

Why have some Scottish and Welsh nationalists criticized Labour's programme of devolution (20)

There have been various reasons why some Scottish and Welsh nationalists have criticized Labour's programme of devolution. One of the main arguments against devolution was that the sheer cost of establishing something that is already done in London would be too much for what you got at the end. These nationalists have also argued that the lack of any experience of decision-making at the level of regional self-government could also lead to delays in the making and implementation of decisions – central government has decades of decision-making experience and could do a much better job for the regions without any delay.

Some Scottish and Welsh nationalists have criticised Labour's programme of devolution because they campaign for full independence for Scotland and Wales. Labour's programme of devolution does not grant full independence to these countries. Instead it just offers slightly more power. Scottish nationalists also criticise Labour's programme of devolution because it will probably lead to a rise in taxes in Scotland.

There is also the fact of the West Loathian Question. This is where Scots can legislate on English matters but the English cannot intervene in Scotland. This could be bad for Scotland as there are some issues where English intervention is welcomed.

One of the major arguments against Labour's programme of devolution is that it will be the start of the break-up of the United Kingdom; that from small beginnings (if devolution can be seen as 'small') the ultimate fate of this country will be regional authorities with more devolved power in the counties – this may appeal to those who want more authority in counties like Cornwall, but many see this as the start of the break up of the United Kingdom with a massive loss of central authority.

The Nationalists don't want to use devolution to deliver a stronger Wales. To do so would invalidate their argument that Wales should cut all ties with Britain. The Nationalists want devolution to fail so that they can press for Welsh independence. They would never use power in the Assembly to build a better Wales. They would only use it to create division between Wales and the rest of the UK.

According to Labour's programme of devolution, it will enable Scotland to increase taxes by three pence in the pound. Scottish nationalists have criticized this, as it will go no way in being able to address the social and economic problems facing Scotland. Scottish nationalists complain that they need a sovereign parliament, which can have

complete control over foreign policy, economic planning and defence spending. Scottish nationalists want a peace dividend that they can save to invest in jobs and social issues. Labour's plans go no way to doing any of this.

It is evident that the nationalists in Scotland and Wales are clearly disenchanted with labour's programme of devolution. There are many issues raised in this essay that prove the nationalist apprehensive nature towards devolution.