

# NATIONAL ACTION

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FIFTH EDITION

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A National Non-Party Plan for the establishment  
of an Original Irish System of Government based  
on Christian Social Teaching and on National  
Unity.

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PUBLISHED BY THE COUNCIL OF NATIONAL ACTION,  
36, RATHGAR AVENUE,  
DUBLIN.

1952.

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## FOREWORD

THIS EDITION of National Action has been completely re-written. It is now presented as a Dáil and Public Bodies election programme.

It has been prepared particularly for workers in Guilds of National Action and for organisations and individuals seeking a national gospel which they can wholeheartedly adopt. It is intended for those who will study it carefully and, having mastered its message, will help to spread that message in simple language to the general public.

Based on Christian Social Teaching and on National Unity National Action does not attack any individual, party or group. It attacks the party system of government, submits that it has failed and advances a national non-party system as an alternative.

Had it not been for the misfortunes of disunion and civil war Dáil Eireann possibly would have developed a non-party system of government somewhat on the lines now advocated. Instead, leading politicians, imitating Britain, formed permanent factions. This imitation has continued to the present day.

Resulting from this calamity, during the past thirty years our State Executives have conspicuously failed in the duties dictated by both Christian and national requirements. That our Governments, during this time, did considerable good work is not of course denied. But this is not enough. Duties left undone by successive Governments far outweigh those they have accomplished; and a Government can claim no authority for neglecting any of its duties or for exceeding any of its rights.

Party politics has almost paralysed this country, north and south. Indeed it has demoralised every country in the world

in which the system is uninspiredly pursued. It has left us, even after only thirty years, in a much more helpless condition, nationally, than we had been at any time under the British. During those centuries of persecution a substantial section of our people had always the courage and the will to resist. To-day party politics destroys us, as a nation, far more rapidly than England could have ever hoped for.

Party politicians, both in the north and south, relate everything concerning the nation, culture, territory and State to party politics. Even the best-intentioned, unbiased criticism or advice is construed either as an attack on, or support for, one party or another. Such criticism is regarded as an encroachment on the party political ring. In these circumstances, people who abhor the personal abuses and shady commitments to which party politics almost invariably leads have been forced from public life. National Action facilitates such persons in doing their duty to the nation without stooping to discredit or without giving cause for attack.

In their dread of being accused of "taking sides" practically all organisations avoid everything political. They adopt a nationally negative attitude, politically very "safe" but nationally very unsound. Furthermore, in the absence of education in citizenship, the rising generations are—in great measure through no fault of theirs—nationally agnostic. Our young people are not encouraged to know their rightful duties to their country much less to practise them.

It is common knowledge that the party system here in Ireland has failed. Evidence of this failure will be given later. There is no hope whatever that our country can truly prosper, or even continue to exist as a nation, unless this system of government is changed. Discussing, say, financial, vocational or agricultural reform while we tolerate the political system through which all our activities are strangled, is merely a waste of time. We require a revolution—spiritual, cultural, social and economic—animated by a true Christian outlook on all our values. Are we likely to get this through the system which has harassed this country for thirty years?

Many people, however, although convinced that party politics has failed, are at a loss to know what can be put in

its place. It would not be sensible to advocate changing from any system of government without having a better system to replace it. It must be shown not only that the present system has failed but also that the proposed new one is eminently suitable, feasible and sound. We submit that a careful study of this Plan will convince readers that these requirements are logically fulfilled.

The Council of National Action has fairly met every serious objection against the Plan of National Action since the first edition was published by the Gaelic Athletic Association in 1942. It gives the complete and logical answer to those who assert that party politics cannot be dispensed with. It offers a programme for the election of Dáil, Corporations and Councils on which all normal people—Protestant as well as Catholic—are already agreed. It offers a parliamentary plan by which the Dáil will not again break up into permanent parties and it offers a social system giving fair treatment and fair representation to all.

National Action does not advocate physical force as a means of solving any of our problems. In our present circumstances the advocacy of physical force, whether it can be regarded as being morally defensible or not, plays into the hands of our enemies and into evil and reactionary forces of every kind. Organised national unity will be far stronger than physical force. We can attain our object through true Christian democracy which has not yet been even tried.

If National Action gets the general support to which we claim it is entitled, particularly from federated national organisations, the party system can be quickly eliminated. But we must first clearly and consciously understand what our object is, we must know our national destination, spiritual as well as material, and we must be sincere. Hesitancy facing vital danger has brought some of its greatest tragedies on mankind; hesitancy now, facing our political danger may bring national defeat.

Now read National Action carefully and with an open mind. Weigh National Action fairly and honestly against the party system as you understand it and see if the asser-

tions made are substantiated. Then calmly decide for yourself which of the two systems, in our particular circumstances, ought to secure the better results. If you decide in favour of the National Action Plan, against the party system or any other system, give National Action your whole-hearted support.

We invite Irish people of every creed and class to unite in a spirit of national fellowship in re-building what can again be made one of the most cultured and prosperous of the small Christian countries of Europe. We need your aid and we exhort you in the name of God and of Ireland to extend it.

Given a Legislature knowing and doing its duty our national possibilities are unbelievably great. Stagnating instead under social, economic and financial enslavement our Motherland languidly sinks in despair. To deliver us from this party political bondage National Action is the key.

# NATIONAL ACTION

## DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

To understand National Action it is necessary to know the political meaning attached in this text to certain words and phrases. Read these definitions and explanations carefully; they underlie the entire Plan.

(1). *NATIONAL CULTURE* is a body of characteristics possessed by a nation and peculiar to itself. National culture is also called the nation's civilisation or way of life. The distinguishing characteristics of a nation are its language, history, traditions, folklore, art, architecture, music, games, flag and every other character or mark distinguishing it from all other nations.

(2). *MOTHERLAND (FATHERLAND)*: Motherland is a collective term meaning a People its culture and its national territory combined. The People, its culture and the land of its ancestors, are complementary; that is, a People is not operatively complete as a nation without its culture and its territory. When we say: "Patriotism means love of country", the word 'country' means the same thing—People, culture and territory combined.

(3). *POLITICS* is a branch of ethics meaning literally the science of government. In practice it has two distinct meanings. The first and chief meaning of the word relates to the status, integrity and well-being or common good of the Motherland. This is *National Politics*. The Second and less important meaning—the only meaning usually attached to it in Ireland—relates to the propagation and management of political parties. This is *Party politics*.

(4). *AN ISSUE* is a matter of public importance relating to the Motherland. The subject of a Bill introduced into parliament, or an item in a political programme is called an issue.

(5). *A FUNDAMENTAL* or *Primary Issue* is one which concerns the very existence of the People, culture and territory as a distinct unit.

(6). A *SECONDARY ISSUE* is one which does not affect the status or integrity of the Motherland. It usually concerns internal problems—cultural, social or economic.

(7). *THE PARTY SYSTEM* is a system of government, based on the establishment of groups or parties, permanently opposed to one another. It is not a natural system, it rests mainly on the personal and political allurements of opposing party Leaders. In some senses, it is un-democratic. It is also in practice sometimes un-Christian.

(8). A *POLITICAL PARTY* is an organised section of a people, which advances a party election programme and which acts and votes generally in concord or agreement. It exists mainly for the purpose of returning to parliament or other public bodies representatives holding the same political views on secondary issues.

(9). A *POLITICAL PARTY ELECTION PROGRAMME* is the election policy advanced by a party. It often contains no primary issue, but always contains secondary issues. For the successful operation of the party system the Dail must be divided into permanently opposed sections. To attain this end—dividing the people and the Dáil into opposing parties—party programmes containing secondary issues, are utilised. Thus, a policy or programme is not a party programme unless it contains secondary issues which automatically divide the people into opposing groups.

A political party may conceivably advance a programme composed almost entirely of primary issues. So long, however, as it follows party procedure, provides no advisory arrangement except an 'opposition' and affords no adequate protection for the people except an 'opposition' against the Dáil itself, it is still a party operating the party system.

(10). *NATIONAL ACTION* is a national, non-party organisation. Its purpose is to eliminate the party system of government and to substitute for it a national system of government based on Christian Social Teaching and on National Unity.

(11). *THE COUNCIL OF NATIONAL ACTION* is the Executive Authority of the Organisation.

(12). *THE NATIONAL ACTION ELECTION PROGRAMME* is the election policy advanced by the Council of National Action. It is composed of five fundamental or primary issues.

(13). *THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN* is the scheme recommended by the Council of National Action for the elimination of the party system of government and the establishment of a national governmental system in its stead. National Action is thus an organisation with a plan. It does not advance formal solutions for specific issues, nor does it include secondary issues in its election programme. Neither the organisation nor the plan of National Action is related to party politics.

(14). The chief differences between *National Action* and a *Political Party* are as follows:

(a). National Action implies unity, and aims at the political unity of the nation.

A political party implies disunity and aims at the creation and maintenance of sections or groups permanently opposed.

(b). *National Action Parliamentary Representatives* will not be expected to vote in consonance or agreement or to vote against their personal convictions.

*Party Parliamentary Representatives* ordinarily vote in consonance or agreement. They are expected to vote even against their personal convictions, whenever the advantage of the party demands it.

(c). *The National Action Election Programme or Policy* contains primary issues only. *It must not contain any secondary issue.*

*The Political Party Election Programme or Policy* may or may not contain primary issues, *but it always contains secondary issues.*

(d). *National Action*, by advancing a primary programme on which all normal citizens are agreed, aims at embracing the entire nation.

A *Political Party*, by advancing a secondary programme on which citizens are bound to disagree, embraces a section of the people only.

From these contrasts it can be claimed that *National Action is NOT A POLITICAL PARTY*. This is fundamental. Should National Action become a political party it would lose its idealism its individuality and also its claim to national distinction.

(15). *THE NATION*. A nation is a body of people possessing a distinct culture of its own. It is evident that the people of the world are divided, in the main, into separate nations and that each nation has its own culture. A People without a national culture of its own is not a nation; hence the supreme national importance of language and other national distinctions. A virile nation maintains its culture consciously and tenaciously. The Christian family is the social unit on which a Christian nation is built.

His Holiness Pope Pius XII declared:—(1)

“A disposition . . . of the divinely sanctioned order divides the human race into social groups, nations, or states, which are mutually independent in organisation in the direction of their internal life.”

Again in the same Encyclical, introducing God's scheme of universal harmony in variety, he said:—

“And as nations become more civilised they become more highly differentiated in their ways of life and of managing their affairs. That is no reason why they should renounce the unity of the human family. Rather, they should enrich that family by making their own contribution to its variety, according to their own endowments.”

Thus, diversity of cultures is not only essential for the preservation of nations but is also necessary for preserving the natural scheme of nations and for the vigour and progress of the human race. A nation that rejects its own culture forfeits its right to nationhood. It thereby fails itself, fails the other nations and in a sense even fails God.

(16). “*THE STATE* is the community of individuals and families united under a common authority and organised for the common welfare of all.” (Rev. T. J. O’Kane.) Thus, the State, unlike the nation, may not have a culture of its own, but it must have a governing authority. There are many

(1). Encyclical—Summi Pontificatus.

examples of nations that are not States and of States that are not nations. Brittany and Wales, for example, are nations because they have cultures of their own. They are not States because they lack Governments of their own. The States of North America are not nations because while they have Governments of their own they lack distinguishing cultures.

The Government embraces all the persons elected, or otherwise selected, by the people, for the purpose of making, unmaking or altering the laws of the country. Thus, every member of the Legislative Body is part of the Governing Authority and shares responsibility for its actions.

Even amongst the most primitive people a common Authority is necessary to protect their rights and to help them to develop their individual and communal capacities and resources.

In general the duties of the State in securing the welfare of the people might be summed up as follows:—

- (a). To secure the good of the greatest possible number in the highest degree.
- (b). To help the weak and the poor who are unable to provide for themselves.
- (c). To preserve harmony and peace within the community.
- (d). To protect the rights of all citizens.
- (e). To help the people by promoting private initiative and worthy social organisation.
- (f). Where the State is a nation possessing territory, it is the duty of the State to protect and maintain the status and integrity of the Motherland; and to preserve the freedom, the culture, the honour and the standing of the nation amongst the other nations.

Not only is the State bound to protect the Motherland against physical aggression but it must also shield it from personal, moral, cultural or economic penetration which might adversely affect its well-being. For instance infiltration of non-nationals should be strictly controlled, demoralising and de-nationalising literature and films should be prohibited and financial and industrial concerns with foreign connections should be closely supervised. Public abuses within the State damaging to the Motherland should be

promptly corrected. The State must also observe its own limitations and be aware of the extent of its own activities. For example the State has no right to favour individuals or sections at the expense of the common good, nor is there any justification for the Executive Authority of the State not knowing its duties or failing to carry them out.

*The plan of National Action is built on a thorough practical interpretation of these definitions. Their full appreciation by those who will defend the Plan, and put it into operation is, therefore, imperative.*

### THE PARTY SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT EXAMINED AND CONDEMNED

The following pages show that the party system has proved in this country a great and tragic failure. They also show that National Action is a sound and workable alternative to the party system of government.

Our people do not yet realise the alarming extent to which our State, because of party politics, has failed in its duties, during the past thirty years. Neither have the people any conscious appreciation of the extent to which, owing to party politics, we are becoming merely a denationalised and cosmopolitan State—that is, a State without a culture of its own.

All national citizens are bound by national duty, and by Christian Social Teaching to play an active part in national politics, that is, in politics that concerns the well-being of the Motherland.

“Fidelity to the nation and loyalty to the State are fundamental political duties of all citizens.” (1)

Citizens are not bound by any duty, or by any teaching, to take part in party politics.

This is of superlative importance—the difference between national and party politics. And having elucidated it we suggest that national organisations can advance no legitimate reason for allowing themselves to be stampeded into dumbness and inaction where national political issues are at stake.

The party system, because of its opposing parties, gives weak and wavering Governments incapable of dealing efficiently with any of the major problems of the nation.

(1). Constitution of Ireland (1945), Article 9.

For this reason alone the party system is quite unsuitable for our country, because we have many fundamental problems yet unsolved.

The Party system sometimes gives a dictator type of government, whereby one party is enabled to dominate the others. Under the Party system there is no safeguard or protection against the dictator type of government. Once a party parliament is elected, the people, being unorganised, are practically powerless to control or influence it. For this reason, under the party system, a “strong” party Government or a coalition Government is neither desirable nor safe. That the people may throw out a defaulting Government at the next election empowers them merely to lock the stable door when the horse may be gone.

Under the party system there is a very strong temptation for politicians to subordinate everything relating to the Motherland to the interests of party politics. The major national issues are lost sight of in the bitter struggle for personal and party power.

All such defaulting by the State and outstepping of its rights may lead eventually to violence and breaches of the law. It is the human tendency of an aggrieved people, unorganised, when vocal protests fail to resort to physical measures for redress.

The party system has many other glaring weaknesses yet it has repeatedly been proclaimed by prominent politicians as a good system. If, after thirty years experience, it is considered a good system the following conditions require some explanation:—

- (1). Our relative emigration rate has not been equalled in like circumstances, in any country of the world, at any time. We are the only self-responsible white race on earth with a persistently dwindling population, while, acre for acre our agricultural land is amongst the richest and most highly productive in Europe.
- (2). We have the lowest total population per acre of arable land; and the lowest relative population living on the land, of any country in Europe.



- (3). Unrestricted purchase of property by non-nationals, is not permitted in any free country of Europe. Proportionately nothing like that which is occurring here in this connection has ever taken place in like circumstances in any free country. We are giving away our national property for depreciating paper and our financial and industrial control and ownership for nothing. We sell our birthright for a mess of pottage.
- (4). There is more non-arable land, suitable for economic recovery in any province of Ireland than there is in the whole of Central Europe.
- (5). We have by far the lowest proportionate wooded area of any country of Europe.
- (6). Excepting Britain with its dense population, we are the only people in the world depending on the other side of the globe for our main bread requirements. Although this is a purely national economic problem, it has never been efficiently examined, free from party politics. We can show that our present bread requirements can be economically produced at home.
- (7). We are the only country in Europe, and probably in the world, voluntarily using the currency of another country, under the control of that country. So destructive and far-reaching are the social consequences of this financial arrangement that many economic authorities believe this handicap alone would be sufficient to account for our entire social and economic failure.
- (8). We have the oldest average marrying age, and we have the highest relative number of unmarried people of marriageable age of any country in Europe notwithstanding the thousands of young people who emigrate.
- (9). We are the only self-responsible people in Europe where love of country and citizenship duties are not directly inculcated in school programmes. Consequently we are unique as a Christian people, in rejecting our own Christian Civilisation in favour of systems based on materialism.
- (10) We are, probably, the only country in the world, where the Executive Authority of the State while professing

nationhood, tends, in its main practices, towards the establishment of a non-nation State. In other words we are heading for a "Republic" which will be, not a nation, but merely a State.

This indictment could be extended in directions that might rouse even complacent people. Many do not see that these and other deep-seated evils, which weak party Governments are unable to cure, underlie our everyday social ills such as flagrant profiteering, widespread unemployment, soaring cost of living, gigantic drink bill, unrestricted greed and cupidity, alien penetration and the demoralising 'dole'.

One may search in vain from the leading political parties, for a genuine plan for solving any one of these national afflictions. The reason is that no party, or group of parties, facing a reckless and nationally irresponsible 'Opposition', almost as strong in voting power as itself, can afford to risk political sacrifices by dragging these evils into the political arena, not to speak of undertaking unpopular remedial action. Thus, we submit, all this dereliction of duty by the State Executive with its immeasurable moral and material losses, added to its un-Christian squabbling, shows that in our circumstances, the party system is one of the worst possible schemes for true parliamentary efficiency that our political leaders could have chosen.

Yet, many people who see that the party system has failed have no alternative but to start another party.

### **HOW POLITICAL PARTIES ARE CREATED AND HOW THEY CAN BE OVERTHROWN**

In National Action the difference between primary and secondary issues in the election of a Dail is of supreme importance; it is the kernel of the whole plan.

Political parties are created by the simple device of presenting to the electors different programmes composed, substantially at least, of secondary issues. No community agrees on secondary issues. This is not peculiar to Ireland, it is common everywhere. Each individual holds, and is entitled to hold, his own views concerning secondary issues, because secondary issues, like ways and means, do not affect the nation vitally and are subject to wide variation. But since

the average citizen is generally unacquainted with all the facts concerning secondary issues, such as public health, transport, education, finance or local government, he is usually a poor judge as to which variation of a secondary issue is best. Voters should not be asked for a verdict on secondary issues. They should be asked to select a suitable representative to deal with them.

For example, the last General Election followed the introduction of a Public Health Bill. An election before that came after a Transport Bill had been introduced. Not more than one or two in every ten or twenty thousand voters had studied these Bills, or knew anything whatever about them. Nevertheless, under the party system, these and other secondary issues were utilised by the parties for dividing the people into opposing groups, and thereby electing a Dail divided into opposing parties.

What usually happens is this. When one party Leader sees the policies of others, he drafts an attractive group of secondary issues, differing in kind or in method of approach, from the opposing Leaders' policies. This is a cardinal requirement of the party system—that the different Leaders must advance different sets of secondary issues, and different ways of solving the same issues, in order to create and maintain the parties.

Thus all the turmoil of a party election has one political purpose—to split the people and the Dail into permanently opposed groups. This system can be undone by undermining the methods through which it is maintained. National Action provides the means by which this can be effected.

*NATIONAL ACTION* will elect a Dail, not on secondary issues, on which people are bound to disagree, but on a fundamental or primary and all-embracing election programme on which the vast proportion of the people are already agreed.

Voters in a Dail election will be asked one simple question, namely, which of the candidates, in their opinion, is the best person to send to the Dáil to help develop the following five-point fundamental programme which embraces every vital aspect of Irish life:

- (1). The establishment and maintenance of a State which will base its Constitution and all its practices on Christian Social Teaching.

- (2). The establishment and maintenance of Ireland's territorial unity and independence.
- (3). The normal establishment of our national culture.
- (4). The establishment of a sound, national, economic and financial system.
- (5). The social organisation of the people, by the people, for their common good.

These five fundamental issues constitute a complete national programme for the purpose of Dáil elections by which a truly national democratic parliament can be established. The same programme can be utilised for the election of Corporations, Councils and other public Bodies.

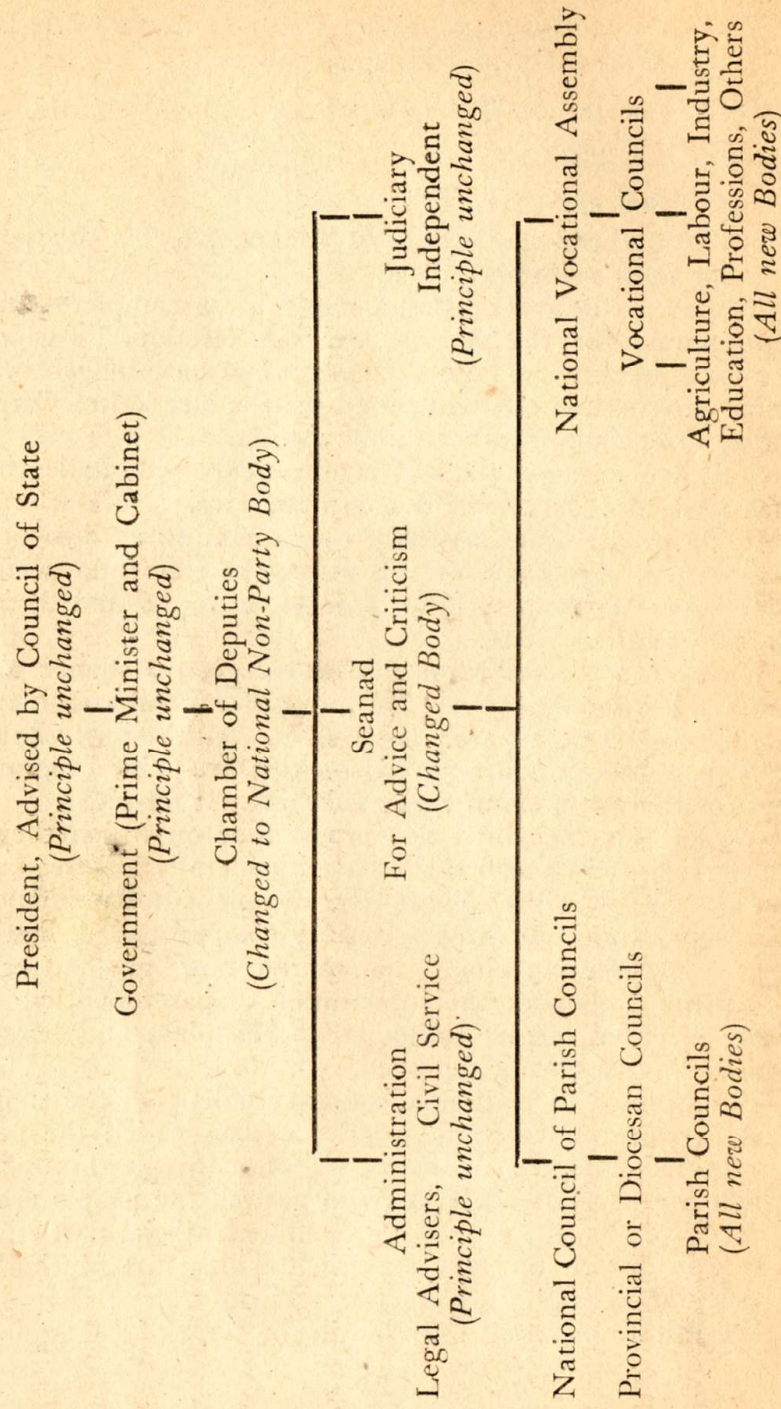
This five-point programme is admittedly wide and general, but it is also definite and comprehensive. It is the only suitable programme on which overwhelming agreement can be secured. Precisely for this reason its tremendous advantages over party programmes leave little ground for comparison between them.

Under the party system the people get no chance to express their agreement on this all-satisfying programme; the party Leaders deliberately suppress it. All the party Leaders and their followers are agreed on this five-point programme but for this very reason they avoid using it for parliamentary elections. If they used this programme on which they are all agreed, and on which the nation generally is agreed, they could not plausibly divide the people into permanently opposing camps. It must be clearly comprehended, however, that a programme alone, no matter how good, does not constitute a plan for the substitution of party politics. The other essential factors embodied in the plan, and hereafter outlined, must also be included.

The Council of National Action submits that the suppression of this fundamental programme, on which the people are agreed, and the deliberate selection of programmes on which the party Leaders know quite well the people are not agreed, for the sole purpose of creating artificial parties, constitute in our circumstances a crime against the Motherland, which our political Leaders cannot justify.

We will now present the Plan in the form of a diagram:—

## A DIAGRAM ILLUSTRATING THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN



### HOW THESE OFFICES MAY BE ESTABLISHED

**PRESIDENT**—(Elected by the people).

**PRIME MINISTER**—(Elected by Chamber of Deputies).

**CABINET**—(Nominated by Prime Minister or elected by Proportional Representation by the Dail.)

**CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES**—(Elected by the people).

**ADMINISTRATION**—{ Legal Advisers (Selected by Government or otherwise).

Administrative Civil Servants (Selected by Ministers or otherwise).

**JUDICIARY**—(Nominated by Government or otherwise).

**SEANAD**—(Elected by Parliament, National Council of Parish Councils and National Vocational Assembly. A small number nominated, say, by the Prime Minister, might also be added).

**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PARISH COUNCILS**—(Elected by Parish Councils).

**VOCATIONAL ASSEMBLY**—(Elected by Organised Vocations).

**PROVINCIAL OR DIOCESAN COUNCILS** (Elected by Parish Councils).

**PARISH COUNCILS**—(Elected by Parish Guilds, that is, by the people of each Parish).

**NOTE:** These recommendations are merely suggestive, therefore whether we should have all these bodies or not, whether Ulster should have a Parliament of its own, subordinate to the Dail, whether the method of forming the Seanad and whether several other features are accepted or not, need not be contentiously debated at this stage.

Politically, as far as we know, the profound importance of the difference between primary and secondary issues in the election of a parliament has not heretofore been recognised anywhere.

Once a Dáil, Corporation or Council is elected, the difference between primary and secondary issues needs no longer be emphasised. In the Dail and other Bodies all issues—primary and secondary and ways and means—will be freely discussed and dealt with. Thus it must be clearly understood that in National Action the two types of issue are segregated for one purpose, namely, for the election of a non-party Dail and other elected public Bodies.

To sum up this section and the diagram which illustrates it, the National Action Plan has the following aims:—

- (1). To abolish the party system of parliamentary election, and thereby to end the party system of government.
- (2). To establish a national, non-party system of government, supported by a Seanad, a permanent system of Parish Councils and a National Vocational Assembly.
- (3). To develop through this joint Body, the five-point national programme on which the Dáil will be elected.
- (4). To base the entire re-organisation of the country on Christian Social Teaching and on National Unity, realising that all authority comes from God.

### **THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN IS TRULY DEMOCRATIC**

It will be seen from the foregoing diagram that the National Action Plan not only represents democracy in the fullest Christian sense, but it also provides machinery to replace an 'Opposition' in the party system.

It must be emphasised that permanent 'opposition' merely for opposition sake, as it has been carried on in the Dail, is a most undesirable and pernicious arrangement. Temporary opposition, however, that is genuine opposition to particular Bills and so on, as they arise, is necessary and is adequately provided for.

Some persons, who have not studied National Action

seriously, assume that in doing away with the 'Opposition' in the Dail, National Action proposes to suppress opposition or criticism in general. This assumption of course is quite wrong. Under the National Action Plan opposition, criticism, advice and discussion, not only in the Dáil but in all the other bodies, will be practically unrestricted. This is one of the main advantages of the National Action Plan. Every person, whether as a representative or as an individual will be perfectly free, in reason, to express his own views. Under the National Action system also, public servants and employees of every kind will be free in reason to express their views on national issues and to play an active part in all national affairs. Under the party system many such persons are seriously restricted in their natural rights and in the carrying out of their rightful duties to the Motherland.

It is not permanent, factious opposition that good democratic government requires. What is wanted is healthy and genuine parliamentary debate, constructive criticism, practical advice, and real protection for the people from any high-handed action on the part of the Dail itself. The party system gives none of these requirements. In fact this is one of the very serious weaknesses of the party system. Social organisation for the purposes of protection, and of parliamentary advice and criticism by the people, does not exist. Most people do not appreciate the grave danger to the Motherland, which this party political weakness creates.

The National Action Plan will give that which is so urgently needed—a strong constitutional Government based on Christian unity. It will also provide opportunity for adequate advice, criticism and protection, through the Parish, Vocational and other Bodies, the Referendum and a free Press. The National Action Plan is, therefore, truly democratic.

### **PARISH COUNCILS, VOCATIONAL BODIES AND THE SEANAD**

#### **Parish Councils:**

As a partial substitution for an 'Opposition' National Action recommends a system of Parish Councils on the lines

operated by Muintir na Tire. The National Council of Parish Councils, in the National Action Plan, will be, however, a Statutory Body, but not in the accepted sense. Instead of being responsible to a Public Department, it will be, like the National Vocational Assembly, directly responsible to the Dail.

### **Vocational Organisation:**

In addition to the National Council of Parish Councils, as a critical and advisory adjunct to the Dail and Seanad, and in substitution for an 'Opposition', a Vocational Order on the general lines advocated by the Commission on Vocational Organisation will be established. This Commission recommends a National Vocational Assembly. National Action proposes to use this body as part of the National Plan and thereby to link it up with the Seanad and the Dail.

### **The Seanad:**

While the Dail will be the central authority, it will be advised and criticised by the Seanad. The Seanad may also initiate Bills. It should preferably be composed of elderly persons who have given outstanding service to the country; the object being to bring restraining and ripening influences to bear on proposed legislation. Whether a suitable body of this kind can be obtained by the method suggested in the diagram is debatable. But if a desirable personnel is not secured the method of selection can be easily changed.

In the National Action Plan the Seanad, Parish and Vocational Organisations will have important functions. Any intelligent person will see that this joint structure for parliamentary advice, criticism and protection, can be made a highly efficient substitute for an 'Opposition' in the party system. It will also represent, in part, the social organisation of society—the fifth issue in the five-point election programme of National Action. The complete organisation of national society will embrace, as well as the foregoing bodies, all societies or associations that help to protect and sustain the Motherland. It is the duty of the State to help the

operation and prestige of all such organisations in fostering the ideals and the culture of the nation and thereby the nation itself.

The obvious reason why party Governments have not helped or effectively facilitated social organisation is the fear that a social order might undermine party politics. For the same reason public bodies, like Corporations and Councils have been made party political organs. This device stultifies public opinion and incidentally, by dividing these bodies into party factions, destroys their own efficiency.

Thus, National Action submits that while the party system operates neither parish nor vocational organisation will be efficiently encouraged by the State. Indeed, vocational, parish or any other form of public organisation that tended to interfere with party operations, might be even stifled by a "strong" party Government.

### **HOW THE NATIONAL PARLIAMENT WILL BE ELECTED**

The National Action Plan will give a non-party, but not a one-party parliament. Its members will not be without specific responsibility. They will go into the Dail for one pledged purpose—to develop in Christian balance and moderation, the five-point programme of National Action. The election of a new Dail will take place say every four or five years.

National Action proposes that all the people over twenty-one years of age shall elect a Dail on the five-point programme. How that programme shall be developed will become the responsibility of the Dail and its advisory Bodies.

Many persons assume that the people at parliamentary elections will demand from National Action a detailed or secondary programme. Party politicians have developed this party mentality for the purposes of the party system. For some time it will certainly flourish amongst uneducated people and unthinking party followers. As the spirit of

national unity advances and the people become politically educated, this feature of party politics will tend to recede. But the people, unlike party Leaders, will not change their political outlook overnight, therefore, the Council of National Action recommends that until the people are politically educated only one National Action candidate will be nominated in a particular constituency. Later on this point is dealt with more fully.

National Action holds that electioneering propaganda during the excitement preceding an election is demoralising. It is not only a waste of time but it is costly, senseless, and often misleading.

Every issue, whether it concerns economy, education, transport, finance, or anything else, must be examined competently in all its bearings and with all obtainable related facts available, before and when it is submitted to the Dail. Any sensible person will admit that a national non-party Dail and its Advisory Bodies, as set out in the diagram, will be in a far better position to do this, and to judge what is best for the common good, than squabbling groups and voters in the heat of a political campaign.

These bodies—Dail, Parish and Vocational representatives—will all be selected by the people, and will represent them in three different popularly elected capacities. They and not the voters will be the proper persons to examine proposed legislation. The voters' duty will be to elect the best persons to carry out this responsibility.

We submit that when the people come to understand this commonsense procedure, they will not demand a secondary or detailed policy for Dail elections, and this will be in complete accordance with Christian democracy.

Candidates will be nominated in the usual way, and in single seat constituencies. There can be any number of candidates in a particular constituency.

Instead of asking the people to vote for parties, or for party personalities, they will be exhorted to elect the person who in their opinion is best suited to develop the programme of National Action. In other words, as already stated, they will be able to select a candidate on his personal merits,

rather than on his party attachments. This is a vital difference between the two systems.

If the list of nominated candidates in each constituency, is published, with a concise description of the general qualifications of each, no further public advocacy will be needed. This will give all candidates similar introduction and will reduce the cost of an election to a minimum. Candidates will be free of course to make public speeches and explain the Plan in other ways. The Council of National Action believes, however, that as the party atmosphere recedes such practices will tend to cease. The names for the ballot papers might be drawn from a hat or drum. (1)

Much more efficacious safeguards than the present, against vexatious nominations, could easily be arranged. This could be done without submitting a candidate to the risk of forfeiting a substantial deposit.

Leading politicians advance in favour of the party system that the party assumes financial responsibility for a party candidate. In reality this is a treacherous feature of the party system.

Under National Action the cost to the individual candidate of contesting an election would be trifling. This would be a great advantage to the country. Suitable candidates would not be hindered by financial considerations as they are often practically debarred under party organisation. Under the party system a candidate whose financial resources are limited must join a party or risk bankruptcy, if he contests an election.

The removal of this weakness would also do away with a very serious danger of corruption under the party system. Owing to the enormous cost of party elections there is undoubtedly a temptation to the parties, to accept from wealthy sources, substantial contributions to party funds. The motive for contribution may not be nationally inspired, but rather in the hope of legislative and other favours to come. In fact, agencies hostile to our national recovery can easily

(1). It is a common belief that in an alphabetical list of parliamentary candidates the first candidate has a better chance of getting the vote than the last.

see in lavish contributions to parties a cheap contrivance for keeping the nation blindly harassing itself. In some countries this form of corruption has caused grave scandals. \*

In our circumstances, communally unorganised, and with Christian patriotism neglected, a strong party, financially fortified, liberally distributing favours to its supporters and with a powerful party Press could become a monstrous one-party force completely uncontrolled by the people. With proportional representation removed such a party Government could do practically what it liked. It could flourish almost indefinitely on bribery, corruption and strife; it could effectively crush public opinion, and it could make "agreements" with another country, without consulting the people, or giving them any opportunity of confirming or rejecting such "agreements" before they were signed.

Referring to this danger, Father Ferris says: (1).

"The party system is . . . an appeal by a political faction to the cupidity of the majority of the voters in order to get into power and the giving of all possible patronage to its own backers in order to keep in power. There is no reason why an astute and unscrupulous politician who would be thorough in putting such principles into practice, should not remain in power all the time."

We must repeat that under the party system the people have no protection whatever against this very grave and possible danger. Those who believe that the party system is true democracy seldom realise that dangers which they fear through a change of system, are already inherent in the system they have.

The National Action system as outlined in the diagram, and the method of election advocated will guard effectively against any such danger.

The National Action plan of election has the following advantages:

(1). It gives a five-point basic programme on which the vast proportion of voters are agreed.

(1). The Democratic Constitution. Rev. William Ferris, P.P., S.T.L. Duffy, Dublin 1937.

*as for instance the austerity programme intro-  
duced by Lemass in which credits for industry  
was practically forbidden & I believe he received*

- (2.) It provides candidates who agree with this programme, since, fundamentally as we have earlier pointed out, there is no other primary or national programme.
- (3.) It gives small constituencies where each candidate ordinarily will be known to the largest possible number of voters.
- (4.) It asks the voters one question only, namely, which of the candidates on his personal merits, is the voters' choice.

Majority rule has many drawbacks, but nations, since the time of Aristotle, have never, under any form of democracy, been able to dispense with it. We can seldom if ever, succeed in electing a candidate who will satisfy all voters; but in most respects the method of election recommended by National Action, approximates very closely to this ideal. All round, therefore, it can be claimed that this combination of election and procedure will give a better chance of efficient democratic selection than any other arrangement that can be contrived.

### UNDER A NATIONAL PARLIAMENT "SNAP" GENERAL ELECTIONS WILL NOT OCCUR

The National Government will not, in any usual circumstances, declare a General Election on secondary issues. It will hold a General Election when its stated period of life will have expired. A new Dail will then be elected on the basic programme as before. This alone would give a degree of public stability and security of enormous value to the country. This stability can never be attained under the fickleness and insecurity of party parliaments and their ever-changing policies.

A Government defeat under the party system is regarded with great concern; it usually brings about a General Election. This danger sometimes induces a party Government to compromise even on a vital issue. This may occur when the

*his instructions from 31 London (when he attended  
there) British motive - to create a market  
in Ireland. Lemass's motive - not yet known  
but he must have been offered some inducement*

Government party is not politically or financially prepared to risk a possible defeat and the great cost of an election. Against this, defeat in the Dail can be tacitly allowed, or some excuse may be used to bring about an election at a time favourable to the dominant party. Nearly all our General Elections have been what are called "snap" elections, brought about before the stated period had expired. This erratic condition reacts very unfavourably on industrial and other developments.

Under the National Action Plan defeat of a Bill in the Dail will not be of any unusual significance. It will make no change in either operation or prestige, and will not automatically bring about an election. The Dail will continue for the stated period of its life and "snap" elections will not take place.

### THE REFERENDUM

In a truly democratic State the people or nation, under God, is the supreme authority. Parliament is merely its legislating and administrative agent.

A Referendum means simply a reference to the people of some particular issue. Any kind of issue can be referred by parliament to the people, but the people should be able also to insist on the holding of a Referendum at any time whether parliament desires it or not, otherwise the Referendum is no safeguard for the people.

The Referendum is embodied in our Constitution, but with the extraordinary provision that it is only the Dail which can call it into operation. That is, a provision obviously intended to protect the people against harsh or unconstitutional action by the Dail and to prevent a dead-lock in the Dail, is entirely controlled by the Dail itself. Even if a million citizens signed a petition for a Referendum, under the Constitution, the Dail might ignore the appeal. In the circumstances the Referendum has never been used.

Under a national parliament a petition signed by a stated number of citizens, might constitutionally guarantee the holding of a Referendum on any particular issue. Alterna-

tively, or collaterally, the National Council of Parish Councils and the National Vocational Assembly combined might be empowered to demand a Referendum, which demand the National Executive of the State would be bound to accept.

As a final protection against harsh or unconstitutional Government activity, a special Referendum, demanded in a prescribed way, and carried by, say, a two-thirds majority, might ensure the dissolution of a parliament at any time and the holding of a General Election. This contingency would be most unlikely but the provision would completely protect the People even against a Government of its own choice.

In Switzerland, where a modified form of the party system operates, the Referendum is frequently utilised; but the general political circumstances in Switzerland are completely different from ours. Their system, and the systems operating in most other small countries of Europe, have been carefully examined. They would be quite unsuitable here. The Referendum is utilised in several European countries, as well as in Switzerland, and is recognised not only as a safeguard for the People but also as a practical guarantee that, under God, the People is supreme.

### COULD THE NUMBER OF DAIL DEPUTIES BE REDUCED?

The Council of National Action submits that the number of Deputies in the Dail, could be substantially reduced, for the following reasons:

1. There will be much more time available for essential work.
2. A better type of Deputy, in general, will secure election.
3. The subordinate Bodies, by replacing an 'Opposition', will expedite the work.
4. The spirit of co-operation as against disunion will bring harmony, expedition and peace.

In France and England, where the party system operates, they have each approximately one member to every 75,000 people. In the twenty-six counties, we have one member to about every 20,000 people. In Holland with colonies and over eight million people at home they have only 100 members. In

*There was no redress when F.F. through Samson - harshly departed the people of Galat - Bread & Honey, - Caric. etc.*

*and combined and encourages English and other foreigners to buy out our National Territory by the thousands of acres for months paper.*



fact, proportionately, we have the highest parliamentary representation in Europe. We appear to have an unenviable capacity for outdoing the undesirable political features of other countries and overlooking their political virtues.

### **WITH PARTY POLITICS REMOVED, THE PEOPLE WILL NOT BREAK UP INTO PERMANENT PARTIES**

Many persons believe that there is no political programme whatever on which an overwhelming majority of the people in the twenty-six counties will agree. This statement is usually made without giving the matter serious thought and without evidence to sustain it.

That the people will disagree on temporary, that is, on secondary issues, is undoubtedly true. As already pointed out, it is normal for a people to disagree on secondary issues. Because of this fact it is wrongly assumed that the people do not agree on any issue.

National Action insists that the vast majority in the twenty-six county area will agree on its fundamental programme. For making this assertion National Action has been accused of promoting dictatorship. National Action is not dictatorial, it is truly democratic in every sense.

Under National Action there will be no obstacle to any person or group advancing another programme. But, in our present circumstances there is no other fundamental programme embracing every essential feature of national life. If an objector resorts to secondary issues, he can make ten thousand political programmes, but on fundamental issues, what other programme can any normal objector advance?

Turning to the programme of National Action the only one of its five fundamental issues which has given rise to any serious controversy is our national culture; and the only feature of it which has caused public contention is the language, or rather the methods utilised for its recovery. The Irish language is the chief characteristic of our national culture and thereby of our nationhood. Yet, in addition to the small number who object to the language because of its

national significance, many people have been antagonised for one or more of the following secondary reasons:—

- (1). That during the past quarter of a century our Governments have been obviously toying with the language revival. Seldom if ever during that period did the Executive Authority of the State show any evidence of being thorough, practical or sincere.
- (2). That political parties persistently used the language for party political ends.
- (3). That in our educational systems the inculcation of patriotism was practically overlooked. Without patriotism the revival of the language could never be achieved.
- (4). That, with rare exceptions, public representatives and officials in key-positions gave little or no concrete evidence of their belief in the national language.
- (5). That the State failed to have the fundamental reasons for the language revival explained or exemplified.
- (6). That from the beginning the recovery methods have been ill-considered, un-practical, half measured and in spite of enormous and wasteful cost and tragic failure, have not been revised. Hesitancy alone, fearing loss of political votes, foreshadowed failure.
- (7). That the treatment of the Gaeltacht has been a national scandal.
- (8). That compulsion, in certain directions, was imposed, without spirit, reason, uniformity, or humanity behind it.
- (9). That those who had a thorough cultural or traditional knowledge of the language were often penalised, and were seldom appropriately utilised.
- (10). That the necessity for saving our worthy national culture as a whole, as the only way through which the

language or any other part could be truly saved, was apparently not appreciated by any party Government.

Thus, during the past thirty years, if Governments and their Departments had been attempting to kill the language and to make it distasteful to those who were officially compelled to use it, their methods could not have been improved.

By these and many other forms of State ill-treatment one of the oldest and greatest classical languages extant—and that language our own—has been made despicable by our own Governments. Is it any wonder, in these circumstances, that enemies of our culture found little difficulty in discrediting the language itself? Is it any wonder that the party-ridden efforts have failed? Is it any wonder that many who believed are now in doubt and that many in doubt have turned away?

All this is the result of party politics and of nothing else. If we had had a truly national Government our language could be saved as easily and as quickly as the Hebrew language is now being recovered in Palestine—a language which had been much longer in national abeyance than ours.

Concerning our culture, National Action asks one question only: Since national culture is the universally recognised test and title of nationhood and, therefore, a primary issue, do you not admit that our own Christian civilisation should be truly and fully developed and utilised? In any European country a citizen who denied his own culture would be regarded as a national renegade and would be publicly ostracised. The reason he is tolerated and often respected here is that we are far advanced in national decay.

Under National Action ways and means for recovering our culture will rest with the Dail and its machinery—aided by competent advice—and, with God's help the ways and means will be revolutionised. The language and associated culture will then, and not till then, be freed from political, anglicising and simulating entanglements.

These are reasons why we feel justified in asserting that the people, generally, will accept the fundamental programme of National Action, and that, once they understand

its implications no other programme will be advanced or required.

But the most convincing evidence of all, showing that the dividing of the people into different permanent groups is merely a political expediency, has been provided by the parties themselves.

Immediately after the last General Election but one, a group of Leaders, representing four or five different parties and proclaiming four or five different policies, joined overnight to form a Government. The voters who supported the different party Leaders were not consulted; yet they, the voters, offered no objection to this political fusion. They accepted it without any form of public demur. Evidently, therefore, there was no fundamental point in dividing them into parties.

A more convincing demonstration showing the absurdity of party politics could hardly be found. Although the agreement was made for political expediency, nevertheless, when the public realises its true significance—that the dividing of the people into parties is merely a party stratagem—the gigantic bluff of party politics will be finally called. Indeed, the formation of an inter-party Government, followed by a Government composed of a party plus a number of independent members, has brought the party system to the level of a tragic farce.

In the twenty-six county portion of Ireland there are no disagreements of a fundamental nature between either the people or the political Leaders. There are only those artificial differences created by party politics. Prominent politicians have repeated, however, in justification of the party system, that the people want to be given an opportunity for discussing "Politics" and that it is good for democratic society they should do so. In principle, National Action agrees with this completely, but not as a justification for the party system.

National politics is necessary and desirable; party politics is neither. Under National Action, the people will have practically unlimited opportunity for discussing all kinds of social and political questions; but, much more important than this, they, under National Action will be in a position

to express their views authoritatively. Through the Parish and Vocational Bodies they will have an efficient mouth-piece.

Under the party system the people wrangle and debate but they have no authoritative means for insisting that considered public opinions should be legislatively examined. Neither have they any protection against a party Government that may neglect or exceed its duties, or make international agreements without seeking the consent of the nation.

Few people think these matters out for themselves, or see the tragic national consequences that have resulted from those viciously operated parties and oppositions.

National Action submits, therefore, that the people do not want to disagree permanently, and that they will most certainly agree on a basic programme for the election of a Dail the moment the party Leaders will allow them.

By avoiding these facts party Leaders, to satisfy their own personal and party interests, are dragging the nation to its doom.

Even under the party system in other countries, when a national crisis arises, parties join in defence of the nation. Apart from our chronic condition of national debility, several national crises, occurred here during the past thirty years, such as the fixing of the "Boundary", "the Economic War", and the financial arrangements with Britain. The parties did not unite in facing any of these issues; the nation accordingly suffered enormous losses. The only two occasions, already mentioned, on which partyism was partially suspended were occasions on which vital national issues were not at stake. They were merely squabbles for party power.

Down the centuries internal disunion has caused us untold trouble; yet, when we got a chance, even in portion of the country, to establish a national system of government, our political Leaders chose instead a system which artificially perpetuates this unfortunate weakness.

Other countries, including Britain, the creator of the party system, are now awakening to the dangers of party politics. Because they have acute religious and racial cleavages, which

in the twenty-six county area we have not, their difficulties in finding a suitable substitute for party politics are infinitely greater than ours.

Broadcasting a warning to the British people on December 22nd, 1951, the Prime Minister of England said: "We cannot keep fifty millions alive in this island if they are divided half and half and electioneering against one another all the time . . . This is not the time for party brawling."

France, with seventeen party Governments since 1945, has the same bitter experience. General de Gaulle appealed more recently for constitutional reforms to end this "lassitude of the people under the chloroform of the party system" . . . "France and the Republic," he said, "must get out of the degradation the party régime has put them in. For the public safety real national union must be created. There is no other solution. All the rest lead to failure and abasement."

We in Ireland are unable to keep the lowest proportionate population in Europe alive, without the help of the most unnatural and unparalleled emigration rate in the world, and the fundamental cause is identically the same as in England and France:—"Divided half and half", "electioneering against one another all the time", and "party brawling."

There is, of course, no comparison whatever between these big countries with their immense and wealthy colonies, and a small partitioned island, struggling to recover from centuries of unjust occupation. National unity, therefore, is far more essential in our case than it is in theirs.

So sure as our political Leaders continue this wretched system, saturated with hatred and bitter personal relationships, so surely will our nation go down in defeat.

In all the circumstances that we have cited, and many more that we could advance, National Action holds that, with the ending of disunity, artificially organised, no permanent objecting group of any significance will normally arise against the all-embracing five-point programme of National Action, nor will the people on any other grounds break up into permanent parties.

## A NATIONAL PARLIAMENT WILL NOT FORM PERMANENT PARTIES

We have become so familiar with the party system, its atmosphere and its propaganda, that most people accept it as inevitable. They offer all kinds of reasons to show that it cannot be done without.

If the National Plan is followed, even in principle only, the national parliament cannot, humanly speaking, divide into permanent parties. This is one of the cardinal advantages of the Plan and we must show that, in reason, it is true. If this contingency were not provided against the entire proposal would be in vain.

The Taoiseach or Prime Minister in a national parliament may be elected by the vote of the Dail. He may nominate his Cabinet, or the Dail may elect the Cabinet. The Cabinet, and even the Taoiseach, could also be elected on the proportional representation system utilising the single transferable vote. The first National Dail will then proceed to establish the National Action Plan, somewhat as outlined in the diagram.

This is how the national Dáil and its complementary Bodies will operate. Suppose a Bill is introduced, by the Government, by the Seanad, or by an individual Member, the Bill will be freely debated in the Dail, each Member being perfectly free to speak and vote according to his personal convictions. Contrast this with the present practice, by which a Member is expected to vote, even against his convictions, when the policy and security of his party demand it.

The Bill will go to the Seanad, whether it is defeated in the Dail or not. The Seanad will discuss the Bill and perhaps vote on it, and will also transmit it to the other advisory Bodies. The Bill will then go back to the Dail with the recommendations of the Seanad and the other Bodies. The Dail will re-consider the Bill, and may accept it in part or in whole, or alter it. The Dail may also, at this stage, reject the Bill. This rejection would be important, the first rejection would not. Should the Bill be approved by

the Dail it may be passed, or if seriously defeated in the Dail it may be dropped.

Even if the Bill is defeated in the Dail, the Government may decide that the Bill is necessary and demand its acceptance.

Suppose the Dail refuses to accept the Bill, even after consultation with the other Bodies, and suppose the Government insists on having the Bill? A dead-lock between Parliament and its Government has then arisen on that particular Bill. These are the only circumstances in which a dead-lock is at all likely to arise.

After efforts to reach agreement have failed, the principles of the Bill will be submitted to the people by way of Referendum. In preparation for the Referendum a simple explanation of the Bill will be published through the Press or otherwise. The people will then decide for or against the Bill, by "yes" or "no" and the Government and Dail will enact their decision.

Some people believe that the Referendum will be called into operation very frequently. This is most unlikely. In the national Dail there will be genuine voting and genuine differences. Under the party system most of the Dáil time is wasted in useless debate, "window-dressing" propaganda and personal abuse. Divisions are often challenged merely for the sake of obstruction.

In the new circumstances, which in common reason will obtain, the Referendum will be rarely required and its operation will become less frequent as the party atmosphere disappears. Once the transition period between the present system and the new one will have passed, the Plan of National Action will operate, we suggest, with increasing efficiency and good-will.

Practically speaking, there is no example of a responsible democratic body of any kind—Corporation, Council, Board, or Parliament, which has divided into permanent parties, except on the grounds of religion, race or party politics. Bodies free from these sources of cleavage, while giving rise to temporary groupings, conduct their business without forming into permanent opposing parties. The only one of these

sources of permanent disagreement in the twenty-six counties is party politics. In a parliament, even free from these sources of difference, groups of Members will form, in support of, or in opposition to, a particular Bill. For example, it has been contended that in a national parliament groups will form on the well-known principle—"You help me and I'll help you." One can easily imagine formations of this kind and they will almost certainly occur. They are inevitable; such temporary groups form in every responsible body in the world. But National Action holds that such groupings will always be temporary and will relate to a particular issue. When another issue is introduced the personnel of the grouping will be different. There is a vast difference between loose or casual associations of this kind and a permanent party with a leader, whips and so on, voting consistently together. Furthermore, a well established party under the party system offers a Member the following main personal attractions:—

1. It secures him against financial loss through contesting a party election.
2. If his personal qualities are not very attractive, he gets considerable added necessary votes, deflected to him from a fairly popular Leader whom he follows.
3. It gives him political help and political use of a programme, already accepted by a considerable body of voters.

The type of temporary association just mentioned does not contain these attractions. Consequently National Action submits that such a group, without a general programme and specific organisation, will never develop into a permanent, orthodox party.

Under the National Action Plan Farmers, Labour, and every other section of society will each have its own representation—far more effective than at present—in the Parish and Vocational Bodies. They will also have, in the Dáil and Seanad, whatever representation personal ability and action secure for them. In the past the formation of Farmer and Labour parties in the Dáil has brought little, if any, worth-

while advantage to these vocations which could not have been secured much more effectively in a national parliament. In fact, the State, after thirty years of these small parties, has no consistent forthright policy on any major issue. Every new party parliament brings a new agricultural, industrial, cultural, vocational and financial shuffle.

Some critics maintain that the National Action System will be costly and slow. Others have asserted that it is Utopian.

With average good-will it need not be as costly as the present system; indeed, it will probably cost much less. Suitable regulations will, of course, be made to expedite the work in the Dáil. And, since all the Bodies can examine a Bill simultaneously, it may be much quicker than the present arrangement.

From the dawn of civilisation everything new and untried has met with doubt and suspicion; yet many projects throughout history, allegedly Utopian, have in practice confounded the 'prophets.'

In spite of all this logical reasoning one sometimes hears that vague and utterly intangible assertion:—"Oh, they'd break up somehow." But can any objector advance a precise and positive ground on which they could break up? Gloomy predictions, which need not be proved and which cannot be answered until the plan is tried, may constitute merely an excuse for sloth. They may also serve those suffering from moral cowardice in shirking the realities of our national plight. Of course, professional politicians have personal interests in maintaining the present system and, therefore in advancing even fantastic objections to any change.

Partyism has been developed here to a more intense and more bitter degree than probably in any other Christian country in the world. In spite of this, Muintir na Tire, which avoids party politics, has succeeded in inspiring a spirit of co-operation heretofore almost unheard of among the different sections of society. The Gaelic League spirit in its own sphere, is analogous. With party politics removed and normal patriotism developed, it is reasonable to assume that this spirit will spread and grow.

Some of us can recall the spirit of national co-operation that inspired the nation in 1916-21. It is not unreasonable

to assume that this spirit can be revived, and that every normal section of society will again co-operate, for the love and success of the Motherland.

Indeed, any other assumption than this implies that the people will be devoid of common-sense, that the State Executive in a national parliament will be incapable, that the Dáil Members will be irrational and that the Dáil itself will be different in its functioning from any other responsible Body in the world.

Instead of bandying objections to a system which has not been tried, we must now seriously ask ourselves, as a responsible people, a few simple questions. Are we to continue the present system which is dragging our nation to ruin, while we content ourselves with quibbling? Shall we have the moral courage and the energy to admit that since party politics has failed we are bound in duty to find and establish a promising alternative? We are bound, moreover, to accept the possibility of failure inherent in this as well as in every other human undertaking. At the same time we are bound to trust to our own forthright action and ability, in God's Name, to make a promising alternative succeed.

### **PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION IN IRELAND HAS COMPLETELY FAILED**

Proportional Representation (P.R.) is a political system designed to give representation to legitimate minorities, that is, to minorities holding different beliefs, on certain fundamental issues, from the majority. There is only one type of genuine minority here, namely, the religious minority. No section of that minority has asked for P.R. In the circumstances, they knew that it could not be successfully applied.

An ordinary political party, no matter how small its numbers, is not a minority in the P.R. sense. Small parties representing, say, Labour, Farmers, Industry, Professions and the followers of independent Members, are sections of society that differ on economic and other internal issues. They have no fundamental differences.

Proportional Representation was never intended for the formation of such artificial permanent groups. In a well

organised community such permanently opposed parties should not, and would not, exist.

The main reason advanced for the introduction of P.R. in the twenty-six county area, was to give religious minorities representation and "safeguards." From its very inception the system has completely failed to accomplish either of these purposes.

In order that P.R., as it is ordinarily applied, should operate in favour of a religious minority, that minority must be proportionately substantial and politically unified; otherwise it must be concentrated in one or more suitably sized areas. The religious minority here is neither sufficiently numerous, nor is it concentrated. This condition was quite as obvious at the time P.R. was introduced as it is to-day.

Proportionately, if all the minority religions in the twenty-six county area, were politically united and concentrated, they would secure, say, six to eight parliamentary representatives. Except for a period, when one representative was elected in Cavan-Monaghan with the assistance of a few thousand "Catholic votes", they got no representation. Under P.R. they have no representation in the Dail at present. All the Members belonging to minority religions were elected as representatives of political parties.

The chief consequences of P.R. are to aggravate the weaknesses of the party system by increasing the number of parties and independent members. Farmers and Labour, for instance—normal and major sections of national society—get only meagre, minority representation, while the religious minority for which P.R. is supposed to cater, gets no representation whatever. In addition to these absurdities, P.R., under the party system, has given us, invariably, the weakest and most helpless type of government it is possible to conceive. This small, partitioned country, after centuries of brutal suppression requires a cultural, social and economic revolution to bring it even near to the level of nations which for centuries have enjoyed their own institutions. Instead of helping us to reach this objective P.R. along with the party system permanently tends to prevent this, without giving any compensating reward.

As a result of these political impositions—the party system and P.R. combined—all the parties have even compromised their own party system in a vain effort to make the combination work. As already mentioned, they have all fought elections, and divided the people into opposing parties, on one set of secondary issues, and immediately the elections were over, compromised with other sets of secondary issues, in order to secure office.

This system (P.R.) in conjunction with party politics, keeps normal Irish people divided into helpless groups. While this goes on political parties and persons flourish and certain non-nationals and other parasites gather in the spoils. These consequences of P.R., possibly constitute the main purpose of some calculating people who wish to maintain it.

National Action proposes to remove P.R. and to establish single seat constituencies in its stead. The only portion of P.R. which may be suitable for this area of the country, and which might be retained, is the single transferable vote. Of course, the P.R. system might be retained for the election of a Cabinet.

The mere removal of P.R., however, would only play into the hands of a “strong” political party. Unless it is discontinued as an essential part of a comprehensive national plan such as National Action advances, the party system might become more dangerous and more demoralising than ever.

But, if we have the wisdom and the moral courage to wipe out this combination of the party system and so-called proportional representation, and set up a national parliament instead, we can save ourselves from such danger, and also save our nation and our culture from what must otherwise inevitably lead to stagnation and defeat.

## **PARTITION AND A NATIONAL PARLIAMENT**

National Action asserts that under present conditions there is little hope of ending Partition equitably, while England and the North-East of Ireland abet to maintain it.

Politicians, both in the north and south, and political conditions generally, are keeping the people artificially

divided. The “Border”, like the language, has been shamelessly utilised by both sides for party political ends. For the same purpose religious bigotry is deliberately organised in the North-East. Obstacles to union are not being approached in the friendly atmosphere that freedom from party politics would bring.

In our present depressed condition, after thirty years of party squabbling, there is very grave danger that a party Government may “solve” the Border to our disadvantage. Elderly people can remember the bogus Fetham Commission. At that time a weak party, emerging from the calamity of civil war and grasping at party advantage, compromised the nation without, of course, solving the problem at all.

Secret bargaining without the people’s knowledge or consent, even on fundamental issues, is a favourite feature of party politics the world over. It has been practised here on several vital occasions.

To barter away economic or other advantages to Britain or the North-East, or to weaken our national position in any way, in order to secure the removal of partition, may have fatal consequences to our nation. It is frightening to contemplate what might easily happen now, should the internal forces, north and south, hostile to national recovery, be in a position to unite.

The unconditional removal of partition is our natural and political right. The justice of this demand cannot be controverted.

Offering compromising inducements to those in the north-east who oppose a united Ireland will be a fatal mistake. We must be fair to ourselves as well as to them. We must offer them what Sinn Féin offered thirty-five years ago, fair religious, social, political and economic treatment, nothing more and nothing less. In addition to this offer we must organise the twenty-six county area into a strong, united and self-respecting unit.

Let the north-eastern opponents to national union judge, not by the politically nourished bigotry that surrounds them in the north-east, but rather by the evidence of good-will that we have shown them. There is no example, from any part of

the world, where a minority proportionately so small has been so generously treated, as the religious minority in the twenty-six county portion of Ireland during the past thirty years. And this was not for party political purposes. It was due to the normal toleration and charity inherent in a Christian people.

What has caused resentment is the hypocritical utilisation of religion for maintaining political associations with England.

Being secondary issues, ways and means for fighting partition should not be submitted to the voters, but any agreement arrived at should be submitted to them before it is ratified.

In the national campaign against partition intelligent, thoughtful people will see the enormous advantage of national unity, world radio and a national Press. In present world circumstances, under a truly national parliament, sincere, forthright and practical in its efforts, the removal of the "Border" would be quickly secured. The moment England sees that we are nationally serious about partition, she and the North-East will face the facts.

As pointed out in the beginning, National Action does not advocate physical force. Situated as we are now and in command of our own resources, an appeal to physical force would probably complete our national destruction.

No doubt physical force did hamper England in 1921, but it was unity, determination, personal sacrifices, patriotism and moral courage that turned the scale. Only a child would believe that physical force alone could win.

The position is completely different to-day. Moral force will now be infinitely stronger than physical force. Peaceful weapons skilfully wielded will end partition; but they must be wielded with all the vigour and tenacity of a nation that believes in itself.

Offering 'cut and dry' solutions for this many-sided problem at this stage will merely cause waste of time and distraction. The Council of National Action, like all normal Irish people, passionately desire the unity of our country. They believe, however, in achieving that aim permanently and justly. They

believe that with thirty years of national weakening, and the organised resistance that must be faced, no party Government, with its stereotyped 'opposition' can end partition in fairness to the North-East and to the rest of the nation. Partition can and will be safely ended, in one way and in one way only—with the party system of government wiped away, and a virile national parliament established in its stead.

### HOW NATIONAL ACTION CAN BE MADE TO OPERATE

The National Action Plan is so superior to party politics and has so many obvious and far-reaching advantages, that it, or some slight variation of it, will certainly come into operation. But we must bring the plan into action before party politics will have destroyed us. The carrying out of the Plan may require some slight changes in the Constitution entailing a Referendum.

The Plan of National Action can be put into operation by nominating suitable candidates in every constituency in which it is assumed a sufficient proportion of people will have assimilated the Plan.

This essential factor—political education—is all important. The most tenacious enemy of National Action will not be party politics directly but what it has produced—gross and widespread political ignorance, civic laziness, absence of moral courage, and unbalanced national values. A small proportion of convinced promoters, organised, can defeat even this morbid combination. It can be done, and it must be done or our nation is lost.

For the purpose of educating the electorate, Guilds of National Action will be established. A Guild must be formed in every constituency in which action is intended.

For this campaign a number of intelligent workers, in each constituency must be organised. Each key personality must thoroughly understand the plan. This can be done by studying and discussing this fifth edition of National Action.

These key-workers, having organised themselves, will in turn enlighten voters generally. They will do this by personal



contacts, distribution of National Action literature, local organisation, private and public meetings, and finally by having every voter in the constituency personally interviewed. So sure as this educational campaign is efficiently carried out, long before an election is declared, so surely will the National Action candidate succeed. On the other hand, if organisation and public education are delayed until an election is declared the National Action candidate will fail.

Provided an educational campaign is efficiently conducted the Council of National Action is convinced that at least one candidate, in any constituency would succeed in the first General Election that National Action contests. It is recommended, generally, except where a specially energetic educational campaign will have been carried out, that only one candidate might be nominated in a particular constituency, at the first General Election contested.

While in elucidating the Plan, the National Action candidate may discuss secondary issues freely, he will not introduce any of these into his five-point election programme. Neither will he make any specific promises as to how secondary issues will be solved. He and his promoters must also avoid recrimination and attack on any particular party or person. Such tactics are not in keeping with the ideals of National Action and will not promote them.

The National Action Candidate may be asked to make the following promises to the voters and to pledge his honour to carry them out:

- (1.) That he will support in the Dail, every measure which he believes to be for the common good.
- (2.) That he will continue to do this until he has sufficient supporters in the Dail to implement the National Action Plan.
- (3.) That he will not permanently join with any political party, or support party organisation in any way.
- (4.) That when a sufficient number of National Action Members are elected to the Dail, he will help the others to put the National Action programme into operation.

- (5.) That in the election of a Government in present circumstances he will support the section which approaches nearest to national unity.

Many questions have been asked about the interim period while National Action representatives will be a minority in the Dail. They will follow the above procedure and vote according to their convictions, subject to the five-point programme. That they may vote on different sides in a division during this interim period, or vote together for or against a Government, will not be of any national significance. Their main objective will be to propagate National Action, particularly throughout the country by every means at their command. Furthermore, during the interim period, even if their number in the Dail may be small, they will not constitute a political party. So long as they maintain the ideals and the practices of National Action, they may be a minority but they will not be a party.

Since National Action is purely national, individuals, as well as national organisations, convinced of its soundness, should, we suggest, in national duty support it. Organisations like the Gaelic League, Gaelic Athletic Association, National Agricultural and Industrial Development Association, Muintir na Tire, Country Women's Association, Macra Na Feirme, Vocational Organisations and so on, are constantly hampered and restricted in their aims and efforts by party politics. They are allowed to flounder independently without any federated national aim. Heretofore, national organisations, generally, fearing lest they should be branded "political", have avoided everything political whether national or otherwise.

We now earnestly appeal to all national organisations to throw off this negative attitude of "no politics" and to become normal, virile associations with a concerted and nationally federated Plan.

National and party politics were conveniently confused here by Britain for her own ends. Our own political Leaders continued this confusion for party ends. Through this non-party Plan of National Action national organisations can now overhaul their political outlook and

discard this doctrine of "no politics", opposed to Christian as well as national requirements and peculiar to Ireland.

The joint part which national organisations can play, pursuing their respective aims and at the same time federated in national action, is tremendous. For instance, such a federation might call on the Government of the day to take appropriate steps for the establishment of the National Action Plan, or give to the public some sound national reasons for not doing so. Jointly, the national organisations would constitute a national force to be reckoned with; unfederated, as they are, they are merely helpless ciphers, acquiescing in the party political game.

Federated, national organisations will thus direct their organised efforts successfully, not only towards their own advancement, but much more important, towards that of our Motherland.

### **NATIONAL ACTION MUST BE INSPIRED BY CHRISTIAN PATRIOTISM**

On account of our long suppression under England, followed by the demoralising influences of party politics, it is no wonder that a great proportion of our people are nationally confused. Yet, confused as we are, there is in National Action the makings of a revolution that can save us—a complete re-assessment of our outlook, our values and our energy. Whether we have sufficient stamina and organising ability left to use this Plan, or whether arguing about vague abstractions, in national servility, will satisfy us, only time will tell.

A nation like a person does not live by bread alone. A virile nation lives by spiritual values. The moment materialism supplants the spirit of the nation that nation is foredoomed. This is our greatest present danger. We are heirs to one of the oldest and most distinguished national cultures in the world. England crushed it for her own ends; we are voluntarily continuing the process in indolent pursuance of her policy. At the same time we boastfully pretend that our culture is being recovered.

Christian Patriotism, which is the spirit of nationality, is a natural and a Christian virtue. We are all bound, in national, as well as Christian duty, to love and serve our country, and service is the true practice of love. Vaunted love without service is but a dream.

For the freedom, protection and well-being of a nation, true patriotism, widely and practically diffused among a people, is essential. No nation can truly prosper, or even maintain itself efficiently without the practical and conscious application of this Christian Virtue. Humanly speaking, it is the only force which will bind a people, in unselfish, organised, community life for their common welfare. In our circumstances it is a human force that will inspire us to take just pride in our Motherland, in producing her products efficiently and in using her products when they are efficiently produced. It is the only human force that will rescue us from otherwise inevitable defeat.

For these various reasons, in nearly every civilised country in the world, patriotism true or false, is, in some way, inculcated by the State. But, while true patriotism, in its statesmen and in its people can be a nation's bulwark, false patriotism can be its greatest enemy.

In our own generation false patriotism, that is, love of country based on false and vicious values, has, in some countries, become a monstrous evil. With us political claptrap is a more prevalent substitution. The greatest barrier against all such perversions is Charity, embodied in knowledge and practice of the truth.

The Catholic Church has repeatedly condemned "extreme and exaggerated nationalism". Concurrent with this, during the past thirty years, the inculcation of normal Christian patriotism has been almost excluded from our educational, social and political activities. These two facts, associated, have confused many people. Because abuses of patriotism are condemned by the Church, and because our party Governments, one and all, have failed to explain and propagate true patriotism, many people assume that patriotism itself is condemned. Nothing could be further from the truth. Full approval of true patriotism is to be found in the

Encyclicals and other authoritative documents. True patriotism is just as strongly commended by the Church as false patriotism is condemned. St. Thomas Aquinas and many other recognised authorities have, throughout the centuries, voiced the praises of true patriotism. They recognised, as the Church recognises, that the Christian virtue of patriotism is a necessary, natural and normal factor of successful Christian community life.

The number of people, in every Age and in every Land, who, for love of country, sacrificed everything in life, and even life itself, is legion. Our own quota, by their sacrifices in every generation, kept the flame from dying of despair. But this same flame, which inspired men typified in Davis, Emmet, Tone and Pearse, can also serve the more mundane ends of social and economic as well as of spiritual national resurgence. We can use Christian patriotism as our greatest weapon against industrial abuses and for spurring production to its winning heights.

Patriotism, like every other spiritual force, can be most effectively established during the formative years of life, and particularly through the schools. Hence, informed States the world over inculcate patriotism in their school programmes. Some people whose patriotic sense has not been stirred in youth, may become hardened and even hostile. Like many to-day, they may, when older, repudiate patriotism altogether.

Being a spiritual force also, patriotism can be established and permanently maintained through the operation in everyday life of the nation's culture. Indeed, culture—language, traditions, arts, music, games and so on—consciously exercised, constitutes the practical medium through which patriotism in every country is preserved. This is one of the cardinal uses of national culture. No spiritual force can be maintained except through its physical expressions and national culture is the practical or physical expression of patriotism.

The reason why patriotism is not now a great inspiring force in Ireland, as it is in other countries, is that our culture is not consciously exercised as such. For instance, the Irish

language is grudgingly learned in schools as a language, without national significance, and the Flag is not consciously saluted as a symbol of the Motherland.

It is the duty of a people to defend its own existence, even to the death. In discussing the nation we saw that a people without a culture of its own was not a nation. National culture, therefore, essential to nationhood, is more important to a nation than liberty itself. Freedom, if lost, may always be recovered, but a traditional culture once destroyed can never be recalled, and liberty without its traditional culture is but a sham.

Vaguely held, as it is with us, without conscious appreciation, traditional culture, and even liberty, will not survive. In a country that indolently abandons its true Christian nationality, religion, in the long run, is also bound to suffer.

There is no example in the world of a people voluntarily discarding its national culture, in circumstances such as we are rejecting ours now; and there is no country in like circumstances, suffering such social and economic depression as we are suffering now—emigration, cultural, economic and financial failure and absence of will as a nation to survive. Those who believe that national spiritual values are outside the sphere of material progress should pause and consider if these two failures are not really one.

For example, the United States of America, which lacks the great traditional back-ground of the older European nations, is now striving to evolve and accumulate national characteristics of its own. Having no national language, it is gradually developing a version of English which will be its own. Thus U.S.A.—one of the wealthiest and most economically conscious countries in the world, finds that materialism without national spiritual values is not enough. U.S.A. would probably give half her wealth could she but call her own the culture which we, in our ignorance, fling to the winds.

We have seen that without the organising help and direction of its Governing Authority, a People can do but little for itself. A Government without its people's co-operation is equally ineffective. Thus all our basic

problems must be solved as one problem, by people and Government combined. The establishment of our own culture, and the spirit that will sustain it, constitutes part of this one great problem, which must be solved by people and Government combined; but the Government in its duty, must always lead. This is one of the main purposes for which a Government is established.

This does not mean that the State must do everything, but it does mean that the State must do its duty and see that, through patriotic inspiration, public self organisation and discipline, the people do theirs.

Every virile nation knows that each characteristic of a nation's culture, which helps to distinguish it from other nations, is nationally important in itself. It knows also that while some are of more national importance than others, national language is the key-characteristic of them all. Furthermore, every virile nation knows that the wilful rejection of one national characteristic is but a prelude to the wilful rejection of others; hence, every virile nation guards with passionate jealousy, its own culture even to the smallest detail.

There is a growing body of opinion in Ireland—that a national language is not essential to nationhood. In a general sense this assertion would appear to be true. Any other contention might unfairly restrict a community, without a national language, through no fault of its own. A people possessing a body of characteristics vigorously and consciously exercised, without a national language, could become and could remain, a living nation. But, in their application to our circumstances, these facts require to be analysed. Unless a nation is big, strong and prosperous, and isolated from overbearing spiritual encroachments, the attainment, or the retention, of national status without a national language is very hard. The nation must also have a firmly concerted belief in its own individuality.

Contrasting even these few requirements with Irish conditions, the puerility of advancing language abandonment and nationhood as a consistency will be apparent.

Promoters of this attitude point to the U.S.A. as a nation-

ally vigorous people without a national language. They seldom add, however, that U.S.A. had no option. U.S.A. did not throw away a great traditional language or anything else of national importance, it is making the most of the national characteristics it has got. Several developing world communities, without national languages and with an eye to nationhood, are doing the same.

Moreover, to speak plainly, those who would jettison the language on the plea that language is not nationally essential, are not frank. They profess to believe in nationhood, yet, as well as rejecting the language they invariably reject the other characteristics of nationhood as well. Indeed one never finds such persons sponsoring any characteristic of nationhood as such. The very fact of shirking the main characteristic is practical proof that they have little regard for the others. If they were sincere in their protestations of nationhood and if they proposed dropping the language they should practise the remaining characteristics vigorously. Without a language, if a nation is to live, the other characteristics must be all the more intensely and consciously pursued. But this is precisely what they do not do. In other words while professing belief in our being a nation they are prepared to see the title deeds of the nation destroyed.

If they proclaimed contentment with a degenerate, denationalised State their contention would at least be logical. Advancing an apparently plausible excuse for rejecting the main title to nationhood, shirking the remaining responsibilities by default and at the same time professing belief in national status, appear to be dishonest as well as being an attitude to be nationally despised. But for the deplorable failure of our Party Governments in the exercise of their duty regarding our culture, such contemptible excuses would not be abroad. In a virile nation one would not dare even to breathe such specious simulation; but, with a fallen people any shallow argument will serve.

The establishment of our national language is a major test of our national sincerity. It is also a major factor in the establishment of our nation. The normal establishment

of our language. therefore, is an essential part of the plan of National Action.

National Action holds that the recovery of our language will never be practically achieved unless the following main conditions are fulfilled:

1. That the people shall be publicly educated as to the national significance of a national language.
2. That the spirit of Christian patriotism shall be practically and efficiently inculcated by the State.
3. *That our own worthy culture shall be consciously recovered as one inseparable and complementary whole. The language will never be established as a living national force, isolated from its companion characteristics.*
4. That an oral test shall be included in all examinations. Attempting to establish a living language without an oral test in examinations is fantastic.
5. That as regards our culture the Executive Authority of the State shall know and exercise its duties to the full.
6. That what is left of the Gaeltacht shall be cherished, and vigorously preserved, and that native speakers and all scholars of Irish shall be efficiently utilised for language propagation.

As two small examples:—

- (a) Persons, some of them retired, of outstanding Gaelic and general philological erudition, are allowed to wander into other spheres or rust on the scrap heap. These and the other repositories of Gaelic culture—old people of the Gaeltacht—soon lost, can never be replaced.
- (b) The Gaeltacht Commission recommended that girls from the Gaeltacht should be trained as nursery governesses for the spread of native Irish. Their votes would not turn the political scale, so England and America got them instead.

The Gaeltacht and the educational system should be the

main complementary channels through which our culture will be recovered, with all the other arms added. Generally speaking, wholehearted good-will from adults, and spirited help in other directions from them, will be far more valuable than forced compliance.

During the past thirty years the degree to which our State, has nullified the spirit of Christian patriotism, through bad example, gross neglect and half measure efforts, has been one of its greatest and most damaging inflictions. Indeed, so nationally demoralised have we become that the fulsome patronizing of the language will probably end only with the party system.

The conditions necessary to save the language may at first appear hard. They will be in reality, in conscious and sincere combination, much easier and less costly than the feckless, half hearted measures which for thirty years political chicanery has inflicted on the nation. When the Governing Authority of the State will do its duty, the people will, certainly do theirs.

Pearse's Ideal was a prosperous Irish Ireland which as a Christian State would be an example to the world. The fact is, that with average national good-will, this aim could have been easily achieved. We had, and still have, an abundance of human ability, and a small national territory second to none; yet what have we got? Facing an accumulation of unsolved basic national problems, neglected during centuries of suppression, we have got partyism pursued to its bitter end. We have got two opposing, almost equally balanced factions, with but a vague and vanishing sense of national responsibility to inspire them, and with no national differences between them. While foreigners steadily increase their grip, nationals and national organisations in moral cowardice recede; while liberalism under the guise of a spurious freedom anglicises and Americanises our children, imitation increases; while thousands of our young people emigrate, others live in a state of luxury and irresponsibility, which, in circumstances like ours, has never been paralleled. While all this degeneration gradually overwhelms us, while fear and suspense stalk the world, and while Godless forces

of evil come inside our very door, party politics continues to be, after thirty years of failure, as shameless and as bitter as the day it began.

National Action will succeed provided that true and practical Christian patriotism shall be its driving inspiration. We must start again where Pearse and his true companions left us; but we must start with all the essential factors of Christian nationhood practically and sincerely embodied in our Plan, or, like those who side-tracked Pearse's Ideal, we shall start in vain. *Seeking an easy road to spurious nationhood will find only the road to defeat.*

### A FINAL APPEAL

Finally, we earnestly appeal, particularly to our young men and women, and to members of the Dail and Seanad who have been led astray by party politics, to come and help us. We appeal for financial help to those who can afford it. We appeal to the newspapers to deal fairly with National Action, realising, as they do, that their first duty is to our Motherland. We appeal to every public organisation to join with us in destroying this party plague and in establishing a Christian and national system, which all can sponsor in its stead.

We would again remind organisations that while they should not take part in party politics, they are bound to be political in the national sense. As organisations, as well as individuals, they are bound to play an active part in promoting every issue that concerns the status and integrity of the Motherland and in censuring everything disruptive. If national organisations would federate under the banner of National Action, they alone could bring about the social-economic revolution our nation requires.

Young men and women who have sufficient strength of character to think and act for themselves, should help in making every organisation to which they belong truly national. They will thereby help to save our country. We need young leaders of thought and action, and from such as these.

they will evolve. In the words of Most Rev. Dr. Dignan (1).

"We need men of courage, men capable of making plans and putting theories into operation; men who are not afraid to break new ground and men who will not hesitate to change even the country's financial, economic and social systems."

We can recover, and in God's name, we will recover. Let us then sink our artificial differences, distractions and doubts, and with conviction, courage, faith and action, while there is yet time, make one concerted effort to save from national extinction our Motherland, that is, our People, our Culture and our Land.

(1) Quoted from Most Rev. Dr. Dignan, Bishop of Clonfert, by special permission and approval.

## Personal Note To The Reader

Wherever the establishment of a Constituency Guild of National Action is contemplated, the Council of National Action, if invited, will endeavour to send a representative to explain the Plan of National Action and otherwise to assist them.

Will those who are convinced that National Action offers a practical system of government to replace party politics, and who are prepared to help in any way, send their names and addresses to:

The Secretary,  
Council of National Action,  
36, Rathgar Avenue,  
Dublin.

Name .....

Address .....

.....

Occupation .....

Organisation, &c., to which you belong:—

*Please take this leaf out, fill it and return to the Council of  
National Action.*

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Printed by the Longford Printing & Publishing Co. (1950), Ltd.,  
Market Square, Longford.

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