Scotland is a mighty nation. Its wealth of goods, indomitable populace, martial prowess, and intellectual power is unsurpassed. The tribal confederation of the Picts, native Scottish Gaels, spiritual Anglicans, and newly integrated Scandinavians have rendered Scotland sturdier than ever before. Conjugated power and propagation of nationalistic sentiments, in combination with an empty throne, leave Scotland searching for an appropriate sovereign: one that rules for the people, and wholly maintains the interests of the country. It is the greatest of follies to disregard the various contenders vying for kingship in this turbulent time, but to make a decision in haste is to bring the entirety of the Scottish aristocracy into disrepute, and compromise the safety of the populace inhabiting the lands we are charged with serving. Nevertheless, we mustn’t divorce Scottish power from notions of sovereignty. Meaning that as the administrators of justice, we have the duty to maintain healthy relations with our neighbours, but this should not come at the price of retiring ourselves as an uninvolved tributary state simply to retain autonomy.

I, Sir Gilbert de la Hay, acting as the fifth Baron of Errol, pledge life, sword, and fealty to Robert de Brus, the seventh Lord of Annandale, and am committed to whatever decision he may reach. It is justified to appoint Robert De Brus, the fifth Lord of Annandale, the closest surviving male relative to King Alexander III, a man trained both in war and politics, to the vacant throne of Scotland; however, the decision becomes increasingly onerous when one deciphers De Brus’ (V) grandson’s inheritance of the Earldom of Carrick. This inheritance obliges the seventh Lord of Annandale to favour the King of England, and support any decision he may reach, while still being loyal to his own grandfather. Regardless of the divisive conclusion Robert De Brus (VII) must reach, his intelligent, just, and honourable persona assure the Scottish people and myself of his eligibility to arrive at a settlement that favours the entirety of Scotland.

King Edward I of England has made a demand that the Scots acknowledge his suzerainty in return for his royal input on the selection of a sovereign of Scotland. This mandate, however, has left the Scottish wondering: if the King were to select a Scotsman who did not prioritize the interests of Scottish people, and instead selected a malleable man aligned solely with the English, would King Edward not have belittled the mighty nation? It is my respectful opinion that the King of England should be given a say in this selection process, but to an extent where his recommendation is just that, and non-binding. To allow the monarch of another nation to decide the outcome of ours is undignified, and leaves the Scots vulnerable to invasion and attack. To accept the recommendation of the English should be an act executed with great caution. While any and every input is appreciated, the resignation of Scotland as an autonomous tributary state would hinder the nation’s advancement, and thwart Scottish endeavours to expand its borders. It is for these reasons that the man assigned the throne of Scotland should be one with great intellect, unwavering patriotism, and above all a steadfast vocation to justly serve the Scottish people.

Scotland’s prominent role in the history of the British Isles is a direct result of having cultivated respect, and having fostered healthy relationships amongst its neighbours. Although tensions have been rising between the Scottish and English, we must use precedent to govern the way we approach certain issues. For instance, by honouring English claims of suzerainty on Scotland, and paying homage to them through monetary means, the placid state of the region is preserved. However, this conformity acts as a sort of self demotion and reduces Scotland’s economic standing, and brings the Scottish nobility into ill repute. While following this precedent is a viable option in this time of strife, setting new precedent is also feasible. Rallying the various clans of Scotland together, and uniting them under one common identity, would allow for the Scottish people to overpower the English. While a full-out war may seem like an unlikely possibility, its initiation may allow Scotland to gain land, money, and influence. Enlisting the help of the ethnolinguistically similar Irish Gaelic peoples, newly befriended Norwegian warriors, and previously oppressed Welsh, the Scottish stand a chance of defeating the English and asserting their territorial integrity. I, Sir Gilbert de la Hay, the fifth Baron of Errol, emphasise that reaching diplomatic negotiations should be the first priority of the Scottish people, and affirm that violent actions should only be undertaken in the event of a breach of Scotland’s sovereignty.

The Sovereign Kingdom of Scotland needs to reach a mutual understanding through this council. I, as the fifth Baron of Errol, have pledged life, sword, and fealty to Robert de Brus, the seventh Lord of Annandale, and am prepared to mobilize troops at his discretion. I am most interested in securing a stable future for the Scottish people, forging secure alliances, and augmenting the money, land, and influence of the kingdom. The Scottish are vulnerable to the divisive nature of external intervention, and should retain a cautious optimism when considering the counsel of King Edward I of England. The people of Errol are ready to fight, and are stronger than ever before. Together the Scottish people, the tribal confederation of the Picts, the native Scottish Gaels, the spiritual Anglicans, and the newly integrated Scandinavians remain steadfast on ensuring the appointment of a just and equitable King.

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