



MINISTRY OF TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING

# NATIONAL PARKS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

Report by  
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## FOREWORD

**T**HIS Report is the work of MR. JOHN DOWER, A.R.I.B.A., M.T.P.I., who was requested to study the problems relating to the establishment of National Parks in England and Wales. It is published for information and as a basis for discussion.

As is indicated in the Report, further preliminary work is necessary on this subject. This is being undertaken and, in the meantime, the Government are not committed to acceptance of the recommendations and conclusions of this Report.

# National Parks in England and Wales

## A REPORT TO THE MINISTER OF TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING

by

JOHN DOWER

### PART I.—PURPOSES AND REQUIREMENTS OF NATIONAL PARKS

1. National Parks, as one of the major objectives of post-war town and country planning, rest on a firm basis of popular desire, informed opinion and Ministerial approval. Of the last the following statements give evidence.

The Minister of Works and Planning (Lord Portal) in the House of Lords, 21st April, 1942 :—" It is clear that no national planning of the use of land would satisfy the country if it did not provide for the preservation of extensive areas of great natural beauty, and of the coastline. The question of National Parks and of the protection of our coast from ill-considered building development will be carefully examined and we fully realize the importance of this " . . . The Joint Parliamentary Secretary (Mr. Henry Strauss, M.P.) in the House of Commons, 29th April, 1942, after repeating the foregoing statement, added :—" We are a large population living in a small island of matchless but most vulnerable beauty. It is reckless folly to squander and destroy it " . . . The Paymaster-General (Sir W. Jowitt, M.P.) in the same debate :—" We must surely consider such questions as green belts and the preservation of the coastline. I give the illustration of the Lake District. Is there anyone who really doubts that a district such as that ought not to be a National Park, combined with some scheme of youth-hostels to give our young people a chance to roam about and get their exercise under those sort of conditions? Has not that some spiritual value? " . . . Lord Portal at the annual meeting of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England, 6th November, 1942 :—" I . . . reiterate what your chairman said about National Parks; they are all-important for the future " . . . The Minister of Town and Country Planning (Mr. W. S. Morrison, M.P.) at Manchester, 13th October, 1943 :—" My Ministry is determined that the amenities of the country shall be preserved, and I have in mind that we should set apart certain areas as National Parks " . . .

2. These statements—reinforced by the findings of Lord Justice Scott's Committee\* that " the establishment of National Parks in Britain is long overdue " and their recommendation that " within the first year " of peace " the demarcation of National Parks and nature reserves be completed, and the National Parks Authority be set up," and by the references in the Government's White Paper on The Control of Land Use† to the " preservation of land for national parks " and " the establishment of national parks," as part of the programme of post-war reconstruction—make it needless to embark here on any general argument of the " case " for National Parks. It may be

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\* Report of Committee on Land Utilization in Rural Areas, 1942 (Cmd. 6378) ; paragraphs 178 and 241.

† The Control of Land Use, 1944 (Cmd. 6537) ; paragraphs 1 and 36.

assumed that the case, in broad principle, has already been made and won ; but all the details remain to be filled in—the choice of areas, the controls to be imposed, the facilities to be provided, the machinery, powers and technique required, and the necessary co-ordination with other purposes of planning and with the policies and activities of other Departments. A general consideration of these and associated matters is the object of this report.

### The meaning of “ National Parks ”

3. It is important to be clear at the outset what is or should be meant by a “ National Park,” for the name, though firmly established here and abroad, is somewhat misleading. “ Park ” has an obvious flavour either of the town park with its railings and shrubberies and “ Keep off the grass ” notices, or of the tree-dotted pasture land surrounding a large country house ; while “ National ” may well suggest a comprehensive public acquisition or other state action more drastic than the true purpose justifies or requires. Moreover, the many “ National Parks ” which already exist in the United States (whose first great Park, the Yellowstone, dates back to 1872), Canada, South Africa and other countries, though they give a fair notion of the scale and purpose, do not sufficiently indicate the nature of a National Park in application to this island. Most of the American and African Parks are continuously “ virgin ” country, whether of high mountains, forests or jungle. We have no such country here. Our remotest areas have long supported some settled population and, even in the most mountainous and infertile districts, there are no considerable stretches in England and Wales, and few even in the Scottish Highlands, whose landscape has not been to a significant degree modified by farming or other human uses.

4. A National Park may be defined, in application to Great Britain, as an extensive area of beautiful and relatively wild country in which, for the nation’s benefit and by appropriate national decision and action, (a) the characteristic landscape beauty is strictly preserved, (b) access and facilities for public open-air enjoyment are amply provided, (c) wild life and buildings and places of architectural and historic interest are suitably protected, while (d) established farming use is effectively maintained. The several requirements and qualifications of this definition are all important, and may suitably form the framework for more extended comment.

### The potential National Park areas

5. First and obviously, the concern of National Parks must be broadly confined to relatively wild country, for, generally speaking, it is only in such country that the public at large either desires or can satisfactorily be given a wide measure of recreational access. This *relatively wild country*,\* of mountains and moors with the associated farm lands of their valleys and fringes, of heaths, of rocky or infertile coastlines, and of the rougher parts of numerous downs, hills and forests, comprises over one-third of the land area of Great Britain—in England and Wales about one-fifth or some 12,000 out of 58,000 square miles, and in Scotland (with which, except where it is specifically mentioned, this report is not concerned) fully two-thirds. The whole of this total extent is not, however, either required or, indeed, available and suitable

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\* The areas coloured yellow on the maps of the Land Utilization Survey give the best available picture of the distribution of the “ relatively wild country.” The main adjustments needed to give a closer picture are the *addition* of (a) various coastline stretches, (b) most of the narrower valleys (mainly pale green) contained by the larger yellow masses, and (c) several of the rougher and more open woodland areas (dark green) such as the New Forest ; and the *omission* of many of the smaller yellow areas, largely representing ill-drained or neglected farmland.

for National Parks. Some of it, though wild enough, is insufficiently beautiful, for instance the industrial section of the Pennines. A good deal is in isolated patches, such as the Malvern Hills and Cannock Chase, too small for national action though usually of value, and sometimes of critical importance, for local or regional action under "open-space" or "green-belt" schemes for preservation and recreation. Considerable stretches are being used, more or less intensively, for large-scale afforestation, quarrying and mining, military ranges or other purposes which cannot be successfully combined with National Park requirements; and it may be found necessary to set aside some further stretches for such uses. But when all necessary deductions have been made, there still remain *potential* National Park areas—sufficiently wild, beautiful, extensive and free from inconsistent uses—amounting to some 8,000 square miles in England and Wales. This is considerably more than is required for initial, or indeed early, establishment as National Parks, and may well be in excess of what will ever be required: but, while a sufficient number of large and varied units are progressively selected, delimited and established as National Parks, the whole of the remainder should be generally safeguarded by the co-operative action of central and local planning authorities as a *reserve* for possible future National Parks. Within this reserve no substantial "development", other than for agriculture or forestry, should be permitted unless shown to be desirable in the public interest; and over all of it the authority responsible for National Parks should hold at least a "watching brief".

### Selection of areas

6. The task of selecting and delimiting the areas which are to be established as National Parks or to be treated as reserves for future National Parks—with the no less important corollary of deciding what areas are *not* to be so treated (without which local authorities will not know where they stand)—will clearly be no easy matter. The choice will be invidious, since some hopes are bound to be disappointed, and must be capable of reasoned defence against inevitable criticisms. It must rest on an adequate and disinterested survey and investigation of all areas which are, or are claimed to be, in any way suitable, and it must take into account a wide range of factors, including landscape beauty, wild life, suitability for rambling access, popularity, existing and potential land utilization, existing or threatened disfigurements, transport and accommodation facilities, and the financial and administrative strength or weakness of the local authorities concerned. It must be consistent with other nationally determined allocations of land, and must be integrated with all relevant national plans for land utilization, including the development of agriculture and forestry, the location of industry, the groundwork of transport and the use of water resources, as these are progressively determined by the Ministry of Town and Country Planning and other Departments. And it must carry full Government authority: this, I suggest, will best be provided by making all selections and boundaries subject to the approval of the Minister of Town and Country Planning, who would be responsible for them to the Government and Parliament.

7. It is clear that the decisive selection and precise delimitation of the areas to become National Parks should follow, *not* precede, the determination of National Parks policy, at least in its essential features and prospective scale of operations. A detailed examination of areas with hard-and-fast recommendations as to choice and boundaries would, therefore, be out of place in this report. Nevertheless, it seems desirable that I should give—if only to provide a general notion of their number and extent, and as a basis for the citing of examples—preliminary lists covering all the areas which it will probably be

necessary to consider, sooner or later, when National Parks are selected. The geographical distribution of these areas is shown in broad approximation on Map II (*see* page 12). As I have already indicated, there is no suggestion that anything like the whole of these areas should ever become National Parks, although nearly all of them were suggested, in whole or in part, by one or more of the witnesses before the National Park Committee in 1930.\* On the contrary, more than half of the areas (covering about one-third of the total extent) are in my opinion unsuitable, on one ground or another, for selection as National Parks: and of the rest, though all seem to me suitable, I suggest only that rather less than half, by both number and extent, should be chosen and established during the first few years' operation of a National Park's system.

8. The preliminary lists which follow are therefore given—necessarily on a purely personal judgment—in three divisions: (A) *Suggested National Parks*, i.e. those areas which I consider most suitable, and desirable for establishment as National Parks during the first period of operations (say 5 years); (B) *Reserves for possible future National Parks*, i.e. those further areas which I consider suitable for National Parks, and some at least of which it will be desirable to establish as such at a later stage; and (C) *Other Amenity Areas NOT suggested as National Parks*, i.e. areas which it will probably be necessary to pass under review when the decisive selections of National Parks are undertaken, but which, in my opinion, are unlikely to be found suitable, although otherwise deserving and requiring the special concern of local and central planning authorities, supported as may be by the National Trust and other voluntary agencies, in order to safeguard their landscape beauty, farming use and wild life, and to increase appropriately their facilities for open-air recreation. In some cases it may be found desirable that these areas, or parts of them, should be given some designated status, whether as county or regional “Parks” or “Reserves”, or as “National Forest Parks” where the Forestry Commission has large holdings of land, or as national or local “Nature Reserves” where there are stretches of special value for their flora and fauna.†

9. *Division A: Suggested National Parks.* The ten areas comprising this division are shown on Map I (*see* page 11). The first six areas are suggested as a first instalment: four outstanding mountain and moorland areas, and the two finest extensive stretches of unspoilt rocky coastline. The remaining four areas are suggested as a second, and early, instalment. It should be noted that Dartmoor (No. 3) and The Roman Wall (No. 10) would require special arrangements for collaboration, respectively with the Duchy of Cornwall and with the Ancient Monuments service of the Ministry of Works. The “selected parts” of the Cornish Coast (No. 6) consist of (a) the Land's End and Lizard

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\* Report of the National Park Committee, April 1931 (Cmd. 3851); *see* especially paragraphs 37–41 and Appendices II and III. This Report, prepared under the chairmanship of Dr. (now Lord) Addison, is the only official document which deals directly with National Parks policy for this country. Preparation under the shadow of the economic crisis, and subsequent developments, particularly in the scope and system of country planning, have made its recommendations inadequate and out of date: and I have not thought it necessary to review them. But the Report remains a valuable assembly of facts and opinions, on which I have drawn freely, and to which I acknowledge my debt. I have also used, and am indebted to, a number of unofficial publications, including particularly those of the Standing Committee on National Parks (through which since 1936 the principal voluntary bodies concerned have pursued a joint policy)—“The case for National Parks in Great Britain,” 1938; “National Parks,” 1944; and an unpublished “priority selection” list of National Park areas submitted in 1941 to the Planning Department of the Ministry of Works and Buildings.

† For consideration of Nature Reserves, and wild life conservation generally, *see* paragraphs 61–68 below, and for National Forest Parks, paragraph 77.



peninsulas and (b) the stretch from Padstow Bay northwards round Hartland to near Westward Ho! (the northern part of this being in Devon): it might be found desirable to designate these separately and successively, though they should eventually be administered together. A similar possibility of successive designation applies to the contiguous but distinct mountain areas of the Black Mountains and the Brecon Beacons (No. 8).

	Approx. square miles
(1) The Lake District ... ..	860
(2) Snowdonia ... ..	320
(3) Dartmoor ... ..	310
(4) The Peak District and Dove Dale ... ..	530
(5) Pembroke Coast ... ..	100
(6) Cornish Coast (selected parts) ... ..	180
	2,300
(7) Craven Pennines (Wharfe, Aire and Ribble)	380
(8) Black Mountains and Brecon Beacons ... ..	470
(9) Exmoor and North Devon Coast ... ..	280
(10) The Roman Wall ... ..	170
	1,300
	<hr/> 3,600 <hr/>

Whether or not this choice and priority of areas (which, though given as a personal selection, is probably in fairly close accord with the consensus of informed opinion) is followed when the official selection is made, I would stress the importance of starting with *several* National Parks of *ample* size, not with one or two Parks only, nor—so far as inland Parks are concerned—with areas of less than about 250 square miles each. If the Parks in the first instalment are too few, or too small, the concentration of visitors, attracted by the publicity accompanying their establishment, will lead to the most serious consequences—in damage to amenities, in overloading and dislocation of transport, accommodation and other facilities, in objections by the resident population, and in initial discredit to the National Parks administration.

10. *Division B: Reserves for possible future National Parks.* Twelve further areas are listed in this division. They fall naturally into three groups, the first of which differs substantially from the other two. It consists of four further areas, worthy of National Park treatment, which are geographically quite separate and distinct from the areas in Division A—of younger geological formations and of markedly different landscape types. Though, in my opinion, rather less straightforwardly suitable than those in Division A, these areas should, I suggest, have priority of consideration for a third instalment, except in so far as it may be found practicable to make satisfactory provision for their preservation and appropriate recreational use by county or regional action. The Broads (No. 1), in particular, are an area of unique waterway and fenland character, which it is of the utmost importance to conserve and to open as fully as possible to such public enjoyment as is consistent with its conservation. But there are many complications, both of drainage, navigation, etc., and of existing misuses and disfigurements; and the requirements differ materially from those of a regular National Park. It may prove better to deal with the area on some *ad hoc* scheme of combined national and local action, which

should include the protection of substantial areas of mere and marsh as strict Nature Reserves. The other two groups, which are not in any order of priority, comprise all the best that remains, after taking the areas included in Division A, in the moorland and mountain masses of the North (Cheviots and Pennines) and of Wales and the Welsh Marches. These are, in effect, the two great reserves from which further National Parks or extensions of existing Parks—not necessarily corresponding precisely to the unit areas as listed—could progressively be drawn, as policy, finance and administrative capacity allowed.

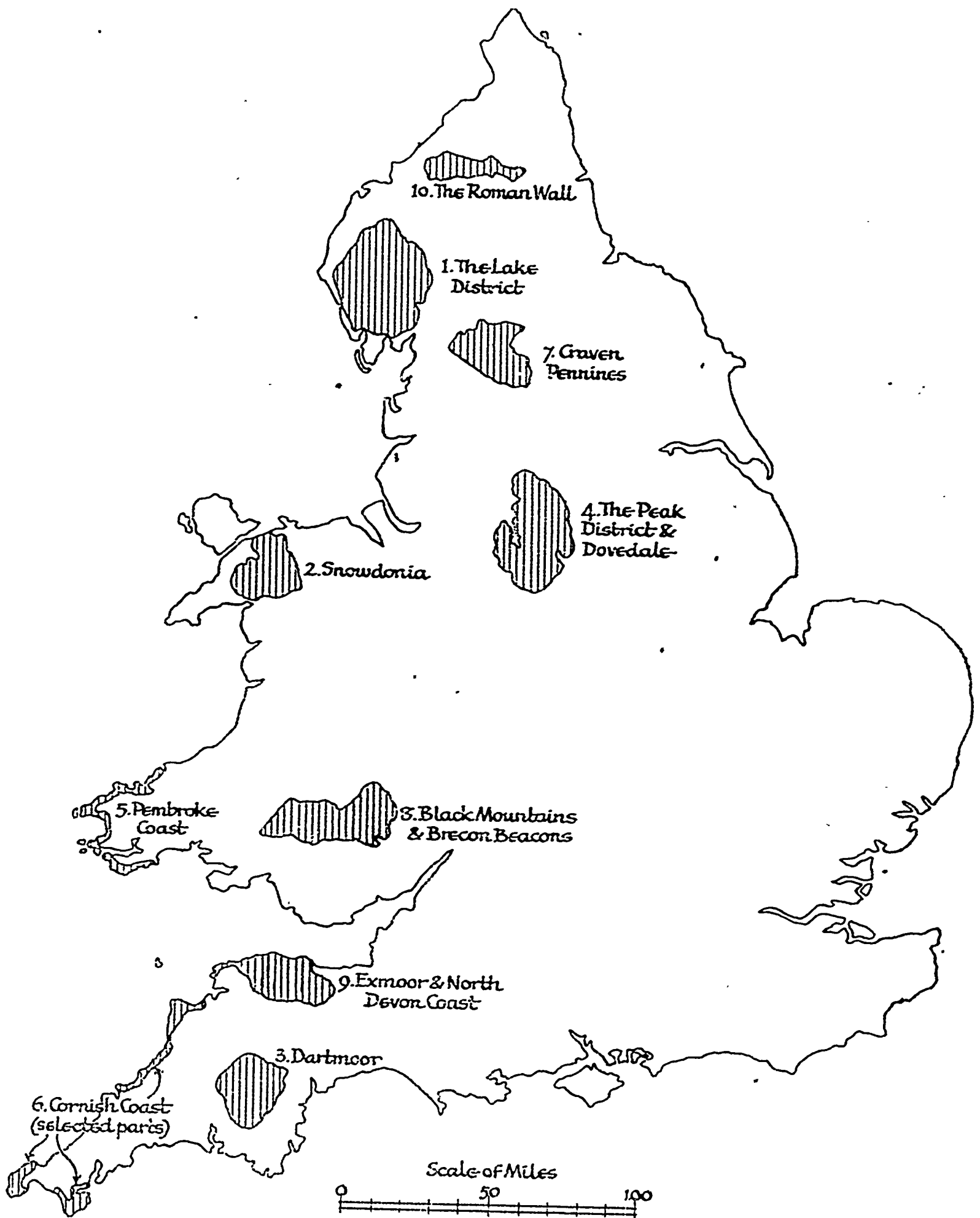
	<i>Approx. square miles</i>
(1) The Broads ... ..	120
(2) North York Moors and Coast ... ..	460
(3) Dorset Coast and Heaths ... ..	200
(4) Berkshire and Marlborough Downs... ..	240
	1,020
(5) North-east Cheviots (Till and Coquet) ... ..	300
(6) North Pennines (South Tyne, Wear and Tees) ... ..	640
(7) Swaledale Pennines (with part of Wensleydale) ... ..	240
(8) Howgill Fells (upper Lune) ... ..	280
	1,460
(9) Merioneth Coast and Mountains (incl. Berwyns) ... ..	660
(10) Plynlimon ... ..	400
(11) Radnor and Clun Forests ... ..	420
(12) Elenith Mountains* (Elan, Towy and Cothi) ... ..	440
	1,920
	<hr/> 4,400 <hr/>

11. *Division C : Other Amenity Areas NOT suggested as National Parks.* (see explanation in paragraph 8 above). These are set out in four groups—Northern ; Western ; South-western ; and Southern and Eastern. It may be thought that some of the areas in this last group should have been placed, so as to secure a more even distribution of National Parks over the country, in Divisions A or B, in which areas in the North, West and South-west predominate. The answer is that the wilder country most suitable for National Parks is predominantly in the North, West and South-west. Nevertheless I should have included at least two southern areas in Divisions A or B if I were not reasonably satisfied that they would, in future, be adequately dealt with by other agencies ; the South Downs by the county and local authorities, and the New Forest by the Forestry Commission. Both have, unfortunately, suffered considerably in places from past misdevelopments. Other areas where the Forestry Commission has a major interest are the Forest of Dean (already a National Forest Park), the South-west Cheviots (Kielder and Kershope Forests), Cannock Chase, Breckland and the Suffolk Heaths.

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\* There is no current general name for this well-marked mountain range running from Rhayader south-west almost to Carmarthen : I take the revival of the ancient name "Elenith" from Mr. A. G. Bradley and Mr. Edmund Vale.

## MAP I

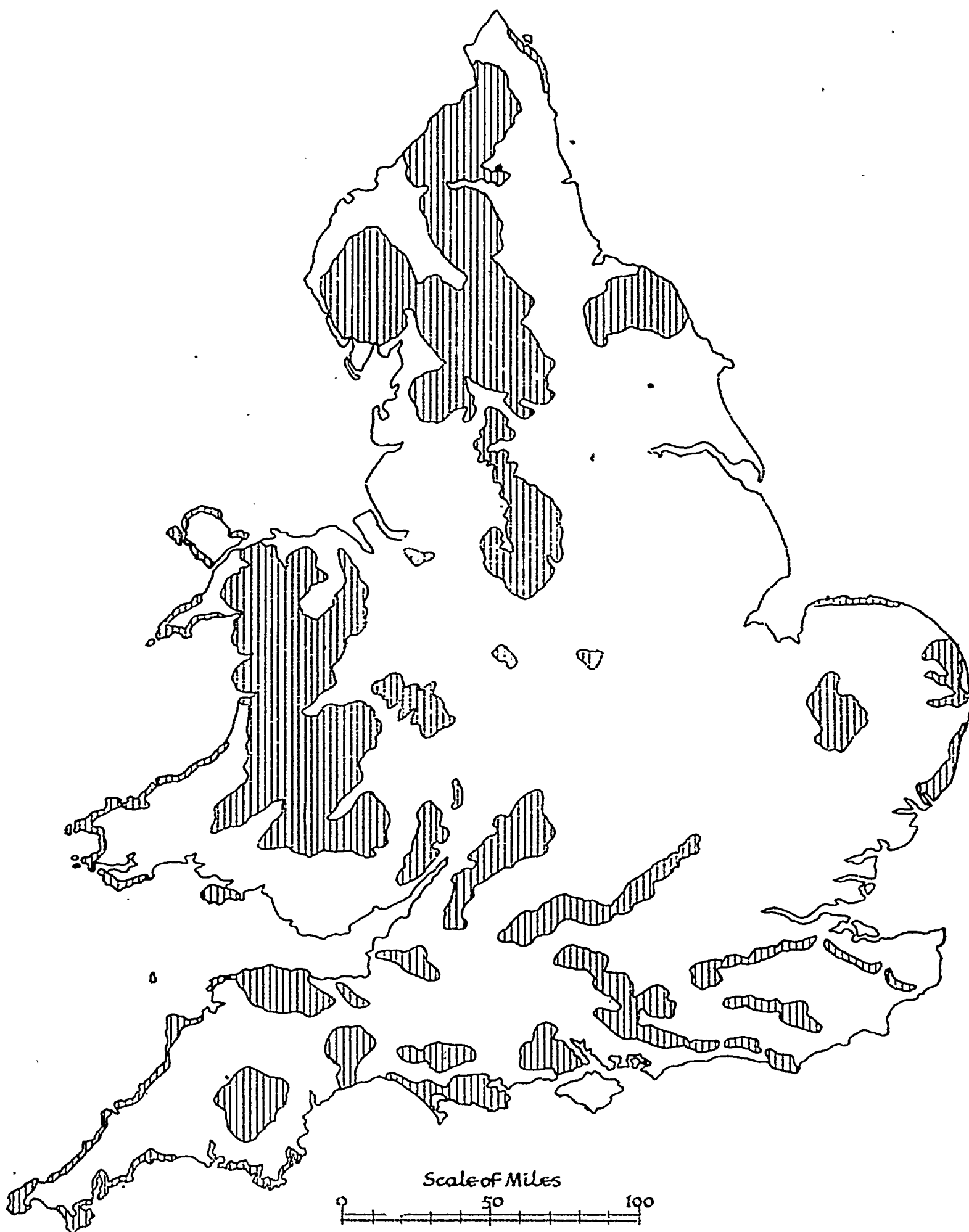


Areas suggested for the first 10 National Parks in England and Wales.

Notes.

To show the coastal areas clearly, their depth is, in some parts, exaggerated. Small enclaves of urban and industrial development are disregarded.

## MAP II



Distribution of areas to be considered when National Parks in England and Wales are selected.

### Notes.

To show the coastal areas clearly, their depth is, in some parts, exaggerated. Small enclaves of urban and industrial development are disregarded.

*Northern*

Northumberland Coast (part)  
 South-west Cheviots  
 Bowland Fells  
 Nidderdale Pennines  
 Industrial Pennines  
 Charnwood Forest  
 Cannock Chase  
 Delamere Forest

*South-western*

The Cotswolds  
 The Mendips  
 The Quantocks  
 Cornish Coast (remaining parts)  
 South Devon Coast  
 Blackdown Hills  
 Dorset Downs

*Western**(Wales and Welsh Marches)*

Anglesey Coast  
 Llyn Coast  
 Denbigh Moors  
 Clwydian Range  
 Cardigan Coast  
 Gower  
 The Eppynt  
 South Shropshire Hills  
 Malvern Hills  
 Forest of Dean and Lower Wye

*Southern and Eastern*

The New Forest  
 Hampshire Downs and Hindhead  
 South Downs  
 Forest Ridges (Horsham to Battle)  
 North Downs  
 The Chilterns  
 Breckland  
 Suffolk Heaths and Coast  
 North Norfolk Coast

12. The terms of reference for this report do not extend to Scotland and the foregoing lists are therefore confined to England and Wales. It is, however, exceedingly desirable that National Parks should be established, and areas for further National Parks reserved, in Scotland *pari passu* with England and Wales, and at a rate of not less than one to three. The mountain masses of the Highlands, with their glens and lochs, are far larger and more continuously wild than any corresponding areas south of the Border; and (in my opinion) at least two selected Highland areas of ample size should become Scottish National Parks simultaneously with the establishment of the first six English and Welsh National Parks. Such action would have, besides its intrinsic merit, the advantage of providing a further insurance against the congestion and other ill-effects which would arise from any scheme which started with too small a number or extent of National Park areas.

### **A national objective for national decision and action**

13. The next requirement of my definition is that National Parks should be in a true and full sense *national*, if they are to be worthy of their name and purpose. This does not mean that *local* interests are to be disregarded. On the contrary, the well-being of those who live and work within them must always be a first consideration. But it does mean that their holiday and recreational use should be for people—and especially young people—of every class and kind and from every part of the country, indeed of the world. National Parks are not for any privileged or otherwise restricted section of the population, but for all who care to refresh their minds and spirits and to exercise their bodies in a peaceful setting of natural beauty.\* Few national purposes are more vital or more rich in promise of health and happiness than the provision, first, of general and generous opportunity for holidays (by the “holidays with pay” system and otherwise) and, second, of large, open and beautiful tracts

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\* This qualification does, of course, imply one broad restriction, namely, that it is no concern of National Parks to cater for those who prefer a town setting for their holidays: see paragraph 29 below.

of country in which holidays can be freely and inexpensively enjoyed. To quote from an address by Dr. G. M. Trevelyan to the Annual Conference of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England in 1937—"It is not a question of physical exercise only; it is also a question of spiritual exercise and enjoyment. It is a question of spiritual values. Without vision the people perish, and without sight of the beauty of nature the spiritual power of the British people will be atrophied. The longing, too often a thwarted longing, for natural beauty and the great unspoilt spaces, is a most touching and a most hopeful thing in the modern city population. The condition of any real value in modern city life is holidays spent in the country. . . . With shorter hours of work, holidays with pay, and increasing leisure for millions, the question of the proper use of leisure has become a national problem second to none in importance. And it makes the provision of National Parks increasingly and urgently necessary. . . ." This essentially popular and democratic character of the demand and need for National Parks is simple enough in theory. It is far from simple to satisfy in practice, without harm to the beauty and quietude which are its basis. Some of the particular difficulties and dangers are considered in later paragraphs.

14. If National Parks are provided *for* the nation they should clearly be provided *by* the nation. Their distinct cost should be met from national funds; the requisite special provisions should be determined by Parliament; and an appropriate national body, under Ministerial and Parliamentary responsibility, should delimit their areas, should direct and supervise all necessary administrative measures for their preservation, access and facilities, and should itself take executive charge where this cannot be satisfactorily undertaken by existing agencies. What this implies in specific machinery, powers and funds, and how these may suitably be applied by the joint action of the national body and the local authorities (without impairing the latter's responsibility for normal local services), are considered in Part II of this report—pending which, the phrase "National Parks authority" is used to describe the responsible national body without implying any particular form of body, or any particular arrangements for joint action. It is sufficient here to state the principle and to note that, self-evident as it may appear, it was very far from being officially accepted before the war. It may fairly be stated that the Government's answer to Parliamentary and public representations for the establishment of National Parks was that the powers of local authorities under the Town and Country Planning Act, 1932, if fully and properly used, should suffice for the purpose.\* In the absence of any policy, accepted by Parliament, for positive national planning, this answer was perhaps inevitable; but whatever its theoretic merits under this and other limiting conditions, it was increasingly difficult to defend in practice against objections that the powers were *not* proving sufficient (many palpable mis-developments being outside planning control), that they were *not* being fully or properly used, and that in some important areas they were not being used at all. There is, however, a more fundamental objection to this recent, if now out-dated, view: namely, that local action, even if it made consistently full and proper use of available powers (now substantially strengthened and widened by the Town and Country Planning Acts of 1943 and 1944) could never of its nature provide *national* Parks. It might well provide a number of local Parks, or by joint action regional Parks, and it is conceivable, though improbable, that such provision might, in time, be made on so considerable a

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\* See, *inter alia*, House of Commons debate on National Parks, 9th December, 1936; Ministry of Health Circular 1750 on Control of Premature or Unsightly Development in the Country and on the Sea-Coast (December 1938); and the sections on "Preservation of the Countryside" in the 1937-8 and 1938-9 Annual Reports of the Ministry of Health.

scale as to leave no sufficiently clear field for national action. But the result would inevitably be local and piecemeal in character; the essential elements of national decision, national choice and national responsibility would be lacking; and a unique opportunity would have been missed of stimulating the best kinds of open-air recreation, and of giving to the public at large the confident sense of enjoying something that was theirs of right, provided undeniably and permanently by all for all.

### **The two dominant purposes**

15. The fundamental decision made when a given area is established as a National Park is that within it two purposes, out of the numerous possible purposes for which the land might be used and developed, shall thereafter stand supreme; all other uses, though by no means excluded, being so limited and controlled as to harmonize with the two dominants. These are (a) that the characteristic beauty of the landscape shall be preserved, and (b) that the visiting public shall have ample access and facilities within it for open-air recreation and for enjoyment of its beauty. That the two purposes must go together in mutual dependence is evident. The skilled and continuous efforts required to maintain natural beauty over a wide and varied district—and the costs, direct and indirect—are doubtfully worth-while and certainly unjustifiable as a national charge, unless the district can be widely visited and freely enjoyed. “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.” Conversely, the fullest provision for public enjoyment is but a sorry blessing if the beauty to be enjoyed is neglected, blotched and evanescent. It must, however, be added that the two purposes, while supporting and justifying each other in general, may nevertheless be at variance with and limit each other in detail. Some things that the visiting public—or that part of it which is as yet insensitive and ignorant of natural beauty—might wish to do in National Parks, and some of the more urban and mechanical facilities they might ask for, will have to be prohibited or restricted in the interest of landscape preservation. On the other hand, there will have to be, from place to place, some sacrifice of those scenic delicacies which are only possible “among the untrodden ways,” and of the completely peaceful seclusion which cannot be enjoyed by more than a very few at a time.

### **Landscape preservation**

16. “Landscape preservation” is the generally accepted, though somewhat inadequate, description of the task of maintaining the characteristic landscape beauty of wide areas: inadequate because it suggests a purely negative process and an artificial and lifeless result. The most obvious and urgent requirements are, indeed, of a negative or restrictive nature. The first essential is to impose control over all kinds of building development or changes in the use of land; and to administer the control so as to prevent, except where they are shown to be essential in the national interest, all developments or changes, other than for agriculture, for open-air recreation and for a limited residential and tourist expansion of the existing centres—small towns and selected larger villages—in each National Park area. Where development of *any* kind is permitted, careful control must also be exercised over its form—siting, size, design, materials and colours—so as to ensure that it harmonizes as fully as possible with its natural setting and with any neighbouring buildings. So far as ordinary “private enterprise” development is concerned, powers for the necessary controls are already generally available under the Town and Country Planning Act, 1932, as amended and reinforced by the Town and Country Planning Acts, 1943 and 1944. The outstanding requirements are



that these powers should be administered consistently and expertly in accordance with a defined National Parks policy, and that they should be given the firm foundation of an effective solution of the problems of compensation and betterment. Satisfaction of this latter requirement—the subject of the “Uthwatt” Report\* and of much other consideration—has now been given definite shape by the publication of the Government’s proposals in the White Paper on The Control of Land Use.† That these proposals are of vital importance to any National Parks policy is sufficiently shown in the White Paper itself, where National Parks are cited as one of four main cases in which “shifts of land value will take place within nation-wide limits” and make it essential that the system for the adjustment of land values under planning should be centralized and nation-wide. I therefore make the fundamental assumption, for the purpose of this report, that legislation on the lines of the White Paper will be enacted before any scheme of National Parks is faced, in operation, with the problems of compensation under the existing law.

17. But undesirable, ill-placed and ugly buildings and other developments, within the normal range covered by planning control, though perhaps the most notorious, are by no means the only misuses and disfigurements which threaten the integrity of National Park areas. Damage, no less widespread and enduring, has come and may come from quarrying and mining, with their trail of waste-heaps and polluted streams, and in some cases of associated industrial plants; from large-scale afforestation, blanketing the varied colours and subtle moulding of the hillsides with monotonous sharp-edged conifer plantations; from ill-considered felling of woodlands or hedgerow timber of “amenity” value‡; from the dams and other works of water supply and hydro-electric undertakings, particularly where these convert natural lakes into artificial reservoirs with large rise and fall and consequent unsightly margins; from the poles and pylons of electricity distribution; from the cruder forms of draining and embanking operations; from military occupation, especially in permanent artillery, tank and bombing ranges; and from unnecessary or unsuitable road “improvements” in wide variety—new routes, widenings, bridge-works, car parks and discordant urban types of surfacing, fencing, signposts and other “furniture”. Many developments, embracing all these kinds, have occurred in areas worthy to be chosen as National Parks, often in face of and in spite of much popular opposition, and there is early threat of many more when the pent-up flood of “reconstruction” is released. Some, especially those connected with mining and quarrying, are proceeding apace during and on account of the war. It is not, of course, a question of prohibiting such uses of land anywhere and everywhere: most of them—though not in any avoidable ugliness or wastefulness of form—are essential to the national economy, and suitable sites must be found for them. But it matters enormously *where* and *how*. In National Park areas the less of them the better. They must be made subject to a control no less effective than that applied to ordinary building development; and, if continuance of uses and works already established must usually be accepted, any new exploitation—or major extension of an existing one—should be permitted only on clear

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\* Expert Committee on Compensation and Betterment; Final Report, 1942 (Cmd. 6386).

† Cmd. 6537.

‡ This does not imply any criticism of fellings required by wartime necessities; nor that mature trees of timber value should not, with rare exceptions, be felled before they start to “go back.” But the felling should be on a considered programme, with equivalent replanting and with due care for the landscape effect at every stage. For instance, if “clear” felling is the appropriate treatment, it should be really clear, *not* (as all too commonly) leaving a spindly remnant of the commercially useless trees; and roadside trees should be cut—and replaced—in instalments spread over a term of years, *not* all cleared away in a single sweep.



proof that it is required in the national interest and that no satisfactory alternative site, *not* in a National Park area, can be found. Such cases should be rare.

18. Effective exercise of the control here postulated is, I believe, one of the two or three most critical elements in any working system of National Parks. Its special difficulties and special requirements are largely due to the fact that most of the projects to be controlled arise from the *public* enterprise of local authorities, of statutory undertakers, and of Government Departments and Commissions. Generally and practically speaking, these agencies, unlike the *private* enterprise responsible for the bulk of ordinary building development, have not been subject to any effective control by planning authorities under the Town and Country Planning Act, 1932. The legislative and administrative advances of the last two years have, however, changed the position materially. Powers of control, whether by the Minister of Town and Country Planning or by local planning authorities, over developments by local authorities and statutory undertakers are the subject of important provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Interim Development) Act, 1943, and the Town and Country Planning Act, 1944; and the precise scope and application of the powers under the 1943 Act have been detailed in a new General Interim Development Order, which will come into operation on May 1st, 1945.

19. The new provisions, as laid down in the Acts and detailed in the new Order, are too complex for exposition here: but it may fairly be said in general summary that, when they are fully implemented in administrative practice, very few, if any, developments of land, of any planning significance, will be initiated by local authorities or statutory undertakers without ample prior consideration of all relevant planning issues and requirements, including those of landscape amenity and architectural design. Of the specific provisions I need mention only that of Article 5 of the new Order which authorizes, in particular areas to be approved by the Minister, the exercise of planning control over certain descriptions of development by local authorities, statutory undertakers, etc., which are elsewhere wholly or partially exempt. This provision may prove a valuable safeguard for National Park areas. An important corollary to these new provisions is secured by the arrangements, already in operation, by which all development proposals brought forward in Private Bills are examined by the Ministry of Town and Country Planning, and any objections thereto are considered with the promoters and other Departments concerned and, where necessary, reported to Parliament. Developments by Government Departments remain formally exempt from planning control, but are now generally—and, it may be anticipated, will soon be invariably—covered by an equivalent system of inter-departmental reference and consultation.

20. The adequacy of these new arrangements as a whole can only be judged by their practical application under post-war conditions. Some adjustment of their detail may perhaps be found desirable in due course: but their success, in ensuring that amenity and other planning considerations are fully taken into account in determining the location, detail siting and design of all public developments of land, will depend mainly upon the quality and energy of their administration, and especially upon the marrying of national with local considerations by the co-operation of central and local planning authorities. Here plainly is an important field of action in National Park areas for a specific and expert National Parks authority, as embodying such co-operation and as ensuring wise and vigorous administration.

21. Most, if not all, of the numerous examples which could be given of disfiguring or misplaced development in National Park areas, due to public or,

as regards mining and quarrying, industrial enterprise, are or have been matters of controversy, often prolonged and complicated, and of resultant compromise. There are few cases, therefore, which could fairly be condemned without qualification, or indeed soundly judged at all without a historical and technical exposition of their arguments, issues and effects. This report is not the place for such detailed examination: but a few outstanding cases, in the first four National Park areas listed above, may usefully be cited as having caused (in my opinion and many other people's) substantial damage to landscape beauty, without implying that they have been entirely without need and justification, or that any blame for their ill-effects should fall entirely on their immediate authors—who may, under the existing circumstances, have been more or less obliged so to act by Parliamentary or Ministerial direction, or by public opinion.

22. In the *Lake District* the most extensive disfigurement is by conifer afforestation, especially in the Thornthwaite and Ennerdale plantations of the Forestry Commission and in the Thirlmere plantations of Manchester Corporation. Further planting by the Forestry Commission is now proceeding in Dunnerdale. It should be added that the Forestry Commission, in response to much popular agitation, have agreed to refrain from further planting in an area of about 300 square miles of the central Lake District, and that their operations in Grizedale and in Greystoke Park, where the landscape is far better suited to large-scale afforestation, are not likely to do any material harm. Of the numerous mines and quarries the most disfiguring is the Greenside lead-mine, especially by its pollution of Glenridding Beck and Ullswater Lake. Two other lakes, Thirlmere and Haweswater, have been converted into reservoirs by Manchester Corporation and, though the works are not unduly conspicuous, the natural beauty has been permanently impaired. There is a good deal of detail disfigurement by overhead electricity distribution, *e.g.* in Coniston village; and there have been a number of unnecessary or ugly roadworks, *e.g.* the 'improvement' of Honister and Newlands passes, cuttings and high walls at Ness Brow near Keswick, and unsuitable iron railings in the Furness area. In *Snowdonia* the outstanding disfigurement is by the vast slate quarries and tips of Bethesda, Llanberis, Nantlle, and Blaenau Ffestiniog; but there are also a number of water-power dams and pipe-lines, and many pole or pylon electricity distribution lines, of discordant effect; and the reclamations of the Portmadoc area, now well over 100 years old, are still the outstanding example of disfigurement by draining and embanking. Mountain-girt and island-studded estuaries of peerless beauty were converted into dull levels of what has proved very third-rate pasture—"the mountain frame remains unchanged, unchangeable; but the liquid mirror it enclosed is gone".\* Dartmoor has large peace-time military ranges on its north-western flanks (Okehampton Common, Willsworthy Camp, etc.), waterworks in the south-west, china-clay workings in the south, Forestry Commission plantations in the east and Princetown Prison at its centre. The worst disfigurement of the *Peak District* is the ever-spreading inferno of limestone quarries and lime-works in the vicinity of Buxton, recently rivalled by a large cement works at Hope. There are many lesser scars and waste heaps from past and present mining and quarrying, and many ugly pole and pylon lines, in other parts of the District. The numerous reservoirs of the gritstone moors are however—from a landscape point of view—as often assets as liabilities (the restrictions they impose on rambling and farming are another matter, to be considered in a later paragraph). There were no pre-existing natural lakes to spoil, and many of the moorland reservoirs are enriching incidents in

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\* Thomas Love Peacock, quoted by Clough Williams-Ellis in an article on *Snowdonia* in the *Geographical Magazine*, May 1939,

their somewhat bleak surroundings. On the other hand, the strings of reservoirs in some of the valleys, notably Derwent and Longdendale, overweigh the landscape with their insistently artificial effect.

### Positive measures for conservation and improvement

23. The *negative* and restrictive measures required to prevent all kinds of inharmonious development are, however, but one side of the task of landscape preservation; they must be balanced by complementary and no less varied *positive* measures to conserve and, progressively, to recreate and enrich the scenic beauty. Almost everywhere, save on the rock summits, faces and screes of mountains and on the peat-hag tops of high moorlands, the landscape to be preserved is the joint product of nature and of human use over many generations; it cannot be preserved in anything like its present aspect unless that human use is kept fully going. Many of the most delightful features of our most beautiful countrysides—"the intricacy with which the fields and coppice-woods are often intermingled"\* in Lake District valleys, the striding patterns of the dry-stone walls on Pennine fell-sides, the springy close-cropped turf of the downs, the rich young heather of grouse-moors, the villages, farms, woods, avenues and hedgerow trees everywhere—would not exist at all without man's husbandry, forestry and sport; and, unless these uses are maintained, they will all too quickly decay, crumble or disappear. Steady and discriminating tree-planting, in particular, is an almost invariable requirement in the valleys and lower hillsides of inland National Park areas; not merely to replace existing timber as (or where practicable before) it is cut, but also to make up for the heavy inroads of recent years, especially during this war and the last. Such "amenity" planting, especially in broken country, is a highly skilled job, and it must be the concern of the National Parks authority to see that the comparatively few people who combine the requisite practical knowledge and æsthetic judgment are fully employed on it. But the unskilled will not often go far wrong if they stick to the locally prevalent hardwood trees. A judicious admixture of larch and Scots pine may do no harm; all other conifers are best avoided. In many places deliberate planting of trees and shrubs will be the best way to hide the minor scars and disfigurements from which no potential National Park area is wholly free, such as disused mine and quarry workings and waste-heaps, ugly but useful buildings, and conspicuous road, railway or drainage embankments. For many other disfiguring features, especially those of a cheap or temporary nature—jerry-built bungalows and shacks, casual rubbish-tips and dumps, *all* advertisements and their hoardings, the few (but most damaging) war factories which have strayed into National Park areas, and *all* the war-time "defence works" litter of barbed wire, sandbags, rails and lumps of concrete—there is only one course; removal at the earliest possible date, with full and skilful reinstatement. This, like several other National Park requirements here outlined, is equally to be desired throughout rural Britain. The difference is only that in National Parks the job† *must* be carried through quickly and systematically.

\* Wordsworth's Guide through the District of the Lakes (5th Ed., 1835). This book by the poet is still the finest statement of the case, and in large measure of the technique, for landscape preservation in the Lakes and other wilder country. Its concluding claim that the Lake District should be deemed "a sort of national property, in which every man has a right and interest who has an eye to perceive and a heart to enjoy," may justly be counted the first shot in the campaign for British National Parks.

† It may be suggested that this and a variety of other jobs in National Parks (such as the clearing of over-grown footpaths and work on "amenity" woodlands), would provide a valuable field for the post-war continuance of the young people's voluntary war-work camps which have developed so rapidly and successfully—the more so in that the work would be "non-economic" and not open to objection on grounds of interference with regular adult employment.

Fortunately such disfigurements are relatively scarce in most National Park areas.

24. Still more positively, every National Park will require a considerable programme of constructional works—paradoxical as this may seem in an area where basic principle requires a specially close restriction of all ordinary building development. The necessary facilities for increased recreational use must include a good many new, enlarged or altered buildings. The combined effect of “holidays with pay” and the publicity attraction of declared National Parks is bound to produce a flood of new visitors and a heavy demand for sleeping and eating accommodation, especially of the cheaper kinds—just how heavy only experience can show. Many more Youth Hostels will be needed; complementary inexpensive provision for married people with their children in hostels, guest-houses or small hutted camps must be initiated; the general run of tourist accommodation in hotels, lodging-houses and farms will require some expansion and a general overhauling; and sites for tent and caravan camping will have to be provided. Work will also be needed on the stiles, gates, bridges and signposts of an ample supply of public footpaths, and on a carefully judged minimum of road improvements and of such incidentals as car-parks, boat houses and jetties, and mountain refuge-shelters. A further range of buildings and works will be required in the interests of the farming and other resident populations. The shortage of farm-workers’ cottages is particularly acute in some National Park areas, partly because so many cottages have been taken over by week-enders and other visitors—a process which must not be allowed to re-establish itself after the war. A large proportion of existing cottages and farm-houses and farm-buildings of all kinds are badly in need of more or less radical reconditioning and improvement. And there is much to be done in general “tidying-up” of villages and village-greens, and in providing village-halls and other social amenities.

25. It is not suggested that the National Parks authority should take full responsibility for all these many things that will need to be done. A small proportion they will probably wish to, or have to, execute themselves; a further and larger proportion they will have to get done by finding, encouraging, organizing and helping suitable entrepreneurs, including the local authorities; the remaining and perhaps largest proportion they may reasonably expect normal private or public enterprise to provide without specific stimulation or assistance. The farming and recreational requirements of National Parks policy are further discussed below. But in one respect the National Parks authority must be concerned with every piece of constructional work, however small; namely, to ensure by planning and architectural control and advice that it is well and harmoniously sited and designed. Control alone is not enough. It may suffice to stop bad work; it will not secure good work. The authority must give positive and helpful guidance, and must itself employ—and secure as far as possible that others employ—only those planners, architects and engineers whose skill and appreciation of landscape beauty can be relied on. Modesty and simplicity must be their rule, with a self-denying ordinance against all elaboration or ostentation of design. As Wordsworth puts it, buildings in beautiful, wilder country “should be not obvious, not obtrusive, but retired,” for in such places “the puny efforts of elegance appear contemptible when . . . obtruded in rivalry with the sublimities of Nature.”

### **Maintenance of farming use**

26. Yet another group of positive requirements in landscape preservation is dependent on, and may best be considered as a part of, the general require-

ment that the farming use of National Parks should be effectively maintained. "Maintained" is indeed an understatement, for there is no doubt that by more general adoption of the policy and technique expounded and experimentally applied with such persistence and enthusiasm by Sir George Stapledon and other scientists and pioneers, farming could and should be greatly improved in most National Park areas. Given proper care for landscape effect in matters of detail—a care which was taken by 18th century improving landlords as a matter of course—such "improvement" is in no way inconsistent with the landscape preservation and recreational requirements of a National Park regime. That fuller cultivation should enhance rather than diminish the scenic effect has been strikingly demonstrated by the war-time changes which have turned so many acres of Lake District and Pennine country "brown side up."\* It is above all else to farming, both to the extensive grazing of the higher open land and to the more or less intensive grazing, mowing and cropping of the lower, fully enclosed land, that the landscapes of all our potential National Parks owe the man-made element in their character; and it is to the farming communities that we must look for continuance not only of the scenic setting but of the drama itself—the rural life and work, "the mild continuous epic of the soil," the endless battle between man and nature—without which the finest of English or Welsh scenery would lack an essential part of its charm and recreational value.

27. Efficient farming is then a key requirement in National Park areas; and, to be efficient, farming must be given generous scope for changes in method and intensity of cultivation, cropping and stocking, and must be assured of adequate and, on the average, remunerative markets. This does not imply that the National Parks authority, though closely concerned, should itself be responsible for the necessary measures of economic organization and technical direction. This, in National Parks no less than in the rest of the country, is plainly the duty of the Ministry of Agriculture and the regular regional and local agencies through which it operates—its Divisional Officers and whatever may be the peacetime equivalent of the County War Agricultural Committees. Any attempt to isolate the farming of National Park areas for separate and specially favourable treatment is not only unjustifiable but largely impracticable, in view of the interdependence of farms, farmers and farm-markets within and outside the districts concerned—including much regular seasonal transference of stock between upland and lowland pastures. It may well be that distinct provisions will be required to assure the future of hill and upland farming,† to develop the sheep production which, with some balancing proportion of store and dairy cattle, is and must be expected to remain the stable use of National Park land, and to carry through a programme of radical "improvement" of hill-grazings. But any such measures must be an integral part of an all-round policy for British agriculture, and must be applicable to *all* suitable hill country throughout the island, not merely to those parts which happen to be chosen, on other (and from the farming point-of-view somewhat arbitrary) grounds, as National Parks or reserves for future National Parks.

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\*This is obviously a personal, though widely-shared, opinion. In the course of recent survey-visits I have been particularly struck by the landscape enrichment in colour and pattern, without any loss of essential character, in the eastern fringes and valleys of the Lake District and in the Yorkshire Dales country in and north of Craven, where the ploughing-up—and incidentally tidying-up—policy has been vigorously applied. By contrast, comparable areas (mainly, no doubt, of poorer land) in North Wales and the Peak District, where neither ploughing nor tidying was much in evidence, had a distinctly neglected and desolate appearance.

† See Report of the Committee on Hill Sheep Farming in England and Wales, 1944 (Cmd. 6498).



28. This said, it should nevertheless remain the right and the duty of the National Parks authority to consult and collaborate with the Ministry of Agriculture and its subordinate bodies, and with farmers and farm-owners, individually and collectively, in many matters of common concern, and—in so far as it may become (for reasons to be considered below) itself the owner of any considerable tracts of land—to participate directly in the management and improvement of farm property. Agriculture, landscape preservation and recreational provisions must march together. There should be no substantial difficulty in working out the necessary practical arrangements, for in all major matters there is community and harmony of purpose. As the Scott Report (paragraph 160) points out: “Even were there no economic, social or strategic reasons for the maintenance of agriculture, the cheapest way, indeed the only way, of preserving the countryside in anything like its traditional aspect would still be to farm it.” Generally speaking, the interests of agriculture and of landscape beauty are at one in requiring that bracken\*, rushes, and thorn and bramble scrub should be fought back; that heather should be periodically burned; that waterlogged and derelict fields should be drained and reclaimed; that drains and ditches should be regularly cleared; that hedges should be laid or trimmed; that walls and fences should be kept in repair; and that farm roads and farm buildings should be properly maintained. All these operations should and, given reasonably assured prosperity, doubtless would be carried through by farmers and owners as normal features of their never-ending job of “keeping the land in good heart”; but there is a heavy leeway to make up and state assistance, in one form or another, will pretty certainly be needed. While, in general, any financial help should come through the Ministry of Agriculture and should not, in any case, be a charge on the limited funds of the National Parks authority (except in so far as they may have landowner’s obligations), it should be possible for the authority to give considerable assistance by way of stimulation, advice and organization, and possibly to arrange for volunteer work on bracken cutting, etc., by parties of young people. In other matters there will have to be a certain amount of “give and take” between the farming and National Park interests. In return for protection against loss of land or interference through building and other forms of non-agricultural development, farmers and owners should accept, ungrudgingly, the planning control over the siting and appearance of new or altered farm buildings, which was recommended in the Scott Report and has now been provided by the Town and Country Planning Act, 1944 (Section 41). Farmers and owners should also be ready to accept a general control—not prohibition—of timber felling,† and consultation about any major “improvement” schemes, with possible adjustments of detail to prevent needlessly harsh or discordant landscape effects. On the other hand, the National Parks authority, in return for farming’s contribution to landscape preservation, must exercise its controls with moderation, with readiness to accept some temporary rawness where the final effect will be harmonious, and with care not to require any substantial addition to costs, unless, in rare and critical cases, it is prepared to pay the difference itself. More important still, the authority must, wherever it becomes the landlord

\* Bracken is, admittedly, a beautiful element in our wilder landscapes, especially by the rich red-brown which it contributes to winter colouring; and *some* bracken is useful to farmers for bedding. But there is altogether too much of it. In the last two generations of depressed hill-farming bracken has spread enormously, and now covers an immense acreage in the potential National Park areas. I agree with Sir George Stapledon that “our hills would be no less beautiful . . . if the bracken area were decreased by 30 per cent.” and a corresponding acreage thus reclaimed for useful pasture. Plenty of bracken will always be left in woodlands and on ground too steep or broken for effective grazing.

† See footnote to paragraph 17 above.

of farm land, be a *model* landlord ; must be the farmers'—especially the hill-farmers'—" friend," giving continuous support to their legitimate claims and interests with central and local government bodies and with the public ; and must so develop and regulate the recreational uses of National Parks that farming and the economic and social life of the resident populations are not dislocated or impaired.

### Recreational facilities, suitable and unsuitable

29. This last point may appropriately introduce consideration of the second of the two main purposes in National Parks ; that access and facilities for holiday-making and open-air recreation should be amply provided, and should be available for the public at large, not just for some privileged section or sections of the community. One restriction on the type and volume of visitors is, indeed, desirable, though it should be left—and, with time and wise management, can confidently be expected—to impose itself ; namely, that those who come to National Parks should be such as wish to enjoy and cherish the beauty and quietude of unspoilt country and to take their recreation, active or passive, in ways that do not impair the beauty or quietude, nor spoil the enjoyment of them by others. The genuine demand for genuinely country holidays has grown enormously and will continue to grow ; it is voiced by hundreds of thousands, and it reflects the more or less conscious desire of hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, more ; but it is very far from universal. Nor is it likely to become so. It is not just a question of custom or of education, or the lack of it. Many people of all classes are, by taste and temperament, far better satisfied by town than by country as a holiday setting. How very many, and how well most of them know what they want, are sufficiently testified by the size and popularity of Blackpool and Brighton and a hundred other coastal and inland resorts. For all who want to spend their holidays gregariously, and to enjoy the facilities—so well provided by the resorts—of cinemas, music-halls, dance-cafés, bathing pools, pleasure parks, promenades, shopping-centres and the like, National Parks are not the place. They had far better keep away, and (some of them, perhaps, after an unsuccessful experiment or two) pretty certainly will keep away—provided that any proposals to establish, within National Parks, the kinds of facilities they desire are firmly resisted.

30. This may seem obvious enough and to present no problem ; but there is going to be an acute shortage of every kind of holiday accommodation after the war and, in practice, it will be by no means easy for the National Parks authority to resist the inevitable demand of the " urban-holiday-minded " that they should have their share in the National Parks programme,\* and that the kinds of facilities they want should be provided as well as those for ramblers, nature-lovers and other " country-holiday-minded " visitors. It is not so much the large and blatant as the smaller marginal cases that will present the dangers and difficulties. The full-blown " lido " or " fun-fair," or the half-mile concrete promenade, with kiosks and shelters, on Lake Windermere or the north Pembroke coast, will rarely be proposed and can be summarily rejected ; applications for more modest features—here a garden pleasure-ground (small bar attached), there a simple bathing enclosure (with " old-world " café)—will be much more frequent and much less readily refused, particularly where they adjoin some existing centre of population, such as

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\* Provision for the " urban-holiday-minded " must, of course, take an important place in schemes for post-war reconstruction. But their main need is more and better Blackpools and Brightons, and a general reinstatement, improvement and expansion of seaside and inland resort facilities, including popular holiday camps—matters beyond the scope of this report.

Ambleside or Fishguard. The holiday-camp for 3,000 under commercial management can probably be dismissed at sight ; it may be far harder to decide whether to accept or reject a camp for 300 on a non-profit-making co-operative basis. As the number of visitors increases, it will not be possible or desirable to exclude altogether some development of facilities for their indoor entertainment and for ball-games and other more concentrated forms of outdoor recreation, but all such things should be permitted only in and adjoining existing towns and larger villages, and after most careful scrutiny both of themselves and of their likely consequences. Sometimes, where the immediate object is sound but its possible evolution dangerous, it may be best for the National Parks authority itself to be the entrepreneur, or at least the controlling land-owner. In general, it will be best to err on the side of caution, especially in the early years when the authority's personnel are learning their job by doing it, and when there is so much else to be done in satisfying indubitably sound and urgent requirements. A desirable facility rejected by over-caution can always be supplied later ; a misdevelopment rashly approved may often be irremediable.

### Motoring : facilities and restrictions

31. A specially important class of marginal cases are those arising from the road requirements of motorists. It is impossible, and would in any case be unjustifiable, to deny National Parks to motor tourists. There is no potential area in England and Wales, of sufficient extent to make an effective National Park, which does not contain within its boundary a considerable mileage of primary and good secondary roads, long used without restriction by all kinds of motor traffic. There can be no question of restricting the use of any of these by private cars, whether those of tourists or those of the resident population ; although it may, in some cases, be desirable and practicable to restrict their use by the heavier or bulkier types of commercial and public-service vehicles, or to reduce the volume of all kinds of through traffic (*i.e.*, neither local nor tourist) by the provision of new or improved through routes *outside* the National Park area.\* But because motor tourists have unrestricted freedom to use all these primary and good secondary roads and to enjoy their scenery, it does not follow that they have any proper claim for the endless widening and improvement of all such roads to enable them to travel everywhere at high speeds, regardless of "the view," and without risk of congestion, however many of them may take simultaneously the same Sunday outing. Improvements necessary to secure reasonable safety must obviously be carried through—the provision of footpaths alongside all busy roads (*one* footpath is enough, except through villages, and it should be of simple rural type and preferably on the field side of the existing wall or hedge, unless there is a wide grass verge) ; the elimination of serious bottle-necks or blind corners ; and the by-passing of villages. But more than these it should rarely be necessary or desirable to do in the National Park areas, except on the few trunk and other first-class routes which pass through them, such as the Llangollen to Holyhead road (A5) through Snowdonia, and the Manchester to Sheffield road (A57) through the Peak District. That great damage, direct and indirect, to landscape beauty,

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\* It is, for instance, in my view, very desirable to reduce the volume of commercial and other through traffic on the Dunmail Raise route (A591) through the centre of the Lake District, much of which, especially in the Grasmere valley, is an exceptionally beautiful tourist road. Long-distance traffic on this route (highest point, 782 feet) is specially heavy in winter when the main South-North route over Shap (A6, highest point, 1,387 ft.) often becomes dangerous or impracticable through snow and ice. An alternative route, partly new, partly improved, via the upper Lune valley and Shap Wells (highest point, 980 ft.) has been widely proposed, *e.g.* by the Friends of the Lake District in "A Road Policy for the Lake District," 1939.



to farming, to the peace and quiet of the country and to its enjoyment by visitors and residents, must follow—and has followed—from wholesale widenings, straightenings and flattenings, and from the encouragement they give to ever-heavier and ever-faster traffic, is plain enough for examples in many parts of the country. As already indicated, any improvements which it is necessary to make, for safety or other reasons, and all road maintenance works should be most carefully designed and supervised to secure a harmonious rural character and to avoid or minimize any disfiguring effect on the landscape.

32. There remains the further large class of subsidiary and more or less motorable highways, varying from the less good secondary roads (well-surfaced and of some traffic value, but with narrow, steep or twisting passages) to the rough mountain and moorland cart-tracks, increasingly used before the war by sporting youth as tests for their cars and motor-cycles. The determination and application of a sound national policy for the immense mileage of such roads and tracks, which we have inherited from the pack-horse, cart and carriage ages, is an urgent post-war need, not merely in National Park areas but throughout the country. Increasing frustration and complaints—by motorists that the roads were open to them but not fit for safe and comfortable use; by farmers, riders, cyclists and walkers that growing use by motorists was destroying the safety, comfort and pleasure of their use—marked the lack of any consistent policy before the war. It is widely (and I believe rightly) held that the only sound policy-basis is segregation and selective restriction of traffic, with graduated improvement of those routes which are left open to most classes of motor traffic, and with no improvement and minimum maintenance of those routes which are reserved for walkers, cyclists and horse-drawn traffic, and closed to all motor vehicles except for the specific service of neighbouring farms. Powers enabling highway authorities to make orders, subject to the Minister of War Transport's confirmation, closing any specified road, or class of roads, to all or any kinds of vehicles are provided by section 46 of the Road Traffic Act, 1930, as amended by section 29 of the Road and Rail Traffic Act, 1933. These powers, however, are presented in terms of traffic safety, and are not regarded by the Ministry as applicable merely on the ground of amenity. Amendment, so as to add amenity as a ground on which action can be taken, is much to be desired;\* but the prime need, as recommended in the Scott Report (paragraph 177), is that the issue should be thoroughly investigated and a national policy framed, under which the future status of *all* roads will be rationally determined by the joint action of central and local authorities.

33. In effect the need is that there should be, as far as practicable, a share-out of subsidiary and rough routes between motorists and non-motorists. The first call, in National Park areas, is to determine the latter's share and, bearing in mind that walkers constitute the most important section of the public for whom the Parks are provided, to make it a generous share—almost all "green-lanes," "drove-roads" and mountain and moorland cart-tracks, and many by-roads which have no through-route value and serve no villages, or are redundant alternatives to other and better routes. Thus relieved of responsibility for bringing up to safe motoring standard a large mileage of routes which, in the typically broken and hilly country, it would in any case be

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\* In 1939 Mr. Henry Strauss, M.P., introduced a Highways Protection Bill, which had received a Second Reading and passed through Committee in the House of Commons before the outbreak of war. Its effect would have been to enable orders prohibiting or restricting vehicular traffic to be made "for the purpose of preserving the amenities of unmetalled roads for the benefit of pedestrians, riders of horses and others." An "unmetalled road" was defined as "a road which is a highway but which, whether it has or has not at any time been metalled, is not in the opinion of the highway authority . . . adapted for general use by vehicles as a thoroughfare."

very difficult and costly so to improve, the highway authorities—in consultation with the National Parks authority—will be able much more readily and quickly to tackle the real needs of touring and resident motorists. The most valuable, and often the only necessary, specific provision for motor tourists, for which nearly all potential National Park areas offer good scope, is the creation, by improvement of existing secondary roads with a few new links, of a recognized “scenic circuit” road, roughly following the boundary of the Park and connected by existing branch roads to the main centres—towns and larger villages—within it. For the rest of the by-roads, especially those that are dead-ended (e.g., those leading to the valley-head villages of mountain country), the improvement standard should be that required for service of the resident population; heavy and bulky vehicles, especially “luxury” touring coaches, should be prohibited, and pleasure motorists must be content to “take them as they find them” at suitably moderate speeds. The alternative (an uncomfortably real one at the approaches to popular beauty-spots) of trying to “beat the band”—more traffic, more improvements; more improvements, more traffic; *ad infinitum*—is palpably absurd.

34. In all these highway issues, and in the provision of such incidental motoring facilities as car parks (which should be ample but under a strict control of siting and appearance), it is evident that there must be close and continuous consultation between the National Parks authority, the Ministry of War Transport, and all highway authorities—the Traffic Commissioners, and the County and other Councils. If sound principles for highway policy in National Park areas are thrashed out and agreed by all the various authorities in advance, differences of opinion about their application will, I believe, be comparatively rare.

### Accommodation for visitors

35. Important and awkward as they may be, these problems of motor tourists and of “urban-holiday-minded” visitors in National Parks are secondary to the main task of providing ample and appropriate facilities for the main mass of “country-holiday minded” visitors. Three main forms of facilities are demanded and required—ample accommodation; full access for rambling over uncultivated land; and plenty of footpaths through cultivated land.

36. Accommodation, for sleeping and eating and for staying indoors in inclement weather, obviously comes first, and has already been noted as one of the main positive requirements of National Park areas, which should be provided on a generous scale, but in buildings and units so limited in size, so sited (normally within or close to existing towns and larger villages) and so designed as to fit inconspicuously and harmoniously into the landscape. While it must be the general responsibility of the National Parks authority to see that sufficient accommodation of the requisite kinds is provided as soon as possible after the war (this does *not* mean enough to house everybody who might like to come at a fine August bank holiday, but does mean as much as will be pretty fully used throughout a “season” of reasonable length), it is neither necessary nor desirable that the authority should itself provide, own or manage the bulk of the new or expanded undertakings which will be needed. Suitably encouraged, existing non-profit-making organizations, such as the Youth Hostels Association, the Co-operative Holidays Association, the Holiday Fellowship, the Workers’ Travel Association, the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A., the Camping Club and the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides organizations, will undoubtedly be ready to undertake a large share in the necessary programme and, subject to architectural control, can be relied on to do it well. The

advantages of making full use of such bodies are manifold. They possess valuable, if not indispensable, experience and organization for management: their memberships\* provide a large and fertile core of education in the love and care of landscape beauty and in knowledge of and respect for farming interests and country ways of living: and they bring into service a large volume of voluntary work and substantial funds from past and current subscriptions, donations (including grants from the Pilgrim, Carnegie and other Trusts) and capital loans. A modest amount of financial and other assistance given to them will achieve *far* more than a corresponding amount of money and effort expended on the direct provision and management of hostels, guest houses and camp sites by the National Parks authority itself. The difficulty of finding and acquiring suitable existing buildings and sites for new buildings and camping grounds, and the difficulty of financing new undertakings over their *initial* unremunerative period, have been—and will be—the chief limiting factors; and the best assistance the authority can give will usually be in overcoming these difficulties, particularly by acquiring suitable properties and letting them, on lease or building lease, to appropriate organizations at nominal rents during the initial period and on favourable terms thereafter. For the provision of sufficient camp sites open to all campers without membership restriction the authority may have to operate more directly, though it should usually be possible to get local farmers or other residents to provide the sites and do the work of management and supervision on simple standard terms and rules. Except perhaps for a few mountain refuges, no other direct provisions should be necessary in the first few years, though they may prove desirable to fill gaps at a later stage.

37. For ample development of normal profit-making types of accommodation, in hotels, boarding houses, farms, etc., both within and on the fringes of National Parks, the authority can (in my opinion) safely rely on private enterprise,\* which the publicity and quickened demand attached to "National Parks" will more than sufficiently stimulate. Indeed, in the long run, the authority's main concern may be to prevent excessive or unsuitable development. In the first few years after the war, however, there is bound to be a serious shortage of accommodation owing to war dislocations, lack of equipment, restriction of building operations and other causes. It has even been suggested by informed observers that the immediate excess of demand over supply, in holiday accommodation of all kinds, will be so great as to cause widespread clamour and chaos, and to threaten complete breakdown in numerous holiday areas, including some potential National Parks. Much will depend on *how* the war ends—whether suddenly and all at once or, as seems probable, through a period of guerilla hostilities and sooner in the west than in the east—and on the success of measures to lengthen the holiday "season," and to "stagger" holiday-making more evenly over it, which the National Parks authority should do all it can to support. But, in any event, there are bound to be some temporary difficulties and shortages, both of accommodation and of public transport, and it must plainly be the authority's concern—if only to defend itself against criticism—to do all it can to overcome or minimize

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\* Some sample 1939 figures are: Youth Hostels Association (England and Wales), over 80,000 members and just on 300 hostels containing over 10,000 beds which were used for some 540,000 "overnights"; Holiday Fellowship, 23,000 shareholding members and about 40 guest-houses and hutted camps which were used for over 35,000 "guest-weeks" (or, say, 250,000 "overnights"); Camping Club, 10,000 members.

† Here, as elsewhere in this report, I make the general assumption that, though public enterprise is likely to expand considerably after the war in many spheres (including National Park provisions), private enterprise will continue to be the normal—and, on the average, profitable—basis for the general run of trade and industry, including the catering trade in particular.

them. Vigorous representations (for instance to Government Departments, evacuated schools, etc., to expedite the release of requisitioned hotels and hostels) and resourceful organization should achieve a good deal at small cost. The publication, under the authority's auspices, of a comprehensive accommodation directory for each National Park should do much to ensure full use of all available beds, especially in farmhouses and other minor establishments. As the supply of accommodation improves, it will be important to ensure, as far as possible, that all catering in National Park areas complies with appropriate standards, both as regards the type and quality of service provided and its cost to the visitor, and as regards the wages and conditions of the people employed. The responsibility and the requisite powers, under the system initiated by the Catering Wages Act, 1943, will lie with the Ministry of Labour, with which the National Parks authority should consult and collaborate.

38. It may confidently be expected that our National Parks, when established, will attract an increased number of visitors from abroad—from the Dominions, from the United States, and from many other countries. The more the better, for international understanding and friendship, and incidentally for the exchange asset which their expenditure will provide. But we must be sure that our National Parks will do us credit in their eyes, as something beautiful, well cared for, convenient and comfortable for the visitor, and distinctively British. The National Parks of most other countries (*e.g.* the United States and Canada) are completely state-owned and state-run. If we prefer, as suiting our conditions, that our National Parks system should be based on state control and the co-operation of central and local authorities with private ownership and enterprise, we must see that the result, *mutatis mutandis*, is no less effective. This is an additional reason why the National Parks authority must be concerned to ensure not only that accommodation and other facilities are ample and up to standard, but also that the land is well farmed, that the resident population is prosperous, contented, well-housed and well-serviced, and that the characteristic landscape beauty is jealously guarded and maintained.

## Access

39. For the other two main facilities—rambling access and footpaths—the National Parks authority will have to take more direct responsibility. What is asked, and what must substantially be given if the insistent claims of all ramblers' organizations and of the large and growing army of individual walkers are to be at all satisfied, may be simply stated: (*a*) as regards all "uncultivated" land, *i.e.* mountains, moors, hill grazings, heaths, cliff-lands, etc., that the public shall have the right to wander at will over their whole extent, subject only to a minimum of regulations to prevent abuse and to a minimum of excepted areas where such wandering would clearly be incompatible with some other publicly necessary use of the land; and (*b*) as regards all "cultivated" farmland and woodland, that the public shall have assured right to use an ample provision of footpaths and other ways through it. Though they may conveniently be examined separately the two claims are complementary to each other (if only because many footpaths would be purposeless unless they led to "open" land, and much open land would be of little use unless conveniently approached by footpaths) and have important features in common. Both have been complicated and, on the balance, more obscured than clarified by prolonged controversies and a formidable background of legalities: both have been given limited concessions by Parliament, notably in the Law of Property Act, 1925, the Rights of Way Act, 1932, and the Access to Mountains Act, 1939; and both, though of special importance in potential National Park areas, have far wider application, extending in

varying degree over all rural land, cultivated or uncultivated, throughout England and Wales.

40. As a National Park requirement and problem, full rambling access—the wander-at-will “freedom of the hills”—is of widely varying incidence and difficulty. Though every National Park, if it is to satisfy the definition on which this report is based, must contain a substantial element of relatively wild “uncultivated” land\* suitable for such access, the proportion which such land bears to the whole differs greatly from one potential area to another. In an essentially moorland area, such as Dartmoor, the uncultivated land may cover two-thirds or more of the total extent within a suitable National Park boundary. In a coastal area, such as parts of the Pembroke coast, not much more than a narrow strip of cliff-land may be so classifiable. Moreover, there is equally wide variation in the degree to which access is, in fact, already enjoyed without material opposition or restriction, or is opposed and obstructed by land-owning and other interests.

### Common land

41. Wherever there is extensive common-land, access is but little questioned or restricted, except in a few instances by military occupation (*e.g.* in peacetime, over two considerable blocks of Dartmoor Commons) or by water-supply catchment. The public has, indeed, by section 193 of the Law of Property Act, 1925, full “rights of access for air and exercise”, subject only to regulations to prevent abuse or damage, over all commons which are wholly or partly situated in urban districts, and over such of the commons in rural districts as are put under the section by deed, revocable or irrevocable, of their owners. In this way virtually all commons in potential National Park areas could, if their owners so wished, be opened to the public on a basis of regulated right; and the total extent which has already been so opened (including that in urban districts) is considerable, though still a small proportion of the whole. Reliable detailed information about the distribution of common-land is, unfortunately, very incomplete, more especially for the wilder districts where it is most extensive. It is very desirable, as the Scott Report recommends (paragraph 178), that full information should be obtained, and should be systematically recorded on maps over the whole country. Whether this is done or not, the National Parks authority should certainly make it their business to get the necessary information collected and mapped over all prospective National Parks without delay. Any estimates based on the information now available are necessarily only rough approximations. The total common-land of England and Wales is probably about 2,500 square miles. Of this, I estimate that roughly 750 square miles fall in the ten “suggested National Parks” listed in my Division A (paragraph 9 above) and a further 750 square miles in the twelve “Reserves for possible future National Parks” listed in my Division B. Of this total of some 1,500 square miles in all potential National Park areas, I estimate that about 165 square

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\* No satisfactory epithet or phrase covers, at all precisely or fully, all the relevant types of land suitable for rambling access, though (with rare exceptions) they are plain enough on the ground. The usual description of them as “uncultivated” must be understood as “relatively uncultivated,” for nearly all the land so described is in some degree grazed by sheep or cattle, and much of it has been or will be subjected, from time to time, to some kind of mechanical cultivation to improve its grazing value—ranging from a minimum of draining and bracken-cutting to full ploughing, manuring and re-seeding. Any land which, through improvement and change in farm practice, becomes arable, ley, meadow or high-grade pasture will obviously—and visibly—pass from the “uncultivated” to the “cultivated” category.



miles or 11 per cent. are "regulated" in one way or another.\* Over the large balance of unregulated common-land walkers and other visitors have no legal right of rambling access and are technically trespassers, except along public rights-of-way; but any trespass which did not involve specific damage almost certainly could not be punished, and the custom or privilege of access is, generally speaking, of long and unchallenged standing.

42. There is no doubt that the first and easiest step for the National Parks authority, in providing and assuring rambling access, will be to get all common-land in National Parks fully and permanently "opened" under suitable—and, to the normally well-behaved Rambler, non-restrictive—regulation, whether by applying section 193 of the Law of Property Act or by some other method of similar effect. Owners and commoners stand to gain more by sensible regulations, especially with an effective authority to see that the rules are kept, than they can lose by some increase in the volume of rambling and by the translation of custom into right. Nevertheless it will be desirable that the authority should have compulsory powers to provide regulated access, for use (subject to conditions approved by the Minister of Agriculture) where voluntary action is not forthcoming. It is important to add that the rambling claim to access over common-land does not—and should not—imply any general impediment to the "improvement" of commons, nor indeed (provided that full access is assured and that no opening is given to building or other non-agricultural development) to the "enclosure" of commons, where and in so far as these are found practicable and desirable from an agricultural point of view. By no means all common-land is of the poorest and least improvable quality. On the contrary, a good deal is suitable for, and in patent need of, improvement. The widespread deterioration of upland grazings in recent decades has been particularly marked (*e.g.*, by the spread of bracken and rushes) on many commons†—not surprisingly, for there is no one to hold the specific responsibility for, or to reap the specific benefit of, improving operations. The war-time power of the Minister of Agriculture to carry out, through the County War Agricultural Committees, improvements of common grazings, and to apportion and recover the costs from owners and commoners, may well prove worth continuing and expanding, with such adjustment as experience may suggest, as a permanent peace-time measure. It has the great advantage of making improvement practicable without requiring the inevitably slow and difficult—and often uneconomic or undesirable—process of legal enclosure.

### Enclosed land

43. It is not, however, over common-land only that the public already enjoys a *de facto* freedom to wander at will. Practically the whole of the fell-land of the Lake District—some 500 square miles, of which about half only is commonable—is by long-established custom freely open to all comers. To translate this customary access into a legal right should be little more than a formality for the enclosed no less than for the commonable areas. On the other hand, practically the whole of the enclosed moorlands of the

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\* Estimates based on the Reports of the Land Division, Ministry of Agriculture and on the Journal of the Commons Society, *passim*. There is no return of commons in urban districts, which do not however form any large part of National Park areas (though the Lakes Urban District, with some 25 square miles of commons, lies at the heart of the Lake District). Of 190 square miles of commons which have so far been brought under Section 193 well over half are in potential National Park areas, including extensive Crown commons in Wales. Regulation under earlier and private Acts contributes a modest balance.

† See Sir George Stapledon's "The Land, Now and Tomorrow," Chapter 8, for a valuable discussion of upland farming and rambling in relation to commons, grouse-shooting and water-supply catchment.

Peak District—the most insistently claimed and, as “lung” and recreation space for the many millions who live in the surrounding ring of cities and towns, the most urgently needed of all access areas—are kept emphatically (if not entirely successfully) closed to the public by their owners, on grounds either of protecting the grouse shooting or of assuring the purity of water supplies. For the same two reasons, separately or in combination, access is more or less severely restricted over several other large stretches of the Pennines (corresponding roughly to the gritstone, as opposed to the limestone areas) and over considerable moorland areas in Wales. There are several other uses of wilder country which involve restriction or even complete prevention of rambling over more limited areas, for instance, military ranges and the afforestation of previously “open” land; while rambling in coastal areas is often impeded by discontinuity of the uncultivated stretches of cliff, heath, sandhills, etc., by difficulties of approach, and by the fencing-off of small private properties. Except on the coast, however, grouse shooting and water supply are by far the most serious obstacles, and when they are overcome the access problem will be substantially solved. (In Scotland there is the further, and more extensive, obstacle of deer-stalking, but this has no effect in England and Wales; there is some stalking in one area, Martindale, in the Lake District, but no attempt is made to restrict public access.)

### **Rambling and farming**

44. Between rambling and farming there is no major conflict of interest, nor in practice any serious amount of trouble. True, farmers in most parts of the country do, from time to time, have just complaint about the small proportion of visitors from towns—few of them genuine walkers—who are so careless, ignorant or loutish as to leave gates open, take uncontrolled dogs around with them, break walls and hedges, or tread down meadow grass and arable crops. But such damage is far more common in the immediate neighbourhood of main centres of population than in the more remote country areas in which nearly all potential National Parks are situated, and it occurs almost entirely in the lower, fully cultivated land to which none of the rambling and open-air organizations, nor any responsible walkers, either take or ask access, except along recognized footpath routes. It is typically the product of charabanc parties, ill-controlled children's outings and other “excursion” groups, and it is far more often ignorant than wanton. It is not surprising that some farmers, both in National Park areas and elsewhere, are suspicious and unwelcoming, and that a few of them should attempt more active restriction, by threats and barbed wire. Such attitudes and actions are, however, quite unavailing. Damage and interference will best be checked and reduced, and farmers will best protect and advance their own interests, not by hopeless efforts to keep all walkers off their land, but by encouraging full access over all uncultivated land (and so tending to discourage wandering over cultivated land); by supporting measures to make such access a legal right, *under effective regulations against abuse or damage*; and by playing a willing part in the process of educating the rising generation of townsfolk in the ways and “good manners” of farm and countryside. By and large, the farming communities of National Park areas will gain more than they can possibly lose, both by the grant of full and regulated access, and by the other provisions of a National Park regime and by the growing numbers of “country-holiday-minded” visitors which these will attract. Against the possibility of a small and temporary increase in the number of cases of minor damage or interference, at least four major advantages can be set: first, that there will be a larger and more certain demand for the profitable side-line of farmhouse accom-

modation and "teas" (a reinforcement of farm income which has carried a good many farms in the Lake District and elsewhere through difficult times); second, that a larger and more certain local market will be provided for farm products, especially milk, butter, eggs, poultry and vegetables;\* third, that the National Parks authority will be in charge, able (and, for reasons already given, anxious) to give farmers effective support and to check any tendency of holiday use to run counter to farming interest; and fourth, that by personal contact with rural life the town-living mass of the nation will best learn to appreciate the national importance of a prosperous agriculture.

### Rambling and grouse shooting

45. Of the two main obstacles to full rambling access, grouse shooting, though it has produced more open conflict and controversy, probably presents a less difficult problem than water-supply catchment. When the issue is seen as a broad question of principle—whether the recreational needs of the many should or should not outweigh the sporting pleasures of the few—there can be little doubt of the answer: that walkers should and, sooner or later, will be given freedom of access over grouse moors. If it were true, as many owners, shooting tenants and keepers assert (most of them quite sincerely), that to open the moors for rambling would ruin them for shooting, then the only fair solution would be to buy out and extinguish the shooting values. This would be a slow and perhaps costly process—how slow and how costly it is impossible to say in view of uncertainty about, *inter alia*, the demand, in a heavily taxed post-war economy, for the expensive sport of first-class grouse driving, and the future provision for differential rating of shooting, recreational and farming values. But, generally speaking, the truth is, in my opinion†, quite otherwise. So far as I know it, the available evidence all goes to show that the use of the moors by ramblers does *not* cause any material harm to shooting except on shooting days; and will not do so under the fullest freedom of access, unless they come in enormous numbers or are possessed by some unprecedented egg-destroying mania. For example, Ilkley Moor, as a common in an urban district, is by law open to the public for air and exercise, and has, in fact, for many years been much frequented by hundreds—at public holidays by thousands—of walkers, yet it has continued to rank high among the smaller grouse moors and to produce, year after year, consistently good bags. The right solution, in my view, is to give full access throughout the year, except on a limited number of actual shooting days (between August 12th and December 10th) on which it would be the commonsense duty of all walkers—suitably warned by red flags and notices at normal points of entry—to keep off the area that was being shot over, or to follow the instructions of shooters or beaters should they accidentally stray on to the ground. If, on a sufficiently extended trial, substantial reductions in bags and shooting values were found to result, there would be a case for equivalent compensations; but, in general, I do not think they will.

46. The main moorland masses of the northern part of the Peak District, including Kinder Scout and Bleaklow, are a special case and may call for a

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\* There is no real reason why there should not also be a considerably increased and profitable market for sheep, cattle and pigs for local consumption during the holiday season; but, since this would require improved organization, with some adjustment of farm and market methods, it is perhaps safer not to assume it in short-term.

† In so controversial an issue any opinion must be labelled personal. It is relevant to note that I write, as both rambler and grouse-shooter, with a foot in both camps, and with a strong desire that the heather moors should give their chosen pleasures both to my fellow ramblers and to my fellow shooters—or rather to those of them who are content with a good sporting day and do not measure enjoyment in terms of record bags.



more drastic solution. It is here that the open conflict of ramblers and gamekeepers has centred, that owners and shooting tenants have most strongly and expensively opposed all access even on a minimum of footpath routes, and that there is the heaviest concentration of would-be ramblers. The issue is complicated by extensive water-supply catchment, for which local authorities and water boards own, or have rights over, much of the moorland. Assuming, however, a simultaneous solution of the problems of rambling in relation to water-supply catchment, it may well be best for the National Parks authority to buy out the shooting values—plus the freehold where privately owned—over a wide area, and to re-let the shooting subject to a prior public right of full but regulated access. The net shooting rents would doubtless fall considerably for a year or two, but thereafter they would, in my opinion, rise again to little short of their previous level. Incidentally, much of the moorland concerned has long been neglected for anything but grouse, and possession or full control would enable the authority to bring back a good deal of it into grazing use. It must be added that, whatever their methods of securing and regulating access over moorland country, it must be the authority's special concern to do all it can to prevent moorland fires, and to detect and penalize heavily any carelessness causing or likely to cause them.

### **Rambling and water-supply catchment**

47. An initial difficulty in considering and in trying to overcome the obstacles to rambling access arising from water-supply catchment is the wide and often arbitrary variation in their extent and in their reasons. The water resources of upland areas are collected, treated and used in many different ways. Some are used for drinking-water, which must be pure and "safe", *i.e.*, free from the germs of water-borne diseases; others are used for industrial, canal and "compensation" purposes, which do not necessarily require such purity and safety. Some are gathered entirely or mainly on the surface; others entirely or mainly from springs. Some pass through large impounding reservoirs, which not only store the water but purify it by sedimentation; others are piped direct from streams or rivers through no more than small balancing and service tanks. Some are thoroughly "treated"—by pressure filtration or chlorination or ozonization, or by some combination of these processes—as an insurance against water-borne diseases; others have little treatment, and some small-scale supplies none at all. Generally speaking, there is no specific interference with access or with farming where the water is not used for drinking; comparatively little interference where the water is drawn from springs or is thoroughly treated in course of transmission; and considerable interference—amounting in some instances to a virtually complete depopulation of the whole catchment area, by prohibition of rambling, closing of footpaths and elimination of resident farming—where the water is surface-gathered and relatively untreated. But there are numerous exceptions, both of gathering-grounds over which access is severely restricted although there is full treatment (one may suspect that grouse shooting and the rents and rates derived therefrom are often the main incentive in such cases), and of gathering-ground over which freedom of access is widely enjoyed although little or no treatment is applied. In a number of important cases public rights of wandering access are specifically secured by statute, *e.g.*, under the Acts covering the Birmingham Corporation's acquisition of the Elan-Claerwen area in central Wales, and the Manchester Corporation's acquisitions of the Thirlmere and Haweswater fells in the Lake District. The access provisions in these and other water Acts have been fought for and secured by strong public opposition to threatened closures, vigorously maintained for more than 60 years and effectively organized by the Commons, Open-Spaces and Footpaths Preservation Society.

48. In all this confused variety of conditions, there is, however, but one main problem: how to ensure that surface-gathered drinking-water shall be pure and bacteriologically "safe" without closing the gathering grounds either to ramblers or to normal farming use. In my view, there is no doubt that this can be done by appropriate precautions in the immediate vicinity of reservoirs and intakes, combined with appropriate "treatment" of the water—preferably by ample sedimentation, followed by pressure filtration or chlorination or ozonization, or by some combination of these. Fully treated water from the heavily polluted Thames safely provides the bulk of London's drinking supply. But the requisite precautions and treatment cannot, in many cases, be provided without a considerable programme of plant installations and other works, which it may take a long time—and will at best take a considerable time—to complete. It should be the concern of the National Parks authority to help to speed up the process in all practicable ways, and to co-operate in a general examination of the issue with the Ministry of Health, in consultation with the Ministry of Town and Country Planning and other interested Departments. Of these, the Ministry of Agriculture is particularly concerned, for the depopulation of gathering-ground has removed from effective agricultural use many thousands of acres of upland pastures—reducing them to a mere sheep ranging (and that often of the thinnest) without any cattle or any cultivation. At the same time the National Parks authority should co-operate with the Ministry of Health in a publicity campaign and other measures for educating the general public in a simple sanitary code for avoiding risks of pollution, not merely of major city and town water supplies, but also of minor village and farm supplies, few of which are adequately treated or protected.

49. This main issue of water catchment in relation to rambling, and other issues of the collection and treatment of water supplies in relation to recreational and farming uses of gathering-grounds,\* are by no means confined to potential National Parks; nor, fortunately, do they arise in any serious degree in all such areas or over the whole of the uncultivated land in any area. Nevertheless they do constitute a major problem in some of the most important National Park areas, especially the Peak District and other parts of the grit-stone Pennines. With the solution of this problem the National Parks authority must be directly concerned; and it is all to the good that a solution in National Park areas will lead directly to a solution elsewhere. The problem is undoubtedly difficult and a full solution will not be achieved without sustained effort. But it is important not to over-estimate the difficulties, which are often exaggerated by prejudice and irrelevance. The substantial risks of pollution which might arise if charabanc parties of careless and ignorant trippers had a free run of the immediate shores of reservoirs, are used as argument against the passage of walkers along high-level moorland paths, miles away from any reservoir or main stream, which would involve no risk at all. When such misunderstandings have been cleared away, the real difficulties can be faced and will not, in my opinion, prove insurmountable.

### **" Access to Mountains "**

50. It will, to a large extent, be by their success or failure in securing ample provision of rambling access that the National Parks authority will be judged by most of the younger generation, and by no small part of the older generation, of "country-holiday-minded" visitors. As already indicated the issue is by

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\* *E.g.* as to the advantages and disadvantages of afforestation round reservoirs, primarily for the purpose of holding up the "run-off" of storm water, but with the incidental effects (a) of restricting access, (b) of eliminating farm-use, and (c), in some cases, of blanketing and disfiguring the natural beauty of the land concerned.

no means confined to potential National Park areas; it arises wherever there is any substantial extent of uncultivated land. Nor is it confined to the "problem" areas—largely, though not entirely, grouse moors and water-supply gathering grounds—over which access is prohibited or severely restricted. It applies, though with far less urgency, to most other areas of uncultivated land—indeed, to virtually all except the relatively small proportion of areas over which access is already legally and permanently secured, whether by regulation of commons\* or in other ways. An undefined, unreliable and unregulated custom or privilege of access no longer meets the needs either of walkers in their ever mounting and ever wider-ranging numbers, or of farmers and owners. Inevitably, the National Parks authority will be expected to play a leading part in the effort to obtain a satisfactory *general* solution of the access issue. In fact it cannot but play an important part, even if it confines its activities to securing access within National Parks; for the example so provided will both stimulate demand, and show how it may be satisfied, in other districts. In my opinion it will be desirable that the authority should, after due study and inter-departmental consultation, participate in the general effort, not merely because its specific action will be more effective if it rests on broad and assured principle, but also because it will be important to avoid any suggestion that it is public policy to shelve the claim to access elsewhere by meeting it within the bounds of National Parks.

51. It must in any case be an early post-war concern of Government, to take up the access issue at the distinct, though far from satisfactory, point to which Parliament had carried it, just before the outbreak of war, by the passage of the Access to Mountains Act. A detailed description of this Act (which does not apply to Scotland) is not necessary here. It is sufficient to say that, while the Bill† from which it started was a simple two-page measure to provide, with a minimum of safeguards, that no person should be excluded or molested by the owner or occupier when "walking or being . . . for the purposes of recreation or scientific or artistic study on . . . uncultivated mountain or moorland," the Act which finally emerged from consultations and Committees was an elaborate and entirely different fourteen-page measure, actually opposed by many rambling organizations and disappointing to all. No access rights whatever are secured directly by the Act. It merely provides that, when application is made by the owner or by a local authority‡ or by an approved organization, the Minister of Agriculture—after due publicity and, if there are any objections, a public enquiry—*may* make an order conferring access over all or part of the land specified in the application; and that such an order shall be subject, not only to a number of general conditions laid down in the Act, but also to any other conditions which the Minister may think necessary to protect owners, occupiers, water-undertakings or shooting tenants against possible detriment. Any order may be varied or revoked by a subsequent order, and substantial fees and expenses are payable to the Minister for "business transacted" by him—a deterrent to owners and a burden on rambling organizations which it is hard to justify. Another provision of the Act, to which much objection has been taken, involves a definite

\* See paragraph 41 above. It should be noted that most of the rural commons which have so far been "regulated" are under *revocable* deed of their owners and cannot be regarded as *permanently* secured for public access, although revocation over any appreciable extent is unlikely (only one revocation has occurred up to the present).

† This was the last of a series of similar Bills sponsored, on behalf of ramblers, L., a succession of Members of Parliament beginning with the late Lord Bryce as far back as 1888.

‡ "The Council of any county, of any borough, or of any urban district having a population . . . of more than 20,000"—smaller urban and all rural district councils are, for no apparent reason, excluded from the provisions of the Act.

alteration to the English law of trespass, in that the mere act of being—as distinct from doing any damage—on a particular piece of land, to which the Act has been applied by order, will, in certain circumstance, be an offence punishable by fine.

52. The Act did not come into force till after the war had started ; no use has yet been made of its provisions, and it seems distinctly doubtful whether it ever can or will be used on any effective scale. On the most hopeful estimate, the cumbersome case-by-case procedure required by the Act would have to be kept hard going for many years, before anything like a general right of access over all uncultivated land could be secured. If the popular claim to walk freely over mountains, moors and other uncultivated land and the popular need for a full measure of such health-giving recreation are admitted (and the Act clearly implies such an admission), then there is a strong case for the early introduction of new legislation to start, like the original Bill, from the other end—to confer public rights of access over *all* uncultivated land (suitably defined) by direct and immediately operative provision ; to subject it to appropriate general regulations with penalties for abuse ; and to establish a case-by-case procedure for determining any particular areas of uncultivated land for which special conditions are desirable, or even complete exception from the general rights of access. There is good precedent for this approach in the automatic application of section 193 of the Law of Property Act to all commons in urban districts.

## Footpaths

53. If the problems of rambling access over uncultivated land are not confined to National Parks but arise in many other areas, still less are the problems of footpath access, primarily through cultivated land, a specifically National Parks matter. Ample and assured footpaths and bridle-ways,\* adequately maintained and equipped with signposts, stiles, gates, bridges, etc., are a national need extending to all parts of the country—from the immediate vicinity of built-up areas to the remotest rural districts. Nor is there any material difference between the footpath requirements of National Parks and those of other areas. Full and early provision will, indeed, have special importance in National Parks, on account of the large numbers of walking visitors which they will increasingly attract—notably in the Peak District and some other inland areas, where there is a marked shortage of public rights-of-way, and in coastal Parks, where a continuous cliff-edge route, generally following the line of the old “coastguards’ path,”† is an outstanding requirement. But provision elsewhere, if in general of somewhat less urgency, should be no less full, and there is no reason why it should be appreciably less early.

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\* Bridle-ways, *i.e.* footpath routes which are also legally open to and suitable for horse-riders, are not only of general importance for farmers and other local riders, but also of special importance in National Parks and other tourist areas in view of the marked revival before the war of horseback touring, which is likely to be resumed and to increase after the war. To avoid complication no further reference to bridleways is made in this and succeeding paragraphs, but all general references to footpaths should be taken to cover a due proportion of bridle-ways. “Drift-ways” or “drove-roads” are a further class of rights-of-way, the maintenance of which is of the greatest importance to the farming communities of National Park areas and other hill country ; in so far as they are also footpaths and bridle-ways they are also of concern to walking and riding visitors.

† On recent surveys of the Pembroke and Cornish coasts, I found long stretches of the “coastguards’ path” still plain on the ground (and in renewed use by coastguards). Several sections were still apparently in public use, and I could see no reason (other than war-time defence requirements) why all should not readily be linked up again into continuous public rights-of-way of first-class scenic and recreational value. Interference with farming would be negligible, since the routes pass almost entirely over uncultivated cliff-land.

54. There is no question that the present provision is radically unsatisfactory in most parts of the country. In spite of the long and valiant efforts of many footpath preservation societies and individual enthusiasts, both the law and its administration are out of date and inadequate. The prime issue, as to whether footpaths are or are not "public rights-of-way," is still in doubt in innumerable cases, and disputes are constantly arising. Doubts and disputes can only be settled by a case-by-case procedure, usually involving a laborious investigation of the question whether the legal fiction of "dedication of a public right-of-way" can be "presumed" on grounds of unopposed public use over a considerable term of years—formerly "from time immemorial," but since the Rights of Way Act, 1932, defined as 20 years for land held at free disposal, and as 40 years for other land. Legal proceedings, in which the evidence of "oldest inhabitants" plays a leading role, are often prolonged and costly; a Cornish case finally decided in 1940 had been in active dispute for 17 years. The administrative system for the provision, recording, maintenance and equipment of paths is equally defective. All local authorities from parish councils upwards have *some* powers of action, whether under general, highway or planning Acts. But the powers are indefinite, overlapping and, in general, "permissive"; there is no clear duty and no effective central supervision; and neglect in varying degree is more common than vigorous use. Small wonder, in the circumstances, that very few new footpaths are created, and that there is a steady—since the war\* a heavy—loss of old and potentially useful paths, both through obstruction or ploughing-up by farmers and owners, and through lack of requisite maintenance—clearing of brambles and other undergrowth, drainage and filling of boggy patches, and repair of stiles and bridges.

55. What is needed is no less than a thorough recasting of footpath law and administration, followed by a systematic nation-wide campaign to provide, record, equip and maintain an ample extent of public footpaths in all districts. It is beyond the scope of this report to make detailed recommendations as to the requisite machinery, powers and procedure. Recommendations in the Scott Committee's Report (paragraph 176) cover a good deal, though not the whole, of the ground, and are under inter-departmental consideration.

56. The vital importance of footpaths in National Park areas does, however, justify some general observations on the functions to be performed by the new system, whatever its precise form. There are three main tasks. The first is to settle all outstanding doubts and disputes about the "public right-of-way" status of existing footpaths. This, in my view, should preferably be by the method of making a comprehensive map record for each district of all apparently public footpaths (including those closed or diverted during the war, and any disputed routes claimed by rambling organizations, etc.); of requiring any owners' objections thereto to be entered within a limited time after the public exhibition of the map; and of deciding all cases so disputed *en bloc* by a competent tribunal sitting locally. All footpaths shown on the maps, as amended in accordance with the tribunal's decisions on disputed cases, would thereafter be indisputably public. If legislation establishing some such quicker and cheaper method of settling disputes also made proof of unopposed public use for 20 years sufficient evidence in *all* cases, including settled and trust estates and publicly owned land, so much the better.

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\* War emergency powers, widely used for diversion of paths to facilitate ploughing and for closure or diversion for defence and other purposes, are in theory of temporary effect and subject, generally speaking, to satisfactory safeguards. In practice, however, the safeguards have been and are being widely disregarded; and a great many footpath routes will be permanently lost, unless there is a specific and vigorous effort, throughout the country, to reclaim them after the war.



57. The existing extent of public footpaths so determined, the way will be clear for the second task, which is to plan and carry through in each district the necessary additions and adjustments—to provide new public footpaths where they are required, both to fill gaps in existing routes and to make entirely new connections, including the many which are needed to enable walkers to keep clear of motor roads ; to vary the alignment of existing paths where these are needlessly inconvenient either to walkers or to farmers ; and—more rarely and with due safeguards—to close any existing paths which have become useless or redundant. This is an integral part of the work of *planning* authorities ; for to be satisfactory the footpath pattern must be fully related to the general pattern of land uses and developments of all kinds, including particularly open spaces, playing fields, schools and new residential areas. It is also a concern of *highway* authorities ; for all public footpaths are “highways” at law, and many of them are inseparably interwoven with roads of all classes—and their roadside footpaths—in the general communications system of each district and region, and of the country as a whole. Suitable provision for joint consideration and action by planning and highway authorities—local, regional and national—would appear to be essential. Preliminary consideration should not wait for the settlement of disputed cases (as discussed in the last paragraph) ; nor should action wait for the completion of planning schemes. A first main instalment of decisions (which should include schemes for the “Pennine Way” and other long-distance walking routes referred to in the Scott Report) should be reached and put into execution as soon as possible. Further instalments can follow to fill any gaps which may be revealed by completed planning schemes or by subsequent periodic reviews.

58. The third task is that of equipment and maintenance ; of bringing all public footpaths, old and new, up to a proper standard and of keeping them there. Here the essential thing is that the job should be placed fairly and squarely, as a compulsory duty, on the shoulders of *one* set of authorities throughout the country—subject to appropriate distinction between roadside footpaths\* and all other footpaths. The equipment and maintenance of the latter class should be treated as a distinct task, not as a mere appendage either of roadway or of planning administration. So far as rural areas are concerned, it will be important to ensure—by central supervision and by the watchfulness of planning authorities and, in National Parks, of the National Parks authority—that footpaths are not excessively or unsuitably “improved.” The pavings and “furniture” of a city side-walk or a suburban alley-way are entirely out-of-place in the countryside. A proper standard for rural footpaths requires no concrete or tarmac surfaces, nor any spiked iron gates and railings. The trodden native herbage, with some reinforcement of gravel or broken stone in soft or boggy places, is the right surface for the vast majority of country paths. Stiles, gates and fences should be of simple local patterns. And signposts should do their job as unobtrusively as possible.

59. All these footpath tasks are common to National Parks and to the rest of the country. A sound general system for their performance, provided it is established in good time, should serve as well for National Park areas as elsewhere. There should be no need of additional or different powers. The concern of the National Parks authority will be to see that the normal powers are fully and expeditiously and wisely used throughout the National Park areas. To this end, it should have the right and duty of collaborating with

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\* A suitable definition of “roadside footpaths” would have to be agreed and applied ; it would presumably include, besides paths actually forming part of road highways, a proportion of other country paths where close to, and directly associated with, public roads, and all, or nearly all, footpaths in built-up areas.

the regular authorities at every stage, without in any way reducing their responsibility, and of referring to higher authority any cases where local action is inadequate or ill-judged. In particular, it should take the lead, and if necessary the prime charge, in preparing the footpath maps (as suggested above) for all National Park areas; and, as jointly responsible with the local authorities for the general planning and preservation of National Parks, it should be actively concerned in determining all additions to and variations of the footpath pattern. In the actual creation, equipment and maintenance of footpaths its function should, normally, be advisory only. It should *not* have any general financial or executive responsibility, for that would inevitably give excuse for inaction by the regular authorities; but it should have a discretionary power of contributing to the cost of any footpath provisions in National Parks which are specially and abnormally required for the visiting public.

### Nature Reserves and Ancient Monuments

60. The last main body of National Park requirements are those concerned with the conservation of wild life and of places and buildings of scientific, historic and architectural interest. These may best be considered in two distinct groups: the first, commonly described as "Nature Reserves," covering all *natural* features—flora, fauna and places of geological interest; the second, under the broad description of "Ancient Monuments," covering all *man-made* features—buildings, remains, sites and objects of pre-historic, historic and architectural interest. There is, of course, a certain amount of overlapping between the two groups; not merely because most natural features have some man-made or man-controlled tincture, and because many man-made features derive an integral part of their beauty and interest from their natural surroundings, but also because, in some places, important natural and man-made features actually coincide.\* Moreover the *particular* significance of both groups in National Park areas is the same; namely, that the places and buildings concerned, in addition to their intrinsic value and their specialized interest to scientists or connoisseurs, are—or tend to be—enriching elements in the sum of scenic beauty, and concentration points for the sight-seeing resort of holiday visitors. Nevertheless, the distinction, if far from clear-cut, is real and effective in all matters of practical policy and action. Each group has its own expertise, its own complex (if far from complete or fully agreed) technique, its own supporting range of voluntary organizations, and its own statutory and administrative provisions—as yet rudimentary for Nature Reserves, but of considerable and well-tried scope for Ancient Monuments.

### Conservation of wild life

61. It may safely be said that every district and almost every parish throughout rural England and Wales contains some species of wild plants, of birds and of other animals which it is worth while to protect for one reason or another—scientific, economic or æsthetic. Thus the conservation of wild life, as a broad national objective, cannot be confined to specific Nature Reserves; still less to such Nature Reserves as can conveniently be situated in National Parks. All controllable human activities, likely to have a material

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\* For example, the Victoria Cave (near Settle, Yorkshire) and several other caves where exploration has revealed not only human remains of great pre-historic interest but also glacial and other deposits of equally great zoological, botanical and geological interest. Among other overlapping cases are the many parklands associated with fine country-houses by more or less deliberate landscape design and, at the same time, remarkable in one way or another for profusion, or for rare species, of flowers, shrubs and trees.

effect on the distribution and density of the immense variety of the country's flora and fauna, are relevant raw material for the wild life conservation policy which it is to be hoped that we shall adopt, as an integral part of a comprehensive programme for conservation and development of our national resources. For all the large amount of voluntary effort and the far from negligible contributions of public authorities,\* it cannot be said that we have yet got in this country *any* national policy for the conservation of wild life. Nor have we made any definite and assured progress towards determining a policy, though valuable prolegomena have been provided by recent reports and studies of the Nature Reserves Investigation Committee, the British Ecological Society and other bodies. It would be beyond the range of this report either to examine the detailed proposals of these papers, or to set out a full scheme of recommendations for the policy to which they are directed—a somewhat rash endeavour in any case, when the experts are still by no means completely agreed on the proper scope and technique of protective and controlling action.

62. Certain main features of the requisite policy may, however, reasonably be assumed as a background for more specific consideration of National Park aspects. It is generally agreed that the first essential will be to establish an authoritative central Committee or Council, largely—though not entirely—composed of experts in the relevant fields. This body, which would be a permanent organ of Government, might suitably be called the Wild Life Conservation Council. Without ruling out the possibility of some exercise of executive powers, its main functions should, in my opinion, be advisory, educative and co-ordinative—for the reason, *inter alia*, that executive power to preserve or control wild life is to such a large extent an inseparable, if incidental, part of the normal activities of existing public authorities and of public and private landowners generally. Moreover, an advisory status would, I believe, enable the Council more readily and quickly to gain the confidence of the Government Departments concerned, to obtain influence with them and be of assistance to them, and—with their co-operation—to proceed steadily with the formulation and application of an all-round practical policy. This will require much continuous research and trial-and-error experiment, which it should be the Council's duty to guide and collate. Education and propaganda must clearly be a major element, for the best of all ways of protecting flora and fauna at large is that the general public should appreciate their value and understand their requirements. In the teaching of school children, especially, far more could readily be done than at present. But education and propaganda, however vigorous and skilful, will only gradually overcome the ill-effects of public ignorance and indifference, and will never entirely eliminate the ravages due to the collecting instinct which inspires many expert adults no less than school-boys. Thus another main arm of the requisite policy should be a thoroughgoing and flexible system of regulations for the nation-wide protection of rare or specially threatened species, with effective machinery for their enforcement, under penalties which would be a real deterrent. That this is no easy matter is sufficiently demonstrated by the general ineffectiveness in practice of the Wild Birds Protection Acts. The key to greater efficiency would seem to be to ensure that the police in all districts, reinforced as necessary by authorized wardens, really understand and take seriously their duties under the regulations, and to see that their powers are adequate for the purpose.

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\* Including, particularly, the British Museum (Natural History), the Royal Botanic Gardens, the Home Office (as responsible for the Wild Birds Protection Acts), the Ministry of Works (for Bird Sanctuaries in Royal Parks), the Ministry of Agriculture and the Forestry Commission.



63. The adoption of such more general measures will not make it any less desirable to secure an ample provision of specific Nature Reserves. On the contrary, Nature Reserves will remain the most direct and complete method of ensuring conservation, and will derive enhanced value from a reliable background of wider policy. As indicated by an elaborate classification in the Report of the Nature Reserves Investigation Committee\* various types of Nature Reserves will be needed to form a well-balanced provision, and to suit the varying conditions of the particular areas which are available and, in fact, selected for the purpose. Some will be small; others of substantial acreage. Some will be naturally distinct and isolated†; others part and parcel with the surrounding country. Some will be so important as to require management by a national body at national expense; others will be sufficiently dealt with by local authorities or voluntary bodies or private owners, under the general guidance of the proposed Council. In some cases public resort and enjoyment will be a main purpose and will be encouraged and facilitated under a minimum of supervision; in others it will have to be more or less severely restricted or even, at certain seasons, prohibited.

64. To the scientist the most important distinction is between the relatively simple "*Species Reserve*", for the protection of one or a few rare or localized species, and the more complex "*Habitat Reserve*", for the preservation both of a whole community of plants and animals—or group and sequence of inter-acting communities—and of the "habitat" or distinctive set of climatic, soil, drainage, and other conditions with which they are associated. In practice, however, the difference will usually be one of degree or emphasis rather than of kind. Most Habitat Reserves are likely to contain some species sufficiently rare to be worthy of specific protection; and most Species Reserves will require some care for the preservation of favourable community and habitat conditions, often over considerably wider areas than those actually occupied by the rare or localized species concerned. As a matter of tactics, it will be wiser to make no publicly declared distinctions between the different types of Nature Reserves. Judging by the past experience of the National Trust (which owns a number of important Nature Reserve areas) and of other bodies and persons actively engaged in wild life conservation, the protection of rare species is often most successful when it is least avowed. To announce that some smallish area has been made a specific "reserve" for the protection of this or that rare bird or flower may be to invite collectors to come and do their worst. So far as possible, all Nature Reserves which are publicly acknowledged as such should be of considerably wider extent than the net areas actually occupied by any rare species, and should be described and managed as for the protection of *all* wild life within their bounds.‡ In some cases the protection of rare species which are particularly attractive to collectors, *e.g.*, the kite and the peregrine falcon, will best be done without any public acknowledgment—the undeclared "reserve" consisting essentially of a specially close watch over the relevant area by wardens or police under the general regulation system to which reference has already been made.

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\* "*Nature Conservation in Great Britain*"; Memorandum No. 3 of the Conference on Nature Preservation in Post-War Reconstruction; March 1943.

† Many small islands round the British coast are at once specially suitable for strict Reserves or "*Sanctuaries*," and specially important as the breeding-grounds of seabirds, seals, etc., and, in some cases, as the homes of distinct "*island races*" or sub-species of the smaller mammals.

‡ There must obviously be exceptions and qualifications to this general rule—*e.g.* as to area, in the case of certain islands and promontories, and as to protection, for the keeping down of "*predators*" or excessively populous species by wardens or farmers, and for the killing of game by authorized persons.

## Nature Reserves and National Parks

65. It is obvious that Nature Reserves are not the same thing as National Parks, nor National Parks as Nature Reserves. The point would, indeed, be too obvious for mention, were it not that some other countries, notably South Africa and the Belgian Congo, have set aside large areas of virgin country as "National Parks," which are primarily reserves for the preservation of "big game" and other wild animals. It is possible that one or two areas in Scotland might be found suitable for the establishment of National Parks which would also be strict Nature Reserves over the whole or the greater part of their extent. But there is no such area in England or Wales. In all the districts listed as suggested National Parks, or as Reserves for possible future National Parks, in paragraphs 9 and 10 above, farming and recreational uses of the land are far too important, and settlement and development too widely established, for strict wild life conservation to be made a first and governing consideration over more than a small proportion of their total extents. It is, in fact, neither necessary nor desirable that Nature Reserves in this country should, in themselves, cover areas at all comparable in size with those required for effective National Parks. The one may typically be measured in hundreds of acres, the other in hundreds of square miles. Moreover, as has already been indicated, many of the areas which it is most important to secure as Nature Reserves are in districts without any general suitability for selection as National Parks.

66. Nevertheless, as might be expected from their relatively wild character, all the more probable National Parks include areas of high potential value as Habitat Reserves, and most of them—notably the Lake District, Snowdonia, the Pembroke and Cornish coasts, and the Craven Pennines—are rich in rare and localized species. Most of them are also exceptionally rich in places of special geological interest. Other things being equal, Nature Reserves are likely to be most effective when they are surrounded by belts of preserved open country, ensuring as fully as possible natural and undisturbed habitat conditions. This requirement will be ideally satisfied where Nature Reserves are sited within National Parks, which in turn are bound to benefit by containing such reservoirs for the enrichment of their flora and fauna. Moreover, the National Parks authority will have special competence to frame, in consultation with the proposed Wild Life Conservation Council, a policy of *general* protection of wild life throughout National Parks (thus giving further support to the *strict* protection in the Nature Reserves they contain), and will be in an exceptionally strong position to apply such protection effectively through the resident officers and wardens, who will in any case be required to prevent disfigurement or neglect of landscape beauty, and to check the litter nuisance and other abuses of public access. Thus National Parks and Nature Reserves are mutually supporting. The provision—and especially the national as distinct from local or voluntary provision—of Nature Reserves cannot do better than start in National Parks. And the National Parks authority should make such provision an integral part of its policy.

67. The question remains: what body or bodies should be executively responsible, as owners or as effective controllers, for such Nature Reserves as are provided by national action and at national cost? Some of these will be within National Parks, others outside. The Nature Reserves Investigation Committee has proposed that the central body (here suggested as an *advisory* Council) should itself hold full *executive* responsibility for "the selection, acquisition, control and management of all National Reserves," including those which happen to fall in National Parks; but they add the proposal that further Reserves, of something less than "National" importance, should

also be created in National Parks, and that for the provision and management of these the National Parks authority should be responsible.\* The Scott Committee's Report (paragraph 179) appears to visualize that Nature Reserves in National Parks should be run by the National Parks authority, but that those elsewhere should be "established separately" by or under the "Central Planning Authority, in conjunction with the appropriate Scientific Societies." The Standing Committee on National Parks, while recognizing and emphasizing the differences between National Parks and Nature Reserves, has proposed that all *National* Nature Reserves, whether within or outside National Parks, should be the responsibility of the National Parks authority, with a committee of experts to advise on their selection and management. This proposal the Nature Reserves Investigation Committee opposes in the following words: "Although at first sight the placing of National Reserves with National Parks under the National Parks Authority would seem to be the simpler plan and would have the merits of avoiding the creation of yet another authority, careful consideration reveals the undesirability and, indeed, the impracticability of such a scheme." To support this conclusion it is argued that the National Parks Authority must deal with a range of interests different from and wider than those of Nature Reserves, and that a specific Nature Reserves Authority would provide "an invaluable centre of scientific knowledge and opinion . . . to inform and unify the policy of many public authorities faced from time to time with problems of controlling natural populations of plants and animals."

68. I do not find this argument and conclusion at all convincing. The task of informing and unifying the wild life conservation policy of public authorities generally will be just as well, and probably better, performed by the *advisory* Council recommended above. Moreover, it is—in my view—both practicable and desirable that the National Parks authority *should* administer National Nature Reserves, certainly those which fall within National Parks, and preferably those outside as well. For the latter it is a matter of practical convenience, in simplification and in economy of "overhead" costs by using one executive authority rather than two; but for the former it seems to me essential. Wild life conservation is an integral part of National Parks policy; and I do not see how a proper balance and inter-relation between it and the other main objects—landscape preservation, protection and improvement of farming, and development of access and recreational facilities—can be secured and maintained, unless the National Parks authority is responsible for the provision of Nature Reserves. I do not, of course, suggest that the National Parks authority should be responsible for *all* Nature Reserves any more than for *all* landscape and recreational Reserves, "open spaces" and the like. It should deal progressively, as opportunity and funds permit, with the most important, whether within or outside National Parks, leaving those of less importance to be secured and run by local authorities, voluntary bodies and individual owners. Like these other agencies, the National Parks authority will require expert guidance both in the management of Nature Reserves and in all other measures for conservation of wild life. This it would readily obtain by setting up—in consultation with the Wild Life Conservation Council proposed in paragraph 63 above, if such is established—a National Nature Reserves Advisory Committee. It will probably also be found useful to set up local Nature Reserves Advisory Committees for the various National Parks and National Nature Reserves, so as to secure not only the technical assistance of representative local experts and enthusiasts, but also their knowledge of, and support for, the practical measures to be taken.

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\* "Nature Conservation in Great Britain," *op. cit.*, paragraphs 22, 32–38, 47–49.

## Ancient Monuments and National Parks

69. The conditions governing the administrative treatment of "ancient monuments" and other buildings and sites of architectural, historic and pre-historic interest in National Parks differ materially from those of wild life conservation. Such places, though some of them may be particularly significant as landscape features or may be visited by particularly large numbers of people, are on the average less frequent in National Park areas than in most other parts of the country, which have been in the past, as they are now, more populous and more highly developed. Moreover, responsibility for the scheduling and, in suitable cases, the guardianship and repair of ancient monuments throughout the country has, for a good many years, been carried by a well-organized Ancient Monuments service of the Ministry (formerly the Office) of Works.\* It may safely be assumed that this will continue to operate on a steadily increasing scale after the war. Though the Ancient Monuments service carries the main responsibility, it is not the only body active, or with powers of action, in the sphere of architectural and historic preservation. The Royal Commissions for Historical Monuments are steadily providing, county by county, a detailed background of survey information; and a number of expert voluntary bodies have been active for many years over a wide range of surveys and historical and technical researches. Numerous buildings and remains have been acquired for preservation by the National Trust, by local authorities and by other agencies. On the administrative side, local planning authorities have had, since the Town and Country Planning Act, 1932, a limited power to prohibit by order, subject to the Minister's approval, the demolition of buildings of special architectural or historic interest.† This planning power has so far been used very little; but a considerable future use is clearly envisaged by important additions to it under the Town and Country Planning Act, 1944. These, *inter alia*, extend the power of prohibition by order to proposed alterations as well as demolitions, and authorize the Minister of Town and Country Planning to compile or approve, and to communicate to the local planning authorities and owners concerned, lists of buildings of special architectural or historic interest.‡ Buildings so listed may not be demolished or altered, under heavy penalty, save after two months' notice—during which time a prohibiting order may be made, or other appropriate action taken.

70. This general system for the protection and care of buildings, remains and sites of architectural, historic and prehistoric interest, by the Ministries of Works and Town and Country Planning and by local planning authorities, should obviously function no less in National Parks than in the rest of the country. There is no call for any transfer of responsibilities to the National Parks authority. Nevertheless the authority should have the right and duty of collaboration in a general watchfulness throughout all National Parks, and should be entitled to make recommendations, both to the Ancient Monuments service and to other authorities, bodies or persons concerned, wherever any building or site may appear to require specific action, whether by listing and safeguarding, or by expert survey, repair and maintenance, or by regulation of, or facilities for, public resort. What body or person should

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\* The word "service" is here used to cover the relevant responsibilities of the Minister of Works and his administrative staff, together with the specialized work of the Ancient Monuments "Board" and "Inspectors."

† See Town and Country Planning Act, 1944, ss. 42–43; also Town and Country Planning Act, 1932, s. 17. The lists to be issued by the Ministry of Town and Country Planning will be complementary to the lists already issued by the Ministry of Works, which give a similar temporary protection (for three months). The latter are broadly confined to *uninhabited* buildings, sites, etc.; so the former, to avoid overlapping, will presumably be broadly confined to *inhabited* buildings.

take the requisite action will vary according to the circumstances of the case ; but it should not normally be the National Parks authority, except in so far as may be involved by its participation in local planning. It may, of course, happen that the authority, where it acquires land in order to preserve or restore its landscape beauty or to provide access or other facilities, will become, incidentally, the owner of some building or site of " ancient monument " value. In such event it should act like any other enlightened owner. It should seek and follow the technical advice of the Ancient Monuments service, and, if the building or site is of major importance or requires much expert attention, should normally offer to transfer it to the service's guardianship. Beyond this, there is only one kind of action in which it may be desirable for the authority to engage directly, namely provision for and regulation of public resort to the more popular Ancient Monuments in National Parks.\* For this it should certainly have the necessary powers (which would probably be no more than a particular application of their general powers of facilitating and regulating public access) ; but they should use them, in consultation with the Ancient Monuments service, only where the requisite action appeared to be beyond the competence of the responsible owner.

### Land-Ownership and National Parks

71. So much for the main purposes and requirements of National Parks. It remains only in this first part of my report to add some general observations—which must necessarily be an expression of personal opinion—on land ownership, and particularly on one or two special forms of land ownership, in relation to National Parks policy. The future of rural land ownership in the country generally, in its relation to planning, agriculture and other aspects of public policy, is a politically controversial issue on which I express no opinion and make no assumption—*except* that the system of ownership, whatever it is, will nowhere be allowed to stand in the way of a democratically determined allocation of the land to its best use in the public interest, or of a full, efficient and seemly development and maintenance of the land for such use. I have already assumed, in paragraph 16 above, that legislation on the lines of the Government's White Paper will provide an effective solution of the problems of compensation and betterment.

72. I have indicated in earlier paragraphs that I do not regard the public acquisition of all or any great part of the land in National Parks as in any way *essential*. Indeed, except as part of some scheme of public acquisition of the freehold, or of the development rights, in all land or at least all rural land, I should be opposed to the public acquisition of all or most land in National Parks, as certain to entail in practice a crippling limitation on the number and size of Parks to be secured. The available funds, whatever their scale, will go many times further on a procedure that relies mainly on control, reinforced where necessary by assistance, compensation or purchase; than on a procedure that takes outright purchase as its normal rule. For the broad purposes of planning and agriculture, public ownership is no more and no less desirable in National Parks than in the rest of the country. Any difference, in more positive determination of the dominant land uses and in more stringent preservation of scenic beauty, is one of degree not of kind. Nor do I regard public ownership as an essential—or, unless adopted for the country at large, a generally desirable—condition or method of satisfying most of the other main requirements of National Parks policy. There should be no great

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\* As noted in paragraph 9 above, where a National Park contains an Ancient Monument of exceptional extent and importance, such as the Roman Wall, special arrangements for the detailed collaboration of the National Parks authority and the Ancient Monuments service will be necessary.



difficulty in securing the bulk of the necessary provisions, in tourist accommodation and other facilities, in rambling and footpath access, in the conservation of wild life, and in the preservation of architectural and historic features, without the interference and expense of public acquisition.

73. Public acquisition is, however, an indispensable—if normally a second line or reserve—weapon in the National Parks armoury; and it should be readily available and unhesitatingly used to secure any of the purposes or requirements outlined in this report, wherever methods of control and assistance are or seem likely to be inadequate or unduly expensive. In some cases such acquisitions may best be made by local authorities or by regular Government Departments under existing powers, but the normal procedure should be for the National Parks authority itself to buy and hold the land. For this the authority should have, within all National Parks and National Nature Reserves, and for any relevant purpose, a general power of purchase by agreement and, subject to Ministerial approval, a corresponding power of compulsory purchase. The more probable and important occasions for use of such powers have already been noted, and it is sufficient to list them here without further explanation: elimination of existing disfigurements (*not* the prevention of new disfigurements which, along with other normal planning operations, it should almost always be possible to secure without acquisition); desirable reclamations and improvements, including “amenity” planting, where the existing owners are unable or unwilling to act; sites for youth hostels, camping grounds and other tourist accommodation, which private enterprise appears unlikely to provide in satisfactory form or to sufficient extent; some of the moorlands over which rambling access is particularly desirable but is opposed on grouse shooting or other grounds; areas of major importance as Nature Reserves which require expert management as such, beyond the capacity of private owners; “ancient monuments” which cannot be satisfactorily safeguarded against destruction, harmful alteration or decay unless they are publicly owned (acquisition of these should preferably be by the Ministry of Works); and any “beauty spots” which require specific management as places of concentrated public resort. Purchases for the provision of accommodation may, in some cases, be desirable on land outside, though closely related to, National Parks, and the authority should have power to make them by agreement, subject to Ministerial approval.

74. Most of the purchases for the foregoing and similar purposes are likely to involve some margin of “uneconomic” expenditure—the losses being justified by the public benefits secured. But there is a further field of land acquisition in which the National Parks or some other appropriate authority may be able to operate on a considerable scale, and on a long view with great public benefit, in which an economic basis would be the normal rule. The proposition is that the State should pursue a steady policy of buying by agreement agricultural land in National Park areas as and when opportunities occur. This policy is specially applicable to hill farms with extensive sheep walks, particularly those capable of radical improvement beyond the financial capacity of the present owners, and those which carry common-rights over unenclosed land of importance for rambling access. The spheres of responsibility for the acquisition and management of land so acquired will need to be defined; and this cannot be done until decisions have been reached about assistance to hill sheep farming\* and the post-war development of forestry. But, in my view, the National Parks authority should certainly have the power and the means to make such purchases to the extent that they are not made by other agencies of Government.

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\* See Report of Committee on Hill Sheep Farming in England and Wales, 1944 (Cmd. 6498).

75. Where land in National Park areas is already owned by Government Departments, local authorities, or other public or quasi-public bodies, there will, generally speaking, be no need to make any change in the ownership. If it proves desirable that some such properties or parts of them should be transferred to or leased by the National Parks authority, it should be sufficient to rely on free negotiation between the parties. To new purchases of properties in National Parks by public and quasi-public bodies there should also, in general, be no objection, provided the uses for which the properties are bought are consistent with the dominant National Park purposes. Purchases of farm land to be held as such, by way of permanent investment, by public and other bodies not liable to death duties are likely (under existing conditions) to be a real advantage, particularly where they serve to maintain or create unit estates of substantial size and reasonably compact arrangement: for, other things being equal, such ownerships offer the fullest and most certain prospect of long-term support for National Park purposes, especially in the conservation of landscape beauty through efficient farming and estate management.

### **The Forestry Commission and "National Forest Parks"**

76. The position in relation to National Parks of two particular land-owning bodies—the Forestry Commission and the National Trust—calls for some further comment. It is obviously essential, in the interests of both parties and of the nation, that the policies and activities of the Forestry Commission and the National Parks authority should be closely and continuously co-ordinated. No great knowledge of the distribution of districts suitable for large-scale afforestation on the one hand, and for selection as National Parks on the other, is needed to see that the two bodies are potentially rival claimants over large areas of upland country, in some at least of which it is unlikely that both could operate successfully. Not that the objects of the two bodies are in all places or in all respects incompatible or inharmonious. On the contrary, in some places and in some ways the Forestry Commission's activities are not merely compatible with, but have already given valuable support to, the main purposes of National Parks policy.

77. In particular, by its establishment of "National Forest Parks", in connection with its properties in Argyllshire (Ardgarden), in Caernarvonshire (Gwydyr) and in the Forest of Dean, the Forestry Commission has been a pioneer among Government Departments in providing those facilities for open-air recreation, especially by the younger generation, which constitute one of the main objects of National Parks policy—opening its mountain and moor land, above planting level, to full rambling access under regulation; providing footpath routes through its woods and new plantations; making sites available for camping grounds and youth hostels; and arranging for the conservation and the enjoyment of wild life. There is prospect of further areas being so treated after the war; while a similar policy is being progressively applied to the New Forest (of which the Forestry Commission holds a large part) within the somewhat complex limits of its ancient laws and customs. The public has good reason to be grateful to the Commission for the recreational opportunities provided in this way. It is important, however, to be clear that National Forest Parks are not National Parks, and that their development, however energetically forwarded, cannot provide any effective substitute for National Parks. This is not merely because they are limited to groups of Forestry Commission properties, typically too small and discontinuous in their extent to make adequate National Parks, but because in them recreational use and landscape preservation are not dominant but secondary purposes—conditioned by and subsidiary to the planting, forest

management and timber production which are the Commission's *raison-d'être*. Moreover, if the Commission gives to the rambler and holiday-maker with one hand, it necessarily takes away with the other. Wherever it establishes new plantations on previously open and uncultivated land it reduces by so much the actual or potential opportunity for rambling access.

78. The effects, direct and indirect, of the Forestry Commission's activities on the conservation of scenic beauty are no less mixed. Most of its hardwood planting (especially where it serves to maintain or re-establish the ancient forest of such areas as the New Forest, Forest of Dean, Cannock Chase, Savernake and the Central Weald) and some of its conifer planting on comparatively flat land, are or will be a valuable and harmonious enrichment of the landscape. On the other hand, the solidly-massed plantations of spruces and firs, typically in "single-age, single-species" blocks and with sharp, straight edges and "ride" divisions, which have formed the bulk of the Commission's work in the mountain and moorland areas of the North and West (including the Cheviots, the Lake District, the North York Moors, the Peak District, Dartmoor, and many parts of the uplands of Wales\*), have produced marked changes in landscape character which—in the opinion of experienced and sensitive lovers of scenic beauty—are often materially inharmonious and harmful. The indirect effects also "cut both ways". If land acquired by the Forestry Commission thereby obtains a useful *prima facie* protection against sporadic building development, advertisement hoardings and other disfigurements, the conservation of its landscape character (and sometimes that of neighbouring land) is liable to be impaired by the interference of subsequent planting operations with sheep-farming economy.

79. Needless to say, the ultimate responsibility for such ill-effects on landscape beauty and sheep farming (however much or little they may be justified by the timber assets secured) rests, not on the Commissioners, but on the policy which it is their duty to carry out—the main lines of which were determined by Government and Parliament at the close of the last war. It is to be hoped that this policy, with its emphasis on the production of softwood timber and its disregard of secondary consequences, will be replaced, at the close of the present war, by a much more comprehensive policy† which gives hardwoods a larger share in the planting programme, which treats the amenity values of trees as of no less national importance than their strategic and economic values, and which makes positive provision for the integration of silvicultural, agricultural and recreational development. But, whether or not there are radical changes in the nation's forestry policy, I make no doubt that a mutually beneficial relation can be established, and any rival claims satisfactorily resolved, if there is sufficiently early, frank and close consultation between the Forestry Commission and the National Parks authority, in association with the Ministries of Agriculture and Town and Country Planning. One main result of such consultation should be a long-term plan which allocates as between the two bodies, in varying proportion, all areas throughout the country in which either has an actual or potential interest. By such a plan some areas would be earmarked for landscape preservation, agricultural development, recreational use or wild-life conservation (as National Parks, Agricultural Reserves, Open Spaces, Nature Reserves, etc.) to the more or less complete exclusion of any further conifer afforestation, while leaving suitable scope for replacement of existing woodlands and some additional hardwood

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\* I am not, in this report, concerned with the widespread activities of the Forestry Commission in Scotland.

† The Forestry Commission's own proposals are set out in its Reports—"Post-War Forest Policy," 1943 (Cmd. 6447), and "Post-War Forest Policy; Private Woodlands," 1944 (Cmd. 6500).

planting. The Forestry Commission has already acknowledged, as previously noted, that 300 square miles of the central Lake District constitute one such area, within which it has undertaken not to acquire any further land. Other areas, in sufficient measure for their approved planting programme, would be allocated to the Commission for more or less unrestricted large-scale afforestation. Intermediately there would be many areas in which amenity, recreation, farming and forestry should all have some balanced and carefully inter-related share and should combine in mutual support to resist any urban intrusions or disfigurements. If such basic planning is sufficiently thorough, I personally have little fear of any serious difficulties or controversies in subsequent execution and administration.

### The National Trust

80. A long history of voluntary effort to safeguard landscape beauty and to open it to public enjoyment has made the National Trust the owner of numerous properties, including many of major importance and some of considerable extent, in most of the potential National Park areas of the country. No difficulty for the National Parks authority can arise from such ownership. On the contrary, the policy and purposes which the Trust applies to its properties are, in all essentials, the same as those here outlined for application over whole National Park areas. Trust properties in National Parks will provide a most valuable foundation and example for the authority's wider action. There will be no possible need for the authority to interfere with the Trust's ownership\* of its properties (the bulk of which are, in fact, inalienable under the provisions of the National Trust Acts); and every reason for the authority to welcome any increase in the Trust's holdings. It should, however, be recognized that the acquisition by the Trust of further properties in National Park areas, particularly by means of public appeals, will be less likely to occur on any large scale once a National Parks policy has been adopted. The mere fact that an area had become, or was generally expected to become, a National Park would make it difficult for the Trust to raise appeal funds for acquiring new properties therein; the charitable public would, justifiably, assume that the National Parks authority had, on behalf of the nation, taken financial responsibility for the necessary measures of preservation and access in the area.

81. There remains the possibility of the National Trust increasing its holdings in National Park areas by means of funds mainly, if not entirely, derived from Government grants. Justly jealous of its strict and long-preserved independence, the Trust has shown no desire to become in any way a regular agent of Government or to accept any *general* Government grant; such a grant would pretty certainly involve some Treasury control of its funds and, sooner or later, some political interference with its policy—to either of which it would strongly object. On the other hand, the Trust would probably welcome *specific* grants, either of land or of money for acquiring and, where necessary, endowing particular properties; and it is, in my opinion, very

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\* There is one contingent matter which will call for co-operation between the two bodies; namely, the co-ordination of their bye-laws, regulations, etc. It will obviously be more convenient, at once for the visiting public and for both bodies, that the regulations applied by the National Trust to its properties should be consistent—and as far as possible identical—with those applied by the National Parks authority over National Parks generally. Any other regulations in force within National Parks (*e.g.* those of the Forestry Commission) will call for similar co-ordination. That a visitor to the Lake District should pass, in the course of a few hours' fell walking, under two or three arbitrarily differing sets of rules would be a needless confusion. It would be a further advantage if the various authorities "pooled" their wardens in each National Park, giving them power to act under all relevant regulations.

desirable that the National Parks authority should have power to give (or sell) land and to make money grants to the National Trust, in furtherance of any recognized National Park purpose. I do not suggest that such power should be used on any very great scale. The bulk of such land as the authority finds it desirable to acquire in National Parks and National Nature Reserves should be held, managed, and developed as necessary, by the authority itself. Nevertheless quite a number of cases are likely to arise in which transfer to, or grant-aided action by, the Trust will be the most convenient—and a very popular—course. In particular, where the Trust has already, in properties and covenants, a major interest in some distinctive stretch of country (such as the Great Langdale and Buttermere valleys in the Lake District, the middle section of Dovedale, and the St. David's section of the Pembroke coast), it will be not only eminently sensible, but also a proper expression of gratitude for the Trust's past efforts, that the authority should help, as opportunity offers, to round off the Trust's holdings. Other suitable cases are most likely to be found among buildings and sites of architectural or historic interest and places of interest for their wild life; in the management of both types the Trust has built up a valuable body of specialized experience. The extension of the Trust's "country-house scheme" is dependent rather on the future incidence of death-duties and other taxation on such properties than on National Parks policy, and is, in any case, a matter of arrangement with individual owners; but its application to such country houses and estates as lie in National Parks would give valuable support to, and should be encouraged and facilitated by, the National Parks authority.

82. Apart from such grant-aided and "country-house" acquisitions, it must be assumed that, as soon as it is clear that certain areas are likely to become National Parks, the main efforts of the National Trust and its supporters in acquiring further properties, or covenants over properties, will be turned to other areas which are *not* likely to become National Parks. Fortunately, there is plenty of scope up and down the country for worth-while use of more than all the funds that are likely to be available. Thus the Trust's activities should not be restricted or embarrassed by any necessary reorientation of its policy. For the National Parks authority the important thing will be to appreciate fully that, when public and national action starts up, private and local action is likely to slow down. There can be no complaint if the very considerable stream of charitable funds and voluntary service, reinforced at times by the efforts of local authorities, which has been devoted, both through the National Trust and in other ways, to preservation in National Park areas, runs somewhat thinner when they become National Parks. Nor need there be any regret. The stream of voluntary effort will not dry up; it will make itself new channels to other fields of landscape, preservation, recreational provision and wild-life conservation, not large or concentrated enough for National Park action, but of no less value for the physical, mental and spiritual refreshment of the people.



## PART II.—THE AUTHORITY FOR NATIONAL PARKS

83. Throughout the preceding first part of this report the necessary central agency for the working-out and application of National Parks policy has been referred to in deliberately non-committal terms as the National Parks "authority." The purpose of this second part is to add a brief and preliminary sketch of the type of authority which, in my view, is suited to the task. I have reserved this question for separate and subsequent consideration, because it seems to me logically and practically necessary to determine first the nature and scope of the job to be done, before proceeding to determine what particular sort of body should do it. The question is indeed, in point of logic and of time, though not of importance, a secondary consideration. There is, moreover, a further reason for separate treatment of the question. The machinery, powers and general system for all purposes of "physical reconstruction"—the planning and development of town and country—are themselves undergoing a thorough reconstruction. If important features of the future system have been settled by the establishment of the Ministry of Town and Country Planning and by the Planning Acts of 1943 and 1944, other essential features—not least the basic provisions for the adjustment of land values under planning which are the subject of the Government's White Paper on The Control of Land Use—still await legislative form and Parliamentary determination. This uncertainty does not limit or qualify, to any material extent, the examination of the purposes and requirements of National Parks and of their more important repercussions in related fields of national activity and public policy, which forms the first part and the main object of this report; since the purposes and requirements, if soundly conceived and drawn, are equally valid whatever the precise form of the future planning and development system. But it does materially limit and qualify an examination of the organization required for satisfying National Park purposes and requirements; since the planning, development and management of particular areas for particular uses and with particular thoroughness, for the benefit of the nation as a whole, are the essence of National Parks policy. Till the *general* machinery and powers for planning and development have been fully determined, it is impossible to decide with assurance and finality what *special* machinery and additional powers are needed. Outline proposals as to the machinery which will probably be suitable, and the powers which will probably be required, may nevertheless be of value as a basis for consideration.

84. I have already sufficiently indicated in Part I that National Parks, if they are to be worthy of their name and purpose, must be nationally selected, provided and supervised by a *national* authority, and I hope that I have also sufficiently shown that the task is important enough and distinct enough to warrant a *specific* national authority, primarily concerned only with National Parks and National Nature Reserves. By this broad conclusion I do not, as I have already noted, imply that the national authority should not collaborate with the local authorities for each National Park area, or that it should interfere with their responsibility for and performance of regular local government services. On the contrary, I regard joint action by the national and local authorities as essential. Nor do I imply that the National Parks authority should exclude or over-ride the Government Departments and other central bodies which have special established interests or regular responsibilities in National Parks. Here also I regard collaboration as essential. Nor do I imply, by claiming that the authority should be "specific," that it should have the full independence of a separate Government Department, with direct responsibility to Government and Parliament. On the contrary, I have no doubt that it should be responsible to and through a regular Departmental

Minister, and—in view of the preponderating place of planning in National Parks policy—that the Minister for the purpose should be the Minister of Town and Country Planning.

### “ Commission ” or “ Service ”

85. In effect, the practical choice for the form of National Parks authority is, in my view, limited to two alternatives: either a “ National Parks *Commission* ” under the general responsibility of the Minister of Town and Country Planning, or a “ National Parks *Service* ” or Sub-Department of the Ministry under the direct charge of the Minister. Both forms have precedent (for what it is worth) from other countries—the Commission, for instance, from Canada and South Africa; the Service from the United States, where a large, distinct and highly-organized staff works directly under the Secretary of the Interior, though in practice with substantial independence. Either form would, I think, be practicable in this country. Indeed, in the organization of administrative and technical staff and in some other respects there need be little material difference between them. Nevertheless, I feel sure that, on consideration of the nature of the tasks to be performed, both in planning and in development and management, the Commission form will be found the more suitable of the two, and I have no hesitation in recommending that it should be chosen.

### Planning functions of the Authority

86. To take the planning side of the authority's work first. This, however national it may be in importance and in its dominant purposes, must in form and application be local or regional. Plans must be made and planning control must be exercised for a number of specific “ planning areas ” corresponding (not necessarily exactly) to the selected National Park areas. It is a plain matter of commonsense that the plan-making and control for each of these areas should be based on, and should make full use of, the *general* system of town and country planning as applied in all other parts of the country. Some provision of special planning powers may be necessary, but, if so, it should be by way of addition to, or adjustment of, the general powers, not by way of substitution for them. Some special arrangements for appropriate use of the general powers will certainly be required. The most important of these, as recommended in the National Park Committee's 1931 Report and supported by all subsequent writers on the subject, is that each National Park should form a *single* “ planning area.” Subject to the proviso that it will probably be found desirable, in most cases, that the planning area should be rather larger—or even, in some cases, considerably larger—than the designated National Park (by the inclusion of one or more adjoining stretches of land which it is convenient to plan therewith), I endorse this recommendation. I do not think, however, that a division between two or even three planning areas, which may on practical administrative grounds be necessary for a minority of National Parks, is likely to cause any serious inconvenience.

87. The Scott Committee's Report goes further. It recommends (in paragraph 231) that, when National Parks have been selected and delimited, “ the National Parks Authority should become the *ad hoc* local planning authority for them for all purposes, and they should thereupon be excluded from the scope of any town and country planning schemes formulated by the local planning authorities into whose areas they would otherwise have fallen.” I do not agree with this proposal. It seems to me vital both for the effectiveness and for the acceptability of National Parks that the local authorities should collaborate in them, and especially in their planning. I recommend

that for each planning area which is or includes the whole or part of a National Park, the planning authority should be an executive joint committee, composed partly of persons nominated by the National Parks authority and partly of representatives of the county and district authorities concerned. The composition of the committee, if not settled by agreement, should be determined by the Minister.

88. It may be asked: Would it not be better still that the normal planning of National Park areas (as distinct from any special and supplementary planning activities that may be required) should be performed in the normal way by the joint action of local authorities only?—the function of the National Parks authority in this regard being confined to guiding and supervising the local authorities' action and to providing any requisite financial assistance. This method was substantially the proposal of the National Park Committee's 1931 Report—made, it should be noted, before the Town and Country Planning Act of 1932, and with far less knowledge than is now available of the working of the planning system. It would however, in my view, fall as far short of what is needed as the Scott Committee's proposal goes beyond what is needed. It would tend to separate and oppose, rather than to unite and fuse, the national and local points of view and requirements; it would multiply delays by inserting an additional rung in the planning ladder; and, by dividing responsibility, it would encourage inefficient administration and patchy compromise plans. If the National Parks authority are to carry out their task to public and Parliamentary satisfaction, they must have a direct and first-instance concern in the whole range of planning operations, including not least the case-by-case administration of planning control.

89. If the foregoing proposal of joint local planning by the National Parks authority and the local authorities is the right solution, it seems to me to follow directly that the authority should be a Commission rather than a Service. It is a basic feature of the planning system that the Minister should act as *central* and higher planning authority, for the direction, co-ordination and superintendence of all local planning, and for enquiry into and decision on all schemes, orders and appeals. Thus it is obviously undesirable that he should engage directly in *local* planning as well, save in comparatively rare instances where particular cases, or some local default or mismanagement, call for his intervention. If the National Park authority were a Service, *i.e.*, a Sub-Department of the Ministry, the Minister himself would in effect be engaging directly and continuously in the local planning of all the areas concerned—a most inconvenient and confusing exception to the normal system. No such difficulty would arise if the authority were a Commission. As a distinct body, it could properly and conveniently collaborate in all the regular activities of local planning and would be subject, like any other local planning authority, to the Minister's central superintendence, which would apply to National Parks just as to the rest of the country.

90. I have already noted,\* as a critical requirement of National Parks policy, that all developments of land in National Parks proposed by public bodies should be no less effectively under planning control than those proposed by private bodies and individuals. In this the National Parks authority will have a vital part to play and will, I believe, best play it as a Commission. It is not merely that, for the control of public as of private development, it is important to maintain the position of the Minister as *higher* authority for reference and appeal, and that the leadership of a Commission will best guide and strengthen the local authorities in their share of the task. What is needed—and what a

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\* Paragraphs 17–20 above.

Commission will provide—is a body of high standing, expert qualification, substantial independence and permanent constitution, which will uphold, and be regarded by the public as upholding, the landscape, agricultural and recreational values whose dominance is the essential purpose of National Parks ; and will measure and judge all proposed developments according to their compatibility with these values. Keen and useful as they have been and will be, the unofficial advocacy and activities of the Standing Committee on National Parks, the Councils for the Preservation of Rural England and Rural Wales, the National Trust, the Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Preservation Society and other voluntary bodies are not enough. If the scales are to be fairly balanced there must also be a statutory guardian of the claims of amenity in National Park areas against the many rival claims so powerfully sponsored by statutory bodies.

### **Development and management functions of the Authority**

91. The other tasks of the National Parks authority, which may conveniently be called its development and management functions as distinct from its planning functions, have been described at some length in Part I and need not be recounted here. Though many and varied, the tasks are “all of a piece,” closely inter-related, and directed to a single broad purpose—that each National Park or National Nature Reserve shall be made and kept a practical and well-balanced success. The qualities required in the authority for efficient execution of this purpose all point to a Commission status. Continuity of policy and method, with a steady building-up of experience and specialized technique, is the first essential. The more settled and, within the general framework of national planning, the more independent the authority can be, the better. It must be free to pursue its job undistracted by the hurly-burly of party politics, and uninfluenced by short-term changes in the balance and tempo of public affairs. Steady, continuous achievement will be powerfully reinforced by the leadership of Commissioners, freely chosen for their distinction, enthusiasm and skill in the relevant fields, and secure in their office for fixed periods of years. It is, however, in its position *vis-a-vis* the general public that a distinct and responsible Commission will have most compelling advantage. National Parks are already, in the public imagination, a widely “popular” cause: and their actual initiation will greatly increase their popularity. This already large and potentially far larger public demand calls, not merely for the answer of a variety of practical and cumulative measures in a series of selected areas, but for a specific national body to stand for, guarantee and symbolize the answer. By the creation of a National Parks Commission the nation will be assured that National Parks are a clear-cut, permanent national purpose which will not be allowed to decay or lapse, by merger with other purposes, into a mere aspect of *general* “amenity” planning and recreational provision.

### **Preparatory work**

92. Before the National Parks Commission\* can start to perform any of its executive functions, it is obviously necessary that a good deal of preliminary work should be done and, in particular, that the first instalment of National Parks and National Nature Reserves should be selected and delimited, and that the further areas to be earmarked as possible future National Parks should, so far as possible, be agreed. I have already listed in Part I the main areas which it will be desirable to review, and have given, as a basis for dis-

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\* In the remaining paragraphs of this report I assume, as a matter of convenience, that it will be decided to set up the National Parks authority in Commission form.

cussion, a tentative allocation of them according to my personal judgment. Such study and selection of potential National Park areas forms, with other preliminary work, a distinct preparatory stage, which—given definite acceptance by the Government of the objective of National Parks—could and should be put in hand at once, without waiting for specific legislation or for the conclusion of the war in Europe. The resultant allocation of areas (which, needless to say, should be treated as provisional until such time as the necessary legislation had been passed by Parliament and the administrative machinery was ready for operation) is not merely an essential preliminary to National Parks action. It is no less urgently needed for the guidance of local authorities as responsible for the planning, development and management of the many important amenity and recreational areas which, for one reason or another, will *not* be found suitable for selection as immediate or reserve National Parks. It is, in fact, an integral and vital part of the broad national “master-plan” for land utilization, without which planning and preparatory work for post-war physical reconstruction cannot proceed with full effect at any level. As such it must fall within the responsibility of the Minister of Town and Country Planning, and be the active concern of his Ministry. But it is obviously very desirable that the National Parks Commission, as the body which will be responsible for the actual operation of National Parks, should collaborate from the start in the selection of National Park areas. Their participation will serve not only to ensure that the task engaged is commensurate with prospective funds and personnel, but also to secure public confidence in the choice when it is made. In the circumstances, I suggest that the National Parks Commission should be brought into being in two stages. At the first stage, to start as soon as possible, a Preparatory Commission—nucleus and precursor of the full Commission—would be appointed by the Minister of Town and Country Planning to assist him in the study and delimitation of National Park areas in consultation with the local authorities concerned, and in the preparation of a detailed scheme for the machinery, action and finance required at the second and executive stage. This Preparatory Commission would act in an advisory capacity and no legislative provision would be needed for its establishment, which could conveniently be secured by Order in Council under the powers of Section 8 of the Minister of Town and Country Planning Act, 1943. By such two-stage procedure the Commission would grow naturally into its task, and would be ready to proceed at once, without delay or hesitation, when the time for action arrived.

### **The operative National Parks System**

93. For the second and executive stage specific legislation will, in my view, be essential: the requirements cannot be met by a mere delegation and specialized application of existing powers. The most straight-forward course will be to introduce the requisite measures as a distinct National Parks Bill—to establish the Commission in its operative form, to invest it and the Minister with all necessary powers, and to make financial provision for the expenditure involved. It would be premature to consider here in any detail the content of such a Bill, which—as regards the main functions of the Commission, and most of the powers required to perform them—has already been broadly indicated in preceding paragraphs. It will suffice to review these in summary form and to note a few other desirable features to which no previous reference has been made.

94. The Commission should, I suggest, consist of a Chairman and from six to eight other Commissioners, chosen by the Minister of Town and Country Planning, serving for a fixed term of years and eligible for re-appointment.



Salaries should be available for full or part-time work by two or three of the Commissioners. It is probable that some of the most suitable nominees will not be available for some time after the end of the war in Europe. If, therefore, a Preparatory Commission is set up first and soon, as here proposed, it is desirable that the Minister, though he would doubtless wish to retain some, should not be under any obligation to retain all of its members when the operative Commission is appointed. Besides a sufficient administrative, technical and clerical staff at headquarters, the Commission would require a small staff, under a well-qualified Assistant Commissioner, in each National Park.

95. The executive functions of the Commission would start, and derive their sanction, in each selected area, from its designation, by due public notice, as a "National Park", or as a "National Park Access Area" (which must be within a National Park) or as a "National Nature Reserve" (which might be either within a National Park or elsewhere). The prime function of the Commission in the areas so designated would be to collaborate with the local authorities in all the powers and duties of town and country planning. I have already proposed, in paragraph 87 above, that this collaboration, for all National Parks, should be by executive joint planning committees with membership shared between the Commission's nominees and local authority representatives. For National Nature Reserves outside National Parks (typically much smaller areas) it would probably suffice that one or more nominees of the Commission should serve by co-option on each local planning committee concerned. Needless to say, the Commission must, under the Minister's direction, have the power and obligation of contributing to the cost of exercising planning control and of preparing and implementing planning schemes, wherever it collaborates therein. On the development and management side of its task the Commission would exercise, in all designated areas, the range of general powers already described under the various heads of Part I of this report: to acquire and hold land and buildings or interests therein; to carry out building works, land improvements, amenity tree-planting, removal of disfigurements, etc., or to make grants for such purposes and for land acquisitions to local authorities, to the National Trust and to other approved bodies; to collaborate with the authorities responsible for footpaths and for roads; to make, with the Minister's approval, both general regulations applying to all designated areas and special regulations applying to particular areas or parts thereof, in order to prevent damage or abuse by the visiting public; and to appoint wardens with appropriate powers for the enforcement of its regulations. For the "National Park Access Areas" further provisions will be required. The effect of these—not necessarily the precise form, which will need careful consideration—should, I suggest, be to give a public right of rambling access over the whole of the areas so designated (which would, of course, be confined to "uncultivated" land) as if they were commons to which section 193 of the Law of Property Act, 1925, automatically applied, subject only to regulations made by the Commission and approved by the Ministers of Town and Country Planning and Agriculture.

96. For the success and popularity of the Commission's activities, great importance will attach to full consultation of the voluntary organizations and expert opinions concerned, and to informative and educative publicity. The Commission should, I suggest, set up and make full and continuous use of a Central National Parks Advisory Committee, broadly representative of the interests concerned, and a National Nature Reserves Advisory Committee of experienced ecologists and naturalists. Local Advisory Committees, similarly representative, for each National Park or National Nature Reserve are equally desirable, both to tap local knowledge and to secure local understanding and

support. As to publicity, the Commission, besides presenting to Parliament, through the Minister, regular annual reports and such special reports as may be required, should publish or get published a generous supply of guides, accommodation directories, leaflets, etc., including particularly a simply expressed "National Parks Code" of "Do's" and "Don't's", with a summary and explanation of the regulations in force, as affecting the visiting public. The Commission should arrange with the Ordnance Survey for the distinctive marking of all designated areas on the regular one-inch maps, and for the publication of such special National Parks maps as may be desirable.

97. It remains only to note, in conclusion, that I make no specific proposal as to the amount of financial provision required. There are too many indeterminates and assumptions, calling for further study, consultation and decision. To take but one example: if, as I have assumed for the purpose of this report, an effective solution of the problems of compensation and betterment is enacted on the lines of the Government's White Paper, the money cost of planning control over development in National Parks will be negligible; if there were no such solution, the cost in compensation payments might well be the heaviest item in the National Parks budget. But although any definite estimate made now would have a large element of guess-work, it can, I think, safely be said that the cost of a generous and progressive scheme of National Parks, expressed as an averaged annual charge on the Exchequer, would be measured in hundreds of thousands of pounds rather than in millions—a very small item indeed in the total national expenditure. There can be few national purposes which, at so modest a cost, offer so large a prospect of health-giving happiness for the people.

JOHN DOWER.

12th April, 1945.

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