

DAVIES, IFOR (1910-1982), Labour politician

Name: Ifor Davies
Date of birth: 1910
Date of death: 1982
Gender: Male
Occupation: Labour politician
Area of activity: Politics, Government and Political Movements
Author: John Graham Jones

He was born on 9 June 1910, the son of Jeffrey Davies, a lay preacher with the Welsh Independents and church secretary, and Elizabeth Jane Davies his wife. He was educated at Gowerton Grammar School, Swansea Technical College and Ruskin College, Oxford where he gained the Oxford Diploma in Economics and Politics. He remained especially interested in adult education throughout his life. He earned his living as an accountant with I. Rowland Jones Ltd., 1931-39, as a personnel officer with ICI, 1942-47, the Statistics Department of the Ministry of Labour, 1947-48, and later with the Aluminium Wire & Cable Co., 1948-59. He was also an official at the Statistics Department of the Ministry of Labour, 1947-49. Davies was chosen secretary of Gowerton Welsh Congregational church in 1948.

Ifor Davies had joined the Labour Party as a youth in 1928, became president of the West Wales Federation of the Labour League of Youth in 1935, and secretary of the Gower Constituency Labour Party in 1948, subsequently becoming its agent. He was elected the Labour MP for the Gower constituency in the general election of 1959, retaining the seat until his death in 1982. He was extremely active both in his constituency and throughout Wales, possessing an enduring interest in industrial relations. Davies was a member of the Co-operative Party, the Fabian Society, the South Wales Executive of the WEA, 1950-60, the Swansea Borough Council and the Glamorgan County Council, 1958-61. He was appointed chairman of the Council of the University College of Swansea in 1969 and was also a member of the Wales Civic Trust Board from 1972. He was also an opposition whip, 1961-64, a Lord Commissioner of the Treasury and government whip, 1964-66, and an Under-secretary of State at the embryonic Welsh Office, April 1966-October 1969. Here he played a key role during the formative years of the new department. He also served as chairman of the Welsh Grand Committee where his impartiality and wide knowledge of parliament won the commendation of MPs from all parties. Davies was a member of the powerful Panel of Chairmen at the House of Commons. He was chairman of the Welsh Labour group, 1960-66, and chairman of the Welsh Parliamentary Party, 1970-71. He voted in favour of entry to the EEC on 28 October 1971. He was awarded the degree of LL.D. honoris causa by the University of Wales in 1980. His hobbies were walking and listening to classical music. He remained a chapel-goer throughout his life. He married on 15 August 1950 Doreen, the daughter of William Griffiths. They had two children. They lived at Ty Pentwyn, Three Crosses, Gower. Ifor Davies died on 6 June 1982. He was succeeded by Gareth Wardell as the Labour MP for the Gower constituency who was elected in the first by-election to be held in Wales during the first Thatcher administration.

Ifor Davies came from the old, caring and compassionate Socialist mould which still remained alive in south Wales at the time of his death. His political career coincided with the period when industrial south Wales was undergoing trauma as a result of a decline in the traditional heavy industries, Davies fought consistently for the revitalisation of the south Wales valleys by urging successive governments to introduce new factories into the area.

Author

Dr John Graham Jones

Sources

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Welsh Hustings - 1885-2004 (Ammanford 2005)

Dod's Parliamentary Companion

The Times guide to the House of Commons, 1966 & 1979

The Times, 9 June 1982

Further Reading

NLW Archives: [Gower Constituency. Ifor Davies, Labour Candidate... 1974](#)

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APA Citation



Jones, J. G., (2008). DAVIES, IFOR (1910-1982), Labour politician. *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*. Retrieved 12 Nov 2024, from <https://biography.wales/article/s6-DAVI-IFO-1910>

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