built, in tandem with the rig-yard developments, encouraged by those same development agencies. He lived with his mother, though by his own admission, he was thirty that year. He was brash, coarse, loud, a little dangerous perhaps, yet interested in answering my questions, interested in talking about his experiences. As we sat there

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talking, I'd write down what he said. Soon we were joined by his friends, first by a younger man, then a woman. They didn’t treat her particularly well, although she was the girlfriend of one of them (I never knew which one), apparently she was a "dirty slut," not a real person, and that made me a little uncomfortable, straining my own social mores and values. The four of us continued for an hour or so, talking about the situation for jobs and training in that district, they chain-smoking cigarettes until the room was filled with smoke, me writing away, trying to catch it all, or as much of it as I could grasp. Ashtrays overflowed and people talked, the girl, perhaps not surprisingly, talked least of all. Sometimes, however, they all talked at once, lapsing occasionally into humor.

Compare these two young men. Call the second guy, the scaffolder, Donald. Not his real name, but a common enough name in those parts. Call the first guy, the boatbuilder, Callum. Donald was presently unemployed, had been unemployed for two years. He was hoping to spend his summer getting trained-up to be a safety-man and, eventually, one of these days, perhaps a diver. He wanted this training in order to get work in the latest phase of oil-related activity at the fabrication yard. In this new trade, rigs are dismantled for scrap or re-built for shipment to other off-shore oil sites -- off the coast of Mexico, Venezuela, or elsewhere. It isn’t as active a period as the time during the seventies and eighties when the Scottish oil-boom kept thousands busy in this small town. In the three weeks I spent there, a lot of folks were idle, laid off. I met and talked to a lot of them. They had time on their hands. I was a welcome diversion.

Donald was something of an extreme in his wildness, obviously a local personality. The girl was quietest when Donald talked, and the other friend deferred to him, even when it was obvious that he was out of line. Often, in the next few weeks, I’d see Donald on the main street during the day, he’d say hello. He’d be walking down the street or leaning languidly against the wall, watching the action. Nothing else to do.

Donald’s whole life had been spent negotiating through the high-school,
government-housing, welfare-lines, work-sites, chip-shops, and bars of this town.\textsuperscript{9}

He'd been to some other places, and even, he inferred, overseas to work, but he wanted to stay here. Given a possibility of a better-paying job for which he was qualified, he'd perhaps leave, but he would rather stay, especially if he married. When there was work, he worked, and if you took what he said at face value, he worked quite hard. Welding and building oil-rigs is not easy work. Although scaffolding is one of the less-skilled operations, even a scaffolding crew needs to be practiced and competent. Donald told me something about the standards and safety courses, the levels of training and the various weak and shaky possibilities for employment. He and his friend argued points of the Scottish Nationalist Party platform and discussed the efficacy of the latest incarnation of the government-run development scheme, a shiny new office here in town that both were familiar with, if a little intimidated by. The girl listened and occasionally smiled glances at me, perhaps letting me know that she thought they were full of themselves tonight.

According to these guys and many other community members that I talked to, there are two ways to survive in this small town right now if you are not one of the few that has a steady and certain job. In way number one, you hang on. You go to the dole line and the council office for money and housing, hang out in bars and on street corners, "moonlight" when you can and take paid work when and if you can get it. The other way, number two, is to dream up a plan, try to think of a business you'd like to start, perhaps the trade you've been moonlighting at, say home electrical wiring, or welding small car-trailers from tube and sheet metal. You go to one of several development agencies and try to get started under a development scheme. If your business doesn't fail, you'll have work. If it does, you'll still have cash for a year or two, stipends, loans, and equipment money from the development agencies, and you'll have something to do, some sense of self-esteem. These

\textsuperscript{9}Since the primary audience is American, I will primarily use the American equivalents for British institutions such as council housing, unemployment benefit, secondary school and so on.
three young people were willing to rate the government-run scheme a partial success, "others have succeeded" -- other businesses in town -- that is, started with scheme assistance. Could they have received help from the scheme? Perhaps, but starting a business is not the kind of enterprise that just any young man or woman is cut out for... "we don’t know, because we never tried." What about other forms of assistance?

"I've been on the housing list for 16 years, but I'm a single man. Unless you have a job...10 years, I was working solid...now I'm working nine or ten months a year. You need to be married or have a kid." (Donald)

It was clear that these three young people, at least at this stage in their lives, were more equipped for the first survival technique. But wasn't there a third alternative? Why don't they just up stakes and go somewhere else, get "on their bikes" and get a job in one of the booming regions of the south-east of England, in Glasgow or Edinburgh -- or even the other nations of Europe, where they now have the right of residence under European law?10 What was it about the place where they lived, this small, depressed coastal town, with poor social life, few youth-oriented amenities, in fact no "progress at all in 14 years" of Donald's post-high school life? What keeps them here in this community?

Leaving Donald and his friends and returning to the west coast, Callum had also been at some odds to stay in his home district. He was within one or two years of Donald's age. Their experience had been similar in some ways, dissimilar in others. Callum was more experienced in the trials and tribulations of the second survival method, starting a small business. His much smaller village was on the opposite coast, nominally in the Gàidhealtachd, the Gaelic-speaking area, although most speak English these days. From my short experience of his daily movements, in the three weeks I spent on this coast, he

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10The "on their bikes" phrase was made famous by a previous British Chancellor of the Exchequor, the Right Honorable Norman Tebbit. He was conspicuous in his criticism of British unemployed youth in the 1980s.
inhabited a sea-linked world that consisted of portions of four or five communities on two or three islands, which were connected by travel on cars, ferries, and small boats. Raised in the largest of the island's few towns, he'd had essentially the same public education that Donald had, perhaps more emphasis on "ordinaries" and "highers," the equivalent of American college preparation courses. He seemed very bright. He hadn't been to college, instead had simply "learned how to build boats," at a larger business in Caithness, far to the north and east. His employer had existed on development scheme funding, but the business had "stopped when the grant stopped."

Callum decided to start out on his own, after first getting an order for two small boats: "I first got a grant in 1984, to buy some machinery. I rented a place in Portree. Highland Region (the local council development scheme) helped find the shed." The loan had come from the Highland Fund, a national-level, non-profit, development agency. The alternative funders, particularly the largest, government-run scheme, the Highlands and Islands Development Board (HIDB), had been more "distant." The HIDB scheme came to an end in 1990. It's successor, Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) and the assorted Local Enterprise Companies (LEC's), had they existed at the time, would have been, in Callum's view, even more problematic. "To get a loan from the LEC would have required a substantial plan -- two or three meetings..." (Callum).

The Highland Fund had used much simpler paperwork and word-of-mouth processing for his application. They had written him an acceptance letter within three weeks, offering a loan at 9% interest, which had later been cut to 5%. They had been extremely helpful, leading Callum to be critical of the more complex, government-run programs, whose people were not knowledgeable of "...what it takes to run a business in the Highlands." All the same, he'd also had a lot of help from those government organizations during the 11 years he'd been working on his own.

Both men cautiously placed the small optimisms that they allowed themselves. Callum spoke of a new community confidence in the Gàidhealtachd, but he was careful to
note that the proliferation of schemes and agencies was not all for the good, because
bringing "salaried government jobs --wealth and fancy cars" into the area, they "drive up
expectations as well as prices. They don’t know that they are doing it." There was a need to
"design a development agency that would take ordinary people and put them to work."
People, perhaps, like Donald.

Donald saw his salvation in Scottish Nationalism, in freedom from Westminster
rule and in Scottish control of oil revenues. Every successful enterprise sent "money to
London." "Scotland needs to be independent." If there hadn’t been a development scheme
at all, the place would still have been "thirty years behind." But he enjoyed the pace of life,
had never lived in a large city. He’d miss the lifestyle if he had to leave, particularly the
"crack, the social aspect."¹¹

These two men are a long way from each other, in hopes, aspirations and
possibilities. They aren’t typical, but then I’m not sure if there is a typical Highlander these
days. The period is gone when the great majority of the Highlands population spoke the
same Gaelic, working the land in similar villages, with similar ecological adaptations,
similar tools, similar traditions and with few overlords and other social strata. Whatever
way you care to look at it, the Highlands is a very diverse place today, no longer a
relatively homogenous "peasant" society. Yet with all the differences it slowly became clear
that the set of values that kept Callum working so hard to stay put and develop in place
were identical to the ones that kept Donald idle and in place. The two had been forced by
their different environments to adapt different mechanisms to maintain the same set of
values.

What was that value set? What was it that kept Donald hanging on in the depressed
industrial town that was his home community? From all the answers, interviews with these
and dozens more other community members, it seems that even with all the industrial

¹¹"Crack" is not a drug, but vernacular for gossip or banter.
degradation and the lack of work, the place is quieter and cleaner, the neighbors still 
neighbors, and the friends still friends. It's better to stay on in the town and sign on the 
dole than it is to go away and search for unsure work elsewhere. If you did find work, it 
was likely to be in some other larger town in Britain where conditions were more 
expensive, where, although there might be more to do in the evenings, it would be with 
new, strange friends, and you would lose the daily pleasure of the clean environment and 
pristine rural countryside surrounding the town. Many chose to stay.
Ill) Gaelic Culture from Ancient Times.

"Nearly all the Gauls are of a lofty stature, fair and of ruddy complexion: terrible from the sternness of their eyes, very quarrelsome, and of great pride and insolence. A whole troop of foreigners would not be able to withstand a single Gaul if he called his wife to his assistance, who is usually very strong and with blue eyes; especially when, swelling her neck, gnashing her teeth, and brandishing her sallow arms of enormous size, she begins to strike blows mingled with kicks, as if they were so many missiles sent from the string of a catapult." (Chadwick, 1971, p 50).

Tracing Gaelic cultural themes from prehistory is a subjective and political occupation that even the most rigidly "objective" Celtic historian or anthropologist has at one time or another engaged himself in. The wild tenor of lines such as those above, written by a Roman intellectual at a time when few Gaelic people could write at all, will rarely fail to stir the blood of anyone with a family link to a Celtic country. This creates a problem for the researcher, the problem of extracting "fact" from romantic account, and the problem of understanding how past romantic accounts change future facts. Any student of the Highlands lives with this problem constantly. Here are historian Marinell Ash and sociologist David McCrone on this issue:

"Historians of Scotland have written at length about the distortions of reality which have passed for "history" in Scotland. It seems to be an account which ignores recent events in favor of a highly romanticised version of the past. It is a history of personalities rather than people, of events rather than processes. In Marinell Ash's words,

"Modern perceptions of Scotland's past are like a foggy landscape; small peaks and islands of memory rising out of an occluded background. The name of some of these peaks are Bruce, Wallace, Bannockburn, Mary Queen of Scots, Bonnie Prince Charlie and the Clearances." (Ash, private mimeograph, reproduced in McCrone, 1992)

To discuss the effect of privatization on this romantic tribal culture, I must first describe the
culture as it might have been before the imposition of capitalism. Here I present a synopsis of aspects, emotional peaks, if you like, of Highland culture and history that remain important throughout privatization and subsequent eras of Highland Development.

The first of those peaks to visit could be called Celtic-ness, what it means to believe oneself to be descended, at least in cultural terms, from Celtic Highlanders. In this and other cases, what is idealized as "Highland" blood is problematic. Images abound of wild Highland warriors raging down hillsides to attack the English and Lowlanders and drive them away. For the purposes of this research, for reasons that will become clear, a "Highlander" is defined as someone who lives and works and attempts to belong to a community in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. The emphasis on belonging -- on membership, attempted, unsuccessful or successful -- is what is seen as important.

Genealogy is not as important as identification with Celtic culture is. A small part of my later argument for the causal texture of the modern Highlands is that there are those incomers, not of Celtic stock, who by adoption of ideals, community, place and language, may become more "Gaelic" than the Gaels.¹²

Even anthropologists are unclear on the racial definitions. Gaelic Highlanders are often placed in a category with Irish, Manx, Cornish, Welsh and Breton peoples; the Galacians of Spain and others, as the last surviving remnants of the Celtic populations of Europe (Chadwick, 1971). Native-born Highlanders see themselves as Celts. For some, such as musician MacLean, Gaelic activists working for Communn na Gàidhlig, or the staff of Sabhal Mòr Ostaig (a college that teaches business management courses in the Gaelic language), this is a primary and enthusiastic self-identification. Others are more prosaic.

To see yourself as Celtic is to see yourself as different from the Anglo-Saxon British mainstream -- and to separate yourself from that mainstream's economy and the

¹²Gaelic is a linguistic and cultural term referring to that group of Celtic people, originally from Ireland, speaking the Gaelic, as opposed to the Brythonic form of the Celtic language group.
perceived brutalities that it wreaks upon a sensitive Celtic soul. The cultural groups that are
defined by historians, anthropologists and linguists as Celtic once covered most of Europe,
but today are limited to the "Celtic Fringe" (Chadwick, 1971, p 109). Celts have an
interesting early history, including the continuing reputation as "barbarians of the north."
"Ally's tartan army" of soccer hooligans has a venerable tradition.\footnote{Refers to a group of (Lowland) Scottish soccer hooligans who follow one particular
team, rioting and causing trouble in towns after "away" games.}
Celtic tribes sacked Rome in 390 BCE and Delphi in 269 BCE, illustrating, in the language of social
anthropology, an organizational cohesion and the ability to produce a social surplus
sufficient to support war-making occupations (Chadwick, 1971, p 39). The expanding
Roman Empire fought back. The Roman conquest of these classical Celts gives us some of
our first written sources, descriptions of the Celts as a vanquished, yet proud people. A
famous statue in the Museum of the Capital in Rome, titled the "Dying Gaul," was erected
by Attalos of Pergamon to celebrate a victory over the Galatians. A curly-haired, muscular
warrior attempts to staunch the flow of blood from a mortal thigh wound. He is naked,
with a twisted torque as decoration around his neck. Highlanders -- "bare-arsed
banditti,"\footnote{The famous "bare-arsed" quote is from a British officer who fought against the
Highland Army in 1745 (Hunter, 1995, p 29).} went into battle naked up until the eighteenth century (Chadwick, 1971, p
134). The statue is exquisite, lifelike and poignant. The artist succeeds in showing us the
vigor and power of the subject, but also shows futility, desperation and defiance. For the
Roman Attalos who commissioned the work, the representation is surely meant to express
Roman power and majesty -- and Attalos' own power and majesty -- for who other than a
powerful and majestic person could conquer this dying Gaul? Today, through the eyes of a
modern Highlander, particularly a nationalist, we might instead see something very
familiar, a Celt suffering to defend his community's land.

Another particularly exquisite depiction survives in writing from Ammianus
Marcellinus, a Byzantine Roman:
"Nearly all the Gauls are of a lofty stature, fair and of ruddy complexion: terrible from the sternness of their eyes, very quarrelsome, and of great pride and insolence. A whole troop of foreigners would not be able to withstand a single Gaul if he called his wife to his assistance, who is usually very strong and with blue eyes; especially when, swelling her neck, gnashing her teeth, and brandishing her sallow arms of enormous size, she begins to strike blows mingled with kicks, as if they were so many missiles sent from the string of a catapult." (Chadwick, 1971, p 50).

A fearsome description. Is it meant as a joke, or as a serious contrast to the place of women in Roman society? Classical Celtic society certainly took fighting women seriously. Many young men were trained as warriors at special households run by women (Chadwick, 1971, p 135). The Celtic Queen Boudicca extracted terrible, yet justifiable revenge after Roman soldiers raped and cut off the breasts of her daughters -- leading a Celtic army to drive the Romans from South-East Britain. The tradition of fighting women would be resurrected in later years as a part of Highlanders' resistance to the imposed system of colonial landlords. In the Highland Land Wars of the nineteenth century, women would be to the fore in demonstrations and riots -- not to mention work. Pictures from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries show crofting women in headscarves working alongside men, often carrying heavy wickerwork creels on their backs, full of peats, seaweed or fish. In the twentieth century, this tradition of strong women would become inspiration for Celtic feminists.

As the first centuries of the Christian era passed, most Celts would be incorporated into the Roman Empire, except for those who lived in the mountain and coastal fringe of West Europe. Ireland was visited by Roman ships, but never conquered. Scotland, although not yet known by that name, was militarily occupied at least in part on more than one occasion, and surveyed, but never subdued. With so much under-used land and resources to exploit in the rest of Britain, Roman resources perhaps never needed to stretch to conquering rugged Scotland. The Hadrian and Antonine walls were built to separate the
more productive lands of South Britain from wild and lawless Celtic "Caledonia."15

What seemed lawless to the Romans was in fact the remnant of a more ancient
culture that in its prime was in control of much of Northern Europe. By the Christian
period most of these peoples had been conquered. The Irish Celts, unmolested by Roman
imperialism, maintained the finest of La Tenne period artwork and tradition, eventually
committing some -- a small fraction -- of oral verse and legend to written records by the
seventh century. Our first Celtic manuscripts derive from this period. From this period also
comes the tradition of illuminated text, which was eventually spread across Europe by Irish
Christian scholars. The great heroic tales such as Chu Chullain and the stories of the
Tuatha de Danaan, verse by the Irish saints, and collections of Celtic treasure from this
period combine with Roman ethnography to illuminate a flamboyant, proud and violent
culture that was preoccupied with battle and raiding, but could be eloquent in praise of
nature and was technologically competent in iron, bronze, copper, silver and gold-
working. Few buildings survive from the early periods, where wood was the predominant
material, but "beehive" meditation huts, such as those on Skellig Michael by the coast of
Ireland, show us an extreme, eremetic Christianity that valued a solitude-in-nature --
reminding us of Native American ideals or the writings of Thoreau and John Muir:

    I have a sheiling in the wood,
    None knows it save my God;
    An ash tree on the higher side, a hazel bush beyond,
    A huge old tree encompasses it...

    Swarms of bees and chafers, little musicians of the wood,
    A gentle chorus;
    Wild geese and ducks, shortly before summer's end,
    The music of the dark torrent...

    The voice of the wind against the branchy wood
    Upon the deep-blue sky;

15 The Roman name for Scotland, from the Caledonii, a Pictic tribe.
Falls of the river, the note of the swan,
Delicious music...

In the eyes of Christ the ever-young, I am no
Worse off than thou art.16

This wild Celtic lay is evocative of an earth-rooted culture which many Highlanders either aspire to or claim as a natural inheritance. Gaelic activists of the 19th and 20th centuries found inspiration in lines like these to pressure for Highland Development. Less naturally, but perhaps appropriately nevertheless, members of today’s British environmental movement draw inspiration from the same Celtic sources. There is a cultural continuity here, reflected in these lyrics, a sense of an alternative values system that defines, to some extent, membership of Highland culture. If we are to follow James Hunter’s argument in his most recent book about Highland culture, this is a down-to-earth and pragmatic environmentalism that should be viewed as separate from, and more realistic than a romantic environmental mainstream (Hunter, 1995, p 16). And a two-thousand year-old trail of survival is visible, from the poetry of the sheiling above, to the poetry of Maclean’s influential music:

Down the Buckley Den the burn crashes down from the Autumn spate
The gentle hazels rustle as they bend and sway as they laden wait
My fathers they have walked this road and now I know
There is no great and heavy load
And yes I know
And yes, didn’t they know

Across the Arlick face the amber sun beats down to tinge the vivid green
I hear it wide and loud, feel it wide and proud the way it’s always been.17

16 "The song of the hermit Marban to his brother Guaire, king of Connaught...."
Probably the seventh century and the oral tradition, written down for the first time around the twelfth century (Chadwick, 1971, p 259).
17 Song from the record album titled Indigenous by Dougie MacLean, Dunkeld Records, Dunkeld, Scotland.
It is clear enough to MacLean that this connectedness with nature is part of what it means to be Celtic, and that this makes him "wide and proud," and that this is "the way it's always been."

After the Romans left South Britain in the fourth century, Irish Celts called Scots, or Scottii by the Romans, took the chance to invade Caledonia and settled mostly in the south and west, which became the land of the Scots and thus, in the Anglo-Saxon language, Caledonia became "Scot-land." The Gaelic name for this land is Alba. They bought with them the Celtic form of early Christianity, writing and the Gaelic language. The Irish and Scottish Gaels endured similar survivorship trails, particularly following the industrial revolution. The two cultures are closely connected. The Scots Gaelic language is called Erse or Irish in English and Lowland texts up until the nineteenth century. Native speakers of either language can understand the other with a little difficulty.

Eventually a multi-ethnic union combining these Irish Gaels, existing populations of Pictish and Romano-British tribes and later Anglo-Saxon and Norse settlers formed the culture that is today recognized as Highland. Scotland was united as a medieval state by an Irish Gaelic king, Malcolm Canmore, in the tenth century. The fact that Scotland was first led by a Gael goes a little way towards explaining the later willingness of lowland Scots to enthusiastically incorporate Gaelic cultural artifacts such as tartan kilts or the great Highland warpipe and its music into their self-image. Despite these cultural borrowings, an ethnic divide still separates the Gaelic Highlands from the multi-cultural Lowlands. Canmore’s union always proved to be problematic. Lowlanders have a culture and to some extent an ethnic inheritance descended more from Teutonic invaders of the fifth and sixth centuries (Angles and Saxons) than from Canmore’s Gaels, although a great many Lowlanders are descended from Highlanders who moved south. This divide between the Gaelic Highlanders and the Anglo-Scots Lowlanders is most apparent in the absence of the
common competitor, the English. Often in history and in common daily life the two have combined to become generic "Scots" in opposition to, or in defense against English "arrogance."

RUN-RIG AND THE CLAN SYSTEM

The Gaelic phrase *Run-rig* is evocative to today's young Highlanders; sufficiently so that it is the name of their most popular home-grown rock and roll band. The phrase refers to a system of communal agriculture and evokes mythical notions of Celtic communality and sociability, a Celtic "good life," a wish to return to a Celtic cultural hegemony that always lies at the heart of the band's haunting, yearning lyrics. To a certain extent, the band uses the phrase as advertisement that they are both Celtic and likely to be singing about these supposedly good old times, "Days of Olden Glory." What is the reality, and what is the modern Highlander's image of that reality? The Celtic Scots and Picts and the Teutonic Angles and Saxons all practiced communal agriculture of one form or another, over many centuries, until the agrarian revolution. Some evidence exists for the differences of patrilocality in the Teutonic form and the possibility of matrilocality or both patrilocality and matrilocality in the Celtic form, a possibility that appears to be in some sympathy with the tradition of strong women reported earlier (Chadwick, 1971, p 1218).

Although the evolution of this agriculture necessarily followed diverse patterns dependent upon the lie of the land; the climate and fertility of the soil; and the differing religious and social-structure traditions of the various cultural groups, there was nevertheless a common model. In Ireland it is called "run-dale;" in studies of medieval England and Wales we learn about the "open-field" or "common-field" system; and in Highland Scotland essentially the same model is followed for "run-rig" agriculture. In each there are two kinds of use-rights given by the community to two different kinds of

18 Refrain "Days of Olden Glory" from a song on the record album titled *Heartland* by the band Run-rig, Isle of Skye, Scotland.
land. The *run* or common is the grazing and woodland, where domestic animals are left to graze, perhaps herded by a small child if necessary. The *rig*, the *dale*, or open field is the "in-bye" land, the valuable land for arable farming which is also held in common by the village, re-divided every few years by some vernacular, ecologically-functional system to ensure that each family has enough cropland to feed itself and that some rotation between fallow and in-use land is used to maintain fertility. Some forms of labour such as harvest and plowing are shared, some are independent to each family. Ancillary occupations such as smithing, baking and milling are vital to the efficiency of the economy, in that they provide for expensive tools and secondary-processing operations that are inevitably more efficient when centralized. Theorists in history and prehistory have assumed that these agricultural adaptations had their origins in a relatively peaceful, lightly-stratified "territorial commune:"

"As more and more pasture and wastelands were converted to arable lands, the earlier territorial commune was gradually replaced by the more tightly cooperative village commune, beginning in Germany and Poland and gradually spreading over much of western Europe and Russia. Groups of peasants voluntarily pooled their holdings into fields, which were cultivated on a rotation basis every two or three years. This open three-field system not only allowed for more intensive cultivation, but it also demanded greater cooperation and group regulation of water use, pasturing and wood gathering, as well as the sharing of oxen and horses for plowing." (Merchant, 1983)

According to some views, in both the Teutonic and the Celtic versions, the need for the tribe to protect itself from the depredations of neighboring tribes led to the rise of a warrior class, an aristocracy and the evolution of the stricter, more directly-managed open-field systems. Eventually, we have that state known by classical economists -- rather too simply -- as feudalism:

The extremely complex feudal system of medieval England was a culmination of the
pre-industrial economic and ecological possibilities. It was dependent on the underlying health of the farming system and thus the productivity of the villages, and by inference, the ability of the people in those villages to work. Consequently, except for "deer forests" where aristocrats pursued bloodsports, the rise of the Norman aristocracy in the English feudal system did not dramatically change the technology of farming or interfere with the structure of land use until completely privatized methods became available after the agrarian revolution. This is not to say that peasant economies were left unharmed by advanced feudalism. They certainly were harmed. Yet the basic ecological system that had been originally worked out in more democratic Celtic and Teutonic forms did not change very much at all over the years before the technological changes of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. To this day, an obvious remnant of this system is seen in both lowland and highland Britain in the form of "ancient field systems," generally taking the form of broad ridges and furrows in a grassy landscape, preserved by the change to pastoral use after the agrarian revolution. These extant field-strips are often datable and some have been found to have provided continual use over several centuries, confirming continuity.

The rise of an aristocracy did dramatically change the distribution of the wealth produced by these village societies. Many historians have reassembled the assemblage of taxes, tithes, levies, scutage and services that comprised the feudal revenue system in England in great detail. I will not go into these taxes here. However, evidence for technological and ecological continuity despite class-formation is very considerable. In Howard Grays classic "English Field Systems" (1915, p 418) the accuracy of this continuity is discussed in some detail. There were geographical and cultural differences. Gray established through archeology and historical research -- based on existing fields, old maps of fields and field ridges in the soil under pastureland -- that there were three variants of the system in common practice in Britain:
"Anglo-Saxon England is thus, as far as field systems are indicative of settlement, divisible into three parts. The large central area, stretching from Durham to the Channel and from Cambridgeshire to Wales, was the region through which Germanic usage prevailed, presumably because of the ongoing nature of the fifth-century subjugation; the southeast was characterized by the persistence of Roman influence, a circumstance which implies that the [fifth century Anglo-Saxon] conquest was less destructive there than to the North and West; the counties of the southwest, the northwest and the north retained Celtic agrarian usages in one form or another."

Gray differentiates between Celtic and "Germanic" (Teutonic) systems on the basis of the form of division and length of fallow designation. In the Celtic system, according to Gray: "field arrangements were based upon run-rig, a device that assigned to all tenants within the township strips in any tract of waste brought under transient tillage." Gray devotes several chapters to a description of the run-rig system. Run-rig was a very successful adaptation that in its most populous period in the Scottish Highlands -- and with the aid of the American potato -- supported more people than the present population.

There were other differences between the Celtic and Teutonic versions of open-field agriculture, particularly in the degree to which the process of class formation and extraction of social surplus had advanced in England relative to the less-stratified Highlands. We are familiar with the feudal class system in England. In the Highlands of Scotland before enclosure the run-rig system was tied not into a baronial feudal system, but into the clan or clann system, which, it has frequently been argued, was a very different thing, closer to a "wild" tribal grouping and supposedly more democratic.

Historical accounts that show fewer levels of social stratification and fewer economic burdens on the peasantry as characteristic of the Highland system are common. However, the argument for a more equitable system in the Highlands may suffer from romantic bias in favor of our partly-mythical Highland communality -- rooted in a notion of
the idyllic life of the *run-rig* village. Loyalty is a variable that is often used to differentiate between the clan system and feudalism. In this kind of theory, the Highlander is depicted as a happy clan member who identifies with his tribe, his people. For instance, the Highland ecologist and social scientist, Sir Frank Fraser Darling, wrote in his historical introduction to what was probably the most complete social science research effort ever undertaken in the Highlands that: "A Highlander could not help but feel independent and proud because he was so completely integrated with his society and place, sheltered and defending, giving loyalty and receiving it, without question." (Darling, 1955, p 2)¹⁹ No basis is given for this assertion. It fits in well with other depictions of clan loyalty, such as that given in John Prebble's important and popular book "*Culloden*" (Prebble, 1961, p 35). According to this pervasive mythology of Highland tribalism, the loyalty of the peasants to their tribal chief was freely given. It was supposed to be a matter of honor or duty, a thing not to be questioned. In reality, if such loyalty existed at all, it was probably more the result of an underlying common bond of economic and ecological necessity. The peasants understood that they needed the chief as a leader to unite them, to lead them in self-defense against predation from other competing clans. The chief was a focal point for the clan to rally around, a trainer and leader of warriors, and the declared patriarch, if not the biological father, of them all. The chief needed the peasants to feed him and his warriors, and to provide him with marketable goods with which to purchase arms and items that could not be made by the clan’s own craftsmen, including all the trappings of a chiefly personage (in later years, as the system was weakened, what constituted adequate trappings became inflated). This underlying necessity resulted in the production, for consumption by the clan people at important gatherings and social occasions, of a useful mythology of

¹⁹Dr Frank Fraser Darling, was a considerable authority on the economic and ecological aspects of the crofting system whose work we will return to later in greater detail. He wrote this opinion of the Highlander’s relation to his chief as part of his 1955 *A West Highland Survey* the major social science and ecological investigation of the crofting system (Darling, 1955).
Highland reciprocity and loyalty. This loyalty is usually depicted in opposition to English feudalism and in conjunction with stories of Highland suffering and heroism in wartime or in defense of their land, implying relative equity and freedom in the clan system. It was the popular opinion in and out of the Highlands that Highlanders found it "the most sublime degree of virtue to love their chief and pay him a blind obedience although it be in opposition to the government, the laws of the kingdom, or even the law of God. He is their idol; and they profess to know no king but him so they will say they ought to do whatever he commands." (Prebble, 1961, p 35).

In fact, the chief could and would force the clansmen to action if he thought it necessary. The following description is probably more accurate:

"A chief's son, wet-nursed by the wife of a humbly, would never call his foster brother his equal, but the milk shared by them imposed a life-long obligation that could and often did compel the one to give his life for the other. And if the compulsion were not strong enough, if the clansman were reluctant to come out with sword and target when needed, the chief would feel himself justified in burning the roof of his milk-brother's hut." (Prebble, 1961, p 37).

However coerced and however romanticized, the clan was capable of acting as a cohesive unit in times of stress. One of the mythological examples usually given to support this loyal self-image is the story of the pursuit of rebel leader Charles Stuart in 1746. The theory of the 1745 rebellion as a beginning of Highland Development will be covered in more detail later, but for now, part of the story serves to illustrate the self-image of Highland clan cohesion. After the failed rebellion and the battle of Culloden in 1746, the Highlands were the subject of English military occupation. The English were anxious to capture "the Bonnie Prince" and placed a bounty of £30,000 on his head dead or alive, a large fortune in those days. But as a "chief of chiefs," the destitute and pathetic young man was able to

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20 Written early in the eighteenth century by Edward Burt, an English engineer employed to survey the Highlands, (Prebble, 1961, p 35).
avoid arrest through the assistance of ordinary Highlanders. Some no doubt, acted in fear
of reprisal from their chiefs, but over five months of evasion the Prince was never
successfully betrayed once, although the English forces wreaked deadly vengeance on any
community that was later found to have sheltered him. All attempts at betrayal ended in
farcical failure on the part of the English forces, who chased the young outlaw and his tiny
retinue from hide-out to hide-out to no avail. He died safely an old man in France, by most
accounts a sottish and demented soul, perhaps justly earning his reputation as first sponsor
of Drambuie, or -- for that matter -- any other liquor.

The story of this evasion, the time of "The Prince amang the Heather..," has become
part of the common folk-history. This sense of loyalty and of taking pride in one's
membership of a clan was a characteristic of Highland culture that was abused during the
industrial revolution to permit some of the worst exploitation of that period. It aided in
various exploitive undertakings such as forced emigration, land-theft, pressed military
service and so on, events we will return to later.

The clan system differed from feudalism in other ways. Land title and land reform
has been seen by many theorists of economic development as central to the survival of
native peoples. Perhaps, if the title survives, an indigenous economic system can more
easily make peace with an encroaching industrial hegemony.21 In the Highlands, land
rights were originally owned not by the chief, as in English feudalism, but by the clan
itself. This tradition has immense significance in today's mythology of Highland
Development. Because "[t]he land upon which the clan lived was not the property of the
chief; it belonged to the tribe and the chief was maintained by its members and given
implicit obedience as the defender of the territory of the people and head of the race..."

21 For reference to theory about native-land rights, there are several sources. See
Victims of Progress (Bodley, 1982, 1990). An environmentalist approach is found in
The Way (Goldsmith, 1992, 1993). The Highlanders' version of this theory is implicit
in the history of the Land War and Resettlement era.
chiefs could rise or fall independent of any hereditary title, and some clans had electoral or confirmation procedures that were close to democratic (Darling, 1955, p 1). In the early eighteenth century, an English ethnographer, struck by this collectivistic approach, remarked in his journal that "Some Chiefs are there that have neither property nor jurisdiction, and the cutting off of the present Chief does no more than make way for another." (Prebble, 1961, p 36).

However, the existence of this communal form of land right did not mean that issuance of rights to land-use was equitable. The land was divided between the members of the clan according to status and merit, the "tacksman" occupying a station of intermediate rank between chief and peasant; in conjunction with rank as an officer in the clan regiment.

By the seventeenth century, the tribal system of common, oral land right, defended against other tribes by force of arms, was already weakened by exposure to the English system. After the union of the Crowns of Scotland and England under the Stuart family in the seventeenth century, English law and custom began to influence Scotland. An unscrupulous chief might seize the possibility of obtaining a formal title, usually a parchment (sheepskin) document, from the King, essentially the same legal theft as was committed under the English "Acts" of enclosure. The emotion resulting from this theft can be aroused today in Highland discourse on development.

Taxes and rents might be imposed as some chiefs attempted to gain income for themselves at the expense of their clan. By the time of the 1745 rebellion, there had been a drift towards the English way of organizing things. The following influential summary from John Prebble -- written in the 1960s as part of a celto-centric and revisionist tradition -- is of the situation before the Battle of Culloden. Prebble's popular history was involved in a re-definition of the Highland values system that took place in the 1960s and 1970s and is of central importance to the evolution of Highland development, particularly "Gaelic" development. Presented here, it gives us a sense of the romance of clan history before and
after the loss of indigenous land rights:

"the land, by the eighteenth century, had become the chief's, his title to it being no more tangible than the approval of his tribe, a situation that proved most awkward for some of them when the great chiefs of Argyll, or Seaforth, or Lovat, discovered that a sheet of sheepskin could be a more effective weapon than a broadsword or a Lochaber axe. Yet, though the land was the chief's, the clan's interest in the soil was deep and strong. Part of it was "mensal land", used by and for the chief himself. Parts, too, might be given in perpetuity to families of officials of the clan, men like the Bard, the Harper or the Piper. The rest was held by tenants under "tacks" or leases granted by the chief. Thus the tacksman, though not of the chief's family, was a man of importance in the tribal society, and his rank entitled him to be a junior officer or a senior non-commissioned officer when the clan formed itself into a regiment for war. In their turn, the tacksmen sub-leased part of their land and so each social stratum was formed, each man owing economic allegiance to those above him, and all bound in fealty to the chief whose direct and known progenitor had been the strong-joined hero who had started the whole tribe." (Prebble, 1961, p 37).

Real or imagined blood ties were invoked to root such patriarchal linkages. The word *clann* is Gaelic for children. The members of the clan were believed to be the "children" of the chief, and as a result they usually took his name when pressed into English-style last-name usage. The Gaelic prefix *mac* means simply "son of..." a Highland Clan being most essentially a

"set of men [and women] ... all bearing the same surname [sic], and believing themselves to be related the one from the other, and to be descended from the same common stock...

"In each clan there are several subaltern tribes, who owe their dependance on their own immediate chiefs but all agree in owing allegiance to the Supreme Chief of the Clan or Kindred and look upon it to be their duty to support him at all adventures." 23

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22 Most Gaelic-origin last names such as MacLeod or MacDonald are oversimplifications. A Gaelic name might refer several times to physical attributes or genealogy.
Some chiefs were more likely to adopt the English arrangement than others. These would be more likely to be loyal to the Union in the coming rebellion. But the ecological base of the system had not altered; the land was still worked in small patches for arable crops, there was common grazing for stock, usually the sturdy black cattle, which could be driven to markets in the Lowlands or England for money income. The lifestyle for the common peasant had not changed much in centuries. There would be some form of continuity from this system to the present day. And the concept that the land still morally belonged to the peasants was not lost to history, even after chiefs turned into landlords and "proprietors:" This "indigenous impression" is of contemporary political importance, a direct descendant of the old tribal legalities underlying run-rig:

"As a crofter, I have great difficulty in conceding to the proprietor any greater right to the croft than I have myself. It is the four small acres my family broke in from the wild morass and rock, drained, manured and fed over the years, with no help from the proprietor.... I hold this piece of land to be mine morally and to be disposed of as I wish."25

COMMUNALITY
As with the American Indian, the Highlander in the nineteenth century was a natural model for the "noble savage," even as the Highland way of life was under its most extreme threat. For any written account of the life before privatization we are forced to resort to writers from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries whose understandings had been necessarily affected by their distance from the era they tried to describe, inflated by romantic idyllism

23Written in 1746 by Lord President of the Scottish Court of Session Duncan Forbes (Prebble, 1961, p 35).
24From the Napier Commission of 1884, who found that it was an "impression indigenous to the country" that crofters' rights to their land should be inalienable (Darling, 1955, p 6)
or deflated by an ethnocentric and colonialist perspective from England and the Lowlands. Later, in the "revisionist" histories of the twentieth century, the idyllic nature of this lifestyle would be again inflated by a political need to set the Gael up as the wronged underdog -- in opposition to the "English" conquerors. There are some trustworthy sources. Much can be inferred by surviving values and practices. Communal labour survived, and is still a fact of modern township life. Here it is described, a poetic translation from the Gaelic novel *The Albannach* by Fionn MacColla (1932, pp 313-314). MacColla depicts life in a crofting township in the 1930s.

"In laborious days there will be healing and accord. At the approach of the harvest, the men drew closer to the earth and to each other. A simple rhythm governed their existence, a unity expressed in swingings of the arms, slow steppings, bowings to the earth. The sun shone brilliantly, swinging down into the south. In her slanting rays at evening the purple bens advanced across the moor. Dry winds blew strongly with a sharpening tooth. Now it was by the light of his window that a man went home at evening to his meal."

A much earlier commentator was Samuel Johnson of London, who made a celebrated tour of the Highlands in 1773, not long after Culloden, but before the worst depredations of land clearance had begun. Johnson’s 1774 *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* (Chapman, 1924) is of an ethnographic nature and is a valuable source, although despised by many Highlanders for its unflattering and anglo-centric depiction of Highland culture. In this excerpt from his journal, Johnson enters the cottage of a peasant woman, a typical *tigh dubh* or black house, a

"hut constructed with loose stones, ranged for the most part with some tendency to circularity, placed where the wind cannot act upon it with violence. When we entered, we found an old woman boiling goats-flesh in a kettle. She spoke little English, but we had interpreters at hand; and she was willing enough to display her whole system of economy. She has five children, of which none are yet gone from her. The eldest, a boy of thirteen,
and her husband, who is eighty years old, were at work in the wood. Her next two sons were gone to Inverness to buy meal, by which oatmeal is always meant. Meal she considered as expensive food, and told us, that in Spring, when the goats gave milk, the children could live without it. She is mistress of sixty goats and I saw many kids in an enclosure at the end of her house. She also had some poultry. By the lake we saw a potato garden, and a small spot of ground on which stood four shucks, containing each twelve sheaves of barley. She has all this from the labour of her own hands, and for what it is necessary to be bought, her kids and her chickens are sent to market." (Chapman, 1924, p 28).

In both Johnson and MacColla, the life that is lead is down-to-earth, self-sufficient at the homestead and community level, and tied to land and to seasons. "Manly pursuits" such as reiving (cattle rustling) and banditry are absent from these depictions. Communal work is a positive aspect of that life:

"I saw the harvest of a small field. The women reaped the corn, and the men bound up the sheaves. The strokes of the sickle were timed by the modulation of the harvest song, in which all their voices were united. They accompany in the Highlands every action, which can be done in equal time, with an appropriated strain, which has, they say, not much meaning; but its effects are regularity and cheerfulness."(Chapman, 1924, p 56).

These reports support a theory of Highland cultural survival that will emerge throughout this work. Marx understood that: "The bourgeoisie...has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal and idyllic relations...", ruthlessly tearing "the motley feudal ties that bound man to his natural superiors." (Marx and Engels, 1848, The Communist Manifesto, in Laslett, 1965, pp 16-17). Motley or not, and although the Highlander's social system may not have been strictly "feudal," (Darling, 1955, p 1) something has to be said for these "idyllic relations" if we are to understand the "actually existing" survival of the Highland culture and peasantry. It may not be possible to show causation, but it is clear to today's Highlanders, demonstrable from their words spoken or written about development, that
there is continuity, the emotional continuity of the crofter who refers to the four small acres his family broke in from the morass, the continuity of the township that still distributes peats to the old people, the continuity of the village *ceilidh* (a musical or other local get-together). And, whether the continuity is in fact "real" or merely perceived is actually a moot point. The fact that the extant culture perceives such continuity, that Highlanders do ground their culture in pre-Roman and later colonialist history is sufficient.

These earlier reports suggest that there was much to this life, values of sociability, richness of culture, and closeness to the land. This Highland understanding is continually found to be in opposition to the colonial economist’s apperception of material poverty and occupational drudgery – the prognosis of the "dismal science" that has been a common formula applied to traditional cultures since the industrial revolution. This was far from an "objective" or "scientific" economics which in a more enlightened day includes the concept of "revealed preference." Consider here the words of the most infamous "improver," John Loch, commissioner to the estates of Sutherland for Lord and Lady Stafford:

"Contented with the poorest and simplest fare and, like all mountaineers, accustomed to a roaming, unfettered life which attached them in the strongest manner to the habits and homes of their fathers, they deemed no new comfort worth the possessing which was to be acquired at the price of industry; no improvement worthy of adoption if it was to be obtained at the expense of sacrificing the customs or leaving the hovels of their ancestors." (Loch, quoted in Prebble, 1963, p 56).

According to Prebble (1963) like many other colonial economists, Loch displayed an almost religious zeal."In an age when gentlemen beat children regularly to their lessons with a zealous belief in the righteousness of every blow, James Loch naturally thought it proper that the people of Sutherland should be pulled out of the past by the scuff of their necks." (Prebble, 1963, p 57).

Rather than leave the Highlanders to their land and traditions, the colonial
economist preferred the alternative, which at the time of these reports was to give it all up, to go to the city and to become a wage laborer. Since the city was usually Glasgow, which had some of the worst conditions of any British industrial city, the continuing attraction of the peasant life becomes more understandable. The Highlander's report below describes the aftermath of the evacuation of one of the most remote Highland communities, as late as 1930. The shock from the loss of place and community and the values they provide is so great as to cause premature death:

"The story of the islanders after the evacuation is not a happy one. Most went as planned to live in Morvern, Argyll and work for the Forestry Commission, but they lacked the determination to begin life afresh. Some drifted to the cities, where they found it even harder to adapt to the different conditions. Although they kept in touch with each other as best they could, the bonds which had once united them were broken, the community forever dispersed. As for the older people, the shock of the sudden and drastic change often proved too severe and many died soon after arriving on the mainland. Some who were not so old died nevertheless of a similar complaint, Others stayed homesick all their lives and wandered back in the summer months to live in their old homes. They were unable to forget and had no wish to do so. Ten years after the evacuation an islander called Alexander Ferguson wrote in a letter to the Earl of Dumfries: "I think there is no paradise on earth like it. On Friday last I hired a motor boat to go to Shillay, and standing on top of that island I saw St. Kilda under a white cap of summer haze. I felt like Moses when he viewed the promised land from Pisgah's heights."(MacLean, 1972, p 143).

Immediately after this evacuation, the landowner, MacLeod of Dunvegan received 400 applications from would-be new St. Kildans wishing to go to this tiny archipelago to take up where the "primitives" had left off (MacLean, 1972, p 141). Although the village agriculture system would decline elsewhere in Europe, a remnant would survive in the Highlands, where township people would be intensely occupied for two centuries with the difficulty of keeping their communities upon the land, often in conflict with landlords who could and would use classical economic theory to justify their actions.
It is fair to say that the Highlands are an example of a Western society in which the otherwise essential process of privatization was and is incomplete. Why did private ownership and management fail to completely subsume the Highlands? The simple answer, to be elaborated in subsequent chapters, is that there was resistance from within a Gaelic culture that valued communality and place above all else. The possibility that this value system extended to other pre-capitalist cultures has not escaped the attention of theorists.

Commenting in *The World We Have Lost*, historian Peter Laslett has this to say about the non-material compensations of communal agriculture:

"Even in the twentieth century, the limits to economic rationality in farming are still in evidence, in the socialist as well as the capitalist areas of the world. But three hundred years ago, this issue could scarcely arise. Working the land, managing, nurturing a family were one and the same thing, and could no more be rationalized than the cherishing of a wife and the bringing up of children." (Laslett, 1965, p 77-78).

If there is, as Laslett says, a limit to rationality, some kind of reward-system exists that is based less on economic rationality and more on those subjective ties and satisfactions that land and kin could provide. Something of this reward system survives in the Highlands. Limited communality is a strategy that is characteristic of crofting, inherited from *run-rig*. Although the extent to which cooperation was used -- and in what form it was used -- changes and declines through the years, cooperation persists today. The report below is from the Progressive period of development grants to crofting communities, providing a homely appreciation of community life and reciprocity in the modern age:

"When the next stage came along -- a splendid bungalow for the croft -- the labor force was at hand and some outlying communities throve by building each other’s houses. A JCB digger was available at weekends when not on hire to the county. Concrete block work? No problem. A joiner? Well Willie John over at Dunmore would be free next weekend.

Crofting’s community spirit would prove ideally suited for the task of
providing sound houses in remote and difficult areas, where outside contractors would have been financially out of the question. In any case, townships had been working together since the days of re-roofing 'black house....."\textsuperscript{26}

\textsuperscript{26}Crofter Iain Thompson (Hetherington, 1990, pp 77-78).
IV) The Trail of the Survivor:
The Privatization Era in Highland Development,
1746-1886

And they make their moves around the virgin light
Leave their filthy stains on the clear and bright
But hope can never be restrained
Where freedom's hand has been nailed and chained
And the shy ones bleed while the sure ones fail
On the trail of the survivor
Dougie MacLean

The title of this chapter is taken from a recording by folksinger Dougie MacLean.
MacLean's work over the last decade is a personal narrative -- one man's take on Highland history. In this and many other songs, MacLean explains the story of this chapter in the most evocative way. MacLean's song is a poetic critique of development and developers; a cry against the "moves" they make and the subsequent problems they create for MacLean's people, the "shy ones" and the "sure ones." MacLean's complaint is for the Scottish Highlands and their economic history, which for decades was dominated by external forces seeking to privatize previously communal ecological resources. His songs are often dominated by a popular modern restatement of the Highlander's traditional case against privatization.

MacLean's song is not without romantic bias of the kind that Marinell Ashe warns against. The history of the Privatization Era in the Highlands has been continually romanticized in countless ways. The repertoire of Highland folk music, for instance, is replete with songs ancient and modern, of the plaintive weeping of women after eviction, or the wild defiance of the Highland military in the 1745 rebellion. As in Chapter III's history of the ancient Gaelic lifestyle, it will not do to simply ignore this romanticism in typical "objective" reporting, for the fact is that romanticism leads to both theory and
activism, and changes the arrangement of powerful forces in the Highlanders’ lives. In the accounts that follow, an attempt is made to understand the causal texture of romantic legend as it affects Highland realpolitik.

CULLODEN: THE BEGINNING OF PRIVATIZATION

The incomplete yet wrenching changeover from communal to private arrangements of land tenure spans centuries of Highland history, but can be dated most conveniently to 1746. The battle of Culloden, in April of 1746, was the last military battle of any significance to be fought on British soil. As I have mentioned above, for historians, Culloden would become the turning point of Highland history. In their analyses, using the language and sense of political history, Culloden commonly marks a turning point in the demise of the clan system, the history of kings, princes, great religions and other nation-level issues. To the ecological analysis presented here, Culloden accelerates the decline of *run-rig* -- the communal agriculture system that raised and fed the soldiers of the Prince’s army. The communal system would decline, mutate and eventually survive, by hook and crook, in emasculated form as crofting agriculture.

The Battle of Culloden pitched an amateur Highland army loyal to the Catholic Stuart family, previously the Royal Family of both Scotland and England, against regular troops and mercenaries in the pay of the Hanoverian dynasty. In terms of the history of political power, of battles between religions, of kings and their armies, Culloden is perhaps best seen as the final military campaign of a victorious Protestant revolution, a conflict decades long that had been played out mostly in England between English factions (although Scots had been involved from the start). The Stuarts were a Catholic line whose loyalty to Church and Rome had been in conflict for generations with the ever-stronger Protestant, mercantile, capitalist hegemony that was well-established in England by the 17th century. The last legitimate Stuart monarch being thrown out of London by the
"Glorious Revolution" of 1688, the Jacobite cause removed first to proxy battlefields in Ireland, then to Scotland and Culloden. This revolution was not, then, originally much of a Highland conflict. It was an English, or at most a English and Lowland Scots conflict, whose origins can be traced back, through the English Civil War to Henry VIII's establishment of the Protestant church in England. It shouldn't have been a Highlander's fight. For the Highlander, using twenty-twenty hindsight, things would have certainly been better left alone. But a portion of the Highland chiefs would recognize the elder Stuart, James, as their King, their chief of chiefs.

At this time, for the majority of this group of chiefs and their people, to be Catholic was part of the list of things necessary to be a Highlander. And part of what it meant to be Catholic was that you followed the Pope's temporal rule. The Pope -- as well as that traditional enemy of England, the French -- supported the Stuarts. Those Highland Clans that had been influenced by the teachings of Calvin and Knox stayed, for the most part, well out of trouble. Catholic Highlanders would be forced in great numbers, as was the custom, to follow their leaders and suffer.

Weber linked the teachings of Calvin (and by inference, those of the Scottish Calvinist, John Knox) to the rise of privatization and Catholicism to the maintenance of Marx's "motley" feudal and communal ties (Weber, 1904-5, pp 35-46). The Weberian thesis is borne out in part by the Highland experience. Knowledgeable commentators remarked on the superior communality of residual Catholic districts as late as 1955 (Darling, 1955, p 315). The Highlands were not particularly unique in experiencing the rise of privatization over traditional communal systems, but nowhere else in Britain did the failure of communalism precipitate such a long drawn-out social crisis as it did in the Highlands after Culloden.\(^27\) Although the Highland chiefs and their clans might have mistakenly chosen to be embroiled with the Stuart or "Jacobite" cause and their long-drawn-out counter-revolution, that political conflict, if we follow Weber's (and Marx's)
historical view, was simply "noise," minor fluctuations on the graph of a larger conflict. That larger conflict was between the encroaching agricultural and industrial revolutions, and the age-old, village-based economic system, between privatization and communalism.

To a Weberian/Marxist analysis, Culloden was a mere skirmish on a messy frontier of enclosure; a frontier whose destiny made manifest would be to drive westwards until it ground to a halt, at least in Western society, on the North American plains. A good, arbitrary date for the first reversal of Western privatization might be the 1890s, with the rise of Progressive federal land management in America, the rise of the modern conservation movement, and the modern stand for common-use rights over private-use rights. Struggles such as those in the eighteenth-century Highlands and on the nineteenth-century American plains continue today in the Amazon, in Sarawak, in Papua New Guinea.

Marxism aside, this analysis is a formalization of a view which is reflected in the Highlanders' own self-image, can be supported using their words and texts, and which can be seen to drive modern innovations such as Highland Development which deliberately aim to reinvigorate communalism. Culloden, therefore, is of extreme importance as the date from which Highlanders themselves trace their environmental and cultural alienation.

The Jacobite counter-revolution had many minor campaigns and two major risings, one in 1715 and the last in 1745. The last would prove to be the most threatening to the Hanoverian Royals and their Protestant supporters, and in its harsh aftermath, the Highland culture and economy would be violently subjugated. I wish to emphasize the effect of this history of subjugation on the Highland imagination.

The story has often been told and written, "one of the most dramatic and heroic episodes in British history...." (Black, p 66). In July, 1745, the latest son of the Stuart line, young Prince Charles, or Tcharlach as he would be called in the Gaelic, a child-like youth of 26, born in Rome and raised in Paris, would sail from France, land on the primitive island of Eriskay and would proceed to the mainland of Scotland above the
Highland line. On August 19th 1745, Charles would raise his standard at Glenfinnan and rally the clans. Not all the Highland chiefs would be willing to be embroiled in the Jacobite cause, particularly those who had embraced Protestantism. The Hanoverian Government could count on the support of many of the most prominent tribes, particularly "the Campbells, Mackays, Munros and Sutherlands." (Prebble, 1961, p 37). Nevertheless, Charles was not without confidence. At Glenfinnan, as the standard was raised, he made a speech declaring that "he had come to Scotland to make his subjects happy, a claim that may have sounded somewhat strange to his listeners who had been raised only by the threat from their clan leader that otherwise their dwellings would be burnt over their heads." (Prebble, 1961, p 70).

The 1745 campaign would penetrate the heartland of England and reach the town of Derby, only a few short days march from London. Londoners would panic. Victory would seem plausible, especially with the prospect of French help. The Jacobite leaders thought they might gain support as the army marched, from dissident elements in England. They did, a miniscule contribution. As a result, supply lines extended, deep in an enemy hinterland, at Derby the Highland army would lose confidence, retreat to Scotland, then to the Highlands, finally to face bloody and unmitigated defeat on Culloden Muir, on April 16, 1746. So much for the political story.

This retreat and final defeat would be fraught with difficulties rising from the underlying conflict of economic and ecological systems. The '45 rebellion would be a model of things to come, as a newer, more productive economic and ecological system was pitted against an older less intensely productive system. If the Highland army had refrained from territorial conquest, or from seeking to regain the crown of Britain for the Stuarts, then the outcome might have been different. History has proven the possibility of the eventual success of guerilla warfare in Vietnam and other conflicts since 1745. Irregular soldiers -- fighting on their own people's ground, hiding in rough terrain, engaging only
on favorable terms -- might beat regular trained troops, or at least force negotiations by
inflicting constant and severe casualties. But the Stuart dynasty's goal was to win back
Britain. This goal would require committing the Highlanders to territorial warfare,
including pitched battles against regular troops.

Among the ecological factors involved, the Highlanders were communal farmers,
fiercely amateur soldiers who fought best for their own land and way of life. The British
army was braced with trained mercenaries from Protestant strongholds such as Germany
and Holland. These regular soldiers were not economically tied to the land or to home
villages, and could continue the march year-round without worry about the worsening
situation at home, as long as supply lines were working. They were expert at pitched
battles and could rely on fortifications and cannon, two luxuries the light-marching
Highland irregulars would rarely enjoy. The Lowland Scottish campaign began in
September, the march that successfully threatened London began in November. The
Highland Army spent most of the fall campaigning. Autumn was harvest time, and male
labour was needed in the clachans and villages of the Highlands. The Prince's army had
lost Highland strength through desertion, after successfully taking much of Edinburgh,
long before the advance through England, which reached Derby in the late autumn and
early winter of 1745. Once the retreat from Derby began, a remnant of Highlanders would
find themselves campaigning in the Scottish lowlands through the winter, with home fires
and spring planting much on their minds. After the failure of the Battle of Falkirk and an
unsuccessful siege of Edinburgh Castle, the Jacobite leaders decided to retreat to the
Highlands.

On February 1st, 1746 the order was given to retreat. In a dramatic demonstration
of the strength of the problem of underlying social and ecological affiliations, many
Highlanders would take the opportunity to desert, a temporary respite. They headed for
home. The Prince's army numbered 8,000 at Falkirk, but on the retreat from Edinburgh:
"As soon as the rebels passed the Forth, the men deserted fast, so that they were not above 3,000 when they went through Crieff; they marched in a great hurry to Perth." (Prebble, 1961, p 146).

The Battle of Culloden would come within a few months. The Prince would rally the Highlanders, and many would respond faithfully, coming to Inverness in early April 1746, for what was plaintively hoped would be a victorious campaign. But King George II's son, William, Duke of Cumberland, would arrive with a large army at Nairn, just a few miles out of town. The other king's son, Prince Tcharlach, would brush aside his Highland Chiefs and their pleas to retire to the mountains and fight a guerrilla operation, instead choosing to take the British Army in battle. That battle would be on Culloden Muir on a wet, blustery, Highland Wednesday. The clansmen would fight bravely despite the overwhelming discipline of the British army, but no sensible tactician would have given them any chance at the onset. The Highlanders fought with the broadsword, the Highland "claymore," and the furious Celtic charge. The British had cannon and rifle-discipline, and were able to fire volley after volley into the Highlanders before the order to charge would be given. Shot cartridges, a recent invention, would permit cannon to be loaded and reloaded in seconds with spraying balls of iron and lead. The Highlanders would be destroyed by the hundreds by this shot, before they were allowed to advance. The order was supposed to be given by the pathetic Charles, who by now, against the advice of wiser Highland chiefs, had taken direct control of the army. The order never came. That Highland loyalty faced an extreme test. "Above the firing of the guns and the playing of the pipes, the beating of drums and the yell of Belford’s gunners, the clansmen called upon their chiefs as children to a father, asking for the order "Claymore" that would put them to the onset." (Prebble, 1961, p 93). Finally the Highlanders would break ranks and, in pockets of a few hundred here and there along the line, the charge began, valiant in the extreme, but doomed already by the cannonade of shot, by the new facts of war on an industrial scale. It was a bloody debacle, later to be made into a glorious and sacred defeat:
"The theory argued of course, that no enemy would continue to advance over its own dead when they lay four deep on the ground before a British battalion in line. Like most arguments in theory, it was frequently confounded in practice. British infantrymen had lost their heads before this, and today, on one part of the field ahead, the enemy was to climb, fight, and crawl over its dead to reach the red coats and the red bayonets....the first murderous discharge of grape, the balls and the iron whispering and whistling their killing way. Father stumbled over son, brother over brother in the sudden slaughter." (Prebble, 1961, p 25).

Though the lines above are redolent with pathos, it is interesting to note the emphasis on clan ties. The death had a communal quality, each clan took its place on the field according to rank and allegiance, and each sept and family would fight together within the clan, just as the mass graves at Culloden today bear only the name of each clan. Some would reach the British line, but to little avail. The battle was lost. British sentinels spent the next two nights listening to the cries of the wounded left on the moor. They were left for three days and two bitterly cold nights, and on Friday, those that were left were killed.

Of course, this is the stuff of which romantic, nationalist legends are made, helped along in this case by the writings of John Prebble, whose work is excerpted above. Note that "Highland Development" and the intensification of the Gaelic revival occurs at the same date -- the early 1960s -- as the popularization of this history by Prebble and other authors. The 1960s were a time of change and redefinition throughout Western society. A time when Western youth actively sought out a wilder heritage. Indians were the model for American hippies, with beads, long hair, buckskin and so on. In Britain, wild Highlanders became interesting to young social rebels. Prebble's book sold -- and still sells -- very well. It told a story that had been omitted by history teachers for generations.

Understand the effect that an intensified, popular, outside interest in this no less
bloody history has here -- in the shaping and changing of the Highlander's self-image. Culloden is a motif of Highland resistance, to be amplified by reflection in the eyes of an newly-accepting Lowland and English audience. The story of Culloden is linked eternally, in Highland cultural history, to the story of the enclosure or theft of the land, the Clearances that followed. John Prebble wrote two popular books, "Culloden" and "The Highland Clearances." The BBC ran a series, and made a movie about the 1745 Rising. Other books followed. The privatization era is understood today, to a great extent, in the Highlands and elsewhere, through a perspective based on these two books and other publications.

Enclosure and privatization had gained a foothold in the Highlands before Culloden, but it took the wholesale social collapse that followed the '45 Rebellion to bring fresh speed to the plans and the avarice of the "improvers." In the opposition to these improvements, the memory of Culloden would surface again and again as a crux or turning point for the Highlands, until eventually it gained the aspects of a holy defeat, a collective good Friday on which whole clans of ancestors literally died for their descendant's sins. As a significant focus of Scottish national and Highland regional grievance, Culloden is of similar standing as Wounded Knee or the 1877 Nez Perce Rebellion is to Native Americans. Certainly, the name continues to have political power today, as ammunition for Scottish Nationalists, even if it is only as a slogan scrawled on a wall -- "remember Culloden!"

This is not to say that the human impact of Culloden was not immense at the time. Culloden was a unequal bloodbath. Perhaps half of the four thousand Highlanders who took the field were killed, for a loss of around fifty soldiers of the British Army. The Highlands were no longer a military threat to privatizing and "improving" forces. A new economy and ecology of life would result.

This change from communal to private land use -- disregarding the importance of
Culloden and the Clearances as a *motif* for Highlanders -- was never an exclusively Highland experience, despite the tendency of nationalistic sentiment to make it so. Americans will instantly recognize themes present in the subjugation of Indian people. These kinds of statistics would soon become familiar wherever the industrial economy met the pre-industrial. The weapons and tactics put into use at Culloden would prove equally capable against other communal tribespeople, elsewhere in the rising British Empire. And on a piecemeal, rather than wholesale scale, the same process occurred at one time or another for all of Britain. I have already said that village-based cooperative agriculture was the most widespread of land-use patterns in the British Isles before enclosure. It follows that the end of this adaptation also occurred across the country. The history of the enclosure movement is well-documented. The rest of the British Isles experienced the rise of privatization in a similar and often equally wrenching way. The process started with the Norman conquest, was particularly accelerated in the fourteenth century after the black plague decimated villages, and was an economic grievance underlying English peasant rebellions until the industrial revolution. The understanding that a similar enclosure had occurred also in England is usually studiously ignored in nationalistic descriptions of Culloden, the Clearances and the Highlander's "unique" adventure with communality. Scottish historians have "failed to correct the popular notion that events such as the Jacobite rising of 1745 and the Highland Clearances were struggles between the Scots and the English." (McCrone, 1992, p 19). This bias plays squarely into the hands of the more virulent nationalist movement. Alternately, an ecological analysis such as that proferred by Highland-born scholar-activist Alistair MacIntosh, of Edinburgh University's Center for Human Ecology, finds world-wide parallels to Highland resistance against alienation and enclosure, such as the English Digger movement of Gerard Winstanly, the North English Luddite Movement, the modern struggle of the Penan of Sarawak to save their rainforest and so on (MacIntosh *et al*, 1994).
AFTER CULLODEN: ENCLOSURE AND CLEARANCE

The Highlanders' rebellious spirit was broken after Culloden, and with it the will of the Highlands to resist British rule, British law and the increasingly "rational" (others might say colonial) British economic method. The first task was to secure sovereignty for the Hanoverian dynasty and the exploitation that would follow. Culloden's aftermath was a violent subjugation of the Highlands that is understood today in Highlanders' descriptions of the "grey years." The first to suffer were the prisoners of war from the defeated Highland army, who were executed, committed to desperate prisons, or transported. Laws followed abrogating the tribal jurisdictions in favor of the English legal system. Jacobite clans were temporarily dispossessed, their lands given as booty to English or loyalist Scottish landlords. The indigenous rights, the "old impression" of communal land-ownership, were removed. Colorful physical manifestations of Highland culture, kilts, bagpipes and such were proscribed by special laws designed to force assimilation to British rule and to the British economy, and these years were called the grey years. In time, a kind of peace was made between the Highlands and the burgeoning Empire, based on economic and military ties, yet built on the memory of subjugation and the fact of alienation and privatization. Eventually, even Jacobite Chieftains could be recast as landlords. Enclosure of the land was a natural consequence of the new hegemony.

Much social theory was invented to rationalize subjugation and enclosure. As in the privatization of Native American land, social thinkers from England and the Scottish Lowlands wrestled manfully with the issue of the lazy and barbaric Highlander. Their outlook was Protestant, imbued by the sense of superiority that had permeated British Protestantism since the Glorious Revolution, buoyed up by the confidences gained of the agricultural revolution and military success in the Empire, terribly prejudiced against Catholics, despising of the pagan superstitions of "savages" such as the Highlanders. Enclosure was a necessary "improvement." The possibility that the Highlanders had
already worked out an efficient economy that made wise use of the landscape and resources in a comprehensive and sustainable way escaped the attention of most of these thinkers. The Highlanders were barbarians and needed to feel the benefits of the mercantile and industrial economies now booming throughout the British sphere of influence. To be kind, to attempt any understanding of such people would prove cruel in the end, merely serving to prolong the inevitable pain of transformation. A formulation of the "Highland Problem" emerged. The charges are familiar to students of the Native American experience: indolence; paganism; and barbarity.

Paganism was a fair charge. Under the Celtic Catholicism predominant in the Highlands, the land itself had a certain sacredness. There were gods and small folk to be placated under every bush and rock, and the Highlanders "superstition" was a legendary source of despite among Lowlanders. Highland Catholicism, soon to be largely exterminated, had long made peace with the pre-Christian tradition. It was less catholic than the Roman variety, "a liberal Catholicism which is the descendant of the Columban Church." (Darling, 1955, p 315). The lingering pre-Christian tradition and Catholicism served as ammunition to prove the general thesis of savagery. In addition, as Weber would find later, the communality of Catholicism was a drag on the individualism necessary for capitalism.

Barbarity and indolence are less convincing charges. The common opinion of the Highlander in the era shortly after Culloden was not flattering: "To an Englishman of the eighteenth century, and to most Lowland Scots, the Highlands of Scotland were a remote and unpleasant region peopled by barbarians who spoke an obscure tongue, who dressed in skins or bolts of parti-colored cloth and who equated honour with cattle-stealing and murder."(MacIntosh et al, 1994). The first necessity was to make the Highlands safe for British law. One of the erstwhile "social theorists" to take this problem on was a Lowland Scottish jurist, Duncan Forbes:
"It has been thought for a great many years impracticable (and hardly thought safe to try it) to give the law its course among the mountains. It required no small degree of courage, and a greater degree of power than men are generally possessed of, to arrest an offender or debtor in the midst of his Clan."28

This distaste for law had to be eradicated before any "productive" economic system could be established, especially since, as Forbes was aware, the Highland habits were maintained through force. Culloden offered an opportunity to solve this Highland problem:

"The inhabitants" stuck "close to their anteint [sic] and idle way of life; retain their barbarous customs and maxims; depend generally on their Chiefs as their Sovereign Lords and masters; and being accustomed to the use of Arms, and inured to hard living, are dangerous to the public peace; and must continue to be so until, being deprived of Arms for some years, they forget the use of them." 29

On Forbes' and other's advice, there was a Disarming Act to remove the collections of arms that chiefs and clansmen until then had accumulated. There would be a Heritable Jurisdictions Act to remove the various traditional offices of Highland Government and replace them with appointees loyal to the Crown. And a Proscription Act would ban the Highland mode of dress, the bagpipes, and the singing of Gaelic songs. All were seen as aiding the military spirit of the Highlanders (MacIntosh et al, 1994). And yet, apart from the temporary dispossession of major rebels, there would be no immediate attempt to remove the non-Jacobite Highland Chiefs from their Clans and land possessions. Eventually, even the Jacobites would be reinstated. Instead, these native chiefs were encouraged to employ the more feudal relationships practiced by their English peers.

The English and Lowland opinion of the Highland way of life soon began to make

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28 Written in 1746 by Lord President of the Scottish Court of Session Duncan Forbes (Prebble, 1961, pp 34, 35).
29 Ibid
an impression on the chiefs and lairds. The old loyalties were weakened beyond recognition. A Highland chief, if he had money to spend, would be welcome, as a sort of romantic, second-class aristocrat in Edinburgh or London. His son might be a catch for the second daughter of an English lord. At home in the Highlands, more likely than not, he would be readily reminded of the poverty of his clansmen, each of whom had a blood claim on him. Since these were the same people that his London or Edinburgh friends thought of as savages, it is no great wonder then that the bureaucracy of the English style of feudal relationship would appear cleaner and freer of tangles than an old-fashioned chiefdom.

With the social thinkers on the one hand and the chiefs on the other, reason and avarice would make a virtue out of any prejudice. In time, the process of replacing the old Celtic stratification with a more feudal relationship would be completed at the hand of these chiefs. This more distant stratification, foreign to the Gaelic way, would weaken the old communalism and encourage privatization and enclosure. Some chiefs still responded to the ancient responsibilities, but most weakened and turned away from the old idea of chieftainship and manhood. And in order to fund the new aspirations of these aristocrats, some more efficient means of producing and extracting a social surplus needed to be found. In this way, the authority of the Highland chiefs was given wholesale to the scheme of improvement and enclosure.

It has yet to be fully recognized in some quarters in the Highlands that the prime instigators of enclosure would eventually be the same Highland chiefs and their officers. There have always been a few exceptions. English capital was interested in Highland lands and encouraging of privatization, but if a laird chose to maintain the old ways (although without arms, now proscribed), nothing in the law of the land could stop him. Some did choose to do this, and in a few isolated pockets of the Highlands, enclosure did not proceed and communalism, even Catholicism prevailed with the aid of the chiefs. Other communities, faced with enclosure, would be forced to remove their ecological and social system and set it up again in less fertile situations, still maintaining the communal way of
life without aid from their chiefs. Some chiefs took the middle road, removing communities, but recognizing the need for *run-rig* and investing the new communities with less fertile land and materials for houses. Others gave land of poor quality and no materials. With few alternatives, with or without their traditional leaders, in this fashion *run-rig* communities began the evolution into crofting townships (Hunter, 1976).

New economies and new products would be found for the Highlands by these chiefs-turned-landlords, beginning a long and tedious history of "developments." For the next two centuries and more, the Highlands would suffer the imposition of externally-generated schemes of development based on enclosure and the supposed efficiencies of the industrial system. Thus begins our traditional litany of Highland products: blood and bone;30 black cattle; kelp; sheep; and deer. Despite privatization, however, a weakened Highland communalism would endure to inform Highland Development.

**IMPOSED DEVELOPMENT, IMPOSED RELIGION: FACTORS OF DECLINE**

Soon after Culloden, British Generals, aware of the Highlander's abilities as a soldier, looked to the Highlands as a place to raise "blood and bone" for regiments. As social thinkers like Duncan Forbes were still busy explaining to themselves how inferior the Highlander was, chiefs with a military bent would use their clan allegiances to raise great Highland regiments manned by these "inferior" Highland troops, which would fight colonial wars for the British and gain fame and fortune for their chiefs. Just a few short years after Culloden, many of the troops in the Canadian wars were Highlanders, led by Highland "lairds." Perhaps influenced by this and other displays of loyalty to the Crown and integration with the Empire, and consistent with the respect for property elements of classical capitalist theory, the few Highland estates forfeited after Culloden were restored to the rebels or their heirs in 1784. Returned, however, with written and exclusive title for the owners, completing the legal process of enclosure.

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30The phrase blood and bone comes from *The Highland Clearances* (Prebble, 1969, p 295).
Under run-rig, some of the excess production of timber products, cattle, goats and sheep would find its way to markets in the Lowlands and England, but most production went to feed peasants on the land. With the introduction of the potato, combined with the new rule of law, the end of reiving and feuding, the effect was to release the human population from the traditional ecological checks. As productivity of people rose, population rose, but productivity per capita declined (Darling, 1955, p 69). Just at that time after Culloden when the newly Anglicized Chiefs, now more accurately termed "landlords," would need more rents to pay for their increasingly expensive aristocratic habits. "Congested districts" were not productive of marketable surplus that could be used for rents.31 The landlord might instead use this population to get political capital in London by raising regiments for colonial wars.

The "blood and bone" tradition would be deeply ingrained, until the twentieth-century, when the slaughter of military-age males in World War I was so severe that the Highlands were able to use this sacrifice to extract political benefit, in the way of laws pertaining to the preservation of their way of life. The Highlands would become a breeding-ground for soldiers, and the blood-letting would continue, slowed only by the Clearances, until 1945 and the end of World War II, a war in which Highlanders played -- again -- far more than their proportionate role. In the 1950s Fraser Darling reported on the survival of this tradition:

"The laird, especially if he is an hereditary one, is accepted as a leader almost without question. He is, as the young men of the estate are, in the Territorials. He goes to camp with them each year, he goes to war with the men of his own place, in the 51st division or the Lovat Scouts, and all too often they have died together in battle."

The tradition of military service as an option for Highland youth still continues today.

31 A phrase used by 19th and early 20th century British policy-makers to refer to rural "overpopulation" in Ireland and Scotland. The implication was that it was unproductive to raise people where beasts could be raised instead.
There are still Highland Regiments in the British Army. Each Highland village maintains its memorial to the "men of this district who fell in the Great War." Each memorial was re-carved in 1945. In some instances, the numbers of names on the memorial are greater than the present male population of the village. These memorials of war -- combined with stories and images of kilted Highlanders fighting in the trenches, at Trobriuk, El Alamein, and, most evocatively bravely, blithely piping landing craft ashore at Normandy under heavy German fire -- sit side by side with the name of Culloden as icons in the Highlanders historical self-image.

Other chiefs began to sell the trees that grew on the land, and a program of felling contributed, with the wet climate and increase in grazing pressure, to deforestation that remains a problem today. Trees, managed this way, were a one-time only cash source. War-making was decidedly risky. It could be readily seen that there were alternative economic possibilities that could be more productive of money on a regular basis than trees or regiment-raising. Landlords began to turn their minds to other uses of the land.

One solution was inspired by the blockades run by the French navy in the Napoleonic wars. For a time, landlords developed a system of economy in coastal districts around the business of gathering kelp, which could be burned to provide a phosphate-rich powder that would be used in manufactures and as a fertilizer. A landlord could move his tenants lock, stock and barrel to the shores, set them up in impoverished subsistence villages close to the seaweed itself, and pay them a pittance to process it while he maintained an expensive lifestyle in London or Edinburgh. Since the tenants still thought of themselves as clan members, and since they had few alternatives, they would go. Each new village would be just large enough to provide a meager subsistence, the poverty of which would force the people to work ever harder at burning seaweed. It was an impressively simple system of exploitation that led eventually, in concert with other imposed economies, to the common size, form and function of typical crofting township today. A community would remove to the new coastal site with all its chattels and encumbrances, build its own
tighan dubh (black houses) and kailyards, and set to work. James Hunter has traced the origin of the traditional crofting activities, part-time farming combined with part-time work in another occupation -- "pluriactivity" -- to this kelp-burning economy (Hunter, 1976). This coastal movement left a vacuum in the glens of the interior. Some form of privatized grazing economy could be developed and substituted for the run-rig economy on these empty lands. The first large scale "rationalization" of the grazing economy can be traced to these kelp-related clearances. Other clearances would follow without any alternative scheme worked out for the villagers.

It would not prove to be politically simple to do this. There was a rising romantic and revolutionary movement in Europe. The people had, until recently, owned rights to the land in common. Some rationale was needed that could be publicly displayed, at least in London or Edinburgh where chiefs were considerate of their reputations. A facet of the social theory that had already been employed to justify the subjugation of the Highlands was the perceived indolence of the population. The Highlanders were portrayed as lazy and unproductive, providing a justification for removing them, by force if necessary, to some region of the country or Empire where they could be put to "rational labor." The land could then also be used for some alternative and more marketable product:

"Lord and Lady Stafford were pleased humanely to order a new arrangement of this Country. That the interior should be possessed by Cheviot shepherds and the people brought down to the coast and placed there in lotts [sic] under the size of three arable acres, sufficient for the maintenance of an industrious family, but pinched enough to cause them to turn their attention to the fishing. I presume to say that the proprietors humanely ordered this arrangement, because, it was surely a most benevolent action, to put these barbarous hordes into a position where they could better Associate [sic] together, apply to industry, educate their children and advance in civilization."32

32The writing of Patrick Sellar, factor to the Sutherland Estate (Hunter, 1976).
It seems interesting to contrast the social theory that the Highlanders were intrinsically indolent with the economic notion about communal farming in general. On the one hand, the Highlanders were lazy and populous. On the other hand, they practiced a communal farming that was inefficient, unproductive, and not of great material intensity. How on earth did they manage to feed this population? What seems closer to the truth is that the old system was indeed productive, having satisfactions of a kind that were adequate when seen through Highland eyes, with a Highland aesthetic. Few of these satisfactions could be creamed off by landlords and bartered for the cash that was needed to be a convincing Highland laird in the late seventeenth and early nineteenth century upper-class social scene in Edinburgh or London.

There began a long series of clearances, by which the people of the villages were dispossessed of much of the land that they and their ancestors had worked for subsistence and satisfaction in the communal, Celtic way of things.

"It was at this time that the flockmasters of the Southern Uplands looked northwards at the potentialities of the newly grassed, deforested lands. Such fresh sward was ideal for the pasturage of sheep on the Southern Upland plan. The flockmasters began to offer rents for the grazings -- sometimes three to four times what they had been before -- which seemed princely to the lairds, who found that they were living above their means. But sheep grazing by the foreign Blackface sheep on the extensive, extractive system found small tenants on the valley lands a distinct encumbrance, and their lands were needed for wintering. The breaks in the earlier ecological integration of laird and small tenant, chief and clansman, had been many and grievous, and what would have been unthinkable a hundred years earlier now seemed expedient even right, namely, the eviction of the folk from the glens to inhospitable places on the coast, where often enough, land had to be made anew. There seems to have been a hope that the people would take up fishing as their livelihood, a hope that has not been justified by results." (Darling, 1955, p 4).
An organized system of eviction was worked out that could be repeated by each laird who made the decision to change his economy. First came the notice to quit, often in the summer when travel for soldiers and police was easier, but with the peoples’ crops yet unharvested. If the laird had some alternative place or industry for the tenants, they would be sent there, as in the kelping business, where they often had to build up their houses by themselves. If there was resistance, the laird had recourse to the law, and the constables would accompany the laird’s "factor" or land manager to the cottages, where the tenants would be forced to leave, the roof-trees of the houses pulled down and the wood and thatch burned to prevent the house from being raised again. The handed-down memory of this injustice, the severing of that last link between clan and chief, is painful for Highlanders even today, forming part of the mythology of Highland self-imaging. Fraser-Darling collected stories well into the 1950s when there were still "plenty of well-attested eyewitness accounts of the burnings of poor people’s roofs, their small furniture not being spared, and in one instance, even the poor scorched, escaping cat being thrown back into the flames." (Darling, 1955, p 6).

If the tenants were to be embarked for the colonies, ships would be contracted and would appear in the harbor. Tenants would be forced onto the ships, often to arrive as intact septs, villages and even clans in the New World. Here is a first-hand account written down in 1928 of a clearance from an island village:

"Many a thing I have seen in my own day and generation. Many a thing, O Mary, Mother of the black sorrow. I have seen the townships swept and the big holdings being made out of them, the people being driven out of the countryside to the streets of Glasgow and the wilds of Canada, such of them as did not die of hunger and plague and smallpox while going over the ocean. I have seen the women putting the children in the carts which were being sent from Benbecula and the Iochdar to Loch Boisdale, while their husbands lay bound in the pen and were weeping beside them, without power to give them a helping hand, though the women themselves were crying aloud and their little children wailing like to break their hearts. I have seen the big strong men, the champions of the countryside, the stalwarts of
the world, being bound on Loch Boisdale quay and cast into the ship as would be done to a batch of horses or cattle in the boat, the bailiffs and ground-officers and the constables and the policemen gathered behind them in pursuit of them. The God of life and He only knows all the loathsome work of men on that day." (Quoted in MacIntosh et al, 1994).

As the quote above implies, the loss of confidence that resulted from the dispossession of these heroes of the clan took on a religious dimension that also reverberates to the present day. The "pagan," Catholic crofters, it seemed, were being punished by a stern and obviously Protestant God. Starting after Culloden, Calvinist missionaries from the south came to the Highlands, using this and other theories to capture congregations. People were converted *en masse* to the new religion.

Calvinism and economic development have often gone hand in hand. Calvinism preached that success in life was a sign of virtue or goodness, and revealed the possibility of heavenly salvation. Weber, in his famous treatise on Calvinism and capitalism, found this to be an essential component of early capitalist success, resulting in increased confidence (Weber, 1904-5, p 115). In the Highlands, it worked the other way. The conversion to Calvinism -- combined with the image of their own hell-bound poverty as seen through Calvinist eyes -- acted to send Highlanders' hopes and aspirations into despair. This created a dependency on these new ministers, which many would see as a central weakness underlying the Highlanders' response to the clearances. "The power of the pulpit" was "paramount," the people "plastic to its influence."33

There were some small compensations for Highlanders, beyond the possibility of entry to a capitalist heaven. Calvinist doctrines requiring democratic control of clergy and congregation gave crofters a new way to respond and resist, and churches and ministers would occasionally be at the forefront of resistance, particularly by the time of the Land League movement of the 1880s. Also, for almost a century and a half, the Calvinist

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33From *The Days of the Fathers* by Dr John Kennedy (Darling, 1955, p 313).
churches were the safest stronghold of the Gaelic tongue.

Sabbatarianism and puritanism were features of the new religion. Consequences are visible to this day. Many islands and townships essentially shut down on Sundays, causing friction between the advocates of the tourist trade and the devout. For example, on the island of Raasay there is a sign asking that visitors do not use the children’s park on Sundays. Such signs are common in the Highlands. Also, when Raasay Outdoor Centre wanted to hold a Sunday Tai Chi workshop for visitors, the Minister complained to the government agency, the center’s landlord. The workshop was banned as an unwanted and literally "pagan" influence. In another classic example, in the 1960s, civil disobedience techniques were used by ministers and Sabbatarian congregation members in an attempt to prevent the staging of a Sunday ferry run from the mainland to the Isle of Skye. The tourist-trade advocates won out, and the ferry ran.34 On Raasay, the unspoken compromise is that the Outdoor Centre will not intrude into the village on a Sunday. Centre activities are limited to the north end of the island, where, on a nice day, you can also find the less religiously-inclined islanders having picnics and visiting with each other over flasks of tea and bottles of beer.35 There is much hypocrisy:

"There was not a man in the audience
but took his creed from Geneva.

There was not a man in the band
who did not subscribe to the whole creed;

but before they left the graveyard
many a man understood the real distress.

Almost all the company understood
a thing that one would not whisper to himself alone:

34This controversy was continually documented in the local newspapers throughout the year.
that not a third of a third believed
in the lasting hell of their creed.36

Despite the fact that church attendance is in decline, particularly among the young, ministries still have considerable control over townships, and often a political change or economic development in an isolated community is dependent on the minister's word. This does not pass without challenge. For a group of Gaelic revivalist thinkers and writers, the lowest trough of the demise of the old organic Highland culture and spirit is seen as coming from the hands of these ministers. Highlanders were convinced by the ministers' power and their own lack of confidence to abandon the old sports and traditions, "[m]any a fiddle... being dramatically broken across the knee." (Darling, 1955, p 314). At one time or another, dancing, singing, poetry, even piping -- all the joys of Gaelic life -- would be proscribed by the new religion, creating the inevitability that many radicals and agents of change would need to step out of the Calvinist mainstream. When this happens, in the mythology of the Gaelic revival, the change is nearly always back to a communalistic, nature-centred spirituality that provides a source of strength for rebellion. In the Gaelic novel, The Albannach, an example of Gaelic revivalism written in the 1930s by Fionn MacColla (1932), the hero is raised in his community's eyes by the act of facing down the minister, at which point Calvinism goes into decline and Gaelic life is reinvigorated. The hero ridicules the minister's pretentiousness in public and succeeds in removing the church's influence over the community, eventually re-starting the story-telling, dancing and singing tradition. This and other similar revivalist myths began a tradition of humor-based resistance that is current to this day:

"From that evening his sway over the younger people was gone forever. They had seen him once in too ridiculous a light. Ever after, he was doomed to seem only preposterous.... The godly woke up to find their authority

36"Funeral in Clachan" (MacLean, 1987).
shattered and the fashion of constipation and the long face fallen into perpetual disrepute. They were at their wits' end, but not the godliest among them dared say a word openly for fear that Murchadh Iain Ruaidh would make a song about him." (MacColla, 1932, p 319).

For a radical core of Gaelic activists, a raising of interest in Gaelic culture, Gaelic religious traditions, and Gaelic musical traditions previously proscribed by the ministers would be seen as necessary to stimulating a sense of self-confidence in young Highlanders. It would, however, take many generations before this renewed interest would waken the old rebellious spirit to resistance. A commentator as late as 1870 found "a terrible fact, that from some cause or another, a craven, cowed, snivelling population has taken the place of the men of former days."

A few communities remained Catholic. Catholicism would never aim, as Presbyterianism so violently did, to completely wipe out the old Celtic folk religions and superstitions that bound the people to the land and each other in social and ecological reciprocity. Many of the other traditions also survived in these Catholic areas:

"Presbyterianism seems given to schism, and it is not unusual to find a small community split between three sects. This religious disunity makes for social disunity as well, and if the warring sects are all against music, dancing, or organized entertainment, social life goes dead. It follows that the social arts other than of conversation also die. We ourselves lived for some years on the border of an area where the religion was Catholic on one side of the river and Presbyterian on the other. The Presbyterian side was emancipating itself by degrees from Free Church domination and had reached the stage of having occasional dances. The music had to come from the Catholic side of the river, where the art of fiddling had persisted....

"The Catholic priest is commonly very busy about the townships seven days a week and exercises a real leadership and pastoral influence. Our observations lead us to the opinion that a very small and remote community

37 John Murdoch, writing in The Highlander newspaper in 1873, quoted in MacIntosh et al, 1994
would have a much greater chance of survival if it were Catholic than if it followed one of the stricter sects of Presbyterianism." (Darling, 1955, pp 315-316)

The ability of an improving landlord to make money out of his land depended on the market for wool. The bottom dropped out of the British wool market after European and colonial wars subsided in the mid 19th century. At the same time, Australia and New Zealand would begin to compete aggressively. Families began to lose money on Highland land. Those families with members who had the training and the brains would take the wealth they had so far accumulated and invest it elsewhere, and by this means some great families would survive in the Highlands. But most would fail, would sell out, and would leave. Great estates would be sold, and the only income that could be gained would be from the "sporting" market. By selling the rights to fish and hunt the mountain "wilderness," most holdings remained vast, intact even under new ownership, yet at a fraction of their former commercial value. However, newly rich Victorian industrialists loved to fish and hunt and ape the privileges of their former betters, and many purchased or rented Highland estates for this purpose. This unwittingly earning them the severe displeasure of Gaelic Highlanders who saw these resources as theirs by right, for "Until the rise of the sporting estate, an individual's exclusive claim to what nature had produced would have been considered absurd; a well-known Gaelic proverb, for example, holds that everyone is entitled to a deer from the mountain, a tree from the wood and a fish from the river." (MacIntosh et al, 1994)

The peasants were studiously ignored or romanticized as faithful "gillies" and keepers, inevitably provoking a tradition of poaching that continues today. It is essentially impossible to enforce private rights to low-density populations of fish and deer spread out over vast areas, unwatched for most of the time. However, the Victorian tourist was a cultural force to be reckoned with. Thousands flocked north each summer on the new railway lines. An era of pretentious, yet vigorous "Balmorality" ensued (MacIntosh et al,
The great Empress Victoria herself put the royal seal of approval on Scotland by buying a sporting estate in Balmoral, building a string of model villages in "Royal Deeside" for estate workers. Railroads were built to access the mountains. The pseudo-study of "tartanry" was invented to give the tourists something to take home. Highland dress, previously proscribed as aiding this "savage race" in warfare, was copied, perverted and usurped. Even today, it is this mistaken tartan image that is the most public face of the Highland tourist system, and of course, Americans of Highland descent lap it up, taking home a tartan nick-nack in some "clan color" unknown to their ancestors. Meanwhile, in the interior glens of the Highlands, few were left who could say that they were descended from the original clan of that region.

This Victorian interest, no doubt fed by the Romantic movement, had begun to decline by the end of the First World War. By the mid-twentieth century, after two wars and a great depression, the decline of the British Empire and the fortunes that built it combined with British progressivism, and the rise of American-led global capitalism to create a world where few Britons could afford to keep a hunting lodge in the Highlands. Use of sporting estates dropped off dramatically, and the countryside today is littered with crumbling lodges and fake castles that are no longer kept up. A new form of private recreational ownership combines with what is left of sporting ownership to be the dominant use of the majority of Highland land. Today's estate owners are likely to be foreigners, frequently businessmen from Europe and America, with a fair sprinkling of pension schemes and insurance companies, Sheiks of Araby, rock-stars, billionaires, TV personalities and so on. Highlanders and environmentalists alike can be forgiven for the impression that estate owners get stranger each year, while the dilapidation, ecological and architectural, gets worse. It is a Highlands "where we are controlled by landowning 'lairds' based in Switzerland or Dubai or the States or England...where 0.08% of the people own 80% of the private land...." (MacKintosh, 1994b)

This dilapidation, of course, occurs on land where you can also find the ruins of
run-rig agriculture villages. The remains of one failed economic structure are superimposed on another. As sporting use declined, it took on a stagnant tweed-wrapped style that has little impact on mainstream British or Highland culture save for a few jokes and stereotypes: the besotted tweedy English sportsman, and the dour Highland guide. There were a few jobs: gamekeepers; gillies; cooks and so on, but this new economy supported a fraction of the population found under the old. Stagnation and accompanying disrespect on both sides of the landowner-Highlander issue were deeply entrenched by the 1940s:

"To the person from the south the West Highlands suggests sport of one kind or another. In his mind, in all probability, the sport is a vague idea since it is only by hearsay he knows about it. To him, it is huntin’ shootin’, fishin’, and if you added joustin’, he wouldn’t be much the wiser. The sport is not for the multitude but for the very few, and amongst the few are not included the natives. Sometimes I think that the people of the Highlands cannot have many more rights to the amenities of their country than had the serfs of an earlier and uglier period. Like their predecessors, they are permitted to get drunk now and again.”(Reid, 1943).

CROFTING SETTLEMENTS, CULTURAL REFUGIA, AND "WET DESERTS"
As well as an imposed economy, aristocratic estates were an imposed ecological structure mapped on to an otherwise unyielding landscape. In the rush to be economically efficient in the farming of sheep, old ecological efficiencies were ignored. Often the trees had been first to go. The nutrient cycle that produced the fertility that raised the black cattle, sheep and goats of previous generations was dependent on broad-leaved trees and shrubs and a complex herbaceous turf. Traditional breeds of sheep and cattle didn’t attack the young seedlings of tree species or the turf as vigorously as the new flocks of Cheviot sheep. Stocking rates were lower when subsistence was the goal. The demands of the market for wool and sheep-meat, inflated by colonial wars, forced the raising of stocking rates beyond that which would maintain fertility. Intensified production of red deer for "sporting" guns continued a regime of overgrazing.
#1 The mountains of Wester Ross.

#2 Glendale in Skye, the site of a nineteenth century clearance, reveals the ruins of its run-rig community. The land is now an intensive sheep farm. Although there would normally be trees, overgrazing has removed all the seedlings, and all the existing trees have died.
#3 The wet desert effect. Heavy red deer grazing will prevent this Scots pine seedling from reaching maturity. All around is now blanket bog, in the background a non-native plantation is protected by a six-foot fence.

#4 Lands alienated from Gaelic communal use during the privatization era have been purchased from the landlord to create Beinn Eighe National Nature Reserve. The sign's construction reveals influence from the designers of American National Parks. In the background, trees regenerate following release from heavy grazing pressure as red deer are culled.
Traditional crofting: Living Museum, or cultural necessity? A hand-worked, two-acre hayfield on the Isle of Raasay, and an early, Government-assisted "department plan" house does new duty as byre on the Isle of Skye.
Declining fertility meant declining production. Acidification and waterlogging of soils encouraged the growth of sedges and rushes where there had been herbs and grasses. Trees were cut with no intention of re-planting or regeneration. The great estates of the mountains and glens went into an ecological decline, creating a massive Highland blanket bog, approximating, as Fraser Darling was to say, a "wet desert."  

This "wet desert" was a cultural wasteland as well as ecological -- according to one estimate, a million Highlanders were displaced in the privatization era (MacIntosh et al., 1994). However, Highland land was not completely privatized in the nineteenth century. Some areas escaped. Particularly in the West, where whole communities had been moved by landlords, first to exploit the kelping, then to free the mountain glens of the interior for sheep or sport, new communities of Gaelic-speaking Highlanders had been set up. In the ecologically-poor coastal settlements, albeit often under the thumb of imposed Presbyterian ministers, the tenants were working out new subsistence schemes based on old models. To use the language of island biogeography, the coastal regions became a refugium of sorts for the village agriculture system and consequently, a refugium for the Celtic way of life. Both would persist and eventually expand. The coast and the islands were not well-endowed ecologically compared to the mountain glens and straths. Alternative economic and ecological strategies were needed to maintain the Highland way of life, and Highlanders found them. Seaweed and even fish could be used as a fertilizer for feanagan, or lazy-beds. Fishing could provide protein for subsistence or for market. Small industries and crafts such as weaving, basket-making and knitting produced both useable and marketable products.

The old pattern of township structure which had been abandoned in the stolen glen, was re-established on the shoreline. Cottages would be scattered over the few hundred acres of wind-swept arable land that comprised the new rig. The crofters would still find some way to manage the grazing in common. New cooperative allegiances were forged, to

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38 Fraser Darling's wet-desert thesis has been well-proven, but recent reforestation attempts have shown that the process is not irreversible.
manage fishing boats, to collect seaweed, to market sheepmeat and wool. New communal rhythms were worked out, and new songs were sung, although not in front of the Minister. This pattern of farming was no longer to be called *run-rig* as it had been in the Gaelic language, but was now termed crofting, in the newly-imposed English tongue. As a result of *run-rig* agriculture's survival as crofting, when the rise of Progressive political parties combined with extended suffrage to offer a new deal to the common people of Britain, there were some Highlanders left on the land, in scattered dispersed townships. These were collectives of individual homesteads, essentially self-sufficient at the village level, albeit at a very poor standard of living. These Highland crofters had survived the first wave of Highland Development against extreme odds. The next wave, of Progressive Highland Development schemes, offered occasional opportunities to build on to and expand from that survival.
V) The Turning Wheel:
The Progressive Era in Highland Development, 1886-1977

For 200 years, the Highlander has been the man on Scotland's conscience....No part of Scotland has been given a shabbier deal by history from the "45 onwards.

This chapter covers the period in Highland history dominated by Progressive political actions and institutions. By "Progressive," I refer to actions based on the belief that the government is a fit and proper instrument to redress society's inequities and injustices. The Progressive Era is well-mapped in history, including Benthamite Utilitarianism, Teddy Roosevelt's "Bull Moose" Progressivism, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal Liberalism among its many manifestations. The years between the Clearances and 1977 were ones in which influential Highland-born and Highland-sensitive women and men developed Progressive structures of thought and invested Progressive institutions whose aim was to develop the Highlands.

By 1977, Progressive schemes had proliferated, unconsciously establishing a long term natural experiment in development techniques -- and a bewildering alphabet soup of acronyms. One of these men, James Shaw Grant, first recommended that the experiments of his contemporaries be studied as such on the event of the 25th anniversary of the most critical and successful scheme, the Highlands and Islands Development Board (HIDB). Grant is an example of a Progressive Era Highland Development leader. He was one of the members of the seminal Lewis Association, an early member of the Board, and a man who maintained an involvement with crofters and their aspirations:

"It is dangerous to make general statements about the Highlands and Islands. Over the last 25 years, the area has presented a bewildering series
of variations on the theme of decay and regeneration. It has been, in effect, a working laboratory of social, economic and political problems and attempts to resolve them, some successful, some failed and many still to be proved. The numbers involved have been so small, it is possible to see the interplay of forces down almost to the personal level.

"A great deal of worldly wisdom has been acquired by the Highland Board in the handling of development problems, but, so far as I know, its experience has not been analysed or codified in any way that might provide guidance for others, or even for itself....The intervention of governments to help underdeveloped or distressed areas is generally based on ideology, on political pressure, or on someone's hunch. We need a much more scientific approach to these matters, based on practical experience in the field."\(^{39}\)

Grant is talking here about the later schemes, particularly the HIDB after 1965, but Progressive policy began early in the Highlands, and the story of the Board cannot be told in separation from its predecessors and peers.

The first Progressive schemes in the Highlands, dating from the 1880s, provided for the return of some of the alienated *run-rig* land as secure, inheritable crofts. It is debatable whether this did or did not establish, as many later commentators have said, a living museum comprising various laborious and out-dated strategies of folk economics. Later schemes -- slowly, very slowly -- brought with them the actuality of jobs that could be held down while working a croft, or otherwise participating in a traditional Highland life in a township or a small village. Schemes that did hit on the technique of developing to fit in with crofting and the dispersed Highland settlement pattern were in a minority, but there were some. As it became possible by the 1950s, through this haphazard development, for some Highlanders to have their cake and eat it too; it also became desirable for Highlanders to be in charge of that process, for them to begin to privilege suitably decentralized schemes, and so to evolve a more careful mature Highland Development. This meant the slow eradication of the crofters' tendency to cling to economic tradition, and the adoption of a new ethos of entrepreneurial activity, although carefully limited by the

\(^{39}\text{James Shaw Grant, "A Long Term Assessment" (Hetherington, 1990, pp 47, 53-54).}\)
prevailing wish to maintain the values of community and place.

THE CROFTERS HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT OF 1886

The Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Act of 1886, (the first Crofters' Act, since there have been several) is the original Progressive bill affecting the Highlands. The student of Progressive politics will find this an exceptionally early date for social grievance to find legislative relief. The political fighting that led up to the Act of Parliament goes back yet further, rooted like other Highland grievances back to Culloden.

The first Crofters Act was not one of philanthropy. Highlanders fought for it, against traditionally philanthropic forces, and won. After Culloden and the Clearances, there were many attempts at Victorian-style "charity" to the "Indians of Scotland." Landlords, engaging in Romantic self-delusion, professed retention of some of the responsibilities of chiefs "...a pseudo-authentic role analogous to that of the chieftains of the past." (MacIntosh et al, 1994). Patronizing the peasantry was a trait of these Victorian aristocrats, who, like Queen Victoria, "...displayed the stunning contradiction of, on the one hand, professing a love of Highland scenery and culture; whilst on the other hand patronizing emigration programmes and setting in process damaging land management regimes centred around deer and grouse." (MacIntosh et al, 1994). Model villages and estates abounded, such as the noticeably English cottages of Royal Deeside, the model fishing village of Ullapool, or Lord Leverhulme's new Stornoway. The missed point, of course, was that the people eventually inhabiting such places were rarely the same as the indigenous people who had been moved to make way for the new buildings. To force the Crofting Act of 1886, Highlanders had to learn to reject this miserly artifice of chieftainship and instead to provide themselves with a new explanation of the landlord's role in their

4019th century Highland tourist John Leyden: "I may now congratulate myself on a safe escape from the Indians of Scotland...." (MacIntosh et al, 1994).
economy. They had to depose the landlord, in their minds, as God-given chief, and re-invest him instead as disinterested capitalist, proprietor, and opponent. Proprietorship in the form of "commercial landlordism," being "exceptionally difficult for Highlanders to assimilate...it was a long time before any attempt was made to fight for the land." (Leneman, 1989, p 2). Political organizing began in the mid-nineteenth century. By 1886, it had proceeded to the point where Highlanders were confident enough in their independence to get legal recognition, in the form of that first Crofters' Act, of the belief that the land had belonged to them, and that "...occupation of the land gave men an inalienable right to that land." The Act falls clearly in the category of Progressive legislation forced as a response to social unrest.

"The struggle was bitter, for pitted against this belief was the inalienable right of any landowner in Britain to do as he wished with his land. Drawing on the example of Ireland, Highland crofters grew increasingly violent in their attempts to regain what they considered rightfully theirs." (Leneman, 1989, p 2).

A parallel process was further along in Ireland, where there was a growing movement of Celtic advocacy linked to nationalism and tenants' rights. Ireland provided the model for the Highlands. The objectives of the violent eighteenth-century Irish resistance to British rule had been changed, in the prosaic Victorian era, from absolute revolution to more pragmatic and economic goals. The Irish wanted their land back. Due to the work of generations of activism and financial support, they did eventually get it back. Several factors combined to ensure the success of Land-Leagueism in Ireland. One was the rise of more democratic political structures. Ireland was represented in the Westminster Parliament by 70-80 Irish seats. Suffrage had been extended in 1840, and was extended yet again in 1884, this time to include all working men. Charles Stuart Parnell, a stunning orator, led the Irish Party in Westminster. Money from newly-wealthy Irish-Americans was also key to success.
The Irish Land Act of 1881 granted the three "f's" that had been "long demanded by tenant righters from the days of Sharman, Crawford and O’Connell: fixity of tenure, provided the rent was paid, free sale by the tenant of the tenant’s interest and improvements in a holding on his vacating it; but above all, fair rents." (Kee, 1972). This was not a non-violent struggle, for, as before in Ireland, "...men with blackened faces were increasingly shooting at or otherwise intimidating landlords and their agents..." There were vast areas of rural Ireland, particularly the poorer terrain of Connemara (corresponding ecologically to much of the Highlands), where "...the Queen’s writ no longer ran." (Kee, 1972).

Some Irish Land-Leaguers took walking tours among their Celtic brethren in the Highlands. John Murdoch, the eventual leader of the crofters' movement, had previously been a British Government employee in Ireland. Speeches were made, meetings were held, radical newspapers were started. By this time, Britain and the British Government were becoming increasingly liberal. Gladstone was committed to home rule for Ireland, and not unfavorably disposed to the same or similar equation in the Highlands. Liberalism had other consequences; relying on general prosperity rather than soldiers to maintain economic peace was decidedly less vigorous a policy than Highland landlords would have preferred. Public order could not be enforced in the face of mass crofter rebellion. No longer could the cavalry wreak arbitrary vengeance in the streets of Highland villages as in the months after Culloden. Crofters were made aware, by degrees, of their rights as British subjects and -- at last -- voters. In this atmosphere, combining the old tension, the more pronounced threat of crofter violence, and this more equally-balanced political power, something had to give. In Skye, in 1881, crofters on the Kilmuir estate of Captain William Fraser "used tactics...borrowed from the Irish Land League to get their rents reduced by 25 per cent." (MacIntosh et al, 1994). Also in Skye that year, the crofters of Braes held a similar rent strike until their landlord agreed to reverse an enclosure of common land. Landlords still had recourse to the law, many occupied a magistrate's bench, but legal power proved
problematic. That year police were sent to Skye to arrest the ringleaders of the crofter’s rebellion and enforce eviction summonses, to be met by "a hail of mud and stones from a crowd of protesters, including many women, who had arrived from all over Skye, led by their respective pipers." (MacIntosh et al, 1994). Although the men had been earlier reported as supine, it seems that the women -- in keeping with tradition -- were willing to be aggressive and activist on behalf of their land and communities. The government sent in the marines, over the sea by gunboat to Skye, but as they arrived, they found "polite, passive resistance as people conspicuously dug their potatoes at every township along the coast." (MacIntosh et al, 1994).

As a result of these and other disturbances throughout the Highlands and Islands, there was a Royal Commission (the Napier Commission of 1884) to study the crofters' situation. The Progressive Commission travelled in the Highlands and interviewed landlord and peasant alike. As a result of their report to a sympathetic Liberal-dominated House of Commons, the Crofters Holdings Act of 1886 was passed. The three "f's" of the Irish model were also granted to Highland crofters, with the exception that sale of a crofter's buildings on her vacation of rented land was always to be back to the landlord, who was required to buy at a fair price set by the Land Court. This certainly amounted to "radical legislation."

"Landlords could no longer evict a tenant at will, for crofters were guaranteed security of tenure and the right to bequeath tenancy of their croft. And finally, a crofter who left his croft was entitled to compensation from the landlord for any permanent improvements he had made to it. Such inroads into the rights of landowners were only possible because of the scale of land agitation, because of fears engendered by the level of violence in Ireland at that time, and perhaps also because of the falling value of Highland estates, as the price of wool was undercut by imports from Australia. The main shortcoming of the act was that although the Crofters Commission

41 John Murdoch's rhetoric of 1873, that the Highland men were "craven, cowed, snivelling..." (MacIntosh et al, 1994).
could make orders for enlargements of existing crofts, it had no powers to create new ones." (Leneman, 1989, p 2).

The Irish were able to gain more, eventually getting their full title through various Land Acts and a loan scheme, "every penny of which was repaid" to the British Government. The Irish also eventually prevailed in a war of secession, 1919-1921, becoming the independent nation of Eire.

Highlanders, however, faced with the fact of their minority status in an otherwise loyal Scotland, never were able to regain their mountain glens, and many are empty to this day, the last great European "wilderness," while coastal areas and islands are busy and populous. A sense of loss, of "desolation, the loneliness of the Highlands" pervades these mountain areas today, especially when you find the tumbling walls that are the last, skeletal remains of a nineteenth century township.

"The 1886 Act fell far short of returning to the people land which had formerly been taken from them. By far the greatest areas of land remained completely outwith crofting tenure. But the Act did secure the survival of crofting life into the present era." (MacIntosh et al, 1994).

One Canadian Highlander found that "Above the 60th parallel in Canada, you feel that only God had ever been there before you. But in a deserted Highland glen, you feel that everyone who ever mattered is dead and gone." Even so, thanks in great part to that first Crofters Act, on the coasts and islands the run-rig ecological system was reinvented as crofting. With it, the Gaelic culture had a chance at survival and evolution. The Land

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42Pers. comm., Professor Emmons, scholar of Irish-American history at the University of Montana. I think that Emmons is overstating his case, for surely there were some defaults, particularly as the law was passed in the 1880s and Ireland won independence from Britain in the 1920s, but the mythology is important.

43Ian Crichton Smith (Hunter, 1995, p 137).

44From Hunter, James., and Maclean, Skye: The Island 1986, (MacIntosh et al, 1994).
League resistance of the nineteenth century would combine with Progressive forces and indigenous activism to allow the development of a yet stronger and more confident Highland ethos by the end of the twentieth century. The western region known as the Gàidhealtachd could continue its function as a refugium, an "island bioregion" for the Gaelic culture. In the future, activists, poets, writers, and inspiration would come from these coastal and island townships.

The creation of the official croft, that "small piece of land entirely surrounded by regulations," was not without its problems, one of which was the unintended effect that crofts and their townships might become "living museums," immune to technological advance. This last has been a common agricultural economists' view of the crofters' situation since 1886, and there is some substance to the notion, since conditions, as we shall see, remained exceptionally primitive for years (Hunter, 1985, p 202). However, there has to be some context. If the context is that of sustainable agriculture and a back-to-the-land movement, we might note that today, in America, modern back-to-the-landers prefer to use such methods for various practical and other reasons. Also in America, many up-to-the-minute organic farms make very good money growing truck-farm produce using "primitive" laboring methods and traditional hand tools. To further contradict the living museum thesis, the next Highland Problem that the British Government would deal with after the 1886 act was that there were not enough such crofts to meet the Highlanders' demand for them.

RESETTLEMENT

In the years after 1886 and before the Great War, it occurred to crofting activists, not for the first time, that the Crofters Act should be bolstered by a program of land resettlement, in which landlords would be forced by government to cede or rent land committed to sporting uses to establish more crofts. In this Progressive enterprise, activists were
encouraged by the historical confidence that the land had previously belonged to the various Highland clans in common, and that the landlord's rights were spurious and fictitious, immoral impositions of a foreign culture. This was an ongoing process. Before the war, the government had been responsible for the creation of over 640 new holdings and the enlargement of over a thousand existing ones, no small achievement.\footnote{Under the \textit{Congested Districts Act}, 1897.} It took the disaster of the war to add exceptional impetus, the disproportionate Highland sacrifice providing a moral rationale capable of speaking louder in the House of Commons than Highland landlords with seats in the House of Lords. In addition, one of the features of the British Government after 1911 was the abolition of the Lords' veto over the Commons, an event that led to the acceleration of many Progressive measures. The \textit{Small Landholders (Scotland) Act} of that year was one such Progressive measure. Allowing for the formation of thousands more crofts, yet administered by landlord-dominated county governments, little happened. The new act remained a damp squib until the holocaust of World War One.

That war required land armies to be massed on a scale never envisaged before, men measured not, as in the French wars of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in hundreds of thousands, but in millions. The common people of the land and cities, including thousands of Highland crofters, were required to serve in those armies. Yet on their return, they were expected to take up lives where they had left off, to live once more as underpaid, undernourished cogs in the British capital machine. Crofters were at war for Britain, a people who did not consider themselves particularly British. Highlanders always resented the landlord class, "[m]en in checked tweeds and some in kilts...talking and giving orders. The same arrogance, the same indefinable air of superiority and low-lidded indifference, the same voices, the same tingle of animosity along the spine!" (MacColla, 1932, p 80). The officer ranks continued to be dominated by the aristocratic class. These "wounded people," (MacIntosh \textit{et al}, 1994) even when Scots, were not Gaels; but \textit{sassunach}, lowlanders, to be feared and despised. Here is an exposition of this class and race-based

\footnote{Under the \textit{Congested Districts Act}, 1897.}
psychodynamic from modern environmental scholar and activist Alistair MacIntosh, who, raised on the long island of Lewis, was a gillie, or guide for a sporting estate in his youth.

"Typical sporting gents of my acquaintance were often surrogate-parented by nannies, then sent away in late infancy to austere so-called "public" private schools. Education for regimentation at these was strong on punishment for your own good, emotionally disengaged ("stiff upper lip"; uptight") and largely lacking in close male and female role models of gentleness. This included the expectation of ....military achievement, success in the professions or old monied industry, and wealth accumulation. ... As Fromm put it, this is the psychology of needing to "have" in order to "be," material acquisition compensating for such a shriveled sense of soul." (MacIntosh et al., 1994).

Crofters in Highland regiments were forced, under threat of death -- for malingerers and deserters could be and were shot out of hand -- to fight under such men in the trenches of World War One. By now, the old grievance, that the land was never the landlord's but the clan's, and so the proper inheritance of the crofting township, was a fundamental bylaw of crofter existence. The war merely provided "a new 'formula' to be used in support of the old claim."46 The return from the war to a hard life on undersized crofts was bitter for these ex-servicemen, especially since many had been encouraged in their war effort by pamphleteering from the government, which promised smallholdings to volunteers.

Direct action was the result. "[M]en who had survived two to nearly four years of active service expected the promises made to them would be fulfilled.... The reaction of ex-service men to the endless delays might not have been so violent had the propaganda prior to and immediately after the war not been so eloquent." One Commons member had achieved his wartime election only by flooding "Sutherland with literature containing rosy promises to all &c, not even [sic] were they to break up farms and pay compensation for the same, but they were also to find capital for soldiers and others who they said could not

46H.M. Conacher (Leneman,1989 p 205).
be expected to have capital with only a shilling a day of pay." (Leneman, 1989, p 205).

In addition to the stick of direct action, there was the carrot of national security. Two new ecological insecurities had been demonstrated by the war, resulting from the land situation. The first was that a disproportionate number of recruits rejected for service on physical grounds had come from unhealthy, polluted districts in the industrial cities. (Leneman, 1989, p 20). The government was even forced to constitute "bantam" regiments of such men whose height was under 5'2" (MacDonald, 1993, p 148). The second was that the German blockade had threatened food supply lines from the Empire. It was necessary, even to a conservative view, that Britain be capable of producing her own food and her own soldiers. And, as before, the soldiers of Highland regiments, inured by their crofting heritage to cold, hard work, and poor food, had proved superior to town men. These realizations surfaced through a liberal interest in augmenting rural settlement, providing smallholdings, and community gardens, issues that had traditionally belonged to the great industrial unions and the cooperative movement of the English midlands and north.47 In the Highlands, this Progressive movement translated into an interest in expanding croft tenancy.

The political climate had also changed in favor of stronger Progressive action, thanks in particular to emancipation, which was made universal in 1918, and the abolition of the Lords' veto. Education was playing a role in increased political organization within the working classes as a whole. There had been a great rise of unions, the cooperative movement and other lower class self-defense organizations, including the Labour Party. All, but particularly the last, were now a threat to the middle class Liberal establishment. Liberals were in the position, unlikely in American politics, but consistent in British, of having a nominal majority but being continually forced to pander to one or the other opposition party to succeed with legislation. In the case of smallholdings, the decision was to side with Labour over the landowning conservatives. This moral stand was unavoidable

47Community gardens are known in Britain by the term "allotments." Traditionally, industrial unions have been the largest allotment landowners, providing a patch of land to farm vegetables in return for a small annual rental.
in the climate following the war.

Beginning after the war and continuing to the present day, through a quirk of the electoral process, Highlanders have also had an occasional strong voice in the cabinet. Since Highland wards had essentially been Liberal since the extension of suffrage, and since the Liberal Party was entwined with the minority Calvinist churches popular on the Celtic fringe, the Welsh Methodists, the Highland Free kirks and so on, Highland MPs, often Liberals to this day, are possessors of some of the safest seats in the realm. This dynamic of power works in two ways. Possessors of safer seats become important politically through the process of attrition, since opponents are voted out of their less safe seats in the run of time. Safer seats will also be gifted to important ministers by party agreement or the Prime Minister's decree. By the end of World War One, and over and again in British parliamentary history, figures like Harold MacMillan, Willie Ross, and Russell Johnstone would prove key to Progressive politics in the Highlands. MPs from the Highlands, either gifted with Highland constituencies, or Highland-born men risen through party ranks, find themselves in positions of disproportionate power, appointed as ministers of state or of lessor portfolio.

The various Liberal, Labour, and Coalition Governments of the post-war period had at heart a policy of Progressive action on land resettlement, but were unprepared for the response from landowners. Having entrenched their power on the land over generations, with seats on county councils and other official capacities, including the magistrates courts, landlords were not about to roll over and play dead, even if thousands of Highland men had fought and died in the war. Despite the provision of statutory compensation, and the assurance of rents to be paid, or in some cases, the outright purchase of the land, landlords resisted through diverse political means. Such resistance merely served to reinforce the crofters' belief that landowners were in the wrong, "the slowness of land settlement" being "largely the result of the intransigence of landlords, whose credo was 'to have and to hold', and who, in the upholding of that credo, were prepared to exploit every avenue of legality
"It was all very well for the Scottish Land Court", grumbled one Shetland landlord, to go about the Highlands 'enjoying themselves hugely' and being 'philanthropic at other peoples' expense.' But none of his crofting tenants would have shared that particular gentleman's disenchantment -- however understandable it may have been from the landowning point of view -- with the organization which, more than any other was symbolic of their newfound security." (Hunter, 1976, pp 27-28).

Interference with a British landlord's right to do just what he wanted with the land would not succeed easily. Delaying tactics were employed in the courts and on the responsible county councils. The result was that Highlanders found themselves forced to direct action to gain these promised lands. The first land raids occurred in the Hebrides as early as 1918.

In a Highland land raid, the crofters and landless men of a township literally stake a claim, as in the mining of the American West, on uncultivated land belonging to a recalcitrant landowner. The land is then turned and cultivated, or animals are let to pasture. The police will be sent to arrest the men, who will stand their turn in court, having performed a ritual and conscientious objection to the injustice of land tenure in the Highlands. If, as in the years after World Wars One and Two, the men are ex-servicemen and heroes, if in addition, as in Raasay in 1920, or Knoydart in 1948, they have the well-wishes of entire communities behind them, they may successfully provoke the authorities, the Highland Land court and the Crofters Commission, to some action against that landlord, such as the compulsory subdivision of a farm into several crofts.

At the time, the emotional impact of such victories must have been overwhelming:

"For someone of his strongly romantic nature the achievement of a place of his own in South Harris represented something akin to the emotion of the Jew returning to Israel; he was one of those people whose fairly immediate ancestors had been uprooted from the south during the evictions of the previous century and his sense of history could easily be manipulated to
conjure up an imagery of an Israelite far, far, older than the Jew."\textsuperscript{48}

This euphoria would prove short lived, with the Great Depression looming on the horizon, bringing with it a fall in prices for lambs and other croft produce. By the nineteen-thirties, a pattern of crofter absenteeism had set in, whereby inheritors of official crofts, descendants of crofters who by right should have been working the family land for which so much had been sacrificed, were to be found in "Glasgow, Motherwell, the United States, Edinburgh, Conon Bridge, Greenock and Australia."\textsuperscript{49} A fresh despondency set in as the depression proved that having the land would not be enough. However, getting the land had been a hard, hard fight, no small success in the survival of the Gaelic culture. By both legal resettlement and successful raiding from 1897 until 1927, over 9000 crofts were created or enlarged in the Highlands.\textsuperscript{50} Since there are some 17,000 crofts (Hunter, 1991) extant today, a great proportion of existing crofts date their creation or improvement from this Progressive action. Surprisingly though, despite the emotion of the time "all that heat, all that strong feeling," (Leneman, 1989, p 194) the history of this period has largely been forgotten throughout the Highlands. The major recent historian of the period, Leah Leneman, found while doing field work on Lewis that it was necessary "to abandon more than one interview when someone old enough to have lived through that period could only talk about the Clearances (a time when they had not been alive) and recall nothing about the period I was interested in." (Leneman, 1989, p 192). This is, of course, further verification of Ash's theory about the foggy valleys and clear peaks of Scottish history. Thanks to selective memory, encouraged by nationalized British schooling which ignores local history unless of national importance, the Clearances are a peak (at least since the work of John Prebble became popular in the late 1960s), the resettlement period is not:

"it wasn't history but memory

\textsuperscript{48} Finlay J. MacDonald, crofter (Leneman, 1989, p 194).
\textsuperscript{49} Taylor Commission report from the late 1940s (Hunter, 1991, p 68).
\textsuperscript{50} A sum of Leneman's figures (Leneman, 1989).
the day Kirsty baptised the factor with piss from a pot she took from the backroom
to the meeting up on the brae of the croft
not spilling a single drop

it wasn't history but memory
the day the town's warriors stood on the banks of the glen river
confronting the sheriff's surly troops
who marched that far then returned without dipping a toe
clutching their wads of eviction orders.51

By 1945, if Progressive politics in the Highlands were to be judged on the land
issue alone, much had been achieved, although the great, empty sporting estates of the
central Highlands remained an open sore. By this period, the Highland problem requiring
Progressive redress, at least from the government’s point of view, had ceased to be the
land issue. The new Highland problem was found to be the lack of prosperity, the dearth of
modern amenities, and the prevalence of primitive living conditions, all of which were seen
as resulting in depopulation. Conditions could be very primitive, as illustrated by the report
below, from the 1920s:

"During the summer, bad weather has been almost continuous, and now it
is November and the oats, rye and barley are still unsecured....Already the
crofters have lost a portion of their crop, for a fierce gale lifted the sheaves
and blew some of them into the Atlantic. And so the men and women of the
village are now busy carrying large stones into the field to hold down their
sodden harvest. With great labor the scattered sheaves are collected and are
tied together with ropes weighted with stones. But some of the crop has
been blown so far that it lies in pools of water, or upon the road, and it is
impossible to tell who is the owner of these sheaves."52

Still, crofters were sophisticated enough, despite what the government might have thought,
to compare and contrast their life at home with that which was available to them if they

51 Aonghas MacNeacail, Skye poet, "A Proper Schooling" (Hunter, 1995, p 137).
chose to make a move. Despite the depression and the primitive conditions, many stayed.

NEW DEAL AND PHILANTHROPIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE HIGHLANDS.
After the First World War, and more so after the Second World War, forestry became an important government-led priority for Highland industry, dominating economic events, along with the development of hydro-electric power schemes. To begin with, and until the 1970s when the principle of comparative advantage in British regional economic planning was abandoned, money was commonly prioritized for schemes that showed an overall national benefit (Carter, 1971). The greatest impetus was the national security fear created by timber and energy shortages during World War One. The two were ecologically linked. Since timber was used for pit-props, required to facilitate coal mining, and since the nation ran the war on coal, afforestation, hydropower, and reforestation became priorities of national security. Hydro-electric schemes promised cheap energy for southern industrialization, particularly aluminum-smelting. New economic theory was soon available to rationalize government intervention in these industries, beyond that which was necessary to mollify security concerns. The rise of Keynesian economics after World War II surfaced in the Highlands through these government-led schemes. Schemes were centrally planned and carried out. Hydro dams and forestry were integrated on land purchased for the purpose from large estates. Of course, before it "belonged" to the landlord, the same land had been viewed as belonging to the clan.

After the second war, Hydro Development was intensified through the creation of the North of Scotland Hydro-Electric Board (the "Hydro"), whose greatest inspiration can only have been the Tennessee Valley Authority or the Bonneville Power Administration of the Pacific Northwest. Having "a statutory obligation to collaborate in the carrying out of any measures for the economic development and social improvement of the North of Scotland," the Hydro presaged the future HIDB. In particular, included in the Hydro's remit was the necessity to "have regard to the desirability of preserving the beauty of the scenery," an exact copy of language in the future Highlands and Islands Development Act.
The Hydro plastered the Highlands with dams. The greatest scheme originating in this period was the combined aluminum smelter, hydropower, and timber-processing complex built at Fort William, the maintenance of which would give planners some considerable difficulties in later decades. The complex, involving considerable government investment, was financially shaky from the start, the paper mill in particular having relied on a relatively untried process that was soon obsolete. Later, conservative economists would blame these and other failures of intervention in the Highlands on the overall folly of government-led intervention in industrial markets. By the 1970s, sociologists would come to the Fort William scheme to study the incidence of anti-social behavior taking place in the attached housing project, behavior thought to be the result of unemployment. It is worth noting that these sociologists found that the occupants of the project originated more from the central belt cities of Glasgow and Edinburgh than from Highland crofts. If the Fort William scheme had been designed primarily to develop the Highlands, then by 1970 it was doing so largely without the participation of Highlanders.

Afforestation was another big, problematic New Deal idea for the Highlands' economy and ecology. Although true reforestation would have been helpful ecologically if it had used native species, the forestry that was widely practiced in the Highlands from the First World War until the mid-to-late 1980s relied on fast-growing non-native species of softwood, adding to the ecological problems perceived by environmentalists. The investment needed for developing non-native forestry in this "wet desert" country has not been justified by the income. To this day, much of the scenery that vacationing Europeans love to visit, that last great European "wilderness," is covered with trees whose provenance should be coastal Alaska, Japan, or central Norway. Tourists are, for the most part, unaware of the irony, demonstrating that scenery -- and the accompanying tourist economy -- are perhaps a cultural phenomenon independent of underlying ecological health. Forestry of this sort was expensive, and has only been undertaken with massive subsidy, various
forestry grant and tax-relief schemes being a major factor in estate economies, to the point where in recent decades, a Highland estate was seen as an excellent tax shelter, attracting investment even from conservative pension funds and insurance schemes.

Deep ploughing of the acid layer in the soil is needed to release the underlying "hard pan" of minerals. Consequently, trees are planted in rows, whose uniformity is not alleviated until after thinning; a process that rarely happens these days thanks to the use of young Highland forests for paper and orientated-strand board. In this form of intervention in the Highlands, forests planted under New Deal-style schemes are harvested thirty, forty, fifty or more years later and processed in mills that were HIDB-sponsored, which by now are owned by up-to-the-minute corporations like Canada's Noranda Corporation. Noranda's orientated strand board plant at Nairn on the Moray Firth is, in turn, groomed regularly with further help from the HIDB's heir, HIE.

Many estates were bought by the government Forestry Commission for forestry plantings, often with townships of crofters and other tenants included. In the New Deal period, the British Government, as did the American, increased its ownership of land, adding to that which had previously been purchased for resettlement. A portion of townships today is nominally on this government-owned land, although government-led industrial forestry has declined drastically in recent years. Even when held by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries or the Forestry Commission, the management of crofting land has been largely decreed by the various Crofting Acts and the Land Courts since 1886, and cannot be expected to change very much whether the estate is government-owned or not. However, resistance to arbitrary landlordism is less necessary on government crofts: Historian Leah Leneman found that in this case Progressive government worked well for crofters, the Department of Agriculture or the Forestry Commission proving more amenable and paternal chiefs than the capitalist landlords. "The Department were seen as helpful, and if you were working your croft properly, they did not interfere. Also their tenants felt secure." (Leneman, 1989, p 198).
One of the most successful Progressive schemes in this New Deal period was housing. The provision of financial assistance to crofters who wished to improve their houses began in 1911. Crofters eagerly took up the opportunity, which was renewed by successive governments until the present day, when grants for crofter housing allow the construction of comfortable modern bungalows, equipped with heating, electricity, water, indoor plumbing and all the "modern conveniences." Early croft-grant housing was less comfortable, but a definite improvement on the traditional thatched huts or tighan dubh. Administered by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAFS), this Progressive scheme provided the standard crofter's cottage until the modern format was introduced:

"The characteristic (early "Department") plan layout is a double fronted house, with three rooms, two of equal size at either end and one smaller one behind the entrance lobby in the middle. There is no bathroom and frequently no indoor water supply but there is a standpipe close by indoors and, usually, a pail closet in a lean-to outbuilding. Space heating and cooking were originally by an open fire..." (HIDB, 1972).

During the 1920s and 1930s there were many other calls for, and attempts at development in the Highlands. One particularly interesting example originated on the islands of Lewis and Harris, where the landlord was the philanthropist Lord Leverhulme. Leverhulme is one of the exceptions proving the rule of arrogance in Highland landowners. He is remembered especially for his arrogance on behalf of, rather than against what he perceived as the crofters' interests.

"The people of Lewis found his aspirations inimical and eventually he retired, defeated. His Grand Design was all very commercially rational and visionary. Stornoway was to become the greatest fishing port in Europe --- there were to be canning factories and jobs for all. Nothing is left today. It makes one wonder whether ambitious industrial transplants and infusions of capital in these remote parts of Britain are really what is called for. The small-scale community cooperative stands a better chance of surviving, but even there setbacks have been experienced.

Leverhulme was not defeated by the climate or the hostility of the
landscape. It was much more elemental. What he wished to achieve was not something which the people of Lewis or Harris valued highly."

One of the greatest "cathedrals in the desert" to be found in the Highlands is Lord Leverhulme's famous "bridge to nowhere." Originally planned for an ill-conceived road that failed to materialize, it stands in a quiet corner, surrounded by the wilds of Lewis. Leverhulme encouraged education, and was an inspiration -- although perhaps a stick rather than a carrot -- for the "Lewis Association," a group of Progressive Lewisians who came together in the 1930s and 1940s to debate development issues and to put development ideas into place. The reports of the Lewis Association make interesting reading. The emphasis on community democracy is echoed in the present-day activities of Highland Forum, a non-profit group that acts as a resource for conflict resolution and encourages community debate. In the years of proactive Highland Development that followed shortly after the Lewis Association's demise, cooperative involvement such as that developed by the Association was found to be critical. Highlanders would passively or actively resist development efforts that were not the subject of community discussion and general approval. Sometimes, as in the recent case of the Eigg landlord who found his garage burned to the ground, with his vintage Rolls Royce automobile inside, this resistance could be violent.

Even with such resistance, however, Highlanders hoped for some forms of development to alleviate the worst difficulties of their lives. Highlanders, as Leverhulme was to demonstrate conclusively, wanted that elusive kind of prosperity that could be enjoyed from one's own croft, in one's own home township. Lessons learned from Leverhulme's development efforts were relearned years later in the evolution of mature Highland Development. In particular, Leverhulme recognized the importance of part-time employment and encouraged such employment in decentralized industries such as his Harris Tweed weaving industry, which still survives, and has been a mainstay of HIDB policy. Small Harris Tweed looms are fixtures in hundreds of Lewisian crofts, providing

53Derek Cooper, "The Intangible Values" (Hetherington, 1990, p 1).
54Pers. comm., James Shaw Grant, founding member of the Lewis Association.
their owners with steady income through the operation of a premium marketing program under the famous "orb" trademark.

Crofters in this Progressive era, pre-dating the thought of Ernst Schumacher in his book "Small is Beautiful," began to selectively use small-scale development initiatives, such as Leverhulme's tweed looms, or DAFS housing grants, that could be made to fit in with township life as a means to maintain their communities and improve incomes. A Highland-conceived and Highland-based non-profit, the Highland Development League, was started in the 1940s to provide advocacy on behalf of development. Government, under various forms of pressure, began to make moves in the right direction.

What was that right direction? In early Highland Development, the fit was generally imperfect. New Deal-style forestry and hydropower schemes provided crofters primarily with seasonal employment, as did the building of roads and other public works. Staying on the land best provided shelter and food. Shelter and food were useful and certainly part of the crofter's income, but the crofter's ability to trade or exchange this croft produce was limited. Once croft produce hit the open market, in the years before subsidy, it had to compete with low-priced produce, often of better quality, from elsewhere in the world. Seasonal work provided the little extras, the shop-brought wheat bread instead of the oatcake, the beef instead of mutton, the linen on the table, even, for a very few, the car or van in the driveway instead of Shank's pony. The difficulty was that these extras were hard to come by without leaving the land once more, if only for part of the year. Not surprisingly, faced with annual migration for seasonal work, Highlanders often chose to make a more permanent separation. The principle government worry, by the 1950s, was that the depopulation of the region had continued unabated since the turn of the century despite repeated Progressive intervention (see population statistics in appendix).

One school of development thought advocating a greater role for government was the regionalist or regional planning school, represented in America by the work of New Deal agencies such as the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). Writing in the 1940s, Hugh Quigley attached an appendix dealing with the TVA to his pamphleteering "A Plan for The
Highlands. " From this description of the TVA, according to Quigley, one could see

"that the Tennessee Valley Authority does provide a useful and valuable model for the Highland Development Board. Its activities are much wider, and the finance required much greater, but its objectives are almost exactly the same, and, if it is possible for an ultra-conservative country like the United States to embark upon such a scheme with every possibility of success, there is no reason why we should not in this country do in our own way the same kind of thing." (Quigley, 1940s, p 42).

If we were to have such an authority, a Highlands and Islands Development Board, according to Quigley, there was no lack of British experience in such matters. The Commonwealth was still a very large place, and Westminster had a say in how it was run. If there were places within the British sphere of influence that had been the subjects of such schemes, then why not the Highlands?:

"A little over two years ago the British Government, confronted with a state of emergency in Newfoundland, decided to form a special commission which would be devoted entirely to the economic resuscitation of the island, the improvement of the industrial position, the more effective utilization of its natural resources...In other words, the Newfoundland Commission has been carrying out for two years for Newfoundland a policy very similar to that put in operation by the Tennessee Valley Authority and to that which is now proposed by the Highland Board." (Quigley, 1940s, p 46).

More of the same was called for. Further industrial development, based on cheap hydro power, it was thought, would reduce the incidence of primitive living conditions, stem the sense of cultural inferiority that pervaded the Highlands, and thus stem emigration. Under pressure from the Highland Development League, Highland Liberal MPs, and an influential group of advocates, the government acted once more on the Highland Problem (various authors in Hetherington, 1990, pp 2, 52, 58). Starting in 1951, it became Labour Government policy, a "Programme of Highland Development " to "encourage people to
live in the Highlands by making it possible to secure there, in return for reasonable efforts, proper standards of life and the means of paying for them." (UK Govt., 1950).

Programme of Highland Development money was concentrated in four main areas:

1) housing, health, roads and education;
2) agriculture, forestry, fisheries and tourism;
3) developing new natural resources such as minerals, seaweed, peat;
4) further encouragement to existing manufacturing industries." (UK Govt., 1950).

The total expenditure for the Programme of Highland Development during 1951-1960 was £220 million, on the order of £1000 per capita. Population decline was not halted. The program was a failure, according to one analyst, because "[a] feasible policy presupposes the establishment of a systematic, consistent programme of development, which recognises that only the creation of new industries can provide the savings and employment necessary to maintain a Highland population." The same analyst thought that inefficiency was encouraged since the scheme directed moneys to "the declining traditional industries which afford neither profit nor employment to the Highlands." (Simpson, 1963). This researcher missed the point, there being no truly traditional Highland industries. Since this researcher and the Programme also missed the second point, that decentralized endeavors were best suited to the extensive, sparse settlement pattern in the Highlands and the ethos of the Highland way of life, success was not at all likely until disabling theories such as comparative advantage (which pointed to natural resource-based industry) and economies of scale (which pointed to large industrial schemes) were discarded.

The Programme concentrated on adding funds to existing government support systems such as regional authorities and single-issue national-interest authorities such as mining, industry, herring and forestry, etc. It was run from a distant Scottish Office in lowland Edinburgh, and proved unable to halt absolute depopulation in ten years of operation (Simpson, 1963).

This monolithic concentration, presaging future versions of Highland Development,
was in line with two particularly intractable theories from economics (both of which must be viewed in the context of post war British socialism). One theory said that by taking advantage of economies of scale -- when Labour Government planners designed factories and other units of production that were large\(^{55}\) -- efficiency and welfare were served by a general reduction in prices. Economies of scale are found when "[t]he technology of production for a product" is "such that one large producer can supply the entire market at a lower per unit cost than can several smaller firms sharing the same market." (Browning and Browning, 1992)

The other theory was that of comparative advantage. First formulated by classical economist David Ricardo, this mathematical conundrum underpins much of what is today known as international trade theory. Abstracting the total costs of production to quantity and price of labor, Ricardo found that it was mathematically preferable for countries to specialize in certain products in which they had a comparative advantage, relative to other countries. Both are abstract constructions, removed mathematically from workers and their product. Both theories point to further centralization and specialization in industry. The process of centralization and specialization was well underway during this post World War II era of British socialism. On the ground, the Labour Government's employment of the theories of comparative advantage and of economies of scale precluded alternative approaches. What advantageous products could the Highlands produce? Some more "rational" economists felt that the place could be abandoned, there being no great point in keeping the Highlands open "year round" (The Economist, Feb 1970, quoted in McQuillan, 1970).

Despite extensive New Dealism and decades of various Progressive measures, on-the-ground improvements had been spottily concentrated in various localities and dependent upon the whims of outside economies. Large areas remained primitive. While Fort William grew, flattened and spread under the weight of its smelter, pulp mill, and hydropower schemes, the village of Ford, situated not very far from the major Lowland cities of

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\(^{55}\)E.F. Schumacher was one such planner, as chief executive of the National Coal Board. From this experience came much of his distrust for large scale development.
Glasgow and Edinburgh, got electricity only in 1963, running water in 1964 and television reception in 1977 (Stephenson, 1984). Ford, the site of a detailed case study by American ethnographer John Stephenson, is not an extreme example of the tardiness of such development in the Highlands. More outlying communities would wait yet longer for these services.

There were some small-scale attempts at development that presaged future Highland Development. Among the most important was the Highland Fund, the organization that first developed a system of credits and loans that allowed local Highland people to design their own developments, presaging the HIDB's eventual policy:

Another force for improvement, launched in 1953, was the Highland Fund. Conceived by Lord Malcolm Douglas-Hamilton and financed at first by a whisky magnate, it gave -- and still gives -- loans chiefly to crofters and fishermen. It provided a modest but valuable rehearsal for the later work of the HIDB. But the big step forward -- the primary attempt to tackle what many people saw as the insoluble problem of the Highlands -- came with the Highlands and Islands Development Act of 1965 and the creation of the HIDB in November of that year." (Hetherington, 1990, p 2).

The Highland Fund should be credited with being the first institution to implement the small-scale, decentralized approach. However, the Highland Fund's resources were also small. Highland Development, although necessarily small scale, needed to be extensive. This would require central government finance. When central government did become even more involved with development in the 1960s, it would take some years to discover the principles of decentralization and small scale.

The Labour Government, in 1949, had formed an Advisory Panel on the Highlands and Islands, led by the persistent Lord Cameron. The panel rapidly became an advocate for a new Highland Development Board along the lines suggested by Quigley and other influences. One major influence was the Norwegian Government. The Panel made a fact-finding mission to North Norway in July of 1962, to review the activities of the North
Norway Development authority. MP Russell Johnston, who would be instrumental in getting a similar development institution for the Highlands, wrote about the Norwegian development model in his 1962 pamphlet on Highland Development, quoting Norwegian official Eivind Erichsen:

"A guiding line of the Norwegian development policy has been to pay much attention to the possibility of establishing at least one large industrial plant in each of the more promising areas of the lagging districts. This is because once such corner-stone plants come into operation they almost automatically bring new economic life into all of the local community. All kinds of supporting industries, trade services, agriculture and fishing are given greatly improved possibilities for expansion through the establishment of a large industrial plant." (Johnston, 1962).

From the Norwegian model, many key concepts were distilled that were to be utilized in the Board’s activities. The Advisory Panel for the Highlands and Island’s report from the Norway trip emphasized four points:

"i) The strength and freedom of financial aid to development, operated by the District’s Fund, the central departments, the local authorities and the industrial banks, coupled with the absence of a burdensome industrial rating system.

ii) The work of the highly trained regional development officers and their support from a strong coordinating organization in the central government.

iii) The policy of concentrating development at selected country towns or other urban key points, which not only provides the best opportunities for industrial growth, but also stops off migration locally, enables a more rational view to be taken of depopulation in non-viable communities, assists the transport industry, provides an extended income ladder at home and a wider source of talent for local government and commercial enterprise.

iv) The ready demand for and supply of technical training and advisory services on a local basis, which helps to stimulate new ideas and

Much from the TVA and Norway models would later prove to be problematic simply because they were not suited to the decentralized Highland settlement pattern. Erichsen's "corner stones" model (the third item in the Norwegian list) was the first and biggest policy mistake with regard to sustainability, irrevocably committing the Highlands to the development of industrial complexes, such as the one at Fort William, that would disintegrate over time in the face of inevitable market fluctuations. This interest in "corner-stone" plants and other forms of centralization came to be known as "growth pole" theory. It was the single most obvious departure from what succeeded as mature Highland Development theory in that it de-emphasized community and place by deliberately moving people into large urban sites, most of which today are blighted. Despite these shortcomings, by 1962 and the Advisory Panel's trip to Norway, the Highland Board was clearly now visible on the horizon.

ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST THE 1965 ACT

In 1964 and 1965, the political climate was particularly ripe for Highland advocates to force a more comprehensive, local approach to development. One voice was particularly prominent, that of the Liberal politician Russell Johnston. Johnston had an ambition to become the MP for Inverness-shire, the heartland Highland county and the location of Inverness, the regional city. As a popular platform, the principle of "Highland Development" to counteract depopulation was the obvious choice. In this analysis, development has been so far considered as a phenomenon continual over two centuries which had been ambivalent or negative for the Highlanders themselves. The call for development had gone out under various guises since Culloden. Nothing much had come of it for the Highlands and much had been lost. What could possibly be different about
Johnston's new call for "Highland Development?" At these point, a lot depended on government and its development theory.

Labour's central idea: that Progressive government could be involved successfully in the promotion of economic developments -- private and public -- came to the fore after the World War II. The Keynesian view of government investment -- as an effective means to tide countries over depressed periods, to ride out the troughs of the "business cycle" -- had been borne out in some considerable force by the successful government-led economic mobilization during World War II. Full employment had been possible during the war. Production had increased enormously. It was thought simple enough to switch from munitions and war supplies to consumer goods under the same modes of operation: government investment, nationalized industry, centralized economic planning and, not by any means least or last, the principle of comparative advantage. This last has the most meaning for the Highland region. What, if anything, could the Highlands provide? In the context of the British Empire of 1945, and even more so in the Commonwealth of 1962, the Highlands were a remote and resource-poor region.

It is worth familiarizing ourselves with the Commonwealth scheme of the 1960s, before the institution was discredited and before the ascendancy of Margaret Thatcher's conservative, neoclassical economic policy, since the Commonwealth meant the existence within the British sphere of resource-rich regions, competing in each of several possible Highland commodities. During this era, the Commonwealth was conceived by Labour as a large-scale trade protection system. These were the years of big development for the Commonwealth, years when Britain conspicuously tried to keep up with American largesse across the world. The Labour Party's socialist ideology for the Commonwealth was undoubtedly in competition with American-led global capitalism during the 1950s and 1960s -- as evidenced by Harold Wilson's steadfast refusal to involve Britain in the Vietnam war. Labour had inherited the old British Empire and was determined to make good. However, "good" did not necessarily translate to immediate independence, because
early Labour attempts to allow self-rule and autonomous development had ended in disaster and civil war in places like India, Palestine, and Rhodesia, Labour's policy would avoid independence until a region had achieved some level of economic and social development, developing as a result that classic late-British oxymoron, colonialism with a socialist face.

The mode chosen for Labour's colonial development policy was implicitly industrial and rested on the Rickardian principle of comparative advantage. The idea was for each region to specialize in the large-scale production of an commodity, promoting efficiency through "economies of scale," to the advantage of all. It was impeccable idealism. Taxation provided the capital, British social planners provided the ideas and expertise. British funds poured into the Commonwealth (Morris, 1978).

And, as with the infamous African Groundnut Scheme, Labour's development, pursued as an end rather than as a means, would disrupt functioning subsistence and semi-subsistence economies all across the globe. Huge monopolistic industries were set in place, planned and protected by Commonwealth economists, creating a network of commodity supply and distribution systems. All the sugar would come from the sugar countries and would be traded for all the wheat that would come from the wheat countries and all the tea that would come from the tea countries and so on. Everyone would have cake and tea and eat it too. All would be protected from non-Commonwealth competition by tariff barriers and quotas. The welfare of the workers of the Commonwealth was (theoretically) bought at the expense of a few pence or cents on sugar or tea in London, Vancouver or Kingstown relative to the price paid, say, in America. There were contracts between the various producers, and the system would keep itself propped up. All producers, private or nationalized, would receive a price that would be sufficient to pay reasonable wages to all their workers. Security would be built in. Industries would be controlled to benefit the people of all the Commonwealth countries and eventually extended to employ all of them (Morris, 1978).
It is worth noting that later generations of Britons would find that this latest phase of the Empire system unsustainable, as ludicrous and paternalistic as earlier ones were. By the 1970s it was

"like waking from a dream. Young men from England going out to rule the Ashanti, or preside over the courts of the Sarakakis! English civil servants in plumed topees receiving the salaams of potentates! A huge department of state in a middle-sized nation of western Europe, devoted to the governments of people thousands of miles away! What had seemed to the late Victorians romantically splendid seemed to mid-century Britons perfectly nonsensical. In the fantasies of the Groundnut Scheme and the New Town Plan for Totse City, the Imperial conviction trailed away in absurdity. (Morris, 1978).

In the absence of any set of advantageous products for the Highlands, Labour planners were at a loss, the ideology being that scarce resources should be applied to where they might do most rational good. Was whisky the only product of advantage for the Highlands? Undoubtedly, there were those who thought so. Traditional industries ought not to be supported at the "expense of industries that provide employment and the prospect of eventual profit." If there were no useful task to which the people might be put, consequential logic would query the wisdom of keeping people in the Highlands at all, for it could -- and was frequently "...argued that there is no economic purpose fulfilled in keeping the Highlands inhabited year round." (The Economist, February, 1970, quoted in McQuillan, 1970). And as late as 1979, a government aide could ask why it mattered if Highland areas became unpopulated and still be taken quite seriously. (Hetherington, 1990, p 1).

Population decline was a "natural" process for a region that had no place in the grand scheme implied by these doctrines, a view evidenced by this more conservative critic, writing for "New Society" after the creation of the Highland Board, published in December of 1965:
"The decline in population is an aspect of the wider movement from the countryside to the towns which has been taking place all over Europe and is an essential part of economic advance....there are indeed those, in Scotland as well as England, who hold that the decline of population in the Highlands is likewise inevitable....attempts to prevent it will either hold up economic advance or lead to the sinking of natural resources in something which is foredoomed to failure....policy has been to bolster up a failing system which is basically unsound." (McCrone, 1965).

There were, then, two schools of thought. One, led by enthusiasts and Highland Development college members like MP Johnston, ecologist Fraser Darling or the industrialist John Rollo, sought to aid the Highlands, seeing the ecological and political problems as essentially redeemable through creative development, socialized or private. Others, like McCrone, saw the problems as both insurmountable and irrelevant in the face of doctrines of comparative advantage, with no loss if the place was abandoned, or at least left to its own devices. There were Labourites and Conservatives, socialists and capitalists in both schools.

For the abandonment school, messing with the economy of a region was a dodgy and wasteful proposition. The forceful conclusion was that the "proposals outlining the constitution and functions of the Highland Development Board may appear revolutionary and the objection may be raised that they constitute a precedent which would be dangerous and unsound." (McCrone, 1965). Of course, the Highland college members and their MPs demurred. The Liberal party, always strong in the Highlands since the Land Wars and the Resettlement period, was naturally in favor of development. Labour was weak, needed Liberal votes elsewhere, and could not afford to lose voters to the Scottish Nationalist Party either. In spite of the various economic and political theories, the Act was passed.

The government had been castigated by the Scottish Liberals throughout the last
time it had held office, for not trying to "promptly act up to its responsibilities and formulate its own policy, with the help of the reports made by innumerable committees over the last twenty years...." In response, Johnston wrote that "Liberalism condemns...the apathy of the Westminster Government towards the special economic and social problems of the Highlands and Islands and seeks the remedy for these and Scotland's other problems through Home Rule." (Johnston, 1962).

Home Rule was anathema to a weak government which could barely pass legislation without these Scottish MPs. And the Labour policy for all the various colonies and dependencies was nothing if not paternalistic, seeking involvement in all orthodox and many unorthodox forms of intervention. Highland Development, however, would require that the regular theoretical approach to interventionist spending be modified to allow development of industries whose design was decentralized rather than centralized, and whose ethos fit in with the Highland communities and places. One man alone in the Labour cabinet probably embodied this latter view more than any other. This was the Secretary of State for Scotland Willie Ross, the most powerful member of the Highland Development college. Ross, an activist for Highland Development, believed that "for two hundred years the Highlander has been the man on Scotland's conscience....No part of Scotland has been given a shabbier deal by history from the '45 onwards."56 This is a characteristic historical justification for Highland Development. At the time, theorist and commentator Ian R. Carter confirmed that Ross was motivated to right the ancient historical wrongs perpetrated on the Highlands, stating that "[t]he political architect of the Board, [Willie Ross] seems to have been moved by a belief that Highlands had been exploited for two centuries and that some amends should be made for this black history." (Carter, 1971). Ross's influence would continue through the first years of the Board as he kept a close eye on his ideological prodigy.

In 1962, another Highland Development college man was close to all this, a

56Secretary of State for Scotland Willie Ross, (Hansard, March 16, 1995).
geographer by profession and development theorist by inclination, who was to be involved with the HIDB project from the very beginning, and who had been part of the Advisory Panel on the Highlands and Islands Norway expedition. Mr F.D.N. Spaven would be part of the Board’s work for many years. In 1995, as I was looking for people who had been with HIDB at the very beginning, Mr Spaven was elderly and retired, living in Inverness, yet still considerably involved with the local development and environmental issues. My first meeting with him came after a City Planning Board meeting. He’d been working for a local non-profit group that lobbied planning meetings — clearly he was still an advocate for maintaining the quality of urban life in Inverness. Meetings with Mr. Spaven took place in the sitting room of his house, an equally elderly building on a hill above the bustle of the city, but a short walking distance to Bridge Street and the HIDB office complex where he had spent much of his working life.

F.D.N. was a window through which I could get a glimpse of the atmosphere, life and personality of the early Board and the "college" of Highland Development advocates that preceded it. This college of thought was eclectic, but influential. It was not a group limited to elected politicians such as Johnston. The idea and ideal of Highland Development also attracted civil servants and university types. F.D.N. had been one of this last group, a trained geographer and planner who later was to write extensively on the role of the geographer in development work, based on his HIDB experience. In 1949, in cooperation with Arthur Geddes, F.D.N. had written an influential paper, later published as a short book, considering the Highlands in the light of the regional development theory that was then in vogue at many British universities, with the addition of some novel, cultural insights (Spaven and Geddes Jr., 1949). He had then gone on to work with various planning bodies. His heart was with the idea of Highland Development and when the possibility of a job with the new HIDB opened up, he applied and was accepted. By working with F.D.N. and his writings, I was able
to get a glimpse of the life of someone who was a member of this college of Highland
Development and who had worked for the Board that the college inspired.

F.D.N. led me to other college members and their writings. Arthur Geddes,
F.D.N.’s colleague and co-author in 1949, was the son of Professor Patrick Geddes,
who was one of the major influences in Scottish planning and whose work was to
presage much that would later become Board policy. F.D.N. had been considerably
influenced by Geddes elder, believing that what was necessary for the Highlands was a
"truly regional development, in the organic sense in which Sir Patrick Geddes first
thought of it." (Spaven, 1995). Dr. Patrick Geddes has been described as Scotland’s
"Renaissance Man." (The Scotsman, July 10, 1995). Geddes senior’s work with
planning and development had originated in his revitalization of Edinburgh’s old town
in the late nineteenth century while a professor at Edinburgh University. He’d taken
that experience and worked in India, Palestine and France as an academic and an
advocate. As a designer of towns, an architect, and significantly, an ecologist,
sociologist, and biologist, Geddes had inspired students in Scotland to view planning
and development as a holistic process. He was a maverick, a wild-looking, wild-
speaking, restless man who in his life upset apple carts from one end of the British
Empire to the other. Certainly, he was far ahead of his time in understanding what
would later come to be thought of as principles of postmodernism and sustainability
theory. Geddes’s re-formulation of the industrial adaptation into paleotechnic and
neotechnic stages presaged both the modern division of modernist and postmodernist:

"As paleotechs we make it our prime endeavor to dig up coals, to run
machinery, to produce cheap cotton, to clothe cheap people, to get up more
coals, to run more machinery and so on.... But all this has been with no
adequate development of real wealth, as primarily of houses and gardens,
still less of towns and cities worth speaking of: our industry but maintains
and multiplies our poor existence.... Whenever we make up our minds, as
some day before long we shall do, to apply our constructive skill, our vital
energies, towards the public conservation instead of the private dissipation of resources, and towards the evolution instead of the deterioration of the lives of others, then we shall discern that this order of things also 'pays'...." (Stalley, 1972).

Geddes also presaged theorists of sustainability or "ecological economics." A Geddesian view was that the typical economist understood the world through a too-narrow view of human motivation and values -- and was frequently wrong as a result. Geddes thought that the abstraction of "the good" to mere monetary measure was an economic mistake of the first order, believing that many "are hypnotised, from their earliest education with its exaggeration of money arithmetic, into a specialized insistence on money gains, which practically amounts to a veritable obsession by these, with consequent practical blindness to real wealth for themselves and to real wages for others." (Stalley, 1972). This is what sustainability theorist Herman Daly and theologian John Cobb have called the "fallacy of misplaced concreteness," or "money fetishism." (Daly and Cobb, 1994, p 25, pp 37-38). In the Highlands, this teaching, inspired in Geddes's pupils and admirers, would take the form of a special understanding for the role of community and place in Highland Development.

Geddes is also possibly the earliest advocate for what is today known as "bioregionalism." He thought that regional ecology was the basis of both economy and culture:

"Every region has its heritage of good and its burden of evil. Every inhabitant from child to patriarch should strive to know what his region contains, not only its wealth of natural resources, scenic beauty and heritage of culture but the opposite picture as well: the evils of ugliness, poverty, crime, and injustice of all kinds. The citizen must first study all these things with the utmost realism, and then seek to preserve the good and abate the evil with the utmost idealism." (Stalley, 1972).
Geddes’s influence on the HIDB by 1965 was essentially, according to F.D.N., "second-hand" and certainly dilute (Geddes died in 1932). But son Arthur had been a member of the informal Highland Development college. The first Chair of the Board, Sir Robert Grieve, had been a student of Geddes’s, and F.D.N. was an admirer. The Board closely followed "Geddesian" planning, which, according to Grieve, was why the HIDB "showed results." "This, perhaps, was because the Board was pursuing the Geddesian maxim of planning and action in parallel. Certainly, by this time, I was deeply affected by his maxim and his own record of action..." (Grieve, 1990). Geddes's influence may be exemplified in a partial reading of the 1949 paper by F.D.N. and Geddes junior, which reveals in these young men an ability to see far beyond the utilitarian economics of the day to an Geddesian understanding of non-material values, tradition and history:

"Despite the breakup of the clans after 1745 and of communities by the ruthless clearances made before the Crofters’ Acts of 1886-1911, and despite prolonged emigration before and since, something still remains of the social ties which have made people want to go on living in isolated communities on a meagre income, and of the custom of mutual aid which has made this life economically possible. Spiritual qualities of his own, a variety of rural skills and strong attachment to his homeland are distinctive features of the individual Highlander's way of life." (Spaven and Geddes Jr., 1949).

Many other influential early members of the HIDB would echo this willingness to stretch their economics to include understandings based on less "tangible" factors such as "spiritual qualities," or "strong attachment" to place and tradition.

From early Highland Development literature, it was clear that the first Chairman of the Board, Robert Grieve, was cast in a Geddesian mold. In 1947, Grieve took part in one of Fraser Darling’s peripatetic expeditions to report on the social ecology of the island of Coll. Darling’s work in the Highlands was legendary, and few have had such influence since. Darling traveled extensively in his job as Director of the Department of Agriculture’s
West Highland Survey. He had the enviable task of wandering about the Highlands with as many Highland development thinkers as he could assemble to investigate economic and social conditions. The Coll Report began with a Geddesian statement of values:

"The conference has been unanimous in considering that the problem of Coll does not lie in the economic sphere alone, and that a solution must cover the social and educational fields. The premiss has been accepted as axiomatic that a solution of the problem will not be judged on the narrow criterion of "is it worth it?" to maintain and lay the foundation for increase of an island community that has dwindled to 210 souls. The purely economic standard cannot be applied because first, the people of Coll have rights of society which the nation cannot neglect and, secondly, the return to the nation of a prosperous island community cannot be measured." 57

It is impossible to assess the effect that membership of such an excursion might have had on a young member of the college of Highland Development in 1947, but it must have been great. Sir Robert Grieve would become, in his time, as well-known a public figure as Geddes, and his work in implementing the Highlands and Islands Development Act would earn him the knighthood that the radical Geddes refused. 58

THE PASSING OF THE ACT

Johnston’s plan was popularized in a small, bright pamphlet: "Highland Development." (Johnstone, 1962). It was debated by the Scottish Liberal Party Conference in Aberdeen in 1962 and adopted as a major feature of the Liberal Party Manifesto for Scotland. In his introduction, Johnston is primarily concerned with the problem of depopulation -- the formulation of the Highland Problem that was to the fore in the early 1960s. The policy of Highland Development was adopted by Harold Wilson’s Labour Government more as a matter of political expediency than of interest:

58 The honor was offered a second time some years later, and Geddes accepted.
"In parts of the Scottish Office, the Highlands and Islands were seen not just as peripheral, but impossible. On good authority it is said that the Permanent Secretary of the years 1965-73, Sir Douglas Haddow, had demonstrated this at a meeting some time before the new Board came. Leaning over a map, he laid his elbow on Fort William and stretched his whole forearm up the Great Glen, and made a gesture westwards — a sweeping gesture north and west — and said 'so far as that area is concerned, it's out.' He saw it as a troublesome area that somehow had to be kept quiet by 'chucking buns across the fence' if necessary, and he was not alone in that view." (Hetherington, 1990, p 3)

But they would be forced to act; Wilson's government had only a small majority. The Scottish Liberals provided votes in aid of other Labour policies. The *quid pro quo* was Highland Development.

From the very beginning, the Act presented the possibility of departure from the traditional thinking on development. The Highlands and Islands Development (Scotland) Act of 1965 provided for moneys to be spent by a board or committee of responsible citizens on "assisting the people of the Highlands to improve their economic and social conditions." (UK Govt., 1965). The "social condition" clause proved to be key to the Board's future successes. At the time, one would have been hard put to find any economist who did not believe that economic and social conditions went entirely hand in hand, two sides of the same coin, and that simply improving the economy would improve social conditions. It was not yet well-understood at the applied level, although the Highlands for decades had demonstrated the phenomenon, that within a given boundary, such as that of a country or a region, the two could be so separated as to have virtually no linkage. It was possible to have a perfectly healthy national or regional GNP, the economist's indicator of national welfare, alongside mass unemployment, depopulation, and deprivation. The requirement that the Highland Board improve not only economic indicators, but less "tangible" social conditions was nothing short of radical. It provided for the novel possibility in the Highlands that when a development would improve things from an
economic point of view at the expense of community or place, that at least these other two issues would receive consideration.

The Board was also required to keep under review "all matters relating to the economic and social well-being of the Highlands and Islands," and to "prepare and submit proposals" in such matters (UK Govt., 1965). This entrepreneurial and collegiate clause ensured that the HIDB operated as a partly business-orientated, partly academically-orientated enterprise. On the one hand, the new Board could design and start its own enterprises, could assist others in their enterprises, and could be an instigator of businesses and social schemes rather than a follower. On the other hand, it could invent its own Highland Development theories, or pay other researchers to invent them, carry out surveys and public opinion polls, and disseminate its own publications independent of HMSO.\(^{59}\) The Board began by starting for itself an excellent library, extant today, supervised by knowledgeable staff, including teams of newspaper clippers, typists and the like. A further requirement was for an annual report to be submitted to the Secretary of State for Scotland.

These clauses also ensured that the HIDB would be to the fore in the discourse of Highland Development. The Board demonstrated a commendable sensitivity to the importance of communication and freedom of speech, and the inclusion of otherwise restricted voices, such as those of the Gaelic associations. This is not to say that there were not those times when the Board, like other bureaucracies, tightened up and refused to give comment, or even indulged in misinformation and propagandizing to avoid scandals, of which there were to be many.

The Board was also legally qualified to acquire land, buildings and manage land at public expense with the intention of furthering social development. It could, if there were no rational alternatives, "condemn" land for compulsory purchase (UK Govt., 1965). This was seen by many as the answer to the crofters' continuing wishes to have access to land that had

\(^{59}\)Her Majesty's Stationary Office (HMSO) is the official UK Government publisher.
been alienated under landlordism.\textsuperscript{60} The actuality was to be less radical, "the acquisition of land by voluntary or compulsory means" being "seen as a measure of last resort to achieve development objectives rather than as a desirable end in itself."\textsuperscript{61}

The passing of the Act disturbed bureaucrats at St Andrews House.\textsuperscript{62} Their fear was of a competitor to the north, independently spending their money in their patch, a beast driven by philosophies untested, un-trammeled by bureaucratic checks. Again, actuality was to prove much less than the fear, for in larger enterprises, the Board was forced to seek the Secretary of State's approval.

From the beginning the majority of the work of the Board was in processing grants and loans of money to fledgling business and non-profit organizations in the Highlands. This distributive role was not indiscriminate. The Board relied on a staff of experts, mostly accountants, the "business majors" of the British 1960s. These experts would take applications for grant and loan assistance from the general public of the Highlands and, on occasion, from outside interests willing to invest in the Highlands. The case officer's job was to work with the individual applicant until he or she had the best possible business plan or proposal. This would then go to the Board. There were seven members, counting the chairman. Money came from central government, who would budget a certain amount for the Board's spending each year:

"Most of this spending is on a loans and grants scheme, the most important of the Board's functions, and the only one specifically detailed in the 1965 Act. The Board has indeed been described by its second chairman as "in some respects...a merchant bank with a social purpose." Loans and grants are given at the discretion of the Board to almost any enterprise operating in the Highland and Islands which is judged to be commercially viable and to be capable of maintaining or increasing employment (or production in some agricultural and other cases). The applicant himself, in most cases, has to put up at least half of the capital required from his own resources including bank and other loans. Assistance up to a maximum of £400,000 can be

\textsuperscript{60}George Houston, "The Land" in Hetherington (1990, p 61).
\textsuperscript{61}Ibid, p 58.
\textsuperscript{62}Seat of the Secretary of State for Scotland and the Scottish Office.
given-with anything over £250,000 pounds requiring the agreement of the Secretary of State for Scotland -- but the average assistance is about £8,700 on projects employing about three people. Social development grants for non-profit-making social and community purposes can be given up to £6000." (Spaven, in HIDB, 1978).

The Board's first Chairman, the Geddesian Grieve, felt that "[e]veryone involved in the Board at the start believed that the test by which it should be judged would be the area’s ability to hold its people. Any area that cannot hold its people is socially and economically invalid, in that sense. If you apply that test today, then the Board must be said to have succeeded."63

GROWTH POLE THEORY

Although Grieve did indeed start out with a Geddesian policy of assisting the outlying areas with decentralized development technique, the public perception of the Board's first years is that of a preoccupation with "growth poles," since these were controversial and received considerable press coverage. The argument for growth poles may have originated in the Highland Panel's Norway junket of 1962. It was certainly reinforced by Norwegian testimony such as that used by Johnson in his Highland Development pamphlett. By 1967 the HIDB was advertising growth poles over the pages of its own newspaper. (See Chapter VI). The fact is: the Board employed both theories more or less equally from the beginning, and perhaps favored decentralist development, at least in terms of money spent (Carter, 1972). Yet they lost ground on public relations. Grieve's Geddesian maxims were outpaced in the news by larger, exogenous events such as the discovery of North Sea Oil, or the continued efforts of the Labour Government to plan British industry.

The Board eventually abandoned "growth poles" altogether to concentrate on its other, Geddesian approach under the chairmanship of Sir Kenneth Alexander in 1976. However, the Board's experiment with growth poles would prove to be long-drawn-out and problematic. Growth pole theory itself is not implausible, depending on the deliberate construction of

industrial centers in order to achieve both internal and external economies of scale and proximity\textsuperscript{64}:

"The origin of the idea of a growth centre lies in the empirical observation that economic growth, and particularly the growth of manufacturing industry is not spread evenly through geographical space but is concentrated at certain nodal points. If one is attempting to promote the economic development of an area"that the various revolutions in agriculture, industry and technology have passed by, then it is reasonable to attempt to create this kind of industrial concentration by deliberate planning." (Carter, 1971).

The two main, early outcomes of the HIDB's foray in growth poles -- the pulp mill near Fort William, or the aluminium smelter at Invergordon -- were eventually closed permanently in 1979 and 1981 respectively. Since large investments required approval from the Secretary of State for Scotland, the HIDB's hands were tied, especially in the case of the more extreme centralized developments such as that at Invergordon. In these cases, the large amounts of government money involved required considerable support and intervention from other bureaucracies, and the Board's influence would be severely limited. By this mechanism of thought, it becomes possible, and some have tried, to largely absolve the Board of responsibility for the industrial wastelands that would be left at Nigg, Kishorn, Invergordon, Fort William, and so on, these being largely mistakes made by central government. Since "most of the factors which determined the fate of these developments were outwith HIDB's control... the blame for them should not be placed at their door." (Campbell, 1991, p 40). I will not be so lenient here, since the Board's embracing of the "growth pole" theory of development is blatantly obvious in its early literature. This theory was a disaster for the areas that were designated "growth poles." The abandonment of an single industrial plant in Birmingham or London is no great long-term problem. Over the fullness of time, the plant will

\textsuperscript{64}Efficiencies related to the size and closeness of units of production. For instance, as at Invergordon (Chapter VI), two plants can share the same transport and housing infrastructure, achieving external economies of scale and economies of proximity.
be put to some other use, the jobs lost will not make a great impression on the economy of a large city, and all will eventually be well. In a small town like Fort William, or Thurso, the abandonment of a pulp mill or the threatened wind-down of a Dounreay reactor causes an earthquake-sized economic catastrophe.

In the next two chapters I present two case studies of two Highland districts, the homes of Donald and Callum of Chapter II. The choice of these districts for more detailed case studies was not a random one. The small town of Invergordon was deliberately picked since it had been an epicenter of the application of "growth pole" development theory. Skye and Raasay were picked since in many ways they were the best example of the application of an alternative, Geddesian development theory. Neither case study claims to be complete, since to provide a complete history of Highland Development in both of these areas would have required far more months of field research than were available. What these case studies do claim to be is an interesting ethnographic contrast between the effects of the application of a Progressive development theory based on the theories of comparative advantage and economies of scale, and the effects of the application of a Geddesian, grass-roots, mature Highland Development theory, based on "planning and action in parallel" (Grieve, 1990).
VI) Invergordon: a Disaster of Growth Pole Theory

"Few, if any, sites now remain in the United Kingdom offering suitable physical conditions and services for major industrial complexes such as aluminium smelting or the petrochemical industry.... Here in Britain a new frontier is opening -- the emergent North.... If British businessmen -- and governments remain blind to the potentials of the North of Scotland now, they will be criminally careless." (North 7, January 1969).

The small town of Invergordon, with a population of 4,145 in 1991, lies on the northern shore of the Cromarty Firth, a valuable deep water harbor. Behind the town, which is a step away from the water and the various harbor piers, is a hinterland, not at all typical for the Highlands, of fertile arable fields, good topsoil and rolling, forested hills. Walk the back roads of the Invergordon hinterlands today and you are likely to see some considerable numbers of prosperous new houses built privately with "oil money," intermixed with old government-financed "department plan" cottages, modern croft bungalows, and decent, if a tad run-down, 19th century farmsteads. Some villages, like the unlikely-named Barbaraville and Arabella, were resettlement-era croft developments with small fields of arable land. Today, they are constructed of a mix of modern croft-grant bungalows. The strikingly modern wooden doorframes and windows typify the up-to-date croft-grant housing. Directly behind these are sometimes old department plan cottages, some of which are rented out, others used as sheds and workshops. These are eclectic communities. Barbaraville's residents today include a professor at the local college, a schoolteacher, oil-related workers, the manager for a famous Highland folk-rock band that tours North America, and several unemployed oil workers, almost all of whom are also crofters. All the hinterland housing in the area between Invergordon and Nigg is spaciously laid out in semi-agricultural settlements. Most houses have an acre or so of land, whether "official" crofts or not. Many of the 15 Nigg and Barbaraville residents I talked to were
actively crofting, and were busy with hay and other chores in the summer of 1995.

By contrast, the interiors of the towns of Invergordon and Alness, once you get off the 19th century high streets, are predominantly constructed of typical government-built council houses, identical to those found in working-class Glasgow or Edinburgh suburbs. The people too are for the most part, immigrants from the central belt. The people that I talked to in these houses were unemployed or just recently laid off -- a slump at the rig yard -- save for two young men who had just been called back to their jobs that afternoon. Unemployment, for most that I talked to, had been long-term. This, since the two mainstays of the Easter Ross economy have recently failed. Both the British Aluminium Company Smelter, and the HiFab oil-rig fabrication yard were set in motion partly by HIDB, in the pursuit of theoretical "growth poles" under their Moray Firth Development (MFD) scheme. The aluminium smelter was an early attempt at growth pole theory, the rig yard was more opportunistic, an attempt for the MFD scheme to benefit from the unexpected North Sea oil boom.

After their first meetings in late 1965 and early 1966, the Board set about the business of putting an agreed-upon strategy into action. They decided to concentrate, as Sir Kenneth Alexander had recommended in his New Statesman article of 8 October 1965, on two policies. One was the development of a "string of pearls" growth poles in the Moray Firth area, another growth pole in Lochaber, and a third in the Wick area. The second item was policy designed to benefit -- and to hold -- the population of the more remote crofting areas. The growth pole strategy failed as a policy of regional development. The industries set up were isolated, single-purpose entities designed to meet national needs for commodities, rather than local needs for employment. At the time of the developments, two problems were unforeseen. One was that these industries were unlikely to be able to meet their needs for a skilled labor force -- thousands of workers with specific training and experience -- from within the Highland region. The other was the likelihood that market and business cycle fluctuations in the production of these commodities would result in the
eventual closing of the plants.\textsuperscript{65} HIDB would place all its Easter Ross eggs in two cracked baskets.

Researcher Ian Carter explained that growth poles (as practiced in the Highlands) are attempts to synthesize some of the requirements for "industrial concentration by deliberate planning." (Carter, 1971). Deliberate planning was what the HIDB had in mind. In October 1967, following close on the heels of the publication of their first report, the HIDB published the first of what were to be regular monthly issues of their public relations newspaper, \textit{North 7}. This paper was to be an element of the Board's ongoing strategy to develop, to involve itself in, and perhaps to control a public discourse of Highland Development.

\textit{North 7} started out on this birthday issue with a front-page attempt to deal with a serious controversy and public relations issue for HIDB. This was the complaint, from members of the farming public in Easter Ross, that the HIDB was planning to develop large scale industry on sites that were better suited for agricultural purposes. The aim of the HIDB leader on this occasion seems to have been to head off this criticism. The leader explained the Board's view:

"If the population of Easter Ross and the Black Island triples its present level of 29,000 by the year 2000, as the Board hope, this growth would use up only three per cent. of the 100,000 acres of cultivated land in the area. This rate of change of land use is much the same as that expected for the rest of Scotland as a whole." (\textit{North 7}, October 1967).

This was clearly in response to a complaint from farmers and in addition, "the North of Scotland College of Agriculture's recent report on farming" that "had stressed that the area was a unique agricultural region in the Highlands in terms of its favorable climate, altitude,

\textsuperscript{65}Particularly in our increasingly volatile economy, the expectation that industrial plants will last for any length of time frequently proves false.
geology, soils, and arable land and its high output and potential for expansion." (North 7, October 1967). The Board's planner (and admirer of Patrick Geddes), F.D.N. Spaven is quoted in the article's text contradicting the College's view:

"These same conditions make it attractive for industry," the Board's chief planner stated. With the deep water harbour at Invergordon, the flat, open land, the trunk road, and rail services and the large resources of fresh water nearby -- it makes a rare combination which is increasingly sought after by certain manufacturing industries, especially in the petro-chemical and electro-metallurgical industries." (North 7, October 1967).

The newspaper went on, in a later special issue, to detail the results of a special planning operation carried out by consultants at the Board's expense and then passed on to local authorities and other interested parties, with the obvious message that money would be available for such developments. The resulting Jack Holmes Planning Group Report (North 7, October 1967), detailed for these audiences: "What action is needed to cope with major growth in the Moray Firth Area."

The Holmes report is an exceptionally interesting document. It is an example of a style that could be considered late British Progressive (or social-modernist), characterized by a tangible and extraordinary faith that economic events could be guided and controlled to the benefit of all concerned by socialistic central planning. It details in some depth the level and scale of development that the Board, in all seriousness, was expecting to foment for the Moray Firth Area. Little of the planned growth was actually to take place, and, with hindsight, given the effect of the portion that was achieved, the area might consider itself lucky. Certainly the theory with which the Board rationalized these aims was utterly discredited by the 1970s, and Moray Firth towns had already begun to show signs of the blight that would result in almost every place that the Board implemented such theory. In a review of the HIDB's first six years, in 1971, researcher Ian R. Carter wondered why the HIDB was one of the last places that the discredited growth pole theory was being applied.
"It is not unreasonable for McCrone to conclude in the light of these reiterated statements that the Highlands Board [sic] represents a survivor of growth centre policy in Britain. Growth centre policies were abandoned elsewhere in Britain when the last Labour Government adopted a policy of taking jobs to the workers; but not in the Highlands....Mackay emphasized the extremely high costs involved in establishing manufacturing industry in the crofting counties compared with locations in less remote parts of Britain. The reduction of these excess costs by concentrating manufacturing industry in a few small areas of the Highlands, and thus obtaining internal and external economies of scale, is one reason why the Board adopted a growth centre policy for manufacturing industry." (Carter, 1971).

The Holmes report had recommended huge expansion for the Moray Firth Development (MFD) (North 7, October 1967). One town, Evanton, today a sleepy village with a population in 1991 of 1,552, was expected "within its boundaries," to "house about 22,000 people, some of whom would work in the adjacent industrial estate while others could readily travel further east or west." Brahan, a tiny place still too small for an independent figure in the county population estimates of 1991, was proposed "for a new town of 16,000 inhabitants on the south slope below Brahan Wood." (North 7, October 1967). The rationale behind all this optimistic planning activity was to alert locals, county authorities in the MFD area, and business people elsewhere in the country that the Board was serious and thinking big about -- literally and figuratively -- pioneering industrial enterprise and new-town development in the "new frontier" of the MFD. No wonder that Moray Firth farmers were up in arms, since it was their land that was slated to be condemned for compulsory purchase to ground these social engineering schemes. The idea of MFD and other growth poles, right or wrong, assumed a life of its own, and the subsequent controversies made it hard for the HIDB to get the public and many professionals to see that it was simultaneously employing a quite different policy for the extensively and thinly-settled Western Highlands and Islands. (Carter, 1971).

By 1969, the same call for businesses was reiterated again in North 7. With a sense
of desperation the HIDB this time issued an challenge on Moray Firth Development:

"Few, if any, sites now remain in the United Kingdom offering suitable physical conditions and services for major industrial complexes such as aluminium smelting or the petrochemical industry.... Here in Britain a new frontier is opening -- the emergent North.... If British businessmen -- and governments remain blind to the potentials of the North of Scotland now, they will be criminally careless." (North 7, January 1969).

By hook or by crook, the HIDB was to get at least some of its wishes fulfilled for the Moray Firth area. One woman who was a considerable influence on all of this was Isabel Rhind, the matriarchal and ambitious councillor for Easter Ross's local authority. Rhind, by all accounts, was a local one-woman development band who serves here as an extreme example of the way in which the agency of a single person can change the character of an entire region and change the livelihood of that region's population. When Rhind was a child, the district surrounding Invergordon was largely agricultural, combining both the market-based farming tradition of Lowland Scotland and the crofting of the Highlands. Invergordon itself was a fishing port, a distillery town and a naval base, and had been all of the above (save for the base) for many decades. Rhind, in an interview in 1995, told me her personal story of Easter Ross development. As a young girl, growing up as one of the few children of wealthy families in what was then an area dominated by traditional crofting and farming, Rhind stayed in the area each summer at her granny's house. Her father was the owner of a boatyard in England. On a sunny day one year, little Isabel planned a picnic with some of her local friends, the children of crofters and farmers and tradesmen. She heisted the local grocery van and collected 30 shillings of "picnic food," apples, oranges, bananas, Mars Bars. They had the picnic in "grannies house" -- perhaps the weather turned bad. Later she asked her father if she might repeat the exercise, having had so much fun the first time. It was then that he told her that she had managed to spend more money on one picnic than the parents of her friends had available to spend on food, entertainment, and
housing in one week. At this time, artisans in her father's boatyard in Essex, England, were getting six to twelve pounds a week, as much as eight times what the local people were getting. The implication was that she should be careful not to hurt her friends by throwing their poverty into too stark a contrast. She was appropriately astounded, and later made it her life's work to ensure that the people of Easter Ross had the chance to earn the kind of money that her father's men in Essex could make.

That Rhind's style is simplistic, yet generous and activist, was further revealed by her somewhat self-aggrandizing story of how she was key to attracting the British Aluminium Company's (BAC's) giant smelter to Invergordon. It was in the 1960s. She'd recently moved back to Invergordon after a southern education, including a respectable London University MA and an equally respectable marriage, followed by a stint as the proud headmistress of "one of the first secondary moderns in Hampshire." In "'63 or '65" -- Rhind couldn't remember which -- a local doctor named Robertson had been pushing her to get involved in things, by which he meant, (and Rhind concurred), they they had "to do something about jobs, otherwise everyone" in the area "would drift away." Mechanization, Rhind felt, was reducing the local need for agricultural and forestry employment, previous industrial developments had been limited to a Navy re-provisioning station and airfield, which although busy during the war, was presently abandoned and the existing whisky distillery, which was capable of little expansion. They needed to follow up on the possibility, presented so strongly by HIDB and the Holmes report, that BAC would bring a smelter to Invergordon. BAC, at the time, was a nationalized industry. It was controlled to a certain extent, in the manner of Labour Party nationalization, by the Westminster Government. Encouraged by Dr. Robertson, Rhind got up at a public meeting in Invergordon, "leaned on the piano" and delivered a stunning indictment of the present county authorities. Told them they were "not performing as elected representatives" for Easter Ross, "doing nothing to lure companies to the area." She "took the meeting and the
county officials by surprise." After a few weeks, in which she had the county clerk and his staff "work like niggers to make a case," Rhind travelled with an Easter Ross deputation to the Board of Trade in London. Luckily, she said, "one lady can get away with things that you wouldn't normally get away with." On the Board of Trade of that time was Alan Ives, who had "been in the Boy's Section of her school" in Hampshire. "See me afterwards" said schoolmarm Rhind. Although theirs was the 13th deputation for one of three planned new smelters66, enough to turn another member of the deputation "off his eggs", Rhind "was not superstitious." "After it was all over" she got a call from Ives. It was then that she knew that "we were getting one of these" smelters.

The smelter was approved by Willie Ross, the Secretary of State for Scotland in June 1968. Construction began in December 1968 on a three hundred acre site with rail access, behind the town. "For Grieve [Sir Robert, HIDB Chairman] and the others who believed in the industrializing of Highland Growth points, it must have seemed that a large slice of their dream was about to be realized. The first aluminium was poured in May 1971."67 It lasted until 1981, when it closed due to an altercation over electricity supplies. Nine hundred workers were immediately laid-off. To add insult to injury, the news came over the Christmas holiday.

Since the possibility was held out for some years that the smelter would reopen, they were powerless to do anything about their future. Also affected were rail transportation and ancillary occupations like small metal fabrication, and at least one colliery and one coal-powered power station. The loss of public money ran into the hundreds of millions of pounds, surely enough to call the growth pole policy into suspicion (Shucksmith and Lloyd, 1982). HIDB tried a rear-guard operation for a few years in the 1980s to reopen the smelter, but by this time Margaret Thatcher's policies of minimal intervention were in charge in Westminster, and nothing was forthcoming.

66BAC, AlCan, and Rio Tinto Zinc.
67Alf Young, Industry (Hetherington, 1990, p 103).
Rhind's story of her seduction of the BAC smelter was followed by a considerable litany of her various involvements in attracting other developments to Easter Ross. At no time did this formidable lady suggest to me the slightest regret that these things had happened. That these various developments including the smelter, the two oil-rig fabrication installations, and the distillery expansion, were all now closed down or in considerable run-down seemed to be secondary to the success of getting them there to begin with. It isn't wrong to attract large scale industry to such a small town, she averred, "providing there isn't a financial impediment." The problem with the smelter was (predictably, according to Rhind) the socialist Harold Wilson, who was determined that the smelter get power from the new Hunterston B nuclear plant: "Never got an economic price for electricity.," said Rhind, and that forced BAC to close in 1981. Not only that, but in BAC itself, there was "a weakness in management. They were sloppy about certain things." In particular, they "had to learn that there should be a partnership" between management and local government.

Rhind soon became a member of the local government, where by force of popular vote, she remains today after more than twenty-five years service. Her time is past, though; she knows it, and is retiring with the grace that one might expect. Her large commanding house above the shore is up for sale. She has moved to a small hamlet in the Invergordon hinterland, and she only comes into the office for meetings. She is well thought of locally, but with some perverse pride. Locals wryly understand that she has a certain egotistical flair that works both ways for them, but remain impressed by her badger-like ability to fight. "Invergordon, they were trying to clean it up! If there's money there, that Isabel Rhind would get it -- she does fight for her corner!" They point to her own failed business, a presently boarded-up supermarket on the Invergordon high street that was apparently run on some philanthropy in recent years, yet obviously did well during the boom. They wonder at the Isabel Rhind Centre, an installation that they thought would be a leisure
center, but that turned out, following an extended process involving cancelled funding, to be a health service center.

Invergordon locals are perhaps more sophisticated than Rhind about the effects of these developments: "I was here -- my family was from farming. Before, during and after [development]. They encouraged crofters to leave their way of life and go for the big time, but that's gone now...what they have done! They haven't developed a single thing!"

"Up here, the biggest problem is unemployment. HIDB funding has been these fly-by-night operations. The railway station [planned to serve the smelter, but abandoned], the smelter, Nigg [fabrication yard]. I think that what they did, they created quite a big industrial place -- solely dependent on two industries!"

In Invergordon, considerable public money was invested through central government in the BAC smelter itself, resulting, by the HIDB's estimate, in a simple (without "multipliers" or "knock-on" effects) cost-per-job statistic of £33,000, in 1981 pounds. In contrast, HIE reported a 1992 cost-per-job average for today's Highland Development projects, in 1993 pounds, of £3,626 (HIE, 1992). Locals felt betrayed when the smelter closed in 1981, and this money, widely but erroneously believed to have been entirely provided by HIDB, was considered a waste from their point of view. "They seem to have thrown [away] a lot of good money that they needn't have. They develop the Highlands and Islands by inviting people from outwith the area rather than trying to develop the people that are here." This last is a reasonable statement considering that the smelter's workforce was 73% incomers -- workers attracted to Invergordon area by the "promise of secure employment" from elsewhere in the country (Sewel and Wybrow, 1983). At least one early academic critic foresaw the many inherent problems:

"The sudden requirements for 600 and 1000 men cannot be met from Highland labour resources, despite the high unemployment figures, and most workers will probably come from the south. This, together with the
extensive expansion of Invergordon, Alness, and other surrounding towns and the re-orientation of outlook will completely destroy the present culture — a phenomenon that has been witnessed at Fort William (with the Pulp Mill) where the outlook and way of life is now much more southern in style." (McQuillan, 1970).

The second development in the area to have a huge impact was an oil-rig building yard. HiFab (Highland Fabricators) opened in 1972 — with some efforts by Isabel Rhind, the County and HIDB to attract development. By 1973, even HIDB were forced to admit that they were now minor players in Highland Development compared to the oil corporations. The Board's Chairman, Andrew Gilchrist, flatly stated in the annual report of that year "Whereas we are authorised to inject capital into the area at the rate of about £11 million per annum, the oil-related industry is probably injecting capital into the same area at a rate conservatively estimated to be about £30 million per annum; and this proportion is rising fast." (HIDB, 1973). HIDB, the County, and even Rhind were dwarfed by the sheer size and volatility of the oil market, and from the beginning HiFab was out of everyone's control.

HiFab was placed at Nigg, the northern jaw of the Cromarty Firth and a few miles along the shore from the smelter. It soon employed upwards of 3,000 workers, but slumps and lay-offs were frequent as platforms were built, towed out and the company waited around for other new orders. Photographs from the time show a trailer-park city on the Nigg headland, while the housing shortage became a County Council problem. By the mid-to-late 1980s the oil construction boom was over. Other such yards closed across the Highlands. Oil production has peaked and dropped in recent years. Presently, the Nigg yard manages to get the occasional order refitting platforms from the North Sea for towing to other sites elsewhere in the world. This was the fate of the various platforms that were visible in the Firth during my visits to the area in 1994 and 1995.

68 Ibid, p 111.
The other major MFD development (and waste of public money) in the Invergordon area was the building of the large tracts of local authority housing for these workers. In respect to this other Easter Ross disaster, the HIDB might be partially exonerated. They had circulated the Holmes report which included detailed community plans, hoping -- perhaps expecting -- that the authorities would take up on the "enlightened" attitude therein, which preferred to tackle the problem by organizing between counties and other authorities. This was not to be. The problem was one of coordination. The difficulty was outlined later by researcher Grant Jordan, for whom the local authorities had, wryly, embodied "Performance without Conformance."

"A joint programme was organized so that the local authority would be 'pooled.' This was intended to attract a national-scale builder with his own workforce into the area and relieve the skilled labour shortage [at the smelter, the HiFab yard, and in the building trades] by phased development. The housing problem was turned round to a housing surplus, but this resulted from the over-optimism of the forecast need and a variety of building responses rather than the straightforward success of the joint operation." (Jordan, 1982, pp 117-129).

Blaming this pooled authority working party for mismanagement and internal bickering, Jordan's 1982 criticism was ill-received at HIDB, since in their coordinating role they had been responsible for inventing the Moray Firth Working Party in the first place, and at the time they still expected to attract alternative developments to the area and redeem the empty housing. It was a "fine example of academic twaddle and jesuistic semantics." "God knows what the housing supply would have been if it had been left to the Jordans of this world."69 Perhaps Isabel Rhind's volatile nature had something to do with the difficulties. When questioned on this, Rhind stated that the County Clerk of the time had preferred that housing money go into the county's coffers rather than to a centralized agency to coordinate

69HIDB graffiti on their copy of Jordan's paper found in HIE Library.
housing development across the area. Whatever happened, the greatest difficulty apart from the lack of occupants was to do with county borders and jurisdiction. Today, a large number of these housing units are empty. Residents who remain face chronic unemployment as a fact of life. In the early 1980s Invergordon was widely known in Scotland for an male unemployment rate of 80% or more. The area continued to show blight, with male unemployment rates hovering around 20-30% for the three years 1987-89. By 1991 the problem was under better control, with 12% male unemployment (HIDB, 1990). Other arguments over funds, siting and other political ramifications of the smelter and HiFab developments also continued into the 1980s.

After HiFab began to run down, and the authorities realized the smelter was a dead duck, the Thatcher Government provided $10 million of local inward investment to be managed by HIDB (1981), and, with the cooperation of HIE and the local authority declared Invergordon as the country's first "Enterprise Zone." (1983) What this translated into was an extremely welcoming attitude towards new companies, particularly in the provision of advance factories, rate relief, and capital grants and loans. Also included was a simplified planning scheme -- which amounts to the suspension of environmental regulations, since the various planning acts contain the teeth of Britain's more stringent environmental regulations. Such seduction can be expected to result in the setting up of companies which are marginal. This has resulted in the enterprise zone system attracting dangerously unstable companies to the region, and there has been continued boom and bust, albeit on a smaller scale than before. This has not passed without local discussion about "fly by night operations" and the difficulty of finding work in an economic environment where a factory might come and go inside of six months:

"I've seen a lot of firms where they really tried, but I've seen them back a number of losers -- quite big losers -- spending a lot of public money. At the same time there's a fair degree of disenchantment with the indigenous population -- they don't seem to get support. There's a preoccupation with start-ups [new firms]."
By comparison, the previous situation with HiFab and BAC seemed relatively rosy to some. However, oil-related workers that I talked to in Invergordon and Nigg in 1995 were philosophical about their future. Oil-related work is, they say, for young people that do not mind the insecurity and travel involved. These people had, for the most part, moved in to take advantage of the high wages offered by HiFab, and would soon move out again, if HiFab didn't pick up.

The more permanent residents are more dissatisfied. After these last thirty years of development history, local residents realize that the decision to site major industrial plants on their shore was not unambiguously to the local economic benefit. Rather, the giant smelter and HiFab were useful to the well being of the rest of the kingdom and imposed on the locals. This policy they felt, had to be reconsidered:

"Undue weight carried by the major firms. Having the sites -- they really act as a pendulum -- which ever way they swing, we have to swing with it. Or do we get off the bandwagon? Say "tough luck, boys." That's the dilemma. Its the tragedy that we've got these things landed on us and the way they've developed ... they've had this unfortunate effect. There's something to be said for getting off the bandwagon."

HIDB? It's a bit of "jobs for the boys." Smaller projects would sustain a longer time -- the smelter! 800 people!

"The [BAC] smelter should never have been built here in the first place. A political decision. The better plan was RTZ [Rio Tinto Zinc]. The electricity ultimately closed the smelter."

One family, a couple with local roots who, from the look of their house and cars, had made a lot of money out of the rig-yard -- the husband was still a foreman -- expressed their own ambivalence fluently and in detail:
"Things are better now here than they were thirty years ago. Things are getting worse now. With hindsight, we should have taken a leaf out of Shetland's book [more autonomous control, heavy local taxes on oil development]. They gave us the enterprise zone. The smelter was a good thing for a long time. They helped to bring HiFab to Nigg here. Now we look out on rows and rows of rigs, which I don't mind.
"All our four sons have gone; there's nothing here for youngsters -- our four boys had apprenticeships. They've had to leave. We hoped that they would find jobs, but things have tailed off. It's a difficult question. People wouldn't have had all those years of full employment -- and there wouldn't be all those incomers. [There's been] a lot of resentment because they've [HIDB] tended to give money to grandiose schemes, and not to locals."

For another, more optimistic, local man, development was a cycle that could be picked up over and over again. Something would come up. First you had the boost, followed by the influx of foreigners, then the infrastructure was improved, there would be a slump, and hopefully the whole thing would start over. However, things didn't start over in any seriousness, and the great majority of the skilled workforce left within a few years, leaving a serious housing surplus (HIDB, 1990). The trained people that had moved in had taken the best jobs, and indeed, for a good while the difficulty encountered by the smelter and HiFab's management was that there was not an adequate supply of skilled labour in the area, providing the rationale for that 73% of the workforce that was imported from elsewhere.

Residents of the Invergordon area are exceptionally sophisticated about the positive and negative social dimensions of the smelter and fabrication installations -- the traditional Highland understanding of community. Locals realize that the money that came to the community did not all go to waste. They appreciate greatly, for instance, the new bridge over the Cromarty Firth to the Black Isle that leads to the HIDB-improved shopping center of Inverness. But they wish that the bus service was still adequate and cheap as it was in the days when both the smelter and HiFab were working hard and fast. Yet with the slump,
there had been a return to the peace and quiet of the area, which for everybody I interviewed, without exception, was an important value. Even the streetwise young men talked about their preference for the peace, quiet, and neighborliness of the Invergordon community. Incomers were equally positive about the amenity values of living in their area:

"I was bought up in a city -- but now I have wide open spaces and hills -- fresh air -- except when Nigg [HiFab workers] is going to or coming from work. Shopkeepers are more friendly -- less crime -- families can let their kids go. You can't do that in the cities. There's far less snobbery in this area."

Things had begun to change somewhat since the yards and smelter had moved in, a fact more noticeable to a young consultant who travelled a lot:

"I notice it more when I go south. There are distinctions. I think the edges have become a wee bit blurred the last thirty years. Those coming into the area had an effect on changing culture -- but equally the culture has had an effect on those coming in."

One oil worker blamed change on American oil-workers, who were sent to work at the plant:

"Through no fault of theirs [HIDB], the way of life has changed dramatically -- but an awful lot of Americans were here -- people have picked up their ways. Thirty years ago, everybody knew everyone else on this peninsula."

The biggest social problem discussed was the difficulty of keeping the young people. The youth unemployment rate in blighted towns is typically much higher than the adult rate. One activity I engaged in while travelling to and from Invergordon for research was to pick up and drop off young people, as they hitch-hiked regularly to Inverness, to go to Inverness's vocational college, to get to some job (and save the bus fare), or to look for
work. Each day I would find a couple or more youngsters on the road. Once or twice the
car was full. We'd chat, and I'd find out what they were doing on the road that day. Local
youths that have stayed after high school and not gone to a three-year university college,
for which they must presently leave the Highlands, instead hope to eventually parley
training courses or vocational college into work, but life is difficult for them in the
meantime. There is little for them to do in the way of local activities besides drinking in the
bars and clubs, which is expensive. Drugs, perhaps surprisingly, do not seem to figure
over-large in these youngsters' lives. Locals continually repeated to me that the town was
relatively drug-free compared to the bigger cities in the south, and I saw, or was told of
little but minor hashish (cannabis resin) use among a hard core of youngsters. Alcohol is a
bigger problem. More than one youngster I picked up hitch-hiking in the morning had a
hangover and didn't smell too good.

Many reported that they were staying on with their parents beyond the age they
would have preferred to be independent. The social benefit structure encourages early
marriage and child-rearing, by which means you'll get a place of your own from the local
authorities, but only a few I talked to seemed to have fallen in to the category of "welfare
parents" so detested by American conservatives. Most of these kids had seen the good
money their parents were able to make at one time and are still scheming to get their share
somehow. Older working and retired folks knew that the younger generation was getting
the worst of things: "I don't think that any of them stays here now hardly. There's not
many staying here. I don't think there's any apprenticeships. It's getting run down."

The biggest cultural gap I found was between the youngsters and the old farming
and crofting population that had been in the area long before the industrial development.
The present way of life for young people was extremely foreign to this generation. One
couple living in a council house -- across from green fields and next to an otherwise idyllic
child's playing field -- were reluctant to open their door to me, and wished to see my
credentials -- the only time I was asked for ID in three summer research visits to the Highlands. Once I had been invited in and accepted, they described their fear of the incomers and the new denizens of the council estates. They didn't go out at night, and kept their doors locked. They were constantly fearful. They were dismayed at what they saw as an increase in violence and crime and a decrease in the community values they had grown up with:

"Much more violence, undisciplined children, murders, muggings, knife threatening. [You] could go where you liked, thirty years ago, leave the windows open, weren't so worried about answering the door. It's wrong that the children cannot be disciplined -- much more drinking -- a different world."

They couldn't understand what was going on, and felt that the old farming occupations were better socially: "There's hardly a job in it. Sad really to see so many young people that never work in their lives -- too much time on their hands." "There's nothing -- no transport, busses, anything. If there was more work on the farms and that they wouldn't have to go."

Similar emotions were reported by others of the pre-industrial generation. Such conceptions are of course relative. Even working alone, I did not find the council estates particularly dangerous, especially compared to an American inner-city housing project. Everybody was remarkably friendly, and few people refused to talk to me. Most older people were just confused as to what their grandchildren and children might do:

"My son -- thirty years ago -- he would be limited to what he could do, but he still could stay. They could make a life. But I'm not sure they could survive financially [today]."

I can pick out several -- ordinary, non academic children that would ordinarily have gone to work on farms -- just out of work. Even local councils don't take on the simpler kids. And even university graduates!"
Another disgruntlement that locals discussed was the regular visit of tourist ships to the large pier that had been -- and still occasionally was -- an oil-rig fabrication station. The visits had been arranged by HIE, along with a £30,000 grant to clean up the high street (according to Mrs Rhind -- "17 this year, including the QE2!"). This was an attempt, on HIE's part, with the cooperation of the local authorities, to bring some new tourist business to the town, which was otherwise bypassed by the new road, and had little in the way of tourist business. More than once I witnessed the following performance: The city workers, on the day that the liners were expected, busied themselves madly putting out giant pots of flowers and shrubs, which were carefully placed up and down the high street. Once the visitors were gone, the workers would be out again with fork-lifts and heavy trucks, taking the pots back to some storage area, no doubt for fear of vandalism from the local youths. This and other obviously cosmetic attempts to tidy up the town were a source of both local amusement and severe local displeasure, since such efforts were blatantly for the benefit of tourists and businesses rather than ordinary locals. It suggests a lingering colonial attitude on the part of Mrs Rhind's council, and the extent to which the under- and unemployed feel alienated. Not surprisingly, some of the youngsters did express a wish to get their hands on the pots if they were left out one dark night. "What about us," they said:

"How come we have to wait for [tourist]liners to come to Invergordon before cleaning up the town. There's roads that have been waiting to have been done for years...The QE2 is coming in September!"

The environmental effects of the smelter and fabrication yards are not a considerable problem, according to the local people, with one or two notable exceptions. One old woman keeps alive the memory of the village that was removed to make way for the HiFab yard. In her garden, she has built a scale model of the place, as it was before the plant was

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70The by-pass had been part of the Jack Holmes Planning Group Report (North 7, October, 1967).
built. You can look from her yard, over the model and over the road, to where her model village should be reflected in reality, and see instead the huge bluff sides of the fabrication sheds. She's an activist, and will talk to anyone who is interested about her outrage at the bulldozing of her mother's croft. "The village isn't here, just the two houses. HiFab bulldozed the houses. Nigg destroyed a whole community. Balnabruach. [Instead] it gave work to people from outlying regions. We were robbed of the beach and the sea."

Others were more prosaic, sympathetic to the environmental effects. This from an unemployed oil worker: "A big dirty oil rig -- smack in my bedroom window! But I can't complain." He had had the good job, and he wanted it again.

It would be impossible, and probably pointless to attempt to extract some external positivistic causal agency from the history of the Invergordon developments. That Rhind and local politicians were party to their attraction is indisputable, as is the fact that HIDB promoted the idea of Moray Firth and other large-scale industrial growth poles (Wick and Lochaber being the other two) as part of its overall strategy for the Highlands and was heavily involved in the debacles at Invergordon. One Invergordon local summed up the whole experiment succinctly: "Folk came for the work. The work's gone. The social problems remain." This seems to be the typical outcome of the way growth pole theory was applied by HIDB, an outcome that is in marked contrast to the policies pursued in other parts of the Highlands.
VII) Raasay and Skye: Geddesian Planning and Action in Parallel

"Remember your hardships and keep up your struggle.  
The wheel will turn for you  
By the strength of your hands and the hardness of your fists.  
Your cattle will be on the plains,  
Everyone in the land will have a place,  
And the exploiter will be driven out."  

The Isles of Raasay and Skye are examples of the second development theory employed by HIDB. On these islands the Board supported or even instigated a number of decentralized, small-scale schemes designed to put working capital in the hands of Highlanders. That this method was ultimately more sustainable is evidenced, at least in part, by the fact that many of the enterprises supported are still working. This is to be contrasted with the Invergordon experience, where it is only the more recent small scale efforts within the Enterprise Zone that can be said to be financial possibilities at all.

The Isle of Skye is spread out on the edge of Scotland like a kid's drawing of a large bird. Indeed, the bird metaphor is the one that was used by Skye's most important recent poet, Sorley MacLean, in his poetic description of the island, An Cuilithionn, The Cuillin. Skye is a considerable piece of the Highlands and Islands region by size and population -- 8,846 people in 1991 -- and a very popular tourist destination. The HIDB assisted in the setting up of bed and breakfast accommodations all over the island, and it is these converted private houses that are the mainstay of the tourist trade. One casual count I made suggests that every seventh or eighth house in Skye's crofting townships serves the dual purpose of family home and bed and breakfast.

The settlement pattern on Skye is diverse. There are dozens of typically spread-out

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71 Mary MacPherson, Mairi Mhor nan Oran, (McGrath, 1975)
72 From "An Cuilithionn" (MacLean, 1987).
crofting townships, with the modern whitewashed bungalows that are the legacy of decades of housing grants to crofters and villagers, which are now generally in good condition. A good number of older croft and other houses are obviously "department plan." Other settlement is in towns -- of a sort. Aside from Portree, which is a "real" nucleated town, towns on Skye are obviously crofting townships that have slowly become towns. Broadford, for instance, the second largest town, originated in this way, and so lacks that nucleated feeling typical of British towns. It is spread out and scattered. Finding the boundaries or simply walking the length of such a town would both be distinctly inconvenient operations. Broadford, one of the most extensive settlements, is several miles long. Broadford has recently been developing as a modern tourist and service center, and boasts a short-stop convenience store and gas station that has been seemingly transplanted from American-style strip development. However, hopeful American tourists that enter this emporium, looking for coffee with which to fill their travel cups are likely to be disappointed. The new store has only a small machine dispensing typically British instant coffee. Americans looking for other Americans are less likely to be disappointed. They are here in summer, along with Australians, New Zealanders and various Europeans, all in great numbers, looking for the perfect Highland village, or the last great European "wilderness."

Rising behind Broadford are the smooth Red Cuillin Mountains, and beyond these sit the jagged Black Cuillin. These ranges, in concert with the tortured landscape of the Quiraing's needles and ridges, may make Skye a beautiful but difficult agricultural prospect. The best land is the in-bye of the townships, which show the work of generations of (mostly female) seaweed carriers and the various Department of Agriculture grants for lime and other fertilizers in their spread of brighter green. These tiny Skye fields are, for the most part fenced and in use, but rarely these days for corn (what Highlanders call barley or oats) or potatoes. Hay is the most important crop these days, and is worked
either completely by hand, or by hand with the assistance of a small tractor. Square balers and even round balers are here and there, but it's easy to see that the size of the fields often precludes more advanced mechanization. Traveling the roads of Skye and Raasay on foot, I have seen old men and old women working their hay with gumboots and rakes, a solitary occupation for the older crofters. Other communities get together informally to get in the hay, with barter and exchange agreements between neighbors as to its proper collection and use. More hopefully, here and there you see entire families out, more each year. One little girl had the job of removing sticks and twigs from the rows of hay before the windrow came rattling by, mounted on a tractor driven by her red-haired mother. Her father and older brother handled the rakes easily. The girl, for her part, was determined to extract each and every twig, even when they were long and tangled with the grasses. I was put in mind of similar part-time farming families in Norway, where the hay is hung on the fence to dry, as indeed it used to be here. The criticism that hand work such as this is outdated, artificial, and a waste of time precludes any understanding of the role of such activities in building family, community, and individual character, an understanding that is commonly employed these days in the Highlands. The striking contrast for me was with Montana's "troubled youth," the residents of the group home where I have a part-time job, with their Nintendo and other equally artificial, and unredeeming preoccupations. It's clear to see that crofting, in cultural context, is more than a merely economic activity.

Likewise, these young people and their families are comforting to theorists of Highland Development, cause for "a new confidence."73 On Skye and Raasay, the youngsters and the various types of work that are expected to keep the youngsters at home are seen as confirmation that the development of the last few years, which has been essentially small-scale and for the most part carried out in consultation with the local communities, proves "the capacity to provide better prospects for ourselves." "The HIDB, although associated initially with a very different approach, has had the courage and insight

73James Hunter, "A New Confidence?" (Hetherington, 1990, p 38).
to assist these novel trends."74

In the "different approach" that is referred to -- the HIDB's growth pole theory -- the emphasis was on industrial policy, policy to attract and develop large-scale industries. In the outlying areas, strategy was instead designed from the beginning to fit in with the existing economies, and was concentrated in agriculture, forestry, fishing and tourism. A lot of people, their heads turned by the momentous events around the Moray Firth, missed the occasional launch of a fishing boat here, the opening of a hotel there, and so on. That growth poles subsumed other HIDB activities has been the argument of several prominent researchers, including Iain Prattis and Mike Geddes (Prattis, 1974, Geddes 1979). Although the growth pole experience was demanding, the evidence is that it did not dominate HIDB activities (Carter, 1971). As early as 1966, the Board quickly moved to advance fishing, starting with the provision of both new and old boats. By 1971, the Board had provided 35 new fishing boats, 24 dual purpose boats and was exploring the provision of funds to refit and provide second hand boats for fishermen to use. It also became active in training fishermen (Carter, 1971). In agriculture, the Board moved to develop new agricultural products (for example, speciality cheeses, venison, and fish farms), to consolidate old strategies through the development of marketing systems, working cooperatively with producing farmers and crofters, and to provide equipment to intensify production on existing farms and crofts. Tourist developments at first were concentrated in larger hotels such as the ones on Barra and Raasay, but later branched out into the provision of trailer parks, campgrounds and the ubiquitous bed and breakfast houses. Small scale manufacturing was pioneered by HIDB on Skye, at the Gaeltec plant; in the Western Isles, with Harris Tweed; in Orkney, with Orkney Cheese, and so on. This was all, for the most part, welcomed by the residents of the further-flung communities, disputes notwithstanding. The beginning of a new confidence can indeed be seen in the

74 Ibid
literature as early as 1971. That year, researcher Ian Carter provided a basic survey of the Board's experience so far, rejecting the idea that the Board was biased toward growth pole development, using an empirical analysis of the Board's spending, far more than two thirds of which was outwith manufacturing schemes both large \textit{and} small (Carter, 1971). The money was spent aiding agriculture, including crofting, forestry, fishing, and tourism. The "revitalization" of the fishing industry on the West Coast and Islands was considered the most positive experience by 1971. Wrote Carter: "The psychological impact of the success of the fisheries scheme has spread beyond these areas, however, and has engendered a belief that improvement was possible." (Carter, 1971)

Thus, long before the various growth pole disasters at Lochaber, Invergordon, and Thurso (Dounreay), HIDB had played this alternative team of decentralized endeavors. In the early 1970s, as the big developments began to prove problematic, and as researchers like Iain Prattis began to hammer the Board for bias towards the same, the Board, in 1977, decided to make it clear to the public which team was really their first string. The Board began to concentrate its public relations effort on disseminating information about their various decentralized enterprises to aid rural districts. This coincided with the chairmanship of Professor Sir Kenneth Alexander, who at the time was already a noted economist. Alexander decentralized the Board's own activities formally in 1980, creating ten outstations. Ten years later (1990), the Conservative Government wound up the Board entirely and created Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) to replace it.

Lorne MacLeod is the Skye inheritor of the HIDB tradition. MacLeod is Chief Executive of Skye and Lochalsh Enterprise Company (SaLE), one of ten relatively new HIE outstation bureaucracies. SaLE was set up in the early 1980s as the local headquarters of the newly decentralized HIDB on Skye. My first (accidental) meeting with MacLeod was on the Raasay Ferry in 1994, as he travelled there to decide on the fate of one problem he had inherited from the HIDB days. He was heading with his deputies to arrange for the sale of the Raasay Home Farm, a little used parcel of land with dilapidated buildings that HIDB
had been forced to buy in the early 1980s (see later discussion of the infamous Dr.Green).
I was heading over to take up residence for a few weeks at Raasay House, where first 
HIDB promoted and SaLE continues to support a thriving outdoor center facility. I'd never 
seen a dark-suited man on the ferry before, let alone a whole herd of them, and didn't take 
long to conclude that this was SaLE's executive team. I introduced myself to MacLeod, and 
exchanged business cards, very conscious of my off-duty researcher's outfit of sneakers 
and jeans. MacLeod, for his part, looked distinctly windswept and slightly out of place 
with the city suit and impressive entourage of like-attired officials, his boyish, tousled hair 
catching the breeze.

MacLeod's detractors call him the "boy king," evidence for his youthful appearance 
and manner, which doesn't always go down that well on the islands, but also evidence of 
the manner in which locals engage in back-stabbing and other disparagement typical of 
small communities. This kind of critical attention is paid by most community residents to 
developments and enterprise of any sort. Success and exuberance being generally frowned 
upon, this is an expression of the Highland trait that community development theoretician 
Iain Prattis called the "very definite constraints on local initiative ... conditions of 
marginality and poverty that make it difficult and unpopular for a man to step ahead of his 
peers." (Prattis, 1974). These constraints appear here as if minor scandal, but must be 
taken seriously in the context of development on MacLeod's "patch." It's a thankless task 
at times. Rancor of the kind that gets MacLeod the title of the "boy king" has often derailed 
expensive schemes and wasted public money. As one of SaLE's Board members said: 
"The Development Board -- if you speak to the people they haven't got a lot of good to say 
about them, but if you sit and think -- it's jealousy, especially in areas like this. A 
tremendously hard job, the HIDB." For another of SaLE's Board members, jealousy and 
other drags on development are rooted in a lack of self-confidence, which is slowly 
changing. Dr. James Hunter, SaLE Board Member, academic and historian of the crofting
community says, "The psychology of it all is very important. Self-confidence. A commodity the Highlands and Islands have lacked. It's realizing that a lot of what is around here is important -- it's a personal process."

It's also a process of public relations. Since first Margaret Thatcher's, then John Major's Conservative Governments tinkered with HIDB, the ensuing HIE and its ten individual Enterprise Companies have been struggling to regain the public confidence that HIDB had, with difficulty, accumulated. As I found out after our first meeting at the ferry, MacLeod is very conscious of this problem, but feels that the decentralized administration gives people in his patch more of a chance to get the help they need, "the best opportunities to help themselves." The HIDB had been seen by some as "slow-moving" and the updated structure should give "new impetus." But HIDB worked, "was right for the time." and the "communities are much more articulate and confident now."

MacLeod may or may not be a Thatcherite conservative. I never asked. But he is smooth and professional. His job is to balance communalism with capitalism. He doesn't pause to worry about ideological inconsistency. "The private enterprise" mission, according to MacLeod, is "to dispose of the assets," such as Raasay Home Farm, and "to encourage locals to take advantage of the opportunities." Alongside of business schemes, MacLeod's Board supports a necessarily diverse range of community and social schemes, SaLE's grass roots projects. "The way that the LECs [HIEs Local Enterprise Companies] are set up, it allows us to do different things for different people.... Much more community-based."

MacLeod's patch is large and diverse, running the length and breadth of Skye, the single largest island off the coast of Scotland, including many surrounding islands and a sizable chunk of the mainland, including the railway terminal and town at the Kyle of Lochalsh. One of MacLeod's, and indeed, the HIE system's stated goals being support for the "indigenous culture," it might be expected that MacLeod has some difficulty in deciding
which corners of the indigenous culture to support on Skye. I asked him about this. Is indigenous culture a band playing to tourists in the pub (one of MacLeod's pet schemes), or is it social-service support for the aging, yet persnickety "Wee Free" (independent Presbyterian) Church congregations of Raasay and Skye's more out-of-the-way townships? While pub music may appear to some to be of little value to the local culture, especially the (theoretically) tea-total Presbyterians, MacLeod would disagree. The popular "ceilidh scheme" is beneficial to both tourists and locals, he says. Locals get a double benefit, he says, the choice of one more place to go out for an evening and the use of the money that stays in the community after tourists spend it at concerts. For MacLeod, the application process for social projects is democratic, open to all, yet the impetus lies with vigor and entrepreneurship. If the pub applies and the Kirk elders prefer to pass up the chance, the pub will get the money and the elders won't. Although diplomatic, MacLeod lacks patience with ditherers.

"We're talking about the indigenous culture? We're talking about the community coming forward! One of the approaches is really promoting the indigenous culture -- for instance the Raasay Walks proposal. That was a community project. It's got history, culture, environment, an act of promotion -- a total pride there. We respect the values, we choose to interpret, live our lives the different way."

Alternatively, development support for the conservative Presbyterians, an aging and argumentative sub-population who lack enthusiasm for the faster, newer ways, is problematic -- "so many schisms." "The Wee Free may dwindle and disappear." A good example of Presbyterian disinterest in development on Raasay would be their seeming preference that the old manse remain abandoned. Although this beautiful old Victorian building is rotting into the ground, and its present use is limited to farm storage, the

75A successful non-profit project to build trails and provide a tourist trail map and interpretive guide for Raasay, instigated by out-going people in the Raasay community.
competing Free Presbyterian Churches cannot agree who owns it, at least since the famous "Disruption" of 1843. Not that either has the resources to use it. By default on the part of these two churches, the manse rots, dwindling like the "Wee Free" themselves. In the absence of agreement, it will remain padlocked to the wind and the deer. With its stone walls and slate roof, high ceilings and big rooms, it would be worth perhaps a million dollars in Montana.

That isn't to say that the Wee Free's pensioners don't get some benefits from MacLeod's schemes. MacLeod would like to see a doctor's office on the island, and a daycare center for the children that are now being raised on the island. All of this will require community involvement, which his staff will foster and nurse, avoiding acrimony as best they can. He'd like to see more housing, and, in agreement with James Hunter, he'd like to see some more villages gain control of their own land, and the founding of "new" villages on sites abandoned after the Clearances. He's happy to work with conservation groups, if, like the John Muir Trust at nearby Strathaird, they want the "community involved in the running" of the land. On Raasay, MacLeod has been instrumental in promoting the transfer of the shooting and fishing rights on the island from the landowners, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, to a committee of the Raasay crofters. Since there is a respectable herd of red deer as well as roe deer, the crofters may now manage the herd, sell the valuable stag (bull) shooting and cull the hinds (cows) for their own meat. Not that poaching wasn't going on already. Raasay folk have meat in plenty when they want it, as I found out when, anticipating fresh chops, I suggested butchering a wounded lamb for the table. "Plenty of lamb and meat!" said a local woman. "Don't bother!"

The founding of new villages and the injection of young blood into the crofting community is one of MacLeod's priorities. He sees crofting as the past and future base for Gaelic culture. SaLE runs a "Croft Entrant Scheme" providing young crofters with start-up money, training, and paying legal fees to transfer croft "ownership." The scheme is targeted at districts with a high percentage of absentee crofters, crofts "not being used, and
they're sterile." MacLeod sees the day coming when redistribution of existing units will not be adequate to meet the need.

"The demand is unreal. The expectation is out there, but the crofts aren't. It's our age group coming forward [The writer and Macleod's, early 30s]. Very much in the hands of the locals. On Skye and Lochalsh we don't have the ruinous villages that they have elsewhere. We're looking at new villages -- one of our problems is housing -- I can see this growth continuing because of these opportunities.... We like to see young people."

Another of MacLeod's priorities is squeezing out every drop of the tourist income.

"It's the science of it. We reflect what the tourist wants. Ample questionnaires. The need for young people's facilities. Students. We have [support] a large number of backpackers' hostels. They'll all come back in later life. It's green tourism -- ecotourism. The growth is in cultural tourism. Disneyworld wouldn't work -- on a financial basis."

What about incomers? Is there a conflict? Does the system favor the more driven urban refugees over the local folks? MacLeod is strident:

"I feel this is largely a myth. There's some incomers. Now, through the LEC network, we disclose the lists of grants. Locals keep quiet and reserved. Incomers shout about it. [They're] very visible in terms of assistance. Incomers are 14% of the population. [There's been] rapid increase in the whole area. Increase has been in the economically active band. People have been coming here and setting up their own businesses -- crafts -- potters -- Gaeltec."

MacLeod is especially proud of the local entrepreneurship initiated by the new Gaelic medium business college at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, set up with HIDB assistance in 1983, and further assisted by SaLE after 1990. According to Macleod, the College has had a "honeypot effect." Ancillary business that have sprouted include a graphic design shop, a broadcaster concentrating on subtitled Gaelic-English output, a private research unit, and a Gaelic Theatre Company. In addition to term-time business school courses leading to
associate degree and four-year degree-equivalent certificates, the College has found a lucrative market catering to cultural tourists in the summer when the business students are gone. People come from far and wide, including many from America, to take classes in Gaelic cultural subjects, especially dancing and the playing of traditional instruments. The school boasts impressively credentialed instructors for both its business and cultural classes.

MacLeod has a varied and challenging job. He has assistance in these decisions from a committee of Local Enterprise Company board members, including the ubiquitous Dr James Hunter. Another of his members, in 1995, was Angus P. MacPhie (A second member is Angus MacPhie, without the middle initial P, illustrating a common problem with the commonality of certain Gaelic last names). Angus runs a large fish farm, whose shore base is at Sconser, next to the pier for the Raasay ferry. His pens are around the point and to the north in a relatively sheltered part of the Raasay sound, unless a southeasterly is running, in which case, both the Raasay Ferry and MacPhie's salmon are in some difficulty.

Fish farming was one of HIDB's earliest decentralized schemes, and one that grew well, presaging future success with bed and breakfasts and community cooperatives. Angus got his start in the fish-farming business with the help of the HIDB, and knew the politics of the business inside and out. He'd been working for Unilever, the same multinational that was originally founded by Lewis's philanthropic Lord Leverhulme. In the late 1960s Unilever was interested in the fish farming business, and had developed some of the technology. At the time, Unilever formed a subsidiary, called Marine Harvest, to develop the farming end. Marine Harvest employed Angus for a while to scope out good sites for fish farms and to get leases on shore bases. As it turned out, the foreshore and sea bed of Britain's coast is owned by the Queen, managed through the Crown Estates

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76Courses equivalent to American vocational college degrees, leading to British Higher National Certificates (associate degree equivalent) and Higher National Diplomas (four-year degree-equivalent).
Commission. At the start of fish-farming in the Highlands, HIDB, Marine Harvest, and Angus were involved in negotiations with this entity to decide who would get the rent, and how much it should be. That the Queen claims unearned rent on the farmers' salmon doesn't go down so well. One other fish farmer that I interviewed had had dealings with the Commission, a "professional bunch of fence-sitters."

After a stint working for Unilever, watching other farms get going, Angus decided to go into the farming business himself, and was set up by HIDB with a grant for equipment and nets under the scheme. Angus credits HIDB official Bobby Fasken -- a "board member, but he knew all the farmers" -- for taking a "bold stance" on fish-farming in the early days, "even when fish-farming was getting lots of stick. It was really all about him -- why they supported it."

Marine Harvest, meanwhile, had gotten greedy. "This is the weakness of the big company," Angus said. They'd made a lot of money in the beginning, and wished to make more, so they expanded and started to produce more and more fish. Necessarily, this brought the price of farmed salmon down to a point where the small producer was getting hurt. However, by expanding, Marine Harvest was getting deeper into difficulties of their own. Not only was the price too low, but the mortalities in the bigger farms were "just terrific." Disease problems had not yet been solved, and Marine Harvest, in the face of "colossal mortalities," was forced to once again rethink their plan. By expanding they had succeeded only in "employing people at a loss." They decided to farm out their operations to small businesses, cutting their own employees loose, giving them the chance to set themselves up independently. Marine Harvest instituted a contract-growing plan, which to all intents and purposes works in a similar way to sharecropping, the system beloved by some neo-classical economists as an example of how the "risk aversion" of capital accommodates itself.

That same economic analysis of share-cropping motivation works for the fish farmer's contract-growing scheme. The parent firm provides the broodstock, healthy smolts from Marine Harvest's nursery farms. The contractor accepts the smolts and the risk
of disease, storm, and seal damage, and so on, and in return, gets a guaranteed price for the crop. Marine Harvest accepts the risk at the marketplace. This worked fine, said Angus, but eventually Marine Harvest decided to reduce the contract prices. By this time Angus didn't care so much. He had made a "bit o' money" to begun with and was happy to slow down a tad. It gave him pause to think about the subsidy system employed by HIDB, since in this case, money intended to benefit little fish farms was actually invested in what were disguised subsidiaries of a bigger firm: "Quite a strong policy, to support the small man. The big companies don't get assistance, but contract growing makes it easy for the big companies to attract subsidies." Today, the industry seems to be consolidating around successful farms, which are not necessarily large ones, but rather a mix of large and small. The deciding factor in success seems to be skill and hard work in fighting various diseases and other sources of "mortality."

Angus's farm today employs three or more people. I spent some time one day chatting with his workers. They were taking a break in their crew room, a corner of the machinery shed, walled-off and equipped with the couch and the equipment, ubiquitous in Britain, for making themselves cups of tea. They were all locals, including the youngest, a youth in his twenties. They were happy to talk about their jobs and the differences between living here and in the rest of Britain. It can be hard work, feeding fish and setting cages when the sea is running high. Later that year, I'd see these guys and Angus a lot on the boats, messing around with bouys and cages and stuff as the salmon grew under the sea.

Salmon farming has the advantage, theoretically, of being what economists call a primary industry, that is, an industry that makes a primary material product, as opposed to secondary manufacturing or service industries. In basic industry theory, which is somewhat discredited these days, primary production is an engine that drives the rest of the regional economy (Power, 1988, p 108). It has long been thought indispensable. For this reason, HIDB thought fish farming a particularly valuable scheme, and gave it a lot of attention in the early days, particularly to the calculation of local "multipliers."
Another important HIDB-sponsored industry on Skye is Gaeltec, a micro-engineering firm that has seen continual HIDB and SaLE help since its inception in 1971. I talked to Sid Johnston, the Managing Director. His boss, Donald McLaughlin had worked for a company in London, but threw in the towel to retreat to Skye. "Came back to the land," apparently, along with other urban refugees in the 1960s and 70s. He'd built a boat, fished for lobsters, but in Sid's words, soon "got hungry." A graduate engineer with inside knowledge of a market opening, he formed Gaeltec and essentially started building the firm's staple -- "pressure transducers" -- as a backyard, "one man" business. A year later, he took on Sid as an engineer, and the company slowly expanded. To begin with, they "didn't really try to get anything from HIDB." There was perhaps an image problem. "The man in sandals and jeans from Dunvegan?" Gaeltec wasn't a very capital intensive business to start with anyway. Despite the hippie overtones, HIDB came through, seeing the possibilities: a small scale, high-tech, high value industry for the Highlands? Eventually, Gaeltec filed some applications for help with expansion. They got money to go to an exhibition to market their products, then to buy equipment. HIDB helped them build the original building -- and then add an extension. Later, they took one of HIDB's advance factories in Portree. "Not convenient, but quick," said Sid.

Since this first support, Gaeltec has been a HIDB showcase operation. Arguably marginal over the longer term due to low profits and market volatility, the support Sid gets helps him to employ people across market lulls. By continuing to employ people, even when the market is down, Gaeltec earns local respect and HIDB or SaLE support. Their success is not easily repeatable, but HIDB often seemed to wish that it was in their literature glorifying Gaeltec and other small-scale operations they helped. Gaeltec is the perfect fit, producing very tiny, very valuable products. "The reason we survive is that the world demand is dominated by small companies." "All the employees are local," a point of pride. "All in-house training... Ten to twenty per cent of the staff have crofts. They do what they want to do, where they want to do it. We are here because we want to be here." "The response from the community has been good."
Gaeltec sits on the junction of the Dunvegan and Glendale roads. On their windy site, the buildings look bleak and militaristic. Once inside, the company is relaxed, warm, but busy. In a bright, quiet, cosy room, not at all factory-like, machinists, men and women, work slowly and carefully at a mix of ancient lathes and modern computerized equipment. In the addition are offices, including the lair of Sid the bear, piled high with books and equipment. Their products include hospital computer software, high-tech medical equipment, and the sensitive pressure transducer, which converts tiny vibrations into electrical signals and is used in industrial and medical applications. Pulse recorders, beloved of hospital movies, depend on pressure transducers, those screens with wavy lines that always go ominously flat when the victim dies, provoking a flurry of life-saving activity on the part of nurses and doctors. Gaeltec makes a good proportion of the world's supply of pressure transducers. No expensive shipping is necessary. When I visited, the product was lying on the office floor, in plain brown, padded envelopes. It goes out by mail, each envelope worth thousands of pounds, but not at all valuable to thieves. Sid tossed one around in his hands. "Twelve thousand, that one," he said with some pride.

Another business that is an example of late-period HIDB sophistication and flexibility lies over the sea from Skye on Raasay, itself worthy of some geographical and cultural detail. The Isle of Raasay complements Skye to the east, running north south along Skye's eastern seaboard. Between the two is a narrow channel, the Sound of Raasay, which, at its shortest breadth, is less than a mile with a strong, spring-tide flow each fortnight. The Raasay ferry leaves on the half hour from the crofting township of Sconser, where the HIDB built a pier, to the exposed south-western tip of Raasay, where an old iron working once had a rail terminal that came out into the sea on a trestle. The HIDB filled the gaps in this structure with concrete and steel to make a solid, t-shaped structure that works as half a harbor wall. The landing is, however, exposed to the south-east, and when a strong south-easterly blows, the ferry is trapped against this wall and cannot leave. The Board's decision to save money by using the old iron working instead of giving the locals a
"proper" landing in the main Raasay village of Inverarish was highly controversial. However, the locals might now be content without the bustle of a ferry pier in the center of their village bay. The ferry provides a sporadic routine to the island's economic traffic. Every hour, a steady stream of five to ten cars leaves the village and further flung corners of the island to head for the pier. If you are a local and walking, you'll be picked up. If you are a tourist, you won't be, unless you stick out your thumb. A reasonable system that allows the tourists to enjoy the walk if they wish. If you have been around for a few weeks, staying, as I did, as a long-term visitor, and especially if you come year after year, you'll be picked up as if you were a local. Raasayans, and Highlanders in general, are wary of visitors these days, but friendliness and curiosity gets the upper hand in a quiet place like Raasay.

From the ferry as it travels across the sound, Raasay is dominated by its forest, the largest hill, Dun Caan, behind the forest, and by Raasay House. The house is a stately eighteenth-century pile built by the MacLeods of Raasay in a hiatus of late Highland clan pride. Raasay House was sold in the mid-1800s and became, with the island itself, a sporting concern. Raasay has suffered all of those colonial forms of development, seemingly worse than many other places in the Highlands. The island was ravaged by British troops looking for Prince Charles after Culloden. The Prince was in fact there for a while, but escaped. The troops, in retribution, raped women, killed men and beasts and burned cottages. After the rape of Raasay, the house, which had been burned, was extensively remodeled and rebuilt, much of the expense of which was no doubt stood by the islanders themselves in the way of increased rents on land. By 1846, the MacLeods had sold out, and a series of owners prevailed, as did clearances. At one point, 120 families, more than the number who presently inhabit the island, were shipped to Australia to make way for sheep (Cooper, 1971, p 110). The Wood family, who became the "sporting" owners of Raasay and the house until 1907, seemed to have been the islanders' preferred owners.

77 Notes taken from undated newspaper clippings, Raasay Community Museum, 1995
lairds, in that they kept the place up, maintained employment and generally were an example of the philanthropic form of landlord. After the Woods, the island was later bought out by Baird's Ironmasters, of Glasgow, who put an iron mine in during the steamship days. The mine was worked by German prisoners in the first World War, who left several graves behind after the influenza epidemic of 1918. After Bairds, the island land went to the government during resettlement. A Land Raid and other agitation resulted in the build up of several new townships but depopulation continued. In 1970, Raasay was "a dying island, the population has dwindled year by year and gradually, one by one, services have been withdrawn in the outlying parts: a school closed here, a telephone kiosk disconnected there." (Cooper, 1970, p 110). The house and home farm fell into the hands of a Dr Green, while the majority of the island became the property of the Department of Agriculture.

Green is hated on Raasay, although he's been dead for some years. In the island museum, a whole file consists of letters and newspaper clippings collected by various islanders at the time of the various scandals. According to Raasay islanders, who are still outraged, Green essentially let the place rot. The house was abandoned and became a hulk. The antiques that had filled it in the Woods' days were stripped and sold, the farmland was run down and disused. Green kept the place in the 1960s as a tax shelter, but on occasion he feigned interest in the island. He argued bitterly against the HIDB's ferry, knowing perhaps that tourists would visit his abandoned mansion, as had the island teenagers and various tinkers, tramps and hobos. Starting fires on the floors was already something of a tradition. Green had bought the house for a few thousand pounds. By the time that the HIDB were well-established, the house and home farm were loudly acclaimed by many in the Highlands as ripe for compulsory purchase, the exercise of the Board's little-used powers in that respect, it being a prima facie case that Dr. Green's ownership was holding up the "social and economic" development of the island. The HIDB were reluctant to

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70 Ibid
71 Ibid
engage and use their ultimate weapon, but were eventually forced to do something by weight of public opinion. Green made a tidy profit, as the selling price was around a quarter-million pounds.80

Once the house and land were bought out, the HIDB then had to figure out what to do with it. This had them stumped, and so to everyones' amazement, the new "lairds" also let the place rot for a while. Said one local: "The HIDB played 'pass the parcel.' It was bought under duress and they didn't know what to do with it." Finally an answer was handed to them on a plate, as it were, in the form of a proposal from an adventurous group of young outdoor activity instructors, with the backing of some Glasgow businessmen, organized as the "Scottish Adventure School," or -- evocatively -- "SAS."81 This group wanted to turn the place into an "outdoor centre," or what Americans would call a summer camp. This project began in 1983, and the result has been that Raasay house has been extensively fixed up and remodeled, at both Raasay Outdoor Centre (ROC) and HIDB expense. The house has become once more the focal point of island life. In the west wing is the village's community center and ceilidh hall. The Outdoor Centre added a cafe in the early 1990s, popular with visitors and villagers alike. The cafe is situated so that it might take advantage of the house's sandstone patio and the views over the grounds and home farm fields to the Cuillin, away on Skye beyond the sound. It is a stunning view, when it isn't raining. Even the weather helps the enterprise somewhat, for Raasay has a much drier climate than Skye, as a glance across the sound will tell most days. Skye is covered in fog or mist while one stands dry in the sun.

Presently, the majority of the Island is owned by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, with the house owned by HIE and managed by SaLE. The shooting and fishing rights have been transferred to the locals. Other HIDB enterprises on Raasay include the (only) hotel and bar, which they built and lease out to tenant publicans, and the Youth Hostel, which, along with many in the Highlands, was HIDB-funded. Not surprisingly,

72 Ibid
81 The Special Air Service (SAS) is Britain's behind-the-lines commando force.
The HIDB refurbished mansion, Raasay House, has been developed as an outdoor center, an example of small-scale economic development.

The old Raasay Manse, built after the Highland conversion to Presbyterianism, now rots slowly. Competing Presbyterian factions cannot agree who owns the Manse, preventing its development for Raasay's benefit as a health and day-care center.
there is a certain symbiosis between the Outdoor Centre, the Youth Hostel and the Hotel.

SaLE completed the sale of the 180-acre home farm to a Raasay family in 1995, who immediately began to intensify farming on Raasay. In the summer of 1995, I watched them hay the main field with a modern round baler, putting up black plastic rolls of feed for the winter.

Llyn Rowe is the current director of Raasay Outdoor Centre. She started with the firm at the very beginning, and was responsible for the initial HIDB assistance and the separation from the parent company, SAS.

"We had 5, including 2 Raasay people. The Manpower Services Commission [Job Creation Scheme] gave us £1000 each to start up, and £40 a week for the first year. HIDB gave a start-up loan. We asked SAS to leave all the old equipment -- we inherited it -- old awful stuff. I went to Ronny Cramond, the Deputy Chief at HIDB -- quite an unusual man-- unique -- liked my spirit -- agreed to let us use the house for a year. They wanted us to use Portakabins at first. We insisted on the house."

The 80-room house was still a structural and aesthetic disaster. HIDB had, by then, put a lot of money into fixing it up, but, said Llyn, there was a lot of graft that went unnoticed by the officials. They brought in builders from Fort William, and only a couple of islanders were employed. "Huge amounts of money were spent on the house -- skeletons in the cupboard. Huge contracts, money was pocketed. The amount of money was scandalous. The islanders could see it. So could I." Even after ROC moved in, the roof leaked, there was no heating, the wiring was shot. The new tenants went "knocking on doors" for business. According to Llyn, they "stumbled through the first year," painting and cleaning in their down time, managing to make the place presentable. In February of the next year, they had a windfall. The Sultanate of Oman was looking for a place to train army cadets -- a sort of summer camp for baby officers. Llyn got the contract. "Four weeks of forty Omanis -- solid work! ... I still don't think I ever paid myself more than £40 a week for the first eight years." The Centre flourished intermittently. "If one market shrunk, you gain
elsewhere, but it's difficult." Learning to be an aggressive businesswoman was a personal process for Llyn, essentially a back-to-the-land type who had a hard time committing.

"What I wanted to do was build a house [instead]."

"I think what happened is that in the sixth year -- once we'd got the push from the Board, I suddenly woke up to the fact that if you don't have money, you can't pay people -- doubled the income in one year. Made me realize how easy it was."

In 1993, MacLeod's SaLE gave them a £2,000 business-consultancy credit. The SaLE-hired accountant came from Inverness. "A wonderful guy... He looked at finances, business, computing, the reports from Harry got us sorted financially." Other help was forthcoming, but problematic, a result of the influence of the island's remaining Presbyterians, and the evils of island politics:

"When Lorne [MacLeod] first came to the house, he opened his car door and his mouth fell open. 'This is wonderful!' he said. There was a disabled group canoeing at the home loch, an empty wheelchair, and the disabled person in her canoe. Later he had a community meeting -- to consider the future. It was a Thursday. A prayer meeting. He went like a lamb to the slaughter! 'How dare he come to a prayer meeting night and stay at Raasay House -- not the Bed and Breakfast [run by a church member]. He had to be revived.... The public meetings are vicious! He did a rapid retreat."

The Centre takes every conceivable form of outdoor guiding and instructing business, but Llyn's own personal drive is for natural-history and ecology-based guiding. She is a good island historian, and has befriended all of the more forward-looking island folk. She and her staff, some of whom are islanders, have been heavily involved in the effort to convert the West Wing to a community center. The Centre staff, the crofters, and other forward-looking islanders gather for ceilidhs and dances. There's an old ballroom in the West Wing, nicely restored. The appropriateness of the MacLeods' ballroom playing host once more to Highland music and country dancing is not lost on Llyn.
The active crofting population seems to her to be the remaining life of the island. Living out on the land with space around them, crofting families "still have freedom." However, the few remaining "Wee Free" occasionally exhaust her, despite her best attempts to win them over. When Baird's Ironmasters handed the row cottages over to the islanders, those that moved in were in trouble. Even strict Presbyterian crofters, she theorizes, had freedom to think compared to their village brethren in the close, tight rows of cottages. "No laughing, crying, shouting, merry making -- the restrictions must have been horrific." "They're fundamentalists," she says. "They're suspicious." But "the conservative community is dying out."

"They're too small and fragile to be even considered as a viable community. Brothers fighting brothers! There were three, now two churches, politically in the past, no leaders, no respect, no wise men or funny men -- and no women!"

Llyn's commentary on the effect of Presbyterian control on Raasay demonstrates an phenomenon that has repeated itself all over the Highlands since Highland Development was first attempted. The tightness of the Presbyterian elder's influence on the moral community cannot be overestimated. However, as she and Lorne MacLeod both pointed out, the "Wee Free" sect members in particular are dwindling. Not surprisingly, since sect membership virtually precludes participation in the newly prosperous Highland economy, among the young people the sect is unpopular and there are no replacements forthcoming.

Another very influential Skye-based commentator on Highland Development is Doctor James Hunter. This study is already heavily informed by Hunter's work. Hunter made his academic reputation with his history of the evolution of crofting, The Making of the Crofting Community. (Hunter, 1976). Since then, he has written other histories and made a name as a popular Highland author, as well as a development expert. But growing up as a Highland youth at Oban High School, there was "never any history relating to the Highlands. It never occurred to me that this was history."
Hunter is adaptable and has brought his intelligence to bear on the crofting issue recently in his past position as director of the Scottish Crofters Union. He has worked for both SaLE and the parent HIE on their Boards. He feels that the HIDB began to work well in the 1970s and later and hit on the necessary development theory to succeed with Highland Development. It was difficult. There was a crisis of confidence. "You can see it in Lewis, to this day, the awful dichotomy between the alcoholic and a religious zealot."
Although the HIDB had to move a lot of people in to do something, the change of blood has been healthy. The immigration of English and lowlanders has not been the problem that it once was thought to be.

"There's 60,000 Gaelic speakers. The Gaelic medium primary schools -- fluent Gaelic speakers with English surnames. People are more optimistic than they were. There's at least a fighting chance that they'll survive."

Hunter, as a historian, sees everything in the Highlands in the light of the 250 years since Culloden. The next priority redeeming Culloden, according to Hunter, is the union of environmentalists and Highlanders in the continued reversal of the Clearances. He makes this case strongly in his book On the Other Side of Sorrow. (Hunter, 1995). "It's a better way forward -- with the environmentalists." For Hunter, who, as an influential man with seats on important boards and committees is very much in a position to do something about his ideas, reversing the Clearances would mean the founding of new villages on old village sites in the alienated lands. Such a movement would probably start on government-owned lands, but also entail compulsory purchase from landlords. It would be achieved using typically communal strategies, updated versions of the Gaelic way of life. Hunter looks to communal ownership and management -- a "mechanism that allows community ownership to expand once more into the areas that have been cleared." It would be, however, "a very different mechanism from the land settlement schemes."

It'll happen. Population pressure, the relationship with the environmentalists. Don't just do the best [most fertile] bits. Look to develop
new types of settlement, simultaneously renew the landscape and the human presence."

Hunter looks to Lingerabay on the island of Harris, a place where the UK Government and Redlands Aggregates Ltd. wish to site a coastal superquarry which would remove a mountain for road gravel. Lingerabay is an example of the detachment that environmentalists and Highlanders have thus far felt for each other, but Hunter feels that things are turning around. The crofters who live close to Lingerabay are presenting "much more opposition." Even a Free Church Minister, the Reverend Donald MacLeod, has taken up against the superquarry based on biblical and communitarian reasoning.

Still, Hunter understands that it has been very difficult to turn development away, and will continue to be so.

"If you were to offer us a factory employing 500 people -- well, there's a tendency to roll over and put our legs in the air. But there's a growing realization -- we are more aware of what we've got -- nice scenery -- not occurred to us that this is an asset. When I was young, we would have rated our locality as very low, compared to Glasgow or Edinburgh. It's very understandable, given the history. The first thing you want to do is to get out."

Hunter's thesis that a new synthesis between environmentalism and a Highland way of life will result in new directions for the Highlands and the reversal of the Clearances is borne out by other evidence. In the next chapter, I will explore the way that development and cultural and ecological conservation issues have already grown together in the Highlands since the 1970s.

Central to that challenge is the need to demonstrate that the environmental rehabilitation of the Highlands can be achieved by means which simultaneously bring about the restoration of people to some at least of the many localities where both human communities and the Gaelic culture associated with those communities were long ago destroyed.

(Hunter, 1995, p 173).

INTRODUCTION

This last chapter is an argument for a third, Environmental Era of Highland Development. This Era forms out of a convergence, out of a coming-together of interests and agencies from different groups in both the national and regional populations. This convergence is deeply restructuring the way the ongoing project of Highland Development is viewed and handled. The two most important factors in this convergence are an increase in confidence in indigenous Highland cultural values and an environmentalist change in Highland Development theory, including the abandonment of large-scale industrial "growth poles." The change in development theory influenced the increase in confidence and vice versa.

There are also several interlinked, subsidiary factors at work in the "causal texture" of this Environmental Era. One such factor is the survival of the idealized rural Highland way of life. Aiding the survival of this "alternative lifestyle" is an immigration of new blood, enterprising families and individuals from the south, who come seeking an alternative way of life, finding few conflicts between their "back-to-the-land" aspirations and the existing Highland culture.

Another factor is a British Government response to "structural unemployment" in the British job market leading to a need for "Job Creation." This may be the hidden, unconscious reason for ongoing government subsidy of the Highlanders' rural lifestyle.

A final factor is the increase of conservation interest in the Highlands, particularly
increasing convergence between conservation activism, conservation policy, and crofting.

Any such convergence of diverse powerful forces is likely to be complicated, and thus difficult to work out in the linear fashion imposed by the medium of writing. In the presentation of evidence for this Environmental Era, I have necessarily been required to impose a linear, roughly chronological order that does not necessarily exist in the synergism of "reality." The argument relies on an analysis of these several convergent factors that is presented independently, as if one factor did not at all influence any of the others. Although this over-simplification will be apparent, it is still possibly the least confusing, if not the best way, to represent this on paper. When the need for brevity permits, important inter-factor linkages and feedback circuits are described.

INCREASING CULTURAL CONFIDENCE

It is possible to track cultural confidence throughout the three Eras of Highland Development. The reason for the original failure in Gaelic cultural confidence is in Gaeldom's defeat and colonization in the 18th and 19th centuries. The idea of development and development theory was present in the "improvement" movement in the Highlands. By the 20th century, there had been many and various development schemes based on colonization and privatization imposed on the Highlands. Even the best of these were external to the Gaelic culture, requiring the Highlanders involved to adopt foreign traits and occupations, and abandon confidence in indigenous culture.

Some landlords, like the Sutherlands during the early Clearances, treated Highlanders cruelly, employing men like Patrick Sellars to do their dirty work. Others, like the Royal Family at Deeside, arrogantly thought they might improve things for Highlanders, but merely mapped their own aesthetic of landscape onto ground which was then carefully populated by the more tractable kinds of people. The improvers, most noticeably the Royals at Deeside, were slow to notice that their Highland subjects had largely left, and that those that remained were not particularly Highland any more. Landed
families continued to romantically celebrate the landscape -- and the people -- that they had so carefully tamed as being still dangerous, wild, and brooding. However, confidence on the Victorian hunting estate was not expected or needed of Highlanders, who were to do their jobs and get quickly out of sight.

Progressive schemes also were -- and are -- unlikely to promote confidence. A minority, such as the scheme of resettlement after World War I described by Leah Leneman, were invigorated and legitimized by direct action from the people (Leneman, 1989). Most, like those attempted on Lord Leverhulme's Lewis, were entirely imposed from without the respective communities. The former, having the weight of Highland popular support behind them, proved the most effective and furthest reaching. When Highlanders were behind Progressive change, change stuck, such as that first Crofters Act of 1886, or the various resettlement acts. When they were not, as in the case of Leverhulme's new age for Lewis, little remains today.

The theories behind both the Privatization and the Progressive Eras had this much in common. Neither were likely to give Highlanders much to believe in about themselves. All of the various schemes had been supposed to bring the Highlands out of what was seen as backwardness and apathy, with or without the concurrence of the Highlanders themselves. Some, even, had deliberately aimed to move the Highlanders on to places such as Canada or Glasgow where they would be forced to labor more industriously. The Napier Commission of 1884 and the first Crofters Act, although partially redressing the forced emigrations, provided for a kind of reservation system, arguably a "living museum," immune to technological progress. The knowledge that one lives in a cultural museum is not conducive to self-confidence.

In the halls of government, among the British-educated, lowland Anglo-Scots of St Andrews House, a social theory of inherent Highland backwardness and indolence persisted: a lingering Celtophobia. This theory listed racial traits including drunkenness, laziness, intractability, traits that are obviously direct descendants of Duncan Forbes'
notions of pagan indolence and barbarity. The Duke of Edinburgh himself demonstrated this outlook on a recent Royal visit to Oban. Locals were outraged and a national Scottish scandal ensued when he flippantly asked a local driving instructor, "How do you keep the natives off the booze long enough to get them past the test?" \(^{82}\)

*And as late as 1930, the British Government was making decisions to resettle evacuated islanders in Morvern, against their own wishes to be in Glasgow or Edinburgh; decisions made as if the islanders were children incapable of divining their own destiny (MacLean, 1972, pp 141-143). These and other expressions of colonialism ran -- and run -- rampant. Not surprisingly, the result was that for generations, Highlanders did not believe in themselves or in Highland values.*

For decades, a pawky humor was one defense against the otherwise impossible odds. One classic Highlander's send-up of the colonial attitude is to be found in Compton MacKenzie's *Whisky Galore*. (MacKenzie, 1945). No accident, then, that the Todday islanders in MacKenzie's novel find their whisky on a crippled ship named the Cabinet Minister. One of the book's many stereotypical English foils, Mr Brown, an army intelligence officer wandering the island, supposedly in disguise, attempts to discover the theft of the whisky and reveal other island iniquities -- such as the men's indolence and lack of enthusiasm in training for the Home Guard. Too obviously English, he is made frequently to suffer the consequences of his own colonial attitude, from which tension comes the book's humor. Although he misses the point, the "natives" get the joke:

"Extraordinarily primitive people," Mr. Brown murmured to himself. He was thinking of that strange old woman in the shop at Nobost last week who when he had asked her if she kept toilet paper had replied with a slightly puzzled but equally propitiatory smile, "No, no, I'm afraid we haven't that kind of paper just now, but we have emery paper if that will do as well for you."

*Abrasive colonialism was a common attitude. Others were available, ranging from*

\(^{82}\)Scotsman newspaper, July 1995
open despite to mere ignorance.

In essence, for better or worse, the Highlands had long been a testing ground for the kind of theory that is imposed from an absent and remote authority. What the Highlands had rarely been, save for moments of violent resistance, was a testing ground for the kind of theory that might be thought up by a Highlander -- perhaps a crofter, or an estate worker, perhaps a housewife on a remote island. Things would change somewhat and slowly throughout the 20th century. The advance of indigenous control accelerated after 1945, the 1950s being the decade of the end of the British Empire. With shifting control came the return of confidence. As the Empire evaporated, Progressive political ideas, and the people who carried them gained further power. Highlanders and other sympathetic Scots, like novelist MacKenzie, educated people sensitive to the Gaelic ethos, came into positions of public respect. Eventually the colonial approach was replaced by action based more on information from the Highland people themselves.

A further acceleration of this process occurred after the creation of the HIDB. Although the Board was often seen as an organization external to the Highland culture, it was completely involved in business and non-profit development in the Highlands. It was an activist organization. At times, HIDB policy deliberately aimed to re-establish confidence, and their literature often revealed this, "a belief that we must continue to produce real development action of a kind that will make the people of the Highlands believe that the existing and emerging plans will work." (Grieve, in HIDB, 1968). Every successful business enterprise, particularly those that reinforced Highlanders in their ability to maintain their lives and communities, added to the increase of confidence. And HIDB's social development role was key to the growth of Gaelic cultural organizations, such as the Gaelic-medium business school at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, the Gaelic advocacy organization Comunn na Gàidhlig, the radical Scottish Crofter's Union, or the mediation and conflict resolution organization, Highland Forum.
That HIDB saw and responded to the need for a mediation group like Highland Forum is revealing of the extent to which intra-cultural friction was seen as holding back the rise of confidence. Even after development came to be owned and initiated by Highlanders, intra-cultural friction remained common. Each township and district has a story of some development project creating divisiveness and acrimony. The descriptions given in Chapters VI and VII, of Highland rancor on Skye and Raasay and in Invergordon, are not flattering of Highlanders' ability to come to agreement. On Skye, HIE executive Lorne MacLeod must choose between supporting the aspirations of Raasay's Free Church congregation to have their island quiet and Sabbatarian, or the aspirations of more vigorous, enterprising young people to liven things up. MacLeod gets caught in the middle, despite his own revealed preference for "progress." Deciding what is and is not a cultural "property" that is worth keeping or having confidence in is not a straightforward process.

An intriguing example of the extent of acrimony in Highland discourse on development is a popular children's story book, *Katie Morag and the New Pier*. Little Katie Morag, the heroine of the story, is concerned about the effect that a pier development will have on the island of Struay. There is much discussion about how the new pier will change the "old ways" of the island, by bringing in tourists and cars. Katie's Grandma, "Grannie Island," the traditionalist of the story, is the advocate for the "old ways," which in this case take the form of undisturbed peace and quiet on Struay (Hedderwick, 1993). Theirs is a stormy -- and typical -- island argument. *Katie Morag* reflects thousands of such discussions that have taken place throughout the Highlands. The old "ways" that are preferred by traditionalists differ. Some prefer the peace and quiet of isolation, which may itself be a product of colonialism, clearances, and depression. Others look back to an era when populations were higher and Gaelic life more vibrant. It is significant that this disagreement is so well-understood, so embedded in the culture, that it can be the subject of a children's story book, as if were something to be explained to confused youngsters.

My own experience with development work in 1985 led me to see how acrimony affects confidence levels in the communities. It contributes to activist burn-out. The
obvious question when you retire, nerves shattered, after a particularly stormy meeting, is "why bother"?

Despite this difficulty, a realization that Highlanders have found new confidence in their culture is spreading: "A new spirit has arisen, and a new confidence in the [Gaelic] language and its prospects." (MacKinnon, 1992) If we follow Hunter and other Highland Development theorists, this confidence must be at least partially credited to the development process, and therefore to the HIDB (Hunter, in Hetherington, 1990, p 38).

What would the implications of an increase in confidence in Gaelic values be for the Highland environment? There is considerable evidence that a return to Gaelic values would be a return to environmental values. The Gaelic way of life at the roots of this new confidence is indisputably a rural way of life. It may also be an environmentalist way of life. The value of community and place resurfaces in this new confidence. Here from historian, HIE Board member and activist James Hunter: "Now we are at last beginning to glimpse... that we have much here in the Highlands and Islands that is of great intrinsic value; and that we have, above all, the capacity to provide better prospects for ourselves." (Hetherington, 1990, p 38).

Hunter claims that Highlanders take a realistic approach to environment and prosperity. According to Hunter, the modern expression of this approach can be traced to an ancient cultural trait, visible in Gaelic poetry and songs to the present day. To Hunter, Highlanders are "natural" environmentalists of a sort, having millennia of environmental appreciation behind them (Hunter, 1995, pp 41-68).

The modern Highlander's idealized lifestyle reflects this trait. Whether or not this trait is "real" remains a moot question. The ideal is a successful (enduring or sustainable) rural lifestyle. Highlanders, both those by birth and those by inclination, newly-arrived, do not choose to live in such a remote and difficult region because of its urban amenities. In my peripatetic studies of the towns and villages of both Skye and Easter Ross, time and again, when asked why they preferred the place that they lived to any other, Highlanders
stated that it was the peace and quiet that they loved most of all. Highland environmentalism is also driven by occupational choice. Highlanders prefer to work at their own pace and with a choice of activities. The difficulty of designing, starting, and maintaining sustainable economic enterprises that both make money and allow for this pace and this mix of activities (what we might call "realist romanticism") has consumed much of the working Highlanders energy and thought for the decades so far described. In working to achieve and maintain this combination of amenity and exchange values, Highlanders have become expert in a pragmatic approach to what has come to be known as "sustainable development."

This approach has been celebrated elsewhere in sustainability literature. When one understands, as Hunter believes the Gaels themselves did and do, that the beauty of the land and its productivity are one and the same, then one becomes what ecologist Edward Goldsmith celebrates as a "vernacular" human, a follower of "The Way." Since Goldsmith believes that "only qualitative vernacular models can provide the informational basis for adaptive behavior," Hunter and Goldsmith might find themselves in agreement in celebrating a vernacular Highland approach to sustainability (Goldsmith, 1993). By comparison, the exclusively romantic approach that is thought by both these authors to be typical of the environmental preservation movement, represented in the Highlands by urban conservation groups, is not to be celebrated, particularly if it further removes control of the land from the people who live there. Both Hunter, in "On the Other Side of Sorrow,", and Goldsmith in "The Way" castigate this approach to environmentalism for being hypocritical. Environmental groups who prefer their rural scenery to be unspoiled by economic activities are meanwhile dependent on an industrial way of life to support their activism. Highland crofters, on the other hand, live out their environmental activism in a daily relationship with the land. In this respect, Highlanders find themselves in a category of sustainability theory that was independently celebrated by both Aldo Leopold and E.F. Schumacher. Leopold wrote:
"The economic determinist regards the land as a food-factory. Though he sings America with patriotic gusto, he concedes the factory the right to be as ugly as need be, provided only it be efficient.

"There is another faction which regards economic activity as an unpleasant necessity, to be kept, like a kitchen, out of sight. Any encroachment on the parlor of scenic beauty is quickly resented, sometimes in the name of conservation.

"There is a third and still smaller minority with which game management, by its very essence, is inevitably aligned. It denies that kitchens or factories need be ugly, or farms lifeless, in order to be efficient." (Leopold, 1933, p 421-422).

And E.F. Schumacher said:

"The crude materialist view sees agriculture as essentially directed towards food-production. A wider view sees agriculture as having to fulfill at least three tasks:

"-to keep man in touch with living nature, of which he is and remains a highly vulnerable part;

"-to humanise and ennoble man's wider habitat; and

"-to bring forth the foodstuffs and other materials which are needed for a becoming life." (Schumacher, 1973, pp 119-120).

Each chapter in this thesis has suggested that, in agreement with both Schumacher and Leopold, Highlanders respond to values derived from community and place before material incentives. Hunter promotes the notion that the Highlands are a special case of this preference and goes a step further, connecting Highland environmentalism to the last two hundred and fifty years of development history in the Highlands. To Hunter, indigenous environmentalism in the Highlands should be -- and is -- hand in hand with the nurturing of the Gaelic culture, and the continuing project of restoring the land to local ownership. To Hunter,

"the environmental rehabilitation of the Scottish Highlands can be achieved by means which simultaneously bring about the restoration of people to some at least of the many localities where both human communities and the Gaelic culture associated with these communities were long destroyed."
(Hunter, 1995, p 173).

THE HIDB AND ENVIRONMENTALIST DEVELOPMENT

The evolution of Highland Development theory was a decisive factor in the increase in Gaelic cultural confidence and thus in the evolution of this Environmental Era in Highland Development. The year that the HIDB came into existence, 1965, is an important date for this process, as the detailed synopsis of events leading up to the founding of the HIDB has shown. However, the roots of the process go back further, at least to 1945, since the spirit of the immediate post-war Britain and the Labour Government of 1945 had a lot to do with initiating the process of change in development theories. And early measures, the first Crofters Act of 1886, the housing assistance starting in 1911, the Harris Tweed industry on Leverhulme's Lewis; these were an alternative set of ideas in the Highland Development milieu: small-scale, decentralized schemes allowing Highlanders to see that such schemes enabled prosperity on the land.

British radicalism had been forged in World War I and reforged in World War II. Newly adamant about their own interests, many more common people in Britain now agreed with the Labour radicals of the twenties and thirties -- and abandoned their apathy. Votes were available as never before. A program of national industrial development was begun, based upon a new deal, equity in society. Highlanders, in large numbers, abandoned their traditional liberalism and voted Labour. Labour, confident and powerful as never before -- and never since -- was set to change the face of British society through what would later be thought of as an extreme period of Progressive action. Most importantly for the Highlands, the best of the new generation of Highland youth would win the chance to take up one of the university scholarships offered for the first time in significant quantity by the Labour Government. A smaller number had been available before the war, but only for the best working class scholars.
Imagine how an increased opportunity for education affected Highland Development theory. It was to take up just such a scholarship, that Highland author Fionn MacColla’s hero Murdo had travelled euphorically by train to Glasgow in The Albannach, (1932) MacColla’s novel could be characterized as a myth-building tale. The hero, Murdo, goes from a traditional and rigidly Presbyterian township to take up a scholarship at Glasgow University. After a few terms, his father dies, and he must return to look after the croft land and his ailing mother. Depression sets in, and he becomes alcoholic, but eventually is blessed with inspiration and takes on the job of challenging the village oligarchy of rigid Presbyterian elders. He is successful, and the village is free to become "Gaelic" once again, with music and dance --previously banned by the elders -- at the center of village life. The Albannach, is a myth destined to become "true." It is a way for MacColla to tell the next generation of Highland activists what it is that they must do, an activist manifesto. As Murdo travelled,

"Over and over again he would exclaim to himself under his own breath, Alba, Alba, my own country! That’s it there for you, he was thinking, the land of the people of my blood, -- my fathers of the thousands of years, over the face of the world my roots in the soil of Alba." (MacColla, 1932, p 79)

Murdo's epiphany is short-lived, for soon the scenery in the window changes to Lowland Scotland's industrial moonscape, the "black scarred land; blasted and torn it lay under grey skies." (MacColla, 1932, p 81) Murdo's college career is equally short-lived, for he fails to reconcile his love for peace and beauty, the freedom of the hills, with the shallow, materialist squalor of industrial Glasgow.

Like Murdo, our Highland scholar-activists were forced to attempt to reconcile two diverse values systems, the materialism of mainstream Britain clashing with the communality of a close-knit, Gaelic-speaking township. Once at college, our Murdo might
not be so ready to accept the old ideas of what constituted sensible and prudent economic progress in the class-ridden British Empire. In particular, as he would be more likely to come from a lower class background, perhaps to be the son of a crofter, such a youth would be interested in further reducing the distance between the "haves and the have-nots" in society. He might also be less likely to accept that prosperity was inevitably linked to industrialization. He would have seen the impact on local prosperity made by schemes such as housing assistance or the provision of Harris Tweed looms. If this youth came from a Gaelic-speaking district, he might also be interested in protecting and developing his native culture. He might even discover a new confidence in this culture, which he would be liable to inject into development efforts. In short, in the words of Highland scholar and economics professor Sir Kenneth Alexander writing in 1965, he discovered "a persistent and sharpening incompatibility with the British way of economic life...." In the course of this study, collecting data in the Highlands, I met several such men and a few such women, and was able to secure copies of the political and development writings of many more.

These people constituted a small society of friends, colleagues and acquaintances, a college even, whose collective inspiration and raison d'etre became Highland Development. Consideration of their lives led me to a different, although not entirely new proposition about the various theories that had been behind Highland Development since World War Two. The leaders of the Highland Development college of the 1950s and 1960s were educated Highlanders and sympathetic Scots of mixed social origins, close to the aspirations of the crofting class, who consciously or unconsciously used a development theory, Scottish in origin, which was at odds with the theory proposed by both the Labour and Conservative Governments of the time. By various means, overt and covert, public and private, this theory was implemented under the noses of both Labour and Conservative

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83 Written for the New Statesman, 8 October, 1965, by Professor Sir Kenneth Alexander, later to be chair of the HIDB, 1976-1980.
 Signs announce who funded development schemes. Funding in this case came from the European Government as well as from HIE (through Caithness and Sutherland Enterprise Company). An improved harbor and marina for Lochinver, and a hatchery to supply smolt to smaller fish-farms in Wester Ross.
supervision. Because this theory was inherently more flexible and more grounded than the alternatives, the institutions it put into place were able to survive the conservative onslaught of the 1980s and evolved into mature Highland Development.

This theory can be traced to independent intellectual and indigenous roots. On the one hand, intellectually, it began as a reiteration of a theory developed in Scotland by popular Scottish academician Patrick Geddes at the end of the nineteenth century (Spaven and Geddes Jr., 1949; Geddes, in Stalley, 1972; Grieve, 1990; Spaven, 1995). It was a collection of ideas that Geddes, an eclectic planner, ecologist and architect, saw as culturally Celtic in spirit. Some of our Highland development activists, the beneficiaries of those Labour university scholarships, were protegés of Geddes and contemporaries of Geddes' son Arthur, who was also one of the Highland Development college members.

On the other hand, any kind of indigenous development theory that a crofter's son might invent for himself after a University education, as MacColla's Murdo did -- a place-centered, organic, community-centered "Celtic" development theory -- might be close to Geddes' development theory.

What Geddes called "Celtic" development, a key-stone of his Celtic renaissance, evolved through its application by the Highland Development college members who populated HIDB, and their experience in the Highland field working with Highlanders, into what I have called mature Highland Development. Geddes' theory was based upon the knowing of a region's biology from the "mountains to the sea." "Real wealth" comprised not money, but decentralized capital: towns, villages, houses, gardens. "Every inhabitant from child to patriarch should strive to know what his region contains, not only its wealth of natural resources, scenic beauty and heritage of culture, but the opposite picture as well: the evils of ugliness, poverty, crime and injustice of all kinds." Mature Highland Development, as taught, for instance, in Frank Rennie's Rural Development course in the

84-The word "ecology" is of recent coinage, having been first proposed by the German biologist, Ernst Haeckel, in 1869." (Odum, 1959, p 3)
Highlands and Islands new Gaelic-language business school, *Sabhal Mòr Ostaig*, reflects these Geddesian theoretical roots. Here for comparison with Geddes' words, is an extract from Rennie's Rural Development course text, translated into English:

"The particular problems and advantages of development in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland have been approached in many different ways over the last two hundred years. Only now I feel, are the inhabitants of this wonderful area beginning to define a different sort of agenda for change in the areas where we live and work. This new agenda centres on a sustainable development, based upon indigenous values, and which encourages indigenous solutions.... Through the case studies in this unit we must always be aware of the need for socially acceptable forms of development which are both socially and financially sustainable in the long term perspective.... It is vital therefore that we can recognise the special features of different habitats and the special needs which are required to protect them from harm." (Rennie, 1993, pp 5, 9, 23).

Economic development theories used by the British Government, either Conservative or Labour, were (and are) at odds with this Geddesian development theory. For mainstream development advocates, the inevitably centralized and industrial nature of any "progress' was axiomatic. The tension between centralization, industrialization and a "Celtic" or Highland way of life was not well-understood. By 1965, the Highland Problem was seen clearly by government theorists as an issue of relative economic disadvantage; which was thought to be driving depopulation. This formulation was likely to miss entirely the question of whether Highlanders would accept the kind of development that was available. It also, as evidenced by the demographic data presented later in this chapter, missed the growing number of newly-arrived Highlanders who were abandoning urban life and moving in. Of course, both kinds of Highlanders wished to be prosperous. But at what cost?
In MacColla's novel, which was written before Highland Development had sponsored Highland optimism about development, Murdo fails to adapt the knowledge of the university to his Highland ethos, drops out, and returns home, where instead, after a bout of alcoholism, he chooses an indigenous Highland path based on Gaelic, music, song, humor, and a strong sense of community and place, a native way parallel to the "red road" of the American Indian Movement. There is a laconic, fatalistic indifference to Murdo's skeptical understanding of development. All returns to dust in the end, and it matters little whether a man runs or walks:

"One million and more of people would be tearing breathlessly about in Glasgow, shouting 'Progress!, Progress!' But the only difference was that here men sank into a grave with some sort of dignity while there, they flew at the business in a great dust of haste and jumped in with both feet or tumbled in head first, legs and arms splayed ridiculously out, so that the end was as noisy and undignified as what had gone before it. That was all the 'Progress' there was to it -- a small matter of being tootled and rattled to your grave in a motor hearse."

The fictional Murdo in MacColla's novel didn't want any part of this Progressivism, preferring to be carried with dignity to his grave by the men of his community, as his father was. As Murdo realized, there is a fundamental contradiction between being "Celtic," or "Highland," following an idealized way of life, and working in a factory or living in a city. The two values-systems don't fit together.

Particularly after the wars, and certainly by 1965, Highlanders, individuals and groups, had once again begun to have confidence in their own values, a confidence not evident since before 1745. And they were beginning to have the access and the means to make these ideas a reality. And so the imposed theory could be slowly and steadily replaced with theory that, instead of being dreamed up by landlords and politicians, was being dreamed up -- literally -- by Highlanders trying to get a vision of their own future. This was a piecemeal and unsteady process which continues to this day. As we saw in Chapter
II, there are organized young people like Callum who, having taken advantage of the system of state-supported "enterprise welfare," advance their own values alongside those of their communities. Others, like Donald, are left behind. Donald, unfortunately, is stranded in an abandoned industrial project that was mapped on to his community by central government, a fact of Donald's life that is all-too-well recognized by the new development authorities.

Here is a link to another factor in the Environmental Era. The important variable differentiating Donald and Callum and their two communities is self-confidence, confidence in Highland values and in Highland continuity. A second differentiating variable is that necessary skill, in a distributive economy, of navigating Highland Development institutions, packaging ideas as business or non-profit enterprises in order to receive assistance from the government.

As always in the Highlands, the past reappears. Myths told and retold underlie ideas. The medium has changed from the oral tradition to publications like John Prebble’s *The Highland Clearances* and *Culloden*, through movies like *Local Hero*, or MacGrath's hilarious but poignant play *The Cheviot, the Stag, and the Black Black Oil*, and, of course, *Braveheart* and *Rob Roy*. Even, little *Katie Morag* has a sophisticated understanding of development based on the necessary evolution of the "old ways." The implication of these texts is clear. As in *Local Hero*, the large-scale, centralized development of an oil production terminal and refinery is hard to *fit in*, for it will destroy the village and the village's land. A more acceptable idea is heroine Marina's aquatic research station, which sounds an unlikely development, but would bring some outside money in, and add just enough to invigorate the villagers' existing and obviously satisfying way of life. We are forced to take the myth seriously, since *Local Hero* is based on the actual case of the village of Drumbuie, and since the development, which in real life was a oil-rig-building yard, was not actually imposed on Drumbuie. Instead it was placed on the wild and empty shore of
Loch Kishorn, where it worked for a few years and hosted roughnecks from all over the world, creating a trailer-house culture locally infamous for its drugs and its parties. Today the yard stands idle and empty, and will probably require expensive reclamation.

THE FAILURE OF GROWTH POLE THEORY

The HIDB was central to evolving Highland Development theory. Decentralist, Geddesian development theory was clearly present in the aspirations of Chairman Sir Robert Grieve, or Chief Planner F.D.N. Spaven at the onset of HIDB activities in 1965. Both were admirers and protegés of Geddes. But neither was able to resist the intense drive to develop industrial growth poles. It seems fair to say that, in the case of growth poles, they both failed to apply the Geddesian principles they had learned so long before.

It took the experience of the various growth pole disasters to get the HIDB to concentrate entirely on environmentalist, Geddesian development. The HIDB, in the course of its development activities, stumbled blindly into many an environmental scandal, including for instance: the issues involving the Cairngorm Chairlift Company's development of mountaintops, the HIDB plans for a Ben Wyvis ski area, and a noxious dispute over the effluent from HIDB-sponsored fish farm pens. It is significant, and can easily be seen from the nature of these examples, that the environmental side of these disputes was dominated by the romantic approach. For example, in the controversy over the Cairngorm ski area expansion, the opposition that was forthcoming came from city-dwelling enthusiasts for Highland landscape, not from underemployed crofters.

By 1977, however, the HIDB would emphasize a reinvigorated policy of convergence between the Gaelic culture and environmental thought. Looking back through the literature, and interviewing HIDB officials from the time, it was hard to discover why this took place. Was it in response to the larger events of the time, such as the threat of energy shortage created by the Arab oil embargo, or was it a development indigenous to the institution? The old guard HIDB staff, believing that their policy had been divinely inspired
by Geddes and Fraser Darling, had failed to publicly -- or perhaps even consciously --
acknowledge that the heavily-applied growth pole theory had been an ecological and social
failure, as well as an obvious departure from an organic "Celtic" development. When the
organization began to re-emphasize and strengthen organic method in sponsoring "small-is-
beautiful" schemes, such as the movement of community cooperatives in isolated villages,
many of the old guard seemed to consider that a small-scale and decentralized ethos had, in
fact, been the organization's only policy all along. One group of old-timer officials that I
questioned suggested that the HIDB had never had a growth pole policy at all, a notion that
must certainly be defeated by such evidence as has been presented here. According to these
officials and their wishful thinking, developments at Nigg, Fort William, Invergordon and
so on had rather been a result of "pragmatic realism," a response to overtures made by
central government and a sympathetic local authority. By local authority, these officials
made it quite clear, they meant the prodigious Isabel Rhind and her cohorts in East Ross,
whose stance vis a vis large scale development had been, to say the least, extremely
welcoming.85 Thus HIDB, caught between a Rhind and a hard place, in this view, had
bowed to pressure and gone along with these giant developments. There is ample evidence
to show that the HIDB, in its early years, pursued decentralism alongside of growth poles,
but the notion that growth poles were absent is false, and can only be attributed to self-
deception. I have already presented evidence to this effect, which is supplemented by this
text, from HIDB Chairman Sir Robert Grieve's second report to Secretary of State for
Scotland Willie Ross in 1967:

"Lastly, our work on major industrial growth points progresses well; it is
ture to say that our Moray Firth development promotion has brought
national consciousness to the point where, as would have been highly
improbable two years ago, Invergordon is regarded as an inevitable site for
major industrial growth in Britain." (HIDB, 1967).

85From conversations with former HIDB official Richard Ardern, in informal company
with other officials, July 1995, HIE Library, Inverness.
Eventually, through disasters such as that described for Invergordon, the HIDB would come to see that growth poles did not work, and furthermore, produced environmental disamenities for the Highlands. By 1977 the Board had adopted a new face, and was predominantly pursuing decentralized enterprise development such as fish farms and community cooperatives, relying on small-is-beautiful designs, and encouraging convergence with the Gaelic culture. These were the natural outgrowth of the HIDB's initial Geddesian theory, which had been eclipsed during the failed growth pole era.

"The large schemes, although welcome, were now viewed with some reserve, for the Corpach Pulp Mill, a major employer in Lochaber, had failed in 1980, and the Invergordon Smelter followed in 1981. It was well-realised that the oil rig fabrication yards would be subject to the vagaries of the oil extraction industry and the world economy. Both Nigg and Ardesier have thus had their ups and downs -- some quite sudden and dramatic. Arnish closed and re-opened. Kishorn finally shut down in 1987." (MacKinnon, 1992).

Growth poles attracted much academic criticism, although not so much from economists, as from sociologists, anthropologists and conservationists. Criticism of this sort was one reason why growth poles were dropped. It also helped to alert the HIDB to the fact that they already had acceptable ideas in place, but simply needed to emphasize them. Specific to the Western Gàidhealtachd, one strident academic commentator lashed out in 1974. This was Professor Iain Prattis, who would have much to do with the later development of mature ideas of Highland community and its survival. Community in the Highlands could not be fabricated by growth poles:

"The point to be made is that the level of job and income generation could have been much higher were it clearly understood by Board members that in the Western Isles they were dealing with a distinct Gaelic culture with attendant differences in community norms, sanctions on individual behavior
and work activity that are distinct from those found in English-speaking communities. That the majority of the inhabitants are bilingual and use the English language should not obscure the fact that Gaelic culture in the Western Isles is still flourishing. This implies that any concern with generating a response from the inhabitants to the incentives controlled by HIDB, requires an understanding of the constraints on individual behavior afforded by Gaelic culture. It further implies that the task of development should not stop with job and income generation. There is a further and perhaps prime consideration of the social responsibility that the HIDB has to the rights and the interests of local cultures. (Prattis, 1974).

Prattis believed that the HIDB had been forced to switch "its focus to the West and Outer Islands mainly because its role as handmaiden and errand boy to big business interests in the Cromarty Firth was becoming absurd." (Prattis, 1974). Alternatively, the Board might have looked to Prattis's own truism that "[i]n the Western Isles, job generation is generally counted in terms of 3s, 5s, and perhaps 10s." (Prattis, 1974).

That the Board of the early 1970s was held by Prattis and others to be insensitive to Gaeldom probably came as a distinct surprise, particularly to then Board member Prophet Smith, a long-time crofter's advocate. Smith and his contemporaries felt that they had been doing all they could to alleviate the situation in the west. Smith's Chairman, Sir Robert Grieve, in particular, had always felt that "sentimentally and historically the crofters reflected what the Highlands was all about." (Hetherington, 1990, p 7). My copy of Prattis's paper, which was sent to the Board and since has resided in their library, is rudely defaced by the adoption of quote-marks around the author's title of "Professor" and carries a note addressed to Mr Smith suggesting that he might wish to take a look at "Professor" (placed in quotes) Prattis' offerings on Highland Development. Prattis may have been right in part. Perhaps certain Board members derided the idea of creating jobs in 3s and 5s when they had the opportunity to "think big" and create jobs by the hundred. Institutional pique aside, Prattis' suggestions to decentralize the Board's operations and begin to concentrate more on small-scale development were nonetheless eventually taken up. HIDB began to show a more Gaelic and more environmentalist public face.
The change in public relations outlook that occurred in 1977 is quite startling and coincides with the arrival of Sir Kenneth Alexander, an academic and economist, as Chairman. Previously, as a member of the Highland Development college of the 1960s, he had championed growth-points, writing in 1965 that "everything points to the growth pole concept being even more applicable in the Highlands than it has been in Scotland's central belt." (The Economist, November, 1965). He would be forced by HIDB's experience to change his mind, and change his mind he did. By the time of his appointment, Alexander refused to equivocate over growth pole theory, and was very clear and forthright about the need to return to traditional Highland values as a core of development. According to Alexander, HIDB had employed growth pole theory, and now must shed it. This from a retrospective by Alexander in 1984:

A third reason for increasing opposition to major projects [in the Highlands] arises from a combination of environmental and subjective factors. People who nurture the objective of the purely rural, who -- for example -- found the sight of smoke from the [Fort William] pulp mill offensive even a 20 miles distance -- will not be easily reconciled to major projects. When the ideal is indigenous, and that is defined in a traditional sense, the scope for development is further constrained." (Alexander, 1984).

Alexander went on to detail the rationale behind the HIDB's conspicuous abandonment of growth pole theory.

"These four factors -- experience of major failures, fear of the agglomeration effect, desire for environmental protection, and commitment to a very pure view of rural life -- together now present a very formidable barrier to the possibility of major projects being sought out and established as a contribution to development." (Alexander, 1984).

Alexander, in his time, would abandon large plans, instead to champion "small is beautiful," particularly in the form of bed and breakfast schemes, the acceleration of
decentralized fish-farms, and the HIDB-led design and instigation of community cooperatives.

Alexander would also champion the Gaelic language, in line once more with Prattis's suggestions. By 1977, North 7 was bilingual, all articles having a side-by-side translation in the Gaelic. Interest in Gaelic has also proved sustainable and has survived Margaret Thatcher's conservative revolution of the 1980s. That ecological, decentralized design and Gaelic culture were two sides of the same coin for Highland Development has been publicly well-recognized in hindsight:

"By this time, development agencies had introduced new policies aimed at the remoter areas. There was less talk of massive "growth poles" in the industrial complexes of Caithness, the Moray Firth and Lochaber trickling their benefits down to the remoter areas. There was more talk of smaller-scale, diversified industries (fish-farming being a good example), and of social and community development. The HIDB promoted the idea of chomuinn, local producer community cooperatives. Government job creation schemes came to areas such as the Western Isles. There was a definite policy to invest in the remoter areas, and the HIDB established field officers -- who were Gaelic speakers -- in these areas from the late 1970s. By 1991 these areas had started to participate in the economic development experienced elsewhere in the Highlands, and local populations became stabilised and even buoyant as a result." (MacKinnon, 1992).

Starting with Alexander's chairmanship, the HIDB virtually ended support for major schemes, decentralized its outreach operation and embarked on an extended career of supporting "small is beautiful" enterprises. This Schumacherian or environmental emphasis was not changed when the Conservative Government reorganized HIDB into HIE in 1990.

IMMIGRATION AND PERSISTENCE

Another factor converging with these others to produce an Environmental Era of Development is one of demographic transition. For generations the problem of
depopulation had been seen as a major part of the Highland Problem, if not the major Highland Problem. Years of Progressive development schemes had failed to correct depopulation.

People were leaving, it was thought, because the region was backward in terms of material prosperity. That the "backward" Highland region had remained so even until the passing of the 1965 Highlands and Islands Development Act, in spite of this earlier proliferation of Progressive schemes and theories is a phenomenon -- and worthy of consideration here. The usual form of analysis, employed by Darling (1955), Quigley (1949), and the British Government in the Act of Parliament creating the HIDB, was to look at the people who left, and try to find out why they left. Another way to look at the problem, seldom employed, but useful to understanding the Environmental Era in Highland Development, is to wonder about the people who stayed and find out why they stayed.

Despite two hundred years of emigration, many Highlanders stayed. One obvious reason why they stayed is because they preferred to stay, even if it meant poverty. It is this remnant, these survivors, in concert with a vigorous new cohort of immigrants, that formed the core of future cultural renewal, the rise of Highland confidence. The rediscovery of old values, the reaffirmation of the possibilities of a Highland way of life, finding solace in community and place rather than in material wealth, required the formulation of the small-scale, decentralized approach to Highland Development.

This new explanation is a complete reversal and deconstruction of the old Highland wisdom on population. Most theoretical and political views of Highland poverty and depopulation dating from the 1940s and '50s preferred to identify the politics of land-use and the poverty of environment as the issues of first order, causing emigration. The land was poor, the theory said. There were few available occupations or industries. Highlanders, in 1965, remained on their hard-won lands; often using subsistence for part of their economy, mostly without power or TV, with few cars and other labor-saving
machines, at two thirds the income of other British people (1965 statistic), in substandard housing (HIDB, 1972, Hetherington, 1990). For example, in 1949:

"In the parish of Rubha, where I was born and brought up, more than 75 per cent of the population lived in thatched houses. Many lived in black houses, crude dwellings which looked like upturned battle cruisers. In the 6ft thick walls, designed to keep the occupants safe from the wintry blast, narrow slits were left to accommodate doors and windows. A peat fire, the focal point of family life, burned on a leac in the middle of the living room and smoke rising from it gave the turf ceiling a thick coating of soot. The black house did not boast a chimney. In our modern society, it is difficult to imagine life in such a dwelling. My formative years having been spent in a village of black-houses, I can vouch for the depressing lack of light, sanitation and decor in our first home."86

By the 1950's and 1960's, as the social ecologist Sir Frank Fraser Darling pointed out, the Highland landscape was a "wet desert....a devastated terrain....and that is the primary reason why there are now few people and why there is a constant economic problem." (Darling, 1955. p 192).

Darling's explanation was typical of a majority in that it sought to identify the reasons for leaving as primarily ecological and physical, as if, until the landscape was repaired, there could be no prosperity. As future Highland Development schemes were to prove, the poor land fertility and the general lack of exploitable resources would become less and less relevant to the Highland economy.

Other theorists sought explanations in the pattern of land tenure -- which in some ways was an ecological as well as a political issue. Landlords, it was felt, had control over resources that the Highlander had a right to use; resources that had been usurped ought to be returned. Return of these resources would stem depopulation. This was the argument of the Land War and Resettlement era. In particular, the sporting estates were thought capable

of productive use for agriculture, and landlordism was thus considered to be "the greatest single obstacle to the creation of agricultural prosperity...." (Quigley, 1940s). Again, the implication is that simply righting the old land injustices by doling out land to crofters would create prosperity. These theories had, as researcher Mike Geddes pointed out later, evolved a tradition of their own, which typically "characterises the problems largely in terms of surface indicators such as peripherality, small and sparse population, lack of industrial development .... Such problems are seen, simplistically, to stem from the inherent characteristics of the region itself and those of its population." (Geddes, 1979).

Advocacy for development and land reform were the obvious responses. The HIDB was expected by some to do both, yet refused to bite the political bullet of land reform.

Even so, absolute population increase began in 1970, after a decline of decades (refer to population statistics in appendix). Did the HIDB achieve sufficient development progress to turn around a century-long population trend after only four years of existence? Probably not.

In 1984, as part of his case study of the town of Ford, John Stephenson highlighted the relatively unstudied repopulation phenomena in the West Highlands. Stephenson was able to re-present secondary demographic data to show the timing of the start of this countervailing trend:

"In-migration has long been a fact in Scotland as a whole in the Highlands as well as the rest of the country. Bell and Kirwin show that between 1966 and 1971, the number of migrants from Scotland to the rest of the United Kingdom totalled around 167,000, while the number of migrants from the rest of the United Kingdom to Scotland was a surprising 124,000 -- a net loss of only 43,000 people. Looking only at Argyll, in 1931 almost six percent of the county’s population had been born outside Scotland, a proportion which grew to eight percent by 1951. Moreover, fully a third of the population of Argyll in these earlier years had been born elsewhere in Scotland, mostly in the Glasgow/Clydeside area." (Stephenson, 1984).
If over a third of the Argyll (one of the seven Highland counties) population came from outwith the Highlands in 1951, immigration to the Highlands was already part of the scene and probably well-understood by the people, if not the academics. Highlanders began talking about "white settlers," urban British who came north to live with the "natives." The additional implication is that some of these settlers had "gone native."

An academic argument persists over whether it was oil development or HIDB growth poles that was responsible, yet neither were factors in Argyll in 1951. Belying the conventional wisdom -- the "Highland Problem" formulated as depopulation -- people had actually been moving into the region in significant numbers for decades. This new demographic trend would not be large enough to reverse the decline in absolute population until a few years later, but it began in this period and before -- as early as the 1930s, and was accelerated in the 1960s to the point where immigration caught up with emigration by the 1970s -- much earlier than any prognosis based on Fraser Darling's, Quigley's, or the HIDB's understanding of the Highland situation, and too early for development to have been the major reason for reversal. For one researcher however, using empirical qualitative and quantitative methods, the answer was clearly neither oil nor the HIDB, but the attractive amenities offered by the region. This, he said, was a common, global phenomenon in developed nations:

"[I]t is become increasingly apparent that the long established pattern of population agglomeration in major metropolitan regions of developed countries is being reversed. The terms "counter-urbanization" and "population turnaround" have been widely used to describe the net flow of migrants from major conurbations, primarily to the hinterlands but also to remoter, peripheral and predominately rural regions. (Jones, et al, 1984).

This immigration phenomena was invisible to the "Highland Problem" theorists of the 1950s and 1960s. Quigley, Fraser Darling and others sought reasons why so many had left. Few, if any of these thinkers were to turn causality on its head, to ask why some had
stayed or why people were moving in. Later, at least the question of if people were moving in was being asked. This from a 1980 report in *Sociologica Ruralis*:

"Stormay's first urban migrants came to the island in the late 1960s. By the end of 1973, there were 37 of them resident on the island. Over the next five years, eleven urban refugees left the island but 38 more arrived, making a total of 64 on the island in 1978. Six babies were born to urban migrants after their arrival, so that the population of migrants and their children in 1978 totalled 70 people." (Forsythe, 1980).

Some had remained, some 250-400,000, depending on where one draws the borders of the region (Spaven and Geddes, 1949). And some had arrived, according to one study, as many as 25,000 by 1984 (UK Govt., 1984, p 2).

And some of these people had, in fact, "gone native." People were not simply moving in, but taking part in an "alternative lifestyle." Migration, for these people, was not merely "a move in physical and economic space...." but significantly, "for most migrants a conscious social distancing from metropolitan work structures, consumption patterns and lifestyles generally." (Jones et al, 1984). Apparently, the new immigrants to the Highlands were committed to self-reliance as an economic or lifestyle-enhancing strategy, and most reported using some subsistence and self-help activities as part of their overall economic strategy (Jones et al, 1984). They were educated people, escaping the urban race to seek environmental and community amenities that were in scarce supply in the Lowlands and England. This was achieved by starting anew, "back to the land" in the Highlands:

"Although most respondents had not moved from the cities themselves, but rather from the hinterlands, the two main groups of dissatisfaction were fairly evenly divided between the physical nature of urbanism (built up conditions, congestion, noise, traffic, pollution) and the associated perceived problems of crime, coloureds, and the single most frequent citation, the stresses and strains of the rat race. The importance of the very last factor is closely associated with the fact that the majority of the survey population had moved from high-status jobs (63% of economically active
heads of household have been in professional, managerial and allied occupations) and were highly educated (55% of households contained at least one adult who had been a full time student in higher education)." (Jones et al, 1985).

It is significant that incomers had relatively high levels of previous income and education. The newly-arrived Highlanders, in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, had different motivations than that of increased material income. Instead, the most common motivation was environmental.

Darling was wrong. His "wet desert" was not restricting in-migration, even as he formulated the notion. The "economic problem" was not doomed to be "constant."

Explanations of Highland poverty using ecological and political factors are useful for explaining economic conditions underlying emigration, but fail to adequately explain the persistence of Highlanders as a distinct culture surviving in spite of emigration and immigration, or the reason why so many were willing to join this culture. Some alternative explanation must now be constructed from the available facts.

The obvious alternative formulation is that there was selective emigration and selective immigration. Some folks left, and others came in. The decision was likely to be based on whether or not both the migrants or the remaining Highlanders chose to embrace a Highland culture and Highland cultural values, such as community and place, over more material satisfactions. In particular, immigrants tried to fit in with the local culture.

Highland demographer Huw Jones said as much in a professional paper in 1984:

"Nevertheless, we found little evidence in our field areas that English in-migration has provoked cultural conflict, possibly reflecting the recognition that most in-migrants have come for reasons of environmental and lifestyle appreciation rather than economic gain and exploitation." (Jones et al, 1984).

Jones is perhaps expressing an overly optimistic view of things. At least two ethnographic studies uncovered considerable conflict not reported in Jones' quantitative survey (McFarlane, in Holy and Stuchlik, 1981; and Forsythe, 1980). In particular, incomers
make themselves disliked by some due to their willingness to take over community
meetings and other deliberative bodies. Incomers come from a more argumentative
tradition, and are less willing to take life easily:

"More brass neck underneath their heads! They just have no damned idea o' the way o' Stormay.... [B]ut its only the incomers that will stand in their committees now, the Stormay ones are all fed up with them." (Orkney islander reported in Forsythe, 1980)

However, since there is considerable evidence that there has been cultural survival in the face of these trends, and since, as James Hunter has pointed out, a considerable number of modern Highland children with English last names are attending Gaelic primary school, it is likely that incomers, to some extent, have embraced Highland culture.87

What this all leads to is that, as the depopulation problem was being analyzed by Darling and others, before HIDB-supported development had been given a chance to really do anything, the remaining Highland people were being joined by a cohort of vigorous immigrants, who were ready and eager to adopt the persisting ethos of community and place. Development, it turns out, was not the only factor responsible for ending depopulation. This is not to say that development agencies such as HIDB were not involved. It is merely a question of which came first. The demographic record indicates that immigration was well under way before 1965. The process is not simply one of development reversing a depopulation problem, but one of development aiding the already-existing survival of an indigenous culture, and at the same time aiding a flight of urban refugees who joined this culture. The HIDB was central to strengthening, rather than initiating the demographic process. Indeed, the early Board sensed that this was to be their role, deliberately setting out at the beginning, in the words of their first chairman "to offer

87 James Hunter, "A New Confidence?" (Hetherington, 1990, p 38).
an alternative way of life to that in the great cities for the few who wanted it." It goes without saying that this was an environmentalist way of life.

Government support for an alternative way of life in the Highlands was to be extended in the future. The consideration that most encouraged this extension, another convergent factor in the Environmental Era of Highland Development, was that of "structural unemployment."

STRUCTURAL UNEMPLOYMENT AND HIGHLAND DEVELOPMENT
HIDB was helped along in their environmentalist career by larger events outside of the Highlands, not the least of which was the Labour Government's invention of the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) in 1975. This was a gigantic bureaucracy whose task was to disseminate moneys for "Job Creation." High unemployment rates in many British cities throughout the 1970s had given cause for alarm and unrest. Labour's answer was to attempt to generate employment by encouraging employers, including non-profit organizations, to take in trainees under an MSC Youth Training Scheme, and to allow non-profit corporations to use unemployed youth in public service projects, paid for by MSC. This massive nationwide scheme was very useful to HIDB in its attempts to generate employment. Basically, Government would pay the wages, if there was a job -- any job -- that these youths could do.

In the crofting communities, the most appropriate existing non-profit organization was usually the township grazing committee, which ensured that youngsters would participate in traditional activities, like digging peat for the old people or reclaiming abandoned buildings and fields. The Job Creation scheme allowed new vigor to be introduced into the grazing committees' activities. Young people were organized to do community tasks that they might have traditionally done, twenty or fifty years earlier, but that had not been done in recent years:

“So the township system, which was formerly the linchpin of community solidarity on the Western Isles, had fallen into disuse as individualism, absentee crofters, and non-agricultural pursuits replaced the necessity for community cooperation over agricultural tasks. Despite this run-down, however, kinship and community ties, reinforced by a common Gaelic

88First Chairman of the HIDB, Sir Robert Grieve (HIDB, 1978).
culture, kept the notion of communality dormant. With the advent of the job creation program, it was the township's grazing committee and community association that became the vehicles for applications to the Manpower Services Commission for project approval, mainly because there were no other structures at the local level that could be used." (Prattis, 1979, p 294).

Conservation organizations also put youths to work, as did community service groups. One scheme that I was closely associated with in the Highlands in 1985 did both, concentrating on planting trees, decorating old-folks homes and cleaning up roadsides. This scheme went from three activists to a YTS and Job Creation payroll of forty young (and some quite old) men and women in less than a year.

There were two aspects of Job Creation that inform the Environmental Era in Highland Development, one being that young people were and are often employed on community schemes in the form of environmental and social projects. The second was that Job Creation evolved out of the need to invent a distributive economy. It didn't take long for economists and other social scientists to decide that what was going on was a response to structural unemployment, itself a product of the increasingly mechanized and automated forms of industrial production being employed in industry to displace industrial workers:

"I will argue that we are on the edge of a transition from an industrial to a post-industrial society; and one consequence of the changes in productive relations that will bring this about is that structural unemployment may well be a permanent feature of this post-industrial society.... I will also argue that government-sponsored job creation programs, for all the wrong reasons have stumbled across what yet may be a partial solution to the consequences of structural unemployment.... For instance in Britain, the growth of the economy due to an expanding oil sector has generated considerable wealth but has done little, in and of itself, to offset the situation of structural unemployment. One strategy to combat structural unemployment is to hide part of the core of unemployed in "pretend" jobs, which contribute little to the national good but to employ labor for a variety of considerations ranging from political expediency, to trade union pressure, and managerial compassion." (Prattis, 1979, p 294).
"Could these programs constitute the initial phase of a social engineering exercise that is designed to counteract alienation and usher in a form of distributive society? In other words, it may be the case that impact considerations within the economic domain may be secondary to social considerations of how best to restructure industrial society so that it can cope with the new technological and social realities that will emerge with the productive changes that will define the structure of the post-industrial society." (Prattis, 1979, p 294).

If what was going on was really adjustment in the economy to structural unemployment, the whole purpose of Highland Development is thus viewable in a different light. If one has a distributive economy in which the work of some proportion of the population is surplus and unnecessary, does it really matter where they live? There had been economic intervention in the region, well before the first Crofters Act of 1886, and ongoing Progressive subsidy of the region since the first department-plan houses were constructed in 1911. Was the real, hidden and perhaps even unconscious reason for this continuing subsidy, not that, if subsidized, the Highlands could produce goods useful for the rest of society, but to make it possible for ordinary people to have the option to live in the Highlands at government expense, regardless of productivity (which was being taken care of elsewhere)? If so, there was convergence between a national need for some people to accept that they would drop out of the job market because of structural unemployment, and the Highlanders' desire to live a rural lifestyle on their crofts, regardless of whether or not the croft was worked for profit. By 1979 more than one researcher thought that crofts had indeed become economic anachronisms, but were still very useful as places to base a life:

"The significance of crofting lies less with considerations of cash return and more with considerations of community definitions and solidarities.... At present, crofting is no longer needed as an insurance against deprivation. It functions rather as a home base for a pool of industrial labor,\textsuperscript{89} provides

\textsuperscript{89}Refers to the practice of migration to industrial developments such as oil-rig
an income supplement, a source of subsistence products, and more importantly, supplies the basis for ongoing definitions of community."

(Prattis, 1979, p 294).

By 1977, as Job Creation became the core of development policy in Britain, the principles of comparative advantage and economies of scale were abandoned in government economic development practice. It was no longer considered important what was produced by industries assisted by development schemes. The problem of under- and unemployment that development sought to solve, it was now thought, was not so much created by the difficulty of production, but rather the ease of production. In the face of a new difficulty, persistent unemployment, the mission for development agencies was to start enterprises to create jobs, regardless of the product. In the Highlands, the Job Creation product, more often than not, since the advent of this adjustment to structural unemployment, has been environmental and social.

ENVIRONMENTAL VISIONS OF THE HIGHLANDS

Another factor of convergence in the Environmental Era is environmentalism itself, and the linked issues of wilderness, forest policy, and crofting trust ownership as seen by Highlanders, by urban environmentalists, and by government.

By the 1970s, the British Government had long offered considerable incentives for landlords to invest in forestry plantings. This was in concert with an ongoing Forestry Commission afforestation program. Both mono-cultural plantings and the clear-felling of maturing trees were becoming very controversial. Planting of industrial conifers on Sir Frank Fraser Darling's wet desert requires plowing of acid peat soils (acidified soil from previously existing forest) to expose mineral soil, sometimes several feet below. The plowings ensure that trees are planted in mechanistic and unattractive straight lines. Clear-felling leaves huge gaps in tree cover which are replanted with more conifers. Fabrication yards, a practice for which there is little opportunity today.
By 1977, the more enlightened naturalists and ramblers began to complain, to the point where the authorities were beginning to respond. A huge change in environmental policy for forestry affected the entire region rapidly. First in the late 1970s came the promise, at the very least, to make forestry operations less intrusive to the scenery-viewing eye, if not better sanctuaries for biodiversity. Then came special grants for crofters to plant trees on croft land for the first time, further restricting the landlord's control.90 Finally, there were new grants for amenity plantings of native trees that would otherwise be unprofitable. More recently, extending the moves that were made in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Forestry Commission has been glossily patronizing the restoration of the Caledonian Forest, using principles similar to those of so-called Ecosystem Management in the National Forests of the U.S. There is, perhaps not surprisingly, considerable skepticism.

More than one environmental organization sees the future of the Highlands as dominated by the forestry issue. For the Scottish Green Party and the publishers of the Scottish Forest Charter, the development of a massive native forest reserve and an accompanying, benign "forest economy" would result from replanting the "Great Wood of Caledon." "A major reforestation programme [that] should be initiated based on the principles of sustainability and should create a new forest resource for the people of Scotland while contributing to international efforts to protect, enhance and expand forest land in all countries." (The Ecologist and Reforesting Scotland, 1992). The "principles of sustainability" envisaged include the development of small-scale, forest-dependent businesses, not at all limited to wood products extraction, but including ecotourism and interpretation, and precluding the continuation of large-scale industrial forestry.

Alternatively, for the Forestry Commission, establishment of extended native

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90 Prior to the 1991 Crofter Forestry Act, there was no incentive for a crofter to plant or maintain trees, since these fell in to a category of improvements that legally became the property of the landlord. (UK Government, 1991)
forests has now become a viable idea, but one to be employed side by side with conventional industrial forestry. And at Laggan, the Forest Authority has considered a community-based forest management scheme that is not far removed from the more radical suggestions.91 Either way, "native forestry" is an idea that is firmly established in both camps, although much work remains to be done before it becomes an extensive reality. It is likely that the "desired future condition" of many public and private Highland forests will be some simulation of various woodland ecosystems that are also managed for small-scale lumber production, an ideal far from American concepts of wilderness, but from the point of view of tradition and biodiversity, a great improvement over past practice in the Highlands.

Highland land is rarely a "true" wilderness. The treeless landscape is far more often than not one artificially created by human use. A fact often unrecognized by the lowland environmentalist is that most Highland land and its use is somewhere in between the two polar opposites of wild versus domestic. Almost all the Highland land that comprises some of the last great European "wilderness," including that designated for conservation, is used economically by someone. Despite this, a significant majority of Britain's acreage of conservation designation lies in the Highlands. And a huge proportion of Highland land is designated for conservation.92

This acreage includes 68% of the total national area for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and 74% of National Nature Reserve (NNR) acreage (HIE, 1991). The acreage combined under these two designations is one sixth of the total area of Highland land. In addition, there has been a latter-day proliferation of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs), a designation under European legislation. From the machairs of the islands

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91Pers. comm., James Hunter, HIE Board Member, March 1996.
92The two most important designations are National Nature Reserve and Site of Special Scientific Interest. Neither one is equivalent to designated wilderness or National Wildlife Refuge status in the US. They need not be publicly owned or managed, although a public agency is responsible for setting management requirements. In the case of Scotland, Scottish National Heritage is the agency.
to the Caithness Flow country, from the high Cairngorm plateau to the mountain west, this protected land is well-loved by both residents and visitors. Much of this designation went ahead with little input from locals. Farmers, crofters, and landlords might wake to find their land the subject of legally binding conservation designation. But by 1991, this fact, rather than being an issue of local pique, was seen as an economic strength and a matter of pride:

"As is evident from the extraordinarily high proportion of our area which is already included in Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Environmentally Sensitive Areas, National Nature Reserves and National Scenic Areas, the Highlands and Islands contain many more such places than any comparable part of western Europe. That is a fact of immense significance. "It is a fact that can be utilised in the marketing of our livestock, our meat, our fish, and our shellfish. It is a fact which will loom large in the promotion of our tourist industry. And it is one of the attributes that will make the Highlands, both in the 1990s and in the twenty-first century, a place where a growing number of people will wish to establish both homes and businesses. Maintaining and enhancing our high-quality environment is the key to promoting the high-quality economy and lifestyle which the HIE network aspires to create in the Highlands and Islands." (Hunter, in HIE, 1991)

Since the above passages were written by Dr. Hunter in his capacity as a board member of HIE, it is significant evidence that development discourse has evolved, in the Highlands, into an environmental discourse. By the time that Hunter wrote the passage above, Highland land had been the subject of debate between conservationists and Highlanders for some decades. For many years, Highlanders, particularly crofters, were not on such great terms with urban environmentalists. This has been dramatically changing in recent years, and a new convergence is visible in recent partnerships between crofters and environmental groups, particularly over the issue of communal management of mountain land.

Sporting ownership of the mountain estates is still an open sore for crofting and Gaelic Highlanders. Environmentalist and academic Alastair MacIntosh has described some
of the worst excesses that the sporting estate owners have recently presented to the Highlands (MacIntosh et al., 1994). The large sporting estate is the predominant Highland land-ownership class by acreage. Some modern-day landlords, often public personalities such as race-car driver Mr. Schellenberg of Eigg or his successor, "Professor" Maruma, have proven as problematic for crofters as the intransigent landlords of the resettlement period. For example, the individual called Maruma recently purchased the island of Eigg from Schellenberg, including the land on which the various inhabitants of the island live and make their living. Later, it was discovered that not only was Maruma not a professor, but that the bank now doubts his ability to pay for the island.93 In an interview with a caustic Scotsman newspaper reporter,

"Maruma did not shed any more light on how he earns his money. He talked about his plans to reveal to a waiting world his idea for art-marketing, which he calls MarumAtom. But his description of what this involves is not very revealing. The idea is based on ancient energy laws, he said. 'Money is nothing other than energy, just another form,' he explained and his aim was to possess it and allow it to flow. 'The German tax authorities found his profession hard to see through,' he said."94

Since the inhabitants of Eigg had been trying to raise the money from HIE and other sources to buy their island themselves, they went into depression when Schellenberg sold the island to Maruma. Some, fearing retribution from a new landlord, an unknown quantity, refused to rejoin the organizing meetings where land purchase was being discussed.95 The island's people were demoralized and afraid.

The reverberation was national. On Eigg and elsewhere in the Highlands, The Scotsman editorialized, an individual was -- and is -- "still able to buy tracts of land upon

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94 From The Scotsman newspaper, July 1995.
which people lived; and that all that the individual who now controlled their destinies
essentially required was money, not even the nominal framework of duty or kinship which
bound his historic predecessors."96

This event became used as a striking indictment of the estate system that is the
descendant of colonialism in the Highlands, ammunition for both environmentalists and
crofter activists. Since these are people's lives we are talking about here, the Highlanders'
sense of outrage at such events is no less strong that it was in the days after Highland men
returned from the first World War. Then they had been indignant at the treatment they had
received at the hand of the ruling classes. Now, it seems to crofters, and their advocates
such as Alastair MacIntosh or James Hunter, that even the ruling class has had its day, and
has let the land loose to an even more suspect group of wealthy individuals. "What a mad
world landlordism imposed on our Highland people. What tragedy, what hardship!"97

An extreme example is Lord Kimball, who distinguished himself at a recent
conference of landowners. A report from Jason Allardyce of The Scotsman, shows some
of the possibilities that the remaining traditional landowners present to the Highlands, and
also shows that The Scotsman, not a particularly liberal paper, is willing to attack this
mindset publicly.

"Lord Kimball, a former Tory MP and master of the Cottesmore and
Fitzwilliam hounds.... Proudly boasting how he had recently run over a
pine martin...went on to relate his obsession with left-wing biased scientific
research, civil servants who could not be trusted and "tame" landlords.
Having blasted the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, he then
advocated the slaughter of seals to protect salmon stocks, as well as the pine
martin which he claimed was endangering capercaillies, and called for a
look at exterminating saw bill ducks, hawks and harriers.
"Kimball then sought to expose the way 'politically-biased' way scientific
evidence is used to support Green views 'at the expense of the knowledge
and experience of those who have managed the countryside for

97Crofter activist Angus MacLeod (Hunter, 1995, p 173).
generations.' Representation on the Scottish National Heritage Regional Committee by some "tame" landlords did not help.... Landowners as a whole must play their part or they will be liquidated as a force in the countryside.' Heaven Forbid."98

The Scotsman and Scotsman on Sunday newspapers and their Progressive English counterpart The Guardian have each made it clear that colonial landlordism is an unjust anachronism to be regularly targeted for journalistic acrimony. The Scotsman blasts the landowning class from its editorial page, and the features page of Scotland on Sunday often highlights the plight of small communities like Eigg or Knoydart. The Guardian has gone a step further, in keeping with its Manchester radical roots. It has sponsored an environmental campaign called "The Land is Ours," (1995) led by the organization of the same name, which intends, through the power of the press, by rewarding "good behavior and highlighting bad behavior ... to remind those who own the ground we tread to remember what many have long forgotten; that the land belongs not only to them but to all of us."

Landlordism is presently unpopular with both crofters and environmentalists, and the interests of both converge on the policy of furthering community control of estate land. This Highland land is not seen as private property, but as sacred ground to both the environmental community and the crofting community, ground that must be returned to better management. The government, through HIE, is responding with the provision of money for communities wishing to buy out their land, not quite the land reform that was once hoped of the HIDB, but effective nonetheless. Good results must, however, depend on crofters coming together as functioning township units, avoiding the lack of confidence seen on Eigg, or Katie Morag style acrimony.

The latest "sacred" Gaelic ground that Highlanders and their environmentalist allies will recover to community ownership is likely to be Knoydart, the site of the last Highland Land Raid (1948). Knoydart is a remote and wild peninsula where, although there is a land

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connection to the mainland, communication is by boat only. Following that estate being put up for sale, the possibility exists that the community might be given government assistance by HIE, as in other recent cases such as Assynt, to purchase the land. Knoydart would then be once more in community ownership after an break of a couple of hundred years.

The newly-formed, non-profit John Muir Trust intends its major business to be the acquisition of estates and their conversion to community management for both conservation and development purposes. The possibility that the same intention might, following a Labour Party victory, become government policy was a major topic at a recent Scottish Labour Party conference, which was addressed by Doctor James Hunter himself. He capriciously called attention, pour encourager les autres, to the fact that Labour had in general managed to ignore the Highlands this century. Highlanders might not even need a Labour Government to get their land back. According to Hunter, "It was possible to make a 'Thatcherite' case for community ownership ... [y]ou can argue that it is absolutely right that people have control of their own lives and stand on their own feet and have that sort of input into the community and into the land issue." 99

Since Dr. Hunter is an exceptionally influential man in the Highlands, and since the landowning class has proved itself to be exceptionally problematic, indeed embarrassing recently, we can only expect that the movement to provide further local control of previously alienated mountain land will expand. Presently, there are successful examples of crofting trust ownership in Hunter's own home of Borve on Skye, in Assynt, at Strathaird and at Stornoway. It remains to be seen if the Knoydart buyout will be successful. The John Muir Trust is interested and raising money. Hunter's HIE might assist. Hunter believes this expansion is inevitable as a result of the convergence of indigenous and environmental interests; an event to be seen, in Hunter's view, as a catharsis of the events after Culloden. Hunter encourages this convergence:

"We have the opportunity today in the Scottish Highlands to turn around those processes which have done so much damage both to this area’s people and to its natural environment. All of us with an interest in the Highlands -- established residents, incomers, environmentalists and others -- could readily resolve to work together for the region’s general benefit. We could jointly bring about the repopulation, as well as the ecological restoration, of all the many places where, as Hugh MacLennan commented, you feel that everyone who ever mattered is dead and gone. We could, in other words, undo some of the consequences arising from the horrors of the past."

(Hunter, 1995, p 176)

In contemporary Highland Development, there is the possibility of yet further convergence between the existing forces, the environmentalists' wish to conserve and restore the Highland landscape and biodiversity, the crofter activists' wish to expand crofting and community ownership into the large, empty sporting estates, and the government's need for policy measures in the face of structural unemployment. In the 1990s, any adjustment to reduce structural unemployment has pragmatic value for governments responding to their citizens' need for meaningful lifestyles. Crofting is an example of such a lifestyle. The croft does not exist, in 1995, to provide food, beyond an egg or two daily and a bag of potatoes. Subsistence farming, although a popular activity, is rarely a necessity. The croft exists to keep the Highlander on the land, an environmentalist preference. It is not yet clear that crofters or government completely accept that this is so. There is still a lot of talk about croft productivity and agricultural efficiency and so on. The pragmatic realism of the following commentary is rare:

"At the heart of this debate is the definition of what crofting is, or rather, what crofting is to become. When he was president of the Scottish Crofters Union Angus MacRae of Lochcarron once declared that taking the agriculture out of crofting would take the heart out of crofting communities. Whether we like it or not that is what may happen. There is hardly a crofter alive who remembers crofts without subsidies, and undeniably there are a good number of crofters who would not be involved in crofting were it not
for the subsidy system. When it disappears, whither crofting?\footnote{100}{\textit{ibid}}

The answer to the question of "whither crofting," to activists like Hunter or the environmentalist John Muir Trust, is that crofting is a strategy for landscape maintenance and other forms of conservation, that is at the same time a socially and culturally preferable form of adjustment to structural unemployment, and therefore deserving of government subsidy.

The onset of this environmentalist preference for Highland lifestyles is mirrored in America. The scattered pattern of crofting settlement, with small to medium-sized, government-built or government-renovated houses surrounded by 5 or so acres of "hobby-farm" land, which itself is surrounded by large expanses of wildland is in some ways similar to that which has taken place recently in Montana, although under private ownership. The modern settlement pattern that is repeating itself throughout Western America is that of Montana's Bitterroot valley, with five-to-twenty acre "ranchettes," with the occasional horse, garden, sheep, or beehive, surrounded by similar neighbors, and the National Forest wilderness beyond. This form of settlement seems to provide what some people want in the Bitterroot Valley, although often land-use is restricted to non-commercial and non-agricultural uses (in contra-distinction to crofting communities), and the spatial pattern of development, rather than conforming to natural topography (as in crofting townships) is often either random, or dictated by the arbitrariness of zoning regulations (\textit{Kunstler}, 1993, pp 263-265). Another key difference between the two types of settlement appears to be that in America, the distribution system is based on private enterprise and ownership, while in the Highlands, it is based upon heritable crofting tenure, and that in the Highlands there is enough of an environmental ethic existing among crofters that extending this form of settlement will perhaps improve the landscape.
environmentally -- by the planting of trees and the better management of ancient field systems and, surprisingly enough, by their inhabitation by humans, a Highland combination of the romantic with the utilitarian:

"Suddenly it seemed to him that there if you want it is an ordering for the world. How else should the world be ordered but that little children should run bare-legged on the grassy knolls shouting out of the gladness of their hearts? What else is there that should take first place to that in the ruling of man's affairs? What else in the name of God?" (MacColla, 1932, p 80).

CONCLUSION
This study has presented detailed evidence for three successive Eras of Highland Development. The evidence for each Era stands by itself in its respective chapter. It only remains to be asked what the future for the Highlands might look like in the light of this latest, Environmental Era of Highland Development.

This last chapter has argued that the predominant Highland issue has become the Highland environment: how to live on it, how to maintain it, how to preserve it, and, more fundamentally --and in keeping with a post-modern age -- the question "what is it?" This change was led by the public, both Highland people and the people of the rest of Britain and beyond. The Highlands' primary purpose perceived at the national (and even European) level was, and is, to be a cherished landscape, for use as a site for vacations and recreation, as a homeland for national Scottish and British myths, and a place where a lucky few might wish to relocate -- to take up an idealized rural life not very distinct from the persisting, modern Gaelic rural ideal -- or simply to retire in peace and quiet.

At the local level, purposes differ from the national. For the people that live there, although no less cherished, the Highlands are home, a center for various utilitarian as well as romantic values, where Highlanders live out their lives, where they must each make their livings "despite adversity," and where they maintain themselves culturally as Highlanders:
which is to be something different from Scottish or British, and which may involve defense against incomers. Necessarily, achieving the goals implied by these two diverse, but nonetheless environmentalist views of the purpose of Highland Development is difficult and a source of conflict. Increasingly, and particularly since 1965, and especially since 1977, conflict between the national Highland environmentalism, and the Highlanders' own environmentalism has become the over-riding concern of Highland Development discourse. More recently, this conflict has been seen by some as reconcilable, a possibility that seems to lie as much in reconciling utilitarian and romantic approaches (on both sides) as in anything else.

If this reconciliation is to proceed, it must be with awareness of the Highland past. Given their history, Highlanders are especially shy of external pressure. All of the historical stages of Highland Development, except the most recent, left Highlanders with less resources to live with than they had before.

Since most of the good natural things that were, were taken by those outsiders and removed, this most recent, Environmental Era of Highland Development represents both an accommodation and a catharsis of the past. There is little left to work with, and few outsiders remain envious of anything but the Highlands' space and tranquility. As we have seen in the proposals for a superquarry at Lingerabay, or in the steady flow of tourists from the Lowlands, there are ways to take even this and export it. However, development schemes that work with renewable resources like space and tranquility in a small-scale, decentralized way are inherently more stable and more sustainable. By a combination of default (everything exploitable being exhausted), and catharsis (a circling to traditional Celtic ideals), Highlanders are working out a sustainable economy.

It seems no coincidence that I will complete this study in the same month as the 250-year anniversary of the last conflict of the Highlands' last military rebellion, the Battle of Culloden (Wednesday, April 16, 1746). Catharsis is a common enough topic of Highlanders' popular discourse on Highland Development. As poet and songwriter Dougie
MacLean has said about mature Highland Development:

We are our fathers son's
We are our mothers' pride and joy,
And we will be the ones
To tell you now that it's over.

Today's Highlanders "will be the ones, to tell you now that its over." According to MacLean's popular song, the era of colonization and privatization of Highland land is over.

Since the advent of this Environmental Era of Highland Development, resources long alienated have become available once more to Highland people, who are able, once more, to exert some control over their own destiny. A portion of such resources are reinvested in cultural, economic, and environmental capital, by which means environmental and cultural sustainability are more assured that in the rest of Britain. In the Highlands, conservation of culture and environment seems probable as an appreciation of the ancient Celtic emphasis on the importance of community and place re-asserts itself. Decades of Progressive development have had some effect on prosperity, particularly in the quality and quantity of capital goods accumulated in the Highlands, belonging to Highlanders. Highlanders are now, for the most part, as involved -- or more involved -- in the distributive economy as other Britons are. They understand that their future depends on tapping the central font of redistributed wealth that flows from government development schemes, and the leaders in their communities learn to do so professionally and expertly. This is reflected in their talk about development.

Their self-image has also changed. The Highlands are no longer the poor cultural cousin to the rest of Britain. Development no longer implies the abandonment of land, community or an idealized Gaelic way of life. For Highlanders, in this Environmental Era, the richness of the Gaelic way of life is rediscovered. As a result of the combination of these three factors, a mature Highland Development theory evolves and becomes part of the
also-evolving Highland culture. An inherently environmentalist outlook is revived from the Gaelic past. A theory emerges and is popularized that there is a special Celtic connection to the Earth. There is a new confidence in a combination of old and new ways of life. A jealous, crowded Britain sees the Highlands, with its combination of seemingly pristine wildland, community life and a mixed economy as the last repose of an ideal rural existence. People begin to move in, stemming two centuries of out-migration. There are newcomers, those "white settlers" that come from the rest of Britain to find peace and an alternative way of life in the Highlands. Some fit in and are accepted. Some don’t, and they live on in a kind of limbo existence, not part of the "real" local community, but there all the same, resented and ridiculed, but impossible to ignore (Hunter, 1995, p 169).

The ultimate "Highland Problem" is, then, one of conservation, both cultural and ecological. It might be said that conservation has been the Highland Problem since 1746. How shall the Highlands keep what it has left of culture and environment in the face of external and internal threats?

Eventually, in this Environmentalist Era, in a portion of the region's communities, there is some small sense of historical catharsis, a sense that things are working out, circling back to a new beginning. There is "a new confidence."101 The nature of this catharsis is suggested by the words of MacLean's song. Today's Highlanders "will be the ones, to tell you now that its over."

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Sons (1930), New York.

APPENDICES

TABLE 1

Highlands and Islands Development Board Area Population, 1851-1991:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years 1851-1991, 10-year intervals</th>
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Note:
Censuses were taken in 1851, 1901, 1921, 1951 and then every ten years.
Figures for years 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891, 1911, 1931, and 1941 are averages of the decline between census years.
Figure given as 1991 is actually a forecast made in 1989.
Note:
Figures given are either averages of HIDB/HIE's five-year estimates (flat spots), or estimates for each year. The latter statistic was only compiled sporadically. Either statistic is likely to be exaggerated, since success in creating jobs was a major political necessity for either agency. For example, the spike for 1993 seems unlikely.
MAP 1

The Highlands and Islands:

Source: Highlands and Islands Enterprise
MAP 2

HIDB/HIE Administrative Areas/Local Enterprise Company Areas:

Note: HIDB was decentralized into the geographical areas shown here as Local Enterprise Companies in 1980.
Source: Highlands and Islands Enterprise
MAP 3

Proportions of Local Populations Speaking Gaelic (as First or Second Language) in 1891:

Source: MacKinnon (1992)
MAP 4

Proportions of Local Populations Speaking Gaelic (as First or Second Language) in 1981:

Incidence of Registered Crofters in Highland Civil Parishes 1981:

Source MacKinnon (1992)
GLOSSARY OF GAELIC TERMS USED

Albannach  (n) Scotsman, (specifically) Highlander.

clann, clan  (n) tribe, literally children.

Chu Chullain  ancient hero/warrior.

cho chumuinn  (n) community cooperative store/business.

cèilidh  (n) gathering for music or conversation.

Communn na Gàidhlig  Gaelic advocacy and development organization.

Gàidheal, Gael  Highlanders in general, specifically Gaelic-speaking Highlander, also
Gaelic-speaking Irish.

Gàidhealtacht  Highlands in general, specifically Gaelic-speaking region (see maps #
3 and 4).

Gàidhlig, Gaelic  Gaelic language and culture, linguistic and cultural term refering to
Celtic people, originally from Ireland, speaking the Gaelic, as opposed to the Brythonic
form of the Celtic language group.

leac  (n) hearth-stone, literally flag or flagstone

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig  Gaelic language college on Isle of Skye, equivalent to American
community college.

Sassunach  Lowlander, literally saxon, English or Scots Lowlander.

run-rig  open field farming system as practiced in Highlands.

run-dale  open field farming system as practiced in Ireland.

tigh dubh (n), tighean or tighan dubh  (pl.) black house, traditional thatched cottage
built of dry stone.

Tuatha de Danaan  mythical ancient ancestors of the Gaels, literally the children of
the mother of God.