



21 October/1732/96

RETURN OF THE STONE OF
DESTINY TO SCOTLAND

The Secretary of State for Scotland, the Rt Hon Michael Forsyth MP, has announced that, on the advice of Her Majesty's Government, The Queen has agreed that when the Stone of Destiny is returned to Scotland it should be housed in the Crown Room at Edinburgh Castle alongside the Honours of Scotland.

This decision has been taken in the light of the criteria set out in our consultation paper published on 16 July.

Mr Forsyth said:

"A total of 113 responses were received from the general public, the churches, interested bodies and experts. Of these 47 favoured a location in the capital and within that 29 favoured the Castle over other possible locations.

“The consultation document invited views on whether the Stone should be kept in a building set aside for religious purposes. Those who responded, including the churches, generally did not attach overriding importance to this factor.

“The Stone has to be sited somewhere accessible, secure and with appropriate historic links. The Crown Room meets these criteria and is available now; and the links with the historic past are reinforced by the fact that the Crown Room was built by James VI in 1617 to house the nation’s treasures then in the King’s possession. The living symbols of Monarchy - the Stone of Destiny and the Honours of Scotland - will therefore be displayed side by side.

“Free access will be arranged by Historic Scotland on 7 December this year, and twice a year thereafter, in April and on St Andrew’s Day.

“We have carefully considered the case for Scone, in support of which there were 19 representations and a petition of several thousand signatures, but no suitable facilities are presently available there. If a well developed proposal of suitable quality were to emerge, it would of course be given serious consideration.

“Plans are now being made to move the Stone of Destiny to Scotland so that it can be installed in the Castle on St Andrew’s Day. The Stone will continue to play its part in future Coronations when it will be temporarily returned to Westminster Abbey.