

CYMRU AM BYTH!
(WALES FOREVER)

A STUDY OF CONTEMPORARY
WELSH NATIONALISM

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(WALES FOREVER)

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CONTEMPORARY
WELSH NATIONALISM

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INTRODUCTION

Professional theorizers of humanity and nationality have looked with awe at the power evidenced by the force of nationalism. In recent history, we have applauded some valiant results of nationalism at the same time that we have recoiled in fear at other products of the force out of control.

Within the last twenty years, nationalist forces in the principality of Wales have been gathered together, once again, organized, and given an outlet in the Plaid Cymru (Welsh Nationalist Party). Under the leadership of dedicated Welshmen, the party gained strength, and in 1966 placed the charismatic Mr. Gwynfor Evans in Parliament, as the Honorable (Plaid Cymru) member from his home county of Carmarthenshire.

Similarly, we are all aware of the current wave of Irish nationalist feelings. However, of the Welsh, the Scottish, the Cornish and the Breton, most Americans know little. This paper intends to concentrate on one current expression of nationalism only -- that of the Welsh. The writer intends to evaluate these developments and to assess their importance for the small nations of the world.

The writer recognizes with pleasure the taped conversations and helpful interviews with the Parch (Reverend) Elwyn Pryse, his wife Tegwen, and their son Maldwyn. All three are active Nationalist

workers; the Reverend Pryse combines his love for country with his love for God as a minister in three Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Chapels. Tegwen Pryse very graciously recorded songs sung in Welsh, both for the edification and moral re-support of the writer when far from Wales.

The advice and aid of Dr. C. Francis Willey, and the help and forbearance of the writer's two sons must be acknowledged with gratitude.

The main issue studied in this paper is the problem: Is a Welsh national state viable? In seeking answers to this problem the writer will attempt to explore backgrounds, beliefs, and future aims of the Plaid Cymru for Wales. Other Welsh groups concomitant with the Plaid Cymru will also be discussed. In presenting reviews of Welsh history and culture, as well as a cursory view of the geography of the principality, the writer hopes to show some of the reasons for the Welsh version of "separatist nationalism", as Eric J. Hobsbawm puts it.¹

The writer employs the model of Breton nationalism delineated by Suzanne Berger, and contrasts the forms of Welsh nationalism with it and with that of the Scottish nationalist experience.

Finally, the author hopes to evaluate her findings about Cymru. She asks the question, with Professor Kohr, "Is Wales Viable?"² Will tiny Cymru be able to exist within the international super-structure of the world to come?

This question is especially pertinent today in a multi-great power world in a time of ever-increasing national state forms. What relevance does the Welsh experience have for an understanding of this

problem? Perhaps Andre Gide had the answer when, in his last words, he said "I love small nations. I love small numbers. The world will be saved by the few."³

The literature on nationalism is extensive. That which pertains to Wales requires a sense of selectivity in choice among the quantity available and pertinent to the subject.

Dr. Karl Deutsch, a political scientist who studies nationalism, Hans Kohn, a professor of history whose specialty is nationalism, Professor Edward Carr, student of nationalism and member of a Royal Institute of International Affairs committee which defined scientifically the nomenclature of the subject, and Suzanne Berger, a political scientist at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, have varying views, models, and prognoses of the nationalist picture. Suzanne Berger's study of the Breton peasant's political organizations, and also her article on the ethnic nationalism of Bretons, Basques, and Scots, have proposed points by which the Welsh movement may be compared and measured. H. J. Hanham, Professor of History at Harvard, has explored aspects of Scottish Nationalism in his book by the same name.

Hanham's model of Scottish nationalism, Berger's findings about unique aspects of Breton nationalist trends, Karl Deutsch's and Hans Kohn's theories on nationalism -- all will be contrasted with the writer's view of the Welsh model of nationalism. Salient points of Berger's model, when juxtaposed with the Welsh model, will be found to be relevant to the Welsh case. These will be discussed at length.

Aside from the aforementioned works on nationalism which help to create the backdrop against which the theatrics of the Welsh story are

to be played, many current works by contemporary Welshmen have been referred to, as has the work of an Austrian student of nationalism.

Gwynfor Evans, first Nationalist Member of Parliament for Wales from Carmarthen (1966), President of Plaid Cymru (Welsh Nationalist Party), and President of the Celtic League of Nations, has presented his study of nationalism in Wales in many books and publications, and also in an interview taped by the writer at Mr. Evans home in Llangadog, Carmarthenshire. Parliamentary speeches by Mr. Evans and other pamphlets and books on the subject of nationalism for Wales, which were published by the Plaid Cymru, have also been an inestimable aid for the writer.

In his book Is Wales Viable?, (1971) Leopold Kohr examines the strengths and weaknesses of the contemporary Welsh economic situation and a prognosis and plan for her future. Dr. Kohr is presently Tutor in Political Philosophy at the University College of Wales in Aberystwyth in the past he has been Professor in Economics both at Rutgers University and the University of Puerto Rico.

Ned Thomas, a journalist and lecturer in English literature at Aberystwyth, surveys the urgent current Welsh cultural crisis. In his own words, " . . . my aim . . . is rather to help people outside, and particularly Englishmen, understand some of the depth of conviction, the secret springs of emotion, the difference and strength of tradition, and the psychology of the Welsh National movement."⁴ This aim is consummated by Mr. Thomas in his book, The Welsh Extremist, a Culture in Crisis.

Second-Class Citizen, A Selection of Highly Personal Opinions

Mainly Concerning the Two Languages of Wales, gives a timely presentation of the Welsh language problem. Mr. Lewis is a Welsh-speaking Nationalist and lawyer from Pwllheli who has been responsible for adapting and translating much legal terminology into the Welsh language.

The writer has referred to a taped rendition of a prized interview in which she was able to have Ffred Ffrancis state the aims and "battles" of the Cymdeithas Yr Iaith Gymreag (Welsh Language Society).⁵ Many publications from Cymdeithas Yr Iaith Gymreag give background material concerning the non-violent struggle for bilingualism for Wales, to which struggle its members are pledged.

In The Dragon Has Two Tongues, Gwyn Jones has surveyed six Anglo-Welsh writers biographically. Welsh speaking and writing authors of some repute who have much to say about Wales in Welsh are discussed in Wyn Griffith's book, The Welsh.

It also remains to be stated that throughout this paper, the Welsh spelling for place-names will be used. The writer has chosen this usage out of respect for the feelings and attitudes of many Welsh people to whom the use of Welsh language place-names is an intimate and cherished part of their culture.

In preparing this paper, the writer has not only relied upon published literature, but has also made two summer trips to Wales, during which she was able to interview a number of people active in the Welsh Nationalist Movement. She has also attended the several centuries old national folk institution, the National Eisteddfod, at which she also

talked with the Scottish Nationalist Member of Parliament. The writer consulted the resources of the National Library at Aberystwyth, Cardiganshire, and the Welsh Folk Museum at St. Fagan's, Glamorganshire. In addition, the author held a special interview with Gwynfor Evans, and sampled the fervor of Welsh nationalist youth in her interview with Ffred Ffransis.

¹Talk at the West European Studies Center, Harvard University, October 26, 1970, quoted in Suzanne Berger, "Bretons Basques, Scots and Other European Nations," The Journal of Interdisciplinary History, (Vol. 3, No. 1, Summer 1972), p. 175.

²Leopold Kohr, Is Wales Viable? (Llandybie, Wales: Christopher Davies Limited, 1971)

³Ibid., p. 63.

⁴Ned Thomas, The Welsh Extremist, (London: Victor Gollancz, Ltd. 1971) p. 10.

⁵Mr. Ffransis, Secretary of Cymdeithas Yr Iaith Gymreag, has since been brought to trial before an English court, found guilty, and incarcerated in an English prison for demanding his rights as a Welshman to speak in his native tongue.

PART I. THE BACKDROP -- SCENERY FOR THE WELSH NATIONALIST DRAMA

"Man has a natural tendency to love his birthplace or the place of his childhood sojourn, its surroundings, its climate, the contours of hills and valleys, of rivers and trees." Hans Kohn

What are the physical delineations of the Principality of Wales?

To the Englishman of today, Wales is a wild, somewhat picturesque place, foreign in flavor yet on one's own soil, the northern portion of which is a pleasant place to spend the summer holiday. Its coastal plain, strewn with colorful rocks over the white sand, is replete with typical English seaside resorts. Snowdonia National Park offers mountains for the climber and profiled aspects of mountains for the motorist viewer. An occasional English holiday pleasure seeker will investigate the coastline of Cardigan Bay in Mid Wales, or motor to the rockbound coastal park in Pembrokeshire, where a holiday can be enjoyed.

To the ordinary Englishman, industrial South Wales is one place to avoid, since poverty, raped hillsides and valleys (cwms) where collieries used to eat the coal from the earth, and fire belching steel mills dominate the landscape. Clearly, the English everyday view of Wales is most unenlightened. The average British citizen has not yet experienced the varying geographical features of its neighbor to the West.

Let us look at the nation of Cymru through the eyes of a Welsh

national. What are the physical attributes of the land of his fathers?

Like Gaul, all Wales is divided into three parts: South Wales, Mid Wales, and North Wales, including the ancient island of Anglesey, the holy island. Highlands form the heartland of Wales. In the north, these highlands climb to the peaks of Snowdon; gorse and heather covered moors dominate the mid heartland. Moors and mountains are punctuated by river valleys in the South. These cwms (valleys) in the South are the Welsh coalfields, whose small rivers run to the Bristol Channel.

Binding the heartland on three sides is the Irish Sea. The north of Wales has a good sand covered coastal plain. Anglesey and the Lley Peninsula, southwest of Caernarfon, have many flat sandy beaches. From the shore of these beaches, one can turn his back on the Irish Sea and face the towering peaks of Snowdon, Cader Idris, and the other higher Cambrian Mountains.

The Mid Wales moorland rolls seaward until it breaks into cliffs overlooking and etched by the sea. There are no sandy beaches here; instead, polished minuscule pebbles of red and yellow form a boundary to the grey waters. Rivers cut through the moorland at intervals, and perpendicular to the mountain chain which is the backbone of the high moors. As these rivers reach Cardigan Bay, small cities and towns line the estuaries. Aberystwyth then, is the mouth (aber) of the River Ystwyth; Aberdovey, the mouth of the River Dovey; Aberayron, the mouth of the River Ayron, etc. Headwaters of these rivers frequently have exposed slate, both red and grey, as they have cut the moors. Much slate for Welsh and English homes has been quarried in Mid Wales.

Although coal and steel have taken over the greater part of South Wales, the counties of Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire remain agricultural. Their moors and mountains are dotted with innumerable Welsh sheep and cattle. A national park in Pembrokeshire guards ancient volcanic promontories; a national park in Carmarthenshire and Breconshire encloses the Brecon Beacons where wild Welsh ponies still graze.

In Glamorganshire, the coastline bordering the Bristol Channel is quite irregular with sandy banks and shores. A natural harbor at Swansea provides a fine port for shipping.

Wales, then, is bounded by the Irish Sea on the North, the West, and the South. The Eastern boundary of the principality follows very closely a dyke erected by Offa, King of the Anglo-Saxon country of Mercia, in 796 A.D. It was thought that Offa's Dyke was intended as a military frontier which a conquering Mercia had imposed upon the various principalities of Wales. Having studied its configurations, Sir Cyril Fox, the archaeologist, found that "it was a frontier based on compromise between the negotiators, and that it is more fitting to regard it as a boundary defined by treaty and agreement between the men of the hills and the men of the lowlands' . . . In this way the Dyke was the original political or territorial manifestation of the still present cultural division between English and Welsh."⁷ It outlines the Welsh highlands and forms a boundary between them and the lowlands of neighboring England. (More of Offa's Dyke will be discussed in the chapter on political history of the principality.)

In a north-south band toward the eastern border of the heartland,

very deep valleys cut the moorland in an east-west position. Because of their location and deepness, the English government has arbitrarily chosen and flooded several of these valleys in order to provide reservoirs of water for Manchester and Liverpool. The Welsh national eyes this geographical feature of his native landscape and its ultimate use with resentment.

The average Welshman, then, knows his land to be either rural or industrial, most heavy industry concentrated in the South near the cities of Swansea, Cardiff, and Newport. He is accustomed to seeing the scars of plundered hillsides and valleys, thinking, when he considers the damages done to his ancient nation, that many parts of Wales are "as the orange peel after the juice and pulp have been extracted".⁸ He also points with pride to ancient standing stones and cromlechs, remnants of past inhabitants of Wild Wales.

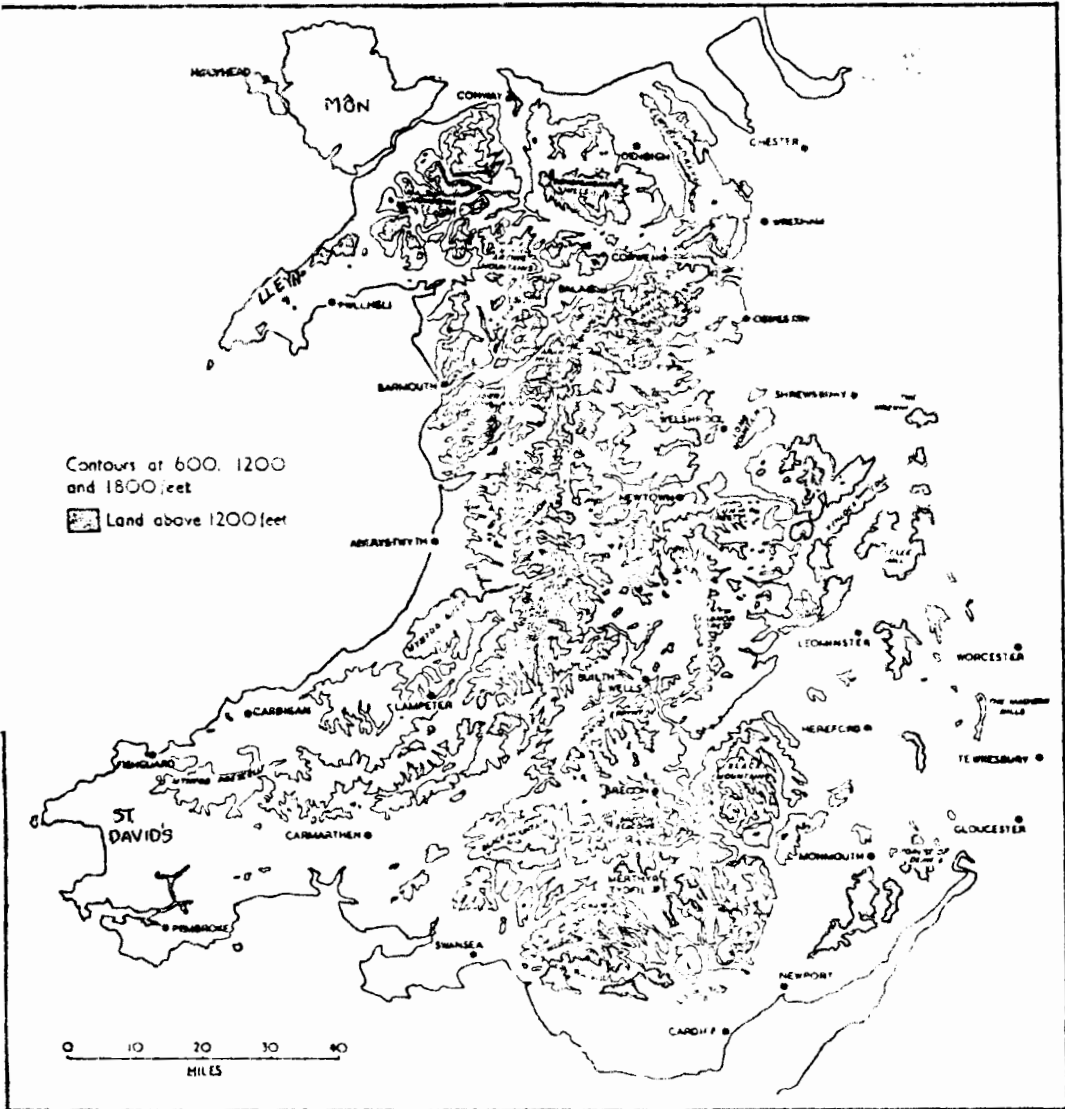


Figure 1. Relief Map of Wales

SOURCE: E.G. Bowen, ed., Wales, A Physical, Historical and Regional Geography (1957) p. 20.

FOOTNOTES

⁶Hans Kohn, The Idea of Nationalism (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1961) p. 5.

⁷J. Gareth Thomas, "Political Development", Wales, A Physical Historical and Regional Geography, ed. by E. G. Bower (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd, 1965) p. 186.

⁸This comment was made by Gwynfor Evans, President of Plaid Cymru, during a taped interview with the writer on July 13, 1971.

"These people being of a sharp and acute intellect, and gifted with a rich and powerful understanding, excel in whatever studies they pursue, and are more quick and cunning than the other inhabitants of a western clime." Giraldus Cambrensis (1145-1223)⁹

Who are the Welsh? Where did they originate? At what time did the first people inhabit Wales?

Anthropologists feel that during neolithic times the coastlines of what is now Wales were colonized by seaborne peoples who were the builders of large stone tombs and dolmens found on both the northwest and southwest peninsulas. At the beginning of the second millenium, B.C., sea voyagers, hoping to eliminate navigating dangerous currents and tidal races around headlands, disembarked and proceeded overland by foot to reach the sea again. Since these people had learned to gather food from the sea, they settled in any habitable environment adjacent to it. Pre-historic Wales, then, became home for the first Welshman, who, as part of the northern Atlantic movement of civilization, may have come from Europe.

On the island of Anglesey, prehistoric man, having found limestone based soils with sparse forestation because of prevailing sea winds, settled, obtained his food from the Atlantic Ocean, and erected megalithic tombs for the burial of his dead. "A survey of the megalithic remains of Anglesey made in 1910 gave the number of burial chambers existing or

known to have existed as fifty-four. About twenty now remain."¹⁰ Similar tombs have been found in Ireland and Brittany.

Bertrand And Reinach, in Nos Origines, state "The internments with the most important remains of the older stock are found mostly in the neighbourhood of the Alps, including the upper portions of the basin of the Danube and the plains of North Italy."¹¹ Rhys and Brynmor-Jones then state "This older Celtic world began, about the sixth century B.C., to be invaded by the Galatic Celts, whose home may be inferred to have consisted of Central and Northern Germany and of Belgium; and the remains of these Galatic Celts are to be studied in the great burial places between the Seine, the Marne, and the Rhine -- in the country, in short, from which they invaded Britain."¹²

In 1916, an interesting hypothesis was put forward by Professor Fleure, an anthropologist, who, having noted the preponderance of swarthy skinned people with dark hair and eyes, prominent brow ridges and mouths, who inhabit some of the more inaccessible areas of Wales, such as the Black Mountains in Carmarthenshire, suggested that these are the descendants of the original Mesolithic inhabitants. Later immigrations, he suggested, may have driven these people into the more inaccessible, the wilder uplands of Wales, where they have survived until today. In 1952, blood group studies appear to have confirmed this hypothesis.¹³

Archaeological artifacts found in Wales show the various waves of immigration which came from the seaways to penetrate to the heartland of Bronze Age and Iron Age Wales. Different tribes of Celts, according to several authorities, shifted, settled, and subdued each other until all

of pre-Roman Wales was inhabited. The Brythonic Celts were the rulers of all of Britain. Their language is the direct ancestor of the Welsh language of today.

These details may seem extraneous to one not conversant with contemporary Welsh nationalist ideology. Today's Welshman is most concerned with the events which shaped the beginning of his nation. In his book, Plaid Cymru and Wales, Gwynfor Evans describes Wales as "A nation cradled in the Roman Empire, a Celtic nation which, of all the Celtic nations, has still the most vigorous language and literature, a small nation of infinite possibilities . . . faced with extinction."¹⁴ Further on in the same book, Mr. Evans states that the regeneration of the Welsh nation is a task for "a movement grounded in the history and culture of the Welsh nation."¹⁵

When the Romans finally conquered North Wales in 71-78 A.D., they conquered Celtic tribes living in what has been called the "cradle of the faith", by Julius Caesar, the faith -- Druidism. Caesar recounts the sending of the youth of Gaul to Britain for their "education and initiation into the mysteries of the fraternity". Druids were "a confraternity of wise man, who gave oral instruction in the doctrines of their religion and in philocopy, practised the arts of divination, and were skilled in astronomy and medicinal lore. They also acted as arbiters and judges in civil and criminal cases."^{16, 17} Anglesey (Mon), with its history of occupation by man for thousands of years, was the center of this religion. It is felt by some that Druidism was the compilation of ancient Neolithic ways of life mixed with ancient Celtic

tribal customs. It is no wonder that the Welsh Nationalist reaches back into time and memory, retrieves the somewhat mythological aspects of the Druid, and injects it into his Eisteddfod ceremonies.

When the Romans had conquered Wales, the complex heirarchy of Druidism had systematically been eradicated as part of the pacification of the country. Fortresses were established, the intermixing of Roman and Celtic hill people was begun on a small scale. The Roman soldier who wanted a woman looked to the Brythonic Celt. Some of their children joined the Roman soldiers. Since the Romans were primarily vegetarians, the Celtic tribesman cultivated corn for Roman coins. The Pax Romana thus had a positive effect on tribal life in Wales.

When the Romans withdrew, the old pattern of invading waves of people from the sea settled in upon early Wales. Celtic tribes from Ireland and from what is now the Scandinavian countries found their ways to Wales, and settled. Normans invaded the southwest; Anglo-Saxons raided the eastern portion of the uplands. Wales had become an area where pastoral tribal people lived in large circular huts and built forts on hilltops. The Welsh tribes began a primitive unification as defense against the Saxons.

Who, then, are the Welsh? The Welsh Nationalist will proudly proclaim that the Welshman is the true Briton, the descendant of the original settlers of the British Isles, the result of the mixing of the Celtic tribes with aboriginal Paleolithic man, overlaid with a veneer of Roman culture.

⁹Giraldus Cambrensis, Annals Cambriae as quoted in In Praise of Wales compiled by Maxwell Fraser, (London: Frederick Muller Ltd., 1950) p. 32.

¹⁰O. E. Craster, Ancient Monuments of Anglesey, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1953) p. 6.

¹¹Bertrand and Reinach, Nos Origines, Volume ii, Les Celtes dans les Valees du Pô et du Danube (in translation) as quoted in John Rhys and David Brynmor-Jones, The Welsh People, (New York: Haskell House Publishers Ltd., 1969) p. 5.

¹²Ibid.

¹³E. G. Bowen, "Race and Culture", Wales, A Physical Historical and Regional Geography, p. 132-133. (This hypothesis is of particular interest to the writer since one of the Nationalists interviewed, the Parch Elwyn Pryse of Llandoverly, Carmarthenshire, fits this physical description, perfectly. The Rev. Pryse may well be proud of his resemblance to the earliest Welshman.)

¹⁴Gwynfor Evans, Plaid Cymru and Wales, (Llandeble, Wales: Llyfrau'r Dryw, 1950.) p. 5.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 9.

¹⁶F. J. North; Bruce Campbell; and Richenda Scott, Snowdonia, the National Park of North Wales, (London: Collins, 1949) p. 315.

¹⁷Julius Caesar, The Conquest of Gaul, translated by S. A. Hanford (Middlesex, England: Penguin Classics, 1951) p. 31-32.

Books may be burn'd, and Monuments may lie
Demolished, thy works and mine may die:
But a Tradition National, alive
While is that Nation, will in force survive.
John Owen, the Epigrammatist (1560 - 1622) 18

When, actually, did the roots of Cymric nationhood begin to grow?
What were the unifying factors causing the Cymry to band together?
What is the picture presented to the world today?

Let us start the history of Cymru (Wales) with the withdrawal of Roman occupation from the territory.

Present day Wales is only part of the territory referred to as Cymru at the time of the Roman occupation. This land extended from the Bristol Channel to the Clyde and the Firth of Forth, and was under the rule of the Roman Dux Britanniarum. Rhys and Brynmor-Jones state that Celtic tribes known as the Cymry were the inhabitants. "The word Cymro means," say Rhys and Brynmor-Jones, "according to the best philological authorities, 'Compatriot'. . . , and it was in the contests of Celtic tribes with Teutonic immigrants that it became a national name."¹⁹ To the ordinary modern citizen of Wales, the word Cymro means Welshman.

Eventually, advancing Teutonic tribes broke up the Cymric confederation. Rhys and Brynmor-Jones say that two events brought about this process. "By the loss of the battle of Deorham in 577, the Cymry of what is now Wales were severed from the Celtic tribes of the southwester

peninsula, and afterwards, as a result of the battle of Chester in 616, the Cymry of Wales were also cut off from their northern allies (of the present-day Northumberland and Firth of Forth area.) The Cymry were thus enclosed by Teutonic kingdoms within that part of the west of the island which subsequently was called Cymru by the inhabitants themselves and Wales by the conquering Saxon."²⁰ From the time of the Roman evacuation of the territory, the head or king of the tribal confederation of the Cymry wore the Crown of Britain and felt himself to have inherited the Dux Britanniarum. Cadwaladr, according to Welsh annals,²¹ was the last to wear the Crown, when the Saxons conquered the area.

Cadwaladr fell in 664 A.D. The history of Cymru from this time until the time of the Norman conquest in 1066 is scantily authenticated. Welsh annals, the laws of Hywel Dda,²² and tradition give rise to the theory that Cymru was divided into three parts -- Gwynedd, Deheubarth, and Powys, each with a king or prince. Some legal treatises give pre-eminence to the kingship of Gwynedd. Nationalists of today record this time as nationhood for Wales, saying that with the King of Gwynedd as supreme over other rulers, Cymru may still be said to have been unified.

In 796, as the result of many battles and skirmishes at what is now the eastern border of Wales, Offa, King of Mercia, built the earthwork known as Offa's Dyke.²³ This "honorable frontier"²⁴ between Celt and Saxon has retained much of its validity as a border down to the present. The territory known as present day Wales, Cymru, was established, then, before the Norman conquest.

From the Brut y Tywysogion and Annals Cambriae,²⁵ we learn of the

establishment of Wales as a feudal society with the Welsh princes paying tribute to the Norman earls. The Normans found that castle building was a far easier way to subjugate Wales; the Welsh were agile fighters, clever bowmen, and very conversant with the moors and mountains of their land. (In fact, the English long-bow was a cultural import from the Welsh.) Much internal fighting between Welsh prince and Welsh prince, between Welsh prince and Norman earl is recorded, as is the extremely cruel practices of the Normans. For a few hundred years, Cymru became known as the Marches of Wales.

When, however, the principality of Gwynedd began to become stronger as in the past, and, as the center of national life, began to be the "eagerly-sought refuge of Welshmen dispossessed by Norman intruders",²⁶ Henry I (1100 - 1135) attacked Cymru, but was defeated by men of the island of Môn, or Anglesey. A long line of princes from the house of Gwynedd (in what is now North Wales) came into power, culminating in Llewelyn II (died 1282). Wales had become a unified and strong feudal state. Edward I (1272 - 1307) declared war on Llewelyn, who signed himself Princeps Walliae. Finally, with the treaty of 1277, Edward changed much of North Wales into shires, rebuilt Norman castles, and replaced Welsh laws and customs with Norman-English ones. Welsh nationals clamored for the laws of Hywel Dda²⁷ and an uprising against Edward was again instigated. Llewelyn II was pressed into the hills of Snowdon and was killed. Llewelyn II is called the last Cymbric Prince of Wales. His brother Davydd, took over the battle, was captured, imprisoned in Rhuddlan Castle in North Wales, tried, hanged, and beheaded. In 1283,

Edward I annexed the principality of Gwynedd. This was, for England, a great triumph, since, Llewelyn II was the "last of one of the very oldest reigning families of Western Europe -- one that could trace its origin to the time when Britain still formed part of the Roman Empire, and which had . . . ruled in Gwynedd for nearly nine hundred years."²⁸ After the conquest by Edward and its resulting settlement, in 1284, the territory of Wales was divided into two kinds of organizations -- the English shire system and the Marcher lordships. Gwynedd was changed to the Edwardian Principality of Wales, and in 1301, Edward's oldest son having been born in the castle at Caernarfon, this principality became the traditional seat of the heir to the throne of England. Thus, the conqueror tried to take upon himself the reflected glory of the ancient ruling house of Gwynedd.

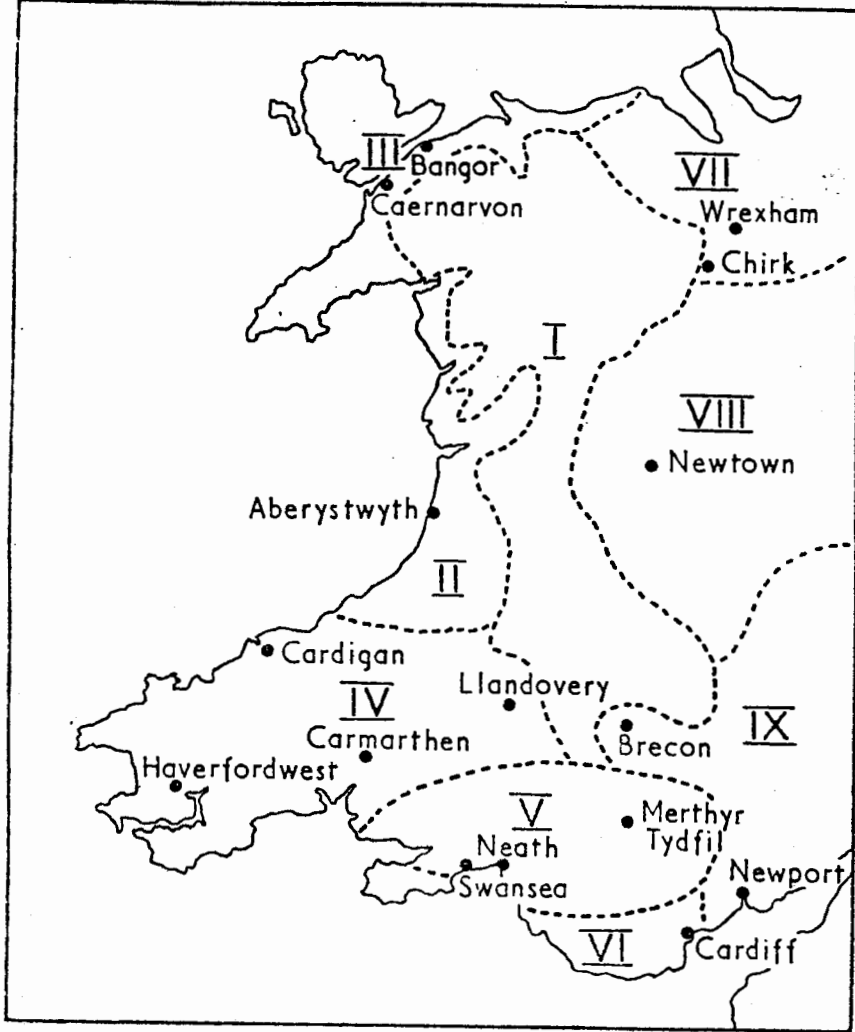
Between the Edwardian settlement and the Act of Union, Welsh nationals twice revolted and endeavored to recapture their nation for themselves. The first revolt was in 1294, when Madog, the illegitimate son of Llewelyn II, led a vigorous insurrection. He was put down and killed in the following year. The second revolt was that of Owain Glyndwr. Welsh nationalists of today proudly refer to the indomitable Welsh spirit of independence which would not be conquered without trying to rise and rebuild itself. History of this desire for freedom is personified by such as Owain Glyndwr, a vital hero for the present day Welsh nationalist.

Glyndwr, a Welsh nobleman of "learning and distinction", in 1385, had fought at the side of Richard II in the war with Scotland. Cherishing

a dream of re-establishing an independent Wales, Glyndwr raised an army of his countrymen, trained them in the hills of Snowdon, besieged and took many cities in North Wales. Glyndwr was a great leader, one whose political foresight envisioned a parliament for Wales, universities in both the North and South of Wales, and the extension of the eastern border into the English midlands. This glorious attempt lasted from 1400 to 1409, when Harlech and its castle were recaptured by the English forces. Disillusioned, Glyndwr fled to Hereford, where he died in 1415, in obscurity. Contemporary Welsh young people echo Glyndwr's political foresight with the same longing to re-establish a free homeland.

The Act of Union, in 1536, struck the first legal death-blow at the Welsh language, Gymraeg. After stating that the people of Wales "do daily use a speche nothing like ne consonaunt to the naturall mother tongue used within this Realme",²⁹ the provision was made that no Welshman could use anything but the English language within the realm of England. England was establishing the laws and precedents which to this day outline the ways in which Welshmen and their country are to act.

The Principality of Cymru as we know it today has been politically the same for the past four centuries -- part of the realm of Great Britain. To speak of the more recent battles for a free Wales and free Welsh language will be the object of the latter part of this paper.



- I The Welsh Heartland
- II The West Coastlands
- III The North Wales Coastlands
- IV The South-West
- V The South Wales Coalfields
- VI The Vale of Glamorgan and Gower Peninsula
- VII The Northern Borderland and the Vale of Clwyd
- VIII The Middle Borderland
- IX The South-eastern Borderland

Figure 2. Regional Divisions of Wales

SOURCE: E.G. Bowen, ed., Wales, A Physical, Historical, and Regional Geography (1957) p. 268.

the rule of the Lord King, have their own laws and customs according to their own tongue

The Welsh Assize Roll, 1277-84
(Claim presented at Oswestry
by Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, Prince
of Wales) translated from the
Latin by E. M. Lloyd

from Lloyd, A Book of Wales, p. 122.

²⁸Rhys and Erymor-Jones, The Welsh People, p. 342.

²⁹P. Beresford Ellis, Wales A Nation Again! The Nationalist Struggle for Freedom, (London: Library 33 Limited, 1968) p. 43.

PART II. THE DRAMA -- THE RISE OF CONTEMPORARY
WELSH NATIONALIST GROUPS

Since the Act of Union in 1536, Cymru was systematically subjugated by the English crown. Slate, tin, iron, lead, steel, manpower, and most of all, coal, were some of the fruits harvested by the plantation owner -- England. The South Wales coalfields were the basis of boom town economy and growth, most dramatically illustrated by Merthyr Tydfil.³⁰

Nationalists refer to the times of the Llewelyns as the Golden Age of Wales; with a surge of pride, they recount tales of Glyndwr's valiant insurrection. Between the Glyndwr attempt and the Rebecca uprisings in 1839,³¹ the indomitable searching for freedom found its outlet in the establishment of Nonconformity in Wales. Nonconformist churches³² and the Welsh Bible, which was translated by Bishop Morgan in 1588, fused and became a bastion for the preservation of the ancient Welsh language, Gymraeg. The people wanted a personal religion. The Sunday School movement was started in 1731, when Gruffydd Jones, Anglican vicar at Llanddowror, sent for Welsh Bibles to teach the common people to read. The Methodist Revival in Wales took place at the same time. Vicar Jones had to send "itinerant masters" for a three month period to an area in order that all the Welsh speaking people might be taught to read and understand the Welsh Bible. Gruffydd Jones' Circulating Welsh Schools taught

150,000 children and almost twice that number of adults for almost forty years.^{33, 34} William Williams of Pantycelyn wrote hymns of great beauty in Welsh with words which are sung to this day over the world.³⁵

The Welsh nonconformist religious and educational developments had important consequences. When the common man and his children had learned to read from the Welsh Bible and Hymnals, some turned to the perusal of the old poets, the masters from the Age of the Princes. Lewis, Richard, and William Morris copied, printed, and distributed these poems. By bringing the classics to the people, they started a literary revival. Enlisting the aid of many expatriot Welshmen in London, they institutionalized these developments by establishing the Honorable Society of Cymmrodorian, which is flourishing today.³⁶

In the nineteenth century, Thomas Gee of Denbigh, a Nonconformist preacher who was also a publisher, started a quarterly review in Welsh, a newspaper, and completed an encyclopedia (1854). Baner ac Amserau Cymru (The Banner and Times of Wales), (1857) a weekly newspaper still in publication today, became "a powerful agent in crystallizing the radicalism of the country into political liberalism."³⁷

Between Glyndwr and now, the Welsh turned inward, clung to their language, their religion, their heritage from past grandeur. The people also clung together in protest against English punder of their lands and natural wealth. The Welsh language not only was the language of the chapel and home; it now became the language of protest against English mineowners and quarry owners.

The English gentry establishment in Wales reacted to these developments by becoming more adamant that English be taught and maintained as the language of Wales. (This Welsh language separated them from what was happening in their factory or mine pit.) The usage of the Welsh Not in the elementary schools was indicative of the times.³⁶

Gradually a polarization process set in. Any social climbing Welshman aping the gentry would seek also the Englishman's speech and church. Thus, one was either a loyal middle or low-class Welsh speaker and worshiper, or a fearful subservient pro-English speaker and religionist. Others sought to escape the dilemma by seeking material gain from emigrating either to London, to the United States, or to Argentina (where there is a Welsh speaking colony in Patagonia today.)

Among expatriate Welshmen, as among oppressed workers, the Nationalist seed receives fertile ground, if only in an emotionally supportive way.

30 "The parish of Merthyr Tydfil increased in population from 7,705 in 1801 to 46,378 fifty years later," E. T. Davies Religion in the Industrial Revolution in South Wales (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1965) p. 8.

31 Farmers disguised as Welsh women led by "Rebecca," rode by night to hated toll houses and destroyed them in protest against unfair tolls (1838-1844). "At /Rebecca/ . . . meetings, their spokesman very frequently was Hugh Williams, the Chartist." David Williams, A History of Modern Wales (London: John Murray, 1950) p. 210.

32 The first independent church in Wales (Llanfaches) was established in 1639. The first Baptist Church was in 1649. In 1735, with the "conversion" of Howell Harris, the Methodist Revival started.

33 Glanmor Williams, "Language, Literary, and Nationality in Wales" (History The Journal of the Historical Association, Volume 50, February 1971) p. 8.

34 The Welsh Sunday School is still a strong and vital force with many political overtones. In a Parliamentary speech on December 8, 1967, Gwynfor Evans, Plaid Cymru member from Carmarthen, in criticism of a Bill making it mandatory to work after 2 P.M. on Sunday stated, ". . . until after 2 P.M. on Sunday, but that is the time at which thousands of people like myself go to Sunday School. In Wales, the Sunday School is not only for children but is for adults, also." Voice of Wales: Parliamentary Speeches by Gwynfor Evans (Cardiff: Plaid Cymru Publications 1968) p. 48.

35 "Guide Me, Oh Thou Great Jehovah - is one of Williams Pantycelyn's most renowned works.

36 A Dictionary of Welsh Biography in Welsh and English has been produced by this society. Lewis Morris wrote, in 1761, "They think if they can but raise a spirit of enquiry among their countrymen in Wales it will be the means to bring Arts and Sciences into vogue among them . . . But by all means the bringing of the people to love and caress their language and antiquities and to be master of it, is the first step of establishing national honour in their hearts as Cymmrodorion." Wyn Griffith's, The Welsh, p. 57.

37Wyn Griffith, The Welsh, p. 59.

38The Welsh Not was a board on a chain to be put around the neck of any child caught speaking in his native language. When a pupil received the Welsh not, it behooved him to catch one of his fellow pupils speaking in his native tongue, so that he could pass on the humiliating board. At the end of the school day, the last recipient of the Welsh Not received a severe caning. This practice lasted down into this century and is remembered by older Welsh speakers.

"A vineyard was set by a man on a sunlit hill,
He hedged her, and planted within her the noblest vines,
He enclosed her strongly, and built a tower in her midst,
And to his son he gave her, a goodly heritage,
That his name might be known among men from age to age.
But a herd of swine have broken into the vineyard,
Have trampled the fence, and root and devour the vines;
Is it not well for the son to stand in the breach
And to call his friends to his aid,
That the breach may be closed and the heritage made secure?
Garmon, Garmon,
A vineyard placed in my care is Wales, my country,
To deliver unto my children
And my children's children
Intact, an eternal heritage:
And behold, the swine rush on her to rend her.
Now will I call on my friends,
Scholars and simple folk,
'Take your place by my side on the breach
That the age-old splendour be kept for ages to come.'"

Saunders Lewis (1893 -
from Buchedd Garmon
translated from the Welsh
by D. M. Lloyd³⁹

Since the demise of the ruling house of Gwynedd in the sixteenth century, Welsh leaders have sought to serve their land in either of two ways -- as Henry Tudor did, by combining Welsh with English loyalty and hoping to bring favors to Wales from an English throne, or as Owain Glyndwr, by severing ties and recreating strong rule on home soil. The Rebeccas of their day protested in the Glyndwr tradition. David Lloyd George in his political youth was a fiery Glyndwr. Together with Tom

Ellis, member of Parliament for Merioneth, in 1886, Lloyd George founded Cymru Fydd (The League of the Wales of the Future) whose purpose was "to facilitate the attainment of a National Legislature for Wales with full control over all purely Welsh business, and a Welsh Executive responsible to the Imperial Parliament where Wales would still be represented."⁴⁰

When Lloyd George became Member of Parliament for Caernarfon in 1890, all Wales rejoiced at the election of an avowed Welsh speaking Nationalist. In the Commons, Lloyd George could declare that "Welsh nationality has survived two thousand years in spite of every human effort to crush out its vitality. The strongest governing forces in the world have successively attempted to crush it, to coax it, and even to pray it out of existence: The Roman, the Saxon, the Dane, the Norman, and lastly the race which is a blend of all . . . Still, after all, here we are . . . claiming the same measure of self government [sic] as our forefathers fought and died for."⁴¹ A truly Glyndwrian speech! However, when David Lloyd George became Prime Minister, Glyndwr was defeated.

During the 1925 Eisteddfod in Pwllheli, Merioneth, an annual occasion when love and loyalty for Wales, its heritage and language, is at its peak, a small group of men resolved to start a Welsh political party. The Reverend Lewis Valentine, a Baptist preacher; Saunders Lewis, a Roman Catholic professor and playwright; and D. J. Davies, a young economist were at the formative helm of Plaid Cymru (The Welsh Party). The primary plank in Plaid Cymru's platform was "to secure self government [sic] for Wales, safeguard the culture, language, traditions and economic life."⁴²

When by 1935, a coalition Parliament had squelched hopes for Welsh self-government, the atmosphere among Nationalists was charged and ready for the explosion which was soon to follow.

Three Royal Air Force Bombing Schools were to be built in 1936 -- one at Holy Island in the North Sea, one at Abbotsbury, and one at Penrhos, on the Llyn peninsula, Wales. The predictable protests arose - and not without some success. For ornithological reasons and residents' protest, the Holy Island and Abbotsbury schools were built elsewhere. The people of Penrhos appealed in every legal way, demanding their rights to keep their town, a stronghold of Welsh culture and language for hundreds of years. The Air Ministry did not even review the case.

On the night of September 7, 1936, three men handed a letter⁴³ to the Police Constable at Pwllheli station, Llyn, Wales and announced that the bombing school was in flames. Saunders Lewis, Lewis Valentine, and D. J. Williams, a schoolmaster, its signatories, explained that it was they who had lit the fire of protest.

"The Three" were tried at the Old Bailey in London, were sentenced and served in jail for nine months. As part of his defense, Saunders Lewis said (and this is much of the philosophy of Welsh nationalism) "If you find us not guilty, you declare your conviction as judges in this matter that the moral law is supreme; you declare that the moral law is binding on governments just as it is on private citizens. You declare that 'necessity of state' gives no right to set morality aside, and you declare that justice, not material force must rule in the

affairs of nations."⁴⁴ This act was to be the first in many acts designed to break the laws of the land in order to defend a "higher moral law".

In the early days, Plaid Cymru followed the leadership of Saunders Lewis. Lewis was a Roman Catholic in a Non-Conformist country. As E. Hudson Davies puts it, ". . . for him the true Wales was the Catholic Wales as it had existed before the Reformation and the Methodist revival, the Wales of the aristocratic Princes who had dominated Wales before the Act of Union."⁴⁵ His was an ideology based on emotionalism. The intellectuals in Plaid Cymru looked backward to the old Welsh literature and emphasized the importance of the Welsh language.

Plaid Cymru's ideals began to take root in the thoughts of many Welshmen. Lewis was a controversial figure, however. His Catholicism and European interests, together with his volatile nature, made him suspect in many non-Conformist minds. At the advent of World War II, this distrust of Lewis' "foreign" nature combined with a resurgence of patriotic British feeling. Lewis' action of protest against the bombing school was damned as a fascist act. Furthermore, Plaid Cymru held that no Welshman should involve himself in an English war, but Wales should remain neutral.⁴⁶ This was a rather unpopular sentiment when Wales itself was being bombed. Lewis gave up the Presidency of the party in 1939, but continued to write many moving articles and speeches in explication of the philosophy behind Welsh nationalism.

During the war period, there were scattered struggles in behalf

of the Welsh language. A petition was presented to the Commons asking for parity of the Welsh and English languages. "On one occasion a Welsh M. P. (Mahon) addressed the House on the subject of the Welsh language. He broke into Welsh accompanied by derisive jeers and catcalls from members. There was an uncomfortable silence when he told them he had been reciting 'The Lord's Prayer'."⁴⁷

In 1945, a new president took the helm of Plaid Cymru. Gwynfor Evans, a lawyer turned market gardener, was a Non-Conformist. His philosophy was less ideological and much more pragmatic. ". . . he posed the Welsh problems as the simple practical ones of stemming the English influences which generation after generation were reducing the number of people who spoke Welsh as their first language . . . and of ensuring that the 'English' Government's neglect of Welsh interests and the Welsh economy were brought to an end . . . the only solution was to secure self-determination."⁴⁸

A concerted effort was made to place Plaid Cymru members in politically influential posts. Gwynfor Evans became a member of Carmarthenshire County Council where he remained as Alderman until 1966. Plaid Cymru was called Plaid Bach (The Little Party) because of its extreme minority status in elections until 1966.⁴⁹ Miraculously, in the by-election in 1966 to replace Lady Megan Lloyd George as Member from Carmarthen, Gwynfor Evans won with a majority of 2,436 votes! Less than a year later, the Plaid Cymru candidate in Rhondda West had a near victory, with the Labour candidate holding his place with a mere majority of 2,206. (Some commentaries see the Plaid Cymru victory

at Carmarthen as being a combined vote of confidence for Gwynfor, the man, and a protest vote against Labour.) Whatever the cause, overnight, Plaid Bach (The Little Party) had become Plaid Mawr (The Big Party). Nationalist sentiment was rising not only in Wales but in Scotland. There, the Scottish Nationalist candidate from Hamilton, Scotland, Mrs. Winifred Ewing, won a Parliamentary seat in November of 1967. The nationalist separatist cause had been boosted into prominence by Gwynfor Evans' victory.

Gwynfor Evans was lionized by nationalists up and down Wales. As the victorious candidate, he was determined to make the most of his time in Parliament and to give Wales, her problems, her concerns, the publicity she was denied in the past. Mr. Evans asked many questions during his term and published booklets containing the questions and the government's answers. Thus, for the first time, people could be made aware of the English government's position on points of importance to the Welsh.

Starting immediately, Mr. Evans, after taking the Oath in English, asked permission to take the Oath in Welsh. "May I say that this Parliament is the only one Wales has, that Wales is a nation with a national language that has been spoken there for nearly 2,000 years and that the people of Wales will regard it as an affront if that language cannot be spoken in this House at least to take the Oath. . . . It is intolerable that after centuries of rule from Westminster no Welshman may utter a word in his own language in the only Parliament. . . . The need is not so much a change in the procedure of the House but to

establish a Parliament for Wales on Welsh soil."⁵⁰ Plaid Cymru aims were heard daily on the floor of the House of Commons. Glyndwr was heard once more as Gwynfor Evans eloquently described the Welsh conditions in his maiden speech, delivered July 26, 1966. "Let Wales have the institutions of nationhood," he demanded. "Let Wales live like a nation and act like a nation. . . Let the people of Wales be free to act for themselves and live their own lives rooted in the traditions of millenia, and rooted in their Christian values. . . . I appeal for help at the seat of the only Government which we have to create quickly the conditions which will ensure for the people of Wales a fine national future."⁵¹

Even with its President in Parliament, Plaid Cymru had problems. Since its inception in 1925, the Plaid had a division in philosophy to face with respect to language and the use of violence. Since Saunders Lewis, the party emphasized the Welsh language. However, many Welshmen are nationalists who do not speak Welsh. The party had to redefine its policy towards the language. This was done in 1969, when an interim report of the Constitutional Sub-Committee of Plaid Cymru stated ". . . on no account must there be discrimination against any monoglot member of our nation, be his language Welsh or English."⁵² Plaid Cymru is for full statehood for the Welsh nation, achieved by constitutional means, by an Act of the Imperial Parliament. A non-violent political party, Plaid Cymru also seeks membership in the United Nations for Wales. (On two occasions, Gwynfor Evans addressed the United Nations -- once in his role as Plaid Cymru President, and once as President of the

Celtic League of Nations.) While those battling for parity for the Welsh language produced what could be termed violent extremist action, Plaid Cymru has publicly disapproved of such forms of struggle.

All nationalists are not in agreement on this point. Some, Saunders Lewis among them, feel that violence will be found along the road to separate statehood for Wales. "I personally believe", Saunders Lewis has declared "that careful, considered, public violence is often a necessary weapon for national movements, necessary to defend the land, the valleys of Wales from being violated, wholly illegally, by the government and by the big corporations in England . . . I think that any means [my underscoring] that hinders this irresponsible violence on the land of Wales by English corporations is wholly just." When asked if he included the shedding of blood, Mr. Lewis answered, "So long as it is Welsh blood and not English blood."⁵³

Plaid Cymru is on record as being a non-violent political party seeking statehood for Wales through the slowly grinding wheels of Parliamentary action. Since all of the Nationalists in Wales must find representation and voice within this one party, it appears a natural phenomenon to the writer to discover the varying positions on the political spectrum -- from Communist to Socialist to Conservative Nationalist -- represented within its ranks. Some Welsh youth have found a need for more drastic action to be taken. Extremist groups have sprung forth from Plaid Cymru; the largest and most non-violent in course of action is the largely youth oriented Cymdeithas

³⁹D. M. and E. M. Lloyd, A Book of Wales, p. 267.

⁴⁰P. Berresford Ellis, Wales A Nation Again! p. 69.

⁴¹P. Berresford Ellis, Wales A Nation Again! p. 76.

⁴²P. Berresford Ellis, Wales A Nation Again! p. 97.

⁴³Signed by "The Three", the following letter explained the reason for the arson.

"Sir: We who sign this letter acknowledge our responsibility for the damage done to the buildings of the bombing school this night, -- September 7. Ever since the intention to build a bombing range in Llyn was first announced we and a large number of leaders of public life in Wales have done all in our power to persuade the English Government to abstain from establishing in Llyn an institution that would endanger all the culture and all of our traditions of one of the most Welsh areas of Wales. In spite of our pleadings and letters of protest sent from hundreds of religious and secular bodies throughout Wales, and in spite of a petition signed by thousands of the electors of Llyn itself, begging the Government to desist from this atrocity, the Government refused even to receive a deputation from Wales to discuss the matter.

Lawful and peaceful methods have failed to get for Wales even ordinary courtesy from the English Government. Therefore, in order to compel attention to this violation of natural rights of the Welsh nation, we have taken this way, the only way left to us by a government contemptuous of the nation of Wales."

P. Berresford Ellis, Wales A Nation Again! p. 100.

⁴⁴G. Evans and I. Rhys "Wales", in Edwards, Evans et all, Celtic Nationalism (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968) p. 256.

⁴⁵E. Hudson Davies, "Welsh Nationalism", The Political Quarterly (Vol. 39, No. 3, July - September 1968) p. 325.

46 Many Nationalists became Conscientious Objectors during this war. In 1940, before a tribunal in Aberystwyth, David Williams of Caernarfon, a law student said, "I wish to emphasize that my chief objection to military service is based on my nationalism which forbids me to recognize the right of any other nation to compel me to take part in war. England has no right to compel the youth of Wales to fight for her."

47 P. Berresford Ellis, Wales A Nation Again!, p. 110.

48 E. Hudson Davies, "Welsh Nationalism," p. 326.

49 Plaid Cymru fought in each General Election from 1955 until their win in the By-election, 1966. The fight was in nine Welsh constituencies. The average vote and the average percentage of the poll was as follows:

	<u>Vote</u>	<u>% of Poll</u>
1955	4,348	11.4
1959	4,893	12.7
1964	3,844	10.4
1966	3,840	10.7

In the General Election of 1966, the Plaid Cymru candidate in Carmarthen, Gwynfor Evans polled 7,416 with Labour's Lady Megan Lloyd George securing the seat with 21,221. E. Hudson Davies lists the comparative vote and percentage of the poll in "Welsh Nationalism".

50 P. Berresford Ellis, Wales A Nation Again! pp. 158-159.

51 Voice of Wales, Parliamentary Speeches by Gwynfor Evans (Cardiff: Plaid Cymru Publications, 1968) pp. 4-5

52 "The Peaceful Road to Self-Government, An Interim Report of the Constitutional Sub-Committee of Plaid Cymru", Caerdydd, Gorffennaf 1969.

53 Ned Thomas, The Welsh Extremist, p. 61.

"CYHUDDIAD YN EREYN GWLADWRIAETH LLOEGR: -

-- I Wladwriaeth Lloegr, ei llywodraethwyr a'i gweision, rhwng y flwyddyn 1282 a'r flwyddyn 1971 gynnllwynio'n anfoesol i ddiwreiddio'r Bobl Gymreig o'u tir, i ddfifetha eu hiaith, eu diwylliant a'u gwareiddiad, ac i ladrata tiriogaeth y Bobl Gymreig,

Yn erbyn Heddwch a Sofraniaeth y Bobl Gymreig, eu Hewylllys a'u Hurddas.

A CHARGE AGAINST THE ENGLISH STATE: -

-- That the English State, its Governors and servants did, between the years 1282 and 1971, conspire immorally to uproot the Welsh People, to destroy their language, culture, and civilization, and to steal their territory.

Against the Peace and Sovereignty of the Welsh People, their Will and their Dignity."

Counter-charge brought to court by eight Cymdeithas Yr Iaith members arrested in January, 1971, for removing English language roadsigns and replacing them with bi-lingual signs.²⁴

Cymdeithas Yr Iaith can be said to have started as a direct result of Saunders Lewis' radio lecture Tynged yr Iaith (The Fate of the Language) in 1962. Altruistic Welsh youth, moved by devotion to their native tongue, aghast at Lewis' predictions that the language would die in the beginning of the twenty-first century, banded together in a "last ditch" effort. As Ffred Ffransis, Secretary of the Society,

put it, "We are seeking a normalization of the situation in Wales. The basic part of our self-respect as a nation is that we should use our national language."⁵⁵ Mr. Ffransis points out that the greatest problem in the battle for the life of the language is within the Welsh people themselves. For centuries, he says, the people of Wales have been conditioned to accept English values and language and to sublimate "Welshness". This is the situation which the Language Society finds "totally unnatural" and seeks to "normalize". Mr. Ffransis states, "Our greatest enemies are our own people."⁵⁶

By non-violent means of action, the Society is "battling" five campaigns on five fronts to save the language and cultural values of Wales. These main campaigns are "1. The Welsh language in law courts (the right to speak in Welsh; bilingual summonses and other documents). 2. The Post Office and Government departments (Car taxation forms and disks; registration of births and marriages). 3. Local Government (the language of meetings and documents). 4. Television and Radio (an Independent authority for Wales; a Welsh T.V. channel and radio wavelength). 5. Rural schools and rural redevelopment (keeping open the school at Bryncroes; "Adfer" and Cymdeithas Dai Gwynedd", the 2 housing associations)."⁵⁷

Stating that the Welsh language cannot survive in a vacuum, Ffred Ffransis explains the Society's involvement in Housing Associations. Nationalists in Wales are concerned and incensed by English purchases of Welsh houses for summer homes and holiday cottages. In many instances, English buyers have crowded out young Welsh couples endeavoring to buy

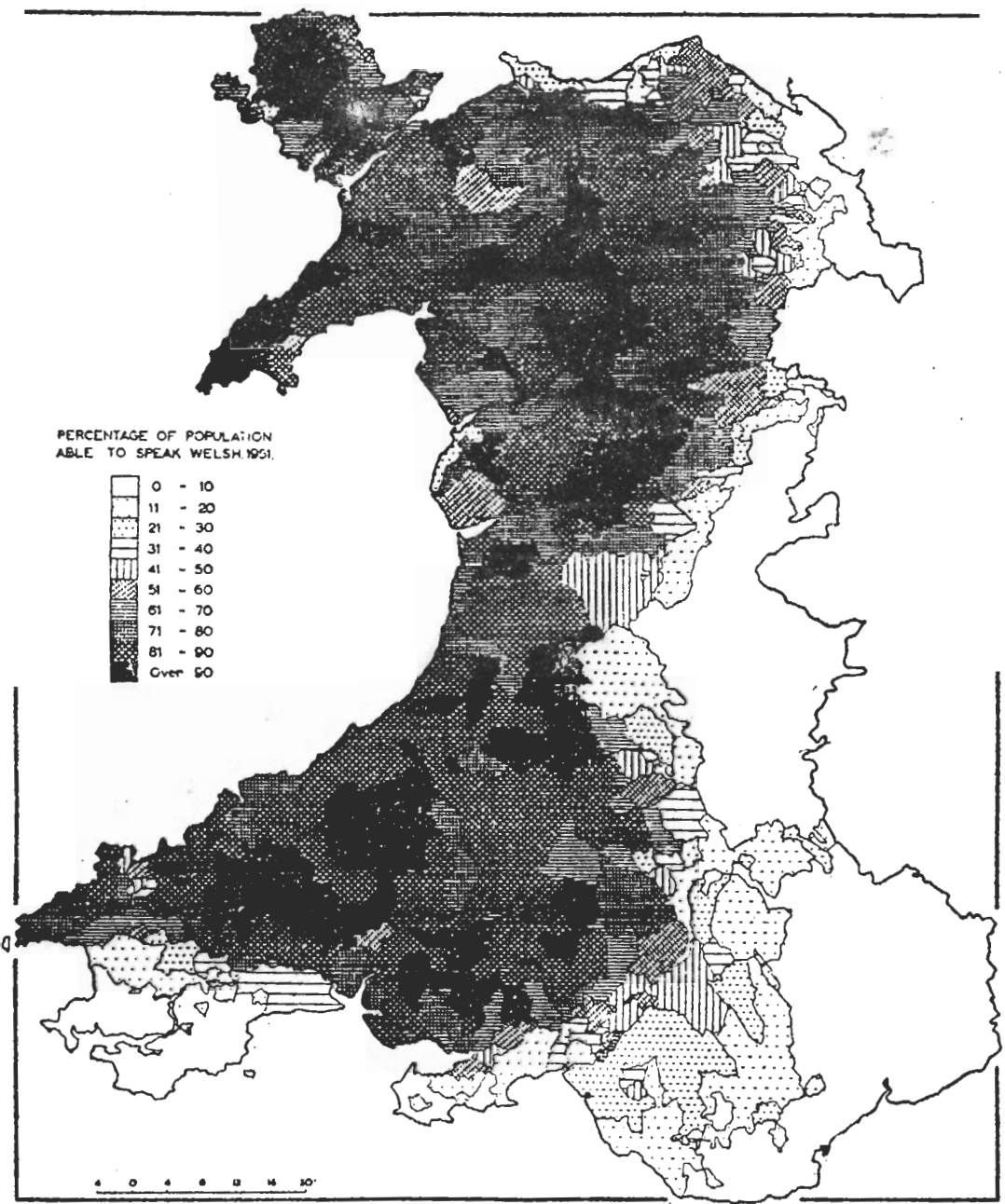
a home, primarily because the English purchaser can offer a higher price than his Welsh counterpart. Then, having purchased the home, the Englishman will occupy it on holidays, not taking part in the Welsh community. The Welsh Language Society takes this as just another instance of English undermining of Welshness.

Nationalists are refusing to register their cars unless allowed a bi-lingual disk (license). When Society members are arrested, they speak only in Welsh, demand Welsh Bibles to swear oaths on. At one instance, when some young Language Society members removed road signs and presented them to the authority with a request for bi-lingual signs, when arrested, the group started with one voice to sing hymns in Welsh. They were led to their jail cell singing hymns in their native tongue. One of the daughters of the Plaid Cymru President, Meinir Evans, was incarcerated in an English jail. When her father, then a Member of Parliament, went to visit his daughter, they were not allowed to speak Welsh. Mr. Evans said that since he and his children had been communicating in that language since their births, this was a cruel act on the part of the authority.⁵⁸

Ten days before the writer and Ffred Ffrancis talked together, in July of 1971, at three in the morning, nine Welsh Language Society members climbed up five major television masts and strapped themselves on to the antennae. A BBC spokesman warned, "They could be affected by radio waves if they meddle with the installations. Radiation could kill them instantly."⁵⁹ The article further reports ". . . Two men, who refused to reply to questions in English, said they were Ffred

Ffransis and Myrddin Williams. Shouting down in Welsh from their perch 75 ft. up the mast, they said that they were occupying the mast on behalf of the Welsh Language Society."⁶⁰ (When Saunders Lewis mentioned the spilling of blood and commented ". . . as long as it is Welsh blood.",⁶¹ he was acting as an augur for the future actions of Welsh Nationalist youth.) Needless to say, BBC did turn on the television masts even at the risk of life. No lives were lost. Two days after our talk, twenty-three year old Ffred Ffransis was imprisoned in an English jail for a three year period. When he asks for his Welsh Bible, he is denied the privilege.

Cymdeithas Y r Iaith Gymraeg members are dedicated young people whose lives are fired by a "holy purpose". Like Ghandi, their strength is shown in their spiritual poise and non-violent acts of protest. They feel they must give their lives to wake their fellow countrymen to the necessity of active participation to ensure the life of the Welsh language and the Welsh way of life. More mature Nationalists point with pride at this manifestation of the indomitable Welsh characteristic which produced leaders, Princes, and a religious revival, within a nation which is small in size, but large in spirit.



Distribution of the Welsh Language, 1951

Figure 3.

SOURCE: E.G. BOWEN, ed. Wales A Physical Historical and Regional Geography (1957) p.251

⁵⁴Charge Against the English State, Cymdeithas Yr Iaith Gymraeg, January 1971 (Mimeographed sheet)

⁵⁵Ffred Ffrancis described the aims and campaigns of Cymdeithas Yr Iaith Gymraeg (The Welsh Language Society) during an interview taped by the writer at the Society's office in Aberystwyth, Wales, on July 1971.

⁵⁶Ibid., taped Ffrancis interview.

⁵⁷"A Nation without Language, A Nation without Heart" (The Background to the Swansea Court Case vs. the Welsh Language Society) Cymdeithas Yr Iaith Gymraeg, (mimeographed sheet)

⁵⁸Gwynfor Evans interview taped by the writer.

⁵⁹"Language Men Risk Death in T.V. Demo", South Wales Evening Post, July 12, 1971. p. 1.

⁶⁰Ibid., "Language Men Risk Death . . ."

⁶¹Ned Thomas "The Welsh Extremist" p. 61.

"So long as it is Welsh blood . . ."62
"Cymru am Byth! (Wales Forever!)"

In 1955, the English government announced that since Liverpool was in need of a new water supply, the Welsh valley at Tryweryn would be flooded to create a reservoir. It was said that the inhabitants of the valley had "given their permission". In 1956, the entire village of Capel Celyn (which was to be flooded) marched with banners through the city of Liverpool. Despite this protest, on July 31, 1957, the Tryweryn Reservoir Bill became law.

Within the next five years, while the valley was being flooded and the dam was being built, at five different occasions, and by nine different young men, willful damage was done to the installations at Tryweryn. At one time, 1,000 gallons of oil was drained; at another, a fire; at other times, bomb blasts. When one of the accused men had his home searched, documents were found indicating that all the men were members of the Free Wales Army.

On October 22, 1963, at the official opening of the dam at Tryweryn, the Free Wales Army made its first public appearance. The leader, Caio Evans handed out propoganda which stated the following: "Pacifism has got the Welsh nationalists nowhere. Violence is the only answer even if it does include hurting innocent people."⁶³

In 1966, Caio Evans and eighty members of the FWA marched with

IRA marchers in the 50th Easter Week Rising Anniversary Parade in Dublin. When interviewed by the press, Caio Evans said "the F.W.A. sought a Welsh Republic and a confederation of all the Celtic countries -- Ireland, Scotland, Isle of Man, Wales, Cornwall, and Brittany."⁶⁴

A rash of bombings occurred. One, at Clywedog dam caused £30,000 damage; threats were even made to blow up the Severn Bridge. Many slogans were daubed over houses and walls.

Plaid Cymru was the spawning ground for both the Free Wales Army and Cymdeithas Yr Iaith Gymreag. The Language Society's aims and methods were more concomitant with the Plaid. Although the Plaid Cymru did not actually condone such practices as television mast climbing, by its silence it supported them. Also, each member of Cymdeithas Yr Iaith Gymreag was also a Plaid Cymru member.

On the other hand, Plaid Cymru despised the acts of the Free Wales Army, as soon as its relationship with the Irish Republican Army was made clear. Before this, Plaid Cymru members openly supported the young men who performed the vandalism at the Tryweryn site.

In 1962, at a Plaid Cymru Conference, the use of violence was overwhelmingly rejected. Unanimously, in the 1967 party conference, a motion was made to expel any member of Plaid Cymru who advocated the use of violence.

It seems clear to the writer why the Plaid Cymru adopts a paternal attitude to the Cymdeithas Yr Iaith Gymreag, since it carries the cause of separatist nationalism forward, at the same time that it offers an active role to the party's youth. The coincidental condemnation of

the Free Wales Army by the Plaid Cymru and the appearance of the Cymdeithas Yr Iaith, instigated by the pro-violent Saunders Lewis, both in 1962, seems to indicate the presence of a broad far-reaching plan for the future of Wales and its politics.

62 Ibid., Ned Thomas "Welsh Extremist"

63 P. Berresford Ellis, Wales A Nation Again! p. 139.

64 Ibid., p. 140.

PART III. THE REVIEWS -- THE CONTEMPORARY NATIONALIST
MOVEMENT IN WALES AS COMPARED WITH THAT IN
SCOTLAND AND IN BRITTANY

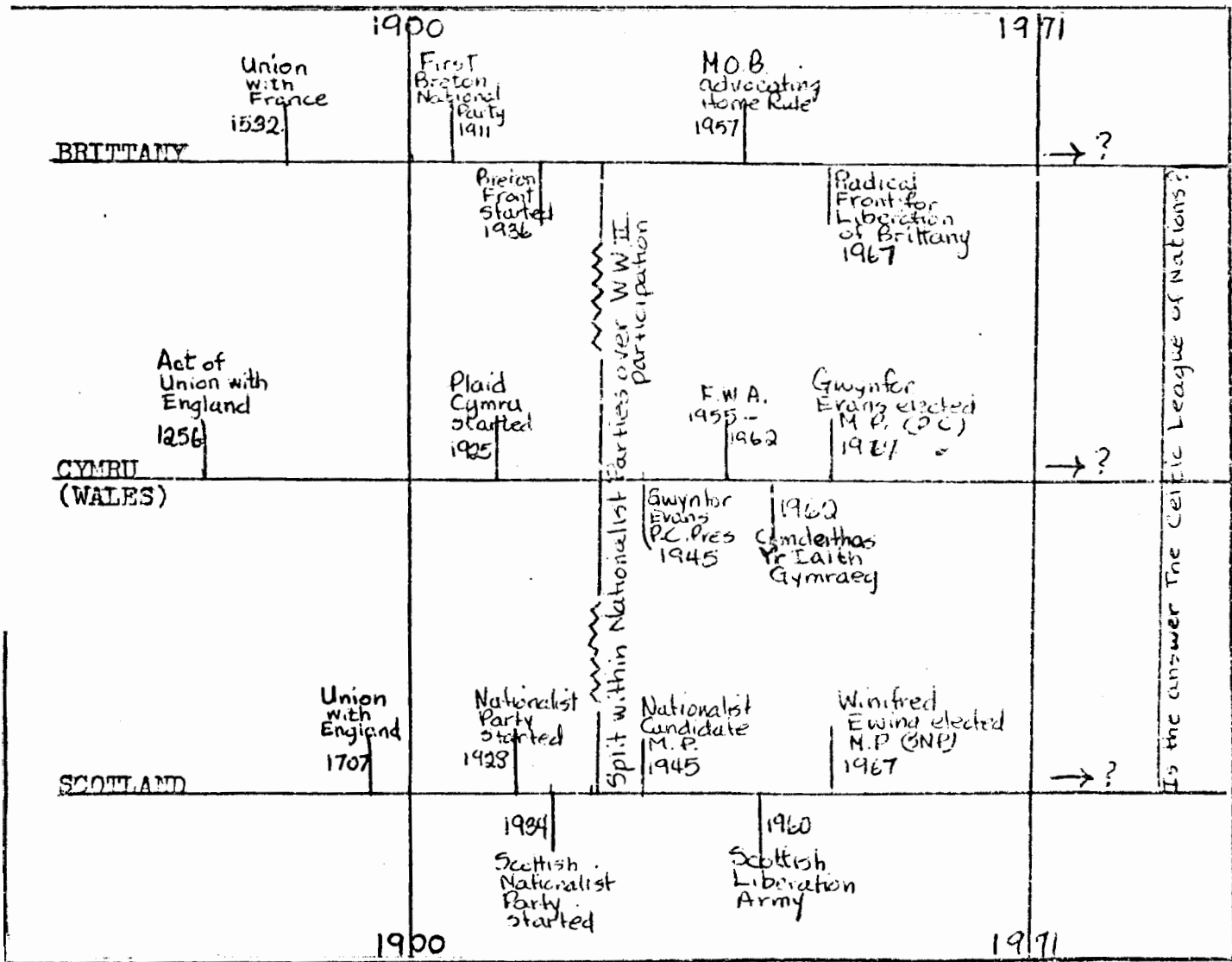


Figure 4. Comparative Timelines of Nationalist Action

I

Suzanne Berger's writings on Brittany and Breton Nationalism⁶⁵

have produced a model of regional ethnicity at work. To recapitulate the main thrust of her argument is to lay the basis for a comparison of her Breton model with the Welsh and the Scottish experiences. In brief, are Berger's findings of a regional pertinence only? Or, do they have a wider significance?

First, we must summarize the findings of Berger with respect to Brittany.

The fief of Brittany became part of France in the sixteenth century. Until the latter part of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Breton language was in almost exclusive use. At this time, concerted efforts on the part of the French governmental agencies and educational systems began to eradicate the language in much the same manner as English attempts to anglicise the Welsh. "Just as Little Black Sambo symbolized for Americans: the happy simple black, for generations of Frenchmen the cartoon figure of the servant girl Becassine represented the happy, stupid Breton." Berger also points out "The French not only spurned authentic Breton culture, but reinvented a 'Breton soul' . . . [existing] only to love, serve, and die for God and France."⁶⁶

In spite of this repressive "official policy of 'non-recognition'",⁶⁷

Berger found that ". . . the sense of ethnic identity grew sharper as contacts and communication increased between Brittany and the rest of France."⁶⁸ Perhaps young Bretons, with increased contact with young French people during World War I were made more aware of the differences between them. Perhaps, this awareness creating appreciation for their own ways, a defensiveness grew from which the "regional ethnic organizations with political demands",⁶⁹ which Berger has studied, were created.

In her study, Berger has isolated three distinguishing characteristics of Breton ethnic organizations. First, she says, "many of these groups are, more or less explicitly, political, but none of them is a satellite of the traditional parties."⁷⁰ Secondly, she finds that the "characteristic that distinguished the Breton regional ethnic organizations is that, with the exception of the political parties, they are the only organizations in the area that do not have a distinctive class base."⁷¹ Finally, in pointing out that "these new regional ethnic organizations all share an ideology which focuses on the relationship between the center and the periphery,"⁷² Berger has found that "The more radical variants of the regional ethnic ideology characterize the relationship between the center and the region as colonial or imperialistic."⁷³

In investigating the doctrines of the regional ethnic groups, Berger has found that, indeed, the bogey has been construed to be imperialism -- cultural, economic, and political imperialism. As stated so succinctly in Berger's article, "cultural imperialism exists because the French state refuses to allow the cultural minority to express itself in its own language or to transmit its language and culture

to its children in public institutions; economic imperialism exists because the Bretons produce raw materials which are processed elsewhere in the nation and must buy French industrial goods dear while selling their own goods cheap; political imperialism exists because Brittany is ruled by bureaucrats sent out from Paris, men who neither understand local interests nor care about the future of the area."⁷⁴

Berger feels that the wave of "separatist nationalism",⁷⁵ "a reaction against governmental intervention and the rule of the bureaucracy",⁷⁶ which is sweeping over Brittany and other ethnic minority regions, is able to do so because "the symbols of protest against the center are already provided by common experience."⁷⁷ Television and the media reinforce the ethnicity and the ethnicity itself becomes the vehicle for the reaction.

To facilitate a comparative treatment for the Berger model with the Scottish and Welsh forms of nationalism, the writer suggests that the following list of generalizations, derived from a study of Berger's writings, may serve as a yardstick against which can be measured the validity of the Berger model as a test or guide for studying what is called "regional ethnicity" -- that peculiar form of "separatist nationalism". (The term is that of Eric Hobsbawm.)

1. The organization is not a satellite of any existing political party.
2. The organization does not have a distinctive class base.
3. The ideology of the organization is focussed on the relationship between center and periphery.

4. Central decision making has been accomplished through the application of the criterion of profitability, to the detriment of the ethnic group.
5. Central political decisions have shifted from "Parliamentary arenas" to "technocratic arenas", thus completely isolating the peripheral regions from the decision-making process.
6. "Organizations expressing regional economic demands are emerging alongside of, and frequently in a kind of symbiotic relationship with, organizations expressing regional ethnic demands."⁷⁸

II

Turning now from Berger, let us test the water for the Berger thesis by examining the recent Scots Nationalist movement.

Historically, Scotland was never conquered by the British. From the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314, the Scots, unlike the Welsh, were able to preserve their independence, and to join England in the year 1707 to form Great Britain on terms acceptable to the nationalists of that time.

Scotland is said to be a true state within a state. The Scottish state can claim its own church, a distinctive legal system, its own banks, a separate administration, and a Scottish system of local government. Even with the Act of Union with England in 1707, Scotland is separate from England.

Gaelic was the language of most of the Scottish Highlands; in the Lowlands, Inglis (English) was spoken. By the turn of the twentieth century, few Gaelic speakers were left, primarily because of emigration to the New World, secondarily because English was and is the language of the Scottish schools. The Scottish churches, both Presbyterian and Catholic, in the Highlands, still hold services in Gaelic.

Even with the inclusion of clauses within the Scottish National Party Manifesto regarding establishing a university with Gaelic as the medium of instruction, the native language is not as intense an issue as it is with the Welsh and Bretons.

The Scottish Nationalist Movement of the twentieth century has been cyclical in nature and has suffered considerable fragmentation. The writer will confine her comments largely to an analysis of the ideological assumptions and practices of the Scottish National Party since World War II.

During the war, there was a dissident group which found Douglas Young refusing conscription because he did not recognise the right of the English government to enroll him in its armed services. When he was sent to prison in 1942 for his refusal, the fact that he became a popular figure for a time attests to the fact that there was a strong current in Scottish nationalism quite discontented with the S. N. P. program of the pre-war years that had opted for the Scots to be treated as equals in the United Kingdom and to retain their share in the management of the imperial interests of the Empire.⁷⁹

By the time that the "Scottish National Assembly" met in Glasgow in March, 1947, and produced, after a year, a "Blue-Print for Scotland" (adopted at the second assembly meeting, March 28, 1948), it was clear that the post-war winds of change were blowing strongly through the Scottish National Movement. Its goals, proclaimed in a new Scottish Covenant were:

1. Reform of the constitution of the country "to secure good government in accordance with our Scottish traditions and to promote the spiritual and economic welfare of our nation."
2. An affirmation that the desire for this reform was "both deep and widespread . . . , transcending all political differences and sectional differences," and a declaration of a determination to remain united in purpose for the achievement of this goal, and
3. ". . . we solemnly . . . pledge ourselves, in all loyalty to the Crown and within the framework of the United Kingdom, to do everything in our power to secure for Scotland a Parliament with adequate legislative authority in Scottish affairs."⁸⁰

Dr. Robert McIntyre, "one of those distinctively Scottish figures whose whole pattern of thought derives from Scottish presbyterianism", is essentially a type familiar to the "small-town Democrats of the prairie provinces of Canada and parts of the United States. He has a passionate belief in economic freedom, which he believes can only be assured if all men possess some property (In this sense he is a neo-Lockean populist who believes in a property-owning democracy)."⁸¹ In view of its new leadership, the old conflict between the materialist creeds of state socialism and private enterprise is "now a sterile and empty conflict . . . the world wide struggle of the age we are now entering is for the human rights of man".⁸²

Significantly, this emphasis of the new S.N.P. policy and the building up of small town democracy omitted a section on Scottish culture and language.⁸³ There was the same mixed bag of influences at work found in parallel movements outside of Scotland; that is, "Henry George, Douglas Social Credit, Christian Socialism, anarchism,

political Radicalism -- everything except a frank acceptance of the modern state and of modern bureaucratized industrial, political, trade union, and commercial empires."⁸⁴

Hanham holds that the fact that the S.N.P. survived from 1942 to 1964 was its great achievement. He concludes that its survival was based on a limited conception of nationalism which shunned the intellectuals, the founders of nationalism, and caused disaffection in their ranks. The party concentrated on the small man, the rank and file of all the parties, rather than upon their leadership. Such a party, Hanham concludes, is "forced to rely upon men who are by definition hostile to the state and incapable of understanding how it is run and what it is trying to do. Such men are well enough en masse at public meetings, but as town councillors or parliamentary candidates they are often incredibly inept. . . American and Canadian experience has shown that it is possible for parties like the S.N.P. to achieve power and to provide competent, if uninspired leadership when in power. But a Scotland run by the S.N.P. would be a simple agrarian or small-town democracy without any state medicine, but it would not be in any sense an intellectual force. So far as the S.N.P. is concerned the Scottish renaissance might never have occurred."⁸⁵

From this summary of Hanham's account of contemporary Scottish nationalism, it is possible to make the following observations with respect to the applicability of the Berger model to the Scottish scene.

1. The S.N.P. appeals to the little man and not to the leadership of existing political parties. So far, this conforms.

2. The disenchantment of the Scottish intellectuals with the S.N.P. and its appeal to the little man contradicts the Berger model which states that the organization should not have a distinctive class base.
3. With respect to Berger points 3, 4, and 5, it would seem that Hanham's account of Scottish nationalism, in general, agrees with the Berger thesis.
4. It is not clear to the writer, from surveying Hanham and other sources, whether the Berger point on the symbiotic relationship between the political organizations and the ethnic organizations can be determined in the Scottish picture.

III

When the lens is turned to Welsh nationalism, one finds a clear view with many parallels with Berger's model of Breton nationalism. The Welsh Nationalists feel much kinship with Breton Nationalists primarily because of the Celtic heritage and the shared parental language. Memories of past Celtic grandeur give a boost to the ethnic organizations of both peoples. Both France and England have made conscious attempts to eradicate both the national language and culture of the two peoples. In both instances, the school system has been the political tool for the elimination of existing ethnic values -- both in the language and in mores. Poor ethnic propaganda -- the "stupid Breton" and "Taffy was a Welshman, Taffy was a thief" -- have been spread about both peoples.

Berger's point four concerning the application of the criterion of profitability has strong implications for Wales. When certain moneys have been allocated by Parliament for road building, or the maintainance of parks, and public gardens, it has been considered

more profitable to build roads in England, to improve English public gardens in order to serve tourism. When the railroads were surveyed with the lens of profitability, lines were closed in Wales. The lens was tuned to large scale profit found within the English realm, not to the small scale profit which is one of the important facets of the Welsh national infrastructure. Welsh Nationalists state that this is a direct example of political imperialism.

Examples of cultural imperialistic policies of the English government can be found also in the amount of television time given to the Welsh to broadcast in their native language.

Both the Bretons and the Welsh feel that France and England respectively are plundering their resources, both in raw materials and in population.

Plaid Cymru is definitely not a class-based political party. It is the only party which serves all of Wales. Within its ranks are both the intellectual, the small man, the monied and the poor. Ethnicity is the link which binds Welsh Nationalists together, both in Plaid Cymru and in splinter extremist groups. Ethnicity also binds the Breton Nationalists within their movement. In Wales, the National Eisteddfod and Cymdeithas Yr Iaith Gymreag (Welsh Language Society) are good examples of organizations with "regional ethnic demands" which are "emerging alongside of, and frequently in a kind of symbiotic relationship with"⁸⁶ Plaid Cymru.

Another striking similarity which Wales and Brittany share is that of geographical size. Both are small in size; the boundaries of

both are not well defined. (With the exception of the areas where Offa's Dyke can still be seen, this is true for Wales, also.) Both are on the "periphery"; the ruling "center" is distant.

Both Wales and Brittany are economically dependent on their ruling neighbors. Should "separate nationalism" be attained, a strong economic plan for the future of the new state would have to be facilitated.

It can be stated, therefore, that in respect to the six generalizations which the writer finds to be the "meat" of the theoretical Berger model, Wales definitely conforms.

⁶⁵Suzanne Berger's book, *Peasants Against Politics* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1972) and the article "Bretons, Basques, Scots, and Other European Nations" are the ones referred to here.

⁶⁶Suzanne Berger, "Bretons, Basques, Scots, and Other European Nations", The Journal of Interdisciplinary History, Vol. 3 (No. 1, Summer 1972) p. 170.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Ibid.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 171.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 172.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Ibid., p. 173.

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 175.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Ibid.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 170.

⁷⁹H. J. Hanham, Scottish Nationalism, (London: Faber and Faber, 1969) pp. 163-166.

⁸⁰Ibid., pp. 170-172.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 174.

⁸²Ibid., and Note 1

⁸³Ibid., p. 175.

84 Ibid.

85 Ibid., p. 180

86 Berger, "Bretons, Basques, Scots, etc.", p. 170

"The image of Wales as a garden, a vineyard, a landscape shaped and humanized by the care of generations, is one that recurs in our literature. The wind too is always there, usually with its religious meaning of something cleansing, blowing away the props of our complacency. The actual garden is fast disappearing; the hedgerows are literally bulldozed down, the cultivated land turns out to be marginal land for the central economic planner, And the warm, human Welsh community within which one could snuggle away from the centres of English power where the decisions were made on our behalf, that too is being broken down. The truth is brought home that although one can survive for a long time by lying low, there comes a time when defencelessness means death. We have to get up and stand in the wind, imagine a new future. As Unamuno said (and being a Basque he knew exactly what was at stake): tradition should be like a skeleton, inside the body, giving it strength, not outside, like the hard shell of a crab, holding the life in. Very soon there will be no quiet, comfortable way left of being a Welsh-speaking Welshman; "traditional" Welshness seems more and more a sham. We either have to lie down as if dead or do something new."⁸⁷

So says Ned Thomas in The Welsh Extremist. Nationalists in Wales are endeavoring to do the "something new" that will enable their land to live in the future, the something new that will enable future Welsh children to re-discover "the warm, human Welsh community".

Is there a place for tiny Cymru within the structure of a crowded world run by super-states? Leopold Kohr feels that the only way that the world will be saved is by breaking down the giants into more workable nations. His thesis is "that the fundamental cause underlying the

more obvious causes of all forms of social misery is bigness." ⁸⁸

Wales is certainly small. It is the writer's feeling that should the Nationalists be successful in their battles against their largest enemy -- the apathy of fellow Welshmen --, and should self determination be gained, the battle will have just begun. An entirely new economic system will be needed in order to stabilize the home conditions. Friendships will have to be maintained between other nations on the Island; trade agreements will have to be made.

As Gwynfor Evans has stated, internal transportation routes must be improved. Communications must be facilitated between all corners of Cymru. Karl Deutsch speaks of the "windowpane theory" in which a nation is bound together and actually formed into the "shape" of a viable nation by its network of transportation and communication, often assuming the physical shape of a windowpane. Welsh Nationalists realize the wisdom of this theory, and place these improvements at the highest priority.

Plaid Cymru is a pacifist party. Its members have gone on record as wishing to help towards world peace by working actively in the United Nations. Plaid Cymru members seem to hold to the adage that "Charity begins at home". They feel that by creating and maintaining a healthy and functioning small nation, they will bring its vitality to the international scene, thereby actually participating in world progress.

If other Celtic nations -- Brittany, Cornwall, Scotland, The Isle of Man, are as successful as they would wish, will they join with Wales in producing another giant, The Celtic League of Nations? This might

defeat the purpose of the rationale of the efficacy of smallness to which they all hold. Gwynfor Evans is President of the League at this writing. The Celtic League of Nations provides much moral support to its members in their various searchings for self-determination.

Time only will be the judge of all these matters. The course of history will show whether the Welsh version of "separate nationalism" has merit.

"Cymru am Byth!"

⁸⁷Ned Thomas, The Welsh Extremist, p. 125.

⁸⁸Leopold Kohr, Is Wales Viable? Llandybie, Carmarthenshire: Christopher Davies, Limited, 1971, p. 11.

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