

**W A L E S**

**the  
next  
step**

**GWYNFOR EVANS**

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## WALES - THE NEXT STEP

**B**ECAUSE the lamentable consequences of the refusal by governments to plan development of Wales as an entity have forced themselves on everybody's notice, the three political parties have revised their Welsh policy. Each of them has been compelled, not by the fact of Welsh nationhood so much as by economic circumstances, to recognise the urgent need for an economic plan for Wales. The Government, however, has not made amends for its dilatory acceptance of the need for developing Wales as a whole by speedy action. **Its tardiness in Wales makes a striking contrast to its vigour in the north-east and the south-east of England. Having received innumerable reports from advisory councils and committees, its response to the need for immediate action is to call for yet more reports.**

*It was in February, 1963 that the Government accepted the necessity for a Welsh plan. This preceded its decision on regional development in England's north-east: but whereas a plan for the development of the English region was inaugurated in December, 1963, the planners in Wales, in June, 1964, have not even got as far as consulting the economics departments of the University of Wales, which are rich with the expertise they require. Though the state of Wales is far more dire than the north-east of England it counts for less politically, which explains the total lack of a sense of urgency in Welsh affairs.*

One of the very first actions of the great Tennessee Valley Authority was to secure the help available in the universities of that large area, which is larger than England, Scotland and Wales combined. Having committed itself to the most effective possible action the achievement of this brain-child of the Roosevelt administration was magnificent. Whitehall is similarly, at long last, committed to planning the development of Wales, but English langour has more in common with the manana mentality of some Latin Americans than with the vigour of the United States. Resolute action transformed the situation in the Tennessee Valley in remarkably few years; in Wales the Government dawdles while the land decays.

Not unnaturally, zealous servants of the present order wish to see no decay, and therefore do not see it. For them, Wales is a boom land and only a misanthrope would suggest otherwise. An objective look at the facts, however, will at once dispel the illusion that Wales is a booming country.

This country has thirteen counties. Of these, seven had a smaller population in 1961 than they had in 1861. They were :

1961		1861
51,705	Anglesey	54,609
38,310	Merioneth	38,963
44,164	Montgomery	66,919
18,471	Radnor	25,382
55,185	Brecon	61,627
53,648	Cardigan	72,245
94,124	Pembroke	96,273

Note that four of the seven are in southern Wales.

There are forty-eight administrative counties in England. Would there be equal complacency in denying decay and mis-government if more than half of these, say twenty-six of them, had a smaller population in 1961 than in 1861? Would this complacency be reinforced if thirty-four of the forty-eight English counties had a smaller population in 1963 than they had five years before, in 1958? In such circumstances, would prosperity in the south-east and an area of the North justify hailing England as a boom country? Yet, this is precisely what the establishment and its hangers-on in Wales devote themselves to doing. Ad nauseam, they cry that our country is booming.

*Here, nine of our thirteen counties had a smaller population in 1963 than in 1958, and large parts of the other four, including some of the industrial valleys, are slowly being denuded of industry. The equivalent number of English counties with declining populations would be thirty-four; in fact, there were two—Middlesex (0.4%), because of movement of people out of the centre of London, and the Isle of Wight (0.8%). Apart from these two, every one of the forty-eight administrative counties of England experienced an increase in population, in many cases a very substantial increase.*

A comparison between nine Welsh and nine English counties shows where the boom has been.

1957—1962							
Decrease %				Increase %			
Radnorshire	...	...	3.7	Bedfordshire	...	...	18.0
Breconshire	...	...	3.3	Buckinghamshire	...	...	17.3
Montgomeryshire	...	...	2.8	Berkshire	...	...	17.1
Merionethshire	...	...	1.8	Rutland	...	...	16.1
Carmarthenshire	...	...	1.9	Hertfordshire	...	...	15.9
Caernarvonshire	...	...	1.3	Warwickshire	...	...	15.2
Anglesey	...	...	1.1	Peterborough (Soke)	...	...	13.0
Pembrokeshire	...	...	0.7	Sussex	...	...	11.2
Cardiganshire	...	...	0.1	Hampshire	...	...	13.4

The only four Welsh counties which enjoyed an increase in population during these five years were Monmouthshire (4.8%), Denbighshire (2.8%), Flintshire (2.2%) and Glamorganshire (1.1%). It will be noted again that five of the seven counties in southern Wales lost population.

Carmarthenshire is one of these. There the drop in population has not been prevented by unusually varied resources, for within the borders of this county we find the whole of the only anthracite coalfield in Britain, steel and tinplate industries, ports, scenic beauty and a rich agricultural potential. Its experience shows that the problem is far from being one of rural depopulation only, part of the drift to towns that is common to most of Europe.

The biggest town in the county is Llanelly, famous for its rugby, which had in 1931 a population of 38,400. This has dropped steadily, decade by decade, to 29,500,\* and the county planning officer calculates that it will continue to fall at a comparable rate during the

\* This is the way in which Llanelly has declined :

1931—38,400 ; 1939—36,600 ; 1951—33,900 ; 1959—31,400 ; 1963—29,500



next decades. Nor has the difference of nine thousand been adsorbed by adjacent industrial villages. The decrease is the result of the failure to develop the area's great industrial potential, which has forced young people to leave Wales to find work. **This long-continued drain of youth, which afflicts every county without exception, is the worst of all social evils in Wales. In comparison with its scale, the brain-drain from England pales into insignificance.**

If a comparison is made between 1961 and 1921, one sees that in those forty years the population of England increased by 26.9%. The increase alone amounted to four times the total population of Wales. Small countries in Europe enjoyed an even greater proportional increase : Switzerland by 39.9%, \* Denmark by 47.6%, Holland by 69.1%. **But the population of Wales increased by only 1.8% in this same period.**

This startling contrast between Wales and other countries whose natural resources are so much poorer prompts the question why this should be. The answer is clear : *they enjoyed both good government and self-government whereas Wales had neither.* Wales has the sad distinction of being the worst governed of the 'democratic' countries of Europe in our time. Responsible for a people exceptionally rich in culture and natural resources, the government has created conditions, sometimes deliberately and sometimes through neglect, which have cruelly impoverished both the nation's spiritual and economic life.

The facts show that there has been no sudden deterioration, although the rate of depopulation in some counties is accelerating. It is an old story. During the inter-war years Wales was allowed to suffer more from poverty and unemployment than other comparable European countries ; five hundred thousand of our people had to leave their land to seek work elsewhere, mainly in England, leaving as many as 30% on the dole. No Scandinavian country, for example, saw anything comparable with this. Wales has the potential to be as civilised and prosperous as any one of these, but the normal condition of life for her is misgovernment.

If Wales had had any authority during those years, through which she could act for herself, the worst of the horror would have been avoided. As it was, she was entirely at the mercy of "gentlemen sitting in London", as Ernest Bevin called them in this context. So too in the post-war years, an indigenous development authority could have made the difference between growth and decay. Having other things,—more important to them,—to think of, the English political parties would not tackle the Welsh problem, and prejudice prevented their allowing the Welsh themselves to do the job.

So that a situation has been created in which both Government and Opposition agree that to establish such conditions of development as industrial roads and efficient railways is a sheer waste of money, because there are no people and industries to use them. The balance of the £300,000,000 which the Welsh taxpayer paid into the Exchequer last year, they argue, can best be used for his benefit in Aden or on Bluestreaks ; for everyone knows that if the choice is between prosperity for Wales and "dining at the high table" of power politics, the Welshman will choose the latter.

\*Rural Switzerland has lost people, but to fairly small cities like Berne and Zurich, **not** to Munich and Milan, which are only 70 miles from the Swiss frontier.

**This is the vicious circle : conditions of development are not created because the country has been allowed to decay and lose population ; decay and depopulation will continue because the conditions of development are denied.**

How can this vicious circle be broken ? In the short run obviously not by the Welsh people themselves ; they lack all power of decision, of initiative and action. It must be broken by those who have kept to themselves the power of action, and they are in Whitehall. The question is, therefore, whether the Government has the will and the energy to act effectively, and whether the Opposition has the will and energy to compel it to act if it falters.

*Somehow a new start has to be made and new hope inspired which will commence a cycle of growth and balanced development. The way to do this is an open secret, and it is based on two propositions. (1.) Wales is a country and it must be treated as a country, otherwise, with only 5% of U.K.'s population we have no case for special treatment. (2.) The fount and direction of development must be within Wales herself. This involves establishing in Wales a development authority with powers to plan economic growth for the whole country as an entity.*

Some advance has been made both by the Government and the Labour Party in this direction. Both have conceded the fundamental principle that the economic life of Wales must be planned, and planned as an entity. The one has established a planning section in the Welsh Office and the other has put a Planning Board in its policy for Wales, but both show a painful lack of vigour, the one in executing its decision and the other in urging it on. The Government's plan for Wales is not expected to be ready for a long time ; nothing is known of the nature of its planning intentions and the Opposition has made no apparent attempt to elicit information.

There are eight requirements which must be fulfilled if democratic planning in Wales is to be successful.

- 1. Wales must be planned as one whole**
- 2. Balanced growth must be ensured**
- 3. It must strengthen the nation's life socially and culturally as well as economically**
- 4. The plan must be a "seamless web"**
- 5. The full co-operation of the University and the local authorities must be secured**
- 6. Positive powers must be given to the Authority**
- 7. Adequate financial resources are an imperative necessity**
- 8. The Authority should be responsible to the people of Wales**

Each of these requirements will be examined in turn.

## **I. Wales must be planned as one whole**

**O**NE has not been able to take this for granted in the past in government action in this ancient country. Just as political necessity was thought to justify the partition of Poland in the eighteenth century, so in the twentieth century has economic necessity been held to justify the partition of Wales.



Whether or not it was designed deliberately to dilute Welsh nationhood the division of Wales in the administration of basic industries and public services has contributed much to that end. Between 1945 and 1947, in coal, electricity and transport, Wales was partitioned and parts were attached to proximate English regions. This was the work of a Labour Government, but succeeding Conservative Governments have not tried to remedy the position. **It comes as a shock to realise that democratic English Governments have had less respect for the small nations of their multi-national State than has Franco's Government for Catalonia.**

No doubt this is good for Bristol and Liverpool, which gain from becoming, increasingly, provincial centres for much of those parts of industrial Wales favoured by the Government. *But it is bound to prove depressing to Cardiff, which makes it surprising that Cardiffians, however weak their Welsh consciousness should acquiesce so easily to being part of a region where it will play second fiddle to Bristol when it has the prospect of being a national metropolis.* Respectability is given the trend by invoking the plea of inevitability, which has been the stock justification for almost every action tending to the destruction of Welsh life or institutions.

There is less complacency now, however, in the Government's attitude towards the economic debilitation of Wales, and as we have seen, it shows signs of wanting to think of doing something about it. It has publicly conceded these basic points : (a) *that the Welsh economy must be developed, (b) that its development must be planned, and (c) that, apart from the over-riding social necessity for this, effective economic development is possible only if Wales is planned as a whole.*

Once it is conceded that Wales must be planned as a whole, it follows that its basic industries and services cannot be administered from English centres or in union with parts of England. To take transport as an example, because the transport system is fundamental to economic welfare, there must be some one person, in formulating and executing the plan for Wales, who has authority to speak for the transport system throughout Wales ; or, less, satisfactory, one spokesman for roads and one for railways. Likewise, the coal industry and the electricity service in Wales must each have a single spokesman. For this reason, there must be Welsh boards for transport, coal and electricity. Obviously, effectiveness in Welsh planning cannot be achieved without this.

The other important point to be made under this head is that there is no region within Wales which is sufficiently big and varied for effective overall planning ; and if there were such a region or regions, to abstract them would destroy the viability of the remainder of Wales for planning purposes unless there were an overall plan for Wales as a whole and an overall Welsh authority. The recently published report for mid-Wales illustrates this by showing, not perhaps intentionally, how insufficient are the resources in the region to make it a viable planning entity. The report makes it clear how desperately urgent is the need for action in this area, covering five counties, where decay has been allowed to continue close to the point where recovery is impossible, but where life could be renewed by integrating them in a plan for the whole of Wales.

The size of Wales is a great natural advantage that has yet to be seized. For planning purposes, which in fact mean for purposes of government, it is neither too large nor too small.

## **2. balanced growth must be ensured**

**T**HE pronounced economic ill-balance of Wales, which is the result not only of the concentrated location of industrial resources but also of generations of neglect, must be redressed. Planned development will be judged by the extent to which it restores the country's balance. One sees in England, where the South-east has become unhealthily congested to the detriment of other parts of the country, how policy may yet redress the balance when the will is strong. The ill-balance in Wales is grosser than in England, but here, too, determined policy can be a corrective.

In the last century, the presence of coal and iron-ore dictated the geographical location of industrial development, but in the new generation other factors have been as important, such as electricity, water resources and an efficient transport system (for access to markets and raw materials), and these made planned development possible. **Of these conditions, the development of electricity has been a generation later in Wales than in other countries, an industrial transport system has not yet been created, and though Wales has abundant water resources, these have proved more of a burden than a boon. The development of all three is determined by central policy. Wales has no control over any one of them.**

Increase in population in the declining counties is the acid test which will indicate that balance is being restored ; and this must be secured in Wales as in so many countries, not by the pernicious destruction of existing small communities, but by introducing suitable industry into large villages and small towns which have been static for generations, sometimes for centuries.

In addition, Welsh agriculture needs its own treatment, and if it received it, the amount of food produced, and the number of people employed, would substantially increase. In view of world population trends this is a duty. A comparison between the basic conditions of agriculture in Wales and those areas of England which influence policy most markedly, shows striking differences in the nature of the terrain, the climate and the size of farms, so that to impose a blanket policy is unintelligent and wasteful both economically and socially. *Welsh agriculture needs a Welsh policy. This should put an accent on development, and ensure heavy investment, for instance, in hill and marginal lands, for if properly drained, fertilised and sometimes re-seeded, these could maintain twice their present stock population.*

## **3. planned development must strengthen the nation's life socially and culturally as well as economically**

**G**OVERNMENT exists to make life possible, but it must also create conditions which foster the good life, which means a fully human life, for each of its citizens. Planning, as a function of government, cannot be absolved, although its concern is mainly with economic matters, from the duty of seeking conditions which enable individual persons to live the fullest and happiest life possible.

Wales is a homeland of a nation whose tradition adds much, and could add more if it were strengthened, to the lives of its people. All State action in Wales should be governed



by the duty to serve and strengthen the nation's life. Economic development in Wales is not an end in itself, to be pursued at all costs. It has a social purpose, which is to enhance the lives of those living in Wales, as members of the national community. If Wales were not a nation there would be no imperative reason why the country should not be little more than a playground for English tourists, without balanced economic development. The justification for development is that Wales is a nation. This gives planning the controlling purpose of strengthening the Welsh pattern of living.

*Those responsible for planning in Wales must therefore set their face against false solutions, however tempting, which might promise immediate economic results, but at high social cost. The introduction of overspill populations from England clearly falls into this category. Economically, it is no doubt a soft option, but its impact on the Welsh pattern cannot fail to be destructive.*

#### **4. the plan must view Wales as a "seamless web"**

**T**HE phrase "a seamless web" as applied to planning is David Lilienthal's, who was for years the Chairman of the Tennessee Valley Authority which was responsible for what is probably the world's greatest classic in planning. In ten short years the T.V.A. transformed the region for which it was responsible, to the great enhancement of the prestige of Roosevelt's government. Plaid Cymru campaigned in the years 1942-52 for the application of its principles to the planning of Wales. Had the governments of those years listened and acted the state of Wales would be far happier today.

In reviewing the amazing success of the T.V.A., David Lilienthal helped to explain it by saying, "For the first time a President and Congress viewed the problem of a region as a 'seamless web' recognising that one strand cannot be torn without affecting every other strand. The problems of the Tennessee Valley were viewed as a single problem of many parts., rather than dissected into separate bits in order to fit pigeon-holes of existing Government departments. . . Resources cannot be developed in unity until a region and its problems are seen in its entirety."

The inter-relation of economic planning and cultural life provides the most important example of this principle's application, but of course it needs to be applied to every aspect of the country's economic life.

For instance, it is sometimes said that it would be ludicrous to expend the large sums needed to build industrial roads in Wales ; but if the problems of Wales were seen in their entirety, development would be so planned that they would be used by new industry in the near future. **Similarly with railways, if one assumes that the Government is serious in its intention to make a success of Welsh planning, what is ludicrous is that important railway lines should be closed and their tracks taken up even now, a year after the announcement of the Government's intention to plan. (See Appendix). If planning were successful these would be needed in seven or eight years' time.**

An aspect of this principle which is of major importance is the use by secondary industries in Wales of basic and raw materials found or manufactured within her borders. This applies to agricultural and forestry resources as well as to those of heavy industry.

Two illustrations of the way in which this principle would be applied are to be found in contemporary undertakings in Merioneth. If a Welsh authority had found it beneficial to Wales to create a reservoir in Cwm Tryweryn, it would have ensured that the people of the valley were settled in congenial surroundings where they would take their place in the same social pattern and share the same values as in their old homes. A community of people whose language and values were Welsh would be settled at the reservoir, and its water would assist in the development of industry, agriculture and electricity in Merioneth and Denbighshire. Some blame Wales for not taking the initiative, but her government is in London, and it is in London that powers of effective initiative at present exist.

Likewise, the building of the atomic power station at Trawsfynydd and the hydro-electric scheme at Blaenau Ffestiniog would have been integrated in further constructive development in Wales, and in particular research stations in which young Welshmen could have found employment and training would have been attached to them, (solving incidentally the problem of a technical college for Merioneth). **Of the sixty-three industrial and scientific research stations maintained by the government's D.S.I.R., there is only a part of one, and that a small part, in Wales. Of agricultural research stations, Scotland has ten, Wales has one. It is essential to integrate into a plan for Wales, not only research stations—some of which could design machines suited to the country's peculiar needs—but the whole of technical and technological education.**

Lilienthal wrote of "the unity of land and water and men," and planners in Wales need a vision of this unity.

"Added responsibilities result when no single job can be considered as an end in itself. For T.V.A. this meant that we could not ignore the dislocations of men's lives which the building of such structures inevitably caused . . . What about the farm families upon whose acres the waters will soon be creeping ; what of the communities and churches and schools affected ? . . . The T.V.A. could not close the gates of the dam, pay off the landowners and townspeople, and call it a day. *That would not do because the resources of the region—human energies included—were to be seen as a whole,* and the development of a river was only a single part of the total job of regional building . . . Farms and crops are facts. But so are human emotions, and they too must be a part of the reckoning if the idea of unity is to be realised . . .

"The T.V.A.'s agricultural experts urge that no more land be taken than is actually to be covered by the waters. Farm land, they argue, is land on which to grow crops ; all of it is needed. At once the expert on public recreation is heard from ; **he** urges the purchase of a wide "protective strip" along the entire shoreline. That land, he says, ought forever to be reserved for its scenic beauty . . . The malaria-control expert has still another opinion . . . The power-expert, on the other hand urges . . ."

So did the experts debate, according to Lilienthal, in this great and humane plan for the Tennessee Valley, and he concludes that, "*The unified development of resources must become the common purpose, as nearly as possible, of all the people and all the agencies of the entire valley.*"

**In Wales it is easy to picture the powerful impetus which a common loyalty to the nation would give a great, imaginative plan.**



## **5. the full co-operation of local authorities and the University must be secured.**

**T**HERE is a great fund of human resources in Wales which, if called upon, could help to make the country's development a dynamic process. In many departments of the national University, and particularly in the economics departments, there are men and women who should be called in to assist the work. To fail to use their knowledge, ability and goodwill would be the height of folly.

Every care should be taken also to secure the full co-operation of local authorities, both of their elected members and their officials. Much discussion of a Welsh planning authority has assumed that it would have to absorb some of the most important powers of county and other councils. To do this is entirely unnecessary and would be a very grave mistake. The need is not to withdraw power from the local councils but to create conditions in which their powers would be exercised more effectively. This can be done by ensuring their close co-operation, as the experience of the T.V.A. shows.

## **6. positive powers must be given**

**T**HE purpose of the present planning powers of local authorities is almost solely to prevent things happening the wrong way; to prevent, for example, houses being built too close to a road or sheds being painted the wrong colour. These negative powers have a valuable function, but they do nothing to further economic development, for which positive powers are necessary.

Consideration of the kind of action required makes this clear. Constructing roads, building houses, bringing in water and sewerage—these things can be done by local authorities acting as agents; but the power of initiative and decision must be vested in the national planning authority for the purposes of the overall plan. Much can be done in this way to attract industry where it is needed, and more through preparing sites and buildings and relieving them of rates for a specified period. Yet one must face the certainty that the success of these methods alone will be limited. In some areas the only way of establishing an industry will be for the planning authority to put it there itself. Converting static or decaying villages or small towns into growing communities thus demands positive powers. These are the touchstone by which the capacity of the authority, and the seriousness of the government will be judged.

## **7. adequate financial resources are an imperative necessity**

**T**HE corollary of investing positive powers in the authority is its endowment with adequate financial resources. It could not build and run factories on the little money which the Board of Trade could give it. Most of the funds used by the T.V.A. were advanced by the federal treasury. They amounted in the ten-year period, 1934-44, to about 750 m. dollars, of which more than half was spent on the central feature of the plan, river and power development and 38,800,000 dollars was spent on land restoration and other development work, and 8,383,000 on fertiliser plants and equipment.

"Are the expenditures for this development worth their cost to the country?" asked David Lilienthal when writing of this aspect of the work, and he gave this answer :

"There is of course no way of settling the question by statistical proof. You must look at the valley appraise what the expenditure of these funds has done in increasing the productivity of the region and of the nation. You must look at the effect of the growing strength and new vitality of the valley on the total strength of the whole country in war and peace. One has to consider what it is worth to the country to provide opportunity to thousands of men and women in this valley—farmers, businessmen engaged in new enterprises, workers in new factories.

"This is not a question that accountants or financial experts can answer for us. Whether the over-all results in this region are worth what they have cost is something the citizen must answer for himself as a matter not of arithmetic but of the highest public policy."

The English government has advanced huge sums to the Forestry Commission as a long term investment, knowing that the return would be delayed. Wales has no government of her own (if she had, her present plight would never have developed), but since the English government is anxious to continue in control of Wales, it has an undeniable responsibility to provide funds to remedy some of the harmful consequences of its misgovernment.

## **8. the authority should be responsible to the people of Wales**

**T**HERE is a growing body of opinion in favour of transferring real power from London to the regions, and this for two main reasons. (a) *The congestion of business in Whitehall makes it increasingly ineffectual, as the state of Wales so amply proves.* (b) *Regional development is more effective when the energy of the people of the region is harnessed to the work.* The Government's plan for the north-east of England has been widely criticised for its failure to provide for democratic, as distinct from bureaucratic, control; and public leaders in the north-east have been remarkably unanimous in calling for a regional government.

"*The Economist*" (November 16th, 1963) in an article on the Government's plans in north-east England and Scotland said :

"There is no conceivable merit in constructing a bureaucracy without a head or mission. Without positive, regionally conscious and economically aware leadership, it is perfectly possible that putting all the civil servants under one roof in Newcastle could merely make it easier for them to carry on their interdepartmental quarrels . . . .

Scotland already has regional consciousness (Scots will call it a national consciousness) . . . . With a sense of purpose on a national scale, with the degree of local devolution and responsibility that they have, it is no surprise that the Scottish performance has been superior . . . .

Because north-east England does not possess this internally generated regional drive, this consciousness of purpose, the task of recommending appropriate action was necessarily and vastly harder there. But it is sad that Lord Hailsham's report does nothing to encourage such a movement in the region . . . . by urgently recommending the establishment of a truly regional unit of government that could work as an institutionalised pressure group in the interests of the region."



**Wales would have behind a national development plan this "internally generated drive and consciousness of purpose" if it had a truly Welsh "unit of government."**

Wales and Scotland, as Sir Keith Joseph has said, must be distinguished from the regions of England. Indeed, the word "region" is inappropriate in their case, since each is the homeland of a nation, but it is a deeply embedded part of current nomenclature. If the case for regional government is strong in the north-east, it is stronger in Wales and Scotland, where an elected government would make planning a dynamic success.

The form of regional government usually urged raises administrative difficulties which are so serious that the creation of a legislature would probably prove simpler. Hitherto the fear of establishing a legislature in Wales has inhibited all action in this direction, although it is the way to solve many of our gravest problems. This fear is not rooted in a concern for Wales. It is not the failure of Welsh parliamentary government that the English parties and Government have feared, but its success. They have the best reasons for fearing that even a limited form of parliamentary self government would be highly beneficial to Wales, and their nightmare is that, having enjoyed its benefits, the Welsh people would demand full freedom, and of this they have an irrational fear, derived perhaps from their forbears in the Middle Ages.

Many countries have evolved constitutions which reconcile unity with differing national origins and linguistic traditions. Switzerland, which Lord Bryce in his standard work considered to be the most highly developed democracy in the world, is a notable example. In *The Observer* (June 13th, 1964), Patrick O'Donovan wrote of it:

"Switzerland is an unassailable unity based on profound differences that would long since have caused any other nation to fly apart. It represents the most decent and reasonable coming to terms with their differences that men have ever achieved politically. It makes the English relationship to Scotland and Wales look unjust and destructive."

The present Government has made it clear that it has a more open mind on the matter than any government or party has had in the past. When I discussed the matter with Mr. Edward Heath, he said that the Government would not act in the same way in all regions, but would consider the peculiar background and needs of each one separately. **If it looks impartially at the problem of Wales, it will see that a Welsh legislature could revivify the whole life of Wales in a way that the congested and remote legislature in Whitehall can never do. But if it thinks it possible to have a democratic regional government which is not a parliamentary legislature, its duty is to establish it.**

**I**f there had been a parliament or a democratic planning authority in Wales in the twenties, the thirties, the forties or the fifties, many of the terrible evils which ravaged the land in those decades would not have been known. The nation's life today would be far stronger and her contribution to the world far greater. The facts given at the beginning of this pamphlet show it to be still a most urgent need.

Both the major Parties bear their share of the responsibility for the failures of the last half-century, but it is the Party which forms the new Government in the autumn which will be called upon to limit the injury which is being done by inaugurating a democratic policy of effective balanced development. The Party in opposition has its own duty of ensuring that this is done.

Will it be done ? The people of Wales can answer that question, and their answer will be given in the way they vote in the general election. Neither English Party will act in an effective way for Wales unless the Welsh people make clear in sufficient numbers that they are determined that there shall be effective action at last. It is true that both major Parties have undertaken to plan Wales as an entity, but no reliance can be placed on them to tackle the job effectively.

*In 1945, the Labour Party promised that if it were returned it would establish an economic development authority in Wales on the lines of the T.V.A. It was returned with a huge majority, but neither this nor any other promise to Wales was fulfilled ; instead, Wales was carved up. In 1964, the Labour Party promises a Planning Board for Wales. Can it be relied on to take this promise seriously, particularly since the Water Board which it has also promised has been shown to be a farce ?*

The only way to ensure that effective action is taken is through independent political action by the Welsh people. Plaid Cymru provides a vehicle for such action, whose influence on the Government and other Parties has often been proved. We will know whether the Government will act effectively in Wales when we know how many scores of thousands of people have given their support in the general election to Plaid Cymru.

**A democratic Welsh economic development authority ? This is the major election issue for Wales. It will be decided by the vote given to Plaid Cymru.**



## Appendix

**M**ANY railways have been closed recently in Wales and some of those which are most important to the undeveloped counties are under threat of closure, because of the financial loss they showed individually. This issue illustrates the need for considering Wales as a whole. The Beeching exercise was the result of the intolerable loss shown by railways in Britain as a whole, but **despite pressing demands the figures for Wales as a whole have never been released. There is reason to believe that the loss per route mile is far less in Wales than in England, and if this fact could be established it would greatly strengthen the Welsh economic and social case for maintaining lines that are losing money.**

The figures for the Cardiff region of the B.R. Western Region seem to confirm the impression that the loss in Wales is small. This area is almost confined to Wales (Hereford is a part) and includes the whole of Wales to the South of Aberystwyth and Knighton.

During the last twelve months its revenue was approximately £35,000,000 and its running costs (which did not include depreciation, bank charges and those arising from nationalisation) approximately £19,500,000. This left an excess of revenue over running costs of about £14,500,000. This huge figure should be sufficient to absorb the heavy charges and show a profit.

The explanation for the prosperity of this region (which includes more than half of Wales) is the extent of the freight traffic, which accounts for no less than 84% of the revenue of the region. It is said that 80% of the freight traffic for the whole of the Western Region originates in Wales. Passenger traffic accounts for only 11% of the revenue of the Cardiff region. Because of its concentration of heavy industry, the Cardiff region (emphasising that it includes more than half of Wales) is one of the most prosperous in Britain.

If Wales had a government, or even a Transport Board, the facts for the whole of Wales would be known, and the Board would be concerned to maintain an efficient railway network throughout the country. No one is so concerned today. If it is true that the Welsh loss is very small proportionately in comparison with England's losses, it makes, in the circumstances of Wales, the closure of so many of her railways an even more grievous social crime.

It cannot seriously be contended that figures for Wales cannot be separated from those for Britain. Dr. Edward Nevin succeeded in abstracting far more complex statistics for Wales in his Social Accounts of the Welsh Economy. Welsh Railways need a Dr. Nevin more than a Dr. Beeching.