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The Formation and Influence of Pwyllgor Diogelu Diwylliant Cymru and Undeb Cymru Fydd: Language and Cultural Preservation in Wales, c.1939-50

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**'The Formation and Influence of *Pwyllgor Diogelu Diwylliant
Cymru* and *Undeb Cymru Fydd*: Language and Cultural
Preservation in Wales, c.1939-50'**

M. A. Hanks

Ph.D. History

September 2017

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Abbreviations

CDDA	<i>Cynhadledd Diogelu Diwylliant Cymru (Defence Committee)</i>
DWB	Dictionary of Welsh Biography
LEA	Local Education Authority
PWC	Parliament for Wales Campaign
WAC	Welsh Advisory Council
WSB	Wales Survey Board
WNP	Welsh Nationalist Party
WPP	Welsh Parliamentary Party
UCF	<i>Undeb Cymru Fydd</i>

!

Introduction

Welshmen are the inheritors of a civilization which is both very ancient and very distinctive ... How truly distinctive Welsh civilisation is becomes clear to anyone who will reflect on the survival of the Welsh language. Welsh has survived because it represents something - a spirit, a culture, a national character, an atmosphere which ... cannot survive the transformation into English.¹

On 31 August 1939, with Europe on the brink of the most devastating conflict in history, the British Government, under the auspices of the Ministry of Health, initiated 'Operation Pied Piper', the evacuation of 1.5 million civilians from the major cities of Britain. This measure was designed to protect the most vulnerable in British society (notably children, pregnant mothers and the disabled) from the dangers of the expected aerial bombardment. A further two million people made private arrangements to evacuate their dependants to more rural and 'safer' areas of Britain during the same period.² This and other government wartime measures to protect the British nation state resulted in a mass influx of 'outsiders' into Wales. Saunders Lewis, the pre-war President of the *Plaid Genedlaethol Cymru* (Welsh Nationalist Party),³ argued that this movement of people threatened to 'completely submerge and destroy all of Welsh national tradition.'⁴ Like Lewis, many contemporaries feared that the war would endanger Wales's 'very existence' and the 'distinctive civilisation' referred to by Zimmern, would be lost forever.⁵

Fears for the future of Welsh traditions and especially the Welsh language had been building since the beginning of the twentieth century when the number of Welsh speakers had begun to decline. The 1901 census confirmed that 929,824 people in Wales, equating to

¹ A. Zimmern, *My Impressions of Wales* (London, 1921), pp. 14-5.

² A. F. Havighurst, *Britain in Transition: The Twentieth Century*, (London, 4th edn, 1985), pp. 290-1.

³ From 1945 *Plaid Genedlaethol Cymru* (The Welsh Nationalist Party) became *Plaid Cymru* (The Party of Wales).

⁴ Saunders Lewis, 'Y Plant Bach: Cymru Dan Dotalitariaeth Rhyfel', *Y Ddraig Goch*, November 1938, pp. 1 & 7; For a detailed account of Lewis's views towards the difficulties facing Wales during World War Two, see, T. R. Chapman, *Un Bywyd o Blith Nifer: Cofiant Saunders Lewis* (Llandysul, 2006), pp. 239-55.

⁵ *Ibid*; This terminology is taken directly from *Y Ddraig Goch* and is not unusual for the period although more realistically they were referring more to Wales' unique identity: Zimmern, *My Impressions of Wales*, pp. 14-5.

49.9 percent of the population, claimed to be able to speak Welsh, while 15 percent were monoglot Welsh speakers.⁶ These figures represent the high point in number of speakers of the language in the twentieth century. Over the next three decades many parts of Wales experienced a decline in the number of Welsh speakers, which, by 1931, resulted in only 37 percent registered as Welsh speakers.⁷

Following the 1931 census, fears for the future of the Welsh language increased. A survey of Welsh language newspapers from the 1930s clearly highlights this concern.⁸ Industrial migration, the onset of tourism and participation in the Great War had, according to historians, all contributed to what by 1935 the *Manchester Guardian* described as the 'anglicising and alienating influence' on Wales.⁹ The 1931 census figures were exacerbated by the devastating impact of the industrial depression of the 1930s and the outward migration that resulted from it. Between 1920 and 1939, 450,000 people, some 20 percent of the population, left Wales in search of work.¹⁰ The worst hit regions of industrial depression were the South Wales valleys and rural Wales. The latter, including the Welsh speaking heartlands of the north-west and mid-Wales, where, as Martin Johnes argued, 'speaking Welsh was at the core of how they [the local inhabitants] saw their lives'.¹¹ In these areas depopulation was even higher, causing an even greater loss to the language. It

⁶ W. T. R. Pryce, 'Wales as a Culture Region: Patterns of Change 1750-1971' in I. Hume & W. T. R. Pryce (eds.) *The Welsh and Their Country* (Llandysul, 1986), pp. 27-9.

⁷ Ibid; For a detail breakdown of the reduction in Welsh speakers during the twentieth century, see R. O. Jones, *Hir Oes I'r Iaith: Agweddau ar Hanes Gymraeg a'r Gymdeithas* (Llandysul, 1997), pp. 327-434.

⁸ See in particular *Baner Ac Amserau Cymru, Y Cymro & Y Ddraig Coch*.

⁹ W. E. 'The Welsh People', *Manchester Guardian* (2 May 1935), p. 17; For historians and the language see, for example, C. H. Williams, 'The Anglicisation of Wales' in N. Coupland & A. R. Thomas (ed.) *English in Wales: Diversity, Conflict and Change* (Philadelphia, 1990), p. 38; D. Phillips, 'We'll Keep a Welcome? The Effects of Tourism on the Welsh Language' in G. H. Jenkins & M. A. Williams (eds.) *Let's Do Our Best for the Ancient Tongue: The Welsh Language in the Twentieth Century* (Cardiff, 2000), p. 531; G. H. Jenkins, 'Terminal Decline? The Welsh Language in the Twentieth Century', *North American Journal of Welsh Studies*, 1:2 (Summer, 2001), p. 60.

¹⁰ P. T. J. Morgan, 'The Clouds of Witnesses: The Welsh Historical Tradition' in R. B. Jones (ed.) *Anatomy of Wales* (Peterson Super Ely, 1972), p. 39; J. Osmond, *The Divided Kingdom* (London, 1988), pp. 125-6.

¹¹ M. Johnes, 'For Class and Nation: Dominant Trends in Historiography of Twentieth Century Wales', *History Compass*, 8:11 (2010), 1257-74.

was generally agreed amongst contemporaries that once a family left Wales it was lost to the language forever.¹²

By the mid 1930s the language shift from Welsh to English was, it was feared, unstoppable and concerns amongst cultural and religious leaders were increasing. In 1935, for example, the Minister Albert Evans-Jones, better known by his bardic name 'Cynan', during a sermon in Caernarfon, spoke of the 'three or four avalanches sweeping the nation'.¹³ Cynan was warning of the Anglicising impact of postal services, daily English newspapers, transport services and tourism on the Welsh language and on Welsh traditional values in the vicinity. This rhetoric was not unusual.¹⁴ However, it was his despair that the decline of Welsh was now unavoidable that was striking: 'these are the factors ... which neither the wit nor the devices of man can counteract or neutralize.'¹⁵ Other parts of Wales, especially the north-east and the south, had been experiencing Anglicisation for even longer. A review of the Welsh language press from the 1920s to the 1930s confirms that Cynan's view was commonly held during the period. The Welsh language was, according to intellectuals and language campaigners, in severe danger.¹⁶

What resonates through contemporary writing is the link between language, culture and Wales' very existence. One philologist, for example, argued: 'When the language of a people dies, all that it embraces, its greatness, its art, its literature and its nationalism, dies with

¹² NLW, UCF/165, O. E. Roberts, 'Liverpool Response to UCF Survey of Condition of Social Life in Wales', 1943.

¹³ 'Cynan' who had seen action in World War One before being ordained as a Methodist minister serving the Penmaenmawr area, near Bangor. In 1931 was appointed tutor at the University College of North Wales, Bangor and had a long association with the National Eisteddfod, serving as joint secretary of the Council. See NLW website Dictionary of Welsh Biography (DWB), 'Jones, Sir Cynan Albert Evans', <http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s2-JONE-EVA-1895.html?query=cynan&field=content>, accessed 3 March 2014.

¹⁴ This rhetoric can be readily found in the Welsh speaking press of the 1930s, especially in *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, *Y Tyst* and *Y Cymro*; see, for example 'Y Gymraeg Mewn Perygl', *Y Tyst* (12 October 1939), p. 3; 'Perygl Mawr i Plant Cymru', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (10 July 1940), p. 4; 'A Fydd Diwylliant Cymru yn Fyw?', *Y Cymro* (25 November 1939), p. 9.

¹⁵ Albert Owen Jones (Cynan), *The Church in Wales and the National Eisteddfod: A Sermon by Albert Owen Evans (Cynan), Archdeacon of Bangor and Rector of Llanfaethlu Cum Llanfwrog, Anglesey at Christ Church Caernarfon, Sunday August 4 1935* (Bangor, 1935), p. 7.

¹⁶ See for example, *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, *Y Cymro* and *Tyst*.

it.¹⁷ This link between culture and language is not, according to Carter and Aitchison, unrealistic. They argued that ‘the character and vitality of a culture is to a large extent, language-dependant ... language helps to preserve traditions, shapes modes of perception, and profoundly influences patterns of social intercourse and behaviour.’¹⁸ In contrast, Bechhofer et al discuss a geographical based social identity.¹⁹ However, it was the former of these, in the form of the minority Welsh speaking traditional culture that caused concern. In turn, this raised concerns for the corresponding Welsh identity. By the second half of the 1930s, Ifor Williams was arguing that ‘the thing that threatens Welsh culture is the thing that threatens the language’: and that ‘thing’ was the spread of the English language.²⁰

It was during this atmosphere of anxiety for the language that the geopolitical tensions between Britain and Germany increased. As Britain prepared for war with plans for national conscription and civilian evacuation, the Welsh nationalist newspaper, *Y Ddraig Goch* warned that ‘the movement of population is one of the most horrible threats to the continuation and to the life of the Welsh nation that has ever been suggested in history’.²¹ While this view may today appear overly fatalistic, historians have also reinforced the strength of this fear. Johnes, for example, has argued that many ‘doubted whether Wales could survive at all’.²² John Davies also contended that ‘there were fears that the experience of another World War would extinguish not just *Plaid Genedlaethol Cymru* but also the identity of Wales itself.’²³ As war began these fears continued to increase. Rhys Evans has

¹⁷ K. R. Hilditch, ‘A Welshman and a Philologist’, *Welsh Nationalist* (May 1942), p. 3.

¹⁸ H. Carter and J. Aitchison, ‘Language Areas and Language Change in Wales: 1961-1981’ in Hume & Pryce (eds.) *The Welsh and Their Country*, p. 1.

¹⁹ Bechhofer and McCrone argued that national identity is one of the most basic social identities that, in most cases, is unambiguous and directly linked to the nation state of residence (or of birth) and is therefore predominantly geographically based, see, F. Bechhofer & D. McCrone, ‘National Identity, Nationalism and Constitutional Change’ in F. Bechhofer & D. McCrone (eds.), *National Identity, Nationalism and Constitutional Change* (Basingstoke, 2009), p. 1.

²⁰ Ifor Williams, ‘Diwylliant Cymru’, *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* (1939), p. 165.

²¹ Lewis, ‘Y Plant Bach’.

²² Johnes, ‘For Class and Nation’ (2010), p. 1257.

²³ J. Davies, *Hanes Cymru*, (London, 1990), p. 576.

suggested that when, in 1940, the Welsh National Eisteddfod was cancelled it was ‘to some, irrefutable evidence that [Welsh] society itself was about to implode.’²⁴

Prior to 1939 the Welsh Nationalist Party (WNP) led the calls to keep Wales Welsh.²⁵ Indeed the creation of a monolingual Welsh society was one of the objectives of Saunders Lewis, although significantly, it failed to gain the support of the majority of the party’s membership.²⁶ Initially, the WNP was as much a cultural pressure group as a functioning political party. Its cultural objectives were always entwined with its political goals. Other Welsh organisations too, were concerned for the fate of the language. The *Urdd Gobaith Cymru* (Welsh League of Youth), the *Undeb Cenedlaethol Cymdeithasau Cymraeg* (the National Union of Welsh Societies), the Guild of Graduates of the University of Wales and the National Eisteddfod Council, were among a number of organisations which expressed concerns for the language and which worked within specific fields to arrest its decline. Significantly, however, on the eve of World War Two there was still no unifying voice or unified response to the issue.

The growing concerns for the future of the Welsh language led to a series of events that culminated with the formation of a national organisation specifically designed to address these fears. Within days of the onset of World War Two, Saunders Lewis and J. E. Daniel wrote to the *Manchester Guardian* and proposed the establishment of a government advisory committee to safeguard Welsh interests during the war.²⁷ Unsurprisingly, given the circumstances the letter went un-noticed in Whitehall, but back in Wales it triggered momentum. The National Eisteddfod Council, described by Miles as ‘the last great stronghold of the language’ responded to the idea and, on 1 December 1939, convened a national conference to discuss the impact of the war, especially the evacuation, on Wales.²⁸

²⁴ R. Evans, *Gwynfor Evans: Portrait of a Patriot* (Talybont, 2010), p. 69.

²⁵ Gwynfor Evans, *The Fight for Welsh Freedom* (Talybont, 2000), p. 144.

²⁶ *Ibid*, p. 132; J. G. Jones, ‘Forming Plaid Cymru’, *Cylchgrawn Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru National Library of Wales Journal* 22:4 (Gaeaf, 1982), p. 432.

²⁷ S. Lewis & J. E. Daniel, ‘Welsh Interests in War-Time: How to Protect Them’, *Manchester Guardian* (8 September 1939), p. 14.

²⁸ D. Miles, *The Royal National Eisteddfod of Wales* (Swansea, 1978), p. 7; See Appendix A for details of delegates.

The Conference for the Defence of Welsh Culture (*Cynhadledd Diogelu Diwylliant Cymru*) was, according to its secretary, backed by ‘practically every Welsh body or movement of importance and influence, both voluntary and official’.²⁹ This national conference led to the establishment of a committee of the same name which boasted some of the most prominent cultural Welsh leaders of the time, including Ifan ap Owen Edwards, William George, *Cynan*, William J. Gruffydd (usually referred to as W. J.) and Saunders Lewis, and was later described by Gwynfor Evans as ‘the most important movements working for Wales during the war’.³⁰ Reflecting the urgency felt at the time, this new Committee, operating with the national mandate received from the conference, began work the following day. Over the next two years the Committee established a national network of local branches and orchestrated a number of campaigns to protect the Welsh language and wider Welsh interests, including government land acquisition and the cultural welfare of Welsh soldiers. In August 1941, following some overlap in activities, the Committee for the Defence of Welsh Culture merged with the National Union of Welsh Societies. *Undeb Cymru Fydd* (New Wales Union) was born and built on the national network of local branches and societies it inherited from the two previous organisations.

Undeb Cymru Fydd (UCF), like the Defence Committee before it, endeavoured to reach all the people of Wales and represent the whole nation in its objectives. To this end it established local branches in every region of the nation. However, despite its inclusive policies, the extensive use of the Welsh language by the organisation meant it was always strongest in traditional Welsh speaking regions and its membership largely emanated from among the ranks of the Welsh intelligentsia and from Welsh religious circles. From a numerical perspective, neither of these organisations were large movements.³¹ However, the influence they could bring to bear on the government and local authorities in defence of

²⁹ T. I. Ellis, *Undeb Cymru Fydd* (Aberystwyth 1948), p. 2; The Welsh word ‘*Diogelu*’ can be translated to mean ‘safeguard’, ‘protect’ or ‘defend’ and all these variances were used by the organisation in their English paperwork. The most common usage, however, was Defend and the Committee often used the abbreviated name Defence Committee or Shrewsbury Committee, reflecting where the National Conference was held.

³⁰ Gwynfor Evans, *For the Sake of Wales: The Memoirs of Gwynfor Evans* (Trans. Meic Stephens) (Cardiff, 2001), p. 54; See Appendix B for a full list of the committee members.

³¹ While the overall membership of the Defence Committee and UCF are difficult to fully ascertain due to the structure of the organisations (see Chapter 2 and 3) they never exceeded more than a few hundred.

Welsh culture, especially in the later war years, was formidable. This was primarily due to the prominence of their members, their influence with Welsh MPs, and the significant support they received from other Welsh institutions.

Over the next thirty years, until its final disestablishment in 1971, UCF campaigned relentlessly for Welsh interests. However, it was during World War Two and the immediate post-war era that the organisation was at its most vigorous. During this time it received a 'warm reception from by religious bodies' of Wales, and, with their support, it was involved with, and often led, campaigns that opposed government land acquisition in Wales and the evacuation of children from South Wales to northern England, while promoting Welsh language broadcasting, the teaching of Welsh in schools and the appointment of Welsh speakers to positions of responsibility in Wales to name but a few.³² It is often overlooked by historians and linguists that language campaigns, including the Welsh street name and Welsh road sign campaigns, which came to the fore with organisations like the *Cymdeithas Yr Iaith Cymreig* (Welsh Language Society) in the 1960s, had their origins in this wartime movement.³³ Mirroring the Defence of Welsh Culture Committee, UCF maintained a non-political and non-sectarian ideology for most of its existence. However, it did step into the political arena in 1949 to launch the Parliament for Wales Campaign, a multi-partisan campaign for Home Rule.³⁴ Notwithstanding this campaign, the Union's primary goal was to protect the Welsh language and Welsh culture.

Throughout their existence, both the Committee for the Defence of Welsh Culture and UCF referred almost exclusively to the Welsh language and Welsh culture in tandem. Rarely was the Welsh language mentioned without Welsh culture or vice versa. What was absent, however, was any detailed clarification on what they included within Welsh culture. When

³² D. E. Davies, *Protest a Thystiolaeth: Agweddau ar y Dystiolaeth Gristionogol yn yr Ail Ryfel Byd* (Llandysul, 1997), p. 147.

³³ Cymdeithas yr Iaith Cymreig (often abbreviated to Cymdeithas yr Iaith) is a direct action language protection group, which was established in 1962. It was inspired, at least in part; by the 1961 Census result and Saunders Lewis subsequent radio broadcast entitled 'Tynged Yr Iaith' (Fate of the Language). For more information regarding Cymdeithas yr Iaith Cymreig, see D. Phillips, 'The History of the Welsh Language Society 1962-1998', in Jenkins & Williams (eds.) *Let's Do Our Best for the Ancient Tongue*, pp. 463-91.

³⁴ See Chapter 5 for more detail.

the term culture was discussed, it was used in connection with perceptions of traditional Welsh culture, including religious freedom, Welsh music and choir singing, reading, poetry, recitals, crafts and storytelling. In essence, elements of the traditional way of life of the Welsh *gwerin* (folk), romanticised by O. M. Edwards in the late nineteenth century and promoted by the Welsh National Eisteddfod.³⁵ There was no mention of other, more recent cultural activities such as sport, dances or attending the cinema. Popular sports, including rugby, received no mention by either organisation. Going to dances or to the cinema, which were becoming popular at the time, were perceived as English, or even American pastimes and, as such, were seen as having a detrimental impact on traditional Welsh culture. The promotion of the traditional *gwerin* culture and the omission of popular culture by UCF alluded to the composition of the hierarchy of the movement, which was made up from the conservative cultural, academic and religious leaders of the time. The omission of popular culture by UCF mirrors, to a large extent, the absence of ordinary working class members of the organisation, which, in turn, may go some way to explaining why it did not grow into a mass popular movement.

II

This thesis will suggest that the Committee for the Defence of Welsh Culture and UCF had a significant impact on Welsh history and on the fortunes of the Welsh language. To date, however, historians have not been kind to either organisation, omitting their existence altogether or making scant reference to them. General histories of Wales by Philip Jenkins, Jeremy Black, D. Gareth Evans and Terry Breveton, do not mention either organisation.³⁶ Similarly, the collection of writings of Raymond Williams, which centres on critical concepts of the Welsh nation and the centrality of culture and which includes sections on culture, history, literature and politics of Wales, also overlooks both groups.³⁷ The more economic

³⁵ See Chapter One for more detail on O. M. Edwards and a discussion on the myth and reality of the *Gwerin* culture.

³⁶ P. Jenkins, *A History of Modern Wales, 1536-1990* (London, 1992); J. Black, *A New History of Wales* (Stroud, 2000); D. G. Evans, *A History of Wales* (Cardiff, 2000); T. Breverton, *Wales: A Historical Companion* (Stroud, 2009); *The Welsh: The Biography* (Stroud, 2012); *An A to Z of Wales and the Welsh* (Swansea, 2000).

³⁷ R. Williams, *Who Speaks for Wales? Nation, Culture, Identity* (Cardiff, 2003).

and social research of John Davies, barely mentions UCF, although there are a few references to its fight against land acquisition and a brief mention of their newsletter, *Cofion Cymru*.³⁸ There is a single reference to UCF in the collection of essays edited by Gareth Elwyn Jones and Dai Smith. An essay by Mari A. Williams illustrated that UCF was ‘a society which was to wage a high-profile campaign to protect the social and cultural interest of Wales ... throughout the war.’³⁹ The need for ‘increased watchfulness’ to preserve Welsh life and UCF’s 1943 survey were also discussed briefly by Griffiths and Edwards.⁴⁰ K. O. Morgan similarly mentions UCF, but says very little about the organisation, other than it was a ‘powerful pressure group for the Welsh language’.⁴¹ The Welsh Marxist historian Gwyn Alf Williams, likewise only makes reference to UCF in relation to the Parliament for Wales Campaign.⁴² A welcome exception to these omissions is Dewi Eirug Davies study into Christianity during World War Two, based on contemporary newspapers, which detailed the support given to both the Defence Committee and Undeb Cymru Fydd by the various religious denominations in Wales.⁴³ Another exception is the collection of essays edited by Geraint H. Jenkins and Mari A. Williams, within which seven of the twenty-one essays refer to UCF. This largely stems from the volumes central theme of language preservation.⁴⁴

Most of the essays in this collection make only passing reference to the Defence Committee or UCF. Jenkins and Williams referred to the Defence Committee in connection to the *Mynydd Epynt* land acquisition and also refer to the 1941 merger with the National Union of Welsh Societies, but only as far as to argue that ‘the Government continued to ride

³⁸ Davies, *Hanes Cymru*, pp. 580-1.

³⁹ M. A. Williams, ‘In The Wars: Wales 1914-1945’ in G. E. Jones and D. Smith (eds.) *The People of Wales* (Llandysul, 1999), p, 205.

⁴⁰ A. Edwards and W. Griffith, ‘Some Conceptions of Welsh National Identity and Governance, 1918-45’ in D. Tanner, C. Williams, A. Edwards & W. Griffith, *Debating Nationhood and Governance in Britain, 1885-1939: Perspectives from the Four Nations* (Manchester, 2006), pp. 136-7.

⁴¹ K. O. Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation: A History of Modern Wales*, (Oxford, 1981), p. 251.

⁴² G. A. Williams, *When Was Wales: A History of the Welsh* (London, 1985), pp. 274-5.

⁴³ Davies, *Protest a Thystiolaeth*.

⁴⁴ Jenkins & Williams (eds.), *Let’s Do Our Best for the Ancient Tongue*.

roughshod over what the Welsh speaking lobby considered legitimate grievances'.⁴⁵ Aitchison & Carter similarly refer to the coming together of a range of cultural organisations in response to wartime pressures, while Loffler summarised the formation of the Defence Committee.⁴⁶ Davies' essay refers to UCF in connection to the Welsh Courts Act and J. Graham Jones credits the Defence Committee for 'embarking on an impressive range of activities'.⁴⁷ In contrast, Smith made a number of references to UCF both in connection to its involvement with the Welsh Courts Act 1942 and during the broadcasting campaigns of the 1950s and 60s.⁴⁸ Significantly, Williams made one of the few references to the 1943 Survey while discussing the Anglicising influences that affected the young women in the industrial valleys of South Wales during the war.⁴⁹ Despite the references in this volume overall there remains scant reference to these cultural organisations in Welsh history.

One reason why UCF's contribution to Welsh history has been overlooked is the limited amount of scholarly work on Wales during World War Two. The impact of the war on Welsh society is an area of research that has only recently been developed and even now it is not a

⁴⁵ G. H. Jenkins and M. A. Williams, 'Introduction' in Jenkins & Williams (eds.) *Let's Do Our Best for the Ancient Tongue*, p. 13. *Mynydd Epynt* was an area of land near Brecon, in South Wales, which was acquired by the government for use as a military range. Its acquisition was opposed by the WNP and the Defence of Welsh Culture Committee as it was feared it would impact negatively on the Welsh language. For more details see Chapter 2.

⁴⁶ J. W. Aitchison and H. Carter, 'The Welsh Language 1921-1991: A Geolinguistic Perspective' in Jenkins & Williams (eds.) *Let's Do Our Best for the Ancient Tongue*, p. 42; M. Loffler, 'The Welsh Language Movement in the First Half of the Twentieth Century: An Exercise in Quiet Revolution' in Jenkins & Williams (eds.) *Let's Do Our Best for the Ancient Tongue*, p. 214. Loffler refers to 25 organisations being present at the Shrewsbury conference, which reflects T. I. Ellis, *Y Gynhadledd Genedlaethol er Diogelu Diwylliant Cymru* (Denbigh, 1940), that lists 26 organisations. However, the attendance register from the conference lists 45 organisations (excluding political parties), see Appendix A.

⁴⁷ G. P. Davies, 'The Legal Status of the Welsh Language in the Twentieth Century' in Jenkins & Williams (eds.) *Let's Do Our Best for the Ancient Tongue*, p. 230; J. G. Jones, 'The Attitude of Political Parties towards the Welsh Language' in Jenkins & Williams (eds.) *Let's Do Our Best for the Ancient Tongue*, p. 262.

⁴⁸ R. Smith, 'Journalism and the Welsh Language; Broadcasting and the Welsh Language in Jenkins & Williams (eds.) *Let's Do Our Best for the Ancient Tongue*, pp. 289; 293; 297-8; 316 & 319. The Welsh Court Act 1942 allowed the use of the Welsh language in Courts on Wales for the first time. See Chapter 3 for more details.

⁴⁹ M. A. Williams, 'Women and the Welsh Language in the Industrial Valleys of South Wales 1914-1945, in Jenkins & Williams (eds.) *Let's Do Our Best for the Ancient Tongue*, p. 179.

topic that has generated significant scholarly attention.⁵⁰ The topic is covered in a number of general histories of Wales and also within edited volumes, which cover broader themes, but few historians have produced monographs on the impact of the war and the lives of ordinary people living in Wales.⁵¹ The reasons for the neglect of this history are unclear. Neil Evans suggests that one reason might be because it is not in keeping with Wales' non-conforming pacifist image.⁵² One exception to this premise, while not a monograph, is the 2007 collection of essays edited by Matthew Cragoe and Chris Williams.⁵³ The theme of this collection is *Wales and War*, which gathered nine essays on the impact of conflict from the nineteenth century to the Falklands conflict. However, only Angela Gaffney's study comparing remembrance practices of the two World Wars discusses World War Two.⁵⁴ In contrast to these studies, Jenkins argued that, until the latter years of the twentieth century, work on Wales' history was uncommon during all historical periods.⁵⁵

Another cause of omissions to work on World War Two is that this conflict, like World War One was often used by historians as a convenient bookend for their research. Numerous works end their interest in 1939.⁵⁶ Conversely, other authors, including Gwilym Prys Davies, Andrew Edwards and Mari Elin Wiliam, as well as Keith Gildart, all use 1945 as a starting

⁵⁰ For recent scholarly work see, for example, the analysis of Welsh literary response to the conflict, G. Williams, *Tir Newydd: Agweddau ar Lenyddiaeth Gymraeg a'r Ail Ryfel Byd* (Cardiff, 2005) or M. Arthur, *Y Diwyd Fugail A Helynt Y Faciwis* (Caernarfon, 2015), which details the impact of the evacuees on a North Wales village.

⁵¹ See for example M. Johnes, *Wales Since 1939* (Manchester, 2012); Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation*; Davies, *Hanes Cymru*, the author rewrote this into English to form *A History of Wales* (London, 1993).

⁵² N. Evans, 'War, Society and Wales, 1899 – 2014', *Llafur*, 11:4 (2014), 146-71.

⁵³ M. Cragoe and C. Williams, *Wales and War: Society, Politics and Religion in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Cardiff, 2007).

⁵⁴ A. Gaffney, 'The Second Armageddon: Remembering the Second World War in Wales' in Cragoe & Williams, *Wales and War: Society, Politics and Religion in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Cardiff, 2007).

⁵⁵ G. H. Jenkins, *A Concise History of Wales* (Cambridge, 2007), p. 304.

⁵⁶ M. Loffler, 'Foundations of a Nation: The Welsh League of Youth and Wales Before the Second World War', *Welsh History Review*, 23:1 (2006), 74-105; P. Gruffudd, 'Back to the Land: Historiography, Rurality and the Nation in the Interwar Wales', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, New Series, 19:1 (1994), 61-77; Edwards and Griffith, 'Some Conceptions of Welsh Identity and Governance'; D. Beddoe, *Back to Home and Duty: Women Between the Wars, 1919-1939* (London, 1989).

point for their research.⁵⁷ One rationale for omitting the war years from such studies may be that in Wales, as in the rest of the United Kingdom, artificial political, economical and social circumstances emerged during the war, as the wartime coalition Government mobilized every aspect of the nation to direct it towards the war effort.⁵⁸ Andrew Thorpe, for example, has highlighted the serious obstacles placed in the way of the normal function of politics, while the economy was organised, almost exclusively through state direction.⁵⁹

There are, of course, studies of Wales during the war, largely undertaken by local historians and journalists.⁶⁰ Early accounts during the late 1970s and 1980s concentrated on the impact of German air operations over regions of Wales, such as the work by Ivor Wynne Jones, Bill Richards and A. Geoffrey Veysey or David Annard's account of airfields that contributed to the British military response.⁶¹ By the end of the century the focus turned away from pure military research towards studies of the impact of the conflict on individual towns and cities, or in some cases counties, including Newport, Cardiff, Porthcawl,

⁵⁷ G. P. Davies, *Cynhaeaf Hanner Canrif : Gwleidyddiaeth Gymreig 1945-2005* (Llandysul, 2008);

A. Edwards and M. E. Wiliam, 'The 'Red Dragon/Red Flag' Debate Revisited: The Labour Party, Culture and Language in Wales, 1945-c. 1970', *Welsh History Review*, 26:1 (June, 2012), 105–27; K. Gildart, *North Wales Miners: A Fragile Unity 1945-1996* (Cardiff, 2001); D. Thomas and D. Jones, *Welsh Economy and Society Post-1945 : A Database of Statistical and Documentary Material* (Cardiff, 1996).

⁵⁸ For a detailed account of these aspects see, for example, A. Thorpe, *Parties at War: Political Organisation in Second World War Britain* (Oxford, 2009); K. Jeffreys, *The Churchill Coalition and Wartime Politics, 1940-1945* (Manchester, 1991); J. Gardiner, *Wartime: Britain 1939-1945* (London, 2004); P. Howlett, and S. Broadberry, 'Blood, Sweat, and Tears : British Mobilization for World War II', in R. Chickering, S. Förster and B. Greiner, (eds.) *A World at Total War: Global Conflict and the Politics of Destruction, 1937-1945* (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 157-76.

⁵⁹ Thorpe, *Parties At War*, p. 1; Howlett & Broadberry, 'Blood, Sweat, and Tears'.

⁶⁰ Ivor Wynne Jones, for example, was a former soldier who reported for the *Caernarfon and Denbigh Herald* and the *Liverpool Daily Post*. Bill Richard was also a journalist, but wrote on the bombing in Pembroke from personal experience.

⁶¹ I. W. Jones, *Luftwaffe over Clwyd: The Air War over Denbighshire and Flintshire* (Llandudno, 1977); B. Richards, *Pembrokeshire Under Fire: The Story of the Air Raids of 1940-41* (Haverfordwest, 1983); A. G. Veysey, *Clwyd a'r Rhyfel 1939-45 - Clwyd at War 1939-45* (Hawarden, 1989); D. Annard, *RAF Penrhos, near Pwllheli, 1937-45 and RAF Llandwrog, near Caernarfon, 1940-45* (Tywyn, 1986).

Pontypridd and later Bangor.⁶² Swansea needed to wait until 2006 for a detailed account of the war on the city, although it had benefited from a pictorial account in 1988 by Nigel Arthur and Laurie Latchford and a collection of contemporary accounts of both the three night blitz and the war period in general.⁶³ More recently another collection of contemporary memories from Swansea has been collated, this time by Jim Owen, who wrote on the plight of the children of the town.⁶⁴ Swansea was not the only area of Wales to benefit from either a pictorial accounts of the war years nor of publications that detailed personal memories of the conflict. Graham Jones collated a fascinating collection of wartime photographs that demonstrate the importance of Colwyn Bay to the war effort, following the arrival of the Ministry of Food in 1939. There is a wealth of personal accounts of the war years, many of which are written by former evacuees who spent part or all of the war years in Wales.⁶⁵ John Sullivan combines these approaches in a national study and successfully merges his pictorial account of Wales with over fifty personal stories, some from serving Welshmen servicemen but many from those who remained in Wales.⁶⁶

This century has seen further accounts of Wales during the war by local and popular historians, many of which have been reinforced with personal testimony. The impact of the

⁶² T. Underwood, *Time to Remember, Time to Forget: The Story of Newport in the War Years. 1939-1945*, (Newport, 1996); D. Morgan, *Cardiff: A City at War* (Cardiff, 1998); J. Cowell, *Bangor at War* (Menai Bridge, 2000); M. Mansley, *Porthcawl at War, 1939-45* (Porthcawl, 1994); D. Powell, *Pontypridd at War, 1939-45* (Cardiff, 1999); G. Davies, 'Ceredigion in the Second World War', *Ceredigion*, 13:4 (2000), 81-93.

⁶³ S. Bowler, *Swansea at War* (Stroud, 2006); N. Arthur and L. Latchford, *Swansea at War: A Pictorial Account* (Swansea, 1988); J. R. Alban, *The Three Nights' Blitz: Select Contemporary Reports Relating to Swansea's Air Raids of February 1941* (Swansea, 1994); N. Carter (ed.) *Memories of Swansea at War: Readers Letters to The South Wales Evening Post* (Manchester, 1988).

⁶⁴ J. Owen, *Swansea's Frontline Kids* (Stroud, 2014).

⁶⁵ See, for example, The Chepstow Society, *Wartime Memories: The Home Front in Chepstow 1939-1945* (2000); F. Swain, *Wales and the Second World War: Women* (Bridgend, 1989); For examples of narratives of evacuees in Wales see H. Walstow, 'Evacuation to Aberdare During World War Two', *Llafur*, 7:2 (1997), 23-30; B. W. Davies, *Y Faciwi: O Blitz Lerpwl i Dolgarreg* (Talybont, 2013); K. Foskett, *The Children's War: Evacuees on a North Pembrokeshire Farm* (Pwllheli, 2007); L. Verrill-Rhys and D. Beddoe, (eds.) *Parachutes and Petticoats: Welsh Women Writing on the Second World War* (Dinas Powys, 1992); J. Boyce, *Pillowslips and Gasmasks: Liverpool's Wartime Evacuation* (History and Society of Merseyside) (Birkenhead, 1989).

⁶⁶ G. Roberts, *Colwyn Bay at War: From Old Photographs* (Stroud, 2012); J. O'Sullivan, *When Wales Went to War 1939-45 (In Old Photographs)* (Stroud, 2007).

arrival of American military on Welsh communities in South Wales was the topic of both Dennis G. Sellwood and Bryan Morse, while Herbert Williams relayed details of the escape and subsequent response to 67 German prisoners of war from Island Farm Prisoner of War camp, near Bridgend in March 1945, nicknamed the 'The Great Escape in Wales'.⁶⁷ Each of these authors delivered basic accounts of their respective topics, without employing the analysis expected from more experienced historians. Reg Chambers Jones, in contrast, delivers an exceptionally detailed narrative of the conflict in his account of the war in the two counties of north-west Wales, published in 2008. This book builds on his 1995 publication and is clearly the subject of extensive research on the area and contains an impressive collection of photographic evidence.⁶⁸ As with many local historians' accounts, however, the book suffers from an absence of evidence to back up much of the detail supplied.⁶⁹ Another local historian, Phil Carradice, took a different approach and published a 'bottom up' monograph full of personal accounts of the war by the 'ordinary people' of Wales.⁷⁰ Similarly, there was an absence of detail as to how the author obtained these testimonies. However, the array of backgrounds from which the sources originated helped build a picture of Wales between 1939 and 1945.

Transcending the bridge between the local and professional historian, Stuart Broomfield's 2009 book, written in the form of a popular history, was the first, and to date only, attempt to form a social history of the whole of Wales during World War Two.⁷¹ Despite an extensive bibliography, the monograph lacks any footnotes or endnotes to reinforce the absorbing content. In contrast, Cindy Lowe's 2010 enlightening account of Colwyn Bay during the war years contains endnotes and a detailed bibliography of primary and secondary sources. This often overlooked book, written by a successful writer of historical fiction is a valuable

⁶⁷ D. G. Sellwood, *The Friendly Invasion: The American Soldiers Who Passed Through Caerphilly In 1943-1944* (Caerphilly, 2002); B. Morse, *A Moment in History: The Story of the American Army in the Rhondda in 1944* (Talybont, 2001); H. Williams, *Come Out, Wherever You Are: The Great Escape in Wales* (Llandysul, 2004).

⁶⁸ R. C. Jones, *Anglesey and Gwynedd: The War Years 1939-45* (Wrexham, 2008), this is an enhanced and expanded edition of *Bless 'Em All: Aspects of the War in North West Wales, 1939-1945* (Wrexham, 1995).

⁶⁹ There are end notes to each chapter that relate to some relevant archival research. However these notes only account for a small amount of detail contained within the respective chapters.

⁷⁰ P. Carradice, *Wales at War* (Llandysul, 2003).

⁷¹ S. Broomfield, *Wales at War: The Experience of the Second World War in Wales* (Stroud, 2009).

additional resource in Welsh historiography.⁷² These studies, while supplying some excellent accounts of how the conflict impacted on Wales or various part of it, to a large extent still concentrated on the military and governmental impact of the war and how each community dealt with bombing, evacuation, conscription, rationing and the like, and often overlooked how these events changed the very communities being studied.

Welsh Industry is one area of World War Two Welsh society that has received, if not extensive, then certainly regular scholarly attention since 1990. It is another field that has combined research and personal accounts of the conflict into a seamless narrative. There are only two main spheres of industrial wartime research in Wales, the coal industry and the munitions factories, with a void in research into other areas of the Welsh economy.⁷³ It is interesting that, on face value, such industrial studies do not contravene the image of the Nonconformist pacifist Wales as described by Neil Evans. However, the preparation of ammunition, while often discussed within the realm of changing perceptions of gender during the period, as most of the employees at these factories were female, still constitute an invaluable element in the country's war machine and cannot be considered as a benign occupation. The impact on Welsh society, especially in South Wales of these ordinance factories was significant, Royal Ordnance Factory number 53 (ROF 53), Bridgend, for example, at its peak employed 32,000 workers from across the region and this was one of five such factories in the area. In contrast to the female dominated war work, coal mining was the preserve of men and an essential industry in Wales in both war and peacetime. The

⁷² C. Lowe, *Colwyn Bay Accredited: The Wartime Experience* (Wrexham, 2010).

⁷³ See, for example, J. S. Wiffen, *Gresford's Bevin Boys: A Wartime Miner's Experiences Underground in North Wales* (Corwen, 1991); S. Broomfield, 'South Wales during the Second World War: The Coal Industry and its Community' (unpublished University of Wales PhD Thesis, Swansea 1979, 2 vols.); S. Broomfield, 'The Apprentice Boys' Strikes of the Second World War', *Llafur*, 3:2 (1981), 53-67; T. M. Owen, 'Reminiscences of My Experiences as a Bevin Boy', *Llafur*, 9:3 (2006), 58-64; B. L. Coombes, 'The War Diary of a Welsh Miner' in B. Jones and C. Williams (eds.) *With Dust Still in His Throat: An Anthology of Writing* (Cardiff, 1999), pp. 153-206; K. Gildart, 'Coal Strikes on the Home Front: Miners' Militancy and Social Politics in the Second World War', *Twentieth Century History*, 20:2 (2009), 121-51; M. A. Williams, *Where is Mrs. Jones -Going?: Women and the Second World War in South Wales* (Aberystwyth, 1995); B. Roberts, 'The Budgie Train: Women and Munitions Work in a Mining Valley in Wartime', *Llafur*, 7:3-4 (1998/99), 143-92; M. J. Clubb and P. Tapper, *The Welsh Arsenal: And the People Who Worked and Died There* (Bridgend, 2007); M. A. Williams, *A Forgotten Army: Female Munitions Workers of South Wales, 1939-1945* (Cardiff, 2002).

existence of these two different industries, operating in the same geographical region has unsurprisingly led to the respective research being juxtaposed in studies of gender and industrial labour.⁷⁴

III

Another reason why UCF may have remained in the shadows is the overlap of personnel and, at times, policies and campaigns, between it and the Welsh Nationalist Party, during both the wartime and post-war period. Some of the campaigns led by UCF have, inaccurately, been credited to the Welsh Nationalist Party. A good example of this is the campaign to prevent the Government acquisition of *Mynydd Epynt* for use as a military range.⁷⁵ This is unsurprising given that most of the senior members of the Welsh Nationalist Party were also members of UCF. As Johnes has suggested, 'from within Plaid Cymru's [The Welsh Nationalist Party's] ranks, the UCF (New Wales Union) was formed'.⁷⁶ This stance reinforced the view expressed in *The Encyclopaedia of British and Irish Political Organisations* that 'most of its [UCF] members were Nationalist party activists',⁷⁷ and while it is true that many members of the Welsh Nationalist Party, like their leaders, were also members of UCF, there were a greater number of UCF members who had no association with Welsh Nationalist Party. Some UCF members were members of other political parties, especially the Liberal and Labour parties and many others were apolitical. Further, UCF was formally established by the cultural and non-political National Eisteddfod Council and not by the Welsh Nationalist Party.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ See, for example, G. G. Field, *Blood Sweat and Toil: Remaking the British Working Class, 1939-1945* (Oxford, 2011); G. Braybon and P. Summerfield, *Out of the Cage: Women's Experiences in Two World Wars*, 5 (London, 2013).

⁷⁵ See, for example, K. O. Morgan, *Modern Wales: Politics, Places and People* (Cardiff, 1995), p. 111, which attributed the *Mynydd Epynt* campaign to the WNP and omitted the Defence Committee who actually led the campaign. See Chapter Two for more detail on this campaign.

⁷⁶ Johnes, *Wales Since 1939*, p. 26.

⁷⁷ P. Barberis, J. McHugh, M. Tyldesley & H. Pendry, *Encyclopaedia of British and Irish Political Organisations: Parties, Groups and Movements of the Twentieth Century* (London, 2000), p. 1583.

⁷⁸ Johnes, *Wales Since 1939*, p. 26.

Perhaps because of the overlapping campaigns of UCF and the Welsh Nationalist Party, few of the political histories of Wales mention the Union. John Osmond, Laura McAllister and David L. Adamson's publications omitted any mention of UCF.⁷⁹ John Davies's brief history of the Welsh Nationalist Party also omitted UCF and the war years altogether, leaping from Saunders Lewis' presidency, which ended in 1939, to Gwynfor Evans presidency in the post-war period.⁸⁰ A structure Richard Wyn Jones mirrored in his 2007 volume on the party's political ideology.⁸¹ In contrast, D. Hywel Davies' early history of the Welsh Nationalist Party briefly summarises the formation of the Committee for the Defence of Welsh Culture and UCF.⁸² Berresford Ellis identifies the role played by UCF in pressing the BBC for Welsh programmes and for its role in highlighting the injustice of Welsh witnesses having to pay for translation services themselves prior to the introduction of the Welsh Courts Act.⁸³ However, Ellis inaccurately argued that the merger of the Defence Committee and the National Union of Welsh Societies occurred after World War Two.⁸⁴ With these omissions the authors fail to consider any influence the Welsh Nationalist Party may have gained from the UCF.

While histories of the Welsh Nationalist Party have not always acknowledged UCF's influence, accounts of Welsh Nationalist leaders have been more generous. Rhys Evans' biography of Gwynfor Evans, for example, describes the National Conference to Defend Welsh Culture as 'one of the most important landmarks in the language's history' and details how Evans considered the later UCF to be 'the most popular national movement that modern Wales has seen.'⁸⁵ Gwynfor Evans' own autobiography makes numerous references to the Defence Committee and to UCF and speaks highly of these organisations, arguing that these non-party movements could achieve more to safeguard Welsh culture during the

⁷⁹ J. Osmond (ed.), *The National Question Again: Welsh Political Identity in the 1980s* (Llansysul, 1985); L. McAllister, *Plaid Cymru: The Emergence of a Political Party* (Bridgend, 2001); D. L. Adamson, *Class Ideology and Nation* (Cardiff, 1991).

⁸⁰ J. Davies, 'Plaid Cymru in Transition' in J. Osmond (ed.) *The National Question Again*, p. 124.

⁸¹ R. W. Jones, *Rhoi Cymru'n Gyntaf: Syniadaeth Plaid Cymru, Cyf. 1* (Cardiff, 2007).

⁸² D. H. Davies, *The Welsh Nationalist Party 1925-1945: A Call to Nationhood* (New York, 1983), pp. 232-3.

⁸³ P. Beresford Ellis, *Wales - A Nation Again: A Nationalist Struggle for Freedom* (London, 1968), p. 110.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ Evans, *Gwynfor Evans*, pp. 62-3 & 78.

wartime period than the WNP.⁸⁶ Similarly, there are extensive publications on Saunders Lewis and much of these are centred on his literary achievements, however, it is only necessary to examine his famed 1962 radio broadcast entitled '*Tynged Yr Iaith*' (Fate of the Language) to understand his views: 'In the middle of the last war, in October 1941 - as a result of UCF's most important campaign - a petition was presented to Parliament, a petition signed by approximately four hundred thousand Welshmen ...'⁸⁷ Given these acknowledgements it is somewhat surprising that Charlotte Aull Davies, whose work was centred around interviews of such leaders, also excluded both cultural pressure groups from her ethnic history of Welsh nationalism. This omission is more surprising given that Davies, entitled part of her publication 'cultural defence', which discussed Welsh culture during the first half of the twentieth century.⁸⁸ In contrast, T. Robin Chapman, in his biography of Saunders Lewis, confirmed that 'there is little doubt about its [UCFs] significance as a body, it attracted the widest cross-section of cultural bodies, academics, local politicians and churches, in Welsh history' and confirmed that 'A full objective account of UCF remain unwritten'.⁸⁹

One of the few scholars to acknowledge the work of UCF is Jamie Medhurst, in his study of Independent Television in Wales. This publication, as the name suggests, details the establishment and development of television broadcasting.⁹⁰ It points out how, during the 1950s, UCF organised conferences, arranged meetings and sent memoranda to promote a more independent Welsh broadcasting service. However, the same author in his article on the Beveridge Broadcasting Report and Wales, erroneously credits the establishment of a separate Welsh Region in 1937 to '(... vigorous campaigning led by the University of Wales and UCF, the New Wales Union, a cultural nationalist pressure group)'. However, UCF (or its predecessor) had not been established at that time and would not be for another two years. This article, which centred on the Beveridge Committee on Broadcasting and its impact on Wales, also omitted to mention that UCF had not only been campaigning on this issue since

⁸⁶ Evans, *For the Sake of Wales*, p. 57.

⁸⁷ C. Baker and S. P. Jones, *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education* (Clevedon, 1998), p. 151.

⁸⁸ C. A. Davies, *Welsh Nationalism in the Twentieth Century: The Ethnic Option and the Modern State* (New York, 1989).

⁸⁹ Chapman, *Un Bywyd o Blith Nifer*, p. 240.

⁹⁰ J. Medhurst, *A History of Independent Television in Wales* (Cardiff, 2010).

its inception in 1941, but had led the Welsh campaign throughout that period.⁹¹ Confusion over establishment of the Committee for the Defence of Welsh Culture and UCF is not uncommon, even the website of the National Library of Wales, who hold the papers for these organisations, in a paragraph relating to the Welsh Courts Act, mistakenly displays that 'A National Petition was launched during the National Eisteddfod of 1938 under the leadership of UCF [New Wales Union].'⁹² This petition was actually initiated by the National Union of Welsh Societies and exemplifies the confusion that relates to UCF and its predecessors.⁹³

IV

Despite the emergence of new works which focus on Wales during World War Two neither the Defence Committee nor UCF have been the subject of serious historical analysis. This research seeks to address this omission and will examine these cultural movements during and immediately after World War Two, when they were at their most active. It will detail the campaigns and activities of both movements in their efforts to arrest the decline of the Welsh language and wider Welsh interests.

The representation of Welsh interests and whether these, from the perspective of both cultural movements, were for the benefit of everyone in Wales, provided a significant theme that diffused through the core of the thesis. The Welsh interests, that motivated much of the work of these pressure groups, were to a large extent centred on protecting the language and concepts of Welshness. However, the fusion of prominent Welsh National Eisteddfod councillors, and their promotion of the *gwerin* tradition, with other Welsh speaking cultural, religious, academic and political leaders, served to endorse a narrow, quite specific concept of Welshness, which was in keeping with the writing of O. M.

⁹¹ J. Medhurst, 'Minorities with a Message': The Beveridge Report of Broadcasting (1949-1951) and Wales', *Twentieth Century British History*, 19:2 (2008), 217-33.

⁹² 'Ymgyrchu: The Welsh Language Petition', National Library of Wales Website. www.llgc.org.uk/ymgyrchu/laith/Cymlaith/index-e.htm, accessed 7 June 2015.

⁹³ See Chapter Three for more details on the Welsh Language Petition.

Edwards.⁹⁴ The thesis will evaluate the extent to which campaigns and struggles initiated by these groups truly represented the interests of the majority of the people of Wales, especially as traditional concepts of Welshness were in decline.

It has been generally accepted that during the World War Two the people of Wales felt a greater affinity to the British national identity than to Wales. In 2010, for example, Johnes, reinforcing conclusions by other historians, argued that during World War Two ‘Welsh people felt more British than at any time in their history’. This increase in affinity with the British nation state, according to Williams, coincided with a decline in affiliation to Wales. ‘The war’ she argued ‘dealt a severe blow to the ‘Welshness’ of the nation’.⁹⁵ This decline is also apparent in the histories of the WNP and general histories of Wales. Evans, for example, described the party during the war as only representing an ‘unpopular minority’.⁹⁶ Reinforcing this view, sales of the party’s newspaper *Y Ddraig Goch* fell by a half during the conflict.⁹⁷ These general discourses relating to the wartime decline in Welsh national identity and the wartime ostracization of the WNP, strongly suggest a waning of Welsh nationalism during the period. However, these arguments are based on a limited availability of detailed analysis of Welsh political nationalism and the absence of any analysis of wider Welsh cultural patriotism during World War Two. In 2012 Justin Stover argued that during World War One ‘while cultural organizations continued their work throughout the war, the political groups they bolstered became increasingly marginalized’.⁹⁸ This thesis will explore whether a similar realignment occurred in Wales during World War Two.

This research begins to fill the scholarly void in Welsh cultural patriotism during World War Two and adds to the limited historiography on Welsh political nationalism in the same period. These two strands of nationalism, both of which had Welsh national identity as a

⁹⁴ See Chapter One for more detail on O. M. Edwards and the *Gwerin* concept.

⁹⁵ Williams, ‘In The Wars’, p. 205.

⁹⁶ ‘Y Blaid a Chymru’, *Y Cymro* (16 September 1939), p. 3; Evans, *Gwynfor Evans*, p. 101; Edwards and Griffith, ‘Some Conceptions of Welsh National Identity and Governance’; McAllister, *Plaid Cymru*; Davies, *The Welsh Nationalist Party*.

⁹⁷ A. O. H. Jarman, ‘Y Blaid A’r Ail Ryfel Byd’ in J. Davies (ed.) *Cymru’n Deffro: Hanes y Blaid Genedlaethol 1925-75* (Talybont, 1981), pp. 67-92.

⁹⁸ J. D. Stover, ‘Modern Celtic Nationalism in the Period of the Great War: Establishing Transnational Connections’, *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium*, 32 (2012), p. 286.

core objective, adopted widely divergent approaches to the war and to the British Government's policies for fighting the conflict. This investigation centres round the cultural response to the perceived dangers facing Wales. However, to emphasis the different between the cultural response and that of the political approach, it does, where relevant, compare the different methodologies and strategies deployed by the WNP. By adding to the historiography on Welsh nationalist and patriotic organisations, the study will thus contribute to the historiographical debate relating to political and cultural nationalism.⁹⁹

It is widely accepted that modern nationalist ideology has derived from the emergence of modern nation states.¹⁰⁰ This belief holds, as a core principle, that the nation is at the centre of this belief and from this nationalist movements derive.¹⁰¹ A full analysis of various forms of nationalism is outside the remit of this analysis. However, as this study relates to both cultural and political forms of nationalism, which to a large extent overlap, some clarification is required.

Political nationalism in its most basic form is focused on achieving political autonomy and self-determination.¹⁰² It is a form of nationalism that considers the nation a political community and is most often connected to seeking electoral approval. However, as all nationalist movements contain both political and cultural elements, there is a significant overlap between political and cultural nationalism.¹⁰³ Cultural nationalism, in contrast,

⁹⁹ K. A. Roberts and D. Yamane, *Religion in Sociological Perspective* (London, 5th edn, 2010), p. 398; D. Balsom, 'Wales' in M. Watson (ed.) *Contemporary Minority Nationalism* (Abingdon, 1990), pp. 8-24; S. May, *Language and Minority Rights: Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Politics of Language* (London, 2012), pp. 55-93.

¹⁰⁰ G. Delanty and K. Kumar, 'Introduction' in G. Delanty & K. Kumar (eds.) *The Sage Handbook of Nations and Nationalism* (London, 2006), p. 2.

¹⁰¹ R. Andersen, 'National Identity and Independence Attitudes: Minority Nationalism in Scotland and Wales', *CREST Centre for Research into Elections and Social Trends, Working Paper*, 86 (2001).

¹⁰² J. Hutchinson, 'Cultural Nationalism' in J. Breuilly (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism* (Oxford, 2013), pp. 75-96.

¹⁰³ For more information see, for example, A. D. Smith, *Chosen People: Sacred Sources of National Identity* (Oxford, 2003); O. Zimmer, 'Boundary Mechanisms and Symbolic Resources: Towards a Process-Oriented Approach to National Identity', *Nations and Nationalism*, 9:2 (2003), pp. 173-93; S. Shulman, 'Challenging the Civic/Ethnic and West/East Dichotomies in the Study of Nationalism', *Comparative Political Studies*, 35:5 (2002), pp. 554-85.

promotes the cultivation of the nation. It emphasises what Hutchinson describes as ‘a moral community’ rather than any political consideration and is usually led by intellectuals and artists.¹⁰⁴ Originating from Von Herder’s view of unity from a shared cultural and historical origin, cultural nationalism emphasises the strengthening or defence of cultural identity and language over overt political demands.¹⁰⁵ This holds true within Welsh cultural nationalism, which promotes the centrality of the Welsh language and the traditional Nonconformist, generally rural, *Gwerin* culture.¹⁰⁶ Political nationalism in Wales, in the form of the WNP, also endorsed the fundamental nature of this cultural base. However, it believed that for the cultural foundation of the nation to prosper, Wales required self-determination, and this would only be achieved in the political arena.¹⁰⁷ For ease of identification, hereafter, this thesis will refer to cultural nationalists(ism) as cultural patriots(ism) and maintain the term nationalist/s for the political component of nationalism as professed by the WNP.

This thesis, which also relates to the endangerment of the Welsh language and attempts to protect it, will prove useful to a range of other scholarly debates, for example, as English was the language of the British nation state and Welsh was a minority language, there are clear implications for the concept of language politics.¹⁰⁸ The attempt to arrest the decline of the Welsh language by its own speakers, without official backing, also lends itself well to social scientists, especially to the disciplines of anthropology, linguistics, sociolinguistics, applied linguistic and sociological and political theory. David Crystal, for example, in 2000 appealed for the urgent need for more information about language loss and language endangerment.¹⁰⁹ This study also overlaps with wider concepts of identity, which according

¹⁰⁴ Hutchinson, ‘Cultural Nationalism’.

¹⁰⁵ Johann Gottfried Herder is often attributed for elucidating the ideology and practice of cultural nationalism. F. M. Barnard, *Herder on Nationality, Humanity and History* (Montreal, 2003).

¹⁰⁶ For more discussion on the traditional Welsh culture see Chapter One.

¹⁰⁷ D. G. Jones, ‘His Politics’ in A. R. Jones & G. Thomas (eds.) *Presenting Saunders Lewis* (Cardiff 1973), p. 31.

¹⁰⁸ For more information on language politics see, S. van Morgan, ‘Language Politics and Regional Nationalist Mobilisation in Galicia and Wales’, *Ethnicities*, 6:4 (Dec., 2006), 451-75; R. Mann, ‘Negotiating the Politic of Language: Language Learning and Civic Identity in Wales’, *Ethnicities*, 2 (June 2007), 208-24.

¹⁰⁹ D. Crystal, *Language Death* (Cambridge, 2000), p. ix; N. P. Himmelmann, ‘Reproduction and Preservation of Linguistic Knowledge: Linguistics’ Response to Language Endangerment’, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 37

to Bechhofer and McCrone, is 'one of the most basic social identities', and is in most cases unambiguous and directly linked to the nation-state of residence (or of birth).¹¹⁰ As Wales is part of the nation-state of Great Britain, Welsh identity is more indistinct and less banal than some theorists would suggest. This raises questions of affiliation to two of what Benedict Anderson termed 'imagined communities', especially when, as during World War Two in Wales, both imagined communities were perceived as being in imminent danger but from different sources.¹¹¹

Using the extensive collection of correspondence and papers, held at the National Library of Wales, and other archival sources, this thesis will shed light on the establishment and activities of the Committee for the Defence of Welsh Culture and UCF. It will, examine how the effective these cultural pressure groups were at protecting the Welsh language. The extent that these organisations represented the interests of all of Wales, as each claimed, will also be tested. By juxtaposing differences and similarities between the policies and approaches of these cultural movements, and those of the WNP, and importantly, the outcome of these policies, the theory that cultural movements are not affected by a decline in wartime political nationalism will be evaluated.

This thesis has been arranged chronologically. Chapter One focuses on the major events and influences that impacted on Welsh culture and on wider Welsh opinions leading up to the beginning of World War Two. While this is not a detailed analysis of Welsh culture or of the wider economic or political difficulties of the 1930s, it is important to place later events in context and to discuss the longer term reasons that led to the establishment of the Defence Committee. Chapter Two examines the early months of the war and the short term influences that led to the founding of a new national movement that claimed to represent Wales. The chapter will then detail the rapid organisational expansion that followed the formation of the Defence Committee and examine its activities, campaigns and ultimate difficulties. Chapter Three focuses on UCF. It will examine how this pressure group arose

(2008), p. 339; L. A. Grenoble, 'Discourse of Endangerment', *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 30:4 (2009), 369-71.

¹¹⁰ Bechhofer & McCrone, 'National Identity, Nationalism and Constitutional Change', p. 1.

¹¹¹ For example see M. Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London, 1995); B. Anderson. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London 1991), p. 6.

from a merger of the Defence Committee and the National Union of Welsh Societies and developed into an influential organisation that impacted on Welsh life. Chapter Four, will demonstrate that, following discontent with the work of other post-war reconstructions survey groups, UCF initiated its own national survey of Wales, to assess the impact of the war on Welsh society and to assist with a post-war strategy. The UCF Research into the Conditions of Welsh Social Life (*Ymchwil UCF i Gyflwr Bywyd Cymdeithasol Cymry*) was completed across Wales and beyond from late 1943 and throughout 1944. From the returns of the survey, key questions, within set categories will be quantitatively evaluated. The subsequent data summary, collated from this evaluation, will be used to draw conclusions on the cultural life of Wales in 1945. The result of this national survey of Wales has received very little scholarly attention.¹¹² Chapter Five will summarise some of the main campaigns that demonstrate the continued evolution of UCF after the end of World War Two, including the Parliament for Wales Campaign. Finally, the conclusion will attempt to assess the impact of these cultural movements on Wales and the Welsh language during the war. Overall it will argue that the idea of decline of Welsh nationalism during the war is unwarranted and relates solely to the wane in support for the WNP during the period. It will suggest that the period 1939-45 played an important part in forming a platform on which the post-war national revival of Wales was established.¹¹³

¹¹² Williams, 'Women and the Welsh Language in the Industrial Valleys'; Edwards and Griffith, 'Some Conceptions of Welsh National Identity and Governance', p. 137.

¹¹³ Johnes, 'For Class and Nation', p. 1261; J. G. Jones, 'The Parliament for Wales Campaign, 1950 – 1956', *Welsh History Review*, 16:2 (December 1992), 207-36.

Chapter 1

The Linguistic, Cultural and Political Landscape of Wales.

Wales is a meeting ground of what may be called, for brevity's sake, two cultures, and there is need for constant interpretation to arrive at mutual understanding. Hitherto, little attempt has been made to achieve this.¹

The Committee for the Defence of Welsh Culture was established in December 1939, 'to watch over the interests of Wales during the war.'² While conceptually, such a committee was initially proposed in September of that year, the foundations for the introduction of such a new patriotic movement were established much earlier. During the interwar period, the number of Welsh speakers continued to decrease and fears for the future of the language grew, despite the establishment of organisations to redress this decline. These linguistic fears mirrored other concerns associated with Welsh identity, specifically those connected to traditional Welsh culture and the declining support for Welsh Nonconformist religion, which, like the language, were considered key components of being Welsh. These increasing threats to Welsh identity and the continuing Anglicisation of Wales reflected other long standing divisions and as Jones suggested, little attempt was being made to unite the country. Some areas of Wales, including the south and north-east, had benefitted from the industrial revolution, while much of the rest of the nation remained rural and agricultural. These divisions shackled attempts to unite the Welsh nation. Additionally, from the 1930s, language decline was, for many in Wales, overshadowed by industrial decline and unemployment. This Chapter will initially explore the origin and status of elements considered by many to be fundamental to Welsh identity, namely the Protestant Nonconformist religion and traditional Welsh culture or *Gwerin*. It will detail the cultural and political landscape of Wales in the interwar period and examine how these relate to theoretical social divisions that have been used to sub-divide the nation. Finally, it will demonstrate how an increasingly collective response to threats to Welsh interests laid the foundation for the creation of a new organisation. This examination will also detail some of

¹ T. G. Jones, *The Culture and Traditions of Wales* (Wrexham, 1927), p. 1.

² T. I. Ellis, *Y Gynhadledd Genedlaethol er Diogelu Cymru* (Denbigh, 1940), p. 3.

the prominent personalities who, through their involvement with other movements, were destined to become prominent members of the Committee for the Defence of Welsh Culture and UCF. Ultimately, it will be seen that, by the beginning of World War Two, despite increasing concerns for the Welsh language, no unified or coordinated attempt had been made to address the regression.

I: Nonconformist Wales

During the early decades of the twentieth century Protestant Nonconformity dominated much of Welsh life. In a population of 2.5 million, the 'four great Nonconformist denominations,' guided the allegiance of almost 1.5 million Welsh people and exerted their influence beyond merely spiritual needs of its members and 'adherents' into the social and political leadership of local communities.³ Such was their influence within Welsh communities that in many areas the Nonconformist chapels affected not only the lives of those affiliated to them but also on the lives of people who never attended any of their activities.⁴ However, by the 1930s, the Nonconformist tradition, like the Welsh language, was suffering from declining membership. As affiliation to the Nonconformist faiths was considered 'part of the essence of Welshness', this was considered another threat to individual Welsh identity.⁵

During the middle of the nineteenth century the Protestant Nonconformist chapels surpassed the state aligned Anglican Church in both size and popularity, resulting in the latter being increasingly seen as 'an alien church supported by gentry and landowners'.⁶ Nonconformist values of Puritanism, self-improvement and education, with an emphasis on

³ D. D. Morgan, 'The Essence of Welshness?: Some Aspects of Christian Faith and National Identity in Wales, c.1900-2000' in R. Pope (ed.) *Religion and National Identity: Wales and Scotland c.1700-2000* (Cardiff, 2001), pp. 140-1.

⁴ R. M. Jones, *The North Wales Quarrymen, 1874-1922* (Cardiff, 1981), p. 43.

⁵ Morgan, 'The Essence of Welshness?', p. 139.

⁶ R. T. Jones, 'The Church and the Welsh Language in the Nineteenth Century' in G. H. Jenkins (ed.) *The Welsh Language and its Social Domains 1801-1911* (Cardiff, 2000), p. 215; Morgan, 'The Essence of Welshness?', p. 142; Jones, *The North Wales Quarrymen*, p. 63.

individual's rights and Liberal politics, fitted in well with the traditional Welsh beliefs of the majority of ordinary people.⁷ By 1851 around three quarters of the Welsh population were affiliated to the Nonconformist denominations. Although there were four primary Nonconformist denominations practising in Wales, they were barely any discernable differences between them.⁸ More significantly, despite their minor differences, on public and national issues they formed a united front and became a powerful voice on Welsh matters.⁹

The Welsh language gained significantly from this Nonconformist expansion. As with all Protestant Churches, in Nonconformity primacy was given to the teaching of the Bible. However, in contrast to other faiths, Nonconformists used a Welsh bible and expected every member to own, read and understand its contents.¹⁰ Nonconformists also preached in the vernacular of the congregation and moreover, encouraged ordinary, often working class people to take up positions of prominence with the chapel organisations. According to Jones, it was therefore 'inevitable' that it was through the medium of Welsh that many church meetings would be conducted. Jenkins concurred and concluded that on the whole 'Welsh was the language of the Nonconformist churches'.¹¹

The Nonconformist denomination's use of the Welsh language bound them to the ordinary people of Wales. This was a time when, according to some historians, a linguistically based two-tier Wales existed, with Welsh speakers often being considered inferior to their English speaking counterparts.¹² By this time much of the Welsh landowning elite had already

⁷ G. Williams, *The Welsh and Their Religion: Historical Essay* (Cardiff, 1991), p. 64.

⁸ Ibid, p. 64; R. T. Jones, Robert Pope (ed.) *Congregationalism in Wales* (Cardiff, 2004), p. 198.

⁹ Jones, *Congregationalism in Wales*, p. 198.

¹⁰ R. T. Jones, 'Nonconformity and the Welsh Language in the Nineteenth Century' in Jenkins (ed.), *The Welsh Language and its Social Domains*, p. 239.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² See, for example, K. O. Morgan, 'Welsh Nationalism: The Historical Background' in K. O. Morgan (ed.) *Modern Wales: Politics, Places and People* (Cardiff, 1995), p. 198; S. May, 'Accommodating and Resisting Minority Language Policy: The Case of Wales', *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 3:2 (2000), 101-128.

assimilated English customs and the English language.¹³ A growing divergence in social perception, where English was the language for the elite and the powerful, and Welsh was the language of the 'backward, ignorant' ordinary people, was reinforced with the publication of the now infamous Blue Books, which Morgan concluded to be 'an indictment of Welsh backwardness, ignorance, squalor, isolation, poverty, incompetence.'¹⁴ As this linguistic and social schism developed the Nonconformist denominations spoke to the ordinary people in their native tongue. In this way religion and language became synonymous with the identity of the ordinary Welsh folk, to the point that the radical MP Henry Richards argued that Welsh speakers and Nonconformists could say to the 'propertied class': 'We are the Welsh people and not you.'¹⁵ In essence Richard contended that Welshness was defined by language, culture and religion and not birth or heredity.¹⁶ This view predominated concepts of Welshness through the rest of the century and into the World War Two period and beyond.

By the end of the century, according to R. Tudur Jones, 'being a Welshman and being a Christian were virtually synonymous.'¹⁷ Moreover, this Christianity was being practiced

¹³ P. Jenkins, *A History of Modern Wales, 1536–1990* (London, 1992), p. 56; C. H. Williams, 'Separatism and the Mobilisation of Welsh National Identity' in C. H. Williams (ed.) *National Separatism* (Cardiff, 1982), pp. 145–201.

¹⁴ The Blue Books is term used to describe the three volumes of the *Reports of the Commissioners of Enquiry into the State of Education in Wales* (London, 1847). P. Morgan, 'The Gwerin of Wales – Myth and Reality' in I. Hume & W. T. R. Pryce (eds.) *The Welsh And Their Country* (Llandysul, 1986), p. 143; For more information on the impact of the Blue Books on Wales, see also, G. E. Jones, 'The Welsh Language in the Blue Books of 1847' in G. H. Jenkins (ed.) *The Welsh Language and its Social Domains*, pp. 431-458; P Morgan, 'From Long Knives to Blue Books', in R. R. Davies, R. A. Griffiths, I. G. Jones & K. O. Morgan (eds.), *Welsh Society and Nationhood: Historical Essays Presented to Glanmor Williams* (Cardiff, 1984), pp. 199-215; P. Morgan (ed.), *Brad y Llyfrau Gleision* (Llandysul, 1991); H. Walters, 'William Morris, Yr Athraw a'r "Llyfrau Gleision"', in H. Walters & H. T. Edwards (eds.) *Cynnwrf Canrif: Agweddau ar Ddiwylliant Gwerin* (Abertawe, 2004), pp. 82-99; W. G. Evans, "'A barrier to moral progress and commercial prosperity": 150th anniversary of the Blue Books', *Planet* 123 (1997), 88-93.

¹⁵ Jenkins, *A History of Modern Wales*, p. 12.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*; I. G. Jones, 'The Welsh Language and Politics' in G. H. Jenkins (ed.) *The Welsh Language and its Social Domains*, p. 526.

¹⁷ R. T. Jones, *Ffydd ac Argyfwng Cenedl: Hanes Crefydd yng Nghymru, 1890-1914, Vol. I* (Swansea, 1981), p. 15.

primarily in the Nonconformist chapels and confirmed in 1887, when the Dean of Bangor calculated that of the 1.3 million people living in Wales, 850,000 were Nonconformists.¹⁸ By this time the influence of the chapels permeated every aspect of Welsh life. As R. Merfyn Jones study of the quarry communities of North Wales demonstrated, Nonconformity provided both a collective identity and a base for social activities. However, it not only became the ‘focus and expression of community values’, they led their communities.¹⁹ For example, the industrial action such as the one undertaken by quarrymen in the Nantlle Valley in 1906 was organised by the chapels and not the Union lodge. It was also common for chapels to sustain industrial action. Jones concluded that the Nonconformist chapels ‘dominated behaviour outside of the mere act of worship’.²⁰

The Nonconformist tradition in Wales was especially strong in the political arena. During the second half of the nineteenth century it not only consolidated its ‘unassailable superiority’ religiously, it dominated Welsh politics. Between 1860 and 1914 the overwhelming majority of Welsh constituencies returned Liberal MPs and the party dominated the newly established County Councils.²¹ Mirroring Nonconformist objectives, the Liberal Party campaigned for the disestablishment of the Church of England in Wales, championed land reform and supported temperance, including the Sunday closing of public houses.²² From within the ranks of this Nonconformist Welsh Liberal cohort, the first modern nationalist movement for Wales would be established, in the form of *Cymru Fydd* (New Wales or Young Wales) which set the tone for later twentieth century movements.²³

Following World War One, despite the Welsh Revival of 1904-5, the Nonconformist denominations’ influence, like the Welsh language numbers, was reducing.²⁴ Although

¹⁸ Adfyfr, *Neglected Wales* (London, 1887); Adfyfr was the pseudonym of T. J. Hughes, Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation*, p. 114.

¹⁹ Jones, *The North Wales Quarrymen*, p. 62.

²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 43.

²¹ Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation*, pp. 12-3 & 28-9; Williams, *The Welsh and Their Religion*, p. 64.

²² D. Roberts, ‘The Strange Death of the Liberal Party’ in J. Osmond (ed.) *The National Question Again: Welsh Political Identity in the 1980s* (Llandysul, 1985), p. 75.

²³ See section on Cultural Landscape (below).

²⁴ For a detailed account of the difficulties faced by Nonconformists in Wales during the period, see, Jones, *Ffydd ac Argyfwng Cenedl*, Vol. 1; R. T. Jones, *Ffydd ac Argyfwng Cenedl: Hanes Crefydd yng Nghymru, 1890-*

chapel membership numbers would not peak until 1926, adherents (the members of the congregations), were already declining noticeably.²⁵ Of the crisis facing the religion, the Principal of Bala-Bangor College,²⁶ Thomas Rees, identified among the causes, World War One, the rise of socialism and the soon to be implemented Welsh Church Act, with its resultant disestablishment of religion in Wales.²⁷ Rees's concern that there would be an exodus back to Anglicanism proved groundless. Although, Jones later argued that once the battle for disestablishment was won, 'Nonconformity lost the aim that had united and excited its followers',²⁸

Of greater significance to the Nonconformists chapels was the effect of World War One, which caused irrevocable damage. Despite being deeply pacifist and each denomination passing pre-war resolutions to this effect, once Belgium's independence had been violated by Germany, Welsh Nonconformity found itself almost wholly in favour of British intervention in the war.²⁹ This support for the conflict and the abandonment of traditional anti-war views resulted, for many, in something of a crisis of faith, which became magnified by the human devastation of this mechanised war. Jones' study of Congregationalism confirmed that, as a result of the war, 'the old religious patterns were distorted beyond recovery'.³⁰ He concluded that thousands of members lost their enthusiasm for the chapel

1914 Vol. 2 (Swansea, 1982). These two volumes have also been translated into English and combined, see, R. T. Jones, S. P. Jones & R. Pope, *Faith and Crisis of a Nation: Wales 1890-1914* (Cardiff, 2004).

²⁵ R. Pope, *Building Jerusalem: Nonconformity, Labour and the Social Question in Wales 1906-1939* (Cardiff, 2014), p. 116; Morgan, 'The Essence of Welshness?', p. 148.

²⁶ Bala-Bangor College was a theological seminary college for the Welsh Independents (*Undeb Annibynwyr Cymraeg*).

²⁷ Welsh Church Act 1914, 4 & 5 Geo 5, Ch. 91 (HMSO, London, 1914) received Royal Approval in September 1914, after a lengthy delay in the House of Lords. However, its implementation was again delayed by the onset of World War One. It eventually came into force on 31 March 1920.

²⁸ R. T. Jones *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru* (Swansea, 1966), p. 280.

²⁹ D. D. Morgan, *Span of the Cross: Christian Religion and Society in Wales, 1914-2000* (Cardiff, 1999), p. 55, Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru*, p. 279; For information on Wales' contribution to the war effort, see for example, R. Barlow, *Wales and World War One* (Llandysul, 2014); M. Renshaw, *Welsh on the Somme: Mametz Wood* (Barnsley, 2015); N. Shepley, *Wales and the First World War* (Cardiff, 2014); G. Jenkins, *Cymry'r Rhyfel Byd Cyntaf* (Talybont, 2014).

³⁰ Jones, *Congregationalism in Wales*, p. 220.

and for the virtue of the Sabbath. For others surviving the war brought them closer to their faith. Overall however, the effect was more negative than positive and was long lasting. As Morgan concluded 'the 'collective guilt ... for having so gullibly supporting Lloyd George's propaganda' and supporting World War One lasted throughout the interwar period and were still influenced chapel thinking at the onset of World War Two.³¹

This war-guilt impacted on Welsh politics. Many Nonconformists, who considered that they had been betrayed by the Liberal Party during the war, withdrew from politics. Similarly many lifelong Liberals who felt that the party had abandoned its principles to win the war also withdrew their support.³² This post-war political apathy within Nonconformity and Liberalism coincided with the rise of a new challenge to the Welsh language and Welsh culture, as working people unified their political rights and supported the Labour Party.³³

Kier Hardie, the first Leader of the Independent Labour Party, was elected Member of Parliament for Merthyr Tydfil in 1900 and by 1914 the party held five parliamentary seats in South Wales.³⁴ By the 1922 General Election Labour polled 41 percent of the vote, winning all 15 parliamentary seats of mining constituencies, together with Caernarfonshire, Anglesey, Wrexham and Swansea East seats and significantly for the first time surpassing the Liberal Party, who polled 34 percent.³⁵ From a Welsh perspective however, the Labour Party, unlike the Liberals, were hostile to Welsh devolution and held no cohesive policy on the Welsh language.³⁶

The impact of socialism on Nonconformity was not uniform across Wales. The south more readily accepted the collectivism of the Labour Party over the individualism of its Liberal

³¹ Morgan, *Span of the Cross*, p. 158.

³² Pope, *Building Jerusalem*, pp. 72 & 163-4; T. Rees, 'The Crisis of Welsh Nonconformity,' *The Welsh Outlook* 7:3 (1920), p. 58.

³³ Pope, *Building Jerusalem*, p. 157 & 163-4; Morgan, *The Span of the Cross*, p. 153.

³⁴ M. Worley, *Labour Inside the Gate: History of the British Labour Party Between the Wars* (London, 2005), p. 45.

³⁵ Davies, *A History of Wales*, p. 528; F. McGuinness, *UK Election Statistics: 1918-2012: Research Paper 12/43* (August, 2012); A. Thorpe, *A History of the British Labour Party* (Basingstoke, 3rd edn, 2008), p. 17.

³⁶ A. Cole & I. Stafford, *Devolution and Governance: Wales Between Capacity and Constraint* (London, 2015), p. 6.

past, especially in the industrial areas³⁷ The developing schism between workers in the south, especially miners, and Nonconformists was amplified by the chapels refusal to take sides during the 1926 General Strike and their subsequent refusal to criticise the harsh treatment miners received on their return to work.³⁸ In contrast, the Welsh speaking north, according to Robert Pope, was far less receptive to the socialist message, primarily due to its greater religiously and politically conservatism. Reinforcing this view, Congregationalists held their ground best in the Welsh speaking cultural areas and lost most ground in parts of Glamorgan and in the Welsh marches.³⁹ In essence, the political divide of Wales between Labour and Liberal parties roughly mirrored the linguistic divide of Wales between the Welsh speaking and more Anglicised areas.

The declining chapel attendance numbers, the rise of the socialist hegemony, especially in the south, combined with growing Anglicisation and other factors meant that as World War Two approached, Welsh Nonconformity was 'in serious jeopardy'.⁴⁰ Morgan has demonstrated that by this time the number of 'adherents' attending services had almost disappeared and the regular communicant membership was also steadily declining.⁴¹ However, despite this deteriorating position Nonconformity was still a significant influence on Welsh life, especially in Welsh speaking areas. Morgan summarised well the standing of the Nonconformist chapels in Wales in 1939:

The virtues of contemporary Nonconformity were many; its still impressive size and breadth of influence over a whole swathe of Welsh life, its wide provision of church fellowship in every town, village and hamlet, the undoubted quality of an ordained ministry which was still attracting some of the most talented young men of their generation ... there was still a consciousness of decline and a nagging feeling that little could be done to halt its relentless progress.⁴²

³⁷ Morgan, 'The Essence of Welshness?', p. 147.

³⁸ Morgan, *Span of the Cross*, p. 154.

³⁹ Pope, *Building Jerusalem*, pp. 74-5; Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru*, pp. 281-2.

⁴⁰ Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru*, pp. 278-95.

⁴¹ Morgan, *Span of the Cross*, p. 162.

⁴² *Ibid*, p. 173.

As war approached, fears for the declining influence of the Nonconformist chapels paralleled fears for the Welsh language. As both of these were considered by many contemporaries to be indispensable characteristics of Welsh identity, the future of Welshness itself was considered to be in jeopardy.

Concepts of identity are not always singular and in the 1930s, as at other times, many people had affiliation to several identities simultaneously. At the onset of the World War Two, views on national affiliation had little changed since Bill Jones' study of the end of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, when some in Wales considered themselves British only; 'others, a small minority perhaps, did not regard themselves as British at all. For most, a sense of their own Britishness and a pride in Empire co-existed ... comfortably alongside their identification of themselves as Welsh.'⁴³ This dual attachment was apparent in the papers of both the Defence Committee and UCF. In contrast to British national identity, which originated from concepts of geographical belonging, Welsh identity, for the most part, stemmed from a fusion of language, culture and religion, as asserted by Henry Richards. The Welsh language and the Christian religion had long unbroken histories in Wales. However, Welsh culture, as it was understood in the 1930s, was a more recent construct.

II: Traditional Welsh Culture & the *Gwerin*

The development of the concept of a traditional Welsh culture or *Gwerin*, as promoted by both cultural patriots and political nationalists in the interwar period can be divided into three chronological stages. Historians are in general agreement that the concept of a *Gwerin* culture, was first advanced as the culture of a Wales, during the 1840s and 50s and was seen as a reaction, both to the report into the state of education in Wales, described as the 'treachery of the blue books', which concluded that the Welsh were ignorant and immoral, and to the modernizing effects of industrialisation and urbanisation.⁴⁴ However, it was

⁴³ B. Jones, 'Banqueting at Moveable Feast: Wales 1870-1914 in G. E. Jones & D. Smith (eds.) *The People of Wales* (Llandysul, 1999), p. 176.

⁴⁴ Davies, *A History of Wales*, pp. 378-81; Morgan, 'The *Gwerin* of Wales', pp. 143-6; E. Sherringham, 'O. M. Edwards, Culture and the Industrial Classes', *Llafur* 6:1 (1992), p. 31.

during the 1880s and 90s that the concept was cultivated and between then and 1914, Morgan argued, the *Gwerin* culture was formed and developed.⁴⁵ During this period the concept was fashioned beyond that of contemporary reality and developed a symbolic meaning. This more idealised or mythical version of the *Gwerin*, living in a 'moralised community', was later promulgated during the 1920s and 30s, by writers such as W. J. Gruffydd.⁴⁶ However, by this time, it was largely referred to as characterising an ideal that had passed by.⁴⁷ This idealised Welsh culture was described as educated, often rurally based, Welsh speaking, hardworking and religious people. While it portrayed a classless society, that included the middle and working classes, Tory squires and Anglican clergy were excluded.⁴⁸

While Welsh writers including Crwys Williams (Archdruid Crwys), Moelona and Ernest Rhys helped develop the *Gwerin* concept, it was the author, educationalist and historian O. M. Edwards who has been credited with being its main proponent, building it into an expression of cultural nationalism.⁴⁹ His success is such that he has been described as 'the father of the older, cultural side of modern Welsh nationalism' (or patriotism as used in this thesis).⁵⁰ Edwards encouraged his fellow countrymen to take pride in their traditions, language and way of life and stressed the importance of Wales's cultural autonomy.⁵¹ This he achieved though the publication of a number of periodicals, the most notable being *Cymru* (Wales), launched in 1891, and *Cymru'r Plant* (Children's Wales) introduced the

⁴⁵ Morgan, 'The Gwerin of Wales', pp. 135-9 & 143-6.

⁴⁶ P. Gruffudd, 'Prospects of Wales: Contested Geographical Imaginations', in R. Fevre and A. Thompson (eds.) *Nation, Identity and Social Theory: Perspectives from Wales* (Llandybie, 1999), p. 151; For more details of this view see Griffith, 'Saving the Soul of the Nation' p. 177; Jenkins, *A History of Modern Wales*, pp. 334-5.

⁴⁷ For a more in depth evaluation of *Gwerin* and its writers see, T. J. Morgan, *Diwylliant Gwerin: Ac Ysgrifau Eraill* (Llandysul, 1972).

⁴⁸ Morgan, 'The Gwerin of Wales', p. 135.

⁴⁹ Ibid; H. W. Davies, *O. M. Edwards* (Cardiff, 1988), p. 2; K. Gramich, 'Creating and Destroying 'the Man Who Does Not Exist': the Peasantry and Modernity in Welsh and Irish Writing', *Irish Studies Review*, 17:1 (2009), 19-30.

⁵⁰ Davies, *O. M. Edwards*, p. 2.

⁵¹ L. A. Hughes, 'O. M. Edwards: Ei Waith A'I Weledigaeth' in G. Williams (ed.) *Ysgrifau Beirniadol XXIX* (Denbigh, 2010), pp. 51-2; Davies, *O. M. Edwards*, p. 42.

following year.⁵² These journals were written specifically to provide reading material for ordinary people and to promote the teaching of Welsh in schools.⁵³ Edwards' aim and motto was 'to raise the old country to its feet' (*Codi'r Hen Wlad yn ei Hol*) and he used his ability as a writer to pursue his vision for Wales and disseminated his view of the ordinary people, the *Gwerin*, as a key feature.⁵⁴ He declared in the opening issue of *Cymru* 'The Welsh are a nation of scholars. The aim of *Cymru* will be to help them to understand the history, thought and ambitions of their own land'.

These journals proved successful and as Davies confirmed, *Cymru* became 'a powerful and influential periodical' while *Cymru'r Plant*, 'became the spearhead in the battle to safeguard the Welsh language'.⁵⁵ Edwards harnessed the overall sense of the *Gwerin* and, as concluded by Llywelyn-Williams, expressed its concept 'in powerful words which enchanted and captivated a generation of young people in Wales.'⁵⁶ These efforts should not be viewed in isolation. For example, the writer Crwys' submission to the 1911 National Eisteddfod, entitled *Gwerin Cymru* (Welsh *Gwerin*), was described as containing the most comprehensive interpretation of the *Gwerin*.⁵⁷

The *Gwerin* culture, as promoted by nineteenth century writers, was established in preindustrial Wales and was, as described by Morgan, a Nonconformist ideal. It was described as a classless society, religious, educated, cultured, hard-working, law-abiding, respectful of the Sabbath and temperate in drink. It maintained closeness to the land and aspired towards ownership of land and property. It promoted poetry, verse, singing and intelligent debate. It desired education and mental challenges and spent its leisure time in the pursuit of knowledge. In essence, this Welsh culture was an example to the world of

⁵² For more information on Edwards publications see H. W. Davies, *O. M. Edwards*.

⁵³ Davies, *O. M. Edwards*, p. 43; For a general analysis of the importance Edwards placed on ordinary people to the concept of the *Gwerin*, see especially, O. M. Edwards, *Cartrefi Cymru* (Wrexham 1896).

⁵⁴ Davies, *O. M. Edwards*, p. 4; For an investigation into O.M. Edwards vision for Wales see, for example, Hughes, 'O. M. Edwards', pp. 51-77; J. E. Carwyn-Williams, 'Gweledigaeth O. M. Edwards', *Taliesin*, 4 (1963), pp. 5-29; A. Llywelyn-Williams, 'Owen M. Edwards: Hanesydd a Llenor', *Y Traethodydd*, 114 (1959), pp. 1-16.

⁵⁵ Davies, *O. M. Edwards*, pp. 43 & 57.

⁵⁶ A. Llywelyn-Williams, *Y Nos Y Niwl A'r Ynys* (Cardiff, 1960), p. 141.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

puritan and religious values.⁵⁸ This led Jones to conclude that some elements of society believed that 'Wales was the most faithfully religious corner of the World.'⁵⁹ This idealised portrayal of the *Gwerin* was, for some, too good to be true.⁶⁰ Alun Llywelyn-Williams argued that the common people of Wales were viewed through a romantic dreamy outlook, as if viewed through a fog, which distorts the imagination.⁶¹ Morgan confirms that the portrayal of the *Gwerin* was, to a large extent, embellished and elaborated into a mythical status. While the *Gwerin* culture was often perceived to be located in rural Wales, it did include some industrialised areas, especially the quarry communities of the north. O. M. Edwards' wrote of the importance of the quarries and elevated quarrymen into folklore, especially when comparing them to the Anglicisation and industrialisation that stemmed from the coal mines and the 'dreadfulness and sin' of the big town that accompanied them.⁶² For example in 1893, when he wrote 'Quarrymen are not like colliers, they are more civilized, more evangelical and they prefer to suffer rather than do anything wrong'.⁶³ However, Roberts' study into the quarrymen of Gwynedd challenged the mythical status which these communities had achieved within the *Gwerin*, concluding that, there was no traditional cultural hegemony within these communities.⁶⁴ Despite these critiques of the *Gwerin* concept, it is evident that, like most successful myths, the illusion had its basis in an element of contemporary reality.⁶⁵

Evaluations of Victorian Welsh life in both north and South Wales confirms a population dedicated to mass participation in cultural events, specifically eisteddfodau, *cymanfa ganu*

⁵⁸ Morgan, 'The Gwerin of Wales', p. 139.

⁵⁹ Jones, *The North Wales Quarrymen*, p. 63.

⁶⁰ For an idealistic view of a village in Welsh literature see H. T. Edwards, *O'r Pentre Gwyn I Gwnderi* (Llandysul, 2004), although the myth of such a village, as portrayed by the *Gwerin* writers, was debunked by the author in the preface.

⁶¹ Llywelyn-Williams, *Y Nos Y Niwl A'r Ynys*, p. 161.

⁶² O.M. Edwards, *Troy n Llydaw* (Dolgellau, 1981), p. 164; O. M. Edwards, *Tro I'r De* (Aberystwyth, 1958), p. 51; O. M. Edwards, *Tro I'r De* (Aberystwyth, 1958), p. 51.

⁶³ O. M. Edwards, 'Diwrnod ym Mlaen Blaenau Ffestiniog', *Cymru* (Sept. 1893), pp. 108-9.

⁶⁴ D. Roberts, 'Y Deryn Nos a'l Deithiau: Diwylliant Derbyniol Chwarelwyr Gwynedd' in G. H. Jenkins (ed.) *Cof Cenedl: Ysgrifau ar Hanes Cymru*, Rhif III (Llandysul, 1988), pp. 151-178.

⁶⁵ Morgan, 'The Gwerin of Wales', p. 150.

(hymn-singing festivals) and religious activities.⁶⁶ An eisteddfod was a competitive musical and literary event, organised at every level of Welsh society. Schools, Sunday schools, villages, towns and regions would compete against each other regularly, with the most talented performers competing at the annual weeklong festival known as the National Eisteddfod of Wales. Reinforcing the *Gwerin* vision and in keeping with the idea of an educated working-class, this National Eisteddfod was sometimes termed ‘*Prifysgol y Werin*’ (the *Gwerin*’s University).⁶⁷ In this way the whole of Welsh society was a performance culture.⁶⁸

The *Gwerin* culture for Edwards represented the greatest strength of Wales.⁶⁹ Reinforcing this, Davies has argued that the periodical *Cymru* ‘became a symbol of a new era in national consciousness’, which generated pride with separate Welsh identity, rooted in Welsh soil and a unifying force between north and south.⁷⁰ However, Edwards, like the other *Gwerin* writers, portrayed this culture as being representative of the whole of Wales, when in reality

⁶⁶ Jones, *The North Wales Quarrymen*; G. Williams, *Valleys of Song: Music and Society in Wales* (Cardiff, 2003); Morgan *Diwylliant Gwerin ac Ysgrifau Eraill*, pp. 7-116.

⁶⁷ See A. Llwyd, *Hanes Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Cymru: Prifysgol y Werin 1900-1918 – Hanes Eisteddfod Genedlaethol* (Llandybie, 2008).

⁶⁸ For an evaluation of the *Gwerin* culture in the north of Wales, see, Jones, *The North Wales Quarrymen*, which confirms that eisteddfodau were regularly held in quarry town and villages and within the quarries. It demonstrates the huge appetite for music, rhymes and verses within these communities, as well as intelligence challenges, including tests of memory, word games and maths problems and informed discussions. These competitions frequently occurred during lunch breaks, resulting in the canteens (or *Caban*) becoming the centre of this *Gwerin* culture. See also Roberts, ‘Y Deryn Nos a’l Deithiau’, p. 153; For examples of cultural participation in the south, see, Morgan, *Diwylliant Gwerin ac Ysgrifau Eraill*, pp. 7-116. Morgan details the *Gwerin* culture in the industrialised Aman and Swansea Valleys. Here the significance of the Nonconformist Chapels within the culture was clearly demonstrated. The scale of participation in some events, especially choral singing was enormous, with some competitions attended by tens of thousands. Almost every industrial town in Wales boasted an amateur choral society. However some of these competitive events led to behaviour that fell short of Edwards’ vision of a religious and tolerant people. For more information, see, Williams, *Valleys of Song*.

⁶⁹ See O. M. Edwards, *Er Mwyn Cymru* (Wrexham, 1927), p. 64 quoted in Morgan, ‘The *Gwerin* of Wales’, p. 137.

⁷⁰ Davies, *O. M. Edwards*, pp. 39-40.

it only reflected the Welsh speaking, Nonconformist areas.⁷¹ Moreover, this culture was portrayed as the 'true' Welsh culture, as argued by Gwyn Alf Williams, this resulted in the Welsh speaking, Nonconformist *Gwerin* viewing themselves the 'real Welsh' and everyone outside of this as only half-Welsh.⁷² This opinion has resonated throughout the twentieth century and beyond. Thus Edwards' vision of unifying Wales ultimately contributed to an increase in the promotion of its divisions.

The idealised views of the Welsh *Gwerin* portrayed harmonious communities, within which everyone participated in the various cultural and religious events. The reality was somewhat different. Analysis of communities located in the Welsh heartlands in the twentieth century, uncovered two distinctly different ways of life coexisting harmoniously. One group conformed to the traditional view of the *Gwerin*; chapel people, earnest and respectable, teetotal, aspirations to run businesses and own property. They also often comprised most of the community leaders, including, for example, deacons, elders and chairmen of various local committees. The second group were described as 'feckless' and 'tavern drinkers', who were not interested in religion, property or business. They were, in general, happy people willing to accept leadership of others.⁷³ Roberts, while discussing the slate communities of the north, confirms the existence of a dual society living together but argues the distinction between them was not 'black and white.'⁷⁴ However, these studies to reinforce Jones conclusion that, within the areas studied, the chapels, of which they were part, affected the lives of everyone with the locality, including the people who never attended any of their activities.⁷⁵

Overall, O. M. Edwards and others managed to manipulate the relationship between language, religion, literature and nation into a powerful and influential narrative of Welsh identity.⁷⁶ For this reason Edwards, in particular, was a key figure in the development of

⁷¹ Morgan, 'The Gwerin of Wales', pp. 134-152; Roberts, 'Y Deryn Nos a'I Deithiau'.

⁷² G. A. Williams, *When was Wales?*, p. 204.

⁷³ Morgan, 'The Gwerin of Wales', p. 148.

⁷⁴ Roberts, 'Y Deryn Nos a'I Deithiau', p. 173.

⁷⁵ Jones, *The North Wales Quarrymen*, p. 43.

⁷⁶ Hughes, 'O. M. Edwards', p. 73.

national consciousness in Wales.⁷⁷ His vision of the idealised *Gwerin* culture, while exaggerated and mythologized in literature, was based on a contemporary reality that existed in many parts of Wales. By the interwar period, as Anglicisation increased, the Welsh language and the associated *Gwerin* retracted further into the Welsh heartlands. By this time Welsh leaders, such as W. J. Gruffydd, believed that the combined impact of World War One, the decline of Liberalism and the Welsh language were responsible for this waning.⁷⁸ It has been argued that 'The *Gwerin* idea comes to the fore when Welsh society was forced to defend itself. This it did by defining itself.'⁷⁹ As World War Two approached and fears increased for Welsh society, it is unsurprising that the myth of the *Gwerin* was again harnessed by some to define Welsh identity.

III: Schisms

By the beginning of the twentieth century Wales was divided by social divisions. Various scholars have used differing parameters to underline these schisms, the most common being based on geography, linguistics or culture. As early as 1921, Alfred Zimmern, proposed a 'three way split' of Wales.⁸⁰ He referred to 'Welsh Wales', in reference to the Welsh speaking heartlands, the industrial 'American Wales' and the southern coastal strip as 'Upper class' or 'English Wales'. In 1985, political analyst Dennis Balsom reinforced this 'Three Wales model', using the term '*Y Fro Gymraeg*, where, 'speaking Welsh, was at the core of how they saw their lives'.⁸¹ Balsom, also spoke of the South Wales valleys as 'a consciously Welsh' region, occupied by the Welsh but not Welsh-speakers and finally a 'British Wales' making up the remainder of the country, which generally reflected the industrialised and more Anglicised regions.⁸² This was not the only theoretical division. Emrys (usually referred to E. G.) Bowen, using a concept of 'Geographical Determinism',

⁷⁷ Ibid, p. 52.

⁷⁸ Morgan, 'The *Gwerin* of Wales', p. 147.

⁷⁹ Ibid, p. 150.

⁸⁰ Zimmern, *My Impressions of Wales*; D. Smith, *Wales: A Question of History* (Bridgend, 1999); Alfred Zimmern held the first chair in International Politics at University of Wales, Aberystwyth.

⁸¹ Johnes, 'For Class and Nation'.

⁸² D. Balsom, 'The Three-Wales Model' Osmond (ed.) *The National Question Again*, pp. 1-17.

preferred a two way division and discussed an 'Inner Wales' and 'Outer Wales'. Inner Wales being located in the north and west, while Outer Wales covered the south and east.' This schism, Bowen argued, was the result of how both regions reacted to English immigrants. 'Inner Wales ... has always been strong in its indigenous character – so strong indeed that invariably incoming ideas and movements were 'Cymricized' and modified so that they became integral to the national culture.' Thus, the impact of immigrants was absorbed into Welsh culture and the Welsh language with only limited influence. Conversely, as the attributes of 'Outer Wales', were, in his opinion, not as strong, local and regional characteristics were themselves changed as a result of contact with English immigrants.⁸³ This theory resonates in Mike Savage's theory of 'Elective Belonging', where the characteristic of an area are determined by those electing to reside there.⁸⁴ In contrast to Elective Belonging, Geographical Determinism has largely been discredited in academic circles and Bowen's own conclusion that 'Inner Wales' was the only 'real' Wales, fuelled regional divisions.⁸⁵ The assertion that Outer Wales, British Wales or English Wales are synonymous with not being Welsh was exclusionist and offensive to many. Gwyn A. Williams, for example, responded to such claims, 'The more arrogant, extreme or paranoid exponents of Welshness simply refuse to see any 'culture' at all in English speaking Wales'.⁸⁶ Reinforcing this lack of homogeneity between north and south *The Spectator* reported in 1937, 'It was a very well-known Welshman who said to me the other day, 'I would rather be ruled from Whitehall than from Glamorgan.'"⁸⁷

The common feature of these theoretical models was the linguistic divergence between the Welsh speaking heartlands and the rest of Wales. These divisions proved challenging to any organisation aiming to represent the whole of Wales. As electoral results demonstrated, the WNP enjoyed higher levels of support in Welsh speaking areas. In contrast, the National Union of Welsh Societies, which was established to combat Anglicisation, was more robust in South Wales. While these divisions of the nation were generalisations, they did reflect

⁸³ E. G. Bowen, 'The Geography of Wales as a Background to its History', Hume & Pryce (eds.) *The Welsh and Their Country*, pp. 77-8.

⁸⁴ M. Savage, G. Bagnall and B. J. Longhurst, *Globalization and Belonging* (London, 2005).

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, p. 85.

⁸⁶ Williams, *When Was Wales*, p. 236.

⁸⁷ J. D. Jones, 'Welsh Nationalism', *The Spectator*, (2 September 1937), 373-4.

significant linguistic and cultural variations, each of which needed representation. To truly represent Wales an organisation needed to transcend these divisions and appeal to every region of Wales.

IV: Cultural Landscape

Efforts to protect the Welsh language from the increasing impact of Anglicisation began prior to the onset of the 'great seminal catastrophe' in 1914.⁸⁸ Two of the most notable movements to attempt to redress this linguistic revolution were the short lived *Cymru Fydd* (New Wales or Young Wales) of the late Nineteenth Century and National Union of Welsh Societies, established in 1913. The National Union would, in 1941 become a component part of UCF, while the former lent its name to the new movement. Thus both of these movements would influence the Union.

This rise in political nationalism during the nineteenth century was not lost on Wales. In 1886, *Cymru Fydd* was established from within the Welsh Liberal hegemony discussed earlier. Now Wales had its first modern nationalist movement.⁸⁹ For a decade this pressure group appeared to unite Welsh cultural and political ambitions. The movement achieved notable successes, especially in the field of education and for the first time brought the question of Home Rule for Wales to the top of the political agenda.⁹⁰ The achievements of *Cymru Fydd*, according to Williams, are such, that a century later, 'the scope and the sweep of this movement ... are still breathtaking.'⁹¹ Initially, *Cymru Fydd* was led by T. E. Ellis, who

⁸⁸ The term 'the great seminal catastrophe of the century' was termed by American diploma and writer George F. Kennan in the introduction to G. F. Kennan, *The Decline of Bismarck's European Order: Franco-Russian Relations 1875-1890* (Princeton N. J., 1979), p. 3.

⁸⁹ Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation*, p.27.

⁹⁰ K. O. Morgan, 'Welsh Nationalism: The Historical Background', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 6:1 (Nationalism and Separatism) (1971), 153-9 & 161-72; For example the creation of a Central Welsh Board in 1896 and the establishment of the University of Wales; *Cymru Fydd*, *Home Rule for Wales* (London, 1890); For more detail on *Cymru Fydd* see D. R. Hughes, *Cymru Fydd 1886-1896* (Cardiff, 2006).

⁹¹ Williams, *When Was Wales*, p. 232.

had been described as 'the golden boy of Welsh politics'.⁹² It was Ellis, according to John Grigg, who felt that the movement 'should be oriented towards politics as well as towards culture', where it had its roots.⁹³ Even to contemporaries Ellis's contribution to Wales was recognised, Arthur Price, for example, argued 'he was the greatest politician that Wales ever produced'.⁹⁴ Other prominent members of *Cymru Fydd* included Owen Morgan Edwards, John Edward Lloyd and David Lloyd George who followed Ellis as leader.⁹⁵ By 1896 the traditional difficulty of politically uniting the north and south of Wales brought an end to the organisation, when the North Wales based *Cymru Fydd League* (which included the North Wales Liberal Federation) and the South Wales Liberal Federation failed to merge.⁹⁶ This failure, according to Morgan left *Cymru Fydd* in ruins.⁹⁷ However, for a time this Welsh movement was firmly established within the British political system and worked from within it to promote Welsh interests.

Almost half a century later, direct links between this movement and the Committee for the Defence of Welsh Culture (and UCF) helped the new organisation gain significant respectability. *Cymru Fydd* was considered by some to be 'the high point in Welsh political national identity' and, although it proved short lived, was seen as a unifying force.⁹⁸ The most significantly link was Tom I. Ellis, the secretary of the Defence Committee, who was

⁹² W. Jones, *Thomas Edward Ellis 1859-1899* (Cardiff, 1986), p. 93; Smith, *Wales: A Question of History*, p. 142; G. Evans, *Land of My Fathers: 2000 Years of Welsh History* (Talybont, 1992), p. 403; For more information on T. E. Ellis, see, Chapter 2.

⁹³ J. Grigg, *The Young Lloyd George* (London, 1990), p.158.

⁹⁴ Jones, *Thomas Edward Ellis*, pp. 4 & 87; T. I. Ellis, *Thomas Edward Ellis*, NLW website, DWB, 'Ellis, Thomas Edward', <http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s-ELLI-EDW-1859.html>, accessed 24 February 2016; Arthur Price was a barrister, journalist and dedicated Welsh nationalist, who had previously denounced Ellis for accepting of a position in Gladstone's government.

⁹⁵ NLW website, 'Disestablishment, Cymru Fydd and Plaid Cymru', www.llgc.org.uk/ygyrchu/Datganoli/PlaidCymru/index-e.htm, accessed 16 March 2015.

⁹⁶ Grigg, *Young Lloyd George*, pp. 158-9; K. O. Morgan, 'Divided We Stand', *History Today*, 49:5 (May, 1999), 24-6.

⁹⁷ Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation*, p. 118.

⁹⁸ U. Masson, *For Women For Wales and For Liberalism: Women in Liberal Politics in Wales, 1880-1914* (Cardiff, 2010), p. 178.

the son of T. E. Ellis, one of the founders of the original movement.⁹⁹ This allowed the younger Ellis to make use of family political connections in London, when promoting the Defence Committee. Other family links also existed. Ifan ap Owen Edwards, founder of the *Urdd* and member of the Defence Committee, was the son of O. M. Edwards, while another prominent member of the Defence Committee, William George was the brother of David Lloyd George.

The connection between the two movements was not limited to family ties. *Cymru Fydd* aimed to establish branches in every town and village of Wales and to unite all existing associated societies into a single cohesive body to promote Welsh national interests.¹⁰⁰ These interests included the preservation of the Welsh language and the cultivation of Welsh literature, art and music and the preservation of national monuments and antiquities. *Cymru Fydd* also included self-determination for Wales but as Grigg suggests there was little trace of separatism within the movement, its objective was Welsh devolution.¹⁰¹ With one notable exception, these aspirations would again be echoed in the later movement. The one significant difference between *Cymru Fydd* and the Defence Committee was that the latter organisation did not pursue a policy of Home Rule. The Committee, following the example of the National Eisteddfod, asserted it would remain entirely outside the political arena.

In 1911 the concept of a congress or union was proposed to unite the cultural societies that had recently been established in South Wales. Two year later, under the guidance of Barry Schoolteacher, D. Arthen Evans and chapel Minister J. Tywi Jones, the National Union of Welsh Societies was established.¹⁰² Arthen, as he was known, became General Secretary of this new National Union and his connections to Welsh cultural, religious and educational organisations meant he was ideally suited to role. Apart from his work in Jenner Park Boys School, he had founded the Barry Cymmrodorion and had close links to the National Eisteddfod, fulfilling the role of General Secretary for the 1920 Barry Eisteddfod. He also had

⁹⁹ Tomas E. Ellis died in April 1899. Tom I. Ellis was a posthumous birth.

¹⁰⁰ Grigg, *Young Lloyd George*, p. 158-9; E. Glyndwr, *Wales Awake! A Call to Yong Wales* (Nottingham, 1887); Adfyfr, *Neglected Wales* (London, 1887).

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² M. Loeffler, 'Eu Hiaith a Gadwant', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, 1997, New Series, 4 (1998), 124-52.

close associations with the local Council of Free Churches and the Barry National Union of Welsh Teachers and fulfilled the roles of President for both.¹⁰³ Arthen held his position as General Secretary of the National Union of Welsh Societies until he died in 1936 making him, according to Loeffler, one of the most important figures in the history of the society.¹⁰⁴

Over 100 delegates attended the Union's inaugural conference on 15 March 1913 on 'Welsh in the Family and the Church' (*Y Gymraeg yn y Teulu a'r Eglwys*) held in Barry,¹⁰⁵ The first President of the National Union was O. M. Edwards, of *Cymru Fydd* note and promoter of the *Gwerin* concept. The constitution, apart from proposing it would assist Welsh Societies, aimed to 'Support the Welsh language and its literature and secure them their due place in every domain of life in Wales'.¹⁰⁶ With the increasing Anglicisation of South Wales this message was well received and, by 1920, about a hundred societies, with a combined membership of 10,000 had affiliated to the National Union.¹⁰⁷ In contrast to this success in the south, the National Union was initially slow to recruit member societies in the north.¹⁰⁸ According to the 1919 Annual Report, 'the north does not feel the same need for Welsh societies as the south' as the Welsh language was not perceived to be under the same level threat. Over the following two decades the Welsh societies and the influence of Anglicisation expanded in unison, pushing further north as it went. This geographical distribution of the National Union of Welsh Societies became of greater significance in 1941, as discussion of a merger with the Defence Committee, which was notably stronger in the Welsh speaking regions of Wales, commenced.

Until 1926 the National Union, which had been established primarily as a cultural organisation, also maintained the political objective of securing Home Rule for Wales. This

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ M. Loeffler 'The Welsh Language Movement in the First Half of the Twentieth Century: An Exercise in Quiet Revolutions in Jenkins & Williams (eds.) *Let's Do Our Best for the Ancient Tongue*, p. 188.

¹⁰⁷ Undeb Cenedlaethol y Cymdeithasau Cymraeg, *Rhaglen y Seithfed Gynhadledd Flynyddol a Gynhelir yng Nghaerfyrddin*, 1 May 1920 (Barry, 1920).

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

objective was dropped following the appointment of William George as President.¹⁰⁹ Loeffler has argued that from this time the National Union pursued objectives more in line with cultural patriotism, especially those connected to the preservation of the language, and left political nationalism as the remit of the WNP.¹¹⁰ Other cultural objectives included an appeal to buy and preserve the home of Welsh poet 'Islwyn' for the benefit of the nation. Islwyn, reported the *South Wales News*, 'is regarded as one of the outstanding figures of the nation'. The Union appealed to 'all who love Wales and its literature' to assist in raising £2,000 for the purchase.¹¹¹ However, despite a few wider cultural campaigns, for the next sixteen years the National Union primarily pursued a policy of defending the language. Their 1931 St David's Day circular stressed how 'we must labour tirelessly within our circle to protect the old Welsh language from deteriorating as a spoken language and its lore withering and dying'.¹¹² Despite their efforts however, the number of Welsh speakers continued to decline.

By 1937 inroads into the north had been established however the Union's influence had begun to decline in the south.¹¹³ Nevertheless, overall membership numbers were maintained.¹¹⁴ While the National Union's charter declared it would operate to protect the Welsh language in 'every domain of Welsh life', its 'circle' was primarily constrained to the realm of education and the legal system. R. Gerallt Jones argued that, 'as the years wore on, it became evident that the modest efforts of this group were not going to meet the needs of

¹⁰⁹ The previous President E. T. John was committed to Home Rule for Wales and had, between 1910 and 1914 led what has been termed the Second Welsh Home Rule Movement. In 1914 John introduced a Welsh Home Bill to Parliament, which aroused little interest and, while MP for Denbighshire, preparing an economic blueprint for Welsh self-Government. For more information, see J. G. Jones, 'E. T. John and Welsh Home Rule, 1910-1914, *Welsh History Review: Cylchgrawn Hanes Cymru*, 13:4 (January, 1986), 453-467; Morgan, 'Welsh Nationalism' (1971), p. 166; In contrast to John, William George (brother of David Lloyd George) has no such aspirations towards Welsh self-government.

¹¹⁰ Loeffler, 'Eu Hiaith a Gadwant'.

¹¹¹ 'Appeal by National Union of Welsh Societies', *South Wales News* (27 February 1926), p. 9.

¹¹² Undeb Cynedlaethol y Cymdeithasau Cymraeg (National Union of Welsh Societies), *St. David's Day Circular*, March 1931, Papers of the Gwent Branch of the National Union of Welsh Societies, Box 1616D, NLW

¹¹³ Loeffler, 'Eu Hiaith a Gadwant'.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

the situation'.¹¹⁵ By the late 1930s the National Union was deemed to have slow internal procedures, which resulted in drawn out and indecisive resolutions, combined with aging officials, who were criticised for a lack of dynamism.¹¹⁶ The movement, run almost exclusively by members of the Welsh intelligentsia, by the beginning of World War Two, lacked enthusiasm and direction.¹¹⁷

As the National Union lost momentum, the dangers to the Welsh language increased. William George, speaking about the increase in tourism in his native Criccieth, which by the mid 1930s depended economically almost entirely on these visitors, he highlighted the benefits and difficulties that resulted from 'A profitable industry, but one full of peril to the language and culture of Wales'.¹¹⁸ He explained some of the changes made to the Welsh way of life to satisfy tourists, 'for the same reason golf and other sports are allowed on Sundays and alcoholic drinks permitted to be sold in the golf clubs.'¹¹⁹ This contradicted the strong Nonconformist tradition practised in much of Wales at the time, where public houses were closed by law and the playing of sports was discouraged.¹²⁰ In 1938, John Henry Jones, a Professor at Leeds University, also pointed out the dangers to Welsh culture, but held that 'sport, gambling and entertainment as the cause of greater danger.'¹²¹ Of these anglicising influences, none were considered more dangerous or more of an opportunity than the newly expanding radio broadcasts in Wales.

The National Union of Welsh Societies has largely been overlooked as a focus of historical research, even though, like the 'Defence Committee', it played an important role in attempting to stem Welsh language decline during the first half of the twentieth century. Marion Loeffler's two published journal articles on the organisation are, to date, the total published work on this National Union. These articles however, omit to detail the events

¹¹⁵ R. G. Jones, *A Bid for Unity* (Aberystwyth, 1971), p. 18.

¹¹⁶ NLW, UCF/A13, Ifan ap Owen Edwards, 'Very Short Memorandum', n.d.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ 'A Struggle for the Welsh Tongue, 21 Years Effort; English Invasion and its Effects', *Manchester Guardian* (12 June 1935), p. 4.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ 'Dangers to Welsh Culture', *Manchester Guardian* (5 February 1938), p. 5.

that led, in 1941, to the merger of the National Union of Welsh Societies and the Defence Committee to form UCF.¹²²

In contrast to the National Union of Welsh Societies, the Welsh youth movement *Urdd Gobaith Cymru* (or simply the *Urdd*),¹²³ has received more historical attention.¹²⁴ The *Urdd* was a Welsh language youth movement, established in 1922 to foster in Welsh children a consciousness of their Welsh heritage within an International framework. Established by Ifan ab Owen Edwards, the *Urdd's* aim was 'to give children and young people the chance to learn and socialise through the medium of Welsh.'¹²⁵ It was, according to Gwennant Davies, primarily a language movement, established to 'protect and promote the Welsh language.'¹²⁶ Edwards, who had seen action in World War One, had experienced difficulties in using his mother tongue while serving in the army in France. In one incident he was dubbed a 'stubborn Welsh pig' by his Commanding Officers, for refusing to re-write his Welsh letter to his parent, in English. The use of Welsh for such purposes was allowed by the Army at the time but his retort to his Commanding Officer earned him a charge for insubordination.¹²⁷ Davies argues that Edwards returned home after the war with a new conviction toward his Welsh heritage and Welsh language.¹²⁸ Edwards was to play a significant role on the Defence Committee and UCF.

Edwards established the *Urdd* in response to his belief that 'the [Welsh] language was already facing a crisis of survival and the Welsh people were conditioned into an apathy of inferiority'.¹²⁹ This movement was not only designed for the children's benefit but also for

¹²² Loeffler, 'Eu Hiaith a Gadwant'; M. Loeffler 'The Welsh Language Movement in the First Half of the Twentieth Century', pp. 181-215.

¹²³ Directly translates as Welsh League of Hope but most often referred to as the Welsh League of Youth.

¹²⁴ See for example E. Meek, *Urdd Gobaith Cymru = The Urdd* (Llandysul, 2003); G. Davies, *The Story of the Urdd (The Welsh League of Youth) 1922-1972* (Aberystwyth, 1973) R. E. Griffith, *Urdd Gobaith Cymru Cyfrol 1, 1922-1945* (Aberystwyth, 1971); I. ab O. Edwards, *Yr Urdd (Urdd Gobaith Cymru) 1922-1943* (Aberystwyth, 1943).

¹²⁵ Urdd Gobaith Cymru Website, www.urdd.org/adran.php?tud=17&lng=en, accessed 3 Oct 2013.

¹²⁶ Davies, *The Story of the Urdd*, p. 9.

¹²⁷ Ibid, p. 4.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid, p. 8.

the benefit of the language. Edwards argued that, 'Our children are our hope for the future [of the Welsh language]' and wrote of his concerns about the English flood sweeping Wales, 'we must act now to prevent our children being swept away by the tide'.¹³⁰ To the children he directed his concerns for the Welsh language 'There are so many strangers around us so that even our language, your language and mine, the language of your mother and your father too, is in danger of disappearing off the hills and meadows of our dear country'.¹³¹ The metaphors of death and loss, chosen by Edwards to portray his ideas of a declining language to young people, were aggressive and somewhat antagonistic. They were clearly designed to play on the children's consciences and encourage feelings of duty, obligation and fear. To balance these negative metaphors, Edwards promised to publish the names of all new members of the *Urdd* in his magazine *Cymru'r Plant*.¹³² Despite these aggressive recruitment techniques, or maybe because of them, the *Urdd* quickly established itself as the largest youth organisation in Wales and by 1933 boasted a membership of 50,000 young people.¹³³

New recruits were expected to swear an oath to protect the language and over half the membership rules also related directly to the use of Welsh. The seventh and final guideline meant that members could be readily identified to each other by displaying of the tricolour red, white and green symbol. Thus each knew that the other spoke and understood the Welsh language.¹³⁴ Some of these ideas would be mirrored both in the Defence Committee and UCF. For example, members of UCF would wear a similar tricolour badge and at some Defence Committee conferences, delegates were asked to take an oath, similar to that taken by new members of the *Urdd*.

An often overlooked envoy of Welsh culture during the early twentieth century was the University of Wales', Guild of Graduates. The Guild of Graduates was described by Ellis as a

¹³⁰ I. ab O. Edwards, 'Urdd Gobaith Cymru Fach', *Cymru'r Plant*, 31:361 (January, 1922), p. 2.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Davies, *The Story of the Urdd*, p. 8.

¹³³ 'Modern Wales: Nationalism with a Difference. The Youth League a New Chapter in Welsh History' *Manchester Guardian* (27 July 1933), p. 11; N. Forman, *Constitutional Change in the United Kingdom* (London, 2002), p. 101.

¹³⁴ Edwards, 'Urdd Gobaith Cymru Fach', *Cymru'r Plant*, p. 6.

‘power house’ in Wales since its inception in 1894, successfully ‘uniting the opinions of the men who have been educated at our University Colleges.’¹³⁵ In the days before the National Library of Wales, the Guild adopted an obligation for the literature and records of Wales, previously housed either in British Library or in private collections.¹³⁶ Welsh culture therefore held an especially important place with the Guild, which had also taken upon itself the responsibility to publish Welsh books and manuscripts during the early part of the century and in the days before the creation of the Board of Celtic Studies and the University of Wales Press. The University of Wales’ Guild of Graduates had six branches, at Cardiff, Aberystwyth, Bangor, Swansea, London and north-east Wales, although meetings were held at a host of locations both inside and outside Wales. It also established several sub-committees, for example, Tom I. Ellis was the Honorary Secretary of the Education Section and Robert T. Jenkins held the post of Honorary Secretary of the Welsh History Section.¹³⁷ Several of the Defence Committee and UCF’s key personalities were also senior members of the Guild of Graduates, including among others, Tom Ellis, Robert T. Jenkins, Gwenan Jones and Ben Bowen Thomas.¹³⁸ It is no surprise therefore, that the structure and organisation of UCF closely emulated those of the Guild of Graduates, including the establishment of similar sub-committees. During the 1930s, Ellis, Jenkins and Jones remained outside politics. Thomas, in contrast, was, for a time, associated with the WNP but resigned after becoming disillusioned with Saunders Lewis’ policies.

During the 1930s the Guild, while demonstrating concern for the decline in Welsh language, was more concerned about the increasing number of unemployed graduates: ‘The Standing Committee would point out that the situation is so critical that the existing machinery for

¹³⁵ T. I. Ellis, *The Guild of Graduates 1894 – 1969: A Lecture Delivered by T. I. Ellis At Gregynog on the Occasion of the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of the Guild* (Cardiff, 1969), p. 1.

¹³⁶ See for example R. T. Jenkins and W. Rees (eds.) *A Bibliography of the History of Wales* (Cardiff, 1931); Ellis, *The Guild of Graduates 1894 – 1969*, p. 1.

¹³⁷ NLW, University of Wales Archive, UNIWWALES/G12/1/5, University of Wales Guild of Graduates, ‘Minutes of Standing Committee, 17 March 1933.

¹³⁸ Jenkins and Ellis were senior members of the Guild, both fulfilling the role of Warden during the war. Jenkins also had close associations with National Library and the National Museum of Wales. For more information see, NLW website, DWB, ‘Jenkins, Robert Thomas’, <http://wbo.llgc.org.uk/en/s2-JENK-THO-1881.html>, accessed 8 May 2016.

aiding graduates to find employment, however well it might have served the University in the past, is now wholly inadequate.¹³⁹ A Report commissioned by the Guild made for depressing reading.¹⁴⁰ At the beginning of November 1935, it was conservatively estimated that at least 500 graduates of the University of Wales were unemployed.¹⁴¹ While the primary concern expressed was for the employment of these graduates it was also acknowledged that the future of Welsh language teaching, to a large extent, rested with these, now unemployed graduates.¹⁴² The dual concern for the declining Welsh language and the severe economic depression resonated, not only throughout the 1930s, but into the war years and beyond. It was to the backdrop of these concerns that the Guild, like other cultural and political movements, formulated their policies. The prominence given to wider Welsh interests by the Guild of Graduates such as unemployment, contrasts with other organisations, such as the *Urdd*, which operated solely for the protection of the language.

As war approached each of the prominent organisations active in the sphere of cultural patriotism in Wales worked in individual and specific areas of society to support and protect the language. Another cultural institution, the Royal Welsh National Eisteddfod, which operated across Welsh society and, as argued by Miles, was ‘the last great stronghold of the language’, will be discussed later.¹⁴³ During the 1930s, however, the Eisteddfod, according to R. Gerallt Jones, operated in a ‘social vacuum, where it was quite impervious to the developing world around it.’¹⁴⁴ Therefore, during this period, when fears for the Welsh language were heightened, there was no co-ordinated cultural response.

¹³⁹ NLW, UNIVWALES/G12/1/5 University of Wales, Guild of Graduates, ‘Minute of Meeting’, 17 July 1935.

¹⁴⁰ NLW, UNIVWALES/G12/1/5 Professor Aaron, ‘Report Presented to the University of Wales Guild of Graduates on Unemployment amongst Graduates’, 13 December 1935.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid*, p. 1.

¹⁴² NLW, UNIVWALES/G12/1/5, ‘Minutes of Meeting’, 17 July 1935.

¹⁴³ Miles, *The Royal National Eisteddfod*, p. 7; See Chapter Two.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid*; Jones, *A Bid for Unity*, p. 15; For a more detailed analysis of the Welsh National Eisteddfod between the wars see, A. Llwyd, *Blynyddoedd Y Locustiaid: Hanes Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Cymru 1919-1936, Cyf. 2* (Llandybie, 2007).

V: Welsh Political Landscape

Probably the most vocal voice for the protection of the Welsh language and Welsh culture, during the late 1920s and 1930s, was the newly formed *Plaid Genedlaethol Cymru*, the WNP. From its inception the party professed to speak for Wales but, importantly, failed to unite the country under its nationalist banner. By 1939 this failure was significant because it left a void among patriots and nationalist sympathisers who could not align themselves with the party's radical policies, which Wil Griffith summarises as, 'anti-urban, anti-capitalist, anti-English and anti-modern'.¹⁴⁵

Until 1925, the political landscape of Wales had been dominated by London-based political parties. Initially, the Liberal Party, whose views were closely aligned with the Nonconformist chapels, including support for the Welsh language, prevailed, as discussed earlier in this chapter.¹⁴⁶ The early decades of the twentieth century witnessed the rise of the Labour Party, which culminated in the 1922 general election.¹⁴⁷ Labour were victorious in 18 Welsh constituencies, doubling their previous best. More significantly they surpassed the Liberal Party for the first time, which only achieved ten seats, halving its pre-election number.¹⁴⁸ The Liberal Party never recovered and Labour became the new dominant force in Welsh

¹⁴⁵ W. Griffith, 'Saving the Soul of the Nation: Essentialist Nationalism and Interwar Rural Wales', *Rural History* 21:2 (2010), p. 177: During the 1930s and 40s the pages of the party's newspapers were filled with the sort of anti-government rhetoric referred to by Griffith. However, it is important to recognise that this stance, led by Saunders Lewis, referred to the 'English' government, which was viewed as an imperial colonial power, the English establishment and especially the London-based press and not the English people as an ethnic group.

¹⁴⁶ J. Osmond, 'Introduction: Coping with a Dual Identity' in Osmond (ed.) *The National Question Again*, pp. xxv-xxvi.

¹⁴⁷ John Davies has argued that until the mid-1920s there was a widespread hope that the Labour Party would be more sensitive to nationalist aspiration in Wales, which attracted former members of *Cymru Fydd* and a new generation of young activists. However, by 1925 it was clear that the Party were becoming increasingly centralist and opposed to specifically Welsh political programme. J. Davies, *The Green and the Red: Nationalism and Ideology in Twentieth Century Wales* (Aberystwyth, 1980), p. 3.

¹⁴⁸ Davies, *A History of Wales* p. 528; McGuinness, *UK Election Statistics: 1918-2012*; Thorpe, *A History of the British Labour Party*, p. 17.

politics.¹⁴⁹ From a nationalist perspective however, the Labour Party, was described as ‘too much engrossed in the readjustment of the economic system to pay much heed to the historic culture and traditions of any one territory.’¹⁵⁰ Labour, unlike the Liberals, did not promote Welsh Devolution and held no cohesive policy on the Welsh language.¹⁵¹ Peter Stead argued that ‘to many in the Labour Party Welshness was indeed more of a social grace than a political imperative.’¹⁵² This stance was not universal, however and many socialists, like S. O. Davies, did also promote Welsh nationalism on an individual level.

The third party in Welsh politics, the Conservative Party, had even less appetite for Welsh devolution. Like the Labour Party, the Conservative Party was controlled from London. The party had staunchly opposed Welsh disestablishment for over half a century in defence of the Anglican Church.¹⁵³ This stance was not popular among Nonconformists, and led to accusations of being ‘anti-National and anti-Welsh.’¹⁵⁴ In 1926, D. J. Williams argued for the similarity between conservative and nationalist ambitions in every country ‘to preserve the most sacred and cherished heritage of the nation in language, culture, tradition and ideal.’ If this was the case, the Conservative Party promoted a British nationalism which did not always align with Welsh interests, especially regarding religious beliefs and linguistic objectives. However, despite these views, the two 1930s General Elections proved to be the most profitable for the party, with victory in 11 of Wales’ 35 seats.

The WNP was established during the 1925 National Eisteddfod in Pwllheli.¹⁵⁵ It was the first national independent political party in Wales. As summarised by Richard Jones, one of the main arguments made by nationalists for the establishment of the WNP was that efforts to

¹⁴⁹ For more information see for example C. Williams, *Democratic Rhondda: Politics and Society 1855-1951* (Cardiff, 1996); H. Francis and D. Smith, *The Fed: A History of the South Wales Miners in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1980).

¹⁵⁰ D. J. Williams, ‘The New Welsh Nationalism’, *Manchester Guardian* (6 January 1926), p. 10.

¹⁵¹ Cole & Stafford, *Devolution and Governance*, p. 6.

¹⁵² P. Stead, ‘The Labour Party and the Chains of Wales’ in Osmond (ed.) *The National Question Again*, p. 100.

¹⁵³ M. S. R. Kinnear, *The Fall of Lloyd George: The Political Crisis of 1922* (London, 1973), pp. 139-40.

¹⁵⁴ Williams, ‘The New Welsh Nationalism’.

¹⁵⁵ Jones, ‘Forming Plaid Cymru’; There six members present Lewis Valentine, Moses Griffith, Huw Robert (H. R.) Jones, Saunders Lewis, the Rev. Fred Jones and D. E. Williams. David John (D. J.) Williams’ train arrived too late to allow him to attend the meeting.

promote the Welsh case though the other (London based) parties and the English political system, including *Cymry Fydd*, had failed completely.¹⁵⁶ Despite its political status, most historians concur with Jenkins, who argued that ‘the primary interest of most, if not all, of the founder members [of the WNP] was cultural.’¹⁵⁷ Although Lewis saw the party as something more radical ‘Some of us ... have realised the futility of mere cultural nationalism that a Welsh Nationalist political party has arisen in Wales, which aims at the establishment of a Dominion of Wales.’¹⁵⁸ Further to this objective, as confirmed by Williams in 1926, ‘to speak directly on the policy of the new party is a difficult task. It is yet in the making.’¹⁵⁹ However, the belief that political self-determination was the only way to protect the Welsh language and culture became fundamental to party policy, which maintained that, ‘Only when we have self-government will the national language be secure’.¹⁶⁰ The inadequacy of cultural nationalism without political nationalism, according to Richard Jones, became one of the most popular themes in the WNP literature before World War Two.¹⁶¹ But that is not to say that the party promoted independence from Britain, promoting instead the idea of Dominion Status, as achieved by other states in the British Empire, including Ireland.¹⁶² In 1928 the party clarified:

The party did not stand for the break-up of the British Empire. They [The Welsh Nationalist Party] accepted the King as the head of this unity of Dominions, and Wales would want a seat in the Imperial Conference on equal terms with other Dominions.¹⁶³

This view was reinforced by Saunders Lewis, ‘we should make no claim for an independent and sovereign Welsh state, but accept the sovereignty of His Majesty King George V and his

¹⁵⁶ Jones, *Rhoi Cymry'n Gyntaf*, p. 81; Saunders Lewis, *Canlyn Arthur: Ysgrifau Gwleidyddol* (Aberystwyth 1938), p. 7.

¹⁵⁷ D. Jenkins, *A Nation on Trial: Penberth 1936* (trans. A. Corkett) (Cardiff, 1998), p. xiii; Davies, *Welsh Nationalism in the Twentieth Century*, p. 67; Davies, *The Welsh Nationalist Party*, p. 262; McAllister, *Plaid Cymru*, p. 23; Davies, ‘Plaid Cymru in Transition’, p. 124.

¹⁵⁸ S. Lewis, *The Banned Wireless Talk on Welsh Nationalism* (Caernarfon, 1930), p. 5.

¹⁵⁹ Williams, ‘The New Welsh Nationalism’.

¹⁶⁰ ‘Rally to the Cymraeg’, *Welsh Nationalist* (January, 1937), p. 7.

¹⁶¹ Jones, *Rhoi Cymry'n Gyntaf*, p. 81.

¹⁶² The Irish Free State remained a Dominion of Great Britain from 1922 to 1937, when it became Eire.

¹⁶³ ‘Welsh Nationalists and Liberal Party: No Concern for Wales’, *Manchester Guardian* (20 August 1928), p. 15.

successors.¹⁶⁴ Significantly, however, the introduction of this political objective, that of achieving governance in a politically self-determined Wales, placed the party within the realms of political nationalism.

With the adoption of self-determination for Wales, both Ragin and Jones have contended that the WNP took up the mantle left of *Cymru Fydd*.¹⁶⁵ However, while there were similarities between some the policies of the WNP and *Cymru Fydd*, there were also significant differences. The WNP was more radical in its anti-government and anti-modernisation stance than *Cymru Fydd*, and the party, or at least some of its senior leaders, were more right-wing in their views than their earlier counterparts. Many WNP members had much stronger views on imposing the Welsh language on Wales. *Cymru Fydd* was more content to promote the concept of Welsh identity through a British hegemony, whereas the WNP, during its early years pursued a policy of 'Wales Alone'.¹⁶⁶ These variations, according to Sherrington, stem from different ideological origins. The Liberal *Cymru Fydd* and its Nonconformist alliance had actively campaigned for the disestablishment of the Welsh church. However, Sherrington contends that the WNP arose from disillusioned Nonconformists and Liberals, fused with disenchanting Welsh intellectuals and was, in essence, a right-wing reaction to the disestablishment of the Welsh church.¹⁶⁷ The ideological differences between the WNP and *Cymru Fydd* meant that the party did not harness the legacy of nineteenth century movement. This void would not be filled until the onset of World War Two.

The ideology of the WNP, prior to World War Two, was almost entirely the product of Saunders Lewis.¹⁶⁸ It was not that the party was undemocratic. As pointed out by John

¹⁶⁴ Saunders Lewis, 'Five Points of Welsh Nationalist Policy', *Welsh Outlook*, 15:3 (March, 1928), 79-81.

¹⁶⁵ Jones, *A Bid for Unity*; C. C. Ragin, 'Ethnic Political Mobilization: The Welsh Case', *American Sociological Review*, 44:4 (1979), p. 625.

¹⁶⁶ S. Brooks, *Pam Na Fu Cymru: Methiant Cenedlaetholdeb Cymru* (Cardiff, 2015): Wales Alone was a WNP policy from 1926 to 1930 which revolved around refusing to have anything to do with Westminster, and a rejection of English dominance. This included, for example, any elected members (if they gained any) refusing to attend Parliament. For more information see McAllister, *Plaid Cymru*, p. 26.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid; E. Sherrington, *Right-Wing Nationalism in Wales 1870-1935* (2015); Although this manuscript was first published in 2015, the contents were originally written in the 1970s.

¹⁶⁸ For a detailed account of the WNP ideas, see Jones, *Rhoi Cymru'n Gyntaf*.

Davies, ideology was discussed regularly in the party's newspapers and debated annually at the party conferences.¹⁶⁹ However, Lewis's debating skills convinced other members of the merits of his proposals and ensured that his ideas were adopted.¹⁷⁰ This dominance of the party extended to writing its policies and preparing its publications, which were, according to Richard Jones, much closer to Lewis's heart than they were to the majority of the rest of the party.¹⁷¹ Other members of the party did assist with specific elements of the ideology; W. Ambrose Bebb provided an interpretation of history, John Arthur Price, of *Cymru Fydd* note, wrote a number of proposals on how the party might develop and D. J. Davies contributed to the economic policies.¹⁷² However, overall, as John Davies summarised, 'the voice of Lewis was the voice of the party'.¹⁷³

Lewis derived his political philosophy from a number of major influences, some of the most significant of these included Catholic social teaching, medieval history, right-wing French theorists, Anglo-Irish poets and dramatist, English distributionists and Welsh patriots.¹⁷⁴ This fusion of concepts led to a brand of nationalism that, Jones argues, was too sophisticated for most people to understand.¹⁷⁵ The adoption of this sophisticated form of nationalism by the WNP led Gwynn ap Gwilym to conclude that the party only attracted 'college lecturers and students, teachers and ministers of religion' and it failed to appeal to the majority of the population.¹⁷⁶ A detailed analysis of Lewis ideology was outside the realms of this research into UCF. However, to understand the policies of the WNP, and their differences to those of UCF, it was necessary to illuminate specific elements of Lewis's beliefs and their origins.

¹⁶⁹ Davies, *The Green and the Red*, p. 10.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 16.

¹⁷¹ Jones, *Rhoi Cymru'n Gyntaf*, p. 55.

¹⁷² Jones, 'His Politics', p. 26.

¹⁷³ Davies, *The Green and the Red*, p. 17.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid, pp. 10-1; Jones, 'His Politics', p. 23; E. Williams, 'The Social and Political Thought of Saunders Lewis', Unpublished PhD thesis, Cardiff University, 2009, especially, pp. 68-75 & 212-225.

¹⁷⁵ Jones, 'His Politics', pp. 24-5.

¹⁷⁶ G. A. Gwilym, *Stori Saunders Lewis: Bardd y Chwyldro yng Nghymru/The Story of Saunders Lewis: The Poet of Welsh Revolution* (Llandybie, 2001), p. 43.

Welsh culture and the Welsh language were at the heart of Lewis's, and therefore the WNP's, philosophy. Lewis produced his *Principles of Nationalism (Egwyddorion Cenedlaetholdeb)*, in 1926, in which he confirmed that, the defining characteristic of the Welsh nation was the language.¹⁷⁷ Lewis believed the only method of securing the Welsh language, and the associated cultural freedom, was through political self-determination.¹⁷⁸ Lewis promoted the idea of a Welsh government, operating through the medium of Welsh. Without the support of politics, Lewis contended, the culture would become 'provincial and irrelevant'.¹⁷⁹ In this way politics and culture were, he believed, integral to the flourishing of a whole Welsh society. Therefore Lewis nationalism was, according to McAllister, a 'doctrine of conservation and preservation, echoing Edmund Burke'.¹⁸⁰

According to Lewis's belief, Welsh culture had not flourished since before the reign of the Tudors and, significantly, the Protestant Reformation. Although he conceded that Wales had been subjugated by England much earlier, it was the fall of the Catholic hegemony that led to the decline in fortunes of the Welsh way of life. Prior to the Reformation, Christianity was the highest moral authority in Europe, under whose authority, each nation, had practised its way of life and Welsh culture had flourished.¹⁸¹ However, during the reign of the Tudors, the Reformation replaced this religious oversight with the consolidation of power in a centralised, English state.¹⁸² One of the consequences of centralisation of state power was, according to Lewis, a drive to culturally homogenise all within its control, in the English tradition, as a result the 'civilisation of Wales wasted away and declined'.¹⁸³ Therefore,

¹⁷⁷ Saunders Lewis, *Egwyddorion Cenedlaetholdeb* (Machynleth, 1926); For a discussion on one language or two for the WNP, see, R. W. Jones, *Rhoi Cymru'n Guntaf*, pp. 89-101.

¹⁷⁸ Jones, 'His Politics', p. 31.

¹⁷⁹ Williams, 'The Social and Political Thoughts of Saunders Lewis', p. 98.

¹⁸⁰ McAllister, *Plaid Cymru*, p. 23; Edmund Burke was an Irish statesman, philosopher, political theorist and MP in the eighteenth century. Burke was a proponent of a society with strong moral values, held together by religion. He has been described as the philosophical founder on modern conservatism. A. Heywood, *Political Ideologies: An Introduction* (New York, 3rd edn, 2003), p. 74.

¹⁸¹ Lewis, *Egwyddorion Cenedlaetholdeb*, p. 3.

¹⁸² Davies, *The Green and the Red*, pp. 13-4; Williams, 'The Social and Political Thoughts of Saunders Lewis', p. 117.

¹⁸³ Lewis, *Egwyddorion Cenedlaetholdeb*, p. 2.

Lewis's aversion to, what he viewed as, the English rule of Wales originated during the Reformation.

Even greater pressure towards English cultural homogeneity resulted from the industrial revolution and the societal changes that it generated. In this Lewis concurs with the theories of the modernist philosophical school.¹⁸⁴ The technological and mechanical advances of the industrial revolution led to the need for a literate population, which was, in turn, served by a privately owned national printed press. To maximise profits, this press promoted a national discourse and a common language, leading to what Anderson termed 'print capitalism' and 'national print languages', around which states, including England, formed.¹⁸⁵ Economic growth and the competition for resources also contributed to this state formation, as states and their leaders, required the population to work together.¹⁸⁶ This, it was argued, led to further cultural homogeneity.¹⁸⁷ The result of these changes caused Wales, as a nation, to lose touch with its distinct cultural history. In short, Lewis believed that industrialisation and political unity with England resulted in growing Anglicisation.¹⁸⁸ It is worth noting that Lewis rarely refers to Great Britain in his political writing, especially in connection to the British government. Reinforcing his belief in the historical consolidation of power by the England state under the Tudors, when discussing Britain, Lewis preferred the term 'English government'.

A further effect of the industrial revolution was the increase in capitalism and large industrial control. Lewis, echoing Marx's criticism of its 'horrors', reserved his greatest bitterness for large scale capitalism.¹⁸⁹ Capitalism and imperialism, Lewis wrote in 1931 'are

¹⁸⁴ For more detail and analysis of Lewis modernist ideas and his views on modern industrial societies, see, G. Davies, *Sefyll yn y Bwlch: Cymru a'r Mudiad Gwrth-fodern: Astudiaeth o Waith R. S. Thomas, Saunders Lewis, T. S. Elliot a Simone Weil* (Cardiff, 1999).

¹⁸⁵ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 224.

¹⁸⁶ For details of modernists who detail how nations and nationalism were constructed to serve political and economic ends see, for example, E. Geller, *Nations /and Nationalism* (Oxford, 1983); Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

¹⁸⁷ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 224.

¹⁸⁸ Davies, *The Green and the Red*, pp. 11-4; Williams, 'The Social and Political Thoughts of Saunders Lewis', p. 184-9.

¹⁸⁹ Jones, *Rhoi Cymru'n Gyntaf*, p. 91; Davies, *The Green and the Red*, pp. 12-3.

bride and bridegroom and their children are famine and death and the destruction of the people'.¹⁹⁰ Capitalism bred 'factoryism' (*ffatriaeth*); a whole generation of people raised to serve machines, with its dehumanising impact on such individuals.¹⁹¹ People, Davies concluded, 'become proletarian when they are without property, when they shed their traditions, when they have no control over their fate and no responsibility for their own communities'. Such a rootless cultureless proletariat, caused by industrialisation, resulted, according to Lewis, in barbarism.¹⁹² Lewis also rejected Marxist state socialism, with its commitment to state centralisation.¹⁹³ This centralisation, Lewis argued, threatened the freedom of the individual and threatened the autonomy of the family, local government and any institution that challenged it.¹⁹⁴

To reverse the effects of modernisation, Lewis, promoted by Catholic social teaching, which was further developed by theorists, such as G. K. Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc, promoted a third way between capitalism and socialism.¹⁹⁵ This third way philosophy revolved around the concepts of distributism, and argued that capital should be distributed as widely among the nation as possible. In the Welsh context, this form of economic organisation promoted that property remained in small individual owned units (*Perchentyaeth*).¹⁹⁶ Rural Wales, was portrayed as fulfilling this form of economy distribution and therefore, was not only a bastion of Welsh monolingualism, but also portrayed the rural idealism of economic self-sufficient organic communities.¹⁹⁷ Such communities also ensured that the land of Wales would be shared between the nation's families.¹⁹⁸ Further, in keeping with Lewis's 'Ten

¹⁹⁰ Saunder Lewis, 'Cymru Mewn Argyfwng: Beth a Olyga'r Cytundeb ym Maes Glo'r De', *Y Ddraig Goch*, (February, 1931), p. 1.

¹⁹¹ Davies, *The Green and the Red*, pp. 11-3

¹⁹² Ibid, p. 11; Saunder Lewis, 'Cymru Mewn Argyfwng'.

¹⁹³ Jones, 'His Politics', p. 37; For a more detailed account of Saunders Lewis and the WNP's economic policy, see Jones, *Rhoi Cymru'n Gyntaf*, pp. 91-6.

¹⁹⁴ Davies, *The Green and the Red*, pp. 20-1.

¹⁹⁵ See, more information see, Davies, *Sefyll yn y Bwlch*, pp. 62-66; G. K. Chesterton, *What's Wrong With the World* (Leipzig, 1910); *The Outline Sanity* (2002, originally published in 1927) H. Belloc, *The Servile State* (London, 1912).

¹⁹⁶ Davies, *The Green and the Red*, p. 14; Jones, 'His Politics', p. 50.

¹⁹⁷ Williams, 'The Social and Political Thoughts of Saunders Lewis', pp. 146-7.

¹⁹⁸ Saunders Lewis, 'Deg Pwy't Polisi', 1933 quoted in Gwilym, *Stori Saunders Lewis*, p. 44.

Points of Policy', published in 1933, such a capital distribution, would ensure that agriculture would be the main industry of Wales. This economic system, which was adopted by the party, sat in harmony with O. M. Edwards' concept of the Welsh *Gwerin*.¹⁹⁹ Lewis accepted that there was some need for bigger businesses in his new economic order. Such businesses would be state regulated to prevent the excesses of capitalism, and, to protect workers from exploitation, moderate trade unions, or similar organisations, would form a second tier of Welsh government in a system of Guild Socialism, the main proponent of which was G. D. H. Cole.²⁰⁰

By reversing the consequence of capitalism and Anglicisation, Lewis believed that the Welsh mind could be liberated from English cultural subjugation, and Welsh culture and the Welsh language, would again flourish. Lewis's views echoed those of Douglas Hyde, who argued for the 'necessity for the 'de-Anglicisation' of the Irish nation' for the country to flourish.²⁰¹ Lewis had looked to Ireland for much of his early inspiration and had come to understand nationalism from the writers of the Irish literary revival, including Yeats, Synge and Colum.²⁰² While Nationalists of both countries, at that time, were committed to the British imperial context, Lewis, like Hyde in Ireland, believed that Welshmen should also view themselves as part of the European community of nations. To represent Wales in such an international community was one of the objectives of WNP.²⁰³

Adopting Lewis's ideologies the WNP wasted no time in attempting to reverse the fortunes of the Welsh language. From the outset Saunders Lewis argued that members 'must constitute themselves the storm troops of the *Cymraeg*' [Welsh language].²⁰⁴ He promoted

¹⁹⁹ A. Pritchard and N. Morgan, 'Mythic Geographies of Representation and Identity: Contemporary Postcards of Wales', *Journal of Tourism and Culture Change* 1:2 (2003), pp. 116-7.

²⁰⁰ Saunders Lewis, *Canlun Arthur* (Aberystwyth, 1938), pp. 23, 66 & 87-96. *Canlun Arthur* (Following Arthur) was an anthology of Lewis Monthly Notes, written for *Y Ddraig Goch* during his imprisonment between September 1936 and January 1937.

²⁰¹ Douglas Hyde, 'The Necessity for De-Anglicising Ireland'. Lecture delivery before the National Literary Society of Ireland, in Dublin, 25 November 1892. <http://www.gaeilge.org/deanglicising.html>, accessed 17 June 2017.

²⁰² D. G. Jones, 'His Politics', p. 23; B. Griffiths, *Writers of Wales: Saunders Lewis* (Cardiff, 1979), p. 4.

²⁰³ Davies, *The Green and the Red*, p. 5-6.

²⁰⁴ 'Rally to the Cymraeg', *Welsh Nationalist*.

the idea that, as well as any new Welsh government, 'all local authorities in Wales are [were] compelled to transact all business in the Welsh language.'²⁰⁵ Lewis also proposed 'That Welsh too is the language of education, that is, the medium of education in all the schools of Wales.'²⁰⁶ This view 'To make the Welsh language the primary and official language of Wales,' was widely published in the contemporary press both inside and outside of Wales.²⁰⁷ The potential negative impact on the Welsh economy of Welsh becoming the primary language of Wales, due to a reduction in trade with, and investment from, England and other parts of Britain, could have been catastrophic, especially during the 1930s when this economy was already suffering devastating decline. Lewis later acknowledged that he was aware of the negative impact this policy could have generated:

There would be storms from every direction. It would be argued that such a campaign was killing our chances of attracting English factories to the Welsh speaking rural areas, and that would doubtless be the case.²⁰⁸

While other organisations also promoted an increase in the use of the Welsh language within certain spheres of life, or within their voluntary membership, such as the *Urdd* and the National Union of Welsh Societies, Lewis and other senior party leaders were arguing for Welsh to be imposed on the whole population of Wales, at a time when 63 percent of the people could not speak the language. During the 1930s not every member of the party agreed with this linguistic policy. D. J. Davies, the main internal challenger to Lewis's ideology, for example, believed that more people in Wales could be reached if the party

²⁰⁵ Saunders Lewis letter to H. R. Jones, 1 March 1925, quoted in Jones, 'Forming Plaid Cymru', pp. 438-9; Jones, *Rhoi Cymru'n Gyntaf*, p. 63; While Lewis promoted the concept of Welsh being used for all official business in Wales with immediate effect. Other party leaders preferred a more cautious approach. For example, J. E. Jones, while agreeing with Lewis's Welsh only Wales, differed in both the timing and strategy of achievement it, suggesting that it would be 'foolish' to attempt to achieve this linguistic objective until self-government had been achieved; J. E. Jones, 'Problem Iaith Swyddogol Cymru', *Y Ddraig Goch* (February, 1930), p. 3. J. E. Daniel, expressing concerns non-Welsh speakers, voiced the view that a transition period would be needed prior to the implementation for such a Welsh only policy. D Hywel, *Welsh Nationalism*, p. 78.

²⁰⁶ Jones, 'Forming Plaid Cymru', p. 439.

²⁰⁷ Williams, 'The New Welsh Nationalism'.

²⁰⁸ Saunders Lewis, 'Tynged yr Iaith' Radio Broadcast ('The Fate of a Nation' Trans. by G. A. Williams), quoted in A. R. Jones and G. Thomas (eds.) *Presenting Saunders Lewis* (Cardiff, 1983), pp. 127-41.

adopted of a bilingual approach and felt that 'the strength of the [Welsh] language in the Welsh speaking areas was a hindrance to the development of political nationalism.'²⁰⁹ Davies even suggested the party move its Headquarters from the north to the south, to broaden its electoral appeal there. However, his views were in the minority and failed to generate significant support. The promotion of the objective of imposing the Welsh language as the official language of Wales resulted in the party being viewed by many as extremists. In 1937 *The Spectator* summarised:

What is it the Nationalists want? In so far as they want to preserve the Welsh language and to promote Welsh culture generally, all Welshmen are at one with them. We are proud of our language ... The Nationalists have, however, a political programme, and with their political programme many a good Welshman finds himself completely out of sympathy.²¹⁰

Paul Ward has argued that this linguistic policy 'played a substantial role in limiting the party's potential.'²¹¹

In keeping with Lewis's economic views based on distributism, the party argued for the de-industrialization of south and north-east Wales. To replace large industry the party promoted a return to what Davies termed 'prudential, patriarchal and pious' family owned farms, as confirmed by the opening paragraph of the party's 1939 policy document'.²¹² Thus the WNP, throughout the depression ravaged years, promoted what Morgan described as the 'bizarre' policy of the de-industrialisation of urban areas of Wales, encouraging workers to return to rural regions.²¹³ The policy came to prominence in 1936 when the WNP

²⁰⁹ Davies, 'Plaid Cymru in Transition'; John Davies, *History of Wales* (London, rev. edn, 2007), p. 574; 'How To Win Over The Workers: Welsh Nationalists Should Speak More English', *Western Daily Press* (11 August 1938), p. 9; For a detailed account of the ideological differences between Lewis and Davies, see, Davies, *The Green and the Red*.

²¹⁰ Jones, 'Welsh Nationalism'.

²¹¹ P. Ward, *H. T. Edwards: British Labour and Welsh Socialism* (Cardiff, 2011), p. 51.

²¹² Plaid Cymru, *The New Wales: Synopsis of the Policy of the Welsh Nationalist Party* (Caernarfon, 1939), p. 1. quoted in A. Sandry, *Plaid Cymru : An Ideological Analysis* (Cardiff, 2011), p. 82; Davies, 'Plaid Cymru in Transition', pp. 128-32; Saunders Lewis, 'Cenedlaetholdeb a Marxiaeth', *Y Ddraig Goch* (April, 1938), p. 9; 'Cenedlaetholdeb a Marxiaeth', *Y Ddraig Goch* (May, 1938), pp. 12 & 14.

²¹³ K. O. Morgan, 'Welsh Politics 1918-1939' in T. Herbert & G. E. Jones (eds.) *Wales Between The Wars* (Cardiff, 1988), p. 107.

opposed the re-location of the Woolwich arms factory to Bridgend. The party appealed to Glamorgan County Council that to do so would 'do great harm to the locality'. This locality like most of the South Wales region was still suffering the devastating effects of the Depression and, even though the Council agreed to debate the issue, planning permission for the factory was granted.²¹⁴ The 'Welsh Arsenal' as the factory became known, eventually employed 32,000 people. The local press criticised the WNP's stance, the *South Wales Echo and Express* for example, ran a cartoon that suggested that Saunders Lewis needed dipping in 'Horse Sense trough ... to cool off his hot head.'²¹⁵ Six further ordnance factories were established in Wales during the war bringing valuable employment.²¹⁶ As confirmed by Gwilym, the WNP failed to appeal to the majority of the people as they had no credible policies to deal with the economic situation, and were out of step with the employment and economic needs of Wales's voters.²¹⁷

While uniting north and south of Wales had always been a challenge, these linguistic and economic policies exacerbated the industrial and language difference of the nation. Non-Welsh speakers were unlikely to support a policy that imposed the Welsh language, that they were unable to speak, on the whole of Wales, while urban communities were unlikely to support a programme of de-industrialisation, especially during the economic depression. These policies therefore alienated large sections of Welsh society. It is worth remembering that these views were not limited solely to the WNP. However, this was the only Welsh organisation seeking to gain political approval from the Welsh electorate. With these policies achieving the electoral success, that the party desired, would be difficult.

Adding to these electoral difficulties the WNP, under Lewis prompting, initially adopted a 'Wales Alone' policy that included a boycott of Parliament. Therefore, in the event of electoral success by a party candidate, the constituency would not be represented in

²¹⁴ 'Biting the Hand That Fed Them', *Western Mail & South Wales News* (hereafter *Western Mail*) (18 September 1936), p. 8.

²¹⁵ J. C. Walker, 'Cartoon', *South Wales Echo and Express* (25 May 1936).

²¹⁶ HC Deb, 17 October 1944, vol. 403 cc. 2319.

²¹⁷ Gwilym, *Stori Saunder Lewis*, p. 42.

Westminster.²¹⁸ In 1929 Lewis Valentine stood as the party's first candidate and contested the Caernarvonshire seat, campaigning on this Wales Alone policy.²¹⁹ Once the votes were cast however, the results were described as 'a traumatic experience for nationalists'.²²⁰ Valentine only polled 2 percent of the votes in this primarily Welsh speaking area. The Wales Alone policy now came under pressure.²²¹ Members argued that this policy was unpopular. Peate, for example, argued that 'an obstructionist policy (for the sake of obstruction) is of no value to the world and you won't get reasonable people to have anything to do with it.'²²² The progressive liberal monthly journal, the *Welsh Outlook*, usually sympathetic to the party, also voiced its opposition calling it a 'ridiculous and dangerous policy', and concluded that 'The [election] verdict will continue unchanged for as long as the party insults the intelligence of Welshmen by retaining non-cooperation as an essential part of its programme.'²²³ In 1930, following lengthy discussions, Lewis was out-voted and the policy was abandoned. John Davies argues that this was one of the few areas where the party resisted Lewis ideas.²²⁴ Nevertheless, electoral success continued to elude the WNP through the 1930s. Membership numbers too, failed to impress. By 1935 the membership of the WNP was barely 500, from a Welsh population of 2.4 million.²²⁵

Apart from the WNP policies, other problems plagued the party. To some Lewis himself was a problem. Jones, for example, contended that, while Lewis was the ablest man among the party leadership, he was also the least typical to project the image of the party.²²⁶ Jenkins

²¹⁸ In addition to the boycott of Parliament, the WNP insisted its members could not be members of other political parties, unlike regional nationalist movements of the period in Scotland and Brittany. Another distinguishing characteristic of the party was that WNP members were prohibited from voting for candidates of other political parties. This prohibition stood even where no WNP candidate was standing, and another candidate was well disposed towards Welsh nationalism. Davies, *The Green and the Red*, p. 6-7.

²¹⁹ 'North Wales Seats: Mr Lloyd George's Two Opponents: A Nationalist Bid', *Manchester Guardian* (18 May 1929), p. 18; McAllister, *Plaid Cymru*, p. 26.

²²⁰ Davies, *The Welsh Nationalist Party*, p. 134.

²²¹ *Ibid*, p. 137.

²²² NLW, Plaid Cymru Records, PLAMRU/B12, Iorwerth C. Peate letter to H. R. Jones, 23 July 1929.

²²³ 'Notes of the Month', *Welsh Outlook* 16:6 (June, 1929), p. 164.

²²⁴ Davies, *The Green and the Red*, p. 10.

²²⁵ Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation*, p. 254.

²²⁶ Jones, 'His Politics', p. 26.

goes further and argued that unlike other leaders, 'Lewis was a cold fish. His reedy voice, bow tie, cerebral style and aristocratic contempt for the proletariat were hardly endearing qualities in a political leader', and concluded that Lewis was a major electoral handicap.²²⁷ Lewis was raised in the Nonconformist tradition, however, after the First World War, as his interest in Catholic social teaching developed he was also drawn towards the Catholic faith, fully converting in February 1933. This meant he was religiously out of step with the majority of the party who were Nonconformist.²²⁸ Another criticism directed at Lewis and at the WNP in general, was that from its inception the party had fascist sympathies. In 1942, for example, Thomas Jones undertook what Morgan later described as 'a blistering attack on Plaid Cymru [WNP] and its leaders.'²²⁹ During this condemnation Jones argued that the earlier communal power of the churches would be filled 'with a new, narrow and intolerant dogma, and the vision of a new Promised Land of Fascism.'²³⁰ Jones was writing after returning to Wales after a 25 year absence, having served as Deputy Secretary to four Prime Ministers, asserted that the WNP had 'all the devices of the old parties and with some new ones learnt from Nazis and Fascists'.²³¹ Throughout the period there are numerous other allegations that the WNP had fascist views.²³² These opinions were not aided by some of the party's ideas. For example, in 1932 the party's newspapers printed:

²²⁷ Jenkins, *A Concise History of Wales*, p. 293.

²²⁸ For details of Lewis's religious beliefs see, Chapman, *Un Bywyd o Blith Nifer. R. Stradling Wales and the Spanish Civil War: The Dragon's Dearest Cause* (Cardiff 2004), pp. 30-1.

²²⁹ Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation*, p. 256; Thomas Jones was a Civil Servant from Monmouthshire who served as Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet under four consecutive British Prime Ministers, in the 1920s and 1930s. He was also described as an Educationalist. In 1914 he established the progressive liberal and cultural national monthly journal the *Welsh Outlook*. By 1942 Jones was retired from public office. For more information on Jones see T. Ellis, *T. J.: A Life of Dr. Thomas Jones* (Cardiff, 1992).

²³⁰ T. Jones, *The Native Never Returns* (London, 1946), p. 23.

²³¹ *Ibid*, p. 20. Jones was familiar with the fascists of Europe, having been confidant of both Stanley Baldwin and David Lloyd George during 1935 – 38, when the British government were attempting to improve Anglo-German relations. As part of this drive Jones accompanied Lloyd George to Germany and met Hitler in 1936. For more information see Ellis, *T. J.*

²³² See, for example, Goronwy Roberts' links between the Welsh Nationalist Party's economic views and that of the distributionist policies of Mussolini's Italy, made at a 'Gwerin' movement meeting Bangor University College in 1935 quoted in Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation*, p. 256; Goronwy Roberts, founded the socialist

The Welsh Nationalist Party's policy does not mean suspending the Conservative, Communist, Liberal or Socialist policy until self-government is secured, but means the abandoning of such policy for all time. Nationalism is a distinct principle and opposed to all other political parties for all time.²³³

Such rhetoric appeared to suggest the objective of a single party state for Wales and was more in keeping with the policies of the European fascist parties. However, an examination of the WNP's policies during the 1930s, and its declared neutrality during the Spanish Civil War, confirms that it held little in common with any form of extreme right-wing party. Similarly, although policy was often dominated by Lewis, the dropping of the 'Wales Alone' policy, confirms that it was a democratic and not an authoritarian organisation.

Allegations that Saunders Lewis supported fascist leaders were not aided by his critical views on the coverage of world events as represented by English national newspapers. Apart from opposing the war, Lewis believed in 'the general suppression of news by the English daily press in the interest of English propaganda,' and argued that all European imperial governments, including the British government, were acting in self-interest.²³⁴ During the 1930s, Lewis frequently equated the British national press' criticisms of European fascist states with the policies of the British Government towards Wales and other parts of the Empire. This anti-government rhetoric often appeared pro-German or pro-Italian in its view and was, according to Jones's admission, 'without doubt provocative, if not inflammatory' to those opposed to the party.²³⁵

movement based at Bangor University to 'guard and strengthen the rights of Wales'. The movement was also supported by Saunders Lewis. As highlighted by Gwynfor Evans, the '*Gwerin Movement*' was ideologically 'a popular front between socialism and nationalism'. For more information on this movement see, I. Parri, 'Gwerin' in G. Thomas (ed.), *Ysgrifau Beirniadol XXVI* (Denbigh, 2002), pp. 96-114; D. Roberts, *Bangor University 1884 – 2009* (Cardiff, 2009); Barberis et. al. *Encyclopedia of British and Irish Political Organisations*, p. 438; Evans, *Gwynfor Evans*, p. 47. For a full analysis of the fascist accusations against the WNP see, R. W. Jones, *The Fascist Party in Wales? Plaid Cymru, Welsh Nationalism and the Accusation of Fascism* (Cardiff, 2014).

²³³ D. J. Davies, 'The Way to Real Co-operation', *Welsh Nationalist* (May, 1932), p. 3.

²³⁴ S. Lewis, 'News of the Month', *Welsh Nationalist* (February, 1938), p. 3; Notes and Comments: The Party and the Next War', *Welsh Nationalist* (October, 1935), p. 6; Davies, *The Welsh Nationalist Party*, p. 108.

²³⁵ Jones, *The Fascist Party in Wales?*, p. 3.

This rhetoric was not, however, limited to Lewis. Other party members promoted objections to what they termed England's 'imperialistic war' and opposed the conscription of Welshmen into the 'English' army.²³⁶ A view reinforced at the 1936 party conference, which resolved 'that no member of the WNP should either voluntarily or under compulsion join the military service of England'.²³⁷ Williams too, also appeared to support the German perspective on territorial expansion, while addressing the Fishguard branch of the party he argued that 'They (the penny dailies) do not tell us for example, that, having failed to obtain justice in any other way, the Germans in sheer desperation took the law into their own hands and tore up the treaty which bound them to slavery'.²³⁸ In an attempt to discredit the English establishment at every opportunity Lewis, and other party members, gave ammunition to their critics. When examined in collectively, these reports appear to have been motivated to a much larger extent by a dislike of the British government rather than support for Berlin, Rome or Madrid. However, the image of the WNP was tarnished by the fascist allegations. This smear not only impacted on the WNP's appeal to the general electorate, it caused difficulties for the Defence Committee, especially during the early months of its existence, when it was perceived that the two organisations were entwined.

The fascist accusations, adding to the radical language and economic policies of WNP, when combined with Lewis' lack of leadership appeal, proved unpopular with the electorate and led Morgan to argue that the party was, 'a small and relatively insignificant group' in the mid 1930s.²³⁹ The party did experience a short lived popular surge between autumn 1936 and spring 1937 following the *Penyberth* arson incident, when three senior members set fire to the construction of a Royal Air Force bombing school on the Llyn Peninsula. However, following the subsequent trial this surge in membership begun to wane, leaving a around 2000 members by 1939.²⁴⁰ As international tensions with Germany increased, the WNP pursued two more divisive policies. Throughout 1939, the party reiterated its stance of neutrality in any upcoming conflict and strongly opposed the influx of English evacuees into

²³⁶ 'Manifesto of the Welsh Nationalist Party Executive', *Welsh Nationalist*, (May, 1939), p. 1; D. J. Williams, 'Should Wales take Part in the Next War', *Welsh Nationalist* (June, 1938), p. 5.

²³⁷ Williams, 'Should Wales take Part in the Next War?'; 'Correspondence' *Welsh Nationalist* (July, 1938), p. 2.

²³⁸ Williams, 'Should Wales take Part in the Next War?'

²³⁹ Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation*, pp. 254-5.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.* See section on *Penyberth* later in this chapter.

Wales.²⁴¹ W. Ambrose Bebb, one of the founder members of the party, and in contrast to colleagues, opposed this neutral stance and supported the war effort. Bebb claimed 'war is Germany's national industry' and being unable to reconcile his views with that of the party, ultimately resigned.²⁴² The contemporary press too were heavily critical of the WNP's neutrality, both during this pre-war period and throughout the conflict. Many of these articles argued that this nonalignment was senseless and would not be recognised or adhered to by the Germans. Insinuations that the policy stemmed from of cowardice were not uncommon.²⁴³ The party's stance on the proposed arrival of evacuees was even less popular.

Operation Pied Piper, as the Government Evacuation Scheme was known, recommended the division of Great Britain into three regions based on likelihood of air attack.²⁴⁴ The most endangered areas, particularly the major cities were designated 'evacuation areas'.²⁴⁵ The areas considered to be of low risk of air attack would receive the evacuees and were designated 'reception areas'. The population of the 'neutral' regions would remain unaffected. Wales, with the exception of the South Wales coastal strip, was designated a 'reception area', and therefore children and vulnerable people from the cities of England were to be received, and housed, within the local population, indefinitely.²⁴⁶ The WNP's main argument revolved around the negatively impact these events would have on the Welsh language and on Welsh culture.²⁴⁷ As with other policies, the rhetoric and the

²⁴¹ 'Welsh Nationalists and Evacuation', *Liverpool Daily Post* (11 March 1939), p. 10.

²⁴² W. Ambrose Bebb 1940 Diary published in Ambrose Bebb 'A Welsh Hundred: Glimpses of Life in Wales: Drawn from a Pair of Diaries for 1841 and 1940, trans. M. K. Stengel (Bloomington, 2009).

²⁴³ See, for example, 'Unwitting Champions of Nazi Spirit', *Holyhead Chronicle* (14 June 1940), p. 4.

²⁴⁴ *Report of the Committee in Evacuation, Operation Pied Piper: The Government Evacuation Scheme* (London, HMSO, 1938). TNA, CAB/24/279, *Report of Committee on Evacuation*, Cmd. 5837 (London, HMSO, 1938).

²⁴⁵ London Metropolitan Archives, County Council Papers, LCC/CL/CD/3/92, 'Memo EV. 4 Government Evacuation Scheme' 1939.

²⁴⁶ The coastal strip of South Wales, which included the ports and industrial regions was deemed a Neutral Area, where no evacuation was felt necessary but neither was it considered safe enough to deposit evacuees.

²⁴⁷ G. Evans, *The Fight for Welsh Freedom*, p. 137; see for example 'The Manifesto of the Welsh Nationalist Party Executive'; For a small example of the Party's opposition to military bases and munitions factories see; Clubb and Tapper, *The Welsh Arsenal*, p. 22-3; Jenkins, *A Nation on Trail*; J. E. Daniel, 'Defender of Small Nations', *The Welsh Nationalist* (April, 1940), p. 1.

confrontational anti-government stance, was much less accepted outside the Welsh speaking intelligentsia from which much of the party's membership originated.²⁴⁸ However, by 1939, even some members of the intelligentsia were becoming disillusioned with the party policies.²⁴⁹ As war began the WNP was in the decline internally and in the nation, *Y Cymro* summarised:

Only that these people [The Welsh Nationalist Party] set themselves to speak for Wales we would not mention the matter. But it is our duty to make it clear that they have no right to speak on behalf of Wales nor to state policy for Wales, when they have been rejected by the nation in general.²⁵⁰

This scathing attack from a moderate Welsh language newspaper demonstrated that by September 1939 the WNP was out of touch with the majority of the people of Wales. This left a vacuum for a moderate nationalist/patriotic organisation.

VI: *Cylch Dewi* and Radio in Wales

Of the anglicising influences that had impacted on Wales, none was considered more dangerous to the Welsh language, or provided more of an opportunity for its defence, than the newly expanding radio broadcasts. Right from the beginning of broadcasting, Welsh language campaigners realised the significance of this new information conduit, and its ability to transmit Welsh language material daily into people's homes.²⁵¹ This potential to promote the distinctive Welsh culture was not lost on a group of university graduates, lecturers, civil servants and ministers of religion, who organised themselves into a group called '*Cylch Dewi*'. This movement was the first to campaign for Welsh language

²⁴⁸ Jones, 'Welsh Nationalism'.

²⁴⁹ Ben Bowen Thomas, Ambrose Bebb resigned from the party, following ideological differences and W. J. Gruffydd ceased paying membership fees (but did not officially resign); For details of Ambrose Bebb disagreement with the WNP stance on the war, see, T. R. Chapman, *W. Ambrose Bebb* (Cardiff, 1997), pp. 113-46; For more on Gruffydd's views towards the conflict, which he did not oppose, see T. R. Chapman, *Nodiadau'r Golygydd: Detholiad o Nodiadau Golygyddol 'Y Llenor'* (Llandybie, 1986), pp. 70-97 and T. R. Chapman, *W. J. Gruffydd* (Cardiff, 1993), pp. 161-75.

²⁵⁰ 'Y Blaid a Chymru'.

²⁵¹ R. Lucas, *The Voice of a Nation?: A Concise Account of the BBC in Wales 1923-1973* (Llandysul, 1981), p. 39.

broadcasting and according to Lucas 'saw in broadcasting the salvation of the Welsh language and the particular culture of Wales.'²⁵² Among members of the group, formed in 1919, were William (W. J.) Gruffydd, Robert (R. T.) Jenkins, Rhys Hopkin Morris, Mary Ellis (wife of Tom I. Ellis), and Saunders Lewis.²⁵³ Each of these would later come to have prominent connections with UCF. *Cylch Dewi* was employed by BBC Station Director, E. R. Appleton, to produce a series of programmes called 'Welsh Hour', first transmitted in 1925.²⁵⁴ The association between *Cylch Dewi* and the BBC did not last long however, and was soured later that year, following a confrontation between Appleton and Saunders Lewis, over Lewis' insistence that a St David's Day broadcast be made in the Welsh language.²⁵⁵ *Cylch Dewi*, with no further outlet for their programmes, disbanded shortly afterwards. The termination of this culturally beneficial arrangement, the result of Lewis' linguistic stance, set back Welsh programming and programmes about Wales.

Two years after the demise of the *Cylch Dewi* group, a 1927 government report concluded that 'the present policy of the BBC is one of the most serious menaces to the life of the Welsh language.'²⁵⁶ The fate of the Welsh language broadcasting deteriorated further in 1932 when the South Wales radio stations were closed in favour of the new West regional station, which covered the west of Britain. The problem faced by BBC controllers was summarised by the *Daily Mail*:

Listeners in Wales are crying that they do not have enough broadcasts in the Welsh language. Listeners in the West Country are raising fists to heaven and wailing that if they have so many broadcasts in Welsh, which they cannot understand, they will make it a matter for parliament.²⁵⁷

²⁵² Ibid.

²⁵³ Papers for *Cylch Dewi* for the years 1919-25 are housed in the Archives of Aberystwyth University, while copies of the programmes prepared by the organisation are available at the National Library of Wales, Reference NLW MS 15527E.

²⁵⁴ Copies of the 1925 *Cylch Dewi* Radio Programmes are available at NLW, MS 15527E, *Cylch Dewi*.

²⁵⁵ T. Hajkowski, *The BBC and National Identity in Britain 1922-1953* (Manchester, 2010), p. 172.

²⁵⁶ Board of Education, *Welsh in Education and Life* (London, HMSO, 1927), p. 174.

²⁵⁷ Collie Knox, 'Wales Wants Welsh Radio, But', *Daily Mail* (30 October 1934), p. 21.

Despite representations to the BBC from the WNP, some local authorities, Welsh MPs and the University of Wales, little changed before 1937.²⁵⁸ The University of Wales even arranged a delegation to meet with, among others, John Reith, E. R. Appleton and Lord Clarendon. The delegation discussed, not only more Welsh language programming but also the feasibility of having a separate Welsh station for Wales but the BBC Directors views were summed up by Reith's diary entry for the meeting, in which stated simply 'silly Welsh delegation.'²⁵⁹ Reith's opinion demonstrates the BBC's contempt towards Wales, and the Welsh language, during this period. The BBC consistently refused to entertain the possibility of a separate radio wavelength for Wales, on the grounds of available frequencies, topography. However, according to Hajkowski's study into the BBC, finance was also an influential factor on the decision of the broadcasting Directors.²⁶⁰ Among the representatives of the University of Wales during that visit to London were William George and W. J. Gruffydd, both of whom would become prominent in UCF. Both these men would continue to pressure the broadcasting corporation for greater Welsh autonomy well into the post-war period. However, this was not the only campaign that they undertook.

William George, as Chairman of the Nation Union of Welsh Societies, campaigned for Welsh-language interests throughout the 1920s and 1930s. He was strongly linked to education in Wales, also chairing the Central Welsh Board and Caernarvonshire County Education Committee. George maintained close links to the National Eisteddfod serving as its solicitor for almost 20 years. W. J. Gruffydd was described as a strong Nonconformist intellectual.²⁶¹ He was a prominent member of the WNP during the 1930s, for a time serving as Vice-President to Lewis, during Lewis incarceration for the *Penyberth* arson. Gruffydd remained active in the promotion of Welsh broadcasting and was nominated to the Chair of Central Council of School Broadcasting on its establishment in 1932.²⁶² Gruffydd was outspoken in his views, and expressed them through the 'Editor's Notes' of *Y Llenor*. He wrote about the Welsh language, religion, the Anglicisation of Welsh society, corruption, political protest,

²⁵⁸ Lucas, *The Voice of a Nation?*, p. 41.

²⁵⁹ Reith, Diary entry for 30 November 1928, quoted in J. Davies, *Broadcasting and the BBC in Wales*, (Cardiff, 1994), p. 51.

²⁶⁰ Hajkowski, *The BBC and National Identity*, p. 169.

²⁶¹ For more information see, Chapman, *W. J. Gruffydd*.

²⁶² Davies, *Broadcasting and BBC in Wales*, pp. 98-9.

education the Eisteddfod and Welsh broadcasting.²⁶³ Both George and Gruffydd would become prominent within the Defence Committee and UCF during the war.

On 3 July 1937, bowing to pressure from the various Welsh organisations, Wales finally received its own radio wavelength, which together with the newly opened North Wales studio in Bangor, allowed almost total national coverage.²⁶⁴ Davies argues that, 'the Welsh Region of the BBC was the only Welsh national institution to come into existence in the 1930s.'²⁶⁵ The campaign for a dedicated radio station for Wales demonstrated the enhanced possibility of success when multiple Welsh organisations campaigned on a single issue.

VII: Penyberth

In contrast, one of the most acknowledged cultural campaigns in modern Welsh history, failed to achieve its objective. During 1936, while the WNP was conducting an energetic campaign to oppose the visit of the Bath and West Agricultural Show to Neath, the Government announced its plans to locate a new bombing school for the RAF on the Lleyrn Peninsula.²⁶⁶ *Penyberth* was culturally important and situated in the heart of Welsh speaking Wales. Its location on the medieval pilgrimage route to Bardsey Island included a farmhouse where a 16th century poem had been written.²⁶⁷ This verse was written as a *cywydd*, a traditional Welsh, strict-metre poem, by Morus Dwyfach, between 1540-80, and was a request for a mill stone for Sir Thomas Gruffydd of *Penyberth*, Llanbedrog from his cousin Robert ap Risiart Gruffydd of Anglesey. RAF Penrhos, as the airbase was to be called, was not the only RAF aerodrome to be based in Wales before World War Two. However, this was the first aerodrome connected to the strategy of aerial bombardment, which had the potentially to impact civilian targets. Such use of air power was an anathema to the

²⁶³ NLW website, DWB, 'Gruffydd, William John', <http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s2-GRUF-JOH-1881.html>, accessed 9 January 2016.

²⁶⁴ Davies, *Broadcasting and BBC*, p. 97.

²⁶⁵ Davies, *A History of Wales* (2007), p. 573.

²⁶⁶ Griffiths, *Saunders Lewis*, p. 30.

²⁶⁷ Jenkins, *A Nation On Trial*, pp. 5-22; S. Lewis 'The Caernarfon Court Speech' in Jones & Thomas (eds.) *Presenting Saunders Lewis*, pp. 115-26; For more information see Jenkins, *A Nation on Trial*, p. 116.

primarily Nonconformist pacifist traditions of Wales. Gwynfor Evans maintained that it was the offensive purpose of this airbase together with its location in the wholly Welsh speaking area that drove the WNP to resist the decision. However, as argued by Griffiths, 'protest came from all quarters.'²⁶⁸

Opposition to the airbase generated widespread support. It was claimed that over 600 Welsh societies and religious bodies, including the University Of Wales' Guild of Graduates, the *Urdd* and the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, all passed unanimous resolutions demanding the withdrawal of the bombing range. This opposition added to the extensive agitation in the Welsh press.²⁶⁹ However, this support was not unanimous. Plans for the airbase were approved by the Chairman for the Council for the Preservation of Rural Wales, Clough Williams-Ellis, who argued that he supported 'bombs exploding in Hell's Mouth Bay, because nothing less drastic would preserve that noble sweep of coast from the impertinent little bungalows that now sadly disfigure both Abersoch and Aberdaron'.²⁷⁰ The airbase, he argued, was the only thing that would keep the natural beauty of the area in unspoilt. However, this view was in the minority.

Significantly, there was little evidence of organisations working together for the common cause of opposing the construction of the aerodrome. The WNP led the objections and attempted to arrange a deputation to speak to the Prime Minister, however Baldwin refused to see them.²⁷¹ To generate support Lewis, in particular, wrote extensively on the matter. In March 1936, for example, he wrote 'In the name of God's moral law in the name of Christianity in the name of Wales. I call on you to oppose this accursed site to the utmost and in every possible way, and if it is not stopped, then destroy it'.²⁷² This reference to destroy the airbase was, according to one writer, one of a number of threats throughout

²⁶⁸ Griffiths, *Saunders Lewis*, p. 30; Evans, *The Fight for Welsh Freedom*, p. 137.

²⁶⁹ Saunders Lewis, 'The Caernarfon Court Speech'.

²⁷⁰ Clough Williams-Ellis, 'The Welsh Bombing School: An Architect's Point of View', *Manchester Guardian* (3 February 1937), p. 18.

²⁷¹ 'Letters to the Editor: Mr Baldwin's Refusal to Receive Deputation', *Manchester Guardian* (27 January 1937), p. 20; Griffiths, *Saunders Lewis*, pp. 30-1.

²⁷² 'Rhwystr Ysgol Fomio yn Lloegr', *Y Ddraig Goch* (March, 1936), pp. 1 & 10; Saunders Lewis, 'Paham y Gwrthwynebw'n yr Ysgol Fomio?', *Y Ddraig Goch*, (March, 1936), p. 6.

early 1936 that alluded to the crime that Lewis was about to commit, a view supported by Davies.²⁷³ Even before the *Penyberth* campaign there were signs that Lewis was becoming impatient with the party's lack of progress, arguing that 'Welsh nationalism is not challenging enough and not revolutionary enough.'²⁷⁴

On 8 September 1936 the opposition to the bombing school became more militant. Three members of the WNP, Lewis, David J. Williams (a Fishguard Schoolmaster) and Lewis Valentine attended the site of the proposed airbase. Once there, as reported by the *Daily Mail*, 'the night watchman was set on by two men and held there while the camp was fired'.²⁷⁵ The arsonists subsequently surrendered at Pwllheli Police Station and confessed to setting fire to the construction site.²⁷⁶ The damage caused to the construction of the airbase was negligible and consisted of workmen's huts, timber and workmen's tools.²⁷⁷ Despite this, the incident represented a new, more bellicose chapter, in Welsh national politics.

Despite their earlier confession, at their subsequent trial at Caernarfon, the three pleaded not guilty.²⁷⁸ Lewis, in particular, used the trial as a platform for his political views and argued that he, and his co-conspirators, had a moral right to challenge the Government.²⁷⁹ Parry argues that, during this hearing, the Judge 'displayed a deep contempt towards the defendants and their beliefs'. However, the Judge did, on several occasions warn Lewis that he was prejudicing his own position through the contents of his statements.²⁸⁰ Despite this, Lewis continued:

When all democratic and peaceful methods of persuasion had failed to obtain even a hearing for our case against the bombing range, and when we saw clearly the whole future of Welsh tradition threatened as never before in history, we

²⁷³ Griffiths, *Saunders Lewis*, p. 31; Davies, *The Welsh Nationalist Party*, p. 160.

²⁷⁴ Saunders Lewis, 'Revolutionary Aims of the Welsh Nationalists: My Country the Worst Hell in Europe Today', *Welsh Nationalist* (May, 1932), p. 1.

²⁷⁵ 'Gaol for Welsh Nationalists', *Daily Mail* (20 January 1937), p. 9.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁷ Davies, *The Welsh Nationalist Party*, p. 160.

²⁷⁸ Saunders Lewis 'The Caernarfon Court Speech'.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁰ R. G. Parry, *David Hughes Parry: A Jurist in Society* (Cardiff, 2010), p. 132.

determined that even then we would invoke only a process of law, and that a jury from the Welsh people should pronounce on the right and wrong of our behaviour.²⁸¹

According to Evans, 'Saunders Lewis gave one of the most impressive addresses ever heard in a court of law'.²⁸² The result of the trial should never have been in doubt as the defendants, throughout the legal process had admitted setting fire to the construction site. The defendants' not guilty pleas were based on a moral right to commit the crime, a position not supported in the British legal system. However, Lewis' courtroom performance almost achieved the impossible, when the jury failed to agree a verdict and a retrial was ordered. This result was seen as a victory by many nationalists.

Following the result in Caernarfon, the Attorney General transferred the case to the Old Bailey in London.²⁸³ This, according to one national newspaper caused 'considerable indignation in Wales' and led David Lloyd George, who had not supported the opposition to the bombing school, to declare it 'is an outrage that makes my blood boil.'²⁸⁴ It was reported that this was the first time that a case had been transferred from Wales to England 'in hundreds of years'.²⁸⁵ In January 1937, despite these objections the case proceeded. On this occasion the three were found guilty and each was sentenced to nine months at Wormwood Scrubs.²⁸⁶ Sympathy for the three nationalists was widespread in Wales, not least because the perceived harshness of the sentence. The Labour MP for Wrexham, Robert Richards, for example, asked the Home Secretary to review this sentence but he refused.²⁸⁷ Objections to the airbase continued but to no avail and the airbase became

²⁸¹ Saunders Lewis 'The Caernarfon Court Speech'.

²⁸² Evans, *The Fight for Welsh Freedom*, p. 138.

²⁸³ 'Welsh Nationalists in Arson Trail To-day,' *Daily Mail* (19 January 1937), p. 9; 'New Trial of Welsh Nationalists', *Lancashire Evening Post* (13 January 1937), p. 3.

²⁸⁴ 'Welsh Nationalists in Arson Trail To-day,'; NLW, Lloyd George Family Papers, MS 23263C David Lloyd George letter to Megan Lloyd George, 1 December 1936; Davies, *The Welsh Nationalist Party*, p. 161.

²⁸⁵ 'Trial of Welsh Nationalists: Transferred to London', *Dundee Evening Telegraph* (7 December 1936), p. 5.

²⁸⁶ 'Gaul for Welsh Nationalists'.

²⁸⁷ HC Deb, 28 January 1937, vol. 319, cc. 1051-2 'Arson Wales (Convictions)'; 'House of Commons: North Wales Arson Trial', *The Times* (29 January 1937), p. 7.

operational on 1 February 1937.²⁸⁸ During the trial, the three defendants had challenged the authority of the court on the grounds that as it was not in their own country. However, more significantly, during the trial all three refused to answer any questions in English and confined their addresses to the Welsh language, a language not recognised by the British legal system of the time.²⁸⁹ This linguistic defiance would, within eighteen months, result in the initiation of another cultural campaign, this time to allow the use of the Welsh language in courts in Wales.²⁹⁰

Following their trial and incarceration, the three nationalists returned to different fortunes. Lewis Valentine was said to have been welcomed back by his church and continued to serve it for the rest of his career and D. J. Williams returned to teaching in Fishguard.²⁹¹ Saunders Lewis, in contrast, was dismissed from his post at Swansea University but maintained his position as leader of the party.²⁹²

The campaign to prevent the establishment of the bombing school was based primarily on cultural issues. However, there was little doubt that Lewis had hoped that the incident would fire Welsh passions and that the WNP would reap the benefit. When 15,000 supporters gathered in the Caernarfon Pavilion to welcome home the three defendants, on their release from prison, *Time Magazine* reported, 'Welsh National sentiment could well be glowing with an effulgence not seen for four hundred years'.²⁹³ However, the excitement

²⁸⁸ Saunders Lewis, 'News of the Month', *Welsh Nationalist* (January, 1938), p. 3; Anti-Bombing School meeting held in Abersoch, *Welsh Nationalist* (March, 1938), p. 8; For more information on RAF Penrhos see, Annard, *RAF Penrhos near Pwllheli 1937-45*.

²⁸⁹ 'Welsh Nationalists Sentenced to Prison', *Manchester Guardian* (20 January 1937), p. 7.

²⁹⁰ See section on National Language Petition in this Chapter.

²⁹¹ For more information on Lewis Valentine, see, A. Vittle, *Valentine* (Talybont, 2006); D. D. Morgan, 'Y Proffwyd Ymhlith y Praidd: Lewis Valentine (1893-1986)' in D. D. Morgan, *Cedyrn Canrif: Crefydd a Chymdeithas yng Nghymru'r Ugeinfed Ganrif* (Cardiff, 2001), pp. 68-104, and for D. J. Williams, see, E. Hywel, *Y Cawr o Rydcymerau* (Talybont, 2009); Jenkins, *A Nation on Trail*, pp. 120-1.

²⁹² 'Welsh Nationalist President: University's Action, Comments on the Dismissal', *Manchester Guardian* (16 February 1937), p. 3.

²⁹³ Evans, *The Fight for Welsh Freedom*, pp. 138-9; Chapman, quoted 12,000 supporters inside the Caernarfon pavilion with a further 7,000 outside, Chapman, *Un Bywyd o Blith Nifer*, p. 210; *Time Magazine* (1936) quoted in Jenkins, *A Nation on Trail*, p. vi.

was short lived. As Jenkins stated, 'there was no massive advancement in the fortunes of Plaid [the WNP].' Saunders Lewis was described as suffering 'deep disappointment'.²⁹⁴ The hope that the incident would bring forth many more party candidates for the May 1937 County Council elections, proved in vain, as only nine official candidates stood throughout Wales.²⁹⁵

The 'Fire in Llŷn' has been elevated by later generations into some form of rallying point, or even seminal happening, for Welsh nationalism, coming as it did on the 400th anniversary of the Act of Union.²⁹⁶ However, Aitchison and Carter argued that the impact on attitudes to the Welsh language across Wales, 'seems to have been very limited'.²⁹⁷ Scholars agree that politically the WNP did experience some notable membership gains during the period for the Fire and the subsequent arson trial but these soon reduced again.²⁹⁸ This decline in membership and the party's failure to capitalise on its increased publicity has been attributed to rise in European Fascism and the party's neutrality policy as tensions with Germany increased.²⁹⁹ However, a less acknowledged explanation for this decline in popularity occurred in 1937. When King George VI was crowned, the WNP, now under the temporary leadership of its deputy, W. J. Gruffydd, called for every local authority in Wales to boycott the national celebrations.³⁰⁰ Jenkins argues that it was this campaign that lost the party the popular support it had gained from the arson attack. The party's stance was heavily criticised by Lewis, who, at the time, was serving his prison sentence at Wormwood Scrubs.³⁰¹ This argument is consistent with the view that throughout the 1930s and 1940s Welsh cultural patriotism was extremely popular in Wales, but only when viewed within a British context. The popularity of the Royal Family in Wales does not always sit comfortably

²⁹⁴ Jenkins, *A Nation on Trail*, p. vii.

²⁹⁵ Ibid.

²⁹⁶ Ward & Edwards, *British Labour and Welsh Socialism*, p. 1; Jenkins, *A Nation on Trail*, p. vi.

²⁹⁷ J. Aitchison and H. Carter, *Spreading the Word: The Welsh Language 2001* (Talybont, 2004), p. 21.

²⁹⁸ J. G. Jones, 'Wales Since 1900' in P. Morgan (ed.) *The Tempus History of Wales: 2500BC-AD2000* (Stroud, 2001), p. 231; Chapman, *Un Bywyd o Blith Nifer*, p. 209.

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ Jenkins, *A Nation on Trail*, p. vii.

³⁰¹ Gruffydd also called for a boycott of the earlier 1937 Royal visit to Wales. Chapman, *Un Bywyd o Blith Nifer*, pp. 206-7.

within traditional Welsh nationalist discourses and therefore is often overlooked. It has also been argued that the whole event, i.e. *Penyberth*, was ‘born out of Lewis’s desire to put the struggling party at the centre of some political issue of national interest in Wales’.³⁰² If this was true, it failed. Jenkins concluded that during the late 1930s the event was ‘not a cherished’ memory in the psyche of Wales and was only supported by the minority, which give it a false impression of being popular.³⁰³ This incident did, however, reinforce the image of Lewis as being more radical than the majority of his party colleagues. He later admitted that after the *Penyberth* attack, and his ensuing incarceration, his popularity slumped to the point that, ‘I was a pariah among the majority in Wales’.³⁰⁴

The *Penyberth* incident reinforced a feeling among many in Wales that it was being let down by the British government and the nation did not have a say in its own future. Even with widespread support for the objections to a bomber school, the British government would not listen. In essence Wales was being ignored. This increased resentment within some quarters, especially within the Welsh intelligentsia. At the same time, the WNP in general, and Lewis in particular, was considered by many to be too radical and extreme in their views. The absence of a moderate patriotic voice to represent Wales was increasing. One consequence of the *Penyberth* affair was the widespread support, the opposition to the airbase, generated across Wales. This was an important step on the road to the formation of the Defence Committee.

VIII: National Language Petition

The linguistic stance of the three arsonists during the *Penyberth* trial illuminated the inferior status of the Welsh language in the British legal system. Since the Act of Union in 1536, English was the only official language in British courts. Official procedures existed to facilitate non English speaking defendants and witnesses testimony, in many languages, through the use of translators, and at the court’s expense. In contrast, however, Welsh

³⁰² D. M. G. Christ, *Welsh Writing, Political Action and Incarceration: Branwen’s Starling* (Basingstoke, 2013), p. 39; Davies, *The Welsh Nationalist Party*.

³⁰³ Jenkins, *A Nation on Trail*, p. vi.

³⁰⁴ Saunders Lewis, *Radio Times* (22 Feb 1957) quoted in Davies, *Broadcasting and the BBC*, p. 99.

defendants and witnesses had no such rights, even when the court sat in Welsh speaking areas.³⁰⁵ That is not to say that the Welsh language was never used in courts in Wales; judges or chairmen of the magistrates could, at their discretion, allow the use of the language. In some courts this facility was only allowed if the party in question paid an interpreter's fees from his or her own pocket. However, these were always individual arrangements and no official procedure existed. Fuelling the feelings of Welsh inferiority Jones has highlighted how Welsh speakers were, at times, even found 'unfit for jury service' based solely on their language.³⁰⁶ It was to emphasise this inequity that Lewis and his colleagues had during the London trial answered every question in Welsh.³⁰⁷ This was not the first time that the use of Welsh in courts had come to the fore. As early as 1923, the *Western Mail* published articles expressing dissatisfaction with these linguistic restrictions, but by 1938 even though the dispute had reached the House of Commons no significant progress had been made.³⁰⁸

On 3 August 1938, during the Eisteddfod week in Cardiff, William George chaired a meeting, under the auspices of the National Union of Welsh Societies.³⁰⁹ This meeting, of 'every association and party in Wales' resolved to present to the Government a national petition to amend the legal status of the Welsh language in courts.³¹⁰ The National Petition for the Legal Recognition of the Welsh Language (*Y Ddeiseb Genedlaethol am Gydnabyddiaeth Gyfreithiol I'r Gymraeg*) was launched.³¹¹ To oversee the campaign a Language Petition Committee was established also chaired by George.³¹² A week later, a young barrister based in Carmarthen, Dafydd Jenkins, was offered and accepted a full-time position of Campaign

³⁰⁵ Evans, *The Fight for Welsh Freedom*, p. 143.

³⁰⁶ J. G. Jones, 'The National Petition on the Legal Status of the Welsh Language 1938-42', *Welsh History Review* 18:1 (June, 1996), 92-124.

³⁰⁷ 'Nine Months Imprisonment for Welsh Nationalists: The Lleyn Aerodrome Fire', *Manchester Guardian* (20 January 1937), p. 11.

³⁰⁸ D. Lleufer Thomas (Stipendiary Magistrate for Pontypridd & Rhonda 1909 – 1933) letter to *Western Mail* (12 March 1923) & (7 April 1923); HC Deb, 26 February 1937, vol. 320, cc. 2423-30, 'Parliamentary Debates'.

³⁰⁹ Jones, 'The National Petition', pp. 92-124.

³¹⁰ NLW, SELNES/49, National Petition Leaflet 'The National Petition for Legal Recognition of the Welsh Language in Wales'.

³¹¹ NLW, UCF/A24, Accounts of Y Ddeiseb Genedlaethol am Gydnabyddiaeth Gyfreithiol I'r Gymraeg.

³¹² NLW, UCF/A3, Dafydd Jenkins letter to T. I. Ellis, 20 February 1940.

Organiser.³¹³ Apart from his extensive legal expertise, Jenkins' was also an experienced Welsh Nationalist activist and had, the previous year, published an account of the arson attack at *Penyberth*.³¹⁴ As a condition of his employment in this post Jenkins was required to refrain from any WNP activities.³¹⁵ This suggests that by 1938, there were concerns that Jenkins' association with the WNP could tarnish the cultural campaign.

Over the following months financial support for the Language Petition was received from David Lloyd George, the WNP, the National Union of Welsh Societies and the Eisteddfod Council, as well as from numerous other smaller contributors.³¹⁶ Significantly, the campaign united the National Union of Welsh Societies, the WNP and the *Urdd*, who worked together to form a 'non-political alliance'.³¹⁷ The petition exposed how 'Welshmen have been found guilty and condemned, without understanding a word of the testimony against them' and, working together, this alliance arranged go door to door across Wales to collect signatories.³¹⁸ A network of local organising secretaries was recruited and, by late 1940, there were 36 across Wales.³¹⁹ The *Urdd's* offices in Aberystwyth became the Campaign

³¹³ NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to William John, 25 June 1941; David Jenkins was a pacifist, author (and joint editor of *Heddiw (Today)*) who was called to the bar in 1934, at the age of 23 years. Throughout World War Two he was registered as a Conscientious Objector. Politically, Jenkins Welsh Nationalism stood to the left of centre and was sometimes uncomfortable with Saunders Lewis's right-wing policies. For more information see M. Owen, 'Dafydd Jenkins (1911-2012)', *Barn*, 593; M. Stephens, *Welsh Lives: Gone But Not Forgotten* (Talybont, 2012), pp. 162-166.

³¹⁴ M. Stephens, *Welsh Lives*, pp. 162-166; D. Jenkins, *Tân yn Llŷn: Hanes Brwydr Gorsaf Awyr Penyberth* (Aberystwyth, 1937), In 1998 it was translated and published in English, see, Jenkins, *A Nation on Trial*.

³¹⁵ NLW, John Maldwyn Rees Papers, ISYSARCHB60/28, G. Brynallt Williams letter to E. Walter Rees, October 1938.

³¹⁶ NLW, UCF/A24, 'Accounts of Y Ddeiseb'.

³¹⁷ NLW, SELNES/49, National Petition Leaflet, 'The National Petition for Legal Recognition of the Welsh Language in Wales'.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*

³¹⁹ NLW, UCF/A24 R. E. Griffiths 'Circular to Local Secretaries National Language Petition'. The network of local secretaries of the Petition Committee spanned Wales. Glamorgan boasted the highest concentration with 13 local Secretaries, Cardiganshire had 6; Caernarvonshire 5; Monmouthshire 3; 2 were located in Pembrokeshire, Denbighshire and Montgomeryshire and finally 1 secretary was located in Merionyddshire, Flintshire and Anglesey. Totalling 36, but this was not fixed and there is evidence of new names being added and others leaving.

Headquarters for what Saunders Lewis described as ‘the most united movement that Wales has seen for centuries.’³²⁰ This time, not only was there widespread support among the Welsh cultural and political organisations for a single cause, there was also an umbrella organisation to lead and coordinate the campaign. This is a significant precursor to the emergence of the Defence Committee.

By 25 August 1939, a week before the commencement of the war, the petition had raised 189,742 signatures.³²¹ The largest number of these signatures was collected in Glamorganshire, the most Anglicised and most densely populated county in Wales. The 72,000 signatories gathered for a petition that was unlikely to directly affect the majority of the county, confirms the general support for this Welsh language campaign.³²² However, as soon as World War Two began, the Petition Committee felt compelled to terminate its activities, as support quickly waned.³²³ This cessation of support for the Language Petition Committee was similarly reflected in the attitude of the Welsh MPs, who had, prior to September 1939, supported the campaign. Now with Britain at war, their attentions were being directed elsewhere. This was a major setback for a campaign to give the Welsh speakers parity in Welsh courts. However, while this setback signalled the beginning of the demise of the Language Petition Committee, it did, from 1940, give, firstly the Defence Committee and then UCF, a foundation from which to build, as detailed in Chapter Three.

At the beginning of September 1939 it was widely accepted that Welsh culture and in particularly the Welsh language was, as Geraint Jenkins would later describe it, dying ‘a tortuous death by a thousand cuts’.³²⁴ The number of Welsh speakers had declined steadily since 1901 and as war approached additional negative influences were expected. According

³²⁰ NLW, UCF/A3, Saunders Lewis, ‘Memorandum to the Conference in Shrewsbury to Cherish Welsh Culture’ December 1939.

³²¹ ‘189,742 Wedi Arwyddo Deiseb Yr Iaith’, *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (30 August 1939), p. 16.

³²² Ibid.

³²³ T. I. Ellis, *Undeb Cymru Fydd* (1943), p. 6; Jones, ‘The National Petition’.

³²⁴ Jenkins, ‘Terminal Decline?’.

to Rhys Evans a 'mood of cultural crisis' existed in Wales by 1939 and, he concluded, Wales seemed more in need of salvation than ever, as its future grew less and less certain'.³²⁵ This was not an isolated view.³²⁶ Welsh cultural organisations worked hard to redress this linguistic decline. However, each worked within its own specific sphere of influence, the National Union of Welsh Societies continued to work within education and law, the *Urdd* worked with the next generation of Welsh people and the Local Education Authorities in some counties had been making slow but steady progress in improving the teaching of Welsh in schools. But no broad reaching, nationally-organised body existed in 1939. As argued by Kate Roberts, on the eve of war, there was a lack of unity in Wales of Welsh culture.³²⁷

While there is substance to this argument of disunity there is also evidence of association. As the 1930s unfolded a greater degree of co-operation between cultural leaders and Welsh organisations developed. Early in the decade *Cylch Dewi* was specifically established, by some prominent Welshmen, to campaign on a single issue, Welsh language broadcasting. The campaign against the *Penyberth* aerodrome generated widespread support and while unsuccessful, did unite many of the Welsh institutions. Significantly, while the WNP led the resistance there was no centrally-managed strategy to harness this support. By 1938, the establishment of the Language Petition Committee to coordinate the activities of the *Urdd*, the National Union of Welsh Societies and the WNP, to campaign for the use of the Welsh language in courts demonstrates a greater level of co-operation. As war began and the fears for the Welsh language increased, the establishment of the Defence Committee built on this concept and generated a greater consensus of opinion across Welsh organisations.

³²⁵ Evans, *Gwynfor Evans*, p. 62.

³²⁶ See, for example, Johnes, *Wales Since 1939*, p. 26.

³²⁷ 'Frenchman's Speech in Welsh', *Manchester Guardian* (12 August 1939), p. 5.

Chapter Two

1939 – 1941: The Establishment of *Pwyllgor Diogelu* *Diwylliant Cymru* (The Committee for the Defence of Welsh Culture)

Language is to group identity as a badge or a jersey is to team membership: there are interesting things to say about the markers themselves, of course, but the identity that they represent is of greatest importance.¹

This chapter will chronicle the events in Wales from the early months of World War Two to the 1941 National Eisteddfod. It will detail how, as war commenced, the introduction of the British wartime measures played on existing fears for the future of the declining Welsh language and for Welsh culture. In contrast to R. Merfyn Jones and Gerwyn Williams, who both argued that the war was a controversial and divisive subject in Wales, the narrative will demonstrate how, building on the events of the 1930s, the various categories of patriotic and nationalist organisations united with the primary objective of protecting the Welsh language, or as Edwards contends, their group identity.²³ It will detail how the resultant national conference spawned the Committee for the Defence of Welsh Culture. Using the organisation's own papers, backed by other sources, the composition and aims of the Committee will be analysed, as will its early campaigns. Finally, the difficulties experienced by the movement will be detailed and the events that led, in 1941, to the merging of the National Union of Welsh Societies and the Defence Committee will be analysed.

I: Evacuees

During the first three days of September 1939, under the auspices of Operation Pied Piper, the mass movement of people, about which Saunders Lewis had warned, began to arrive in

¹ J. Edwards, *Minority Languages and Group Identity: Cases and Categories* (Amsterdam, 2010), p. 195.

² R. M. Jones, *Cymru 2000: Hanes Cymru yn yr Ugeinfed Canrif* (Cardiff, 1999), p. 95; Williams, *Tir Newydd*, p. 8.

³ Edwards, *Minority Languages and Group Identity*, p. 195.

Wales.⁴ Under the Government Evacuation Scheme, north and mid-Wales were expected to host some 346,000 evacuees from Liverpool and Birkenhead, although not all came, while evacuees from London and the Midlands were to be housed in South Wales.⁵ Adding to the organised mass-movement of civilians across Britain, a further 2 million people made private arrangements to evacuate their dependants, many of whom also came to Wales. Institutions also relocated away from danger zones, as Britain prepared for the German Luftwaffe bombing campaign that was expected to kill 600,000 people in the first two months.⁶ The Government relocated many of its departments moving 30,000 Civil Servants away from London.⁷ For example, the Inland Revenue moved to Llandudno and the Ministry of Food, which was responsible for the wartime rationing of food for Britain, transferred its operations to Colwyn Bay.⁸ The arrival of 5,000 civil servants almost overnight, increased the population of this seaside town by 25 percent.⁹ Further down the coast, one newspaper reported how Bangor 'lost its innocence overnight with a transport of actors', as B.B.C. light entertainment relocated there.¹⁰ Part of the University College, London, also moved to Bangor with the remainder locating to Aberystwyth and Sheffield, while Liverpool University transferred much of its operation to Harlech College.¹¹ Not all evacuees were from England. European refugees too were also welcomed in Britain and into Wales, that same month.¹² In

⁴ Saunders Lewis, 'Y Plant Bach'.

⁵ J. Wallis, *A Welcome in the Hillside? The Merseyside & North Wales Experience of Evacuation: 1939-1945* (Bebington, 2000), p. 1; 'Welcome (in Welsh) for 7,000: London Children Cry Hooray!', *Daily Mail* (20 May 1940), p. 5.

⁶ Johnes, *Wales Since 1939*, p. 8.

⁷ I. Stuart, *Taxing Times: A History of the Inland Revenue Staff Federation and its Predecessors* (London, 2007), p. 137.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 137-43; Lowe, *Colwyn Bay Accredited*; Roberts, *Colwyn Bay at War*.

⁹ Roberts, *Colwyn Bay at War*, p. 3.

¹⁰ A. Price quoted the Daily Post in Parliament, HC Deb, 10 July 2006, vol. 448, col. 1194.

¹¹ Liverpool University Archives, Liverpool, Papers of Graduates, D376/4/5, Gilbert L. Marson 'Photographs at Harlech', 23 March 1940; H. R. Houdhuysen, 'Some Women Editors of Shakespeare: A Preliminary Sketch' in G. McMullan, L. C. Orlin and V. M. Vaughan (eds.) *Women Making Shakespeare: Text Reception and Performance* (London, 2014), pp. 79-89. (p. 81); 'London University Evacuation: Scattered Colleges', *The Times* (12 Sept 1939), p. 3.

¹² 'Czech Refugees at Porthmadog', *South Caernarfon and Merioneth Leader* (30 November 1939), p. 4.

total some 200,000 evacuees arrived in Wales during the early years of the war and were, in general, welcomed enthusiastically.¹³ Some contemporary estimates suggest that this figure could have been as high as 350,000.¹⁴ However, to language activists, cultural organisations and the WNP, among others, the arrival of so many English speakers, especially into the Welsh speaking areas of Wales, represented the point of no return in the decline of the Welsh language.

The difficulties experienced in Wales fell into two categories. Firstly, the tensions caused by the social mismatch of fusing children, a disproportionate number of which arrived from the poorest inner-cities areas, into the more rural and often more affluent communities, are well documented and mirrored similar difficulties across Britain.¹⁵ Sonya Rose, for example, described Britain at this time, as two nations, those of 'urban poor and country people' and compared the discourse with that used of paupers in the Victorian era.¹⁶ It has been argued that these problems, exposed by the evacuation, were so severe that they profoundly altered attitude to state welfare and led to the introduction of the welfare state.¹⁷

¹³ Jenkins, 'Terminal Decline?', p. 62; Johnes, *Wales Since 1939*, pp. 11-2; Williams, *Tir Newydd*, p. 5; 'Welcome (in Welsh) for 7,000'; 'Newborough and the Evacuees', *The Holyhead Chronicle* (19 April 1940), p. 5; For contemporary sources see, for example, Nuffield College Social Reconstruction Survey, Nuffield Library, Oxford (hereafter NCSRS), C1/327, J. Morgan Rees, 'The Economic Problems of the Wales Region: With Special Reference to Reconstruction After the War', September 1942.

¹⁴ Rees, 'The Economic Problems of the Wales Region'.

¹⁵ See for example A. Calder, *The People's War: Britain 1939-1945* (London, 1992), pp. 38-41; Wallis, *A Welcome in the Hillside?*; C. Jackson, *Who Will Take Our Children? The Story of Evacuation in Britain 1939-1945* (London, 1985); T. L. Crosby, *The Impact of Civilian Evacuation in the Second World War* (London, 1986); Boyce, *Pillowslips and Gas masks*; M. Brown, *Evacuees: Evacuation in Wartime Britain 1939-1945* (Stroud, 2000); J. Welshman, *Churchill's Children: The Evacuee Experience in Wartime Britain* (Oxford, 2010).

¹⁶ S. Rose, *Which People's War? National Identity and Citizenship in Wartime Britain, 1939-1945* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 58-60.

¹⁷ J. Welshman, 'Evacuation and Social Policy during the Second World War: Myth and Reality', *Twentieth Century British History*, 9:1 (1998), 28-53; A. J. P. Taylor, *English History, 1914-45*, (Oxford, 1965), p. 455; B. Holman, *The Evacuation: A Very British Revolution* (Oxford, 1995).

Wales was no exception to these difficulties with reports of poor health, poor hygiene and differences in acceptable behaviour common place.¹⁸ Kate Roberts, for example, reported that ‘the clean living families of Wales have had some of the dirtiest and most disgusting people that Merseyside has, forced upon them.’¹⁹ A report by Anglesey’s Director of Education mirrored these sentiments and reported, ‘Some children sent to the island were in a dirty and awful condition’.²⁰ Similarly, the *Caernarfon and Denbigh Herald* reported that ‘The majority of these evacuees were not in a fit state of cleanliness to be received in any clean home’.²¹ So serious were these complaints that, less than a fortnight after the evacuation began, the matter was raised in the House of Commons. The MP for Caernarvonshire, speaking of these difficulties, reported that all the bedding, mattresses and curtains in some rooms used by the evacuees were so badly soiled, and infested, that they required immediate burning.²² Responding to these health issues Liverpool Education Authority authorised the appointment of four health visitors to deal with evacuees in the Caernarvonshire. It also sent a dental surgeon and authorised the appointment of a medical officer.²³ Milk was also shipped from Liverpool and given free of charge to the evacuees. It is generally accepted that initial difficulties, which included complaints directed at mothers as much as children, were on the whole overcome, or at least improved significantly, as the weeks and months passed. In this, Wales mirrored experiences across many parts of Britain.

¹⁸ The contemporary press contained numerous reports of difficulties of various kinds caused by the integration of evacuees into the Welsh speaking regions of Wales. It is also worth noting however, that there are at least an equal number of positive reports from locals and letters from evacuees and their teachers thanking the people of the region. For a small selection see, for example, ‘Welsh Culture and the Evacuation: the Talk of Contamination’, *Manchester Guardian* (19 January 1940), p. 12; ‘Evacuees Problems’, *Holyhead Chronicle* (5 February 1941), p. 5; ‘Perygl i Ieuenctid Cymru’, *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (15 May 1940), p. 7; ‘Dylifiad Noddedigion i Gymru’, *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (5 June 1940), p. 5; ‘Newborough and the Evacuees’; ‘Welcome (in Welsh) for 7,000’.

¹⁹ K. Roberts, ‘Pa Le Y Mae Adroddiad Y Diciâu’, *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (13 September 1939), p. 8.

²⁰ ‘Ffoaduriaid o Lerpwl: Cwynian ym Mon’, *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (13 September 1939), p. 12.

²¹ ‘Children and Evacuated Areas’, *Caernarfon and Denbigh Herald* (15 September 1939), p. 8.

²² See Major Owen (Goronwy Owen was M.P. for Caernarvonshire from 1923 – 1945) comments during Evacuation debate, HC Deb, 14 September 1939, vol. 351 cc. 802-86.

²³ ‘Caernarfon Education Committee: Milk for Evacuees’, *South Caernarfon and Merioneth Leader* (7 December 1939), p. 2.

The second problem was more regional and related to the fears that the evacuees would change local communities and dilute the Welsh language. The National Union of Welsh Societies, for example, in its *Manifesto to Wales*, highlighted how the Welsh language was in danger and argued that 'Wales must remain mindful of the duty to safeguard her language literature and culture'.²⁴ The problem was clearly stated, 'In households which were formerly strongholds of the native tongue, members of families must of necessity resort to a second language'.²⁵ In contrast to the improving health and behaviour problems, these fears only increased.²⁶ The fears of Welsh cultural and political organisations were not entirely unjustified. A brief examination of Anglesey County shows the extent of the impact experienced across Wales, especially within the Welsh speaking regions.

In 1939 Anglesey was a predominantly traditional Welsh community. It was largely, although not exclusively, a Nonconformist, Welsh speaking, rural culture. In early September, three Merseyside secondary schools relocated to the island: Alsop School arrived at Holyhead with 540 pupils, Oulton School arrived in Llangefni with 300 pupils and Blue Coat School brought 240 pupils to Beaumaris.²⁷ All three were dedicated girls schools, attended, primarily, by Roman Catholic children. The impact of these children on an island populated by around 46,500 was further exacerbated by the arrival of around 2,500 mainly Catholic primary school children and almost 400 unofficial evacuees.²⁸ Unlike the secondary school girls, who were housed in the three towns, the additional children were accommodated in the homes of local residents throughout the island. This embedding of evacuees within the local population required many Welsh households to increase their use

²⁴ 'Y Gymraeg Mewn Perygl: Undeb Cymdeithasol Y Cymdeithasau', *The Welshman* (29 September 1939), p. 7; 'A Manifesto to Wales: Language's Danger', *The Welshman* (20 October 1939), p. 7.

²⁵ 'Welsh Culture: Union of Welsh Societies Manifesto', *Caernarfon and Denbigh Herald* (13 October 1939), p. 3.

²⁶ 'Problem Y Ffoaduriaid: Profiadau Pobl yng Nghyrmu Cymraeg', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (13 September 1939), p. 12.

²⁷ 'Evacuees in Anglesey', 30 September 1939, UCF Papers, Box A1, NLW; G. Jones, *Anglesey At War* (Stroud, 2012) p. 83; Jones, *Anglesey and Gwynedd*, p. 42.

²⁸ Digest of Welsh Historical Statistics

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/publications/dwhs1700-1974/?lang=en>, accessed 6 February 2015;

'Ffoaduriaid o Lerpwl: Cwynian ym Mon'.

of English to communicate with them. It was the sheer number of evacuees that caused concern. In keeping with national figures, it was likely that about 11 percent of the population of Anglesey would enter the military, leaving a population of just over, 41,000.²⁹ Therefore, almost 10 percent of the population of Anglesey in late 1939 was English speaking, primarily female, school children and their teachers, with different religious and cultural backgrounds from the indigenous Welsh population.³⁰

Both categories of children required educating and there was a rarely acknowledged difference in the funding of official and unofficially evacuees. The cost of educating 'official' evacuees rested with the originating Local Education Authority (LEA). In contrast, the costs relating to the education of 'unofficial' evacuees rested with the host LEA. This policy penalised Anglesey heavily and resulted in an estimated additional expense of £6,000.³¹ Spiritual needs also drained resources. There was no official policy on religious education and Anglesey had few Catholic facilities. Therefore schools and, in particular, chapel rooms were utilised as make-shift location for services.³² Religious welfare was clearly not a high priority for the government during Operation Pied Piper, which was confirmed when concerns for the religious wellbeing of protestant children, relocated to the mainly Catholic, Republic of Ireland, were raised in Parliament. The government announced that, as these evacuees to Eire had been accompanied by their mothers, 'the responsibility for religious instruction of the children is [was] one for the parents who accompany them'.³³ There was a similar lack of governmental initiative to deal with religious sensibilities in Wales.

The influx of so many Catholics into a Nonconformist area further challenged Welsh life. Ideologically, Catholic beliefs were held to be the complete antithesis of Nonconformist doctrines and therefore Welsh values.³⁴ As a result 'a distinct and persistent anti-Catholic

²⁹ Pre-war population of Anglesey, 46,500 minus 11 percent conscripted into the military = 41,385.

³⁰ 3,930 evacuees children (a figure which excludes teachers and parents) as a percentage of 41,385 = 9.5 percent.

³¹ 'Anglesey Education Authority: Claim Additional Cost, *Holyhead Chronicle* (29 March 1940), p. 4.

³² Jones, *Anglesey and Gwynedd*, p. 42; 'Evacuees in Anglesey', UCF Papers.

³³ HC Deb, 13 February 1941, vol. 368, c. 1495.

³⁴ T. O. Hughes, 'Anti-Catholicism in Wales, 1900-1960', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 53:2 (April, 2002), p. 322.

polemic was common' in Wales through this period.³⁵ Additionally, *Y Cymro* argued that the reason for this hostility towards Catholicism 'is the fact that it is gaining ground in Wales while Calvinism is fast disappearing'.³⁶ There was, in the interwar period, an increase in numbers of Catholic Churches, while chapels were closing and attendance at Sunday schools falling sharply.³⁷ Evidence of Nonconformist aversion to Catholicism was not hard to find, the Nonconformist, *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, for example argued, 'Nothing but evil can come from the success of Popery in Wales'.³⁸ While the more moderate *Y Cymro* reinforced an often stated Nonconformist view that it would be better for children to be brought up as atheists than as Roman Catholics.³⁹ The arrival of some 3,500 Catholic children to Anglesey further fed the fears of Nonconformists about the future of Wales and of Welsh life. Despite these fears several chapels allowed Catholic services and religious instruction to be given to evacuee children inside chapel rooms. This demonstrates a level of religious tolerance and an attitude of mutual assistance at grass-roots level of religious institutions, which reinforced the traditional wartime communal spirit. This willingness of Nonconformists to cooperate and assist Catholics preserve their religious wellbeing, evidenced in Anglesey, was not universal across Wales. In some areas, such as Llanelli, the arrival of just over a thousand Catholic evacuees from Liverpool soon led difficulties.⁴⁰

In Caernarvonshire, another strong Welsh speaking area, 7,532 official evacuees arrived in September 1939 and a further 1,350 unofficial evacuees followed.⁴¹ The Education Committee here was noticeably positive regarding the evacuees. In a 1940 report it emphasised that Liverpool children were being taught in separate rooms to Welsh children and argued that 'It is surprising how little the Welsh and the English are doing together.'⁴²

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ 'Y Byd Yfory – Annibyniaeth i Bentrefi', *Y Cymro* (15 July 1933), p. 5.

³⁷ For a detailed account of the expansion of RC religion on Wales, see, T. O. Hughes, *Winds of Change: The Roman Catholic Church and Society in Wales, 1916-62* (Cardiff, 1999).

³⁸ 'Y Gweinidog Addysg A'r Pabyddion', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (24 June 1930), p. 2.

³⁹ 'Seiat Fawr Sulgwyn: Sylw yr Athro W. D. Davies ar y Catholigion', *Y Cymro* (10 June 1933), p. 15.

⁴⁰ See for example, Davies, *Protest a Thystiolaeth*, pp. 47-58.

⁴¹ NLW, UCF/A5, UCF, 'Addroddiad ar y Noddedigion yn Sir Caernarfon', 1940.

⁴² NLW, UCF/A9, Caernarfonshire Education Committee, 'Report of the Organiser of Infants' Schools and Language Training, 1940.

The report also underlined that 'a number of evacuees staying with Welsh families have learnt Welsh ... some have even learnt to write Welsh and embraced Welsh culture, including attending Sunday school and singing Welsh hymns.'⁴³

In contrast to the Education Departments Report, a representation was received by Caernarfon Town Council from the Rotary Club, urging the Council to approach the Ministry of Health with a view to future evacuees being thoroughly examined before their arrival. The Town Clerk, having clearly responded to other complaints, explained that strong representation had already been made to the Ministry.⁴⁴ J. E. Williams, a schoolmaster of 30 years wrote to the editor of the *South Caernarfon and Merioneth Leader*, 'I wonder if parents ... realise how positively disastrous to the education of their children this travesty of half time sessions really is.'⁴⁵

The contradictory accounts of the evacuees in Wales mirrors wider historiography of the evacuation and the home front in general. The philosophy of the 'spirit of the blitz' is well embedded in the national culture of Britain. This view, promoted during the war and later cemented by Richard Titmuss, was reinforced by other scholars, until it was challenged in the later 1960s.⁴⁶ Calder first disputed the concept, spotlighting increased crime, black marketeering and looting.⁴⁷ While Calder questioned the established view, Harrison, outright challenged it.⁴⁸ Similarly, Pontin questioned the 'finest hour' argument and concluded that this was little more than government propaganda.⁴⁹ These publications drew attention

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Caernarfon Record Office, Gwynedd Archives (hereafter CRO), Records of the Borough of Caernarfon, XD1/763, Town Council Minute Book, 'Minutes of Emergency Committee Meeting 14 September 1939', Minute 1642, p. 114.

⁴⁵ J. E. Williams 'letter to editor', *South Caernarfon and Merioneth Leader* (4 January 1940), p. 8.

⁴⁶ R. M. Titmuss, *Problems of Social Policy* (London, 1950), pp. 340-4; R. Mackay, *Half the Battle: Civilian Morale in Britain during the Second World War* (Manchester, 2002), p. 3; C. Fitzgibbon, *The Blitz* (London, 1957), p. 113; D. Thompson, *England in the Twentieth Century* (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 193; Taylor, *English History*, pp. 502-3.

⁴⁷ A. Calder, *The People's War; The Myth of the Blitz* (London, 1991).

⁴⁸ T. Harrison, *Living Through the Blitz* (London, 1976), pp. 280-1.

⁴⁹ E. Smithies, *Crime in Wartime: A Social History of Crime in World War Two* (London, 1982); C. Pontin, *1940 Myth and Reality* (London, 1990).

to important issues, but appeared to have concentrated on the actions of the minority and argued that they were the conduct of the majority. In contrast, scholars like Andrew Thorpe, after reviewing public morale through a variety of methods, concluded that 'Overall...civilians supported the war effort, despite the hardships involved'.⁵⁰ Other scholars concurred, believing that breakdowns in civilian morale, where they occurred, were no more than local and short term lapses.⁵¹ The contradictory reports in Wales towards evacuees initially appear similar to those experienced in other parts of Britain and there is no doubt that some of the same factors were at work. However, the belief by many intellectuals in Wales, that these evacuees would substantially increase the decline of the Welsh language and destroy Welsh communities adds a further layer to the 'spirit of the blitz' debate.

II: Other wartime problems

Apart from the civilian evacuees there were other government wartime measures which had an adverse bearing on Welsh communities and the Welsh language. The conscription of Welsh speakers into the British military, where English was the sole language, was of particular concern. During World War One, military recruiting occurred regionally and therefore soldiers from specific areas of Wales, like other parts of Britain, generally remained together in Welsh regiments. While this policy aided the maintenance of cultural identity it also resulted in the potential for large numbers of casualties from the same locale. By World War Two military policy had changed, distributing recruits to various units as they were needed.⁵² Thus, when a regiment sustained large numbers of casualties, the impact on relatives was not concentrated in a small area or town, but distributed across the nation. Despite the operational and political benefits of this policy shift, for monoglot Welsh

⁵⁰ A. Thorpe, 'Britain', in J. Noakes (ed), *The Civilian in War: The Home Front in Europe, Japan, and the USA in World War II* (Exeter, 1992), pp. 14-34.

⁵¹ P. Hennessey, *Never Again: Britain 1945-1951* (London, 1992), p. 34; J. Ray, *The Night Blitz 1940-1941* (London, 1996), p. 12; P. Ziegler, *London at War 1939-1945* (New York, 1995), p. 340; M. Smith, *Britain and 1940: History Myth and Popular Memory* (London, 2000).

⁵² HC Deb, 7 November 1939, vol. 353 c. 63W; NLW, UCF/A11, 'Minutes of the 16 Meeting of the Executive Committee (CDDC)', 6 June 1941.

speakers, this resulted in linguistic separation and alienation. Welsh soldiers, it was reported experienced ridicule from officers and fellow soldiers for failing to understand orders and they also found it hard, when necessary, to accurately describe medical symptoms or request medication.⁵³ Their difficulties were not confined to communicating with their fellow soldiers.

From the beginning of the war there were reports of Welsh soldiers not being allowed to correspond with their relatives in their native tongue.⁵⁴ These constraints were not isolated incidents. They were imposed at the instructions of the War Office, even though 'some of those boys are unable to express their thoughts clearly in the English language'.⁵⁵ The lack of Welsh speaking censors to vet the correspondence was blamed for the restrictions. However, another issue was that neither military authorities nor local Post Office personnel could decipher the Welsh addresses.⁵⁶ When letters did arrive home, the language restriction resulted in monoglot Welsh parents ignominiously compelled to take personal letters to third parties to have them deciphered.⁵⁷ Former Welsh soldiers, some of whom, including Ifan ab Owen Edwards had become prominent leaders, remembered that in World War One such restrictions had not existed. Therefore, this was seen an additional attack on Welsh culture by the British authorities.⁵⁸ These issues ultimately resulted in many Welsh speaking soldiers reverting to English as their day to day language.

This Anglicising influence was also evidenced inside Wales. English was the sole language used in the Home Guard and among Air Raid Wardens, even when these positions were based in Welsh speaking areas. Another significant impact on Welsh speaking communities was the establishment of military bases across the nation, each bringing with them thousands of non-Welsh speakers. The Royal Air Force alone, despite the protests and the arson attack at *Penyberth*, increased its presence in Wales to 32 airfields during the conflict,

⁵³ 'Wales and the War: Welsh Lads in Welsh Units Demand', *South Wales Evening Post* (25 February 1942), p. 3; see also, Davies, *Protest a Thystiolaeth*, pp. 74-6.

⁵⁴ 'Rhwystru Llythyrau Cymraeg', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (20 September 1939), p. 1.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ 'Soldiers Want to Write Home in Welsh', *Daily Mail* (26 November 1940), p. 3; 'Wales and the War'.

⁵⁷ 'Soldiers Want to Write Home in Welsh'.

⁵⁸ 'Rhwystru Llythyrau Cymraeg'; See also Plaid Genedlaethol Cymru, *Llais Cymry yn Lluoedd Lloegr* (1944).

where three had existed in 1935.⁵⁹ Army camps, naval personnel and the arrival of foreign armed forces, both from the nations of occupied Europe and, later, the United States, were all located in Wales during the war. This military build-up added significantly to Lewis's 'movement of population' and reinforced the belief that the Welsh language and culture would be swamped. The occupation of so much of Wales for military use was also abhorrent to many nationalists and Nonconformists, as it struck at their views of their imagined community and national identity based on land, language and *gwerin*.

It was not only the influx of non-Welsh speakers that caused concern. On 2 September the BBC unified all their regional frequencies into a single Home Service that transmitted across the UK, to free up radio waves for military use. According to Davies, this unification was more to do with centralisation of information than operational requirement.⁶⁰ However, the result was the same, Welsh radio, which had only been in existence since 1937 ceased, meaning that Welsh language programmes all but ceased.⁶¹ The Welsh language press's reaction ranged from rage to wry humour and the BBC was accused, 'that broadcasts in the Welsh language have been disproportionately penalised by the arrangements introduced since declaration of war.'⁶² The University of Wales, Guild of Graduates went so far as to accuse BBC programmers of ineptitude.⁶³ The total withdrawal of Welsh language programmes was eased slightly a week later, on 12 September. However, there remained a feeling in the Welsh language press that this would further impact negatively on the Welsh language.⁶⁴ This powerful conduit of information was now entirely at the Government's disposal and was almost exclusively infusing the English language into Welsh homes. This

⁵⁹ Information collated from a number of sources including CADW Twentieth Century Military Sites Project, Government documents and local historians including, A. Phillips, *Military Airfields Wales* (Wrexham, 2006); N. Barfield, *Broughton: From Wellington to Airbus* (Stroud, 2001). The three bases in operation in 1935 were RAF Stations Sealand, Pembroke Dock and Manobier.

⁶⁰ Hajkowski, *The BBC and National Identity*, p. 182; Davies, *Broadcasting and BBC*, p. 121.

⁶¹ This is well documented but for examples, see P. Davies, *Gwynfor Evans: Golwg Ar Ei Waith a'i Feddwl* (Swansea, 1976), p. 25; 'Radio Cymru: Dim Cymraeg Drwy y Radio', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (6 September 1939), p. 6.

⁶² NLW, UCF/A23, T. I. Ellis letter to F. W. Ogilvie, 9 February 1940.

⁶³ NLW, UNIWWALES/G12/1/5, 'University of Wales Guild of Graduates Minutes of Standing Committee', 21 October 1939.

⁶⁴ 'Ychydig O Gymraeg O'r Diwedd', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (13 September 1939), p. 4; 'Radio Cymru'.

wartime measure, when added to other government emergency powers, would, it was perceived, impeded significantly on Welsh speaking society.⁶⁵ It appeared that Wales was again being victimized.

After the onset of war, the WNP increased its pacifist, anti-government rhetoric. This vocabulary even questioned whether a British victory was in Wales's best interests. J. E. Daniel, the party's wartime President, for example, argued that 'Wales had nothing to gain and everything to lose' from contributing to the war.⁶⁶ Evans even suggested that a German victory might be better for Wales.⁶⁷ Other extreme views were also sometimes expressed. For example, one nationalist supporter suggested that only 'native speaking' Welsh evacuees, returning from England, should be accepted in North Wales.⁶⁸ This statement raises questions as to whether the writer would have accepted Welsh children who did not speak Welsh into the locality. The author's exclusion of potential native Welsh speakers returning from other parts of occupied Europe was also provocative.

In keeping with the WNP's policy, some party members did conscientiously object to military conscription, an exception that was allowed by the National Service Act, until July 1940, when it was withdrawn.⁶⁹ In total, there were 2,920 conscientious objectors recorded in Wales during World War Two, However, very few appealed against conscription purely on nationalist grounds, most preferring ethical or religious justifications.⁷⁰ Caernarfon's David Williams did follow the party's stance and argued; 'I wish to emphasise that my chief objection to military service is based on my nationalism, which forbids me to recognise the right of any other nation to compel me to take part in war. England has no right to compel

⁶⁵ See Emergency Powers (Defence) Act 1939; The Military Training Act 1939 and The National Service (Armed Forced) Act 1939; For interesting contemporary interpretation of the 1940 Emergency Powers (Defence) Act see W. I. Jennings, 'The Emergency Powers (Defence) (No. 2) Act 1940', *The Modern Law Review*, 4:2 (October, 1940), 132-6.

⁶⁶ J. E. Daniel, 'Wartime President of Plaid', *Welsh Nationalist* (August, 1940), p. 4; Johnes, *Wales Since 1939*, p. 25.

⁶⁷ Evans, *Gwynfor Evans*, p. 68.

⁶⁸ Tangwysti, 'A New Menace for Cymru', *Welsh Nationalist* (January 1939), p. 7.

⁶⁹ J. Humphries, *Spying for Hitler: The Welsh Double-Cross* (Cardiff, 2012), pp. 56-60.

⁷⁰ National Library of Wales website, 'Ymgyrchu: Pacifism', www.llgc.org.uk/ymgyrchu/Heddwch/Heddychiaeth/index-e.htm, accessed 20 June 2015.

the youth of Wales to fight for her.’⁷¹ Similarly, David John Thomas followed the same argument ‘it was morally wrong to force anybody belonging to one nation to join and fight in another nation’s army’.⁷² Both these claims failed. Eventually twelve nationalist were imprisoned for their opposition to conscription based solely on their nationalism, suggesting that the majority of the party membership either objected on other grounds or refused to support the party’s view.⁷³ These figures reaffirm the unpopularity of this policy even among members.

The WNP continued to lose ground in popular opinion, which consistently supported the war effort.⁷⁴ The strength of public feeling against the party was, at times, severe. Local opposition was sufficiently high in Pembroke, for example, that a party meeting was terminated and in Aberystwyth four activists were only saved from a mob by being arrested.⁷⁵ As the war began in earnest, Rhys Evans has argued that ‘the last remnants of tolerance for nationalism and pacifism disappeared’.⁷⁶ Letters from Wales to the *Manchester Guardian* reinforce this view, ‘when we’ve seen the hideous thing that a blind nationalism has made of Europe, let us bury this name under the highest mountain and go

⁷¹ Quoted in Ellis, *Wales - A Nation Again*, p. 108; Other nationalists included additional reasons for their objections to military conscription, Gwynfor Evans and William George for example included Christian grounds in their appeal.

⁷² ‘Welsh Nationalists’ Application’, *The Chronicle* (14 June 1940), p. 6.

⁷³ Gardiner, *Wartime: Britain*, p. 106; Some well known nationalists were imprisoned, including A. O. H. Jarman, editor of *Y Ddraig Goch*. Others were not, including, George Lloyd, Wrexham and Robert J. Evans, Brymbo.

⁷⁴ See, for example, British Institute of Public Opinion Polls (hereafter BIPO), June 1941; 81 percent of those polled would disapprove of the Government discussing peace proposals with Germany. ‘Demonstrations at Aberystwyth’, *Manchester Guardian* (21 May 1940), p. 7; ‘Y Wlad Yn Erbyn ‘Heddwch Hitler’, *Y Cymro* (7 October 1939), p. 1.

⁷⁵ *Wales at War*, pp. 46-7; ‘Notes and Comments’, *Welsh Nationalist* (December, 1941), p. 2; The article gives very little in the way of detail of the event but states that the four nationalist were charged with ‘Insulting Behaviour’ for disrupting the playing of ‘God Save the King’; This was not the only example of violence against those opposing the war in Aberystwyth. Demonstration occurred on 18 and 19 May 1940 against Pacifists and Communists who had been attempting to sell *Daily Worker* and *Peace News*. These papers were seized and destroyed by demonstrators, see, ‘Demonstrations at Aberystwyth’; ‘Y Wlad Yn Erbyn Heddwch Hitler’.

⁷⁶ Evans, *Gwynfor Evans*, p. 66.

forward together in the cause of freedom.’⁷⁷ The *Holyhead Chronicle* also reported receiving many letters denouncing the WNP.⁷⁸ The party was in a poor position to protect Welsh interests. Jones agrees that ‘even in the eyes of some of the party’s supporters, its position seemed ill-judged’.⁷⁹ Whereas Evans confirmed the party was virtually absent during this period.⁸⁰ It is worth noting that Rhys Evans’s view, while in keeping with the overall negative portrayal of disharmony among the party faithful, his particularly bleak portrayal of the WNP during the war does assist him to portray Gwynfor Evans’ post-war presidency more favourably.

III: Response to Pied Piper

Within days of the onset of World War Two, a proposal to establish a new government committee began a chain of events that would result in the creation of a new organisation to speak for Welsh interests. Notwithstanding the party’s policies, the initial proposal came from the past and current leaders of the WNP. Lewis and Daniel wrote to the Editor of the *Manchester Guardian* a letter entitled ‘Welsh Interests in War-time: How to Protect Them’.⁸¹ There was nothing new in their rhetoric, but there was a new suggestion. The authors proposed the establishment of a consultative committee ‘to watch the national interests of Wales and to keep the Government informed on such matters and represent the needs of the Welsh people.’⁸² This committee, they argued, should contain representatives from the Association of Welsh Local Authorities, the Welsh University Council and other public bodies including religious leaders. The letter was also printed in

⁷⁷ ‘Welsh Culture and Evacuation’.

⁷⁸ Parry, ‘Unwitting Champion of Nazi Spirit’.

⁷⁹ Jones, *The Fascist Party in Wales*, p. 58.

⁸⁰ Evans, *Gwynfor Evans*, p. 63.

⁸¹ Lewis & Daniel, ‘Welsh Interests in War-Time: How to Protect Them’.

⁸² *Ibid.*

some of the Welsh language press.⁸³ Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the events of that month this blueprint went un-noticed in Whitehall, but in Wales it triggered a momentum.

Building on the theme, an article appeared in *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, entitled 'How to keep Welsh Culture'. In response to an enquiry 'for suggestions to protect Welsh culture against the flow of English children', the newspaper proposed segregating Welsh children and evacuees in schools, ensuring that Welsh institutions like church services did not convert to the English language but cater for the visitors separately.⁸⁴ Similarly, the *Caernarfon and Denbigh Herald* also addressed these issues but, in contrast, clearly opposed the idea of segregating evacuees. It also argued against running bilingual religious services, instead this English language newspaper maintained that Welsh institutions should carry on as they did before the war. The newspaper contended that English children would adapt to their new surroundings, and in a compelling point, argued, 'Suppose Welsh children had been evacuated into England. Is it in the least likely that the English churches would mix the languages [between English and Welsh] in their services?'⁸⁵ Neither of these articles, however, referred to Lewis and Daniel's letter.

By 20 September *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* reported that it had received numerous letters from such prominent Welshmen as R. T. Jenkins, W. J. Gruffydd, T. I. Ellis, William George, Ben Bowen Thomas and others.⁸⁶ However, it became apparent that the newspaper had written to each of what it called the 'Nation's Leaders' asking for their opinion on Saunders Lewis and J. E. Daniel's *Manchester Guardian* letter. Each of these 'leaders' were prominent within a range of Welsh cultural institutions, including the National Eisteddfod, the National Union of Welsh Societies, the University of Wales Guild of Graduates and higher educational establishments. R. T. Jenkins supported Lewis's proposal for an Advisory Committee and argued that something needed to be done immediately. George reinforced the 'dramatic impact on the dangers to Welsh culture' from the latest English overflow and conceded that

⁸³ See, for example, Buddiannau Cymru Adeg Rhyfel Sut i'w Hamddiffyn', *Y Tyst* (21 September 1939), p. 3; Pwyllgor Ymgynghorol I Wyllo Buddiannau Cymru', *Y Ddraig Goch* (October, 1939), p. 8.

⁸⁴ 'Sut i Gadw Diwylliant Cymru', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (13 September 1939), p. 8.

⁸⁵ 'Welsh and English', *Caernarfon and Denbigh Herald* (15 September 1939), p. 4.

⁸⁶ 'Cadw'n Fyw y Genedl Cymreig: Arweinwyr Y Genedl Yn Cytuno Ag Awgrym', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* 20 September 1939, p. 12.

Messrs, Lewis and Daniel's concept was a valuable suggestion.⁸⁷ All the contributors agreed that the current situation placed new strains on the Welsh language and in general most supported Lewis and Daniel's proposal for an advisory committee. Other Welsh newspapers also published articles appealing for support for the concept, *Y Llenor* argued for local committees to safeguard 'the essential Welsh life' and *Y Cymro* similarly stressed that 'War or not, we have to fight for our language.'⁸⁸ Tom Ellis praised *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* for 'their valuable service in the best interests of Wales by bringing these non-bias and impartial ideas forward' and stated that it would be 'a privilege and a pleasure to do anything I can to promote this good cause.' It is unlikely at this time that he realised how much this 'good cause' would take over his life.⁸⁹

Less than a fortnight after Lewis and Daniel's letter was published, Hywel D. Roberts, a local member of the WNP and a town councillor in Caernarfon, followed Lewis' lead. Caernarfon was located in an area where the Welsh language was the primary daily language and the type of place, it was feared, that would be significantly affected by the English speaking evacuees. At the Town Council meeting on 20 September, Roberts proposed that Caernarfon Council 'should attempt to take the lead in safeguarding the life and interests of the Welsh nation during the war'.⁹⁰ Building on Lewis and Daniel's proposal, he argued for the desirability of setting up a 'Welsh Consultative Committee' to 'serve as the mouthpiece for the needs of Wales.'⁹¹ This Council unanimously resolved to write to the Prime Minister, every Welsh Member of Parliament and to every other local Council in Wales to lobby for such a Committee.⁹² By early October *Y Cymro*, reported that these communications had

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ W. J. Gruffydd, 'Editors Column' *Y Llenor* 18:3 (October, 1939), p. 129; 'Yn Amser Rhyfel', *Y Cymro* (16 September 1939), p. 3.

⁸⁹ 'Cadw'n Fyw y Genedl Cymreig'.

⁹⁰ 'Interest of Wales: Protection of Life and Language', *Caernarfon and Denbigh Herald* (22 September 1939), p. 8.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² CRO, Records of the Borough of Caernarfon, XD1/763, Town Council Minute Book, 'Caernarfon Town Council Meeting 20 September 1939', Minute 1614, p. 108; 'Gwarchod Hawliau Cymru', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (27 September 1939), p. 12.

been dispatched.⁹³ With support for an Advisory Committee growing, the WNP, as an organisation, took no further part in the process either lacking the political will or the organisational resources to take advantage of the increasing momentum.

In contrast to the small and relatively disorganised WNP, the culturally focused National Eisteddfod Committee was well established and well organised. It was clear that the Lewis and Daniel's *Manchester Guardian's* article hit a chord with its Council and in a separate move to Caernarfon Town Council's initiative, contacted T. I. Ellis and asked him to assist its Secretary, D. R. Hughes in forming 'a small body' to examine the difficulties confronting Wales because of the war and to explore the support for a protective body.⁹⁴ Momentum for a new body to safeguard Welsh interests was building. Ellis, the son of the former Liberal M.P. Tom Edward Ellis, was well regarded and well connected to Welsh cultural organisations.⁹⁵ He had close links with the Nonconformist religious organisations and academic connections. He was a member of the University of Wales' Guild of Graduates and had served as Assistant Master at the Cardiff School for Boys and as Assistant Lecturer at the University College Swansea. In contrast to Ellis senior, however, he had no political affiliation.⁹⁶ At the time Ellis was a School Headmaster at the County School in Rhyl, which was conveniently close to Hughes, who resided in Old Colwyn ten miles away..

⁹³ Ohebydd (The Editor) 'Galw Am Bwyllgor I Wyllo Buddiannau Cymru', *Y Cymro* (7 October 1939), p. 1.

⁹⁴ NLW, UCF/A3, 'R. Hopkins-Morris letter to T. I. Ellis', 25 September 1939.

⁹⁵ Thomas Edward Ellis, Liberal MP for Merioneth 1886-1899 and became his party's chief whip. He strongly promoted Welsh interests and measures to secure the disestablishment of the Church of England in Wales. He also devoted much of his time to educational administration in Wales. He was, together with J. E. Lloyd, O. M. Edwards and Alfred Thomas, one of the founding members of *Cymru Fydd* an organisation, begun by London based Welshmen to achieve self-government for Wales. The organisation soon spread to other English cities with large Welsh populations and to Wales itself. For more information on Ellis, see, T. I. Ellis, *Thomas Edward Ellis: Cofiant (1859-1886)*, (Liverpool, 1944); O. L. Owain, *Tom Ellis: Gwladgarwr a Gwylidydd* (Caernarfon, 1915); Jones, *Thomas Edwards Ellis*.

⁹⁶ NLW website, T. I. Ellis Papers,

[http://discover.library.wales/primo_library/libweb/action/display.do?tabs=detailsTab&ct=display&fn=search&doc=dedupmrg147902249&indx=48&reclids=dedupmrg147902249&reclids=47&elementId=47&renderMode=poppedOut&displayMode=full&frbrVersion=&vid=44WHELF_NLW_VU1&mode=Basic&tab=tab1&vl\(235331553U1\)=all_items&vl\(235331552U10\)=creator&dsct=0&vl\(freeText0\)=T.%20I.%20Ellis%201899-1970&scp.scps=scope%3A%2844WHELF_NLW%29%2Cprimo_central_multiple_fe&dstmp=1503416397722,](http://discover.library.wales/primo_library/libweb/action/display.do?tabs=detailsTab&ct=display&fn=search&doc=dedupmrg147902249&indx=48&reclids=dedupmrg147902249&reclids=47&elementId=47&renderMode=poppedOut&displayMode=full&frbrVersion=&vid=44WHELF_NLW_VU1&mode=Basic&tab=tab1&vl(235331553U1)=all_items&vl(235331552U10)=creator&dsct=0&vl(freeText0)=T.%20I.%20Ellis%201899-1970&scp.scps=scope%3A%2844WHELF_NLW%29%2Cprimo_central_multiple_fe&dstmp=1503416397722,)

Initially, Ellis turned to his associates in the University of Wales, Guild of Graduates, writing to the secretary and requesting that the Guild hold a 'Special Meeting' in order to discuss the 'Welsh questions' facing the nation. Specifically, he stated, 'to consider the effect upon the life of Wales of the disposal of evacuees in Wales, and other similar problems caused by the war.'⁹⁷ Initially, the Guild of Graduates was not enthusiastic, responding that 'it is a problem capable of solution by government action only,' nevertheless, despite this reluctance, the Guild's secretary agreed to call a meeting although warned that 'attendance is sure to be small'.⁹⁸

On 22 September 1939, the Executive Committee of the National Eisteddfod Council met in Shrewsbury and formally picked up the baton.⁹⁹ Cassie Davies, following up on Lewis and Daniel's letter in the *Guardian*, launches a discussion on 'the state of Wales, especially Welsh Wales, in the face of changes brought about by the war'.¹⁰⁰ There was unanimous agreement on 'the importance of immediate action, before Welsh life sinks out of sight'.¹⁰¹ The Welsh National Eisteddfod maintained in its constitution: 'The Court holds full right to promote the interests of the Eisteddfod by any means which it may from time to time deem

accessed 21 January 2015; Jones, *A Bid for Unity*, pp. 52-4; 'Thomas Iorwerth Ellis', *The Times* (22 April 1970), p. 12.

⁹⁷ Guild of Graduates, 'Minutes of Standing Committee'.

⁹⁸ NLW, UCF/A3, 'University of Wales Guild of Graduates letter to T. I. Ellis, 21 Sept 1939; T. I. Ellis letter to University of Wales Guild of Graduates, 29 Sept 1939.

⁹⁹ A direct link between the Saunders Lewis' letter to the *Manchester Guardian* and the actions of the Eisteddfod Council is confirmed by Ellis, *Y Gynhadledd Genedlaethol*, p. 3, where Lewis' suggestion for an independent Committee to protect the Welsh language and Welsh culture was accepted by several Welsh leaders and then discussed further by the Eisteddfod Council. Conclusions of the Eisteddfod Council meeting including its decision to call a conference, was reported in 'Cynlluniau Cyngor y 'Steddfod i Ddiogelu Cymru', *Y Cymro* (21 October 1939), p. 7.

¹⁰⁰ Chapman, *Un Bywyd o Blith Nifer*, p. 240.

¹⁰¹ NLW, UCF/A7, Cyngor Eisteddfod Genedlaethol, 'Pwyllgor Cenedlaethol er diogelu Diwylliant Cymru' 11 October 1939.

advisable.¹⁰² As *Cynan* confirmed, ‘remember that the National Eisteddfod is first and foremost an institution for the safeguarding of the Welsh Language and the promotion of Welsh culture.’¹⁰³ Under this justification the Eisteddfod Council determined to hold a national conference to discuss the impact of the war.

To ensure that the conference was fully representative of the views of the nation, all religious, voluntary and official organisations were contacted and asked to appoint representatives.¹⁰⁴ Within a fortnight, positive replies were being received from other institutions and by mid October the *Urdd*, at its annual meeting, unanimously resolved to give every possible support to the movement initiated by the Council of the National Eisteddfod during ‘this silly war’.¹⁰⁵ The national conference was arranged for Friday, the 1 December 1939. Ironically, the location chosen for what was later described ‘as a momentous gathering on Welsh affairs’ was *Capel yr Annibynwyr Cymreig* (Welsh Congregational Chapel),¹⁰⁶ in the English border town of Shrewsbury.¹⁰⁷ This location was chosen as it was considered the most convenient place, from a transport perspective, for delegates from across Wales to meet.

The speed with which the Eisteddfod Council made progress with the Conference arrangements and the almost immediate acceptance of many organisations demonstrates the urgency felt at the time. Support was received, not only from among the cultural and political leaders of Wales, but also from wider institutions. For example, the Central Student’s Representative Council of the University of Wales, which had discussed the

¹⁰² Miles, *Royal National Eisteddfod*, p. 7; T. Parry, *Hanes yr Eisteddfod Gan Thomas Parry a’r Eisteddfod Genedlaethol A’r Orsedd Heddiw gan Cynan: The Story of the Eisteddfod by Thomas Parry and The National Eisteddfod and Gorsedd of To-day by Cynan* (Liverpool, 1962), p. 41.

¹⁰³ Parry, *Hanes Yr Eisteddfod*, p. 39.

¹⁰⁴ Ellis, *Y Gynhadledd Genedlaethol*, p. 3.

¹⁰⁵ There is evidence that by 30 Sept 1939 some organisations had already been invited to attend a conference see, for example, NLW, UCF/A3, Hywel Roberts letter to T. I. Ellis, 30 Sept 1939; NLW, UCF/A23, R. E. Griffith letter to D. R. Hughes, 23 October 1939.

¹⁰⁶ A congregation of Welsh Independents built the Tabernacle chapel in 1862, in Dogpole, as a memorial to the 1662 ejection of the puritan clergy by the Act of Uniformity.

¹⁰⁷ NLW, UCF/A23, D. R. Hughes letter to W. P. Wheldon, 16 November 1939; NLW, UCF/A8, ‘Minutes of the Conference to Safeguard Welsh Culture’, 1 December 1939.

problems of evacuees in Wales at its Executive meeting in Cardiff on 26 October, wrote to Hughes confirming its support for the initiative and requesting to be allowed to send a delegate.¹⁰⁸ Even the Regional Director of the BBC in Wales, the former Liberal MP, Rhys Hopkins Morris, concurred 'I fully agree with the views you express about the importance to Wales of the many problems created by the new in rush of population'.¹⁰⁹ Speaking for the Broadcasting Corporation Morris declared, 'We want to support the establishment of a national committee with official status.'¹¹⁰ Similar support for the conference was received from W. P. Wheldon at the Welsh Department of the Board of Education.¹¹¹ Wheldon, was a significant ally as, according to J. Gwynn Williams, he 'understood the feelings and aspirations of his countrymen'.¹¹² Wheldon confirmed that:

Someone will be there (at the conference) representing the Welsh Department of the Board and offering his and his department's support . . . I have no doubt that we can come to some conclusion as to what this department can usefully do for the meeting at Shrewsbury.¹¹³

Wheldon subsequently nominated two HM Inspectors to attend.¹¹⁴ The support from both the BBC and the Board of Education for the Eisteddfod's initiative suggests the prestige in which the cultural organisation was held and is also an indication that the concerns for the Welsh language and Wales' future were widespread.

Attendance figures for the meeting of the University of Wales, Guild of Graduates, held on 21 October, as requested by Ellis, are not available. However, following news that the

¹⁰⁸ NLW, UCF/A23, A. Davies letter to D. R. Hughes, 30 October 1939.

¹⁰⁹ NLW, UCF/A3, R. Hopkins-Morris letter to T. I. Ellis, 25 September 1939.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Sir Wynn Powell Wheldon was educated in Friar's School Bangor, the University College of North Wales and at St John's College, Cambridge. In 1906 he began his career as a lawyer in London and joined a number of London's Welsh Societies including the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion. He served with the Royal Welsh Fusiliers during World War One and was decorated for bravery. He was appointed Permanent Secretary of the Welsh Department of the Board of Education in 1933.

¹¹² NLW website, DWB, 'Wheldon, Sir Wynn Powell', <http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s2-WHEL-POW-1879.html>, accessed 10 January 2016.

¹¹³ NLW, UCF/A23, W. P. Wheldon letter to T. I. Ellis, 21 November 1939; W. P. Wheldon letter to T. I. Ellis, 27 November 1939.

¹¹⁴ NLW, UCF/A23, W. P. Wheldon letter to T. I. Ellis, 21 November 1939.

National Eisteddfod had initiated the conference, there was a complete reversal of the Guild's attitude. The Guild's secretary, who had appeared unenthusiastic only a few weeks previously, wrote an open letter to all the Guild's branches offering 'wholehearted support to the movement started by the National Eisteddfod Council to safeguard the cultural interests of Wales.'¹¹⁵ The correspondence also requested that each branch of the Guild to 'undertake a survey of its area' so that its representatives at the conference would be in possession of 'information concerning the effects of the war and evacuation.'¹¹⁶ The Guild resolved to send seven representatives to the conference, which included Ellis, B. B. Thomas, R. T. Jenkins and Gwenan Jones.¹¹⁷ For these four this was the beginning of a long association with the Committee for the Defence of Welsh Culture and the later UCF.

By 23 October 23 councils had pledged 'complete support' for Caernarfon Council's proposal for a Welsh Advisory Council. Not all of these councils were located in predominantly Welsh speaking areas. One council, Flintshire County Council acknowledged receipt of Caernarfon Council's proposal no further correspondence was received, while six councils, including Rhyl, Colwyn Bay and Llanelli Town Council agreed to take no further action at that time.¹¹⁸ Some Councils including Menai Bridge and Llanfairfechan, both in the Welsh speaking heartland of North Wales waited to see how other councils responded.¹¹⁹ In contrast, Anglesey Rural District Council, much to the distaste of Hywel D. Roberts, passed a resolution to defer discussion on the matter for 10 years, he commented, 'hopefully there will be a Wales waiting for them by then'.¹²⁰ In a clear merging of the two proposals, Roberts supplied Ellis with a full report on the progress of Caernarfon Council's initiative towards a Welsh Advisory Council, including the names and addresses of the other councils contacted. Roberts recommended that Ellis contact these councils and advise them of the Eisteddfod plans to hold a conference. Roberts also suggested that the names of the councils that supported a Welsh Advisory Council should be published in '*Y Ddraig Goch*,

¹¹⁵ NLW, UCF/A2, Pansy M. Lewis letter to T. I. Ellis, 23 Oct 1939.

¹¹⁶ *ibid.* Guild of Graduates, 'Minutes of Standing Committee'.

¹¹⁷ Guild of Graduates, 'Minutes of Standing Committee'.

¹¹⁸ NLW, UCF/A2, Hywel D. Roberts, 'Report for Welsh Advisory Committee', 28 October 1939.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

stating that he had already cleared this with the Town Clerk.¹²¹ This proposal was clearly intended as a strategy to apply pressure to those councils which had not announced their support. However, for reasons that are unknown, the list was never published.

As the Conference date approached, the press, led by *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* continued to promote the idea. The editor summarised his personal belief, 'I think that there is hope of making something effective if we act now.'¹²² On the 18 October the newspaper published a copy of the Eisteddfod Council's appeal to any 'national body in Wales', expressing its concern that 'Welsh speaking Wales was sinking under the huge changes brought about by the war'. The 'immediate barrier', according to the Eisteddfod Council, was that there was no organisation, council or society which could act with authority in the matter. In a confirmation that the Eisteddfod Council now concurred with concerns that had been building before the war and, exacerbated by the conflict, the article continued, 'The serious risks that are circling Welsh life – in its religion and culture, and indeed, in its nationalism – is evident and known to everyone'.¹²³ The Eisteddfod Council explained that it would have preferred to support another organisation, but in the absence of such a body, it was writing to a host of organisations, asking them to attend the conference. It was particularly significant that it was the Royal National Eisteddfod Council, a body well respected in Wales, especially among the Welsh intelligentsia, which took the lead in organising this conference.

Apart from invitations to Welsh organisations, prominent members of Welsh society received personal invitations to attend as did the two men who were considered to have founded the concept of a Welsh advisory committee, Saunders Lewis and J. E. Daniels.¹²⁴ This unprecedented move by Wales' leading cultural organisation validated the degree of anxiety felt for the future of the language.

¹²¹ NLW, UCF/A3, Hywel D. Roberts letter to T. I. Ellis, 30 Sept 1939.

¹²² NLW, UCF/A2, E. Prosser Rhys letter to T. I. Ellis, 3 October 1939.

¹²³ 'Pwyllgor i Warchod Buddiannau Cymru', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (18 October 1939), p. 12.

¹²⁴ For examples of personal invitations see, NLW, UCF/A23, T. I. Ellis invitation to Ben Bowen Thomas, 16 November 1939; T. I. Ellis Invitations to Richard Roberts, 16 November 1939; T. I. Ellis invitations to Lewis Valentine, 16 November 1939; NLW, UCF/A23, D. R. Hughes invitation to Saunders Lewis, 9 November 1939; D. R. Hughes invitation to W. P. Wheldon, 16 November 1939.

VI: National Conference for the Defence of Welsh Culture

On the 1st December 1939, the Conference for the Protection of Welsh Culture convened in Shrewsbury, under the Chairmanship of W. J. Gruffydd.¹²⁵ Tom Ellis later publicised 'What made this gathering so significant is that practically every Welsh body or movement of importance and influence, both voluntary and official was represented there'.¹²⁶ An examination of the wide range of organisations in attendance confirms his view.¹²⁷ *Y Cymro* went so far as to state that this gathering was the closest thing to 'a parliament that Wales has ever seen'. Chapman later concurred suggesting that this was the first national assembly of Wales.¹²⁸ Excluding representatives of the main political parties, forty-six other institutions sent delegates. Almost all the main religious orders were present, as were the youth organisations of Wales. Education was also well represented, with all the Local Education Authorities, the main teaching unions, colleges and student bodies in attendance. Pacifists, temperance movements and labour movements also sent delegates. Unsurprisingly, of the 121 delegates, the largest single contingent came from the National Eisteddfod Council.¹²⁹ This widespread support enjoyed by the National Conference, not only confirms the need felt for such a gathering, but also gave legitimacy to the resolutions passed there.

The Chairman addressed the Conference 'on the gravity of the current situation in the history of Welsh culture and the National Eisteddfod Council's objective for calling the Conference'. In what could only be perceived as a warning to members of the WNP, in general, and Saunders Lewis in particular, he trusted 'that all speakers would abstain from rhetoric and focus on practical work'.¹³⁰ The first motion reflected the concerns for the Welsh language and Welsh culture:

¹²⁵ NLW, UCF/A23, D. R. Hughes letter to Percy Watkins, 16 November 1939.

¹²⁶ Ellis, *Undeb Cymru Fydd*, p. 2.

¹²⁷ NLW, UCF/A8, 'Minutes of the Conference to Safeguard Welsh Culture', 1 December 1939.

¹²⁸ 'Cynlluniau Y Gynhadledd Fawr I Ddiogelu Cymry', *Y Cymro* (9 December 1939), p. 12; Chapman, *Un Bywyd o Blith Nifer*, p. 240.

¹²⁹ For a full list of delegates see Appendix A; NLW, UCF/A4, Cyngor Diogelu Diwylliant Cymru: Cynrychiolaeth y Cyrff (The Council for the Protection of Welsh Culture: Organisations Represented).

¹³⁰ 'Minutes of the Conference'.

That this conference, representing all aspects of Welsh life, in expressing concern about the future of the nation's language and culture in the face of the new elements which – because of the war – have intruded into national life and in particular to rural life; we believe that the Government recognizes that the situation in Wales is totally different from England and call for special consideration. Our difficulties cannot be understood or dealt with without consultation with experienced Welsh speakers to devise plans without delay to protect us against the risks that are overtaking us.¹³¹

In response to this motion reports were presented, which highlighted the adverse effects English immigrants were having on the education and religious wellbeing of schoolchildren in Wales.¹³² Richard Thomas, Principal of the Normal College, Bangor supplied a detailed breakdown of these difficulties, which included the detrimental educational consequences of classroom sharing and part-time education. The difficulties of maintaining classroom cleanliness in the prolonged school hours, blackout and light restriction resulted in fewer 'thorough cleans'.¹³³ This, he argued increased 'the risk of insanitary conditions that are a risk to health'. The report also pointed to increased delinquency and confusion of disciplinary standards between evacuees and their hosts.¹³⁴ Thomas concluded with a warning, which was in keeping with core reason for the conference, 'The influx of English parents and children will inevitably tend towards Anglicisation.'¹³⁵ W. J. Gruffydd also presented a report on the impact of evacuees, wartime restrictions and the billeting of troops in Welsh areas.¹³⁶ Saunders Lewis, in contrast, prepared a memorandum for the Conference. This memorandum was in keeping with his previously expressed views and referred to the dangers to Welsh life and society brought about by the evacuees, the weapons factories, military installations and camps now scattered across Wales, the economic costs of the war to Wales and conscription.¹³⁷ Over a dozen other speakers

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² NLW, UCF/A3, Report by Principal Richard Thomas, 'The Emergency and Education in the Reception Areas (North Wales)', n.d.

¹³³ Ibid, p. 2.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ NLW, UCF/A23, D.R. Hughes letter to Percy Watkins, 16 November 1939.

¹³⁷ NLW, UCF/A3, Saunders Lewis, 'Memorandum to the Shrewsbury Conference'.

commented on the motion before it was passed unanimously.¹³⁸ Most of the reports played on the fears of the period and expressed concerns that the influx of predominantly English speakers in large numbers would significantly dilute the Welsh language. Thomas's submission was particularly significant being, as he was, a respected senior academic and head of a teacher training college with no previous links to nationalism.

To provide a mechanism for government consultation (as discussed in the first resolution), it was resolved to establish a new organisation. From future annual conferences an Executive Committee would be nominated to pursue the conference's objectives, which were 'a) To protect Welsh Interests during the war and b) to help to establish in all parts of Wales voluntary arrangements to protect and develop a healthy Welsh social life'.¹³⁹ The Executive Committee was also tasked with raising funds, establishing local committees and consulting national authorities, religious organisations, Welsh MPs and Ministers of the Crown.¹⁴⁰

A third resolution was presented by Saunders Lewis. It called for the Government to consult with the new Executive Committee on all matter connected to Wales.¹⁴¹ The use of terms like 'English political leaders' and 'England's war goals' demonstrated the same England versus Wales rhetoric that was common in his press articles. Although Lewis's resolution was discussed at some length, agreement could not be reached it was eventually 'agreed to move on to the next business with only about half a dozen dissenters'.¹⁴²

The final item was the establishment of the Executive Committee. The Chairman recited a list of ten predetermined names, which together with the Eisteddfod Council's joint secretaries, were proposed for this purpose. The names on the list were unanimously approved.¹⁴³ The formation of this executive committee furnished promoters of the Welsh language and Welsh culture with a credible alternative to the WNP. As argued by Rhys

¹³⁸ 'Minutes of the Conference'.

¹³⁹ NLW, UCF/A4, 'Cyngor Diogelu Diwylliant Cymru Cyfansoddiad (Drafft) (The Council for the Defence of Welsh Culture Constitution (Draft))', n.d.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Lewis, 'Memorandum to the Shrewsbury Conference'.

¹⁴² 'Guardians of Welsh Culture in War: Shrewsbury Conference Appoints a Committee', *Western Mail* (2 December 1939), p. 7.

¹⁴³ Minutes of the Conference'.

Evans, 'From this point onwards, in the virtual absence of Plaid Cymru [WNP], hundreds of patriots with Wales's cultural interest at heart now had a focus.'¹⁴⁴ In contrast, the conservative *Western Mail* seized on Lewis' presentation to the conference. The newspaper argued that 'the proceedings seem to have gone on smoothly until Mr SAUNDERS LEWIS (sic) threw off his mask and let the cat out of the bag.' The newspaper reported that 'the attempt to set up a new political stunt of the Welsh Nationalist Party was frustrated by the good sense of the delegates' and concluded that 'to entrust the destiny of Wales to such hands would be nearly as bad as being overrun by Nazis'.¹⁴⁵ Despite the *Western Mail's* views that the conference was dominated by the WNP, the reality was that, as the newspaper had reported, Lewis's resolution failed to gain any support and was defeated by more judicious views. However, this was not the only occasion when this new organisation would be perceived as being manipulated by the WNP.

V: Committee for the Defence of Welsh Culture

From the Conference the 'Committee for the Protection of Welsh Culture' (*Pwllgor Diogelu Diwylliant Cymru*) was established. Reinforcing the urgency that was felt at the time, it began work the very next day. This 'Shrewsbury Committee' or 'Defence Committee', as it often referred to itself, was representative of the bodies at the Conference, and was made up of the cream of youth, cultural and religious leaders of the time. As described by R. T. Jenkins, these were 'men of different ideals and convictions, who had been brought together through a realisation that the culture of their country was imperilled'.¹⁴⁶ The initial meeting of the 'Defence Committee' was chaired by W. J. Gruffydd. Other significant members included the two National Eisteddfod Council Secretaries, *Cynan* and D. R. Hughes, Ifan ab Owen Edwards, leader of the *Urdd*; William George, Chairman of National Union of Welsh Societies and Saunders Lewis. Various academic and religious leaders completed the twelve committee members, including Ben Bowen Thomas, Warden of *Coleg Harlech*.

¹⁴⁴ Evans, *Gwynfor Evans*, p. 63.

¹⁴⁵ 'The Welsh Culture Camp', *Western Mail* (2 December 1939), p. 4.

¹⁴⁶ 'Preservation of Welsh Culture: Inspiring Address at Porthmadog', *Holyhead Chronicle* (18 October 1940), p. 8.

Noticeably, T. I. Ellis, who was to become the committee's driving force, was approved as a member but was not, at this point, secretary.¹⁴⁷

The Committee represented a wide range of Welsh opinions. It has been well documented that Lewis and Gruffydd had an intense dislike for each other, to such an extent that they were sometimes described as being 'violently at odds'.¹⁴⁸ They had clashed previously on both political and religious grounds. It was significant therefore, that they felt this issue was of sufficient importance to overcome their differences and work together.¹⁴⁹ The strength of the committee was that it fused major religious, educational and cultural leaders into a cohesive body. It also fused representatives of different organisations under a single banner. For the first time the Royal National Eisteddfod Council, the *Urdd*, the National Union of Welsh Societies, the Guild of Graduates came together with political leaders and religious leaders in a single movement.

The Committee initially determined to advise the Prime Minister of the existence of the new body and release a memorandum summarising the impact of the evacuees on Welsh culture. The joint-secretaries wrote to the Prime Minister, while Lewis took responsibility for the preparation and, on approval of the committee, the release of the memorandum. Three days later the following communiqué was sent:

Sir,

A Conference, convened by the Council of the National Eisteddfod of Wales was held at Shrewsbury on December 1, 1939. This Conference, which was attended by official delegates from bodies concerned with the religious, educational, and cultural life of Wales, has appointed an Executive Committee to serve as a means of communicating to His Majesty's Government the feeling of these bodies upon matters which intimately and urgently concern the interests of Wales in the present crisis.

We are therefore directed to enquire whether His Majesty's Government will be prepared to receive representations made by this Committee from time to time

¹⁴⁷ See appendix B for a complete list of the members 'Defence Committee'.

¹⁴⁸ Jones, *A Bid for Unity*, p. 19.

¹⁴⁹ Gruffydd was editor of *Y Llenor* from its first publication in 1922 until 1945. He wrote books on poetry and competed at the Eisteddfod. He would later contest and win the 1943 University of Wales Parliamentary seat, as a Liberal candidate (See Chapter 3) beating Saunders Lewis. For greater insight into Gruffydd see, for example, Chapman, *W. J. Gruffydd*; G. Bowen, *W. J. Gruffydd (Bro a Bywyd)* (Swansea, 1994).

whenever urgent matters arise which affect the cultural life of the Welsh Nation.¹⁵⁰

The response was both positive and rapid, confirming that ‘consideration would at all times be given to representations which they (the Committee) wish to make on matters of interest to Wales, and that there can be no objection of their addressing themselves to His Majesty’s Ministers in this way.’¹⁵¹ The response to the Committee’s memorandum on evacuees, prepared by Lewis, was less enthusiastic.

The Defence Committee’s *Memorandum on Evacuees and Youth Service* was published in early 1940.¹⁵² The content was highly critical of the Government’s evacuation plans, not least because it ignored the cultural differences between England and Wales. In an echo of WNP rhetoric, the memorandum spoke of ‘the constant friction’ and ‘moral havoc brought by the alien intrusion’ and argued:

It may be said that only the prompt return of many of the mothers, followed by an early return of large numbers of children, prevented the invasion [of evacuees] from causing general unrest in many parts of the Welsh countryside, which might even had led to a public disturbance of the peace.¹⁵³

The memorandum suggested that it would be in the best interests of both Welsh and English children if the evacuees were located together in groups and not dispersed throughout Wales. To facilitate such a proposal the Defence Committee prepared a list of large empty houses to accommodate the evacuees.¹⁵⁴ The suggestion that the children be

¹⁵⁰ Letter to Prime Minister from Joint Secretaries of Defence Committee, 5 December 1939, Reproduced in NLW, UCF/A8, ‘Secretary’s Report for 1940 presented to National Conference for Safeguarding Welsh Culture; A copy of the letter was also sent to the Secretary of State for Home Affairs NLW, UCF/A35, Jt. Secretaries letter to Secretary of State, December 1939.

¹⁵¹ C. G. L. Syers letter (on behalf of Prime Minister) to Joint Secretaries of the Defence Committee, 20 December 1939, reproduced in NLW, UCF/A8, ‘Secretary’s Report for 1940’.

¹⁵² For details of Lewis perspective on the impact of the evacuees, see Chapman, *Un Bywyd O Blith Nifer*, pp. 241-3.

¹⁵³ NLW, UCF/A21, ‘Memorandum on Evacuees and Youth Service’.

¹⁵⁴ T. I. Ellis, ‘Diogelu Diwylliant Cymru, *Heddiw: Cylchgrawn Misol* 6:1 (Meh. 1940), 4-6.

segregated was heavily criticized as being inhumane and not in keeping with the war effort.¹⁵⁵

However, the proposal of segregating local and evacuee children was not as out of step with public opinion as may first appear. A BIPO survey in February 1940 discovered that across Britain 75 percent of respondents preferred the concept of billeting evacuated school children in camps and similar buildings as opposed to private houses.¹⁵⁶ This view was also mirrored in government policy. The *Camps Act* provided funding for 'non-profit making' companies to build and run such establishments.¹⁵⁷ This resulted in the construction of thirty one camps by the National Camps Corporation, including two at Colomendy Hall, near Loggerheads, in Denbighshire by Liverpool City Council.¹⁵⁸ The Act restricted camps to within 30 miles (later extended to 45 miles) from the city of evacuation. This excluded most of Wales.¹⁵⁹ Had the Defence Committee pressured for an extension of the programme or the removal of the geographical restriction the resultant publicity may have been more favourable.

The *Welsh Nationalist* described how the 'Shrewsbury Conference has produced an extremely moderately worded memorandum on the results of evacuation on Welsh life.'¹⁶⁰ However, in general, the memorandum was not well received by the press. The *Liverpool Daily Post*, quoted extensively from the publication and while the newspaper described the contents as 'the considered judgement of the leaders of Welsh life and Welsh representative institutions', it painted a very different view to the WNP newspaper, considering the antagonistic.¹⁶¹ The article quoted phrases such as 'considerable impropriety of behaviour amounting even to barbarism'.¹⁶² D. Emrys Evans, the principal of the University College of North Wales, who was present in Shrewsbury, questioned the tone

¹⁵⁵ Jones, *A Bid for Unity*, p. 20.

¹⁵⁶ British Institute of Public Opinion (BIPO) February 1940.

¹⁵⁷ *Camps Act 1939* (London, HMSO, 1939); HC Deb, 29 March 1939, vol. 356, c. 2079.

¹⁵⁸ HC Deb, 18 January 1940, vol. 356, c. 267W; HC Deb, 20 March 1940, vol. 358, c. 2007.

¹⁵⁹ HC Deb, 12 November 1940, vol. 365. Cc. 1637-42.

¹⁶⁰ 'The Shrewsbury Conference and Evacuation,' *Welsh Nationalist* (March 1940), p. 2.

¹⁶¹ 'Peril to Welsh Culture: Evacuation Scheme Condemned', *Liverpool Daily Post* (9 January 1940), p. 4.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

of the wording of the article and asked if 'the *Daily Post* has printed a personal memorandum of Lewis'.¹⁶³ D. R. Hughes responded that the memorandum had been pre-circulated and approved by the Committee prior to release.¹⁶⁴ However, this was not the only criticism of the memorandum; the *News Chronicle* ran a poster entitled 'Welsh Revolt Against Evacuation' and according to Hughes 'the *Western Mail* also came down on the whole thing'.¹⁶⁵ In a letter to the other committee members Hughes clearly blamed Lewis for this bad publicity, insinuating that Lewis either amended the Committee memorandum after final approval or had distributed his own memorandum. In either case, Hughes declared, 'people are suspicious of everything' Lewis was involved with. However, Ellis later argued that 'some rushed to attack it [the memorandum] before they gave proper consideration of the recommendations made within it'.¹⁶⁶ This suggests that at least some members of the Defence Committee approved the contents. This implies that there was not as much distance between the views of the WNP and the Defence Committee as many in Wales had hoped for, either in rhetoric or ideology. R. T. Jenkins later conceded that the memorandum had been 'prepared in a crisis' but defended claims that the conference was a political stunt, maintaining that the executive contained representatives of 'all the political parties except the Conservatives, five different churches, pacifists and non-pacifists'.¹⁶⁷ However, following these criticisms, it was noticeable that, for the duration of the Defence Committee period, Lewis was not given responsibility for any further publications.¹⁶⁸

The tone of the memorandum also disheartened many Welsh MPs. D. Owen Evans the Liberal MP for Cardiganshire, speaking for the Welsh MPs, claimed that the memorandum

¹⁶³ NLW, UCF/A3, D. Emrys Evans letter to D. R. Hughes, 9 January 1940.

¹⁶⁴ NLW UCF/A2, D. R. Hughes letter to D. Emrys Evans, 10 January 1940.

¹⁶⁵ News Chronicle article quoted in NLW, UCF/A1, D. R. Hughes letter to Committee, 10 January 1940; 'Evacuation Moral Havoc Alleged', *Western Mail* (10 January 1940), p. 3.

¹⁶⁶ Ellis, 'Diogelu Diwylliant Cymru'.

¹⁶⁷ 'Welsh Culture in Danger: Evacuation and Other Problems', *Liverpool Daily Post* (6 May 1940), p. 7.

¹⁶⁸ E.g NLW, UCF/A3, Downing Street letter to T. I. Ellis, 18 December 1939; Carmarthenshire County Council Education Committee see NLW, UCF/A2, J. Edward Mason letter to T. I. Ellis, 6 February 1940; NLW, UCFA2, T. J. Rees, Federation of Education Committees (Wales and Monmouthshire) letter to T. I. Ellis, 2 February 1940; NLW, UCF/A2, Ministry of Information letter to T. I. Ellis, 24 January 1940.

'was disappointing to many of us'.¹⁶⁹ This point was also raised by the Cardiff branch of the Guild of Graduates:

The Welsh MPs are said to be not too well disposed towards the [Shrewsbury] conference and to be inclined to look askance at the movement – on the grounds that Welsh Nationalists are trespassing.¹⁷⁰

Despite its initial reluctance and criticism of the memorandum, the Guild of Graduates were now firmly in support of the Defence Committee. It contacted Ernest Evans, a member of the Guild and MP for the University of Wales requesting that he 'identify himself with the 'National movement' and use his influence to ensure that 'the language, culture and the religious life of Wales should emerge from the war unscathed'.¹⁷¹ In contrast to most contemporary views, which feared for the future of the language, E. Maldwyn Evans, the editor of *Y Llan*, during his report on the memorandum, argued against its opinions, and contended that there was little danger to the Welsh language or culture from the evacuees.¹⁷²

Despite widespread support for the Defence Committee, one notable Welsh organisation exempted itself. The Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion had sent representatives to the Conference but was not convinced to lend its support to the Committee. This Society had, on 18 November 1939, held its own event to discuss 'Welsh culture, its present situation and a policy for its protection', which was hosted by Ben Bowen Thomas, in the University College, Bangor.¹⁷³ The speakers included *Cynan*, E. Morgan Humphries and Tom I. Ellis, all of whom later played significant roles in the Defence Committee and UCF. *Cynan* spoke of the *Gwerin* and about this culture he warned of 'the terrible dangers to the most valuable thing we have as a nation'. *Cynan* also promoted the National Eisteddfod Conference and spoke of the clerics and Minister who were eager support it and throw their energies into

¹⁶⁹ NLW, UCF/A2, D. Owen Evans letter to Artems, 31 August 1940; D. Owen Evans was during the war the Liberal MP for Cardiganshire.

¹⁷⁰ NLW, UNIVWALES/G10/6, Guild of Graduates letter to Ernest Evans, 14 December 1939; At the time Ernest Evans was the MP for the University of Wales seat.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Davies, *Protest a Thystiolaeth*, p. 50.

¹⁷³ Williams, 'Diwylliant Cymru', pp. 157-74.

it.¹⁷⁴ Ellis, spoke of the important of education to the future of Welsh culture, which he described as ‘the mental and spiritual discipline of the nation’. Ellis also argued that the arrival of the evacuees threw up ‘countless barriers’ to Welsh education.¹⁷⁵ In contrast to most contemporary views, and despite Ellis’s comments, delegates at this meeting concluded that they ‘saw no danger to the culture of Wales from the evacuees’. It warned instead about the anglicising influence of permanent wealthy immigrants.¹⁷⁶ *Cynan*, however, and unsurprisingly, expressed a view more in keeping with the Eisteddfod view. The connection between the Welsh language, traditional culture and religion, were evident at this gathering, as were contemporary concern for their future.

While there was little initial support from the Honourable Society for the Defence Committee, its view deteriorated further following the release of the post-conference memorandum, ‘The Council (of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion) was not in sympathy nor agreement with the spirit behind the first memorandum issued by the Executive Committee - which is why it did not contribute to the Society at the time’.¹⁷⁷ This position would not, despite repeated efforts, significantly change throughout the war.

VI: National Structure

The ‘Defence Committee’ met at least once a month over the following months and in keeping with the Conference agenda, focussed its efforts in two main areas. The first was organising regional and local conferences across Wales with a view to establishing local committees. The second was the task of safeguarding the Welsh language and culture.¹⁷⁸ The first local conference was organised in Wrexham on 4 May, 1940, followed rapidly by

¹⁷⁴ Ibid, pp. 163-5.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, pp. 171-4.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid. p. 168; ‘Amddiffyn Ein Diwylliant: Rhaid Cadw Eisteddfodau’n Fyw’, *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (22 November 1939), p. 8.

¹⁷⁷ NLW, UCF/A3, J. L. Cecil-Williams letter to T. I. Ellis, 20 December 1940.

¹⁷⁸ T. I. Ellis, *Gynhadledd Genedlaethol er Diogelu*, p. 3.

Holywell and Carmarthen.¹⁷⁹ On 6 July, 320 people then convened for the Denbighshire conference in Colwyn Bay, presided over by Sir T. Artemus Jones.¹⁸⁰ Speakers included T. I. Ellis, D. R. Hughes, Ffowc Williams (who was to become prominent in UCF) and the journalist E. Morgan Humphreys.¹⁸¹ Here, as at all conferences, following discussions on Welsh life, three resolutions were presented; The first to encourage preservation of the culture; the second relating to the Government circular 1486 on Youth Services, and finally a proposition to establish a local committee.¹⁸² On the first of these, the delegates were asked to take an oath. W. Ambrose Bebb, emphasised its significance, ‘the righteous, virtually sacrosanct nature of the oath is taken to safeguard, even rescue Welsh culture.’ He continued ‘We – you and I – who take this oath in the name of every generation that has preceded us, are honour-bound to deliver our culture intact into the future’.¹⁸³ This same format was used at every conference across Wales. The exact wording of the oath has been lost to time. However, the taking of such an oath was not unheard of, members of the *Urdd*, for example, took an oath on initiation as members. The difference here was that this oath was not being taken by children but by prominent Welsh adults.

¹⁷⁹ NLW, UCF/A3, Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting of Cynhadledd Diogellu Diwylliant Cymru (CDDC), 19 July 1940; NLW, UCF/A10, Advertising Poster for Holywell Conference, 25 May 1940.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid; ‘Welsh Culture Conference at Colwyn Bay’, *Holyhead Chronicle* (12 July 1940), p. 3; Sir Thomas Artemus Jones was a Welsh speaking judge, journalist and historian who originated from Denbigh. Following a successful career in journalism, that included positions at the *Daily News* and the *Daily Telegraph*, Jones studied law and was appointed Judge of County Courts in north Wales from 1930. A Liberal candidate on three (unsuccessful) occasions, he was a staunch supporter of the Welsh Language Petition and of the campaign to obtain a Secretary of State for Wales, see for example his open letter to Winston Churchill, published in *Y Cymro* (26 June 1943). For more information see NLW website, DWB, ‘Jones, Sir Thomas Artemus’, <http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s2-JONE-ART-1871.html?quebry=Thomas+Artemus+Jones&field=content>, accessed 4 March 2015.

¹⁸¹ ‘Nid Cartref ‘Jazz’ yw Cymru: Cynhadledd Diwylliant Bae Colwyn’, *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (8 July 1949), p. 8; Humphreys wrote extensively for a series of newspapers, including the *Manchester Guardian*, the *Liverpool Daily Post*, *The Times* and a host of Welsh language papers. He often used the pseudonym Celt when writing in *Liverpool Daily Post*. He was a firm supporter of the National Eisteddfod.

¹⁸² NLW, UCF/A2, T. I. Ellis, ‘Conference for Defending Welsh Culture, Secretaries Report for 1940’, December 1940.

¹⁸³ W. Ambrose Bebb, *A Welsh Hundred: Glimpses of Life in Wales*, pp. 137-8.

E. Morgan Humphreys was also present at the Porthmadog conference. Here, he demonstrated the difference between the perspectives of the Defence Committee to those of the WNP, 'The greatest peril to Welsh culture comes from within,' he stated, 'We should realise that in these days we have a double responsibility – to Britain and to ourselves.'¹⁸⁴ This view reflected a greater personal responsibility and, significantly, acknowledged a greater affiliation to British national identity. This contention was reflected throughout most of the Defence Committee's publications, following the initial memorandum. What makes this difference more surprising was that most of the senior leadership of the WNP were also actively involved in the Defence Committee. Despite their differing approaches, the common aim of the two organisations was reinforced by Professor Hughes at the Swansea conference, 'As a result of the war effort, Wales might never recover its traditional entity'.¹⁸⁵ Humphrey's pro-British comments are particularly noteworthy as they stem from the political left and confirm the Defence Committee's non-partisan political support. Humphreys wrote on socialism in Wales and was, for a time, the President of the Caernarfon Fabian Society.¹⁸⁶ There was no evidence of Humphreys' having any association to the WNP, however, he was strongly linked to the National Eisteddfod and the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion.

By the end of 1940, fifteen regional conferences had been held, each attracting between one and three hundred and fifty delegates.¹⁸⁷ Some local conferences were organised by outsider organisations with a view to establishing local committees to work with the 'Defence Committee'. The Archbishop of Bangor, for example, organised three conferences one each at Bangor, Pwllheli and Barmouth and each led to the establishment of local committees.¹⁸⁸ Similar locally arranged meetings were held in Clydach, near Swansea,

¹⁸⁴ 'Preservation of Welsh Culture: Inspiring Address at Porthmadog'.

¹⁸⁵ 'Professor Ernest Hughes Speech at Swansea Youth Conference', *Swansea Evening Post* (25 February 1942).

¹⁸⁶ See, for example, NLW, Edwards Morgan Humphreys Papers, D1, draft article 'Socialism in Wales'; see also E. M. Humphreys, 'Socialism and the Welsh Nationality', *Socialist Review* (October, 1909) 116-22.

¹⁸⁷ T. I. Ellis, 'Secretary's Report for 1940'.

¹⁸⁸ NLW, UCF/A23, C. A. Cambrensis letter to T. J. Rowlands, 2 August 1940; The Archbishop of Wales from 1934 to 1944 was Charles Alfred Green, who also held the post of the Bishop of Bangor (from 1928); T. I. Ellis, 'Secretary's Report for 1940'.

Brecon and St. David's.¹⁸⁹ As a result of these conferences a network of sub-committees was established that covered the whole of Wales. One town refused the opportunity to host a conference and, to the surprise of some of the Welsh language press, this was a town 'that had earned its place in history because of its associations with Owain Glyndwr, the famous Welsh patriot'. The town council of Machynlleth, following a visit by T. Ellis and R. T. Jenkins, only received one vote from 15 to proceed with a conference proposal.¹⁹⁰ With conferences approved at locations with smaller concentrations of Welsh speakers, the refusal by a town in the centre of a Welsh speaking region, was a surprise. It was the only known location to refuse.¹⁹¹ The reasons for Machynlleth's rejection are unknown. However, it demonstrated that support for the Defence Committee did not follow linguistic or industrial divisions and was much more nuanced. By April 1941 further successful conferences had been held in Cardiff and Llandeilo. Cardiff attracted over two hundred delegates, confirming that the Defence Committee was also supported in more Anglicised areas.¹⁹²

The second national conference was held on the 29 November 1940, also in Shrewsbury and was again well attended. A review of the delegates confirms that most organisations sent senior executives to the conference and not middle managers. For example, the President of the Association of Welsh Local Authorities attended, as did the Treasurer and Vice-President of the *Urdd*.¹⁹³ The status of the delegates, both from official and voluntary organisations, demonstrated the esteem with which the conference and the Defence Committee were held. The war was never far away however, one delegate, Wesley Felix sent a telegram from Bootle on the day of the conference 'Sorry Cannot Come. House Damaged In Raid'.¹⁹⁴

By the end of 1940 it was felt that the organisation's overall momentum was waning. At a 'Special Meeting' of the Executive Committee the introduction of regional committees was

¹⁸⁹ T. I. Ellis, 'Secretary's Report for 1940'; NLW, UCF/A3, 'Minutes of Executive Committee', 19 July 1940.

¹⁹⁰ 'Gwrthod Cynhadledd Diwylliant: Agwedd Pobl Machynlleth', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (26 June 1940), p. 8.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹² NLW, UCF/A11, 'Minutes of the 16 Meeting of the Executive Committee (CDDC)', 6 June 1941.

¹⁹³ NLW, UCF/A8, R. E. Griffith letter to T. I. Ellis, 20 August 1940; NLW, UCF/A8, P. J. Waters letter to T. I. Ellis, 14 August 1940.

¹⁹⁴ NLW, UCF/A8, W. Felix telegram to T. I. Ellis, 29 November 1940.

approved.¹⁹⁵ This introduced an additional intermediate level of organisation to maintain closer links with the local committees and functioned as a conduit for information.¹⁹⁶ By April 1941, while it was felt that in South Wales and in Caernarfon local branches were active, some of the other committees still needed a boost. The Caernarfon branch had recovered from initial poor turnouts of its meetings 'that were not worthy of this organisation'.¹⁹⁷ One initiative that assisted this turnaround was the sending of minutes of all its committee meetings to *Y Cymro*. The additional publicity that the branch received not only promoted its activities but resulted in increased membership. This procedural change was so successful that *Y Cymro* asked Ellis to extend the system to all regional branches.¹⁹⁸ These initiatives to revive the organisation were superseded by merged talks. However, the benefits of these changes would be reflected in the new organisation.

The Defence Committee recovered quickly from initial the poor publicity that related to its perceived association with the WNP. The movement received widespread support and developed a national infrastructure of regional and local branches with the sole aim of defending Welsh culture and Welsh interests. Despite this support, however, one newspaper, the *Western Mail*, continued to associate the Defence Committee with the WNP and more importantly, as most of the cultural organisation's transactions were conducted in Welsh, also questioned whether their concept of Welsh interests included non-Welsh speakers.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁵ NLW, UCF/A3, 'Minutes of the 12 Meeting of the Executive Committee (CDDC)', 29 November 1940; Saunders Lewis and Tom Ellis established a central regional committee, at Aberystwyth, Cynan, R.T. Jenkins, J. Morgan Jones and D. R. Hughes established the northern regional committee, at Bangor, and W.J. Gruffydd and Mrs Myrddin Davies founded the southern regional committee, at Cardiff.

¹⁹⁶ NLW, UCF/A3, 'Minutes of 15 Meeting of Executive Committee (CDDC)', 4 April 1941.

¹⁹⁷ NLW, UCF/A1, Caernarfon County Committee, 'Agenda of Movement to Safeguard Welsh Culture', 17 May 1940.

¹⁹⁸ NLW, UCF/A3, Edwin Williams letter to T. I. Ellis, 4 October 1940.

¹⁹⁹ Keidrych Rees, 'Anglo-Welsh and Today's Conference', *Western Mail* (1 December 1939), p. 4; 'Welsh Culture', *Western Mail* (1 July 1941), p. 2.

VII: Circular 1486

The second element of the Committee's work was the commencement of efforts to protect the Welsh language and culture. The Committee concentrated on issues that directly affected Welsh speakers; the impact of the 'evacuees', the conscription of Welshmen into the military and the acquisition of Welsh land for military use. However, three days before the national conference at Shrewsbury, the British Government unveiled a new directive, known as circular 1486, designed to promote the wellbeing of young people that, for many, went under the radar. Dent contended that 'the response of the general public was, to say the least of it, lukewarm'.²⁰⁰ In Wales, though, this was seen as a new and severe threat to the language.

As with other wartime measures, this initiative was an attempt by the Government to protect one section of society, in this case young people. According to the Board of Education, 'The social and physical development of boys and girls between the ages of 14 and 20, who have ceased full-time education, has for long been neglected in this country'.²⁰¹ To address this, on 27 November 1939, the Government released *Circular to Local Education Authorities for Higher Education*, better known as circular 1486. This document tasked every LEA to prepare a plan to improve the social and physical development of young people within their boundaries. The circular acknowledged the benefits to young people of association with existing volunteer organisations and committed to providing financial support to allow them to continue and expand their work. The Youth Committee for England and Wales was tasked with overseeing the management of the circular.

Prior to 1939, youth services in Britain had, for a century, been run voluntary services, backed by funding from local and central government and endorsed through sequential Education Acts.²⁰² During the 1930s the general health of young people of Britain was considered to be poor. For example, less than a third of the 1933 volunteers for the Army

²⁰⁰ H. C. Dent, *Education in Transition: An Interim Report* (Abingdon, 1944), p. 102.

²⁰¹ Board of Education, *Circular 1486: In the Service of Youth* (London, HMSO, 1939).

²⁰² A. J. Jeffs, *Young People and the Youth Service* (London, 1979), p. 25; A. J. Peters, *British Further Education: A Critical Textbook* (Oxford, 1967), p. 205.

were passed fit.²⁰³ With the school leaving age at 14, the voluntary attendance at youth organisations, run by ‘well meaning amateurs’, was the only cultural or organised activity young people experienced.²⁰⁴ When war broke out many of these organisations began to close.²⁰⁵ The Government considered that ‘the black-out, the strain of war and the disorganisation of family life have created conditions which constitute a serious menace to youth’.²⁰⁶ The introduction of Circular 1486 was designed to improve the health of young people of Britain. However, it created conditions that further endangered the Welsh language.

Under this new circular, funding was to be reserved for organisations on an approved list. Some fourteen major youth organisations were approved under the scheme. The *Urdd* was the only dedicated Welsh youth organisation included and therefore the only one which would receive resources and financial aid under the scheme. Organisations which ran through Welsh churches and, significantly, Nonconformist chapels, were not approved. It was estimated that over half the 210,000 youths in Wales within the target category were members of such religious organisations.²⁰⁷ Reports were quickly prepared on this new challenge and submitted to the Shrewsbury Conference.²⁰⁸ It was felt that ‘it is very important that the Youth Service in Wales is consistent with all our traditions and national culture’, something that it was believed would only be achieved through membership of dedicated Welsh organisations.²⁰⁹ There was a general feeling among the Defence Committee that this circular had been prepared by people unfamiliar with Welsh life. The Government’s objective of promoting youth organisations generated widespread support

²⁰³ Jeffs, *Young People and the Youth Service*, p. 20.

²⁰⁴ *ibid*, p. 25.

²⁰⁵ J. Roberts, ‘The Significance of Circular 1486 – The Service of Youth’ *The Encyclopaedia of Informal Education* (2004). www.infed.org/youthwork/circular1486.htm, accessed 17 February 2014.

²⁰⁶ Board of Education, *Circular 1486*, p. 1.

²⁰⁷ B. B. Thomas, D. T. Jones and J. Griffiths, ‘Youth In Wales’, *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* (1940), p. 86; NLW, UCF/A21, ‘Memorandum on Evacuees and Service of Youth’.

²⁰⁸ For example, see, NLW, UCF/A3, Professor J. Morgan Rees, ‘Report on Youth Organisations in North Wales, 30 November 1939; NLW, UCF/A3, ‘Cynhadledd Genedlaethol er Diogelu Diwylliant Cymru, ‘Gwasanaeth Ieuencid’, n.d.

²⁰⁹ Cynhadledd Genedlaethol, ‘Gwasanaeth Ieuencid’; NLW, UCF/A21, National Conference for Safeguarding Welsh Culture, ‘Service of Youth’.

within the Defence Committee. However, it was the method by which the funds would be distributed to youth organisation that was seen as detrimental to Welsh life.

Adding to concerns regarding the loss of funding for religious youth groups in Wales was the possibility of 'English' organisations on the approved list, to use the additional funds, allowed under the circular, to establish themselves within Wales. The Guild of Graduates reported that English youth organisations had already begun opening new centres in Wales. For example, 'two Masters from Liverpool have started a Boys Club for evacuee boys' in Ruthin'. Similar Boys clubs had also been established in Llanidloes, Rhyl, St. Asaph and Llay.²¹⁰ In general, most of these clubs were established for evacuees, but local Welsh youngsters were not excluded from membership. Ifan ap Owen Edwards, warned that 'If the *Urdd* fails here, and the boys and girls clubs come to the towns of Welsh [speaking] Wales, that will be the end of Welsh culture there'.²¹¹

The 'Defence Committee' concluded that Wales, because its different cultural make up, needed to be treated as a separate administrative area. Such an area could prepare an approved list of youth organisations more in keeping with Welsh society. The Committee offered full support to the *Urdd* and ensured that a resolution of support was presented at all the local conferences. In early January 1940, confirming Neville Chamberlain's promise the previous month that Ministers would give consideration to the Committee, a delegation visited the Board of Education, where 'a full discussion of the problems' ensued'.²¹² Ellis concluded that, as no reference was made in the Circular to the differences between England and Wales, 'we suggested that the Board send out second Circular and reference the differences'.²¹³ This delegation was the first of many from the Defence Committee to the Government and represented a significant change of strategy by Welsh organisations wishing to bring issues to their attention. That the British wartime government accepted such delegations confirms the status that the Defence Committee was afforded.

²¹⁰ Rees, 'Report on Youth Organisations in North Wales'.

²¹¹ NLW, UCF/A3, Ifan ap Owen Edwards letter to T. I. Ellis, 29 January 1940.

²¹² Syers letter to the Defence Committee.

²¹³ T. I. Ellis, 'Secretary's Report for 1940'; Ellis, 'Diogelu Diwylliant Cymru'.

Pressure was also brought to bear in Wales. Reinforcing the request for a second Circular, the Defence Committee prepared a memorandum, which was circulated to all LEAs, the Welsh Advisory Board and to the Welsh Department of the Board of Education.²¹⁴ A delegation from the Defence Committee visited the Welsh Department Board of Education in January 1940 to reinforce the contents of the memorandum. This meeting was followed up with further correspondence.²¹⁵ Delegations were also arranged to meet with Education Committees to push for support for a second Circular. For example, on 4 May 1940 T. I. Ellis and R. T. Jenkins arranged to meet Flintshire County Council Education Committee, which was sympathetic, 'You can place before the [Education] committee any observations that you may have to offer regarding the above mentioned subject.'²¹⁶ This modus operandi of preparing memoranda, arranging deputations and following these up with correspondence became the standard method of applying pressure.

Apart from pressing for a Welsh-specific element to Circular 1486, the Defence Committee memorandum also made practical suggestions on how the new financial resources could be directed in Wales. For example, it proposed that Local Authorities employ hostel leaders to manage local youth centres. It also suggested that the *Urdd's Aelwydau* could be used for such a purpose.²¹⁷ Such places could also arrange practical and academic courses as well as events, incorporating outside organisations such as Colleges and Universities. In towns where no *Aelwyd* existed one should be established in 'the most suitable building.'²¹⁸

Within months of this proposal Caernarfon established a town Committee, backed by the *Urdd*, to found just such an *Aelwyd*. Two adjacent town houses were purchased for £850 and the town committee raised a further £600 for furnishing. In keeping with Circular 1486, a grant of £150 was donated by the LEA.²¹⁹ That the remainder of the money was raised

²¹⁴ The Executive Committee of the Conference for the Protection of Welsh Culture, *'Memorandum Evacuation Schemes and Service of Youth'* (Denbigh, 1940); Ellis, 'Secretary's Report for 1940'.

²¹⁵ NLW, UCF/A6, T. J. Rees letter to T. I. Ellis, 25 July 1940.

²¹⁶ NLW, UCF/A6, Director of Education letter to T. I. Ellis, 4 May 1940.

²¹⁷ Directly translated as 'home' or 'household' but in this context is the title given to buildings where the *Urdd* hold their meetings.

²¹⁸ CDDC, 'Gwasanaeth Ieuenctid'.

²¹⁹ 'Grant to Caernarfon Aelwyd', *Holyhead Chronicle* (13 December 1940), p. 2.

from the local population in wartime, reinforces the importance that was placed on this project and the future Welsh culture. This *Aelwyd*, continues to service the youth of Caernarfon to this day. The local press publicised some of the events arranged there, 'In addition to games and activities of different kinds, the centre will provide a library and reading room, classes in Welsh literature and history, discussion groups and classes in drama, music, arts and crafts, a debating society and lectures'.²²⁰ These topics were designed to encourage traditional Welsh activities and the use of the Welsh language, and were exactly the model the Defence Committee was proposing. This model of promoting the language through participation in enjoyable events and the classes, in the opinion of the Defence Committee, reduced the impact of 'diluting' linguistic influences. The practice of proposing positive workable suggestions also became a feature of the Defence Committee's methods. Despite significant effort and time, the campaign to persuade the government to issue a second circular specific to Wales failed and circular 1486 was implemented as originally published. During this campaign the Defence Committee worked closely with the *Urdd* and generated widespread support both from its own regional conferences and from other organisations. This campaign reinforced the justification for establishing an organisation to speak on behalf of Welsh interests.

VIII: Mynydd Epynt

To facilitate the continued military expansion and training of the armed forces, the Government needed more land. For this purpose the wide ranging Emergency Powers (Defence) Act gave the Government powers to acquire such land.²²¹ This was already a sensitive issue in Wales following the already documented building of RAF Penrhos, at *Penyberth*, in the mid 1930s. Other military bases had been established since then with little local resistance. However, Westminster's plans to acquire 40,000 acres of Welsh moorland around *Mynydd Epynt*, just north of Brecon for an artillery firing range, again harnessed opposition. The problem, as underlined by Johnes, was that this was one of the last Welsh speaking areas in the county and because of this acquisition, the Welsh language was forced

²²⁰ 'Yr Aelwyd Caernarfon', *Holyhead Chronicle* (7 June 1940), p. 4.

²²¹ *The Emergency Powers (Defence) Act* (London, HMSO, 1939).

to retreat another 10 miles.²²² According to Gerwyn Williams, government land acquisition, together with the arrival of the refugees, were the most evident aspects of the war on rural Wales, and it was not just the temporary loss of the land that worried contemporaries; Iorwerth Peate, for example, argued that when the war was over and the land returned to civilian use, the roots of the communities would still be lost.²²³

This was the type of Welsh issue the Defence Committee was established for and it took the lead in opposing the Government's plans. However, that is not to say it was the only organisation that tried to prevent the acquisition. The WNP spoke of its 'surprise and disappointment' and, at a meeting in Aberystwyth, resolved to write to the Prime Minister 'ask the Government to cancel the plan at once and thus justify its claim to respect the rights of small nations.'²²⁴ As Davies has shown 'several Nationalist leaders campaigned, including J. E. Jones and Gwynfor Evans, to motivate the families in the farms to refuse to bow to the arrogance of the War Office.' He argued that 400 hundred people were turned out of their homes in what he terms this 'act of villainy'.²²⁵ This appears to be a little exaggerated, as it is now known that only about half that number was affected.²²⁶ The importance of this campaign was confirmed by Rhys Evans, who, in his biography of Gwynfor Evans, argued that this 'one of the major battles of Gwynfor's life'. Evans account, also acknowledged the role the Defence Committee played in the campaign.²²⁷ For nationalists and patriots, the acquisition of the land was seen as another example of the government ignoring the needs of Wales.

UCF coordinated with other organisations, arranged meetings and utilised the press and the Welsh MPs. Articles appeared in both Welsh and English language newspapers in Wales and

²²² Johnes, *Wales Since 1939*, p. 26; Davies, *A History of Wales*, p. 586.

²²³ Williams, *Tir Newydd*, p. 5; Iorwerth C. Peate, 'Mynydd Epynt', *Y Llenor*, XX:4 (1941), p. 185; Iorwerth Peate was a poet, Welsh Nationalist, pacifist and employee of the National Museum of Wales. For more information see the NLW website, DWB, 'Peate, Iorwerth', <http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s6-PEAT-CYF-1901.html>, accessed 5 October 2014.

²²⁴ 'Amddiffyn Tir Cymru', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (3 April 1940), p. 12.

²²⁵ Davies, *Gwynfor Evans*, pp. 26-7.

²²⁶ *ibid.*

²²⁷ Evans, *Gwynfor Evans*, p. 62.

even reached the British nationals.²²⁸ The Committee argued on two fronts. Firstly from the cultural perspective, it prepared a report on the impact the acquisition would have on the locality, which it circulated widely. The report argued, 'It must be acknowledged that the decision of the War Office is a heavy blow to agriculture in Wales, the rural Welsh speaking society and to Welsh life and culture'.²²⁹ The report also confirmed that UCF had the co-operation of a number of MPs to 'prevent this evil'.²³⁰ A delegation from the Defence Committee met with Welsh MPs on 19 March 1940 to discuss *Mynydd Epynt*. The Secretary of the House of Commons, R. Griffiths, was present, as were the Welsh MPs, Clement Davies, William John, James Griffiths and William Jackson.²³¹ Confirming the non-partisan support generated by the Defence Committee, three of the four MPs represented the Labour Party, while Davies was a senior Liberal. There was also an attempt by the Defence Committee to see the Prime Minister but this was rejected by Downing Street.²³² Chamberlain's promise, that 'consideration would be given at all times' to the Defence Committee, now appeared short lived.²³³ Clement Davies suggested a more sympathetic hearing would be received from the Secretary of State for War, Oliver Stanley.

While Davies was fully behind the campaign, other Welsh MPs seemed a little more hesitant. 'I had quite a lot of difficulty with our people [WPP]. I am trying to arrange for 2 or 3 of us to see Oliver Stanley,' but even gaining support from such a small number was proving challenging.²³⁴ It was clear that on this issue, the disparity of loyalties for Welsh MPs between political party and Wales needs was again apparent, a point highlighted by Tom Ellis, and accepted by Clement Davies, 'you have put your finger on the weak spot in our

²²⁸ See for example: 'Brwydr Mynydd Epynt', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (10 April 1940), p. 12; 'Military Occupation in Wales', *The Times* (5 April 1940), p. 6; 'Land for Artillery Range', *Liverpool Daily Post* (8 May 1940), p. 8; 'Land for Military Purpose: A Protest from Wales', *Manchester Guardian* (18 April 1940), p. 10.

²²⁹ NLW, UCF/105, 'Report on Mynydd Epynt', Spring 1940.

²³⁰ NLW, UCF/105, Lord Cobham letter to Clement Davies, 23 April 1949; 'Report on Mynydd Epynt'.

²³¹ NLW, UCF/105, handwritten notes of meeting, 19 March 1940.

²³² NLW, UCF/106, T. I. Ellis telegram to Prime Minister, 9 March 1940; NLW, UCF/106, E. M. Watson letter to T. I. Ellis, 9 March 1940.

²³³ Syers letter to Defence Committee.

²³⁴ Oliver Stanley was a Conservative politician and Secretary of State for War from 5 January 1940 until the end of Chamberlain's Government on 11 May 1940. NLW, UCF/106, Clement Davies letter to T. I. Ellis, 15 March 1940.

armour. As you point out, the real trouble is that the Welsh Members of Parliament do not pursue or press for any coherent policy. After all, they are the representatives of Wales in the Imperial Parliament'.²³⁵ Despite these difficulties a delegation of Welsh MPs did visit the War Office two days later on the 21 March.²³⁶ The reluctance to Welsh MPs to take action on issues of Welsh interests during the early years of the war was not restricted to this campaign. For example, support for the National Petition for the recognition of the Welsh language had been dropped in 1939.

Simultaneously with the cultural approach, the Committee argued against the acquisition of *Mynydd Epynt* was inequitable. It argued that a disproportionate amount of land had been acquired by the Government in Wales compared to both Scotland and England. The Committee reported that since 1938, 35,590 acres of land had been requisitioned by the War Office in Wales, compared with only 6,160 acres in Scotland and 56,780 in England.²³⁷ If the current acquisition was to proceed, the acreage of Welsh land in use by the military would increase to 75,570 acres, eclipsing the total land acquired in England and Scotland. The Committee had obtained these figures from the Secretary of State for War, in response to a question from the Welsh M.P. William John.²³⁸ These totals were subsequently repeated in the Welsh press with *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, arguing, 'these are the figures which should be printed on the mind of every Welshman in Wales and throughout the world'.²³⁹ This argument was subsequently taken up by James Griffiths, MP for Llanelli, who grilled the Minister of Agriculture on the Government's record on land acquisition in Wales, and according to the *Welsh Nationalist*, 'the answers were highly evasive'.²⁴⁰ From the military perspective Wales was ideally placed to locate training centres. It was geographically close to southern England, where most of the British military was strategically located, and this made travel straight forward. The rural, mountainous landscape also suited military use.

²³⁵ NLW, UCF/179, Clement Davies letter to T. I. Ellis, 11 April 1941.

²³⁶ NLW, UCF/105, Lord Cobham letter to Clement Davies, 23 April 1949; 'Report on Mynydd Epynt'.

²³⁷ 'Report on Mynydd Epynt'.

²³⁸ NLW, UCF/105, Oliver Stanley written answer to William John, 9 April 1940.

²³⁹ 'Ffigurau Damniol', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (17 April 1940), p. 6; 'Notes and Comments' *Welsh Nationalist* (June, 1940), p. 2.

²⁴⁰ 'Notes and Comments', (June, 40).

As the *Welsh Nationalist* reported, however, 'All the pressure brought to bear by the Welsh MPs and the Shrewsbury Committee failed to induce the Government to renounce its plans in that area'.²⁴¹ Contemporary historians agree. According to Jenkins and Williams, the Committee for the Defence of Welsh Culture was 'powerless to prevent the appropriation of land which had been farmed by Welsh speaking families for generations'.²⁴² In total, 219 primarily Welsh speakers were relocated, and initially did not receive their full compensation. Although on this regard the Defence Committee, in conjunction with Welsh MPs, did persuade the Government to change its stance and secured a better financial arrangement for the farmers.²⁴³

In contrast to the traditional Welsh discourse, the occupants of *Mynydd Epynt* were not forcibly evicted from this land.²⁴⁴ The occupants of the farms, under the recommendation of the local National Farmers Union, accepted the Government's offer and voluntarily relocated. At an 'informal conference' organised by the Brecon War Agricultural Executive, on the 29 February 1940, representatives of the War Office and National Farmers Union met and discussed the acquisition. The meeting, which was also attended by local farmers and solicitors, resolved that the best solution was 'for the Government to purchase the land at a valuation and to agree to pay full compensation for the loss entailed by the tenants in giving up portions or the whole of their holdings'. Significantly, the resolution was carried unanimously.²⁴⁵ The local NFU secretary wrote a scathing letter to the Defence Committee stating that the farmers believed that 'your National Conference for the Safeguarding of Welsh Culture will not be able to do anything for them' and that, 'they are afraid that your interference with their business has done them tremendous harm and I am blamed for

²⁴¹ NLW, UCF/105, C. L. Bayne (War Office) letter to T. I. Ellis, 29 April 1940; 'Notes and Comments', (June 1940); HC Deb, 25 April 1940, vol. 360 cc. 349-50, 'Land Acquisition (Wales)'.

²⁴² G. H. Jenkins & M. A. Williams, 'The Fortunes of the Welsh Language 1900-2000: Introduction' in Jenkins & Williams (eds.) *Let's Do Our Best For The Ancient Tongue*, p. 13.

²⁴³ NLW, UCF/A11, 'Memorandum Mynydd Epynt', n.d.

²⁴⁴ See, for example, H. Hughes, *Mae'r Ddiwedd Byd Yma. . .: Mynydd Epynt a't Troad Allan yn 1940* (Llandysul, 1997).

²⁴⁵ NLW, UCF/105, Brecon War Agricultural Executive 'Informal Conference', 29 February 1940.

having permitted you to come to Brecon'.²⁴⁶ He was also critical that 'outsiders' were trying to make political capital out of the issue.²⁴⁷ Although it was unclear if this was a slur directed towards the Defence Committee or the WNP, either way, it demonstrated that this farmers' organisation was not supportive of the efforts made by the Defence Committee in support of the occupants of *Mynydd Epynt*.

The Defence Committee went to great lengths to harness widespread support across Wales. It organised local meetings, sent representatives to see MPs and gained the support of the press and, to a large extent succeeded to persuade that this action was detrimental to the Welsh language. However, significantly, it failed to persuade the local National Farmers Union to oppose the land acquisition.²⁴⁸ Despite the support generated at the National Conference in Shrewsbury and on the acquisition of *Mynydd Epynt*, the Defence Committee's claim of speaking for Wales appeared only to be relevant when that section of the Welsh community wished to be spoken for. Iorwerth Peate's concerns for the families returning to the land after the war, proved unnecessary. The land is still in military hands and better known as Sennybridge Range.²⁴⁹ This was not the only occasion that the policies of the Defence Committee and War Office clashed.

IX: Welsh Regiments

The Defence Committee, picking up from critical reports the Welsh press, challenged the Army's recruiting policy in Wales.²⁵⁰ It was argued that its policy was detrimental both to the effectiveness and the culture of Welsh soldiers, especially those from Welsh speaking areas

²⁴⁶ NLW, UCF/106, W. Williams letter to Moses Griffiths, 28 March 1940; NLW, UCF/106, W. Williams letter to T. I. Ellis, 3 April 1940.

²⁴⁷ W. Williams letter to T. I. Ellis.

²⁴⁸ 'Achub Mynydd Epynt', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (17 April 1940), p. 12; '70 Ffermwr Ar y Clwt?', *Y Cymro* (16 March 1940), p. 1.

²⁴⁹ For a more detailed account see, for example, H. Hughes, *An Uprooted Community: A History of Epynt* (Llandysul, 1998).

²⁵⁰ See for example, 'Wales and the War: Welsh Lads in Welsh Units Demand', *South Wales Evening Post* (25 February 1942), p. 3; See also Section II, this chapter, 'Other Wartime Problems'; Saunders Lewis also criticised this policy, see 'Cwrs y Byd', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (14 February 1940), p. 1.

of Wales. The Committee campaigned for Welsh soldiers to be kept together in Welsh Regiments, and, where possible, for these Regiments to remain inside Wales. The matter was presented by the Defence Committee for the attention of Welsh MPs in February 1940, arguing that, 'The people of the Welsh countryside have a different environment from those of England, a separate language, different traditions and ways of life, and they have always had their own religious, cultural and recreational institutions'.²⁵¹ Clearly this argument was designed for an audience unfamiliar with Wales. By the following month *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* reported that, due to its [the Defence Committee] efforts, Oliver Stanley, had promised to do everything he could to keep Welsh soldiers together.²⁵² But no assurance was received to keep them inside Wales. The Committee continued to put pressure on the MPs to obtain this geographical assurance but by the time its delegation was seen, the threat of a German invasion loomed large. The delegation however, was received by a 'good number' of Welsh MPs and its proposal was given what was described as a 'hearty reception', which concluded with the promise that the MPs would put 'the suggestions before the War Minister'.²⁵³ It is difficult to believe that the suggestion to keep Welsh military units in Wales would be taken seriously by the War Minister. There would be no strategic value in maintaining front line military units in the West of Britain, at a time when an invasion of the south by the German Army was perceived as imminent. Therefore, it was no surprise that this suggestion was not adopted by the Government.

By early 1941 it was clear that Welsh soldiers would not remain within Wales and the promise to keep Welsh soldiers together was not being adhered to.²⁵⁴ Again, following pressure from the Defence Committee, the Welsh Parliamentary Party raised questions in the house. The Liberal National, Henry Morris-Jones, asserted that representations had been made more than once and while some sympathetic promises had been made, 'there is a very distinct and justifiable grievance (in Wales) that the War Office has not met them on

²⁵¹ NLW, UCF/106, CDDC, 'Memorandum on Welsh Soldiers in Training and Service', n.d.

²⁵² 'Y Cymru yn y Fyddin', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (6 March 1940), p. 6; This promise was also made by Stanley's predecessor at the War Ministry Leslie Hore-Belisha, a promise regularly referred to by Welsh MPs, e.g. HC Deb, 18 March 1941, vol. 370, cc.83-6, Henry Morris-Jones.

²⁵³ 'Secretary's Report for 1940'.

²⁵⁴ 'Welshmen for Welsh Regt.', *Holyhead Chronicle* (21 March 1941), p. 5.

this particular aspect of the question'.²⁵⁵ Another Liberal, this time the Independent Liberal MP for Caernarvonshire, Goronwy Owen after expressing difficulties some Welsh speakers were having in understanding what was required of them, proclaimed the advantages of regional regiments from his personal experience in the First World War, 'they worked together and understood one another and the officers understood the men who were serving under them'.²⁵⁶ Again the War Office response was positive, when the Secretary of State for War, David Margesson replied that 'he knew of no insuperable difficulties', and told the House of Commons, 'I think we shall be able to thrash out this matter'.²⁵⁷ However, the military had different priorities. The former Minister of Health, Walter Elliot, confirmed in a meeting with the Defence Committee's Professor (David) Hughes Parry, in mid 1941, the army's policy of distributing soldiers from the same area to various army units was designed to prevent large scale losses from one region..²⁵⁸ This primarily language issue was never resolved and the policy of placing units from the same region together was never formally introduced.

X: Welsh Centres

Late in 1940, a single correspondence led to a new initiative that would impact on thousands of Welsh speaking soldiers and conscripted war workers who found themselves far from their homeland. Late in October 1940, David Lloyd George received a letter from a Welsh expatriate living in Nottingham, who affirmed that:

²⁵⁵ HC Deb, 18 March 1941, vol. 370, cc. 84, Henry Morris-Jones; Morris-Jones began his political career as a Liberal, but from 1931 became a Liberal National, although, by 1935, was considered by many to be surrogate Conservative.

²⁵⁶ HC Deb, 18 March 1941, vol. 370, cc.93-4, Goronwy Owen.

²⁵⁷ HC Deb, 18 March 1941, vol. 370, cc. 108, Captain David Margesson.

²⁵⁸ NLW, UCF/A11, 'Minutes of the 16 Meeting of the Executive Committee (CDDC)'; Professor Sir David Hughes Parry, a Welsh speaking professor of Law at the London School of Economics and Political Science and later founder of 'Institute of Advanced Legal Studies' in 1947 and Vice-Chancellor of the University of London (1945-1948), does not appear to have been a member of the Defence Committee nor of UCF but clearly maintained close links with both organisations.

Scattered throughout the country, and even in larger cities of the Empire, there are small Welsh communities meeting occasionally who would welcome to their gatherings any Welsh man or woman from any of the national services who happened to be stationed ... in their midst.²⁵⁹

The difficulty, as the correspondence stated, was there was no way to tell these Welsh speaking servicemen and women where such Welsh communities existed. This correspondence found its way, firstly to the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, whose secretary felt that the idea was 'a very excellent one if it was practical'.²⁶⁰ The Society was aware of the difficulties; some years previously it had attempted to establish a list of Welsh Societies, but found that 'because the Secretaries changed so often it became impossible to keep pace with them.'²⁶¹ Therefore, the Honourable Society passed the matter onto the Defence Committee.²⁶² Ellis, as secretary of the Defence Committee, picked up the baton and within a month had obtained details of Welsh groups in Nottingham and Yorkshire.²⁶³ It was significant that Ellis, despite being aware of the Honourable Society's misgivings and previous failure, was still resolved to proceed with attempting to unity Welsh service personnel with Welsh Centres.

For the project to have any practical use details of more Welsh centres were required. Therefore, Ellis prepared a circular and forwarded it to addresses of other Welsh societies, supplied by the Yorkshire centre. On 24 January, one of these Welsh societies, based in Leeds replied positively, and enclosed details of further locations and addresses.²⁶⁴ Ellis wrote to each new address asking if they 'knew of any Welsh Centres outside Wales where people who have to leave their *mamwlad* (motherland) can be welcomed.'²⁶⁵ It was clear from the correspondence that Ellis also included individual Welsh families on his register of Welsh centres.²⁶⁶ The list grew quickly, and confirming that news of Ellis's project was being

²⁵⁹ NLW, UCF/A19, S. Jones letter to D. Lloyd-George, 25 October 1940.

²⁶⁰ Quoted in NLW, UCF/A19, A. J. Sylvester letter to S. Jones, 21 November 1940.

²⁶¹ NLW, UCF/A19, J. L. C. Cecil-Williams letter to T. I. Ellis, 13 March 1941.

²⁶² Ibid.

²⁶³ NLW, UCF/A19, T. I. Ellis letter to S. Jones, 27 December 1940; S. Jones letter to T. I. Ellis, 5 January 1941.

²⁶⁴ NLW, UCF/A19, W. Williams letter to T. I. Ellis, 24 January 1941.

²⁶⁵ NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to G. Herbert, 27 March 1941.

²⁶⁶ NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to J. J. Evans, 27 March 1941.

disseminated via the centres themselves, Ellis was, at times, contacted directly by people willing to be added to the register of centres.²⁶⁷ To further expand on the number of available centres, Ellis contacted the major religious and cultural organisations in Wales. The Union of Baptists replied, 'here are the names of some brothers who can best give you the information you wanted' and enclosed addresses in Birmingham, Bristol, Liverpool and Manchester.²⁶⁸ Similarly, the Presbyterian Church supplied seven addresses from London to Edinburgh.²⁶⁹ The Union of Welsh Societies responded with a list of eighteen addresses, while the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, despite its reservations, added a further six, mainly in the south of England.²⁷⁰ The register of Welsh centres was growing. Ellis followed up each of these new contacts and while most agreed to welcome Welsh soldiers enthusiastically not all the responses were positive. For example the *Cymdeithas Genedlaethol Cymry Manceinion* (The Manchester National Welsh Society) reported that it had 'to shelve all its meetings for the duration of the war', as the building they used was requisitioned for war use.²⁷¹ However, it did include an extensive list which contained details of all the Welsh churches and chapels in the city.²⁷² The maintenance of this growing register of Welsh centres and the correlation of communication with each of them would have required a great deal of time and a high level of organisational ability, which Ellis undertook himself. That most groups or families contacted by Ellis replied positively, confirms a high level of support for the project.

Ellis also adopted more general methods of obtaining information on Welsh centres. Advertisements were placed in the Welsh speaking press for Welsh chapels or organised

²⁶⁷ NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to M. Hughes, 27 March 1941; NLW, UCF/A1, Ellis letter to Wynne Samuel, April 1941.

²⁶⁸ NLW, UCF/A19, Undeb Bedyddwyr Cymru a Mynwy (Baptists Union of Wales and Monmouth) letter to T. I. Ellis, 2 January 1941.

²⁶⁹ NLW, UCF/A19, Presbyterian Church of Wales letter to T. I. Ellis, 6 January 1941.

²⁷⁰ NLW, UCF/A19, Undeb Cenedlaethol Cymdeithasau Cymraeg (National Union of Welsh Societies) letter to T. I. Ellis, 4 January 1941; Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion letter to Ellis, 7 January 1941, UCF Papers, Box A19, NLW.

²⁷¹ NLW, UCF/A19, Cymdeithas Genedlaethol Cymru Manceinion (National Welsh Society Manchester) letter to T. I. Ellis, 9 February 1941.

²⁷² Ibid.

centres outside Wales to contact Ellis. However, it became apparent from correspondence that many of the Welsh centres in England did not read the Welsh published press.²⁷³ By January 1941, Ellis had persuaded the BBC to launch an appeal on the radio 'for all Welshmen who live in England to communicate' with him.²⁷⁴ This programme of connecting Welsh soldiers and workers with local Welsh communities and families expanded rapidly during 1941 although it was initially designed to aid Welsh people who had been relocated out of Wales to maintain their culture, the reality was that it also assisted Welsh people who resided in England, and beyond, to maintain their Welsh heritage. It was impossible to ascertain how many Welsh soldiers and war workers were welcomed into Welsh organisations, and the individual homes of Welsh families, during the war, but the rapid growth and popularity of the project suggests that it was appreciated by many who had left their homeland.

XI: Difficulties and Merger

As early as the middle of 1940, the Defence Committee experienced financial difficulties. In the first instance the Committee turned to its founder, the National Eisteddfod Council. Unbeknown to the Defence Committee, the National Union of Welsh Societies too was experiencing difficulties and had similarly asked the National Eisteddfod Council for help. Following a meeting on the 20 September 1940 the National Eisteddfod arranged to meet both organisations.²⁷⁵ The news was not positive. The National Eisteddfod resolved that it, 'could not under any circumstances guarantee the costs of the Defence Committee', nor was it willing to consider a merging of the work of the three bodies.²⁷⁶ In view of this, the Eisteddfod argued that either one or both of the organisations that were in difficulties must either be wound up or 'focus on a new concept; a 'Friends of Welsh Culture Society'.'²⁷⁷ In

²⁷³ NLW, UCF/A19, S. Jones letter to T. I. Ellis, 5 January 1941.

²⁷⁴ NLW, UCF/A19, H. Morris-Jones letter to T. I. Ellis, 21 January 1941; NLW, UCF/A19, D. Beynon Williams letter to T. I. Ellis, 27 January 1941; NLW, UCF/A19, H. Morris-Jones letter to T. I. Ellis, 21 January 1941.

²⁷⁵ NLW, UCF/A4, R. T. Jenkins, 'Minutes of Meeting of Representatives of National Eisteddfod Council, Union of Welsh Societies and Committee for the Defence of Welsh Culture', 18 October 1940.

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

this suggestion lay the foundation of the next evolution for both movements, although it would take almost a year before it was actioned. In the short term the Defence Committee decided to continue independently. That a merger of the National Eisteddfod, the Defence Committee and the National Union of Welsh Societies was discussed by the Eisteddfod Council was particularly significant. The possible union of the financially stable, long standing, respected National Eisteddfod institution with the national structure and parliamentary connections of the Defence Committee, together with the estimated 10,000 members affiliated to the National Union of Welsh Societies would have created a Welsh cultural colossus. That the National Eisteddfod was unwilling to proceed with this proposal and was content to allow either, or both, of these fellow organisations to flounder implies that it rated its own autonomy above the wider interests of Welsh culture. This decision may have related to the future financial stability of a new expanded National Eisteddfod, had it incorporated the two organisations with money problems, although no such concerns were expressed at the time.

By the end of 1940, the Defence Committee was no longer in a position to pay its way and was in debt. The Committee was jointly funded by a combination of other Welsh institutions and by individual contributions. A summary of accounts up to 1940 demonstrated that, unsurprisingly, the National Eisteddfod Council was the largest of three main contributors, the others being the *Urdd* and the National Union of Welsh Societies.²⁷⁸ It was also apparent that not all Welsh organisations were as forthcoming.²⁷⁹ The remainder of the income was made up of personal contributions.²⁸⁰ Unfortunately for the Committee, during its first year, the outgoings exceeded its income.²⁸¹ Ellis' travel expenses were particularly high. In contrast, he was not paid for his time, as he confirmed in 1941, 'Maybe there is a rumour that I am being paid for my work, but that's completely wrong.'²⁸² Despite Ellis's generosity a new financial initiative was required.

²⁷⁸ NLW, UCF/A20, D. R. Hughes, 'Financial Accounts 1940', December 1940.

²⁷⁹ NLW, UCF/A3, Brynallt Williams letter to T. I. Ellis, 2 January 1940; NLW, UCF/A3, Central Welsh Board letter to T. I. Ellis, 14 February 1940.

²⁸⁰ 'Financial Accounts 1940'.

²⁸¹ NLW, UCF/A3, D. R. Hughes, Summary of Accounts, 6 November 1940.

²⁸² NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to M. Hughes, 18 March 1941.

Until November 1940, the Executive Committee, and each branch, was each individually responsible for raising its own funds. However, following a proposal by the Bangor branch, this fund-raising was restructured.²⁸³ From this time, responsibility for raising money would rest solely with the branches. These would, in turn, contribute a percentage of their income to the Executive. A membership system was also initiated 'Sponsors' contributed £1.1s 0p annually and 'friends' of the organisation paid 2/6p per annum. Details of prospective members were supplied by each branch, for example, Caernarfon supplied 260 names, which included local dignitaries and activists.²⁸⁴ By April 1941, the Defence Committee's finances had returned to break even.²⁸⁵ The financial difficulties suggest that support for the organisation was faltering or money raising efforts were being curtailed. It was recognised that money was not readily available in wartime. However, the success of previous and future financial appeals demonstrates that funds were obtainable.

During this period of financial turmoil for the Defence Committee other difficulties became apparent. At a 'Special Meeting' in February 1941. Moses Griffith, who was also a member of the WNP, was critical of the ineffectiveness of the organisation and referred to a lack of guidance from the President. The matter was sufficiently serious for a vote was taken on whether to conclude the organisation. Ultimately, it was resolved to continue.²⁸⁶ This internal rift points to growing division between elements within the Defence Committee. The depth of these divisions was demonstrated by the fact that a vote was taken.

Another problem facing the Committee was the growing overlap with the National Union of Welsh Societies. From the beginning of World War Two the Union had held the same fears for the Welsh language as had the Defence Committee and other organisations.²⁸⁷ In a 1940 circular to members it stressed that 'the fate of the Welsh people, as a nation, is at stake in these difficult times – and that fate, perhaps is final.'²⁸⁸ The National Union, mirroring the

²⁸³ NLW, UCF/A3, 'Bangor Sub-Committee Report', 19 November 1940.

²⁸⁴ NLW, UCF/A3, W. Vaughan Jones (Caernarfon County Committee) letter to T. I. Ellis, 15 April 1941.

²⁸⁵ NLW, UCF/A3, D. R. Hughes, 'Circular to Committees' 2 April 1941; NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to R. T. Jenkins, 30 July 1941.

²⁸⁶ NLW, UCF/A4, 'Minutes of Special Meeting of Executive Committee (CDDC)', 7 February 1941.

²⁸⁷ 'Welsh Culture in Many Hands', *Western Mail* (3 February 1941), p. 3.

²⁸⁸ NLW, UCF/A3, National Union of Welsh Societies (NUWS), 'Circular to Members', Autumn, 1940.

sentiment of the 'Defence Committee', urged all the Welsh Societies to devote one meeting, 'the first of the season if possible', to the sole objective of 'considering seriously how they can affect their efforts in favour of language and culture'. By January 1941, members of the National Union were also feeling uneasy about the duplication of efforts between the two organisations.²⁸⁹ This overlap of objectives, together with increasing financial difficulties impacted on both organisations and brought them to the negotiating table.

In February 1941 the Executive of the Defence Committee 'studied carefully' proposals by the National Union and resolved, by majority, to pursue closer cooperation and explore a joint constitution.²⁹⁰ In March, representatives of the two organisations met at Aberystwyth, where it was unanimously resolved that the two bodies should unite. A joint memorandum explained, 'a sub-committee under the chairmanship of R. William George will make the necessary arrangements.'²⁹¹ By June the new constitution was ready.²⁹²

During the merger discussions Ifan ap Owen Edwards was asked to evaluate the strengths and weakness of both organisations. His findings are enlightening. Edwards concluded that the Defence Committee was 'too college' and for reasons of prejudice was not generally popular, while the National Union of Welsh Societies suffered from 'sluggish procedures and aging officials, 'What proportion of (a) officers and (b) members of the Council are under 60?' Edwards asked.²⁹³ In contrast, one of the Defence Committee's strengths was that it was run by more active members, mostly under the age of fifty years old. However, the main strength of the Defence Committee was the 'drive and energy of its secretary', Tom Ellis. The National Union's strengths included being 'An old institution which has earned its place in the country's affection, eliminating some people's prejudices' and, apart from

²⁸⁹ NLW, MS/17204C, NUWS, 'Council Minutes', 31 January 1941.

²⁹⁰ NLW, UCF/A13, 'Minutes of Special Meeting Executive Committee (CDDC)', 7 February 1941; 'Secretary's Report for 1940'.

²⁹¹ NLW, UCD/A1, Joint Memorandum, 18 March 1941; NLW, UCF/A4, 'Minutes of Joint Meeting of Representatives of National Conference to Protect Welsh Culture and Representatives of Union of Welsh Societies', 14/15 March 1941.

²⁹² NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to Rachel Davies, 20 May 1941; NLW, UCF/A11, Minutes of the 16 Meeting of the Executive Committee (CDDC), 6 June 1941; NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to William George, 9 June 1941; T. I. Ellis letter to D. R Hughes, 20 March 1941.

²⁹³ Edwards, 'Very Short Memorandum'.

having a greater infrastructure across Wales, managed to 'represent the 'humble' and the 'colegial' very successfully.'²⁹⁴ This contemporary view confirms that the Defence Committee had not fully overcome the initial allegations of being influenced by the WNP. It also suggested that it was perceived as being more academic than the National Union.

Initially, naming the new organisation proved somewhat problematic. Options discussed and discarded included *Undeb Diogelu Cymru*; *Undeb Cymru*; *Yr Undeb Cymraeg*; *Cyngor Cymru* and *Undeb Diogelu Diwylliant Cymru*. A popular choice initially was *Undeb Caredigion Cymru* (Union of Welsh Friends) and it was in this name that the first draft constitution was printed.²⁹⁵ Those nominated to serve on a new Executive Council from the Defence Committee were Ifan ap Owen Edwards; T. I. Ellis; Gwynfor Evans (who had been co-opted onto the Executive Committee in April 1941); Moses Griffith; R. T. Jenkins; Gwenan Jones; D. Wyre Lewis and Saunders Lewis, W. J. Gruffydd and D. R. Hughes were later added.²⁹⁶ Among the equal number of representatives from the National Union of Welsh Societies, were William George, Professor E. Ernest Hughes, James Clement, Rhys T. Davies and T. Francis. The new organisation formally met for the first time at the 1941 National Eisteddfod in Old Colwyn and the union was completed.²⁹⁷ The new body did not stick with the original name and following further discussions, Gwynfor Evans' proposal was agreed upon and *Undeb Cymru Fydd* was born.²⁹⁸ Over the eighteen months of its existence the Defence Committee had established a network of regional and local committees that covered Wales, although there was a greater concentration of these in the north. The fusion with the Union of Welsh Societies helped address this geographical imbalance making the newly formed UCF much more representative of the whole of Wales. According to Jones 'for the first time in over a generation one organisation could now speak with legitimacy for Wales.'²⁹⁹

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ 'Minutes of the 16 Meeting of the Executive Committee'; NLW, UCF/A11, 'Undeb Diogellu Diwylliant Cymru', n.d; NLW, UCF/A4, Undeb Caredigion Cymru, 'Y Cyfansoddiad', April 1941; NLW, UCD/A13, Undeb Diogelu Diwylliant Cymru, 'Y Cyfansoddiad Ddraft', n.d.

²⁹⁶ Evans: *Gwynfor Evans*, p. 76; 'Minutes of 15 Meeting of the Executive Committee; NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to William George, 9 June 1941; 'Minutes of the 16 Meeting of the Executive Committee.

²⁹⁷ NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to D.R. Hughes, 20 March 1941.

²⁹⁸ Davies, *Gwynfor Evans*, p. 26; Evans, *Gwynfor Evans*, p. 78.

²⁹⁹ Jones, *A Bid For Unity*, p. 21.

With the establishment of the Defence Committee in late 1939 the cultural, and arguably political landscape of Wales, changed. Prior to the conference in Shrewsbury, the WNP had led the call for the defence of the Welsh language and Welsh culture. However, the party's anti-English establishment, 'them and us' rhetoric failed to generate popular support, as did its anti-war stance. While the WNP failed to convince the mainstream electorate and was losing support among the Welsh the intelligentsia, on the core issue there was a general consensus amongst the press, religious, cultural and political leaders in Wales that the language and culture were in imminent danger. In hindsight, while the language was in decline, these fears proved to be an overreaction. However, the fears went further. As argued by the National Union at the beginning of the war, 'we realised that it wasn't just the Welsh language that was in danger, but the whole of the Welsh way of life.'³⁰⁰ Importantly, it was perceived that there was insufficient being done to address the matter. The Shrewsbury Conference changed that. It brought together Welsh leaders from across the political, religious and cultural spectrum to discuss the issues that faced the nation and it formulated strategies to deal with them. Ellis reinforced this status 'The movement was entirely apart from any party, religious or political. It was an effort to strengthen Welsh life.'³⁰¹ There was no doubt that some of the Committee's objectives were unrealistic, for example, its desire to keep Welsh soldiers inside Wales. However, on other matters its initiatives were positive and played a useful part, especially in keeping Welsh soldiers and workers in touch with their homeland, such as the Welsh centres project.

While the theme that underpinned all of the projects in this period was the protection of the Welsh language, the importance of the non-political status of the Defence Committee cannot be overstated. Many supporters wrote on this theme, 'the thing that appeals to me is the fact that the Committee is non-party - incorporating Labour supporters, Nationalists, Liberals and Conservatives'.³⁰² Although, some felt that the WNP had too much influence, a

³⁰⁰ NLW, UCF/A13, National Union of Welsh Societies, 'Statement', 23 April 1941.

³⁰¹ NLW, UCF/A3 T. I. Ellis letter to Bishop of Bangor, 17 July 1940.

³⁰² NLW, UCF/A3, T. A. J. letter to D.R. Hughes, 25 August 1940.

view not aided by Lewis' conference memorandum. One Liberal MP wrote, 'My impression is, from what I have heard, that it (The Defence Committee) did not start very well because extreme Nationalists had more influence than they deserved in formulating its policy and programme', although he went on to concede that 'it may have the form of something useful'.³⁰³ As the Committee became established this view changed and greater support from Welsh MPs was gained.

Apart from establishing national coverage, the main focus of the Committee was directed towards the impact of evacuees on Wales, the introduction of the Service of Youth, opposing the acquisition of *Mynydd Epynt* and helping the plight of soldiers in the military by trying to keep them within Welsh units preferably within Wales. On most of these issues, however, little or no progress was made. During the summer of 1940 the second wave of evacuees arrived after the aerial bombing campaign began and, as with the first tranche, they were distributed among Welsh families. The Service of Youth programme was introduced, un-amended and no second issue referring directly to Wales was made. *Mynydd Epynt* was taken over by the War Office and still remains in military hands, and although Welsh army regiments existed, soldiers from Wales were, following conscription, distributed where they were needed throughout the British Army. Similarly, little progress was made on other secondary initiatives; the Home Guard in Wales continued to use English as its primary language as did Air Raid Precaution Officers (ARPs) even when they were located in Welsh speaking areas. The BBC did, following representations, begin to transmit 3 hours of Welsh a week across the Home Service network that meant that Welsh soldiers and workers throughout Britain could hear their native tongue.

Although none of these individual initiatives were successful, success can be measured in many ways. The foundation of a national Welsh movement to protect the Welsh language and Welsh culture had been established backed by a national infrastructure. An awareness of Wales' linguistic and cultural individuality had been raised among the corridors of power in London. While within Wales a greater recognition of the state of the language was

³⁰³ NLW, UCF/A3, D. Owen Evans letter to Artemis Evans, 31 August 1940; Artemis Evans was Secretary of the National Union of Welsh Societies. Sir David Owen Evans was a Barrister, an industrialist and a Liberal politician who held the seat for Cardiganshire between 1932 and 1945. He also held the Presidency of the Council of the Eisteddfod and was a member of the Council of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion.

achieved. The most significantly bearing the Defence Committee had on Welsh nation, however, was that for the first time in the twentieth century an organisation had moved away from mere rhetoric and created positive, strategic plans to protect the language of Wales. The benefits of this cohesive national approach began to come to fruition under the banner of UCF.

Chapter Three

1941-1945: The Early Years and Early Successes of *Undeb*

Cymru Fydd (New Wales Union)

The only people who can stop a language from shrinking or dying are the speakers of that language.¹

This Chapter will examine the activities of UCF from its inception in August 1941 until the end of the war in 1945. This was a particularly noteworthy period in Welsh cultural history. The fusion of the long standing National Union of Welsh Societies with the more dynamic Defence Committee, led to the establishment of a Welsh organisation with the infrastructure, political links and determination to campaign successfully for Welsh interests. Nowhere were these attributes more visible than in the Union's campaign to change the legal status of the Welsh language. The period witnessed something of a shift in Welsh cultural strategy. The Defence Committee had largely limited its campaigns to reacting to government wartime measures. In contrast, from its formation, UCF undertook a more proactive outlook to protecting the Welsh language. In keeping with Kindell's argument, it was in this period that Welsh speakers experienced notable successes in cultural campaigns to protect their language.²

The published aims of UCF provided a framework with which to evaluate this period of cultural patriotism. The Union's projects will be analysed against each of these aims, allowing for an assessment of its overall accomplishments. Not all of UCF's campaigns can be attributed exclusively to the new organisation. Both component bodies had projects which had been begun prior to amalgamation, which were either, as yet, incomplete or stalled because of the war. UCF continued or revived several of these projects and as such, while the Union can take credit for their conclusion, any success must be seen in the wider sense, with the Defence Committee or the National Union of Welsh Societies playing a part.

¹ G. Kindell, 'Endangered Language Groups, Summer Institute of Linguistics', *Sociolingo: International Sociolinguistics Department Newsletter*, 7 (Fall, 1994), 1-3.

² Ibid.

Indeed, in one campaign in particular, the petition to allow the use of the Welsh language in courts, all three organisations played significant roles.

I: UCF: Organisation, Structure and Finances

Despite the announcement in August 1941 that the merger of what the *Liverpool Daily Post* termed ‘the two most important Welsh cultural movements’ had been completed, there was still a significant amount of work outstanding.³ Local branches, which were to form the backbone of the new Union, were still to be established. This was achieved through fusing the national infrastructures of both component movements, an operation which took several months to complete.⁴ It was from these branches that delegates were nominated to attend the Union’s ‘supreme governing body’, the Annual General Conference. Also represented at the conference were religious and cultural organisations and individual members. The Conference, in turn, elected a twelve person Council to direct the Union’s work throughout the year.⁵ The branches, and consequently the Union as a whole, attracted much support from the Welsh speaking intelligentsia but never made the transition into a popular or grass roots movement.⁶

Tom Ellis maintained his position as Secretary and later summarised the Union’s objective, to ‘try to keep Wales alive and awaken in its residents (not forgetting the Welsh in diaspora) a greater awareness of their Welshness’.⁷ It was not uncommon for senior members of the Union, like other leaders of Welsh political and cultural organisations, to use terms similar to Ellis’ reference to awaken Welsh residents. Many cultural and political leaders of Wales, at the time, portrayed themselves as an enlightened vanguard, which needed to stimulate the national consciousness of an ignorant or distracted population. William George, for example, argued that ‘The common people of Wales are apathetic at a time like this ... We

³ ‘Union of the New Wales: Cultural Societies Merged’, *Liverpool Daily Post* (16 August 1941), p. 2.

⁴ NLW, UCF/A4/1, T. I. Ellis letter to W. Vaughan Jones, 7 October 1941.

⁵ NLW, UCF/175, Draft Manuscript, n.d.

⁶ Jones, ‘The Parliament for Wales Campaign’, p. 211.

⁷ T. I. Ellis, ‘Undeb Cymru Fydd’, *Lleufer: Cylchgrawn Cymdeithas Addysg y Gweithwyr Yng Nghymru* 1:2 (1944), 17-9.

[the Welsh leaders] realise now more than ever that the circumstances brought about by the war tend seriously to weaken the national consciousness of Welsh people.⁸ These opinions are similar in nature to Marx' concept of a vanguard party or Lenin's 'revolutionary vanguard'.⁹ However, in contrast to communist ideology, this vanguard was not drawn from among ordinary people.

Much can be drawn about UCF from its published aims. As with the Defence Committee, protecting the Welsh language and Welsh traditions were central to its aspirations. The full published goals were:

- To Safeguard Welsh interests and maintain throughout Wales arrangements for protesting (sic) and developing Welsh social life in accordance with Welsh tradition.
- To Secure for the Welsh language its place as an official language in Wales
- To secure that Welsh education is founded on Welsh life and traditions
- To stimulate the activity of Welsh societies, and unite their efforts in order to realise the aims of the Union.
- To keep Welsh societies outside Wales, and Welsh people in dispersion, in touch with life of Wales.¹⁰

It is important to note that there was no stated definition of what was deemed 'Welsh social life' or 'Welsh tradition', as referred to in the first aim. From other documentation it was clear that included in these traditions were the Welsh language, religious nonconformity (or at least the option to worship in this way) and the cultural events covered by the eisteddfodau, which at the time were held in most schools, chapels and towns in Wales. There was a rare mistranslation in this 1948 publication, which stated in the first aim 'protesting and developing'.¹¹ The original 1943 Welsh pamphlet uses the term '*amddiffyn a datblygu*' which more accurately translates as 'protection and development'. It was also

⁸ 'Union of the New Wales: Cultural Societies Merged'.

⁹ K. Marx & F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (London, 1848), p. 22.

¹⁰ T. I. Ellis, *New Wales Union (UCF), 1941-1948* (Aberystwyth, 1948), p. 3; NLW, UCF/A23, UCF, 'Y Cyfansoddiad', (n.d).

¹¹ Ibid.

significant that the Union planned to work towards making the Welsh language 'an' official language of Wales and not 'the' official language, as was promoted by the WNP at the time, and which some historians have also attributed incorrectly to the UCF.¹² The final three aims related to specific groups and organisations that, it was considered, would assist the Union to achieve these aims: educational structures would influence the next generation, the Welsh societies, which with an estimated combined membership of 10,000 was the Union's contact with ordinary public, and the Welsh men and women who, by choice or wartime necessity, now lived outside Wales.

In October 1941, within months of the merger, UCF held its first national conference. Over 150 representatives attended at Dolgellau. Reports to the conference confirm that while the makeup of the first council contained an equal number of members from both component organisations, all the key positions were filled by former members of the Defence Committee. Only the financial secretary originated from the National Union of Welsh Societies. This structure suggests that the Defence Committee was more influential in the merger discussions. This configuration may also reflect the notable age difference between the two set of officials with the National Union's former leaders being less willing to undertake the duties involved in initiating a new project.¹³

The dominance of UCF by former Defence Committee personnel was reinforced over the following two conferences, despite these being elected positions.¹⁴ The delegates at these Union conferences were made up of branch official, which suggests that the Defence Committee's dominance of the new organisation also extended to local level. Adding to these electoral successes, another former Defence Committee member, Saunders Lewis, who, for reasons that are unclear, did not initially take up his position on the Council, was co-opted onto it in 1942.¹⁵ By 1943, this distortion in leadership was mirrored by an

¹² Ellis, *New Wales Union (UCF), 1941-1948*, p. 3; See, for example, R. Coupland, *Welsh and Scottish Nationalism: A Study* (London, 1954), p. 336.

¹³ Edwards, 'Very Short Memorandum'.

¹⁴ NLW, UCF/98, President's Report, Minutes of the First Conference of Undeb Cymru Fydd; NLW, UCF/A21, T. I. Ellis Circular to the Regional Secretaries, '1943 Annual Conference', 21 May 1943; NLW, Kate Roberts Papers (hereafter KATERTS) 4336, UCF, 'Secretaries Report for the Year August 1941 – July 1942'.

¹⁵ NLW, UCF/127, UCF, 'Circular to Local Secretaries', 18 September 1942.

imbalance in the geographical representation of the Committee. Of the 23 Council members, eleven hailed from North Wales and eight from Aberystwyth and Carmarthenshire. Therefore, the area that accommodated two thirds of the population was represented by only four members. The distribution of the Council more closely emulated the demographic distribution of Welsh speakers.¹⁶ By 1943, the merger of the Defence Committee and the National Union appeared more like a take-over.

Over its first two years 'considerable successes' were achieved in merging the organisations.¹⁷ The 16 branches created in the first year increased by a further eight in the second year.¹⁸ In 1943 for the first time, two branches were established outside Wales, the first in Liverpool and the second in Birmingham, while plans were also afoot to set-up a branch in London.¹⁹ Liverpool was selected as the location for the first branch of UCF outside Wales as it had a large Welsh expatriate community. However, the establishment of this branch was particularly significant, as it formed the only direct link between *Cymru Fydd* and UCF. In 1943, Liverpool hosted the last remaining division of the nineteenth century *Cymru Fydd*. However, following this meeting it elected to transfer its loyalties and join UCF. The locating of branches in English cities was in keeping with the Union's aim to keep Welsh societies outside Wales in touch with Welsh life.²⁰ It was an attempt to reverse the contemporary concern that once people left Wales they were lost to the language forever.

The organisational success of the merger was not, however, emulated monetarily. The financial difficulties that had plagued the Defence Committee were clearly still apparent during the early months of UCF. By April 1942 the Union was short of funds, most of which was generated at branch level.²¹ Initially, each branch was asked to increase its contribution to the Council and later that summer a general financial appeal was launched.²² The results

¹⁶ Ellis, *Undeb Cymru Fydd* (1943), p. 15.

¹⁷ 'Secretaries Report for the Year August 1941 – July 1942'; NLW, UCF/A21, 'Minutes of the First Undeb Cymru Fydd Annual Conference', 16 July 1942.

¹⁸ NLW, UCF/A18, UCF, 'Minutes of the Second Annual Conference', 10 July 1943.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Ellis, *New Wales Union*, p. 3.

²¹ 'Minutes of the Second Annual Conference'.

²² NLW, UCF/127, UCF, 'Circular to Department Secretaries', 18 March 1942; NLW, UCF/A20, UCF, 'Yr Apel Ariannol', July 1942.

of these combined measures were almost immediate.²³ By the time the Treasurer reported on the financial situation in March 1944, the Union's accounts were in a much healthier position.²⁴ The response to the appeal varied considerably across the branches. For example, in the more Anglicised areas of Wrexham and Flintshire significantly more money was raised than in the predominantly Welsh speaking districts of the Vale of Clwyd, North Denbighshire and Bro Ddyfi.²⁵ Caernarfon and Cardiff branches raised the most, while two of three lowest contributors were branches in Welsh speaking regions.²⁶ Similarly, the results of the appeal did not appear to follow any rural, industrial or economic division. Therefore, the success of the appeal reflected the motivation of each branch for fundraising, as opposed to any linguistic or monetary divisions. The Union's ability to raise additional funds, almost at will, during World War Two confirms the widespread support experienced by the organisation.

By the summer of 1943, UCF was both organisationally and financially stable. The merging of the Defence Committee and the National Union of Welsh Societies into a single organisation was complete. The Union boasted twenty three branches across Wales and beyond, with a further four being planned. Financially, the Union held a bank surplus higher than at any time of the Defence Committee and, thanks to its financial reorganisation, this situation was improving month on month. From this time onwards, this stability allowed the Union to concentrate fully on campaigning on Welsh interest instead of being distracted by financial and organisational matters.

II: Conscription, War and Women

The first aim of UCF was to 'Safeguard Welsh interests and maintain throughout Wales arrangements for protecting and developing Welsh social life in accordance with Welsh

²³ 'Minutes of the Second Annual Conference'.

²⁴ D. B. Jones & J. Iorwerth Roberts, *Undeb Cymru Fydd Financial Balance Sheet 1 April 1943 – 31 March 1944* (Llangollen, 1944).

²⁵ NLW, UCF/A20, 'North Wales Areas', 15 September 1942.

²⁶ NLW, UCF/A20, J. Iorwerth Roberts, 'Adroddiad yr Ysgrifennydd Ariannol', January 1943.

tradition.’ The greatest threat to Welsh social life was considered to be the conscription of women to work in the war factories, often away from home and away from Wales.²⁷

Concerned about the impact of the 1941 National Service Act and, specifically, its impact on the conscription of women, UCF quickly arranged three national conferences.²⁸ Confirming its extensive organisational abilities and infrastructure these conferences were held on the same day, 21 February 1942, in Swansea, Aberystwyth and Colwyn Bay. A Circular was prepared asking other organisations ‘to cooperate with us by sending representatives to the conference that is within your reach’.²⁹ Reflecting the strength of feeling on the issue religious and cultural institutions responded and all three conferences were well attended. The *Liverpool Daily Post*, for example, reported that 500 people representing ‘church and chapels and Welsh movements attended Colwyn Bay’.³⁰

As a direct result of these conferences, a deputation was organised to see the Minister of Labour. The deputation highlighted the ‘moral dangers’ faced by these women and objected to the ‘wholesale transfer of Welsh women to factory work.’³¹ As a result of this meeting, and demonstrating the Union’s increasing standing with the Government, the Ministry of Labour asked the Union to undertake further enquiries into the problems caused by the relocation of Welsh women.³² The Union organised three sub-committees to examine North Wales, South-West Wales and South-East Wales respectively. There was considerable consensus in the reports of all three sub-committees.³³ There was little impact on women who could commute from home to work. However, it was reported that relocating from rural areas into the towns endangered the women’s ‘social morality and religious beliefs.’³⁴ However, the number of women conscripted to work in the factories of Wales was eclipsed

²⁷ Jones, *A Bid for Unity*, p. 25.

²⁸ The National Service (Armed Forces) Act 1939 (London, HMSO, 1939).

²⁹ NLW, UCF/A18, UCF, ‘Circular’, February 1942.

³⁰ ‘Welshmen in the Forces’, *Liverpool Daily Post* (23 February 1942), p. 3; ‘Undeb Cymru Fydd’, *Y Seren* (28 February 1941), p. 4; Undeb Cymru Fydd’, *Rhos Herald* (29 February 1942), p. 3.

³¹ Ibid; Ellis, *New Wales Union*, p. 3.

³² Ellis, Ibid.

³³ Jones, *A Bid for Unity*, p. 25.

³⁴ Ibid.

by what was described as the 'general exodus to the factories in the Midlands.'³⁵ This relocation out of Wales raised further concerns.

The war factories of the Midlands housed the largest concentration of conscripted Welsh women, at the time totalling almost 2,000.³⁶ The Union was concerned that these young women, without the stabilizing influence of family and religious background, would lose their Welsh culture and be morally corrupted by the English work colleagues.³⁷ UCF enlisted the assistance of other interested organisations to examine the situation.³⁸ In May 1942, the Union hosted a meeting of Christian organisations, the Temperance Council and the YWCA, to discuss concerns that these women were 'in grave danger of losing their roots, both spiritual and cultural.'³⁹ This meeting resolved to establish a joint committee between UCF and the various church organisations. This new committee used the unwieldy name, The New Wales Union and the Churches in Wales Joint Committee for Welsh Women (*Cyd-Bwyllgor Undeb Cymru Fydd A'r Eglwysi Yng Nghyrmu 'Dros Ferched Cymru*).⁴⁰ The establishment of this joint committee reinforced the Union's policy of attempting to negate the impact of the Government's war measures on the Welsh language.

Initially, the committee wanted detailed information. It arranged for Olwen Carey Evans, daughter of former Prime Minister David Lloyd George, and Miss Mai Roberts, a Union member who was also associated with the YWCA, to visit the Midlands and report on the status of the Welsh women working there.⁴¹ Roberts subsequently relocated to Birmingham for a further five weeks.⁴² During this time Roberts used her connections within the YMCA and YWCA to arrange for young Welsh women to be welcomed on arrival. She also liaised with the Welsh chapels in the region and encouraged them to welcome these workers.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ NLW, UCF/259, UCF, 'Memorandum ar y Merched yn y Ffatrioedd', October 1943.

³⁷ NLW, UCF/259, Gwenan Jones, 'Memorandum on Women', 19 May 1943.

³⁸ 'Memorandum ar y Merched yn y Ffatrioedd'.

³⁹ Ibid; 'Minutes of the Second Annual Conference'.

⁴⁰ 'Minutes of the Second Annual Conference'.

⁴¹ Jones, *A Bid for Unity*, p. 26.

⁴² Mai Roberts was a Welsh Nationalist Activist, a former private secretary to the Denbighshire MP, E. T. Johns and was associated with the National Eisteddfod. She was employed by Caernarvonshire County Council. It is unclear whether she left this post to assist the UCF or was allowed some form of secondment.

Based on Roberts' work, it was quickly accepted by the Union that a fulltime Welsh Welfare Officer was required to liaise and assist young women, especially those who were primarily Welsh speakers, to settle into their new environment.⁴³ This was not the first time the subject had been raised. As early as April 1941, the Defence Committee had suggested Welfare Officers to assist male workers but had rejected the proposal due to the costs.⁴⁴ In April 1943, the Women's sub-committee resolved to launch a financial appeal among the religious organisation in Wales, to pay for the proposal. It was believed that if 1,000 churches or chapels donated £1, the project could proceed.⁴⁵ This was clearly an ambitious project but the Union had already demonstrated its ability to undertake bold objectives and succeed.

Ellis maintained regular communication with Welsh MPs, especially Henry Morris-Jones, MP for Denbigh. In September 1943 Ellis wrote to him MP requesting that he raise questions in the House of Commons to clarify the location of what one newspaper called 'Exiled Welsh Girls'.⁴⁶ During the ensuing debate, Ernest Bevin confirmed the steps were being taken to enable women and girls transferred from Wales to keep in touch with Welsh life. This response verified the government's association with UCF and suggested that the Union was going ahead with the employment of a Welfare Officer:

My Department has secured the co-operation of the local Welsh societies and a joint representative of these societies has been specially appointed to act as liaison officer between them and the women and girls transferred from Wales. Wherever possible, the arrangements for contact are initiated by the girls being met on arrival by a representative of the local society. In addition, [Ministry] Welfare Officers at the factories concerned have been asked to pay particular attention to incoming Welsh girls and leaders of workers' clubs have been encouraged to arrange special Welsh evenings and events.⁴⁷

Less than a fortnight later, however, again in response to an enquiry by Morris-Jones, Bevin went further:

⁴³ 'Memorandum ar y Merched yn y Ffatrioedd'.

⁴⁴ 'Minutes of the 15 Meeting of the Executive Committee'.

⁴⁵ 'Memorandum ar y Merched yn y Ffatrioedd'.

⁴⁶ 'Caring for Exiled Welsh Girls', *Western Mail* (15 October 1943), p. 3; NLW, UCF/A17, Henry Morris-Jones letter to T. I. Ellis, 22 September 1943.

⁴⁷ HC Deb, 14 October 1943, vol. 392, cc. 1061-2W, 'Women, Wales (Transferred to Midlands)'.

In the Midlands and other districts where special welfare facilities are required for transferred war workers and are not otherwise available, I am prepared to consider applications for grant-aid from local voluntary organisations, which are in a position to provide such facilities and which are in need of financial assistance for the purpose.⁴⁸

The Union was just such a voluntary organisation in a position to provide such facilities. The financial assistance offered by the Government ensured that the Union could proceed with its Welfare Officer Programme. The offer of government-aid for this purpose, clearly demonstrates the seriousness with which the British Government viewed the need for these women to maintain contact with their compatriots and their Welsh identity. Mackay suggested that the prime consideration during the war was the morale of military personnel and how civilians could sustain it.⁴⁹ However, the Government did not ignore the home front. It was recognised that the enforced long-term separation from family and loved ones was a significant factor in adding to the strain of war.⁵⁰ The full effects of long term separation is still an under investigated area of the conflict.

The welfare of conscripted workers had been a priority of the Ministry of Labour from 1940. The Ministry of Labour established its Welfare Department to address the 'welfare of civilian government workers in all its aspects'.⁵¹ Following the commencement of female conscription, the work of the Welfare Department had received a higher priority, and to allay fears it was announced that 'no girl arrives to take up war work in a strange town friendless or unprotected.'⁵² These Ministry Welfare Officers worked in the best interests of the female workers while in the factories and their living quarters, but they had no specialist knowledge of Wales or the Welsh Nonconformist, Welsh speaking rural traditions.⁵³ For this reason the Ministry of Labour liaised with UCF and supported its initiative to employ a dedicated Special Welsh Welfare Officer for the Midlands Area. Reverend D. Wyre Lewis,

⁴⁸ HC Deb, 26 October 1943, vol. 393, cc. 39-40W, 'Transferred War Workers (Welfare Grants)'.

⁴⁹ Mackay, *Half the Battle*, pp. 97-8.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 98.

⁵¹ 'Scot Girl War Workers: Welfare Without the Red Tape, Labour Ministry's Big Scheme', *Glasgow Herald* (28 November 1941), p. 6.

⁵² *Ibid*.

⁵³ P. H. J. H. Gosden, *Education in the Second World War: A Study in Policy and Administration* (London, 1976), p. 213.

now the Union's Chairman, reported that 'there was little wrong inside the factories,' where the Ministry Welfare Officers supported the women 'but the preparations for the girls following their work hours was very unfortunate.'⁵⁴ From the 1 January 1944, the Union appointed a trained social worker, Mair Rees Jones, as Welfare Officer for the Midlands.⁵⁵ Jones who was tasked to build on the work began by Mai Roberts and continued by the Birmingham Welsh chapels.⁵⁶

The additional government funding for the Welfare Liaison project was welcomed and together with funds being generated back in Wales, allowed the Women's sub-committee to extend its operation. In late 1943, even before Jones took up her post, the Committee resolved to employ a second Welfare Officer. The Union's President confirming that 'We expect contributions to pay for their salaries etc from all the churches and chapels of Wales.'⁵⁷ To fill this second role Emma Williams was appointed and tasked with covering southern England.⁵⁸ In addition to these Welfare Officers and to assist with the religious welfare of the Welsh women, UCF arranged, with the support of the Bishop of St Asaph's, for a Welsh chaplain, Rev. D. Jones-Davies, to relocate to the Midlands for a 'special duty', a position that extended for three years.⁵⁹

By March 1944, the financial appeal for each church to donate £1 was generating results.⁶⁰ A cross-section of Welsh religious institutions added considerable weight to the appeal. These included the 'Archbishop of Wales, the Archbishop of Cardiff, the Welsh Congregational Chapel, Baptist Union of Wales, Presbyterian Church of Wales, the Welsh Assembly of the Methodist Churches, the YMCA in Wales as well as the UCF'.⁶¹ It was reported that 216 individual churches had responded. However, as some 5,000 circulars had

⁵⁴ NLW, UCF/A19, UCF, 'Minutes of the Maelor and Powyd Fadoc Branch', 4 December 1943.

⁵⁵ NLW, UCF/259, 'Minutes of the Sub-Committee of Undeb Cymru Fydd and the Churches', 17 March 1944.

⁵⁶ Jones, *A Bid for Unity*, p. 26.

⁵⁷ 'Minutes of the Maelor and Powyd Fadoc Branch'.

⁵⁸ Jones, *A Bid for Unity*, p. 26.

⁵⁹ Ellis, *The New Wales Union*, p. 3.

⁶⁰ 'Minutes of the Sub-Committee of UCF and the Churches'.

⁶¹ NLW, UCF/259, 'Cyd-Pwyllgor UCF A'r Eglwysi Yng Nghymru: Dros Ferched Cymru letter to the Churches of Wales, February 1944.

been distributed, the number of respondents was relatively still quite low.⁶² In a further attempt to improve the response rate, the Sub-Committee decided to utilise the mass coverage of the press, to 'publicize the work being done in the Midlands' to 'publicize the list of contributors [to the appeal]' in *Baner ac Amserau Cymru, Y Cymro* and the *Western Mail*, also it was decided to 'highlight some of the difficulties these wartime arrangements were also causing non-Welsh speaking women and women not associated with churches and chapels.'⁶³ By March 1945 the joint sub-committee had, raised in total £1,274 from the appeal, well above the £1,000 target.⁶⁴

In total some 750 churches and chapels responded to the appeal and not all of these were located in Wales. Churches and chapels from Birmingham, Manchester, Blackburn London and Liverpool contributed. Of the personal contributors (which by June 1946 had reached the sum of £137), £50 had been received from a single donation from Dr Griffiths Evans, of Caernarfon, who, in 1943, had been president of the North Wales BMA and High Sheriff of the County. While Evans was a chapel elder and lay preacher, there was no evidence of any involvement in any nationalist organisation. Despite the extensive publicity for the appeal, at least half of the personal donations came from a small handful of people, many of whom were already closely associated with the UCF.⁶⁵ Similarly, many of the societies that assisted the appeal already had strong links to the Joint Sub-Committee. UCF Executive Council passed on £90 and the Eisteddfod Committee £70. The largest sum from a single society was received from the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion (Welsh War Relief Fund), which donated £200. This Society had not always been an enthusiastic supporter of the UCF but it clearly felt that this was a worthwhile project.⁶⁶ Despite extensive publicity, this project was primarily sustained financially by the Welsh religious institutions. Even within these organisations, the number who contributed monetarily represented less than 20 percent of those appealed to. Outside of religious denominations support for this project, appears to

⁶² 'Minutes of the Sub-Committee of UCF and the Churches'.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ NLW, UCF/259, Cyd-Pwyllgor UCF a'r Eglwysi, 'Cyfrif Ariannol Hyd 12 March 1945'.

⁶⁵ NLW, UCF/259, Pamphlet 'Sub-committee of Undeb Cymru Fydd and the Churches Report 1943-1946'.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

have been greater among the hierarchy of Welsh cultural movements, rather than among ordinary people.

The cessation of hostilities brought new challenges for the Joint Sub-committee for Welsh Women. By the end of 1945 there were still many Welsh women in the Midlands but as the war factories closed a new problem emerged.⁶⁷ The sub-committee wrote to the Welsh MPs to draw attention to the problem:

At present we understand that large numbers of these conscripted women are becoming redundant as far as war industries are concerned and many of those who were directed to England are taking up civilian employment in England on advice given by the Labour Exchanges.⁶⁸

The concerns that these Welsh women would lose their Welsh culture did not, as expected, decrease with the end of hostilities, in fact, it increased. With Labour Exchanges in England directing Welsh women to seek private employment, it proved much more difficult for organisations in Wales to monitor and assist them. It was also feared that these temporary emigrants from Wales would now become a permanent loss to the country. The Union estimated that some 75 percent of these Welsh women were staying in England.⁶⁹ More worryingly for the sub-committee, 'In the last few weeks hundreds of new women went to look for work in England because of unemployment in their home area.' Fuelling these concerns further, both Mair Jones and Emma Williams reported that factory officials from England were coming to Wales to recruit female workers.⁷⁰ The wartime temporary relocation of Welsh workers was now turning into a peacetime industrial migration. The sub-committee for Welsh women, reinforcing a proposal made by Labour Llanelli MP Jim Griffiths, who argued that, 'Ensuring work in Wales is the only social medicine' that would alleviate this exodus.⁷¹ However, back in Wales priorities were being directed elsewhere.

⁶⁷ NLW, Ffowc Williams Papers (hereafter FFLIAMS) A1982/18, 'Adroddiad Cydbwyllgor UCF A'r Eglwysi 1943-47'.

⁶⁸ NLW, UCF/259, Joint Sub-Committee for Women of Wales letter to Welsh MPs, 21 August 1945.

⁶⁹ NLW, UCF/52, UCF, 'Minutes of the 26 Executive Council Meeting', 3 November 1945.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid; NLW, UCF/98, 'Appendix to Secretaries Report on Meeting with Officials of Welsh Parliamentary Party (in Cardiff on 31 July 1942)', 1 September 1942.

Following the end of the war efforts by local government officials and labour movements to ensure future employment was directed primarily towards men.⁷² During 1945 thousands of women in Wales were laid off from wartime factories. For example 10,000 were made redundant from the Bridgend armament factory alone and while efforts were made to ensure work for men, these women were, in general, expected to go back to their 'proper' place, back in the family home.⁷³ For women who were now located in England, the situation was worse. As even where vacancies existed for female employees in Wales there was no mechanism whereby these women could be informed. The Welsh MPs were asked to exert pressure on the Ministry of Labour.⁷⁴ However, these women were no longer remaining in England under wartime conscription but were exerting their personal preference to remain in employment, meaning that there was little that could be done. Eventually, most did return to Wales.⁷⁵

The establishment of the Joint Sub-Committee for Welsh Women did not stem the tide of young women being re-located from Wales to the factories of England during the war. It did, however, result in many Welsh women and especially Welsh speaking women being met off the trains at their new locations by Welfare Officers who introduced them to other Welsh women, Welsh clubs and Welsh religious organisation in the vicinity. Not only did this initiative help Welsh women maintain contact with their language it also resulted in an increased awareness among the Ministry of Labour Welfare Officers of the specific needs of young Welsh women. However, there was no evidence as to the popularity of these efforts among the women themselves. No doubt this level of care would prove popular among many young women away from home for the first time. It is equally likely that some would have resented the intrusion, especially from women who were not particularly religious.

The approach of UCF to the conscription of women for war work, as with other issues was markedly different from the one taken by the WNP. Initially, both movements called for a cessation of the transfer of war workers from Wales to England.⁷⁶ However, when that was

⁷² Clubb & Tapper, *The Welsh Arsenal*, pp. 308-9.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ 'Joint Sub-Committee for Women letter to MPs'.

⁷⁵ NLW, UCF/52, UCF, 'Minutes of the 30 Executive Council Meeting', 21 September 1946.

⁷⁶ Wynne Samuel, 'Transference Must Stop' 1943, quoted in Davies, *The Welsh Nationalist Party*, p. 233.

clearly not going to occur, the WNP reverted to publishing argumentative and confrontational rhetoric. In 1943, for example, a headline in the party's newspaper bemoaned the fact that, 'Recently over 200 girls left a Welsh town on a slave train to the English Midlands. Conditions on arrival were deplorable'.⁷⁷ By contrast UCF took practical steps to assist these women. It consulted with the British Government, liaised with local organisations and individuals and worked with other institutions to establish practical help. Much of the WNP's propaganda was written by Saunders Lewis. However, he also attempted to import his opinions into UCF, for example, at the height of the concern for the conscription of women, Lewis asked Ellis to raise the following resolution:

That we record our absolute opposition to the conception of man and society which reduces the worker to the level of a chattel which may be requisitioned, removed, hired and used solely at the will of another, whether that other be a person, an industrial undertaking or the state itself. We assert that justice has fled a social order which ceases to have respect for the person, the feelings and the hopes of the worker and his family; and that his enforced removal far from his native soil, and the destruction and dismemberment of his home is an act of tyranny.⁷⁸

This proposal reflected Lewis's long standing objection to the de-humanising effects of modern industrialism, which stem from his beliefs in Catholic political theories, such as distributism (see Chapter 1.) However, at a time of war, these views could also appear provocative to those engaged in or supporting the war effort. This vocabulary was not in keeping with UCF's more moderate collaborative policies and therefore, it was not surprising that this proposal was never presented to the Council by Ellis. It was this censorship of Lewis' more extreme and confrontational views that allowed the Union to harness broader support from across a host of religious institutions, cross-party political membership and numerous official and voluntary organisations. This vetting also demonstrated that the element of racial separatism, still present in the Defence Committee, was not going to be tolerated by UCF.

⁷⁷ 'Welsh Girls Deported to England', *The Welsh Nationalist* (November 1943), p. 2.

⁷⁸ NLW, UCF/A18, Saunders Lewis letter to T. I. Ellis, 25 May 1943.

III: Saving the Language

UCF's second aim was 'To secure for the Welsh language its place as an official language in Wales'. It was within this sphere that, following what Saunders Lewis later called the Union's 'most important campaign', it claimed its first major success.⁷⁹ On 22 October 1942 the Welsh Courts Act received Royal Assent.⁸⁰ This Act changed the legislative status of the Welsh language for the first time since the Acts of Union four hundred years earlier. It meant that defendants and witnesses could testify in courts in Wales in their native tongue. There is still much historiographical confusion around the events that link the Language Petition initiated by the National Union of Welsh Societies, the involvement of the Defence Committee from 1939, UCF and the passing of the Welsh Courts Act in 1942. The National Library of Wales website, for example, credits UCF with beginning the Language Petition campaign in 1938, but neither the Union, nor indeed its predecessor, the 'Defence Committee', were in existence in 1938.⁸¹ Gwynfor Evans, in contrast, argued that the campaign stemmed from a meeting between the Welsh MPs and members of the Defence Committee, held in Cardiff in 1941. However, this assembly was little more than a strategy meeting held three years after the campaign had been initiated.⁸² Given the significance of this Act, it is also surprising that its enactment is given scant reference in general histories of Wales.⁸³ Articles written specifically on the topic by J. Graham Jones and Gwilym Prys Davies barely mention UCF's involvement, even though the former used a large amount of evidence from the Union's archival papers in his research.⁸⁴ Jones does attest to UCF's involvement when discussing the post 1940 increase in momentum, but fails to give it full credit for its work. He argued that 'almost miraculously the organisation sprang back to life

⁷⁹ Saunders Lewis, 'Tynged yr Iaith' in Jones & Thomas, *Presenting Saunders Lewis*, p. 140.

⁸⁰ HC Deb, 22 October 1942, vol. 383, cc. 2179.

⁸¹ See NLW Website, 'The Welsh Language Petition', www.llgc.org.uk/ymgyrchu/laith/Cymlaith/index-e.htm, accessed 16 April 2015.

⁸² G. Evans, *For the Sake of Wales*, p. 56; G. Evans, *The Fight for Welsh Freedom*, p. 143.

⁸³ Johnes, *Wales since 1939* makes 2 references to the Act, Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation*, and A. B. Philip, *The Welsh Question* (Cardiff, 1975) make 1 reference each and no reference is found at all in Davies, *A History of Wales* or Williams, *When Was Wales*; Williams *Who Speaks for Wales*.

⁸⁴ Jones, 'The National Petition'; G. P. Davies, 'The Legal Status of the Welsh Language in the Twentieth Century' in Jenkins & Williams (eds.) *Let's Do Our Best for the Ancient Tongue*, pp. 217-48.

in the wake of a new found readiness by the Welsh MPs to present the petition'.⁸⁵ The reality was that this 'new found readiness' was not miraculous but the result of tireless efforts by UCF and indeed the Defence Committee to push the campaign to a successful conclusion.

The Language Petition Committee was established in 1938, its purpose to campaign for the Welsh language to be permitted in courts in Wales, as has been detailed in Chapter One. From the onset of World War Two this campaign experienced difficulties. Through 1940, for example, the Committee 'found it impossible to ensure the co-operation of the Welsh MPs', which was considered essential to achieve its objective.⁸⁶ Another significant drawback, as war broke out, was that the organisation ran out of money and no further fund raising efforts were instigated. By the end of 1940, the Petition Committee was in debt to the tune of £86.⁸⁷ The financial deficit and the reluctance to raise additional funds, together with the abandonment of the campaign by the Welsh MPs, due to the onset of war, impacted negatively on the campaign. However, the inertia began by the Language Petition Committee was continued by the Defence Committee.

Almost from its inception, the Defence Committee became involved in assisting the Language Petition Committee. In February 1940, for example, less than eight weeks after the Shrewsbury Conference was held, the Language Petition Committee was copying important correspondence to Ellis and there was, even by this early stage, evidence of a combined strategy to harness the support of the WPP. Both movements, for example, attempted to arrange separate delegations to visit senior Welsh MPs in unison so as to apply more pressure on the issue.⁸⁸

Apart from the general inequitable legal status of the language, as shown during the *Penyberth* arson trial in 1936, the Defence Committee was also responding to numerous complaints regarding Conscientious Objector Tribunals. In May 1939, Parliament introduced

⁸⁵ Jones, 'The National Petition'.

⁸⁶ NLW, UCF/A24, R. E. Griffiths, National Language Petition Circular to Local Secretaries, 1 December 1940; See also Chapter One.

⁸⁷ Ibid; NLW, UCF/A24, R. E. Griffiths letter to William George, 27 December 1940.

⁸⁸ NLW, UCF/A3, Dafydd Jenkins letter to T. I. Ellis, 20 February 1940.

military conscription to Britain. Conscientious objectors of this mobilisation were required to attend tribunals, which, being part of the British legal system, were conducted entirely in English.⁸⁹ With almost 100,000 monoglot Welsh speakers at the beginning of the war and many bilingual speakers better able to express themselves in Welsh, many of these objectors felt disadvantaged.⁹⁰ The Government had allowed for Welsh speakers who resided in England to face tribunals back in Wales. This increased their chance of testifying in Welsh. However, as with other testimony this was dependent on the sitting judge.⁹¹ Both the Defence Committee and the WNP received complaints from Welsh speakers that they were unable to plead their case in their native tongue.

To address this issue, the Defence Committee threw its weight behind the now stalled, Language Petition. Ellis liaised with the Petition Committee and concluded that, the collection of signatories to the petition should resume, however, 'when it comes to a question of bringing pressure to bear upon the government or its departments, it is largely through Members of Parliament that action has to be taken'.⁹² Ellis was clearly not deterred by the Language Petition's failure to enthuse the Welsh MPs at the beginning of the war. The Defence Committee had from the beginning maintained a close liaison with the Welsh MPs. However, this relationship experienced 'a definite change of attitude' and improved significantly with the appointment of Henry Morris-Jones as Chairman of the WPP.⁹³ In 1940, Ellis managed to harness the support of 30 Welsh MPs for this Welsh language petition.⁹⁴ In early 1941, less than a year from the Defence Committee's involvement, the Labour MP, William John informed Ellis, that the Welsh MPs were ready to present the petition. This notification, from John came to the Defence Committee before the Language Petition Committee was notified, which verifies the closer relationship Ellis enjoyed with the

⁸⁹ Davies, *A History of Wales* (2007), p. 582.

⁹⁰ D. Hopkin, 'Social Reactions to Economic Change' in T. Herbert & G. E. Jones (eds.) *Wales Between The Wars* (Cardiff, 1988), p. 53.

⁹¹ NLW, UCF/A3, J. E. Jones letter to T. I. Ellis, 15 March 1941; NLW, UCF/A3, Plaid Cymru, 'Report on Welsh Applicant in England'.

⁹² Ellis, *New Wales Union*, p. 4.

⁹³ 'Secretaries Report for the Year July 1941 – August 1942'; NLW, UCF/A24, William John letter to T. I. Ellis, 21 March 1941.

⁹⁴ Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation*, p. 270; NLW Website, 'The Welsh Language Petition'.

Welsh MPs over the Petition Committee. Similarly, corroborating the close working relationship between the Defence Committee and the Language Petition, John's communiqué was discussed at the next Petition Committee meeting and its response despatched to the MP prior to John making direct contact.⁹⁵ The development of these close working relationships, with both MPs and other organisations, reveals one of Ellis' strongest attributes. Through these relationships the Defence Committee obtained information, harnessed external support and brought pressure to bear in the name of Welsh interests and the Welsh language. By the end of 1940, this support led, unofficially at least, to the Defence Committee taking the lead in the campaign to use the Welsh language in courts.

In the spring of 1941, responsibility for the language petition officially changed. This stemmed from confusion that arose when, a month after John's letter, the *Western Mail* reported that the WPP were 'against adopting this course at a time when the Prime Minister is so heavily preoccupied with the war.'⁹⁶ It was Ellis, on behalf of the Defence Committee and not the Petition Committee, who wrote to John for clarification of the situation.⁹⁷ The increasing involvement of the Defence Committee, and especially Ellis, in the project led to the conclusion, by the Petition Committee, that it was the former who was best placed to maintain the momentum of the venture. Therefore, on the 24 May 1941, the Petition Committee formally transferred responsibility for the language petition to the Defence Committee.⁹⁸ The historian Davies notes the impact of this: 'In Wales, however, the campaign shifted into top gear. It was taken over by UCF, which felt deep anxiety about the risks and dangers which the war posed for the language.'⁹⁹ The transfer of responsibility led to immediate results. Within two months printed copies of the Petition were on route to

⁹⁵ NLW, UCF/A24, Dafydd Jenkins letter to William John, 22 April 1941.

⁹⁶ NLW UCF/A1, William John letter to T. I. Ellis, 22 April 1941; 'Minutes of the 15 Executive Committee Meeting'; 'Commons Subdued, but Confident', *Western Mail* (10 April 1941), p. 4.

⁹⁷ William John was the Labour Member of Parliament for Rhondda West from 1920 until 1950. He would go on to fulfil the role of Government Whip between 1942 and 1945.

⁹⁸ Ellis, *Undeb Cymru Fydd* (1943), p. 6; UCF, 'Secretaries Report for the Year July 1941 – August 1942'; NLW, UCF/A13, T. I. Ellis letter to Dora Williams, 14 August 1941; NLW, UCF/A24, Secretary of Petition Committee letter to E. Ernest Hughes, 26 May 1941.

⁹⁹ Davies, 'The Legal Status of the Welsh' p. 230.

London. Copies were distributed to the press in both English and Welsh language.¹⁰⁰ By the end of the month the Liberal (and later Labour) Party backed *Reynolds News*, published an article with a photograph of the Welsh MPs standing outside the House of Commons with the chest containing 400,000 signed forms, over double the number that had been signed by August 1939.¹⁰¹ The significance of the size of this petition cannot be over stated. This number of signatures represented about 15 percent of Wales' 2.4 million wartime population. The signing of the petition in such high numbers across Wales, despite the struggles of wartime, demonstrates the significance still placed on language issues.

Less than a year later there were signs that the Government was listening. P. Beresford Ellis argued that the idea of the Welsh language in court petition 'was met with scorn by [English] Members of Parliament.'¹⁰² However, in April 1942, the Home Secretary, Herbert Morrison, responding to an enquiry from the Carmarthen MP, Maelwyn Hughes, announced that 'A Welsh witness should not be made to pay for speaking in his own language'.¹⁰³ He stated that 'if a witness is more at home in the Welsh language no obstacle should be put in the way of the use of this language'.¹⁰⁴ Morrison used his influence to push through the new legislation. By October of that year the Welsh Language Act was passed into law and began:

An Act ... to remove doubt as to the right of Welsh speaking persons to testify in the Welsh language in courts of justice in Wales, and to enable rules to be made for the administration of oaths and affirmations in that language, and for the provision, employment, and payment, of interpreters in such courts.¹⁰⁵

The Act allowed monoglot Welsh speakers to give Welsh testimony in a court in Wales, without paying for the privilege. In doing so, according to the *Manchester Guardian*, it

¹⁰⁰ NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to the Editor of *Y Cymro*, 29 July 1941; NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to T. Lloyd, 29 July 1941.

¹⁰¹ NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to D. Raymond Jenkins 29 July 1941; *Reynolds News*, of which Jenkins was editor, was a Sunday weekly newspaper which, by the war, promoted Labour Party views. While several contemporary reports list 400,000 signatories, historians have subsequently revised this down to 360,000.

¹⁰² P. B. Ellis, *Wales - A Nation Again*, p. 110.

¹⁰³ 'Carmarthen M.P. Receives Important Letter from Mr. Herbert Morrison', *Carmarthen Journal* (17 April 1942), p. 1.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ The Welsh Court Act, 1942 (London, HMSO, 1942), p. 1.

removed a 400 year old injustice, which was, in its view, 'a step in the right direction'.¹⁰⁶ First-language Welsh speakers, who could speak English as their second language, were however, still compelled to give evidence in English.¹⁰⁷ This was not the equal status for the Welsh language many had hoped for and led to criticism in Wales of what Gwynfor Evans, termed 'This feeble Act'.¹⁰⁸ UCF, while confirming that 'Welsh speakers now had the opportunity to take full advantage of the Act', concluded that it 'did not feel satisfied at all' and it and some of the Welsh press felt that a more robust Act would follow.¹⁰⁹ The WNP published its criticism in a pamphlet which spoke of betrayal and which according to Jones, 'was given wide currency'.¹¹⁰ However, for all its shortcomings, this was a major landmark in the history of the Welsh language and a reversal in the traditional 'language politics' of England and Wales. From this point, the Welsh language slowly began gain state recognition and other language Acts would follow.¹¹¹

Unfortunately, Welsh men and women sometimes still had to fight to obtain the concessions granted within the Act. In 1943, for example, during a case at held at Llandudno, a Welsh speaker was refused the right to speak Welsh.¹¹² This incident was brought to the attention of Herbert Morrison. Morrison immediately clarified the situation:

I am advised that Section 1 of the Welsh Court Act 1942, gives an absolute right to any party or witness to use the Welsh language in any court in Wales, if he considers that he would otherwise be at any disadvantage by reason of his natural language of communication being Welsh, and that a court has no discretion in the matter.¹¹³

The significance of this statement was that it confirmed that the onus of deciding which language a person used in a court in Wales was left to the person himself and not the sitting

¹⁰⁶ 'Use of Welsh Language: Removing 400 Year Old Injustice', *Manchester Guardian* (15 October 1942), p. 6.

¹⁰⁷ G. Evans, *The Fight For Welsh Freedom*, p. 143.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ 'Minutes of the Second Annual Conference'; R. Smith, 'Journalism and Welsh Language' in Jenkins & Williams (eds.) *Let's do our Best for the Ancient Tongue*, p. 289.

¹¹⁰ R. E. Jones, *Bradychwyd y Ddeiseb* (Caernarfon, 1942); Jones, 'The National Petition' p, 122.

¹¹¹ J. Callaghan, *Time and Chance* (London, 2006), p. 42.

¹¹² HC Deb, 24 September 1943, vol. 392, cc. 558-9W, 'Court Proceedings (Welsh Language)'.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

judge or any other person. This statement removed many of the grounds of discontent with the Act. However, this clarification has often been overlooked by politicians, including Gwynfor Evans as well as by Welsh historians, who even by the end of the century inaccurately maintained the position that the Act 'permitted witnesses to give evidence ... provided they swore on oath that using English would place them under a disadvantage'.¹¹⁴

IV: Welsh Education

The third aim of UCF was that Welsh education should be founded on Welsh life and traditions. This included the teaching of the Welsh language; the availability of other subjects through the medium of Welsh, especially in predominantly Welsh speaking areas, and the teaching of Welsh history, geography and heritage in Welsh curriculum. These topics were considered vital for Welsh children to understand the country they lived in. In 1941, in an attempt to establish the status of the teaching of Welsh, and about Wales, in schools, the Defence Committee wrote to every head teacher of County Schools in Wales.¹¹⁵ Each head teacher was asked to complete a questionnaire which reflected these issues.¹¹⁶ This questionnaire was significant, not only because of the organisation logistics and time required to analyse its responses. This questionnaire, like others used by Ellis, was a forerunner to a much larger national survey that would be used to ascertain how much Wales had been affected by the war.¹¹⁷

The head teacher's questionnaire was not the only enquiry being made. Concurrent with the head teacher survey, each LEA in Wales and every UCF branch were contacted by Ellis and asked to supply information on education in their areas. Education Authorities were asked to comment on the availability of Welsh books and teachers.¹¹⁸ UCF branches were also

¹¹⁴ J. G. Jones, 'The Attitude of Political Parties Towards the Welsh Language' in Jenkins & Williams (eds.) *Let's do our Best for the Ancient Tongue*, pp 261-2; G. Evans, *The Fight for Welsh Freedom*, p. 143.

¹¹⁵ NLW, UCF/A21, 'At Brifathrawon yr Ysgolion Sir Yng Nghymru: Y Gymraeg Yn Yr Ysgolion Canolradd', January 1941.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ See Chapter Four.

¹¹⁸ NLW UCF/A18, W. E. Williams, 'Awdurdod Addysg Sir Ddinbych', 14 October 1941.

asked to complete a questionnaire; this one mirroring the questions circulated to head teachers.¹¹⁹ It was difficult to draw conclusions from the responses of the Education Authorities as most have not survived (or may not have responded). However, it was clear that even in predominantly Welsh speaking areas, there was a shortage of Welsh educational books. In Denbighshire, for example, the County Library, housed 716 English language books compared to the 400 Welsh language equivalents.¹²⁰ This linguistic imbalance in library books was the result of the far greater number of books published in English, compared to Welsh. These research initiatives assisted the Union in formulating a strategy to improve Welsh teaching and teaching about Wales. One of the weaknesses of both these surveys was that, like much of the Union's material, they were printed and distributed in Welsh. Consequently, the questionnaires were completed by Welsh speakers, who were therefore more likely to be sympathetic to the furtherance of the language. Therefore, despite initially appearing to be a comprehensive enquiry the results of these questionnaires originated from like-minded members of the Welsh speaking population.

During the war pressure was building throughout Britain for a new Education Act. As with other exclusively domestic issues, however, Churchill was reluctant to discuss education as, in his opinion, it detracted people's attention away from the primary objective of winning the war. In 1941 Churchill communicated this view to R. A. Butler, the President of the Board of Education, 'It would be the greatest mistake to raise the 1902 controversy during the war, and I certainly cannot contemplate a new Education Bill ... we cannot have any party politics in wartime'.¹²¹

Despite this reluctance of Churchill, it was from Butler that support for Welsh education came. In an address to the Central Welsh Board, in Abergele, he encouraged Welsh local authorities to redouble their activities on behalf of the Welsh language. These comments were subsequently formalised with *Circular 182: 'The Teaching of Welsh'*, which was

¹¹⁹ NLW, UCF/A3, 'Circular to Local Committees', n.d.

¹²⁰ 'Awdurdod Addysg Sir Ddinbych'.

¹²¹ TNA, PREM 4/11/6, Winston Churchill letter to R. A. Butler, 13 September 1941; Churchill was referring to Balfour's 1902 Education Act, which caused significant and heated debates between the political parties. A. Rogers, 'Churches and Children: A Study in the Controversy Over the 1902 Education Act', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 8:1 (November, 1959), p. 29.

distributed to every council in Wales in October 1942.¹²² This circular ‘insisted that each Education Authority draw up plans to promote the teaching of Welsh in their schools and called upon them to discuss their plans with teachers’ unions and other relevant bodies.’¹²³ Morgan argued that this circular was particularly significant ‘because it meant that the whole of Wales was obliged to discuss how to improve the status of Welsh and the teaching of Welsh in 1943, at precisely the same time as the Government was preparing the Education Bill that became the Education Act of 1944.’¹²⁴ The significance of this for UCF was that it considered itself to be a ‘relevant body’, as mentioned in the circular. This circular contained official recognition of views that the Union had been promoting since its inception.

On face value, Butler appeared an unlikely source as a catalyst for Welsh language education. Born in India, educated at Marlborough and Cambridge University he had no obvious connection with Wales. His concerns for the Welsh language, however, grew from the disappearance of another endangered language, which he later explained:

I took a particular initiative in Circular 182 upon the subject of the extension of the teaching of the Welsh language. I took a personal interest in that matter because I had been sorry to see my own native Cornish tongue destroyed and forgotten during the last 100 years ... I was determined to see that the Welsh language did not also disappear from our midst.¹²⁵

The President of the Board of Education was clearly a powerful friend to Wales and his determination to ensure the preservation of the Welsh language was strong enough that he was willing to disobey an instruction from the Prime Minister and promote new educational policies.¹²⁶

¹²² W. Wheldon and B. B. Thomas, ‘The Welsh Department, Ministry of Education, 1907-1957’, *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* (1957), 18-36.

¹²³ I. Morgan, ‘Early Days’ in I. W. Williams (ed.), *Our Children’s Language: the Welsh Medium Schools of Wales 1939-2000* (Talybont, 2003), p. 27.

¹²⁴ Ibid; W. G. Lewis, ‘Cymru/Wales: Towards A National Strategy’ in P. Mehisto & F. Genesee (eds.) *Building Bilingual Education Systems: Forces, Mechanisms and Counterweights* (Cambridge, 2015), p. 154.

¹²⁵ HC Deb, 26 January 1948, vol. 446, cc. 677-786, ‘Welsh Affairs’.

¹²⁶ For more information on R. A. Butler see A. Howard, *RAB: The Life of R. A. Butler* (London, 1987).

Further support for the teaching of the Welsh language was given by the 1943 Norwood Report, which argued that in Wales:

The Welsh speaking pupil must be given ample opportunity to study his own language and its literature; and the English speaking pupil must be given an opportunity to acquire a knowledge of Welsh. Furthermore, both types of pupils, before they leave the school should know about the history and traditions of Wales; but [this Report] regrets that the policy and practice of Educational Authorities in Wales falls far short of this ideal.¹²⁷

Over the next two years UCF, at every level, arranged regular meetings on the developments on Welsh language education. Public meetings were arranged by local branches in every part of Wales, as were meetings with all the Welsh LEAs.¹²⁸ These meetings discussed Circular 182, the White Paper on Education, entitled 'Educational Reconstruction', as well as the 1943 Norwood Committee Report and the 1944 McNair Committee Report.¹²⁹ One such meeting was held in Cardiff, where the East Glamorgan branch called a 'special' meeting to encourage the Education Authorities to implement teaching Welsh in schools and the teaching of Welsh History and Geography as recommended by the Circular.¹³⁰ Similar meetings were organised in Cardigan and Bangor.¹³¹ Meetings too were arranged with the County Council Education Committees, such as Ellis' meeting with Carmarthenshire Education Committee, in December 1943.¹³² The result of these meetings was a memorandum on the Education Bill, which UCF submitted to the Board of Education, through the WPP, in early 1944.¹³³ In general, the

¹²⁷ Board of Education, *Curriculum and Examination in Secondary Schools: Report of the Committee of the Secondary School Examination Council Appointed by the President of the Board of Education in 1941* (The Norwood Report), (London, HMSO, 1943), p. 136.

¹²⁸ NLW, UCF/127, UCF, 'Circular to Branch Secretaries', 26 August 1943.

¹²⁹ Board of Education, *White Paper: Education Reconstruction* (London, HMSO, 1943); *The Norwood Report; Teachers and Youth Leaders: Report of the Committee Appointed by the President of the Board of Education to Consider the Supply, Recruitment and Training of Teachers and Youth Leaders* (The McNair Report), (London, HMSO, 1944).

¹³⁰ NLW, UCF/A23, UCF, 'Adran Dwyrain Morgannwg Cyfarfod Arbenning', November 1943.

¹³¹ 'Minutes of the Second Annual Conference'.

¹³² Ellis, *New Wales Union*, pp. 6-7; NLW, UCF/A19, Georgina Parkinson letter to T. I. Ellis, 17 October 1943.

¹³³ 'Welsh M.P.s: Education Bill Amendments', *Liverpool Daily Post* (10 February 1944), p. 2.

memorandum supported the proposals for the new act, however attached to the memorandum were submissions for 15 amendments.¹³⁴ The result was publicised in the press, 'Amendments to the Education Bill are to be drafted, on behalf of the WPP ... Mr T. I. Ellis, secretary of the New Wales Union [UCF] attended, and discussed with the [WPP] party the provisions of the Bill in relation to Wales.'¹³⁵ Once again UCF's strong links with the Welsh MPs was evident.

UCF was not the only organisation campaigning to improve the status of the Welsh language in schools. At the same time the University of Wales' Guild of Graduates, for example, appointed its own committee 'to enquire into the position of the Welsh language in Secondary Schools' and while there was no direct evidence of communication between Guild of Graduates' sub-committees and that of UCF, it was likely, given Ellis' close ties with the Guild (an organisation he would become Warden of from 1943), that some form of contact existed.¹³⁶ The Guild of Graduates, like UCF, warmly welcomed the emphatic declaration contained in the 1943 Norwood Report and proposed 'writing to the University [of Wales] and [Welsh] Examining Boards, which do not at present include Welsh as a subject ... to the effect that it be included in the list of Modern Languages which may be offered'.¹³⁷ The Guild also contacted Welsh LEAs, however, a year later, only four authorities had replied to their enquiry.¹³⁸ This poor response to the Guild, suggests that by the second half of the war, UCF, which regularly generated a greater response from the same local authorities, was held in higher esteem by local government departments. Such esteem may derive from the Union being a more active organisation during the war or from the support local authorities had expressed for the Defence Committee in 1939. However, it was also possible that the Union received more prompt replies from the local authorities, because they were ware of Ellis's persistence in pursued them.

¹³⁴ NLW, UCF/103, UCF, 'Education Bill 1943: Memorandum', 1 February 1944; UCF, 'Education Bill: Submission for Amendments', 1 February 1944.

¹³⁵ 'Welsh M.P.s: Education Bill Amendments'.

¹³⁶ NLW, UNIVWALESG1/3, Guild of Graduates, 'Minutes of 49 Ordinary Annual Meeting', 24 July 1943.

¹³⁷ NLW, UNIVWALESG1/3, Guild of Graduates, 'Minutes of 50 Ordinary Annual Meeting', 22 July 1944.

¹³⁸ NLW, UNIVWALESG1/3, Guild of Graduates, 'Minutes of 51 Ordinary Annual Meeting', 21 July 1945.

The prominence of UCF also impacted on the WNP. Reinforcing UCF's status as the primary Welsh pressure group during the war, some Welsh Nationalists preferred to work through the Union than through their own party. For example, while working as a Latin master at his home town school of Porth in the Rhondda Valley, the poet, pacifist and Welsh Nationalist activist, J. Gwyn Griffiths prepared a report on Welsh language teaching in the area. It was significant that Griffiths chose to submit this report, entitled 'Education in Rhondda' via UCF and not the WNP. There was no doubting Griffiths' strong nationalist belief, as he would go on to edit *Y Ddraig Goch* for four years and stand for election under the Welsh Nationalists banner in two General Elections.¹³⁹ In 1943, however, Griffiths clearly felt that UCF was better placed to pursue his language goals.

Evidence suggests that the efforts of UCF and other institutions to increase the amount of Welsh taught in schools in Wales was, by the mid-1940s, making progress. As Janet Davies has suggested, by this time Welsh had become the main medium of primary school education in areas that were predominantly Welsh speaking, a significant improvement on the inter-war years. The policy in the more Anglicised areas, varied according to each LEA.¹⁴⁰ In the secondary schools of Wales, Welsh was available as a second language subject in almost every school. However, very few other subjects were taught through the Welsh medium.¹⁴¹

On the 3 August 1944, the Education Act, which according to one MP at the time 'gathers up the dreams of all educational reformists' received Royal assent and changed the education system in Britain.¹⁴² The Act abolished the Board of Education and replaced it with the

¹³⁹ Morgan, 'Early Days', p. 28; J. Davies, N. Jenkins, M. Baines and P. Lynch, *The Welsh Academy Encyclopaedia of Wales* (Cardiff, 2008), pp. 337-8; After the war, Griffiths by this time employed as lecturer at University College Swansea, edited *Y Ddraig Goch* for four years and also stood for the Welsh Nationalist Party in two General Elections but failed to get elected.

¹⁴⁰ Davies, *The Welsh Language: A History*, p. 124.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² HC Deb, 19 January 1944, vol. 396, cc. 245, 'Education Bill'; The 1944 Education Act was well supported by most MPs during its reading through Parliament however, this Act led to the only parliamentary defeat that Churchill's coalition government suffered throughout the war, when Conservative MP, Thelma Cazalet Kier, proposed an amendment relating to equal pay for female teachers. The Government opposed the motion on the grounds of cost and were defeated by one vote.

Ministry of Education, it raised the school leaving age to 15, and most significantly provided free secondary education to all pupils.¹⁴³ Chan and East have suggested that the 'Act recognised the importance of education for economic advancement and social welfare'.¹⁴⁴ One component of the social welfare element of the Act that UCF was particularly content with, was the instruction to all schools that the 'school day in every county school and in every voluntary school shall begin with collective worship on the part of all pupils in attendance at the school.'¹⁴⁵ These morning services were to be non-denominational but generally Christian in their format. Ellis confirmed the Union's view 'We are convinced that Christian Education is suited to Wales, and we welcome the section of the Education Bill which ensures that'.¹⁴⁶ However, the most significant element of this Act, from a Welsh language standpoint, was that for the first time it enabled LEAs to provide Welsh-medium schools.

The opportunity to establish schools dedicated to Welsh medium education was a major step forward in the history of the Welsh language and one that UCF had played a significant role in. Now, with the new provision in place, the Union was not about to rest on its laurels. Unwilling to wait for LEAs to act on the introducing of Welsh medium schools, the Union resolved to take matters into its own hands. UCF was, of course, aware of the success of the *Urdd's* private Welsh School, established in Aberystwyth in 1939, and for a time proposed to emulate this. In January 1945, Ellis wrote to each branch committee to encourage them to consider the possibility of establishing a Welsh school in their area.¹⁴⁷ Although Ellis reported that the request met with a ready response, progress was slow. Some two years later the matter was raised again, 'We urge our members to consider this question [of opening a Welsh medium school] in those places where there are a significant number of

¹⁴³ There is a wealth of information on the significance of the 1944 Education Act, see for example M. Barber, *The Making of the 1944 Education Act* (London, 1994); B. Simon, *Education and the Social Order* (London, 1991); K. Jones, *Education in Britain 1944 to the Present* (Oxford, 2003); K. Jeffereys, 'R. A. Butler, the Board of Education and the 1944 Education Act', *History*, 69:227 (1984), 415–31.

¹⁴⁴ S. Chan & P. East, *A Recent History of Primary and Secondary Education in England, Part 1: 1944-1985* (London, 10th edn, 2004), p. 8.

¹⁴⁵ The Education Act 1944 (London, HMSO, 1944), p. 20.

¹⁴⁶ NLW, UCF/127, UCF, 'Circular to UCF Local Secretaries', 20 January 1944.

¹⁴⁷ NLW, UCF/127, UCF, 'Circular to Local Secretaries', January 1945.

parents who feel that their children will benefit from attending a Welsh school.’¹⁴⁸ Demonstrating a degree of autonomy, many local branches, instead of promoting the establishment of their own Welsh medium schools, pressed their respective LEA to do so. This approach brought more rapid results and by the summer of 1946, Ellis reported that two branches had been working with their LEAs on the establishment of a Welsh medium school, although neither was named.¹⁴⁹ Others branches too followed this course and when the first public Welsh school opened in Llanelli in 1947, Ellis confirmed that ‘our branches reports activities in this direction in Carmarthen, Cardiff, Colwyn Bay, Llandudno, Rhondda, Port Talbot and Maesteg.’ In what appears to demonstrate the Union’s successful negotiation with several local councils, Ellis concluded that ‘the Union may justly claim no little credit for this activity’.¹⁵⁰

The desire to establish Welsh medium education in Wales had been an ambition for many Welsh activists and organisations long before World War Two. The first Welsh medium school was opened under the auspices of the *Urdd* in September 1939, three months prior to the Shrewsbury Conference that founded the Defence Committee. However, it was during the war that, entwined with the wider growing pressure on the Education Minister to reform the education system, UCF was able to generate a momentum to amend the education system in Wales. The Defence Committee and UCF were not the only organisations campaigning to establish Welsh medium education and a greater number of Welsh language courses in the curriculum. The WNP, the Union of Welsh Teachers and the *Urdd* are just a few of the others. However, UCF undertook such a comprehensive campaign that informed and motivated the public through general meetings held across Wales, liaised with, and worked, with other organisations to co-ordinate their approaches and, from its branches to the Executive Committee, brought pressure to bear on local and central government authorities. This pressure coincided with the Government’s preparation of the 1944 Education Act, an Act which facilitated the establishment of Welsh medium schools. By 1947 the first of a host of such schools opened in Wales and as Catrin Redknap has argued that ‘The development of Welsh-medium education in Wales since the 1950s has been

¹⁴⁸ NLW, UCF/127, UCF, ‘Circular to Local Secretaries’, 28 August 1947.

¹⁴⁹ NLW, UCF/239, UCF, ‘Adroddiad Yr Ysgrifennydd am y Flwyddyn Awst 1945/Gorfennaf 1946.

¹⁵⁰ Ellis, *New Wales Union*, pp. 6-7.

astonishing'.¹⁵¹ However, this development began during World War Two and was facilitated by the 1944 Education Act. The organisation that led the campaign to influence this Act, as with other wartime campaigns, was UCF. This was not the Union's only campaign to increase Welsh language education.¹⁵²

V: Welsh Societies

The fourth of UCF's aims was to stimulate and unite Welsh societies.¹⁵³ The lack of any major, nationally orchestrated, activity within this sphere, between 1941 and 1943, suggests that this goal held the lowest priority. However, the absence of a significant campaign by the Union does not equate to a deficiency of endeavours. Events in South Wales in early 1941 brought a new threat to Welsh youth organisations of the region, and a new challenge to UCF, as Cardiff, Swansea and Pembroke suffered the full impact of the air war.

On 4 September 1940, Adolf Hitler vowed to 'exterminate British cities' and three days later the 'Blitz' of Britain began.¹⁵⁴ Following 57 consecutive nights of attack on London, other cities were targeted, including those in South Wales.¹⁵⁵ Firstly, Cardiff was attacked on 2 January, 1941 causing 150 fatalities and injuring a further 427.¹⁵⁶ Six weeks later, Swansea endured the 'Three Nights Blitz', which resulted in 230 people being killed and over 400

¹⁵¹ C. Redknapp, W. G. Lewis, S. R. Williams and J. Laugharne, *Welsh Medium and Bilingual Education* (Bangor, 2006), p. 4.

¹⁵² More on this in Chapter 5.

¹⁵³ Ellis, *New Wales Union*, p. 3.

¹⁵⁴ D. Wood and D. Dempster, *The Narrow Margin: The Battle of Britain and the Rise of Air Power, 1930-1940* (London, 1961), p. 116; G. Wright, *The Ordeal of Total War, 1939-1945* (London 1968), p. 31.

¹⁵⁵ S. Bungay, *The Most Dangerous Enemy: A History of the Battle of Britain* (London, 2000), p. 313; There are many publications on the air war over Britain during the early part of the war; for a more detailed account of the Battle of Britain see R. Overy, *The Battle of Britain: Myth and Reality* (London, 2004); J. Gardiner, *The Blitz: The British Under Attack* (London, 2011); C. Goss, *The Luftwaffe's Blitz: The Inside Story November 1940 – May 1941* (Manchester, 2010); E. R. Hooton, *The Luftwaffe: A Study in Air Power, 1933-1945* (London, 2010).

¹⁵⁶ NLW, UCF/A3, W. J. Gruffydd letter to T. I. Ellis, 7 January 1941.

injured. This raid left much of the centre of Swansea destroyed or severely damaged.¹⁵⁷ In total, the air war claimed 985 lives in Wales with the most significant regional numbers being from the bombings of Swansea and Cardiff.¹⁵⁸ However, it was the plight of the children of Cardiff and Swansea that came to the attention of the Defence Committee, just as it was in the process of merging into UCF.

As early as February 1939, Saunders Lewis and the WNP had objected to the 'neutral' status of the South Wales coastal belt, in the Government's evacuation scheme. The party argued that due to the industrial make-up and number of ports in the area, it would attract German military attention and therefore children and vulnerable people should be evacuated to more rural areas.¹⁵⁹ The party even suggested that English evacuees in the safer parts of Wales should be re-evacuated to accommodate these Welsh children.¹⁶⁰ In 1940, the Defence Committee emulated the WNP's stance:

One of the chief points we are now concerned with is the possibility of persuading the Authorities to recognise certain parts of South Wales ... as evacuation area. We feel that it would be far better to transfer children from these areas into Welsh Wales, and to re-evacuate into reception areas in England the children who are now in the Welsh rural areas.¹⁶¹

Following the attacks of Cardiff and Swansea the issue became more urgent. The Defence Committee again resolved to pressure the Government into designating the 'dangerous areas of South Wales Evacuation Areas'. It also reiterated the argument that the evacuation should be to safer areas of Wales (and not to England) and that English evacuees already in

¹⁵⁷ 'Swansea Again: Severe Damage in Town's Third Night Ordeal', *South Wales Evening Post* (22 February 1941), p. 1; For a more detailed account of the three Night Blitz see, D. Roberts, *Swansea's Burning: Remembering the Three Nights' Blitz* (Neath, 2011); Alban, *The Three Nights Blitz*. For a more general account of Swansea during the conflict see Bowler, *Swansea At War*, and for a more personal account of the Blitz and of the war from children's perspectives see, Owen, *Swansea's Frontline Kids*. For an account of the longer term impact and bombing and reconstruction of Swansea see D. Evans, 'The Dynamics of Labour Party Politics in Swansea 1941-1964', Unpublished PhD thesis, Bangor University, 2007.

¹⁵⁸ Johnes, *Wales Since 1939*, p.17, quotes 1 less at 984.

¹⁵⁹ Saunders Lewis, 'Memorandum on the War-Time Evacuation Policy of the Government', *Welsh Nationalist* (February 1939), p. 3.

¹⁶⁰ *Y Ddraig Coch*, September 1940.

¹⁶¹ NLW, UCF/A2 T. I. Ellis letter to D. Raymond Jenkins, 31 July 1940.

South Wales should be moved back to England.¹⁶² The view to re-evacuate children who had already undergone the emotional distress of one evacuation appears radical to the UCF usual standards. This may arise out of the strength of concern for children in these Welsh urban areas or that UCF was required to develop a policy quickly and therefore imitated that of the WNP. Despite the reasons, the similarity of the Union's policy to that of the WNP brought difficulties, 'We are inclined to believe that some local authorities in South Wales look with disfavour upon suggestions to remove children to safer areas in Wales just because it happens to have been sponsored by the WNP'.¹⁶³ UCF was now in danger of being ostracised by Welsh officialdom. It was noteworthy that the Union concluded that the South Wales authorities objected to its policy due to its similarity to that of the WNP and not for any other reasons.

Responsibility for changing the evacuation status of an area rested ultimately with the Ministry of Health. However, it was governed by the local Board of Education. In April, following a meeting of head teachers at Swansea's Guildhall, the Swansea Education Committee recommended to the Borough Council that the area be re-designated an Evacuation Area, a recommendation the Council immediately approved. However, this new development raised new concerns for the cultural welfare of the children.

In April 1941, the South Wales coastal strip was re-designated an Evacuation Area.¹⁶⁴ With this decision, the issue of where to send the children came to the fore. Despite earlier assurances from the Minister of Health that any evacuation from South Wales would be to other parts of Wales, rumours arose that contradicted this.¹⁶⁵ Even before Swansea suffered its Blitz, there were reports that the children of Cardiff were to be moved to Gloucester.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶² 'Minutes of the 15 Meeting of the Executive Committee'.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ K. Millien, pers. comm. (email), Archivist and Education Officer, West Glamorgan Archives 6 April 2016; 'Swansea Evacuation Recommended', *Western Mail* (8 April 1941), p. 5; '7,000 City Children City Children May be Evacuated', *Western Mail* (6 May 1941), p. 3.

¹⁶⁵ NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to Wynne Samuel, 8 April 1941; Ernest Brown M.P. was Leader of the Liberal National Party from 1940 to 1945 and served in Churchill's coalition Government as Secretary of State for Scotland from May 1940 to February 1941, but more significantly, from 8 February 1941 served as Minister of Health, the Ministry responsible for the evacuation of civilians.

¹⁶⁶ NLW, UCF/A3, J. E. Jones letter to T. I. Ellis, 18 February 1941.

Following the attack on Swansea, these rumours changed and Ellis was advised by local members of UCF that, if initial proposals went ahead, the children of South Wales were to be evacuated to Scotland.¹⁶⁷ UCF was outraged. Ellis wrote to the Union's local representative in Llanelli, informing her of the rumours and asking her to find out what exactly was happening in relation to the proposed destination for these Welsh children.¹⁶⁸

Ellis also attempted to harness support from Parliament but this time achieved little success. Attempts to arrange another delegation to see the Minister of Health was less successful than the previous year, as one MP reported 'it is difficult to get Ministers to receive delegations these days'.¹⁶⁹ Ellis' attempt to contact the Welsh MPs, on this occasion, was no more successful. He reported to the Executive, 'We are concerned that the Welsh Members of Parliament have refused to do anything to try to improve the organisation of evacuees in Wales'.¹⁷⁰ To increase pressure on these MPs the Executive Committee resolved to publish in the press copies of the two letters sent by Ellis to William John, together with the Committee's policy, to keep these Welsh children in Wales.¹⁷¹ Local Swansea MPs were especially criticised by the Union. David Mort, MP for Swansea East and Lewis Jones, MP for Swansea West, were silent on the evacuation. Both men were raised in the Swansea locality and as Jones was a native Welsh speaker it was felt, he was especially likely to understand the benefits of keeping children within their cultural homeland.¹⁷² The reason for the lack of response from the Welsh MPs is unknown. It was possible that they were pre-occupied with other matters at the time or that they did not agree with the Union's position. It was also possible that these MPs like other members of the authorities, felt that the safety of the children was the main priority and ensuring an evacuation was more important than the location chosen.

¹⁶⁷ NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to Wynne Samuel, 8 April 1941.

¹⁶⁸ NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to R. Davies, 9 April 1941.

¹⁶⁹ NLW, UCF/A3, Clement Davies letter to T. I. Ellis, 20 February 1941.

¹⁷⁰ 'Minutes of 15 Meeting of Executive Committee'.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² For more information on Jones see NLW website, DWB, 'Jones, Lewis' <http://wbo.llgc.org.uk/en/s2-JONE-LEW-1884.html>, accessed 7 April 2016. For more information on Mort, see K. Gildart 'Mort, David Llewellyn', in K. Gildart & D. Howell (eds.), *Dictionary of Labour Biography*, 13 (Basingstoke, 2010), pp. 265-79.

Within days Ellis received further information, it was not, however good news for the Union. Wynne Samuel, the South Wales organiser for the WNP and, more significantly, a former Swansea Borough Clerk, reported, 'We understand that there are plans to move children from South Wales to Cumberland and Westmorland'.¹⁷³ Both of these locations are in what is today Cumbria, adjacent to the English border with Scotland. On the 12 April Ellis sent telegrams to both William John and David Lloyd George, which argued, 'this thing is foolish and ridiculous and I truly hope that we can prevent the authorities from doing such wrongs to the Welsh nation'. Eventually Ellis enlisted the assistance of Megan Lloyd George and in an echo of the WNP view argued that 'it would be more sensible to re-evacuate Merseyside children who are already in Wales to Cumberland and Westmorland, and fill their places in the reception areas with children from South Wales'.¹⁷⁴ These proposals, while practical from the viewpoint of keeping children of both nationalities within their original cultural roots, took little notice of the emotional upheaval that would have been endured by the English evacuees who, having been relocated from their families to live with strangers in Wales, would, under these suggestions, be required to move again to another unknown area and again be deposited with a different group of complete strangers.

Having failed to make any significant impact on preventing the proposed evacuation from South Wales to the north east of England, with either the local authorities concerned, nor with the Welsh MPs, Ellis, enlisted the assistance of the press. He wrote to *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* detailing the plans to move the children to Cumbria and included details of his efforts to prevent this.¹⁷⁵ As a result of the ensuing article and the numerous letters from the general population to authorities, plans to move the children to the north of England were abandoned.¹⁷⁶ The General Secretary of the WNP wrote to Ellis praising him,

¹⁷³ 'Symud Plant Abertawe i Loegr', *Baner Ac Amserau Cymru* (23 April 1941), p. 5; NLW, UCF/A3, Wynne Samuel letter to T. I. Ellis, 12 April 1941; Wynne Samuel was, until 1940, Swansea County Borough Council's town clerk, when he was dismissed for failing to support the war effort.

¹⁷⁴ NLW, UCF/A3, Wynne Samuel letter to T. I. Ellis, 12 April 1941; NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to Megan Lloyd George, 14 April 1941; NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to Megan Lloyd George, 29 April 1941.

¹⁷⁵ 'Yr Aelodau Cymreig: Llythyrau Undeb Cymru Fydd A Syr Henry Morris-Jones', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (6 May 1942), p. 6.

¹⁷⁶ NLW, UCF/A3, J. E. Jones letter to T. I. Ellis, 12 May 1941.

‘Publishing your story and all the telegrams ... was highly effective’,¹⁷⁷ he continued ‘I believe that this sudden strike has killed the proposal [to move children to Cumbria] in its heart.’¹⁷⁸ Even though the Cumbria option was scrapped, a decision was still needed as to where to evacuate the children.

By the end of May, while there was still some confusion as to the destination of the children of Cardiff, the destination for the children of Swansea had been finalised. They were to be evacuated to Carmarthenshire in the west of Wales.¹⁷⁹ By June 1941, Ellis confirmed that the relocation of children from both Cardiff and Swansea had been accomplished and, as advocated by UCF, both had been moved to Reception Areas within Wales, mainly in Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire. These areas also had the additional benefit of being within relatively easy travelling distance for the families of the children.¹⁸⁰

There was no way of knowing what impact an evacuation to the north of England would have had on the children of Swansea and Cardiff. The linguistic impact on many of these children was likely to be negligible, as, at the time, these regions, especially Cardiff were predominantly English speaking areas. This campaign cannot be deemed to have been to the benefit of all in Wales. However, by preventing this relocation and keeping the children in Wales and within close geographical proximity of their parents, it was to the benefit of the families involved. This campaign cannot be defined solely as a language campaign. Many of

¹⁷⁷ John Edward Jones (1905-1970) (usually referred to as J. E. Jones) was General Secretary of WNP from 1930-1962. He was educated at the University College of North Wales, Bangor from 1924. While there he served as secretary of the Students Union and is credited with making Welsh a joint official language of the University, along with English. After a short spell teaching in London he returned to Wales to take up the post of General Secretary of WNP, a post he held until 1962. He stood for parliament once, in Caernarfon constituency, in 1950. During the General Election of 1970 he died in road traffic accident. He was described as a tough character and strong mind with extraordinary organising talent. Gwynfor Evans acknowledged that Jones ‘contributed more than anyone to keeping Plaid together during the war’. For more information see, NLW website, DWB, ‘Jones, John Edward’, <http://wbo.llgc.org.uk/en/s2-JONE-EDW-1905.html>, accessed 7 May 2015.

¹⁷⁸ NLW, UCF/A3, J. E. Jones letter to T. I. Ellis, 12 May 1941.

¹⁷⁹ NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to Rachel Davies, 20 May 1941; NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to Gwynfor Evans, 20 May 1941.

¹⁸⁰ ‘Minutes of the 16 Meeting of the Executive Committee (CDDC)’.

the children from the region, especially from Cardiff, did not speak Welsh. However, the Union did justify its position on both linguistic and cultural basis. It was also noticeable during the campaign that a higher priority was given to the children of Swansea than Cardiff and this maybe because of the great number of Welsh speakers there. This campaign proved a major success for UCF and was one of its first. It was not, however, to be its last. The utilisation of local members of the organisation to obtain information, which Ellis then used to promote the Union's objectives, was to become a regular strategy during future campaigns.

VI: Preserving Welsh Life

The fifth and final aim of the UCF was to keep those Welsh societies outside Wales, and individuals in dispersion, in touch with their heritage.¹⁸¹ Even before the onset of the war, there was a large Welsh contingent living in England. However, with the introduction of conscription some 300,000 Welsh men and women would, over the following six years, serve in the Allied Forces.¹⁸² This figure represented some 12 percent of the Welsh population. Civilian workers too, were directed to work in essential industries, often away from areas where they lived. It is often overlooked in wartime histories that the British Government, under the 1941 National Service Act, was able to relocate civilian workers, as well as military personnel, to where they were most needed for the execution of the war effort.¹⁸³ Under these wartime measures, hundreds of thousands of people were required to leave Wales.

In contrast to the WNP, which objected to military conscription and encouraged its members to conscientiously object to the war, UCF took a different approach. The Union, through Ellis, worked with the British Government to limit the negative impact of its wartime measures. In a letter to Ernest Bevin, in 1941, this policy was re-iterated. Ellis, speaking of Welsh workers working in England, declared that 'my committee is of the

¹⁸¹ Ellis, *New Wales Union*, p. 3; NLW, UCF/A23, UCF, Y Cyfansoddiad, n.d.

¹⁸² Johnes, *Wales Since 1939*, p. 21; The National Service (Armed Forces) Act 1939 (London, HMSO, 1939).

¹⁸³ National Service Act (No. 2) (London, HMSO, 1941); This Act was passed in December 1941 as is designated No. 2 as not to confused it with the National Service Act 1941, passed in April 1941.

opinion that it would not be conducive to the morale of these people to deprive them of cultural and social activities'.¹⁸⁴ Over the following months it became apparent that the government, and especially the Ministry of Labour and National Service was prepared to build on the relationship begun under the Defence Committee and work with UCF. It was in the domain of maintaining links between Wales and the large number of Welsh people diffused across Britain that this relationship proved most profitable.

Initially, the Union continued to build on Ellis' Welsh Centres project begun during the Defence Committee period. Ellis had continued to collate a register of Welsh speaking families and groups across Britain that would welcome Welsh soldiers and war workers. While this strategy had generated notable results in listing the location of Welsh centres, it lacked the means of identifying the locations where the need was greatest, that is, those that contained the largest concentration of Welsh soldiers and workers.

In March 1941, the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion was approached by the Ministry of Labour to see if they could assist regarding 'very homesick ... Welsh speaking people who were moved to different parts of England to work'. The Honourable Society, aware of Ellis work on Welsh centres, referred the matter to the Defence Committee.¹⁸⁵ By the summer it became apparent that the Honourable Society had been communicating with the Ministry of Labour, regarding the location and welfare of Welsh war workers in England.¹⁸⁶ Following an initial contact a ready exchange of information ensued between the three organisations. This substantially increased Ellis' information about where large numbers of Welsh workers were based in England. UCF could begin to organise a programme, in conjunction with the Ministry of Labour, to help Welsh people in dispersion maintain their Welsh roots.

Over the following months UCF developed a close working relationship with the Ministry of Labour. During late summer 1941, Ellis met regularly with Regional Welfare Officer for the Midlands regarding 'making arrangements for the cultural and social welfare' of Welshmen

¹⁸⁴ NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to Secretary of State for Labour and National Service (Ernest Bevin), 29 July 1941.

¹⁸⁵ NLW, UCF/ A19, J. L. C. Cecil-Williams letter to T. I. Ellis, 13 March 1941.

¹⁸⁶ NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to Ministry of Labour, 2 July 1941; T. I. Ellis letter to Hughes, 2 July 1941; Ministry of Labour letter to Cecil Williams, 26 June 1941; T. I. Ellis letter to Ministry of Labour, 3 July 1941; T. I. Ellis to Cecil Williams, 2 July 1941.

and women in his region.¹⁸⁷ Among the suggestions made it was proposed that in locations which housed large numbers of these workers, specific Welsh clubs would be established. In other areas workers were supplied details of Welsh Centres nearby, obtained from Ellis' register. Other suggestions included a Welsh books library service and the provision of Welsh cultural activities.¹⁸⁸ It was clear that the Ministry of Labour, which held overall responsibility for the welfare of war worker, took the cultural welfare of Welsh workers seriously. These overlapping aims, together with both organisations willingness to combine resources and information, were to prove hugely beneficial to Welsh workers for the rest of the war. The Ministry's willingness to work with UCF also demonstrates the reputable standing the Union had earned with the Government.

The development of this close working relationship benefited both organisations. One of the first issues addressed was the introduction of Welsh employment contracts for Welsh speaking workers. Initially this task appeared to cause the Ministry some difficulties therefore the Union assisted and provided translated copies of the contracts to the Ministry.¹⁸⁹ The language was a problem for the Ministry's Welfare Officers who were 'naturally doing what they can' when they received Welsh women in their areas, however, few if any of them had any knowledge of the Welsh language.¹⁹⁰ At that time UCF was not in a position to assist with this issue. However, this was not an issue that Ellis or the Union were willing to ignore.¹⁹¹ In the meantime there was still much that could be achieved.

The developing relationship and exchange of information between the Ministry of Labour and UCF demonstrates an unusually high level of trust. The official policy of the Ministry of Labour and indeed the British Government was not to divulge information relating to the location of war workers for fear that this could prove advantageous to the enemy and increase the danger of aerial bombardment. Despite this however, the Ministry appeared willing to divulge information to UCF from an early point in their association. For example, during the autumn of 1941, during a meeting between Ellis and Ministry officials, Ellis was

¹⁸⁷ NLW, UCF/A4/1, T. I. Ellis letter to Regional Welfare Officer, 20 August 1941.

¹⁸⁸ NLW, UCF/A4/1, T. I. Ellis letter to Regional Welfare Officer, 10 September 1941.

¹⁸⁹ NLW, UCF/A19, C. W. Pierce letter to T. I. Ellis, 5 July 1941.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ For more on this, see Chapter 5.

informed of a group of labourers from North Wales, working in Shropshire.¹⁹² This clearly contravened official policy.

While Ellis was the primary facilitator of information, he was adept at enlisting the assistance of others. Following up on the information received from the Ministry, Ellis contacted the Reverend Maldwyn Davies, from Shrewsbury:

I understand that many men of Caernarvonshire are constructing camps or factories and living in villages outside the town of Shrewsbury. I do not have details about these people but because you wrote to me some time ago about the facilities in Shrewsbury for the Welsh, I thought that you might take an interest in this matter.¹⁹³

Ellis continued 'perhaps you could provide some kind of cultural practice and Welsh society for these men ... to try to keep their Welshness alive.'¹⁹⁴ It was later reported that Davies was 'very anxious to help'.¹⁹⁵ As elsewhere, the Union, working with Ministry of Labour representatives, arranged for these workers to be informed about Welsh Centres in the vicinity, while Reverend Davies began to organise Welsh language gatherings and made Welsh books available to the workers. Contemporaneously, Ellis set about arranging Welsh music concert for the workers.¹⁹⁶ This multifaceted approach, like much of the Union's activity was co-ordinated by Ellis. The Welsh language facilities offered to these labourers gave them the opportunity to use their mother tongue outside their immediate circle.

This was the first time the Union had attempted to arrange a Welsh music concert. Ellis initially contacted the National Council of Music in Cardiff, however was advised that the Council did not operate outside of Wales. It suggested contacting Committee for Encouragements of Music and Arts (or CEMA).¹⁹⁷ Ellis wrote to CEMA that same day to

¹⁹² NLW, UCF/A4/1, T. I. Ellis letter to Maldwyn Davies, 11 September 1941.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ NLW, UCF/A4/1, T. I. Ellis letter to Glass, 2 October 1941; T. I. Ellis letter to Maldwyn Davies, 8 October 1941; T. I. Ellis to M. C. Glasgow, 8 October 1941.

¹⁹⁶ NLW, UCF/A4/1, T. I. Ellis letter to Maldwyn Davies, n.d.

¹⁹⁷ NLW, UCF/A4/1, T. I. Ellis letter to Miss Glasgow, 30 September 1941; After the war CEMA changed its name to The Arts Council by which it is still known today and many of their early papers survived and are housed at the Victoria and Albert Museum Archive in London.

ascertain if it was possible ‘to make arrangements for Welsh concerts under its auspices for Welsh men and women who may find themselves in groups in various parts of England.’ Ellis offered the services of the Union, ‘We would be very glad to cooperate with your council for the benefit of any group of Welsh people who are now out of Wales’.¹⁹⁸ Within days Ellis received a positive reply and further concerts were arranged in the Handsworth and Aston areas of Birmingham.¹⁹⁹ It was unclear who bore the cost of holding these Welsh concerts around England, although CEMA did receive Government funding for such activities. Importantly, there was no evidence in the Union’s accounts to suggest it made any contribution, except through Ellis’ travelling expenses. Therefore, without incurring substantial costs, the Union had established a new method for Welsh workers to practise their language.

This was not the only attempt to organise events of this kind. Another Entertainment organisation active during the wartime period was the Entertainments National Service Association (ENSA), which was established in 1939 specifically to provide entertainment for the Armed Forces. UCF campaigned for ENSA to establish a Welsh concert party ‘If a thoroughly Welsh Party Concert could be organised ... I am sure that there are very many Welsh soldiers who would greatly appreciate the musical and dramatic entertainment which it would offer.’²⁰⁰ A Welsh travelling show was established, nicknamed ‘Taffy’s Twelve’ with performers from the Rhondda, Swansea, Blaenau Ffestiniog and Holyhead.²⁰¹

It was difficult to assess the long term success the Welsh Centres project, or the concert parties, had in helping Welsh soldiers and workers maintain their links to Wales. However, the cultural benefits to Welsh soldiers of a Welsh concert party travelling around military bases cannot be overstated. It not only assisted in the maintenance of morale and contact with their linguistic heritage but would have sent a clear message to the Welsh soldiers of

¹⁹⁸ NLW, UCF/A4/1, T. I. Ellis letter to Miss Glasgow, 30 September 1941.

¹⁹⁹ NLW, UCF/A4/1, T. I. Ellis letter to Miss Glass, 2 October 1941.

²⁰⁰ NLW, UCF/A4/1, T. I. Ellis letter to Cyril Phillips, 23 October 1941.

²⁰¹ BBC Archive, World War Two People’s War, Article ID:A6984200, Catherine Lovatt, ‘Torpedoed While Travelling With ENSA’, www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/00/a6984200.shtml, accessed 12 June 2014.

how important their 'imagined community' was to Britain.²⁰² However, as with other Union campaigns, these initiatives were directed primarily at Welsh speaking Welshmen and women. Less fervour was expended assisting non-Welsh speakers to maintain contact with their homeland. For this reason the Union was not representative of the whole of Wales.

VII: Cofion Cymru

During the early months of 1941, the Union's treasurer, David R. Hughes, came up with a different method of reaching Welsh men and women who had left Wales because of the war. He proposed the publishing of a Welsh language newsletter, which was later described as 'remarkable on many counts', which he called '*Cofion Cymru*' (Greetings or Regards from Wales), which he planned to distributed free of charge to Welsh servicemen and women, wherever in the world they were located.²⁰³

Hughes was ideally qualified to make this initiative a reality. Following his upbringing in North Wales, to Welsh speaking parents, he moved to London, where he spent the next 45 years working for United Dairies.²⁰⁴ During that time Hughes was a leading figure among the London Welsh community. He had links to the Nonconformist denominations and several Welsh cultural organisations, including the *Urdd* and the National Eisteddfod, and was the secretary for the 1909 National Eisteddfod in London. More significantly, while employed in London, Hughes was editor of the United Dairies staff magazine for 19 years and was also joint editor of the London Welsh periodical *Y Ddolen*.²⁰⁵ The experienced gained through editing these newsletters gave Hughes the knowledge and experience to spearhead this initiative.

²⁰² NLW, UCF/A4/1, T. I. Ellis letter to Cyril Phillips, 23 October 1941; BBC Archive, World War Two People's War, Article ID:A2304271, 'ENSA' www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/71/a2304271.shtml, accessed 30 July 2015.

²⁰³ Williams, *Tir Newydd*, p. 27; Morgan, *Cardiff: A City at War*, p. 25.

²⁰⁴ For more information see E. H. Griffiths, *Bywyd a Gwaith D. R. Hughes* (Caernarfon, 1965).

²⁰⁵ NLW website, DWB, 'David Rowland Hughes', <http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s2-HUGH-ROW-1874.html?query=David+Rowland+Hughes&field=name>, accessed 15 May 2015.

As Hughes began work on the newsletter, the Defence Committee was not in a position to move the project forward. The Executive Committee, which was supportive of the initiative, was pre-occupied with imminent merger with the National Union of Welsh Societies and with other initiatives.²⁰⁶ Therefore, arrangements for the publishing, printing and distribution of this newsletter were left to Hughes.²⁰⁷ Another problem left to Hughes was the matter of raising sufficient funds. The Defence Committee finances were, at the time, in a perilous state. Hughes, therefore, initiated a specific financial appeal to fund the venture by disseminating a circular to addresses of members and contributors supplied by Ellis.²⁰⁸ The appeal raised sufficient funds to get the project off the ground but, as *Cynan* later noted 'The first edition was published in April 1941 as an optimistic adventure, without a penny in hand'.²⁰⁹

To drive the project forward, Hughes established a specific committee to assist him, it was based in Bangor. Although an experienced editor, Hughes approached his Eisteddfod colleague, *Cynan* and Thomas [Tom] Parry, a poet and academic from University College of North Wales, Bangor, to edit the newsletter.²¹⁰ Due to the government restrictions, the newsletter was restricted to 4 pages.²¹¹ Joining the two editors, and Hughes as publisher, on the five-man committee, were Professor J. Morgan Jones and R. T. Jenkins, both academics with strong links to the College.²¹² This made for an experienced and impressive publishing

²⁰⁶ Throughout much of 1941 the Defence Committee and the National Union of Welsh Societies were involved in negotiations which led, in August 1941, to their merger into UCF.

²⁰⁷ NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to D. R. Hughes, 20 March 1941.

²⁰⁸ NLW, UCF/A3, D. R. Hughes, 'Circular', 19 March 1941.

²⁰⁹ *Cofion Cymru*, April 1945.

²¹⁰ Thomas [Tom] Parry was a poet and scholar closely associated with the National Eisteddfod. He would later become Principal of the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth and Chairman of the National Eisteddfod Council. Parry was co-editor until March 1944 when he was replaced by W. Ambrose Bebb and J. H. Williams (Llanberis). However, he maintained a position on the *Cofion* Committee thereafter. For more information see D. L. Morgan, *Y Brenhinbren: Bywyd a Gwaith Thomas Parry 1904-1985* (Llandysul, 2013).

²¹¹ Morgan, *Cardiff: A City at War*, p. 25.

²¹² Bangor University Archive, Bangor (hereafter BUA), IW/1020, *Cofion Cymru: At Ei Phlant Ar Wasgar*, Rhif 1 (Ebrill, 1941), p. 1; J. Morgan Jones was a Minister and Principal of Bala-Bangor College. He had previously served as Vice-President of the University College of North Wales and Warden of the Guild of Graduates. R. T. Jenkins was a lecturer of history at the University College of North Wales Bangor. Both were published

team that combined, intellectual scholarship, strong cultural connection with ties to the National Eisteddfod and to Welsh nonconformity. The combined backgrounds of the committee set the tone for the newsletter, although outside assistance was also sought to strengthen the content. For example, for the April issue, help and advice was sought from Ifor Leslie Evans, the Principal of the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth.²¹³ Although, as acknowledged by Ellis, Hughes and the newsletter committee ‘bore the lion’s share of the work and responsibility connected with it.’²¹⁴

The first issue of *Cofion Cymru* began with a reinforcement of the dangers faced by Wales during the war as perceived by UCF and the *Cofion* editorial committee. Maybe surprisingly in 1941, these dangers were not perceived to be from a German invasion or a loss of the war but more for the decline of the Welsh language and Welsh culture. Archival evidence confirms that a German victory was not considered by the Union (or the Defence Committee) at any point during the war. However, in contrast, it regularly promoted the notion that the greatest threat to the future of Wales was from England, or more specifically from Anglicisation. This perceived danger had been promulgated since the 1930s and had underpinned the Defence Committee’s campaigns. It was not the only Welsh institution to promote this view. It was, after all, the primary reason the National Eisteddfod had called the Shrewsbury Conference in 1939.

The opening passage of the newsletter re-affirms this overall fear, delivered through a quotation by O. M. Edwards, the Welsh historian, writer and Liberal politician, closely associated with the *Cymru Fydd* movement. An extract from Edwards’s book *Er Mwyn Cymru* (For the sake of Wales) warned that Wales will be ‘immersed in the [British] Empire...where her voice will no longer be heard’. The consequence of such a tragedy, it argued was, ‘when a new need arises for [the cause of] freedom and religion, it will not be Wales that raises the flag; her voice will be silent.’²¹⁵ This passage linked the combined

extensively and both also had experience editing Welsh periodicals. For more information on Jones see NLW Website, DWBO. <http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s2-JONE-MOR-1873.html>, accessed 3 January 2015; and for R. T. Jenkins see A. Llywelyn-Williams, *R. T. Jenkins* (Cardiff, 1977).

²¹³ NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to Ifor L. Evans, 13 April 1941.

²¹⁴ Ellis, *New Wales Union*, p. 7.

²¹⁵ ‘O. M. Edwards, ‘Er Mwyn Cymru’, *Cofion Cymru*, Rh. 1 (April, 1941), p. 1.

needs of defending freedom and religion, as advocated by the British Government, while maintaining the individual Welsh identity and culture, as advanced by UCF. This fusion of objectives summarises well the stance taken by both the Defence Committee and UCF to defend against the simultaneous threats to the two different 'imagined communities' of Britain and Wales. However, the editors choice of this quotation to re-affirm the fears from Anglicisation, to a mainly military audience, at a time when Germany and the Axis powers had invaded and conquered most European countries and were threatening the British mainland, could be considered ill-timed or at worse belligerent.

Following the open passage the main objective of the newsletter was set out by the editors. 'We believe that most of you will be pleased to get some news about Wales each month and to read some Welsh'. Further into the editor's comments the contents of the newsletter were summarised:

In this magazine we are making an effort (a small one it is true) to keep some connection between you and Welsh life ... We will try to find a new story to publish each month; we will print selections of Welsh literature, we will mention prominent Welshmen of the past, men whose lives are an inspiration to us in these difficult times, we will organise some competitions and give you news from Wales.

A visual link to Wales was included either side of the main title of the newsletter. Here two small drawings were printed. To the right was a typical Welsh scene of a lake in the forefront, and a mountainous backdrop, no doubt chosen to remind the reader of home, and to the left of the title a similar drawing, this one depicting University College, Bangor, where the newsletter originated.²¹⁶

The second of the two main articles was also particularly significant. This 'Special Message' confirmed the support of the authors for Welsh servicemen, 'accept this sign that your homeland is thinking a great deal about you in these troubled days, and is determined to keep the Welsh fire glowing in your locality in preparation for the momentous day when you return.' What made this message so significant were the 16 names that were appended to it. The message had been endorsed by some of the most influential and significant religious, educational and cultural leaders in Wales at the time, all of whom had clearly confirmed

²¹⁶ BUA, Cof/X/ID/296 *Cofion Cymru* (April, 1941).

their support for this elaborate venture. These names included the leaders of all the major denominations in Wales, the principals of all four colleges of the University of Wales and the heads of all the major cultural societies.²¹⁷ The significance of obtaining the endorsement of such a notable list of cultural leaders for the project cannot be overstated. This newsletter sent out a clear message to Welsh service personnel and workers, wherever they were located, that the whole of Wales was united in appreciation of their efforts and supportive of their endeavours. The boost to the morale generated by receiving such a united message can only be guessed at, but was likely to have been significant. However, as this was solely a Welsh language newsletter this significant message of support would have been lost on non-Welsh speakers.

The opening page of this initial issue could be seen as containing something of a mixed message to Welsh servicemen. The article of support from the cultural leaders of Wales appeared to be an endorsement of their military service, while the cautionary note regarding the loss of Wales to Anglicisation, could be viewed in a contrary manner. There was no further negative rhetoric in that, or other issues, of the newsletter. *Cofion* did not campaign against the war. Neither did it promote fears for the Welsh language, despite being the *raison d'être* for establishing the publication. Overall, *Cofion Cymru* attempted to keep Welsh speakers in contact with their culture by promoting the positives of the Welsh language. As summarised by Williams it was 'the light in the gloom. It reminded its readers of the civilised values and rich life that awaited them when their time in Armed Forces was over.'²¹⁸ Given that in April 1941 the threat of a German invasion still high, the editor's choice of Edwards' quotation that Wales's voice may not, in the future, be heard was perhaps ill-judge.

As printing commenced there was one major obstacle to overcome. The greatest challenge to the project was how best to organise the distribution of the newsletter to Welsh members of the armed forces, at that time spread across the globe. It was recognised that information relating to the location of these Welsh service personnel could only be obtained from their original locality. It was therefore resolved to distribute the newsletter via the 23

²¹⁷ BUA, X/ID/295 Cof., *Cofion Cymru* (April, 1941), Rh. 1; A full list of these sixteen names and titles is included in Appendix C.

²¹⁸ Williams, *Tir Newydd*, p. 29.

branch secretaries of UCF.²¹⁹ These secretaries were tasked with liaising with all the churches and chapels within their region to obtain the names and current location of men in the armed forces from among their congregations, and to post the newsletter on to them.²²⁰ Additionally, the local press ran advertisements, notifying readers how friends and family members could be added to the distribution list. This was clearly an ambitious operation that required a significant amount of organisation from all those involved. Hughes, and the newsletter committee, now benefitted from the Union's national infrastructure and by the end of May distribution was in full swing, and copies of *Cofion Cymru* were being dispatched to Welshmen across Britain and the world.

The contents of the early issues of *Cofion* set the format for future issues and were later described by T. Gwynn Jones as an 'amazingly rich magazine that included plenty of variety.'²²¹ In May 1941, there were sections on the people, short religious reflections, limericks, an inspirational article on Welsh 'Veterans and their Waterloo', as well as humorous comments and competitions.²²² The competitions and humorous stories were often directed at the original target audience of military men, such as the funny story in the August 1941 issue that related to a 'soldier's cap'. The newsletter, in general, was heavily influenced by traditional Welsh culture: poetry, book reviews, religious extracts, short stories and items of news. The section of the newsletter entitled 'Wales Today' concentrated on an individual town and published news and events from that town. For example January 1945 detailed Bangor, while March 1945, covered news from Barry in the south and Denbigh in the north.²²³ Articles were also included of more personal connections and links to normal home life. For example, the August 1944 issue included the disclosure that it was the love of her dog Tomos that had helped Kate Roberts endure the darkest days of the conflict.²²⁴ Such stories not only kept servicemen in touch with home, they reminded

²¹⁹ NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to D. R. Hughes, 26 March 1941.

²²⁰ NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to D. M. Williams, 30 June 1941.

²²¹ T. G. Jones, 'Cofion Cymru A'r Cyfrolau Anrheg Cymraeg i'r Lluoedd', *Y Casglwr*, 21:16; T. Gwynn Jones was formerly the Secretary of the West Carmarthenshire Branch of the New Wales Union.

²²² See, for example, BUA, X/ID/295, *Cofion Cymru* (May, 1941).

²²³ BUA, X/ID/295 Cof., 'Cymru Heddiw', *Cofion Cymru* (January 1945), Rh. 45, p. 3; 'Cymru Heddiw', *Cofion Cymru* (March 1945), Rh. 47, p. 3.

²²⁴ Williams, *Tir Newydd*, p. 27.

them of the life that awaited their return. The editors also encouraged servicemen to become involved: 'We would like to stress that we will be pleased to publish contributions from members of the navy, army or air force, and we would also pleased to receive letters suggesting improvements.'²²⁵ This message was also disseminated through other, more mainstream newspapers, such as the English language newspaper the *Holyhead Chronicle*, which also advised anyone who knew the names and addresses of prospective readers should send this information to D. R. Hughes.²²⁶ The support of other news outlets, in both English and Welsh, confirms the widespread support for this cultural newsletter.

The general support from other newspapers was not, however, total or unanimous. *Y Llan*, a bilingual newspaper of the Anglican Church in Wales, published an article, which referred to *Cofion Cymru* as a 'Secular magazine.' With the newsletter's heavy religious influence this description drew a scathing response from Ellis.²²⁷ The *Holyhead Chronicle* felt that the newsletters content was too tame, arguing that 'in the rush and anxiety of wartime it is hardly the type of mental nourishment that will be appreciated' by men in the military.²²⁸ The *Chronicle* noted that 'It is important also to make the bulletin racy and readable in its contents.'²²⁹ Despite these criticisms, the newsletter was an instant success with Welsh readers, as the rapid increase in required numbers confirms.

The popularity of *Cofion Cymru* can be evidenced from the requests for copies that followed the initial distribution. The first print run, in April 1941, was expected to be for 1,000 copies. However, even before printing began, Ellis notified Hughes that 'a thousand copies are probably not enough.'²³⁰ Hughes increased the print order to 5,000 copies, but even this was insufficient to fulfil demand and a further 7,000 copies of the April issue were eventually required.²³¹ To fulfil demand for the second edition, 15,000 copies were

²²⁵ BUA, X/ID/295 Cof., *Cofion Cymru: At Ei Phlant Ar Wasgar*, Rhif 1 (Ebrill, 1941), p. 4.

²²⁶ 'Welsh Bulletin for the Forces', *The Holyhead Chronicle* (2 May 1941), p. 4.

²²⁷ NLW, UCF/A4/1, T. I. Ellis letter to the editor of *Y Llan*, 13 September 1941.

²²⁸ 'Welsh Bulletin For The Forces'.

²²⁹ T. I. Ellis letter to editor of *Y Llan*.

²³⁰ NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to Hughes, 7 April 1941.

²³¹ 'Minutes of the 16 Meeting of the Executive Committee (CDDC)'.

printed.²³² Over the following months the demand for *Cofion Cymru* continued to increase. At its peak, 26,000 – 28,000 copies a month of the Welsh newsletter were being printed and distributed across the world.²³³ To put this distribution figure in perspective the wartime distribution of *Cofion Cymru* equates to around half the current distribution of some well known news outlets like the *Independent* newspaper, was approaching the weekday distribution of the *Financial Times*, and exceeded that of many current regional newspapers.²³⁴

This project had originally been planned for members of the armed forces. However, as the first issue was going to press, both war workers in the factories in England and conscientious objectors, some of whom had been required to relocate to work in industries, like forestry, were also added.²³⁵ As illustrated in the first issue, ‘All Welshmen and Welshwomen, scattered from their homes to the armed forces, or because of the requirements for special war-work, whether on sea or on land, can secure a free copy of ‘*Cofion Cymru*’ every month.’²³⁶ However, not every request for the newsletter was approved. Requests for the newsletter to be sold locally throughout Wales were rejected due to a lack of paper.²³⁷ The limited availability of paper again became apparent during 1942, when increasing the print numbers was proposed to enable the inclusion of Welsh prisoners of war in the distribution lists. To this end UCF asked the government for a doubling of its paper allocation. Unfortunately, for those in captivity, the request was refused and consequently the newsletter was never sent to Welsh Prisoners of War.²³⁸

²³² Ibid.

²³³ Ellis, *The New Wales Union*, p. 8; BUA, X/ID/295 Cof., *Cofion Cymru* (April, 1945).

²³⁴ For the *Independent* distribution figure of 54,932 see ‘Circulation and Readership’ Mail Advertising *Daily Mail* website; www.mailclassified.co.uk/advertising-tools/circulation-readership, accessed 4 August 2016; For *Financial Times* figure ‘of fewer than 36,000’ see Christopher Williams, ‘FT Battles Uncertain Future as Competition Turns Digital’, *Telegraph* (25 June 2015), p. 4.

²³⁵ NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to Wynne Samuel, April 1941; NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to D. R. Hughes.

²³⁶ *Cofion Cymru* (April, 1941), p. 1.

²³⁷ NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to D. R. Hughes, 22 April 1941.

²³⁸ NLW, UCF/98, UCF, ‘Minutes of the Eighth Meeting Council’, November 1942.

It total 62 consecutive issues of *Cofion Cymru* were published between April 1941 and the final issue in June 1946.²³⁹ From March 1945, as the restriction on resources eased the newsletter doubled in size to eight pages.²⁴⁰ Apart from the monthly newsletters the *Cofion* Committee also published six 'Gift Books: For the Children of Wales in dispersion' (*Llyfr Anrheg: i Blant Cymru ar Wasgar*). The first was published in winter 1943 and began with the words 'With best wishes from all of Wales.'²⁴¹ These Gift Books, described by one recipient as an 'additional blessing' were pocket sized for convenience and contained some fifty pages each.²⁴² One of the most significant elements of these Books was that they allowed for an extension to Ellis' Welsh Centres project. Through the pages of *Cofion Cymru*, Ellis had managed to collate details of Welsh organisations across the world and these were published in the Gift Books.²⁴³ Soldiers too, were encouraged to organise Welsh centres wherever they were based and by 1944 Welsh centres were located in such exotic locations as Delhi, Durban, Alexandria, Haifa, Naples and many others, as well as across the British Isles.²⁴⁴

The six gift books contained similar content to the monthly newsletters. The first book, published for Christmas 1943, was filled with religious verses, quotes from the teaching of Jesus, a variety of poems and the words of traditional Welsh songs. The second gift book was published three months later to coincide with St David's Day 1944 and the third in time for Christmas 1944. During 1945, the fourth book appeared in time for St David's Day and the fifth during the summer as the war in Europe ended. Finally the Sixth book, entitled *Y Ddolen* (The Link), celebrated the end of the paper restriction with a 108 page hardback edition reportedly celebrating the best of Wales.²⁴⁵ These Gift books proved a popular supplement to the monthly newsletters.

²³⁹ Ellis, *New Wales Union*, p. 7.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*

²⁴² T. E. Griffiths, 'Llyfr Anrheg', *Y Fflam*, 1:2 (1947), pp. 61-2.

²⁴³ See, for example, BUA, X/ID/295 Cof., 'Trydydd Llyfr Anrheg Cyfres Y Cofion', Rh.3 (Gwanwyn 1944) but each issue contains such details.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁵ BUA, X/ID/295 Cof., Undeb Cymru Fydd, 'Lyfrau Anrheg', One to Six.

Letters of thanks were written from servicemen all over the world to the local distributors, as well as to the editorial team. An examination of these letters confirms the popularity and significance of *Cofion Cymru* and the Gift Books to the servicemen who received them. One such local distributor was Ivor E. Davies, branch secretary of the Conwy Valley branch. Davies was a quarryman and local historian who wrote extensively for the *North Wales Weekly News*, *Daily Post* and *Bangor Chronicle*. Davies was also closely associated with *Capel Salem*, an English Congregational Chapel, where his father was the Minister.²⁴⁶ Davies sent copies of *Cofion Cymru*, often accompanied by other Welsh newspapers, to servicemen and workers from the area. This gave Davies a personal connection with the recipients of the newsletters.²⁴⁷

The enthusiasm with which the servicemen received the Welsh newsletters was evident in almost every letter. One former member of the congregation at Salem wrote to Davies, ‘we are always looking forward to our ‘weekly news’ in case there is an article on the history of Pen [Penmaenmawr] and its people.’²⁴⁸ It continued ‘We boys are really grateful too you (sic), for the trouble you take supplying us with *Cofion*.’ The writer clearly knows Davies personally. This was one of the few letters written to Davies in English and the obvious spelling errors of ‘grateful’ and ‘to’, suggests that the writer was primarily a Welsh speaker, as most of the people of Penmaenmawr were at the time. There was evidence that Ivor E. Davies had, before the war, run English classes in and around Penmaenmawr, which could explain this attempt at an English correspondence.²⁴⁹ R. Lloyd Williams wrote his thanks for *Cofion Cymru* from Germany while ‘waiting for the big push.’²⁵⁰ While for another Williams the military offensive in German had already begun, ‘I think we were one of the first Battalions to start this big push and what a place Germany is’, more worryingly the letter continued, ‘Sorry about the writing but I am in a very hot spot!’ Why Williams decided to write his letter of thanks at that time can only be speculated at. While these letters

²⁴⁶ D. J. Roberts & J. W. Jones (eds.) *The Collected Works of Ivor E. Davies: A Glimpse at Life in the Past in Penmaenmawr and Dwygyfylchi* (Caernarfon, 2014), pp. 9-12.

²⁴⁷ CRO, Ifor E. Davies Papers (hereafter IEDAV), XM4046/10, E. Jones letter to I. E. Davies, 11 March 1945; CRO, IEDAV XM4046/11 G. Jones letter to I. E. Davies, 23 April 1945.

²⁴⁸ CRO, IEDV, XM4046/7, (no initial given) Brown letter to I. E. Davies, n.d.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ CRO, IEDAV, XM4046/9, R. L. Williams letter to I. E. Davies, 1 March 1945.

demonstrate the gratitude of the recipients, they also help to paint a picture of the locations and activities that Welshmen were enduring while away from North Wales, such as Gwilym Jones who wrote from Italy, 'having travelled through Rome, Florence and Ravenna with my *Cofion Cymru*.'²⁵¹ It was noteworthy that some of these letters were addressed to Penmaenmawr, Caernarvonshire, North Wales, 'England'. The men writing these letters were from North Wales, the addition of England to the address was clearly more to do with confidence in the postal services across Europe and beyond, than ignorance of their own addresses.

It was difficult to quantify or evaluate the true readership of *Cofion Cymru* but it was significantly higher than the overall number being published. There was reference in almost every letter of thanks of servicemen passing around their copies of the Welsh newsletter to other Welshmen, as confirmed by G. O. Jones, at the Royal Navy Barracks at Davenport. Similarly, Meredydd Hughes, of the Quarrying Corps, based in Gibraltar, wrote of his 'very many thanks for your welcome letter and *Cofion Cymru* received today . . . I know that your kindness will be appreciated by all the Welsh lads who are out here with us.' Hughes confirmed that the newsletter has been passed around among the Welsh contingent at that evening's Welsh meeting. Fusilier R. K. Williams concurred with the practice of distributing the Welsh newsletter, 'First of all I want to thank you for *Cofion Cymru*, which I have read and passed on to many a Welsh lad for him to have as much pleasure in reading as I have had'.²⁵² These letters, like many others, confirms a close connection between North Wales and Gibraltar, where, due to their quarrying experience, a large Welsh contingent was based.²⁵³

The Welsh servicemen based in Gibraltar during World War Two were testament to the impact UCF initiatives were having. Hughes confirmed that, inspired by Ellis' encouragement for soldiers to establish their own Welsh Centres:

A very keen Society has been formed by the Welsh contingent out here and has been officially named 'Brythoniaid yr Graig' [Historic or old Britons on the

²⁵¹ CRO, IEDAV, XM4046/11, G. Jones letter to I. E. Davies, 23 April 1945.

²⁵² CRO, IEDAV, XM4046/9, M. Hughes letter I. E. Davies, July 1942; CRO, IEDAV, XM4046/8, G. O. Jones letter to I. E. Davies, n.d; CRO, IEDAV, XM4046/9, R. K. Williams letter I. E. Davies, 1 March 1945.

²⁵³ CRO, IEDAV, XM4046/162, J. J. Thomas letter to I. E. Davies, 1 March 1942.

Rock]²⁵⁴ and Idwal has been appointed the Penmaenmawr representative on the Committee. . .but unofficially we prefer to be called ‘Y Ddraig ar y Craig’ [the Dragons on the Rock].²⁵⁵

J. J. Thomas, wrote of the St David’s Day celebrations enjoyed by Brythoniaid yr Graig in Gibraltar in 1942. Following an expression of the pride shared by the Welshmen there: ‘Today the children of Wales in dispersion are doing their share...until the world it at peace again’, Thomas reported that there was much Welsh singing of ‘the old tunes and recitals’ and he proudly reported that one Englishman had commented ‘Where there’s a Taffi there’s a song’ and concluded ‘and that is the way it was in a room in Gibraltar on 1 March 1942.’²⁵⁶ The establishment of a Welsh society in Gibraltar that gathered regularly and welcomed newly arrived Welsh military personnel relocated there, was, no doubt, a welcome sight to young Welshmen, some of whom were away from home for the first time. The distribution of *Cofion Cymru* among the Gibraltar Society would also have been a unifying factor for the Welsh servicemen that not only kept them in contact with their language, their culture and their homes but would also have generated topics for discussion.

The experiences of Welsh soldiers in Gibraltar were not unique. One *Cofion* recipient, T. Elwyn Griffiths, station in the Middle East during the war, later recalled the benefits of receiving *Cofion* to Welsh servicemen and claimed that ‘the only thing that regularly came out of Wales in service of the Welsh in the Armed Forces was the small engaging journal’, and while Griffiths was critical that some of the newsletter was ‘too literary in style’ he argued that ‘many of us came to view D. R. Hughes as the father of the Welsh in dispersion’.²⁵⁷ This testimony reinforces the opinions widely found in personal correspondence to the distributors of the newsletter from soldiers serving in the Armed Forces. Both *Cofion Cymru* and Welsh Centres were to be found wherever British soldiers were based during World War Two.²⁵⁸ As with other UCF projects, it was impossible to

²⁵⁴ Brythoniaid is a Welsh term sometimes used to describe the original, or pre Roman Britons, i.e. the Welsh.

²⁵⁵ M. Hughes letter to I. E. Davies July 1942.

²⁵⁶ J. J. Thomas letter to I. E. Davies, 1 March 1942.

²⁵⁷ Griffiths, ‘Llyfr Anrheg’.

²⁵⁸ There are extensive letters from Welsh servicemen stationed across Europe and the Middle East. However, there are very few letters from the Far East campaign. The reasons for this are unclear and may reflect postal difficulties, both in delivering *Cofion*, and in the delivery replies.

evaluate the exact impact these initiatives had on Welsh speaking servicemen during the war. However, it can be safely argued that the impact was both significant and positive. However, once again, the Union had ignored Welsh servicemen who did not speak Welsh.

Cofion Cymru, described by one veteran as 'our community paper', was not the only Welsh language cultural newsletter published during World War Two.²⁵⁹ Inspired by the success of *Cofion*, *Seren y Dwyrain*, printed around 1500 copies in Cairo from October 1943, for Welsh servicemen based in North Africa and the smaller *Seren y Gogledd* was published for Welshmen serving in Iceland and beyond.²⁶⁰ However, *Cofion Cymru's* distribution far exceeded any other newsletter of its type. *Cofion Cymru's* objective 'to bring a taste of home to boys and girls is dispersion' proved hugely successful.²⁶¹ Much of the success of the project was attributed to D. R. Hughes. One of the Union's local branch secretaries, attested to his 'persistence and dedication, as well as his natural nobility of spirit, which won him the support to be able to distribute thousands of copies of *Cofion Cymru* every month, free of charge to the sons and daughters of Wales dispersed to all parts of the World'.²⁶²

VIII: University of Wales By-election

In 1942 The Liberal MP for the University of Wales, Ernest Evans was appointed a County Court Judge. The ensuing by-election, described by Prys Morgan as 'one of the most striking events in the University's history,' also raised new challenges for UCF and especially for Tom

²⁵⁹ Glyn Ifans, quoted in Williams, *Tir Newydd*, p. 29.

²⁶⁰ Evans, *Gwynfor Evans*, p. 92; Williams, *Tir Newydd*, p. 29: For more details on establishing *Seren Y Dwyrain* see A. Misell, 'Seren Y Dwyrain: Papur Bro Cairo a'r Dwyrain Canol', *Barn* (September 2013); After the war *Seren y Dwyrain*, with the support of the *Urdd* and UCF became *Undeb Cymry ar Wasgar* (named by T. I. Ellis), later the name was changed to *Undeb Cymru a'r Byd* (Wales International), an organisation which, to this day connects Welsh individuals and organisations everywhere and welcomes the Welsh back to Wales at every National Eisteddfod. The Union also published a quarterly magazine, *Yr Enfys*. For more information see *Cymru a'r Byd* website, <http://walesinternational.cymru/eng/history>, accessed 7 March 2014.

²⁶¹ NLW, FFLIAMS/A1982/18, Press Release 'Undeb Cymru Fydd', March 1947; *Plaid Cymru Report 1938* quoted in Philip, *The Welsh Question*, p. 18.

²⁶² Jones, 'Cofion Cymru A'r Cyfrolau'.

Ellis.²⁶³ The Liberal Party, as part of the wartime coalition pact, knew that it would not face a candidate from either the Conservatives or Labour Party. However, it was expecting the WNP, who were not participant in the coalition agreement, to put forward a candidate. To counter this nationalist threat the Liberal Party nominated the former Welsh Nationalist Deputy Vice-President, former Chairman of the Defence Committee and incumbent Vice-President of UCF, W. J. Gruffydd.²⁶⁴ Gruffydd was, according to John Davies, the leading figure among Welsh speaking intellectuals.²⁶⁵

As soon as the by-election was announced for January 1943, the WNP announced that its former President and current UCF Council Member, Saunders Lewis was to stand.²⁶⁶ Lewis had contested the seat in 1931 and, according to Davies this was just the kind of seat that the nationalists thought they could win.²⁶⁷ Three further candidates stood as independents, Alun Talfan Davies, himself also a former member of the WNP, and two independent Labour candidates, Evan Davies and N. L. Evans.²⁶⁸

Gruffydd and Lewis knew each other well, both in the political arena and through their involvement in UCF. Both had been prominent members of the WNP prior to the war, with Gruffydd having served as Deputy Vice-President to Lewis in 1937, a time that coincided with Lewis' incarceration for the *Penyberth* arson.²⁶⁹ Thus he effectively led the Nationalist party for that time and was, in 1942 still a member, although he had not paid his subscription since 1939.²⁷⁰ Although Gruffydd eventually stood as a Liberal, he had initially allowed his name to be put forwards as an independent, supported by a loose coalition of

²⁶³ P. Morgan, *The University of Wales 1939-1993* (Cardiff, 1997), p. 30.

²⁶⁴ For an excellent account of the 1943 by-election and Gruffydd's Parliamentary career, see Chapman, *W. J. Gruffydd*, pp. 176-92. From the Lewis perspective see Chapman, *Un Bywyd O Blith Nifer*, pp. 259-262.

²⁶⁵ Davies, *A History of Wales*, p. 593.

²⁶⁶ 'Welsh By-Election: The Writ Issued', *Manchester Guardian* (4 January 1943), p. 6.

²⁶⁷ Davies, *The Welsh Nationalist Party*, p. 237.

²⁶⁸ 'Welsh Seat: Five Candidates', *Manchester Guardian* (15 January 1943), p. 6; Alun Talfan Davies stood at further elections, all in other parts of Wales, and on each occasion stood as the Liberal candidate. He failed to get elected on any occasion. Evan Davies and Evans only stood for Parliament on this one occasion.

²⁶⁹ Davies, *A History of Wales*, p. 593.

²⁷⁰ Morgan, *The University of Wales*, p. 30.

Welsh non-nationalists, led by Thomas Jones.²⁷¹ Jones, who opposed nationalist policies, had been himself approached to stand but felt that he was too old. However, Jones also believed that Lewis's ideas and tactics were dangerous to Wales and therefore set about orchestrating a non-nationalist opposition to deprive Lewis and the Nationalists of success.²⁷² Following his announcement that he would stand, D. J. Williams of *Penyberth* note, contacted Gruffydd and asked him to reconsider his decision, warning that if he opposed Lewis it would be at a 'terrible cost to Wales and his own good name.'²⁷³ However, even though Lewis once called Gruffydd 'the most eminent literary man in Wales' the pair had a strong dislike for each other, which had been played out in the Welsh press over many years.²⁷⁴

As the campaign for the by-election began it soon became bitter. Gruffydd, although outspoken, was politically the more moderate of the two, and derived his political views from the radical Liberal tradition and Nonconformist beliefs that emphasised individual freedoms and responsibilities.²⁷⁵ Gruffydd also supported the war with Germany unlike Saunders Lewis.²⁷⁶ In contrast, Lewis was described by Emyr Williams as a 'radical conservative', which led to a more extreme nationalism.²⁷⁷ Lewis, of course, was a Catholic and his anti-government and anti-war rhetoric published regularly in 'cwrs y byd' column in *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, and in articles in the party's newspapers, the *Welsh Nationalist* and *Y Ddraig Goch*, fuelled these claims. During the months leading to the by-election, links between the WNP and fascism were raised again. Gruffydd was critical of the power wielded by the Catholic religion and had been a long term critic of the extent to which Lewis had been influenced by writers of the French Catholic right, resulting in Lewis being out of step

²⁷¹ See Chapter One for more examples of Jones criticisms of WNP.

²⁷² Ellis, *T. J.*, pp. 461-2.

²⁷³ Chapman, *W. J. Gruffydd*, p. 178.

²⁷⁴ Saunders Lewis 'The Caernarfon Court Speech'; Morgan, *The University of Wales*, p. 31; Jones, *A Bid for Unity*, p. 19; for more detail of Lewis's turbulent relationship with Gruffydd see, Chapman, *Un Bywyd O Blith Nifer*.

²⁷⁵ Davies, *The Welsh Nationalist Party*, p. 238; Jones, *The Fascist Party in Wales?*, p. 14.

²⁷⁶ For more on Gruffydd's views towards the conflict see Chapman, *Nodiadau'r Golygydd*, pp. 70-97; Chapman, *W. J. Gruffydd*, pp. 161-75.

²⁷⁷ Williams, 'The Social and Political Thought of Saunders Lewis', p. 44.

with the majority of Wales.²⁷⁸ The *Western Mail* backed Gruffydd and printed a series of articles that linked Lewis and the WNP to Hitler and fascism.²⁷⁹

The involvement of two of its senior members in a political campaign that was rapidly becoming bitter placed the Union, and its non-political stance, in a difficult position. Both candidates held strong views on the preservation of Welsh culture and language, both supported home rule for Wales.²⁸⁰ The Union initially decided to remain impartial, until such time as it could determine which candidate would be better for Wales. To help determine the suitability of candidates, Ellis supplies each with a questionnaire containing seven questions. Each enquiry began with, 'If you were elected to Parliament' and contained questions on topics such as the Welsh Language Petition and 'Wales' representation ... on all committees that are appointed to deal with Welsh matters.'²⁸¹ This was particularly significant in 1943 with the establishment of various reconstruction and post-war planning committees. Ellis also asked each candidate's view on a host of issues that related to the Union's priorities and campaigns, including religious education in Wales, a separate Welsh radio station and, significantly, what each candidate would do to strengthen relations between the WPP and the Union.²⁸² Relations between the WPP and the Union had improved significantly over the preceding two years, a situation Ellis wished to maintain. As both main candidates were prominent members of the Union it was unlikely that this was under any real threat.

Of the five candidates only one took the time to attempt to answer the questionnaire in full. The Independent Socialist candidate Neville Evans acknowledged receipt of the questionnaire by telegram but failed to respond further. However, it was the responses of the two main candidates which attract the greatest interest. Gruffydd's response began

²⁷⁸ Gwilym, *Stori Saunder Lewis*, p. 42; See Chapter One for details of Lewis's ideology and major influences.

For more detail of how Gruffydd viewed a link between elements of the Catholic right and fascism see, W. J. Gruffydd, 'Mae'r Gwylliaid ar y Ffordd', *Y Llenor* (October 1940), p. 116; For details of Gruffydd's criticism of the Catholic influence in British government, see, Hughes, 'Anti-Catholicism in Wales', p. 323.

²⁷⁹ See, for example, 'Prospects for Varsity Election', *Western Mail* (16 Jan 1943), p. 2; 'Nationalists Say We Are Beaten', *Western Mail* (30 Jan 1943), p. 2.

²⁸⁰ Davies, *The Welsh Nationalist Party*, p. 238.

²⁸¹ NLW, UCF/18, Lewis letter to T. I. Ellis, 18 January 1943.

²⁸² NLW, UCF/19, UCF, 'Circular to Branch Secretaries' January 1943.

‘Dear Friend, No, really, fair play!’ He was clearly not amused by the Union’s actions, ‘What on earth was in the Council’s mind that it sent such questions? Each of them (with one exception) requires a whole essay as an answer.’²⁸³ He went on to assert that it was impossible for him to accurately answer such questions, without first experiencing Parliament and argued that to do so in advance would be an act ‘of pure dishonesty’.²⁸⁴

In contrast, to Gruffydd’s negative view of the questionnaire, Lewis answered each question in detail. Even the opening address struck a different tone. Lewis clearly recognised this communiqué as a formal campaign document and opened with ‘Dear Mr Ellis’, in contrast to his usual less formal address.²⁸⁵ In a clear attempt to court the Union’s support, Lewis took his time to answer each question extensively and pledged to push through Union campaigns.²⁸⁶ He underlined how ‘I hope to remain a member and a working member of Undeb Cymru Fydd as I have been hitherto.’²⁸⁷ These responses are significant, not only because Lewis pledged to draw the Union and the WPP closer together, but also because they demonstrate a new level of pragmatism by Lewis, even suggesting that some UCF campaigns on behalf of Wales should wait until after the war.

It was clear that Lewis’s response to the Union’s questionnaire was specifically prepared with his audience in mind. Overall, the answers followed more closely the moderate beliefs of UCF rather than Lewis’ previous rhetoric. However, towards the end of the questionnaire Lewis’s more traditional rhetoric returned, when he referred to the ‘imperialist English political parties’.²⁸⁸ However, in general the responses were very well thought out.²⁸⁹ At every opportunity he reiterated a closer working relationship between the Union and the WPP and kept to Union policy rather than those of the WNP. This suggests that Lewis felt that the support of UCF was important to achieving electoral victory.

²⁸³ NLW, UCF/19, W. J. Gruffydd letter to T. I. Ellis, 16 January 1943.

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

²⁸⁵ NLW, UCF/19, Saunders Lewis letter to T. I. Ellis, 18 January 1943.

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

As the election approached, despite the argument made by Chapman that Gruffydd, by virtue of his editorial in *Y Llenor*, had a greater influence of Welsh speaking population during the middle of the 1930s, the Welsh intelligentsia was split relatively equally between the two main candidates.²⁹⁰ Each candidate published a list of their supporters in the press.²⁹¹ UCF ultimately did not back either candidate and remained impartial. However, it did publish both Gruffydd and Lewis's responses to their questionnaire in full, to allow members and the people to make their own judgement.²⁹² The impartial stance by the Union and the balanced lists of supporters published in the press challenges the view, expressed by Jones that the Welsh academic establishment united behind Gruffydd to prevent Lewis getting elected.²⁹³ However, it was clear that some members of the University electorate did collude to prevent Lewis's success and while they succeeded in 1943 the long term omens were more positive. It is difficult to disagree with the candidate J. E. Jones, who argued that 'although the old brigade in Wales may have won the battle, the younger generation were behind Lewis.'²⁹⁴ Despite this, in 1943, the result was emphatic, Gruffydd polled more votes than the other four candidates combined and increased the Liberal majority of 1935.²⁹⁵

The by-election did result in a record turnout for the WNP, who achieved some 22 percent of the vote. McAllister has suggested that this was a credible result for the party, however as this was 'a constituency particularly suited to Plaid', made up of voters from the University of Wales, the result should be seen as more of a disappointment. Reinforcing this view, Davies concluded that the result left Lewis 'embittered by the experience', although correspondence between Lewis and D. J. Williams at the time, where Lewis claims he was

²⁹⁰ Chapman, *Un Bywyd O Blith Nifer*, p. 206.

²⁹¹ See 'Prof. Gruffydd's Supporters', *Western Mail* (7 January 1943), p. 3; 'For Mr. Saunders Lewis', *Western Mail* (14 January 1943), p. 3.

²⁹² See for example 'Candidates Answer New Wales Union', *Western Mail* (23 January 1943), p. 3.

²⁹³ Jones, *The Fascist Party in Wales?*, p. 14.

²⁹⁴ Chapman, *Un Bywyd O Blith Nifer*, p. 260.

²⁹⁵ Ernest Evans received 2796 votes in 1935 and won with a majority of 1,028, Source: 'Welsh By-Election: Writ Issued'.

none the worst for election, challenges this view.²⁹⁶ However, in the wider context, the 1943 by-election has been seen by some historians, such as Andrew Edwards and Wil Griffith, as one that left the WNP in disarray.²⁹⁷ Others, while acknowledging this as a low point, see the experience in a more positive light. Williams, for example, argued that ‘from 1942 the tide was clearly turning in the party’s favour’, while another Davies argued that this election gave the party ‘a powerful new impetus’.²⁹⁸ Historians are in general agreement that the lowest ebb of the WNP’s popularity occurred during the second half of the war.²⁹⁹ From that low point it slowly and steadily grew into a credible political force in Wales.

UCF emerged from a potentially damaging split unscathed. By maintaining an impartial political stance it maintained its close links with both candidates. W. J. Gruffydd took his place in Parliament and strengthened the Union’s links with the WPP. Lewis resumed his work with UCF and although, as confirmed by John Davies, it was some twenty years before he again intervened in Welsh politics, he continued to work within the Union throughout the war to protect the language and the Welsh culture.

There was one previously unnoticed aspect of this by-election that could have impacted of the Union’s impartiality. Until mid December 1942, some five weeks before the election was held, the apolitical secretary of the Union, Tom Ellis, was himself approached by the Liberal Party and contemplated standing for the University of Wales seat.³⁰⁰ Ellis held impressive credentials. He maintained a close connection to the University of Wales’ Guild of Graduates and would become its warden in 1943. He was assisted by the reputation of

²⁹⁶ Emyr Hywel (ed.), *Annwyl D. J.: Detholiad o’r Ohebiaeth Rhwng D. J. Williams, Kate Roberts a Saunders Lewis* (Talybont, 2007), pp. 114-5.

²⁹⁷ McAllister, *Plaid Cymru*, p. 29; Davies, *A History of Wales*, p. 593; Edwards and Griffith, ‘Some Conceptions of Welsh National Identity and Governance’, p. 140.

²⁹⁸ Plaid Cymru Website, D. Williams, ‘JE – Architect of Plaid Cymru: Address by Dafydd Williams on the Life of JE Jones’ at Plaid Cymru History Society, Llandudno, September 2011, www.hanesplaidcymru.org/author/admin/page/2/?lang=en, accessed 3 February 2016; J. E. Jones, *Tros Gymru: JE a’r Blaid*. (Abertawe, 1970), p. 276; Davies, *The Welsh Nationalist Party*, p. 241.

²⁹⁹ See, for example, Edwards and Griffith, ‘Some Conceptions of Welsh National Identity and Governance’; McAllister, *Plaid Cymru*; Davies, *The Welsh Nationalist Party*.

³⁰⁰ NLW, UCF/43, Peter Scott letter to T. I. Ellis, 16 December 1942; ‘Welsh University By-Election’ *Liverpool Daily Post* (4 November 1942), p. 3.

his father, whom K. O. Morgan described as an apostle of *Cymru Fydd* and ‘the very embodiment of Celtic genius in politics,’ and also maintained family contacts in London. His close association with the Nonconformist churches and Welsh youth movements would further add to his appeal.³⁰¹ On top of these were the reputation and political connections he had acquired as secretary of, firstly the Defence Committee, and then UCF. Ellis would therefore have made a credible Liberal candidate to challenge the nationalism of Saunders Lewis. However, he ultimately decided to remain apolitical.

During the period between 1941 and 1945 UCF, often building on work begun by the Defence Committee, experienced a number of significant successes. Among the most notable was the introduction, in 1942, of the Welsh Courts Act. Although many in Wales were disappointed with the final content of the Act, and the difficulties experienced getting it accepted by all in the legal field, it was significant, both for monoglot Welsh speakers at the time and as the first change to the status of the Welsh language in four hundred years. This Act was the first in what was to become a series of legislative changes, which over the following decades would benefit the Welsh and the Welsh language. Similar, but less noticeable, success was achieved in influencing the 1944 Education Act, to allow Welsh Local Education Authorities to establish Welsh medium schools. The Union’s campaigns in this sphere, both before and after the Education Act was passed, led to the opening of the first Welsh medium school in Llanelli in 1947 and a host of further Welsh medium schools across Wales. The success of other campaigns was more difficult to quantify, the campaign to prevent the children of Swansea and Cardiff being relocated to the north of England, clearly provided a victory for UCF. However, how much this victory impacted on these children, who were from largely more anglicised areas of Wales, was less clear. That these children remained much closer to their families was, maybe, as significant a benefit of the campaign as that of their cultural welfare. Other campaigns were even more difficult to evaluate. The publishing and distribution of *Cofion Cymru* to Welsh military personnel and workers relocated out of Wales and the efforts of the joint women’s committee in favour of

³⁰¹ Morgan, *Modern Wales*, p. 9; *Rebirth of a Nation*, p. 251.

Welsh female war workers in England, were each significant in their funding, organisation and operation. Whether these campaigns achieved their respective objectives is difficult to evaluate. However, while definitive conclusions cannot be supplied, there was overwhelming anecdotal evidence that these campaigns were valued by those who were forced to leave Wales to assist in the protection of Britain during the war. However, the most significant success for UCF in the period 1941 to 1945 was, arguably, the organisation itself. The Union built on the infrastructure of the two organisations that preceded it and successfully fused them into a cohesive organisation. Significantly, UCF established itself as a moderate and reliable organisation, respected by members of both local and central government, with which it worked closely to achieve its objectives.

Chapter 4

1943: The National Survey of Welsh Social Life

The purpose of wartime social surveys is not to produce a finished academic result, but to give sound practical guidance about what needs to be done in a situation which is, in any event, changing so rapidly that exact quantitative study is out of date before the results can be compiled.¹

One of the most significant domestic developments during World War Two was the emergence of comprehensive social planning. From an early stage in the war, consideration was given to improving British society in its aftermath. From 1942, as the tide of the conflict turned in the allies' favour, these deliberations increased. In June 1942, following similar broadcasts covering other regions of the country, the Government announced the establishment of an Advisory Council on Welsh Reconstruction Problems (Welsh Advisory Council), under the authority of the Ministry of Reconstruction.² This was followed in December with the publication of the landmark Social Insurance and Allied Services Report, more commonly referred to as the Beveridge Report, which delivered the blueprint for the Welfare State.³ Away from government, as early as February 1941, the Nuffield College Committee, prompted by G. D. H. Cole, set up the Social Reconstruction Committee, based in Oxford.

Initiatives were also launched in Wales. At the first meeting of the newly formed UCF in 1941, the Council appointed a committee to deal with the problems of reconstruction which

¹ NCSRS, 206/J1/1-10, memo by G. D. H. Cole, 'A Memorandum on Wartime Surveys', 4 June 1943, p. 2.

² See, for example, HC Deb, 11 September 1941, vol. 374 cc. 304-7, 'Post-War Reconstruction Scotland (Council)'; TNA, CAB 87/17, 'Reconstruction Joint Advisory Council'; HC Deb, 30 June 1942, vol. 381 cc. 27-9, 'Welsh Reconstruction (Advisory Council)'; The Ministry of Reconstruction was established in 1943 under Lord Woolton, which replaced the Reconstruction Secretariat.

³ TNA PREM 4/89/2, William Beveridge, *Social Insurance and Allied Services: Report By Sir William Beveridge* (London, HMSO, 1942); For a small selection of recent and contemporary publications, from an extensive bibliography see, B. Harris, *The Origins of the British Welfare State: Society, State and Social Welfare in England and Wales, 1800-1945* (New York, 2004); M. Sullivan, *The Development of the British Welfare State* (New York, 1996); N. Kaldor, 'The Beveridge Report: The Financial Burden', *The Economic Journal*, 53:209 (1943), 10-27; E. M. Burns, 'The Beveridge Report', *The American Economic Review*, 33:3 (1943), 512-33.

met several times over the following twelve months.⁴ In April 1942, building on an initial meeting the previous December, J. F. Rees, the Principal of University College, Cardiff, established the Wales Survey Board.⁵ This Board formed sub-committees at each of the four University of Wales Colleges and consisted primarily of Welsh academics. Each of these organisations faced the same challenge: prior to formulating a strategy a detailed survey of the current situation was required.

This Chapter will detail how, due to growing discontent, the Union, despite close connections with the Wales Survey Board, determined to conduct its own national survey. It will detail how the ensuing National Survey of Welsh Social Life was organised and undertaken in an attempt to establish the impact of World War Two on Welsh society. It will show how the Survey, described as ‘the most comprehensive survey of its kind ever to be undertaken in the Principality,’ returned responses from across Wales and even beyond.⁶ It will also confirm Cole’s contention that such surveys are often out of date before the results are compiled.⁷

I:UCF and the Social Surveys, 1939-1942.

Assessing the state of the nation and its population was not a new concept. The Ministry of Information (MOI), which had been briefly established at the end of the First World War, was re-formed in September 1939, and since the beginning of the conflict exerted a considerable resources on its Home Intelligence Division, by monitoring public morale through a series of regional offices. The MOI used qualitative and quantitative methods to provide the Government with a reliable flow of information on what the public were thinking. This provided a basis for the authorities to target their publicity and to assess the morale of the population.⁸ For the purposes of the Home Intelligence Division, Wales was designated a single region, with its regional office based in Cardiff. However, this gave the

⁴ NLW, UCF/A23, report by T.I. Ellis, ‘Secretary’s Report for the Year August 1941 – July 1942’, July 1942.

⁵ NLW, UCF/43, Wales Survey Board, ‘Post-War Reconstruction in Wales’, 20 April 1942.

⁶ ‘A Survey of Wales: Questionnaires on Aspects of Life’, *Liverpool Daily Post* (16 November 1943), p. 4.

⁷ G. D. H. Cole, ‘A Memorandum on Wartime Surveys’, p. 2.

⁸ TNA, INF 1/47, ‘Home Intelligence Division’ (1940).

resultant information an imbalance in favour of South Wales. The information gathered by this department was regularly supplemented by the employment of outside agencies, in particularly Mass Observation.⁹

The Mass Observation social research organisation was created in 1937 to record everyday life in Britain. The founders, Tom Harrisson, Charles Madge and Humphrey Jennings, used three main methods to obtain information. Firstly, around 500 volunteers kept diaries which were submitted to the organisation on a monthly basis. These entries were supplemented by observers who completed directives, or open ended questions, on specific topics based on their interpretation of local attitudes. These volunteers were supplemented by a team of paid investigators who embedded themselves in a variety of public situations and recorded people's behaviour and conversation in as much detail as possible.¹⁰ These methods were criticised, even at the time, for their almost exclusive use of quantitative methods which was considered unscientific and uncontrolled.¹¹

In Wales, the distribution of the Mass Observation diarists was concentrated along the South Wales coastal corridor from Newport to Swansea, although one man serving in the Armed Forces wrote from Bury Port to the west of Swansea for a short period in 1941.¹² This again gave the responses a South Wales bias. Of a total of 17 diarists who wrote from Wales, only three were located outside this region, one from Llandovery in Carmarthenshire and two from the north-west, one in Barmouth and the near Pwllheli.¹³

The usefulness of these diarists to this study is limited. The diarists from South Wales generally wrote from the more Anglicised areas and did not comment on language issues. The Llandovery diarist proved to be temporary and again ignored the Welsh language. Further north, one submission was reportedly by a housewife from Harlech. However, on

⁹ P. Addison & J. Crang, *Listening to Britain: Home Intelligence Reports on Britain's Finest Hour, May to September 1940* (London, 2011).

¹⁰ Mass Observation Website, 'The Documents', www.massobservation.amdigital.co.uk/Introduction/TheDocuments, accessed 3 April 2016.

¹¹ H. Jones, *British Civilians in the Front Line: Air Raids, Productivity and Wartime Culture, 1939-45* (Manchester, 2006), p. 13.

¹² The Keep, Brighton, Mass Observation Archives, 'Wartime, Diarists', Diarist Number 5112.

¹³ *Ibid.*

closer inspection she was actually a middle-class lady, who lived, with a servant, in a cottage in Slough, who had visited Harlech on charitable work during the spring of 1942.¹⁴ Similarly, she made no comments relating to the Welsh population or language, apart from conceding that 'too much readjustment [was] needed' to live in Harlech.¹⁵ This diarist could not, therefore, be considered representative of the local population. The final diarist, a Pwllheli farmer, did reside in the vicinity. His farm was located some four miles from RAF Penrhos, the site of the 1936 arson attack.¹⁶ However, his diary entries are composed mainly of the routines of rural life, and he expressed little sympathy for Welsh nationalists. Referring to its economic policy, he commented, 'I speculated pessimistically on what would happen to the land and farming if some of the planners and nationalist had their way.'¹⁷ Despite the overall value of the Mass Observation archive as an historical source there was very little representation from rural and Welsh speaking areas of Wales.

In April 1940, to address criticisms of Mass Observation, the MOI established the Wartime Social Survey.¹⁸ This Survey was based at the London School of Economics and conducted more academic and quantitative investigations. The Wartime Social Survey was designed to obtain information on specific topics as requested by other government departments. A total of 55 trained field workers, all of which were female, interviewed a random sampling of the general population.¹⁹ From these responses statistical information was extrapolated. These field workers were divided into two teams of investigators. The first was a mobile group who would travel to any part of the country as required, while the other, which was distributed throughout the main centres of population, reported from within their respective areas.²⁰ Again, due the demographic spread of the population in Wales, there was no representation outside the South Wales industrial belt. Late in 1941 the Wartime

¹⁴ MO, Diarist 5304, Diary Report, 22 July 1941.

¹⁵ MO, Diarist 5304, Diary Report, 5 April 1942.

¹⁶ See Chapter 1.

¹⁷ MO, Diarist 5056, Diarist Report, 4 September 1940.

¹⁸ I. McLaine, *Ministry of Morale: Home Front Morale and the Ministry of Information in World War Two* (London, 1979), p. 53.

¹⁹ K. Box and G. Thomas, 'The Wartime Social Survey', *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, 107:3/4 (1944), 151-89.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

Social Survey was incorporated into the MOI. Notwithstanding their slightly different remits, all these organisations used the same methodology.

Scientific social surveying was described as a firsthand investigation, which, in Britain, usually dates from the 1880s.²¹ From its inception it was closely linked to social reform and most frequently investigated living conditions, unemployment and health, all of which were associated with economic disparity.²² At the beginning of the war information gathering via social survey followed the pre-war 'panel form', in which the same individuals were interviewed and re-interviewed on a regular basis to ascertain changing opinions.²³ However, to produce sufficient data on such a large range of topics as was needed by the wartime government, a new method was required.

The newly developed probability sampling method (or sample survey), developed by George Gallup in the United States had been adopted in Britain in 1936 by Henry Durant. This technique used a random sampling system to give a statistical response to set enquiries and was adopted by the British Institute of Public Opinion (BIPO).²⁴ One of the criticisms of this method, however, was that investigators frequently did not know the respondents and significantly, were unaware of local circumstances that may influence replies. Mass Observation diarists, in contrast, who were more familiar with local pressures, wrote freely and did not respond to preset questions, making comparisons difficult. These methodological weaknesses were transferred to the later-established organisations set up to look specifically at the post-war period.

Two such organisations were both founded by academics. In February 1941, the Nuffield Survey was established to 'foster the co-operation of scholars and the nation's business and political leaders'.²⁵ It began to recruit teams of unpaid volunteer investigators, located at

²¹ M. Bulmer, K. Bales & K. K. Sklar, 'The Social Survey in Historical Perspective' in M. Bulmer, K. Bales & K. K. Sklar, (eds.) *The Social Survey in Historical Perspective 1880-1940* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 17.

²² *Ibid*, pp. 2-3 & 39-40.

²³ M. Savage, *Identities and Social Change in Britain Since 1940: The Politics of Method* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 203-4.

²⁴ *Ibid*; Bulmer, Bales & Sklar, 'The Social Survey in Historical Perspective', p. 41.

²⁵ NCSRS, Introduction, p. 1.

www.nuffield.ox.ac.uk/Resources/Library/ArchiveCollections/Documents/NCSRS.pdf, accessed 7 January 2015.

twenty-eight regional offices, located, for the most part in universities across the country. In Wales, for example, the Nuffield Survey established regional centres at Cardiff, Swansea, Aberystwyth and Bangor.²⁶ Initial reports focused on industrial and demographic distribution.²⁷ However, enquiries were soon expanded to include education, social services and local government. While the Survey was an unofficial body, it did initially receive official approval through government grants. However, in March 1943, this financial support ended, due mainly to various Ministries 'paying much greater attention to the issue of reconstruction ... and resentment on the part of the Government at the perceived intrusion of the Survey into their spheres of responsibility.'²⁸ By January 1944 the Survey was officially closed down. However, some sub-committees, investigating topics like education and local government, continued to meet. To date, besides a few references to individual Nuffield Reports, the extensive papers of this Survey remain a largely untapped historical resource. The Nuffield Survey, like Mass Observation, proved of limited value to this study primarily due to its economic research areas.

The other academically established reconstruction organisation began in Wales. It originated at the University College Cardiff. As early as December 1940, J. F. Rees, the College Principal, coordinated a meeting of representatives of Welsh life, including education, local government, town and country planning, industry and expressed his concerns:²⁹

At the end of the war the problem of reconstruction with which we should be faced would be bigger than the questions that faced us in 1918 ... there must be groups of people here and there genuinely concerned for the future and trying to thin out what forms that reconstruction might take.³⁰

²⁶ NCSRS, C1/321-355, 'Local Investigation Centres: Regional Reports'.

²⁷ See, for example, TNA, CAB 117/167, 'Nuffield College Social Reconstruction Survey: Interim Report on Movements of Population During the War', 1941; CAB 117/168, 'Nuffield College Social Reconstruction Survey: Report on the Location of Industry 1942-3', 1943.

²⁸ NCSRS, Introduction, p. 1.

²⁹ NLW, UCF/A3, T. Alwyn Lloyd letter to T. I. Ellis, 17 February 1941.

³⁰ NLW, UCF/179, 'Notes of Discussion of Meeting Called by Principal Rees at University College Cardiff', 12 December 1940.

Rees suggested that the war would result in a fundamental alteration to the social life of Wales.³¹ Among the delegates were the pioneer of town redevelopment and writer, Edgar L. Chappell and the well known town planner, T. Alwyn Lloyd. Another significant name at the meeting was Peter Scott who would fulfil the role of secretary. Scott had been the driving force behind what became known as the 'Brynmawr experiment', which from 1928 attempted, with some degree of success, to rejuvenate the derelict former mining town.³² The meeting proposed establishing a new board to plan for reconstruction in Wales. It was felt at that time, however, that the time was 'not ripe for anything so definite'.³³ Despite several further meetings, it was almost eighteen months later before Rees' concept came to fruition and the Wales Survey Board was founded.

Despite the delay in establishing a formal group, the meeting resolved 'with others, whom we think appropriate, agree[d] to gather from time to time to discuss ideas'.³⁴ T. Alwyn Lloyd considered that Ellis and UCF fell into the category of 'appropriate other' and, following an initial exchange of correspondence, Ellis was invited onto the Board.³⁵ In spring 1941, the Board resolved that it required 'some person in each of the four University College areas to handpick the people known in the area to be interested in reconstruction and to bring them together'.³⁶ To this end Rees approached the principals of the other three Welsh University Colleges to enlist their support.³⁷ The support of Sir Percy Watkins, the Permanent Secretary of the Welsh Department of the Board of Education, was also obtained to act as Chairman.

In April 1942 it was announced that arrangements had been completed for the establishment of a Wales Survey Board.³⁸ Significantly, the announcement declared that

³¹ Ibid.

³² 'Brynmawr – A Derelict Town and a New Life', *The Spectator* (12 December 1931), pp. 5-6.

³³ NLW, UCF/179, 'Notes of Discussion of Meeting', 12 December 1940.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ NLW, UCF/A3, T. Alwyn Lloyd letter to T. I. Ellis, 17 February 1941; NLW, UCF/179, Peter Scott letter to T. I. Ellis, 12 March 1941; NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to Peter Scott, 17 March 1941.

³⁶ NLW, UCF/179, 'Notes of the Discussion at a Third Meeting Called By Principal Rees on Post-War Reconstruction', 25 April 1941.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ NLW, UCF/43, Wales Survey Board, 'Post-War Reconstruction in Wales', 20 April 1942.

‘the Board will recognise the Principality as a historic national unit with its own traditions, cultural influences, and economic activities’.³⁹ This was an unusual outlook at the time but one in keeping with UCF’s views. The primary objective of the new body was, ‘to carry out a comprehensive survey of the present conditions in Wales and Monmouthshire as a preliminary to post-war planning.’⁴⁰ Each regional group took responsibility for conducting surveys within its own respective areas and also had the power to co-opt further members.⁴¹ Chairing the four regional Councils were Moses Griffith (Aberystwyth), Principal J. Morgan Rees (Bangor), Principal J. F. Rees (Cardiff) and Principal C. A. Edwards (Swansea).⁴² Clearly, Rees had been successful in recruiting the principals of Bangor and Swansea Colleges; however, Ifor L. Evans at Aberystwyth was reported to be ‘not anxious to do much’.⁴³ The reason behind the appointment of Moses Griffith to the remaining position is unclear. However, it is likely that as an agricultural scientist, his expertise in land use played a significant part.⁴⁴ This experience would also have reinforced his appointment as a member of UCF. Ellis had notified the UCF Executive that there was the possibility of some other members of the Union joining him on the Board several months earlier.⁴⁵ Whatever the motivation for this appointment, Griffith’s associations with UCF meant that two of the nine members of the Wales Survey Board were also senior members of UCF. This gave the Union a powerful voice within reconstruction discussions.

It was not surprising that the two organisations worked in tandem. It was apparent from the sources that Ellis and Scott quickly developed a close working arrangement, with Scott and his wife staying with Ellis on their trips to Aberystwyth.⁴⁶ This friendship facilitated the development of parallel strategies and a division of responsibilities. Within months of the

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ NLW, UCF/179, Wales Survey Board (n.d.).

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² NLW, UCF/43, Wales Survey Board, ‘Post-War Reconstruction in Wales’, 20 April 1942.

⁴³ NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to Peter Scott, 5 May 1941.

⁴⁴ R. M. Jones, ‘Robert Geraint Gruffyth 1928-2015’, British Academy Website, www.britac.ac.uk/sites/default/files/13-Gruffydd.pdf, accessed 23 April 2017.

⁴⁵ NLW, UCF/A11, Minutes of the 16 Meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Conference for the Defence of Welsh Culture, 6 June 1941.

⁴⁶ NLW, UCF/A1, T. I. Ellis letter to Peter Scott, 17 March 1941.

formal announcement of the Welsh Survey Board (WSB), a division of duties was discussed between Scott, Ellis and Griffith. ⁴⁷ It was proposed that the WSB research public health, local government, physical planning and conduct special surveys of selected towns and rural areas. The areas of education and life in rural Wales, both of which had previously been within its remit, were now left to UCF. ⁴⁸ Confirming one of the Union's weaknesses, the Board offered to give 'every assistance in starting these groups in the non-Welsh speaking areas.'⁴⁹ This re-affirms that the Union was stronger in Welsh speaking areas of Wales but its influence was reduced in the more Anglicised regions.

The Board clearly considered that the two organisations would achieve greater influence by working together. This collective endeavour reached a point where the Board approved a resolution to explore delegating some of its secretarial work to Ellis at UCF. ⁵⁰ Such a move would have placed Ellis in a strong position to further influence the organisation and, in all likelihood; result in a fusing of attitudes. Not everyone agreed with these proposals in their entirety. Scott reported that, 'the Chairman of the Wales Survey Board feels strongly that the Board should have a Functional Committee on Education', although Scott clarified that 'he is the only one that takes this view'. ⁵¹ Throughout 1942 there was a drawing together of opinions and policies between the two organisations, facilitated to a large extent by the relationship between Ellis and Scott. UCF, despite having a reconstruction sub-committee, had been an organisation which primarily campaigned on wartime issues. However, through this closer association with the WSB, post-war reconstruction began to take a higher priority.

By November 1942, building on their closer working relationship, the WSB and UCF appeared to be on the verge of a merger. Over the preceding three months regular communication had been exchanged and the Chairman of the Union, together with Ellis,

⁴⁷ NLW, UCF/43, Peter Scott, 'Report of Suggestions for Co-operation Between *Undeb Cymru Fydd* and the Wales Survey Board Arising Out of a Conversation Between Tom Ellis, Moses Griffiths and Peter Scott at Aberystwyth', 2 September 1942.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ NLW, UCF/43, Peter Scott, 'Report to Wales Survey Board'.

⁵¹ NLW, UCF/43, Peter Scott letter to T. I. Ellis, 7 October 1942.

had held a personal meeting with Rees.⁵² A meeting of the two organisations was arranged in Carmarthen. This meeting unanimously resolved to hold a combined annual conference and agreed to form a joint standing committee. It further resolved that the two bodies exchange memoranda and information and arrange joint consultation on matters concerning Wales.⁵³ The two organisations were moving closer together. While no documented merger objective was discovered by this research, the unification of these organisations would have strengthened UCF's already strong presence within the University of Wales, brought a number of senior Welsh specialist professionals under its banner and given it a powerful voice in planning the post-war reconstruction of Wales. The motives of Rees and the Wales Survey Board for a merger are more ambiguous.

During the spring of 1942, both the WSB and the Nuffield Survey were operating in Wales. These reconstruction organisations had similar structures. Each had established centres in the University Colleges of Cardiff, Swansea, Aberystwyth and Bangor. The overlap between these bodies went further, with both frequently researching the same topics, primarily industry and population changes and, at times, using the same academics to complete this research. In the case of Cardiff and Bangor, both the Nuffield and WSB regional centres were headed by the same person, namely J. F. Rees and J. Morgan Rees respectively.⁵⁴ It would appear from the submitted outputs of these academics that, for unknown reasons, the Nuffield Survey received priority. In contrast to reports submitted to the Nuffield Survey, there was no evidence that any of the suggested reports were completed for the WSB.⁵⁵

⁵² NLW, UCF/98, Minutes of the Eighth Meeting of Undeb Cymru Fydd Council, November 1942.

⁵³ NLW, UCF/43, Peter Scott letter to T. I. Ellis, 25 February 1943; NLW, UCF/43, 'Report of a Joint Meeting Held in Carmarthen on Wednesday, 11 November, of Representatives of *Undeb Cymru Fydd* and the Wales Survey Board, December 1942; NLW, UCF/43, Peter Scott, 'Wales Survey Board Agenda', 26 September 1942.

⁵⁴ NLW, UCF/A6, 'Preliminary Memoranda for the Meeting of the All Wales Survey Board, 12 September 1941; NCSRS, C1/324 'Prof. J. Morgan Rees, Some Suggestions for a Survey of North Wales', February, 1943.

⁵⁵ For further output to Nuffield Survey, see, for example, NCSRS C1/327, J. Morgan Rees, 'The Economic Problems of the Wales Region: With Special Reference to Reconstruction After the War', Sept 1942; NCSRS C1/324, 'North Wales Region: With Special Reference to Location of Industry, 13 October 1941; NCSRS C1/334, 'J. F. Rees, South Wales Report: Regional Study in the Location of Industry, October 1941; For a list of planned WSB reports see, NLW, UCF/A6, 'Preliminary Memoranda for the Meeting of the All Wales Survey Board', 12 September 1941.

This subservient position in the priorities of these investigators was challenged further when the Government announced its intention to establish its own Welsh reconstruction council.

In June 1942, the Government's attention to reconstruction reached Wales. Following consultation with Welsh MPs, the Government announced it had decided to appoint an Advisory Council on Welsh Reconstruction, 'to Survey...those problems of reconstruction which are of special application to Wales and Monmouthshire and to advise on them.'⁵⁶ To further muddy the reconstruction water in Wales, the chairmanship of this Welsh Advisory Council (WAC) was given to Principal J. F. Rees.⁵⁷ Rees was now directly involved with all three reconstruction agencies in Wales. The remainder of the new Council however, contained more of a political and industrial make up and included the influential Labour MP James Griffiths, Evans Williams J. P., General Secretary of the South Wales Miners Federation, Sir Robert J. Webber, Managing Director of the *Western Mail* and the industrialist David Lewis.

Within weeks of the announcement establishing the WAC, the Chairman of the WSB questioned the need for his own organisation's continued existence.⁵⁸ He queried, for example, the need for his Board to prioritise the economic future of Wales as this was now within the realms of the Advisory Council, which, he argued, was better equipped to conduct such a survey. Furthermore, the Nuffield Survey had already conducted a survey on this topic with a report expected imminently.⁵⁹ To add further pressure to earlier organisations Lord Reith's Ministry of Works and Planning also established an office in Wales that summer.⁶⁰ The formation of a government backed WAC, added to the withdrawal of grants to the Nuffield Survey signalled the demise of both it and the WSB. With the closure of these private organisations, the post-war reconstruction of Wales, like other parts of Britain, was now exclusively in the domain of the Government. This reduced UCF's input into planning the Welsh future.

⁵⁶ HC Deb, 30 June 1942, vol. 381, cc. 27-29, 'Welsh Reconstruction (Advisory Council)'.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ NLW, UCF/43, Percy E. Watkins, 'Relations with the Advisory Council on Welsh Reconstruction Problems', 31 July 1942.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ NLW, UCF/A17, Henry Morris-Jones letter to T. I. Ellis, 9 July 1942.

The relationship between UCF and the new WAC was significantly more distant than with the WSB. Ellis contacted Rees soon after the Government announcement and followed this up with a memorandum on education in Wales.⁶¹ However, a year later, Ellis reported, that despite repeated attempts, there had not been an opportunity for representatives of the Union to meet with the Advisory Council.⁶² By this time the WAC had prepared its first interim report, which was published in February 1944.⁶³ Reflecting its industrial composition, this report made recommendations on coal, slate, tin-plate and associated industries and the export trade.⁶⁴ This report was in keeping with the investigations by most of the post-war survey organisations of the time, whose research was generally limited to industrial, economic and demographic distribution.⁶⁵ These spheres of enquiry, which were all linked to post-war employment, stemmed from widespread concerns that on culmination of the conflict, the Welsh economy would return to the depression of the 1930s. This view was reinforced by Mass Observation which claimed that as the war progressed, people's expectations for employment after the war reduced.⁶⁶ However, despite these prevalent concerns, these topics were not those that UCF wished to explore.

The culturally motivated UCF was more concerned by how badly Wales, and the Welsh language, had been affected by the war. Therefore, following the demise of the WSB and Nuffield Survey, and its less amicable relationship with the WAC, the Union resolved to take

⁶¹ NLW, UCF/A18, 'Minutes of the Second Annual Conference of Undeb Cymru Fydd'.

⁶² NLW, UCF/239, 'Undeb Cymru Fydd, Adroddiad yr Ysgrifennydd am Flwyddyn Awst 1942/Gorfennaf 1943, 3 July 1943.

⁶³ NLW, James Griffiths Papers (JAMTHS) C1/2, 'Interim Report of the Welsh Advisory Council (Draft), 1943; TNA, HLG 71/1124, 'Welsh Reconstruction Advisory Council, Interim Report', 1944.

⁶⁴ HC Deb, 17 October 1944, vol. 403, cc. 2245-6, 'Welsh Affairs'.

⁶⁵ See, for example, NCSRS C1/324, J. Morgan Rees Report, 'North Wales Region: With Special Reference to Location of Industry', 13 October 1941; NCSRS C1/332, A. H. Cox, 'South Wales: The Industrial Future of the Region,' 18 August 1941; TNA, HLG 71/1124, 'Welsh Reconstruction Advisory Council, Interim Report', 1944; A small number of Nuffield Reports from Wales did contain reference to the Welsh language and its decline, for example, see NCSRS C1/322, Percy George, 'Report On The Central Wales Area', January 1942; NCSRS C1/327 J. Morgan Rees, 'The Economic Problems of the Wales Region: With Special Reference to Reconstruction After the War', September 1942.

⁶⁶ T. Willcock and T. Harrison, *The Journey Home: The Fifth Change Wartime Survey (Advertising Service Guild's Report on the Problems of Demobilisation Conducted by Mass Observation)* (London, 1944).

its own initiative. Adding to what Mary Stocks termed 'Social Survey Madness' which, she claimed, was sweeping the country at the time, UCF resolved to conduct its own national survey of Wales.⁶⁷

II:UCF and the National Survey of Welsh Social Life

The UCF National Survey of Welsh Social Life was, from the outset, unusual. Firstly, it deviated from traditional enquiries into material living standards and attempted to evaluate the impact of the war on Welsh culture. Additionally, it was not organised by the Government or by a specific reconstruction or social organisation but by a relatively small cultural body, intent of protecting the language.

Despite already having a committee for reconstruction, in late summer of 1943, the Union formed a specific sub-committee to explore the feasibility of conducting this survey. Leading the sub-committee was the South Wales barrister Ithel Davies, an experienced political activist and a conscientious objector during both world wars.⁶⁸ Davies had previously been involved with the pre-war language campaign and came to the Union through his membership of the National Union of Welsh Societies.⁶⁹ Despite this he had not previously held any senior positions in UCF. However, in 1943 he was elevated to the National Council of the Union.⁷⁰ Politically, Davies, through the 1930s was closely associated with the Labour Party and was, from 1934, a member of the Socialist League.⁷¹ However, Davies resigned from the Labour Party in early 1940 and despite being unsatisfied with the national

⁶⁷ 'Political Leadership: Social Survey Dangers', *Manchester Guardian* (18 March 1944), p. 3; Mary Danvers Stocks (later Baroness Stocks) was a social reformer. She involved herself in, among other things, campaigns connected to women's suffrage and other feminist issues, as well as the introduction of the welfare state. For more information see, M. Stocks, *My Commonplace Book* (London, 1970).

⁶⁸ Davies was imprisoned for three years during the First World War following an arrest for desertion in May 1916. NLW, Ithel Davies Papers (ITHDAVIES) 392, 'Application to Register as Conscientious Objector'.

⁶⁹ Ithel Davies, *Bwrlwm Byw* (Landysul, 1984), p. 198-9. Davies believed the National Union of Welsh Societies had been 'swallowed' by the Defence Committee during the merger. Despite this, at the merging of the two organisations he was elected Chairman of the Swansea Branch of the new UCF, *Ibid*, p. 202.

⁷⁰ 'A Survey of Wales: Questionnaires on Aspect of Welsh Life'.

⁷¹ NLW, ITHDAVIES 392, 'Swansea Socialist League Membership Book'.

principles of Saunders Lewis became drawn to the nationalist cause. In his autobiography he later wrote, 'I also saw that there was no hope for Wales or the language while Wales was under the paw of the English.'⁷² However, despite his continued commitment to socialism and discontent with the leadership of the WNP, he joined the party in spring 1942, going on to write a number of articles for the *Welsh Nationalist*.⁷³ Following the war Davies became prominent in the Welsh Republican Movement (*Mudiad Gweriniaethol Cymru*) and stood for it at the 1950 General Election.⁷⁴ Joining Davies on the sub-committee was a Welsh historian, Robert Owen as well as D. T. Morgan, the former northern organiser for the National Union of Welsh Societies.

To ensure complete national coverage the Union wished to obtain information from every parish in Wales. Initially, UCF intended to rely heavily upon its local branches to obtain this information. However, it soon became apparent that the Union's national structure did not unilaterally allow as comprehensive a coverage of the nation as it desired. Therefore, to ensure full national coverage, the Union enlisted the assistance of other Welsh cultural organisations. In areas where the Union had no branches, or where the branch was considered weak, Young Farmers Clubs, youth organisations and especially the *Urdd* was urged to help. Davies argued that, 'under the guidance of the Committee and mature people, the young people of the *Urdd* can be of great service'.⁷⁵ To facilitate this cooperation, the *Urdd's* chief organiser, R. F. Griffiths, was co-opted onto the organising sub-committee.⁷⁶ The National Eisteddfod was approached, however its involvement, or lack of it, suggests a less enthusiastic response.⁷⁷

⁷² Davies, *Bwrlwm Byw*, p. 174.

⁷³ Ibid, p. 175; For an example of Davies articles, see, for example, Ithel Davies, 'Economic Development', *Welsh Nationalist* (January 1945), p. 3; 'An Economic Policy for Wales', *Welsh Nationalist* (December, 1944), p. 2; 'Wales and the Election', *Welsh Nationalist* (September, 1945), p. 2.

⁷⁴ NLW, ITHDAVIES/406, 'Welsh Republican Party, 1950 Campaign Brochure Ogmere Division'; for more information on his time with the Welsh Republican Party and a more indepth appraisal of Ithel Davies's life, see his autobiography; Davies, *Bwrlwm Byw*.

⁷⁵ 'Ffeithiau Am Gymru: Trem Genedlaethol Undeb Cymur Fydd, *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (6 October 1943), p. 8.

⁷⁶ 'A Survey of Wales'.

⁷⁷ 'Ffeithiau Am Gymru'.

The National Survey of Welsh Social Life was to be accomplished through the completion of a preset semi-structured questionnaire, 'upon all aspect of social conditions in Wales'.⁷⁸ This questionnaire, which contained a combination of open and closed questions, was subdivided into five sections and enquired about Education and Youth Organisations, Churches and Sunday Schools, Welsh Homes, Social Life and finally Local Government and Administration of Law. In total 234 questions were presented for completion, in a 30 page booklet. These questions reflected the concerns of the Union and addressed issues such as the teaching Welsh in schools, the teaching of Welsh history and availability of Welsh books and Welsh speaking teachers. The Survey enquired into religious changes, by asking for information on the establishment or closure of churches and chapels. There were several questions relating to the effect of evacuees, for example 'what was the effect of this 'alien influence' on [Welsh] households?' The Social Life section related to changed to Welsh life, especially since the beginning of the war, and reflected a wide range of topics, including those linked to Anglicisation, including information on cinemas and newspapers. There were enquiries too relating to political parties and trade unions but only in respect of the language they used at meetings. Significantly, given the introduction of the Welsh Courts Act the previous year, the final section of the questionnaire related to local government and the administration of law.⁷⁹

Despite the wide range of topics included in the booklet, the overall theme of the questionnaire was how each specific subject had impacted on the Welsh language. There are no references to elements of Welsh social life outside this sphere. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, for a cultural survey, economic factors such as employment and industry were overlooked. However, there was also an absence of some cultural components such as sport. The primacy given to the Welsh language in the questionnaires and the omission of wider topics of Welsh life was evidence that the survey was influenced by the socio-linguistic nationalist agenda.

Many of the enquiries contained in the questionnaires included what are termed complex question fallacy, in that they combined two or more questions into a single enquiry. This

⁷⁸ NLW, UCF/18, 'Ymchwil Undeb Cymru Fydd i Gyflwr Bywyd Cymdeithasol Cymru.

⁷⁹ For a full breakdown of the survey questions see Appendix D. (translated by the author).

technique pre-supposes the response to the initial question prior to answering the second element. For example, while enquiring about the housing of evacuees and war workers in Wales, the question 'What was the effect of this 'alien influence' on [Welsh] households?' pre-supposes that there was an effect on households.⁸⁰ While historians classify such techniques as leading questions, legal experts such as, the Survey's author, Ithel Davies consider it entrapment.⁸¹ From this perspective the questions contained in the questionnaire booklets were not well written and led the respondent towards certain conclusions.

In this way, the questions contained in the questionnaire cannot be deemed impartial. Many of the themes pre-supposed that the Welsh language was still in decline and, more importantly, that the Anglicisation of Wales had increased as a result of the British Government's wartime measures. More significantly, there was an underlying inference that everything connected to the Welsh language and traditional Welsh life was positive and anything associated with the English language was negative. This was not a new stance among Welsh language or nationalist organisations. However, with fewer than 40 percent of the population claiming to speak Welsh, it was another challenge to the Union's claim to speak for the whole of Wales.

By October 1943, the preparation of the questionnaire was all but complete. To generate support and raise awareness, Davies released details of the project to the press. The wording of the subsequent statement affirmed Davies's nationalist and anti-military opinions. In a reinforcement of UCF's views, he contended that Welsh life had undergone significant changes and that the influences 'on our homes, on our churches, on our societies, on our educational and cultural institutions, such as schools', which had begun before the war had escalated. This, he argued, was due to the arrival of evacuees, weapons factories, military camps and the 'unrestrained and ruthless scattering of the country's population through military service'.⁸² The statement described how the Survey would

⁸⁰ NLW, UCF/18, 'Ymchwil Undeb Cymru Fydd i Gyflwr Bywyd Cymdeithasol Cymru', Question C. v. (b).

⁸¹ For more information see, D. Walton, 'The Fallacy of Many Questions: On the Notion of Complexity, Loadedness and Unfair Entrapment in Interrogative Theory', *Argumentation* 13:4 (Nov., 1999), 379-83.

⁸² 'Ffeithiau Am Gymru'.

'attempt to measure the impact of these changes on national life'.⁸³ The reference to national conscription was particularly noteworthy and demonstrates Davies' distaste for military service.⁸⁴ By December the questionnaires were distributed to UCF branches, volunteers and sections of the *Urdd*, and respondents were given six months to complete and return the responses to Aberystwyth.⁸⁵

Initially, many branches were slow to react. By April 1945, Gwynfor Evans' Carmarthen branch of UCF, for example, had not finalised how it should sub-divide the region and it was clear that little or no progress had been achieved over the preceding four months.⁸⁶ This was not an uncommon situation and consequently, Davies extended the initial ambitious deadline for completion of the Survey by twelve months.⁸⁷ Eventually, a total of 112 completed questionnaires were returned to UCF's offices.⁸⁸ This survey therefore provides a useful indicator of Welsh public opinion.

This social investigation used the 'sample survey' method. However, the samples used were not random, as with other contemporary investigations. Each branch committee decided autonomously how to complete the survey in its area, in such a way as to avoid geographical overlap. Some UCF branches, including Flint, Pembroke, Merseyside and Monmouthshire completed one questionnaire for the whole county. In most counties, however, each parish completed its own survey. Denbighshire and Carmarthenshire for example, submitted 30 and 25 questionnaires respectively. Every county completed and submitted at least one of these questionnaires with one noticeable absence. For reasons that are unknown there were no responses from Caernarvonshire. The Union's paperwork

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ See earlier comments regarding Davies experiences during World War One and subsequent registration as a Conscientious Objector.

⁸⁵ NLW, UCF/18, 'Ymchwil Undeb Cymru Fydd'.

⁸⁶ NLW, UCF/A19, Gwynfor Evans letter to T. I. Ellis, 3 April 1944.

⁸⁷ NLW, ITHDAVIES/130, Richard Thomas letter to Ithel Davies, 4 April 1944. See, for example, correspondence from Merseyside, Llandrillo and Lansanyffraid all received in February 1945, NLW, ITHDAVIES/130.

⁸⁸ As a sample size for a national survey this number was low. Later studies would argue that for such a national study some 500 to 1,000 respondents were recommended. However, as a percentage of the population, this number is in keeping with other wartime surveys that influenced government policy including Mass Observations. For more information see, S. Sudman, *Applied Sampling* (London, 1976), pp. 86-7.

on submitted responses merely contained a repeated entry of the letter 'm' adjacent the name of the county.⁸⁹ This absence was surprising for a number of reasons. Caernarvonshire was a strong Welsh speaking county, which had, throughout the existence of the Defence Committee and UCF, one of the most active local branches, based in Caernarfon. Further to this, Caernarfon was not the only branch in the county, active divisions were also located in Bangor, Llandudno and Porthmadog: none of which submitted responses to the Survey. There were also other language activists based in Caernarfon which had, historically, worked closely with the Union, including the WNP's Hywel D. Roberts and J. E. Jones.⁹⁰ This absence was unfortunate as it left a significant cavity in the overall data.

The National Survey of Welsh Social Life was a Welsh language survey. The questionnaires were printed exclusively in that language and the responses were, with exception of Langarne Parish, near Carmarthen, completed in Welsh. This confirmed the linguistic preference of those completing the questionnaire booklets, it did not, however, necessarily reflect the primary language used in the area from which the responses came. The normal daily language used in each area was significant to the Survey, not least because the impact of the war was considered by the Union, and the WNP, to be greater on Welsh speaking areas than on areas that normally used English. The linguistically Anglicised areas of Wales were believed by many to be already lost to the culture, as it was judged that traditional Welsh life was eroded in tandem with the language. The exclusive use of the Welsh language for the Survey limited the spread of respondents to those who understood the language. It was likely therefore that, in general, respondents would be more sympathetic to the plight of the language than, maybe, non-speakers would have been.

The Survey initially ascertained the normal linguistic preference of households in each responding area. Of the 103 questionnaires that had answered this question, 65 claimed to come from predominantly Welsh speaking areas, with a further seven declaring the homes

⁸⁹ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur Ymchwil Undeb Cymru Fydd i Gyflwr Bywyd Cymdeithasol Cymru'; None of the replies to the questionnaires were dated, however, they were all completed between the end of 1943 and Spring 1945.

⁹⁰ See, for example, Roberts' involvement in Caernarfon's initiative to establish an Advisory Committee in 1939 (Chapter Two). J. E. Jones was Secretary of the WNP based at the Party's Office in the town and maintained regular contact with Ellis.

in their areas were split equally between the English and the Welsh language. Just under a third of the booklets returned were from parts of Wales that spoke little or no Welsh.

There was little detailed information on the Survey respondents themselves. Many of the questionnaires were not signed by the individuals or organisations that had completed them and those that were, frequently, contained two or more names. However, it was noteworthy that an examination of the names that were present, suggested that almost half the people completing the survey (46 percent) were members of the clergy, especially chapel ministers.⁹¹ Two responses were annotated with the names of branches of the *Urdd*, while the remainder of those with names, simply listed individuals, and were split approximately evenly between male and female. The addresses associated with most of these names, however, confirmed that the majority of them were teachers or head teachers.⁹² Therefore, based on the available evidence, the questionnaires were predominantly completed by religious ministers and school-teachers. This division was unsurprising as it was from these professions that the Union received a significant amount of support. Thus, while the Survey was completed in almost every geographical region of Wales, except Caernarvonshire, the respondents, in contrast, stemmed from a narrow, quite specific, section of the Welsh-language communities. Any information or conclusions derived from this survey therefore, must be viewed in this context and understood as a view of the whole of Welsh society, as seen through this specific sector.

III: Responses to the National Survey of Welsh Social Life

This project has concentrated primarily the responses to 20 specific questions in the questionnaire. These questions were selected as they closely reflect the major concerns of UCF and its predecessors and, in general, answer Ithel Davies concerns relating to 'our homes, churches, societies and educational institutions'.⁹³ The event that spawned the 1939 Shrewsbury Conference and the establishment of the Defence Committee was the arrival of the evacuees. Therefore, initially, questions relating specifically to the hosting of evacuees

⁹¹ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur'.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ 'Ffeithiau Am Gymru'.

were chosen for evaluation and whether their arrival changed the atmosphere of Welsh schools or impacted on children's practices. Expanding on the educational impact of both evacuees and other arrivals in Wales, adult education was also examined to see if this had changed significantly. There was a whole section in the survey on religious services and Sunday schools, which contained 22 questions. However, for the purposes of this research these were summarised by scrutinising two of these enquiries. The first relating to how churches and religious activity had been affected by the arrival of the armed forces and adult evacuees and the second which enquired about the attitude of religious leaders towards Welsh organisations, like the *Urdd* and UCF.

To evaluate the impact of the war on traditional Welsh life and the Welsh language this project concentrated on two specific lines of enquiry. It looked at questions that indicated overall changes to Welsh social life. These included probes into the general linguistic preference of households in the vicinity, a study of the extent that homes had been affected and most significantly, whether or not Welsh life in the area was considered at risk. A view consistently expressed by nationalists since before the war. With regard to traditional Welsh life, the research honed in on an enquiry into whether ministers and teachers took an active part in local life. This was considered particularly significant given the occupation of most of the respondents. Much had been made by the Union and WNP, among others, of the negative influences on Welsh life of an increasing trend by young people to attend dances or card schools. The Survey investigated this claim and enquired whether these pastimes, conflicted with other more traditional Welsh pastimes, including attending chapel or other cultural organisations activities. It also enquired who was promoting the events, English or Welsh. Finally, the questionnaire asked whether mixed marriages were on the increase? The mixed marriages referred to by the Union were those between English and Welsh people, they also enquired whether these bonds were 'turning the Welsh atmosphere [of some areas] English'.⁹⁴ These two questions, by linking language and local atmosphere, reinforced the view that the Welsh language and culture were one and the same and the cornerstone of the struggle for many nationalists and patriots.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur'.

⁹⁵ Denney, 'The Social Construction of Nationalism', p. 152.

The concerns relating to the Anglicising influence of the arrival of large numbers of evacuees in Wales has already been discussed. The National Survey attempted to quantify the impact of these arrivals on Welsh life, and included a number of questions relating to the effect they had had on Welsh homes and on local education. This research concentrated specifically on two survey questions. The first, another example of complex question fallacy, was in two distinct parts, 'Did evacuees arrive in the area and did they change the atmosphere of the school?' The second enquired, 'Did this change the children's practices - in their language, in their play, in their meetings in and outside the school?'⁹⁶ It was not surprising given that Wales was a reception area, that of the 104 questionnaires that responded to these questions, 60 areas confirmed the arrival of evacuees, although the numbers received in each case varied significantly. What was more surprising was that of these 60 locations only ten responded that these 'outsiders' had caused a negative change in the atmosphere of the school.⁹⁷ Thirty five areas claimed that there had been no significant change to the atmosphere of the school and a further seven areas commented that it was the evacuees that had adapted to Welsh culture and had learnt to speak Welsh.⁹⁸ These responses went against the views that most nationalists, including UCF and WNP, had been promoting since the beginning of the war.

The impact of the evacuees was reduced further in response to the second question. This time only eight of the 60 respondents suggested that children's practices in their area had changed. In each case the change involved the greater use of English. However, in two of eight areas, the change was confirmed as being only temporary and once the evacuees returned home, the children had returned to their exclusive use of Welsh.⁹⁹ Therefore, based on the survey responses, only six of the 112 areas of Wales that responded, reported that the arrival of the evacuees led to an increase in the use of English by Welsh children. The Anglicising effect of the war on the children of Wales, according to the survey, was therefore minimal.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur'.

⁹⁸ The remaining eight questionnaires were either left blank (4) or reported that the area was already English (4); These results concurs with Caernarvonshire Education Committee, 'Report of the Organiser of Infants' Schools and Language Training 1940 discussed in Chapter 2.

⁹⁹ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur'.

There are a number of reasons why the impact of the evacuees was not greater in Wales. As has been well documented many evacuees did not stay long in their new surroundings. The way that the Government operation was organised also reduced their influence, with evacuees frequently being segregated and educated by their own teachers in separate classes from local Welsh children. However, this practice was only feasible in cases where large numbers of official evacuees were located. In many other cases, official, and especially unofficial, evacuees were hosted in small Welsh communities and, in general, were required to integrate fully into local life. The Survey confirmed that, in contrast to the six areas that reported a greater Anglicising influence caused by the evacuees, eight areas reported that the evacuees had adopted Welsh life, which included learning the Welsh language.¹⁰⁰ Some evacuees became so settled in the Welsh environment that, as early as 1940, a Home Intelligence Report confirmed that, 'many evacuated children are so settled in North Wales that difficulty is anticipated when they have to be sent home'.¹⁰¹ Therefore, in contrast to the earlier fears that evacuees would have a severe detrimental impact on the Welsh language, the reality was that where there was a negative impact it was balanced by the adoption of Welsh by some evacuees and a significant increase of awareness of the language. These linguistic changes, by both sets of children, appear to have been temporary, with each later returning to their mother tongue.

Similarly, little real negative impact was noticed on Adult educational classes from the arrival of the evacuees or the establishment of military bases in Wales. In response to an enquiry whether the dispersal of the population had impacted on the maintenance of adult classes in the area, 44 percent of the respondents confirmed that it had. Unfortunately, the questionnaire did not clarify whether this question related to the dispersal of the local population away from their homes or the arrival of outsiders who had themselves been dispersed. The majority of this 44 percent therefore clarified that this impact stemmed primarily from the loss of teachers or of young people that resulted either in fewer classes or a much older average class age. The follow-up question relating to the impact of

¹⁰⁰ See, for example, NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Crymych; Llanfiahngel; Llangynhafal & Llanellidan.

¹⁰¹ Home Intelligence Report Wednesday 21 August 1940 quoted in Addison & Crang (eds.), *Listening To Britain*, p. 349.

outsiders on these adult classes confirmed that in 85 percent of areas, there had been no noticeable change. Even in areas that hosted adult evacuees or military personnel, very few attended adult classes. Only two areas, Goginan and Aberffrwd near Aberystwyth, and Trefeurig, reported that adult evacuees took any interest in adult classes.¹⁰² In contrast, Ruthin reported that English workers located there took an interest in Welsh classes.¹⁰³ Interest in adult classes, especially Welsh classes, from military personnel was also rare. Only six areas reported military interest in adult educational classes and half of these were from foreign servicemen.¹⁰⁴ Proportionally, American and especially Czech servicemen took a greater interest in classes on Welsh history and the Welsh language than the British servicemen from other parts of the U.K. The impact of the mass movement of people into Wales during the war therefore had little lasting impact on either children's or adult education in Wales.

One reason why the adult wartime arrivals had less impact on Wales than was originally feared was, according to UCF's National Survey, their indifference to Wales. When asked, 'What is the attitude of these arrivals towards Wales and the Welsh?' 89 (80 percent) questionnaires responded with negative comments, indifference or blank spaces. Llandybie, for example, commented, 'they have no interest in the culture at all and take no interest in the language.' Several areas reported that on the whole they remained segregated from the local population. Llantwit Major, within whose parish two large military bases were located, responded "'A terrible place Wales", complain the airmen, because the pubs and cinemas don't open on Sundays'.¹⁰⁵ These types of negative comments on Welsh culture were, in truth, few in number, with majority of areas quoting indifference. In contrast, six respondents returned that the attitude of the visitors was positive towards Wales.¹⁰⁶ It appeared that military personnel located to Wales during the war, many of whom were only there for a short time, preferred to remain within their bases. To a large extent this

¹⁰² See, NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Goginan and Aberffrwd; Trefeurig.

¹⁰³ See, NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Ruthin.

¹⁰⁴ See NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Aberdare; Barry; Llangollen.

¹⁰⁵ See NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Llantwit Major.

¹⁰⁶ See NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Ruthin; Llansanffraid; Llangollen; Llanarth; Radyr (Cardiff); Llandrillo.

segregated them from nearby communities and reduced the impact they may have had on them.

These results conflict with the traditional narrative of the significant impact of American servicemen on Wales. From autumn 1943 until the invasion of Europe the following June, the ports of the South Wales were used to disembark hundreds of thousands of American soldiers, prior to their re-location to southern England. More significantly some 78 percent of all the supplies used by U.S. forces in the European campaign also moved through South Wales.¹⁰⁷ To accommodate this logistical operation, some 100,000 U.S. servicemen were based in the region from 1943. Penarth was described as ‘virtually an American town in the year before D-Day’, and yet only Aberdare and Caerphilly referred to Americans in response to the questionnaires.¹⁰⁸ Caerphilly stated that the Americans were responsible for an increase in the number of dances being held in the area. This was unsurprising as two railway battalions of Americans were located near the town.¹⁰⁹ While the majority of the Americans were stationed near the coast, a comparatively small number were located in the Valleys area, especially around the Rhondda.¹¹⁰ A small percentage of these were billeted with the local population, although this was rare. While Aberdare acknowledged that while the Americans did influence the area during their stay, there was ‘over time, no impact’.¹¹¹ One reason why the Survey takes little account of the American influence on South Wales may be connected to the areas that responded. For example, there were no questionnaires returned from Barry, Penarth or Swansea and the only area of Cardiff to complete the Survey was Whitchurch. Despite this, it was surprising that there were so few comments on the American influence in the questions examined.

From the early days of the war there had been concerns that the arrival of outsiders would impact on Welsh religious institutions. Churches, and especially chapels, were considered central to traditional Welsh life and a bastion of the Welsh language. The increasing apprehension that Anglicisation would increase in this sphere of life was fuelled by

¹⁰⁷ Broomfield, *Wales at War*, p. 120.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid; NLW, UCF/165, ‘Atebion i’r Holidaur’ from Aberdare; Caerphilly.

¹⁰⁹ Broomfield, *Wales at War*, p. 126.

¹¹⁰ Morse, *A Moment in History*, p. 10.

¹¹¹ NLW, UCF/165, ‘Atebion i’r Holidaur’ from Aberdare.

correspondence received by the Union from across Wales. In Anglesey, for example, one Minister complained that he was required to preach in English for the following Sunday's RAF church parade: 'This will be the first time ever that a service will be held in English in this chapel, which is well over a hundred years old'.¹¹² As within education, UCF's National Survey investigated this topic by asking, 'to what extent has the arrival of evacuees or branches of the armed forces to the vicinity affected churches and religious activity?' It is noteworthy that the question was only interested in evacuees and members of the armed forces and ignored other potential Anglicising influences, such as the unified radio broadcasts.

Of the 112 questionnaires, nine responded that the religious organisations in the area had been affected by the arrival of the visitors.¹¹³ In general, as was found in schools, their impact related to the greater use of English. However, not all of these respondents referred to language or considered the impact to be negative. Brechfa & Llansawel, for example, commented that 'the evacuees swell the numbers of the Sunday school and the military camp sends us a few faithful.'¹¹⁴ Glyn Ceiriog reported that it had lost its Sunday school.¹¹⁵ However, this was due to a lack of young people and not as a result of the evacuees or military arrivals. In contrast, the overwhelmingly number of areas, 91 in total, responded that the outsiders had had little or no effect on the religious services in their region. Several commented that, in general, neither the evacuees nor the servicemen attended religious services. Therefore, demonstrating a similar picture to that found in education, the vast majority of religious institutions of Wales were barely affected by the influx of evacuees and military personnel during World War Two.

In contrast to education and religious activity, the impact of the war on Welsh homes was more widely felt. In response to the enquiry, 'to what extent have homes been affected by the war?', only four areas responded that there had not been any impact. At the opposite extreme, 18 areas stated that homes had been affected by the war to a large extent. Most respondents, who answered this question, felt that they had been influenced to a small

¹¹² NLW, UCF/A3, J. Talwrn-Jones letter to T. I. Ellis, 28 November 1940.

¹¹³ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur'.

¹¹⁴ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Brechfa & Llansawel.

¹¹⁵ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Glyn Ceiriog.

extent (32) or that the most significant impact was the 'scattering of the family' through military conscription and factory work (46).¹¹⁶ Unfortunately, the subjective nature of this question made detailed analysis impossible. There was little doubt that the heavy bombing reported by Merseyside had a large impact on homes, while parishes based in colliery villages, like Carway, near Llanelli, felt little change from before the conflict, not merely because of their rural nature but also because miners, as members of a reserved occupation, were exempt from military conscription.¹¹⁷ Many respondents, somewhat surprisingly, felt that the dispersal of family members to serve their country, which were the most numerous responses, had a small effect on the household. Others, however, stated that this had a large impact on the family home. The survey contained no guidelines on how to define the level of impact sustained.

In contrast to the negative impact of wartime changes that most areas referred to, Merthyr Tydfil drew attention to a more positive effect and referred to the economic impact: 'Every member of the family is now working - in a town where there was so much unemployment'.¹¹⁸ The survey demonstrated the overwhelming view that the most significant impact of the war on Welsh homes arose from the Government's management of the people. Notwithstanding military conscription, and transference of workers out of Wales, according to those completing the survey, other government measures such as rationing, the blackout and the relocation of outsiders into traditional local communities, only affected homes to a small extent.

Societal changes were more difficult to evaluate. To assess this, the questionnaire concentrated on organised recreational pastimes with particular emphasis on young people, public areas, including halls and libraries and the extent to which teachers and religious ministers engaged with their local community. As in the other sections of the Survey the underlying trend equated to the use of the Welsh language and any changes to its use within these spheres of life. Underlying the linguistic leaning to the questions there were specific questions relating to the 'tendency for monolingual English people to buy houses and property in the area with a view to relocate there?' and whether there was 'a trend of

¹¹⁶ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur'.

¹¹⁷ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Merseyside; Carway.

¹¹⁸ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Merthyr Tydfil.

Englishmen opening up businesses, setting up workshops or undertaking economic projects in the area?’ In this way, the questions themselves led the respondents in a direction to concur with patriot’s opinion and that viewed all forms of Anglicisation as being detrimental to the Welsh language and traditional Welsh culture, even when this would result in greater economic and employment opportunities.

Longer-term Anglicising influences such as radio broadcasting and the increasing popularity of cinemas and public houses were, it was felt, exacerbated by a sharp increase in card playing and attending dances.¹¹⁹ The increases in these pastimes were blamed on the war. They were also deemed to be detrimental to attendance at religious gatherings, and card playing in particular, was seen as a temptation and not in keeping with Welsh Nonconformist traditions.¹²⁰ It was not surprising, therefore, that the survey wished to examine these leisure activities and asked several questions on the topics. This research has focused on four of these enquiries, each of which focused jointly on dances and playing cards. The first question contained two elements, ‘if there are prominent dances or playing cards in the area, do they conflict with original institutions.’ By original institutions the survey included cultural organisations like the *Urdd* or *Eisteddfodau* and religious organisations and services.¹²¹ The second question enquired as to whether Englishmen or Welshmen promoted these gatherings and what language was used on the dance floor and the board tables? Finally, UCF looked for confirmation that if there was an ‘increase in the popularity of dances and card schools is [was] it due to the influx of outsiders?’ The design of the questions indicated that the Union was anticipating the response that these damaging activities were on the increase as a result of the ‘outsiders’, and consequently this caused the decline of traditional Welsh activities. It was also expected that these pastimes were promoted by Englishmen and the language used was English. A review of the completed questionnaires, however, discloses a slightly different picture.

The Union accurately assessed the prominence of dances and card playing in Wales. In response to the first question, 69 areas confirmed that there were prominent dances or card playing schools and a further 19 areas stated that they existed to some degree. Only six

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ NLW, UCF/165, ‘Atebion i’r Holidaur’ from Llanfachreth; Rhydymain.

¹²¹ NLW, UCF/165, ‘Atebion i’r Holidaur’.

districts stated that there were none. Several answers reinforced the Union's concern that these activities were detrimental to Welsh organisations for example, Llanarth (Ceredigion) confirmed that 'they have had a bad effect on things like bible classes'.¹²² Rhosllanerchrugog responded 'I have to say that this is not a healthy influence or is any good for the religious institutions.' One area went further and argued, 'very few main institutions remain in Ruthin because of the dances and whist drives'.¹²³ Despite these anticipated views, the majority of those who confirmed the prominence of these pastimes, were more tolerant. Caerphilly, for example, stated that, 'there are major dances but they have not caused any changes'. Glyn Ceiriog failed to understand the problem with these dances and argued that 'dancing is as common to Wales as it is to England or France'.¹²⁴ Only three respondents confirmed that these leisure activities had caused any conflict within their areas. One reason for this was suggested by Llanilltud: 'They do not conflict; it is not church people who go to these places'.¹²⁵ This confirms, that in Llanilltud, at least, a degree of separation between those who participated in card-playing and dances and, those who lived a life more in keeping with traditional Welsh culture, which reinforced Morgan's hypothesis, as discussed in chapter one.¹²⁶ However, this concept was contradicted by other neighbourhoods. Aberffwd, for example, registered that 'they do not conflict because it is people from the 'original institutions' who take part in them'.¹²⁷ Llansanffraid went further and confirmed that these events were held 'with the approval of the main institutions', which implied some form of co-operation.¹²⁸ In many areas of Wales therefore, dances and card schools were not perceived as problematic to religious or traditional organisations. These responses suggest that at least some of the traditional organisations of Wales were responding to the modernising influences brought about by the war and embracing the changes. Therefore, while the survey confirmed the prominence of dances and card playing schools across Wales during the war, with regard to their impact on traditional Welsh life, it also divulged a

¹²² NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Llanarth.

¹²³ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' Llanarth; Rhosllanerchrugog; Ruthin.

¹²⁴ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' Glyn Ceiriog.

¹²⁵ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' Llanilltud.

¹²⁶ Morgan, 'The Gwerin of Wales'.

¹²⁷ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' Aberffwd.

¹²⁸ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' Llansanffraid.

significantly more diffused picture than was expected by the organisers. These responses demonstrated something of a disconnect between the Union's view of the traditional Welsh life and that which actually existed during the period.

The enquiries into the promoters and linguistic influence of these dances and card schools also unearthed an opaque landscape. In keeping with the Union's views 57 percent of the areas that commented confirmed that English was the sole or main language used on the dance floor and while playing cards. In contrast, only 20 percent testified to Welsh being the main or sole language with 22 percent claiming that they were bilingual.¹²⁹ As many of the respondents were ministers of religion it was somewhat surprising that not more than two respondents, claimed that they did not know the language used at such events, as they had never been.¹³⁰ The large number of areas that confirmed that English was the language used at such pastimes, means that even in many predominantly Welsh speaking areas, English was used. The reasons for this are unknown but reinforced the Union's opinion that these were Anglicising influences.

In contrast, the enquiry into the promoters of these events disclosed a different picture. Of the responses received, 38 percent of areas reported these events were promoted by both the English and Welsh people, as they were 'as bad as each other'.¹³¹ Meanwhile, 35 percent stated it was the Welsh people alone.¹³² Only a quarter of respondents claimed that the dances and card schools were promoted solely by English people. The view was confused further as the questionnaire or most of the replies did not clarify whether English meant linguistically English or English by nationality. This was only clarified in two responses, where both Merthyr Tydfil, and the adjacent Treharris, reported that the events were promoted by the English and Anglo-Welsh, thus exonerating Welsh speakers.¹³³ In the remaining districts the differentiation between linguistic and national division was not clarified for either the English or the Welsh. In a variation on other areas, Aberporth

¹²⁹ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur'.

¹³⁰ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Llangollen; Llanynys.

¹³¹ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Pentredwr (Llangollen).

¹³² NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur'.

¹³³ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Merthyr Tydfil; Treharris.

described these dance promoters as 'a certain class of Welshmen'.¹³⁴ There was no further clarification as to what was meant, but it was unlikely to be a complimentary term. The completed questionnaires confirmed UCF's worry that dances and card schools were frequently an Anglicising influences on Welsh communities. However, they also demonstrated that these events were most often promoted by local Welsh people rather than by outsiders. This suggests that there was less of a link between these pastimes and the arrival of wartime immigrants than projected by the Union.

The final stage of the review of UCF's opinion on dances and card schools concentrated on changes to the frequency of the events. This research examined the responses to one of the most significant questions on the subject: 'Has there been an increase in popularity (of dances and card schools) and is this due to the influx of outsiders.' Again, with two elements to the question, it constricted the respondent, and guided them towards a certain conclusion. The enquiry does not, for example, make it easy for someone to respond in a manner that indicated an increase in these events for other reasons and assumed that any increase in these pastimes was as a result of outsiders. However, this was unlikely to be the reason that a quarter of respondents failed to complete this question at all.

Despite the leading format of this enquiry, a variety of responses was received. To the first element of the question over half the given responses (53 percent) confirmed that there had been no increase in dances and card playing in their region since the onset of the war, seven of which agreed with Llantwit Major, that these pastimes had been prominent in their area for many years before hostilities.¹³⁵ The remaining 47 percent confirmed that the frequency of these events had increased, although sometimes only temporarily.¹³⁶ However, only a third of those that confirmed such an increase believed it was related to the war. This equated to only 16 percent of total respondents concurring with the Union's view. The other areas where increases had been experienced challenged the Union's stance, for example, Ruthin argued that more dances and card playing were witnessed 'because they are typical of the modern era as opposed to being influenced by outsiders.'¹³⁷ Merthyr

¹³⁴ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Aberporth.

¹³⁵ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Llantwit Major.

¹³⁶ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur'.

¹³⁷ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' Ruthin.

Tydfil, was one of several places which confirmed that the increase was 'because earnings are much better because of the war.'¹³⁸

Of more concern to UCF, and its view of traditional Welsh life, was that a quarter of areas that affirmed an increase in what it perceived as detrimental pastimes, exposed that they were organised by established Welsh institutions, to raise money for charitable causes such as the Red Cross. Therefore, in some places, these 'immoral activities' were being used for the benefit of those less fortunate. As if that did not challenge the Union's ethical standards sufficiently, it became apparent it was often the institutions that the Union was arguing would suffer from these activities, which were arranging and promoting the events. These answers similarly challenged the established view of traditional Welsh life.

One of the most sensitive questions in the questionnaire related to whether mixed marriages between the English and Welsh were increasing. This issue had been of concern for some time but became particularly relevant during the second part of the war. As Morgan has argued 'during the build-up to D-Day, Wales hosted thousands of soldiers who often married local girls ... intermarriage between nations meant, usually, that Welsh went to the wall'.¹³⁹ As significant as such intermarriage was when the couple moved away, the Union was more concerned about the impact on Welsh communities.

The Survey enquired if these 'mixed' marriages had a negative impact on the atmosphere of local communities. It also asked if they were leading to Welsh institutions using the English language to a greater extent. This question, like several others, did not clarify whether in this context, English referred to nationals of England, or people who spoke exclusively or primarily English. If the questionnaire referred to nationality, then the Union was beginning to emulate the WNP's rhetoric, which had proved so unpopular during the period. Alternatively, if the enquiry related solely to linguistic preference, then there was as much chance of Welsh people impacting on the atmosphere of Welsh localities and institutions, as those who originated from England. As the primary concern of UCF was the decline of the Welsh language, the likelihood is that it was a linguistic probe. Given the

¹³⁸ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Merthyr Tydfil.

¹³⁹ Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation*, p. 270.

military build-up discussed by Morgan, it was surprising that the Survey, or very few of the respondents mentioned the American influence.¹⁴⁰

The responses to these marital enquiries would have increased the concerns of UCF and language activists. Half the areas that gave definitive responses to these questions confirmed that 'mixed' marriages were on the increase to a greater or lesser extent.¹⁴¹ Menai Bridge was one of several parishes which reinforced the Union's fears and confirmed that when 'mixed' marriages occurred, 'the households invariably go English'.¹⁴² Responding to the general tone of the questionnaire rather than the individual enquiry, three areas, including Maesycwmer, highlighted how this 'has been a worry for years' and argued that this was not only a result of the war years.¹⁴³ In contrast, seven regions referred to wartime issues, such as serving in the military or working in the war factories, as being the cause of the increase in mixed marriages.¹⁴⁴

In contrast to the result of the enquiry into an increase in mixed marriages, the question relating to the impact of these marriages on Welsh communities was significantly less severe. Almost 75 percent of areas reported that there was no change to the local atmosphere or to Welsh institutions. The reasons for the variance between the two responses differed from place to place. Llansadwrn, for example, revealed how 'some [Welsh people] marry the English but they don't stay in the vicinity' and several respondents, agreed with Dyffryn Conwy that those who marry while in the Armed Forces tend to remain in England and therefore did not impact on the community.¹⁴⁵

While this practice of living in England reduced the impact on Welsh communities, it was still of concern. As seen in other areas, when Welsh speakers left their cultural group, they were usually lost to the language. Not every area agreed that mixed marriages necessarily led to Anglicisation of the household. Aberporth, for example, challenged this idea and

¹⁴⁰ Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation*, p. 270.

¹⁴¹ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur'.

¹⁴² NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Menai Bridge.

¹⁴³ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Maesycwmer.

¹⁴⁴ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur'.

¹⁴⁵ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Llansadwrn; Dyffryn Conwy.

argued that it 'depends on the strength of Welsh life in the family.'¹⁴⁶ Overall, the Survey confirmed that, while there was an increase in the number of Welsh people marrying English partners during the second half of the war, the Anglicising influence on homes, in traditionally Welsh speaking areas, was not as widespread or as severe as had previously been believed. That was not to say that mixed marriages were no longer a threat to the Welsh language. A quarter of respondents confirmed that the Welsh atmosphere of their locale was being influenced by these marriages. As the response from Pontyberem confirmed 'the language is not the top priority for those in love'.¹⁴⁷ Given the linguistic decline experienced during the interwar years, these figures equate roughly to a continuance of an existing pattern rather than a substantial increase caused by the war. This element of the survey reinforced earlier sections, which suggested that while Anglicisation continued unabated, there was no sudden increase in the early 1940s.

When the questionnaire enquired whether religious leaders and teachers took a leading role in communities and supported local organisations, almost 90 percent of respondents returned positive replies to varying extents. Six percent cited one group as being more interactive than the other.¹⁴⁸ However, overall these balanced out. While this result was in line with UCF's view, one area revealed a negative effect of such spiritual involvement when it answered, 'all public authorities are controlled by the church members ... they are nothing but a gang of fascists - democracy has never functioned here'.¹⁴⁹ This was a minority view but confirmed that, as in most areas of Wales, the religious and educational leaders continued to play a significant role. Despite any Anglicising influence therefore, this aspect of traditional Welsh life remained largely intact.

As the survey was prepared by UCF, with assistance from the *Urdd*, the questionnaire attempted to ascertain the view of teachers and religious leaders towards the two organisations. This enquiry took two forms. Initially, the attitude of religious leaders alone towards the *Urdd* and UCF was investigated and, in a later part of the booklet, a further question enquired into the combined attitude of teachers and ministers towards the two

¹⁴⁶ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Aberporth.

¹⁴⁷ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Pontyberem.

¹⁴⁸ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur'.

¹⁴⁹ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Carmarthen and St Clears.

organisations. Unsurprisingly, the responses to both questions were similar. A total of 60 percent of areas reported that the religious leaders were supportive or favourable to these Welsh organisations, while a further 19 percent reported some support was received, although it was not always particularly enthusiastic.¹⁵⁰ To the second question 76 percent described some form of positive attitude.¹⁵¹ In both cases, less than a tenth of respondents reported indifference or a lack of support for the cultural organisations and only one area, Carmarthen and St. Clears, reported hostility towards them.¹⁵² This overwhelming support for the Union and the *Urdd* from religious leaders and teachers was unsurprising as these were the primary sectors of society from which the Union drew most of its support. This level of backing cannot be viewed as evidence of encouragement from the wider community.

Despite this wide spread support there were some worrying replies. Llansadwrn, for example, stated that 'some [ministers and teachers] feel that the Union is part of the Welsh Nationalist Party', with another similar comment from Trimsaran.¹⁵³ UCF had, throughout the war, attempted to promote its autonomy and maintain a non-political stance. A perceived association with the WNP was unlikely to impact on the responses to the Survey, as most were completed by UCF members and associated organisations. However, these replies from sections of Welsh society most closely associated with UCF did suggest a failure to convince everyone of its independence. This was not the only concern. It was clear from the answers to these enquiries that the *Urdd* was more widely known and supported than UCF. This was most likely the result of having been established for much longer. As the *Urdd* was a supporter and contributor to the Union this would have been a more minor concern. However, of greater concern was that Whitchurch, in Cardiff, reported ignorance in the parish to the existence of the Union. A different concern for both organisations was expressed by four other respondents, who confirmed that there were no Welsh institutions

¹⁵⁰ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur'.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Carmarthen and St. Clears.

¹⁵³ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' Trimsaran; Llansadwrn.

of any kind in their areas.¹⁵⁴ Cultural and religious organisations were perceived as the backbone of traditional Welsh life and as such were expected to exist in every part of the country. Despite the few negative answers, overall the Survey confirmed the continued support of teachers and ministers for cultural institutions and indicated that Welsh life had not been seriously affected by the war.

The final key element of the Survey examined in this research was connected to the core theme of traditional Welsh life and the impact of World War Two on it. With two thirds of questionnaires being completed from within Welsh speaking areas of Wales, the question 'Is Welsh life in the area at risk because of the dangers of the last few years?' was particularly significant.¹⁵⁵ The constriction of the enquiry to the last few, therefore wartime, years was important and it was clear from the responses that this was interpreted in different ways by different respondents. Overall, despite the extensive movement of population caused by the war, only 30 percent of responses believed that Welsh life was in danger and many of these even stated that these dangers were long standing and not stemming from the war. A surprising 61 percent of areas replied that Welsh life was not in danger in their locality or, at least in no greater danger because of the war. It can therefore be extrapolated that in most parts of Wales, Welsh life was perceived as not adversely affected by World War Two. Traditional Welsh life, as perceived by UCF, had been declining for many years before the war and the responses made it clear that this had not abated.

Ithel Davies claimed that the changes to the national life of Wales caused by the 'unrestrained and ruthless scattering of the country's population' during World War Two would be measured by the National Survey of Welsh Social Life.¹⁵⁶ In anticipation of the result, he further claimed that, because of the war, the homes, churches, societies and

¹⁵⁴ NLW, UCF/165, 'Atebion i'r Holidaur' from Whtichurch; Rhiwlas; Glyn Ceiriog; Gwesyllt, Rhosrobin & Bradley (Wrexham); Glyndyfrdwy.

¹⁵⁵ NLW, UCF/18, 'Ymchwil Undeb Cymru'.

¹⁵⁶ 'Ffeithiau Am Gymru.

educational and cultural institutions of Wales had changed to a large extent.¹⁵⁷ However, following the completion of the National Survey a different picture emerged. The evaluation of homes, schools, religious institutions and traditional Welsh life concluded that, in every category, while some areas of Wales had been affected by the conflict, the majority of the country had not. Even the arrival of the evacuees, which was considered to be one of the greatest threats to Welsh life, proved to have only had a temporary influence on their respective reception areas.¹⁵⁸ The Survey also confirmed that long term Anglicising influences, like dances and card playing schools, had not been encouraged exclusively by outsiders and were much more likely to be sponsored by local people. It further exposed that these 'evils', which were believed to be detracting from religious attendance, were, at times, arranged to promote or raise money for good causes, such as charities and were often organised by the local church or chapels.

Overall, the Survey confirmed that the Government's wartime movement of population had not, to any large extent, adversely affected education, children's behaviour, religious services or indeed traditional Welsh life. These results are particularly significant when consideration is given to the investigators who completed them. The answer booklets informed respondents that, 'We expect the answers to be completely honest'.¹⁵⁹ However, personal biases are more difficult to control. The Surveys were completed by Welsh speaking observational investigators, who were, mainly, members of UCF and the *Urdd*. These investigators were primarily drawn from the Nonconformist chapels and the Welsh intelligentsia. That this group, who were sympathetic to Welsh interests, exposed these results, was not foreseen, and reinforced the conclusions that the war had little impact on Wales. This unanticipated failure to fully substantiate the beliefs of UCF may be one of the reasons why the results of the Survey were never published more widely.

Another reason why the results of the Survey were never published relates to the Union's inability to complete it within the original timeframe. By the time all the responses had been submitted in the summer of 1945, World War Two in Europe was over. The last of the evacuees had returned home and other wartime measures, such as blackout restrictions

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Saunders Lewis, 'Y Plant Bach'.

¹⁵⁹ NLW, UCF/18, 'Ymchwil Undeb Cymru Fydd i Gyflwr Bywyd Cymdeithasol Cymru'.

had been withdrawn. More significantly the demobilisation of the armed forces had already begun and many munitions factories had ceased production.¹⁶⁰ This meant that many of the reasons for establishing the National Survey of Welsh Social Life had been removed. In addition UCF now had the results to a national survey, which due in part, to the poor preparation of its questions and in part to the changing circumstances, was based on out of date or irrelevant information. As Ithel Davies had predicted, 'all the work for all practical purposes will be futile and it will only be of dubious interest to academics.'¹⁶¹

As with many UCF campaigns the National Survey was an attempt to protect the Welsh language. As such, its value to the whole nation, where less than 37 percent of the population spoke the language was questionable. Although, as was discussed earlier, many believed that the protection of the language was for the benefit of everyone in Wales, it was a view that was disputed among some non-Welsh speakers.¹⁶² The ability to complete a survey of this magnitude during wartime, demonstrated the strength of support and organisation, both for UCF and for cultural nationalism during World War Two. This survey was completed at a time when the traditional narrative of Welsh nationalism suggests that it was at its lowest ebb. Therefore, this study challenges the current historiography. It demonstrates that, in contrast to Welsh political nationalism, which was at a low level of support, cultural nationalism was at its zenith. The wartime period was the first time in modern Welsh history that a coalition of almost all the Welsh cultural organisations, through their support for UCF, worked together.

There was evidence that by the final year of the war, the popularity of UCF was beginning to wane. Davies, for example, contacted *Y Cymro* in the spring of 1944 with an update on the survey project. His communiqué was returned claiming that because of a shortage of staff the newspaper could not 'syndicate' it, as requested.¹⁶³ However, not only did it decline the

¹⁶⁰ A. Allport, *Demobbed: Coming Home After the Second World War* (London, 2010), p. 26; Conscription through National Service continued until 1960, however the numbers of conscripts was significantly lower than during the war.

¹⁶¹ 'Ffeithiau Am Gymru'.

¹⁶² See, for example, 'The Welsh Culture Camp'; 'Welsh Language in Wales', *Western Mail* (27 November 1944), p. 3.

¹⁶³ NLW, ITHDAVIES/130, R. Thomas letter to I. Davies, 4 April 1944.

opportunity to distribute it among other newspapers, neither did it print it itself. Throughout 1944 and 1945 the WNP's *Welsh Nationalist* paper only referred to the Union on a couple of occasions and only in connection with the joint sub-committee of women. Press coverage in other Welsh newspapers, like *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* and the *Holyhead Chronicle* were also substantially reduced on earlier years. UCF's origins stem from the fears of Welsh organisations at beginning of the war that the Welsh language, Welsh culture and Welsh identity would not survive the conflict. As the war came to an end and Wales, together with Britain and the Allies celebrated victory, it was clear that these early wartime fears would not be realised. Welsh identity did survive the war, and the Union's attention now needed to be turned fully to the post-war period.

Chapter Five

1945 – 50: The Post-war Transition

Wales is an imagined community, a construct which, amoeba like, changes its shape and character according to its people and the influence of external forces.¹

Historians generally agree that at the culmination of wartime hostilities, Welsh identity, and especially Welsh nationalism, experienced a national resurgence. Martin Johnes, for example, argues that 'It was in the period after the Second World War that Welsh nationhood became something far more substantive than a cultural sympathy'.² For the WNP too, the appointment of Gwynfor Evans as President coincided with an upturn in political fortunes. Laura McAlister credits 1945 as the starting point for a period when the party began to mature 'into an important force in Welsh politics.'³ In contrast, for UCF, the period from the summer of 1945 was more challenging. The end of hostilities removed the main reasons for its foundation. The results of its own National Survey of Welsh Social Life had challenged its stance on the impact of the war on Wales and on 'outsiders' in general, and the General Election result, which returned the first majority Labour government, removed many of the movement's supporters in Parliament.⁴ UCF needed a change of character.

Despite these challenges there were still, from the Union's perspective, issues that needed addressing. The teaching of Welsh in schools was still not as widespread as the organisation believed was adequate and there was still insufficient availability of Welsh language books. Radio broadcasts to, and within Wales, was still an ongoing issue and with the BBC Charter due for renewal in 1946, there was much campaigning to do in this sphere. The plight of Welsh workers still in the Midlands also continued to dominate debates. The Union's

¹ Jenkins, *A Concise History of Wales*, p. 301.

² Johnes, 'For Class and Nation'.

³ McAllister, *Plaid Cymru*, p. 29.

⁴ Following the 5 July 1945 election result many of the established Welsh MPs lost their seats or retired, for example, the Conservatives, Percy James Grigg and Arthur Evans of Cardiff East and Cardiff South respectively and the Liberal MPs Seaborne Davies and Goronwy Owen in both Caernarfon and Caernarvonshire seats.

initiatives on these topics did not change in 1945. While language issues continued to be paramount, there was a subtle shift in the Union's objectives and outlook that meant that language issues no longer dominated the agenda. UCF began to encompass more widespread topics, including government use of land in Wales, employment and Welsh transport and infrastructure. In 1949, following failed attempts by Welsh campaigners to secure a Secretary of State for Wales, UCF initiated the Parliament for Wales Campaign.⁵ This was a significant diversion for the Union. Not only was this not a specific Welsh language issue it was also deemed a political objective and not in keeping with UCF's apolitical stance. This Chapter will summarise some of the Union's main campaigns from the latter years of the war until the beginning of the Parliament for Wales Campaign and argue that these actions represented a change in UCF's approach.

I:UCF and Language Campaigns

Despite the initiation of other projects, the primary objective of UCF remained the protection of the Welsh language.⁶ Nowhere was this more visible than in the realms of education. Building on its successful influence of the 1944 Butler Education Act, the Union maintained its pressure to increase the use of the Welsh language in schools. One of the significant structural changes that stemmed from the introduction of the Act was the establishment of the Central Advisory Council for Education (Wales).⁷ The Union was well represented on this Council from the outset. Both Saunders Lewis and Ifan ap Owen Edwards, apart from being members of other organisations, were also members of UCF.⁸ Other members of the Advisory Committee who had close links with the Union were Ben Bowen Thomas and the Chairman D. Emrys Evans, who was present at the initial Shrewsbury Conference.⁹ This gave UCF a powerful voice on the Advisory Council.

⁵ For more detail of efforts to secure a Secretary of State for Wales see Coupland, *Welsh and Scottish Nationalism: A Study*, pp. 368-70.

⁶ See below for more details.

⁷ Part 1 Section 4 of the 1944 Education Act.

⁸ HC Deb, 19 December 1944, vol. 406, cc. 1629-40W, 'Education (Central Advisory Councils)'.

⁹ Ben Bowen Thomas, who had served as a Civil Servant through the war, from 1945, became Permanent Secretary to the Welsh Department of the Ministry of Education.

Supplementing this internal influence, the Union's secretary, Tom Ellis, from its initial establishment, initiated what was described as regular contact with the Advisory Committee.¹⁰

This Advisory Committee was initially tasked with evaluating the content and development of the 1944 Education Act in Wales.¹¹ UCF used its influence to shape this initial report. During the investigating stage the Advisory Council obtained reports or memoranda from numerous members of UCF, these included, Tom Ellis, Ambrose Bebb, Irene Myrddin-Davies, Dr Gwenan Jones and Rev. D. Wyre Lewis.¹² It was also significant that the Union was the only non-educational or governmental organisation permitted to submit memoranda to the Advisory Council.¹³ A similar priority was given to the Union's representatives when the Advisory Council asked for witnesses to present their views in person. Most of the 46 testimonies were received from educational organisations, government departments and trade union movements. The only evidence submitted from an organisation outside these categories was from UCF.¹⁴ In a demonstration of the importance the Advisory Committee placed on the Union's submission, it, in an unprecedented move, travelled 'en masse' to Aberystwyth to meet and hear testimony from the Union.¹⁵ Within a year the Central Advisory Council submitted an interim Report to the Minister of Education.¹⁶ It is unsurprising that the final report mirrored the Union's policies on the teaching of Welsh, the teaching of other subjects through the medium of Welsh and basing elements of the curriculum, especially the geography and history curricula

¹⁰ Ellis, *New Wales Union*, pp. 6-7.

¹¹ Ministry of Education, *The Future of Secondary Education in Wales: Report of the Central Advisory Council for Education (Wales)* (London, HMSO, 1949).

¹² NLW, UCF/103, Undeb Cymru Fydd, 'Memorandum for the Advisory Council for Education (Wales)', 6 December 1946.

¹³ Ministry of Education, *The Future of Secondary Education in Wales*, p. 78; The other organisations not directly linked to education who submitted reports to the Advisory Committee were the BBC, the War Office and the National Museum of Wales, although the Museum could also be deemed an educational institution.

¹⁴ Ministry of Education, *The Future of Secondary Education in Wales*, pp. 75-7.

¹⁵ NLW, UCF/103, Basil E. Thomas letter to T. I. Ellis, 13 May 1946; 8 & 25 November 1946; 12 December 1946, and T. I. Ellis letter to Basil E. Thomas, 8 October 1946, 18 December 1946 & 3 January 1947; All other witness testimony was heard in Cardiff.

¹⁶ Ministry of Education, *The Future of Secondary Education in Wales*, p. vii.

on Wales.¹⁷ The Advisory Council concluded that LEAs in Wales should introduce such courses immediately in English or Welsh in accordance with the linguistic character of the class.¹⁸

In addition to influencing Local Education Authorities via the report of the Central Advisory Council for Education, the Union also maintained direct locally-based pressure. In 1947, the Union concluded that 'the best way for us to act now was to hold private conferences in central locations ... in order to attempt to place the Welsh language in its rightful place in the education system of Wales.'¹⁹ The Union's ability to organise multiple conferences across Wales was again demonstrated. Five conferences were organised for January and February 1948, at five separate locations; Machynlleth, Brecon, Carmarthen, Colwyn Bay and Bridgend.²⁰ These were held, with one exception, at weekly intervals.²¹ Although they were small private gatherings of invited attendees and not the large scale conferences held on other topics, the attendance of between twelve and twenty representatives at each location led to resolutions that each conference would arrange delegations to meet with LEAs in their region. This commenced immediately.²² LEAs were therefore receiving Union pressure to improve the teaching of Welsh, and about Wales, both from official recommendations and from delegation of local representatives.

UCF were not only concerned with improving the teaching of Welsh to children and young people. Adult Welsh classes were also encouraged to increase the number of Welsh speakers. In January 1948, Ellis wrote to every Director of Education in Wales to ascertain what facilities existed within each Local Education Authority for adults, especially non-Welsh

¹⁷ Undeb Cymru Fydd, *Polisi Addysg i Gymru* (Aberystwyth, 1945); Ministry of Education, *The Future of Secondary Education in Wales*, p. 65.

¹⁸ Ministry of Education, *The Future of Secondary Education in Wales*, p. 65.

¹⁹ NLW, UCF/127, T. I. Ellis, 'Private Circular to UCF Local Secretaries, 14 November 1947.

²⁰ The reason for the gap at the end of January was that Ellis was away on annual leave, NLW, UCF/23b, Clerk letter to Owen G. Williams, 27 January 1948.

²¹ Ellis, *New Wales Union*, p. 7.

²² NLW, UCF/23a, Undeb Cymru Fydd, 'Cynhadledd Addysg Aberhonddu', 17 January 1948; NLW, UCF/23a-23d, Undeb Cymru Fydd, 'Cynhadledd Addysg Breifat', 17 January to 28 February 1948; NLW, UCF/23b, J. O. Jones letter to T. I. Ellis, 11 February 1948; NLW, UCF/23b, Edward Rees letter to T. I. Ellis, 13 February 1948; NLW, UCF/24a, 'Cofnodion Cyfarfod y Pwllgor Addysg', 31 Mawrth 1948.

speaking adults, to learn the Welsh language.²³ Most Directors responded within a fortnight.²⁴ The responses confirmed that, in general, most Local Education Committees were running evening classes for non-Welsh speakers. The lack of courses in some Anglicised areas, including Radnorshire and Swansea, may reflect a lack of interest in these regions but it could also suggest a lack of enthusiasm on behalf of each education committee or a lack of publicity of the availability of such courses. However, the popularity of such courses in other Anglicised areas, including Monmouthshire and Cardiff points to the will of the Education Committees.

To supplement Welsh language courses the availability of Welsh resources was another long standing Union issue that continued into this period. In 1943 the Union established a Book Committee with the objective 'to help meet the increasing demand for publications for our schools in Wales.'²⁵ The Committee was chaired by the D. Wyre Lewis, while Ellis, with his experience of education sat on this committee, the role of Secretary was fulfilled by Ffowc Williams.²⁶ Among the ten person committee, other notable members included D. J. Williams, of *Penyberth* note and W. Ambrose Bebb. Both were employed within education, both had been prominent Welsh Nationalists in 1930s, although their nationalist beliefs varied considerably leading to Bebb's resignation from the party, both were active members of UCF. To ascertain information on any shortfall on Welsh books and English books about Wales within the various stages of education the committee set-up three sub-committees. These sub-committees were formed from specialist teachers and H.M. Inspectors of Schools

²³ NLW, UCF/127, T. I. Ellis letter to Welsh Directors of Education; NLW, UCF/24b, T. I. Ellis letter to H. Wyn Jones, 10 February 1948.

²⁴ See, for example, NLW, UCF/24b, H. Wyn Jones letter to T. I. Ellis, 28 January 1948; J. Henry Jones letter to T. I. Ellis, 28 January 1948; W. Emrys Evans letter to T. I. Ellis 28 January 1948; D. T. Jones letter to T. I. Ellis, 28 January 1948.

²⁵ NLW, UCF/127, Ffowc Williams, 'A Special Appeal to the Directors of Education in Wales from the New Wales Union Books Committee'.

²⁶ Ffowc Williams was Headmaster at the Intermediate School in Llandudno from 1933-1954, although he was brought up in Bethel, near Caernarfon. He was an active member of both the Llandudno and district and the Conwy Valley branches of UCF, as well as being a committee member of the *Urdd Gobaith Cymru Aelwyd* in the town.

and reported on the needs at Infant, Junior and Secondary education respectively.²⁷ The information supplied by these sub-committees was used to identify writers who could fill the voids. Following agreement from writers, the committee contacted publishers and persuaded them to print the books.²⁸ In this way UCF, building on an original 1938 idea, proactively addressed the needs of education in Wales.²⁹ From 1946 the first books identified under this project were being printed and distributed to schools in Wales. W. Ambrose Bebb's 1946 Welsh language publication on Welsh History was followed within a year by G. P. Ambrose's English equivalent.³⁰ This project was not only designed to assist the teaching in Welsh but also, building on the Advisory Council's recommendation, with more teaching about Wales. The benefits of this project to Welsh language teaching and the teaching about Wales, is self explanatory. However, it should not go unnoticed that the authors of these publications, and others the developed from the project, were written by Union members. Therefore, this campaign hints at members of UCF promoting colleagues.

The Book Committee initiated other projects, not all as successful as the books for schools. Publications were prepared for general distribution which promoted the Union and use of the Welsh language.³¹ Many of these too were written by Union members.³² The Book Committee was also responsible for preparing a Welsh comic book, a nativity play entitled '*Drama'r Geni*' and a set of playlets written by Ceridwen Gruffydd and Jennie Thomas, which, by late 1946, were already being circulated around infants schools.³³ To assist adults learning Welsh, E. Ernest Hughes suggested a simple English-Welsh dictionary, designed specifically for beginners, an idea which was accepted enthusiastically by the Book

²⁷ Jones, *A Bid for Unity*, p. 30.

²⁸ NLW, Selwyn Jones Papers, SELNESS/49, The New Wales Union, 'Support U.C.F. A Non Party Organisation Pamphlet' (Aberystwyth, May 1947).

²⁹ Marion Loeffler, 'Eu Hiaith a Gadwant'.

³⁰ W. Ambrose Bebb, *Hil a Hwyl y Castell: Llyfr Hanes Cestyll Cymru i Blant Cymru* (Aberystwyth, 1946); G. P. Ambrose, *A History of Wales* (Aberystwyth, 1947).

³¹ See, for example, Cyril O. Jones, *Yr Iaith Cymraeg yn Mywyd Cyhoeddus Cymru* (1947); Ellis, *Undeb Cymru Fydd*; NLW, UCF/127, Ffowc Williams, Circular to UCF Local Secretaries, 28 August 1947.

³² All three authors included in fn30 above were Union members.

³³ NLW, UCF/52, Minutes of the 30 Meeting of Undeb Cymru Fydd Executive Council, 21 September 1946; Jones, *A Bid for Unity*, p. 31.

Committee.³⁴ A series of Welsh historical newspaper bulletins were launched but abandoned after three issues.³⁵ An attempt to launch a Welsh diary, to include facts about Welsh life failed to capture the imagination of the public and also failed.³⁶ The Committee even experimented with recording gramophone records including records on prose, poetry, folk songs and Welsh as a second language, but again these never became popular.³⁷

One of the most popular projects undertaken by the Book Committee began in 1945 with the publication of the Union's first Welsh Calendar. For almost two decades, until UCF ceased in the early 1960s, a Welsh calendar was prepared every year for the schools of Wales. It contained photographs and artists impressions of Welsh landscapes, famous Welshmen and internationally famous paintings. As the Committee's secretary stressed, 'Our hope ... is to encourage and foster the love of Art amongst school pupils'.³⁸ Every Director of Education in Wales was approached and asked to support the project and in 1947 half these Education Directors in Wales purchased calendars for every school in their region.³⁹ The distribution of the Welsh Calendar throughout Wales and beyond fulfilled a number of objectives. It promoted the Welsh language, promoted Welsh culture through the pictures that accompanied each month and not insignificantly, it promoted the work of UCF. The appearance of Welsh language calendars in so many schools of Wales increased the language visible in everyday life, an important component of language preservation.

This concept of increasing, what Landry and Bourhis termed the 'linguistic landscape' of the Welsh language was also adopted in the wider communities.⁴⁰ The Union undertook post-war initiatives to ensure the Welsh language established its 'proper place in Welsh life'.⁴¹

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid, p. 30; The historical bulletins were prepared for the years 1793, 1843 and 1893.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ NLW, UCF/127, Ffowc Williams, 'Undeb Cymry Fydd Circular to Members of the Book Committee', 11 October 1947, UCF Papers; Ellis, *New Wales Union*, p. 6.

³⁸ NLW, UCF/127, Ffowc Williams, 'A Special Appeal to the Directors of Education in Wales from the New Wales Union Books Committee'.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ R. Landry and R. Y. Bourhis, 'Linguistic landscape and Ethnolinguistic Vitality: An Empirical Study', *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 16 (1997), p. 23.

⁴¹ NLW, UCF/127, T. I. Ellis letter to the Clerks of the Welsh Border Counties, 6 May 1948.

One of these involved road transport. The Welsh road signs campaign was generally recognised as a Welsh Language Society (*Cymdeithas yr Iaith*) campaign, which from 1967, encouraged local authorities to erect bilingual road signs and involved defacing English only road signs.⁴² However, it was not widely recognised that this, like other Welsh language campaigns, had its origins much earlier. In 1948, in an attempt to make road users differentiate between driving in England and driving in Wales, UCF wrote to every Welsh border county and asked them 'to consider the advisability of erecting signs, in Welsh and English, on the roads leading into your county from England, in order that travellers may realise that they are entering Wales'.⁴³ Each of the Union's branches was then asked to meet with its local MP to discuss the implementation of these bilingual signs.⁴⁴ Information regarding the success of the Union's campaign during the late 1940s was not available. However, there appears little evidence of a successful campaign, in that such signs did not appear within the areas targeted. During the period when the Union were pushing for these signs, Wales, like the rest of Britain, was attempting to rebuild housing stock and industry while suffering from post-war austerity. It was unlikely, therefore, that any Welsh councils bordering England had the resources to implement the project. The attempts to have bilingual road signs erected in Wales during the late 1940s did lay the foundations for what would ultimately lead to the more radical and ultimately influential Welsh Language Society campaign.

Another campaign to improve the Welsh linguistic landscape was undertaken within local communities. David Mills argues that place names are not only labels but 'fulfil an essential function in our daily lives' and as such 'are as much part of our cultural heritage as the various languages.'⁴⁵ UCF had argued for some time that in many parts of Wales the Welsh names for streets, villages and towns were either Welsh translations of their English names, or Anglicised (and therefore incorrect) versions of their original Welsh name.⁴⁶ Examples of

⁴² For more information see D. Phillips, *Trwy ddulliau Chwyldro?: Hanes Cymdeithas Yr Iaith Cymraeg, 1962-1992* (Llandysul, 1998); R. Jones and P. Merriman, 'Hot, Banal and Everyday Nationalism: Bilingual Road Signs in Wales', *Political Geography*, 28:3 (2009), 164-73.

⁴³ Ellis letter to The Clerks.

⁴⁴ NLW, UCF/127, T. I. Ellis, 'Circular to Undeb Cymru Fydd Local Secretaries', 23 October 1946.

⁴⁵ D. Mills, *A Dictionary of British Place Names* (Oxford, 1991), p. xi.

⁴⁶ Ellis, 'Circular to Undeb Cymru Fydd Local Secretaries', 23 October 1946.

this Anglicising of Welsh names, was not difficult to find across Wales, from Caernarvon (and not Caernarfon) and Conway (instead of Conwy) in the north, to Llanelly (Llanelli) and Aberdovey (instead of Aberdyfi) further south. Similar mistranslations or misspellings were even more common at the street level, especially in the more Anglicised south and north-east of Wales. Adding to these existing inaccuracies the Union expressed concern that new post-war domestic developments, would continue and expand on this predicament. Therefore, the Union tasked branch committees to bring pressure to bear on local authorities to ensure that new streets and townships be given Welsh and not English (or Anglicised) names and, where necessary, to also press for existing inaccurate Welsh names to be corrected, or revert back to their original older Welsh names.⁴⁷ As with the road sign campaign the renaming of Welsh towns to their original form would not become popular until later in time.

While these campaigns are significant for Welsh history, they have, to a large extent been overlooked academically. These landscape campaigns are particularly significant to studies of group identity and nationalism. Azaryahu and Kook, for example, have noted the importance of street names as symbols of national identity in their research on Israel.⁴⁸ These names are banal by nature but also introduce an authorised version of history into that life.⁴⁹ In this way, Jones and Merriman argued that street names transgress the undefined lines between 'banal and hotter forms of nationalism' and represent an overt and formal display of nationalist beliefs.⁵⁰ This explicit pre-eminence for the Welsh language in every sphere of Welsh life was in keeping with a continuation of UCF's policy to protect and promote the Welsh language.⁵¹

The long-standing campaign which suggested that UCF was beginning to change its emphasis away from solely defending the language was its effort to increase the number of radio broadcasts in Wales. From its inception the Union was determined that the voice on

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ M. Azaryahu and R. Kook, 'Mapping the Nation: Street Names and Arab-Palestinian Identity: Three Case Studies', *Nations and Nationalism*, 8 (2002), p. 199.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Jones and Merriman, 'Hot, Banal and Everyday Nationalism', pp. 166-7.

⁵¹ Denney, 'The Social Construction of Nationalism', pp. 149-66.

the radio was to be heard promoting the Welsh language: 'We need not emphasise the potent influence of broadcasting on a nation's cultural life. We have frequently been told how many more of the people of Wales are reached by the spoken word over the radio than by any other medium.'⁵² The Union quickly identified that a Welsh broadcasting organisation had a potential to unite the nation and promote the language. A theory subsequently reinforced by Himes who argued in relation to the United States that 'it is an indisputable fact that [radio] broadcasting ... is deeply tied up in the nationalist project. That is, from the very beginning ... control over broadcasting has been crucial part of defining who we are as a nation ... and creating a sense of our national heritage and history.'⁵³ Similarly, it had been argued that the BBC, during the pre-war period, helped generate such a national identity for Great Britain, through the promotion of the monarchy and the empire.⁵⁴ It was such a national identity that UCF hoped to emulate for Wales. However, from the beginning of the war, transmissions were controlled from London.

Throughout the war years there was general discontent with Welsh language broadcasting. From 1939, when the Home Service was unified into a single wavelength, Welsh language transmissions virtually ceased.⁵⁵ From this time there were regular complaints from UCF branches. In June 1941, for example, Ellis reported 'dissatisfaction by some branch committees on the BBC's Welsh language and cultural programmes.'⁵⁶ The Welsh press too reported disquiet. *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, for example, wrote in April 1944 that 'There is no doubt at all that Welsh radio today is thoroughly unsatisfactory.'⁵⁷ Lucas confirmed that

⁵² NLW, UCF/175, Draft Manuscript, n.d. reproduced from a Central Advisory Council on Education (Wales) Report, p. 37.

⁵³ M. Himes, *Only Connect: A Cultural History of Broadcasting in the United States* (Boston, 4th edn, 2007), p. 10.

⁵⁴ H. Chignall, 'Review of Thomas Hajowski, *The BBC and National Identity in Britain, 1922-53* (Manchester, 2010)' *Institute of Historical Research* website, www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/1079, accessed 2 January 2013.

⁵⁵ For more details, see Chapter Two.

⁵⁶ NLW, UCF/11, 'Minutes of the 16 Meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Conference for the Defence of Welsh Culture', 6 June 1941.

⁵⁷ See, for example, 'Dim Digon O Gymraeg: Anfodlon Ar Y Gwasaneth Radio, Llythr Protest O'r Rhondda', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (16 April 1941), p. 1; 'Gwasanaeth Radio Cymru Eto', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, (5 April 1944), p. 4.

'expressions of discontent [against the BBC from Wales] continued throughout the war years' and concluded that 'the general consensus in Wales was that Wales had not been well-served in the matter of broadcasting before the war. Since the war it had hardly been served at all.'⁵⁸ In an attempt to address the matter UCF enlisted the assistance of the pre-war Director of the BBC's Welsh Region, R. Hopkin Morris, who Gwynfor Evans later argued, 'led the effort to get Welsh-language programmes on the wireless during the war.'⁵⁹ However, these efforts were, in general, fruitless. It was noted that the primary concern expressed by the UCF during this period was still the Welsh language.

As the war drew to a close and with the BBC Charter due to expire on 31 December 1946, UCF saw an opportunity to influence broadcasting in Wales.⁶⁰ Reinforcing this priority, the Union's 1944 annual conference unanimously passed a resolution to campaign for 'the Welsh speaking nation' to have its own corporation and its own wavelength.⁶¹ It was particularly significant that there was, in 1944, no reference to the broadcasting needs of the non-Welsh speaking majority population of Wales. The Welsh language was still the primary driving force.

Over the following two years, the Union, led Gwynfor Evans, as chair of its Media and Publicity Committee, harnessed the support of other Welsh institutions, including the National Eisteddfod, the *Urdd* and the NFU.⁶² The main argument, as outlined in the Union's pamphlet '*The Future of Radio in Wales*', printed in both languages, was that the Welsh language was best served by an independent broadcasting corporation in Wales.⁶³ Although the publication did confirm the importance of English, 'since the majority of the Welsh nation understands only English, the programmes, though Welsh in character, would be divided between the two languages.' Despite this, the main tone of the campaign was based

⁵⁸ R. Lucas, *The Voice of a Nation?*, p. 141.

⁵⁹ Evans, *For the Sake of Wales*, p. 99.

⁶⁰ HC Deb, 13 December 1945, vol. 417, cc. 606-7, 'B.B.C. Charter'.

⁶¹ NLW, UCF/175, Undeb Cymru Fydd, 'Annual Conference Agenda', 1944; NLW, UCF/175, Undeb Cymru Fydd, 'Circular to Branch Secretaries', February 1946.

⁶² Davies, *Gwynfor Evans*, p. 26; Evans, *Gwynfor Evans*, p. 106, see also 'Corfforaeth Radio I Gymru: Dirprwyaeth U.C.F.', *Baner Ac Amserau Cymru* (27 March 1946), p. 3.

⁶³ NLW, UCF/98, 'Circular: Pamffledi ar y Radio yng Nghyru', 24 August 1945; Undeb Cymru Fydd, *Radio yng Cymru* (Aberystwyth, 1944); New Wales Union, *Radio in Wales* (Aberystwyth, 1945).

on the Welsh language. As the Union's awareness campaign gathered momentum, discontent with the quality of Welsh radio grew.⁶⁴ However, the campaign received a setback in the summer on 1946, when, on 16 July, the Government announced that, due to time constraints, the existing BBC Charter would be extended in its existing form until 1951.⁶⁵

Despite the continued support of Welsh language organisations, UCF made little progress over the next three years. Broadcasting returned to the spotlight when, in the summer of 1949, the Government announced the establishment of a committee to report on the BBC's monopoly on British broadcasting.⁶⁶ Within a fortnight of the announcement Ellis made representations on behalf of UCF.⁶⁷ The Union subsequently submitted a statement to this committee, on the topic of broadcasting in Wales, and re-initiated their campaign.⁶⁸ This time, however, the Union's emphasis was firmly on the establishment of an independent Welsh radio organisation, which would transmit to Welsh homes in both the Welsh and English languages. Greater emphasis was also laid on preparing programmes, in both languages, about Wales. On these issues campaigning began.

Over the next two years general support was harnessed throughout Wales. Apart from continued support from the Welsh cultural organisations, the majority of Welsh county councils passed resolutions supporting an independent Welsh broadcasting corporation, as did a large number of local councils, religious bodies and voluntary organisations.⁶⁹

⁶⁴ Davies, *Broadcasting in Wales* p. 147; Hajkowski, *The BBC and National Identity*, p. 194.

⁶⁵ Bangor University Archive, Bangor, O. E. Roberts Papers BMSS/10366, P. Buchan-Hepburn letter to O. E. Roberts, 17 July 1946; HC Deb, vol. 425, cc. 1063-183, 16 July 1946, 'Broadcasting'.

⁶⁶ The Beveridge Report was the first full scale independent enquiry since the war into the working of a public corporation. For more information see, R. Nottage, 'Report of the Broadcasting Committee 1949: Some of its Administrative Aspects', *Public Administration*, 29:2 (June, 1951), p. 173; S. Street, *The A-Z of British Radio* (Plymouth, 2009), p. 41.

⁶⁷ Broadcasting Committee, 1949, 'Press and Broadcast Notice PB 3896', 24 June 1949; NLW, UCF/175, T. I. Ellis letter to G. R. Parsons, 11 July 1949.

⁶⁸ NLW, UCF/175, Undeb Cymru Fydd, 'Statement In Favour of an Independent Broadcasting Corporation for Wales', September 1949.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*; See, for example, NLW, UCF/175, 'Clerk to the Nant Conwy Rural District Council letter to T. I. Ellis, 12 May 1950.

Following an article in the *Western Mail*, it became apparent that the Merthyr Tydfil, Labour MP's, S. O. Davies's views on the matter, mirrored those of UCF. Ellis acted immediately and as a result Davies became a prominent ally in the Union's broadcasting campaign.⁷⁰ In contrast, following a deputation in spring 1950, the WPP were not convinced by the merits of the campaign.⁷¹ Despite this reluctance on the part of the WPP there remained a powerful coalition of organisations from across both the Welsh speaking and Anglicised areas of Wales. On this occasion the level of support received gave some justification to the Union's claim to be 'in many ways representative of Welsh opinion.'⁷² As a result UCF was one of only three non-BBC submissions on the subject of Welsh broadcasting that was accepted by the Broadcasting Committee.

On the 18 January 1951 the *Report of the Broadcasting Committee 1949* (Beveridge Report) was published.⁷³ Significantly, the report recommended a de-centralising of broadcasting responsibility.⁷⁴ UCF's objective on broadcasting was now one stage from being achieved. Unfortunately, the Government did not concur with the conclusions of the Report and adopted a concept of national Governors for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to speak for each country's interests, backed by the appointment of Broadcasting Councils.⁷⁵ While UCF ultimately supported the Government's position as an acceptable minimum for Wales, it was not the outcome that it had been pursuing.⁷⁶ UCF continued to argue for the establishment of an independent Welsh broadcaster throughout the 1950s.

This campaign was particularly noteworthy as it demonstrated a variance in the Union's approach, from the early period, before the 1946 announcement, to the later 1949

⁷⁰ NLW, UCF/175, T. I. Ellis letter to S. O. Davies, 16 December 1949; Stephen Owen Davies was a former miner and trade unionist who held the Merthyr Tydfil seat from 1934 to 1972 (the last two years as an independent after his party had deselected him due to his age). Politically he was a strong Welsh nationalist and supporter of the Soviet Union.

⁷¹ NLW, UCF/175, T. I. Ellis letter to Edward James, 8 April 1950; Lucas, *The Voice of a Nation?*, pp. 157-8.

⁷² NLW, UCF/19, T. I. Ellis letter to Herbert Morrison, 21 September 1946.

⁷³ 'Report of the Broadcasting Committee, 1949'. Cmd. 8116. (London, HMSO, 1951).

⁷⁴ TNA, CAB 129/46-cp(51) 183, 'Broadcasting: Memorandum on the Report of the Broadcasting Committee, 1949, June 1951 .

⁷⁵ *Report of Broadcasting*, p. 160.

⁷⁶ NLW, UCF/175, Undeb Cymry Fydd, 'Draft Statement: The Future of Broadcasting in Wales', April 1952.

campaign. Prior to 1946, the Union pursued its goal for a separate Welsh radio broadcaster by promoting its benefits to the Welsh language. In short, the campaign was, almost exclusively a language campaign. This early campaign generated support from most of the Welsh language cultural organisations and the WNP. In contrast, the 1949 campaign was fought on noticeably wider issues, which included English language broadcasts about Wales, Welsh life and history. This approach generated significantly greater support, which now came from across the whole of Wales. During the late 1940s other non-language campaigns were initiated under the justification of wider Welsh interests.

II:UCF and Non-Language Campaigns

The use of Welsh land by the Government had been a contentious point since before the beginning of World War Two.⁷⁷ The inequitable distribution of land acquisition between the regions of the UK during the war added to the other patriotic, linguistic and religious objections. In the autumn of 1946 it was reported that the Defence Ministries held 500,000 acres of land in Wales, which represented almost 10 percent of the country's land, and despite the end to hostilities, the government wanted more.⁷⁸ In late 1946 Ellis reported that 'We are receiving information from our branches throughout Wales about proposed acquisition of land in Wales by the Defence Ministry.'⁷⁹ By the turn of the year the War Office had announced further acquisitions of an additional 500,000 acres, although quickly reduced this to 125,000 acres.⁸⁰ UCF resolved to raise awareness of this land acquisition and bring pressure to bear on the Government to reserve its intentions.⁸¹

To focus public opinion the Union organised five local conferences across Wales. These conferences were organised to be held concurrently on the 25 January 1947.⁸² In another

⁷⁷ See Penyerth and *Mynyth Epynt* in Chapters One & Two respectively.

⁷⁸ Ellis, *New Wales Union*, p. 5; Jones, *A Bid for Unity*, p. 28.

⁷⁹ NLW, UCF/19, T. I. Ellis letter to Lewis Silkin, 2 December 1946.

⁸⁰ Evans, *Gwynfor Evans*, p. 111.

⁸¹ Ellis, *New Wales Union*, p. 5.

⁸² Initially these conferences were planned to take place over two days, 15 and the 24 January 1947, so that some speakers could attend more than one conference, however, this idea was dropped and all conferences

example of the Union moving away from language rhetoric, the branch secretaries were asked to publicise the impact of War Office's intentions on 'national culture' and not, as occurred during the *Epynt* campaign, on the impact on the Welsh language.⁸³ One of the reasons for this change of focus may be suggested in same document. Ellis informed the Union's branches 'It is really important that these conferences be truly representative [of all the people of Wales]'.⁸⁴ To be truly representative of the people, the Union needed to generate support from both Welsh and English speaking communities. It was important that it was not again seen to be working to a different agenda to the one of people living in the areas of the proposed land acquisition, as had occurred at *Epynt*.⁸⁵

The conferences were held in Brecon, Denbigh, Dolgellau, Llandeilo and Maenclochog (in Pembrokeshire).⁸⁶ Following the unanimous support expressed at these gatherings the support of the WPP was requested.⁸⁷ As a result, a national conference was hastily organised under the combined auspices of UCF and WPP. The conference, held at Llandrindod Wells in March, was described as 'a singular demonstration of national unity'.⁸⁸ It was backed by a host of Welsh organisations, including the Committee for Wales and Monmouthshire County Council Association, South Wales Rural District Council Association and its North Wales counterpart, and a wide range of other cultural and voluntary organisations.⁸⁹ The WNP also supported the event, although some histories have attempted to transfer the credit for the conference to Gwynfor Evans and WNP.⁹⁰ The conference, said to represent 'every aspect of Welsh life and culture' resolved to submit a

were held on the same day. 'Dylem Ddysgu Dweud Na Yn Groch Ac Unedig: Unfrydedd Yn Erbyn Cynlluniau'r Swyddfeydd Amddiffyn, Cynhadledd Undeb Cymru Fydd', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (29 January, 1947), p. 1; 400 O Deuluoedd A 7,000 O Ddefaid', *Y Cymro* (31 January 1947), p. 9. 'Diogelu Tir Cymru', *The Rhos Herald*, (1 February 1947), p. 3; 'Cynhadledd Undeb Cymru Fydd yn Nolgellau', *Y Seren* (1 February 1947), p. 2.

⁸³ NLW, UCF/127, T. I. Ellis, 'Circular to UCF Local Secretaries', 1 January 1947.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ See Chapter Two for details of the *Epynt* campaign.

⁸⁶ NLW, UCF/19, T. I. Ellis letter to Clement Davies, 13 January 1947.

⁸⁷ NLW, UCF/127, T. I. Ellis letter to Welsh Parliamentary Party, 27 January 1947.

⁸⁸ Evans, *Gwynfor Evans*, p. 113; NLW, SELNES/49, 'Draft Report of Llandrindod Conference', 22 March 1947.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ See, for example, Evans, *Gwynfor Evans* p. 113.

protest to the War Office.⁹¹ The impact of this protest appeared almost immediately, before the end of the month the army announced it would not be taking up the land at three planned locations.⁹² Unlike, the result in 1940, this campaign appeared successful.

Despite the initial positive impact of the Union's campaign, later in 1947, the Ministry of War announced it was to acquire 27,000 acres of land near Tregaron. UCF, in connection with the WNP and local farmers immediately initiated another campaign to oppose the acquisition.⁹³ Similarities between this campaign and the *Mynydd Epynt* acquisition are inevitable and, according to Davies, 'disturbing'.⁹⁴ However, there were two significant differences which aided the Union in 1947. Firstly, the war had ended, thus reducing the Government's justification for the acquisition and secondly, UCF were more established and had generated strong links with Welsh MPs, local authorities and a host of other institutions. On this occasion, backed by the message from the national conference in March, the Welsh MPs were, from the outset, 'notably active in the matter'.⁹⁵ As a result of the combined efforts of the Union and WPP, the Secretary of State for War chaired a 'Special Conference' in Shrewsbury in January 1948. By the following summer the plans to acquire Tregaron had been dropped and, by the end of that year, the total acreage of Welsh land held by the Defence Ministries had been reduced from 500,000 acres to around 80,000 acres.⁹⁶

In contrast to earlier land campaigns, the Union, in the post-war period, used a different strategy. In the post-war campaign there was barely any mention of the impact of the proposed land acquisition on the Welsh language. It was not so much a change of opinion or objective, as a change of focus. By promoting the dangers to traditional Welsh life or to Welsh culture, greater support was generated. The reasons for this are unclear, but may be

⁹¹ NLW, SELNES/49, 'Draft Report of Llandrindod Conference', 22 March 1947.

⁹² The three places listed were Preseli, Harlech and Llan y Fan, which had already been withdrawn in January; Evans *Gwynfor Evans*, p. 111.

⁹³ 'Agor Brwydr Tir Tregaron', *Y Ddraig Goch* (October 1947), p. 1.

⁹⁴ J. Davies, 'The Fight for Preseli', *Planet: The Welsh Internationalist* 58, (1986), 3-9.

⁹⁵ Ellis, *New Wales Union*, p. 5.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

because Welsh life and culture were appreciated more in non-Welsh speaking communities that concerns based simply on the language.

Similar non-language based campaigns were orchestrated by the Union, particularly in the sphere of post-war Welsh infrastructure. The geography of Wales had dictated that during the first half of the twentieth century the major road networks had been orientated east to west. UCF campaigned for the construction of a main road from north to South Wales.⁹⁷ This was not a new proposition; as early as 1931 the possibility had been discussed, but it had been rejected due to construction difficulties and the cost of traversing the three major mountain ranges on route.⁹⁸ In 1942, the Dean of Bangor reinforced the need for greater transport links between north and south of Wales.⁹⁹

South Wales should be educated to look to Llandudno rather than Western-Super-Mare, and North Wales should look to Porthcawl rather than Blackpool ... The greatest "boom" from the closer "linking" of north and south would be the inter-mingling of the North Walian's natural culture with the class-consciousness and political wisdom of the south Walian.¹⁰⁰

The Union acknowledged that such a project might increase the levels of Anglicisation. However, it considered that the potential for improved communications would unite Wales and was vital for the nation's future.¹⁰¹ Two years later the Ministry of Reconstruction also recognised the importance of good communications within Wales and gave a high priority to a north-south road from Holyhead to Cardiff.¹⁰² It recommended that the government should plan the exact route 'without delay' and that such a road should be included in any post-war schedule of major public works.¹⁰³ During October 1944, Parliament held its first Welsh Day, at which time two major transport schemes were under consideration in Wales, the north-south road link and a Severn Estuary crossing, which would improve

⁹⁷ NLW UCF/127, T. I. Ellis, 'Circular to Undeb Cymru Fydd Local Secretaries, 20 November 1944'.

⁹⁸ P. Williams, *The Psychology of Distance: Wales, One Nation* (Cardiff, 2003), p. 31.

⁹⁹ Edwards, *Memorandum Submitted to the North Wales Labour*, p. 8.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ NLW, UCF/127, T. I. Ellis letter to Megan Lloyd George, 7 September 1944.

¹⁰² The Ministry of Reconstruction existed between November 1943 and July 1945, and was responsible for planning for the British people after the war. Lord Woolton was the Minister in charge for its entirety.

¹⁰³ Williams, *The Psychology of Distance*, p. 31.

communication between South Wales and London and southern England. Backed by UCF and others, Welsh MPs stressed that 'A north–south Wales road is [was] of the first and utmost importance to the post-war prosperity of the Principality,'¹⁰⁴ arguing that 'if it is possible to build a road over the French Alps, which can take traffic at 50 miles an hour in the depths of winter, surely it is possible for us to build roads over the Welsh mountains.' However, despite such views the President of the Board of Trade argued that it was more imperative to improve the communication between South Wales and London or the industrial Midlands and Birmingham, 'It is much more important economically than the north-south road' as it has 'no direct industrial value'.¹⁰⁵ On this issue the Government's view prevailed and commercial connections between South Wales and England were subsequently improved. However, this endeavour was significant as it represented a notable change to the Union's stance. Throughout the war, UCF had been critical of any and all forms of Anglicisation. However, during the north-south road discussion, for the first time, the Welsh language was not given highest priority. The promotion of greater road links between the Anglicised areas of Wales and the Welsh speaking heartlands, and the subsequent potential for greater national unity between north and south of the country were considered more important than the increased dangers to the language. This priority change reflects a greater consideration for the unity of Wales.

Similar views were expressed on the topic of air transport. UCF was quick to acknowledge the potential economic benefits of improved air links to Wales but also recognised the potential dangers to Welsh culture.¹⁰⁶ Despite this the Union promoted the benefits of increasing tourism within Wales and make representations that Wales, because of its geographic location, should be the major terminus for transatlantic traffic.¹⁰⁷ The only major hurdle according to UCF was 'that with our poorer rail connections to London as compared to Southampton, or even Bristol, there is little prospect of one [transatlantic terminus] being

¹⁰⁴ HC Deb, 17 October 1944, vol. 403, cc. 2241-47, 'Welsh Affairs'.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, cc. 2324-5.

¹⁰⁶ NLW, UCF/A20, S. Kenneth Davies letter to I. Jones-Davies, 14 April 1943; NLW, UCF/A20, S. K. Davies, 'Memorandum: Wales – Air Transport', 14 April 1946.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid; 'Airport in Wales: Welsh MP's Move', *Liverpool Daily Post* (29 November 1945), p. 1.

established.¹⁰⁸ This memorandum again prioritised the economic situation above the potential of an increase in Anglicisation. There is no doubt that UCF were concerned about the post-war economy of Wales. During the 1944 annual conference it was reported that creating employment was 'debated at length' and only this topic and the future of radio in Wales had been considered important enough to warrant debate.¹⁰⁹ However, the promotion of trade and the industrial future of the nation over language and cultural problems confirms the significant deviation in policy.

III: UCF and the Parliament for Wales Campaign

A greater deviation in the Union's policy was witnessed from 1949. From the end of the war there was an increasing momentum in Wales for greater powers of self-government.¹¹⁰ Scotland already benefited both from a Secretary of State and a Scottish Office located in Edinburgh.¹¹¹ Repeated calls for a Secretary of State for Wales had been ignored by the post-war Labour government, which argued that there was 'no general demand for a Secretary of State for Wales'.¹¹² Even the London newspapers disagreed, with the *Daily Mail* claiming 'in this, Mr. Attlee is quite wrong.'¹¹³ To placate Wales, the Government established the Council for Wales and Monmouthshire in 1948, an unelected body to advise on Welsh affairs.¹¹⁴ While this Council, according to Edwards, had its origins within the Welsh Labour Party, its establishment generated widespread criticism, even from within the party's own MPs: 'We are' stated S. O Davies, 'ruled by Civil Service not by Parliament'.

¹⁰⁸ NLW, UCF/A20, Davies, 'Wales – Air Transport', 14 April 1946.

¹⁰⁹ 'Work for Welshmen: Post-War Proposals', *Liverpool Daily Post* (17 July 1944), p. 2; NLW, UCF/A52, UCF, 'Annual Conference Agenda,' 1944; NLW, UCF/175, UCF, 'Circular to Branch Secretaries', February 1946.

¹¹⁰ Jones, 'The Parliament for Wales Campaign', p. 208.

¹¹¹ M. Jones, *A Radical Life: The Biography of Megan Lloyd George, 1902-66* (London, 1991), p. 231.

¹¹² F. Owen, 'The Welsh Want to Mind Their Own Business', *Daily Mail* (28 October 1946), p. 2; J. G. Jones, *The History of Wales* (Cardiff, 3rd edn, 2014), p. 170; Jones, 'The Parliament for Wales Campaign'.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ National Assembly for Wales website, 'The History of Welsh Devolution', www.assembly.wales/en/abthome/role-of-assembly-how-it-works/Pages/history-welsh-devolution.aspx, accessed 7 August 2014.

Davies and others argued that Britain had lost its Parliamentary democracy.¹¹⁵ Conservatives did not support the proposals for this Council advocating instead the establishment of a Welsh Minister, with a seat at cabinet.¹¹⁶ The Liberal MP, Megan Lloyd George, now chair of the WPP, argued that:

The Lord President has offered us this scraggy bone, without meat or marrow in it ... If this Council is to be set up, we in Wales may well have to reconsider whether a greater measure of devolution than even a Secretary of State for Wales ... may be the only satisfactory solution.¹¹⁷

She concluded by referring to the 1941 Atlantic Charter, signed by the British and United States governments, which declared that all countries should be governed according to their own desire: 'That provision does not only apply to Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania – countries far distant. It applies also to Wales'.¹¹⁸ The key element of this statement, of course, was the stipulation of 'own desires'. There were differing contemporary interpretations of what Wales desired. Despite this, Megan Lloyd George's statement, according to Jones, proved to be 'the first shot' in what would grow into the Parliament for Wales Campaign (PWC).¹¹⁹

From 1943 UCF had expressed 'serious doubt' as to whether the appointment of a Secretary of State would give Wales the status that it wanted in matters of government.¹²⁰ In contrast, on the topic of Home Rule, the Union had been silent. In late 1949, following growing momentum for greater Welsh autonomy, led by the Liberal Party, the WNP and others, UCF acknowledged 'a desire in many circles' for a national conference to discuss self-

¹¹⁵ A. Edwards, 'Labour, Nationalism and the Problem of Welsh Devolution, c.1939-64 in C. Williams and A. Edwards (eds.), *The Art of the Possible: Politics and Governance in Modern British History, 1885-1997: Essays in Memory of Duncan Tanner* (Manchester, 2015), p 148; 'New Wales Union, Call for Self-Government: Shadow Constitution Move', *South Wales Evening Post* (3 July 1950), p. 5.

¹¹⁶ Jones, 'The Parliament for Wales Campaign'; The Conservative and Unionist Party, *The Conservative Party General Election Manifesto – 1951* (Cardiff, 1951).

¹¹⁷ HC Deb, 24 November 1948, vol. 458, cc. 1341-3, 'Welsh Affairs Debate'.

¹¹⁸ Jones, *A Radical Life*, p. 232.

¹¹⁹ Jones, 'Parliament for Wales Campaign'.

¹²⁰ NLW, UCF/43, UCF, 'Memorandum on the Proposed Appointment of a Secretary of State for Wales', 15 February 1943.

government for Wales.¹²¹ The PWC was launched. Building both on previous joint projects and her statement to the Commons, the Union approached George to chair an interim committee with a view to organising such a conference. The Welsh Nationalist, Elwyn Roberts was asked to act as its temporary secretary. UCF's office in Aberystwyth was initially used as the as the Committee's headquarters and it also provided extensive financial and organisational support.¹²² With the initiation of this campaign, Coupland has suggested that, 'It was only after ten years of its life that the new *Cymru Fydd* stepped out into the political arena.'¹²³ The objective of Home Rule was considered firmly with the realms of political nationalism.

Despite this, it was UCF's apolitical status which made the PWC somewhat unusual in Welsh modern history. Previous attempts to obtain any measure of self-government for Wales had been initiated from within the framework of one or other of the political parties.¹²⁴ The Union's independent cultural status, together with its history of working with MPs of all parties, strengthened the prospect of achieving non-partisan political support. The Union also harnessed widespread support from religious and cultural organisations. Under the guidance of the Union, arrangements progressed quickly.

On St. David's Day 1950, details of the conference were announced. On 1 July the National Conference in favour of parliamentary self-government for Wales was held at Llandrindod Wells and was attended by over 600 delegates.¹²⁵ The Conference was chaired by J. R. Jones from Merseyside. On the face of it Jones was an unusual choice. He was a Liverpool Liberal City Councillor and magistrate who had been born and raised in that city. However, he was of Welsh descent and had close ties to the National Eisteddfod and the Wavertree Welsh church. Significantly, he had also been a member of the UCF's Executive Council since 1943.¹²⁶

¹²¹ NLW, UCF/268, T. I. Ellis, 'Secretaries Report September – December 1949'; Jones, 'Parliament for Wales Campaign'.

¹²² NLW, UCF/268, T. I. Ellis, 'Secretaries Report September – December 1950'.

¹²³ Coupland, *Welsh and Scottish Nationalism*, p. 336.

¹²⁴ Parliament for Wales, *Parliament for Wales* (Llandysul, 1953), p. 3.

¹²⁵ Jones, *A Bid for Unity*, p. 51.

¹²⁶ 'Day to Day Liverpool', *Liverpool Daily Post* (26 August 1943), p. 2.

Megan Lloyd George was one of a number of prominent Welsh conference speakers, which also included the *Urdd's* Ifan ap Owen Edwards, the Union's T. I. Ellis, WNP's Gwynfor Evans and Labour's S. O. Davies. Also present was the leader of the Communist Party, Idris Fox. The Welsh Communist Party had campaigned for greater self-determination for Wales since the war and justifiably argued that, 'the Communist Party has been at the forefront of the fight for a Parliament for Wales since the launch of the 1950-56 campaign'.¹²⁷ In a motion proposed by Lloyd George and seconded by Davies, the Conference unanimously resolved to organise a petition in favour of a Parliament for Wales and 'to seek the help of University professors and lecturers in drawing up a shadow constitution for such a Parliament'.¹²⁸ The conference also nominated an Executive Committee to co-ordinate a national petition that aimed to gather a million signatories.¹²⁹ For a time it appeared as if UCF had once again successfully united most of the political and cultural organisations of Wales behind a single cause.

The motivations for supporting the campaign were wide-ranging and not always connected to any form of nationalism, although this was a factor for some. The Government's economic and industrial policies in relation to Wales encouraged some to believe that a Welsh-based government might do better. Memories of the interwar mass unemployment and Government's unsuccessful policies for relieving it persuaded some to support the campaign.¹³⁰ Others were discontented with the Government's industrial policies during and since the war, which were blamed for encouraging the movement of Welsh youth to England.¹³¹ These economic factors led one newspaper to argue that 'even some English Industrialists in and around Cardiff are supporting the petition'.¹³² The centralisation of government also caused difficulties and had, according to the Campaign Committee, led to

¹²⁷ Welsh Communist Party website, 'Real power through a 'People's Parliament' for Wales' www.welshcommunists.org/peoples-parliament, accessed 7 September 2016.

¹²⁸ 'Self-Government for Wales: County Council Appoint Four Delegates', *Caernarfon and Denbigh Herald* (30 June 1950), p. 8; Mab Gwalia, *Wales - The Next Step: Devolution Secretary of State Parliament for Wales and all that . . .* (Cardiff, 1959), p. 12.

¹²⁹ Jones, *A Radical Life*, p. 232; Jones, 'Parliament for Wales Campaign'.

¹³⁰ Parliament for Wales, *Parliament for Wales*, p. 5.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² 'Home Rule for Wales, Labour Divided: Five MPs to be Carpeted', *Manchester Guardian* (27 May 1954), p. 8.

the overwork of Ministers and Civil Servants, which in turn resulted in ‘measures being passed without proper consideration.’¹³³ These undefined measures were, it was argued, detrimental to Welsh interests and accusations that the Government ‘has been out of touch with the facts of Welsh life.’¹³⁴ These combined factors led all parties to agree that Wales needed special treatment.¹³⁵

Another motivation for supporting the campaign was that the Parliament for Wales Conference coincided with the Government’s announcement of the construction of a hydro-electric scheme near Llanberis.¹³⁶ This scheme, not unlike other civil projects, before and after, was pushed through despite objection from local Welsh residents and organisations.¹³⁷ The PWC Committee added its voice to the protests and criticised the British Electricity Authority for planning ‘a very great interference with Welsh scenery and Welsh agriculture’. Significantly, the electricity company refused to give any undertaking that Wales would have priority of supply.¹³⁸ Once again it was perceived that Welsh resources were being exploited for the benefit ‘of big centres outside Wales’.¹³⁹ Megan Lloyd George, in her capacity as President of the Council for Rural Wales, led demonstrations against the scheme. These issues led one Labour MP to conclude, ‘there is a feeling that Wales is being hacked about without regard to its national feeling entirely for the convenience of Whitehall’.¹⁴⁰ The impact of the Government’s announcement, during the summer of 1950, on the PWC Wales should not be overlooked. The opposition to the electric scheme, especially in North Wales, while not to the level of earlier protests at *Penyberth* and *Mynydd Epynt*, or the later campaign to oppose the flooding of *Capel Celyn* in the *Trewern* valley, was still significant.

¹³³ Parliament for Wales, *Parliament for Wales*, p. 5.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹³⁶ ‘Power Needs of Wales: Do It without Vandalism’, *Liverpool Echo* (24 July 1950), p. 5.

¹³⁷ ‘Threat to Beauty of North Wales: B.E.A.’s Plans Opposed’, *Manchester Guardian* (26 June 1950), p. 4.

¹³⁸ Parliament for Wales, *Parliament for Wales*, p. 5.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ Goronwy Roberts letter to Gwilym Williams, 8 August 1951, quoted in Parliament for Wales Campaign, *Steps on the Road: Quotations on Devolution for Wales* (Cardiff, 2002), p. 14.

The initial momentum of the campaign was short lived. The movement got off to a slow start and gained little momentum.¹⁴¹ From the outset there was very little money available and no established method to raise any.¹⁴² UCF was forced to provide continued financial, administrative and organisational support.¹⁴³ By the time the PWC was officially launched at the Llanrwst Eisteddfod in 1951 and the petition had begun to collect signatories, the Liberal candidate for the Denbigh constituency, Glyn Tegai Hughes commented, 'I've never seen anything so abysmally organised'.¹⁴⁴ UCF had, over the previous decade, successfully organised numerous campaigns, often in conjunction with other organisation, and had brought the similarly organised Language Petition to a successful conclusion in 1942. The organisational difficulties experienced by this campaign were not in keeping with the Union's record. Significantly, the PWC was organised by its own Executive Committee, which, while influenced and supported by UCF, did not contain their key members, including D. Wyre Lewis and especially T. I. Ellis.

Another problem was the official position of the various Welsh political parties. While the PWC drew support from members of all of the major parties, including a few Tories, the only parties to fully endorse the campaign were the WNP and the Communist Party.¹⁴⁵ The Liberal Party, which had since 1949, promoted self-government for Wales, a position it reiterated in 1951, could not agree on the UCF led campaign.¹⁴⁶ Only two of their five Welsh MPs, Megan Lloyd George and Emrys Roberts, actively campaigned on the matter. Significantly, by the time the campaign reached full momentum both had lost their seats.

The PWC caused greater difficulties within the Labour Party. The relative success of the meeting at Llandrindod and the subsequent support from five of its MPs was seen by some

¹⁴¹ Jones, 'The Parliament for Wales Campaign', p. 215.

¹⁴² Parliament for Wales, *Parliament for Wales*, p. 3; Jones, *A Radical Life*, p. 232.

¹⁴³ NLW, UCF/268, T. I. Ellis, 'Secretary's Report, September – December 1950'.

¹⁴⁴ Parliament for Wales, *Parliament for Wales*, p. 3; Jones, *A Radical Life*, p. 232; Glyn Tegai Hughes was a Liberal candidate for Denbigh, with strong nationalist view, who fought three election campaigns but despite increasing the Liberal vote, failed to achieve victory.

¹⁴⁵ Jones, *A Radical Life*, p. 233.

¹⁴⁶ The Liberal Party, *A Parliament for Wales: The Liberal Proposals* (Newtown, 1951).

in the party as a challenge to Labour's authority in Wales.¹⁴⁷ The Labour Party, while allowing its members to advocate a Parliament for Wales, forbade them from associating with, or appearing on, the platform of the UCF campaign movement.¹⁴⁸ Despite this Cledwyn Hughes, Goronwy Roberts, T. W. Jones, Tudor Watkins and S. O. Davies continued to support the PWC and were joined by several defeated Labour candidates from north and mid-Wales.¹⁴⁹ Morgan suggested that the dissident five became an embarrassment for the Labour Party and there were attempts, led by the leader of the Welsh Regional Council of Labour, Clifford Prothero, to discipline the Labour campaigners.¹⁵⁰ There was, for a time, even talk of expelling those who campaigned for the PWC, although ultimately no action was taken.¹⁵¹ The support of these Labour MPs gave the movement significant credibility.

The failure of the Welsh Labour Party, as a whole, to back the PWC was a significant setback. Labour held 27 of the Wales's 36 Parliamentary seats and as such was a powerful voice on Welsh affairs. It was significant that Davies was the only one of the five Labour MPs backing the PWC to represent what could be described as a South Wales industrial constituency. The remaining four, together with the defeated candidates all hailed from more rural areas of 'Welsh Wales'.¹⁵² Over twenty Labour MPs from the more Anglicised industrialised regions of the country refused to back the campaign. Therefore, in general, the split in the socialist support for Welsh self-government can be viewed as part of the traditional linguistic divisions within Wales.

The reasons why more Labour MPs refused to back the campaign were various. James Griffiths, a previous advocate of Welsh Home Rule refused to sign the petition because, 'we have no right to ask our people in Wales to sign a blank cheque for a Welsh Parliament without the consequences being fully explained to them', therefore, opted to support the

¹⁴⁷ For a more in depth analysis of the impact of the campaign on the Labour Party, see Edwards, 'Labour Nationalism and the problem of Welsh Devolution'.

¹⁴⁸ Gwalia, *Wales - The Next Step*, p. 12.

¹⁴⁹ K. O. Morgan, 'Power and Glory: War and Reconstruction, 1939-1951' in D. Tanner, C. Williams and D. Hopkin (eds.) *The Labour Party in Wales 1900-2000* (Cardiff, 2000), p. 182.

¹⁵⁰ R. M. Jones and I. R. Jones, 'Labour and the Nation' in Tanner, Williams and Hopkin (eds.) *The Labour Party in Wales 1900-2000*, p. 253; 'Home Rule for Wales, Labour Divided'.

¹⁵¹ Jones, *A Radical Life*, p. 234.

¹⁵² *Ibid*, pp. 233-4.

Secretary of State option.¹⁵³ Other previous advocates of devolution within the party, including D. R. Grenfell and W. H. Mainwaring, also opposed UCF's proposal.¹⁵⁴ Cliff Prothero, unsurprisingly, continued to advocate working within the British Labour hegemony.¹⁵⁵ While Huw T. Edwards, on behalf of the Council for Wales published a pamphlet, *They went to Llandrindod*, attacking the PWC. Although, significantly, according to Paul Ward, from 1953 he regretted this publication and converted to support the campaign.¹⁵⁶ According to Jones the main reason for the lack of support among Labour MPs was because the concept of a Welsh self-government went against the socialist concept of 'a comradely alliance of Britain working class'.¹⁵⁷ However, the most common argument against political separation was that it would lead to the creation of a separate economy. Such an economy would be short on investment and therefore incapable of developing.¹⁵⁸ Wales would, it was considered, suffer economic hardship. In contrast, the Labour candidate for Montgomeryshire, Caradog Jones, maintained 'fundamental objections' to the whole idea. These were based primarily on what he viewed as a 'lack of preliminary work' by those advocating the proposal. He was critical of the campaign committee's pamphlet, which he argued, 'contains a number of dubious, unsubstantiated and misleading statements of opinion which are presented as statements of fact'.¹⁵⁹ Such diverse justifications for refusing to back the movement from within one party meant it was difficult for the campaign committee to respond.

From an early stage the campaign was also plagued by inter-party hostility. The Labour Party, and especially Cliff Prothero, were hostile to Welsh patriotism and, despite its cross-

¹⁵³ James Griffiths in *South Wales Democrat*, November 1951, quoted in Parliament for Wales Campaign, *Steps on the Road*, p. 14; A. Walling, 'The Structure of Power in Labour Wales, 1951-1964' in Tanner, Williams and Hopkin (eds.) *The Labour Party in Wales 1900-2000*, p. 195.

¹⁵⁴ Jones and Jones, 'Labour and the Nation', p. 253.

¹⁵⁵ Edwards, 'Labour, Nationalism and the Problem of Welsh Devolution', p. 148.

¹⁵⁶ P. Ward, *Huw T. Edwards: British Labour and Welsh Socialism* (Cardiff, 2011), pp. 97 & 101.

¹⁵⁷ Jones, *A Radical Life*, p. 233.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid*, p. 234.

¹⁵⁹ NLW, Goronwy Roberts Papers S3/12, D. Caradog Jones letter to Roberts, 1 February 1954.

party support, viewed the PWC as a nationalist plot.¹⁶⁰ The Liberal Party accused Labour of having limited interest in Wales and the WNP for being too extreme.¹⁶¹ While, one Welsh language newspaper was especially critical of the stance of the Labour Party and accused it of forgetting the ideas of Keir Hardy and Arthur Henderson.¹⁶² In a critique of a Welsh Nationalist statement, one patriot responded, 'a Welsh Government would have to govern in this actual imperfect world and not in a fool's paradise'.¹⁶³ These political attacks served to undermine the PWC and made it difficult for representatives from different political beliefs to work together.

More worryingly, Goronwy Roberts drew attention to longstanding, and underlying, suspicions between north and south were again affecting Wales:

There is the suspicion among some people in the rural north and west that such a parliament would be dominated by the Anglicised, industrial majority of Glamorgan and Monmouth. And some people in South Wales fear that the rural Welsh speaking areas would try to force a ruthless language policy on the rest of Wales.¹⁶⁴

These suspicions were fuelled by the campaign committee largely conducting most of its business in the Welsh language.¹⁶⁵

As early as 1951, the PWC Committee felt obliged to release a press statement reiterating complete independence of the movement and announcing that 'A solid kernel of MPs continue to give their valuable support and leadership'.¹⁶⁶ In 1953, the Campaign acquired, and according to McAllister was saved by, a new organising secretary in the form of the WNP's Gwynedd organiser, Elwyn Roberts.¹⁶⁷ However, by this time much of momentum

¹⁶⁰ Edwards, 'Labour, Nationalism and the Problem of Welsh Devolution'; Jones and Jones, 'Labour and the Nation', p. 252.

¹⁶¹ The Liberal Party, *A Parliament for Wales*, p. 3.

¹⁶² 'Ymreolaeth i Gymru', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (18 November 1953), p. 1; 'Pam Y Mae Morrison yn Erbyn Senedd I Gymru: Mantais Plaid o Flaen Lles Cenedl', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (25 November 1953), p. 1.

¹⁶³ NLW, Noelle Davies Papers, 1/17/28, Fred Jones letter to Davies, 12 December 1951.

¹⁶⁴ NLW, Goronwy Roberts Papers S3/12, 'The Case for Federation in Britain', Newspaper Cutting, n.d.

¹⁶⁵ Ward, *Huw T. Edwards*, p. 101.

¹⁶⁶ NLW, Noelle Davies Papers, 1/18/2, Press Release, 19 September 1951.

¹⁶⁷ McAllister, *Plaid Cymru*, p. 99.

had been lost and some supporters had already drifted away.¹⁶⁸ It was clear that the political, industrial and geographical divisions of the country were again visible. These problems undermined whatever political influence the campaign had achieved.

In December 1954, with momentum generally petering out, Davies, now acted independently of the Campaign Committee, presented a private member's Bill to Parliament. This action confirmed the lack of unity present within the PWC and reinforced Davies's reputation as something of a maverick.¹⁶⁹ The initiative proved unsuccessful, at its second reading in March 1955 the Bill was rejected by 48 votes to 14.¹⁷⁰ This appeared to signify the end of the 1950s PWC. However, the Committee resolved to continue with the collection of signatures and a year later reached a final total of 240,652 signatories.¹⁷¹ This represented about 15 percent of the Welsh population.¹⁷² Ward has suggested that most of this support for the campaign came from Welsh speaking Wales and this view supports Gwynfor Evans claim that the majority of the ground work was completed by WNP activists.¹⁷³ In April 1956 the petition was presented to Minister of Welsh Affairs, Gwilym Lloyd George, and with mounting debts the PWC was brought to a close.

The PWC accomplished very little in terms of legislative devolution for Wales. However, it proved an important milestone in Welsh affairs. Historians have suggested that this movement 'made it easier for less ambitious [Welsh] demands to be justified'.¹⁷⁴ For example, in 1959, the Labour Party acknowledged that 'the time has now come for the special identity of Wales to be recognised' and pledged to appoint a Secretary of State for Wales in its 1959 manifesto.¹⁷⁵ In 1964, the Labour Government fulfilled this pledge and appointed James Griffiths to the post. Devolution, for a time at least, was off the political

¹⁶⁸ Jones, *A Radical Life*, p. 232.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 233.

¹⁷⁰ 'No Senate of Wales: 14 Vote in Favour', *The Times* (5 March 1955), p. 9.

¹⁷¹ Jones, 'Parliament for Wales Campaign', p. 227.

¹⁷² McAllister, *Plaid Cymru*, p. 100. Jones, *A Radical Life*, p. 233.

¹⁷³ Ward, *Huw T. Edwards*, p. 101; Johnes, *Wales Since 1939*, pp. 217-8.

¹⁷⁴ Jones and Jones, 'Labour and the Nation', p. 253.

¹⁷⁵ The Labour Party, *Britain Belongs to You: The Labour Party's Policy for Consideration by the British People* (London, 1959).

agenda, although Johnes has suggested that this experience was another step on the gradual construction of a proto-Welsh state.¹⁷⁶

The campaign left contrasting legacies to the Labour Party and the WNP, while the other parties involved appeared unaffected by the experience. Jones, for example, has suggested that the involvement in this movement caused the 'schism in the [Welsh] Labour Party to become more apparent'.¹⁷⁷ Edwards reinforces this view by suggesting that even when Cledwyn Hughes was appointed Secretary of State for Wales in 1966, there remained within the party questions over his loyalty to Welsh patriotism over his socialism.¹⁷⁸ In contrast, the PWC helped to raise the profile of the WNP and according to Jones helped put them back on the political map and ultimately, eventual electoral victory.¹⁷⁹ Gwynfor Evans concurred and attributed the improved 1955 electoral results, where it achieved an average of 10 percent of the vote across the twenty seats it contested, directly to the WNP's involvement in the PWC.¹⁸⁰ This UCF initiated PWC therefore, contributed significantly to the development of the WNP as a political voice.

The problems of unifying campaigners from across the political and cultural spectrum proved too much for the campaign. A consensus could not be reached on strategy or the distribution of responsibilities and as a result the movement was poorly organised and poorly led.¹⁸¹ When added to funding difficulties and interparty friction, it was something of an achievement that the campaign had continued for five years. Among the general population too, the campaign had failed to mobilise widespread support.¹⁸² This was due in part to the organisational difficulties of the movement that overlooked large parts of the country.

¹⁷⁶ Johnes, *Wales Since 1939*, pp. 217-8.

¹⁷⁷ Jones, 'The Parliament for Wales Campaign', p. 225.

¹⁷⁸ A. Edwards, *Labour's Crisis: Plaid Cymru, the Conservatives, and the Decline of the Labour Party in North-West Wales, 1960-74* (Cardiff, 2011), p. 15.

¹⁷⁹ Jones, *A Radical Life*, p. 233.

¹⁸⁰ McAllister, *Plaid Cymru*, p. 100; The contrasting fortunes of the Welsh Labour Party and WNP are discussed in detail by Edwards's study into North-West Wales. Edwards, *Labour's Crisis*.

¹⁸¹ Jones, 'The Parliament for Wales Campaign', p. 229.

¹⁸² McAllister, *Plaid Cymru*, p. 100.

During the various studies of PWC and the difficulties it and its constituent players experienced, one element has been generally overlooked and that is the organisational relationship between the movement and UCF. While the PWC was initiated and supported by UCF, especially in the early years, the movement's own executive committee was responsible for organising the campaign. As such, the energy and experience of key members of UCF, especially that of Ellis, who had previously organised similar campaigns, was absent from the Executive. The reasons for this are unclear. However, based on the Union's track record over the previous decade, the PWC were the weaker for the omission.

This deviation into political nationalism by UCF proved to be the end of the Union's primacy within Welsh culture. From the end of this campaign, support for UCF, both from other cultural organisation and from the Welsh intelligentsia slowly dissipated, although it would continue to campaign to protect the Welsh language, in various forms, until it eventually ceased its operation in 1971.¹⁸³ The emergence of more radical patriotic movements, from the early 1960s, including the Welsh Language Society (*Cymdeithas yr Iaith*) together with the increasing popularity of the WNP, both impacted negatively on UCF support. As a result of this, in 1965, the Union registered itself as a charity, thereby limiting its potential future activities.¹⁸⁴ The following year, at the 1966 Llandudno conference, UCF's long serving secretary, T. I. Ellis announced his intention to retire in 1967. It was not a coincidence that in December 1966, with Ellis departure imminent, the Union held its first discussion regarding ending its activities. Within three years a Special General Meeting at Aberystwyth, in November 1969, resolved to ask the Trustees to suspend all UCF activities.¹⁸⁵

Tom Ellis served as secretary of the Defence Committee and UCF for almost thirty years. However, in many respects he had led both these movements, both through his influence of members and branches, and by controlling the organisations correspondence. It was widely acknowledged within UCF that, without Ellis, the Union 'would have had but little to show in justification of its existence.'¹⁸⁶ Ellis was never salaried for fulfilling these roles, preferring

¹⁸³ Jones, *A Bid for Unity*, p. 51.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*, p. 43.

¹⁸⁵ Jones, *A Bid for Unity*, p. 51; Over the next 18 months the Union's financial affairs were concluded and in 1971 UCF official closed.

¹⁸⁶ Jones, *A Bid for Unity*, p. 52.

instead the exercise the freedom from the shackles that such employment would have entailed. Apart from involvement in UCF, Ellis was also an accomplished writer and broadcaster, in both English and Welsh, and was a member of the Welsh team of the BBC quiz *Round Britain* for 20 years. He fulfilled a number of other cultural roles, including Warden of the University of Wales, Guild of Graduates from 1943-47, member of the University of Wales Court, the Council of University College of Wales, Aberystwyth and served on the Court and Council of the National Library of Wales and was a member of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion. His religious affiliations included being a member of the Governing Body of the Church in Wales and serving as treasurer of the Welsh Council of Churches for the period 1961-66.

Other prominent members of UCF during the wartime period did not maintain their association with the Union for as long as Ellis. W. J. Gruffydd, despite assurances to contrary during the University of Wales by-election in 1943, became much less involved following his election to Parliament. Gruffydd served this constituency until it was abolished in 1950 and maintained his contact with the National Eisteddfod, serving a President of the Court from 1945 until his death in 1954.¹⁸⁷ However, while he maintained regular correspondence with Ellis from London, he no longer attended any Union meetings. Saunders Lewis too, gradually disassociated himself with the Union. He played no part in the PWC and withdrew from politics for twenty years.¹⁸⁸ He did not re-enter the nationalist limelight until 1962 with his now infamous *Tynged yr Iaith* (Faith of the Language) broadcast, which, it has been argued, launched the Welsh Language Society.¹⁸⁹

D. R. Hughes, *Cynan* and the editorial team of the *Cofion* series, all ceased their association with UCF after the final issues of the newsletter and gift book were printed in 1946. There is no evidence of any ill feeling and the reasons why none of the five continued their

¹⁸⁷ NLW Website, DWB, 'Gruffydd, William John'. <http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s2-GRUF-JOH-1881.html>, accessed 10 October 2016.

¹⁸⁸ Davies, *A History of Wales*, p. 593.

¹⁸⁹ D. Jones, 'I Failed Utterly!: Saunders Lewis and the Cultural Politics of Welsh Modernism', *The Irish Review*, 19 (Spring-Summer, 1996), 22-43.

association is unclear. Hughes was by this time 72 years of age and would die in 1953.¹⁹⁰ However, *Cynan* was in his early fifties and maintained a close association with the National Eisteddfod where he served as Arch Druid from 1950-54 and 1963-66. In contrast R. T. Jenkins, retired from his position in University College Bangor in 1948 and this may suggest why he took no further part in the Union.¹⁹¹

For some members of UCF, the involvement in cultural patriotic campaigns led to involvement in political nationalism. One of the most noteworthy members in this group was Gwenan Jones. Prior to World War Two, Jones was an academic at University College of Wales, Aberystwyth and a member of the University of Wales, Guild of Graduates. In 1939, as a representative of the Guild she attended the Conference for the Defence of Welsh Culture and from that time became an active and prominent member of both the Defence Committee and later UCF, including chairing the joint sub-committee for Welsh Women and preparing pamphlets on Welsh education.¹⁹² Following her involvement in the various campaigns of the Defence Committee and UCF, Jones, joined the WNP and was nominated to stand against W. J. Gruffydd for the University of Wales seat in 1945. Jones was one of seven WNP candidates to stand at that General Election. None of the seven candidates won their respective seats. However, Jones polled a respectable 25 percent of the votes and significantly, was the only WNP candidate not to lose her deposit.¹⁹³ Jones continued her association with the WNP thereafter and was later described by Gwynfor Evans as 'one of the greatest of all Welsh women'.¹⁹⁴

In contrast to Jones, whose time with UCF led to a political career, Ithel Davies had been active in the political area prior to joining the Union. As discussed earlier, Davies had been an active socialist and member of the Labour Party during the 1930s but during the war

¹⁹⁰ NLW Website, DWB, 'Jones, Sir Cynan Albert Evans' <http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s2-JONE-EVA-1895.html?query=cynan&field=content>, accessed 10 October 2016.

¹⁹¹ NLW Website, DWB, 'Jenkins Robert Thomas. <http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s2-JENK-THO-1881.html>, accessed 10 October 2016.

¹⁹² See Chapter Three for more details; See also NLW Website, DWB, Jones, Gwenan'. <http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s10-JONE-GWE-1889.html>, accessed 10 October 2016.

¹⁹³ McAllister, *Plaid Cymru*, p. 69.

¹⁹⁴ Evans, *For the Sake of Wales*, pp. 27-8.

joined the WNP. During the early years of the conflict Davies, a pacifist and conscientious objector, spent much of his time defending fellow objectors at tribunal hearings. In 1943 he was co-opted onto the Council of UCF and nominated to lead the Union's National Survey of Welsh Social Life.¹⁹⁵ The events at the 1949 WNP conference were to give Davies a new political direction. Since the end of the war there had been an increasing call for the party to take a more republican stance. In 1949, when a motion to this effect was rejected, some members walked out and, together with some former members of the Labour Party, formed the Welsh Republican Movement.¹⁹⁶ Davies joined this new group and the following year was chosen to fight the Ogmere seat at the General Election, in which he polled a disappointing one point three percent of the vote.

By the mid-1950s very few of the wartime activists were still involved with UCF, apart from Ellis. Many continued to work for other Welsh cultural organisations and some, including D. Wyre Lewis and the Ivor E. Davies, reverted their priorities back to their pre-war occupations, Lewis as Minister and writer and Davies as a reporter and local historian.

Between the end of World War Two and the PWC, UCF reacted to the difficult position it had found itself in during 1945 by changing its strategy. From 1941 the protection of the language had underpinned all of UCF's campaigns. However, from the end of the war, while the defence of the Welsh language continued to be important it was no longer the Union's sole driving force. During this period other Welsh interests came to the fore, including improving the nation's infrastructure, discussions on post-war employment and ultimately, the desire for Home Rule. This shift in was particularly noticeable during the campaign for the establishment of a Welsh broadcasting corporation. Initially, the Union campaigned on improving Welsh language broadcasts and, in this, received support from other Welsh language cultural organisations. However, after the 1947 and 1948 hiatus, the Union's stance and arguments were directed more towards bilingual broadcasts on topics about Wales and Welsh history. This position generated significantly greater support from across Wales, especially from local authorities. By presenting a bilingual approach, UCF could finally claim to represent the opinions of Wales.

¹⁹⁵ See Chapter Four for more details.

¹⁹⁶ Evans, *For the Sake of Wales*, p. 97.

Welsh Home Rule had been a long-standing objective for various organisations and movements in Wales, both political and cultural. However, as the success of such a campaign would have resulted in a change to the political structure of both Wales and Great Britain, it was seen as a political objective. The Union from the outset had dogmatically maintained an apolitical stance but by initiating the PWC, the Union deviated from its own longstanding position and entered the political arena.

Conclusion

The emergence of the Defence Committee and *Undeb Cymru Fydd* during World War Two changed the face of Welsh patriotism. These organisations, for the first time in modern history, successfully fused senior members of almost all the nation's Welsh language cultural and political organisations into a single, united and cohesive response to the specific challenges facing the Welsh language and Welsh nation. They were formed as a direct response to concerns that measures by the Government to protect Britain from losing the war would be the final death blow to a declining Welsh language and the end of the distinctive Welsh identity linked to it. While this integrated reaction did not last, it was during the conflict and into the post-war period, a powerful force for Welsh interests.

This study has demonstrated that existing Welsh historiography relating to Welsh patriotism, during World War Two, should be treated with caution. Such a narrative has been developed from various analyses of Welsh political nationalism, primarily relating to the WNP. In general, cultural patriotism was omitted from these conclusions. This study has demonstrated that, contrary to the accepted view, Welsh patriotism did not decline during World War Two but increased, became more united and evolved into a much stronger representative of Welsh interests that had been witnessed prior to hostilities.

This thesis also uncovered a number of other trends. Firstly, the continuation, or in this case increase, in popularity of cultural patriotism in Wales and the corresponding marginalisation of the WNP, was in keeping with a similar shift in support during World War One.¹ What was particularly significant was how rapidly this switch in allegiance occurred. Soon after the Shrewsbury Conference in 1939, the Defence Committee eclipsed the WNP and became the primary voice for Welsh interests. Confirmation of this was not difficult to find, for example, within months of its formation the Defence Committee became the leading force in the Welsh Language Petition and, from 1940, the WNP acknowledged that this Committee was better placed to campaign on matters affecting Wales. In June 1940, for example, Lewis' proposal to re-organise Welsh services in the event of a German invasion of England was

¹ Stover, 'Modern Celtic Nationalism', p. 286.

discussed by the party, which concluded, 'the Plan will receive a better hearing if the Committee formed in the Shrewsbury Conference ... took a prominent role promoting the work'.² This admission reinforced Stover's World War One conclusion that, 'While cultural organizations continued their work throughout the war, the political groups they bolstered became increasingly marginalized', was also played out in World War Two.³

The declining influence of the WNP during the war years was also in keeping with the traditional shift away from political parties during the early years of the war. However, justifications for this concept related primarily to mainstream parties, which were members of the wartime coalition government, as Laybourn has argued, smaller parties, such as the Communist Party, increased their membership during the period.⁴ The WNP, as a minority party, which was not confined by any political truce, was, in theory, well placed to also take advantage of this, especially during the 1943 by-election for the Welsh University Parliamentary Seat. Despite the result being decided by academics, a group from whom the WNP's received much of its support, and reduced opposition because of the political arrangement of the coalition government, meaning that no Conservative or Labour Party candidate stood, the party proved unable to achieve more than 22 percent of the vote. The party's failure stemmed largely from its position on the war. The WNP's declaration of neutrality and its policy of directing its members to conscientiously object to military conscription were unpopular. The Communist Party, in contrast, following the German invasion of the Soviet Union, supported the war effort. The WNP's anti-government rhetoric and de-industrialisation policy also failed to convince the University electorate. Adding to these unpopular policies was the party's perceived right-wing nationalist ideology, fuelled by accusations of fascism. At the time Britain and her allies were at war with right-wing nationalist fascist governments from Europe. The Communist Party's position at the left of the political spectrum benefitted from this fact. Therefore, unlike other many smaller

² NLW, UCF/A3, D. Myrddin Lloyd letter to T. I. Ellis, 19 June 1940; 'A Civil Order Corps for Wales', *Welsh Nationalist* (June 1940), p. 4; 'Dylifiad Noddedigion I Gymru'.

³ Stover, 'Modern Celtic Nationalism'.

⁴ K. Laybourn, 'Review of Andrew Thorpe, Parties at War: Political Organization in Second World War Britain', *History*, 94:316 (2009), 547-48.

political parties, including the Communist Party, the WNP, the most vocal political exponent of Welsh interests, was being largely ignored.

In addition to the narrative of a wartime decline in Welsh nationalism, Johnes suggests that the war proved divisive, not only for the WNP but also for the Welsh speaking intelligentsia.⁵ However, with the exception of the short period around the 1943 University by-election campaign, this investigation provided evidence to the contrary. Following the establishment of the Committee for the Defence of Welsh Culture, the majority of the Welsh intelligentsia unified behind the movement, despite having different approaches to patriotism. This support was maintained through the 1941 merger with the National Union of Welsh Societies and, for the most part continued into the post-war period. The disagreements caused during the 1943 by-election were short-lived and both candidates and their supporters again unified behind the endeavours of UCF.

A significant trend unearthed by this research was the evolution of Welsh cultural patriotism. Prior to 1939, cultural patriotism in Wales was represented by a number of organisations, operating within different spheres of society. Each responded to the decline of the language in different and uncoordinated ways. The *Urdd*, for example, established summer camps and gatherings for children. The Welsh Guild of Graduates published Welsh language books and the National Union of Welsh Societies promoted the language in schools and in legal matters. With the formation of the Defence Committee all the cultural organisations united. Co-ordinated campaigns were initiated, such as those to keeping Welsh soldiers together in Welsh Regiments, to protect *Mynydd Epynt* from being taken over by the government and to protect Welsh organisations by seeking an amendment to Circular 1486, The Service of Youth, which, if successful, would have allowed Welsh organisations access to government funds and resources.

As the study demonstrated these early campaigns were defensive in nature. They were initiated in response to individual government actions, such as land acquisition, military conscription and funding for youth organisations. Despite the individual importance of these campaigns to Welsh history, the most significant development was that the full weight of Welsh culture was being brought to bear on each issue. Ultimately however, each of these

⁵ Johnes, *Wales Since 1939*, p. 26.

reactive campaigns proved unsuccessful, *Mynydd Epynt* still became Sennybridge Range, conscripted Welsh soldiers, as with soldiers from other regions of Britain, continued to be distributed through the British military and no revised second circular was published for Wales. But despite these failures, a blueprint had been established.

With the advent of *Undeb Cymru Fydd* in 1941 the defence of the language developed broader more offensive campaigns. The Union ceased to be solely a reactive organisation and developed (or revived) proactive initiatives. These included the Welsh Language Petition, which resulted in the implementation of the 1942 Welsh Courts Act, the education campaign that influenced the 1944 Education Act, which facilitated the state sponsoring of Welsh medium education, and the employment of Welsh speaking welfare officers to assist those women relocated to the war factories of the Midlands and the south of England. Not only were these projects proactive, they also proved successful. That UCF led cultural initiatives that resulted in the wartime government making provisions for Welsh interests, such as the Ministry of Labour provisions for war workers, was a major leap in influence. The transition from reactive to proactive strategy was not, as first appears, an instant or sudden change. There were indications that this progression had begun prior to the 1941 merger with, for example, the Welsh Language Petition but it was in the period after the merger that the full magnitude of this development was witnessed.

Building on these accomplishments and the successful implementation of another proactive initiative, the National Survey of Welsh Social Life, the Union widened its scope further. By this time the war was over and the threats to the Welsh language from evacuees and military conscription had diminished. UCF continued to pressure authorities on language issues but also began implementing campaigns on non-linguistic issues. These included improvements to the national infrastructure of Wales and improved communications. While these matters were of concern to many people in Wales, and to Welsh post-war interests, they did, in reality, lead the Union outside the realms of cultural matters. This led ultimately to the Parliament for Wales Campaign. By 1950 there was a coming together of political nationalism and cultural patriotism, based on broad support from a wide range of

institutions. For a time Welsh interests appeared united in a single goal. However, this unity was short lived.⁶

One of the key issues relating to this cultural trend was the claim that UCF was representing the whole of Wales. It was clear from analysing the papers that members believed their efforts were for the whole nation. However, as this study has demonstrated, most of the campaigns undertaken were motivated by protecting the Welsh language. At the time, the language was spoken by less than 37 percent of the Welsh population. It was therefore difficult to justify such campaigns as being representative of the whole of Wales.⁷ Despite this, several governmental committees and councils accepted the Union's submissions based on the mistaken premise that they were representing the opinion of the Welsh nation.

The belief that Wales, as a nation, would only maintain its individual identity through the maintenance of the language was in keeping with general patriotic and nationalist discourse of the mid-twentieth century. There was little doubt that members of the Defence Committee and UCF promoted this concept. In this way, efforts to protect the language could be viewed as being in the interest of the whole nation. While the validity of such beliefs may be dubious, that it motivated patriots and nationalists of the time is beyond doubt. Not every campaign undertaken during the war was motivated solely by linguistic concerns. Even during the conflict there were campaigns that suggested wider motives. The attempt to keep the children of South Wales in Wales was only partly motivated by the concerns for their language. The majority of the children from Cardiff and many from Swansea did not speak Welsh and therefore any efforts to keep them within Wales were motivated by other concerns, especially keeping them close to their families. Similarly, not all the Welsh Centres that Ellis promoted were Welsh speaking. However, this did not exclude them from Ellis' list.

Following the end of the war and, significantly, the completion of the National Survey of Welsh Social Life, this analysis no longer maintained its validity. Many more campaigns in the post-war period were motivated by wider, non-linguistic issues. These included national

⁶ Jones, 'Parliament for Wales Campaign'.

⁷ Based on the 1931 Census figures, See Chapter One for more details.

infrastructure and Home Rule for Wales. The implementation of these initiatives meant that UCF were much more representative of the interests of the whole of Wales.

This thesis sheds a new light on other aspects of wartime Welsh history. The National Survey of Welsh Social Life implemented by UCF, for example, has received little attention in Welsh historiography.⁸ Following the receipt of the final completed questionnaires in 1945, there was evidence that the Union prepared a brief summary report. This report, however, is not in the organisation's papers. The lack of promotion of this survey by UCF goes a long way to explaining why the survey has gone unnoticed academically. Another possible motivation for not promoting the results of their own survey is that, as this study has shown, many of the completed questionnaires returned answers that were not in keeping with the Union's mandate.

The survey responses also challenged some of the urban myths surrounding World War Two in Wales. For example, the segregation of military personnel from nearby communities questions how much influence they actually may have had on the public. Similarly, with only six of 112 areas reporting an increase in the use of English by Welsh children during the period, the survey requires a change of thinking about the impact of evacuees on Wales. Most of the country confirmed that overall, evacuees had little direct effect on local communities and any influence that was experienced was only temporary. Overall, in contrast to popular belief, these questionnaires demonstrate that World War Two, in general, did not adversely impact on Welsh communities, the Welsh language or on key elements of Welsh life. These results were returned despite the specific pro-Welsh bias to the questions of the survey. These responses, despite their bias, are still historically beneficial. Indeed, they became more significant because of this bias. There is no doubt that this investigation into the National Survey of Welsh Social Life, was an interesting first step into the vast information it contains. Further studies of this new historical Welsh resource will no doubt follow.

Another neglected facet of the wartime period was the Union's publication and distribution of *Cofion Cymru*. The establishment of a Welsh language newsletter that was printed in such

⁸ Williams, 'Women and the Welsh Language', p. 179; Edwards and Griffith, 'Some Conceptions of Welsh National Identity and Governance', p. 137.

large numbers and disseminated so widely across the world is significant in the story of both the Welsh language and the preservation of the Welsh culture. The reasons why this project has, to a large extent, been overlooked by histories of Wales are unclear. This initiative, like other Union projects, was significant in its funding, organisation and implementation and based on anecdotal evidence was hugely popular with the recipients. To date, historians have more often quoted wartime issues of the *Welsh Nationalist* as an indication of Welsh feelings towards the conflict. However, based on circulation numbers and contemporary popularity, the 2,000 copies of the political nationalist newspaper reflects far less Welsh wartime views than the 26-28,000 circulation of the cultural patriotism of UCF.⁹

This research has analysed the campaigns and activities of the Defence Committee and UCF to protect the Welsh language, exposed forgotten projects and uncovering wartime patriotic trends. However, as UCF and the Defence Committee, were established primarily to protect the Welsh language, it was against this objective that their overall accomplishments should be evaluated. Unfortunately, it was not possible to scientifically measure the influence that these cumulative cultural campaigns had on the language or culture. The only available information from which to extrapolate any conclusion was the number of Welsh speakers. While it was acknowledged that there could have been many influences affecting the linguistic preference of the Welsh population, they are, as the only details available, used as a guide.

The trend of language decline in Wales from 1911 to 1961 was assessed. As has been well documented the number of Welsh speakers was already reducing prior to 1939 and fears had been expressed for the future of the language. With the onset of World War Two, a surge of Anglicisation was expected as 'Englishness seeped into Wales through all kinds of channels'.¹⁰ Evacuees, military conscription, Anglicised radio broadcasts, establishment of military camps.¹¹ These challenges for the Welsh language were further exacerbated by the arrival of tens of thousands of Americans, on route to the European theatre of war, the establishment of prisoners of war camps across Wales and the relocation of young women

⁹ The April 1945 issue of *Cofion Cymru* quotes the circulation as 28,000.

¹⁰ Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation*, p. 270.

¹¹ Johnes, 'For Class and Nation', p. 1257; Davies, *Hanes Cymru*, p. 576.

to the war factories of England. Contemporary sources believed that the level of Anglicisation was so severe that it threatened individual Welsh identity.¹²

There was no census carried out in 1941 because of the war. When the 1951 census was completed it confirmed that the Welsh language had continued to decline. However, this decline only represented a further 7.4 percent of the population, since 1931.¹³ To put this in perspective this reduction in Welsh speakers was no greater than the average in any other decade, once the double census period was factored in.

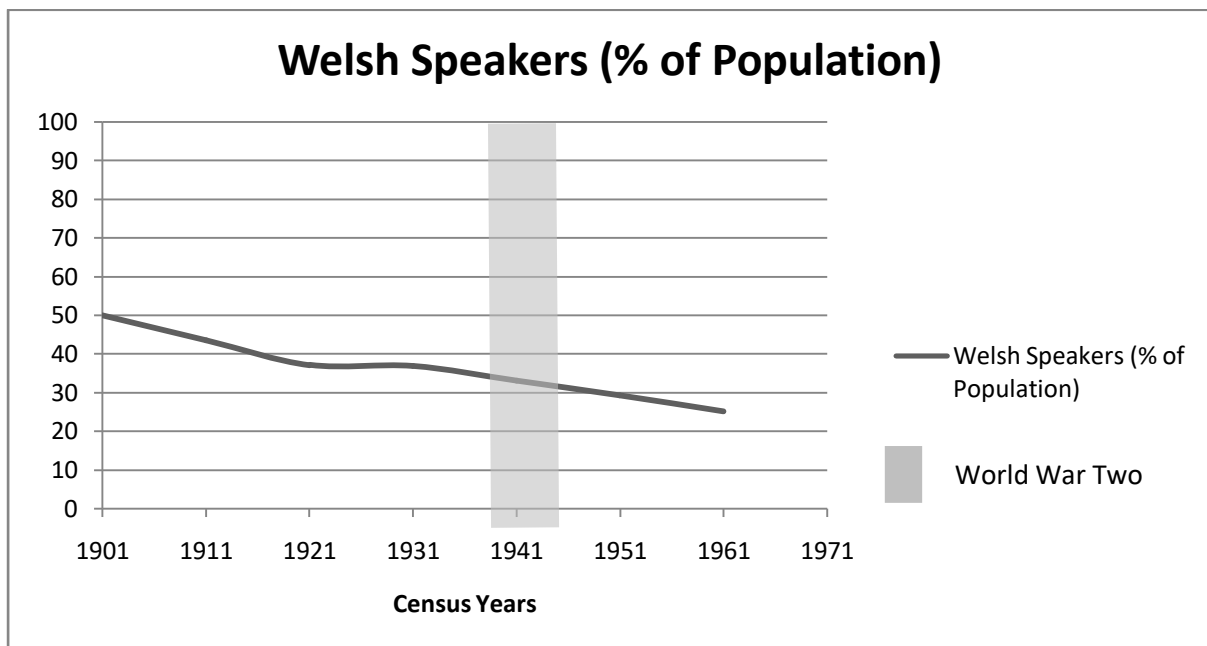


Figure 1: Decline in Welsh Speakers 1911 – 61¹⁴

Therefore, despite the influx of hundreds of thousands of outsiders into Wales and mobilisation of large sections of the Welsh population to engage in the war effort, the rate of Welsh language decline did not increase. This conclusion confirmed the findings of UCF's National Survey of Welsh Social Life that the war had only a limited impact on the Welsh language and culture. One senior member of UCF went further. In 1944, W. J Gruffydd reported to Parliament, 'wartime prosperity and influx of a large new population, far from having a harmful effect on Welsh culture, had actually stimulated an unprecedented

¹² NLW, UCF/A3, 'Circular to Members, Undeb Cenedlaethol Cymdeithasau Cymraeg', Autumn, 1940.

¹³ D. T. Williams, 'The Distribution of the Welsh Language, 1931-1951', *The Geographical Journal* 119:3 (1953) 331-5.

¹⁴ Extrapolated from, Office of National Statistics, *200 Years of the Census in Wales* (London, 2001).

revival.¹⁵ Therefore, despite all the early fears to the contrary, war did not hasten the Anglicisation of Wales.

The Defence Committee and UCF were established primarily to defend the Welsh language from the effects of World War Two. In this they were successful. The war did not adversely affect the Welsh language more than any other period between 1911 and 1961. It was not possible to connect the language campaigns of these cultural organisations to numbers of Welsh speakers. Therefore, due to lack of information, UCF cannot be credited with negating the effects of the war on language decline, although to rule out their influence would be erroneous.

Williams has argued that ‘the people of Wales emerged from the Second World War charged with a new spirit of optimism.’¹⁶ Other historians have similarly argued that following the conflict both Wales and the WNP experienced something of a national revival.¹⁷ An increase in Welsh language education, Welsh language broadcasts, Welsh speaking teachers and greater education on Welsh history and heritage are all evidenced by a collection of academics and historians. In most cases the reasons for the increases go unexplained. It is not coincidence that these were all campaigns undertaken by UCF.

This research contributes to the lean historiography of wartime Wales. It highlights the response of Welsh cultural patriotism to the perceived threats to Welsh language interests by the onset of war. It is therefore, the first study of Welsh cultural patriotism in World War Two. Throughout the study, the policies and actions of UCF, the most active cultural organisation at the time, were compared to the approach of the WNP. In this way, the review contributes to the volume of work conducted on this political nationalist party and adds to the cultural and political nationalism debate.

¹⁵ ‘Welsh “D” Day’, *Western Mail* (17 Oct 1944), p. 2.

¹⁶ Williams, ‘In the Wars: Wales 1914-1945’, p. 206.

¹⁷ McAllister, *Plaid Cymru*, p. 47.

Appendices

Appendix A

THE CONFERENCE FOR THE DEFENCE OF WELSH CULTURE

Capel yr Annibynwyr Cymreig, Dogpole, Shrewsbury. 1 December 1939

List of Delegates

National Eisteddfod Council	7
The Church in Wales	6
The Union of Welsh Independents	6
The Wales and Monmouth Baptist Union	6
The Welsh Presbyterian Church	6
The Welsh Methodist Church	6
Council of the University of Wales	2
The National College	4
Central Board of Wales	2
National Union of Welsh Societies	6
Education Workers Union (South and North)	4
Union of Welsh Education Committees	2
The Guild of University of Wales Graduates	2
Union of Welsh Teachers	2
Honourable Society of 'Y Cymmrodorion'	2
Local Government Association	2
Urdd Gobaith Cymru	2
North Wales Evangelical Church Union	1
University of Wales Students Central Council	2
Welsh Language Society	1
National Music Council	2
Gwynedd Temperance Assembly	1
Merched y De (Women of the South)	1
North Wales Women's Temperance Society	1
The Adult Classes Teachers Union	1
The Women's Institutes	1
The Council of Social Services (North and South)	2
Liverpool Welsh National Society	1
London Welsh Society	1
Welsh Members of Parliament	4
National Union of Teachers	2
Society of Intermediate Teachers	2
The Education Authorities	18
The Catholic Church	1
The Unitarians	1
Union of Quarrymen	1
Miners Union	1
Tin Workers Union	1
Union of Railwaymen	1
Welsh Agricultural Organisation Society	1
National Library of Wales	1
National Museum of Wales	1
The Library Association	1
The Union of Welsh Publishers and Booksellers	1
Young Farmers Clubs	1

Appendix B

Members of the Committee for the Defence of Welsh Culture

December 1939

A. Evans-Jones (<i>Cynan</i>)	Joint Secretary, National Eisteddfod Committee.
I. ab O. Edwards	Founder of <i>Urdd Gobaith Cymru</i> .
T. I. Ellis	Academic, Member of University of Wales Guild of Graduates.
W. George	Chairman, National Union of Welsh Societies. Honorary Solicitor to National Eisteddfod . Brother of David Lloyd George.
W. J. Gruffydd (Chairman)	Academic Cardiff University. Close Associations with Eisteddfod. WNP Politician in 1930s, Liberal MP from 1943.
D. R. Hughes	Founder of <i>Cofion Cymru</i> , Joint Secretary National Eisteddfod.
R. T. Jenkins	Academic and contributor to <i>Cofion Cymru</i> .
Dr. E. K. Jones	Uncompromising Baptist Minister. Social and Educational Reformer.
Brifathro J. M. Jones	Vice-President University College of North Wales.
S. Lewis	President of Welsh Nationalist Party 1926-1939.
D. F. Roberts	Minister, Author and Religious Academic.
B. B. Thomas	Warden Coleg Harlech, later wartime Civil Servant.

The Committee of 12 members were made up from a cross-section of the delegates at the conference, representing all the major organisations. The influence and prestige of the committee rested not only with its support from the Conference but the individual standing of its members.

Williams John Gruffydd, better known as W.J. Gruffydd, was elected Chairman. Like *Cynan* he had strong links to the Eisteddfod, serving as President of the Council, an academic background being the Professor of Celtic Studies at the University College Cardiff from 1918 (to 1946) and politically affiliated to WNP prior to the war, serving as its Vice-President in 1937. In 1943 he would become a Liberal MP for the University of Wales seat.

Albert Evans Jones (better known as *Cynan*) The initial secretary of the committee. *Cynan* originally became a Baptist Minister and war poet but it is as a servant of the Eisteddfod that he is better known. Between 1937 and 1947 he served as secretary to the National Eisteddfod Committee and became an academic in the University of Wales Bangor.¹⁸

Tom I. Ellis was to become Committee secretary. Ellis was another academic having held a position at University College Swansea. In 1939 he was about to take a position as a lecturer in classics in St David's College, Lampeter, followed a year later by a lecturing position in the University College Aberystwyth.¹⁹

Youth organisations were represented on the Committee by **Ifan ab Owen Edwards**, founder of the Welsh youth organisation *Urdd Gobaith Cymru*. Ifan established the Urdd in 1922 'to give children and young people the chance to learn and socialise through the medium of Welsh',²⁰ through an international Christian framework.

Saunders Lewis was President of WNP prior to 1939. Unfortunately, Gruffydd and Lewis had strong differences of opinions, sometimes described as being 'violently at odds with each other'.²¹ These disagreements over the proper course for Wales had already resulted in Gruffydd's resignation from WNP. It is testament to both the importance placed on this organisation and to the members that served with them that they managed to work together.²²

¹⁸ Ifor Rees (ed.) *Bro a Bywyd Syr Cynan Evans-Jones 1895-1970* (Caerdydd, 1982).

¹⁹ Ellis became notable for both his biographical publication on his father *Thomas Edward Ellis, Cofiant* (Liverpool, 1948) and especially his *Crwydro* series of guides to wandering regions of Wales

²⁰ Urdd Gobaith Cymru Website <http://www.urdd.org/adran.php?tud=17&lng=en>. Accessed 3 Oct 2013

²¹ *Ibid.* p. 19

²² Chapman, *W. J. Gryffydd*.

Reinforcing the strong link with the National Eisteddfod **D.R. (David Rowland) Hughes** who had served as Secretary of the National Eisteddfod Association 1935-36 and Joint Secretary (with *Cynan*) 1937 – 1947 was also nominated. Hughes came from a commercial background having worked for United Dairies in London for 45 years.²³

Another academic on the Defence Committee was **R. T. Jenkins**, a lecturer in Welsh History at University of Wales College Bangor from 1930.²⁴

Three Ministers added to the religious influence; Y Parchedig Ddr E. K. Jones, Y Parchedig Brifathro J. Morgan Jones and Y Parchedig D. Francis Roberts. **E.K. Jones** was described as an ‘uncompromising Baptist’, while both **Morgan Jones and Roberts** were authors and academics. **J. Morgan Jones** was Vice-President of the University College of North Wales.

Another significant member of the Committee was **Williams George**, brother of David Lloyd George.²⁵ From 1916 he Chaired the County Education Committee for Caernarvonshire (1916-1948) and sat on the County Council there from 1907 - 1967. He Chaired the National Union of Welsh Societies and also had strong connections with the Eisteddfod Committee; serving as honorary solicitor of the court and council of the National Eisteddfod from 1937 to 1956.²⁶

B.B. (Ben Bowen) Thomas was the twelfth member of the Committee. He was born in Ystrad Rhondda, and throughout the 1930s was Warden at Harlech College, at the time a residential college for adults. In 1940 he was seconded to the Ministry of Labour and then on to the Ministry of Education, becoming the Permanent Secretary to the Welsh Department, Ministry of Education from 1945-1963. Thomas a committed Baptist, worked to improve Welsh education and the teaching of Welsh in schools.²⁷ Politically he also had associations with WNP before his resignation.

²³ NLW, DWB, ‘Hughes David Rowland.’, <http://wbo.llgc.org.uk/en/s2-HUGH-ROW-1874.html>. Accessed 12 Aug 2013. Hughes would go on to serve as Treasure to UCF in 1941 and again 1944-45.

²⁴ NLW website, DWB, ‘Jenkins, Robert Thomas’, <http://wbo.llgc.org.uk/en/s2-JENK-THO-1881.html>. Accessed 10 Aug 2013

²⁵ Meic Stephyens ‘W.R.P. George Obituary’ *Independent* (22 Nov 2006).

²⁶ NLW website, DWB, ‘George, William’, <http://wbo.llgc.org.uk/en/s2-GEOR-WIL-1865.html>. Accessed 17 November 2013

²⁷ ‘Obituary Sir Ben Bowen Thomas: A Force in Welsh Education’ *The Times* 29 July 1977 p.16; R. Wallis Evans (ed.), *Syr Ben Bowen Thomas: Teyrnged*, (Aberystwyth, 1978).

Appendix C

Names Added to the Opening Message of the First Edition of *Cofion Cymru*

C.A. Cambrensis (Dr. C. A. Green)	Archbishop of Wales.
Mihangel McGrath	Archbishop of Cardiff.
W. Rhys Watkin	The President of the Union of Baptists.
J. Morgan Jones	The President of the Union of Congregational/Independent Chapels.
Thomas Williams	President of the General Assembly of Presbyterian Chapels.
Edward Davies	President of the General Assembly of the Methodist Churches.
J. F. Rees	Principal of University College of South Wales, Cardiff.
C. A. Edwards	Principal of University of Wales College, Swansea.
Ifor L. Evans	Principal of University of Wales College, Aberystwyth.
D. Emrys Evans	Principal of University of Wales College, Bangor.
Wyn P. Wheldon	Welsh Secretary at the Board of Education.
W. Crwys Williams	The (National Eisteddfod) Archdruid of Wales.
J. M. Howell	The President of Urdd Gobaith Cymru.
William George	The President of the National Union of Welsh Societies.
G. Hartwell Jones	The Chairman of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion Committee.
W. J. Gruffydd	The President of the Conference for the Defence of Welsh Culture (or Defence Committee).

Appendix D.

Research by New Wales Union into Condition of Social Life in Wales.

WORD OF INTRODUCTION

About three years ago the Committee for the Protection (Preservation) of Welsh Culture sent a small questionnaire to some friends in different areas of Wales, seeking a report on the state of the culture and language in those locations. A good deal of very interesting and valuable answers were received. Because of that [survey] it was clear that a more detailed and broader research was needed to obtain a complete picture of national life. *Undeb Cymru Fydd* appointed a sub-committee to organise a fuller questionnaire, and behold that fuller questionnaire is ready.

We are sending it to individual people and groups (companies) of people in the hope of obtaining full and detailed answers to every section of it and from every region of Wales, and through that we can get a reasonably accurate description of the life in our nation at this time.

We're allocating six month to complete the work, and we are expecting the answers to reach Undeb's office in Aberystwyth by the end of June 1944.

Write the answers carefully ensuring that the facts and dates are correct.

State also if the answers are the work of one person or of a company (Group), by placing the name or names next to the answers.

By doing the work carefully and thoroughly we'll get a national mirror to see ourselves in.

D.WYRE LEWIS, *Council Chairman.*

T. I. ELLIS, *Secretary.*

13, High Street
Aberystwyth

December, 1943

***Undeb Cymru Fydd* Questionnaire**

Factual Summary

Name of Parish or Parishes

Villages and town in the vicinity

Local Government Council (civic or rural)

Population

Number of daily elementary schools

The closest higher elementary school

(a) Higher standard

(b) Intermediate

(c) Technical

Number of private schools and their nature

Number of religious orders/faiths

Number of members in the different religious monastic orders

Number of Sunday Schools

Number of English daily papers received in the vicinity

The number of Welsh newspapers

Number of English magazines

Number of Welsh magazines

The Industrial nature of the area (e.g. agricultural, etc.)

A. Education and Youth organisations

1. The Schools (Elementary, Intermediate, Technical)

- (a) To what extent, if at all, is Welsh used as a medium of education in the schools?
- (b) Unless Welsh is used as a medium of education, how much notice is given to it in text or lessons?
- (c) Is the Headmaster (Headmistress) Welsh (speaking)?
- (d) How many teachers speak Welsh?
State how many teachers and how many of those speak Welsh.

- i.
 - (a) Do the Teachers speak Welsh with the children in school, and English outside school? If so what is the reason for English?
 - (b) Is Welsh or English the usual language when children's meetings are conducted under the auspices of the school, e.g. concerts, eisteddfod, drama, debates, or any other meeting?
 - (c) Is the atmosphere of the School Welsh?
 - (d) Are there any English (pupils) in the School? Give an idea of the proportion of Welsh (speaking), English pupils and non-Welsh speaking Welsh pupils
 - (e) If there is a children's school magazine, is it in Welsh or English? If it is bilingual, what is the proportion of Welsh compared to the proportion of English?
- ii.
 - (a) How much notice is given to Welsh history in the schools?
 - (b) What place is given to Welsh literature?
 - (c) Is some notice paid to local history?
 - (d) Are there any pictures of eminent local people in the school or renowned national characters? If no, what pictures, if any, are there?
Note the pictures that are present.
- iii.
 - (a) Is there a library in the school?
 - (b) How much space is dedicated to recent Welsh books?
 - (c) What is the proportion of Welsh books to those in English?
Note an estimation of the comparable value of the Welsh books to the English books and incentive is given to children to read Welsh literature.
- iv.
 - (a) What is the attitude of the School Managers towards Welsh?
 - (b) Is there a tendency to appoint English or non-Welsh speaking Welsh as teachers?
 - (c) How many English, apart from non-Welsh speaking Welsh, are among the teachers?
 - (d) Are any of managers English? Note the number. What is their approach to Wales and to the Welsh?
- v.
 - (a) Did any Evacuees arrive in the locality and did this change the atmosphere of the school?
 - (b) Did this change the children's practices - in their language, in their play, in their meetings inside and outside the school?
- vi.
 - (a) What is the attitude of the County Education Committee towards Welsh?
 - (b) Do the Board of Education operate to Circular 182 (Wales) - "Welsh in Schools"?
 - (c) If not, who is blame – either the Education Committee or the Managers or the Head teachers and teachers.
 - (d) Do Welsh programmes for schools by the Broadcasting Corporation get any space in the school's programme?
- vii.
 - (a) Are there any private schools in the locality?
 - (b) Are there any recently opened institutions?

- (c) Is their language English or Welsh?
 - (d) What children's ages do they provide for?
 - (e) What notice is given to Welsh language, history, literature and culture in them?
 - (f) Are there any Welshmen among the instructors or governors?
- viii. (a) Have any schools come from England for safety from the war?
- (b) Do they give some attention to Welsh life, language, history, literature and so on, and the history of the area?
- (c) What is their attitude to life and residents of the area?

2. Evening Classes and other educational classes.

- i. (a) Is there a night school in the vicinity?
- (b) If so, is Welsh practiced as a medium of education?
- (c) Is Welsh taught as a subject?
- (d) Are the teachers Welsh or English?
- ii. (a) Are there any external classes under the University of Wales or under the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) or under any other organisation or educational funding in the area?
- (b) Is the language of these classes Welsh or English?
- (c) Is the Lecturer Welsh or English?
- (d) Are the class members Welsh, a mixture of Welsh and English, or non-Welsh speaking Welsh people?
- (e) Have the circumstances surrounding the war caused any changes in the sex composition and practices of the class?
Note the reasons for this.
Give the subject studied by the class, and if there are more than one, the classes for the three or four previous years.
- (f) Have Welsh books been recommended to read and study relating to the class subject? If not, what is the reason?
- iii. (a) Has the dispersal of the population had an impact on the education activities and maintenance of the classes?
- (b) If members of the army, navy, or air force have been stationed or are boarding in the area, or there are adult evacuees, do they take interest in the classes? What impact has that had on them?
- (c) What is the attitude of these arrivals towards Wales and the Welsh?
- (d) Is there a provision in the area to teach these newcomers the Welsh language, Welsh history or directed at the nation's culture?
- iv. Are there any organisations or educational arrangement in existence in the vicinity apart from the organisations and arrangements above?
Note under whose auspices they are and what impact they have had on the life and interests of the vicinity by applying the above questions were appropriate.
- v. (a) Are there any youth organization in the area - *Aelwyd*, *Urdd Gobaith Cymru*, or a club under the auspices of the Education Committee?
- (b) Is Welsh or English the normal and official language?
- (c) If English boys or girls are members who cannot speak Welsh, is Welsh taught to them?
- (d) What provision is made in the work plan of the various organizations to instruct these young people in history, literature and various aspects of Welsh life?
Provide an overview of their programmes.

- vi. (a) How many children in the area attend Intermediate School, and what is their average age?
- (b) How many boys and girls from the area are in University? For what occupation are they preparing?
- (c) If there are Intermediary Schools or Technical School in the vicinity or services the area, how many young people or children attend them?
- (d) Is there any attempt being made in these schools to direct and prepare pupils for community life?

B. The Churches and Sunday Schools.

- i. (a) How many churches are there in the area?
- (b) How many English churches are there in the area?
- (c) Are English Services regularly or occasionally held in the Welsh churches or in some of them?
If there are, what is the reason?
- (d) If there are any English causes in the area, to what extent do they rely on the support of Welsh speakers?
Give, if you can, some notion of the average of these Welsh speakers and the reason why they support English causes more than Welsh causes?
- (e) Is there an increase in the English causes in recent years, what accounts for that?
- ii. (a) Have any religious orders or churches been established in the area within the last thirty years?
- (b) Has an order or church closed in that time?
- (c) Is Welsh or English the usual language for the service of the Order or church on a Sunday, on a weekday meeting or a meeting arranged by them or under their auspices?
- iii. (a) What is the attitude of the religious leaders in the vicinity towards Welsh organisations like the *Urdd* and *Undeb Cymry Fydd*?
- (b) Do they sponsor and promote cultural societies in the churches or outside them?
- (c) Are there Welsh societies, such as literary society, drama, or of some other cultural nature in the Welsh churches or in some of them?
- (d) If not, what is responsible for the indifference/apathy?
- (e) If there are Welsh societies in the local churches, do they work together? Give some idea of the cultural activities of the local churches.
- (f) Is Welsh holding its ground in the religious field? If it is losing ground, what is the reason?
- iv. (a) What is the impact of the dispersal of the population on the localities religious life and activity?
- (b) To what extent has the arrival of evacuees or branches of the armed forces to the vicinity affected churches and religious activity?
- (c) Apart from the existence of English churches or Orders, have any special provisions being made in the Welsh churches for these arrivals?
- v. (a) Is the Welsh language the language of the Sunday schools in the local Welsh churches?
- (b) If they use the English language, what accounts for this?
- (c) What is the position relating to Welsh in the weekday meetings of the Welsh churches and in children's meetings, Y Gobeithlu (Band of Hope), Cymdeithas y Bobl Ifainc (The Association of Young People) the Bible class, Sisters Sewing class and any other meeting or class related to the church?

- (d) Do the children and young people in general attend different Sunday schools? If they do not, or the majority do not, what is the reason?
- (e) Is an effort being made to provide an effective foundation of Sunday school education standard?

C. Welsh Homes

- i.
 - (a) What is the proportion of homes to population in the area?
 - (b) Are there many homes where English is the first language?
 - (c) Is Welsh the normal household language?
 - (d) If there are English families in the area, are they trying to convert themselves to Welsh society? If not, what is the reason?

- ii.
 - (a) To what extent have homes been affected by the war?
 - (b) How much dispersing of the population has there been in the area?
 - (c) If there are evacuees or boys or girls from the armed forces accommodated in (local) homes, what effect has this had on the language and practice of the families who accommodated them?
Give some idea what is the standing regarding the housing of evacuees and members of the armed forces?
 - (d) Do the Welsh families motivate and instruct those housed with them to speak Welsh and to acquaint them with the national culture and organisations and the Welsh Institutions that foster them?
 - (e) Is Welsh life in the area at risk because of the exchanges during the last few years?

- iii.
 - (a) What kind of literature is read in the homes?
 - (b) Are there signs that English literature is used ahead Welsh literature? What accounts for that if it is the case?

- iv.
 - (a) How many of workers and their families have come to the area due to war assignments and war work?
Where they English or Welsh?
 - (b) What provisions have been made so such people?

- v.
 - (a) To what extent are homes in the area getting overpopulated?
 - (b) To extent do homes in the area sponsor the national culture and to what extent are they under alien influence?
 - (c) Are there homes of any Welsh celebrities in the vicinity? What is their condition today? Is respect given to them by the residents?
Note some of the celebrities in the area and their homes.

D. Social Life

- i.
 - (a) What are the common interests of the people of the area and especially the young people?
 - (b) Have any new attractions appeared as a result of the war? Note them.
 - (c) Have any new organisations been established relating to the war or defence services? (e.g. Military apprentice organisations such as Air Training Corps, Army Officer Training Organisation or National Fire Service, casualty first aid, Home Guard and so on.
 - (d) If so, to what extent has this impacted on life and original (or native) social activities of the area and on Welsh life and tradition?

- (e) Do these organizations or institutions provide for their own recreation? Is so enter the recreational features.
- (f) Who are the leaders of these organizations? Are they Welsh or English?
- ii. (a) Have Eisteddfods been held and competitive meetings and drama and Welsh concerts in the area?
 (b) Under whose auspices were they conducted?
 (c) What effect has war circumstances had on the like?
 (d) To what extent is the English language used in them if at all?
 (e) Do they have the general support of the area and are they still popular?
- iii. (a) Is there a public hall in the area? If there is, how much use is made of it for the purpose of Welsh cultural and social organizations?
 (b) Under whose sponsorship is it?
 (c) Are the rooms compatible for small meetings or committees?
- iv. (a) Is there a public library in the area?
 (b) Is there a reading room in it?
 (c) What is the proportion of Welsh and English newspapers and magazines?
 (d) To what extent do Welsh people take advantage of it?
- v. (a) If a weapons factory or air station or military camp been established in the area, what effect did that have on:
 1. Language
 2. Customs
 3. Cultural and social institutions of the place.
- vi. (a) Is Welsh in the district being read?
 (b) Do they read and buy Welsh books?
 (c) If English books predominate what accounts for this?
 (d) Is the reading of English literature on the increase?
- vii. (a) If there are notable dances or card playing in the area, to what extent does this conflict against the original institutions?
 (b) Is it Welshmen or Englishmen who promote them?
 (c) What is the language of the dance floor and the board tables – Welsh or English?
 (d) Is there an increase in popularity, is this attributed to the influences and practices brought in with the influx of people and through the experiences of local boys and girls in the war or while working away from home?
- viii. (a) Are there cinemas in the area or convenient to the area?
 (b) What is their influence on the language and customs and interests of the people especially the young people?
 (c) Is their influence obvious?
 (d) Does their presence adversely conflict with the original institutions of the area such as weekly religious causes and cultural and educational organisations?
- ix. (a) Do teachers and ministers take a leading role in the public and social life outside the schools and churches?
 (b) Do they support Welsh non-denominational and non-political organisations?
 (c) What is their attitude to Undeb Cymru Fydd, The Urdd and Aelwydydd Yr Urdd?
 (d) Is there some local leadership regarding the various problems of Welsh life and Wales as a country and a nation?

- (e) What is the public feeling in the area on matters of importance to Wales and continuation of Welsh life, such as Secretary of State for Wales, Welsh education, the Welsh language in the administrative life of Wales?
- (f) Is there a (strong) public feeling because Government forms and notices are in English? Is it a feeling of dissatisfaction?
- x. (a) If it is an agricultural area, is there a Young Farmers Club locally?
 (b) If there is, in what language does it carry out its business?
 (c) Are the Officers and promoters Welsh or English?
 (d) If they are English, what accounts for why Welshmen do not take leading role in them?
- xi. (a) What is the feeling among local residents regarding the need for Wales to have its own national organisations to make her own arrangements after the war?
 (b) Is there some evidence that the local people are especially keen to operate through local associations to plan economic renewal after the war and to save Wales from further dispersion of its population and further migrations from the country into towns?
- xii. (a) Are there different branches of political parties and trade unions in the area?
 (b) If there are, do they conduct their business in Welsh, If not what is the reason for this?
 (c) Are the leaders of the political parties or trade unions Englishmen or some of them?
 (d) If so, does this tend to Anglicise them?
 (e) How much notice is given to Wales problems and work on its future such as Education, Post-war reconstruction, depopulation of Wales and the closure of Welsh quarries?
- xiii. (a) Is there a tendency for monolingual English people to buy houses and property in the area with a view to relocate there?
 (b) Is there a trend of Englishmen opening businesses, set up workshops and undertaking economic adventures in the area?
 (c) Are there an equal amount of English traders in the area? If so, do they strive to learn Welsh or do they tend to Anglizise the place?
 (d) To what extent are small local traders being replaced by large market chains? What is the attitude of the people towards them and what is the attitude of those surveyed to Wales and the Welsh.
 (e) Are the Supervisors of these markets Welsh or English?
 (f) What is the attitude of the English, who for whatever reason have settled in the locality, to Welsh life?
- xiv. (a) Are public service officials such as the post office, banks, the railways, and so on, Welsh or English?
 (b) Are announcements and notices published in Welsh as well as English?
 (c) Is it local Welshmen, or at least some of them, that administer them?
- xv. (a) What is the condition of the roads in the area?
 (b) Have travel facilities had some effect on the practices and institutions of the local neighbourhoods, and has this tended to draw the young people into the local towns for entertainment?
- xvi. (a) Is there an English name for the town, village or place in the district, and can you suggest how the Welsh name can be restored?
 (b) To what extent is the Welsh name used by the inhabitants?
- xvii. (a) Are there indications that mixed marriages between the Welsh and the English on the increase in the area?

- (b) If so, is this trend turning the Welsh atmosphere English and turning Welsh institutions to serve the English?
- xviii. (a) Is there a newsagents and bookshop there?
 (b) If there isn't, is there some place or means locally to order or request books and newspapers?
 (c) Is there someone or some people in the place who could undertake such a service?
- xix. (a) Is there a choir or drama group or entertainment group in the area?
 (b) If there isn't, is there talent for these who could maybe make it work?
 (c) To what extent has the radio affected these types of things, if at all?
 (d) What is the common attitude of people towards the Welsh Broadcasting Station and the Welsh programmes and to the short time given to these Welsh programmes?
 (e) Does Welsh broadcasting tend to generate closer sympathy between the Welsh and greater interest in things Welsh?
 (f) What is the feeling about getting an Independent Broadcasting Organisation for Wales?
- xx. If there is some social activity that has not been previously included, such as garden fete, flower show, various exhibitions, music festivals, festive evenings and the like, also note the language they operate in and if not Welsh what is the reason for this.
- xxi. (a) What is the state of the rural crafts such as blacksmithing, carpentry, stone masonry, shoemaking, tailoring work and so on, and they have disappeared or tending to disappear or are they able to hold their own?
 (b) Are their wool factories and flour mills in the areas? If there were some, how long since they have ceased?
 State the reasons and caused for the disappearance of the crafts, factories and mills.
 (c) Is there a feeling of loss to local life because of the disappearance of these crafts, factories and mills?
- xxii. (a) Is there a local paper published in the area?
 (b) If there is, is it Welsh or English?
 (c) If it has a mixture of Welsh and English what is the proportion of space given to Welsh matters within it? Is news included in Welsh or only essays and articles?
 (d) Are Welsh or English behind them? Or is it a mixture of Welsh and English? Is the editor Welsh or English?

E. Local Government and Administration of Law

- i. (a) Are the local government officials in the area or those pertaining to the area Welsh or English?
 Note the positions held by the Welsh and by the English.
 (b) Do the English have sympathy for Welsh causes and Wales?
 (c) Are members of the local council Welsh or English, e.g. local members on the various councils that serve the area?
 (d) If they are English, what is their proportion to the Welsh and what is the reason why the area is represented by the English?
- ii. (a) Is Welsh or English the usual language of the local council?
 (b) Are minutes kept in Welsh or in English?
 (c) If the Council mixes Welsh and English, do the Welsh speak Welsh in the council meetings?

- iii. (a) Are Council notices, warnings, orders and circulars published in Welsh or English or bilingually?
(b) If only in English have the Welsh made some effort to change things?
(c) If not, what is the reason for this?
- iv. (a) To what extent does the Council feel a sense of duty towards Wales and is ready to collaborate with other councils in matters pertaining to Wales as a national unit?
(b) Is there a national feeling in the Council and a feeling of insistence in the face of Wales' situation as a country and nation?
(c) What, if there is indifference, accounts for this?
- v. (a) Have they written to an individual Welshmen or to Welsh local authorities on behalf of the Council in Welsh at all?
(b) Is there some opposition or difficulty to the producing official correspondence of the Council in English?
(c) What is the official attitude to corresponding in Welsh?
(d) Is the situation accepted by the Welsh?
- vi. (a) How many local Magistrates are Welsh, how many are non-Welsh speaking Welsh and how many are English?
(b) If Magistrates Courts sit in the area do they use Welsh regularly or occasionally?
(c) If not, why not?
(d) Are cases debated in Welsh at all by the lawyers?
- vii. (a) Do the lawyers who practice law in the area speak Welsh?
(b) What, if at all, is the proportion of English to Welsh speaking (lawyers)?
(c) Are some of them capable of taking cases in Welsh?
- viii. (a) If there is a Small Claims Court in the district, are there difficulties carry out its proceedings in Welsh? If there are what are they?
(b) Is there evidence that the Welsh are at a disadvantage in understanding what's going on because the official language of the court is English?
- ix. (a) Do the Court Officials, such as Magistrates Clerks, Court Registrar and High Court, Justice of the Peace and the clerks to the offices relating to them, speak Welsh?
(b) If they do not, what is the proportion of English to Welsh speakers?
(c) Are the Chairmen of the quarterly Assizes Court proficient in Welsh?
(d) What is the attitude of these officers to the Welsh speakers and the Welsh?
(e) Would it be an advantage to the people if these officials could speak Welsh?
(f) Is that also the case for Police Officers? And do Police Officers who do not speak Welsh serve in the Welsh districts?

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