Rhondda West By-election 1967

PETER DAVIES 68/6

Mr Vic Davies
Plaid Cymru

On Wednesday, Plaid stage an eve-of-the-poll meeting at one of the largest halls in Rhondda West, Pure and Dare, Treorchy—also a one-time Labour venue.

Labour take over the hall on Monday when the Minister of State, Commonwealth Relations Office, Mr. George Thomas, will be addressing it's second public meeting of the campaign.

On Monday, the Conservatives hold a public meeting at the College of Further Education, Llwynypia, when the chief speaker will be Mr. William Deedes, former Minister Without Portfolio in the Tory government.

The following day, Mr. Edward du Cann, chairman of the Conservative Party, will visit Rhondda West and join the Conservative candidate, Mr. Gareth Neale, during his canvass in the Treorchy area.

The Communists also stage their big rally on Monday when Mr Frank Stanley, the party's national chairman, addresses a public meeting at Treorchy.

Mr Gareth Neale
Conservative

Swinging Rhondda?

"THE feeling of the Rhondda is the same as me, Bitter. There's going to be a swing and a big swing at that."

So says an ex-miner in Rhondda West, two days before a by-election which has suddenly become one of fascinating uncertainty.

Will the Labour vote drop sensationally? Is there even a chance of a Plaid Cymru victory? The Nationalists' campaign has certainly upset Labour candidate Alec Jones, who calls their policies "obnoxious" and accuses them of staging "a circus."

Herbert Williams makes a searching assessment of the parties' chances in tomorrow's ECHO.

Buzzing With Rumours

WHILE it was known on Wednesday that there would definitely be four candidates contesting the Rhondda West parliamentary by-election, the constituency was buzzing with rumours that the Young Liberals were determined to put forward a nominee, although their seniors, the Liberal Association, had announced with regret that they were not submitting a nominee.

The Young Liberals were stated to be in a very militant mood and prepared to fight whatever the difficulties.

Thursday, March 9, is the date chosen for the by-election and the candidates already in the field are: Mr Vic Davies, Plaid Cymru; Mr T. Alec Jones, Labour; Mr Gareth Neale, Conservative, and Mr Arthur True, Communist.

At the general election Labour retained the seat with a majority of 16,888. Labour polled 76.1 per cent. of the vote, against Conservatives, Communist and Plaid Cymru candidates.

MR CENNARD DAVIES, Plaid Cymru Agent for Mr Victor Davies in Rhondda West.

LET'S GO?

"Let's go — with Labour" was the London-Labour slogan.

Around 20,000 Welshmen have gone from Wales, every year on average, since 1921: a total of some 750,000 mainly to England.

Now, the London-Labour Government has planned for another 50,000 (or maybe 100,000) workmen — and their families — to leave their country, for England, during the next 3 or 4 years.

The only way to stop this exploitation, this mis-government, this destruction of Wales is for Welshmen to stick up for Wales, with the only party that is devoted to the rights of Wales and Welshmen, Plaid Cymru.

Mr Arthur True
Communist

Mr Alec Jones
Labour

IN 1924 Rhondda had a population of more than 167,000 people, with a mining population of roughly 40,000; today we have a population of under 98,000, with roughly 6,000 miners, says Mr Arthur True, the prospective Communist candidate.

Some years during this period we probably lost a larger percentage of population than any other comparable area in Britain. Far from stabilising, we are still declining at a rate of between 500 to 1000 persons per year, if these trends are allowed to continue, it can't be many years before Rhondda, as an important community, will cease to exist.

Life Blood Hit

During the 20s and 30s some argued that this decline was part of the general depression affecting the country as a whole, and dismissed it as such. Since the war, however, whilst the country is supposed to have been in a state of boom and affluence, Rhondda has continued to lose population at 500 or more per year. This surely, suggests the inability of Tory and Labour administration to solve our problems; they have both on more than one occasion had their chances. At least one big lesson should be learned—that changing governments, by itself, does not always guarantee change in policy; much pressure is often needed to bring about changes, needed. In recent years a Tory government decided to make big cuts in coal production, hitting hardest at areas in South Wales. Rhondda was one of the hardest hit, but instead of Labour easing the position, they followed with still bigger cuts, striking at the life blood of Rhondda itself as a community.

Oil And Gas First

One of our biggest problems has been the bid to maintain or retain the coal industry, on which Rhondda itself was built. Despite all the appeals and protests, private industry has refused to voluntarily move in to relieve the crisis. Today, under a Labour Government wage freeze policy, almost nine per cent of our population is unemployed. It appears that Big Business is pushing the Government into the channels of profit for private enterprise in oil and gas from the North Sea, rather than aiming at a full policy based on a nationalised coal industry, which, in the long run, is far more suitable for a Socialist future.

Even with a Labour Government, a Labour County Council and Labour Borough Council there is reluctance to supply Rhondda needs, it is the people themselves now who must make the running. Chapels and churches are closing, shopkeepers are very worried lest there be fewer pay-packets and less pay. Seventy-five per cent of householders are owner-occupiers, who have purchased and repaired their houses at much sacrifice; now they find no work and no opportunity of selling at a fair price, even if they get offers of suitable work elsewhere. Because of pit closures and factory shut downs, rents and rates are bound to rise, as revenue no longer comes in from these sources. Therefore the people must make their voices heard as never before. The coming by-election gives us a wonderful opportunity, by the use of the vote.

Protest Resoundingly!

Rhondda has the chance to register the biggest protest ever by electing a left candidate—it is useless considering candidates like Tories and Liberals, who have already been rejected. To consider Nationalists or Independents would be no better, for they also represent the breaking up of the organised labour movement—a movement born out of struggle itself. The task is to give such a vote to the left as to make the government sit up and take notice.

In this coming election I claim to be that candidate of the left: my policies are in line with the aspirations of Rhondda people, who are the staunchest of Socialists any way. If I were elected

A welcome in the valley for putting Rhondda on the map

From GEORGE GALE

THE RHONDDA, Friday.

THE Welsh Nationalist candidate, undisputed moral victor of the Rhondda by-election, today toured the constituency from Blaen Cwm, at the top of the valley, to Tonypandy, at the bottom.

Over the loudspeaker he said :—

"This is Vic Davies your Plaid Cymru candidate, thanking you for your support yesterday. You have put the Rhondda back on the map."

Women in pinafores and hair in curlers came to the doors of their terraced cottages and waved as he drove by.

So did men, leaning against the walls in the way the unemployed waste away the hours.

They did not wave so willingly during the campaign. Plaid Cymru was not yet accepted in industrial Wales.

Now it is, and between them the people of the valleys and Mr. Davies, who polled 10,087 votes — just 2,306 behind the Labour victor—have made it so.

"I'm a Socialist," says Vic Davies. Why is he a Welsh Nationalist ?

"*Look around you.*"

At Blaen Cwm the road ends at Glenrhondda Colliery. Beyond the colliery are great brown and black and green hills, part natural, part man-made.

SEALED OFF

The colliery was closed last September, the pit shafts are sealed off with corrugated iron. The pit will not open again.

"*Look around you,*" says Vic Davies.

The place is already derelict, a vast and rusty rubbish heap.

He believes : That London does not care about places like the Rhondda.

That neither the Tory nor the Labour Party has done anything for Wales.

That the Vietnam war is wrong.

That the Welsh, left to themselves, would make Wales another Switzerland or Denmark.

This is the man—a Socialist and a Welshman—whom the Labour Party in the final hours of the campaign desperately attempted to discredit.

He will be the first to admit that he is an amateur politician. But he and his organisation, led by Mr. Kennard Davies, made the Labour candidate, Mr. Alec Jones, and his organisation led by Mr. Emrys Jones, look like beginners.

Almost opposite the Plaid Cymru committee rooms this morning a Labour Party loudspeaker van was parked. It was silent. It carried L-plates.

Rhondda W. battle is warming up

IF Rhondda elect another Labour M.P. it will give the impression that the people are satisfied with the mess the Government has made in Rhondda, Mr. Vic Davies, Plaid Cymru candidate in the Rhondda West Parliamentary by-election said at Tonypandy last night.

He said, "The election of yet another Labour M.P. to be added to the near 100 majority in London would be worthless for Rhondda."

"A massive vote for Plaid Cymru would shake the London Government out of its complacency and out of its lack of concern for the plight of Wales and its valleys," said Mr. Davies.

A mistake

Mr. Gareth Neale, the Conservative candidate said at his adoption meeting at Tonypandy last night, Mr. I. R. Thomas, the late Labour M.P. for the constituency pointed out to his own Government in January of last year that their policies were hindering rather than helping industrial development in the Rhondda.

"And I heartily agree," said Mr. Neale. "To make practically the whole of Wales a development area was a stupid mistake. How can an area such as Rhondda really hope to compete, especially at this time of industrial stagnation with places such as Bridgend or Caerphilly?"

Industrial opportunities for both young and old must be created in the Rhondda said Mr. Neale.

Debate challenge

Mr. Neale challenged his Labour opponent, Mr. Alec Jones, to a public debate and said he would have no objection if the other candidates wished to join in.

Speaking at Treorchy last night in support of the Labour candidate, Mr. Alan Williams, M.P. for Swansea West, said that many people in Rhondda were under the wrong impression that the Labour Government were responsible for all the present unemployment in Rhondda.

"Last year three pits, Glen Rhondda, Parc and Dare and Cambrian closed down, affecting over 1,600 men, and all of these were found alternative employment, with the exception of 300," he said.

"At the same time from the period January 1966 to February 17, 1967, about 600 workers, approximately 25 per cent. of the present unemployed figure, employed in Rhondda factories were made redundant by private industry over which the Government has no control."

Rhondda— a dog that may bite

AFTER all the forecasts it will now be a shock if the Labour Party are not given a shock at the Rhondda West by-election, where voting takes place on Thursday.

Labour find themselves in a position which is only partly their fault. They are at the receiving end of all the ill-feeling that should be spread over all the Governments of the past 20 years, if not more.

Mr. Gareth Neale, the Conservative candidate, gave his own version of this situation last night on television when he said that Labour were in fact to blame because they had had 13 years to think about the solution of Rhondda's problems. Certainly such meditation would not have been interrupted or made out of date by any action from his party, which during those 13 years had the power not only to think but also to do.

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All the same, Labour are not blameless. They have been in office for nearly 2½ years and they have not been able to deal with the one basic and obvious problem: unemployment.

The shock — if it does come — will probably be given to Labour by the Welsh Nationalist. There are special reasons for this. The Conservatives are non-starters. The Communists are past their peak. The Nationalists are still living in the glow of Carmarthen.

For those wishing to protest against unemployment of over 3 per cent. and continued migration, the Nationalists are the obvious channel. A by-election swing in their direction would not be at all a bad thing.

It would mean nothing positive, and would be corrected at a general election. But it would almost certainly ensure that Labour woke up to the plight of the hitherto faithful.

Tempo rises as polling day nears

WITH just three days to go the tempo in the Rhondda West by-election is increasing, the four parties contesting the seat having all planned a series of public meetings with star speakers between now and polling day on Thursday.

At a Labour meeting in the Parc and Dare Hall, Treorchy, **Mr. George Thomas,** Minister of State, Commonwealth Relations Office, said: "Welsh Nationalists will have to decide on major issues whether they will vote with Conservative or Labour in the House of Commons. Gwynfor Evans has and voted with the Conservatives been faced with this dilemma fives on a number of occasions."

Tonight **Mr. James Griffiths,** M.P. for Llanelli, will address a meeting at Ystrad Labour Club, and two further meetings tomorrow night at Llwynypia and Treherbert. On Wednesday **Mr. Richard Marsh,** Minister of Power, will be the chief speaker at Labour's eve of poll meeting at Tynewydd Labour Club.

The Conservatives hold a meeting tonight in support of their candidate, **Mr. Gareth Neal,** at the College of Further Education, Llwynypia, when the chief speaker will be **Mr. William Deedes,** who was Minister Without Portfolio in the Conservative Government.

The Communists, who have concentrated on street meetings and house-to-house canvassing, stage a rally tonight at Treorchy which will be addressed by **Mr. Frank Stanley,** the national chairman of the party.

Over the weekend Plaid Cymru were extremely active. A motorcade of nearly 200 cars headed by **Mr. Gwynfor Evans,** Plaid M.P. for Carmarthen, and the party's Rhondda West candidate, **Mr. Vic Davies,** drove through the constituency to a mass meeting at Judge's Hall, Trealaw.

About 700 people accorded both a standing ovation as they walked on stage.

Mr. Gwynfor Evans also addressed four club meetings on Saturday night, and last night Mr. Vic Davies spoke at a meeting in the Cambrian NUM Social Club, Tonypandy.

The Plaid has arranged an eve of the poll meeting and rally at the Parc and Dare Hall, Treorchy, for Wednesday night at which Mr. Gwynfor Evans will again be the chief speaker.

Plaid call for a Rhondda victory

Western Mail Reporter

A "VICTORY for Wales" in the Rhondda would be even more resounding than at Carmarthen, said Mr. Gwynfor Evans, M.P. for Carmarthen, at Treorchy on Saturday. The Rhondda had "the power to shake the establishment out of its complacency and arrogance and hypocrisy."

Mr. Evans was speaking at the adoption meeting of Mr. Vic Davies, Plaid Cymru's prospective candidate in the Rhondda West Parliamentary by-election.

"For millions of people all over the world Rhondda is Wales," said the party president.

'State of decline'

"It has led the trade union and the Labour movement in the past. The big question is—will it lead Wales today?

"If Rhondda takes the lead, there is no doubt that Wales will again stand on her own feet and forge a fine national future."

More than 500 people packed the Parc Hall, Cwmparc, for the meeting.

Mr. Davies said, "We see Rhondda in a state of decline — pits have been closed down and thrown out of work without any provision for other employment — local factories have cut their labour force and in some cases closed."

He said the shocking unemployment figure of 8.8 per cent. would be even worse were it not for the fact that people were leaving Rhondda at the rate of 800-1,000 every year.

More and more power was being taken away from local authorities, said Mr. Davies, and added, "The only real hope for the future lies in the new spirit and determination which is in the air and which demands for the people of Wales greater responsibility and more control over their own resources."

Mr. VIC DAVIES

But I can speak Welsh...

Western Mail Reporter

AN allegation in the House of Commons yesterday that Mr. Vic Davies (above), Plaid Cymru candidate for the Rhondda West by-election, could not speak Welsh brought a strong denial last night.

"I speak Welsh as well as they speak English in the Commons, fairly well if not fluently," said Mr. Davies. "I can certainly express myself up to Plaid conference standards, where technical and commercial language is often used."

Mr. Richard Crossman, Leader of the House, was replying to a question from Mr. Gwynfor Evans (Plaid Cymru, Carmarthen), who had asked what proposals he had for enabling M.P.s to take the oath in Welsh.

Report

Mr. Crossman said that his predecessor had asked the Select Committee on Procedure to look at this matter. He thought that Mr. Evans should wait until the committee produced a report.

In the discussion that followed Mr. G. E. Davies (Lab., Rhondda East) interjected that as far as he understood the Plaid candidate for Rhondda West did not speak Welsh.

OUT OF WORK IN RHONDDA LIKE 'DAYS OF DEPRESSION'

RHONDDA'S present unemployment figure of nearly nine per cent. was roughly the same as the unemployment figure in England during the depression year of 1927, Mr. Vic Davies, Plaid Cymru candidate in the Rhondda West Parliamentary by-election, stated at Blaenrhondda last night.

Addressing an electing meeting at the Blaenrhondda Social Club, Mr. Davies said, "The seriousness of unemployment in Rhondda can perhaps be best illustrated by comparing it with the depression years.

"In 1927 the unemployment figure for England was nine per cent.—and today the unemployment figure in Rhondda is nearly nine per cent. In addition it should be remembered that in the height of the depression in 1933 the unemployment figure in England was 12 per cent., only three per cent. more than the present figure for Rhondda."

Granted permission

After the meeting Mr. Davies spent several hours at the club and he said, "We were delighted with the meeting but were more delighted with the discussions and debates we had with individual members after the meeting."

Mr. Davies said that Plaid Cymru have applied for, and been granted, permission to hold election meetings in 11 working men's clubs in the constituency.

LIGHT AND HEAVY INDUSTRIES MUST BE WON

A Pledge Given By The Conservatives

THE great issue facing the Rhondda today is—where is it going tomorrow, next week, next year. In a nutshell what is the future for the Rhondda? demands Mr Gareth Neale, the prospective Conservative candidate.

It is a question which will undoubtedly be asked, rightly, many times during the coming by-election. Recently the Rhondda Borough Council deeply concerned over the present situation with its mounting unemployment put the question to the Secretary of State for Wales Mr Cledwyn Hughes. His answer was delightfully vague. It was that 1,800 jobs were "expected" to arise in or near Rhondda. When? How? Mr Hughes made a typical Labour promise. There have been too many of them in the last few years. How many have been fulfilled ?

Labour's Dis-Service

Let me say immediately that one of the greatest dis-services the Labour Government has done the Rhondda was to extend the Development Areas Act to cover practically the whole of Wales.

The success of bringing industry into these areas, especially more diversified forms of industrial activity, depends directly upon the economy as a whole being healthy.

The Wales Development Area, as it is defined at the moment, is far too large. It stretches as far south as Caerphilly. There an industrialist can set up a factory with no affect at all on the areas which have high unemployment rates. What he does achieve is to obtain maximum allowances on his investment, special treatment from the banks, and he draws his workers from Cardiff and district where industrial activity already abounds.

All that is achieved under these circumstances is that competition for labour in the Cardiff area is intensified and both wages, and through them costs are forced up.

The Development Area must be drastically reduced in size to meet the needs of areas such as the Rhondda.

Serious Problem

The problem of re-training is a serious one. The Government acted before the re-training facilities were sufficient to meet demands. It will cease to be so important when the Training in Industry Act, which was passed by the last Conservative Administration, begins to take effect. This in fact is already happening as the Training Boards are beginning to make their presence felt.

Siting an industry properly can be more difficult especially when one considers an area like the Rhondda. The valleys are narrow, but they are quite suitable for light industry. The terrain and the danger of subsidence, however, present a different picture when thinking in terms of heavy industry.

Progressive Policy

Something must be done for these valleys which once had 28 pits employing 27,000 men, where now there are only two pits employing 1,800 men; and an unemployment rate of 8.7 per cent as against the national average of 1.9 per cent is unacceptable. Something must be done.

Light industries must be encouraged to come here, for they provide suitable work for men who suffer from disablements such as pneumoconiosis. But they have the disadvantage that they are generally offshoots or sub-contract units to some larger central factory — units which by being small feel the pinch first when the economy tightens.

The larger units can, however and must, be attracted to the nearby industrial estates in Hirwaun and Treforest. Provided transport facilities and roads are improved, this valley —once described by Borrow as one of the most beautiful in Wales—could become a residential area.

Vital to this scheme, however, must be a progressive policy—the removal of tips, forward and dynamic thinking in Town Planning, and a careful and considered placing of the industry that does come into the valley.

GARETH NEALE
Conservative

He'll Be A Rebel For Rhondda!

TORRENTIAL rain kept many people from attending the opening meeting of Labour's election campaign on Monday night when the party's candidate, Mr Alec Jones, spoke at Tonypandy.

Even so, between 150 to 200 people listened to the first non-mining candidate in the valleys say he wanted to be considered wasted if you want action and not words.

"The Rhondda Borough coat of arms motto is 'Fame Outlasts Wealth.' I say we have had the fame for long enough, now let us enjoy a fair share of the wealth of this country."

Supporting speakers were Mr George Thomas, Minister of State for Commonwealth Relations Office, Mr Ted Rowlands, M.P. for Cardiff North, and Mr Alan Williams, M.P., Swansea West, Parliamentary Secretary to the Postmaster General.

TOO EXPENSIVE!

"The Rhondda Valleys have been loyal to the Labour Party for over three-quarters of a century and I feel confident the Conservative will lose his deposit," said Mr Thomas.

Referring to the Welsh Nationalists he said, "Nationalism is a luxury we cannot afford when we are trying to stay alive. One of the major tasks confronting any Minister is to attract industrialists. We do not believe in compulsion. It is necessary to attract the key people of industry to come and live here. We have to attract the capital and the personnel, and many industrialists don't want to come to Wales because they fear being treated as outsiders. There is a bigotry which divides us into Welsh speaking and English speaking. I hope Rhondda is too mature to think that we can solve our difficulties by separating from the United Kingdom."

Speaking of Llantrisant Trading Estate, Mr Thomas went on "Rhondda people would be ill-advised to underestimate what this is going to mean to our valleys."

LEASEHOLDS

Speaking finally on the new Leasehold Bill which the House is putting through in ten days' time, he said at least 80 per cent. of Rhondda people were leasehold property owners who would benefit by the Bill. Leasehold reform was a right of people, because they had a right to own their own homes."

Chairman of the meeting was Ald. D. Murphy.

We Must Restore Power and Beauty to Rhondda

PLAID DEMANDS TWO VITAL PRIORITIES

FOR those of us who live in Rhondda and see the empty houses in every street, unemployment standing at 8.7 per cent., and the number of people leaving the valleys again climbing inexorably towards the figure of one-thousand per year, it has become clear that the old palliatives and the pie-crust promises will no longer suffice, writes Mr H. Victor Davies, prospective Plaid Cymru candidate.

We, in Plaid Cymru, do not believe it to be some divine ordinance that communities like Rhondda should drift along from crisis to crisis, with accompanying incidents of stark human tragedy like Cambrian and Aberfan.

Faceless People

Can anyone remember a period when this, or that factory was not going to close and transfer its production to some tarmac paradise nearer the heart of London or Birmingham? Was there ever a time when some pit or other was not alleged to be making an insupportable loss and suddenly closed, throwing the older miners on to the dole? For a people who are generally acknowledged to be clever, industrious, and adaptable, the Welsh seem to have to fight very hard for the simple right to earn their bread and butter! We are ruled these days—or so it seems—not by our elected representatives but by faceless people who churn out well worn cliches, such as "normal commercial practice" or "economic trends," as if the very science of economics were devoted to the continuation of population drift and political ineffectiveness.

Grim Results

Over-centralised government in Britain and a too powerful bureaucracy have produced their inevitable result. Every federal State of America, every constituent republic of the Soviet Union, Ulster, even the Isle of Man, has a greater degree of self determination than has Wales. We are a nation with roots in history extending back over 2500 years, and have attained maturity and experience in national and international affairs. Yet we have seen so many of our most brilliant political figures frustrated by the inertia of the London big party machines.

Today in Rhondda, we are experiencing the grim results of government by remote control. Can we afford to wait four years for Cledwyn Hughes' 1,500 jobs to materialise, when already we have 2,277 people unemployed? "If", "maybe," "sometime," are words which come easily to the major London parties, who appear to feel that between them they have the divine right to control our destinies for ever more. Yet it is within our power to restore beauty and a full life to the Rhondda. If, instead, we create or even tolerate a desert, then by our own action or inaction we stand condemned.

Our Needs

The needs of our community are plain to see, and surely demand that priority be given to the following:

(1) The establishment of factory sites within the Borough, bearing in mind the colliery sites which are now derelict. Those practised frustrators of the public will, the National Coal Board, must be told quite simply "if you take away the jobs you can take away the junk." Who governs us in Wales anyway? Have our Local Authorities and Members of Parliament themselves been made redundant?

(2) We must create surroundings physical, social and cultural, that will attract the doctors and key personnel of outside industry whom we need. Herein lies the value of the Civic Trust plans for Rhondda, designed to restore some of the beauty, ravaged in the past to the shabby slogan of "where there's muck there's money." We can curb the bureaucratic machine which spills filth over our mountainsides creating ugliness and danger, under the crude blackmail of threatened pit closures when its demands are resisted.

Ballad of Rhondda West

Re-deployment, Mr Wilson, is a long and lovely word
And you must have jumped for joy in London when you heard
Of the thirty thousand, nine hundred and ninety two men
Redundant here in Wales from Fflint to Rhyd-y-fen.

"Re-deployment eastwards is what I would advise,"
Said the English Prime Minister when he heard of his prize,
"And the Rhondda West men must be deported now —
They can hardly vote Plaid Cymru if they're all in Slough."

As Hitler hated all the Jews, as Franco hates the Basques,
Do these London men so hate us behind their smiling masks?
No, I think its just that they're too far away to see
That the Rhondda Fawr means more than Slough to men like you and me,

And that we mean more to Rhondda Fawr than we ever will to Slough:
Our children have their roots here — we will not move them now.
Oh, redeployment, Mr Wilson, is a long and lovely word
But we'll throw you out in Rhondda West — for the dragon's nest you've stirred,

M. Rees

VICTOR DAVIES, Plaid Cymru candidate in West Rhondda by-election

VIC DAVIES MAKES DEEP IMPRESSION

VIC DAVIES, Plaid Cymru's candidate in the vital by-election in Rhondda West, is making a deep impression on the constituency.

We asked one who has known him well for a number of years to describe for us Vic Davies the man. This is what he says:

"What first strikes one about Vic Davies is his complete and utter sincerity. Coupled with this is his ability to deal competently with complex problems, and his deep interest in his fellow men.

"Vic Davies has always ensured that the good of the community and of Wales comes before any thought of personal betterment. He is a straightforward man of complete integrity, a man of strong character who would fight tooth and nail in Parliament to preserve and improve the Valley which has always been his home.

"He has wide industrial experience which is an essential qualification for any prospective candidate in the coming by-election when one considers the present plight of the constituency.

"Plaid Cymru is indeed fortunate in having a candidate of this calibre to represent it in such a famous constituency at such a critical time."

HOW TO RESTORE RHONDDA FULL LIFE

PROSPECTS FOR A WELSH WIN in the Rhondda West by-election are promising, reported Press representatives during February, even before the election date was announced.

In the "Western Mail" (7.2.67) it was reported that the Plaid Cymru election machinery had already been set up, and that even at that early stage there were forecasts of a "second Carmarthen."

"The results of the initial canvass have been most encouraging," declared Mr Cennard Davies, the Plaid Cymru Agent.

At the crowded Adoption Meeting on February 11, the speakers included Mr Gwynfor Evans, Dr. Phil Williams, of Cambridge University, Mr Arthur Donaldson, chairman of the Scottish National Party, and the candidate, Mr Victor Davies himself.

PIE-CRUST PROMISES

In a special message to the people of the Rhondda, Mr Vic Davies said this:

For those of us who live in Rhondda and see the empty houses in every street, unemployment standing at 8.7 per cent., and the number of people leaving the valleys again climbing inevorably towards the figure of one thousand per year, it has become clear that the old palliatives and the pie-crust promises will no longer suffice.

For a people who are generally acknowledged to be clever, industrious and adaptable, the Welsh seem to have to fight very hard for the simple rights to earn their bread and butter!

GRIM RESULTS

Over-centralised government in Britain and a too powerful bureaucracy have produced their inevitable result.

Every federal State of America, every constituent republic of the Soviet Union, Ulster, even the Isle of Man, has a greater degree of self determination than has Wales.

We are a nation with roots in history extending back over 2,000 years, and have attained maturity and experience in national and international affairs. Yet we have seen so many of our most brilliant political figures frustrated by the inertia of the London big party machines.

To-day in Rhondda, we are experiencing the grim results of government by remote control.

RESTORE FULL LIFE

"If," "maybe," "sometime," are words which come easily to the major London parties, who appear to feel that between them they have the divine right to control our destinies for ever more.

Yet it is within our power to restore beauty and a full life to the Rhondda; if, instead, we create or even tolerate a desert, then by our own action or inaction, we stand condemned.

Determined, imaginative planning is the answer to Rhondda's problems, with the finance to back it up. Money must be made available by the Welsh Office, unless that edifice is yet another mirage which will fade to nothing as we wanderers in the economic desert draw near.

We have paid with blood and the wealth of our natural resources for our place on this island. We must not now be treated as poor relations!

We must vote, must make a stand, for our rights, for justice, for a fair deal, with the only party which is devoted to Wales and her people, Plaid Cymru, said Mr Vic Davies, in conclusion.

MR CENNARD DAVIES, Plaid Cymru Agent for Mr Victor Davies in Rhondda West.

CYFLE NESA CENEDLAETHOLDEB

AWN I GYD I'R RHONDDA!

MAE'R Blaid wedi dewis Mr Vic Davies, Treorci, yn ymgeisydd yn yr is-etholiad sydd ar ddod yng Ngorllewin y Rhondda. Rhoddodd hyn foddhad cyffredinol i aelodau'r Blaid yn y Rhondda, ac i aelodau trwy'r Blaid i gyd.

Mae Mr Davies yn Gymro Cymraeg, yn 49 oed, ac mae ganddo dri o blant. Addysgwyd ef mewn ysgolion yn Ystrad, Rhondda, ac yn Ysgol Dechnegol, Morgannwg.

Bu un adeg yn swyddog yn ei Undeb Llafur—yr A.E.U., cymer ddiddordeb mewn diwydiant yn gyffredinol, ac yn y diwydiant glo yn arbennig iawn.

Oherwydd prysurdeb mawr a galwadau trymion ar ei amser, bu Mr Davies am beth amser ar gyfyng gyngor a dderbyniai ef y gwahoddiad a'i peidio. Gyda llawenydd mawr y derbyniwyd ei ddyfarniad i gynrychioli'r Blaid mewn is-etholiad mor bwysig.

DEWISIAD CAMPUS

Darlithydd yw Mr Davies ar Beirianaeth yng Ngholeg Addysg Bellach Pontypridd. Mae'n aelod o Bwyllgor Gwaith Plaid Cymru ers blynyddoedd ac yn adnabyddus i'w haelodau yn Ne a Gogledd. Mae'n adnabyddus iawn hefyd yn y Rhondda ac yn uchel iawn ei barch ymhlith y trigolion. Heb unrhyw amheuaeth mae'n ddewisiad campus.

Mewn gornest bedair-onglog yn Etholiad Cyffredinol 1964 daeth yn ail i'r ymgeiswyr Llafur, gan guro'r Toriaid a'r Comiwnyddion.

HELP O BOB MAN

Bydd cenedlaetholwyr o bob rhan o Gymru'n falch o fynd i'r Rhondda i helpu. Rhaid trefnu ymlaen llaw gyda Mr Cenard Davies, y Cynrychiolydd neu gyda Mr Vic Davies ei hun. Ysgrifennwch i Swyddfa Etholiad Vic Davies, Plaid Cymru, Treorci. Agorir Cronfa Etholiad yn nes ymlaen a dylchir i bawb sy'n dymuno cyfrannu anfon i un o swyddfeydd y Blaid, neu i'r Swyddfa Etholiad, yn awr neu'n nes ymlaen.

Y CYFARFOD MABWYSIADU

Dylai darllenwyr **Y Ddraig Goch** wylio am ddyddiad y Cyfarfod Mabwysiadu, yn hanner cyntaf Chwefror (Chwefror 11 efallai). **Disgwylir tyrfaoedd o bob Sir yng Nghymru. Apelir** at swyddogion, ac unigolion diswydd, fynd ati'n awr i drefnu llond bws o'u hardaloedd neu lond pob car posibl yn y lle. **Bydd y cyfarfod yn ddigwyddiad cenedlaethol.**

Bydd pawb sy'n dymuno gweld ymgyrch fawr fuddugoliaethus yn cerdded drwy'r Rhondda yn mynd ati'n ddiymdroi i drefnu'r daith yno.

YSBRYD BRWYDROL

"Mae pawb mewn ysbryd rhagorol ac yn llawn ysbryd brwydro" ebr Mr Davies wrth "Y Ddraig Goch". Mae'r is-etholiad, meddai, yn gyfle i'r Rhondda roi arweiniad eto yn y byd gwleidyddol. Fe'i hesgeulusir gan y Llywodraeth caewyd tri phwll glo yn ystod 1966 ac mae diffyg gwaith wedi codi i 7.6 y cant.

Cynhelir is-etholiad oherwydd marwolaeth Mr Iorwerth (Iori) Thomas. 16,888 oedd mwyafrif Llafur y tro diwethaf. Mae'r Blaid yn ffyddiog y bydd edrych ar ffigurau'r etholiad nesaf gyda syndod mawr drwy Gymru a Lloegr.

VIC DAVIES — AIL A.S. PLAID CYMRU?

Photograph: John Summers

Mr. Vic Davies, Welsh Nationalist candidate in the Rhondda West by-election.

"Today the choice is Wilson or Wales...!"

IN RHONDDA WEST

HIS NAME IS VICTOR

PLAID CYMRU'S prospective candidate in the momentous by-election in Rhondda West is popular and energetic Vic Davies, a true son of the Rhondda.

This is the third time he has contested the seat, so that he's now well-known to the voters of this famous valley. In last year's general election he came second to Labour, beating the Tory and Communist candidates into third and fourth places.

There is now no doubt in Rhondda minds that Vic is the only serious challenger to Labour.

Aged 49, he was brought up in Ystrad Rhondda, and now lives at Treorci. He was educated at Bodringallt Primary and Tonypandy Secondary School and at the Glamorgan College of Technology. Apprenticed in motor engineering, he became an A.E.U. official and branch officer, and served for a time as an engineering inspector in local factories.

He is an Associate Member of the Institution of Motor Industry, and an Associate Member of the Institute of Engineering Inspection, and since 1960 he has been a lecturer in Engineering at the Pontypridd College of Further Education.

INTELIGENT ENGLISH-WOMAN

While on wartime service with the R.A.F. he met his wife, Irene, a Yorkshire girl. She is an intelligent Englishwoman who believes that every nation should be free, and she cannot understand why the Welsh have been so slow in demanding self-government. Her husband will see to it that many more of them will very soon.

They have three children. John Rhys (19), is an Honours History student at University College, Cardiff. Peter David (17) is at the Rhondda County Grammar School for Boys, and Ann Caryl (14), born on St. David's Day, is at the Rhondda County Grammar School for Girls.

Vic has travelled too. He spent three years in Canada and the United States. So much for "parochial nationalism"! He is a member of Caersalem Welsh (Wesleyan) Methodist Church at Treorci, and a staunch supporter of C.N.D.

HEART-WARMING

Vic Davies doesn't believe that elections can be won from an armchair. He is one of Y Blaid's most active and effective canvassers, and he has already knocked on hundreds of doors in Rhondda West, getting a heart-warming reception everywhere. He has a most efficient agent in Cennard Davies, and a big band of enthusiastic workers of whom our party can be proud.

There is strong anti-Government feeling in the Rhondda at the moment. With the exception of the die-hards, for whom Labour can do no wrong, the workers and their families are bitter about the rocketing unemployment rate and the disintegrating transport system. Vic Davies is telling them that this situation is wholly due to the lack of a Government in Wales for Wales.

We invite you
TO JOIN
PLAID CYMRU
(Form on page 8)

And the Rhondda voters are listening to his sound sense as they have never listened before. You may ask, 'What's in a name? Well, our candidate's name is 'Victor'. He may well be just that. After Carmarthen, anything can happen.

MR VIC. DAVIES,
popular, energetic Plaid candidate

WELSH NATION

RHONDDA AGENT

THE hard-working, efficient and enthusiastic young Agent for Plaid Cymru in Rhondda West is Mr Cennard Davies, a native of Treorci, a winner of two State Scholarships from Porth grammar, a graduate of Swansea University College, who has returned to his old school in the Rhondda to teach.

In Swansea, his activities were very varied. He started the Literary Society, he edited two college magazines, "Crefft" and "Dawn", he won twice the prose Medal at the Inter-College Eisteddfod; later he gained a Studentship and went on to obtain his M.A. for research.

Mr Cennard Davies

With a team of helpers, Mr Cennard Davies is in charge of the Rhondda campaign. Offers of help and support should be directed to him at the impressive Plaid Cymru office, Stryd Fawr, Treorci.

Now 30, Cennard is married to a teacher of music; they have one two-year old girl, Branwen. Cennard's hobbies are gardening, rugby, writing, and language-teaching methods.

WEDI
TERFYN
ETHOLIAD
GORLLEWIN
RHONDDA

George Brown to tour Rhondda?

BIG LABOUR BUILD-UP

Western Mail Reporter

THE Labour Party's chief election campaigner, Foreign Secretary Mr. George Brown, may spend two days in the Rhondda during the last week of the Rhondda West by-election campaign. With only two weeks to go the party is moving its big guns into the traditional Socialist stronghold.

The Minister of State, Commonwealth Relations Office, Mr. George Thomas, has already spoken in the Rhondda and tomorrow Mr. Michael Foot, M.P. for Ebbw Vale, will address two meetings in Cwmclydach and Treorchy junior schools.

On Sunday, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. James Callaghan, will be the chief speaker at the Tan Penta Workmen's Hall and next week's Labour speakers include Secretary of State for Wales, Mr. Cledwyn Hughes and the Minister of Social Security, Miss Margaret Herbison.

But last night a party spokesman would not confirm that Mr. Brown would be arriving in the valley.

Street corners

While Labour concentrates on public meetings, with the Conservative and Plaid Cymru candidates are holding street-corner and loudspeaker meetings.

A Plaid spokesman said last night that the party had received a £10 donation towards the campaign — because an Aberystwyth supporter was angry at the behaviour of Labour M.P.s in the House of Commons on Monday.

"When Mr. O. Eifed Davies said in the House that Mr. Vic Davies was not Welsh speaking, Labour M.P.s started to laugh before Mr. Gwynfor Evans could point out that in fact Mr. Davies is Welsh speaking," he said.

Mr. Alec Jones, the Labour candidate, speaking last night at Blaencwm School said that the fact that he had described himself as a Rhondda rebel had upset certain people.

"Rhondda has a tradition of rebel M.P.s and I am proud to follow in that tradition," he said.

A Labour allegation that private enterprise was to blame for 400 of the present unemployed in Rhondda, was an insult to industrialists who had established factories in the valleys and to the men and women who worked in them, said Mr. Gareth Neale, the Conservative candidate at Treorchy.

"Labour, however hard it tries, cannot wriggle out of its responsibility for the unemployment position in Rhondda," said Mr. Neale.

People who shout for Wales on the rugby field should vote for Wales in the political field, Mr. Vic Davies, Plaid Cymru candidate, said.

"The Government should spend an extra £5m. a year to modernise Rhondda's amenities and make up for the neglect of the past," Mr. Arthur True, Communist candidate, said at Treherbert.

LOOKING AROUND WALES by JOHN HOGAN . . .

TEST OF FAITH

HOW DEEP will Labour's long hold on the Rhondda Valley be dented by next Thursday's by-election result in Rhondda West? Or will it indeed be touched at all? The 6,000 who voted for the three other parties last time will probably do so again.

RHONDDA WEST LABOUR PARTY COMMITTEE ROOMS: 1 Ystrad Road, Pentre, Rhondda.

But what about the other 19,000 who returned the late Iorrie Thomas to Parliament with that thumping majority bordering 17,000?

Are they likely to be influenced by the Other Parties' propaganda about unemployment, now getting weak and monotonous, and by what the OP's candidates like to consider as Rhondda's present plight?

There may be some of course, but I don't think they're anything like the number expected by a few real optimists I've met.

They are Plaid Cymru supporters still throbbing with that surprised Carmarthen injection and one can forgive them for having high hopes.

But Rhondda is one of the hard-core areas of what is best in Wales, and I mean its people and not its scenery. You can't pull wool over anyone's eyes in the Rhondda and everyone knows it, the Prime Minister included.

"Not that he has ever tried," say the people of the Valley. "Harold Wilson is no con man. Just look at all the things he's done for the good of the country, even though they've made him and our Party a bit unpopular at times."

Eight days left to woo Rhondda West's uncommitted voters

ALTHOUGH the four parties in the Rhondda West by-election all claim "excellent results" in their campaigns, individual canvassers are reporting a large number of uncommitted voters.

This is estimated by some canvassers to be as high as 30 per cent. and even 40 per cent. in some areas.

On the other hand tremendous interest has been shown in public meetings which have attracted audiences of up to 500 despite the weather.

Just over a week to polling day the uncommitted voters are going to be the target of the four parties.

One significant factor which has emerged in the past few days is the overwhelming number of inquiries received at Plaid Cymru's committee rooms from householders offering to display the Plaid's posters.

1,000 requests

To date there have been 1,000 inquiries and there has had to be a reprint of posters.

"During our initial canvass we had an excellent response though there were a number of uncommitted voters but their percentage is a decreased rapidly during the past few days," said a Plaid spokesman.

"During our initial canvass we had 500 inquiries from householders wishing to display Vic Davies posters and last weekend we received a further 500 requests."

Whatever the result, the campaign has certainly stimulated interest in the Rhondda where for so many decades Parliamentary elections have been a mere formality.

Public meetings which have been regarded at past elections as a waste of time have gained a new lease of life.

Some observers predict an "extremely high poll."

Rhondda swings

BY HARRI WEBB

Rhondda is a special place. So is everywhere else in Wales, of course, but Rhondda more so than most.

You slither down into it from the surrounding heights, or edge in along its only logical link with the outside world through Pontypridd.

Once inside, you can understand why nobody ever wants to get out, and why, in a sense, no-one ever really leaves, carrying Rhondda with them wherever they go.

Yet this uniquely loveable place has its unloveable aspects too. There is the harsh evidence of exploitation and neglect; the houses sparkle with the pride of possession but too many of them are empty. Groups gossip cheerfully in shop doorways, but too many of these are obviously struggling.

The streets are full of friendly folk but are an ill-planned maze of wasted opportunity. For this could be a lovely place to live in.

The ugliest wound of all is in the personality of the community, split between passionate Welshness and cynical rejection of nationhood, between hope and despair, between sturdy independence and servility to London, between native dignity and the snarling rejection of all decent standards voiced by its anglocentric politicians.

THE CAMPAIGN

The big clean up started in the cold days of January, with the most thorough door to door canvass I have ever known, and was not damped by the February rains.

We were on the scene long before any of the others had stirred from their complacent lethargy. From the start, the signs were encouraging. Even the most optimistic among us were impressed by the party's enthusiasm and efficiency, and by the genuine public response to our message.

This was the first trial of strength of the post-Carmarthen era. The adoption meeting at Cwmparc was an exciting start to the campaign proper. Conversions were made on the spot. Arthur Donaldson brought fraternal support from Scotland and Vic Davies addressed the biggest audience of his life.

On the Saturday before polling day, the motorcade of over 150 cars showed the flag from Blaenrhondda to Tonypandy and there was another swinging meeting at Tonypandy with Glyn John and Phil Williams in great form and Gwynfor again taking the platform as the leader of the nation.

And all the time at the smaller meetings in clubs and schools the opposition arguments were demolished and their record exposed.

ON OFFENSIVE

For the first time Wales was on the offensive, and the others could only appeal to old habits and to the very loyalties they had themselves so shabbily betrayed.

Their visiting big guns turned out to be damp squibs, while Blaid speakers were welcomed everywhere. Meredith Edwards handed out autographs, Gwynfor's name was on all lips, and Vic's picture in so many windows that the opposition got the wind up and went around asking people to take them down.

At one village, best left nameless, our meeting split the community down the middle and ended up with neighbours shouting at one another in the streets.

Of the very last stages of the campaign, the eve of poll meeting at Park and Dare Hall, the soapbox oratory in the streets, the ordered tension of polling day who can write without emotion?

Rhondda will never be the same again.

Cennard Davies has won his spurs as one of the coming men of the Blaid, Ken Spencer and other local workers have their reward. Vic Davies has his place in history.

Kitchener Davies, the lonely pioneer of only a few years ago, did not waste himself in vain.

Truly, Wales stands on the threshold of a new age, and Rhondda as ever, is playing Rhondda, as ever, is playing national awakening.

Platform at one election mass meeting
From left: Glyn John; Dr. Phil Williams; David Davies (Chairman); Vic Davies; Gwynfor Evans; Mrs Vic Davies.

Plaid deny ban on Young Socialists

Western Mail Reporter

PLAID Cymru last night strongly denied Labour allegations that Young Socialists had been refused admission to the Plaid meeting at Treorchy "because they were wearing the wrong colours."

The swing to nationalism which has swept through Rhondda West in recent weeks reached fever pitch last night when 1,250 people packed a Plaid eve-of-poll rally at the Parc and Dare Hall.

But while some observers were forecasting a protest vote against Labour—some estimated their majority would be cut by 7,000—Labour canvassers were convinced the "doubters" were consolidating behind their candidate.

About 200 people were turned away from the Treorchy meeting, but Plaid Cymru secretary Mr. Elwyn Roberts, said, "No one was refused admission to the Parc and Dare because they were wearing the wrong colours.

"The hall was packed to capacity and we had to refuse admission to more than 200 after local police instruction.

"If any Young Socialists were refused admission it was because they were among the 200." The allegation that some were turned away was made by Labour candidate Mr. Alec Jones at a meeting at Tonypandy Grammar School.

In the Labour committee rooms last night there was no fear that the "doubters" would abstain from voting today or effect a protest vote.

Estimating

In the Communist camp Mr. Bert Pearce, agent for candidate Mr. Arthur True, said, "Plaid Cymru have lost ground in the last three days and there has been a consolidation of the Labour supporters.

Estimates for today's poll run as high as 70 per cent., compared with 80 per cent. at the general election last March. The electorate numbers 30,693—a drop of 497.

Mr. Emrys Jones, Labour agent at Pentre, said last night, "We have had no doubt from the start that we will win and our canvassers—there have been up to 600 in the field—have been convinced of a final consolidation of our supporters all the time.

Hoping

"We hope to get the same percentage of votes this time as we did last March." In the general election Mr. Iorrie Thomas polled 76.1 per cent. of the total votes.

The Tories are also confident that their candidate, Mr. Gareth Neale, will not lose his deposit. A spokesman said last night, "We expect a good turn out and we are setting a target well above saving the deposit."

The Conservative candidate has lost his deposit in every election in the constituency since the war and in the general election last March Mr. B. S. Hill tabled 1,955 votes—7.8 per cent. of the total poll.

BY-ELECTION ROUND-UP

Plaid motorcade woos the Valley

GWYNFOR EVANS LASHES P.M.

Western Mail Reporter

A PLAID Cymru motorcade of nearly 200 cars, headed by Plaid M.P. Mr. Gwynfor Evans and candidate Mr. Vic Davies, brought the first real whiff of election fever to Rhondda West at the week-end.

Plaid Cymru supporters from all parts of Wales drove through the constituency and won a warm reception from residents.

The motorcade ended at Judges Hall, Trealaw, where 700 people at a mass Plaid rally gave a standing ovation to Mr. Evans and Mr. Davies as they walked on to the stage.

Mr. Evans told the rally, "The experience of the Rhondda is the experience of most of Wales — migration, depopulation and a continuing high rate of unemployment demonstrating the breakdown in Wales of the centralised system of London government."

Mr. Evans said the continuing talk of redeployment was now a bitter joke in Wales.

"To add insult to injury at a time of mine closures, coal is still being imported from English coalfields to Welsh power stations," he said.

Injustice

"This is a record of failure. There is neither competence nor justice nor even Socialism here. Is this what the Rhondda fought and suffered for in the past?"

Mr. Vic Davies said Plaid Cymru was certain of obtaining a large vote.

He added, "We have a chance of winning the seat. To vote Plaid Cymru is the only effective way of condemning the Government for the 9.1 per cent. unemployment in the Rhondda."

Heath hits out at 'Panicky' Labour

THE Government has made it more difficult than ever for people to get jobs in the Rhondda, says Mr. Edward Heath, leader of the Opposition, in a message to Mr. Gareth Neale, Conservative candidate in the Rhondda West by-election.

"In the Rhondda one person out of every 11 is now out of a job," says Mr. Heath. "That is more than twice what it was before the Labour Government came into office — it is twice the average for Wales and nearly four times the average for the rest of Britain.

"So much for Labour's promise that areas like the Rhondda would get special protection against unemployment. While the Conservative Government had picked out the Rhondda as a development district, and given encouragement to new industry to move into the valley, this Labour Government has changed all that.

"Now almost the whole of Wales has to share Government help for putting up new factories and Government inducements to industrialists to start up there. The result is the Rhondda is no longer being singled out for special treatment."

Mr Heath added: "I do not think the people of the Rhondda should be under any illusions. The unemployment they are suffering now was deliberately created by this Labour Government. They had to do it because they got the country into an economic mess of their own making. They failed to take the right action at the right time and at the last moment they panicked."

Speaking at Treorchy last night, **Sir Keith Joseph** Opposition front-bench spokesman on trade and power, said the Labour Government had been in office for nearly 20 months and the country was worse off than when they came into power.

The Labour candidate, **Mr. Alec Jones**, spoke to pensioners at Llwynypia of the new Rhondda and the emphasis to be placed on education, health and welfare services.

New spirit urged

The issue in this by-election is not the return of a new government, but rather to get the present one with its solid majority to change its course and adopt new and more socialist policies, said the Communist candidate, **Mr. Arthur True**, speaking at Treherbert.

In an eve of St. David's Day speech **Mr. Vic Davies**, Plaid Cymru candidate, said at Blaenrhondda: "The people of Rhondda and Wales should follow the example of the English and all other nations to stick up for their country and demand the right to order their own affairs.

Self-government Always Pays, Says Plaid

MR VIC DAVIES, the Plaid Cymru candidate, said this week: "Our canvass of Rhondda West is most encouraging and proves that it is not impossible for us to win."

"London complacency and inefficiency is one of the reasons why Wales is now on the move to win her national rights. We should no longer let London mess about our country and valleys.

"One of the reasons for the swing to Plaid Cymru here is that in a by-election the people are able to consider our case objectively. They see the terrible record of the government in Wales and the Rhondda, the high unemployment, migration, mine closures without alternative employment, rail closures, and cuts in the road building programme which is so essential for industrial development.

POSITIVE POLICY

"If you, as the electors of this most famous valley in Wales, elect me, not only will the news reverberate around the world, but Westminster will set about giving the Rhondda and Wales a squarer deal.

"Plaid Cymru has a positive policy in this and every election. I can here mention three or four only of its main items.

"What the Rhondda wants—with its 9.1 per cent unemployment—are numerous small industries quickly. There is plenty of scope here for light industries. If the London government was really concerned about it, it could immediately offer special incentives for industrial investment and development here in the Rhondda and in similar areas with high depopulation and unemployment. Other self-governing countries can bring about such development in outlying areas; Norway does it within the aretic circle by special incentives; but it needs a 'government that cares' to do that, and that is why self-government always pays.

"The improvement or roads and railways is essential to economic development. The London government has an immense programme of building motor and dual carriageway roads in England, and the electrification of railways; but in Wales its policy has been closure of railways and cutting down road grants.

NO SIGN OF PLAN

"Then again, the government should have published its Plan of Development for Wales a long while ago. There is no indication when it will be ready; and when it is published, it is doubtful whether it will be more than a re-iteration of the present plight. The government is so unconcerned about the prosperity of Wales that it cannot be bothered to prepare a real plan of development. This could be produced by a government in Wales within a matter of three months; and its implementation could be begun immediately.

"The London government will listen to these Welsh demands only to the extent the Plaid Cymru vote is massive in this election.

"I do not think that anyone in the Rhondda will be taken in again by the flashy slogans of the London parties. 'Let's go —with Labour' was a slogan that comes cruelly true for the Rhondda and Wales.

"One thousand people a year have had to go from this valley. Our coal mines go, as do our railways, branch factories go back to England.

"Prosperity goes and concentrates in South East England and the English Midlands—near the seat of government. The newer slogan, 'You know Labour government works?' is even more cruel for the Rhondda.

"For us here, it works devastation.

STARK POINTS

"The stark facts and figures of the situation in the Rhondda should compel every man and woman to determine never again to vote for those who have brought about the destruction of our glorious and famous valley.

"In 1921 the Rhondda (Borough) population was 163,000; today it is 97,720.

"Even in 1948 we had 32 pits; now we have four, and 75% of the displaced men have had employment in the Rhondda.

"Unemployment here is now 9.15 per cent; throughout Wales it is over 5 per cent; but in England it is below 1.6 per cent.

"Over 70 per cent of the households in the Rhondda are owner-occupied. The run-down of the borough under London government will mean that the value of these houses will continually decrease — they may even become unsaleable.

"There are empty factories in the Rhondda today. In the whole of Wales, state-owned factories since 1964 have provided employment for only 226 men.

"Finally, the migration of young people from the Rhondda —mainly into England to foster prosperity and development there—has been between 800 and 1,000 each year. Nowhere in Europe has there been such mis-government!

NOT TAKEN SERIOUSLY

The London government should explain, not only why the population of the Rhondda has almost halved, but also why the population of Wales has increased since 1921 by only one per cent, while the population of England has increased by 10 millions, or 28 per cent, in the same period.

"No self-governing country in Europe has suffered this lack of development.

"Under London control, we see our Welsh coal mines being closed one after another, to a far greater extent than English coalmines, although the Kent coalfield made the greatest loss of all. Not only that, but 436 tons of English coal is brought every year into Welsh power stations, although that English coal costs 8s per ton more than would Welsh coal.

"Further the government does not take seriously the retraining of those who have lost their employment in Wales; there are still only two retraining centres, and only one in five applicants has been accepted in them.

WORTHLESS

"It must be fairly evident to most people that the election of just one more Labour M.P. to be added to the huge majority of about 100 they have in the Commons will be worthless for the Rhondda.

"In fact, the election of a Labour M.P. would give the impression that we are satisfied with the 9.1 per cent unemployment, with the migration of close on 1,000 of our young people every year, with the closure of mines before alternative employment is provided, and with the consequent impoverishment of our community.

"On the other hand, a massive vote for Plaid Cymru would shake the London Government out of its complacency and its lack of concern for the plight of Wales and its valleys.

"A breakthrough on behalf of the Rhondda and Wales is quite possible, and this second election victory will be as important, crucial and effective for Wales as the first at Carmarthen. The people of Wales and the Rhondda are on the march for justice."

Mr. Victor Davies, the Plaid Cymru (Welsh Nationalist) candidate in tomorrow's Rhondda West by-election.

Rhondda West

LABOUR CONCENTRATE ON PLAID CYMRU THREAT

OTHER OPPONENTS IGNORED

By CHRISTOPHER MUNNION

RHONDDA, Tuesday.

OF the four candidates publicly arrayed together for the first time last night, Mr. Victor Davies, Plaid Cymru's man, was the only one without a distinctly grey pre-poll pallor.

He is the most nervous of speakers, yet his florid speeches reflected the Plaid camp's boundless optimism when he offered his 10-minute contribution to an inter-party forum organised by local Methodists.

Most observers feel the Nationalists are certain to collect most of Rhondda's vote of protest over its industrial plight.

Both the Communist and Conservative canvassers concede that Plaid is much in evidence. Yet the Labour camp doggedly refuses to admit the possibility of any significant protest vote.

Rhondda Must

A PACKED audience of over 400 at Cwmparc's Parc Hall on Saturday heard Mr Gwynfor Evans, Plaid Cymru M.P. for Carmarthen, declare "Rhondda has such a reputation and such a famous name that if it took the lead now in a vote for Wales and Plaid it would shake the government and political opinion more than anything has ever done. Carmarthen helped to do this but it was nothing to what Rhondda could achieve."

Mr Evans was guest of honour at Plaid Cymru's meeting to adopt Mr Vic Davies as their prospective candidate in the forthcoming by-election in Rhondda West. With him on the platform were Dr. P. Williams, Cambridge graduate in radio astronomy research, who joined Plaid Cymru in 1961, and polled nearly 4,000 votes at Caerphilly in 1964, and Mr Arthur Donaldson, chairman of the Scottish National Party.

IN ENGLISH

The chairman of the meeting was Mr David Davies who, opening the meeting, said, "We shall be conducting the whole of the meeting in English, but we still envisage a time in Wales when any audience will be able to follow an address in Welsh."

Dr. Phil Williams, as the first speaker, set the mood of the meeting in a reasoned but feeling plea for Wales to manage her own affairs.

"How can Wales possibly benefit from remote control?" he asked. "We need to do some serious thinking about the valleys and Wales. Is it to become a 20th century desert or a new nation? This is a choice for Rhondda, because Rhondda speaks for Wales — it always has. When people think of Wales they think of Rhondda. People all over the world know the name of Rhondda.

"Even today, a quarter of South Wales' people depend on coal for a living and a further 25 per cent depend on steel. Looking at the future of Wales from today's standpoint, half your youth depends on two industries in serious decline. The coal industry is in a state of collapse.

WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

"Yet, thinking of the future of South Wales, I am not really sorry to see the end of coal mining. But what is going to take its place? Not only here in Rhondda, but throughout South Wales?

"This is the major issue of this election. Granted we need new industries, but every young Welshman should be asking 'How are we going to get it?' It is no use relying entirely on the government for an answer. In the next four or five years it will be necessary to prepare 60,000 new jobs to keep the present status quo, and this is not going to provide jobs for the 40,000 unemployed in Wales, or for the young people who have to leave Wales every year. With an actual need of 100,000 jobs in five years, we have been promised 20,000 by the Secretary of State.

"The government tells us it has set up training centres for the unemployed. But how many places does it provide? About 3,000 men have applied already, and the tremendous waiting lists prove there are places for only a few hundred. There are no signs at all that the government is facing the present situation, or has any intention of doing so.

CAN'T RELY ON CHARITY'

"Neither can we rely on charity. Our local authorities have made the greatest mistake in approaching government and industry cap-in-hand to ask for help. No industry will come to South Wales out of charity. One of the most appalling appeals came from Cledwyn Hughes, when he said, 'What the valleys needed was compassion.' We don't. We want a chance to build our own future."

Here the speaker's words were drowned in a road of applause, after which he made a plea for the introduction of the industries of the future — industrialised building factories— the modern revolutionary industrial materials which in the 1970's and '80's will see the steel industry decline as coal has done.

"To attract these industries to Wales is a competitive business. We have something to offer, and we have got to sell ourselves. First and foremost we must have good communications, roads and railways, as well as medical and recreational facilities. These we could give if there were determination and good planning.

"If you want an idea of London's planned economy for Wales, take a look at its transport facilities. The development of roads precedes industrial development, and we see this in England. The government's transport policy in rail and road implies the decline of Wales. Indifference and incompetence govern a policy in which one government department schedules an area for industrial development and another promptly closes its railway.

NO PLAN

"In the face of Wales' tremendous potential, the government has still produced no plan, though they have promised it year after year. Plaid Cymru is determined to set a plan, and Rhondda people should take the lead as they have in the past."

Speaking in support of the Welsh Nationalist Party, Mr Arthur Donaldson, chairman of the Scottish National Party, said it was always a pleasure to come to Wales, "but even greater now that you are fighting the greatest battle you have ever fought."

There were roars of applause and laughter when he said: "Tory and Labour are the two sides of the same bad penny, and the gap between them is now so narrow we can hardly tell the difference between them. In one thing they agree absolutely. They put the interests of the English majority so far ahead of those of Wales and Scotland that in effect we get no consideration at all."

He paused, then went on with a smile: "I saw a rugby match last week in which a gallant Welsh team was beaten. But what chance would 15 Welshmen have had if there had been 200 playing on the other side?" That is the position of Wales in a London Parliament. You are so hopelessly outnumbered that the only hope you have is to pull out back to Wales to do the job for yourselves."

Take The Lead

OWN GOVERNMENT

"You must have your own government. There is no other way to prepare for your future, or to gain self-respect and the respect of those outside.

The adoption of Mr Vic Davies was proposed by Mr Glyn James, who called for a more radical spirit in Rhondda. "Commitment to Plaid is the step which sorts out the men from the boys," he said.

Introducing Vic Davies, his agent, Mr Cennard Davies, of Treorchy, said: "We have already passed the total monies donated at Carmarthen's adoption meeting. Surprise has been expressed at the number of young canvassers working for us. We have between 60 and 100 —it is not enough. I want 200 by next Saturday."

As Mr Davies stepped forward he received a standing ovation from the audience and platform party, and, obviously moved, remarked: "This is the biggest day of my life. I only hope I will do it justice."

In a speech which corroborated the facts of his colleagues he gave some colourful analogies, quoting Commander Stephen King-Hall in his description of central government. "Fat octupuses that spread tentacles throughout the country for the votes of the people."

"General de Gaulle has said there are two and a half world powers today. Russia and America and Britain the half. How dearly we pay in Wales as one twentieth of the half world power!"

APPEAL

Bringing the meeting to a close, Mr Gwynfor Evans appealed to the audience for Rhondda to assert its leadership for Wales. "In those early days Rhondda's leadership was the most important in the British Isles, but it was limited too. It did not identify itself with Wales the nation."

He said that Rhondda could not only help Wales, but could indeed save Wales for the future. Too often the people of Wales have forgotten they are Welshmen, and the people of Rhondda must remember this, and fight in a way which will show allegiance to their country.

"The greatest moral power today is the power of nationhood, and it is the small, independent nations which are providing the balance in a bulldozed civilisation. As a nation we belong to the world and bear responsibility toward all the world. It is high time we became a member nation of the world community, like our sister country, Ireland. The small nations have a great part to play in world order, and this should be part of our fight against the arrogance and hypocrisy of the establishment."

Amid cheers and laughter he quoted from "The Ballad of Rhondda West".

"Re-deployment eastwards is what I would advise."

Said the English Prime Minister when he heard of his prize.

"And the Rhondda West men must be deported now—

They can hardly vote Plaid Cymru if they're all in Slough".

"But the Rhondda Fawr means more than Slough to men like you and me.

And we mean more to Rhondda Fawr than we ever will to Slough."

A bouquet was presented to Mrs Vic Davies by Delydd Evans.

Financially the meeting, covering collection and literature sales, brought in £300.

At the adoption of Mr Vic Davies as Plaid Cymru candidate (left to right) Mr Arthur Donaldson, chairman of the Scottish National Party; Mr Vic Davies and Mr Gwynfor Evans, M.P., president of Plaid Cymru.

Rhondda West By-election

In our minds, Hughes tells valley

Western Mail Reporter

GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED factories for areas like Rhondda are in the mind of both the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. James Callaghan, and the Secretary of State for Wales, Mr. Cledwyn Hughes.

This was revealed last night by Mr. Hughes, when he appeared at a meeting at Blaenrhondda in support of Mr. Alec Jones, Labour candidate in the Rhondda West by-election.

Mr. I. I. Jones, a local member of Rhondda Borough Council, asked him, "Don't you think that one Government-sponsored factory in Rhondda employing 1,500 to 2,000 people would solve our unemployment problem?"

Mr. Hughes said he did not disagree with the suggestion. There were a number of Government projects in the pipeline and he hoped to bring one of these to the valley.

"You can look forward to a better future than past," he said. "No one can say Rhondda has had a fair share of the prosperity."

Text book

Rhondda could be revived—but not under the dead hand of Labour, Mr. Gareth Neale, the Conservative candidate, said at Treorchy last night.

"The Labour leaders govern on the basis of text book series with little knowledge of how they will work out in practice," he said. "In many senses Plaid Cymru suffer from the same complaint.

"The people of Rhondda are realists—it would not be sufficient in this by-election to protest against Labour's mismanagement by staying away from the polls and much less by voting for the party which has no strength in Parliament."

The Communist candidate, Mr. Arthur True, speaking at Pentre, said that the abstention of 62 Labour M.P.s in the defence vote showed that Mr. Wilson's military strategy was losing support of all sides of the Labour Party.

"Mr. Wilson is bankrupting the nation to pay for a programme of national insecurity," he said.

Industries

Plaid Cymru had the only positive programme to meet the great problems of the valley their candidate Mr. Vic Davies said last night. "Our first priority is a massive drive to establish 100 light industries in Rhondda," he added. "A government which took seriously our 9.1 per cent. unemployed and 1,000 a year migration could do the job in 18 months."

It would cost the same as the second Polaris submarine which was launched last Saturday. "The Chancellor of the Exchequer conveniently forgot to mention it the following night in the Rhondda," said Mr. Davies.

Their second priority was to treble the expenditure on roads and communications and electrify railways.

● Pontypridd and Rhondda hospital management committee have turned down a Plaid Cymru request to allow party canvassers into the wards.

Parties jump on rebels warning

Western Mail Reporter

MR. Wilson's warning that party rebels will not be tolerated was taken up last night by the Conservative and Plaid Cymru candidates in the Rhondda West by-election.

Mr. Gareth Neale, the **Tory** candidate said "In view of this the position of the Labour candidate if he ever gets to Westminster, is intriguing.

"Mr. Jones has said he will be a Rhondda rebel — will he be one of the Labour M.P.s who will not get party support if they bring the Government down and then seek re-election?"

Mr. Neale, speaking at a series of club meetings, was supported by Mr. Frank Taylor, M.P. for Manchester Moss Side.

Disaster

"The first two Labour Governments ended in disaster and nothing is more certain that this third Labour Government will end the same way," said Mr. Taylor.

"Abroad there is despair and despondency at our policies. Consider the situations created solely and entirely by Harold Wilson — Gibraltar, Aden, Malta, Rhodesia and the serious brush-off he personally met in France and Germany on the question of the Common Market."

At Cwmparc last night Mr. Vic Davies, **Plaid Cymru**, said, "Mr. Wilson's warning that rebels within his party will not be tolerated put paid to the local candidate's promise to be a rebel."

There had not been a rebel fighter for Wales in the Labour Party for 40 years and one Plaid Cymru M.P. was doing more for Wales than the other 35.

Off beam

Speaking at the Cambrian Miners' Club, Mr. Alec Jones, the **Labour** candidate, said that any suggestion by his opponents that leasehold was irrelevant was "way off the beam."

"This matter is very close to the hearts of Rhondda people," he said. It has removed fears and anxieties for possibly some 20,000 owner-occupiers in the valley who have bought or are purchasing their own homes."

Mr. Arthur True, the **Communist** candidate addressed open-air meetings outside the employment exchanges at Tonypandy and Treorchy yesterday. He accused the other parties of fearing to tackle the unemployment problem at the roots.

"Pleading with the millionaires to bring factories to Rhondda is like asking brewery directors to sign the pledge."

Things worse now, says Sir Keith

Western Mail Reporter

"THE Socialist Government had been in office for nearly 30 months, and the country was worse off than when they came to power," Sir Keith Joseph, Opposition front-bench spokesman on trade and power, said at Treorchy last night.

"No party is perfect—no government is always right—but the Socialist Government has blundered from the start," said Sir Keith.

"They have given fine promises, on which they have won two elections, but these have been broken."

The Government promises on growth, the national plan, and Rhodesia had all failed, he said.

The Socialists had no hope to offer, except that by constant belt-tightening, with luck things might stay as they are, which, in the Rhondda, can be no great comfort.

A message

Mr. Vic Davies, **Plaid Cymru**, said at Blaenrhondda, "As Plaid Cymru candidate it is natural I should give you a St. David's Day message.

"My message is that the people of Rhondda and Wales should follow the example of the English and all other nations, to stick up for their country and demand the right to order their own affairs.

"On this St. David's Day, when unemployment is only 1.7 per cent. in England but 9.1 per cent. in Rhondda, my message has a most practicable application—only the new spirit in Wales will compel the authorities to adopt a crash programme to relieve the unemployment and migration."

The **Labour** candidate, Mr. Alec Jones, last night told pensioners at Llwynypia, "Many of you, who own your own homes, have feared that you might lose them, and along with me, and thousands of young married couples, you appreciate the true value to Rhondda of the new leasehold reform bill."

Mr. Arthur True, **Communist**, said at his native township, Treherbert, "Rhondda today is a monument to past neglect and present incompetence of the private profit system.

"We shall never get full employment and a secure future in the valleys until the Government decides to show the big firms and financial interests who is the boss."

BY-ELECTION ROUND-UP

Plaid's machine in top gear

1,500 CANVASS VALLEY

Western Mail Reporter

THE Plaid machine has moved full force into Rhondda West. Last night the party claimed 1,500 workers had been "in the field" for Thursday's by-election—the largest number ever to operate in the valley.

Labour, as well as canvassing the whole constituency, have contacted 50 Rhondda miners who have moved with their families to the Llantrisant area but still have a vote.

The Conservative organisation, based at Pentre, had a feeling of "quiet optimism and satisfaction" last night, having sent election addresses to the whole of the constituency.

The Communists have been concentrating on evening work when they have had up to 60 canvassers—mainly local members.

Warning

Mr. William Deedes, Minister Without Portfolio in the last Conservative Government, said last night at Liwynypia, that Rhondda could be a warning light to the Labour Party as Orpington was to the Conservatives.

He was speaking in support of the Tory candidate, Mr. Gareth Neale.

Some Labour supporters were "close to alarm" about the electoral situation in Rhondda West and a bad result in this Labour stronghold would be a severe blow to the Government, said Mr. Deedes.

A great deal of "insidious nonsense" was talked about the economics of the 13 years of Tory administration.

In the 12 years before Labour took office, the manufacturing industries in Wales expanded at twice the national average.

Two tasks

Llanelli's M.P., Mr. James Griffiths, said the Government faced two major tasks in the Welsh valleys.

They involved finding a secure place for coal in the revolution in fuel technology and providing new industry to give the communities fresh jobs and a new foundation.

It was "a tough job" in the Rhondda as in the other valleys, said Mr. Griffiths, speaking in support of Labour's candidate, Mr. Alec Jones.

But he was sure a well-equipped coal industry still had an important role to play in the economy of South Wales.

Run down

Referring to new industry and jobs, he said, "The Labour Government record in this field is a clear indication of our resolve to tackle this problem resolutely."

Mr. Vic Davies, the Plaid Cymru candidate, speaking throughout the constituency yesterday, said, "There are at least 400 empty houses in the Rhondda — in no town or valley in England does this sort of thing occur nor would it be tolerated.

"This is only another indication of the run down of these valleys which London government deliberately allow," he added.

Communist candidate, Mr. Arthur True, said at Treorchy that 12 months of the Wilson wage freeze had shown the most sincere Labour supporters that the present course would be fatal for their movement.

The secret swede-scrumper cashes in on his boyhood

ALL RIGHT, so the earth is flat, so the apple grew out of Newton's head and England did not win the World Cup.

Alec Jones should still go in for Rhondda West. Labour he is, you see.

They say it here as though it is something a little more fundamental than the Creation.

And all the bitterness, and resentment, at a 9.1 per cent. unemployment rate and pits closed under a Labour Government will not upset the basic divine-law of this pinched, house-clogged little valley.

Yet nothing here is the same as it used to be. Plaid Cymru, the Welsh Nationalist Party, are here. At Carmarthen last year their man Gwnfor Evans sensationally turned the tables on Labour.

This time the Nationalist is Victor Davies, with his round, shining Welsh face.

But Mr. Davies is no Gwynfor Evans, Rhondda West is no Carmarthen, and there is a difference between thinking the unthinkable and actually doing it.

There are, at a rough calculation of canvass returns, something like 40 per cent. of "don't knows" in this by-election.

Cosseted

That, so far, is the protest. I think Mr. Davies is going to be second in the poll, far ahead of Gareth Neale, the Tory, and Arthur True, the Communist.

Everything Plaid Cymru fights for is going for them here. This is Wales, neglected, while England, they say, is cosseted.

There are 800 people a year leaving the valley. There are 400 empty, unsold houses; 2,350 people on the dole; poor health services; poor communications and only one pit left in the constituency.

Plaid Cymru are knocking on doors and running the adjectives off the duplicator. And it is being listened to.

Doorstepping with Victor Davies proves it. Out of 50 people we spoke to in Treorchy, more Welsh-speaking than the rest of the towns, 15 people said they would vote for him.

That is a 30 per cent. vote—16,000 plus out of an electorate of 31,189, and five times the Party vote in 1966.

Added to that, 1,200 posters have been distributed to householders, there were 500 people at his adoption meeting and a motorcade through the Rhondda is planned for this weekend.

It is heady stuff—until you drive down the valley between the slate-roofed, railway-carriage houses and see Alec Jones talking to right old age pensioners in a hall called "The Old Engine Shed."

It is only right, because the secretary forgot to post the letters telling members that Mr. Jones was coming to speak.

He is talking about a new health clinic. "You know where I mean—way down the long side where Tommy Jones has got his garage, now.

"I've known this hall since I was a boy. I can tell you now Mr. Churchill, if you missed some of your prize swedes off your stall, it was me. We used to climb in this hall here on a rainy day to have ourselves one of your swedes."

It is a beautiful performance. By voice, manner, birth, and breeding it is pure Rhondda. And although Labour are obviously worried — Callaghan and Foot have been down, Herbison and Marsh are on their way—Alec Jones is sure he will win.

He promises to be a 'Rhondda Rebel,' is running public meetings, house-to-house canvasses and meeting people on the doorstep. All unknown for a Labour candidate.

The promises are for new factories on cleared tip sites; 2,000 jobs in and near the Rhondda; better health services and a new Rhondda.

The one thing against Mr. Jones may be that he is not a miner. But then, none of the others are. He is a teacher. The Welsh Nationalist and the Tory are lecturers and Mr. True is an electrician.

First time

It is however, the first time in living memory that a non-National Union of Mineworkers' Labour candidate has been up for election.

General Election Results, 1966: I. Thomas (Lab.) 19,060; V. Davies (Welsh Nat.) 2,172; Dr. B. S. Hill (Cons.) 1,955; A. True Comm.) 1,053. Labour majority 16,888.

Candidates, 1967: A. Jones (Lab.); V. Davies (Welsh Nat.); G. Neale (Cons.); A. True, (Comm.).

Electorate 31,189. Polling day March 2.

THE LITTLE ELECTION

VOTES IN Parliament and opinion polls seem to be warning the Government of waning popularity. The real test will be in the five by-elections now pending.

Three constituencies in England, Scotland and Wales give their verdicts next week—Rhondda West, Nuneaton and Pollock. All were held by Labour at the last General Election.

Two others, Honiton and Brierley Hill, both Tory-held, poll later this month.

Sun writers will give close-up views of all the election fights. First, **JOHN DODD** looks at Rhondda West.

Gareth Neale (Conservative) talks to a voter, Mr. John Rabaiotti, in Ton Pentre.

Alec Jones (Labour) has his rosette pinned to his coat by Miss Ruth Pinkney outside the Labour office at Pentre. Watching is agent Mr. Emrys Jones.

Just who is right in the Rhondda?

By GEORGE GALE: The Rhondda, Tuesday

LISTEN to four different predictions on the outcome of the Rhondda West by-election. They come from a campaign leader, two agents and a candidate.

Not all of them can be right and possibly they could all be wrong.

Time will tell.

SAYS Mr. Emrys Jones, the Labour campaign leader: "According to our canvass, the Labour Party will maintain its percentage of the votes cast."

SAYS the Welsh Nationalist agent Mr. Cennard Davies: "Mr. Vic Davies has a fighting chance of winning the by-election for Plaid Cymru."

SAYS the Communist Party candidate, Mr. Arthur True: "I said I would double or treble my vote, and as a result of my canvass I would say this would be the minimum.

"There are still a large number of people turning it over in their minds. You see how many people have shifted from their traditional Labour vote."

SAYS Tory area agent Mr. Bob Wolstenholme: "I think that we are going to poll quite strongly as I am quite confident we shall increase our percentage share of the poll.

Arthur True (Communist) talks to shoppers in Treherbert.

Vic Davies (Plaid Cymru) looks through the papers at his home before leaving for canvassing.

Canvass 'most encouraging' for Plaid Cymru in Rhondda West

PLAID Cymru, still the most feared opponent of Labour in the Rhondda West by-election, is making a marked impression in the constituency.

Mr. Vic Davies, the Plaid candidate, said the first complete canvass carried out by young workers of the party had been most encouraging.

"Anything can happen here in the Rhondda—as at Carmarthen," he predicted. "The canvass showed quite clearly the fight in Rhondda West is between our National Party of Wales and the London Labour Party, and that party is obviously scared stiff and is therefore concentrating its big guns on us."

Mr. Alan Williams, Labour M.P. for Swansea West, said last night the Rhondda had a success story as well as one of industrial misfortune. More than 2,000 factory jobs were assured during the next four years.

Job claims

"And already the Treorchy Advance Factory has had to be expanded to four times its original planned size—and there is to be a new Advance Factory at Llwynypia," he added.

"Two industrialists from Tonyrefail and Gilfach Goch have occupied new factories at Penygraig and these will provide 300 jobs, mainly for men. And this may prove to be an under-estimate of the expansion at Penygraig.

"Work will start next month on the new industrial estate at Ynysmaerdy on the borders of the Rhondda and 700 new jobs are already assured there.

"And as one in six of Rhondda workers already travel to work outside I am sure others will grasp this opportunity at Ynysmaerdy."

The Labour Party has announced a formidable line-up of Labour speakers and now the Conservatives announce that Sir Keith Joseph, Shadow Minister for Steel and Trade, will head the Tories' attack.

Tory line-up

Sir Keith, who was Minister for Welsh Affairs from 1962 to 1964, will be the chief speaker at a public meeting in support of Mr. Gareth Neale, the Conservative candidate, at the new Upper Rhondda Secondary Modern School, Treorchy, next Tuesday evening.

Other Conservatives to speak at meetings in the constituency include Sir Edward Brown, M.P. for Bath; Mr. Fred Taylor (Moss Side) and Mr. Raymond Gower (Barry).

Mr. Michael Roberts, of Cardiff, who has fought Cardiff South-East, will address a meeting at Llwynypia and Tonypandy Conservative Club tomorrow evening.

RHONDDA WEST BY-ELECTION

Leasehold: Tories say Labour timed it all

By DAVID G. ROSSER

THE Government was accused yesterday by the Opposition of rushing the Parliamentary debate on the Bill for Leasehold Enfranchisement with an eye to the Rhondda by-election. The second reading debate on the bill, presented only last week, takes place in the House of Commons on Tuesday.

Last night the Commons tabled a reasoned amendment calling for vital changes in the proposed legislation to safeguard against what is described as "confiscatory terms."

Tory leaders are agreed on the principle of leasehold reform, but the amendment declares that while accepting that ground landlords should be permitted to buy or rent their house on fair terms, except where a property is to be redeveloped, the bill should not be given a second reading while it seeks to provide leasehold enfranchisement on confiscatory terms.

Important

The Opposition is following the policy set out in the last general election manifesto.

Because of the important bearing the bill has on the leasehold system applying to Wales, the Secretary of State for Wales, Mr. Cledwyn Hughes, will have the task of winding up the debate.

Mr. Fred Willey, the former Minister for Land and Natural Resources, will be the other Government front bench spokesman. For the Opposition the main speakers will be Mr. Anthony Barber and Mr. Graham Page.

Preparation for the committee stage of the bill are well in hand. It is expected that the committee will begin its work in about 10 days after the second reading.

Mrs. Eirene White, Minister of State for Welsh Affairs will be in charge of the Welsh interests of the bill in committee.

The pensioner is 'better off'

Western Mail Reporter

EVEN in the times of greatest difficulty the Labour Government has done everything possible to bring to old people, widows and disabled a better kind of life than they had before, Miss Margaret Herbison, Minister of Social Security, said yesterday during her whistle-stop tour of Rhondda West.

She told pensioners at Ystrad that as Minister she had sent out 11,000 letters to old people asking them to co-operate with Ministry officials and that over 9,000 people agreed to co-operate.

"We learned from this survey that there were 700,000 old people who could have had a supplementary benefit from the National Assistance Board, but had not applied," she said.

Terrible

Miss Herbison said that 250,000 of these were living well below National Assistance Board level and that was a "terrible indictment." She said that now about 600,000 had made applications under the new Ministry and already two-thirds of these had received a supplementary pension.

While Miss Herbison was attending the meeting Ystrad **Communist** supporters were outside distributing an open letter to the Minister from the Communist candidate, Mr. Arthur True.

Mr. True challenged the Minister to give old-aged pensioners a £6 a week pension as a right with no means test.

Tory candidate Mr. Gareth Neale, speaking at an Ystrad street meeting, said the fact that Government - sponsored factories for areas like Rhondda is no win the minds of the Chancellor and Secretary of State for Wales was a "strange coincidence."

Plaid Cymru candidate Mr. Vic Davies attacked the Government's report on Wales.

"The Government has made it clear that it is not concerned primarily with improving conditions in Wales itself," said Mr. Davies.

The report shows there are only four miles of motorway in Wales and a mere 34 miles of dual carriageways, he said.

Wilson's jobs promise

Western Mail Reporter

DURING the next four years the Rhondda could look forward to 1,600 new factory jobs, the Prime Minister said yesterday in a message to the Labour candidate for next week's Rhondda West parliamentary by-election.

Mr. Wilson said in his message to Mr. Alec Jones that the new industrial estate at Ynys Maerdy would provide at least 700 extra jobs, and in the Rhondda itself two advance factories were to be built soon.

"In 1963—the year before this Government came to power—only 4.2 per cent. of the industrial development certificates issued in Britain went to Wales," Mr. Wilson said.

"In the first three-quarters of 1966 the proportion had been multiplied by more than three—to 14.1 per cent. In the past two years we have authorised 24 Board of Trade advance factories for Wales, compared with six in the whole of the 13 years when the Conservatives were in power."

Mr. Wilson said Rhondda's main problem, employment, was not the only "long-standing and disregarded" one which the Government was tackling.

Plaid Cymru hoping for big swing in Rhondda

WRITS for the by-elections at Rhondda West and Glasgow Pollok were issued by the Speaker, Dr. Horace King, in the Commons today.

Rhondda West was held by the late Mr. Ieuwerth Thomas (Lab.) and Glasgow Pollok by the late Mr. Alex Garrow (Lab.).

In Rhondda no-one, with the possible exception of fervent Plaid Cymru supporters, expects anything but a Labour victory on March 9.

But already local Labour Party officials are anticipating a much reduced majority. They fear that because of the economic position and unemployment at around nine per cent, many of their supporters will abstain.

On the other hand Plaid Cymru, after an initial canvas of the whole constituency, are confidently forecasting that thousands of Socialist votes will be coming their way and that former Labour supporters are already pledging support for Mr. Vic Davies.

Tory hope

While conditions in Rhondda are far different from Carmarthen it is already accepted that Plaid Cymru will provide the chief opposition.

If the Plaid can build up its vote to around 8,000, and thus substantially reduce the Labour majority it will give the anti-Labour element a solid foundation on which to contest further elections and so bring out those who have abstained in the past because it was not worthwhile.

Even the Conservative candidate—always an also ran in Rhondda West, can achieve a moral success by saving his deposit, which will be the first time this has been done by a Conservative candidate.

The four prospective candidates already announced are: Mr. T. Alec Jones (Labour), Mr. Vic Davies (Plaid Cymru), Mr. Gareth J. Neale (Conservative) and Mr. Arthur True (Communist). The Liberals have also announced their intention to contest this election as have the National Party, based on Mr. Edward Martell's Freedom Group.

The Rhondda West figures at the last general election were: Mr. I. R. Thomas (Lab.) 19,060, Mr. V. Davies (Plaid Cymru) 2,172, Dr. R. Sandford-Hill (Con.) 1,955, A. True (Comm.) 1,832. Labour majority 16,888

Nationalists are setting a cracking pace in two by-elections

ONLY one thing seems certain in the by-election in the Pollok division of Glasgow—the Scottish Nationalists will capture a big share of the vote, but nobody seems certain as to which of the *other four or five* candidates will be deprived of it. With the Tories only 1,973 [illegible], Labour in a straight fight last time, not even the most experienced political experts will predict the result.

The Labour Party agent dismisses the National Party as "Tartan Tories." The Labour candidate even goes so far as to say that the SNP candidate, Mr George Leslie, will lose his deposit.

This is laughed at by the Nationalists, and it seems certain they will be in the first three. Heavy money is going on them and already the odds have narrowed from 200-1 to 10-1.

Many Labour supporters who would never vote Tory are not exactly thrilled with the performance of the Government. The freeze has left them cold.

Unemployment still goes up despite Government assurances that Scotland would be protected from the worst effects of the freeze, and it is Labour's strongest supporters who are being hit hardest.

One life-long Socialist said: "Wilson has a big majority, and the loss of this seat wouldn't make any difference. But I want to give the Government a jolt and the only way I can do it is vote Scottish Nationalist."

Now there is the "NALGO affair." Because the English wage negotiations were earlier than the Scottish negotiations, NALGO members south of the Border received a 7 per cent. rise on February 1; the Scots expected theirs on March 16. But they have been told it is frozen.

This has been an absolute "gift" to the Nationalists. On learning that Scotland's Secretary of State, Mr William Ross, still refuses to intervene in the dispute, a Scottish Nationalist said: "Willie Ross is the greatest asset the Nationalists have ever had. He is winning more votes for us than any other politician in the country."

The Conservatives are not ignoring the presence of the Nationalists. Professor Esmond Wright, the Tory candidate who is well known as a chairman of TV programmes in Scotland, sticks to his original calculation. "The votes the Nationalists get will be roughly two from Labour to every one from us."

The Government's defender, Mr Richard Douglas, Senior Lecturer in Economics at Queen's College, Dundee, says that housing is a major issue. "I can already detect some alarm among people in case council houses are put up for sale as has happened in Birmingham."

Mr David Miller, the Liberal, says: "The whole Liberal approach in Pollok has been the issue of neglect of Scotland. We have put forward a strong case for 'de-frosting' Scotland."

Mr Alex Murray, the Communist candidate, thinks council rents—about half the electorate live in council houses—is a big issue. "People are worried about the prospect of rents going up," he says.

GLASGOW POLLOK

By a Special Correspondent

RHONDDA WEST

By James Tucker

IN THE Ystrad Rhondda Labour Club and Institute, the Labour candidate in the Rhondda West by-election, Mr Alec Jones, admitted that he had come across one Socialist who said he was not going to vote for him. "He told me he would vote Conservative," Mr Jones added with relief.

The great and reasonable fear in the Labour camp is that dissatisfaction with the Government over the general run-down of the Rhondda and the 9.1 unemployment figure (against a national average of 2.6) will result in a large switch of votes to the Welsh Nationalists. In an area whose Socialist roots go as deep as Rhondda West's not many people could bring themselves to vote Conservative, even as a protest.

The Communists are also standing but the feeling is that they passed their peak in 1945 when Harry Pollitt stood for Rhondda East.

Since Carmarthen the Nationalists have been revitalised as a political force, but it's difficult to guage how much of the talk in their favour is only talk.

Mr Roy Stoddart, a college lecturer, of Sherwood Street, Llwynypia, and a Labour supporter, said: "When it comes to the crunch most people will probably vote Labour, whatever they say now. He thought that on polling day, March 9, Labour's majority might drop about 3,000 from the present 16,888.

But a housewife in the same street thought there was widespread criticism of Labour's choice of candidate. Mr Jones, 42, is a local schoolteacher and was agent for Mr I R Thomas, whose death caused the vacancy. "We should have gone outside for a national figure," she said. "Rhondda's troubles are so big and so long established that we need someone of exceptional dynamism. We should have done what Ebbw Vale did when they chose Michael Foot."

At by-elections, when their resources are not spread, the Nationalists can bring in supporters, especially students from all over Wales, as they did at Carmarthen. The Nationalist candidate, Mr Vic Davies, 49, a college lecturer, thinks that at the very least they should treble their vote.

Last time, they polled 2,172 and came a very bad second, losing their deposit. Mr Davies finds it significant that he has been asked into a great number of Labour clubs this time to address members.

In the Clydach Vale working men's club and institute, there was a good deal of bitterness about the closure of Cambrian Colliery last September, the last but one colliery in the constituency. "We have lost about 15 good members since then," said one man. "They've had to leave the area."

Another, Mr Glyn Davies, of Clydach Vale, who is still employed by the Coal Board, said he would be voting Nationalist as a protest.

The Communist candidate, Mr Arthur True, 46, an electrician, is the only non-educationist among the four. Mr Gareth Neale, the 31-year-old Conservative, is a lecturer in liberal studies. He is fighting his first by-election, a recognisable tradition for Conservatives in South Wales: They are thrown in at the deep end and, if they make creditable efforts to keep afloat, may be given something easier next time.

Perhaps he will benefit marginally from the general discontent. But the main beneficiaries will almost certainly be the Nationalists, and the Labour majority could fall sensationally.

Tory takes hard way in Brierley

The Brierley Hill constituency was once a powerful Tory stronghold, but in 1966 their lead dropped to 1,567. The by-election, caused by the death of Mr John Talbot, will be a hard-fought and closely-watched contest.

The Conservatives have chosen for their candidate, Mr Fergus Montgomery, a 39-year-old former schoolmaster, who in 1959, won Newcastle-on-Tyne East by only 98 votes (but lost it in 1964 by 1,644).

"I am used to doing things the hard way," he said. "I intend to take the place apart and knock on every door. Elections are won on the doorstep."

Labour's choice of candidate, Mr Derek Forwood a 39-year-old insurance broker from Nuneaton, was a surprise in some circles. Many thought that a local councillor, Dr Kate Rogers, who whittled down the Tory lead at the 1966 election would be an automatic choice.

IT LOOKS LIKE A HEAVY POLL IN RHONDDA

AFTER a quiet start polling speeded up in the Rhondda West by-election today. One official said: "It looks like being as heavy as at a general election."

All the candidates, Mr. Alec Jones, Labour, Mr. Gareth Neale, Conservative, Mr. Vic Davies, Plaid Cymru, and Mr. Arthur True, Communist, were out and about in the constituency at 7 a.m. as the first voters arrived at the polls.

The Plaid Cymru camp were forecasting that if they could get 9,000 votes they would win and repeat the sensation of the Carmarthen by-election last July, when Mr. Gwynfor Evans became the party's first M.P.

The by-election was caused by the death of Labour member Mr. Iorwerth Thomas.

Polling is also taking place today in two other by-elections—in the Labour marginal seat of Glasgow Pollok and at Nuneaton.

Seat held by Cousins

At Pollok, where the by-election was caused by the death of Mr. Alexander Garrow, there are five candidates, Labour, Conservative, Scottish Nationalist, Liberal and Communist.

Last time in a straight fight with the Conservatives, Labour had a majority of 1,973.

Despite distaste, polling was brisk at Nuneaton where the by-election was caused by the resignation of Mr. Frank Cousins, former Minister of Technology, who had a majority of 11,403 at last year's general election.

The results from all three constituencies are expected tonight—at about 11.15 at Rhondda West, 11.30 at Nuneaton and around midnight at Pollok.

Other pending by-elections are at Honiton (Devon) and Brierly Hill (Staffs.), both Conservative seats.

Polling at Honiton is on March 14; the Brierly Hill date has not yet been announced.

ALEC JONES
Labour

VIC DAVIES
Plaid Cymru

Mystery

WHERE, OH WHERE, HAS LABOUR'S SUPPORT GONE?

in the Rhondda

By GEORGE GALE

THE RHONDDA, Monday.

THE Labour Party's technique in by-elections varies little—it concentrates on getting its known supporters to the polling booths, and leaves stunts and gimmicks to the others.

It is easy, therefore, to underestimate its efforts during a campaign, for they are seldom spectacular.

Nevertheless, there is something curious about what the Labour Party is doing, or not doing, in the Rhondda.

To be sure, in the past, the party has never had to work exactly hard for its votes here. And this is the first by-election in Rhondda West, so one would not expect immaculate organisation.

Appeal

BUT, given the undoubted fact that all observers are prophesying a big, or very big, collapse of the Labour vote, one might reasonably anticipate its loyal supporters to be coming to the aid of the party.

Far, apparently, from it.

A letter being sent out to party workers from the Ton Pentre ward Labour Party (where the central committee rooms are) runs :—

"Dear colleague, The response from ward members to date has been most disappointing and there is still a great deal of work to be done.

I should be glad if you would inform me of your intentions on polling day regarding time and details of work you can undertake, whether you have a car for party use and whether or not any friends are available for any of the above. . . ."

It is, indeed, politically astonishing the extent to which the Labour Party here appears to be on the defensive.

At the General Election its three opponents all lost their deposits, yet now, less than a year later, the Nationalists are going around as if they had a sporting chance of winning.

Logic

I have just had a few drinks with Mr. Vic Davies, the Welsh Nationalist candidate.

Seeing the Plaid Cymru rosettes, the pub landlord came across and said : "What they want here is to use a bit of honest logic. Not too much, mind you. But a bit. We want another Carmarthen (where the Welsh Nationalist leader defeated Labour last autumn).

"If you put a Labour man by here, all he wants is a Government job or a seat in the Cabinet. But we want a local M.P., someone for the Rhondda."

Candidates : Trevor Jones (Lab.), Gareth Neale (Tory), Victor Davies (Welsh Nat.), Arthur True (Comm.). General Election : Labour, 19,000; Welsh Nat., 2,172 ; Tory, 1,955; Comm., 1,853. Lab. majority 16,888. Polling : Thursday.

Plaid sets sights on new Carmarthen

Western Mail Reporter

THOUGH no date has been set for the Rhondda West parliamentary by-election, the Plaid Cymru election machinery has been set up and even at this early stage enthusiastic supporters are forecasting "a second Carmarthen." In the past few weekends about 100 young volunteers, mainly from Rhondda, have almost completed a canvass of every house in the constituency.

"And the results of this initial canvass have been most encouraging," said Mr. Cennard Davies, the party agent. "Even in what is considered to be strong Labour households, we have been promised firm support at this election, and the electorate appear to consider this election as a straight fight between Labour and Plaid Cymru."

Mr. Vic Davies, the Plaid Cymru candidate, said last night, "Some of the canvassing team from Carmarthen who have been helping us in Rhondda, have told me that this initial canvass has proved far more encouraging than the initial canvass in Carmarthen last year.

"During this election Rhondda people will be primarily concerned with local problems—namely, unemployment, pit closures and new factories and jobs.

"And we feel that there is sufficient dissatisfaction with the present Government, particularly as Rhondda is suffering heavily from unemployment, that many hitherto strong Labour supporters are turning now to Plaid Cymru."

Candidates

The first salvo from the anticipated "big guns" during the by-election will be fired next Saturday at Mr. Davies's adoption meeting at Treorchy.

Speakers will include Mr. Gwynfor Evans, M.P. for Carmarthen; Mr. Arthur Donaldson, chairman of the Scottish Nationalist Party, and Dr. Phil Williams, of Cambridge University, who fought Caerphilly for the party last time.

The Labour, Conservative and Communist parties have all announced their candidates, and both the Liberals and the new National Party have announced their intention to contest Rhondda West. There is a possibility also of an Independent standing.

Rhondda West is regarded as one of the safest Labour seats in the country, and at the general election the late M.P., Mr. I. R. Thomas, had a majority of more than 16,000.

Rhondda result about midnight

POLLING takes place tomorrow in the Rhondda West parliamentary by-election and the result is expected to be announced about midnight in the Llwynypia College of Further Education.

In a four-cornered contest the candidates are Mr. Alec Jones, Labour; Mr. Gareth Neale, Conservative; Mr. Vic Davies, Plaid Cymru; and Mr. Arthur True, Communist.

Rhondda voters will go to the polls from 7.0 a.m. to 9.0 p.m. tomorrow at 37 polling stations.

Well organised

Traditionally one of the safest Labour seats in the country, Rhondda West for the first time has a wave of anti-Labour feeling sweeping through it, with a well organised and well-manned Plaid Cymru election machine determined to repeat their historic success at Carmarthen.

Rhondda West traditionally is a heavy polling constituency and at the General Election over 80 per cent. of the voters polled. But estimates of tomorrow's poll in this the first ever Parliamentary by-election in the constituency vary from 70 per cent. to as low as 50 per cent.

This means that only between 16,000 and 22,000 voters are expected to attend the polls and the position is such that the lower the poll the greater the chance of a real sensational upset.

Aware of danger

The Labour Party are well aware of the dangers of a low poll and have completed arrangements to have a sub-committee room open tomorrow near each of the polling stations. This well planned organisation might well prove a vital factor when the votes are counted.

At the General Election Labour had a majority of nearly 17,000 but tomorrow it's possible that 10,000 votes or even less could win the seat. Although both Conservative and Communist forecast an increase in their polls, the battle is a straight issue between Labour and Plaid Cymru.

Mr. Cennard Davies, the Plaid Cymru agent, for the first time hinted at a possible Plaid victory in the election.

"We are now convinced that Mr. Vic Davies will poll well and returns from our canvassers throughout the constituency indicate the distinct possibility of a Plaid victory," said Mr. Davies.

Important meetings

Plaid Cymru have a complete marked canvass of the constituency, more help than ever before, and an abundance of cars to carry the majority of their supporters to the poll.

Tonight both Labour and Plaid Cymru hold important eve of a poll meetings. The Labour meetings are at the Tynewydd Labour Club, Treherbert, and the Tonypandy G.S. and will have as chief speaker Mr. Richard Marsh, Minister of Power, while the Plaid Cymru meeting at the Pare and Dare Hall, Treorchy, will be addressed by Mr. Gwynfor Evans M.P.

● **A majority of 5,000 is on the cards—Page 5.**

A MOST exciting by-election has reached its climax in the Rhondda West parliamentary constituency, and on Thursday evening the result was awaited with bated breath not only in Wales, but perhaps even more so in London.

Coverage of the campaign has been of the widest. With the gradual steaming up of the campaigns of the respective candidates in the past week intensive opinion and gallup polls have been held by the Press and sound and vision personnel of B.B.C. and I.T.V.

Canvassers and candidates, as well as the electorate, have been avidly interviewed.

The candidates themselves, with their officials and supporters, have worked themselves almost into the ground.

Labour Hope

On Tuesday Labour agent Mr E. Jones said he believed his party's canvass of constituents throughout the parliamentary division has been the most thorough the party has ever carried out in the Valleys, and he was optimistic.

"Considering it is almost inevitable the poll will be quite a reduced one, I believe on percentage. We shall do as well as last time," he said.

However, there is a large body of the public who would not agree with him, bearing in mind the impact made by the Plaid Cymru campaign, combined with the bitter protests of the unemployed and redundant.

The Conservatives, represented by Mr Gareth Neale, also declared themselves satisfied in mid-week with results. Traditionally anti-Tory though the Valleys are, it has been said that the war and post-war prosperity built up in Rhondda would automatically swing people toward capitalism, the basic theme being once you've got money, conserve it. The party could also gain some protest votes.

For this reason too, the Communist vote could show an increase, Mr Arthur True being like Plaid's Vic Davies, a popular man.

So it was anybody's guess until after the count on Thursday night.

This was the state of the parties in Rhondda West at the last General Election: Labour 19,060; Plaid Cymru 2,172; Conservative 1,955; Communist 1,853. Labour majority 16,888.

RHONDDA WEST BY-ELECTION

Callaghan puts offer to Bonn

CHANCELLOR Mr. James Callaghan last night offered to do a deal with West Germany to settle the dispute over the maintenance of Britain's Rhine Army.

He said that if West German finance minister Franz-Joseph Strauss cared to pay for the foreign exchange costs of the troops by purchasing goods in Britain to send to India or any other part of the world he would accept the bargain.

"Let me make it quite clear that we intend to reduce our forces in order that the foreign exchange costs are met," he said.

"We are not asking the Germans to meet the costs of the troops. What we are asking for is that the foreign exchange costs should be met in Deutschmarks. They are not paying for our troops by doing that."

Silence

The Chancellor was speaking at Ton Pentre in support of the Labour candidate for the Rhondda West by-election Mr. Alec Jones.

Conservative candidate Mr. Gareth Neale said at Tonypandy on Saturday that there had been "deadly silence" from the Labour camp on his offer of a debate on Rhondda's high rate of unemployment.

He said the reason was that the Labour candidate had no answer to his criticism of the Government's policy.

The Plaid Cymru candidate, Mr. Vic Davies, said last night, "Not for 40 years has any party had so many election workers in the Rhondda Valley as we had on Saturday."

Record

More than 200 members were presenting their policies—most of them from the valley and the remainder from neighbouring areas. They had visited every house in Rhondda West.

"They found that voters generally want a real change in this election, which only Plaid Cymru can provide," he said.

Communist candidate Mr. Arthur True said at Treorchy at the weekend that Communists had a record of fighting for the interests of the Rhondda for the last 40 years and today were alone in pressing for the radical social changes which were the key to the future."

Judgment day tomorrow for nationalists

Tomorrow is a day of judgment for the nationalist parties in Scotland and Wales.

Nine month ago, at Carmarthen, the Welsh Nationalists became the first nationalist party to sit at Westminster since the war. At the general election, four months earlier, the Scottish Nationalists had made impressive gains in many constituencies and had polled more than one third of the vote in one of them. Now, both parties are making bold claims for the vote they stand to get at tomorrow's byelections.

WHAT happens tomorrow may well have a big influence in shaping the future of the nationalist parties. It seems likely that the big improvement in the nationalist position in Scotland was set off most of all by the excellent showing of the party's man in the 1962 West Lothian byelection.

The parties are fighting tomorrow on less promising ground than West Lothian or Carmarthen. Rhondda West and Pollok are urban seats, and the strength of the parties so far has mainly been in the country.

A big vote in Rhondda West would be Plaid Cymru's first major success in the towns. A big vote in Pollok would show that the nationalists are able to win votes outside the seven counties along the Forth and Tay which provided their main successes in the 1966 election.

Growing membership

If they can show that their growing memberships (about 42,000 in Scotland and 21,000 in Wales) are matched by a growing vote, then fewer people will dismiss them as a picturesque local eccentricity.

But would success for these parties in fact demonstrate a growing determination in Scotland and Wales to cut ties with Westminster? Almost certainly not. To a great extent, whatever the party leaders may preach from platforms, the vote they get is likely to be a negative one: a protest rather than a positive affirmation.

Both Wales and Scotland have for years now been returning Labour majorities to Westminster. In 1959, for instance, when the Conservatives had a majority of 100 in the Commons, the Welsh and Scottish members were predominantly on the Left.

It was possible to feel in those days that if only there were a change of government at Westminster, if only Scottish and Welsh intentions were not frustrated by the Conservative English, things would be better, people would be better housed, and new jobs would come to areas where they were scarce.

Labour's own insistence in days of opposition on the neglect of Wales and Scotland may now—the Nationalists argue—be backfiring on them. The protest is against the Government in power, which happens to be Labour, but which also happens to have made a noisy song and dance before the 1964 election about the real need for regional devolution.

It is possible, say the Nationalists, that Labour may now be suffering extra unpopularity through having made a correct diagnosis of regional maladies in 1964 and having done little of note since then to put them right.

In Rhondda West, which still watches the drift from the valleys and still sees little done to staunch it, the Plaid Cymru candidate, Victor Davies, expects to gain votes from this feeling of disillusion. "They waited 13 years for progress from a Labour Government. But, as Gwynfor Evans told them would happen, it was no better."

In Scotland, the nationalist argument is the same. Emigration continues: industrial development certificates do not impress people. The disappearance of old jobs, the failure to provide new ones, and the lack of investment in the regions all feed the protest movement.

The Tories are unlikely to pick up any votes, since their own record is far from forgotten: it is for the nationalists, along with the Liberals and Communists, to collect the spoils.

They feel these things in the North-west and the North-east, too, but no one there demands secession from England. The fact that Wales and Scotland have independent history and independent culture certainly adds to the power of the ideas which the nationalists preach, and certainly plays a basic part in the thinking of the party leaders.

But if nationalism, rather than regional protest, moves the mass of voters at all it will mainly be from a feeling that, as Welshmen, or as Scots, "we're all in this together." It is on these imprecise and perhaps ambivalent feelings that the SNP slogan, "Put Scotland first," so cleverly plays.

Change in character

The change in the character of these movements helps, too: the Scottish Nationalists are not fiery old men in tweeds, preaching an antique faith, or disrespectful youngsters raiding Westminster to steal the Stone of Scone.

Welsh Nationalists are no longer thought of first and foremost as blowers up of reservoirs, (though the nationalists have always said that they were not responsible for that).

But the divergence between the platforms of these parties and the motives of protest on which they hope to draw their vote is bound to be exposed if the parties gain enough ground to be in reasonable reach of authority.

Plaid Cymru calls for a self-governing Wales within the Commonwealth, with a seat in the United Nations. Relying on studies made at the University of Aberystwyth in the mid-50s (ancient by the standards of economists and soon to be brought up to date) it says no subsidy from Westminster would be needed. Since it is resolved to ban the bomb, it expects defence costs to drop sharply on independence. The Plaid does not anticipate any barriers to the free movement of capital and goods within a Great Britain Common Market, though it would, for instance, sell its water to English cities. The party's economic policy is based on a cooperative economy dominated by worker-owned cooperatives and private home ownership.

The Plaid also wants to see a completely bilingual nation, with Welsh given full parity with English.

Swiss parallel

The Plaid points to Switzerland and Denmark as the sort of small, advance democratic country that Wales could be, and quotes with heavy irony the self-congratulatory phrases with which Mr Wilson celebrates Britain's gift of freedom to other countries.

The Scots do not propose complete separation overnight. In spite of party propaganda, the aim at present is to work for better terms for Scotland in its association with England.

In time, though, Scotland would have its own Parliament with control over the nation's affairs. A State bank would be set up which would have arrangements with the Bank of England "to control our balance of payments," and there would be a Customs union with England.

Scotland would be able to support itself on a higher standard of living than it has today by spending less on defence (British defence policy is described as "useless to Scotland.") There would be no spending on nuclear weapons.

Scotland would retain a big enough army to defend her own territory and to help the UN, together with a small navy and air force. The money saved in this way would pay, the Nationalists claim, for a cut in income tax, higher spending on fuel and transport policies designed to strengthen Scotland, and for better unemployment, sickness, and retirement pension benefits.

Victor Davies, at Rhondda West, thinks his party needs to gain only six seats at Westminster to bring Wales self-government. The Scottish Nationalists, more realistically, say they would not ask for full control until they commanded 36 of the 71 Scottish seats.

Some Nationalists look forward to the day when this is achieved, since they will then be able to resume more orthodox political affiliations. Davies himself is widely described as a Welsh Socialist, who would be happy to find himself part of the Labour majority in a Cardiff Parliament.

For many activists, nationalism is a crusade, as much a movement of idealists as socialism was when Labour began winning Wales. But, like most crusades, the movement may well enlist the support of people who are not committed to its stated purposes.

How many would defect if their economic lot improved; how many simply see self-rule as a blanket cure for all political ills; how many would falter and turn back if the link with London were about to be broken: all this we are unlikely to know until the crusaders are at least within sight of Jerusalem—if that day ever comes.

HOW THE NATIONALISTS FARED

Results at 1964 and 1966 general elections

	1964	1966
Wales		
Seats fought:	23	20
Deposits saved:	2	2
Best results:	Caernarvon (21.4) Merioneth (16.8)	Caernarvon (21.7) Carmarthen (16.1)
Scotland		
Seats fought:	15	23
Deposits saved:	3	13
Best results:	West Lothian (30.5) Perth and E. Perthshire (17.4) Kinross (14.1)	West Lothian (35.5) West Stirling (26.0) Kinross (20.5) Clackmannan and East Stirling (20.1) Midlothian (16.3)

The figures in brackets show the party's percentage share of the poll

... and Tory hint for Wales

Mr Edward du Cann, Conservative Party chairman, hinted yesterday that by the next election his party might have gone a long way towards offering self-government to Wales. He also hinted why.

"It has crossed by mind," he admitted to journalists in Rhondda West, that if Scotland and Wales have self-government there might be a permanent Conservative government in England." It was too early to commit the party but regional policy groups were now at work. "The more power you can concentrate in local hands the better," he said. The Conservatives, like the Liberals, were opposed to the non-elected regional boards.

DIFFERENT NEXT TI

Plaid Cymru gets within 2,000 of

The valley that shocked itself

Banner-wavers struggle with drenched police

By MICHAEL LLOYD-WILLIAMS

POLICE struggled to control the banner-waving crowd as the result burst from the purple-draped counting hall. Rhondda West had shocked itself. Moments before all four candidates had been pacing the room silently, their wives ready to console or cheer.

Tension had been mounting as the piles of voting papers multiplied on the desks allocated to the Labour and Plaid Cymru candidates.

Originally, they had looked about even. Then it became clear to nail-biting supporters and officials that only a small majority was in sight.

Rain-sodden

Speculation spread like nerve-gas through barred doors and over broad police backs to the rain-sodden electors outside.

Chanting, singing, drinking from beer flagons, they impatiently awaited the David or Goliath news.

Then the glass doors flew open to present the result and the attenuated Labour Goliath to his heckling audience.

Rosettes were crushed underfoot and banners collapsed. Sweating police officers struggled to save Mr. Alec Jones from a crushing defeat of another sort.

His victory speech was an unheard shout, inches from the unsympathetic faces of Plaid believers from all parts of Wales.

He quickly turned back in disgust to give the rotund Mr. Vic Davies his turn and the Plaid hero bounced his way round the forecourt of the college on the shoulders of the crowd, his balding head glistening with rain and his face wreathed in bewildered smiles.

Soon even the indomitable Mr. Davies gave up and sought refuge back inside the building. He was almost the last man to leave it.

"Celebration?" he said quietly, before going home wearily early today to his Treorchy semi-detached. "I hadn't really thought of it. All this has been such hard work. And today I have to get back to my job as a lecturer after my two weeks off for the party."

The congratulatory telegrams are already arriving at his house in Prospect Place.

Plaid Cymru reporters chair Mr. Vic Davies after the result was declared at Llwynypia. He lost, but claims a moral victory.

DIFFERENT NEXT TIME, SAYS LABOUR

Plaid Cymru gets within 2,000 of Labour at Rhondda West

MR. ALEC JONES (left), who held the seat for Labour with a majority of 2,306, is congratulated by Mr. Vic Davies, the Welsh Nationalist runner-up, after the declaration of the poll in the Rhondda West by-election.

SEAT WILL NOT BECOME MARGINAL ONE – NEW MP

LABOUR'S new MP for Rhondda West, Mr. Alec Jones, said today he was convinced the seat would not become a marginal one, despite the greatly reduced majority in yesterday's by-election.

Last night Labour got home by a hair's breadth as Plaid Cymru cut the Socialist majority from 16,888 to 2,306.

Forty-two-year-old schoolteacher, Mr. Jones, of Tonypandy, said today: "My small majority was a protest vote in which the people of Rhondda West used their right to express their deep feelings and channel their expressions into an opposition party," he said.

Winning candidate Mr. Alec Jones after the Rhondda West result was declared. It will be a different story at the next general election, he said.

Plaid set to step in as Labour's main rivals

TURNING POINT AT RHONDDA

Mr. Vic Davies—not the winner, but perhaps the most successful candidate at Rhondda West relaxes at his home last night.

NEWS FOCUS

OFFICIALS of both major parties spent much of yesterday explaining away the Rhondda West by-election result as "a flash in the pan" and an "anti-Government protest." But there is no doubt that Plaid Cymru supporters have good reason for believing that their party may be emerging as a new force in Wales.

The swing of 28 per cent. to the Welsh Nationalists in the Rhondda following on the Carmarthen by-election victory could mean that a new pattern of Welsh politics is emerging—a pattern which will have Plaid Cymru as the main opposition party to Labour.

Many political observers see the massive vote for Plaid Cymru, which has turned one of the safest Labour seats in the country into a marginal constituency, as a warning to the Government that the people of the Rhondda feel that they are being neglected.

But some of these observers can also see the seeds of what may turn out to be a political revolution. For the first time in its 30-year history Plaid Cymru is being taken seriously by a large number of voters.

Joke over

The very fact that people have brought themselves to vote for the party in such large numbers has in less than a year changed Welsh Nationalism from something that has often been treated as a joke to a phenomenon that is causing Labour officials to think seriously about the new threat.

Dr. Kenneth O. Morgan, a Fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge, and formerly a member of the history department at University College, Swansea, made a study of Rhondda West during the general election last March.

Yesterday he said: "At the moment I would say the result was a by-election phenomenon but it could become more."

"A by-election flash-in-the-pan can become so much more and it is significant that this is the first real challenge that the Labour Party has met in industrial South Wales."

A spur

Dr. Morgan said that apart from some elections in the 1930's this was probably the first real election in the Rhondda since 1885—the first time that the Labour Party has had its proprietorial rights over the Rhondda seats seriously questioned.

"My own view is that it is probably a protest against Labour rather than pro-Plaid. If it were continued at the next general election one could say that a new chapter had begun in Welsh politics," he said.

Dr. Morgan's view that many of the people who voted for Mr. Vic Davies were really threatening the Government and demanding that something should be done about the problems of the Rhondda is echoed by other experts, but Dr. Morgan added, "This sort of boost could make them something different."

Mr. Frank Stacey, a lecturer in political theory and government at University College, Swansea, also thought that the result indicated a protest vote on local issues. Even so this could mean long-term gains for Welsh Nationalism.

Isolation

"The Welsh Nationalists are building on the feeling for regional autonomy, and that, coupled with the distaste with the wage freeze, has persuaded people to vote against Labour," he said.

"Possibly the Welsh Nationalists will become the opposition to the Labour Party in Wales, and in the country areas they may take over from the Conservatives and the Liberals."

This view has been vigorously discounted by both the Labour and Conservative parties, and last night Mr. Elved Davies, M.P. for the twin constituency, Rhondda East, where he sits on a majority of almost 20,000, said, "I am not worried about the threat of Plaid Cymru."

Mr. Davies subscribes to the majority view of the result as showing discontent with the Government rather than sudden enthusiasm for Welsh Nationalism. So does Professor Edward Nevin, professor of economics at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, but not for exactly the same reason.

"People are wanting to be taken much more into the picture than they have been in the past. They have a sense of isolation and neglect," he said.

"What the people of the Rhondda are deciding is that the people they are electing should be closer to their problems."

What the experts cannot decide yet is how much closer to their problems the Welsh people want their M.P.s to be. The last two Welsh by-elections have indicated, even if inconclusively, that national feeling is becoming a more important factor and this could lead to much greater sympathy for the Welsh Nationalists.

Personalities

The party itself is convinced of this and Mr. Emlyn Roberts, the general secretary, said what will inevitably be repeated a thousand times in the next few months. "What you have witnessed here was not any advantage accruing from a by-election. What you did see was evidence of the awakening national consciousness in Wales."

Certainly one new element seems to have come to the fore at Carmarthen and in the Rhondda. Personalities, which have long been discounted as being of any great significance in vote catching, seem to have had a greater effect than has been thought likely.

Both at Transport House and Conservative Central Office there is a general belief that the personality of a candidate does not count for more than about 500 votes either way. This magic figure should probably now be reassessed since Plaid Cymru is beginning to make headway in constituencies where established M.P.s have died.

Test to come

Mr. Stacey suggested that while people might have been unwilling to vote against M.P.s who are respected and have held the seats for a considerable time they are less concerned about tradition where the sitting member has retired or died.

If this is true—and Lady Megan Lloyd-George and Mr. Iorwerth Thomas were both political figures who commanded respect and affection in their constituencies—some Labour strongholds could fall to a reinvigorated Plaid Cymru.

In Wales there are eight M.P.s aged over 69. Five of these are 70 or over and one is 80. When the time comes for these veterans to stand down there could be a radical change in the way people vote in these constituencies. Carmarthen and Rhondda West have shown that this is possible. Other elections will be the real test of Plaid Cymru's new-found strength.

PLAID'S EYES NOW ON LOCAL SEATS

PLAID Cymru, cock-a-hoop with its "moral victory" in the Rhondda West by-election, is poised for the biggest election onslaught in the party's history.

Today, its general secretary, Mr. Elwyn Roberts, forecast more shocks and said the party was expecting big gains in the coming municipal elections.

In yesterday's poll the Labour majority slumped from a "safe as houses" 16,883 at the 1966 general election to a marginal 2,306. The Plaid Cymru support increased almost five-fold. In 1966 Mr. Davies polled 2,172 votes.

Warned Plaid Cymru's secretary, "We are going to fight every Parliamentary seat in Wales at the next election and we will fight every by-election betwen now and then. We will provide further shocks for Mr. Wilson.

"We are getting our organisation modern and efficient in all constituencies and have already started choosing candidates and agents."

Saved by high poll

And in the local elections Mr. Roberts said Plaid Cymru will attack on the widest front next May, putting up "many more candidates than ever before."

"We shall press home our Rhondda success and expect this to be reflected in future results," he said.

Today Rhondda was a valley which found it hard to believe the result was true.

It was generally accepted that only the high 82.3 per cent. poll saved this traditionally safe Labour seat from the upset of the century.

But Rhondda's new Labour member, Mr. Alec Jones, commented: "If we can hold Rhondda West under the present difficulties I am confident it will always remain a Labour stronghold. I cannot accept the view that because of one by-election it is now a marginal seat."

Swinging Tories grab Pollok

By GEORGE GARDINER

THE Tories pulled off a spectacular by-election victory at **Glasgow Pollok** in the early hours this morning, turning Labour's 1,975 general election majority into a 2,201 Tory lead.

In both the other by-election seats the swing was strongly against Mr. Harold Wilson and his Government. At **Nuneaton** their majority tumbled from 11,403 to 4,084, and at **Rhondda West** from 16,888 to a mere 2,306.

This adds up to the biggest ballot-box caning Mr. Wilson has suffered since becoming party leader. Jubilantly the Tories claimed that at last the tide has turned.

But their joy must be qualified slightly. It is doubtful whether they could have won Pollok without the strong intervention of a Scottish Nationalist, who clearly stole thousands of protest votes from Labour.

Qualified

In Rhondda it was the Welsh Nationalists who chased the Labour candidate to a marginal win, with the Tory coming bottom of the poll.

But at Nuneaton the Tories can claim all the credit. In this former stronghold of Mr. Frank Cousins the anti-Labour swing was 6.5 per cent.

If repeated right across the country in a general election this would make Mr. Heath Prime Minister with a majority of around 40.

In Pollok the anti-Labour swing was 5.2 per cent., but, as with the 27.1 per cent. swing at Rhondda, this cannot be projected nationally because of the unique role of Nationalist candidates in these seats.

Disillusion

Insofar as a general picture can be seen, it is as much one of disillusion with Labour as of positive enthusiasm for the Tories.

In both Pollok and Rhondda thousands of protest votes went to the Nationalist candidates, in much the same way as they used to go to the Liberals in the days of Tory Government.

Certainly last night's results augur well for the Tories in the coming local government elections in England and Scotland, not to mention the two further by-elections pending in Tory-held Honiton and Brierley Hill.

Labour's humiliation at Pollok can be put down to a number of peculiarly Scottish factors quite apart from the Nationalist intervention.

The effects of the economic freeze have been felt more bitterly in Glasgow than in most cities, and the feeling has grown that Scotland's case is not being pressed in the Cabinet as strongly as it should be.

A bitter inquest in the Labour ranks is inevitable, adding to Mr. Wilson's difficulties in handling his hands of rebels on defence, incomes policy and the Common Market.

This new Nationalist phenomenon is ominous for the Liberals. In Pollok their performance was derisory, their candidate losing his deposit.

Rhondda: Labour in but majority is DOWN

LABOUR held on to Rhondda West with a reduced majority in yesterday's by-election.

The result:

ALEC JONES (Lab.)	12,373
VICTOR DAVIES (Welsh Nat.)	10,087
GARETH NEALE (Con.)	1,075
ARTHUR TRUE (Comm.)	1,723
Maj	2,286

(Gen. Elect. maj. 16,888).

The by-election was caused by the death of Mr. Iorwerth Thomas, MP since 1950.

At the General Election, his three opponents, Welsh Nationalist, Conservative and Communist, all lost their deposits.

But the Welsh Nationalists, heartened by their success at Carmarthen last year, went into action with a vigorous by-election campaign.

There were other factors which made political observers wait for last night's result with keen interest.

HARD HIT

South Wales, despite being a development area, has been hard hit by the effects of the squeeze, mainly in rising unemployment.

In the Rhondda valley the jobless figure is 9.1 per cent., four times the national average.

Last night's figures will be studied to determine how strong are the old loyalties to Labour in the light of the disenchantment felt by many families.

No seat safe in Wales after Rhondda West

BY CHARLES QUANT

There isn't a seat in Wales that's safe after Rhondda West.

That was the comment yesterday of former B.B.C. news editor Tom Richards whom I met in Aberystwyth excitedly discussing the shock result of the by-election which left Plaid Cymru within a hairsbreadth of taking their second representative to Westminster.

There is no more shrewd observer of the contemporary scene than Tom Richards, but in conversation with many other people in Aberystwyth and Mid Wales yesterday, it was clear that the Rhondda result has shaken them to the foundations.

The overwhelming conclusion they drew is that what can happen in Rhondda this March could happen at any other by-election in Wales, as long as the government of the day are in trouble.

But whether the same would apply at the next General Election after the usual preliminary softening-up process of tax concessions and largesse all round, few of them were ready to assess.

The language barrier

What is significant perhaps is that the Rhondda result has clearly broken through the language barrier. In the borough there is a population of about 100,000 of whom according to the Hughes-Parry Report about 23,000 speak Welsh, almost precisely in line with the national average of one-quarter of Welsh speakers.

Yet in Rhondda nearly half the voters voted for the Welsh Nationalist. It is inconceivable that these were only the Welsh speakers, for the Hughes-Parry figures cover all ages.

Something must have clicked to make a predominantly English-speaking population take such a dissident line with the traditional political party of the era.

What could happen, therefore, in other areas where the majority language is Welsh?

What about Cardiganshire, where Mr Elystan Morgan got in last time under the Labour flag after fruitless contests previously in the Nationalist cause. It suggests perhaps that if he had hided his time and stuck to his colours he might have got in at the next election in Cardiganshire without having to change his coat.

Drop in the Plaid vote

As for Merioneth, where Mr Will Edwards held Mr T. W. Jones' old seat in the face of a strong Liberal-Nationalist challenge, the issue is obviously open again despite the drop of 1,200 in the Nationalist vote between 1964 and 1966.

And Anglesey, now held by the Secretary of State for Wales no less; is Anglesey safe? Anglesey, with its huge preponderence of Welsh speakers, one of the few constituencies last time where the Nationalist vote actually rose on the 1964 figures, from 1,817 to 2,596.

Or Caernarvon across the Straits which produced the second largest Nationalist vote last time of 6,834.

Even if it were doubled as compared with Mr Vic Davies' fourfold increase in Rhondda the sitting Labour member would be ousted.

As for Montgomery, will Mr Emlyn Hooson's lone Welsh liberal seat be safe, despite that low figure of 1,841 Nationalist votes last time?

They got the windfall

This result in Rhondda could conceivably represent the replacement of the Liberals by the Nationalists as the radical party of Wales. The Rhondda miners clearly had no interest in Conservatism and as the Liberals did not put up a candidate it must be presumed that they were not interested in the miners. Plaid Cymru got the windfall.

A crop of by-elections between now and the theoretical end of the Government's life in 1970 might conceivably face Mr Wilson with a Welsh party in Westminster as big as the present Liberal Party for the whole of Britain.

The Nationalists polled 61,000 votes in Wales last time, a drop of 9,000 on 1964, but if they were able to achieve no more than half the measure of their success in the Rhondda there could be a dozen Welsh Nationalist M.P.'s to join the dogs yapping at Mr Wilson's heels, from other directions. He will be studying the life expectation of his Welsh Members with the keenest interest.

RHONDDA'S VICTOR

"THE result of this election is a great success for Plaid Cymru. We've shaken the safest seat in the three countries of Britain to its foundation.

"The result is a powerful challenge to the London Establishment to do right by Rhondda and Wales".

This was said by Mr Vic Davies when the by-election result was announced about midnight March 8.

"Wales and the Rhondda have been kicked about far too long. We are going to stop it", he said.

"The message goes out tonight from the Rhondda that Wales is marching on in her campaign for what is good and right for every nation, — for self-government".

After thanking the Returning Officer and all his helpers, Mr Davies thanked the other parties; "they have, almost without exception, fought a clean and friendly election" he said.

He thanked especially the people of the Rhondda, for their welcome and great support, and thanked all who had helped, Cennard Davies, his agent, and hundreds of others.

Finally, he said: "This campaign has been watched in many countries. There will be joy in many lands that this great small nation of Wales is on the march".

MR VIC DAVIES

His vote humiliated London government of Wales.

Anger over neglect was chief cause of swing

OSCAR REES ASKED THEM WHY

ANGER over Labour neglect of the Rhondda has been given as the main reason why 8,000 more people voted Welsh Nationalist at Thursday's by-election.

But a number of other factors have emerged from a snap survey of people in Rhondda West, conducted by the Western Mail yesterday.

They are: **Socialism:** A 24-year-old professional man who last night walked into Plaid Cymru committee rooms and asked to join the party said, "I have been a Labour Party member for six years, but during the past few weeks I heard far more socialism from the Plaid Cymru platforms at election meetings than I heard from the Labour platforms.

"I am resigning from the Labour Party because I feel Plaid is the only party for Wales and because it is not negative, but positive for Wales, and because I am a Socialist."

Change: A young Cwmparc couple, Mr. and Mrs. Gareth Davies, of Tallis Street, said, "We voted for Plaid Cymru because we felt it was time for a change. We know that one man cannot work miracles, but had he been elected he would have shaken the Labour Government, and we feel that because of this he could have done something for us here in Rhondda.

"The Labour Government might well do a good job nationally, but we feel Rhondda is becoming more and more neglected and we also feel it is time for a change on the borough council."

Employment: Pipe - fitter Keith Ceaser, in the same street, said that like so many other Rhondda people he is forced to commute because of lack of local jobs.

"I have to get up at 4.30 a.m. each day, travel to Barry and I don't get home until 7.30 p.m., having spent nearly four hours travelling each day, at a cost of £2 10s. a week.

"We feel Plaid Cymru could do something for Rhondda—the Labour Party have failed to do anything, and we are delighted to think Plaid Cymru polled so well."

National pride: Secretary Anne Jenkins, aged 25, of Tremain Street, Cwmparc, had voted Plaid "because it is a good thing to have national pride and it is about time we in Wales had more national feeling."

She said she had voted Labour at two previous parliamentary elections, adding, "At the Plaid Cymru election meetings I felt proud to be Welsh and I will always vote Plaid Cymru in future."

Traditions—A Treorchy professional man, aged 53, said, "All my family voted Plaid Cymru because we want to see the Welsh traditions maintained and Plaid Cymru is the only party capable of doing this."

Parents — A young schoolteacher said, "Both I and my parents voted Plaid Cymru—my parents have always voted Labour and they are rather concerned this may upset some old friendships. Personally, I wouldn't care less about what people say, but I respect my parents' wishes and I shall be voting solidly for Plaid Cymru in future."

General — An old age pensioner at Treorchy summed up, "I've lived here all my life but now I've switched to Plaid Cymru. It was a hard thing to do, but I feel that Labour closed down our pits, put men out of work without providing alternative jobs, and, being perhaps a little old-fashioned, I haven't forgiven them for what they did to our traditional Welsh Sunday, by opening the public-houses."

She said, "Don't use my name, I want to live in peace with my neighbours."

SEEN NOTHING LIKE IT

I have never seen anything like it since the days of Mabon, said a veteran Rhondda voter in the former London Labour Party stronghold, at the end of the Plaid Cymru campaign there.

The Plaid Cymru vote increased almost fivefold.

This was the result, with the 1966 General Election figures in brackets:

Labour (19,060) 12,370
Tory (1,955) 1,075
Vic Davies (2,172) 10,067
Communist (1,853) 1,725,
Tory (1,955) 1,075

It was obvious to everyone during the election that Rhondda was living through another revolution.

Plaid Cymru swept into the political vacuum created by the English parties with irresistable force. The campaign had an impetus which surprised even experienced fighters.

GUTTER ACCUSATIONS

As the pace quickened, the London parties were obliged to stoop to the gutter for their ammunition.

But their nasty accusation rebounded from the characters of Vic Davies and Gwynfor Evans and all the other Plaid workers, and the enemy was well spattered with their own mud.

The South Wales Echo said two days earlier that even a majority of 5,000 would be "humiliating" for London-Labour and "a moral victory for Plaid Cymru."

TIMES "REGION"

"The Regions are Stirring" was the headline of the Times editorial. This paper has not yet learnt that Wales is a country and a nation, not a region or (another of its phrases) a "Celtic fringe".

"Moral defeat" called the Daily Telegraph: "fierce beating" for London-Labour said the Daily Express.

Of the result, the "South Wales Echo" said it is a "blow from which the (Labour) Party will take a long time to recover."

POLLOK TOO

The Welsh Nation congratulates the Scottish National Party on its great success in the Pollock by-election, on the same day.

GWYNFOR: AMAZING

Mr Gwynfor Evans, in special message, said:

"The amazing Rhondda result is a powerful blow to the Labour Establishment in Wales, and will knock out much of its cockiness and complacency.

"This was a great moral victory for Plaid Cymru.

"The two by-elections of the last year show that the people of Wales are losing faith in the system of London Rule."

Wilson takes his worst hammering

THE Government today suffered its greatest hammering since Mr. Wilson took Labour into power in October 1964. The mini-election of three by-elections in Socialist seats resulted in the Labour Party's biggest drubbing and a sensational slump in votes.

The Socialists lost Pollok to the Conservatives, the first Tory by-election gain in Scotland in 20 years.

They suffered their most crushing moral defeat in Wales in half-a-century, with a 30 per cent. slump in votes and a sensational swing to the Welsh Nationalists.

And at Nuneaton a 6½ per cent. swing to the Tories pulled Labour's 11,000 majority at the general election down to 4,000.

Setback

The results, on top of yesterday's public opinion polls, which revealed that Labour had lost its 11½ per cent. lead over the Tories, adds up to Labour's most grievous setback in two parliaments.

Plaid Cymru struck the most damaging blow ever to the Labour Party in Wales and to the Government with its massive slashing of the Socialist majority at Rhondda West.

For more than half a century the Rhondda has been a bastion of the Labour Party, impervious to Conservative and Liberal assaults.

And now it is the Welsh Nationalists who have come nearest to trenching this Socialist stronghold. They have reduced Rhondda to a marginal constituency.

It was a sensational result—but not one which really surprised Labour Party headquarters. There had been grave fears up to the eve-of-poll that Labour might lose the seat.

By DAVID G. ROSSER

There is no need for an inquest by the Labour Party. Rhondda had already made it quite clear that it was no longer prepared to be the willing donkey of the Labour ticket.

The abject failure of the Government to lift the Rhondda out of its despair over mounting unemployment, and the continuing policy of pit closures without alternative employment for redundant miners, and no new industries, was the nal stroke which all but snapped Labour's grip on a half-century tradition of Socialism in the Valley.

Danger

The Welsh Nationalists have now clearly emerged as the biggest single danger to Labour in South Wales, and Rhondda will spur on both M.P. Mr. Gwynfor Evans and Plaid to greater efforts.

Another factor which, it was being claimed last night, could have affected the turn-about in Rhondda, was the internal strife in the Labour Party at Westminster.

Mr. Wilson and some senior ministers must take part of the blame for this in their autocratic behaviour towards the rank and file.

Pollok, a marginal seat in Glasgow, fell to the Tories with a turn-o-roung of more than 4,00 0votes.

But here, as in the Rhondda, an outstanding feature was the success of the Nationalist Party, which secured 10,804 votes.

It was the first time in many years that the Scottish Nationalists had contested the area.

During their campaign they had the support of Plaid M.P. Mr. Gwynfor Evans, who went to Glasgow.

It was rain, rain all the way in yesterday's mini-election which covered a seat each in England, Scotland, and Wales.

NUNEATON was held by Labour, but with a very heavy cut in the majority that will encourage the Tories. The new M.P. for this Midlands town is Mr. Leslie Huckfield, only 24 years old.

RHONDDA WEST stayed Labour, but a surge for the Welsh Nationalist made a big hole in the majority. Mr. Alec Jones is the new M.P.

Meanwhile the votes were still being counted at POLLOK (Glasgow), a Labour seat.

These were the scenes yesterday as all parties whipped up their supporters.

NUNEATON: Heavy rain drenched the candidates most of the day. Young Mr. Leslie Huckfield—aiming to take the place of Mr. Frank Cousins—had to struggle through floods near Bedworth with his fiancée, a Birmingham nurse.

Tory candidate Mr. David Knox warned: "It looks like a low poll." The 1965 figure was 61.7 per cent.

There was a good-luck telegram for Mr. Knox from all Tories at the Commons—and another from Mr. Gareth Neale fighting the Rhondda. "Hope to join you in Parliament."

Mr. Alan Meredith, the Liberal who got 7,000 votes last time, was up at about 4 a.m. His five sons all joined the campaign.

Novelist Mr. John Creasey, the All Party Alliance candidate, went out sticking the last of his "secret weapon" stamp-size notices around the town.

POLLOK: Despite heavy rain, officials of all five parties fighting the marginal seat predicted a good poll.

Bookmakers too were busy. They offered 5—4 on the Tories, even money on Labour, and 3—1 on the Scottish Nationalists. One firm alone said it had taken £22,000 in bets.

Each of the main parties had more than 200 cars out—a vital service in the bad weather. The only candidate with a vote in the constituency was the Nationalist, Mr. George Leslie.

RHONDDA WEST: Unemployment has been the main debating point in the constituency, which has nearly 2,400 out of work—and many of them were first to cast their votes yesterday.

Ministers and Welsh M.P.s sent telegrams to the Labour candidate, Mr. Alec Jones, who has campaigned on the strength of the party's 16,888 majority last time.

The Welsh Nationalist Party had more cars available yesterday than either Labour or Tories. And Mr. Elwyn Roberts, general secretary of Plaid Cymru, said: "We feel anything can happen. We believe the Labour Party is completely demoralised."

People Roused To Anger

BY slashing the Labour Party's majority from 16,888 to a mere 2,306 in the by-election, the electorate of Rhondda West has sharply focused public attention on the dissatisfaction and disillusion that are rampant in our valleys. Up to now Labour has been able to count confidently upon overwhelming support in the coalmining areas of South Wales, but even in such areas as these there is always a possibility of drastic change and the sensational result of the by-election has demonstrated that the Nationalist Party is well placed to take over if the Labour Party fails to restore its image to public favour.

With over 3,000 of the employable population of Pontypridd and Rhondda without jobs, and government spokesmen declaring that we must look to the Llantrisant area for our main factory sites, the people of the valleys have been roused to anger and they are demanding that urgent action be taken by the government to provide far more jobs LOCALLY than is now planned.

But we do not believe that public discontent stems only from the heavy unemployment that exists in this part of Glamorgan: it is surely no accident that Ratepayers' and Tenants' Associations are springing up, and that in Pontypridd the Independents and Liberals have made headway in recent years. Labour's image in local government has certainly lost a lot of its lustre. The practice of making important local government decisions at Labour Group meetings held prior to Council meetings has resulted in the pros and cons of arguments getting less and less of an airing as the years have gone by, and so vital steps are often taken without the public knowing their full implications until hit by them.

Recently both the Pontypridd and Rhondda Councils have been examining the desirability or otherwise of introducing rent rebate schemes for Council tenants. These will be burning issues, but, as usual, the discussions of the two Councils in this connection have been shrouded in secrecy. How much better it would be if the public were taken into the confidence of the two Councils at an early stage in their deliberations, instead of being suddenly presented with cut and dried decisions, which can only evoke shock and anger.

Again, would there be as much apprehension about the plan to establish a new civic centre for the Rhondda at Porth if more intensive effort were made to keep the facts and figures before the public? The same thought applies to the Rhondda Council's township plans for Penrhys Mountain and the Pontypridd Council's Glyntaff housing scheme. Little wonder that people in both areas have wondered anxiously whether either scheme is really necessary.

To sum up, there will be a great deal of heart-searching and re-thinking in the Labour movement in the days ahead: priorities and needs will have to be re-assessed and vigorous action taken. But as a district we will have to keep pressing for more factories and more jobs —in Pontypridd and Rhondda in the first place, and, secondly, in the Llantrisant Council's area. Promises for the future are not good enough: our people want work NOW and the government must be compelled to take whatever steps are needed to provide it.

PLAID PIPPED AT THE POST

Labour's iron grip cut by 14,582

Western Mail Reporter

LABOUR scraped home in the Rhondda West by-election last night-but Plaid Cymru slashed the Socialist general election majority from 16,888 to a mere 2,306.

Welsh Nationalist Mr. Vic Davies increased his share of the poll from 2,172 to 10,067 and came within a hair's breadth of pulling off Plaid Cymru's second major election sensation within a year.

Jubilant barracking from hundreds of Plaid Cymru supporters drowned the Labour winner, Mr. Alec Jones, as he made his victory speech outside the Rhondda College of Further Education at Llwynypia.

Mr. Jones polled 12,373 votes—his majority dropping from 16,888 to a shock 2,306.

Both the Conservative and Communist candidates lost their deposits.

Tory Mr. Gareth Neale came bottom of the poll with almost 50 per cent. fewer votes than his party polled at the general election.

The 82.3 per cent. turnout was higher than at the last two general elections.

The Communist, Mr. Arthur True, a Rhondda-born electrician, also polled fewer votes than at the general election.

Chanting

Wild scenes took place outside the school where the count took place. Several hundred people, standing in the rain, kept chanting "Victor" for Plaid's Mr. Davies.

The acting returning officer, Mr. Noel Thomas, could not be heard as all the crowd as he shouted the figures.

It took 10 minutes before the candidates were able to come forward to make their speeches and half of what they said was drowned in the continual noise.

Welsh flags were waved in the air and the crowd sang, Land of my Fathers.

Threat

Mr. Jones described the demonstration as "The worst manifestation of Rhondda politics for many years and a threat to democracy."

Commenting on his success, he added, "I never set out in life to become an M.P.

"I have strong feelings towards the needs of Rhondda. I acknowledge the difficult position of the Rhondda and I consider this will be my lifetime's work."

Mrs. Irene Davies, wife of the Plaid Cymru candidate who polled 10,067, said, "It is a pity if youngsters got out of hand. I see this tremendous vote for my husband as a positive, rather than a protest vote.

"The Rhondda will never be a safe Labour seat again."

Mr. Davies, whose vote had increased from a meagre 2,172 at the last election, was chaired shoulder-high around the college forecourt by his supporters.

After the candidates returned into the school the crowd continued to chant and sing. A triumphant Mr. Jones was booed.

Welsh Nationalist Mr. Davies said, "Our success was a victory for Rhondda and Wales, more than Plaid Cymru.

"They can't kick us around any more with impunity. We have shaken the safest seat in the three countries of Britain to its foundation.

"The result is a powerful challenge to the London establishment to do right by Rhondda and Wales."

Wales and the Rhondda have been kicked about far too long.

"W are going to stop it. The message goes out tonight that Wales is marching on in her campaign for what is good and right for ever nation—self-government.

"This tremendous reduction in the Labour majority should impress upon Mr. Wilson and the Labour Government that the people of Wales and the Rhondda are not going to take things lying down.

Signal

"It was more than a protest vote. It is a tremendous step forward and I have no doubt the support given to me by the Rhondda people will set all Wales on fire.

"After the victory at Carmarthen, this comes as a clear signal for the future."

Mr. Emrys Jones, Labour Party organiser for Wales and Labour election agent during the by-election, said "I congratulate Mr. Alec Jones on being a first-class candidate and I know he will make a first-class member of Parliament and Rhondda will grow to be proud of him.

"The Nationalist Party can only make headway when other parties are struggling with difficult problems and forced to take unpopular decisions."

● The Welsh Nationalist gain in Rhondda West was even greater than the shock victory of Gwynfor Evans in the Carmarthenshire by-election last July.

In Carmarthen, they increased their share of the vote from 7,416 to 16,179, while in Rhondda the Nationalist candidate increased his poll five-fold.

The Labour share of the poll in Rhondda West dropped dramatically from 76.1 per cent. in 1966 to 49 per cent., while the Welsh Nationalist share soared from 6.7 per cent. to 39.9 per cent.

The Tory polled 4.3 per cent. (7.8 per cent. in 1966) and the Communist 6.8 per cent. as compared with 7.4 per cent.

RHONDDA WEST (30,692)

A. Jones (Lab.)	12,373
H. V. Davies (Plaid Cymru)	10,067
A. C. True (Comm.)	1,723
G. Neale (C.)	1,075
Majority	2,306

No change. Percentage of poll—82.3.

1966 general election: T. Thomas (Lab.), 19,060; H. V. Davies (Plaid Cymru), 2,172; B. S. Hill (C.), 1,953; A. C. True (Comm.), 1,353. Labour majority—6,888. Electorate—31,189. Conservative and Communist candidates lost deposits. Percentage of poll two per cent. higher than at the last two general elections.

NUNEATON (65,564)

L. Huckfield (Lab.)	18,239
D. Knox (C.)	14,185
A. Meredith (Lib.)	7,644
J. Creasey (All Party Alliance)	2,755
Air Vice-marshal D. Bennett (Nat. Party)	517
Majority	4,054

No change. Percentage of poll—66.1.

1966 general election: F. Cousins (Lab.), 27,492; D. S. Marland (Co.), 10,049; A. Meredith (Lib.), 7,236. Labour majority—11,403. Electorate—63,926.

POLLOK, GLASGOW (51,079)

Prof. E. Wright (C.)	14,270
R. Douglas (Lab.)	12,069
G. A. Leslie (Scottish Nat.)	10,884
I. D. Miller (Lib.)	735
A. C. Murray (Comm.)	694
Majority	2,201

Conservative gain. Percentage of poll—75.7

1966 general election: A. Garrow (Lab.), 21,237; P. T. Smollett (Con.), 19,262. Labour majority, 1,975. Electorate, 51,303.

WELSH NATION

What papers said after Rhondda

The voters of Glasgow Pollock and Rhondda West have rapped out the message loud and clear (to the leaders of the English Parties): A PLAGUE ON BOTH YOUR HOUSES. — D. Mirror, 11.3.67.

After the Nationalist performances in Rhondda West and Pollock, there can now be no doubt of their considerable importance in British politics. — Editorial, S. Telegraph, 12.3.67.

Mr Vic Davies and his organisation, led by Mr Cennard Davies, made the Labour candiate and his organisation look like beginners. — George Gale, D. Express correspondent, 11.3.67.

TONIC

What a tonic for British politics in the 10,000-plus polls of the Welsh Nationalists at Rhondda West and the Scottish Nationalists at Pollock. And what a warning to any politician—whatever his party—who thinks that Britain revolves around Westminster. — **Editorial, News of the World 12.3.67.**

OF ALL the papers, tragically it was the two Cardiff ones which sought to make the Plaid vote a mere protest vote: **"This was more a vote of protest than a vote for nationalist principles."** Editorial Western Mail, 11.3.67.

"It would be unwise to attach much importance to the huge swing to the Nationalists in Rhondda West and Pollock." — Editorial S.W. Echo, 11.3.67

Yesterday, the deepest anxiety was seeping through Liberal headquarters. They got 1.9 per cent of the Pollock vote; they did try Rhondda. — **Guardian, Miscellany, 11.3.67.**

NEXT ELECTION

THE swing from Labour to Plaid Cymru was 28 per cent. If this was repeated at the next General Election, the Welsh Nationalists could win at least ten seats. — J. Sullivan, correspondent, in D. Mail, 11.3.67.

After their sensational gain in the Rhondda West by-election, the Welsh Nationalists can now talk without absurdity about fighting, with a chance of success, all Welsh by-elections and all 36 seats at the General Election. — J. Tucker, Times correspondent, 2.3.67.

At Rhondda West, the derisory 1,075 (Conservative) votes is a record low figure for any constituency since the war.

The Nationalist attack on the "rule from London" merely canalises what is basically a widespread dissatisfaction with government in general. — Editorial D. Telegraph, 11.3.67.

MORE ATTRACTIVE

It would be a mistake to think that the Nationalist vote was merely negative. The same force in the Rhondda as in Carmarthen: the belief that politics is as much an idealistic activity in pursuit of justice and freedom as it is an exercise of power. — J. Morgan, S. Times, 12.3.67.

Clearly, nationalism is becoming more and more attractive to practical people as well as to idealists. Scotland and Wales have the obvious advantage of nationhood. — Editorial, Liverpool Post.

There isn't a seat in Wales that's safe after Rhondda West . . Nearly half the voters voted for the Welsh Nationalist. Something must have clicked to make a predominantly English-speaking population take this line. — Charles Quant, correspondent to Liverpool Post, 11.3.67.

Lancashire Nationalist

If a week is a long time in politics, four years is a very long time indeed. It is four years until the Government need have a General Election. That the Conservatives are to-day odds-on favourites to win it should neither depress nor elate anyone too much.

This is a period in the present Parliament's life when the Government ought to be losing support. The Conservatives were in 1955—and came back with an increased majority at the General Election four years later. They were again in 1960—and failed to come back at the General Election four years after that. Which is the appropriate parallel for this week's Labour losses it is impossible to say. Perhaps it depends whether the policies which have made the Government unpopular are tough, purposive and necessary, or just half-digested and blundering.

At least the Conservatives needn't be depressed by the fact that Labour losses aren't yet becoming Conservative gains. In 1955 and again in 1960 it was the Liberals who were gaining, as a kind of half-way house between the big parties. This time, in Wales and Scotland at least, it is the Nationalists who have cashed in. The Liberals, indeed, had rather disappointing results.

What of the Nationalist vote, though? Is it just a protest vote, or something more? The numbers polled by the Nationalist candidates, particularly when compared with those polled by the wide range of protest vote attractions at Nuneaton, do suggest that the Nationalists at Rhondda and at Glasgow have made real, and potentially permanent gains—even if they have no doubt attracted a number of protestors too.

It is highly significant that they have made these gains in urban, even industrial, areas. Clearly Nationalism is becoming more and more attractive to practical people as well as to idealists. Scotland and Wales have the obvious advantage of nationhood. A Lancashire Nationalist, or even a Yorkshire one, is still not seriously imaginable. Yet some of the factors which give strength to Nationalism—such as the lip service to devolution, which is never translated into action by the great power parties—are as irritating and damaging in England, and particularly in the neglected North of England, as in Wales or Scotland. How long will it be before that irritation begins to find political expression here, too?

Already the Nationalists are influential beyond their numbers, for although they have only one seat at Westminster, each of the other three party groups there can see quite a handful of seats it might lose to them if it does not make more, and more genuine, concessions to their way of thinking.

NO WINNERS

CALLING the hounds to heel and putting on a strong-man act appears to have won Mr. WILSON no extra support from the electorate. The swing against the Government at the beginning of the month reported by the Gallup Poll appears to have continued right up until polling day in the three by-elections. During that time it has been issues of party discipline rather than economic problems which have dominated the political scene. For the Conservatives, the poll results are of only limited encouragement. At Rhondda West, the derisory 1,075 votes is a record low figure for any constituency since the war. At Nuneaton, the Liberals picked up three times as many Labour defectors as the Conservatives. However, the success of gaining Pollok and thus reversing the trend in Scotland for a decade will have a tonic effect on Conservative party morale. In all the mists of statistics it is just possible to find signs that the Conservatives' strength has stopped ebbing and that the tide may be about to turn.

The large nationalist votes threaten Labour rather than Conservative prospects. Of the 36 Welsh M Ps, only three are Conservatives; of the 71 Scottish M Ps, only 21. Substantial vote-splitting could hand more seats to the Tories in subsequent by-elections. The Liberals, both as the normal third force and as the only party to advocate national parliaments, might suffer even more from this upsurge of support for these new home-rule movements. At present the protest promises to be little more than a by-election phenomenon. The comments of the electors concerned suggest this.

The "plague-on-both-your-houses" attitude of voters—it was also evident at Nuneaton—is understandable. For years the State has been steadily increasing its role. A dozen times a day the citizen is faced with irritating situations and an obvious, even at times an eager, scapegoat. Trains are late, buses are inadequate, telephones are infuriating. Schools are backward, hospitals are wretched. Electricity costs rise, power failures occur, subsidies are poured into coal mines. The Government, which persists in running almost everything and apparently wants to run more, incurs the odium. The nationalist attack on "rule from London" merely canalises what is basically a widespread dissatisfaction with government in general.

To the Editor

SIR,—The Labour's self-styled 'Rhondda Rebe. is exposed, by his own platitudes, as a rigid reactionary.

When the Tories were in power Rhondda didn't have its present unemployment problem. What they failed to do in 13 years, Labour achieved in two, as a deliberate act of policy. Remember the tolerable 2 per cent Mr Alec Jones?

Plans to bring work to the Rhondda could have been prepared when Labour was in opposition. After all, they had plenty of time. But then it has taken them 22 years to make up their minds about leasehold reform. They did promise it in 1945!

2,300 Jobless

Labour's prospective candidate may be filled with 'emotion and pride' over his selection, but he should know that 'pride and emotion' leave empty the cupboards of Rhondda's 2,300 out-of-work breadwinners.

The so-called Socialists in power are slow to establish State-owned industries to give alternative work as the mines are closed. They have not even produced a development plan for Wales.

Pattern Goes On

If the people of Rhondda will continue to support the London-based Labour Party, the experiences of the past can only be expected to be repeated in the future. Our railways will continue to close, our roads will be inadequate, the archaic rating system will remain with us, and our young people will continue to leave by their thousands because of lack of opportunity at home.

The London-based Labour Party's policy for the Rhondda is disturbingly lacking in thought and constructive ideas, and remarkable for its stick-in-the-mud-like refusal to face realities. Their policy is to empty the valleys, and I challenge anyone to prove differently.—Your, etc.,

GLYN JAMES.

Drwy y Darren,
Ferndale.

Premier shrugs off poll

By J. T. W. HAINES

THE PRIME MINISTER shrugged off Labour's by-election setbacks last night and declared: "What we have had is a protest vote."

He said at a dinner in the House of Commons: "We are reinforced in our determination to go on governing and producing a decisive answer to the drift, the complacency, and failure to bring work where work was needed."

Mr. Wilson said the protest vote was irrelevant in a real test of strength between Government and Opposition.

"Last July," he added, "I told my colleagues I was prepared to jeopardise the whole of our electoral popularity for the sake of national strength, and independence."

Mr. Wilson was bound to try to minimise the results from Pollok (Glasgow), Rhondda West and Nuneaton.

The Conservatives in turn, were bound to try to make them appear better than they are.

But Pollok hardly justified the claim by the Conservative Party chairman, Mr. Edward Du Cann, that "the Conservative advance is on the way."

Though the Tories won Pollok, once one of their safest seats, their vote was the lowest in any election there since 1923, and their share of the poll the worst ever.

Mr. John Silkin, Government Chief Whip, acknowledged in a speech at Woolwich, London, last night that the voters at Rhondda and Pollock in particular had little faith in either major party.

BY-ELECTION ROUND-UP

Plaid optimism is unfounded—Tory

Western Mail Reporter

THERE was no reason for Plaid Cymru's optimism in the Rhondda West by-election, said Mr. Gareth Neale, **Conservative** candidate, at Treorchy last night. He said Plaid Cymru appeared to be in a buoyant mood in this by-election, "but I see no reason for their optimism."

He said that while credit must be given to Mr. Gwynfor Evans for his success at Carmarthen, "it was a success which even took Mr. Evans by surprise. He said so afterwards. But one Mr. Evans does not make a Welsh Nationalist summer. Rhondda West should be their winter of discontent," he said.

There were no last-minute surprises when nominations closed yesterday. Nothing had been heard from the Freedom Group National Party, who were sent nomination forms.

Mr. Vic Davies, **Plaid Cymru** candidate, said at Gelli last night it was high time the London parties faced the facts of the situation in Wales and Rhondda, instead of using flashy slogans and trying to gloss over the decline of our valleys.

First priority

He said, "Let's go with Labour" was a slogan with a twist that had come cruelly true for Rhondda and Wales.

Speaking on a new Rhondda at Llwynypia last night Mr. Alec Jones, the **Labour** candidate, said, "While jobs are still number one priority in the building of a new Rhondda, our education and health services must be maintained and improved."

Communist candidate, Mr. Arthur True, speaking at Treorchy yesterday, said, "It is time to get tough with big business. The Labour Government is trying to please the bankers all the time. That is why we have the spectacle of starved social services and frozen wages leading to unemployment."

FRIDAY, MARCH 10, 1967

A SHOCK FOR SOCIALISTS

RHONDDA WEST a marginal seat. Who could have imagined such a situation even 12 short months ago?

After the Carmarthen by-election last summer, when Mr. Gwynfor Evans, the victorious Plaid Cymru candidate, prophesied that henceforth there would be no safe seats for Labour in the whole of Wales, his optimism was put down by most as a natural enough expression of post - poll Celtic exuberance.

But after yesterday's poll in the one-time Socialist stronghold his words take on a new authority. By robbing the Labour Party of 20 per cent of its support Mr. Vic Davies has achieved the second largest swing in post-war elections.

While the Government will no doubt justifiably conclude that special circumstances which prevail in the South Wales mining valleys make yesterday's poll untypical of the national climate, they would be unwise to write off its implications for the rest of Wales.

This was no freak result. The poll, indeed, was heavier than at the General Election, and while it could be argued that the Carmarthen decision was a personal vote for a nationally known figure the same could not be said for Mr. Davies's following.

Though the Rhondda vote holds out little encouragement for the Tories (who notched up their lowest share of the poll for many years) it was a clear enough expression of the disillusion with centralised London government, which whatever its political colour has shown itself incapable of injecting new life into the depressed areas.

Not every one of those 10,067 valley citizens who voted Plaid Cymru yesterday is necessarily in sympathy with the party's demands for self government.

What they were saying in the most forceful manner open to them was that they are tired of being the Cinderellas of society and that their votes can no longer be taken for granted by London - orientated Labour politicians.

A moral win, say cock-a-hoop Plaid

Western Mail Reporter

THE man who began the Plaid Cymru onslaught on the Labour hold on Welsh politics Mr. Gwynfor Evans, Welsh Nationalist M.P. for Carmarthen, said last night, "The amazing Rhondda result is a powerful blow to the Labour establishment in Wales and will knock out much of its cockiness and complacency.

"This was a great moral victory for Plaid Cymru and Wales. In fact the two Welsh by-elections of the last year show that the people of Wales are losing their faith not only in the Labour Party but also in the system of London rule," Mr. Evans said.

His feelings were echoed by Mr. Elwyn Roberts, Plaid Cymru general secretary who told the cheering crowd after the result had been declared, "I feel certain that the Labour establishment will be shaken to its very foundations by this wonderful result.

"It proves beyond doubt that Carmarthen was no mere accident but was proof of a rising tide of Welsh national consciousness.

"The fear of the rising tide of Welsh national consciousness must be gripping Mr Wilson and his followers with fearful intensity.

"It proves that Carmarthen was a precedent and one thing is now perfectly clear, that they are on the way out and we are on the way in," he added.

Plaid Cymru organiser Mr. H. H. Roberts said, "This shows that our campaign was on the right lines by highlighting the lack of development in the Rhondda and in Wales and by drawing attention to the most inequitable policies of this Government, such as Selective Employment Tax—disastrous to communities like the Rhondda."

For the first time in the history of politics in the Rhondda, the valley now has a marginal seat. Labour majorities in Rhondda West have always been overwhelming.

In the elections since 1950 they have been: 23,518; 22,488; 16,864; 16,152; 17,959, and 16,888 in last year's election.

Mr. Bert Pearce, Welsh secretary of the Communist Party, commented, "We don't think the Welsh Nationalist programme has any basic answer to Rhondda's problems, therefore we feel it will open a new period of Welsh politics, with real Socialist campaigning once again."