

THE REPUBLICAN STANDPOINT IN CYMRU

The basic difference between the Republican standpoint in Cymru and that of the Political Nationalists, i.e. "Plaid Cymru" is not generally understood and it is with the intention of clarifying the republican outlook that I am writing this article.

As the Plaid Cymru policies are already well known, it may be worthwhile to compare the two basic attitudes and see how they differ. To begin with, the political nationalists accept the 'status quo' as the norm, and seek to change it via the 'ballot box', their first priority being to obtain a majority of the Cymric seats in what one must remember is the English Parliament, where irrespective of what any future successes may bring them, they are doomed forever to remain a permanent minority. The proof of this is the classical example of Tryweryn where the representatives of 95% of our nation voted in Westminster against the drowning of the valley together with its flourishing cultural community, by Liverpool Corporation. In a Democratic society, this vote would have been overwhelmingly decisive, but the English override the Cymric vote and today, the once proud village of Capel Celyn lies in its silent tomb below the waters of a vast reservoir and bearing silent testimony to the so-called effectiveness of political constitutional means. England's respect for the 'ballot box' exists only when it is favourable to her vested interests, otherwise Cymric opinion will be trampled on as at Treymeryn.

There must be few nations indeed that have obtained their freedom within the framework of their oppressor's constitution.

Political nationalism alone will not gain us our freedom, only toothless concessions like 'Devolution' to quote Saxon phraseology "To prevent the breakup of the United Kingdom".

It would I believe be far better if we had no M. P.'s from Cymru sitting at Westminster at all. It would certainly make no difference to our present position and our people would no longer be duped, for they would know for sure how we stood and be actively inclined to remedy the situation as they would already be polarised as to identity, - us and them - it would be a case of their government, their Army, their Queen, and not the government, the army, the queen as at present.

It must also be taken into account, that if the English were the type to be motivated on the grounds of morality, they would not have become our masters in the first instance. The only valid argument for political representation in Westminster is the possibility of obtaining dubious concessions by holding a balance of power, but here again it centred at Whitehall rather than at Westminster.

There is no shortage of talent in the ranks of the political nationalists. There is enough to govern Cymru, her culture and economy with great efficiency but they are tied to the limitations of their political framework. There is not enough space for me to go into detail here, and I have already done so on other occasions but suffice it to say that Plaid Cymru seek 'Commonwealth Status' for Cymru with the English queen as head of state. To any republican, these trappings of English imperialism are completely unacceptable on both ideological and practical grounds.

To the republican it is not a question of politics, it is a 'matter of rights', for there can be no politics on a national level until we possess the medium to implement politics, also politics envisages argument and compromise etc. A nation's right to freedom, sovereignty and control of its own destiny is beyond and above all argument. No

man, no power, has the right to deny us this freedom and on this issue there can be no compromise.

Most people are completely unaware of the fact that whilst Scotland and Ireland signed 'Acts of Union' with England, and accordingly had their emblems incorporated on the 'Union Flags', Cymru did not sign the 'Act of Union' of 1536 and accordingly there is no representation of Cymru on the said flag - thank God - which makes the Union Jack about as relevant in Cymru as the 'Swastika'.

An 'Act of Union' under International and ethical law is by definition a 'Treaty of Union' duly signed by the representatives of the nations concerned, The 'Act of Union' which robbed us of our nationhood, nomenclature and legal system was never ratified by Cymric hand; in fact our people were never even informed of the issue until after it was passed by the English Parliament unilaterally, (Wot, no referendum??). By that token the Laws of Hywel Dda are still valid in our land, and Cymru is not a legal part of the 'U. K.' except by definition of alien conquest and occupation. This is our standpoint and that is why so many of our patriots have refused to recognise English courts in Cymru when facing trial.

The Republican campaign must of necessity be waged within Cymru - at grass roots level, whilst the political nationalists have until recently concentrated their main efforts in getting representation outside, at Westminster and no true patriot could meaningfully take an oath of allegiance to an English Sovereign. Our job is to first gain control of the provinces and trade unions of Cymru, (The old pre-conquest 'lands' and now recently resurrected as 'Counties'). These provinces already have considerable powers of planning, education, local economy, etc. With all this under our control and its consequent resurrection of national pride and identity all that would remain would be elevate the counties as provinces, and set up a federal senedd in Aberystwyth, hence the re-birth of our national freedom. Since we never signed away our freedom in the first instance, there would be no point in making a formal application for it to London.

It is the policy of the Republican Movement, that the Provinces would have a high degree of autonomy and the national senedd would be mainly concerned with foreign policy, finance, military, etc., on similar lines to the Swiss 'Canton' or German 'Lander' systems.

We also reject bi-lingualism as an end project, we regard it only as an intermediary measure to the eventual full recognition of our country after which English will be on a par with French, German, Italian, etc.

Once we have obtained our freedom and the prosperity which the control of our own resources would bring us, thereby reflecting itself in the reduction of taxation and increased public resources etc. - all would be lost if we failed to pass legislation forbidding the sale of land and property to non-nationals, because the English would flood in as never before to take advantage of our better standard of living, would soon rule us from inside, our language would be dead within years and we would be a little independent "Westanglia" - another Englishman's tax dodgers capitalist paradise - as the Manx are only too well aware. Austria, Switzerland and even the Channel Islands have found it necessary to pass such laws in order to safeguard the culture and economy of these countries. We seek too an interceltic alliance - 'Celtica' with mutual aid, co-operation and support amongst the Celtic nations. No Celtic nation should remain complacent and at peace whilst even one of our Celtic brethren is in bondage.

The basic aims of the Republican Movement are

- 1) The establishment of a Welsh Republic.
- 2) To regain for Welsh its rightful position as the first language of the nation.

- 3) To place the control of the Social and Economic life of Wales in the hands of the people.

The three stages or 'triad' in the march of liberation of Cymru are roughly the same for the other Celtic lands, after 700 years of foreign domination and suppression. The Saxon propaganda machine - the world's most effective - has had no lack of opportunity to perfect itself on the countless millions that have come under England's imperialist heel, - has seen to it that our national identities have become extensively eroded, so the first stage, must of necessity be the restoration of National identity and pride. This is absolutely vital, for without our identity and self respect, no further progress is possible. Once our identity, pride, self respect and patriotism are established the second stage must be implemented, i. e. the Nationalist Movements, to channel and guide patriotic sentiments into a positive and concentrated struggle for freedom. The third stage is the organisation necessary to back up the demand for national freedom and defend the native heritage by all the means at its disposal should all other means prove futile in the face of a brutal offender.

"It is a sin against national faith to expect national freedom without making use of the necessary means to obtain it."

Here in Cymru, the organisation responsible for the first stage, is 'Cofiw'n' which organises the Cilmeric rally in honour of Llywelyn II, Caedrewyn, and Bryn Glas, with regard to Owain Glyndŵr's war of liberation together with field trips, plaques and lectures, and generally educating the people with regard to their heritage, and restoring national pride and identity irrespective of language spoken. It was formerly known as the National Commemoration Association.

The second stage, via the "Mudiad Gwerin Cymru", (The Republican Movement), together with "Cymru Goch" and the republican elements of Plaid Cymru. And the third stage via 'Byddin Rhyddid Cymru'. The reader will undoubtedly find many details in this article which need further explanation but I have omitted such detail for obvious reasons, it would need a whole book to contain them. I have instead tried to give a rough idea of basic, comparatively unknown, fundamental issues, relevant to patriotic nationalism in Cymru today, particularly with regard to the non-validity of the Act of Union, and Cymric law, things played down and hushed up by English Education and propaganda media. With regard to the above any individual can obtain documentary proof of what I have written, but such documentation is not easy to come by as it is not in the interests of the English establishment that such things are made public.

In spite of the organisations involved in the Resistance Movements, it is in the end the individual that can have the greatest impact, for the surest way to national freedom is for all individuals to THINK FREE and to ACT FREE.

Eurig Ap Gwilym.

GAIRM. quarterly, 100pp in Scottish Gaelic. Publishes new work in poetry and the short story, folklore, musical and literary criticism, articles on current affairs and scientific topics. Annual subscription £2.00. GAIRM 29 Waterloo St., Glasgow G2.

The Cornish Banner, organ of the Cornish National Party, quarterly, 40pp, price 30p. Subscription £1.50 (over-seas £2.) Trelispen, Gorran, St-Austell, Cornwall. Articles outlining the party's policies, about life in Cornwall, book reviews, letters, etc.

WELSH REPUBLICANISM

"I would like to comment on Eurig ap Gwilym's article on Welsh Republicanism in *CARN* 18.

He maintains that 'A nation's right to freedom, sovereignty and control of its own destiny is beyond and above all argument'. It is above and beyond all argument simply because it does not exist save in the pious platitudes of politicians and always concerning nations which are not part of their particular State. There is no benign committee that parcels out the globe to various nations which prove their case; nations acquire their freedom by fighting for it in whatever way is best suited to the situation and pray God it remain so for a nation which has no will to fight for its existence has no right to exist.

To maintain that the Act of Union is invalid is also a spurious notion. The English gained Wales by right of conquest and hold it by immemorial custom until such time as the Welsh conquer it back. If right of conquest is invalid than not only would the English be required not only to give back Wales to the Welsh but the whole of Britain as well; unfortunately we would not enjoy the sole mastery of this island for long, since the Celts conquered it from the Iberians, who probably conquered it from someone else themselves.

How a Republican can demand the revival of the Laws of Hywel Dda, which are ridden with monarchial philosophy, slavery, racialism and the idea that punish for murder should be graduated according to the social status of the victim is beyond me.

It should be remembered moreover, that the Act of Union was promulgated by Henry VIII, whose father came to the throne with support of the Welsh armies, and that its primary aim was to revoke the laws forbidding Welshmen from holding office, living in towns, carrying arms and riding horses. Furthermore the people of Wales throughout the period 1295-1536 sent deputations to the king asking permission to use the English Common Law rather than Hywel Dda's Laws in matters of inheritance. The monarch has not been an Englishman for almost a thousand years.

Bilingualism cannot be revoked just like that. Our historical, geographical, economic and social connections with England are too strong. Wales cannot be self-sufficient, therefore it must trade. Moreover whereas it would be desirable for everyone to learn the 5 other Celtic languages, it is a rather impractical suggestion. Our model should be Israel, where all officials and daily business is done in Hebrew, but most signs are bilingual and virtually everyone can speak English so that tourists and foreign business can know where they are and what they are doing.

D. ap C. Thomas.

[A careful reading of E. ap Gw. 's article indicates that the inalienable right of Wales to self-determination is not held in itself sufficient to achieve freedom. However, our correspondent seems to underestimate the value of the historical argument (based on the fact that no representative Welsh assembly ever ratified the 1536 Act of Union), first from a propaganda point of view (continuity in the claim to national freedom is an important constitutive element of nationality); also from an ethical point of view: the conviction and belief of the individuals involved in the struggle for freedom that they are right, that they are maintaining values which many generations before them already upheld, is by no means a negligible factor of determination to struggle and to win; finally, even though in the last resort most nations have established or regained sovereignty only manu militari, and even though regimes accede to power occasionally by use of force, in general they can be seen to be very anxious to de-

monstrate their legitimacy by referring to constitutions, legal acts, treaties, etc. Why should our national movements so lightly throw away their historical arguments? Of course there are other arguments which may be more determinant in winning popular support and achieving victory.

To say that a nation which has no will to fight has no right to exist is very debatable. It is an argument which serves the interests of the numerically and materially strong nations but not ours. Cymru, like Brittany, went down fighting with odds against them as much as 20 to 1 in some instances. We must look forward to some world order where naked force is restrained by the recognition of other than material values. The difference between the right of the Welsh to govern themselves on one hand, and the right of England to rule the country is that they have lived in it for umpteen generations and form the great majority of the population. The Iberians, if ever they came, are no longer identifiable there.

E. ap Gw. hardly meant to say that a free Wales should re-adopt the laws of Hywel Dda!!! but that they could serve as a platform from which the Welsh could base their policies, especially from an international point of view. It would be of interest to know better their basic principles and compare them with those of the English laws. That the Cymry asked to be heard under English law is historically consistent. After 1282 the towns (garrison towns) were in any case populated by English and Flemings, and the Cymry were not allowed in the towns, even to trade, until 1536. They had to appeal to the ruler's laws if they wanted to change this situation other than by military means. There is proof, however that Cymric law was still being practised after the "Act of Union", one case concerning a land dispute in Dyfed is notable.

We are assured that, far from being backward, the Welsh Laws are considered by European mainland law historians to have been 400 years in advance of anything in Europe at that time, and as far as women's rights are concerned, they were well over 1000 years in advance of English law. We are told also that the Cymro was a free person in his land when 80-90% of the English were in some sort of bondage; that the first introduction to "civilised" English law was the beheading, hanging, drawing and quartering of the Welsh leaders. We should be very careful when dealing with "historical facts".

In this connection, a reading of "English Historians and Welsh History" by A. H. Evans, who is also the publisher (address: 83 Giants Grove Rd., Llansawel, ger Castell Nedd, Morgannwg), is recommended. Price £1.20p incl. postage.

We shall not comment here on the last paragraph. There was a misprint in E. ap Gw. 's article: "We reject bilingualism as an end project" should be corrected to: "... product".] A. H.