

WELSH NATIONALIST AIMS

by
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WELSH NATIONALIST AIMS

THERE still remain in Europe a few small nations without political self-government. Three of them belong to the Celtic group, of which Ireland alone is self-governing. These three are wholly without self-government, lacking even that measure of it which the cantons of Switzerland or the provinces or states of other federal countries enjoy. Consequently their fate is to be assimilated by the dominant countries, England and—in the case of Brittany—France, in whose states they have been incorporated. Wales is one of this group.

Two and a half million Welsh people live on a mountainous peninsula of 8,000 square miles on the West of the largest of the British Isles. They have been there a long time. Historians have made a habit of saying that the Welsh were driven into their moun-

tains from the plains of England by the Anglo-Saxon invaders, but the consensus of opinion now is that there never was a drive to the West and that there were no Anglo-Saxon invaders. The Welsh of today descend from those who were in Wales "when first the Romans came to Rye", and their nation was cradled in that distant period.

The sixth century saw the earliest literature in the Welsh language, which has survived to our time, and the end of the thirteenth century coincided with the end of the country's political independence, though it was not until the sixteenth century, with the Act of Union, 1536, that Wales was incorporated in England by a king of Welsh descent. Though the history of Welsh law ends there, the attempt to destroy the national language had no great

success, with one important exception, until the present century. The exception was among the families who should have provided political and social leadership, the wealthier landed families. For them the past of Wales ended two thousand years ago. Their interest in the country, where it exists at all, is purely antiquarian, in archaeological relics, never in the vital tradition of a living nation. Lacking all sense of responsibility for the nation's life, they have fulfilled no creative function during the last three centuries, but have lived a destructively parasitic existence.

During these centuries the main theme in the history of this small people—whose population did not swell to half a million until the beginning of the nineteenth century—was their effort to produce new leaders for themselves. This they did well, and the new Welsh aristocracy of the last century, the leading thinkers, theologians, poets, writers, musicians, come of working farmers, miners, quarrymen, shop keepers craftsmen. These arose in a homogeneous society, which if not classless lacked the sharp class distinctions of England, and was marked by a lively intellectual activity and a powerful concern for the things of the mind and the spirit. A political characteristic was a passion for social justice which gave Wales her radical bent, but it was not until the end of the century that any organised effort was made to secure national self-government.

When this effort was eventually made it took the form of a movement

for a limited measure of autonomy and was made within the English Liberal Party which had a complete ascendancy in Welsh political life. Even so other measures of reform were given precedence, and when it was supplanted by the Labour Party in Wales during the second decade of this century, the Liberal Party had done nothing for self-government in Wales. Its sympathy for "nations rightly struggling to be free" was inherited by the Labour Party, which pledged itself to Welsh home-rule. Although it made no attempt to fulfil this part of its policy, it was not formally renounced until the party's Annual Conference of 1954.

ENGLISH PARTIES AND WELSH NATIONALITY

IT had long been clear by then that no English party would act to establish a Welsh Parliament except under effective compulsion from the Welsh people, who had to be taught to renounce English party politics and to concentrate upon achieving their national freedom. This direct immersion of Wales in English party politics distinguishes the Welsh situation from that of all other nations within the British Empire, except the Scots. As a result of its long persistence the Welsh people had almost ceased to think politically as a nation. Even today they have no party to represent them at Westminster. Not surprisingly, immensely strong vested interests now exist on both sides of the Welsh border which are determined at all costs to maintain the status quo.

On the Welsh side are those for whom allegiance to the English parties—and the Labour Party in particular in this generation—alone offered the possibility of a successful political career. Most of these have not been unwilling to cooperate with their party in placing every obstacle in the way of the growth of the national movement. They had access to the main media of influencing public opinion—radio, television, daily press, cinema—but have used their power to exclude Plaid Cymru* (the Welsh Nationalist Party). In the most important of them, radio and television, they have succeeded in having the State's power used to ban broadcasts by Plaid Cymru to the Welsh people. This is the only occasion on which the Government has used its power of veto to ban programmes which the Broadcasting Corporation had intended putting out.

* Plaid = Party : Cymru = Wales.

Despite this Plaid Cymru has continued to grow, and apart from fighting each by-election, it was able to contest in the last general election a third of the Welsh constituencies. Hundreds of its members sit on local councils and the effect of its efforts to awaken the will to freedom is permeating Welsh life. Denationalising forces still grow in power, but there is a more vigorous national consciousness in Wales today than the country has known for centuries.

PLACE OF NATIONAL COMMUNITY

THERE is no Welsh political party but Plaid Cymru. Although this is

the most obvious and important difference between it and other parties, it is not the only one. In philosophy, policy and method, the Welsh party has emphases which are peculiar to itself.

It places the nation high in its scale of values, but has never lost sight of the fact that the basic reality is the human person. All institutions, cultures and civilisations exist for man, and our concern in politics is to secure those conditions, as far as politics can secure them, in which man can live his life most fully.

Man's life is not confined to his body. This truism is often forgotten, to judge by the materialism of English politics. His bodily needs must be satisfied; that is fundamental. Economic life must be so ordered that everyone has a fair chance to live his own life. But man is a soul too, whose spiritual needs are great. That is equally fundamental. The solution of economic problems is a first duty of government; it makes decent life possible but it does no more than open the way to fullness of life. And if its method of political and economic activity destroys the culture and tradition of a nation, by which men's spiritual life is enhanced, it is not even opening the way to a fullness of life which is truly human.

Must economic and political activity result in the destruction of a nation's culture? If the experience of Wales is typical, the answer must be in the affirmative for a nation which is not self-governing. A government which properly fulfils its functions is most

sensitive to the impact of economics and politics upon the nation's cultural life, and seeks to guide the former so that the latter is strengthened. Today, more than ever before, it must be vigilant in this, when impersonal forces and technical requirements threaten to submerge the human and personal. In Wales you see a nation which has no government to perform this function, and the erosion caused by these forces threatens in consequence to make a desert of the spiritual heritage of millennia.

Nothing could be more obvious than this, that the true welfare of each human being is vitally affected by the quality of his social context. Man would not be man apart from society. He is so woven into its warp and woof that the nature of the society into which he is born goes far to mould his own character. In a nation's manner of life, which we usually call its culture, is embodied its values, the highest wisdom distilled in perhaps thousands of years of living together. This way of life is, and should be, a more powerful civilising and educational factor in man's life than all the schools and colleges of our formal education. In a healthy educational system there is of course no dichotomy here.

Men cannot be uprooted from their community, from its traditions, language, values, without a grave impoverishment of personality. If a community disintegrates into a rootless mass, its members sink to a lower level of living. All this is obvious, except to those who are not, and do not want

to be, concerned with quality of life. Yet in this Western nation our fight is against this shattering disintegration, against the reduction of our society to a mass and of our people to a proletariat.

One further thing must be said of man's nature. His imperfection, his proclivity to evil as well as good, is a basic fact which the politician must accept. As it cannot be humanly eradicated, it must be contained by strong institutions, by a wide variety of sources of social power which will prevent a person or group controlling the whole, and most of all by a strong and vigorous traditional culture. These are bulwarks of freedom and humanity which men neglect at their peril.

Against this background the importance of the national community stands out. We know in Wales, as do people elsewhere, how it enriches the life of the individual person, and how much the lives of future generations would be diminished by its eclipse. But the loss cannot be confined to the members of the community itself. The life of Europe and the world would be diminished by its decay, for it has a unique contribution to make through its tradition, as each other nation has, to the common treasury. It follows that each nation has not only a right to the freedom that will make possible its contribution to mankind but also a primary duty to secure it.

This being so, the Welsh nationalist seeks a world order in which every national community can live its own

life in freedom irrespective of size, power or wealth. Just as national law should protect the citizen's right to live his life with due regard to the rights of all, so must international law secure the right of each nation to live. No just and enduring international order can be built which avoids this fundamental necessity. The right of nations to freedom is not a principle which may be followed or ignored at will. It must be built into the very structure of a stable and peaceful world order.

THE MEASURE OF FREEDOM

SUCCESSFUL pressure by nationalist movements in India, Ireland and other countries has by now compelled the English government to base its policy for its Empire on the rights of nations. To end colonialism and to transform Empire into Commonwealth by granting all its nations responsible self-government: this is now the declared policy of English governments of the Right and the Left. But the touchstone of its sincerity is to be found in those countries, such as Wales, whose peoples are not yet in a position to compel the acknowledgement of their national rights. The geographical position of Wales is no valid reason for denying her national status.

Most of the upholders of the status quo in Wales are not yet clear of the imperialist virus. They make a virtuous show of tolerating the nation's existence and of permitting the use of her language in schools, but say that as she is already free, she does not need, and cannot be allowed, a government of

her own. So might one tolerate the right to breathe in a man dying of starvation. They do not kill, but will "not strive officiously to keep alive."

The only basis of the assertion that Wales is free is the fact that she returns to the London Parliament 36 representatives of the 625 who sit there. But freedom involves responsibility. It includes the power to choose and to act. The Welsh people are not responsible today for their nation's government; they cannot choose their course, they have no power of initiative, no power of action. The 36 Welsh M.P.'s are in no sense responsible for Welsh Government. They sometimes try, usually in vain, to influence English Government; they certainly cannot direct its course. Wales is governed by the acts thought to be good for England.

No democratic community is free which lacks a government responsible directly to its people. Wales has no government. Her life, her very survival, depend on getting this essential institution of nationhood. In the twentieth century the denial of the institutions of government to a nation is equivalent to the denial of life. The period of the greatest growth in the powers of the State has also seen the most alarming disintegration in the life of Wales. If there is to be a Welsh nation in the future, there must be a Welsh State.

Although it insists upon the necessity of national freedom, Plaid Cymru has never demanded independence for Wales. In an address delivered at the

party's first conference, Mr. Saunders Lewis stated that it rejected independence as a goal, "not because it is impracticable, but because it is not worth having. . . . It is a cruel and material thing, leading to violence and oppression and ideas that have been proved wrong. We demand, therefore, not independence, but freedom. And the meaning of freedom in this matter is responsibility. We who are Welsh people claim that we are responsible for the civilisation and the ways of social life in our part of Europe."

This attitude has never been changed. Setting its face against the concept of absolute sovereignty, the party demanded the measure of freedom necessary to the full development of the nation's life, which implied control over both domestic life and external relations. Within the Commonwealth there is only one status of freedom for nations, that which is called dominion or commonwealth status. This is the party's aim for Wales.

A CONFRATERNITY OF NATIONS

IT has cooperated with others in demanding a parliament to control the domestic life of Wales as a step towards full self-government. The national petition for a parliament demonstrated the support of 80% of the Welsh people for this demand. But though this would be a great advance, it would not satisfy the nation's needs or rights. Provincial status is not enough, for as we have seen, each nation has a contribution to make in

international life which is of value to the world and at the same time necessary to its own moral and intellectual development.

Moreover, even control of domestic affairs is greatly restricted when a nation does not govern its political and economic relations with other peoples. In our inter-dependent world the extent of a nation's self-control depends upon ability to make economic agreements with other countries and to decide upon its political relations with the rest of the world. Nor can a nation afford to allow the government of another to decide for it in the fateful issues of war and peace. As things are today, Wales can be dragged into all England's imperialist adventures, even into such as the "nasty, brutish and short" war against Egypt, without consultation. At all times, and most of all when war can mean annihilation, a nation must be in a position to decide upon her own attitude, and to remain neutral if she wishes.

To be involved in another world war could mean annihilation for the countries of Britain, for the nuclear arms race ensures that the most devastating weapons would be used. Even a Conservative English Government has had to face the fact that there is no defence against nuclear attack. One should be able to deduce from this that no sane English Government will ever again take part in a war between the big powers. But for the Welsh people, control of the final decision by their own government can alone give complete security against involvement.

The changed character of war, with the use of nuclear weapons, also destroys the main reason for English fear of Welsh self-government. This was that a free Wales could be used as a bridgehead by invading naval and military forces.

Political thinkers whose background is a large and powerful country have taught many to believe that freedom for small nations somehow lessens the chances of lasting peace. The contrary is true. Small nations are readier than big powers to cooperate closely in an international order which demands the sacrifice of some national sovereignty. Their freedom from the temptations of imperialism makes this easier for them. We have therefore this paradox, that decentralisation of power amongst the nations leads to the greater solidarity of mankind.

There is a universal need for fostering the life of each national community which has an autonomous social and spiritual life. Plaid Cymru's policy of full freedom within the Commonwealth coincides with it. But the party has gone further by recognising the special relationship which must always exist between the nations of the British Isles. The facts of geography and history dictate close cooperation with England, Scotland and Ireland, and it has therefore put forward, in conjunction with the Commonwealth Party of England and the National Party of Scotland, a plan for a Confraternity of the nations living in these islands.

A confraternal solution differs basically from federalism, which, when applied to the nations of the British Isles, would give England, whose population is four times as great as the three Celtic nations combined, a permanently dominant position. Under confraternity the four nations would be a community of equals, amongst whom social and economic interchange would be fostered so that it might be greater than it is today. But as the interchange would be voluntary it would not impede the healthy development of each nation's indigenous life. A dictum of the late Lord Balfour is apt in this context: "Nothing can increase the feeling of solidarity more than the sense that solidarity depends on the complete sense of free equality."

This conception of confraternity could prove fruitful in other parts of the world. There is nothing in it inconsistent with groupings. Applied to the nations of the British Isles, it is fully consonant with simultaneous cooperation in European, Commonwealth and World organisations.

DECENTRALIST POLITICS

WELFARE politics stem logically from the primary emphasis placed by Welsh nationalists upon the human person. In what kind of domestic order, they ask, will the individual person live his life most fully? A decentralist order is an essential part of their answer. In politics, industry and social life, responsibility must be distributed as widely as possible if men

are to achieve the quality of which life is capable. The evils of concentrating political power in one man or in a group have been demonstrated in the tragedy of more than one country. The extreme cases are the confessedly totalitarian countries, but wherever the State's powers are unduly inflated, though parliamentary democracy may ostensibly be the form of government, totalitarianism is not far away. A totalitarian order, whether of the Right or of the Left, is the antithesis of the radically decentralised order the nationalists would build in Wales.

Infrequently in the West during this century has a deliberate effort been made to halt and limit the ever-increasing powers of the State, which are now far too inflated for control by an elected assembly. A great part of the real power of government is in the hands of bureaucrats, who are permanent and non-elected. This transfer of power has proceeded so far that the government of the United Kingdom would be more accurately described as bureaucratic or managerial than democratic. At the head of the bureaucracy is the caucus of the majority party in Parliament. Together the caucus and the bureaucrats decide upon policy, which is then pushed through Parliament by the majority at the disposal of the caucus. Parliament itself decides nothing of major importance.

This state of affairs has many virtues and is infinitely to be preferred to complete totalitarianism. But the glory of democracy is not there and few of its potentialities are realised. Starting

from the primacy of the human person, Welsh nationalists take democracy seriously. They have little sympathy with the removal of responsibility for government from the shoulders of the individual citizen. But realising that men's ability to accept responsibility depends greatly on the cultural content of their social life, they lay stress on the political and economic importance of developing a vigorous intellectual and cultural life throughout the nation.

Here we can note the confusion which is so prevalent of nation and state, which are often spoken of as if they were one and the same thing. The world has paid dearly for this confusion in its lamentable consequences. It is easy to fall into the error since most States are nation-states, but straight thinking on politics is quite impossible unless the nation, the community, is clearly distinguished from the State, the machinery which it maintains to serve it in its common activities. Where the difference is not kept clear, the State has small difficulty in exchanging its proper role of servant for one of master. The existence of nations, such as Wales, which have no State, is a constant reminder of this vital distinction, and members of such nations are unlikely to fail to make it.

COMMUNITIES WITHIN THE NATION

THE decentralist would limit the power of the State, but to counter-balance this he would foster all communities within the nation which are beneficial, autonomous sources of vita-

lity. In a totalitarian order even the nation may be swallowed by the State, and this complete inversion of right order has not been uncommon in our time. Still more often, in countries not rigidly totalitarian, we see within the nation religious, social and economic communities being weakened or destroyed by State action. This is a very grave loss, for these communities do much to develop man's personality and to provide bulwarks against the State's erosion of individual freedom. For despite the great and undoubted benefits which have been conferred through the State, it is not the only agency through which they can be secured, and the consequences of unchecked centralisation could be a tyranny which might put the social benefits as well as human freedom in jeopardy. The individual person must therefore be enabled to withstand the State when it over-reaches itself. Standing alone, he has little hope of sustaining his freedom, whereas when buttressed by strong communities he can challenge even the State with hope of success.

The smallest of the communities within the nation is fundamental in more ways than one. It is the family, which alone can be called a natural community. The structure of society depends more upon this than upon any other entity within it, and the ill-effects of weakening it are quickly visible.

In the Welsh nationalist view therefore the nation is a community of communities, and the State fails in its proper function if these communities are weakened rather than strengthened

by it. This is certainly not less true of the nation herself. When the State rightly performs its duty, the nation is enriched and strengthened in the whole of her life. Thanks to the State, she is more of a nation. Wales, which suffers under English rule a continuous diminution of vitality, is an example of the failure of the State to fulfil its proper function in the life of a nation.

No institution is more valuable in a decentralist policy than the local government council. It performs successfully many tasks in local administration and is an invaluable nursery for public service. When it harnesses the altruistic spirit aroused by local patriotism, it is a most important cohesive agent in the life of a neighbourhood. Its present value can be greatly enhanced by entrusting it with greater powers and more financial freedom, which will increase its powers of initiative. For example, Plaid Cymru has long advocated granting power to local authorities to engage, in cooperation with each other, in some forms of industrial activity through public utility boards. Local patriotism should be given the most effective possible expression, and invigorating local government is a means of doing this which feeds the grass roots of democracy to the benefit of the national community.

INDUSTRIAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

IT is not enough to decentralise power in central and local government while ignoring the needs of the economic sphere. Men spend so large a part of their waking life at their

daily work that the way in which their occupations are conducted profoundly affects the community's quality of life. So many are employed in large units in industry or the public services that these present a particularly important problem of their own. The assumption has been that men's status in their industry must be sacrificed to efficiency and high productivity. This need not be so. Efficiency standards can be maintained and even improved by increasing the share of men in the government of their industry, as a considerable body of evidence proves.

There is a huge field for experiment here and those communities that venture far in humanising industry will be great benefactors of mankind. In advocating its policy of cooperative control, Plaid Cymru does not insist on any one rigid pattern as do those socialists who will admit no variation upon their nostrum of State nationalisation. Our experience of nationalisation shows that public control of itself is no improvement upon the old capitalism from the human standpoint, and that joint consultation committees which have no power can be farcical institutions.

The party insists upon the necessity of recognising the rights and functions of the technician, the contributor of capital and the consumer, and its policy for heavy industries gives them representation on the board of control. There is no sufficient reason for fearing that the judgement of technicians would be less respected than it is in local government, where the harmonious

relations between the popularly elected council members, the permanent officers and the representations of the central government, is a most impressive feature. But once again, in occupational self-government as elsewhere, the extent of possible advance depends much upon the level of the country's culture.

The size of industrial units is an important factor in the worker's life, for the bigger they are the more impersonal do relations tend to become. It has frequently been observed that large units are more prone than smaller ones to industrial troubles. Hugginess in industry has many shortcomings when judged from the standpoint of satisfying work and human relations, but it is generally thought that the advantage it gives in increased efficiency outweighs them. Even this has been challenged, and it may be found that the lack of adaptability of giant units will prove as fatal to them as it did to the huge reptiles of the dinosauric era.

Occupational democracy must not be confined to industry; it is equally applicable to other professions and activities. And cooperation as a governing principle can be applied in many ways; already we have in Wales a great deal of consumer cooperation in urban areas and amongst farmers, and a number of producer cooperatives, all of which show how great are the possibilities if we had a government to encourage voluntary cooperation.

DISTRIBUTION OF PROPERTY

A man whose economic dependence upon another is complete, as at times it has been upon a landlord or industrial employer, finds it hard to resist the demands the other may make upon him. This is no less true—indeed it may be clearer—in relation to the State. Without a measure of personal economic independence, men will have little political and social independence. This is one reason why Plaid Cymru has always advocated the wide distribution of property. Men who have some property behind them are in a more favourable position to maintain their personal freedom than those who are propertyless.

The evils to which property is heir are legion and many have therefore thought it should be abolished. Plaid Cymru has been aware of its evils, particularly when it is concentrated in few hands, and from its inception the party has been what can be called anti-capitalist. But it has believed that the abolition of property would lead to evils far greater even than those to which it has given rise in the past. Not abolition but thoroughgoing distribution is its remedy, and it has applied this to land as to all other forms of property. It has kept to the spirit of Welsh law, which knew nothing of primogeniture. An illustration of the application of its policy is its pressure for lease-hold enfranchisement.

At one time a Welsh word meaning 'house-ownership' was coined to suggest the content of this aspect of the

party's policy, and if it has not found general currency it is probably because the form of property to which it refers is too limited. The policy of course applies to industry, where it is allied to cooperative ownership, as it does to land.

BALANCED DEVELOPMENT

THERE are many good reasons why the economic development of a country, even of the smallest, should be balanced, giving agriculture and industry their due place and ensuring as wide a variety of industry as possible. This policy offers the fairest prospect of economic stability; it lessens international tensions, which are so greatly aggravated by countries which stake their existence on successful competition for export markets; and its relevance to the central theme of Plaid Cymru policy is that it widens occupational opportunities for people and gives them a better chance of expressing themselves in work suited to their talents.

In Wales, industrialism has outstripped agriculture in an unhealthy way and the party presses for redressing the balance by a more vigorous development of the country's agricultural potential. The social reasons for this, in a country whose traditional culture depends upon the rural areas, are at least as important as the economic.

Proper economic balance must involve a policy of careful location of industry by inducement, so that it will not be crowded into a few parts of the country while the greater part is

denuded of it. This cannot be done without attention to the transport system and the public services, such as electricity, water and gas.

Another aspect of this policy is its emphasis upon the use and development of basic materials in the country which produces them, though not solely there of course. The coal, iron, steel, tinplate, electricity and water which Wales produces in such quantities are not today, but should be, the basis for a wide variety of secondary industry in Wales. Plaid Cymru has had to fight against false notions of the division of labour while urging this. But in this way alone can Wales provide work for her people, of whom a very high proportion have been forced by lack of work to leave their country during this and preceding generations.

Finally, a fundamental consideration. Proper balance entails that every care is taken to ensure that industrial development strengthens rather than destroys the country's best traditions. This concern should govern the whole of a country's legislative activity and economic planning.

A WELSH WALES

BECAUSE Wales has in the past seen more exploitation than development and has lacked a responsible government, her social life has been ravaged without inhibition. The most tragic consequence of this is the destruction of the Welsh language as a spoken tongue in many of the most populous parts of the country. Where-

as in the middle of the nineteenth century the country was almost wholly Welsh-speaking, in the middle of the twentieth century less than one-third of the population speak the national language.

The reversal of this process is the aim of Plaid Cymru. It would awaken amongst Welshmen a pride of nationality and an attachment to their traditions so strong that they would insist that their children enter fully into the national heritage, which means that their language would be restored to them. A vigorous educational policy based on the nation's traditions can do this, and each child will share the benefit with the whole community. So can Wales become Welsh-speaking again.

There is an essential condition, which is that the people's will must be inflexible. Nothing of value can be done against the will of the parents. Wales will know full nationhood when her people are nationalist. In an awakened nation, harmony of aims will naturally be reflected in the close co-operation of family and school, to the end that the nation be fully herself once again.

The language is but one, albeit the most important, of the national traditions which must be venerated and succoured. All social change—and change this will and must be—should be a continuous development of the great estate which we have inherited. To try to abolish the past and begin afresh is the greatest possible unwisdom and leads inevitably to catastrophe.

Men must cherish their inheritance and seek to create the conditions of its organic development. This work is bedevilled in Wales by the teaching with which our generation has been so thoroughly impregnated, that values embodied in tradition are of little importance in comparison with the material benefits which change can bring.

CAN WALES AFFORD IT?

SINCE many of the Welsh people are unprepared to pay any price for the maintenance of their tradition, opponents of national freedom have found that it pays to profess that a policy of full nationhood for Wales would lead to economic distress, and they have painted the perils of an autonomous national life in lurid colours. This attitude has not been unknown in many countries whose newly-won freedom is giving it the lie, but the contiguity of Wales to England makes it particularly virulent here.

In fact, Wales has less reason to fear than most. Her endowment in natural resources is unusually rich and her geographical position and equable climate make them easily susceptible of development. Per head of the population, for example, she has eight times as much coal as England and twice as much land. She produces almost the whole of the tinplate of the British Isles and a high proportion of the steel. Amongst her people there is considerable energy and intelligence. Comparison with other countries serves to strengthen one's faith in her possibilities as a free democracy, nor is it sha-

ken by anything we know of her financial position.

In October 1956, the University of Wales Press published the work of a group of young economists at Aberystwyth, who worked under the guidance of Dr. Edward Nevin, entitled "The Social Accounts of the Welsh Economy, 1948-1952." This showed that in 1952 Wales had a gross national product of £635,000,000, and that whereas the total cost of government in Wales (less armaments and national debt interest) was £134,000,000, the amount paid from Wales into the London Exchequer was £184,000,000. We hear a lot of the tremendous burden on the Exchequer of Welsh local government. Its total was £29.6 millions: the tax on tobacco alone produced from Wales £30.4 millions.

LIVING STANDARDS

A community's standard of life depends not only upon the extent of its resources but also upon the use to which they are put. The Welsh standard is higher than many countries but lower than that of England. Plaid Cymru's radicalism is reflected in matters of social reform, for counterbalancing its emphasis on the importance of custom and tradition is the boldness with which it has urged the application of economic resources to raising the people's living standards. Those who suffer most in this time of inflation are the elderly men and women who have little or nothing to support them but their state pension. In a free Wales the sum of this pension

could be doubled without strain, and we have pressed for this.

But we must face the fact that material standards in other countries are very much lower than our own and that a country enjoying our fortunate position has a duty to help others who lack our advantages.

The major economic reason for the inability of a country as wealthy as England to do more for her people and for others whose standards are far lower, is the huge armaments bill which absorbs so much of her income. Though the Conservative Government has reduced a little the enormous expenditure initiated by the Labour Government, the sums spent on suicidal weapons are still fantastically large. They can and should be reduced drastically.

In doing this England must face the major change in her political role in the world, and must renounce her imperialism completely. This is unavoidable, for another world war, in which nuclear weapons would be used, would annihilate her. Plaid Cymru has always opposed imperialism and its corollary, the vast expenditure on armaments. It has also resisted military conscription, the only party to do so consistently since its first introduction in 1939. During war-time and in the following years it gave its full support to those of its members who were jailed for their resistance to the conscription of the Welsh people.

THE ROAD TO FREEDOM

THE ends achieved by a political movement are to a great extent shaped by the means which it adopts to reach them. Many movements have had the noblest aims, but their methods of achieving them have resulted in very different ends from those intended. This is so obvious that it is surprising how little attention is paid to the vitally important question of means. Moral ends do not justify the use of immoral means, but they are seldom achieved by immoral means either.

There can be few national movements which have renounced, as Plaid Cymru has done, the use of methods of war and violence. It has done this not because it is a pacifist party—the great majority of its male members were in the armed forces during the last war—but because it knows that it will never see the kind of Wales it wants to build if its methods rest on hatred and the violation of the personalities of others.

Having renounced methods of personal violence, it has to show that it is ready to suffer for its cause, for nothing really great is achieved without suffering. This must be shown in a positive way by non-violent action in which its will to freedom is pitted against the forces opposed to it.

These forces are organised politically in English parties, which use their immense wealth and power to quell the will to freedom in Wales. Of them the Labour Party is by far the most powerful in Wales herself, and holds over three-quarters of the

Welsh seats, although she is under a Conservative Government. A root cause of the decay of the Welsh nation has been the denationalising of the Labour movement, and whoever is to bring her salvation must fuse the power of the Labour and nationalist movements in one creative force. This cannot, of course, be done in an English party.

In its task, Plaid Cymru can call upon the resources of the national spirit, and harness Welsh nationalism to the construction programme I have outlined. Although its opponents like to speak of nationalism as "an out-moded sentiment", we can ask them to tell that to the peoples of all the continents which have discovered in it the greatest social power on earth, a liberating force which can and does bring

freedom for men and nations in its train.

Its results depend upon the direction it is given. In each country it takes the colour of the national tradition, but if those who guide it are imbued with the highest human values, its benefits for mankind will be incalculable. Welsh nationalists embark on their task in this spirit of responsibility, combining a loyalty to their own country of Wales with a deep sense of the place of their nation in the life of Europe and the world. They ask of their principles whether they are universally applicable, and believe them to be so. The future of mankind depends upon reconciling the claims of the nation with those of humanity. Each nation must make this reconciliation for herself.

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*The collective voice which Mankind will try to raise will not call itself Gandhian nor Marxist, nor after any other man, although many will be its teachers in its effort to achieve a world mind. These men will be found among the democratic socialists of Asia and all the world; the strugglers for freedom from colonial rule, particularly in Africa; constructive workers throughout the developing world; men of all religions who see their God also among the poor; supporters of a World Development Corporation and a world government; opponents of totalitarianism, racial inequality and the civilisation that makes one nation so grossly superior to another and one person so vastly unequal to another; all men who, like a Thoreau, would like to ask an Emerson why he was still out of prison.

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