



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

## ***News Release***

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### **Political pioneer's legacy to inform debate on future of democracy**

The future of democracy – both in the UK and abroad – will be explored at an event on Thursday 6 September that commemorates the influence of one of Scotland's most pioneering politicians.

The event at the Scottish Parliament will mark 40 years since the death of Professor John P Mackintosh, the former Labour MP, academic, writer and leading advocate of Scottish devolution.

The debate, titled *Where Now for Democracy?*, has been organised by the University of Edinburgh, where Professor Mackintosh was the Professor of Politics until his death at the age of 48.

Professor Mackintosh's advocacy of the UK joining the then European Community, as well as his support for Scottish devolution put him at odds with his party, but won him admirers from across the political spectrum.

The late First Minister of Scotland, Donald Dewar, described him as “something of a prophet, a mighty champion of reform at a time when constitutional change was not an approved and certainly not a fashionable cause”.

Professor Mackintosh was the Member of Parliament for Berwick and East Lothian between 1966 to 1978.

The John P Mackintosh Memorial Debate will see a distinguished panel of politicians and commentators discuss his legacy and ask what the future holds for good government.

Lord Menzies Campbell of Pittenweem, former Leader of the Liberal Democrats, and Angus Robertson, former Deputy Leader of the Scottish National Party, will be joined by Professor Mona Siddiqui, Professor of Islamic and Interreligious Studies at the University of Edinburgh, and Catherine Stihler MEP, Labour Member of the European Parliament for Scotland.

Chairing the debate will be the Rt Hon Ken Macintosh MSP, the Scottish Parliament's Presiding Officer.

The free event, which is open to the public and ticketed, takes place in the Scottish Parliament's Debating Chamber on Thursday, 6 September, from 6 to 7.30pm. It will be

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followed by a reception, which will be addressed by the new Principal of the University of Edinburgh, Professor Peter Mathieson.

Professor Mathieson said: “John P Mackintosh’s influence is still felt today in politics and academia. His publication *The British Cabinet* remains a widely referenced source for those interested in the politics and government of the UK. We are delighted to be working with the Scottish Parliament on this event to acknowledge his work.”

Ken Macintosh MSP said: “The words of John P Mackintosh are carved in stone within the Scottish Parliament building. They remind MSPs and visitors of the passion and commitment to Scottish devolution over many years that shaped Scotland’s journey to securing a Parliament.

“It is fitting that his memorial debate at Holyrood should see a panel of experts consider what the future holds for democracy both at home and abroad.”

To register for a ticket, please visit [www.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk) and search for ‘Where Now for Democracy?’

For further information please contact:

Edd McCracken, Press and PR Office, tel 0131 651 4400; email [Edd.McCracken@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Edd.McCracken@ed.ac.uk)

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