

CONFIDENTIAL.

DRAFT DECLARATION OF POLICY APPROVED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE WELSH NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION FOR SUBMISSION TO THE COUNCIL.

OUR DUTY.

The end of the war is approaching, and we may suddenly be confronted with the problems of peace. It is therefore of paramount importance that, as citizens of a free and democratic country we should be considering these problems, lest we are caught unprepared, as we were at the conclusion of the last war. We are agreed that every individual has not only the right, but indeed the duty of forming an opinion concerning the principles which should govern our relationships with other peoples in the post-war world, and the institutions which are essential for the prevention of future wars.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

At the end of the first world war the peoples demanded that an organisation should be created to maintain the peace. As a result, the League of Nations was brought into existence which its founders hoped would be developed into an International Authority powerful enough to prevent aggression and to ensure the peace of the world. President Wilson declared that the new organisation was to be a league of peoples, but when its constitution was drafted in its final form it emerged as a league of governments. We believe that this was one of the causes of its failure to fulfil its high mission.

VOLUNTARY SOCIETIES.

In many countries it was felt that the League would be unable to discharge its duties and obligations unless it was supported by a strong and informed public opinion, which would ensure that the governments represented upon the Council and Assembly would give it their support and develop its powers in order that it might become an effective instrument for the prevention of war. As a result voluntary bodies or associations sprang up in different

information about the activities of the League, to encourage a spirit of collaboration and intercourse with other peoples and generally to ensure that the principles and articles of the Covenant would be respected and upheld. The most important of these voluntary associations was the British League of Nations Union incorporated under a Royal Charter, of which the Welsh Council was a part.

THE WELSH COUNCIL.

From the outset the people of Wales were keenly interested in the success of the League. They had not forgotten the traditions bequeathed to them by the pioneers, Richard Price, Robert Owen, Tregelles Price, Henry Richard, Samuel Roberts and other distinguished Welshmen who, in the past, had laboured for the cause of peace. In the course of a few years, 298 branches of the Welsh Council, comprising no fewer than 18,000 subscribing members, were formed in all parts of our country. Such a response demonstrated that Wales had not lost its enthusiasm for peace, and its detestation of war as the method of settling international disputes. It should also be emphasised that, although the Welsh Council was linked up with the English Union, it financed its own activities, had its own headquarters and developed its own policy. In other words it enjoyed a status of Home Rule. Whilst strictly adhering to the common objective, namely, support of the principles of the Covenant and the success of the League, it asserted its right to enunciate a distinctive policy of its own.

TWO VIEWS.

Within a few years it became evident that there were two schools of thought regarding the status, constitution and powers of the League. On the one hand there were those who regarded it as an adequate institution for the preservation of peace, and rejected proposals for its development into a world Authority. This school was prepared to rely solely upon the sanction of public opinion for the prevention of war; it refused to recognise any flaws in the Covenant or to close the gaps in the constitution of the League which might lead to war. In short, it was content with a deliberative body, a talking shop, which could neither reach decisions nor enforce them. Moreover, this school repudiated the necessity for an organised system of sanctions to deal promptly with acts of aggression.

On the other hand, there were those who regarded the League as a foundation upon which to build. They realised that it was a human institution, and pointed out its defects. They urged that its powers, machinery and organisation should be expanded in

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efforts upon the establishment of two institutions, an Equity
Tribunal or Tribunals for the settlement of all political disputes,
and an armed Police Force to prevent aggression and safeguard
the security of the States members of the League. They urged
that, when negotiations ended in a deadlock, the dispute should
be referred to a body of impartial and disinterested persons who,
after investigating all the facts and hearing all the evidence, would
be able to recommend to the Assembly a just, fair and reasonable
settlement. They also proposed the organisation of financial,
economic and military sanctions, to uphold and, if necessary, to
enforce the decisions of the League.

THE LLANDRINDOD CONFERENCE.

At a Conference held at Llandrindod on June 9th, 1934, the
Welsh Council, by a majority of 86 to 8, endorsed both these
proposals, and incorporated them in its programme of aims and
objects. In the discussion, which lasted for two days, it was
maintained that a durable peace could only be founded on justice,
and that justice involved a peaceful procedure for the settlement
of all disputes, political as well as juridical, supported by the
collective force of all those nations who were prepared to submit
themselves to the rule of law. Furthermore, in order to ensure
that this obligation would be fulfilled, it was decided to urge the
creation of an organic police force under the direct control of the
League.

THE POLICY OF WALES.

In the light of events since the passing of these resolutions,
it is not too much to suggest that if the policy of the Welsh Council
had been adopted by the States members of the *United Nations*,
the second world war could have been prevented, and the suffering,
misery and devastation of the last four years avoided. With the
exception of New Zealand, whose government brought forward
similar proposals at Geneva, Wales was the only country which,
through the Welsh Council, advocated these international reforms.
In some quarters they were described as visionary and impractical ;
subsequent events have proved, however, that they were realistic
and practical. It is now clear that alliances, arbitration pacts,
treaties of friendship, trade agreements, a talking-shop and appease-
ment have miserably failed to prevent war. Moreover, the fact
that they relied exclusively upon their national armaments, which
were totally inadequate at the outset of hostilities, brought the
members of the League to the verge of the abyss. Although the
common enemy had been decisively defeated twenty years pre-
viously, he came within an ace of achieving the domination of
Europe, and indeed the mastery of the world. In any case, the

system of Sovereign States and national armaments did not prevent war, which was the primary objective of the League. On the contrary, it made war a certainty—it was only a question of time. Whatever criticisms may be levelled against the futile policy pursued by other bodies of unilateral disarmament and the glorification of an ineffective League, this charge cannot be brought against the Welsh Council or the Welsh people who strenuously supported the idea of an international authority backed by force, in order to assert the claims of Justice, to prevent aggression and to establish equality in the sight of the law for all nations, great and small alike.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR WORLD WAR II.

Nor must we forget that the League was a Confederation of national Sovereign States. It could only do what the governments and peoples of these States wished it to do. It could only employ the extremely limited and restricted powers and functions which its States members had conferred upon it. The Foreign Offices—always jealous of this new competitor—undermined its moral authority on more than one occasion, and helped to sabotage it. Can we wonder then that, having refused to endow this embryonic confederation with the rudimentary institutions of government, it failed to establish a durable peace and to carry out the responsibilities entrusted to it by the peoples of the world? It is therefore idle to suggest, as its detractors have done, that the League was in some way responsible for the second world war. No, the responsibility rests with the peoples and governments of its States members who persisted in playing the game of power politics and refused to pool their resources for the administration of justice, the prevention of aggression and the maintenance of their own security.

A NEW INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION.

When the United Nations have won the war, they will have created the conditions which will make it possible to establish a new League, Confederation or Federation of the United Nations. It is clear that some kind of international organisation will be indispensable. This necessity is recognised by the leaders of the United Nations. In the Atlantic Charter it is described as “a permanent system of general security,” in the Declaration of the Moscow Conference as “a general international organisation.” In any case it is inconceivable that the world should relapse into the conditions of international relationships—secret diplomacy, the balance of power, treaties and alliances—which were the stock-in-trade of the Foreign Offices before the first world war. The Holy Alliance, the Concert of Europe, the Hague Conference and, lastly, the League, have all failed to introduce a system of

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law and order into the world. But that does not prove that these attempts, unsuccessful though they have been, were not worth while provided that from the experience thus gained we draw the right conclusions. Because these bridges have been washed away by floods of anarchy and lawlessness, it does not follow that we should abandon our efforts to build a new one! We may, of course, believe that the problem is insoluble, that the system of anarchy which breeds war is inevitable. Obviously, that is a counsel of despair, which means that we give up the struggle for justice and peace, and consign our children or our grandchildren to the hell of another world war even more devastating and more costly in life and treasure than anything we have witnessed in our life time. It also means that we capitulate to the powers of darkness, to the evil and mischievous men whose thirst for mastery, power and loot knows no bounds. It implies that we acquiesce in the state of barbarism and insanity which drives the peoples of the world at frequent intervals to enter into a competition in the wholesale slaughter of their fellow-men.

ATTITUDE OF WALES.

We do not believe that the Welsh people will abandon the cause of justice and peace. Disappointment there may be, but never the feeling of despair that the task is impossible, that the battle can never be won. In the past Wales has been in the forefront. Her sons and daughters have blazed the trail. Let us therefore be true to the tradition of our forefathers. In the light of bitter experience, let us develop the heritage they have bequeathed to us. Let us also remember that because in the past other peoples have refused to follow our lead, that is no reason why we should not persist in our efforts.

AN AUTHORITY.

At the conclusion of this war a new opportunity will present itself of urging the policy and objectives we have hitherto pursued upon the nations of the world and, especially upon the government of our country. It must now be clear to all that the only way to secure justice and prevent war is the establishment at the earliest moment of a *United Nations Authority*—not merely a conference or another talking shop. This Authority must possess powers of government. It must be able to declare what the law is, to administer it and to enforce it. In future no nation should be allowed to be the judge in its own quarrels. The States members of the Authority must confer upon it the power to settle all international disputes, to organise the common defence of its members, so that the defence of each becomes merged in the defence of all, and to

provide the means of collaboration for their common welfare and economic prosperity. Past experience proves that nothing short of a *supra-national authority* will suffice to put an end to the anarchy of national Sovereign States. We must choose between sovereignty and justice—between anarchy and the rule of law.

THE CAMPAIGN.

The Executive Committee of the Welsh Council, therefore, appeals to the Branches and members to prepare for a new campaign, for a *dywigiad*, which will bring home to our people the immensity of the issues at stake, and the unique opportunity which will present itself at the end of the war of making our contribution as a nation to the progress of civilisation and the advancement of justice and peace. During the last four years our thoughts and energies have been concentrated on winning the war. Now that victory is in sight our thoughts naturally turn to winning the peace. Therefore, we would plead with our friends and comrades, and with all other men and women of goodwill, to help in this campaign in order that the Welsh Council, which is a democratic body elected by its Branches and Members, may be able to represent the views and policy of the Welsh people in the sphere of international relationships.

In conclusion we would stress that there is no time to lose. Events follow each other in rapid succession, and peace may descend suddenly upon us. Consequently, we earnestly hope that those Branches which have nobly carried on during the war period will become active again, and that those which for various reasons have become dormant will blossom into life once more.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee, held at Shrewsbury, on January 29th, the following resolutions were submitted and recommended for the consideration of the Council :—

In view of the possibility of a sudden ending of the war, the Executive Committee of the Welsh Council of the League of Nations Union suggests :—

(1) That the time has now arrived when serious consideration should be given to the principles and policy which the members, branches, and friends of the Welsh Council desire to see incorporated in the international re-construction of the post-war world.

(2) That as soon as possible the General Secretary of the Council be instructed to consult the active branches and to suggest the advisability of summoning meetings with a view to forming County Committees for the resuscitation of pre-war branches and the establishment of new ones.

(3) That such time as possible be taken to make a provisional policy as to the future of the League of Nations and its relations to the establishment of a new international organisation.

(4) That the name and title of the League of Nations Union be changed to that of the League of Nations Organisation.

(5) That the League of Nations Organisation be specially concerned with the welfare of the people of the world.

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We can be in touch with the people of the world.

(3) That such Committees and branches shall be created provisionally in support of a United Nations Authority, until such time as a National Conference can be held to frame the future policy of the Welsh Council. The Atlantic Charter, the Declarations of the Moscow and Teheran Conferences, point to the establishment of a new international organisation which it is to be hoped may come into being before the end of the war.

(4) That it is premature to consider any change in the name and title of the Welsh Council of the League of Nations Union until the nature and designation of the new international organisation is known.

(5) That the branches and County Committees be invited to organise and hold as many public meetings as possible, especially upon United Nations Day, June 15th.

(6) That when these arrangements have been concluded the Branches shall be requested to elect representatives to the Welsh Council and to attend a National Conference at the Temple of Peace, when the policy to be pursued by the Council can be fully discussed and decided upon.

(7) That, after having agreed upon its programme, the Welsh Council should forthwith inaugurate an intensive campaign if possible with the support of other public bodies, in order that Wales may be able to make her contribution towards the establishment of Justice, Security and Peace in the post-war world.

(8) That these resolutions and the above draft declaration of policy be now submitted to all Welsh Members of Parliament, to the Leaders of the Churches, Lord Mayors, Mayors and the Chairmen of County, Urban and Rural District Councils, as well as to the principal officers of other suitable institutions in Wales, and that these ladies and gentlemen be invited to indicate their views for the consideration of the Committee before plans for the resuscitation of the Movement are finally submitted to the Welsh National Council.