

Save Wales

by
Political
Action

D.P.T.

SAUNDERS LEWIS

Three Pence

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Chapter I

EUROPE is a collection or family of nations, many of them small like ourselves and a few great and populous. Wales has not yet her own government or the means to defend her society like many of the other nations, and this difference is a very great one.

But problems like their problems are facing Wales today, namely the problems of preserving the nation and of guarding its unity and its traditions in a world that is falling under the military rule of a few great industrialized powers who distrust each other and are more and more dependent on force of arms.

MILITARY RULE

The English papers tell us that the Crimea Conference shows clearly the kind of order that has been determined for Europe after the fall of Germany. I imagine this is true. If so, then it may be stated at once that the English Government will have an army of a quarter of a million on the soil of Europe for a long time, perhaps for a generation. Nor can the home forces be any less. The air-force will be proportionate to the needs of an army of this size. There will also be unknown demands in the Far East and in the Mediterranean countries.

The meaning of all this is that compulsory military service or conscription, together with war industries proper to the needs of a standing army and air-force, will be a continuing and extremely important part of the social order of the land of Britain after the war. *This is a fact of the greatest importance to the Welsh nation. It is a revolution in our history. It brings us face to face with an altogether new situation.*

The popular idea in Wales today is still that the present system, the war-time one, is abnormal or exceptional and that it is something for a time only. This error has been refuted time and again on this page of the *Baner*. But to no purpose. The greater part of the Welsh people and the leaders of public life in Wales cling to the notion of the time when the boys and girls will have returned from France, from Egypt or from Palestine "for

the enduring peace." Their idea all along is that, possibly this year, or at any rate in 1946, the boys and girls will be free to return to their homes and that then it will be possible to resume the life so rudely interrupted in 1939. To these people the war is only an exceptional incident, something abnormal, and they cannot even now grasp that there will never at all be a return to life as it used to be.

The explicitness of the Crimean declaration should awaken, undeceive and convince them. If there is to be order and settled existence after the war it will be martial order. If there is to be not order but disorder, there will be military compulsion and industrial conscription in just the same way.

There is no escape from it. Wales cannot escape from it. And it will remain as long as England is one of the Great Powers. Thus it will be if the political life of England is to remain orderly and undisturbed. Thus it will be also should a communist revolution or any other kind of revolution happen in England.

WALES' PART IN THE SCHEME

Strategically and industrially the soil of Wales will play an important part in the military schemes of the English Government after the war. A more important part than in the present war. We will not go into details of this now to explain why. It suffices to state this probability.

The plans of Mr. Dalton and his ministry for South Wales are already known. These plans envisage nothing less than making the English Midlands and South Wales and Bristol into one industrial block with its highway over the Severn and its airports on each side of the mouth of the Severn and the Bristol Channel. Mr. Dalton made this quite clear in the House of Commons on that black and calamitous day called "The Welsh Day" in parliament—one that through Dalton's declaration merits being set side by side with that day in 1536 which saw the passing of the Act of Union between England and Wales.

If we consider the intentions of Mr. Dalton's ministry together with the unavoidable consequences of the Crimea Conference, and also alongside the insurance scheme for moving industrial workers under the Beveridge plan or the government's amendment of this plan—if we consider all these things *dispassionately and deliberately*, then it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the end of the Welsh nation as a social and historical unit has now been determined.

THE POINT FOR WALES

The soil of Wales and the workers of Wales and the soldiers of Wales and the women of Wales are useful to the English Government.

But, in common English parlance, the Welsh nation is a nuisance and a bore to the government of England.

The English War Office abominates the nation of Wales. So also does the Admiralty and the Air Ministry. So also does the Treasury and the Board of Trade and the Ministry of Labour. All of these aim, as their works and their constant and undeviating policy testify, at the destruction of the Welsh nation.

And now, as this war comes to some sort of a close, and the strain tells fearfully on the resources of England as a Great Power, the centering of authority under a strong military and economic bureaucracy, so as to compete with Russia and the United States, implies of necessity a policy that is fatal to the Welsh nation. Nothing less than this. Let no one suppose that this is an extreme view. Let us learn to be clear-sighted and to face the unpalatable truth. Neither let us seek an escape through suggesting that a bit of Welsh cultural dilettantism in the Board of Education can alter the situation.

There is only one power that can change the situation : the common people of the Welsh nation.

There is only one way in which the people of Wales can change the situation : through effective political action.

POLITICAL ACTION.

It would be a good thing if it were possible to get intelligent people in every part of Wales to consider and discuss these two propositions.

It is of course necessary to recognise that a remarkable number of the ordinary people of Wales are indifferent as to the fate of the Welsh Nation. They are unaware and do not suppose that the loss of the nation would be a loss to themselves or to their children.

But we recognise at the same time and with thankfulness, that the greater number of the leaders of Welsh public life, indeed, most of the leaders of the English political parties in Wales, still continue to recognize and to avow publicly that the dissolution of the nation into a diverse medley of people without a tradition would be a great loss indeed to the standing of social life and to the future order of society and so to every family and person in Wales.

But it is not possible to say that most of the leaders of Welsh public life, local or national, are agreed that it is only through political action that the situation can be saved.

Nor are the greater number of the public men of Wales ready to support "effective political action."

On account of this one must recognize that the outlook for Wales is uncertain and obscure. And again, how can any honest thinker, viewing the totalitarian tendencies of civilization to-day,

fail to recognize that political action is essential in order to prevent the annihilation of the Welsh nation? It is through political intervention that the nation's destruction is secured. Through laws and parliamentary measures, through creating ministers and giving them authority over men and materials, through ministerial orders and orders in council, through powers given to them by parliament, through the authority imparted to them by laws—through all these things the State and its servants now concern themselves with the life of every family and every child in the kingdom. There is not now one single department of life that is safe from the interference of the State.

Every honest thinker in Wales should now recognize also that bitter experience has shown how insignificant and ineffective are the attempts of religious and cultural bodies to effect any change of consequence in the plans of the state. The plain truth is that the state does not know or recognize voices that are non-political.

Votes at elections count, by affecting the plans of ministers of the crown and the state services. But neither well-meant resolutions passed at public meetings nor religious bodies can obtain the official or ministerial ear.

As long as the Welsh nation lacks a political voice the state is under no necessity to heed it or to recognize its existence. And that is what is happening. We all know that at present the state neither heeds nor recognizes its existence. Not by acting against the Welsh nation does a minister like Mr. Dalton set about destroying it, but by acting in a practical manner as if it did not exist at all. For him it does not exist, since it has no political existence.

Nor can this state of affairs be altered, save by Welsh political action that is effective.

EFFECTIVE WELSH POLITICS

Up to now the argument has been an appeal to reason. But for an appeal for Welsh political action to take effect, it is not the reason that should be appealed to, but the conscience and the will.

It has been said already that there is no means of saving and helping the Welsh nation in the crisis that threatens it but effective political action. That which is effective is that which alters or assuages or checks the designs of the State to the advantage and good of the Welsh nation. Up till now therefore, it must be confessed, there has scarcely been any Welsh political activity that has been of effect.

Who has the best chance to work effectively for the defence of the Welsh nation? The usual answer is : the members of parliament elected in Wales, together with the local authorities. Perhaps we should add the leaders of the Welsh Trades Unions. There is no space here to discuss these three classes.

It will generally be agreed that the members of parliament

are the most important from the standpoint of the country or the nation, because it is on political or national principles, on principles of government policy, that votes are given and decided for the electing of members.

All the members of parliament for Wales belong to one or other of the three English parties. These three parties constitute the present coalition government.

The first aim of every one of these three parties is to support the greatness of England, to uphold the empire of England, to uphold the traditions of England, to defend the interests of England. Every one of these parties spring from the life of English England, and English ideals are their ideals. It could not be otherwise. It should not be otherwise. We have no right to expect anything else. Membership of any of these parties means of necessity acceptance of this foremost aim, to support and to defend the interests of England. There may be secondary aims. But secondary aims they are, and in a time of peril, in a time of war, in distress, the first aim takes the first place, and every other vanishes. *Every English parliamentary party is an English nationalist party.*

From parliamentary action in this war there emerges one clear lesson for Wales, namely that the safety and well-being of the Welsh nation are of no account in the day of England's peril. Every Welshman is English in the eyes of the government and of parliament in time of war.

The government has not eased a single one of its defence measures during all the years of this war in order to assist in keeping the Welsh nation from destruction. Even in small matters and in its arrangements for women, the government of England has not abated one jot of its plans in order to keep Wales Welsh. No leader has urged upon any English parliamentary party the need for preserving the Welsh nation.

Wales is a secondary affair that ceases to be even that in time of war or peril to every one of the English parties, whether Labour, Liberal or Tory. This, to be sure, is only proper, this is only as it should be, this is only right for English parties. We should not ask from them anything else.

In war, in peril, the strong national instincts of the Englishman impel him gloriously on to challenge the world and to threaten with extinction every secondary concern that threatens to hinder the determination of the vigorous English nation to overthrow the enemy and secure its power and its inheritance and its rights. Magnificent from an Englishman. But that is not effective Welsh politics.

AN INDEPENDENT WELSH PARTY

It is not sought to suggest anything novel in these notes.

The point is that war time methods and conditions are bound to continue for long years after the war is over, and that it is certain also, that **unless conditions change, the destruction of Wales as a nation is assured. Nor can such a change take place unless effective political action on behalf of Wales intervenes.**

The only peaceful and non-revolutionary method of obtaining effective political action on behalf of Wales and for the defence of Wales is to instal an independent Welsh party in the English parliament.

This is a matter that is clear to instinct and to reason. It is a matter that is obvious to experience. One cannot place the mother-country second in politics. The Welsh member of parliament who accepts the whip of an English political party proves to every Englishman that he is not seriously concerned for the defence of Wales. The Englishman knows what patriotism is. The Englishman knows what it is to be in earnest for the rights of a nation. The Englishman has proof and experience of these things. He has proof in South Africa, in India, in Ireland, in Canada. He cannot be deceived. The Englishman knows that a successful parliamentary career in any of his own parties is not a sure sign of entire faithfulness to Ireland or Wales.

But the Englishman also knows, and his government knows, that an independent party like that of Parnell, standing from day to day in parliament for the rights of country and nation, creates a will and a determination in that land that will in the long run prove stronger than the parliament of England.

A party that spurns rewards, that spurns offices, that spurns titles, a party without earls and "sirs," a Welsh party and that only—such a thing the parliament of England and the government of England has not seen yet in all its history. But that is what England must be shown if it is desired to help Wales. Nothing else henceforth can be effective politics for Wales. And there are two by-elections pending, one at Neath and the other for Caernarvon Boroughs, which afford Wales the chance of founding the Welsh Parliamentary Party. That is the election message of the Welsh National Party.

Chapter II

THERE is dire need of a Welsh parliamentary party, independent of every English political party, to look after the interests of Wales in the English parliament during the period of post-war reconstruction. It was not imagined that, in the course of writing, the Welsh members of parliament now in the House of Commons would hasten to prove the truth of the argument. But so, fortunately, it has happened.

THE WELSH PARLIAMENTARY PARTY.

As is known, there are in the House of Commons thirty-six members belonging to the English political parties who have been returned by the electors of Wales. They meet together occasionally to discuss Welsh matters and they have a chairman and a secretary and call themselves the Welsh Parliamentary Party. Their chairman at present is Mr. Aneurin Bevan.

Recently, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced his decision to set up two important financial corporations with powers and financial resources to help and to encourage industrial developments after the war. Very properly, Mr. Aneurin Bevan judged that the terms of setting up the corporations and the powers and the authority and the field of action entrusted to them, were matters of *special importance to Wales*, and so matters which the Welsh Parliamentary Party should consider seriously, and that they should be united as one Welsh unit in their attitude to them.

For this reason Mr. Bevan called a special meeting of the Welsh Parliamentary Party in one of the rooms of the House of Commons in order to examine the matter. Nothing could have been more profitable or appropriate.

But now observe the sequel. *Not one half of the Welsh members of parliament came to the meeting. When they did come, there was a heated argument between them, one faction maintaining that the matter was a political and debatable one and therefore could not be discussed by the Welsh Parliamentary Party.*

It was decided to vote on the point as to whether to press for control of the financial corporations by the House of Commons. Five votes were obtained for this and five against it, and only through the casting vote of the chairman was the proposition carried. But that is not the end at all. There was then a furious dispute in which it was maintained that the Welsh Parliamentary Party could not continue if it sought to take action in political problems about which there was no common agreement amongst the English Parties. Said the London correspondent of the *Western Mail* :

"It would be idle to deny that the unity of the Welsh Parliamentary Party was threatened by the incident"

and the same correspondent said :

"Most people have a false impression about its character and functions. It really is not a party at all, certainly not in the sense which CYMRU FYDD had in mind fifty years ago."

And this correspondent who is, to be fair to him, one of the staunchest defenders of the Welsh Parliamentary Party, added that only

in non-political matters to do with Wales can the party work at all :

"They agreed to co-operate on matters non-party in character where the interests of Wales are affected."

We must hope that the electors of Caernarvon Boroughs and the electors of Neath will turn their earnest attention to these statements and to the split that arose at the first attempt of Mr. Aneurin Bevan to get the Welsh Parliamentary Party effectively to look after the interests of Wales during the reconstruction after the War.

This occurrence shows better than any reasoning can that there is no hope for the effective defence of the interests of the Welsh nation in parliament unless there are to be had in the House of Commons Welsh members independent of every English party, members the whole of whose politics can be summed up in the word "Wales."

If these are obtained, there is yet hope. If even one is to be had, or two, then in this way, the Welsh nation will have a voice free to uphold Wales, Wales first, Wales always, not Wales of second importance in "non-party" matters neither good nor bad.

EFFECTS OF ELECTING A NATIONALIST

It may have entered the mind of the reader to ask what, supposing he is elected to parliament, would be the attitude of an independent Welsh member, a member of the Welsh Nationalist Party, Professor J. E. Daniel or Mr. Wynne Samuel, towards that which is mis-named the Welsh Parliamentary Party. The point deserves a few minute's thought.

The first consideration is this : can the reader appreciate *the revolution, the bewildering change, the great historical event, should a sincere Welsh Nationalist be elected to the English parliament?*

The election of Tom Ellis for Merionethshire and David Lloyd George for Caernarvon were occurrences of deep significance for Wales in the last century. But the importance did not penetrate to England. To the Englishman of the time they were only Liberal members of no exceptional prominence.

The election of an independent Welsh Nationalist candidate to the House of Commons in 1945 would create a new situation in Wales and would make a deep and telling impression on English thought. It would be a message on the subject of reconstruction from the people of Wales to the Government of England. It would create a new and different and anxiously careful attitude towards Wales on the part of Whitehall. It would be the appearance of a new political fact, a new situation—it would make Wales be of account politically.

It is fair to say that the people of Wales do not even now in

the least realize what this new fact can mean to the ordinary people. The people of Wales have never had experience of such a thing. It is necessary to state in simple terms what would be the consequences to the ordinary man and the ordinary woman and to their children in the towns and villages of Wales.

For example, the election of a nationalist to the House of Commons would be a warning to every Labour Exchange throughout Wales. Word would go out to every one of them not to offend a Welshman or Welshwoman needlessly, nor to suggest an insult for their lack of English, nor to give excuse for the sending of a complaint against the office to the Welsh National member in parliament. An order would go forth to act circumspectly towards young men and women and towards the out-of-work in Wales. This would be a right enough thing; it is high time that the civil service began to lick the dust of Wales a little.

POLITICAL EFFECTS

The political effects would be immediate and important.

Firstly, in Wales itself. The English have a proverb that "nothing succeeds like success." Wales for twenty years now has known the propaganda and endeavours of the National Party.

Even the most violent enemies of the Party recognize that it has managed to renovate much of the life of Wales and has compelled the English parties to give more and more attention to Welsh problems in their meetings in Wales. It has developed and widened their attitude in spite of derision, in spite of persecution. Every English party at last, and even the Communist Party, shapes and offers to Wales a programme of promises and recognizes to an extent the rights of the Welsh Nation.

But should a Welsh Nationalist candidate be elected to the House of Commons, the enemies of the Party know—and that is why they rage against it—that the effect throughout Wales would be electrical. The effect on every local authority throughout Wales would be resounding.

A new era would have opened, and era of confidence and expectancy, of self-reliance and determination. Wales would have at last a back-bone. She would respect herself.

Wales having voted for and having willed her recognition, would be a nation standing once more on her own feet. The centuries of shame and cowardice would have gone past—in the conversion of the nation to self-respect.

The present Welsh members of parliament would not fail to sense this change. The *Manchester Guardian* in a leading article said that the growth of the nationalist movement determined the Government to appoint a "Welsh Day" in the House of Commons.

We have no notion how the Government would choose to celebrate the advent of a Welsh Nationalist to the House of Commons. But it is easy to guess how the Welsh members would celebrate the event. There would be a fervent welcome. There would be a feast of oratory so ardent you would think it was a National Party summer school. There would be patriotic speeches as fiery as anything the author of "Cwrs y Byd" could imagine. Mr. Clement Davies would be in tears, and the hand of Mr. James Griffiths would be at his collar to open a way for his patriotic perspiration. And in the House itself, it would not be the new Welsh member who would surprise the Government: no, the new tone of the Welsh members—the old hands—that would be the miracle. Were it not that we fear to blaspheme, one might call it transfiguration.

The day is at hand, perhaps; and so it is well to warn England and Wales lest they swoon. But that day, it will not be the speeches of the Welsh member that will challenge and terrify the ministers of the crown—but seeing and hearing the irretrievable old sheep of the English Parties in Wales turning in the twinkling of an eye into young nationalist lions. And on that day the sage of England will say—"it is easy to light a fire on an old hearth." Then will flow honours and rewards upon the heads of every old Welsh member. An offer will be made to turn Jimmy into Sir James, and Dai into Sir David and a governorship in the B.B.C. will be offered to the erstwhile romantic Welsh poet. The sinews of government will be braced to guard the old domestic sheep-fold from the ravages of the shepherds. The Prime Minister will be seen taking the arm of the chairman of the Welsh Parliamentary Party to conduct him into the right lobby, and slipping a cigar into his pocket.

NATIONALISTS AND THE PARLIAMENTARY PARTY

Perhaps there is some hint of levity in the above paragraphs. Thinking of the Welsh Parliamentary Party facing the music of patriotism in Wales has prompted this. We will return hastily to our usual sobriety.

Our point is that the growth of Welsh nationalism and a nationalist victory, if that happens, is likely to have the effect of strong wine on the Welsh Parliamentary Party. When Wales turns to nationalism the Welsh members of parliament will turn to nationalism.

The change will not be hypocrisy. It is not hypocrisy for a man to try to save his life and it is not hypocrisy for a member of parliament to try to save his seat. The reform will be fervent.

The presence of one nationalist and independent Welsh candidate in the House of Commons will make the Parliamentary Party of Wales more Welsh, bolder, braver, more importunate.

than it has been for half a century. The old Welsh members will be less afraid of their Party Whip and their ears more attuned to the demands and the needs of the Welsh nation. The Caernarvon and Neath elections, there is reason to think, can be a spur to the Welshness and courage of all the Welsh members.

Co-operation with the Welsh Parliamentary Party in everything that appertains to the interests and well-being of Wales and for the defence of the Welsh nation will be the policy of any Welsh Nationalist elected to the House of Commons. His aim will be to revive and rebuild from the foundations the unity and independence of the Welsh Parliamentary Party, and to work with his fellow-members that the voice of Wales in political matters and matters debatable and partisan, and arising from the war and its consequences, may be a clear voice, a national voice, the voice of Wales

THE MEMBERS AND WALES

The example of the independent Welsh member in his dealings with Wales will also be of great effect on the rest of the Welsh Parliamentary Party.

The Welsh Members of Parliament have never met in session in Wales since the days of "Cymru Fydd." The Welsh members do not now recognize any responsibility outside their own constituencies. Their meeting together and with national bodies in Wales to discuss the nation's needs is something not hitherto seen.

But, if there is meaning at all in parliamentary democracy, that is the proper task of the Welsh Parliamentary Party. The presence of a Welsh Nationalist member in parliament, and his close and constant contact with the voluntary bodies that work in Wales, like "Undeb Cymru Fydd," will compel other Welsh members to follow his example.

The principal function of the Welsh members at present is to represent the English government coalition in the constituencies and counties of Wales. If a nationalist is elected to the House of Commons a remarkable and fundamental change will take place. The principle function of this member will not be to plead the Government's cause in Wales, but to plead for Wales against the Government. This also will be novel.

There will be independent criticism from Wales. Wales will have a voice. Not an English voice with a Welsh accent. And behind that Welsh voice the Government will know that there is a Welsh will supporting and acclaiming it.

Not that it is pretended that the Government will change at one stroke its whole policy towards Wales.

What we say with conviction is this : that the Government of England only gives weight to political certainties ; that only in the outcome of parliamentary elections will the government give heed

to these ; that even one nationalist victory in Wales is likely to have an enormous influence on the whole attitude of the Welsh members of Parliament, and the whole attitude of the civil service towards Wales ; that one Welsh victory in parliamentary elections is likely to have more effect on the policy of the Government towards Wales than a thousand protestations and resolutions from voluntary and non-political Welsh bodies.

Therefore the electors of Caernarvon Boroughs and the electors of Neath have a special responsibility in the two elections that lie before them. The future of Wales is in great measure in their hands, and the future of their families and of their children. They have the opportunity of striking a blow for Wales, the one effective blow.

Chapter III

THE TWO ELECTIONS IN WALES

THE root of the interest in the two elections in Caernarvon Boroughs and Neath is that Welsh National candidates are appealing for the votes of the electorate against the official candidates of the English Coalition. **The challenge to the electors is clear. Their votes in the two elections will show the government whether the future of Wales and the safety of the Welsh nation is of first or second concern with an important part of the population of north and south Wales.**

Much will depend on the result. The verdict of the two elections in the present crisis will have weighty effect on the fate of Wales. It is necessary to face the consequences ; a weak nationalist vote in the two elections will be a threat to the whole of Wales, extremely damaging to the nation. It will be a proof to the government and to all the government departments that they are under no necessity to consider the Welsh nation or its rights in their plans for the future of the island of Britain.

On the other hand, a Welsh nationalist victory will create a political situation too new and bewildering for any Government to ignore : it will be a day of days and a new dawn for the whole of Wales. *Wales will count* in the politics and plans of the period of reconstruction beyond the conception and beyond the imagination of those who would be content that she should perish.

AIMS OF THE NATIONALISTS

It is hardly necessary to explain the ultimate aims of the candidates of the Welsh National Party. The aim is to secure a full, free and safe life for the nation of Wales. The aim is to win for the Welsh nation the position, the status, the freedom, the

fair measure of command over her own life, that will make her a full and recognized member of the society of European nations and of the nations of Britain. The aim is to win for Wales those rights of life, political and economic rights, that are essential to every nation—the rights without which there can be no nation.

Up till now the only means open to "The British Commonwealth of Nations" of recognizing national existence, the only means it has of securing ready and willing national co-operation in work and policy, the only means of securing democracy instead of imperialism in the relation of the nations with each other, is through recognizing a nation as a Dominion. It has no other means. No nation within the Empire has ever been offered any other form of freedom or any other status by the Government of England.

It is not the name that is important. Not even the equality of Wales and England is very important. Because in the long run, it is not upon status that true equality depends. This is what is important:—only by getting on the statute book of England an explicit act declaring that Wales is a nation and that she has the acknowledged freedom and rights of a nation, only by getting this will there be security in war or peace for the Welsh nation. This act must give the Welsh nation all the responsibility that befits a nation. These are the essentials. That is the aim of Welsh Nationalism in politics. Without this the Welsh nation cannot co-operate with the nation of England. For without this the Welsh nation does not exist. The close and willing and equal co-operation of Wales and England and Scotland is something greatly to be desired. At present the only name English statute law has for the system that makes this sort of co-operation possible, is Dominion Status. Should it happen sometime—and it can happen, because after this war the future of the British Dominions overseas is very doubtful and obscure—should it happen that the Government in England should offer any other status to Wales that would secure to the Welsh nation all the rights and real responsibilities of a Nation, then doubtless the Welsh National Party would be very ready to consider such an alternative. But for the present it is a clear political fact that "Dominion" is the British definition of a nation that possesses democratic responsibility. The people who talk of a federal system for Britain on the Swiss system are much more extreme than the Nationalist Party. For this means interfering with the status of England and with her parliament and changing her constitution. It suffices the temperate nationalists of the Welsh National Party to change a little the status of Wales.

THE ESSENTIAL NEED

Having said this much as to the ultimate aims of the Nation-

alist Party one can agree entirely with Professor Daniel when he says that to win Dominion Status for Wales is not the most important point of the elections that are now pending in Caernarvonshire and the Vale of Neath. We also hope that the electors of Caernarvonshire and Neath will be convinced that passing sentence on Germany and strengthening the hands of Mr. Churchill in his conferences with Stalin and Roosevelt are not the things that should decide their vote. The electors of Caernarvonshire and Neath can influence in no way the course of the war. They cannot influence the San Francisco conference arranged for April. They cannot even change the attitude of the Government towards Poland or Greece. Probably there will be a lot of talk about these matters from the platform of the English parties during the elections. It is not difficult to make eloquent speeches about the means and the principles of pacification in Europe and the world during war time. It is easy to expatiate long-windedly on the subject of a new league of nations and the need for Wales to send a message to the World that there must be justice for the little nations. And in the midst of military victories and the noise and commotion they give rise to, it is easy to turn people's heads by speaking of a new world order, and to hide the truth about their own power and influence from them. That is done time and again during elections, and especially in time of war.

It is hoped that the eyes of the electors of Caernarvonshire and Neath will be open to these simple facts. Their votes can in no way influence the Dumbarton Oaks plan. Their votes can in no way change the attitude of the English Government towards France or Belgium or Russia or the United States. Their votes can in no way strengthen the hands of Mr. Churchill in his dealings with Germany. Neither Eisenhower nor Montgomery have any need of their suffrage.

On one part only of the policy of the Government is there a chance and an opportunity for the electors of Caernarvonshire and Neath to pass judgement, that can alter Government policy, a judgement that can be of account and influence. They can influence the manner in which the Government treats Wales and the people of Wales. In Welsh matters, should the electors of Caernarvonshire and Neath give a heavy nationalist vote, it is reasonable to say in cold blood that they can change the course of the Government. And in these matters only.

WELSH MATTERS

What can the electors of Caernarvonshire and Neath do for Wales? Nothing less than this: **help to secure the continuance of the Welsh Nation in the years of crisis that lie before us.** None of us knows what is before us. There is great expectation of an end to the war, of peace, of the re-construction of the life of civilization. If this happens, well and good. But whatever happens

we already know two things : we know how Wales was treated by the Government after the last war, and we know some of the inevitable consequences of this war and some of the Government's intentions.

For instance, we know it will take a mighty effort to keep England a Great Power. We know that this implies an attempt to regain overseas markets ample for industry and to win back the economic strength that England had before the war. We know moreover, that after this war the English Government cannot afford to keep millions of men idle on the dole. The analysis of the consequences of the Government's economic intentions given in the second chapter of "Wales after the War" still holds good. Let us quote one paragraph :

"With the army demanding the services of a host of young men and women, with cities and factories to be rebuilt, and with the call to win back overseas markets for new industries, it is impossible to grant the workers or the young people starting life the right to choose their calling or the right to live where they wish. The Ministry of Labour will keep its present hold upon lives, sending them to work wherever they may be summoned to go, and in particular, sending them to work in training camps and in factories as apprentices to learn their craft and handing them on from there to the fields of labour and to the districts where there is need of them."

This is what faces Wales if the war comes to an end. That is the Welsh problem. Just as the English Government ignores the Welsh Nation now in time of war, just as our sons and daughters are scattered throughout the army and the English armed forces, just as our workers are sent to every part of England at the call of the war factories, so also—unless a complete change takes place—will it be in the years of crisis after the war. And we know moreover, that this state of affairs, if it becomes the normal rule, means the destruction of the Welsh Nation in less than a generation.

These then are the matters affecting Wales which the electors of Caernarvonshire and Neath can influence. It may be supposed that the electors are ready to admit that they are matters worthy of their notice.

A WELSH POLICY

We must all recognize that it is no longer possible to escape these things. They are the consequences of war. The war is an existing fact that brings its effects, and they cannot be blotted out. For a generation at least, and possibly longer, state interference with the private life of the individual will be something constant and normal. It is idle to resist the fact. There is nothing else that can be put in its place.

What is essential therefore is that we should have a Welsh policy fitting the circumstances, and secondly that we should have Welsh members of parliament, independent of every English party, to uphold the policy proper to Wales.

And the basic principle of Welsh policy, for the whole period of crisis and post-war reconstruction, is to get the Government in all its intended schemes to keep Wales as a unit.

This is not a matter of paying homage in words. Not some empty talk of "The Welsh Nation." It is a matter of consistent and practical policy.

CONSCRIPTION

We cannot make the point clearer than by considering the future of compulsory service in the armed forces.

We said in 1941 that this was likely to continue after the war. This intention is now quite clear. There is no escape from it. As long as Wales is under English Government it is useless to argue for leaving Wales out of the plan. By doing so we shall avail nothing.

But it is clearly evident also that the continuance of conscription as it is at present is ruinous to the development of the Welsh Nation. Nor is this all. It is an injustice and an oppression of the young men and women of Wales.

The Government policy of scattering Welsh boys through English regiments and refusing to grant them entry into Welsh units under Welsh officers has embittered the life of hundreds of Welsh youngsters in this war. Voluntary Welsh bodies, yes, and even Welsh M.P.s have made many intermittent attempts to improve matters during the course of the war. But their representations have been entirely in vain.

Now, if conscription is to remain in force at all after the war, the Government will have to arrange this through a parliamentary measure and through the passing of a law. This will not happen immediately after the termination of hostilities in Europe, because the continuance of the war against Japan will suffice to keep the present measures in force.

But the end of the present war in Europe, whenever that happens, would be the opportunity for a strenuous attempt to get the Government to make a new start in the matter of the calling up of Welsh youths for the armed forces.

Thenceforward there should be instituted, not Welsh regiments in mixed English divisions and bodies—there is no future or safety for the young men of Wales in such an arrangement ; but a start should be made to establish Wales as a unit in the War Office and the Air Ministry. We are not asking that the Welsh youths called to the army shall be given the choice of joining Welsh regiments. We are asking for a positive decree that every such youth shall be sent to the Welsh section, and that they themselves shall choose what sort of unit, whether it be infantry or ordnance or artillery and so on, they wish to serve in.

But the Welshmen who are compelled to serve must be able to serve as Welshmen, must be recognized as Welshmen, must be given Welsh officers and staff-officers, and receive their training in Wales, unmixed with English or Scottish divisions.

This is an entirely practical matter. This is done with the Jews in Palestine. This is done with every other nation in the whole of British Empire. It is only the continual anti-Welsh prejudice of the English War Office that opposes this for Wales.

Welsh youth has suffered very much on account of this throughout the whole space of the war. After the war, and should conscription continue, the plan that is outlined here will be essential in order to render fair-play to the youth of Wales and for the future safety of our nation.

We believe also that two other points should be included in a Welsh policy affecting conscription. Firstly, the Nationalist Party and its parliamentary candidates should firmly and confidently oppose any future military conscription of women. All the auxiliary women's divisions should be dispersed at once after the armistice. They should not be suffered in peace time. On this point the Welsh people can expect the willing co-operation of all the best elements in the public life of England.

Secondly, at the end of the war in Europe every military corps or pre-service unit in the schools of Wales should be abolished. This type of institution should not be tolerated in children's schools in time of peace. The setting up of these units in the intermediate schools during the war has been one of the most degrading and immoral acts in the educational world. The semblance of excuse for them was that they would shorten the time of training of the soldier when he came of age to be called up. This excuse will disappear when the war is finished. It is essential to make sure that after the war and right up to the age of eighteen every child is entirely safe from being tarred with the brush of state militarism. This is essential both for free democracy and for morality.

Chapter IV

A WELSH RE-CONSTRUCTION POLICY

IN all the proposals put forward respecting reconstruction in Wales after the war, our constant aim has been to keep within practical limits and to try and win the consent and agreement of all who are concerned with the same problem.

We rejoiced when we found that the report of the Advisory Council for Welsh Reconstruction approved two at least of the suggestions made by us, namely, the setting up of a Welsh Reconstruction Council and a Welsh Electricity Board.

The Report of Sir J. F. Rees' Council also had one virtue that should make it warmly received, namely, **the constant emphasis it laid on all Wales, south and north, as one land, one people, one society, one unit. We heard this caused displeasure in English circles. More praise to the Welsh Council and to Sir J. F. Rees for their emphasis.**

But Sir J. F. Rees has been called to Ceylon. We do not know if the Welsh Advisory Council will continue to act whilst he is away. However, one thing is clear. The Government has not yet taken any step at all to put into force a single one of the basic recommendations of the Interim Report. Is it fair to ask, why not? The report shows, and it has been published for a year now, that there is need for long and hard preparation before the war comes to an end if it is desired to put Wales in the way of avoiding a repetition of the distress of the years between the two wars.

And in spite of this, and in spite of the publication of the Report of the Advisory Council for Reconstruction, behold the months going by, a Welsh day in parliament going by, a debate on Re-construction in the House of Commons going by—and nothing effective done to implement the recommendations of a Council set up by the Government itself. Why? Why?

The answer is clear. Because there is no independent Welsh party in the House of Commons to urge upon the Government the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

The Government is unlikely to acknowledge the principle or importance of a Welsh Council, nor to start acting on its suggestion without heavy pressure from Wales.

This should be a matter of prime concern for the electors of Caernarvon Boroughs and Neath in these coming weeks.

CREDIT BOARDS : AN EXAMPLE FROM MERIONETH

In the second chapter we were discussing the setting up of the new credit boards by Sir John Anderson and their meaning in relation to the needs of Wales. In the newspapers of March 13, there appears a short report of a meeting of the Merionethshire Rural Industries Committee. Disappointment was expressed in the committee that the Government did not recognize North Wales as a special Development Area.

Then it went on to consider whether a modern woollen factory could be set up in Merioneth after the war and a letter was read from the Rural Industries Office (in London) declaring that the Office could not offer any financial help for the purpose. The report stated that a number of members of the Committee maintained that the capital could be raised in Merionethshire itself.

The report we saw was very short; but it will be well to linger over the problem for a little because it is one that is typical

of a host of Welsh problems. At first sight one would think that the extending of credit to a modern wool factory in Merioneth would come easily within the field of the new Anderson reconstruction credit scheme, the Credit Corporation. But there is reason to fear that the attempt would be unsuccessful, and for various reasons.

Firstly, because of psychological prejudices. The Credit Corporation would be likely to ask the opinion of the great English industrialists as to the history and prospects of this industry in Wales and we know that this verdict would be altogether unfavourable.

In this regard one must recognize that a factory in Merionethshire could not guarantee secure jobs for any remarkable number of workers; it would not contribute anything of importance to the attempt to put men into employment.

Thirdly, the request for capital would compete with attempts to renew the machinery of woollen factories in England itself directly after the war. And so on. It would now be easy for the specialists of the Credit Corporation to prepare an unfavourable report to their Board.

And now, suppose there was in being a Welsh Corporation to extend help to industries in Wales? The first thing we would say is this: a Welsh Corporation should not be the least bit less careful than an English Corporation. Its investigations should be equally thorough. Its standard of security should be of equal degree.

But besides this a Welsh Corporation, because it would be Welsh, would consider circumstances and bearings outside the comprehension of English industrialists.

One might name a few points relating to the woollen industry in North Wales that would be likely to weigh with a Welsh Board:

1. The history and past experience of the industry. Its difficulties in the past because of lack of capital, because of lack of suitable machinery, because of the lack of technical and artistic education.
2. The success of the industry in a narrow field, namely in producing high quality tweeds for an expensive but limited market, but failing even in this field because of lack of effective salesmanship or consistency in developing the market.
3. The importance of the industry to Welsh rural life and the opportunities afforded under proper guidance.
4. The development of technical education in the Welsh country parts would be easier if this education were connected with some traditional crafts and industries maintained under careful guidance.
5. The value of the industry through its connection with the summer tourist trade in Wales. It will be policy to enhance the appeal of the land of Wales to visitors after the war. The advertizing value of special native crafts is very great, and they have a wide appeal. One attractive shop in a seaside town displaying coloured and variegated cloths will draw people there, and add to the appearance and attractiveness of the place, and provide a theme for women's talk—the most effective advertisement there is.

From considering all these things, it is easy to believe that a Welsh Credit Corporation would give thorough attention to an application for credit to set up a modern factory in Merioneth.

But this is not all. It would also enable all the woollen factories in Wales to get together in a Co-operative Society and prepare a programme for developments of every sort, the improvement of machinery, apprenticeship and technical and artistic education, study of the markets, the connections with the tourist trade, connections with farmers, electricity problems, etc. It may readily be agreed that the woollen industry in Wales will always be a small one, and will never bring work to a great number of workmen. But its indirect contribution to the wealth and to the appeal of Wales would be very substantial, and its value would justify the attention and assistance of a Welsh Credit Board. And furthermore, a Welsh Board is the only one likely to recognize this. To a board of English industrialists, the gain would not appear to be worth the trouble and the outlay, even if security was given for the loan.

A WELSH NATIONAL PLANNING AUTHORITY

That is an example, arising out of a discussion in Merionethshire recently, of the need for a special body to help industries in Wales.

I do not believe in multiplying boards and public councils beyond the real need for them. We will return therefore to Sir J. F. Rees' Welsh Advisory Council report. In this report the setting up of a planning authority for Wales is urged on powerful and flexible lines. The Council held (paragraph 67 of the Report) that the powers of the Authority should be much more far-reaching than those granted formerly to the Special Areas Commissioner. It held that the new Authority should be able to treat Wales as a unit and be free to act constructively in any part of Wales, wherever it could best attack the problem of unemployment and improve economic conditions.

That is the very same sort of Authority the Welsh National Party holds that Wales should have. It is unfortunate that Sir J. F. Rees' report does not go on to discuss explicitly the powers and constitution of the Authority. The report says:

"The whole question is one to which the Council will require to give much more detailed consideration when the lines of national policy emerge more clearly."

We will therefore proceed to help the Council by outlining the powers that should be given to this Authority, namely the Welsh National Planning Authority.

CONSTITUTION

It may be suggested that there should be seven members on the Planning Authority—a chairman and deputy chairman appoint-

ed by the Government to give their whole time to the work ; the president of the Welsh Board of Health ; a representative for the Welsh coal industry chosen by the responsible Minister ; a representative for Welsh exports ; an authority on the problems of Welsh local authorities ; a representative for agriculture and rural life.

The terms of reference of the Authority should give it power to act in every part of Wales in order to raise the standard of living of the people, to give an impetus to economic and social life, to prevent unemployment, and to be for all Wales an authority on the same par with the Tennessee Valley Authority in the United States of America. This would entail a special parliamentary measure for Reconstruction in Wales. This would be very much better and more important than creating an inferior office in the Government of a Secretary for Wales—though nothing need prevent this being included in the plan should the Government so determine.

A WELSH ELECTRICITY BOARD

The first duty of the Authority perhaps would be to set up (in consultation with the Central Electricity Board in London) a Welsh Electricity Board.

Here again one can but agree with one of the most important recommendations of the Report of the Welsh Advisory Council (paragraph 261), for the Welsh National Party has for long before the war and constantly during the war given special attention to the problem of electricity in Wales. It is not necessary to write at length here on this point. The pamphlets of the Welsh Party may be referred to and the report of the Advisory Council, page 89. At the end it said :

“ Provision of cheap electrical power is one of the fundamental requirements of Wales in the reconstruction period.”

This should be adhered to and adopted as a principle. Therefore the Welsh Electricity Board should be solely responsible for the production of electricity in Wales, and like the Tennessee authority and Sweden before it, it should set conditions respecting electricity costs to the users in every agreement to sell electricity to the distributing companies or to public bodies. And the successful example of the Tennessee valley should ensure that the Welsh Board gives an important place to scientific research in its activities.

A WELSH CREDIT BOARD

The second department that should be set up under the auspices of the Welsh National Planning Authority is a Credit Board for industries.

One Credit Board in Wales could fulfil the task divided by Sir John Anderson in England between the Credit Corporation and the Credit Board. We have given an example from Merioneth in this chapter of the need for an institution of this sort for rural industries and for North Wales in particular. But such a board can be of importance to the heavy industries of South Wales in the same way. The prejudice that persists amongst the owners of industry and capital in England against South Wales and against the Welsh tinplate industry was demonstrated by us recently. It is not yet known at all what the future of the Welsh coal industry will be nor what are its export prospects. Two things are likely. One is that there will be need for a thoroughgoing reorganization and mechanization of the industry in Wales on an unprecedented scale. The second is that it is likely the Government will have to help in some way or another to set the price of coal so that it can compete in the export market with countries overseas. A Welsh Credit Board could be a handy medium for these purposes. This would imply that the Government, through the Treasury and the Board of Trade would have a measure of control over the Board. Even so, a special Board for Wales would ensure a much greater degree of economic fairness to Welsh industries than they have had at all so far.

EVOLUTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Another department that should be set up under the Welsh Planning Authority is a Board to guide and stimulate and instruct Welsh local authorities in their plans and in their problems of reconstruction. We may mention briefly some of the tasks that should be suited to this section, made up of specialists chosen from among the local authorities.

1. To act as a Welsh commission (on the lines suggested by Mr. Wynne Samuel lately) on the boundary problems of local authorities in Wales.
2. To encourage the co-operation of Welsh local authorities in buying, in public services, in commercial arrangements, water supply and drainage schemes, distributing electricity, etc.
3. It is known that a Government White Paper charges local authorities to prepare development plans for building houses, roads, hospitals, to ensure that periods of unemployment do not ensue when there is a lessening of private demands on capital.

These preparations will call for the utmost degree of co-operation by local authorities and for the guidance of experts in planning. That is the field in which the Welsh Local Authorities Commission under the Planning Authority and in close consultation with the Electricity Board and the Credit Board, could unite all Welsh plans and endeavours in itself and

turn them into an effective whole. Once again, the success of the Tennessee Authority in a similar task is an apt example.

The amount and distribution of the capital that should be given to start the Welsh National Planning Authority is not under discussion in these notes. This is a matter to be discussed with the Treasury when setting about establishing the Council and it is a point for specialists. It may be suggested that it should not be less than the capital of Sir John Anderson's Credit Board.

The aim in these notes is to give definite shape to the suggestions that have been, since the war started, a part of the policy of the Welsh National Party. They are also included in the recommendations of the Report of the Welsh Advisory Council. The plan also conforms with the Reconstruction policy of the Government in its principles, whilst defending the unity of Wales during the Reconstruction.

Is not this a policy that Welshmen from all parts of the principality can agree upon? Is there not here a programme that the electors of Caernarvon and Neath can welcome? Are not these the lines on which to move forward for the prosperity of our land?

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