

# to become a sovereign director has no doubts

that a concrete Welsh identity had emerged.

He said: "I suppose if I walked out and said, 'What is it that means you're Welsh?' I'd get 100 different responses."

Mr Osmond contends that the spectacular electoral success of the Liberals and then Labour prevented an expression of Welsh identity that was not

tied to the UK political system.

He said: "The overwhelming domination of these parties led them to believe that they embraced the essence of Welsh representation to such a powerful extent that no other force or point of view needed to be taken into account."

He believes the vision of an Assembly with law-making powers contained in the present Government of Wales Act needs to be reworked. In particular, he backs the 2004 Richard Commission's proposals, which included increasing the number of AMs to 80 and electing them by the Single

Transferable Vote system.

He writes: "We need to straighten it out, sharpen it up, and generally make it fit for purpose along the lines of the Richard Commission recommendations."

"In short we need to claim Welsh sovereignty over devolved matters that is presently being denied. In doing so we will, of course, be contravening the letter of the British unwritten constitution that declares sovereignty to be indivisible and to lie with the Crown in Parliament."

"In this matter, however, we should abide by the prior, moral injunction that has long been followed by the Scots, that sovereignty lies with the people, and in this case the people of Wales. In practice, in the developing process of devolution within the United Kingdom, sovereignty is a fluid concept, a sharing of power."

## FEDERAL FUTURE:

Conservative AM David Melding says a federal system must be formally established to ensure the survival of the United Kingdom

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## The business of power

A key test for supporters of greater Welsh autonomy is whether they can win the confidence of the business community.

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been as proactive, as good for business, as it could be, and I have real concerns about that."

Nigel Payne, chairman of the automotive group PAI and the Honorary Consul for the Slovak Republic, said Wales had much to learn from other small European nations who have developed their economies.

He said: "I think that's an area where Wales has to develop links with European countries that have done this."

Greater sovereignty should only come, he said, when it was clear that there were individuals with the necessary skills and commitments to provide leadership.

He argued that "the Senedd has to mature and has got to have leading figures wanting to go into the political arena"

continues to rise (half a million more women have become members since 1995) and women are now just as likely to be union members as their male colleagues.

"Unions have continued to put on members amongst managerial and professional staff, and during the last year have stepped up their efforts to organise and support Britain's two million vulnerable workers."

## NHS waiting times probe

MORE than 500 people are waiting more than the 22-week target time for an operation in Wales.

The vast majority of these patients are suffering delays after being referred to Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust for treatment.

The latest waiting list figures reveal the full extent of the problems

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