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Wales and militancy 1952-1970

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BA Hons

Submitted to the University of Wales in fulfilment of the requirements for
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

2010
Abstract

This thesis addresses the campaign of militant activism which Wales witnessed between 1963 and 1969. It demonstrates that the unprecedented period of violence was fuelled by both the contentious flooding of Cwm Tryweryn and crucially, the failure of Plaid Cymru to prevent the valley’s drowning through constitutional means. By not taking passive and timely protest action, Plaid Cymru ensured that militancy, as predominately undertaken by Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru, became a feature of the Welsh geo-political landscape. Moreover, had the party taken a more sharpened approach during the earlier stages of the proposal, it is likely that the emergence of the so-called Free Wales Army, which campaigned along the lines of using ‘propaganda against the Establishment’, may well have been avoided. However, this is a view which is challenged by, among others, former members of the displaced community, who maintain that Plaid Cymru - and most notably its president - did all they could to prevent the Tryweryn Reservoir Bill becoming law. Nonetheless, the escalation in militant strategy came in response to the impending Royal Investiture of Charles Windsor as Prince of Wales. In retaliation, the authorities established the so-called Shrewsbury Unit. This was borne of an increasingly desperate attempt to apprehend those responsible, in order to ensure the safety of the Royal Party and the success of the ceremony.

By considering the publicity conscious Free Wales Army, the thesis demonstrates that the group undertook one failed militant strike. It also establishes that the militant offensive undertaken by MAC comprised two distinct phases. The first in 1963 was predominately marshalled by Emyr Llywelyn Jones. The second period of hostilities, between 1966 and 1969, was orchestrated by John Jenkins; who critically, was a Sergeant in the British Army Dental Corps.

This thesis seeks to reinstate the importance of the militant campaign in Welsh history, neither by judging it nor dismissing it, but by establishing the importance of these protests to both the nation’s history and its cultural and political advance. It also establishes the detail of what happened, while seeking to tell the story in a balanced way, paying full attention to the perspective of the perpetrators and those actively engaged in their detection.
DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Signed................................................................. (Candidate)

Date.................................................................

STATEMENT 1

This thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

Signed............ ......................................................... (Candidate)

Date.................................................................

STATEMENT 2

I hereby give consent for my thesis, if accepted, to available for photocopying and for inter-library loan, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organisations.

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Date.................................................................
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‘Dying embers can still start a fire’.

*Western Han Dynasty.*

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It has been an honour and a privilege to undertake this thesis and to meet and correspond with all concerned. I am blessed. Please excuse the self-indulgence above!

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Wyn Thomas.
Carmarthen, May 2011.
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Abbreviations

TNA - The National Archives
NLW - National Library of Wales
LRO - Liverpool Record Office
HO - Home Office
WT - Wyn Thomas

Movements and Terrorist Organisations
MAC - Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru
FWA - Free Wales Army
PF - Patriotic Front
CylG - Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg
IRA - Irish Republican Army
FLN - Front de Liberation Nationale
FLQ - Front de Liberation du Quebec
ETA - Euskadi Ta Askatasuna
FLB - Front for the Liberation of Brittany

Newspapers
CJ - Carmarthen Journal
CT - Carmarthen Times
LDP - Liverpool Daily Post
LE - Liverpool Echo
SWEP - South Wales Evening Post
WoS - Wales on Sunday
WM - Western Mail

Welsh-language publications
BaAC - Baner ac Amserau Cymru

Periodicals
NS - New Statesman

Newspapers and other publications mentioned once, or entitled with one word, are included entirely.
Wales and militancy 1952-1970

Introduction

Between 1963 and 1969, Wales was rocked by a series of bomb-blasts. The first explosion in the series occurred at the Tryweryn Reservoir site on 11 February 1963. The bombing campaign was the first sustained use of explosives, as a means of political protest, which the nation had ever witnessed.

There were twenty explosions, while six other devices failed to activate. Although the identity of those responsible for all these attacks has never been established, the two groups most prominent in their campaigning at this juncture were the Free Wales Army and Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru. This thesis will show that contrary to some speculation, the two groups did not act in tandem. The FWA, established in 1963, comprised a somewhat motley membership of between fifty and - if the group’s self-styled leader and able publicist Cayo Evans is to be believed - several thousand. Despite the group’s fictitious cries of responsibility for the bomb blasts, its donning of military-style uniforms and its engagement in elaborate manoeuvres, the FWA was primarily involved in a campaign of propaganda. Yet, as this thesis will demonstrate, the group was nonetheless involved in one failed militant action. Nine activists, either members of the group or those sympathetic to its aims of achieving independence for Wales, were arrested and tried for Public Order and various firearms and explosives violations between April and July 1969. Three, including Cayo Evans, were sentenced to terms of imprisonment.

Contrary to the FWA’s affectation, the covert and audacious Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru undertook its campaign of militant activism with considerable effect. The group, thought to comprise some fifteen activists, operated along the lines of an insular three-four man cell structure, with only the cell leader known to MAC’s operational director, John Jenkins. It proved an impressive and somewhat impenetrable system. Led by the charismatic, prudent, if solipsist Jenkins, MAC was responsible for many of the explosions, including a number of notable ‘successes’. Nevertheless, what MAC most needed, John Jenkins believes, was political approval from Plaid Cymru. Had the party endorsed its action, or more tacitly offered its
support, *a la* Sinn Fein/IRA, ‘it would have made a big difference’, Jenkins maintained:

We had the almost impossible job of trying to show the authorities that we were prepared to kill, when in fact we had no intention of doing so. All records of our actions prove this. We were not into taking life. We wanted to save our soul; the soul of the nation.¹

Yet, John Jenkins’ collective use of the word ‘we’ is challenged by Emyr Llywelyn Jones, who rejects the idea of ‘an underground movement’ as fallacious. Jones does not ‘think there was a MAC or anything like it as such, just groups of people, working independently of one another, determined to do something’. Moreover, ‘the whole Welsh militant campaign of the 1960s’ had ‘become a little more than a myth’, he believed, and this because, there has been ‘so little effort to write an account of the era accurately’.² Not only does this thesis try to rectify that, its importance is all the more critical because many of the perpetrators and protagonists have passed away since being interviewed.

**Why militancy emerged**

Why was it, in the face of traditional political activity, that a number of people in Wales adopted the gelignite and the timer as a means of political expression? This dissertation will argue that the answer to this question, can be traced to the refusal of Gwynfor Evans and the Plaid Cymru hierarchy to stray from its chosen path of constitutional politics when first confronted with the proposal by Liverpool Corporation to flood Cwm Tryweryn in Meirionnydd in 1955. This single episode proved to be the most inflammatory, yet decisively unifying issue in post-1945 Welsh politics. It seemed to encapsulate the manifold concerns of the nation’s nationalist community, sparking an unprecedented outpouring of resentment and outrage. The resultant excitation came to symbolize and embody Wales’ stark political denudation. If ever the country needed to awake to the grim truth that its essential cultural identity was at stake, nationalists opined gravely, it was provided by ‘Tryweryn’. Nonetheless, to those on the militant periphery of Welsh nationalism, ‘the party of Wales’ and more specifically Gwynfor Evans, had propitiated Liverpool Corporation. This perceived ‘betrayal of Tryweryn’³ began a chain of events, which by the decade’s

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¹ Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 November 2008. ‘What we lacked was popular support. There was a lot of tacit, acquiescent support’.
² Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 10 October 2005.
³ Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 12 September 2003. ‘Gwynfor Evans redeemed
end, had seen the so-called Free Wales Army all but disbanded, a ten-year-old boy badly injured, two apparent members of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru dead and the self-styled director-general of the organisation imprisoned for ten years in solitary confinement.

For John Jenkins, the future director-general of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru, as for many drawn to the ranks of Welsh militancy, the judicial process to secure parliamentary support for the flooding of Cwm Tryweryn and more potently, the inability of the Plaid Cymru leadership to orchestrate effective opposition, struck a loud and disturbing chord. Nevertheless, blame for the valley’s flooding lay not so much with Liverpool, nor indeed Parliament, but rather, Jenkins believed, with the hierarchy of Plaid Cymru. Liverpool was not targeted throughout the MAC campaign, Jenkins revealed, as the city council had not been at fault. It was rather, ‘acquiescence on the part of Gwynfor Evans’, Jenkins argued, which had sealed the valley’s fate. ‘Had Plaid Cymru announced at any stage prior to the valley’s clearance that it had a task force, which would literally fight anyone who attempted to forcibly remove villagers and farm owners from their properties, then it would have been stopped’, he declared in 2007. For, had this stand resulted in open hostility, the moral outrage and uproar would have been deafening. As a result, Jenkins asserted, ‘nothing further would have been done’.4

Jenkins’ later decision to spearhead a militant campaign against what he believed to be insensitivity by central government towards Wales and its resources could be specifically traced to one key event: the U-turn taken by Gwynfor Evans, to appoint Emrys Roberts as party opposition coordinator to the Tryweryn proposal. Roberts’ appointment, Jenkins demurred, ‘succeeded in that most basic of political provisos: it seemed to be doing the job, without actually doing it’. Crucially, Jenkins added,

Roberts was regarded as a man of great integrity: known and respected within the party, including by those intent on undertaking action over Tryweryn...When they were informed that the great organiser had been appointed, they sat back and waited...but meanwhile, time was going on, the houses were being demolished and the people were being shifted away. By

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the time people had opened their eyes to what was happening it was all over and done with.\(^5\)

In January 2008, Emrys Roberts himself noted that ‘there was a great deal of frustration and resentment by the ‘Young Turks in the party over Tryweryn...They intended to act and the party leadership had to do something to draw the sting’. Yet, no sooner was Roberts ‘appointed to ‘organise a plan of opposition’, he ‘was hedged in by so many constraints’ that he ‘couldn’t do anything’. Roberts believes ‘Gwynfor began to get cold feet. He alone had the authority to reverse any such decision; the party wasn’t even consulted’. Subsequently, Roberts asserts, ‘every suggestion’ he proposed ‘was rejected for one reason or another’. His ‘hands were tied’. For instance, Emrys Roberts proposed a hunger strike, but was then put under pressure by the party to forget the idea, on the grounds of it not being ‘party policy’. This was ‘quite ironic’, Roberts added, when considering what ‘happened later in Gwynfor’s career’.\(^6\) Yet, if this were indeed true, why had the party hierarchy been so reluctant to ally itself, albeit officially, to any form of militant action? An opinion, vociferously shared by Owain Williams and Emyr Llywelyn Jones, each of whom was imprisoned in 1963 for undertaking the first truly militant protest over the Tryweryn issue, is that Cwm Tryweryn was sacrificed on the altar of Plaid Cymru’s electoral advance.\(^7\)

However, as with any historical event, the furore which surrounded both the flooding of Cwm Tryweryn and the rationale which subsequently gave rise to militant Welsh nationalism did not develop in isolation. Each was a culmination of anxieties, frustrations and, crucially, the result of a gradual shift in the political and cultural zeitgeist of the nation. An indication of this, was the servile and parochial reaction expressed to the flooding of Cwm Elan at the close of the nineteenth century and the nation’s response to the drowning of Cwm Tryweryn some sixty years later; so too, the contrast between the 1911 royal investiture and 1969 ceremony.\(^8\) A significant starting point for this epochal change is the end of World War Two, which acted, so

\(^5\) Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 November 2008. Although initially supportive, the more militant thinkers grew quite dismissive of Emrys Roberts as he ‘was a talker’. Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 10 October 2005.


\(^7\) Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 12 September 2003.

\(^8\) Elizabeth Clarke, *The Valley* (London, 1969), pp.160-70; also, Francis Brett Young, *The House Under the Water* (London, 1932); also, *Observer* (Supplement), 22 June 1969, p.18. In 1911, a few dissenting voices in the Welsh press, raised the point that since the death of prince Llywelyn, the title Prince of Wales ceased to exist.
believed Gwynfor Evans, as a chrysalis for what was to develop into the post-war nationalist movement. This was because, Evans maintained, the period of hostility demonstrated to Welsh servicemen and women the illogicality of conflict to liberate nations abroad, while their own was itself the victim of constitutional subjugation.9

Yet, this apparent disaffection with the political status quo was not recognized by any of the pivotal political parties at the 1945 General Election, with each favouring a broad policy of central government re-planning.10 However, with the years of hostility and the call for unionist harmony principally answered, it was time, separatists believed, for the nationalist struggle to reawaken. Neither the symbolism of Penyberth,11 nor the mass unemployment of the 1920s and 30s had been forgotten and a new era, demanded change. Nowhere was this burgeoning sense that it was time for Wales to take a new direction better exemplified than at the Ogmore and Aberdare by-elections in 1946, when against all expectation, Plaid Cymru polled 30 percent and 20 percent of the vote respectively.12 The result did not go unnoticed by senior Welsh Labour figures. For the second time in eight years, it was proposed that Wales should receive a Secretary of State.13 Furthermore, the incumbent would have a seat in the cabinet, head a Welsh Office and enjoy ‘reasonable powers in administration’.14 Two years later, the wheels of nominal devolved government for Wales began to turn, when the Atlee administration created the Council for Wales and Monmouthshire. Having been established ostensibly to assist the government in policy and economic matters, it was nevertheless devised by a scathing and sceptical Deputy Leader, Herbert Morrison, as an ethereal alternative to the degree of devolution for Wales favoured by Jim Griffiths and other Welsh Labour spokesmen.15 However, such ministerial compromises rarely reap good harvest and accustomed to the often meandering nature of political debate, the pro-devolution lobby, led chiefly

9 Telephone interview between WT & Dafydd Evans, 10 February 2007.
11 Dafydd Jenkins, A Nation on Trial (Cardiff, 1986), pp.38, 39, 305. At 1.30 a.m. on 8 September 1936, Saunders Lewis, Revd. Lewis Valentine and D. J. Williams committed arson in protest at the construction of an RAF bombing school in an area of Llyn considered of sensitive Welsh cultural and historic importance. At the Old Bailey, all three received a nine month gaol term.
14 James Griffiths, James Griffiths and his Times (Ferndale, 1975), p.41
by the influential Jim Griffiths, would see their dream realized.

Of considerable importance to the development of Welsh nationalism in the post-war era, was both the Parliament for Wales campaign, which by April 1956 had drawn 240,000 petitioned signatures and the stoic struggle of the Beasley family to receive a bi-lingual rate demand from Llanelli Rural Council. Each episode managed to cultivate and attract some degree of cross party, if individual, support and sympathy. As did the clarion call by Saunders Lewis to the nation’s youth to adopt ‘revolutionary methods’ to safeguard the Welsh language. A response was not long in coming: and so began the struggle to see one of Europe’s oldest vernaculars afforded legal status in its own country. While often bitter and divisive, the campaign of Cymdeithais yr Iaith Gymraeg proved vital in the journey for Welsh cultural recognition.

However, of arguably paramount importance to the growth of militant Welsh nationalism, was the first use of explosives as a means of direct action, by members of Mudiad Gweriniaethol Cymru (the Welsh Republican Movement) on 19 October 1952. The targeting of a water pipeline near Llandrindod, was undertaken in protest at the flooding of Cwm Claerwen, the last project in Birmingham Corporation’s water storage programme in Cwm Elan.

Amid this atmosphere of what was believed by disgruntled Welsh nationalists to be self-assertion, came a series of further protests. All were fuelled by a real concern that the nation’s cultural life and environmental splendour faced a grievous threat. For example, in the immediate post-war period, anger was levelled at the British military establishment, for refusing to honour a 1940 pledge to return commandeered farmland to the people of y Epynt when hostilities ceased. Meanwhile, in 1951, Plaid Cymru led a sit-down demonstration near Trawsfynydd, to protest at the War Department’s intention to add a further 10,000 acres to its already

16 Williams, Plaid Cymru, p.16; also, interview between WT & Eileen Beasley, 29 July 2004. Emyr Llywelyn Jones declared Eileen Beasley: ‘the beacon of modern Welsh nationalism. Her action, along with her husband Trefor, created the atmosphere for Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg’; it had been its ‘motivating force’ and ‘a very brave thing to do. Beasley was’, stated Jones ‘the Welsh Rosa Parks’. Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 28 August 2004. The Beasley protest drew admiration from among others, Denis Coslett, who declared it to have been instrumental in instilling ‘a sense of nationhood’ within him. Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000.
18 Telephone interview between WT & Gareth Miles, 13 January 2008.
19 Gweriniaethwr. The Young Republicans (Llanwrst, 1996), pp.92,100; also, Express and Times, 25 October 1952, p.1; also The Welsh Republican, (June-July 1953); also, Telegraph, 4 January 2004.
sizable military range in the area.\textsuperscript{21} By the mid-1950s, what was perceived by the Welsh nationalist community to be the ‘awful march’ of the Forestry Commission’s conifers had struck a chord,\textsuperscript{22} as had, the continuation of National Service.\textsuperscript{23} Nonetheless, the essential experience of military life proved fertile to the growth of extreme nationalist thinking in the years to come. Rural de-population also proved pivotal to the rise of nationalist political sentiment, being the product, so separatists alleged, of successive economic incompetence and indifference to the Welsh rural landscape by central government.\textsuperscript{24}

Issues and events on the wider domestic front also fostered a belief within the Welsh nationalist community that the time had come for the nation to stand alone. For example, The Butler Education Act 1944, created a verdant, dissenting and more informed generation, many of whom, fuelled with a wider understanding of political awareness, embarked with zeal on life’s journey, to right the wrongs of the preceding generation. Furthermore, despite demonstrating to many the advantages of the British State, the birth of the NHS was also a factor. With its promise of free ‘cradle to the grave’ health care for all, the Welsh nationalist community now demanded further change and improvement.\textsuperscript{25}

Yet, the shift in central party policy towards Wales, was not confined to the Labour Party. Following the ‘success’ of the Parliament for Wales campaign, the Conservative Party, often depicted within nationalist circles as hostile to Welsh cultural interests, also attempted to make political in-roads into what it had traditionally regarded as somewhat precarious political territory. Returned to government in 1951, the following year, the Churchill administration launched the office of Minister for Welsh Affairs. Its overall purpose was to coordinate issues relating to Wales, hitherto dispersed throughout various government departments. Essentially a minor arm of the Home Office, it was later immersed within the Ministry

\textsuperscript{20} Western Mail (Supplement), 30 November 2002, p.7; also, Planet, No 48, May 1979, pp.29, 30.
\textsuperscript{23} Williams, Plaid Cymru, p.16. A number of men who later rose to prominence in the FWA had been conscripted. Men such as Cayo Evans, Denis Coslett, Toni Lewis and Glyn Rowlands had to some extent been militarised by their experience; it was certainly a factor in their later being drawn to the Free Wales Army. Interview between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 20 May 2009.
\textsuperscript{24} Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 28 August 2005.
\textsuperscript{25} Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 10 October 2008.
of Housing and Local Government. Meanwhile, the thawing within the Labour Party to the idea of a political office for Wales in Cardiff, as officially launched in its 1959 election manifesto, led many nationalists to believe that the wheels of autonomous political recognition for Wales were now in irreversible motion. However, such political modulation did not translate into electoral support for Plaid Cymru. At the 1959 General Election, Gwynfor Evans, standing as the Plaid Cymru candidate for Meirionnydd received just 22.9 percent of the vote. Despite it being the party’s best showing of the night, it was to be, Evans was later to recall, ‘the election result which was the most bitterly disappointing of all’. The Meirionnydd ballot box revealed much about Plaid Cymru and its fledgling political status. It appeared to provide irrefutable proof that although somewhat sympathetic to many of the party’s political ambitions, the electorate was far from ready to entrust the ‘party of Wales’ with the reins of self-government.

International issues were also significant to the rise of Welsh nationalism. The end of hostilities in 1945 precipitated a new World Order, whereby two vast superpowers faced each other uneasily over a gulf of military and ideological mistrust. With this re-shaping of the political world, Great Britain found its days as a world political heavyweight at an end; nowhere was the country’s titular position at the table of world influence more blatantly exposed than during the Suez debacle in 1956. How could central government, particularly one so obviously out of kilter with world political opinion, understand how Wales, England’s first colony, thought and defined itself, Welsh nationalists asked.

Nevertheless, life for many on the domestic economic front continued to improve. With the eventual end of rationing in Britain in 1956, came the rise in consumerism, most notably the widespread availability of both the motor car and the television set, each, in their own distinct way, leading arguably to a more informed and critical populace. Yet, if the languid Harold Macmillan could announce with some justification in July 1957 that ‘most’ of the nation had ‘never had it so good’, such earnest sentiments could not charm the fears posed by the ever-present horror of nuclear annihilation. Its dark shadow dampened any sense that with the tempestuous

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27 Evans, *For Sake of Wales*, p.145.
28 Wood, *Great Britain*, p.430
fascist threat all but removed, the world was now a safer place.\textsuperscript{30} For those raised with an unquestioning loyalty to the state and the crown, the Cambridge Spy Scandal provided further proof that the country had lost its moral compass. Despite later calls that the defections had resulted from a belief that knowledge of the nuclear issue needed to be balanced,\textsuperscript{31} for Wales’ weary, unsuspecting and unforgiving populace, the episode further served to embody the fear and uncertainty of the Cold War period.

Amid this atmosphere of political and perfidious intrigue, the political map of the world was being re-drawn. Whether as a way of exacting the moral high ground, or due to logistical and financial expediency, ‘the West’ began a policy of de-colonization. Nowhere perhaps was the brutal resistance to the end of colonial rule more apparent than in French Algeria and British Kenya. Nonetheless, as ‘the wind of change’\textsuperscript{32} continued to blow, the Black Civil Rights Movement in the United States gathered momentum, as did the Anti-Apartheid Movement in South Africa. Each, along with the particular efforts of the FLQ, the Front de Liberation du Quebec to receive political independence from the Canadian government, was perceived by the nationalist community of Wales, to be further testament that the time had come for the so-called ‘oppressed communities’ of the world to make a stand.\textsuperscript{33} As the very term ‘protest’ appeared to re-enter common parlance with a youthful vigour,\textsuperscript{34} the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, ruthlessly demonstrated the ever-present threat of nuclear conflict.

Yet, it was far from all doom and gloom, either in Wales, or beyond. As Rock ’n’ Roll music swept all before it, the teen-movement and ‘generation gap’ quickened apace. In an atmosphere of enlightened protest, artistic expression and sexual liberation, youth worldwide embarked on a journey to right the wrongs of what many regarded to be, the antiquated policies of the establishments social domination. For Wales, as elsewhere, the times indeed were changing. Monochrome austerity gave way to the technicolour optimism of the 1960s, as a new era dawned: whereby

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\textsuperscript{31} \textit{The Plot Against Harold Wilson}. BBC Production. Screened BBC 2, 16 March 2006.
\textsuperscript{33} Correspondence between WT & Royston Jones, 18 February 2010. Responsible for over 200 violent actions, including eight deaths, the left-wing nationalist paramilitary FLQ was active between 1963 and 1970. Welsh activists deemed the Canadian situation ‘more analogous’ to Wales, rather than the US or SA. Moreover, ‘many militants admired the Afrikaners and were ambivalent about Apartheid’. Equally, they identified more closely with ‘Malcolm X and the Black Panthers than Martin Luther King’, whom, Jones added, they considered ‘a bit of a waffler’.
\textsuperscript{34} Address by Senator John F. Kennedy to the National Press Club, Washington DC, 14 January 1960.
\end{flushright}
traditional and entrenched mores were rejected, to be replaced with new ideas, lifestyles, beliefs and concepts.

Speaking in 2000, the former Free Wales Army ‘commandant’ Denis Coslett, attempted to identify why he believed this shift in social thinking was instrumental to the rise of the FWA. ‘The late 1950s and 1960s’, he explained, ‘was a time when it was felt that anything could be achieved. I suppose the FWA saw itself as a part of that call for change’. While this spirit of optimism was shared by Owain Williams, it was nevertheless, the inability of the Plaid Cymru hierarchy to depart from its ineffectual, cautious hectoring which proved the nationalist struggle’s biggest handicap. Its constitutional straightjacket, he believed in 2006, having presented at the time of the Tryweryn issue, little more in political terms than sentimental loquaciousness.

**Historians, commentators and Welsh militancy**

Neither the bombing campaign of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru, nor the so-called ‘propaganda campaign’ of the Free Wales Army, has been the subject of concerted historical analysis - even by Welsh historians. More notably, no one has acknowledged that neither group would have materialized had ‘the party of Wales’ taken a more sharpened approach when first confronted with the proposal to flood Cwm Tryweryn in 1955. For instance, Gwyn Alf Williams, states that Welsh militancy was fuelled by what he terms ‘the scandal of Tryweryn’. He notes that a number of people, having seen both the ‘powerlessness of Wales exposed’ and, crucially, passive demonstrations fail, resorted to sabotage as a means of expressing their anger, when a successor dam was constructed at Cwm Clywedog. Yet, by attaching all specific blame to the development of militancy in Wales to the drowning of Tryweryn, Williams fails to address the specific role played by Plaid Cymru to its rise.

John Davies offers a wider suggestion as to why militancy entered the Welsh political landscape. He argues that a number of Plaid Cymru’s members felt compelled to adopt violence to further the nationalist agenda because of the party’s

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35 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000. ‘The sixties’, Coslett added, ‘was a wonderful period of time...a renaissance for the Welsh people. We were born again weren’t we?’.  
36 Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 15 March 2006.  
marginal position within Welsh politics. Furthermore, he suggests that the decrease in the number of Welsh-speakers and the decline in the values considered to be central to Welshness, fostered the feeling that uncompromising nationalism alone could save the nation from extinction.\textsuperscript{38} While Davies correctly acknowledges the importance of an existent threat to Welsh cultural identity to the growth of Welsh consciousness, historians have all too often been guilty of failing to recognise the more complex and broader issues involved. Namely, that contrary to accepted thinking, the cause of Welsh militancy was not merely a parochial struggle, but rather a feature of a wider period of protest. In such a climate, it was inevitable that many in Wales, influenced by events both at home and across the globe, would voice their concern for the nation and its future. The reasons therefore are multi-faceted and yet surprisingly, they are routinely ignored.

Historians have also made factual errors in their treatment of the subject. For instance, while addressing Wales in his study, \textit{British History, 1945-1989}, K. O. Morgan clearly recognises the threat to unionist harmony as posed by the Free Wales Army. It is \textit{they}, he states, this ‘small guerrilla group’, who rock the political symmetry with sinister ‘paramilitary activities’, such as attacking government buildings and ‘a new phenomenon - second homes’ owned in Wales by English occupiers.\textsuperscript{39} However, the FWA was neither responsible for targeting a government building, nor was the group embroiled in the ‘holiday home’ action, which began in December 1979. Morgan’s seminal history of modern Wales makes no mention of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru; rather it erroneously states that the ‘uglier side’ of extremism was undertaken by the ‘small, but fanatical Free Wales Army’, who Morgan correctly adds, conducted parades and manoeuvres and paid homage to the Irish Republican Army.\textsuperscript{40} Gareth Elwyn Jones also wrongly places the Free Wales Army at the forefront of vehement Welsh political agitation. He attests that it is not the shadowy Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru which posed the security threat to the investiture, but rather, the FWA, this ‘sinister fringe movement’.\textsuperscript{41}

Geraint H. Jenkins, in contrast, roundly dismisses the campaign of the Free Wales Army as ‘risible antics’. The group, he opines, merely a ‘gimcrack outfit, with

\textsuperscript{38} Davies, \textit{A History of Wales}, pp.665, 671.
\textsuperscript{40} Morgan, \textit{Rebirth of Nation}, p.384.
a reputation for flamboyant gestures, rather than military prowess'. Nevertheless, he adds that along with the hastily organized investiture of Prince Charles, maximum publicity was afforded the FWA, 'in a desperate bid to spike nationalist guns'. 42 A broader perspective is taken up in some measure by Jeremy Black, who states that nationalist consciousness and pressure was not merely restricted to concerns for the statistical decline and lack of legislative status for the Welsh language. Violent Welsh nationalist groups, he writes, used bombs to attack what they saw as 'alien bodies', such as reservoir dams and pipelines taking water from drowned Welsh valleys to English cities. Such was the seriousness of the Welsh bombing campaign, asserts Black, that 'until the outbreak of the ‘Troubles’ in Northern Ireland’, Wales was considered ‘the bigger internal security risk’. 43 Yet, while some historians like Black recognize the importance of militanism, others ignore it completely. In his study, A History of Wales (2000), D. Gareth Evans makes no mention of either Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru or the Free Wales Army. 44 In 2008, John S. Ellis, Investiture: Royal Ceremony and National Identity in Wales, 1911 – 1969 was published. Although a more comprehensive account of these events, it too is guilty of notable omissions and factual inaccuracies. 45

It is not just academics who offer stinging rebukes of the Free Wales Army. In his study Wales and the Welsh, the cultural commentator Trevor Fishlock, and, at the time of the investiture, The Times correspondent for Wales, regarding the group as ‘a strange brotherhood which throve on dreams, fantasies and beer-built schemes...Mittyish dreamers, puffed up with hot air and all manner of swaggering, posturing and boastful talk’. As for John Jenkins and Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru, contrary to ‘the make-believe’ of the FWA, Jenkins ‘played it wholly for real’, Fishlock states. Moreover, despite ‘delusions of grandeur’, the commander-in-chief of MAC cared ‘passionately for Wales and found ample evidence that his country was being sapped and destroyed’. 46 Yet, for all those content to castigate the FWA, it should be noted that the group’s impact on Welsh political and public life was considerable, even if its modus operandi did routinely appear ill-conceived and ill

45 J. S. Ellis, Investiture: Royal Ceremony and National Identity in Wales, 1911 – 1969 (Cardiff, 2008). For a more detailed critique of this study, see chapter 5.
Another non-academic view comes from the BBC journalist Andrew Marr, whose history of Britain states that ‘Welsh nationalism came out of a need to protect the Welsh language’ and that violence in its name, was ‘thankfully unpopular and badly organized’. By expressing such, Marr too merely scratches at the surface. He also fails to recognise the wider cultural issues which prompted a militant response; such as the threat to the nation’s environment posed by forestation and the drowning of valleys to provide the conurbations of England with water.

Historians of terrorism and the intelligence services have also ignored Welsh militancy. In July 1975, while imprisoned at HM Prison Albany, an indignant John Jenkins wrote of reading a book outlining the exploits of the so-called Angry Brigade. It purported, Jenkins added, to focus upon ‘Britain’s first Urban Guerrilla Group’, a title surely more worthy of MAC. There is also no mention of the MAC campaign by Christopher Andrew in his study: *The Defence of the Realm. The Authorized History of MI5* or by Michael Burleigh in his study: *Blood and Rage: A Cultural History of Terrorism*. The failure of each author to include anything other than passing reference to Welsh militancy - all the more surprising when smaller, apparently less influential groups are addressed - adds to the widely held nationalist belief that the campaign of militant action has been ‘deliberately air-brushed out of history’. Yet, might a more unpalatable explanation be responsible: namely, that it has been passed over owing to its Welsh context? Certainly MAC’s action has not received the same degree of attention which other militant organizations operating at the same juncture have subsequently received. During a period characterized by ‘the spirit of revolution’, the IRA (Irish Republican Army), FLN (Front de Liberation

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49 Andrew C. *The Defence of the Realm: The Authorized History of MI5* (London, 2009). Burleigh, M., *Blood and Rage: A Cultural History of Terrorism* (London, 2008). Professor Andrew could ‘remember the explosions’ which Wales witnessed during the 1960s, but believed they failed to come within the security remit of MI5, as the intelligence agency was contemporaneously ‘more concerned with Soviet infiltration of the Labour Party’ and other perceived or existent ‘threats to state security’. Welsh militant activity ‘was a police matter’. Interview between WT & Prof. C. Andrew, 29 March 2011.
50 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007.
Nationale); the FLQ, (Front de Liberation du Quebec), ETA (Euskadi Ta Askatasuna), the Black Panther movement in the US and the FLB, (Front for the Liberation of Brittany), have all enjoyed considerable subsequent media and analytical coverage, at least within their own countries of insurrection. Whatever the truth, while the Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru protest may not resonate through the pages of a British-leaning study, the fact the Provisional IRA based its cell structure on that deployed by MAC, with - as they saw it - spectacular ‘success’, surely warrants inclusion in any comprehensive analytical account of militanism.

There are however, non-academic books and studies which look at Welsh militancy, but they are somewhat narrow and selective in their synopsis. To Dream of Freedom by Roy Clews is not an historiographical account, but rather a populist study of each campaign undertaken by the Free Wales Army and Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru. It is not, by the author’s admission, a serious attempt to probe and analyse, but rather an attempt to highlight that Wales has a history of militant resistance to what the protagonists regard as English imperialism. Meanwhile, Owain Williams’ account of the drowning of Tryweryn entitled Cysgod Tryweryn; Watcyn L. Jones’ account entitled, Cofio Tryweryn and indeed John Jenkins’ Prison Letters, all address each author’s own involvement in the events under review, rather than offering an analytical study of the entire process itself.

A more comprehensive non-academic history of Welsh militancy was published in 2008, while research for this thesis was progress. Freedom Fighters, by the former editor of the Western Mail, John Humphries, offers a number of valuable and useful insights within its very broad account. Nonetheless, it contains a number of uncorroborated and contested assertions, most notably, that the device which exploded in Abergele on the eve of the investiture, comprised ‘a fifty stick gelignite bomb’ and was ‘the largest ever assembled’ by MAC. It was, Humphries tantalisingly intimates ‘clearly intended for a major target’. He further suggests - through an

51 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 12 December 2003. Jenkins admitted to being informed, ‘years after his militant campaign ended’, that so-impressed were the IRA with his command policy of insular four man units, that it based its hugely ‘successful’ cell structure on Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru.
52 Interview between WT & Roy Clews, June 2006.
53 Owain Williams, Cysgod Tryweryn (Llanwrst, 1995).
54 Watcyn L. Jones, Cofio Tryweryn (Llandysul, 1988); also, Cofio Capel Celyn (Talybont, 2007). It should be noted that the latter publication, resolutely questions the true extent of Plaid Cymru’s involvement in spearheading the Save Tryweryn campaign, (most notably the roles performed by Gwynfor Evans and J. E. Jones) as supported by Rhys Evans, A Portrait of a Patriot, (Talybont, 2008).
unspecified source - that contrary to all available oral and archival evidence, that it was not in fact the town's Social Security Office the saboteurs intended to attack, but rather the rail track upon which the Royal Train was shortly to pass. Moreover, the device, Humphries alleges, was transferred by Alwyn Jones and George Taylor by way of a paint pot tied to a ladder.\textsuperscript{56} Yet, contacted to discuss these ‘findings’, John Jenkins dismissed all aspects of Humphries’ account out of hand; further adding that he had ‘no idea’ where the former journalist had acquired this apparent knowledge.\textsuperscript{57} Among a number of additional points requiring clarification, is the claim that ‘one of the saboteurs’ involved in the Clywedog action in March 1966, was ‘living aboard in 2008’\textsuperscript{58}. However, this was again refuted categorically by John Jenkins, on the grounds that ‘all those involved have long since passed away’,\textsuperscript{59} leading to the suggestion that Humphries - on occasion - has succumbed to the temptation of journalistic embellishment. It is this ‘access’ to those who actively participated in the militant struggle and the level and accuracy of disclosed detail, which sets this thesis apart from Humphries’ journalistic account.

Such scant historical attention serves only to convince many linked to the nationalist cause that a deliberate policy of academic indifference is at foot. Indeed, such is the cursory nature of academic and cultural comment, that many prominent figures within the militant nationalist community, believe that no mention has been made of those groups most closely identified with Welsh political extremism. For example, in November 2007, John Jenkins stated that the nationalist militant campaigns had been ‘ignored’ by, what he termed, ‘so-called reputable historians ...It’s as if these campaigns never happened’. Meritorious historians, he felt, ‘must not, for what ever reason, ignore events - they may not agree with them, but it was their duty, as historians, to establish the facts as they happened and not to ignore those episodes they simply wished to ignore or forget’.\textsuperscript{60} For historian, Hywel Teifi Edwards, such fleeting historiographical mention, often laced with disparaging overtone, demonstrates the political nature of history writing. Historians had, he

\textsuperscript{57} Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 18 April 2010.
\textsuperscript{58} Humphries, \textit{Freedom Fighters}, p.5. John Humphries also alleged that ‘in accordance with good records management practice’, file 18/16/103 ‘Activities of the Free Wales Army’ was destroyed by the Home Office in June 1990’, p.101. This was disputed by material received from the National Archives.
\textsuperscript{59} Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 18 April 2010.
\textsuperscript{60} Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, November 2007.
believed in March 2008, regarded this type of action as being detrimental to Welsh cultural and political standing. Such a movement, he opined, would not have appealed to Welsh historians. Furthermore, they would view it as peripheral and non-productive. Moreover, historians would not want to consonance that type of opposition, and would certainly have been reluctant to be thought of as supporting such a campaign through historical analysis.\(^6\)

It is perhaps understandable that both the Free Wales Army and Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru are the focus of so little historical examination; after all, such political activity hardly falls within the parameters of mainstream political thinking. What is more, it should be noted that comparatively little post-1945 Welsh history has been the subject of academic study.

**Thesis and Method**

Can the FWA really be dismissed as a Welsh historical irrelevance, a mere ‘footnote’ as Trevor Fishlock opined in 1995?\(^6\) More contentiously, can a sporadic, well-orchestrated, three year bombing campaign, *truly* be worthy of so little, if indeed, any real analysis or comprehensive historical comment? This thesis seeks to reinstate the importance of the militant offensive in Welsh history, neither by judging it nor dismissing it, but by establishing the importance of these campaigns to both the nation’s history and its cultural and political advance. It also establishes the detail of what happened, while seeking to tell the story in a balanced way, by paying full attention to the perspective of the perpetrators and those actively engaged in their detection. It will do so through five distinct chapters, each addressing the manifold reasons for the escalation in both nationalist thinking and militant strategy. The first chapter will focus upon the period 1955 to 1962. It will identify why a number of people in Wales were drawn to the ranks of militant nationalism. This will be achieved, by briefly addressing the immediate historical background which led to the rise of Welsh nationalism as a relevant political force and the subsequent rise of both the Free Wales Army and Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru. Most notably however, the chapter will establish that both the militant action of MAC and the propaganda campaign of the FWA, were initially fuelled by frustration for the judicial process of the Tryweryn Reservoir Bill, which culminated in Parliament in July 1957. It will

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\(^6\) Telephone interview between WT & Hywel Teifi Edwards, 10 March 2008.
clearly identify that despite outrage at the passing of the Tryweryn Bill, the main protagonists of each campaign were drawn to act ‘in the defence of Wales’ as a result of what they considered to be both Plaid Cymru’s refusal to stray from the path of constitutional political campaigning and the perceived indifference of central government to Welsh cultural identity.

Chapter 2 will focus upon the initial militant campaign of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru. It will further address the group’s apparent demise, following the apprehension and imprisonment of its main members in the spring of 1963, the formation of the FWA and the reaction of the government and the police to the growing political unease in Wales. It will culminate with the opening of Llyn Celyn and the first public appearance of the so-called Free Wales Army.

Chapter 3 will address the period January 1966 to December 1967. This was the second phase of the campaign undertaken by MAC; and coincided with the rise to prominence of John Jenkins, from peripheral member, to operational-commander. It will also address the on-going propaganda campaign of the FWA.

Chapter 4 will focus upon the period January 1968 to December 1968. The coherence of this period will be identified, by demonstrating that the increase in militancy was fuelled by the impending investiture of Prince Charles as Prince of Wales. To this end, the chapter will establish the strategy and efforts of both MAC and the FWA to undermine both public and authoritarian support for the ceremony. Among other notable events, it will address the explosion at RAF Pembrey in September 1968 and the establishment of the Shrewsbury Unit.

The last chapter will address the period from January 1969 to April 1970. It will address the efforts of the militant community to undermine the prestige of the Royal Investiture and the efforts of the security services, most notably the Shrewsbury unit, to ensure the success of the ceremony. This it endeavoured to achieve, by apprehending those responsible for the militant activism. Subsequently, it will highlight the factors which led to the arrest, trial and sentencing of the leading members of both the Free Wales Army and Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru.

The story is not a simple one and is clouded with uncertainty. It is inevitably both complicated and heavy with names, dates and conflicting accounts. To help the reader, the appendices contain reminders of the key characters and a timeline to ensure

an easier navigation of the narrative.

The previous section described and demonstrated the existing historiography. It identified the apparent indifference of historians and commentators to the study of militant Welsh nationalism in the 1960s and the many inaccuracies and assumptions which subsequently surround the issue. Yet such anomalies are not confined to historians and contemporary observers. This thesis draws upon oral interviews with thirty seven of those involved in the events. Of that number, some seventy percent expressed factual errors with regard names, dates and incidence. While often frustrating, it nevertheless illuminated the importance of deploying sound methodology when tackling any such historical episode. This section outlines the method employed in this thesis, focusing on the use of oral history as a source. It will elaborate on the issues related to the selection of respondents and the formula adopted for conducting the interviews, most notably, the process undertaken to establish trust between the interviewer and the respondent, a factor which proved essential to the success of the project.

My interest in this issue was fuelled by having been born the son of an eventual high-ranking policeman, who whilst a junior officer, was routinely instructed to walk Radnorshire sections of the Cwm Elan to Birmingham water pipeline in an attempt to discover explosive devices. My initial approving awareness that an aqueduct along the route, located just five or so miles from the family home had been targeted by militant nationalists, was tempered with knowledge that my mother had often feared both for my father’s welfare and her ability to raise three sons alone, should he suffer serious injury - or indeed loss of life - whilst undertaking his duties. This has fuelled my conviction to approach historical writing in a fair, considered and balanced manner.

Unsurprisingly perhaps, the question of balance presented difficulty. This is because the subject of Welsh nationalism is an emotional one; its message promotes strong feelings which many people find impossible to be dispassionate about. The reason for this, is that all drawn to Welsh nationalism are united with regard one overriding factor. Whether it be a conservative viewpoint, or one which endorses the position taken by the militant wing of the movement, all share an emphatic, compelling belief that the nation’s cultural identity faces a grievous threat. Nonetheless, even with such an emotional topic, it should be possible to treat both the subject matter and all those involved with dignity and informed respect.
The selection of subjects to interview, began with making telephone contact with Rhodri Evans, the son of Cayo Evans, the man widely regarded as the former leader of the Free Wales Army. As a result of an enlightening evening spent at Evans’ home, further telephone numbers of former senior members of the FWA were received. Having gained a positive endorsement from Rhodri Evans, all responded favourably to the request to be interviewed. Moreover, as a result of further positive discussions, each was forthcoming in providing additional telephone numbers and addresses of other former activists. Apart from former members of the FWA, leading members of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru, such as John Jenkins, Owain Williams and Emyr Llywelyn Jones were also contacted and interviewed. Along with Denis Coslett of the FWA, all three former members of MAC were interviewed several times. These individuals were approached, as all were at the vanguard of each respective organization and in the hope of establishing each person’s actual involvement. These interviews generated evidence previously unknown outside the so-called ‘inner circle’, and subsequently enabled the thesis to address many of the misconceptions which have developed in the ensuing period. The wealth of evidence from the oral testimony of many of the leading protagonists forms the main focus of the research. Indeed, the tone and content of the thesis is shaped primarily by the memories and recollections of those individuals, supplemented to a lesser extent, by archive materials, newspapers, literature and television programmes and documentaries.

**Oral testimony**

The benefits of oral history to a project where there exists relatively little alternative material cannot be overstated. As several studies have persuasively argued, oral evidence can be understood as crucial in cataloguing and exploring contexts where this factor presents a problem. Oral testimony is also of fundamental importance when considering an event, such as the campaign of militant nationalism in Wales, where there is an often disagreement and conflict with the ‘official’ narrative. In this respect, the value of interviewing those involved - in whatever capacity - provided insight into what otherwise appeared to be largely inaccessible episodes of the past. In many respects, the oral record has recognizable advantages over the written account. One such advantage is that there can be no doubt to the authorship of a

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particular point of view. Furthermore, in recording the memories, opinions and experiences of persons who may have neither the inclination, nor the literary talent to submit their experiences to paper, oral history facilitates a process which explores the impact ‘ordinary’ men and woman can have on the course of history.\(^{64}\)

Given the subject matter, it was important to develop a trusting relationship with those most prominently involved in the events under review. This was achieved in the first instance, through establishing a firm overview of both the facts of the campaign and perhaps more importantly, the motives of those involved. It should be made clear that some of those contacted - most notably John Jenkins - were interviewed as much as fifteen times and this, it is believed, could not have happened had an empathetic, though neutral and informed approach, not been taken. There was no condemnation of actions by the interviewer and each interview revealed new information as trust increased. As a consequence, the thesis’s strength lies in the unique insight that was gained from interviewing leading figures and others significantly involved over a number of years.

From the outset, it became apparent that all drawn to act ‘in the defence of Wales’ had harboured an undisguised belief that the Welsh nation was under threat. Moreover, all saw Wales within the confines of a homogeneous, unionist state, largely ignorant, if not openly hostile, to the unique cultural landscape of their ‘beloved’ homeland. Having therefore established this important platform, it was next necessary to determine the campaign as a whole. This was achieved by asking the following questions. What had each former activist hoped to achieve? How had their protest action been orchestrated, organized and implemented? Had they enjoyed the experience of challenging, what they considered to be, English political and cultural oppression and domination? Had they, to some extent, basked in their apparent notoriety? And not least, did they feel the risks taken and in some cases imprisonment, to have been worthwhile when considering their action with the benefit of some forty years hindsight? Although this format followed a certain structure, interviews were not conducted on a formal basis. Rather, each was allowed to ‘free-fall’ and to develop at their own pace. This ‘open’ policy encouraged dialogue and debate, and although broadly similar, enabled each interview to become characterized by what amounted to an individual identity.

\(^{64}\) Ibid, p.28.
It was, at this juncture, having overcome some initial reluctance and distrust, that the ‘sensitive’, informed approach to the subject deployed was rewarded with further candid revelations and exclamations of what was believed to be genuine encouragement and support. At no point was this established ‘rapport’ better highlighted, as when, after much regular contact, information was disclosed of not only the true extent of an activist’s personal involvement, but also what some came to regard as mistakes and hitherto unknown reservations. Such was the degree of frank exchange by this stage, that a number of those interviewed became visibly upset and agitated when recounting more difficult aspects of the campaign. One example of this was when John Jenkins, the former director-general of MAC, described the events which led to the deaths of two alleged members of the movement whilst on ‘active duty’. It should also be established at this juncture, that respondents were not obliged to continue with the interview if they felt in any uncomfortable. This understanding went some way to alleviate any issues regarding exploitation, or their forcible participation within the project. It was supplemented by an offer of anonymity, which was routinely offered and occasionally accepted.

In an attempt to gain a legal understanding of the issues involved, former members of the judiciary were also interviewed. As with regard to members of the nationalist fraternity, here also a policy of informed neutrality was employed. Those contacted were Sir Tasker Watkins, who led the prosecution in the trials against Emyr Llywelyn Jones in 1963, the Free Wales Army in 1969 and John Jenkins, the director-general of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru in 1970; and Sir John Mortimer, who acted on behalf of Denis Coslett, during the so-called FWA trial. In an attempt to establish a political understanding of the period, Gwynfor Evans, the former president of Plaid Cymru was interviewed; while in order to gain a fuller understanding of police activity to counter those perpetrating the Welsh militant campaign in the 1960s, retired police Assistant Chief Constable, John Owen Evans was also consulted, as was Raymond Kendall, a junior member of the Shrewsbury Unit: the group assembled in 1968 to both apprehend the saboteurs and to monitor the perceived threat to the Royal Investiture the following year. Indeed, as with several members of the militant community, both Evans and Kendall were interviewed and/or contacted on a number of occasions. All of the above responded with candour to the questions put forward, while also revealing a number of hitherto unknown and interesting points.

How the oral testimony collated could be verified proved a pressing concern.
A major problem regarding oral testimony is the fallibility of memory. As Diana Greenway noted, ‘personal memory does not handle interval very well’.

Nevertheless, to ignore oral evidence appears tantamount, as Hywel Francis opines, ‘to taking the decision to write off whole areas of human experience’. While this view must be acknowledged, there nonetheless exists the constant threat of confusion, particularly where dates and incidents feature prominently. This recognized threat to factual accuracy, inherent within oral history studies, presented itself during this project, most notably, with regard the dates of actions undertaken. Yet, despite the frustrations of factual inconsistency, it is possible to recognize that there exists little or no purpose in pursuing detailed ‘accuracy’ from oral interviews, and crucially, that ‘accuracy’ should not be confused with reliability or validity. Furthermore, that certain measures can be applied to ensure that the information collected is both scrutinized and that subsequent safeguards can then be adopted to maintain the verifiability of the evidence. This process of validation is ensured, through assessing additional resource material. For example, archive evidence and newspaper sources were explored to discover and verify factual information. An example of how this process developed included the alleged reaction of police to protestors demonstrating in Cardiff in 1968 against the investiture. A number of those interviewed spoke of an unprecedented aggression shown towards them by the police. This testimony was then, to some considerable degree, corroborated by accessing newspaper sources which had reported extensively on the episode. This same pattern of verifying oral testimony through cross-referencing with archive and newspaper sources was followed throughout the period of research. As a result, despite its recognized flaws, the strength of oral testimony as a source cannot be discounted.

Yet, there are important limitations which need to be identified when using oral testimony. While its strength as a source derives from it being a first-hand account and recollection, not to mention its ‘originality’ and its ability to ‘capture’ the emotion of an interviewee, a degree of caution and scrutiny is required. The credibility, selectivity and impartiality of those interviewed needs to be assessed. It was important to remain ever mindful as to the ‘reliability’ of the information being relayed. For example, in addition to how the interviewee ‘performed’ with regard

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66 Hywel Francis, ‘The Secret World of the South Wales Miner: The Relevance of Oral History’, A
dates and facts, how 'open' were they? How confident could one remain that 'everything' was being disclosed? Might they have been boasting and/or exaggerating their personal involvement or status? Such questions were more difficult when it came to the telephone discussions that were undertaken alongside the recorded 'face to face' interviews. These enquiries were another opportunity to gain material 'straight from the horse's mouth', but their weakness derived from an inability to accurately gauge facial reaction and more subtle emotional responses.  

Another potential hazard oral testimony can present, is the question of 'relationship'. For example, every interview, Ithiel de Sola Pool suggests, is an 'interpersonal drama with a developing plot'. In other words, the standpoint from which the information is offered, continually unfolds in relation to interview interaction. It is therefore a 'power relationship', in that interview respondents not only offer substantive insight pertinent to the topic under consideration, but they also simultaneously and continuously monitor who they are in relation to themselves within the context of the interview.  

This perspective is reminiscent of Michael Foucault's argument regarding the role of the 'confession', namely, that a person cannot confess without the presence of a partner. This so-called 'partner' is not merely there to receive divulged information, but their presence is one of authority: which intervenes, judges, punishes or forgives the person confessing. In this context, Foucault suggests that all formal, verbal interactions are laden with an implicit power relationship.  

It is an argument endorsed by The Popular Memory Group at Birmingham University, which has argued that oral testimony is 'undemocratic', in that interviews are an 'imbalance of power'. The group substantiates this claim by maintaining that the interview process is routinely governed by numerous factors. These can include the choice and contacting of respondents, the nature and manner of the interview process and the collating and interpretation of data. Yet, while this must be recognized, it is possible to suggest that the interview process is not simply a one-sided, 'hegemonic' experience for the interviewer; and oral history practitioners have

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70 The Popular Memory Group, 'Popular Memory: Theory, Politics and Methods', in Richard Johnson
suggested ways in which to neutralize the power imbalance inherent in any oral
history project. One such method is to allow the subjects to take an active role in
determining the final version of the project itself.\footnote{Lilian Lanzardo, Class Consciousness and the Fiat Workers of Turin since 1943, in Paul Thompson
(ed.), \textit{Our Common History: The Transformation of Europe} (London, 1982), pp.79-93.} A further suggestion - and one
deployed within this study - was made by Penny Sommerfield, who argues for
undermining the power imbalance through the use of anonymity.\footnote{Penny Sommerfield, \textit{Reconstructing Women's Wartime Lives} (Manchester, 1998).}

Moreover, oral history studies have typically been viewed as asymmetrical
counters in which the interviewer solicits information from an interviewee who
responds passively to the interviewer's enquiries. This oversimplified view suggests
that those who wish to learn more about an historical event, merely have to ask the
right questions and the interviewees will provide the necessary information. Studs
Terkel has argued that this is an elementary part of the interview process and that once
trust has been established, 'the sluice gates of damned up hurts and dreams (are)
open'.\footnote{Studs Terkel, \textit{Working People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About It} (New
York, 1972), p.25.}

Yet, subjects have power too. They can withhold information or suggest false
interpretations. Oral history is not just an interviewer exercising power to gain
information. Overcoming this problem requires trust. The importance of trust cannot
be underestimated, as nor can the difficulty of a respondent hiding behind the assumed
narrative. These problems are often interlinked and they occurred within this thesis,
with regard the former 'commandant' of the FWA Denis Coslett. Having
demonstrated an initial ambivalence towards questions which attempted to determine
the full extent of the FWA's involvement in the militant struggle, a breakthrough was
finally achieved. The episode exemplified how through regular and courteous
persistence, in this instance following some three years and six lengthy interviews, a
trusting relationship necessitated a full and frank admission as to the group's actual
participation. Prior to this, Coslett had continued to propagate the belief that the
group had enjoyed a far more active association in the militant offensive than, as it
transpired, was actually the case. The issue was reminiscent of that identified by
Alastair Thomson, who suggested that a personal interpretation or narrative is often

\addcontentsline{toc}{section}{Notes}
\footnote{Lilian Lanzardo, Class Consciousness and the Fiat Workers of Turin since 1943, in Paul Thompson
(ed.), \textit{Our Common History: The Transformation of Europe} (London, 1982), pp.79-93.}
\footnote{Penny Sommerfield, \textit{Reconstructing Women's Wartime Lives} (Manchester, 1998).}
\footnote{Studs Terkel, \textit{Working People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About It} (New
York, 1972), p.25.}
borne of a need to legitimize behaviour.\textsuperscript{74}

As a result of all the techniques followed, it is possible to appreciate that the power relationship typical of an oral interview need not be static and that the process can both flow and be dynamic. Furthermore, by allowing the respondent to engage fully in the process, the interview will change and develop to the satisfaction of both parties as the procedure progresses.\textsuperscript{75} This was therefore a \textit{vital} instrument in the methodology deployed in a thesis of this nature.

Of secondary importance to oral testimony in the methodology used was newspaper evidence. As a primary source, its strength proved to be its ‘contemporary’ viewpoint; its weakness was editorial or journalistic political and/or cultural bias. A number of television and radio programmes, both contemporary and those subsequently produced, were also consulted. Once again, as with newspapers sources, the same strengths and weakness were found to apply, as indeed was proved to be the case when further sources were exercised, such as government-released papers, Hansard and books and periodicals. Each, it must be recognized, proved invaluable in providing a fuller understanding of the events under review, however, each proved equally as susceptible to a pre-determined political and/or cultural standpoint. For example, \textit{FWA: I' r Gad!}, (\textit{FWA: To Battle!}) screened in 1999, adopted a somewhat sympathetic tone, while \textit{Wales and the Welsh}, by Trevor Fishlock, appeared to be far more critical of the Free Wales Army, both as a so-called ‘terrorist’ organization and/or as a political mouthpiece.\textsuperscript{76} This sentiment was particularly in evidence, with regard government or civil service papers, which, released under the thirty-year public access rule, were surveyed during a number of visits to the political archive department at the National Archives in Kew. One memorable incident concerned a letter viewed at the National Archives in December 2008, which appeared to incriminate a person’s involvement in the militant struggle. Yet, on returning to the National Archives some sixteen months later, it was discovered the letter had been removed from the file. The archive, it would therefore appear, was not neutral, but


subject to the ever active security interests of the state.

Numerous visits to the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth were also undertaken, where papers donated to the political archive department from Plaid Cymru and personal papers from among others George Thomas, Gwynfor Evans and Cledwyn Hughes were also consulted. Files returned to Denis Coslett in accordance with the thirty-year ruling, of the court transactions used in the trial of the so-called Free Wales Army, were also used. Although each source proved prodigious, a constant evaluation was nevertheless required, in order to determine the amount, degree and direction of any apparent or concealed bias: whether it be political, cultural or linguistic.

The power of nationalism

Whether through accident or design, this enigmatic period in the nation’s history has been largely overlooked by historians and cultural commentators. For the first time, this thesis will analyse the events which for too long have been met with historical indifference. The importance of the subject, its illegality, and the myths which encompass much of the detail, demand that the topic is closely examined; while full attention to the motives and thinking of those routinely dismissed by contemporaries and historians as ‘terrorists’ is paid. It is hoped that this thesis gets as close to the ‘truth’ as anything previously compiled. It is, for that reason, groundbreaking.

A re-examination of these events is both necessary and important to the historical, cultural and political journey of the Welsh nation. This is because any development of Welsh history, which does not include this episode, is surely incomplete. Much is said of nationhood being an ‘imagined community’, most notably by Benedict Anderson, of nationalism and cultural identity being a mere construct and projection, in that members of even the smallest nations will never know, meet or even hear of most of their fellow-members. Yet, while such opinion must be acknowledged, it fails to capture the full power of nationalism. It fails to recognise the raw emotion that ‘nationality’ can produce. What is it about that less easily defined force that can drive educated, thinking people to do both great and dreadful things? Throughout Welsh history’s often troubled passage, when the death knell for Welsh nationhood has apparently sounded, patriotism has re-emerged to

challenge and protect. Time and again, that mysterious allure has brought men and women to the fore, all united in the moral cause to safeguard that which defines the Welsh nation. And so it was in the 1960s: that same inexplicable force led men to lay explosives in the name of Welsh cultural identity; despite appalling risk, to both themselves and to others. It is time that these events are given their true place within the rich, lurid pages of Welsh history.
Chapter 1
'$Pathological and pathetic fixation...'

Cwm Tryweryn is flooded

Introduction

This chapter addresses the proposal by Liverpool Water Corporation to flood Cwm Tryweryn in Meirionnydd. It examines the hostility with which the measure was greeted within both Welsh nationalist and wider political circles; and further identifies how frustration with the judicial process and the failure of constitutional Plaid Cymru, underpinned the emergence of militant Welsh activism, which marked the period in Wales between 1963 and 1969.

The Tryweryn Reservoir Bill

On 22 December 1955, the *Liverpool Daily Post* carried the headline: ‘Big new dam near Bala planned’, before outlining Liverpool Corporation’s plan to augment the city’s water provision by promoting a Parliamentary Bill, so as to receive the legal authority to dam the Tryweryn river and valley. Perhaps to circumvent Welsh nationalist suspicions of a ‘done deal’, ten other ‘considered’ sites were listed in the Corporation’s report. In an embittered response, Plaid Cymru declared that the Corporation’s announcement demonstrated its complete inability to assess the nature of Welsh opposition. It was intolerable for a Welshman to be told that he must ‘yield (a) thoroughly Welsh-speaking area’. The English authority had ‘no claim to (any Welsh) valley in law or morality’.

It soon became clear that any committee established to fight the proposal would need real political clout. In March 1956, with some of Wales’s most influential and prominent personalities, including: Megan Lloyd George, T. I. Ellis, Lord Ogmore and Ifan ab Owen Edwards at the vanguard, the Capel Celyn Defence

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1 *Liverpool Daily Post*, 22 December 1955. Unknown to the inhabitants of Cwm Tryweryn, in March 1955, a four man delegation arrived from Liverpool Corporation to undertake suitability surveys.

2 *LDP*, 21 December 1955.
Committee was formed; along with its Liverpool branch, the Tryweryn Defence Committee. Nonetheless, for Plaid Cymru and in particular its president Gwynfor Evans, it was arguably the start of the most difficult and challenging period of his political life, as repeated calls ‘to do something self-sacrificial’ were constrained with the duties of fatherhood and the financial restrictions of the party.

Through the diligence of Plaid Cymru activist Dafydd Alun Jones, who consulted the records of Liverpool Corporation’s Water Committee as far back as 1865 - most notably the years 1920-1955 - it was revealed that the city was already receiving some 50 M.D.G. from Lake Vymwy; despite an existing domestic consumption of just 26.9 M.D.G. Thus, should the Tryweryn proposal be ratified, Liverpool Corporation stood to gain an additional daily increase of some sixty-five million gallons. Intriguingly however, the supply of water which Liverpool Corporation provided for industry between 1920 and 1955, had increased from 8.52 million gallons per day to 20.23 million gallons per day. Therefore, to those opposed to the motion, the reason for the further flooding of Cwm Tryweryn, seemed to have far less to do with social need than with increased profit for Liverpool City Council.

Nevertheless, opposition to Liverpool’s proposal was far from universal. At the end of September 1956, it was announced that Talyllyn Parish Council in Meirionnydd, had decided not to join the protest. Despite the announcement, Plaid

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3 Casglu'r Tlysau. www.tlysau.org.uk.
9 LDP, 13 December 1956. In light of such, why, it was suggested, could Liverpool not follow the example of Warrington which had utilized perfectly suitable water for industry from the Mersey; as had London from the Thames.
10 Evans, Fighting for Wales, p.89. As Gwynfor Evans was later to recall, not only was the English authority receiving its water at the cheapest price in Britain, it was ‘already reselling some of the Vyrnwy water for millions of pounds a year; in addition to meeting the needs of its own homes and industries’. Gwynfor Evans, For The Sake of Wales (Cardiff, 1996), p.127. In addition to Lake Vynwy, Liverpool Corporation was also entitled to abstract a further 10 M.G.D. from the river Dee in north Wales. Moreover, Liverpool regions Birkenhead and Bootle, abstracted huge amounts of water from other north Wales sources, lakes Alwen and Brenig. Evans, Fighting for Wales, p.89.
11 LDP, 25 September 1956. A councillor declared: ‘all reasonable forms of development (in the area) should be welcomed’. In a letter dated 14 December 1956, apparently written by T. J. Parry of Bala, a former Cwm Tryweryn farmer, the author complained of unknowing outsiders orchestrating opposition
Cymru was determined to demonstrate clear leadership over the issue, by spearheading resistance. Under the banner ‘Hands off Tryweryn’, the party led a procession through the streets of Bala. For three hours, the crowd numbering four thousand packed into a marquee on the edge of the town, where speeches of hostility were heard. Without a single dissentient, a resolution was passed calling on Liverpool Corporation to abandon its scheme. Yet, the victory was short-lived. Within a fortnight, a motion to oppose the measure on the grounds that it might adversely affect the towns existing supply from Llyn Arenig was opposed by Bala Town Council.

If Liverpool Corporation believed - or hoped - that the decision of Bala Town Council undermined the burgeoning protest, it was in for a surprise. Just weeks later, the Lord Mayor of Cardiff, Alderman J. H. Morgan, held a meeting in the city beneath the increasingly emotive banner ‘Save Tryweryn’. There were ten MPs and three-hundred representatives from local government and trade unions present. It was decided that a delegation would go to Liverpool, to appeal for a change of heart. However, the proposal was brusquely refused on the grounds that the council’s policy was never to receive deputations. Unperturbed, on 7 November, the leader of Plaid Cymru attempted to address Liverpool City Council. Hoping to appeal for the argument of the nationalist community in Wales and those facing expulsion from their homes; it proved a futile exercise. Led by the indefatigable Bessie Braddock - the staunch socialist champion of the city’s so-called underclass - those in support of the motion began to bang the lids of their desks, raising the volume within the chamber to that akin, ‘to the roars of hell’s pit’.

The efforts of Gwynfor Evans were not however in vain. Galvanised by the stoic resolution shown by the party leader in Liverpool, letters were sent on behalf of the Defence Committee to councils, chapels, churches, trades unions and a variety of other societies and organisations seeking support. As the months passed, the protest movement, which once appeared meek and supine, began to gather considerable momentum. The extent of which was outlined in 1970 in the memoirs of J. E. Jones.
the former Plaid Cymru General Secretary. The first big achievement, recalled Jones, was to get virtually the whole of Wales - local councils, one-hundred-and-twenty-five of them and movements of all sorts - to adopt resolutions opposing Liverpool’s plan. Indeed, he felt that ‘all Wales was on our side’. Correspondence opposing the measure soon arrived at the offices of Liverpool Water Corporation. At a meeting on 20 November 1956, it was stated that throughout the year, the authority had received 29 letters hostile to its proposal to flood Cwm Tryweryn. One, included a petition from the Capel Celyn Defence Committee, signed by 614 residents of Bala. Many more were to follow.

The following day, as Liverpool City Council prepared to vote whether or not to proceed with the Tryweryn Water Bill, all but three members of the Cwm Tryweryn community marched with banners through the streets of Liverpool to protest the proposal. With placards bearing slogans such as: ‘Your homes are safe - why destroy ours’ and ‘Please Liverpool, be a great city not a big bully’, the protesters made their way to the Town Hall. Whether or not deemed by the city’s authorities to be a cause of discomfort, the hopelessness of the situation must have begun to strike a loud and clear chord in the hearts of the assembled coterie of hill farmers and villagers, as their repeated pleas to be heard, were met with a courteous, yet firm refusal. The ‘youngest to march’ was Eurgain Prysor Jones. Speaking in 2006, she recalled the hostility shown towards the marchers by a number of the city’s inhabitants; most notably Bessie Braddock. Also among the ranks of the protestors was Harriet Jones Parry. She, however, remembered ambivalence and even apathy rather than hostility from the crowd.

A new tactic was deployed at this point by Liverpool Corporation: the promise of considerable compensation. In contemptuous response, councillor Dafydd

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17 Gwynfor Evans, For The Sake of Wales (Cardiff, 1996), p.128.
19 Liverpool Record Office (LRO). Liverpool Corporation Water Committee Minutes, 352MIN/WTR/1/59, p.343.
20 Williams, Story of Plaid Cymru, p.18.
21 LDP, 22 November 1956.
22 Telephone interview between WT & Eurgain Prysor Jones, 29 June 2006. It was ‘a great expedition to go to Liverpool’, Jones explained. Nonetheless, ‘the Liverpool people were horrible; we had rotten tomatoes thrown at us’. Jones particularly recalled Bessie Braddock, who ‘was vile, really nasty’ and said ‘some horrible things’ to protestors.
Roberts, chair of the Defence Committee declared: ‘You can talk of compensation, it is not compensation we call for, but to keep our homes’. However, the lure of this financial incentive did prove too great for one family. This offer succeeded in eroding the united stance which had hitherto been taken by those residing in the area.

Whether or not Liverpool City Council was shamed by its earlier behaviour, or embarrassed by the resultant outcry, two weeks after refusing the three man delegation to address the city council chamber, Gwynfor Evans was given the rare, if not unprecedented privilege of addressing the council for a quarter of an hour. The following day, the Manchester Guardian, reported that Evans had made such a brilliant plea for the preservation of the valley’s economic and cultural life, that the council broke into spontaneous applause at the end. Yet, the efforts of the Plaid Cymru president proved fruitless, as the council voted in favour to support the proposal to flood Cwm Tryweryn by 95 votes to 1.

It soon became apparent, that those in favour of the motion, whether fuelled by wider political ideology or by less benevolent thinking, merely regarded Cwm Tryweryn, if not to say the very country of Wales, as little more than an extended feature of a wider England. Nowhere was this better illustrated than by Liverpool Alderman John Braddock, who at the end of November, announced that the council’s duty was only towards the citizens of Liverpool; before inflaming nationalist outrage by adding ‘Wales is a part of our country’.

Emotions were beginning to run high. On 14 December 1956, a letter was sent to the offices of Liverpool Corporation, warning the authority to abandon its proposal to flood Cwm Tryweryn. Declaring its intention to sabotage any work undertaken at the site, it was signed ominously ‘the WRA’. (Welsh Republican Army).

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24 Evans, Fighting For Wales, p.88.
25 Interview between WT & Eurgain Prysor Jones, 18 June 2010. Having accepted an offer to be relocated to a smallholding, some years later, John Evans and his wife were killed in a car accident. There were some in the Bala area who wondered whether divine punishment had been dispensed.
26 Correspondence between WT & Gwynfor Evans, 20 August 2003.
27 Evans, Portrait of a Patriot, p.173.
28 The Times, 22 November 1956. News of the result was contemptuously greeted in Y Cymro, (The Welshman). On 22 November 1956, its cartoon feature declared: ‘Nid oes gydwybod gan gorfforaeth ...’. (‘A corporation has no conscience...’).
30 LDP, 1 December 1956.
31 Thomas, Capel Celyn, p.97. Addressed to Liverpool Corporation, the letter read: Keep out of North Wales. We of the South will driver any one (sic), who trys (sic) to take our peoples (sic) homes away from them. We mean what we write. We will sabotage any work you do there. Keep out of our country. This is a warning. We remain, your truly, the Welsh Nation. Or WRA. P/S (sic) The Tryweryn Villey (sic) belong (sic) to Wales, not the English Government.
It was at this juncture, in the comparatively early stages of the proposal to flood Cwm Tryweryn, that Liverpool Corporation first demonstrated to those against the motion, the efforts it would make to circumvent reasoned, if not to say, democratic politics, to see the Bill ratified by Parliament in the months to come. Before there was any chance of the proposed Liverpool City Council’s Bill passing through Parliament, it had first to have the approval of a public civic meeting. At the meeting, the city’s numerous Welsh inhabitants arranged for hundreds of their compatriots to attend. It soon became apparent to the city’s authorities and those proposing the motion, that with the Welsh in the majority, the spectre of defeat stared them firmly in the face. Adopting a delaying tactic, having failed to open the meeting at the pre-arranged time, some thirty minutes later, employees of Liverpool Water Corporation, some bedecked in the livery of the Water Board, entered the hall. With those on the platform now confident of victory, the meeting was allowed to commence. On the vote by show of hands, 262 favoured the Bill’s promotion and 161 voted against.

However, even Liverpool City Council was now divided. Having arguably proved the claim that Cwm Tryweryn was to be drowned solely for the purpose of fiscal gain, a number of labour non-members indicated their intention to abstain their vote at the impending and crucial Liverpool Council meeting. Yet, despite these indications of disapproval, on 18 December 1956, a vote of 160 to 90 in support of the proposal to flood Cwm Tryweryn was passed in the council chamber.

Throughout January 1957 and beyond, opposition to the proposal continued to mount, as more councils joined the stand against Liverpool Corporation. Nonetheless, opposition to the measure remained fragmentary, with news that Radnor District Council had agreed not to take action regarding the proposed Bill. During the early months of 1957, Liverpool Corporation’s Private Bill passed through its first parliamentary stages. It now began to appear unstoppable. Whether deflated at the increasing prospect of failure, or whether re-aligning themselves for the final battles which now lay ahead, little was heard from those who opposed the Bill in the weeks to come.

32 Evans, *Sake of Wales*, p.129.
33 *LDP*, 18 December 1956.
34 Evans, *Fighting For Wales*, p.91.
36 *LDP*, 17 January 1957.
On 1 May, the Tryweryn Reservoir Bill came before a select committee of the House of Lords, at the start of what was to become a nine-day hearing. It coincided with news that eleven petitioners hostile to the proposed Bill had withdrawn their objections. Among notable testimony, the committee heard extracts from the report submitted by Henry Brooke. It soon became clear as to which side of the argument the Minister for Welsh Affairs had pitched his coin. On the facts available to him, Brooke was ‘satisfied’ that Liverpool Corporation had ‘a real and urgent need to augment its water resources’, if it was ‘to fulfil its duty of affording domestic and industrial consumers and to meet the needs of adjoining areas’ which depended upon it for their supply. However, not all of Henry Brooke’s findings read unfavourably. Along with his predecessor, Brooke had received 508 letters of protest: of which 217 were from individuals, 91 from local authorities and 200 from other bodies such as churches, trade union branches and political organisations.

On Day 5 of the Hearing, on behalf of owners, lesers and occupiers of properties in the parishes of Llanfor and Llanyil, Dewi Watkin Powell read aloud a list of distinguished Welsh people who had become honorary presidents of the Capel Celyn Defence Committee. The list included Lady Hughes Parry, Lady Megan Lloyd George and Lord Ogmore. One man unimpressed by the list of Welsh dignitaries was Alderman Frank Cain, chairman of (the) Liverpool Corporation, who retorted that the list was politically engineered. Moreover, Welsh nationalists, Cain asserted, had ‘stoked the fires of protest’ which had ‘resulted in a fever pitch’.

Dewi Watkin Powell then read a long list of Welsh public bodies and organisations opposed to the scheme. The list concluded, Powell turned to Frank Cain and asked whether he thought Liverpool Corporation should proceed in the face of such opposition? Cain’s reply was resolute: the Corporation had put the scheme before Parliament and was prepared to abide by its decision; adding that Liverpool

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37 LDP, 31 January 1957; also, LDP, 21 February 1957.
38 LDP, 2 May 1957. The authorities which now withdrew their petitions of protest included: Birkenhead Corporation; Denbigh County Council; Wallasey Corporation; East Denbigh Water Company; Mid and South East Cheshire Water Board; the Dee and Clwyd River Board and the West Cheshire Water Board. It followed ‘assurances’ and the formation of a sub committee to discuss issues of interest.
39 LDP, 3 May 1957. On visiting Cwm Tryweryn, Henry Brooke marvelled at this ‘lovely part of the world’ and declared he would return to London with ‘a much clearer impression of the problems and difficulties faced in the area’. LDP, 26 April 1957. Brooke ‘came under false pretences’, believed Capel Celyn resident E. P. Jones. None realized it then, ‘but while there with his advisors, they were taking soil samples to see how much clay was in the soil, so as to work out the cost of the building work’. Telephone interview between WT & Eurgain Prysor Jones, 29 June 2006.
had more than 90,000 sub-standard houses, many of which shared their water supply from a half inch standpipe. On behalf of Meirionnydd County Council, Moses Gruffydd, the Welsh agriculturist, maintained that the soil in the river valley was fine silt of good depth, and as such, was far too good to be placed under water to satisfy the industrial demands of Liverpool, should the measure be ratified.

In response, J. G. Eve, a senior surveyor and land agent employed by the English authority, fiercely attacked Moses Gruffydd's testimony and submitted report. The country around Capel Celyn, declared Eve, was wild and thinly populated; furthermore, the valley was not a useful contributor to food production. Eve's evidence served only to hammer another nail in the coffin of Cwm Tryweryn.

In support of the petition forwarded by Meirionnydd County Council, was Dr. D. Robinson, a senior partner in a Manchester firm engaged in the design and construction of water undertakings. Robinson's evidence gave fresh hope to those opposed to the measure, that a compromise might yet be reached. It was clear, Robinson stated, that even if Liverpool proved it needed 65,000,000 gallons a day, this could be provided from the river Dee with the assistance of a reservoir of much more modest dimensions than that proposed; and without the submerging of property and the expensive road and rail diversions. If it appeared that the matter was delicately balanced, following just a few minutes of apparent deliberation, it was announced that the House of Lords Select Committee was 'of the opinion that the Bill should be allowed to proceed'.

Despite the Bill's hitherto successful passage, on 23 May 1957, the Liverpool Daily Post recorded that Welsh MPs on both sides of the Commons had agreed to fight the Bill when it came before the House to receive its Second Reading. This was billed in the national media as being 'one of the keenest struggles seen for some time'. To an angry buzz from Welsh MPs and amid cries of 'Resign' and 'Go', Henry Brooke, concluded the debate by stating that water shortages might occur in the

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40 LDP, 8 May 1957.  
41 Ibid.  
42 LDP, 10 May 1957. Gruffydd's earlier submitted report proposed alternative measures, not hitherto examined, acceptable he hoped to both parties. LDP, 29 November 1956.  
43 LDP, 8 May 1957. Photographs of abundant corn and hay fields contradicted J. G. Eve's findings.  
44 LDP, 9 May 1957. Robinson proposed three alternative sites, two on the river Celyn, the other on the Hirnant. Among further proposals - such as utilizing existing lakes overlooking Cwm Tryweryn - raising the existing wall at Llyn Vymwy was also deemed feasible.  
45 LDP, 14 May 1957.  
46 LDP, 23 May 1957.  
47 LDP, 3 July 1957.
next few years on Merseyside and in south-west Lancashire. ‘I cannot believe’, the Minister for Welsh Affairs declared, ‘that preservation of the Welsh way of life requires us to go as far as that’. Moreover, Brooke could not ‘believe that the Welsh people, of all people’, wanted ‘to stand outside the brotherhood of man to that extent’. As doubts persisted as to the Bill’s likely outcome right up to the declaration of the vote, finally, by a majority of 49, with 166 in favour of the Bill and 117 against, the House of Commons passed the Second Reading of the Liverpool Corporation’s Tryweryn Reservoir Bill.\(48\)

During another nine day Select Committee Hearing, a chartered civil engineer approached by Liverpool Corporation to locate a suitable reservoir site, revealed the flooding Bala had also been considered. Furthermore, he had reviewed the company archive which proved that a detailed examination of Cwm Tryweryn had taken place in the 1890s, when the site had allegedly first been considered as a proposed area for flooding.\(49\) Finally, with the committee confident that a clause inserted in the Bill adequately addressed both compensation and re-establishment claims,\(50\) its endorsement was given. The stage was now set for the Third and final Reading of the Tryweryn Reservoir Bill.

As speculation abounded as to what strategy those opposed to the measure might be preparing, news began to filter through media channels in London that the game was already well and truly over. On 27 July, the Western Mail reported that Welsh MPs - and particularly the Members for north Wales - now conceded that a final stand would be profitless.\(51\) However, refusing to ‘roll over’, the following day, Gwynfor Evans explained the concerns of the Welsh nationalist community in a letter to Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan. If an English majority ensured the Bill passed through Parliament, it would ‘do no more than to give a veneer of legality to an immoral act of aggression’, he stated. ‘It would be a declaration by the English majority in Parliament’, that it had ‘the power to destroy Wales’...whose powerlessness ‘to protect’ its communities and resources would be observed; resulting in it being at the mercy of ‘other corporations and bodies’. Moreover, ‘if

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\(48\) LDP, 4 July 1957. Twenty-four of the thirty-six Welsh MPs voted in opposition, the rest either abstained or were not present. Those absent included: Aneurin Bevan, Megan Lloyd George, Iori Thomas and the Conservative member for Cardiff North, David Llywellyn, who was the only Welsh MP vocal in his support of the measure.

\(49\) LDP, 19 July 1957.

\(50\) LDP, 25 July 1957.

\(51\) Evans, Fighting for Wales, p.97.
all legal and constitutional endeavour to defend the Welsh heritage were ignored, despite the unity and depth of Welsh conviction, the defence’ would ‘continue, but by other means’.52

Yet Gwynfor Evans also met with some hostility for ‘dragging of feet’ over the Tryweryn question. One such remonstrator was Raymond Edwards of Blaenau, who believed there were many things Plaid Cymru, with Evans as its leader, could have done, but instead, Meirionnydd ratepayers had ‘a debt of over £3,000 for putting up a defence to save the valley’. The only conclusion Edwards could draw, after learning of the weaknesses of men who claimed to be leaders of the Welsh people, was that Wales was dying; dying fast of a cancer of respectability and of white-collar talkers who were not prepared to lead the nation to freedom and prosperity.53 It was an accusation which Gwynfor Evans was to face several times more again in the years that followed and laid the bedrock for the militancy already beginning to foment.

On 31 July 1957, the Tryweryn Reservoir Bill was passed by Parliament by a majority of ninety six. The next day in the House of Lords, amid much rancour and recrimination among Welsh MPs opposed to the measure, Liverpool Corporation’s Tryweryn Bill received its Royal Assent and so became law.54

Two months later, despite the declared Parliamentary support for the Bill, a national conference was called by Alderman J. H. Morgan, the mayor of Cardiff, to discuss a motion proposed by Gwynfor Evans. With the editorial backing of the Western Mail, it was hoped that perhaps a breakthrough could be reached and that all parties could be brought to support it.55 In this alternative motion, Gwynfor Evans, to widespread consternation from within the ranks of Plaid Cymru, endorsed the drowning of Tryweryn, but crucially proposed to safeguard the village of Capel

52 NLW. Ymgyrchu - The Water Industry. Plaid Cymru Archive. M55. NLW.ww.uk. Dafydd Evans rejected the suggestion his father had meant violence, although he may have been deliberately ambiguous. Rather, he believed Gwynfor Evans may have been considering a sit down protest as earlier undertaken at Trawsfynydd. Such a repeat would have prevented construction machinery entering Cwm Tryweryn. Telephone interview between WT & Dafydd Evans, 27 September 2005.
53 LDP, 1 August 1957. Saunders Lewis later also spelt out who he considered to blame for the Tryweryn saga: ‘It was dishonest to blame the Minister for Wales for not opposing the measure. Tryweryn was ‘our matter (Welsh people), our responsibility only’. One Wales, October, 2001.
54 LDP, 2 August 1957. Henry Brooke later rejected claims that his dual responsibly had impacted negatively upon the anti-flooding lobby. ‘It had been better for Wales that the country’s Minister was also the Minister of Local Government’, he maintained, because in the dual role he ‘could state the Welsh case; or at least the case of those opposing the Bill’. LDP, 1 August 1957.
55 Evans, Portrait of a Patriot, pp.180-183. The decision to draft the alternative proposal, Gwynfor Evans ‘later saw as unwise’. Evans, Sake of Wales, p.130.
Celyn; with assurances made to the Liverpool authority, that it would receive the same amount of water as stipulated in the original Bill. Having initially refused to meet the five man delegation - led by Huw T. Edwards, chairman of the Council for Wales and Monmouthshire - Liverpool Corporation finally relented. Nevertheless, just weeks after the Bill’s Third Reading, the slow trickle of villagers from Capel Celyn began. The anger within the nationalist community was such that on 15 October 1957, David Cole the editor of the Western Mail, wrote to Henry Brooke, forecasting a grim warning: that ‘the seeds of an Irish problem’ had been sown in Wales. How perilously close that prediction might have proved to be in the years that followed.

It was not long before the Conservative government saw a chance to redeem itself and to stem the tide of nationalist thinking. Just weeks after the letter from David Cole, Henry Brooke presented a cabinet paper calling for the building of a suspension bridge across the river Severn to combat, if not alleviate, ‘the deep and widespread distrust of the Government's attitude towards Wales’. Moreover, cabinet papers disclose that such had been the alarm felt within the government of political unrest in Wales, following its handling of the Tryweryn issue, that it had felt impelled to locate the huge strip mill at Llanwern rather than Grangemouth in Scotland. In a memorandum to the cabinet, the Chancellor of the Exchequer warned of the political consequences of siting the strip mill elsewhere. There was still ‘resentment in Wales over the support given by the Government to Liverpool’s Bill for flooding part of the Tryweryn Valley,’ Heathcote Amery declared. If the Government did not support the construction of the strip mill in Wales, ‘criticism’ would ‘be greatly intensified and Welsh nationalist feeling aroused...The dangers of such a situation’, Amery concluded sombly, ‘must not be underrated’.

Defeat over ‘Tryweryn’ was indeed received with grave foreboding by many in Wales. To Plaid Cymru and its President Gwynfor Evans, it merely demonstrated
how benighted the central parties were in recognising and defending the cultural, environmental and linguistic identity and interests of Wales. Nonetheless, with the constitutional battle lost, those opposed to the construction of a reservoir at Cwm Tryweryn, licked their wounds, took stock and vowed solemnly to carry on the fight.

**Division threatens Plaid Cymru**

For the wider nationalist community of Wales, it was obvious that the so-called democratic process had proved a disingenuous vessel on which to expect reasoned argument. This was typified, they believed, on 5 February 1958, when, following two months of apparent deliberation, Liverpool Corporation confirmed that it had decided to proceed with its Tryweryn scheme, following what it termed, ‘careful and sympathetic consideration to the suggested alternative sources put forward (by the deputation) from the Cardiff conference’. Whether resigned to defeat, or blinded by the lure of indirect financial gain from the flooding of Cwm Tryweryn, Meirionnydd County Council also refused to support the alternative motion. It was a decision which caused fragmentation within the ranks of the party faithful in Plaid Cymru.

If it seemed to many - including influential Plaid Cymru member Elystan Morgan - that Gwynfor Evans had done ‘everything he could...(and) everything he could think of’ to try and stop Liverpool Corporation from digging a watery grave for Capel Celyn, others were quick to take a very different view. Evans they denounced was ‘a traitor’, who had been ‘ready to compromise with Liverpool’. The ambitious politician, too craven and respectable to go to prison for a Welsh-speaking community. Nevertheless, with work at the site still to begin, Plaid Cymru was at pains to prove that the Tryweryn issue would not be relinquished quite so easily. On 16 February, following a meeting of the party executive in Dolgellau, a statement was released which declared it outrageous that at a time of financial stringency, one English municipality was to spend on one scheme in Meirionnydd, more than the total sum allocated annually by Whitehall for the entire educational needs of Wales. Its confident prediction that a one day strike by Welsh miners and steelworkers ‘could

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61 LRO. Liverpool Corporation Water Committee Minutes, 352MIN/WTR/1/69. p.11.
62 Evans, Portrait of a Patriot, p.183.
64 Evans, Portrait of a Patriot, p.161.
change the Tryweryn situation overnight\textsuperscript{65} was met with predictable derision. A response in the \textit{Western Mail} two days later to the call for a strike was not encouraging. Its editorial declared that ‘such action as the Welsh Nationalists are now advocating, would merely be a piece of futile industrial vandalism’. It could result in bitterness; harm two important industries and take money from the pockets of the workers involved.\textsuperscript{66}

With the Bill’s passage through the parliamentary judicial process at an end, any hope that Gwynfor Evans harboured that the most challenging period of his political career to date was now behind him was quickly dispelled. Calls for the party leader to carry out some measure of illegal action, prevalent in certain quarters before the Third Reading, now reached a crescendo; and the spectre of Saunders Lewis, the man held in reverential awe by many of the party faithful, loomed ever large. Speaking in 2008, Gareth Miles, a former member of Plaid Cymru and Welsh language campaigner, remembered how the party leader’s indecision over direct action had caused much resentment, as a belief had permeated among many in the party, ‘that the Plaid Cymru leadership would carry out a symbolic act, as had happened at Penyberth’.\textsuperscript{67}

In a speech at the National Eisteddfod in Ebbw Vale in August, Saunders Lewis, called once more for Plaid Cymru to adopt a policy of ‘direct action’. If that was not designed to embarrass the party hierarchy, his suggestion that his eventual successor as party president Gwynfor Evans was ‘too much of a coward’ to venture along that path, confirmed his status as chief thorn in the side of the nationalist party of Wales.\textsuperscript{68} The Plaid Cymru executive was quick to respond. On 9 August, having received constant calls from a number within the party to endorse ‘illegal action’, J. E. Jones, the Plaid Cymru General Secretary, announced that there now remained no practical method of freeing Tryweryn from the grasp of Liverpool Corporation. ‘We have lost a battle’, he declared ruefully, ‘now we must win a war’.\textsuperscript{69} The ‘war’ in question, it was widely supposed, was - at last - parliamentary representation.

In an interview with the \textit{Western Mail} in October 1958, Huw T. Edwards, who had recently resigned as chairman of the Council for Wales and Monmouthshire in

\textsuperscript{65} \textit{WM}, 17 February 1958.
\textsuperscript{66} \textit{WM}, 18 February 1958.
\textsuperscript{67} Telephone interview between WT & Gareth Miles, 13 January 2008.
\textsuperscript{68} Evans, \textit{Portrait of a Patriot}, p.187.
\textsuperscript{69} \textit{Merthyr Express}, 9 August 1958.
protest at the government’s failure to deliver a Secretary of State for Wales, angrily responded to Liverpool Corporation’s rejection of all attempts to reconsider its decision. ‘Liverpool’, he declared, had asked for ‘whatever was coming to it’. The Tryweryn issue would not be forgotten in Wales; he was convinced that many thousands of Welshmen would be prepared to make sacrifices, including imprisonment, if it might prevent Liverpool from ‘getting away’ with its action. Threats made against the Mersey Tunnel should not be taken lightly.70 Yet, one man quick to discount himself from the fight was Saunders Lewis. In a letter to D. J. Williams, Lewis hoped to see ‘another Penyberth’. However, as for personal involvement, he himself would be ready to break the law, were it not for his ‘cares’ and his wife, ‘Margaret’s opposition’.71

After returning invigorated from a publicity tour of America,72 the Plaid Cymru president decided to ‘up the ante’ over the party’s handling of the Tryweryn crisis. He now resolved to lead a campaign of civil disobedience. Just days into the new year, the Plaid Cymru executive passed a resolution proposing that ‘passive resistance’ be taken ‘at Tryweryn when the time’ came. Others soon followed Evans’ lead, with Elystan Morgan proposing the party should take ‘firm action’ with a ‘self-sacrificing’ edge to it.73 The militant wing of Plaid Cymru was thrilled. Speaking in 2008, Emrys Roberts threw light on how far the party leadership was prepared to stray from its chosen path. Having been persuaded to join Plaid Cymru’s staff as deputy secretary to J. E. Jones, Gwynfor Evans further requested that Roberts organise direct action, perhaps even in Liverpool, to try and prevent the drowning of Cwm Tryweryn. Roberts readily agreed. One thing however was sacrosanct: nothing would be done which might endanger human life. Other than that, Roberts was offered no explanation as to what form direct action should take. It felt, he later revealed, like having been given ‘a clean slate’.74

Yet, Dewi Watkin Powell (the senior barrister and Plaid Cymru executor)

70 WM, 16 October 1958.
71 Evans, Portrait of a Patriot, p.187.
72 TNA, BD 25/59. File entitled: Miscellaneous Welsh Bodies: Plaid Cymru 1958 - 1973. In Boston, Gwynfor Evans spoke to an audience of hundreds at Harvard’s famous Law School. In a further twist of fate - and unknown to Evans - Henry Brooke’s son attended. If G. Evans felt the meeting was a resounding success, Peter Brooke disagreed. It had been, he reported to his father: ‘mad, quite mad’. This, Brooke senior later wrote, was typical of the response he received in relation to other meetings Evans addressed.
73 Evans, Portrait of a Patriot, pp.189, 190.
74 Telephone interview between WT & Emrys Roberts, 18 January 2008.
attacked the party (and perhaps by association the party leader) for having a 'pathological and pathetic fixation' over the adoption of direct action and perhaps the wider Tryweryn issue. Despite the valiant determination of the Plaid Cymru leader to appear unaffected, the stinging rebuke from the man he held in high esteem had struck a nerve. It forced a revision in Evans’ thinking and a reconstruction of his view.\textsuperscript{75}

As if to remind the life-long pacifist leader what might be at stake, eight days later, police in Liverpool stated that ‘powerful blasting powder’ from a north Wales explosives factory, had been used in the assembling of a home-made bomb, found in the city two days before. Following an anonymous telephone call, the device was found in an office of the Federation of Building Trades Employers. It had been planted in a hollowed out loaf of bread and placed within a case also containing two bottles of petrol. It was here that many of the workers employed at the Tryweryn reservoir construction site signed on. With the police becoming increasingly concerned, a further two ‘bomb’ warnings were received. In each instance, anonymous telephone calls declared that a device had been planted both at Speke Airport and in an electrical components factory in the Broadgreen area of the city. Following intensive inspections at each of the sites, nothing was found.\textsuperscript{76} The identity of those responsible has never been established.

Perhaps in response to these events and to Emrys Roberts’ dismay, Gwynfor Evans had a change of heart. With Evans’ fourteen-year leadership beginning to flounder, at a meeting of the Plaid Cymru sub-committee in Dolgellau - without the wider party’s consultation - it was decided to make a U-turn and reject support for a law-breaking campaign. There would be no action, no repeat of Penyberth.\textsuperscript{77} The party did not decide that, remarked Roberts curtly in 2008, ‘Gwynfor did’.\textsuperscript{78} Somewhat surprisingly, and perhaps uppermost in Evans’ mind, those party members most opposed to the use of direct action, were party activists in Meirionnydd.\textsuperscript{79} Despite the anger at Evans’ apparent reversion, it was a decision widely endorsed by many in the party, who were now, more than ever, determined that the only route to

\textsuperscript{75} Evans, \textit{Portrait of Patriot}, p.190.
\textsuperscript{76} \textit{WM}, 29 January 1959.
\textsuperscript{77} \textit{Gwynfor: Yr Aelod Dros Gymru}, BBC Wales Production. Screened S4C, December 2005. The meeting of the ‘select few’ was held at the Golden Lion hotel in Dolgellau on 31 January 1959. \textit{WM}, 2 February 1959. It has since been described as ‘a vital moment in Welsh nationalist history’. Evans, \textit{Portrait of Patriot}, p.191.
\textsuperscript{78} Telephone interview between WT & Emrys Roberts, 18 January 2008.
\textsuperscript{79} John Davies, \textit{Transactions of the Merioneth History Society}, 1999 (vol. XIII, part II); also, \textit{Gwynfor: The Member for Wales?} BBC Wales Production. Screened BBC 1 Wales, May 2005.
parliamentary success lay with continuing along the path of constitutional politics. Speaking in 2003, Dewi Watkin Powell remained certain that the leader’s action had proved vital in ensuring the party’s tree would one day bear electoral fruit. However, Gareth Miles later remembered the keen sense of betrayal. He could recall reading the banner headline in the *Western Mail* which marked the event: ‘Plaid Cymru volte-face on Tryweryn’.81

If those on the militant wing of the party dismissed the party leader as toothless, those loyal to Evans believed his action to be correct. Gwynfor Evans had recognised his target. It was Liberal, rural Wales. If the party was ever to pose a serious, credible threat, Evans knew he needed the vote of the chapel-going Welsh-speakers; a group unlikely to be won over by direct action. As a result, he set about diluting the party’s ultra-nationalist message. He also recognised the restrictions of the party’s purely cultural image, of its all too easy depiction in the unionist-based media, both national-and-British based, as a linguistic, inconsequential oddity. As a result, he began the process of broadening the party’s appeal.

This was not the only U-turn Evans made in the spring of 1959. In an attempt to seize both control of the Plaid Cymru and to ensure it remained steady on its constitutional course, he proposed that the party seek to establish a partnership with Liverpool Corporation. Evans now proposed, in a document hammered out by Dewi Watkin Powell, J. E. Jones and he, that Meirionnydd should receive ‘some profit from its water once Tryweryn had been drowned’. A number of other criteria were also put forward. These included that the workers involved in the construction of the dam would be Welsh; that the workers to be employed at the site - once it had become operational - would be Welsh and a Tryweryn Water Board, with its headquarters in Bala, would be established affording equal representation to Liverpool City Council and Penllyn Rural Council. Six months later, having apparently deliberated for eight months as to the feasibility of adopting some, if not all, of the measures in *Tryweryn - New Proposals*, the document was rejected out of hand by both Liverpool City

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81 Telephone interview between WT & Gareth Miles, 13 January 2008.
84 *WM*, 23 March 1959. In response to *Tryweryn - New Proposals*, on 24 June 1963, a meeting was held between Gwynfor Evans and Minister for Welsh Affairs, Keith Joseph. The matters discussed, ranged from ‘the development and control of water resources in Wales, with particular reference to Tryweryn’ and ‘the possibility of treating Wales as a single entity for commercial television’. TNA, BD 25/59. File entitled: *Miscellaneous Welsh Bodies: Plaid Cymru 1958 - 1973.*
This new set of proposals undermined *all* the party’s nationalistic rhetoric: which demanded political recognition for Wales and the inalienable right for its people to control their own land and resources. A consequence of the party leader’s action was yet further fragmentation within the ranks of the party faithful. Two opposing camps now emerged, with the constitutional wing of the party and those who advocated ‘direct action’ determined to gain the upper hand. To many, Evans was the tireless campaigner, wholly committed to safeguarding the interests of the community of Tryweryn; the pragmatist, who recognised that only through constitutional means could the party advance. To others, however, Evans was to blame for what was seen as Plaid Cymru’s rudderless coasting between 1956 and 1959. It was due, they contested, to the party leader’s inability to formalise a solid, aggressive and effective political dogma; furthermore, Plaid’s age old pacifist traditions appeared increasingly ‘old hat’. They maintained that a more forthright, less homespun, dogmatic direction was needed, to meet and combat the pressures of the nuclear, post-colonial age. The fall out from Evans’ decision threatened the very survival of Plaid Cymru, as internal denigration threatened to tear the party apart.

Whether stung by the backlash caused by the bitter Plaid Cymru in-fighting, disheartened by its efforts to prevent the Tryweryn Bill becoming law, or distracted by alleged dirty tricks employed by the Labour Party, at the General Election called for 8 October 1959, Gwynfor Evans, standing as the Plaid Cymru parliamentary candidate for Meirionnydd received just 22.9 percent of the vote. Despite it being the party’s best showing of the night, it was to be, Evans was later to recall, ‘the election result which was the most bitterly disappointing of all’. Crucially, the party’s share of the vote was virtually identical to the result the party president had polled in the same seat four years earlier. It was a firm indication that despite efforts to smooth its political edge, the Welsh electorate remained impervious to Plaid Cymru’s core

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87 Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 16 March 2004; also interview between WT & David Walters, 29 December 2008. In the immediate post-war period, following ‘a conflict which witnessed a great loss of life’, Gwynfor ‘was ideal. Even up to the early 60s; after that, he was not. He should have stepped aside for a younger man with younger ideas’.
88 Evans, *Sake of Wales*, p.142.
89 *WM*, 9 October 1959.
mandate. Nonetheless, at the national Eisteddfod that summer, the party was given a welcome lift to its morale, when angered at what he considered to be the central political party’s dragging of feet over the question of self-government for Wales, Huw T. Edwards resigned from the Labour Party and announced he was joining Plaid Cymru.\textsuperscript{92}

**A more radical generation**

The start of the 1960s saw Plaid Cymru attract a more radical generation of nationalists. With an entrenched belief that strong-arm tactics were needed to further the political advance of the party, this ‘new blood’ refused to blindly accept the autocratic, ‘Messianic’ leadership of Gwynfor Evans.\textsuperscript{93} In 2008, Gareth Miles reasserted how emotive the issue of Tryweryn remained, as a burgeoning militant wing of the party now emerged. It was not only intent to fight ‘the establishment’ and to create confrontation between itself and the British state, but also to reject the compromises that Gwynfor and Plaid Cymru had been involved in; ‘\textit{and which had failed}’.\textsuperscript{94} Unlike Saunders Lewis, declared Owain Williams in 2005, Evans ‘had no vision’ at Tryweryn.\textsuperscript{95} It was Lewis, he argued, who in taking action twenty years before, had ‘led the way’, by sacrificing so much.\textsuperscript{96}

To others however, any such repeat was seen as nothing more than futile histrionics. Despite its rightful position at the head of Welsh nationalist protest, ‘Penyberth’ they argued, had achieved ultimately very little: what use was Evans languishing in prison to the tentative development of Plaid Cymru as an applicable, constitutional force? The time had come to sever the party’s umbilical link with Penyberth, they believed; events had surely proved that the party should now concentrate on ‘serious politics’. His apparent rejection by Evans and those on the right of the party hit Saunders Lewis hard. In a BBC interview broadcast in May 1961, Lewis reflected mournfully to having had ‘no small desire to change the history of Wales’. To change ‘the whole course’ of its history, and to make Welsh Wales

\textsuperscript{92} Butt, \textit{Welsh Question}, p.78.
\textsuperscript{93} Telephone interview between WT & Gareth Miles, 13 January 2008. ‘Gwynfor’s politics were all emotion based; his ‘fits all’ approach antagonised many. It was a narrow-minded, middle class, romantic view of Wales; very prone to high rhetoric. Saunders Lewis said it how it was: in order to achieve anything of value you had to break the law’.
\textsuperscript{94} Telephone interview between WT & Gareth Miles, 14 October 2008. ‘We were young, romantic and in a subjective, emotional way, opposed to the British state’.
\textsuperscript{95} \textit{Gwynfor: Yr Aelod Dros Gymru?} BBC Wales Production. Screened S4C, December 2005.
\textsuperscript{96} Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004.
'lively, strong and powerful'; belonging 'to the modern World'. He had, he remarked dolefully, 'failed completely'.

The constitutional battle to save Tryweryn had sent ripples of resentment across the waves to Canada. Angry at what he perceived to be the arrogant legal pilfering taking place across the Atlantic, Owain Williams, from the Lleyn Peninsula in north Wales, living and working in the tough, uncompromising logging camps of British Columbia, resigned himself to return to Wales and to act in the defence of his homeland. At the close of 1959 - eighteen months after leaving - Williams arrived back in north Wales and along with financial support from his father, ploughed his hard-earned savings into opening a café in Pwllheli. Having barely readjusted to life on the Lleyn Peninsula, Williams began to make tentative inquiries as to who might be 'interested in taking this to the limit'. A long-standing friend of Williams, John Albert Jones, responded positively. Having been invalided out of the RAF, due to a car accident in which he sustained head injuries, the unemployed Jones was a frequent visitor to Williams’ Espresso café. Over the many coming months, Williams and the former RAF policeman discussed the Tryweryn issue with increased resolve.

The situation was agitated by a letter published in *Y Faner*. Enigmatically penned 'Cymro', it 'openly called for insurrection', so opined the *Western Mail*, with its message that the time had come to act against the 'continual attacks on the Welsh nation from London'. Furthermore, a revolutionary movement was needed, with no connection to Plaid Cymru, to symbolise both inside and outside Wales, a form of strong, effective and if necessary, illegal protest, to counter the things that were being done by the government against the soul of Cymru. It would be a secret movement: whereby small units, or cells, comprised of three or four members, would remain unknown to another unit or cell. Each would be organised and led in their actions by a 'small national chief council'; it would be a secret movement in the truest sense of the word. Members of the movement would swear to act in the 'only way' that London understood. Moreover, it would resist actively anything the government might do, which would immorally prostitute the will of the people of Wales, either through

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98 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004. While in Canada, Williams read with increasing frustration accounts of the struggle to save Cwm Tryweryn, in Welsh language newspapers posted from home. TNA, DPP 2/4471; also, Owain Williams, *Cysgod Tryweryn* (Caernarfon, 1979), p.9. Williams later claimed that he had in fact returned to Wales in the summer of 1960.
99 Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams 15 April 2007. At this juncture, as a means of gaining access, Williams and J. A. Jones attempted to get work at the Tryweryn site by pretending to be
action or by ignoring its wishes. The only choice remaining, the article soberly concluded, was either to struggle, or face annihilation.  

For Emyr Llewelyn Jones, an eighteen-year-old undergraduate student at Aberystwyth University, the entire Tryweryn issue had proved unedifying. Having watched as a schoolboy the Bill successfully pass through the legislative process, only one conclusion could be drawn: the time had come to prevent another such drowning of a Welsh valley from ever happening again. Speaking in September 2003, Jones remembered the sense of outrage which many young Welsh nationalists had felt as the drama unfolded: people, he discerned, had forgotten that there was a community there, which had taken thousands of years to create. By that, he meant its ‘cultural atmosphere’. People talked of environmental concerns, but what of a ‘spiritual environment’, which encompasses the ‘values and culture within which people live?’ It seemed to Jones that ‘everybody acknowledged that an injustice had been done’. He and other like-minded students had felt compelled to say ‘that’s enough; you draw a line here; we’re not going to allow this kind of thing to happen again’.  

With such a vehement belief that Wales was suffering once again at the hands of its neighbour, it was not to be long before the practicalities of what action might be taken, began to hit home. ‘Everybody’ recalled Jones ‘was talking about it; and everybody was talking about doing something about it’. Yet, he and other concurring students were aware of the question - ‘how do you fight the power of the modern, centralised state?’.  

Gwilym Tudur Jones, a fellow student at Aberystwyth, returned from a visit to his home town of Pwllheli, with news that a certain twenty-seven-year-old coffee bar owner, had decided to strike a blow in the name of Welsh nationhood. A regular visitor to Owain Williams’ café during visits home from university, he in turn informed Williams that embittered by the drowning of Tryweryn, a number of students in Aberystwyth had all but decided to act. One such person was Emyr Llewelyn Jones.  

Speaking in 1969, Owain Williams was under no misapprehension as to where the blame lay for the rise in militant thinking. The ‘origins of underground, or semi-
underground organisations in Wales', he asserted, could be ‘traced back to disillusionsment with Plaid Cymru and its handling of the Tryweryn issue’; especially among ‘younger people’. Through perhaps their most formative political years, these people had watched the party stagnate. This younger element were ‘fed-up with so-called constitutional means of asking, bowing, scraping and grovelling’. They had instead decided: “we want this, we want that and we’re going to go out and get it”. They considered this the only way it had been achieved in other countries and so reasoned ‘it was time to do the same in Wales’.  

Emyr Llywelyn Jones also believed that Plaid Cymru’s spineless appeasement of Tryweryn had much to answer for. The flooding of Tryweryn symbolized ‘the social, economic, linguistic and cultural oppression of the Welsh nation’. Yet, having stated such, the party hierarchy then ‘turned its back’ on the issue. Unsurprisingly, there had permeated, ‘a feeling of disappointment and anger. Something’, declared Jones, ‘had to be done’.

These were not the only young Welshmen affected. Speaking anonymously in Llangollen in 1969, Marcus Gale, an ex-member of the Free Wales Army remembered how attempts, ten or so years before, had been made to contact other like-minded individuals in the town. In those days, he did not belong to the FWA, but rather the WFA: the Welsh Freedom Army. There had been about three members of the group in the beginning, but this had ‘later increased to five’. Having decided to expand, use was made of a printing press; cards bearing the slogans: ‘Resist English Rule in Wales: WFA’, were printed off and distributed throughout various villages and towns. These cards had then been dropped off in public houses; placed under beer mats; in people’s pockets; in telephone kiosks; libraries; book shops, stuffed in between the leaves of the books...anywhere where people would find them.

As a result, ‘things usually happened’, such as an outbreak of slogan daubing. The WFA was usually able to trace these activists. The group reasoned the people responsible would be young people; probably from nationalist families, so they made use of a booklet called The Saint David’s Day Fund, which, while published by Plaid Cymru, also listed the names and addresses of subscribers to the fund. Consequently, whenever an outbreak occurred, the WFA would visit the place of the slogan-daubing and contact the families living in the area named in the publication. Purporting to be

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103 Ibid.
104 Week In Week Out - Story of the FWA. BBC Wales Production. Screened BBC1 Wales, 3 July 1969.
reporters from the *Welsh Nation*, (the Plaid Cymru periodical) they would then inform those gathered who they really were. The strategy had often been successful, many times resulting ‘in a new company’ being formed. The WFA had been serious about its political objectives, it hadn’t got a set idea about what it was going to do, but the group knew ‘it just had to do something’. The main thing was ‘just to get organized’, in the belief that ‘something’ in the coming two or three years would happen.106

Speaking in 2006, Lyn Ebenezer recalled how the idea of a Free Wales Army was conceived. There had been a Free Wales Army before, but only in name. People like Harri Webb and Mike Stephens were writing songs about it, but he didn’t believe that there was any group as such. It was ‘people like Dai Bonar Thomas who seemed to be the bridge between those like Harri Webb and others who eventually joined like Cayo Evans’. He remembered Bonar Thomas at the Cardiff Eisteddfod in 1960, chatting about forming the FWA. He had been in the same crowd as Harri Webb and others from the Uplands in Swansea. The next thing he knew, Bonar Thomas was part of ‘Cayo’s set-up’.107 As the idea of a Free Wales Army began to gather momentum in the years that followed, the avuncular Dai Bonar Thomas introduced Cayo Evans to another passionate nationalist from Llangennech, the irrepressible Denis Coslett.108

It was at this time, that Cayo Evans, heavily steeped in the folk music, culture and history of Ireland, began to ponder the question of his own national identity. Lyn Ebenezer later recalled the day he met for the first time, the man who was to have such a profound effect on his life. Having attended a YFC speaking competition, Ebenezer had visited the adjoining pub. Sat on a bar stool and playing ‘Irish rebel songs’ on his accordion, was Cayo Evans. ‘I’ve got a nasty feeling that I was responsible for turning him into what he became you know’, Ebenezer declared. ‘Because he was on about the Irish all the time; Ireland this and Ireland that. I remember telling him - it was a risky thing to do! Why the hell don’t you do more about your own country? And he said, “there’s bugger all here: there’s no-one here willing to stand”. So I said, well now’s your chance, come on’.109

During the same August that Ebenezer and Evans forged their friendship, the

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106 *Week In Week Out - Story of the FWA*. BBC Wales Production. Screened BBC1 Wales, 3 July 1969.
107 Interview between WT & Lyn Ebenezer, 16 June 2006.
108 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 13 December 2000.
work began to ready Cwm Tryweryn for flooding, as the construction site became operational. It was not the only cause of alarm for some in Wales. The following month, it was announced that Swansea Corporation planned to construct a reservoir in Cwm Gwendraeth Fach near the village of Llangyndeym in Carmarthenshire. Once more corporate insensitivity, albeit this time by a Welsh authority, threatened to escalate into unrestrained protest, as local people reacted with anger at the proposal to flood their homes. With memories of the failed campaign waged by the various branches of the Tryweryn Defence Committee still fresh in the mind, Plaid Cymru saw the opportunity to redeem itself by providing clear and focused leadership. However, fearing that the presence and involvement of the Plaid hierarchy might politicise the campaign and ultimately do more harm than good, those orchestrating the campaign at a local level, begged Gwynfor Evans to stay away.

On 27 January 1961, the last goods train from Bala to Blaenau Ffestiniog stopped at Capel Celyn. Undaunted by the rejection of the Llangyndeym Defence Committee to assist its campaign, a faction within Plaid Cymru remained as determined as ever - if not to prevent the flooding of Cwm Tryweryn - to at least hinder progress at the site. Despite Gwynfor Evans' U-turn, Emrys Roberts set about his task of organising a campaign of action in response to the flooding of Cwm Tryweryn with typical vigour. As the construction work at the site continued at pace, in an action plan, the Blaid Deputy Secretary and 1960 parliamentary candidate for Ebbw Vale, proposed that progress at the site could be hindered through adopting any one of three strategies. The first was violent action of a destructive nature; with the intention of causing such a disturbance that extra police, possibly troops, would have to be called in to deal with it. The second, was to try to make the construction of the dam so costly for the contractors that they would either refuse to carry on, or Liverpool would find it impossible to raise the necessary capital. The third was to

110 Guardian, 8 October 1965. Work began to develop the site on the 2 August.
112 Evans, Portrait of Patriot, p.232. Despite the rejection of G. Evans and Plaid Cymru, many of the lessons of Tryweryn had been learnt. Further to marches, numerous meetings and the lobbying of local and national politicians, in April 1963, the committee deployed the successful tactic of blockading farm gates to deny Corporation contractors access to undertake the necessary surveys. Finally in 1965, after a 'protracted and increasingly acrimonious campaign', Swansea Corporation abandoned its plan and sought an alternative location. It proved to be the wild, but spectacular upland area north west of Llandovery, where in 1972, after four years to complete, the Llyn Brianne reservoir was opened. CJ, 5 April 1963; also, Baner ac Amerau Cymru, 18 April 1963; also CJ, 20 August 1965.
113 Thomas, Capel Celyn, p.71. The last regular passenger service ran on 2 January 1960.
take direct action, then hunger strike in prison. As for the timing of the proposed action, Roberts added that he had decided to take action over Tryweryn that summer. A response to the clarion call soon arrived, as party member and poet Harri Webb stated that 'psychologically', he was prepared for anything: 'jail, disruption of personal life, hardship - the lot. I am on 'active service', he declared earnestly; he had been 'called up'.

Six months later, with Gwynfor Evans seriously considering his position as party leader, a motion that the party adopt and support a policy of 'direct action' was again proposed at the Plaid Cymru annual conference. Its most notable advocate was a faction calling itself the Belle Vue group, named after the Aberystwyth hotel where, it is believed, the decision was taken by those gathered, to adopt the use of force when confronted by 'acts of aggression, such as Tryweryn'. The conference became a battle for the very soul of the party, as the principal debate of whether to support direct action threatened to shatter Evans' leadership once and for all. Speaking in 2008, Emrys Roberts recalled how Plaid Cymru officials had attempted to placate those party members calling for a programme of militant action. With a number of plots being considered and the names of those prepared to undertake some measure of direct action about to be taken, a party member had approached R. Tudor Jones (Plaid Cymru Vice-President) suggesting that such a policy was contrary to that endorsed by the Plaid Cymru executive some months before. The vote, declared R. T. Jones, was merely being taken to appease the party's more reactionary members and the Plaid Cymru executive had no intention of supporting such a measure. The remark had left Roberts feeling uneasy. He considered such a strategy to be dishonest; nevertheless, it typified the division which had enveloped the party.

Speaking in 2005, Elystan Morgan remained confident that the contribution he made that day in Llangollen, had served the party well and had stood it in good stead for the years which followed. If it was not for Penyberth, he had declared, there would be no nationalist party of Wales, he agreed. Yet, if it carried on as if it were in

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114 Terfysgwyr Tryweryn, S4C Production. Screened S4C, 13 July 2003. On 24 August 1961, the Liverpool Daily Post stated that Emrys Roberts was to lead a peaceful demonstration through the streets of Liverpool, following which he intended to block the entrance to both the Liverpool Town Hall and the offices of the city's Water Corporation.
115 Meic Stephens, No Half-Way House (Talyont, 1997), p.234. The letter containing the comment by Harri Web was sent to Gwilym Prys Davies, an ex-WRM member in April 1963.
116 Telephone interview between WT & Dafydd Evans, 19 October 2005.
117 Williams, Story of Plaid Cymru, p.20.
118 Telephone interview between WT & Emrys Roberts, 18 January 2008.
the same era, as a faction rather than a constitutional group, it would have no future as a parliamentary party. Gwynfor Evans, ‘fearful that it could get out of hand’, also opposed the motion. His party supported him and his leadership - at least for the time being - was unassailable. To Cynog Dafis, the Plaid Cymru MP, the decision of the hall to support the party leader reflected the party’s coming of age. To many, Gwynfor Evans had led Plaid Cymru kicking and screaming into the ranks of mature political thinking. Finally, after years of pains-staking devotion to his task, the charismatic captain had ensured that the party now posed a more credible electoral threat to the three central political parties in Wales. Saunders Lewis never forgave him. He believed that Evans had sold Plaid Cymru down the river, it had lost its aura; it had betrayed its mystique by clambering to be seen as acceptable to white-collar Wales and middle England.

Unsurprisingly, with the Tryweryn issue uppermost in the minds of most nationalist students, the valley’s impending drowning became the subject of much discussion at the country’s foremost seats of academic learning, most notably, or so the police believed, at Aberystwyth. Speaking in 2003, Wyn Morris a retired Special Branch detective, suggested that much of the nature of these discussions had been unlawful and that lecturers had been all but complicit in their encouragement of students to actively involve themselves in felonious protest action. He believed that there was a ‘gang of about two dozen’ involved. Being with ‘the secret police’, most of his work had involved trying to find out who these people were. However, also speaking in 2003, Emyr Llywelyn Jones rejected Morris’s comments. He admitted that there were lecturers at Aberystwyth who would ‘talk about it and discuss it’, but nothing was organised and the idea that students had somehow been indoctrinated by the staff was quite wrong.

Seeking clarity and perhaps even instruction, Jones and a small number of other like-minded students approached Plaid Cymru Deputy Secretary Emrys Roberts. Their question was unambiguous: did the Plaid Cymru executive have an action plan up its sleeve, to protest against the flooding of the valley? Roberts replied truthfully that he could not see the party leadership either endorsing or undertaking anything.

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120 Telephone interview between WT & Dafydd Evans, 19 October 2005.
121 Gwynfor: Member for Wales? BBC Wales Production. Screened April 2005.
123 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 13 September 2003.
which might hamper the party’s constitutional ambition. Nevertheless, sympathetic
with Jones’ belief that a strike undertaken across generational lines would indeed have
more clout, he suggested he contact Saunders Lewis. Among the Plaid hierarchy,
declared Emyr Llywelyn Jones in 2005, it had been Emrys Roberts who was
recognised as being most favourable to the young people of the party, those
dissatisfied with its position and itching for change.

Towards the close of 1961, Saunders Lewis received two visitors to his
Penarth home. One of them, Emyr Llywelyn Jones, a student with a growing
reputation for academic attainment, respectfully attempted to ‘sound Lewis out’ as to
his view on undertaking a peaceful protest at the Tryweryn site. A number of
students, Jones added, had decided ‘to do something at Tryweryn’, and that its impact
might be increased, should more respectable people, from an older generation also be
involved. According to Jones, Saunders Lewis listened in silence, before declaring his
belief that any such action would prove futile. To his credit, remarked Jones, ‘he told
us to go back to college: that it would be a pity to waste our young lives over this.
Were I in his shoes today, I would say the same’.124

If Emyr Llywelyn Jones was disappointed by Saunders Lewis’s reaction, it did
not quell his enthusiasm to continue with his plans. Within months, a reconnoitre of
the site had begun.125 Another figure emerges from the shadows at this time. For one
demobbed national serviceman, the two years spent in the RAF had proved an eye
opener in more ways than one. For the first time, Toni Lewis, who by the decade’s
end had risen to enjoy a position of some prominence on the nationalist stage of
Wales, had begun to question his own national heritage and cultural identity. Within
weeks of leaving the Air Force, he visited the Plaid Cymru office in Cardiff. With an
assortment of literature to be digested, Lewis spent all his free time either learning
Welsh, making his way through the material handed to him by Plaid Cymru officials,
or reading books which focused solely upon the historical journey of his homeland. It
was through Plaid Cymru party channels that Lewis was introduced to a magazine
entitled Cilmery Centrepoint; distributed by Harri Webb and Emrys Roberts.126

While attending the Plaid Cymru summer conference in Fishguard in 1964,
Lewis met 17-year-old Keith Griffiths from Bridgend. Griffiths was an aspiring,

124 Ibid.
125 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 28 August 2005.
126 Interview between WT & Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004.
intelligent young radical, with a swarthy appearance and passionate nature. Uneasy with the English resonance of his name, within weeks it had been Cymricized to Gethin ap Iestyn. Following discussions with ap Iestyn, Toni Lewis’ political and spiritual allegiance was assured. The nation was in need of another society opined the two subversives, especially established to confront the contemptuous attitude to Wales and Welshness which seemed to permeate seamlessly throughout the more anglicised region of the south east industrial belt. Finally, declared Toni Lewis in May 2004, ‘we had our perspective’. Having started the Owain Glyndwr Society, he then established the Llywelyn Society. Able to print and distribute hundreds of the society’s cards and literature, it was not long before the mysterious material found in telephone boxes and elsewhere throughout the county, came to the attention of the police. ‘They didn’t like our societies at all’, chuckled Lewis. ‘They kept trying to find us and discover where we were getting our funds from’. It was ‘preposterous’, because the printer belonged to Lewis. There was only the two of them, but the idea that there were many involved proved ‘highly successful’. Soon, with the ruse gathering momentum, the idea of forming a Free Wales Army began to develop. A motif was soon decided. It would be, declared Plaid Cymru activist Harri Webb, the fabled White Eagle of Snowdonia.

It was not just Plaid Cymru that was changing, so too was the nation itself, as many of the country’s traditional mores were swept away on the tide of modernity. As the world began to dance to a different tune, the ‘grand old man’ of nationalist politics in Wales was not finished yet. Frustrated by what he regarded as the party’s rejection of civil disobedience, in a letter to D. J. Williams on 15 January 1962, Saunders Lewis spelt out the historical antithesis towards the Welsh language; and his vision for what was now needed to ensure its very survival. Centuries of political tradition, and the economic tendencies of the age, had contrived to undermine the survival of ‘y Gymraeg’, he declared, ‘nothing could change this, but determination, will, struggle, sacrifice and effort’.

Consternation was raised following the 1961 census, which revealed that the number able to speak the language had declined to just 26 percent of the population.

127 Interview between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 20 May 2009. G. ap Iestyn first toyed with Ceith following a discussion with Trefor Morgan’s wife. He also revealed that he and Lewis were arrested for pulling down Union Jacks during the Eisteddfod and that Pedr Lewis ensured their release from police custody.
128 Interview between WT & Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004.
One strategy deployed to see its legal status enhanced, was to ride two on a bicycle. Realising that such action would result in a summons, attention could then be drawn to the fact that it had been served only in English. Yet, if a solitary event can be seen as the catalyst for the change in the legal and administrative fortunes of the Welsh language, it occurred during the evening of 13 February 1962. In a paper for the BBC Wales Annual Radio Lecture, Saunders Lewis emerged from romantic seclusion and called upon the people of Wales, especially its youth, to make what was later described ‘the salvation of the language their central, indeed, only priority’. In his lecture, entitled *Tynged yr Iaith*, (*The Fate of the Language*) Lewis predicted that if the present trend continued, the Welsh language would cease to exist as a *living* language towards the beginning of the twenty-first century. Success, Lewis concluded gravely, could only come through ‘revolutionary methods’.

The call by Saunders Lewis to undertake illegal action to secure legislative protection for the language, struck the constitutional politics of Gwynfor Evans a heavy blow. If that was not bad enough, the call to action was aimed at the nation’s youth: the very future of Wales and Plaid Cymru. John Davies believed the crisis that Lewis was describing was all too real, but it ‘became obvious that he was trying to turn Plaid Cymru into a militant language group and nothing else’. To Davies, this was ‘complete madness’. Nevertheless, Saunders Lewis was still held in the highest regard, and soon plans were being hatched to establish a movement whose sole aim was to protect and safeguard the Welsh language. At the Plaid Cymru summer school in August 1962, fifteen people decided to defend the actions of recently arrested Gareth Miles, who having received a summons in English for illegally riding his bicycle, had asked that the summons be issued in Welsh. Yet, despite the first unsteady steps towards a campaign to ensure legislative protection for the Welsh language, the storm clouds which hung over Tryweryn still cast a shadow.

One young man fully aware of the dangers facing both the linguistic and cultural landscape of the nation was Emyr Llywelyn Jones. Despite Saunders Lewis’

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131 Gwyn Alf Williams, *When Was Wales?* (London, 1985), p.292. Impressed the family’s stoic struggle to receive a bi-lingual council rates demand from Llanelli Borough Council, Lewis wrote to Eileen Beasley, asking for information which might be included in a radio address he was in the process of writing. Interview between WT & Eileen Beasley, 28 July 2004.
reluctance to ally himself with protest action at Tryweryn, Jones was determined to make a symbolic strike at the Tryweryn reservoir site. In the spring of 1962, he decided that his best chance of gaining the necessary knowledge needed to assemble an explosive device, lay across the Irish Sea. Through Proinsias Mac Cana, the Irish academic, Jones was given the name and address of 65 year-old IRA veteran Martin O Cadhain. With the IRA on 26 February 1962 having terminated ‘the campaign of resistance to British Occupation’, to his initial dismay and later relief, Jones found the IRA ‘dead, defunct and inoperative’ and O Cadhain, although a cordial host, both unable and unwilling to help. Following a week of genial hospitality, Jones departed for home.

The ever-widening gulf between the constitutional and non-constitutional wings of Plaid Cymru still threatened to split the party. At the annual conference at Llangollen in August 1962, the two opposing factions: on one side, the Gwynforiaid; on the other, the self-styled activists competed for ascendancy. Following another tempestuous debate, a compromise was reached. No one, it was agreed, ‘was to take action in the name of Plaid Cymru, but members were free to undertake specific action when it was a matter of conscience or conviction’.

The first militant strike at the Tryweryn reservoir site

It was not long before action was taken. Shortly after 22.00, on 22 September 1962, Police Constables Williams and Jones, having ‘received reports of loiterers on the Tryweryn site’, found ‘in possession of certain tools’, David Barnard Walters, a twenty-two-year-old underground colliery worker from Bargoed and David Glyn Pritchard, a twenty-five-year-old electrical planning engineer from New Tredegar. Following an inspection of the site, it was discovered that a thousand gallons of oil, as stored in an electrical transformer, had been released. The two men were then taken to Bala police station for questioning. There, the following afternoon, each man

134 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 28 August 2005
136 Telephone interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 18 November 2007. An Aberystwyth lecturer who Jones refused to name, put him in touch with Proinsias Mac Cana. He in turn introduced him to Martin O Cadhain, a well-known writer and professor in Irish at Trinity College, Dublin. Although supportive in every other way, O Cadhain, did not want to take responsibility for any consequence which might occur should explosives be used.
137 Rhys Evans, Gwynfor Rhag Pob Brad (Talybont, 2005), p.222.
138 Interview between WT & David Walters, 29 December 2008; also Berresford Ellis, Wales: Nation Again, p.129; also WM, 25 September 1962; also Butt, Welsh Question, p.91.
finally admitted that their real motive and purpose for visiting the construction site had been ‘to put the (site’s) electricity supply out of action’. Having been charged jointly under the 1882, Electric Lighting Act, Pritchard and Walters contacted Elystan Morgan, the Wrexham solicitor and member of the Plaid Cymru party executive, to act as their legal representative.

The following day, the two men appeared before magistrates at Bala. Police superintendent David Jones stated that despite Pritchard and Walters’ claim to have stolen the tools in their possession, extensive inquiries had failed to substantiate this. In attempting to secure bail, Elystan Morgan declared that neither had attempted to escape and that each had fully co-operated while in custody. In objecting to the request, David Jones submitted that the gravity and deliberate nature of the alleged offence should be considered, while moreover, there was ‘no guarantee the two might not try to repeat their act of sabotage’. Following Morgan’s disclosure that he had interviewed the accused for only a brief period the previous night and that he was therefore unable to offer any sureties, the request for bail was denied and Pritchard and Walters were remanded in custody.\(^{139}\) Significantly, both Pritchard and Walters were from the predominantly English-speaking industrial valleys of south-east Wales, neither were Welsh-speakers and Pritchard was a member of the Plaid Cymru executive.\(^{140}\)

In Bala Shire Hall Assizes on 3 October, each man pleaded guilty to the charges against him. Unaware that two groups were involved in the action, prosecuting counsel, K. Dowling, erroneously stated that they had been sighted by a night watchman, ‘in a car at the Ffestiniog end of the site, some two miles from the transformer’.\(^{141}\) Having telephoned the police, they were arrested on the Bala to Capel Celyn road. Pritchard and Walters initially alleged that they had hitch-hiked from Gwent seeking employment at either Trawsfynydd or Tryweryn. The following morning, they each admitted that their police statements of the previous evening had been, ‘all wrong’.\(^{142}\) Pritchard now conceded that he and Walters had intentionally removed the caps from the drainage valves, to interrupt the sites electrical supply.

Explaining their actions, Pritchard declared that as Welshmen, he and Walters had considered a ‘personal strike’, such as that undertaken, to be their only answer

\(^{139}\) *WM*, 25 September 1962.
\(^{140}\) Butt, *Welsh Question*, p. 91
\(^{141}\) Interview between WT & David Walters, 29 December 2008; also *WM*, 4 October 1962.
against Liverpool Corporation. Furthermore, he hoped their small effort would deter any future English authority from encroaching into an area of Wales, without first having sanctioned the permission of the Welsh people. Not all were impressed by the two men’s apparent need to salve their consciences. The delay in revising their statements, declared Dowling, had simply been a premeditated ruse, in order ‘to ensure that all the oil would drain from the transformer’. Despite serious damage not having been committed by switching off the sub-station, it had nonetheless resulted in a ‘great inconvenience and had curtailed work on the night shift’.

In defending Pritchard and Walters, Elystan Morgan informed the court that the two accused were men of an ‘idealistic frame of mind, and deeply concerned, if not obsessed’, with issues of principle. It was an act, Morgan added, ‘conceived from a sense of duty’; undertaken in response to the over-whelming consensus of Welsh opinion against Liverpool’s ‘acquisition’ of Cwm Tryweryn.\footnote{WM, 4 October 1962.} It was a view endorsed by Gwynfor Evans, who remarked to waiting journalists, that rather than the two accused, it should indeed be English authorities in the dock facing charges.\footnote{WM, 20 December 1962.}

In summing up his testimony, Elystan Morgan submitted that a dominant issue surrounding the background of the case was the question of ‘Wales as a nation’. If it was non-existent, with no rights, then the accused had indulged in wanton damage meriting strict punishment. However, if the Welsh nation did exist and had rights over its assets, then it may be believed that the two young men had acted in defence of those assets, and that, he asserted, must be viewed in a more mellow light. The chairman of the court declared that he had listened carefully to the argument proposed by the defence council, but nevertheless pronounced that each man had come deliberately from south Wales to commit the offences, and had certainly not done so without counting the cost. Pritchard and Walters - the first apprehended men to strike a blow in the name of Welsh nationalist protest since the opening of the Claerwen Dam ten years before - were each fined £50, ordered to pay £26 costs and given three months in which to pay.\footnote{WM, 4 October 1962. Borne of ‘fear the hearing and the wider situation might be inflamed’, Walters believes the magistrates were ‘instructed’ not to imprison them. On emerging from court, ‘there was a collection, we were handed cheques and our fines were paid’. Interview between WT & David Walters, 29 December 2008.} The seeds of protest, to lead by the turn of 1970, to the arrest and sentencing of many Welshmen and women, all drawn from within the
wider nationalist protest movement of Wales, from varying ages, socio-economic and linguistic backgrounds had been sown.

Whatever the thoughts of the magistrates, to the waiting crowd who warmly greeted the two discharged men as they appeared on the steps of the court, it seemed that their protest had been an act of industrial sabotage amounting to little more than measured symbolic resistance. In 2008, David Walters threw new light on this first ‘militant’ action to protest the impending drowning of Cwm Tryweryn. Contrary to the belief that the two men had acted alone, he revealed six men had travelled to the site. Namely, Dave Pritchard, Alf Williams and himself in one car; and in another, approaching the reservoir site from the opposite, north westerly direction, Trefor Beasley, Dai Bonar Thomas and O. M. Roberts.

In attempting to quantify their action, Walters disclosed that the group, all prominent members of Plaid Cymru, had each declared that ‘something had to be done about Tryweryn’, but with no explosives, ‘the most efficient way’ had been to utilise David Pritchard’s expert knowledge of industrial machinery and in particular, electrical transformers. Employed in the design of such equipment, Pritchard knew that drained of oil, the transformer would ‘burn out internally’, thus destroying its inner workings. This, he was aware, would result in considerable damage and might delay the construction process by some weeks.146 Despite a suggestion made to the contrary in 2008,147 Pritchard also realized that the transformer would not in fact combust, owing to the large safety supply of oil which would cool the transformer when discharged. The release of this ‘safety valve’ would occur when the existing supply reached the level determined by a pre-programmed setting.148

Such was the threat of action, stated Walters, that officers consigned to Special Branch had been deployed at the site. It followed reports from construction workers that a photographer had been viewed apparently reconnoitring the area. The person in question, Walters revealed, was David Pritchard. The authorities, he added, had expected for a number of years that some measure of protest action would be taken, and indeed, a number of unreported incidents had occurred to substantiate their concerns. Walters was later informed of these developments by Irish nationals employed at the site.

146 Interview between WT & David Walters, 29 December 2008; also telephone interview, 25 April 2010.
Having made the necessary arrangements, it was decided that while Pritchard and Walters went for the transformer, an attempt would also be made to destroy the stores, machinery and materials at the other end of the valley. It had been a clear night and while en route to Capel Celyn, one of the men had briefed the driver. Instructed to turn off the car’s headlights when approaching the site and to coast quietly, the lights were kept on too long and the party was then spotted by workmen. Having alighted from the vehicle, the passenger and his companion had tried to get to the stores huts, but with the security men in pursuit, they had been forced to make their escape. However, on the other side of the valley, Pritchard and Walters took advantage of the diversion and were able to reach and drain the transformer. They then made to a pre-arranged pick-up point, but were there apprehended by the police. The two south Wales men, it was revealed, had mistaken a police car without lights for their own. Whether in an attempt to minimise the actions of Pritchard and Walters, or possibly in a genuine belief that the pair had acted alone, news of this further incident went unreported.

David Walters also revealed that the two arresting police officers, so one of them informed him many years later, had been subjected to considerable hostility throughout the Bala area following his and Pritchard’s apprehension. The officers, it was explained, ‘had to some degree been ostracized’. Such action, Walters believed, was unfair. Both he and Pritchard had been treated with ‘dignity and respect’, while each arresting officer had voiced their individual support for the protest action taken. This was highlighted, Walters disclosed, when having finally admitted their guilt the day following their arrest, the two officers informed he and Pritchard that had they stated their intention the previous evening, the policemen would have ‘let it go’ and rather than a police cell, they would each have slept in their ‘own beds’.

Nonetheless, having been arrested, Walters continued, not only had their cell doors been unlocked, allowing them to wile away the time chatting together, they had also been taken to the home of one of the officers in order ‘to eat a home-cooked meal and to admire his peacocks’. While such activity had occurred only when the senior officers had departed for home - the attitude of whom had conflicted somewhat with those of the junior officers - it should nevertheless be noted, Walters added, that the latter had been ‘as good as gold’, handing out cigarettes and against regulations,

148 Interview between WT & David Walters, 29 December 2008.
unfastening their handcuffs en route to the court hearings. Subsequently, he could not criticise them in ‘any way shape or form’ and felt nothing but gratitude for they way both he and Pritchard had been treated.149

The Plaid Cymru executive found itself in an awkward, political quandary: support the action and risk further alienating mainstream electoral support, or criticise the protest and risk losing both potential support and the support of an existing number within the party, wholly in support of the action taken. It was a dilemma which would blight Evans’ leadership throughout the entire period of the militant campaign.

This was highlighted just two days after Walters and Prichard were fined, when the Western Mail reported that Gwynfor Evans, in what was both seen - and intended to be seen - as a categorical denial, revoked any suggestion of there having been a ‘plan’ by a faction within the party to disrupt working progress at the Tryweryn site. Despite the denials, an editorial in the Plaid Cymru periodical the Welsh Nation, strengthened the persistent rumour of at least some measure of senior party collusion. This was achieved by it revealing that ‘a band of determined militants’ had met during the previous months and had ‘laid plans to carry their intentions into effect at a later date’. Moreover, the Welsh Nation added that it would be carrying further ‘news of the fighting in this important sector of the battle for Wales’. Responding to the article, Gwynfor Evans conceded the group’s existence, but stated that he could not take it very seriously and that consequently, no effort had been made to determine the identities of those involved. They had certainly not been acting on behalf of the party, he remonstrated. When pressed for comment with regard to his original statement denying any knowledge of the group, Evans cogently - and firmly - replied that he stood by what he had said.

Nevertheless, the party president ordered the September edition of the Welsh Nation to be destroyed. Instructed to do so, Harri Webb, the paper’s editor, stated his belief that Gwynfor Evans had not contradicted himself in his subsequent admission of the group’s existence. The article’s information had come from the persons concerned, Webb disclosed. He did not know exactly how many were involved, or what they planned to do, as the Welsh Nation had only been kept informed of events in general terms. As to the identity of those involved, Webb thought they were

149 Telephone interview between WT & David Walters, 25 April 2010.
members of Plaid Cymru; however, acting not in the name of the party, but in accordance with their own convictions. As to the suggestion that as a result of the article the paper had received a measure of police attention, this was denied by Webb, who stated that there had been no police interest in the matter.\textsuperscript{150}

In a letter to the \textit{Western Mail}, published 11 October 1962, Gwynfor Evans defended the constitutional means employed by Plaid Cymru, while criticising the lack of democratic accountability which had seen the Tryweryn Bill passed some four years before.\textsuperscript{151} To those who endorsed the use of direct action however, yet again Evans had not gone far enough. They believed that an opportunity had been lost for the Plaid Cymru president to publicly applaud the actions of Pritchard and Walters; and by so doing, send a clear signal that the drowning of another Welsh valley would not be tolerated. The inevitable back-lash from within the rank and file of the party was not long in coming.

Yet, in 2008, a disclosure by David Walters contradicted the stance adopted in October 1962 by Gwynfor Evans and the Plaid Cymru ‘hierarchy’. Evans, he alleged, not only met both him, Pritchard and the others involved in the Tryweryn protest, but on the tacit understanding they would neither ‘endanger human life’ nor instruct the media of their intentions, had also given them his blessing. In a further twist, Walters also revealed that Evans had appealed to party members to attend the hearing at Bala Assizes, in order to show support for him and his co-defendant.\textsuperscript{152}

The increasingly seasoned party leader was, as ever, walking a political tight rope. Ever mindful of just how damaging a link with militant nationalism might prove, Evans remained determined that nothing would undermine the party’s advance along the constitutional path to electoral success. His message was unequivocal: the party had to stand united against the use of illegal force. As such, dissention was not to be tolerated. In a letter to Gwynfor Evans, published in the \textit{Western Mail}, Neil Jenkins, a young party official heaped praise on the actions of Pritchard and Walters, but concluded that all true Welshmen must have been utterly ashamed and disgusted by the disgraceful repudiation of their deed by the president of Plaid Cymru;

\textsuperscript{150} \textit{WM}, 5 October 1962.
\textsuperscript{151} \textit{WM}, 11 October 1962; also \textit{One Wales}, September 2001.
\textsuperscript{152} Interview between WT & David Walters, 28 December 2008. Gwynfor Evans had regarded Pritchard and Walters’ protest as ‘a gesture’. Moreover, he warmly greeted the two men outside court so as ‘not to alienate that faction within Plaid Cymru who supported the action’. This ‘minority’ element within the party ‘was growing’, such was the feeling stirred by Tryweryn. His father had felt it necessary ‘to keep it under control’. Telephone interview between WT & Dafydd Evans, 5 October.
especially as one of the men (Pritchard) was a long-standing member of the party’s executive council. He kept his most stinging comment however for the final paragraph. ‘These men’, he proclaimed, ‘had certainly acted for Wales and in the name of Welsh nationalism, something which had probably never even occurred to Gwynfor Evans, during the eighteen fruitless years of his presidency’. Jenkins asked that Evans resign his position, declaring it ‘high time’ that he relinquished ‘this purely nominal leadership’ in favour of a real nationalist.

One man, who in the months to come was far more deserving of the title in Jenkins’ mind, was Owain Williams. Five days after Jenkins’ letter to the president of Plaid Cymru, Owain Williams began the process of taking the militant struggle to a higher plateau by raiding the explosives magazine at Crofts Quarries, Llithfaen. Williams was accompanied by two regulars to his Espresso café in Pwllheli: Edwin Pritchard (20) and Robert Williams (18). Both were from Nefyn and each, suspected Owain Williams, lacked the necessary emotional rigidity to feature further in his plans. His fears proved well-founded. Arrested the following April, each soon succumbed to police interrogation; leading officers to many of the detonators removed and revealing the identity of their ring-leader.

Despite Gwynfor Evans’ broad support for the unconstitutional, but non-violent actions of Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg, the party leaders’ endorsement did not extend to others who advocated the wider nationalist movement adopt a similar method of agitation. As such, on 18 November, Neil Jenkins was expelled from Plaid Cymru, for what was seen by party leaders as ‘unfair criticism’ over their handling of the Tryweryn strike protest. Defiant to the end, Jenkins declared it ridiculous to be expelled for merely expressing an opinion which disagreed with the party leadership over the Pritchard and Walters question. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the episode did not prove to be the end of Neil Jenkins as a force in the name of Welsh nationalism. As events were to take a more militant turn in the years that followed, Jenkins was to

2005.
153 WM, 19 November 1962.
154 One Wales, October/November 2001.
155 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 24 March 2004.
156 Correspondence between WT & Gwynfor Evans 20 August 2003. Gwynfor Evans thought CylG ‘hindered the party in the short term, but may well have strengthened a feeling of Welshness, and thus Plaid Cymru in the longer term’. Furthermore, despite possibly harming Plaid’s immediate constitutional prospects, ‘many members had indeed sympathized’ with CylG at both a grass roots and senior level.
157 WM, 19 November 1962.
become closely allied with others who had found themselves out of favour with the party executive.

With an announcement on 22 November that a further two valleys had been earmarked for flooding in Wales, Cymru Ein Gwlad, a periodical published by fringe elements within Plaid Cymru, upheld the gesture and justification of Pritchard and Walters’ action, ‘and any others which might follow’, as an essential way of demonstrating Welsh opposition to the English ‘cement and concrete invasion of Wales’.158 Interestingly, it also revealed that the Pritchard and Walters protest, was not the first such incident at the site; and that a number of other previous actions had occurred, of which writers of the periodical had knowledge. For example, an attempt had been made to target the brightly illuminated arc lights which aided the erection of the dam wall during the shorter-winter days. These lights, it was alleged, had been targeted as a possible prelude to further action under the cover of darkness.159

Arson at the Tryweryn reservoir construction site

In the early hours of 19 December 1962, another attempt by ‘two men’ to disrupt work at the Tryweryn construction site was attempted. A small fire in a ‘fitters shed’ was started and, before allegedly being startled by a watchman, an attempt was made to set ablaze ‘the timber compressor house’.160 Speaking in January 2004, one of the two men, wishing to remain anonymous for fear of prosecution, recalled the night he entered for the first time, the so-called pantheon of Welsh nationalist militant protest. It was meant to be a symbolic act, he conceded, ‘along the lines of Penyberth’. It was carried out by a group of students based at Aberystwyth, with more than just two involved in the ‘actual thing’. News that security on the site had been stepped up, following the action of Pritchard and Walters had made little impact. While, news the previous month, that more sites were being earmarked for flooding, had been a factor in the group’s decision to make a stand.161 He and his accomplice had been dropped off at Bronaber, near Trawsfynydd, as the rest of the party continued along the road to Bangor. They changed into workman’s clothes and after crossing the mountain and finding the old railway track, had followed the line through to the Tryweryn site.

It was raining and windy and yet, despite the conditions and the terrain, their

158 WM, 22 November 1962; also WM, 20 December 1962.
159 WM, 24 December 1962.
journey had been relatively straightforward. With no fence to scale, the two men walked unchallenged onto the site. Unable to set one of the sheds alight, and feeling that it had not been damaged enough to ‘make it a symbolic action’, they had then attempted to set fire to the compressor. The following day, newspaper headlines announced the night watchman had grappled with one of the two men. The story was dismissed by one of them in 2004 as false; he had merely shouted and they had made their escape. It was construed, he believed, solely to discredit them. Yet the job had been ‘botched’. They had wanted to ‘finish it’ and possibly get caught; that then would have been the end of their protest. They had fled due to their failure to carry out the action successfully. Had events been different, it would have been secured the symbolic act they intended.

The trek back along the railway line was made all the more uncomfortable owing to the cold and persistent rain. *En route*, they fell upon a parked police car. The police must have been notified of the attempted strike action, he added; they must also have realised that someone could access the site by following the railway line. Subsequently, at a junction where the line crossed the road, each man was forced to lie flat on their stomachs in water-bogged marshland, as the unsuspecting police officers sat in the warm comfort of a police car, no more than ten yards away. They could hear the officers talking. Finally, after apparently having considered themselves to be alone in the area that night, they left. Having done so, the two students crossed the road and continued along the track to Bronaber.

On returning, they changed back into their regular clothes and buried their workman’s overalls in nearby woods. They then waited to be collected by the party returning from Bangor. It was well organised, with the alibi being - were they stopped by the police - that the group was simply returning from ‘a normal students night out’. Inspired by the protest and subsequent action of Saunders Lewis, D. J. Williams and Lewis Valentine, 26 years earlier at Penyberth, it had been the perpetrator’s intention to hand himself in to the authorities had the plan proved successful. In contrast to the candour expressed by one of the two men, in September 2004, the other man allegedly involved remained resolutely tight-lipped. He had, he professed, ‘nothing whatsoever to say on the matter’.

161 *WM*, 22 November 1962.
162 Anonymous interview with WT, January 2006.
A brief statement released by the Gwynedd Constabulary the following day, declared that a small fire had been confined to a wooden bench in the fitter’s shed; that only slight damage had occurred and that neither of the two saboteurs had left any clue as to their identity; either on site or while escaping. An official of Tarmac Ltd, the main contractor in the reservoir’s construction, was also quick to play down the incident; he nevertheless conceded that had the ‘compressor house’ caught fire, ‘the damage could well have been considerable’. Having stated that the incident had not interfered with work in the ‘slightest degree’, the resident site engineer, refused to be drawn on whether extra security measures at the site - where 210 men were employed - would be taken.

As rumour abounded that each incident at Tryweryn had been the work of the shadowy ‘action group’, police denied knowledge of its existence, but confirmed that intelligence sources had earlier relayed certain information. This speculated that the Prichard and Walters protest, was intended to be only the first in a series of such incidents, prompted by the same political motives. Quite possibly, but monitored action group members, whether or not aware that those responsible were students from Aberystwyth, not unsurprisingly denied any knowledge of the incident when contacted by the press.\textsuperscript{164}

On Christmas Eve 1962, a spokesman for Gwynedd police refused to confirm that site contractors at Tryweryn had received an anonymous phone call, warning of possible further incidents over the holiday period. Whether a coincidence or not, having sharply denied the escalation in active resistance was a factor, a site official then confirmed that a number of sirens had been installed. These would be heard in Bala, some four miles away, should the site be infiltrated. It was also disclosed that the number of night watchmen patrolling the area was to be trebled in number from two to six and that at least one would patrol with a trained Alsatian dog. The increase, he insisted, merely followed the standard procedure at holiday times when the work was temporarily suspended.

The timing of the increase in security measures at Tryweryn, coincided with media reports that a letter signed ‘Meibion Glyndwr’ (Sons of Glyndwr) had been received at the offices of Birmingham Corporation: the authority which had emerged

\textsuperscript{164} WM, 20 December 1962. An action group member admitted that although an incident over the Christmas period was anticipated, he was surprised at the possibility the disturbed protest had been a premature independent strike by two of its members.
as the likely leading sponsor of a Bill to flood Cwm Clywedog in Montgomeryshire. With the authority set to vote on the proposal, the letter alleged that as a protest, members of its group had buried 100 bottles of poison in the area earmarked for flooding. If heavy machinery was used in the development of the site, the bottles would smash and the water poisoned. In response, a police spokesman announced that routine inquiries were made into the matter, as was the customary practice following a letter being received of that nature.165

The symbolism of the failed arson attack at Tryweryn did not go unnoticed. For those on the periphery of nationalist thinking, the mistakes of the action were carefully scrutinised. In Aberystwyth, a plan was being hatched which would involve a different modus operandi. It was to begin a chain of events, which in the years that followed, led to the establishing of a special police unit and a significant number of undercover intelligence officers pouring over the border, all in an increasingly desperate bid to apprehend those responsible.

Conclusion

The attempted action at the Tryweryn Reservoir construction site, just before Christmas 1962 - so fiercely reminiscent of the 1936 protest at Penyberth - saw the conclusion of an extraordinary period in the history of Wales. It witnessed the rejection of all attempts to prevent the flooding of Cwm Tryweryn through constitutional channels. To those proud of Wales’s cultural identity, such apparent contempt was hard to swallow, especially to a younger post-war generation, far less prepared to blindly accept the autocratic demands of a seemingly detached central government and parliamentary system. Gwynfor Evans had steered the Plaid Cymru ship with some aplomb through its troubled waters. Nonetheless, for all Evans’ commendable efforts, he had failed to prevent the drowning of Cwm Tryweryn, or orchestrate resistance the authorities were wary to inflame. The party’s younger element had grown tired of dignified failure. A fresh approach was required. The

165 WM, 24 December 1962. The threat to bury bottles of poison ‘bore all the hall-marks of British intelligence’, believed E. I. Jones; perhaps undertaken ‘to discredit nationalist action’. Jones’ reason for stating such was that ‘it wasn’t the kind of thing that people did’. Yet, it was possibly just ‘wild talk’. Jones emphatically denied phoning the police warning of possible further incidents at Tryweryn over the 1962 Christmas period. There were always people like that, ‘playing the heroics’. Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 14 October 2005.
humiliating lessons of Tryweryn would not be forgotten. As further sites for flooding were announced; and other causes of Welsh nationalist resentment continued, those intent on undertaking militant action vowed do so with a far greater degree of cadence and expertise. This time, the party leaders’ approval would not be sought.
Chapter 2

'Liverpool - Hands Off Wales'

MAC emerge and Llyn Celyn is opened

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the escalation in militant action at the Tryweryn reservoir construction site, its legal aftermath and the emergence and apparent demise of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru. It also addresses the opening of Llyn Celyn, an event which coincided with the first public appearance of the so-called Free Wales Army. The chapter will also dispel the commonly-held belief, that the initial militant campaign was financed by a benefactor, hitherto believed to have been R. O. F. Wynne or Hywel Hughes. It also focuses upon the continuing directional conflict between the constitutional and non-constitutional wings of Plaid Cymru and opposing attitudes of senior party officials to its electoral advance. The chapter demonstrates that the rise in militant action was fuelled partly by a belief that centralist government policy, through accident or design, was ambivalent, if not indifferent, to Wales and its cultural identity. It therefore addresses the political reaction to this suspicion by Harold Wilson’s Labour administration.

Attack on the Tryweryn construction site

For Huw T. Edwards, the former chair of Wales and Monmouthshire, the wound of Tryweryn still oozed. The story, he declared in January 1963, remained like ‘a scar on the consciousness of every Welshman worthy of the name’. It was a sentiment fervently shared by four young nationalists from different educational and cultural backgrounds. One of them was Aberystwyth university student Emyr Llywelyn Jones. Early that month, Jones made contact with David Pritchard, who, three months earlier, was fined for releasing oil from an electrical transformer at the Tryweryn reservoir construction site. Yet, more importantly as far as Emyr Llywelyn Jones was concerned, he had been told that Pritchard ‘knew how to do things’. What struck the

young man above all else, was how ‘responsible’ Pritchard was. It was difficult to imagine Pritchard undertaking anything which might involve the loss of human life. He was a man for whom Jones had ‘great respect’. With the process begun to acquire the necessary knowledge to undertake a militant strike action at Tryweryn, Jones was faced with another dilemma, as an unlikely obstacle - in the form of the more inflammatory Owain Williams - presented itself. That same month, Jones was stopped by a policeman for riding two on a bike. The officer was surprised to discover the young student in possession of ‘about £50’. The money was intended to hire a car, in order to reconnoitre the Tryweryn site that night. The policeman accepted the explanation that Jones and a number of other students were in the process of hiring a vehicle, in order to attend a social function at another university. The arrest was made and the issue of the money forgotten. On 12 January, Jones appeared in court in Aberystwyth, having refused to receive the summons for the charge in English. He was fined 10s.

During the previous autumn, Emyr Llywelyn Jones visited Ysgol Capel Celyn. There, he was introduced to a pupil called Tryweryn Evans. The seemingly innocuous encounter, Jones revealed in September 2003, had ‘affected’ him. He began to wonder what the word Tryweryn might mean to future generations. Would it become a term describing an act of betrayal or capitulation? Or would it perhaps mean something else? Something more positive, such as strength and honour in the face of injustice? Only time itself held the answer.

With the thought uppermost in his mind, Emyr Llewelyn Jones made contact with Owain Williams, a café owner from Pwllheli. He wasn’t involved with Williams and his friend and fellow nationalist John Albert Jones at the beginning, but through Gwilym Tudur Jones, a fellow Aberystwyth university student from Pwllheli, Jones had heard that they were planning ‘something’ independently. Increasingly alarmed at the strong use of reactionary language emanating from north Wales, Emyr Llywelyn Jones grew fearful that after so much self-preparation, they might do something ‘a bit extreme’. This was an idea to which Jones was wholly opposed: not
solely on the grounds that ‘no cause was worth the spilling or shedding of innocent blood’, but also because an untempered strike might ruin the whole philosophy of carrying out a measured, symbolic action at the Tryweryn reservoir site. Consequently, he decided it would be better to attempt a protest at the construction site together. That way, a prior understanding could be reached, as to how a successful action might be achieved and what tactics would be needed to ensure that all the group’s objectives were met.

According to Jones, prior to any agreed action, the four men should agree to the wording of an oath. He was sure that had Williams and J. A. Jones not subscribed to what he had written, he would not have agreed to act alongside them. It had not been anything formal, merely ‘to act as a unit with fixed aims and methods’; furthermore, it would ensure that the romantic idealism of Owain Williams would be curbed. At the bottom of the oath were the words Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru (The Movement for the Defence of Wales). However, Jones claimed that it had not really meant anything; he had merely coined the phrase for the purpose of the oath. Speaking later, Owain Williams recalled that all three had decided upon the name Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru. With Harold Macmillan installed at 10, Downing Street, they had regarded themselves as ‘MAC boys’. Moreover, both he and John Albert Jones had felt unease for the oath. Nonetheless, they had decided to go along with it merely to placate Jones.

However, one factor of Jones’s strategy particularly concerned Williams and J. A. Jones. They each rebuffed the idea that the group should hand themselves in to the authorities following the action. Jones figured that if Saunders Lewis had given

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5 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 12 September 2003. E. LI. Jones declared: ‘if we undertake one protest we’re patriots, if we do more than one we’re terrorists’. Williams and J. A. Jones planned to activate ten explosions at the site. A bridge carrying construction traffic was to be destroyed, as would trucks, machinery and the contractors’ stockpile of petrol drums. It was hoped that following the attack, contractors would withdraw permanently from the site. Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004; also, Owain Williams, Cygody Tryweryn (Llanwrst, 1995), pp.24, 25.
6 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 28 August 2005. Fellow student and E. LI. Jones’s flat mate Gwilym Tudur Jones, informed him that ‘two chaps from his home town of Pwllheli were going to do something’ and if he and Jones did not involve them in their action, ‘they were going to make a right balls up of it’. Fearing Williams and J. A. Jones might do ‘something fool-hardy’: both for themselves, and others if acting alone and ‘spoil any symbolic protest’ he and G. T. Jones had ‘planned’, reluctantly, E. LI. Jones ‘agreed to contact them’.
7 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 28 August 2005. Jones felt the oath would ‘hold Williams back’ and keep ‘the protest on a realistic and idealistic level’. The oath read: I promise to keep the activities of the Movement and the names of its members secret. I promise neither to kill nor injure any man who, as part of his duty, attempts to prevent me, and I will do everything in my power to ensure that no one is injured or killed as a result of an act on my part. I promise not to undertake any
himself up, then he should do the same, declared Williams. Both he and J. A. Jones shared a great respect for the talisman Lewis, but nevertheless, for Emyr Llywelyn Jones to hand himself in was one thing, but it would be impossible and impractical for him to do so, as he was a husband and father. If they were going to be caught, then the authorities ‘would have to do their homework’. He did not intend to ‘go meekly, cap in hand’. In fairness, for the sake of the children, Jones agreed to forget the idea.8

David Pritchard was not required to read the oath. He had, from the outset, espoused the importance of cautious action. With the protest planned for the middle of February, Jones admitted to harbouring some feelings of increasing apprehension as the date for the planned action drew nearer. Two issues troubled him: Owain Williams’ often fiery language and the age and apparent naivety of J. A. Jones. While he liked the young man, he had not been comfortable with his involvement. However, his position as Williams’ ‘side-kick’ had ensured his inclusion. Some little time later, David Pritchard held a ‘training exercise’ on the beach near Pwllheli. It was to instruct the three men and most notably Emyr Llywelyn Jones, how to assemble and ready an explosive charge by way of a timer. Gwilym Tudur Jones, the man assigned to drive the group to the Tryweryn site, drop them off and collect them after the device had been planted, did not attend. With Jones ready, the logistics of the strike could be finalised.9

The site was mostly watched by Owain Williams and John Albert Jones.10 Patrols at the Tryweryn site had been stepped up, following the failed arson attempt the previous December. The date of a follow-up action was set for a rough period in the year, so as to maximise the chance of patrols being suspended owing to the

positive acts without consulting the other members of the movement.
8 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004. Despite Jones’s academic background, all three came up with MAC. It caused some amusement, as they wrestled to establish the appropriate wording. He and J. A. Jones considered the oath to be ‘useless’. Neither man believed in endangering human life. Furthermore, what if something happened ‘accidentally’? They would be denounced ‘as hypocrites’. By January 1963, Owain Williams had three children.
9 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 28 August 2005. Jones admitted to having taken some time to lower his guard, but on another level, he realised he could trust Williams and J. A. Jones ‘from the beginning’. He ‘could see they were genuine’.
10 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004. Williams opined both men walked around the site ‘if not hundreds of miles, then certainly dozens of miles’. They wanted to ascertain the sites security: at what time employees arrived for work, had their breaks and shift ended. Every hour patrols with dogs were made of the site. They soon established exactly what time a bomb could go off with minimum risk of anyone getting injured. One could only minimise the risk, remarked Williams starkly, ‘it was impossible to be 100% sure’.

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Later that month, a quarry stores south of Aberystwyth was broken into. One of the three involved in the operation, recalled in January 2006 what happened. Having used a crow bar to enter the stores, he and his accomplice had removed a large quantity of gelignite, while the third man, the driver, had remained outside keeping watch. Having hidden the explosive material in the boot of a car, they then travelled to north Wales where it was hidden.\(^1\)

After many months of careful planning and with resolve stiffened by ongoing plans to flood Cwm Clywedog in Montgomeryshire, Emyr Llywelyn Jones was ready to embark on a journey which would see explosives used in the name of militant action for the second time in Welsh political history.\(^1\) During the afternoon of 8 February, Jones collected a hire car from Aberystwyth and drove to New Tredegar. At the home of Alf Williams, he collected the timing device from David Pritchard. In the early hours of the following morning, Jones drove to Pwllheli. Hours later, as arranged, along with Owain Williams and John Albert Jones, he waited for Gwilym Tudur Jones to arrive. He failed to do so.

While not judging G. T. Jones for his change of heart, speaking in August 2005, Emyr Llywelyn Jones nonetheless confirmed his non-appearance had thrown the plan into a state of some confusion.

> I wasn’t supposed to drive. I was to carry the device; it was my job to look after that, to make sure that nothing happened; it’s quite sensitive...He chose not to do it and I think he was right actually, but from his own personal vantage point, I think he regretted it...Even if he’d dropped us off at the site, no way would he have got caught, but....\(^1\)

The absence of their agreed driver was greeted with angry indignation by Owain Williams and J. A. Jones. ‘Diplomatically’, Williams revealed in 2004, Jones stated his belief that his friend and fellow student had been unable to undertake his agreed role ‘due to illness’. It was an explanation given short-shrift by both Williams and J.

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\(^1\) Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 28 August 2005. E. Ll. Jones admitted that had Williams and J. A. Jones not agreed to the oath, it would have complicated matters; he needed them. ‘It wasn’t something that could be achieved on one’s own; for instance, the driving’. Yet, ‘they didn’t have any expertise in assembling the device’. Jones reasoned that the December 1962 action was possibly viewed as a ‘one off’.

\(^1\) Anonymous interview with WT, January 2006.

\(^1\) *Radnor Express & Times*, 25 October 1952. The strike - an explosion at Fron Aqueduct near Llandrindod - was undertaken by Mudiad Gweriniaethol Cymru (the Welsh Republican Movement).

\(^1\) Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 16 August 2007. G. T. Jones ‘was supposed to meet the three of us at Owain’s in Pwllheli’. Yet, E. Ll. Jones did want to criticize him; he had ‘more than played his part in many other ways’.
A. Jones. Later asked to comment on these events, after some thought, Gwilym Tudur Jones declined to do so.

There was one other problem: the weather. For days, Britain had been blasted by heavy snowfall. Far from considering aborting the action, the weather, Emyr Llywelyn Jones revealed, had initially been viewed as an ‘advantage’. Besides, when you’ve planned something for six months, you’re not going to call it off because of a bit of snowfall are you? And even if people pull out, it’s been synchronised: your nerves are on edge, you’ve worked up to this for six months.

The weather conditions led Williams to believe that perhaps the protest should be postponed, he later admitted, but it had been the group’s lack of attention to detail which had proved their biggest handicap. He had been surprised to discover Jones driving a red Vauxhall car, hired, ‘from all places Aberystwyth’. If that wasn’t incriminating enough, the three were seen leaving Williams’ cafe by a number of witnesses.

En route to the site, the car, driven by Emyr Llywelyn Jones, hit a stone in the road and burst a tyre. Unable to find a jack, J. A. Jones and Williams lifted the car, while Emyr Llywelyn Jones replaced the wheel. The incident and the unanticipated weather conditions, only added to their sense of foreboding. Aware their intended action was now up to an hour behind schedule, the ‘sky was beginning to darken’ as Jones parked the car in a schoolyard, approximately three or four miles from the dam site. Clambering over hills in the thick blanketing snow, finally, with Emyr Llywelyn Jones a little way ahead carrying the timer and Williams and Jones following with the detonator, wiring and clock, the three came to within sight of the works, nestled brightly and seemingly abandoned in the valley below.

With little more than five hundred yards to the compound area, the rest of the journey was completed by crawling. Undetected, they reached the compound area. Between them and the target was erected a seven feet tall metal fence. Along its top, positioned every few inches, stood twisted spikes of metal. The three had come prepared. Owain Williams climbed the fence and laid a blanket across its top.

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15 Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 16 March 2004. ‘Emyr said he was in bed with flu’, declared Williams. ‘But being cynics, John Albert and myself didn’t think her name was flu’.
16 Interview between WT & Gwilym Tudur Jones, 25 August 2004.
17 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004.
18 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 12 September 2003.
19 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 28 August 2005.
20 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004.
Instructed to stay well back, both to keep guard and as a safeguard against an explosion, J. A. Jones watched as Williams, acting in defiance of the orchestrated plan, clambered over the fence to join E. Ll. Jones in laying the charge.\(^{21}\) The implications of Williams’ action, was considered by Emyr Llywelyn Jones in 2005. ‘To actually stand there and say “if you’re going to get blown up, I’m going to get blown up” was foolhardy, but I admired him for that...It was borne of sheer cussedness, but also very brave’. It was a decision taken to show solidarity, Jones added and ‘demonstrated the degree of camaraderie that existed’ between them. Nevertheless, Jones admitted to feeling annoyed. Williams had a wife and children; furthermore it contradicted the agreed plan of action. Fearing it might ‘be the last minute’ of his life and that the two would be ‘blown to bits’, were the device wrongly wired, Jones nervously set the charge.\(^{22}\) Williams explained that ‘the clock was hooked on and fixed with two wires’; before ‘one or two detonators were pushed into two or three pounds of gelli’. Carefully, the device was placed in a biscuit tin, which was then slid into place underneath the oil tank near the base of the transformer. The entire process had taken little more than five minutes.\(^{23}\)

A hurried glance at Jones’ wrist watch, revealed it was shortly after 22.00; the device had been set to activate five hours later. With the task completed, Williams and Jones scrambled back over the fence and the three, having crawled out of the glare of the lights, stood to their feet and stumbled as fast as the conditions would allow away from the site. Unable to focus clearly in the dark, while attempting to clear a hedge, Emyr Llywelyn Jones lacerated his knee on a strip of rusty barbed wire. Attempts to stem the blood flow by tying a handkerchief around the injury proved useless. Having finally reached the car, the leg began to stiffen and feel numb. Fearful that it might affect his use of the brake, it was decided that Williams should drive. If the snowy conditions had increased the likelihood that security at the site would be kept to a minimum, it had also greatly increased their chances of detection. They had left huge tracks.\(^{24}\)

In a decision which ultimately sealed their fate, Owain Williams suggested they

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\(^{21}\) Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 12 September 2003.

\(^{22}\) Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 28 August 2005.

\(^{23}\) Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004. The amount of explosives used, ‘would almost certainly have killed us’, stated Owain Williams.

\(^{24}\) Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 28 August 2005. Despite later ‘irritating’ television depictions of Jones being carried ‘Vietnam style’ on the back of one of his confederates; it did not
drive over the mountain road, in order ‘to join the A5 towards Cerrigydrudion’. He believed this route would minimise their chances of being observed, as due to the hour on a Saturday night, he felt certain Bala would be swarming with police. The higher they climbed, the greater the snowfall they encountered.\textsuperscript{25} Travelling ‘too fast’, the car swerved to avoid a van - which unable to advance stood blocking the road - and came to sudden stop in a snow drift.\textsuperscript{26} Assuring his two companions that he would ‘do the talking’, Williams approached the young van driver and began ‘to curse in English the Welsh weather’. A plan of action was quickly agreed. First the car would be pushed out of the drift and turned around to face the direction just travelled and then all three would attempt to turn likewise the van. The van driver duly obliged. None, admitted Williams, ‘checked to see if he was wearing gloves’. The red Vauxhall Saloon slowly sped off in the direction of Bala. Had one of the car’s occupants turned to glance back up the road, they might have seen a blood splattered handkerchief which lay on the verge.

As the car made its way out of Bala, it passed a police car parked in a lay-by. To their alarm, the squad car pulled out and began to follow them. Instructed by Emyr Llywelyn Jones to ‘put his foot down’, Owain Williams refused. He would, he announced, drive as if the group were ‘out on a Saturday night: neither too fast, nor too slow’. The police car followed them almost to Dolgellau, recalled Williams. Finally, the police car turned away.\textsuperscript{27} A quantity of unused detonators lay on the back seat.\textsuperscript{28} At 3.15 a.m. the device activated.\textsuperscript{29} The night watchman, Trefor Evans, patrolling another area of the site with his Alsatian dog ran to the compound.\textsuperscript{30} Activated by an alarm system, the police soon arrived. A hurried search of the area was undertaken by officers, the watchman, his colleague Cadwaladr Owen Jones and the site engineer. No damage was detected. Four hours later, Cadwaladr Owen Jones walked to the compound to switch off the site’s floodlight system. It was then he noticed that the snow-covered ground around the transformer was saturated with oil and part of the

\textsuperscript{25} Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004.
\textsuperscript{26} Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 28 August 2005.
\textsuperscript{27} Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004. ‘He must have thought we were from over the border’, stated Williams, ‘because when he spoke, it was in very broken English’. All three had spoken of the police car’s presence, he added, with no one daring to turn around.
\textsuperscript{28} Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 12 September 2003. Jones later regarded his knee injury as fortunate, as the manner in which Williams subsequently drove when followed was correct.
\textsuperscript{29} WM, 11 February 1963.
transformer’s exterior casing had been blown in. The explosion would not have been huge, according to Owain Williams, but it was enough to start a small fire, what with the oil, and destroy the base of the generator. Having watched in recent years, television depictions of the incident, Emyr Llywelyn Jones admitted to harbouring a sense of annoyance at attempts to dramatize what was in truth a ‘very controlled’ and minimal explosion. Only a very small amount of explosives had been used.

Arriving back at the café home of Owain Williams at 3.00 a.m., the trio eagerly awaited confirmation that the operation had been successful. Finally, after a sleepless wait, they received the news they were hoping for. During the mid-morning BBC Wales news broadcast, it was announced that the main transformer - supplying electricity to the Tryweryn reservoir construction site - had been shattered by an explosion in the early hours of the morning. Thought to be an act of sabotage, police had begun extensive enquiries. Emyr Llywelyn Jones declared: ‘We felt elated. We had done it!’. In Cwm TRYWERN, the action was viewed as ‘very encouraging’. Even The Times adopted a rather sympathetic appraisal, believing those responsible to be ‘members of the Welsh Nationalist Party action group’, acting in protest at what they considered ‘the rape of Tryweryn’ by Liverpool.

The escalation in tactics brought forth a vigorous response from the authorities, who then had a lucky breakthrough. The van driver, ‘himself a nationalist’, remarked innocuously to his uncle that in the early hours of the previous Sunday morning, he had helped ‘three Englishmen in a dark red car stuck in the snow near Bala’. The young man’s uncle contacted the police. Immediately, all garages and car hires in the area were paid a visit. With the net cast ever wider and particular attention focused upon university towns, it was not long before Detective Wyn Morris

31 WM, 11 February 1963.
32 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004.
33 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 28 August 2005. ‘Someone standing 400 yards away might have wondered what the thud was’, he stated.
34 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 12 September 2003.
35 Owain Williams, Cysgod Tryweryn (Llanrwst, 1979), p.43.
36 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 28 August 2005.
37 Telephone interview between WT & Martha Jane Roberts, 16 October 2005. ‘Cwm Celyn was a unit, it didn’t anticipate receiving support from anywhere; then out of the silence came the protest by those three brave young men. At last, someone had stood up against the scheme. It gave the people of Celyn a great boost’.
38 The Times, 11 February 1963. Despite an increase in security, ‘sabotage experts’ had managed to infiltrate the site works and cause ‘devastation’. Barn, 14 February 1963.
called at Nelson’s Car Hire on Alexandra Road in Aberystwyth. Enquiries as to whether a member of the university had leased a red coloured vehicle over the weekend of 10 February were soon confirmed. The man in whose name the car had been hired, was well known to Morris, involved as he was in the campaign for legislative status of the Welsh language. The filthy condition in which the car was returned, immediately struck the officers consigned to the case as suspicious. If that in itself was not incriminating, evidence that at some point over the weekend, the car had been pushed from the back, was soon confirmed with the abundance of fingerprints and palm prints located on the boot.

Forensic examinations were also undertaken at the reservoir construction site. The police soon deduced that a detonator, dynamite and timing device had been used in the attack. Furthermore, it had been carried out by someone with good engineering knowledge. Experts in explosives from the Forensic Science Laboratory in Preston were approached by Gwynedd Constabulary. Inevitably, the media spotlight soon shone on Gwynfor Evans. That Sunday evening, Evans informed the country’s media that Plaid Cymru opposed direct action ‘as a matter of policy’. However, he qualified this by adding, that ‘opposition to such methods did not always imply moral disapproval...There must be sympathy for these men’, who were acting as they thought right, ‘in the best interests of Wales’.

Senior Plaid Cymru member Elystan Morgan issued a statement, in which he angrily condemned the sabotage action. Such a policy, he declared, could only be counter-productive...and result in disillusionment for those who had ‘devoted their time and energy towards the attainment of national freedom along constitutional lines’.... If it were proved that the incident had any political connection, then one thing was certain: Plaid Cymru could not be held responsible. Nonetheless, Morgan felt compelled to re-emphasis his absolute disapproval of the action taken by Liverpool Corporation. It was, he discerned, ‘an act of depredation and ravage’. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the Tryweryn incident divided nationalist opinion; with Harri Webb fiercely critical of the stand taken by Elystan Morgan. Writing some time later, Webb stated that ‘no denunciation had been taken from the enemies of direct action,

39 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004.
41 WM, 11 February 1963.
42 WM, 13 February 1963.
only Elystan Morgan had done that. By doing so', opined Webb, 'he had completely ruined himself'.

**Emyr Llywelyn Jones is arrested and tried**

During the early evening of 18 February, Emyr Llywelyn Jones was arrested at his lodgings by Det. Inspector, Humphrey Jones, the head of Gwynedd CID, while accompanied by Det. Sergeant Glanmor Hughes. He was taken from Aberystwyth, thence to Dolgellau police station. Finally, at 2.40 a.m., Jones was informed by Inspector R. E. Jones of Bala, that he was being arrested in connection with the explosion at Tryweryn eight days before. The following morning, the 22-year-old student was taken by officers to Bala police station; where later that day, he appeared in a specially arranged court in the town, charged under the 1883 Explosives Substances Act of 'unlawfully and maliciously causing by an explosive substance, an explosion of a nature likely to cause serious injury to property'.

It had been 'a deliberate attack', Inspector R. E. Jones informed the bench, resulting in damage 'thought to be estimated at several hundreds of pounds'. Having given details of Jones' arrest, Humphrey Jones requested that bail be denied. There was cause to believe that others had been involved, he stated and that inquiries were on-going in a bid to trace the defendant's accomplices. Asked by John Williams, the clerk of the court, if he had any questions to ask Humphrey Jones, the defendant replied that he had not. Stating that two sureties had come forward to act as guarantors, he then asked to be allowed bail. The request was denied by Chairman of the bench, O. M. Jones. E. Ll. Jones was remanded in custody, to appear again two days later. While detained by officers, he had not having suffered any degree of physical abuse, Jones declared in 2003, but nevertheless, the process of questioning had been intense. While Humphrey Jones had been 'a gentleman', Glanmor Hughes was more intimidating. It had come, as 'quite a shock to be treated with such disdain and contempt'.

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44 WM, 20 February 1963. Jones's lodgings were on Terrace Road in Aberystwyth. Emyr Llewelyn Jones, Eileen Beasley declared warmly, 'was a very serious young man'. Interview between WT & Eileen Beasley, 28 July 2004.

45 Ibid.

46 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 28 August 2005. Glanmor Hughes was 'very unpleasant', stated Jones; trying all ways to intimidate him by playing 'mind games'. He was, added
News of Jones’ arrest came as a shock, exclaimed Owain Williams. Television news pictures confirmed his worst fears. The same news item, featuring a photograph of Jones, had also been seen by a regular visitor to Williams’ café. His brother was a member of the Gwynedd Constabulary. The feeling of shock was soon replaced with a sense of sadness and powerlessness. It was a reaction shared by John Albert Jones. Despite his growing unease, he was sure that his namesake would ‘not break down under the pressure’ and betray the identity of his accomplices. The amount of evidence found at Emyr Llywelyn Jones’s lodgings, included: maps and photographs of Tryweryn and the Bala area, books on explosives and letters to ‘people in Ireland’. It amounted to what one ‘might expect to be in the possession of a person intent, or guilty, of having caused an explosion’, later professed Glanmor Hughes.

The court room in Bala was packed on 21 February, when Jones appeared to face the charges against him. He was represented by W. R. P. George of Cricieth, the nephew of David Lloyd George. Following an admission that he could not object to the request for a further remand, George appealed for his client to be granted bail. All gathered knew, he added, that whoever was guilty of the offence, it was not ‘a criminal act in the common sense of the word’. It was a line of argument strongly opposed by Superintendent John St. David Jones of Dolgellau, who affirmed that the police were not in a position to proceed with the case and that he was surprised to hear a solicitor of the High Court state that the charge was not a criminal matter. Following a brief adjournment, the chair of the bench, O. Ll. Jones from Llanuwchllyn, declared that the defendant be released on bail in his own surety of £100 and two other sureties for the same amount, to appear at Bala magistrates court on 14 March. He added however one stipulation: that Jones return to reside at the home of his parents in Llandysul.

Under the leadership of Gwilym Tudur Jones, sixty students had journeyed from Aberystwyth to support Emyr Llywelyn Jones. While he was on bail, the
decision was taken by a small number of them to continue the militant campaign. The group went as far as to purchase a timing device from a source in London. It had been a ‘heat of the moment decision’ one of the group admitted in 2006. The symbolic action had been taken; there was no point in taking it any further. Besides, with the length of Jones’ sentence still to be determined, to carry out a further attack involving explosives would almost certainly have resulted in a somewhat lengthy sentence for the perpetrators, had they been caught and found guilty. Had those involved remained undetected however, ‘the authorities would have been aware that something was afoot: very amateurish and very idealistic’. Nevertheless, the decision not to continue, the source declared, had been correct.50

Emyr Llywelyn Jones’s court appearance was widely reported in the nation’s Welsh language newspapers; most notably, Baner ac Amserau Cymru, which addressed the frustration felt by many of the nation’s youth for the traditional adherence to constitutional political practice in Wales. Expressing this view, it declared that the democratic process had proved itself ineffective; furthermore, those opposed to the flooding of Cwm Tryweryn were now ‘hand tied’. Although the paper did not support illegal action, only through breaking the law, it maintained, could opposition to the scheme be exercised.51

At Jones’s trial, J. Wood, on behalf of the Director of Public Prosecutions, informed the court that explosives experts now estimated the damage to the compound to be £2,600; and that approximately two pounds of explosives had been used. Beneath the transformer, a mechanism had been found, of the kind used in time-bombs. Nearby, police had also found a red plastic material, pieces of cork, greasy brown paper and a small torch bulb with wires attached. The brown paper corresponded with fragments of the wrapping of a commercial explosive. The deep snow had proved ‘an extremely fortunate matter’ for the police, Wood added, as ‘three deep and distinct sets of footprints had been found from the compound ridge on the dam side, to the transformer and back again’; moreover, the footprints led across the fields to the Bala-Ffestiniog road. Crucially, police had been able to deduce that the footprints had been made by a pointed shoe, a nailed climbing boot and an ‘ordinary shoe’. Their imprints led up to the mound behind the transformer, where a

appearances, G. T. Jones was reportedly ‘sent down’ by college officials until ‘the end of term’.

50 Anonymous interview with WT, January 2006.

51  Baner ac Amserau Cymru, 28 February 1963.
two-cell battery torch had been found. Wood then referred to unexplained patches of blue stain, which had been located at several points along the route back to where car tyre marks had been found. Here, further prints of the pointed shoe and the climbing boot had also been detected. Continuing their search along the Cerrigydrudion road, police found two coils of white-plastic covered wire and further pointed footprints. The wire appeared to be from one or more electric detonators, and had been abandoned or discarded, 'only a short time before'.

Police-inspector R. E. Jones of Bala, one of the officers who had carried out the search along the Cerrigydrudion road, informed the court that officers had discovered evidence that a car had left the road and become stuck in the snow. Nearby, were more climbing boot prints, a woollen glove and a handkerchief bearing the initial ‘E’. The court heard that the car hired by Emyr Llywelyn Jones had been returned three days later, having travelled a distance of 641 miles. Swobs taken inside the car, had clearly revealed contamination by explosive substances, similar to those found at the transformer. Furthermore, debris found within a pocket of a donkey jacket removed from Jones’ lodgings, were found to have traces of the same explosive substances.

Other material taken from Jones’s lodgings, included license plate numbers of Gwynedd police cars and three letters. They were in Welsh and in Jones’ hand. One stated that the recipient had heard ‘plenty of brave words’ from him. He urged the addressee to wait three months before ‘committing the act’ as that would afford him the time ‘to resign’. He still wanted to be involved, as no one was more ‘conscious of failure’ than he. Requesting they meet again ‘for a chat’, Jones asked for forgiveness for the ‘mistake’ he had made; and offered his blessing and best wishes should the receiver decide to ‘go ahead’ on his own. Nonetheless, it was worth remembering that he alone possessed ‘the technical knowledge’. The ‘utmost caution was needed’, the letter ended, ‘therefore burn all letters, party literature and any list of addresses they might possess’. At the foot of each was written in bold letters LLOSGL. (Burn). In April 2007, Emyr Llywelyn Jones revealed that he had sent the letters to Gwilym Tudur Jones and other students sympathetic to carrying out a measured

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52 WM, 15 March 1963. E. Li. Jones denied deliberately spilling ink intermittently while returning to the car. The pointed shoe, he smiled, was worn by Owain Williams; he did not know where Williams had ‘got that modern stuff’...but it had proved ‘totally inadequate’. Telephone interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 10 October 2010.

53 Ibid.
protest action at the Tryweryn site.\textsuperscript{54}

The tone and character of the letters found at Jones' lodgings, reminded Det. Sergeant Glanmor Hughes of a 'South American revolutionary'. So much so, that in July 2003, he alleged that Hywel Hughes, the Welsh businessman who had made his fortune exporting cattle in Columbia, had financially supported Emyr Llywelyn Jones.\textsuperscript{55} It was a claim dismissed by Jones as risible.\textsuperscript{56} Nevertheless, in July 2007, Owain Williams conceded that Hughes had sent a cheque for $280 to his wife, to help with the upkeep of his business and family costs.\textsuperscript{57} Whatever the extent of his involvement, as the decade unfolded, it was not the last time that 'Hughes of Bogata' was linked to the rise in militant action in Wales.

In court the following day, night watchman Cadwaladr Jones astonished the hearing, by first begging the pardon of the court, then declaring himself to be 'a Welshman'. The outburst followed a request by J. Wood, that he describe the destruction found at the transformer. As a storm of cheering and applause erupted from the public gallery, magistrate O. Llywelyn Jones warned that the court would be cleared if the noise continued.\textsuperscript{58} Cadwaladr Jones was not the only one sympathetic. That evening, BBC Wales transmitted a programme entitled \textit{Gallery}. The programme resulted in viewers telephoning the \textit{Western Mail}, complaining that the programme's content had been both in contempt of court and that as the matter was still \textit{sub judice},

\textsuperscript{54} Telephone interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 15 April 2007. Posted when E. Li. Jones worked in Cardiff, they were sent to G. T. Jones, Geraint Jones and Dyfryg Thomas; Owain Williams was not included. Jones admitted to feeling some annoyance at his flat mate's failure to get rid of such incriminating material, but it had not really mattered in the end; additional evidence having proved 'over-whelming'.

\textsuperscript{55} \textit{Terfysgwyr Tryweryn}, S4C Production. Screened S4C, 13 July 2003.

\textsuperscript{56} Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 12 September 2003. There was no contact with Hughes, stated Jones. They had neither met, nor exchanged written correspondence. In fact, Jones did not think that Hughes was ever mentioned in conversation; either among his college friends or with O. Williams and J. A. Jones. There existed a good deal of 'inhuendo' that Hughes was financing 'this revolution', stated Williams; it was 'rubbish'; though he was sure Hughes 'would have done', had Williams asked. He was 'someone' Williams 'liked very much', being very charismatic and individualistic. Williams later spent time at Hughes' home on Anglesey when he returned. Telephone interview between Owain Williams & WT, 10 July 2007.

\textsuperscript{57} Ivor Wynne Jones, \textit{Hitler's Celtic Echo} (Aberystwyth, 2006), p.208; also, telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 27 July 2007. Hughes sending the cheque 'was more than a lot of local people did', remarked Williams. Yet, the business did 'go down'. One reason was the announcement by a local grammar school headmaster, that pupils were banned from going to the cafe. Williams, the headmaster declared, was 'a bad influence'.

\textsuperscript{58} \textit{WM}, 15 March 1963. The reason the car recorded mileage in excess of that considered likely for the journey undertaken over the weekend, was 'probably' owing to him being 'unsure of the route and taking wrong turns'. Telephone interview between WT & E. Li. Jones, 15 April 2007.
that those people interviewed were prejudicial to the court proceedings.\textsuperscript{59} Interviewed for the programme, Gwynfor Evans declared that those responsible for the strike at Tryweryn had his ‘full sympathy, respect and moral support’.\textsuperscript{60} He certainly had no intention of expelling those involved from Plaid Cymru.\textsuperscript{61} Having for years slalomed carefully through the course of constitutional politics, such remarks typified to some members of the wider public, much of what appeared untrustworthy about Plaid Cymru. To those vehemently opposed to nationalist politics in Wales, Evans appeared little more than the two heads of the same coin. He was, they opined, the wily politician, who publicly criticised the use of violence as a political tool on the one hand, while being sympathetic with those prepared to use it on the other. Especially, if undertaken to further the political ambitions of Plaid Cymru towards an ‘independent’ Wales.

Nonetheless, despite Plaid Cymru’s pacifist credentials, anxious government ministers attempted to establish whether the party was behind the strike at Tryweryn, or, if not, whether it might be tempted to endorse, or sanction, any such activity. Following Evans’ appearance on Gallery, Lord Brecon, the incumbent Tory Minister for Welsh Affairs, requested a copy of the transcript. The controller of BBC Wales, wrote to one of Brecon’s officials apologising that no recording of the interview existed, but sent a memo written by the programme’s interviewer, James Tucker. Despite Evans’ assurances that Plaid Cymru would never target the public in a campaign of violence, Tucker concluded that three points had made an impression. Firstly, if the party executive considered that violence would do the party no electoral harm, then it might officially advocate such a policy. Secondly, violent protest could conceivably be carried out against people. Thirdly, the leadership was aware that its position might be ignored by party members who did favour adopting a policy of direct action.\textsuperscript{62}

\textsuperscript{60} Gwynfor: Yr Aelod Dros Gymru? BBC Wales Production. Screened S4C, December 2005. They ‘were acting for Wales’, Evans added. Furthermore, they were acting ‘courageously’ and in a way they saw as ‘most effective’.
\textsuperscript{61} WM, 15 March 1963. In 2003, Gwynfor Evans again dismissed any suggestion Plaid Cymru had considered engaging in violent protest. While he was a ‘self-declared pacifist’, at the party’s conference in Swansea in 1938, a vote was taken never to use violence in pursuit of its aims. Correspondence between WT & Gwynfor Evans, 20 August 2003.
\textsuperscript{62} TNA, BD 25/59. File entitled: Miscellaneous Welsh Bodies: Plaid Cymru 1958 - 1973. The government, the report stated, must ‘retain the goodwill of the Nationalist Party in Wales’; recognise the importance of its attempt to work on constitutional lines; and the efforts it had taken in preventing
The second day of Emyr Llywelyn Jones' hearing, began with his defence counsel contesting the results of forensic tests carried out on a donkey jacket found at his lodgings. Police Chief Inspector, A. H. Allen, of the Preston Forensic Laboratory, asserted that upon examination, debris found in the pocket was discovered to be contaminated with three explosive substances. When asked if a sample had been retained, so as to enable the defence to carry out a similar test, Allen replied that he had returned the debris to the jacket pocket. He had failed to place it in a container, he explained, owing to it having being chemically destroyed during the forensic examination. This was not uncommon, he stated; adding that it was not his function to invite scientists acting on behalf of the defence to witness his examinations.

Among other articles removed from Jones' room, were two pages from the Western Mail. These also, stated Allen, revealed contamination with three explosive substances, similar to those found on articles located near the damaged transformer.

Notes of a conversation, which occurred at Jones' lodgings between him and Det. Inspector Humphrey Jones, were read to the court by Det. Sergeant Glanmor Hughes. Having admitted hiring the red Vauxhall Victor, Jones was asked to outline his movements on the night of 10 February. He and a few college friends had intended to drive to Prestatyn, he declared, but owing to a flat tyre, they had been forced to catch a bus near Corwen. The group had neither suffered further problems with the car, nor had it become stuck in snow. They had both journeyed through and returned via Bala and at no stage had any of the party been near the Tryweryn site. The following day, he was asked if he would like to make a statement, remarked Glanmor Hughes. It was a suggestion which saw W. R. P. George interject. While the questions already read were inadmissible in evidence, he proclaimed, a dispute now existed as to whether his client had been cautioned at that stage in the inquiry. If no caution had been issued, then the bench should decide whether further evidence should be heard in private. Following a consultation, court-clerk B. J. Williams announced that the inadmissibility of evidence concerning the caution and statement would be heard and discussed in camera. When the five magistrates returned some two-and-a-half hours later, chair O. Ll. Jones declared his satisfaction that the accused had been cautioned, both at his lodgings and later at Aberystwyth police station.

Gwynfor Evans, the memo added, 'obviously wants to avoid a situation which could be embarrassing to the government, to the Welsh people, to himself as leader of the Nationalist Party and to the Nationalist Party as it is constituted at present'.

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Police constable Arthur Jones informed the court that the red Vauxhall Victor saloon was observed by a patrol car passing Fidler’s Elbow, Treharris, at 1.33 a.m. on 9 February. With little more made of the incident, surely Jones was asked, the authorities must have speculated why the car involved in the protest had been so close to the home of David Pritchard; a collier, with a knowledge of explosives, who just six months earlier had carried out a protest at the site. They might well have made the connection, he replied, but there had not been enough evidence to implicate Pritchard. Evidence was also given by 18 year-old, Hugh Llywelyn Roberts, a butcher’s apprentice from Cwmtirmynach. Roberts stated that at 12.30 a.m., on 11 February, shortly after becoming stuck in a snowdrift on the Bala to Cerrigydrudion road, a red Vauxhall Victor car had passed him before it too became stuck in a ditch. The car had contained three men; all of whom were unknown to him. Two of the occupants had got of the car and one of the two had spoken. Roberts had helped push the car out of the ditch, by pushing from the rear, in order to redirect it down the road on which it had travelled. Sergeant B. O. Shimmins of Liverpool City Police fingerprints department, revealed that part of a palm-print found on the boot lid of the car was identical with prints taken of Roberts’ palm.

Emyr Llywelyn Jones now faced an additional charge, that of between 8 and 11 February, of ‘knowingly having in his possession, or under his control in Meirionnydd, an unknown quantity of explosives in such circumstances as to give rise to reasonable suspicion that it was in his possession or control for an unlawful object’. Jones pleaded guilty to both charges; adding quiescently that he did not consider his action to have been an offence ‘in the ordinary or accepted meaning of the word’. Granted further bail, Jones was ordered to appear for trial and sentencing at Carmarthenshire Assizes.

In response to reports that 300 people - from across Wales - were expected to gather outside the Guild Hall in Carmarthen, police revealed that access to the hearing would only be possible to those who possessed a security pass. Those attending the
The action of the accused, declared counsel for the defence, Elwyn Jones QC, had not been undertaken to cause serious destruction of property. This was evident in both the small amount of explosives used and that the charge had been placed in such a way that there existed no consequential danger. Jones was a brilliant student, yet, throughout the previous twelve months, a 'certain deterioration in his work' had been reported. This, he believed, might have been caused by 'the agonising decision' of whether to carry out the 'symbolic act and to embark on this grave illegality'. The decision to do so, had caused 'deep distress and agony of mind'; it had not been embarked upon 'out of sheer bravado'. Jones was a young man of 'exemplary and complex character'; who throughout the torments and doubts of youth, had maintained the 'qualities of spiritual integrity'. Mercy would do more to achieve the well-being and peace of Wales, than emphasis on punishment. Having re-stated his guilty plea, Jones added quietly that he had nothing to add.\(^{69}\) Speaking in September 2003, E. LL. Jones revealed why he remained reticent.

Before the trial, Elwyn Jones asked me in the rooms below the courtroom, if I intended making a speech from the dock. When I replied that I was going to explain that we were trying to save this community, he said that in that case he would not be able to defend me. If I chose not to, then he was confident that he could get a minimum sentence, but if I insisted, then the Judge would have no alternative but to impose a heavier sentence...He had, he said, a son my age and that he was trying to imagine how my parents would be feeling...He explained that in legal terms I might expect to get perhaps three years. However, if I pleaded guilty, he thought he might be able to reduce the sentence and lessen the suffering of my family. I decided to listen to him: you have to think of other people's feelings. I had made my protest; it was enough.

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\(^{69}\) *WM*, 30 March 1963. Outside the hearing, Plaid Cymru officials distributed leaflets asserting the guilt of Liverpool Corporation and Parliament.
without acting the individual hero in the dock.\textsuperscript{70}

A ‘visibly moved’ Justice Barry then passed sentence. With words often ‘barely audible’, he declared it to be the most pathetic case he had presided over. Evidence suggested that Jones was a young man of the highest character. He had aroused considerable sympathy, yet unfortunately, in furtherance of his views, he had embarked upon a most serious criminal enterprise, which had resulted in a very serious criminal offence. Justice Barry believed that Jones had set forth on this course of conduct from no disgraceful motive, but nonetheless, he had a duty to ensure that safety of property was preserved. He was therefore impelled to deter any similar such action. With what Barry declared to be ‘great reluctance’, he sentenced Emyr Llywelyn Jones to a year’s imprisonment. The sentence was received in silence. Afterwards, Jones turned smartly and walked deliberately to the steps leading to the cells below. Throughout the three months ordeal, from his arrest to his being sentenced, he had refused to reveal the identity of his two confederates.\textsuperscript{71}

Quietly, the public gallery began to empty. As the crowd made their way from the court, unbeknown to them, pamphlets bearing the words of a new song, set to the tune of \textit{Men of Harlech}, had been distributed by Plaid Cymru. Yet, no one sang. As an eerie silence befell the waiting crowd, twenty-four-year-old Gareth Roberts summed up the mood. It had been the intention to greet news of the verdict with a defiant and rousing chorus of the re-worked Welsh chapel standard, he announced, however, on reflection, it had been thought more effective to greet the news in silence.\textsuperscript{72}

Asked for his thoughts in 2003, on the line of prosecution taken by war-hero Sir Tasker Watkins, E. LI. Jones was nothing but complimentary. Watkins, he discerned ‘was a gentleman’; who may possibly have admired their protest. He had not at all prosecuted in ‘a nasty way’, but rather, had appeared ‘almost sympathetic’.\textsuperscript{73}

Contacted in 2007, Sir Tasker was asked if the moral argument had been with those

\textsuperscript{70} Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 28 August 2005. Prior to his counsel’s advice, Jones intended to make ‘a big speech from the dock like the Irish do’.

\textsuperscript{71} \textit{Carmarthen Journal}, 5 April 1963. ‘It never crossed my mind that he would’. Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004.

\textsuperscript{72} \textit{WM}, 30 March 1963; also, \textit{Baner ac Amserau Cymru}, 4 April 1963; also, \textit{WM}, 30 March 1963; also, \textit{CJ}, 5 April 1963; also \textit{Cambria}, (Carmarthen, January/February 2006).

\textsuperscript{73} Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 12 September 2003. If there was one man on the judicial circuit who would understand the moral issue involved, Elwyn Jones informed his client, it was Tasker Watkins. He had been, E. LI. Jones conceded, ‘lucky to get him’. Telephone interview between WT & E. LI. Jones, 15 April 2007
involved in ‘direct action’? He could not say, yet to his mind the moral argument was clear. It was debatable whether the creation and purpose of the dam, outweighed that which was being lost. Nature had created a thing of beauty and it belonged to the world, and in a more particular sense, the people of the country in which it existed. To eradicate forever, something so enriching, seemed at the very least questionable.74

Owain Williams and John Albert Jones continue the MAC offensive; soon arrested they are charged and sentenced

If the authorities hoped the Tryweryn explosion was an aberration, or that the sentence imposed upon Emyr Llywelyn Jones would act as a deterrent to those considering militant protest, they were wrong. On 31 March, at Gellilydan, Maentwrog, some fifteen miles from Bala, four explosive charges were attached to an electrical pylon carrying power to the Tryweryn reservoir site. Three failed to detonate.75 In 2006, a former leading member of Mudiad Amdiffyn Cymru stated that ‘thankfully, it was a botched job’. He had guessed straight away who was behind it and thought it likely the explosives had been miswired, as neither Williams nor Jones, to his understanding, had any knowledge of how an explosive charge should be assembled. It appeared that the action had been undertaken solely to ‘get caught’.76

The explosion was heard by a farmer who, on discovering the damaged pylon the following afternoon, notified the police. Unknown to him, officers had also been informed of the explosion by the Western Mail. That same Sunday night, an anonymous call was received at the paper’s office from someone purporting to be ‘in charge of the publicity for the organisation’. The ‘principal suspects’, confirmed the Gwynedd Constabulary, were the ‘direct action’ group of Welsh nationalists. A spokesman for the Merseyside and North Wales Electricity Board, declared it to have been ‘a narrow escape’. The pylon carried a combined 99,000 volt line; had an explosion resulted in it toppling, then power would have been cut off over a large area.77

At 11.00 p.m., on Sunday, 7 April, Owain Williams was arrested at his café in Pwllheli. His arrest was a ‘series of errors’, he remarked in March 2003. With a theft

74 Telephone interview between WT & Sir Tasker Watkins, 15 April 2007.
75 WM, 2 April 1963.
76 Anonymous interview with WT, January 2006.
77 WM, 2 April 1963.
of explosives and detonators from a quarry stores in Llithfaen six months earlier and
the explosion at Gellilydan seven days before, the police felt sure they had found their
man. It had been a frightening experience, he admitted; but he had pleaded ignorance,
stalling for time. Williams was escorted the brief distance to the police station, where
he was interviewed by Humphrey Jones and Glanmor Hughes. While the senior
officer had ‘acted decently’, his junior partner had informed him starkly that he was ‘a
terrorist’, who might ‘easily have killed someone’. Having refused to sign a
statement, which implicated him in the theft of the explosives at Llithfaen, the
incident at Tryweryn and the explosion at Gellilydan, the police, Williams alleged,
adopted another tactic. Taken to an upstairs window, which stared directly opposite
into the upstairs rooms of his flat, there he saw his children, frightened and crying,
being held aloft by police officers. The strategy worked. He signed the statement on
the condition that his family be left alone. At the back of the café, police discovered a
number of detonators. In August 2005, Emyr Llywelyn Jones stated that he was
saddened to hear that Williams and Jones had been arrested. He had hoped ‘they
would get away with it’. The explosion had, he believed, been carried out to show
support for him in prison. It had been ‘very foolhardy’, yet, he had respected them for
it.

There was worse to come for 29-year-old Owain Williams. At a special court
session in Pwllheli the following evening, along with 18 year-old Robert Wyn
Williams and 20 year-old Edwin Pritchard, he was jointly charged with stealing 2,000
electric detonators from the explosives store of Crofts Quarries, Llithfaen, between 13
and 16 October 1962. The younger Williams and Pritchard - regular visitors to
Owain Williams’ café in the town - were granted bail and instructed to appear at
Pwllheli Magistrates Court on 22 April; each had been arrested just days before
Owain Williams. With regard Owain Williams, police Inspector Cledwyn Shaw
objected to his being granted bail, as he was due to appear in court at Blaenau
Ffestiniog the following morning, in order to face ‘two serious charges’ with a person

78 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004. Williams was surprised to see ‘about
twelve’ officers entering the café, ten from the front entrance and two from the kitchen behind the
counter. Trying hard to conceal his concern, Williams politely informed them he was locking up for
the night. When none answered, he asked them if it was cigarettes they were after. It was not, they
announced: they had come for him. The game, he realised, ‘was up’. Glanmor Hughes, alleged
Williams, was a ‘hateful, repulsive bastard’. He was not threatened with ‘physical violence’, but he
knew ‘they weren’t the boy scouts’.

79 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 28 August 2005.
already in custody. The charges came under Section II of the Explosives Substances Act 1883. The next day, Owain Williams and John Albert Jones were remanded in police custody until 18 April.

With the three Tryweryn saboteurs behind bars, opposition to the proposed Bill to flood Cwm Clywedog gathered momentum. Yet again, Plaid Cymru was at pains to prove its effectiveness as a political force. With three farms, totalling 615 acres facing submersion, in early April, the Clywedog sub-committee devised a new policy. With subscriptions raised by party members, it announced its decision to take out a 25-year-lease on 2.6 acres of land at the heart of the threatened valley. Over the coming weeks and months, the land was sub-divided into 75 units and rented to some 200 people from Wales; and others from as far afield as Australia, Canada, Germany and the United States hostile to the plan. The reason behind the action was a legal stipulation as outlined in the Property and Land Law. This stated that any person in possession of land, or property on land desired by a corporation, whether occupied/inhabited or not, had to be allowed to voice his or her opinion, either for or against a takeover, to a public enquiry; irrespective of the owner’s place of residency. This however, was not the only protection it was hoped the law might afford. It was also held that leaseholders had a legal guardianship of the land, and as such, trespassers could be prevented from gaining access. A legal opportunity to prevent unwelcome surveyors access had been granted. Nevertheless, having adhered to the letter of the law, an amendment was issued, stating that no longer would there be any need to call witnesses and interested parties to the enquiry. For one Welsh nationalist from Llangennech, the U-turn summed up the wider nationalist struggle. It was this ‘callousness’, recalled Denis Coslett in 2000, which prompted his decision to become more involved.

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80 TNA, DPP 2/4471.
81 WM, 9 April 1963.
82 WM, 10 April 1963. J. A. Jones was arrested the morning after Williams. TNA, DPP 2/4471.
84 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 12 December 2000. ‘How’, Coslett asked robustly, could you ‘reason with people like that?’. Two days after Pritchard and Walters were fined, it was announced that the River Severn Resources Committee intended flooding Cwm Clywedog in Montgomeryshire. It was in order to make the ‘river’s waters available to future big abstractors’. LDP, 5 October 1962.
Aware of the storm clouds amassing over the Clywedog proposal, on 18 April, Owain Williams and John Albert Jones appeared in court at Blaenau Ffestiniog. They were represented by J. Roberts of Pwllheli. Each faced the charge of being ‘part responsible’ for the explosion at the Tryweryn site two months earlier. Despite Roberts’ plea for ‘justice and not mercy’, bail was denied. The two accused were committed to stand trial in the same court nine days later.

The day before their trial, in an article entitled *The Importance of Welsh Water*, published in the *Liverpool Daily Post*, Cledwyn Hughes, the Labour MP for Anglesey, addressed the concern that the nation’s youth was being drawn into a downward spiral of reactionary violence. He believed that the future of Wales depended upon young people who had the ability to draft a good amendment, not those who could handle high explosives. Nonetheless, for Plaid Cymru member and future MAC policy advisor, Harri Webb, the issue of exploiting Welsh water was recognised as a pivotal moment in the nation’s own political and cultural journey. That same month, in a letter to Gwilym Prys Davies, a former member of the Welsh Republican Movement, Webb discerned that for men of his generation, there existed a remarkable parallel between recent Welsh history and pre-war English history. The Munich Agreement, ‘that paper signed by Hitler and Chamberlain in 1938 had shamed England’, wrote Webb, and England knew it had been shamed; from then on ‘the days of appeasement were at an end’. Here in Wales, Webb added intently, ‘Tryweryn was our Munich. Clywedog may be our Poland’.

Shortly after midnight on 27 April, police and fire service officers were called to a fire at the Tryweryn reservoir site. Despite their best efforts, a laboratory and its contents, owned by Liverpool Corporation, was destroyed. Police immediately ordered a security clamp-down. When approached for a statement regarding the incident, a fire officer at Dolgellau revealed that he had been ordered ‘not to release

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85 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004. Thirty days after Owain Williams was imprisoned, the Clywedog Reservoir Bill was passed by Parliament. With the Bill’s Royal Assent a formality, work began to ready the valley for flooding. Following a High Court Order, on 13 October 1965, the first family was evicted from their farm in Cwm Clywedog. *WM*, 14 October 1965. Relocated to a property owned and restored by Birmingham Water Authority, with sobering irony, the Evans family discovered the farmhouse, further up the valley, had yet to be connected to the water supply. *Unwaith Eto, 1965*. S4C Production. Screened S4C, September 2002.
86 *BaAC*, 25 April 1963.
any information’. Later that morning, Owain Williams and J. A. Jones appeared in court at Blaenau Ffestiniog. A plea for bail was refused and the case was postponed until 7 May.\footnote{\textit{BaAC}, 2 May 1963.}

Early that same May, after spending little over four weeks in Swansea Prison, Emyr Llywelyn Jones was transferred to the prison in Shrewsbury. The reason for his transfer, was so that he could be ‘identified’ at the trial of Williams and J. A. Jones in Blaenau Ffestiniog.\footnote{\textit{BaAC}, 23 May 1963.} On the first day of their trial, John Wood, acting on behalf of the Director of Public Prosecutions, astounded the court with the revelation that the pair were members of a ‘movement to protect Wales’. Having read the oath of the alleged organisation, the court also heard that articles found in Owain Williams’ café premises, included 21 newspaper cuttings. These related to the Tryweryn explosion and the prosecution of Emyr Llywelyn Jones. A number of tape-recorded news items of Jones’ trial were also found, along with a home-made Free Wales Army poster.

Under questioning, Williams admitted to being responsible for having painted large Free Wales Army slogans on walls near Bangor, and also painting \textit{Free Wales} on the railway bridge at Portmadoc. John Wood further revealed that J. A. Jones and Williams had been ‘frequently seen’ with Emyr Llywelyn Jones in the weeks leading up to the incident at Tryweryn; most critically, on the evening before the explosion, leaving Williams’ café in Pwllheli by car. The forensic evidence against the two accused, as had been the case at the trial of their accomplice two months earlier, was overwhelming. Among new evidence, was the revelation that in early February, Emyr Llywelyn Jones had taken one packet of explosives, which Williams and an unnamed man had removed in a large box to a site near Nefyn. Loud applause erupted from the public gallery, when Emyr Llywelyn Jones was led to the dock. He was then positively identified by the manager of Nelson’s car hire garage in Aberystwyth. Despite police calls for silence and a warning from the bench, cries of support and applause for Jones continued. As court officials began to hustle secondary school teacher Ceri Jones from the courtroom, he shouted a defiant ‘Cymru am Byth’ (Wales

\footnote{\textit{WM}, 29 April 1963. Soon reduced to rubble, the laboratory, used to carry out tests on water supplies, was a wooden hut 30 ft by 10 ft. Owain Williams dismissed the idea the fire resulted from protest action; further believing that no other protest was attempted at the site after that undertaken by E. Ll. Jones, J. A. Jones and himself. Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 15 April 2007.}

\footnote{\textit{BaAC} 2 May 1963.}

\footnote{\textit{BaAC}, 23 May 1963.}
Having attempted to establish Williams' and Jones' involvement in the incident at Tryweryn, Wood turned his attention to the other charge against the two accused: the explosion on the electrical pylon at Gellilydan, Maentwrog, on 31 March. It had been 'a symbolic act', Williams had remarked to the police on his arrest, stated Wood. He had not intended to harm anyone; furthermore, he was solely responsible and as such, the 'other two should be released without charge'. John Wood informed the court that had anyone come into contact with the pylon on the ground, they 'would have been burned to death'.

When John Albert Jones was arrested at his sister’s home in Penrhynedduadraeth, police found locked in a suitcase, two pairs of white Korean Combat Overboots. When told that the boots’ tread corresponded with footprints found near the pylon at Gellilydan, Jones admitted his part in both explosions. Having done so, he too refused to implicate anyone else. The suitcase also contained a diagram outlining the apparatus required to carry out an explosion; a map which had been marked to highlight the exact position of the pylon at Gellilydan; press cuttings of the two explosion incidents and a card bearing the oath of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru. In 2004, Williams explained that he and J. A. Jones undertook the explosion at Gellilydan, to both ‘show solidarity’ with Emyr Llywelyn Jones and to continue the protest action against the flooding of Cwm Tyweryn. They did not have a clock, Williams admitted. He had blown the charge ‘on the spot by flicking two wires’ and had taken cover beneath an old stone bridge, just in case it fell headlong on top of him. He refuted the claim they endangered hospital services, as was alleged and believed the charge was merely an elaborate attempt to discredit their action. They had realized the pylons ran across the hills to Bala, and hoped by toppling the pylon, that electricity to the Tryweryn site would be halted.

Evidence was then heard against Owain Williams, Robert Wyn Williams and Edwin Pritchard, regarding the incident at the Llithfaen quarry seven months before.

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92 WM, 8 May 1963; also, The Times, 8 May 1963. The court heard that E. LI. Jones wrote the oath some nine months before.
93 WM, 9 May 1963.
94 Ibid. It was also revealed that a car tyre print from Williams’ car matched one removed from near the scene of the blast. TNA, DPP 2/4471. J. A. Jones later denied declaring to officers when asked to open the suitcase: ‘If I open it, it is finished’. Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2003.
95 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004. Some five pounds of gelignite was
All three pleaded guilty to both charges. Nevertheless, John Wood added that five months later, a red box containing 1,200 detonators was discovered buried in a hedge by a Nefyn farmer; one of the 12 paper bags containing detonators had been opened. Another 800 detonators were recovered from inside a box-like grave adjoining Llanarmon Church, near Chwilog. The police, Wood alleged, had been directed to these detonators by John Albert Jones. Supported by Owain Williams, it was an accusation Jones fiercely denied. Others were found hidden in a refuse tip on the site of a nearby holiday camp; in the roof of Williams’ café home and among crates of coca cola in his garden shed. Another 1,620 detonators were found in an old building near Edwin Pritchard’s home in Nefyn and in his garden. The police, Wood further maintained, had been informed of these ‘caches’ by Owain Williams. Stolen explosives were also found hidden in the grounds of a large uninhabited house at Llanystumdwy and a quarry at Llanbedrog. Robert Wyn Williams was fined £25 and Edwin Pritchard was fined £40. Owain Williams was informed that the sentence against him would be heard at the conclusion of the trial he now faced with John Albert Jones. The decision to hide the stolen material in a church yard had caused quite a stir, in early 1960s, ‘God fearing’ north Wales, smiled Owain Williams. Its location had been ‘obvious’ as ‘nobody would suspect such a thing in a graveyard’.

In March 2004, Owain Williams threw light on why the crate containing the detonators was so carelessly discarded. He had given the box to an associate, not a member of MAC, instructing him to hide the remaining detonators and ‘burn the crate in the gorse bushes’. The man had failed to do so and had simply thrown the crate containing its contents in a gorse bush instead. Children playing found the crate and took it to a nearby farmhouse. The farmer immediately informed the police, who were quickly able to trace the man entrusted to dispose of it. The person in question, Williams declared, had actually been involved in the theft, but due to his cooperation, was never charged. It had been ‘very difficult’, to acquire the material, Williams

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96 WM, 8 May 1963.
97 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004. Williams revealed that Edwin Pritchard informed the police of their whereabouts. Only Prichard was privy to this information and was instructed by Williams to hide them. The police did not even need ‘to call the kennels’, Williams remarked disparagingly.
98 WM, 8 May 1963. Robert Wyn Williams was given one month to pay, Edwin Pritchard, three months. The box was found in the hedge at Nefyn on 2 March 1963.
99 Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 27 July 2007. The suggestion by police, that Williams directed officers to the hidden detonators, he later rejected as ‘pathetic’.

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added, taking approximately one-and-a-half hours to break through a ‘heavy, magazine door’.100

Also speaking in 2004, John Jenkins - who in the years ahead orchestrated a campaign of militant action unparalleled in Welsh history - gave his verdict on the security of Williams’ operation. It was not the way to conduct sabotage, he remarked. Boxes thrown in hedges just gave the impression that those involved were amateurs. Nothing succeeds like success, Jenkins added. You had to prove you could do it; and it had to be ‘done properly’ .101

The following day, William Pugh Roberts of Pwllheli alleged that in response to his claim of having recognised Emyr Llywelyn Jones ‘a number of times’ at Owain Williams’ home, including ‘one entire weekend’, he had been told by Williams that he was mistaken and ‘to shut his mouth’. It was not the only incriminating evidence: two tickets were also presented, which it was claimed, proved that Williams’ car passed over the tollgate bridge at Portmadoc. One had been issued a few hours before the explosion at Gellilydan, the other in the early hours of the following morning.102

Owain Williams later refuted the charge, insisting that he and J. A. Jones had travelled to and from Gellilydan via the ‘back road’. It had merely been ‘a piece of fabricated evidence’, he believed, designed to show Glanmor Hughes as ‘the clever detective’. Hoping to discredit Williams still further in the mind of the bench, John Wood informed the court that police had found two books at his home on the question of Irish Home Rule.103 Next to give testimony was farmer Aneurin Jones. He stated that having heard a loud explosion near to his farmhouse at 22.30, the following day, he noticed ‘yellow wire’ running across the road from his farm. It had been connected, he added, to a ‘dry battery’ placed the other side of the railway bridge.104

On 9 May, Owain Williams received the most meagre of good news. The bench, he was informed, had amended the charge against him to 3,886 and not 3,920 detonators stolen from the quarry at Lithfaen. More significantly however, it was also

100 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004. Back in Pwllheli, the driver realised he had forgotten to retrieve a radio he had removed from the car when loading the explosives. Mindful it was covered in palm and finger prints, Williams returned with his wife and purporting to be a courting couple, retrieved it.
102 WM, 9 May 1963.
103 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004. One book was based on the life of Michael Collins, another was entitled The Red Path of Glory with the IRA in the Fight for Freedom. Williams, Cysgod Tryweryn, p.65.
104 WM, 9 May 1963.
agreed to delete the words ‘to endanger life’, in the joint charge against him and J. A. Jones in relation to the pylon explosion at Gellilydan. This mirrored the charge each faced in relation to the Tryweryn incident. In an attempt to substantiate the symbolic intent of each explosion, the bench further agreed to accept as evidence the oath of the ‘Movement’.

Nevertheless, John Wood opposed bail. In support of the application, was defence counsel for each, John Roberts. After hearing 32 witnesses, examining 54 exhibits and presiding for nearly 17 hours, Blaenau Ffestiniog magistrates committed Owain Williams and John Albert Jones for trial at Meirionnydd Assizes, Dolgellau, on 18 June. Bail for each of the two accused was granted, as was an application on behalf of Jones to receive legal aid.105

The following day, with unfortunate timing for the still to be sentenced J. A. Jones and Owain Williams, Emyr Llywelyn Jones began a hunger strike in Shrewsbury Prison.106 Shortly after, Emrys Roberts released a statement from Plaid Cymru, which declared that the determination of Jones’s action, demonstrated the ‘deep and poignant’ feeling in Wales against the actions of Liverpool Corporation. Furthermore, a meeting was needed, where it and those local authorities in Wales most affected by the scheme, could discuss the suitability of agreeing to a policy of joint ownership and co-management of the Tryweryn reservoir. The proposal was rejected by Liverpool Corporation. Five days into his hunger strike, having been moved to Walton Prison, Liverpool, where hospital facilities were on hand to treat those either fasting or intending to fast, Jones called off the protest. He had been warned that he would be forced fed two days later.107

In October, 2005, Emyr Llywelyn Jones stated that he undertook the action, to ‘raise the profile of the campaign’; and to try and take the protest away from violent action, a policy which he was aware might escalate. Having informed the prison governor that he intended to fast, his request that his family be notified was declined:

So, I was on hunger strike and nobody knew about it. So I wrote a letter to Gwilym and it was coded. Every third word had a meaning...I said ‘number 3 is important in Welsh literature, the poetry’s written in triads, so you think of the letter three, it’s important’. And that was the

105 WM, 10 May 1963. The charge of endangering human life was dropped, as the pylon was some distance from the road.
106 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 12 September 2003.
107 BaAC, 6 June 1963. E. Li. Jones dismissed any suggestion that the decision to hunger strike was taken in response to the circular written by Emrys Roberts on 28 February 1961. It was inspired, he declared, ‘by Gandhi’. Jones denied any knowledge of Roberts’ plan of action. Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 16 August 2007.
opening paragraph. And then I wrote the message to read: ‘I AM ON HUNGER STRIKE’. He did work it out and so informed the press. The prison authorities must have wondered how the news got out. Anything like that they wanted to suppress; the less publicity the better...On the fifth day, Bebb, the prison Doctor came to see me and said, “I’m in charge here and I’ve got to do it, and I don’t want to do it. You’re putting me in a difficult position. OK”, he said, “you’ve done five days: you’ve made your point. What do you want to do eight days? Nine days? Ten days? What’s the point?”. So I was talked around. I should have gone on with that. But this chap Bebb was such a gentleman. I don’t regret calling it off now really.108

Emyr Llywelyn Jones was transferred to Exeter Open Prison to serve out the rest of his sentence. The decision was taken, he believed, due to the authorities being afraid of people protesting outside Walton Prison.109

On 14 June 1963 at Meirionnydd Assizes in Dolgellau, Owain Williams and John Albert Jones pleaded guilty to the charges against them. Called to give evidence on their behalf was Revd. E. Bowen, the vicar of Llanuwchllyn. He apologised to the court, but asked that he might take the oath in Welsh before taking the stand. His apology was rebuked by Justice Elwes, who to the delight of the public gallery, added that the witness was entitled to make such a request; moreover, he was glad that Bowen was insisting on his rights. Having commended the police for their successful detection of the three men, Justice Elwes then placed John Albert Jones on three year’s probation. He informed the court that he was doing so, as it was neither in the interests of justice, nor Jones, for him to remain in custody.110 He urged Jones to consult people who shared his view and in whom he had confidence. It was a fine thing to be proud of one’s race and country; and to wish to be independent. Yet, it was not acceptable to abandon democratic purposes towards that laudable end, even if those processes did not appear to work very well. It was not in the democratic interests of Wales, added Elwes, to counter decisions one was opposed to by adopting such methods.111

Philip Owen, counsel for Owain Williams, declared that his client had acted solely from ‘a political motive’; fuelled by the injustice of Liverpool Corporation’s acquisition of Cwm Tryweryn and its intention to sell the reservoir water to neighbouring authorities at huge profit. In reply, Justice Elwes admitted to being ‘greatly impressed’ with the thrust of Williams’ argument in mitigation. With an

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108 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 16 October 2005.
109 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 12 September 2003.
110 TNA, DPP 2/4471; also, WM, 2 July 1963. Justice Elwes decided to release Jones, owing to his ‘age (22) and a medical certificate which stated that head injuries sustained in the RAF, rendered him unable to fully appreciate the outcome of his actions’.
111 TNA, DPP 2/4471; also, Williams, Cysgod Tryweryn, p.81.
opaque nod to the unknown threat posed by Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru, Justice Elwes declared that the recently committed offences were rather like an iceberg; and represented the 10 percent which was not submerged. If he could receive in any way an assurance that there would be no more resort to criminal offences, in order to ventilate what seemed to be a perfectly intelligible grievance, it would make his task 'much easier and much less painful'. Even so, he was persuaded to ignore retributive punishment in any event. Having heard testimony that Owain Williams' youngest daughter, aged just three months, was gravely ill in a Liverpool hospital following a brain operation, Elwes released him on bail to appear again for sentencing on 1 July. He had decided upon the unprecedented step of releasing Williams, Justice Elwes explained, to calm the rising tide of unrest in Wales\(^\text{112}\). Any shared hope by the Williams family that their son, husband and father might escape prison was short-lived, as the following day, undermining newspaper coverage implied Justice Elwes had considered militant action over Tryweryn 'a justifiable grievance'.\(^\text{113}\) *The Daily Herald* went still further: the Judge, it headlined, 'hints of deal with saboteur'.\(^\text{114}\) Any prospect of clemency was at an end.

The sentencing opened with an address to the court by Philip Owen, who stated that during the adjournment, Williams had appreciated both his family responsibilities and had sought scrupulous advice. He was prepared to give an unqualified undertaking as to his future conduct, but would not offer any assistance regarding the remainder of the organisation. In his summing up, Justice Elwes informed Williams that it had been submitted to the court that his crimes represented a 'symbolic act'. This, he did not accept. Furthermore, it was important that the court did not interfere in the question of whether a grievance, arising from Williams' political views, was indeed just or not. He was previously a man of 'high character'; from the outset, the case against him had caused Elwes 'very great anxiety'. Nonetheless, he wished to remove any danger that Williams had misunderstood his remarks when he last appeared in court. He was not concerned to consider whether indeed Williams' grievance was just, even if it did appear intelligible.

The judge commented that the oath of Mudiad Amdifffyn Cymru, found by

\(^\text{112}\) *WM*, 15 June 1963. Owain Williams' daughter Teleri Bethan, was found to be suffering from hydrocephalus (water on the brain). Despite surviving for seven more years, much of the time she was in a coma.


\(^\text{114}\) *Daily Herald*, 15 June 1963; also, Williams, *Cysgod Tryweryn*, p. 84.
police in Williams’ home, had caused ‘further anxiety’. He had been invited to regard this manifesto, as something which mitigated the offences, but that had not been its central purpose. This had been to damage important installations. These were serious crimes, which had resulted in the loss of considerable amounts of money. However, he had decided not to impose a term of imprisonment longer than that handed down to Emyr Llywelyn Jones. Following the hearing, Elwyn Roberts informed the waiting media that Plaid Cymru would be arranging a rota to help Irene Williams in the running of her husband’s business. Moreover, a fund had been opened to meet the expenses of the trial and to help the Williams’ family.

No doubt to many observers, the year’s sentence imposed upon Emyr Llywelyn Jones and Owain Williams was a just and proportionate punishment; reflecting both the injustice felt by many in Wales to the flooding of Cwm Tryweryn, yet also the strong conviction held by the two men for the sanctity of human life. Nevertheless, while no doubt united in the belief that every effort had been taken to ensure that no innocent blood was spilt in the struggle for Welsh cultural, linguistic and political advance, to John Jenkins, speaking in 2004, the action of the three men had served only to further portray the Welsh people as subservient, naive and honourable. While respectful of its intentions, such action managed only to convince Jenkins that the time had come to elevate the nationalist struggle of Wales to that of ‘a guerrilla campaign’. In order to undertake an effective war of sabotage, he opined, you jumped in, you hit and you came away. In Jenkins’ opinion, if one was to base a policy or strategy on the fact, or principle, that ones opponent had a conscience and therefore all that was required was to shame him publicly and everything would come your way, then one was ‘not going to achieve a damn thing’. It was a lesson learnt by the Irish long ago. Not only did Jenkins think that cultural martyrdom and symbolic gestures led nowhere, it merely put one further back; by reinforcing the belief that Welsh people were ‘very nice; sang nice Welsh hymns, but were not very effective’.

115 *WM*, 2 July 1963. Williams’ defence that the nation supported such action was an insult to its ‘ancient and proud’ people, stated Elwes. He also took into account that Williams immediately undertook another explosion, on learning of Jones’s imprisonment. Williams believes that Elwes awaited instruction from the Home Office as to what sentence to hand down, and perhaps might even have been reprimanded for intimating the sentence was going to be light. Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 27 July 2007.


117 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 25 March 2004. It was ‘nice to see people standing up to
It was a view with which Owain Williams concurred. Voicing his thoughts in 2004 on the campaign undertaken by himself and his two confederates in 1963, Williams was quick to declare his ‘huge respect’ for Emyr Llywelyn Jones. Nonetheless, he had often wondered why Jones had been so meticulous in his planning and execution with regard the explosive device, but yet so careless in other areas of the operation; such as hiring a car from Aberystwyth; not changing its number plates; not having the car thoroughly cleaned before returning it; not ensuring that incriminating evidence had been removed from his flat and both carrying and dropping a handkerchief embossed with the incriminating initial ‘E’. His suspicion had intensified, added Williams, as Jones had often remarked how he wished to be a martyr like his hero Saunders Lewis. Asked to respond to Williams’ postulation, Emyr Llywelyn Jones admitted that there had perhaps existed an unconscious desire to get caught. Nevertheless, it had been an act undertaken with the ‘impetuosity and enthusiasm of youth’; they had not sought to be ‘sophisticated’. They were not ‘trained saboteurs’; that was not the intention. Had he deliberately dropped the handkerchief he was asked. After some thought, Jones conceded that he ‘probably’ had.

Media interest in militant Welsh nationalism increases

With Emyr Llywelyn Jones and Owain Williams behind bars, questions were being asked. Was this new element in Welsh life, the ‘gelignite blast’, the work of individuals or an organised body? A stunt undertaken by disaffected university students? A mock IRA? A thousand conjectures now appeared in the columns of the country’s newspapers. With Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru and Free Wales Army symbols and slogans daubed in increasing numbers, could it be that at the extreme end of the protest spectrum, there really was a military style organisation?

It was a question given considerable focus by the *Western Mail*, in a series of

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118 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004. Williams conceded that often in the year’s following the incident, he had speculated that much of Jones’ negligence was perhaps deliberate. Maybe he ‘left a lot of clues’, thought Williams. That said, they had all been ‘a bit naïve’ he added.

119 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 16 October 2005. ‘We were amateurs’ remarked Jones.
articles penned by Peter Kane, who appeared convinced that MAC and the FWA were one and the same. The series opened by speculating who was behind the explosions. Despite the Plaid Cymru leadership’s careful effort to ‘distance itself from illegal action’ wrote Kane, the FWA had received ‘moral support and encouragement’ from certain senior and influential party members. As for the FWA itself, it was ‘a ramshackle body, top-heavy and pathetically amateurish’. It was impossible to assess the group’s exact numerical strength, but it appeared likely that it comprised of no more than ‘30 hardcore members’. Every former and current associate was known to the authorities. It was therefore reasonable to assume that they were under constant watch. As for its oath, that human life would not be in peril, if a device was set to activate at any given time, it was impossible to ensure beyond all doubt, that no one would be present when the blast occurred. The police meanwhile were confident the FWA no longer posed a threat. It was a degree of acknowledgement of the group’s existence, somewhat at odds with the available evidence, which merely hinged at this juncture on slogans and daubings.

Whatever the truth, the confidence of the police was not shared by Peter Kane. Unless and until the FWA disarmed, he argued, there existed a potential nucleus for a full-scale campaign of violence and terrorism, on the pattern of that waged by the IRA. If it was a suggestion dismissed as ‘fanciful’ in most quarters, it was nonetheless a premise afforded some credence by the Plaid Cymru activist Harri Webb. Not all in the party agreed with the party’s pacifist traditions; or its rather ‘folksy’ image, he stated. Indeed, there now existed within its ranks, a tougher more resolute faction, which was far less inclined to compromise. Unapologetic for his stance, Webb declared it ‘impossible for any nationalist not to sympathise with those involved in the three incidents at Tryweryn’. They were, he believed, ‘fighting in the

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120 WM, 2 July 1963. The FWA seemed to resemble the Swiss Navy, stated Kane, in that almost all its active members held high rank. During Owain Williams’ trial, Welsh Freedom Army recruiting cards were found on a train running between Bala and Liverpool. They urged Welsh people to join ‘companies’, being ‘formed in your area’. Kane also alleged that at least one member of the IRA had visited Wales to instruct Welshmen in the ‘ignoble act of sabotage’. The Irishman’s presence was known to police and he was shadowed by two officers of Special Branch. Kane then implied the IRA operative departed because ‘the FWA weren’t up to it’. As a result, members of the FWA then travelled to Ireland for ‘discussions and instruction’. It was a claim dismissed as ‘nonsense’, by Emyr Llywelyn Jones and ‘rubbish’ by Owain Williams. All training received had been from Welshmen, Williams added, ‘from the south east of the country’. Telephone interviews between WT & O. Williams & E. Ll. Jones, 15 April 2007.

121 WM, 3 July 1963.

122 WM, 4 July 1963.
cause of territorial integrity for Wales'. Unsurprisingly, such sentiments did little to endear Webb to the party leadership.

At the same time, the veteran political warrior, Huw T. Edwards, contended that it was time for Plaid Cymru to abandon the electoral battle and reconstitute itself as a widely based ‘Welsh National Movement’. This would act as an aggressive pressure group, intent on satisfying Welsh-related demands, through forcing concessions from the three central parties. Even Lord Ogmore, for so long a champion of Welsh cultural expression, recognised that in the previous months a dangerous precedent had been set. The use of explosives to further a political ideal, he maintained, was a dangerous lunacy. Furthermore, it might result in the death of a child perhaps. How eerily prophetic Ogmore’s words would prove to be by the decade’s end. The last word in the series of articles fell to Gwynfor Evans. Peter Kane was no ‘objective inquirer’, argued the Plaid Cymru president; he had not attempted a ‘serious study’, but had instead sought propaganda for his own inherent prejudices. Yet, less partisan observers, Evans continued, would have noted that something in addition to dynamite had necessitated the Tryweryn actions: ‘courage’ had been required; so too ‘selflessness and a rare degree of patriotism’.

Emyr Llywelyn Jones renounces violence and angers Owain Williams

On his release from prison in December 1963, Emyr Llywelyn Jones renounced violence. To Owain Williams, still languishing at Her Majesty’s pleasure, Jones’ remarks smacked of betrayal. Whatever his thoughts, ‘he should have kept them private’, remarked Williams in 2004. Jones appeared to be questioning their actions: implying that their protest had been wrong. Yet, Jones had decided in prison that on his release he would emulate non-violent protest, as followed by Gandhi and

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123 Ibid.
125 WM, 9 July 1963.
126 WM, 8 July 1963.
127 WM, 10 July 1963.
128 Week In Week Out: The Story of the FWA. BBC Wales Production. Screened 3 July, 1969. Jones also distanced himself from the suggestion the nation’s youth was being drawn to the ranks of the FWA. He did not think the group existed. He knew people in Wales who believed in ‘direct action’ as a means of achieving political ends, but they were ‘not organised as an army’. The nomenclature had probably been devised by youthful people, anxious to further their cause by ‘painting slogans all over the place’.
129 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004. Prisoner 287, O. Williams was held at Drake Hall Open Prison.
Martin Luther King. This was in the belief that the way to achieve one's aims, is as important as the aim itself; the methods you use mould the type of person involved and the movement itself. He had also, he later confessed, during moments of contemplation, realised that 'any idiot could go out and plant a bomb'. It had been a mistake: but when young, one did not consider the implications of one's actions. Had the situation escalated, he would have 'felt responsible'. Some years later, under the chairship of Emyr Llywelyn Jones, a motion to support non-violent protest was endorsed by Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg. Owain Williams remained unconvinced. What they had done at Tryweryn had been right for that time, he countered: it was what the situation had called for and 'somebody had to do it'.

When analysing the situation, Williams said that Jones’ imprisonment had coloured his view of their action and that his upbringing was greatly responsible. It was a background, Williams believed, at odds with his and John Albert Jones’s ‘working class backgrounds’. It had, he believed, been ‘very Eisteddfodau, very literary and steeped in non-conformist religion’. He felt that such an emotional environment had resulted in his co-conspirator being brainwashed and instilled with a sense of guilt. He did not mean to say that Jones had been ‘screwed up’ by religion, yet, to Williams, it had almost appeared ‘expected’ of Emyr Llywelyn Jones ‘to act for Wales’: that he somehow ‘felt dutiful to carry out the action, to get caught and to suffer for it’. Jones, thought Williams, had been ‘groomed from the cradle to be a martyr by his father’. He had visited Emyr Llywelyn Jones at his home following their release from prison, and could, he declared, ‘almost smell the bloody righteousness’.131

This suggestion was roundly dismissed by Emyr Llywelyn Jones, who retorted that while supportive, his family had known nothing of his action until his arrest.132 Nevertheless, Owain Williams added that he too was ‘frog-marched’ to Sunday school as a child, but had received more condemnation from those within the Christian circle in Wales at the time of his protest, than he ever had from those outside

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130 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 16 October 2005; also correspondence between WT & Geraint Jones, 16 April 2011.
131 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004. With a population of just 2.5 million in 1963 and of those, ‘only a fraction prepared to do something for Wales, the only viable protest open, had been the one taken. Welsh Pacifists’, he added, ‘mixed up their New Tredegar’s with their New Delhi’s. They believed seeing millions of Hindus protesting on the banks of the Ganges would work in Wales. It simply would not. Nobody’, he stressed, ‘believed in putting at risk anyone’s life’.
132 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 12 September 2003.
it. He believed their action had been undertaken to defend the nation’s heritage, its language and way of life; its non-conformity being a factor. What hurt him more than anything, were remarks endured by his wife during a chapel service during the months of his imprisonment. A chief deacon had declared how shameful had been Williams involvement and how it was hoped he had learnt his lesson. It was ‘insensitive and ignorant’, remonstrated Williams. The chapel authorities, he believed, had no concept of what was happening to Wales ‘right under their noses’.

In April 1964, Owain Williams was released from prison. Recalling the experience forty years later, he conceded it had not been easy, further adding his belief that he was ‘criminalised deliberately and denied political status’. Having been placed between a child murderer and a rapist, his Sunday School background had not prepared him for the ‘harrowing’ emotional onslaught of imprisonment.

**The Free Wales Army**

A further outbreak of slogans daubed along the main roads in Gwynedd, strengthened the belief that the amorphous Free Wales Army was being revived. The boldly-painted signs, in both Welsh and English, advocating freedom and a parliament for Wales, appeared over-night in several places, particularly in the Porthmadoc, Penygroes and Bangor areas. Significantly, a further outbreak of signs daubed at Tremadoc, Beddgelert and Llanfrothen, led to the suggestion that those responsible were deliberately targeting sites at the heart of the tourist industry.

Under pressure, Plaid Cymru strenuously denied any involvement. In a statement, newly appointed organising secretary Emrys Roberts claimed the slogans and FWA initials, were more likely the work of ‘enterprising, if irresponsible schoolboys’. It was strange, he added, that the daubings had received quite remarkable publicity, while the solid, substantial work of the party had continued almost unheeded. As for the FWA itself, the party believed it was without substance

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133 Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 16 March 2004. Williams refused to allow his ‘action to be clouded with a sense of guilt’. Why should an action in defence of Wales be seen as wrong in Christian eyes? It was ‘OK for Methodist preachers to recruit from the pulpit; to remain miles behind the front line as some poor, illiterate, monoglot Welsh-speaker was dragged to the trenches to fight and die for the Empire’.

134 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004. That Christmas, divorced and alone, Williams received many cards and letters of support. Yet, one letter he opened was anonymously signed ‘a Liverpool Doctor’. It read: ‘I wish your baby was dead. She would be better off than having a lunatic like you for a father’. Williams, *Cysgod Tryweryn*, p.96.

and largely a publicity stunt. The slogan-daubing might affect the party’s image, but when the public realised it was purely an irresponsible action and in no way connected to Plaid Cymru, it might even do it some good.136

It was at this juncture that Cayo Evans, who for some time had considered ‘entering the fray’, decided the time had arrived. Despite the popular myth that Evans was at the forefront of the Free Wales Army from its conception, speaking during his last television appearance in 1995, he recalled the events which had prompted his decision to join its fledgling ranks. His first inkling of the Free Wales Army was seeing an emblem painted on a wall coming out of Aberystwyth. He was ‘pleased’ and had thought ‘this sounds good’.137 While sat in Conti’s café in Lampeter in the late summer of 1964, 15-year-old schoolgirl Gillian Davies’s attention was drawn to the activities of one boisterous young man. Cayo Evans, whose appearance and conduct would soon become the talk of Cardiganshire and beyond, just ‘wanted to be ordinary’, remarked Davies - his future wife - in 2006. Yet, to his great displeasure he had been sent away to Abermad, the fee-paying school in Aberystwyth. Having, she was sure, ‘run away (from there) a couple of times’, Evans soon found himself at the prestigious Millfield Public School in Somerset.138 He soon came to the attention of his House Master, a young Polish exile and language teacher, Yanick Helczman.

With the growth of nationalist convictions already taken root, Helczman, the well-spring of Evans’s nationalist inspiration, aided its flowering with frank and serious discussions concerning the right of all nations to be self-governed. Under his tutor’s wing, Evans’ sense of Welsh nationalism looked to blossom. Yet, one integral piece of the jigsaw remained unplaced. Following a period at the exclusive Agricultural College in Cirencester, in 1955, Cayo Evans, was conscripted into the British army and the regiment of the South Wales Borderers.139 Apart from having tendered his young pupil’s nationalist ideals, Helczman had also instilled in Evans a life-long loathing of Communism. His antithesis of all things considered to be on the left of the political landscape, derived from a number of areas, FWA member Lyn Ebenezer speculated. Evans firstly considered himself to be a latter day member of the Welsh gentry; confirmed in no small measure, by the family home Glan Denys; a

138 Interview between WT & Gillian Mary Davies, 15 June 2006.
139 Interview between WT & Dalis & Rhodri Evans, 28 February 2006.
turreted Gothic mansion in Silian, two miles north of Lampeter. His experience at Millfield had also played its part. However, it was two years in the British army which proved the most potent ingredient in Evans' political thinking. Having been involved in military engagements with communist guerrillas in Malaya, albeit in a relatively minor degree, Evans now considered his implanted mistrust of the communist ideology to have been confirmed. Yet, it was to be his meeting with Irish Republican sympathisers, both during and after his years of conscription, which sealed both Evans' nationalist beliefs and his political fate. With those who talked of their ancestors' struggle with the Black and Tans, Evans recognised a kindred spirit and began to realise it might be possible to challenge the authority of the British unionist state. Towards the end of his service, he considered how small numbers of determined insurgents might tie up thousands of regular troops and almost paralyse the normal governing and administration of vast areas of a country.

On Monday, 31 August 1964, the Western Mail headlined that it had received a letter purporting to be from the Free Wales Army. Handed to the Gwynedd Constabulary, unsigned and neatly-typed, the three page letter stated that the FWA had now severed all links with Plaid Cymru; while furthermore, it accepted responsibility for the recent outbreak of slogan-daubing in north Wales. Wales was 'not a public convenience for the English'; nor a source from which it could receive its water at a reduced rate. They had taken Tryweryn, but they would not take Clywedog, it would not, the letter added woefully, go under water. Far from being, as reported, a resurrected army the missive maintained, the FWA had continued to grow through the years. It represented all of Wales and was comprised of independent young nationalists. It was 'an army guarding the nations' responsibilities'...it would proudly defend its interests, however the destruction of property would only be carried out as a 'last resort'.

Amidst inter-party turmoil over the role of Gwynfor Evans and the direction of Plaid

140 Interview between WT & Lyn Ebenezer, 16 June 2006. Evans would later recount tales of having been at Franco's bedside as the fascist leader lay dying
141 Interview between WT & Dalis & Rhodri Evans, 28 February 2006. 'They shipped him off to India because he had sympathy with the Germans' declared Rhodri Evans with regard his grandfather, the former High Sheriff of Cardigan and professor of Maths at Lampeter University. 'He had friends: contacts with the Nazi's. He wanted to join up with them, so they shipped him out...Dad said "he died of smoking the pipe and gardening". He (Cayo) was far closer to his mother'.
142 WM, 31 August 1963.
Cymru, Saunders Lewis announced to the *Western Mail* in 1965, that to his dismay, just one sad difference existed between the Welsh nationalist party of the 1960s and the Welsh Methodists of the 1760s. The Methodists in their day had aroused ‘hatred, violence, persecution and prison’. That, Lewis added sombrely, ‘was why they had won’.  

While Plaid Cymru offered no clear direction to nationalists who desired quick progress, others seemed more bent on action. To the amusement of the inhabitants of Lampeter, Cayo Evans had taken to walking through the town in a uniform, he proudly announced, was that of the Free Wales Army. He used to make it himself, remarked Lyn Ebenezer, ‘he used to boil this bloody great cauldron with green dye in it and then throw a coat in and things like that’. With Evans’ skill for making badges, particularly the emblem of the movement, the White Eagle of Snowdon, the ensemble was complete. Evans was most comfortable in his uniform, walking around the manorial family home. His mother took it all with typical *sang-froid*. In 1995, Cayo Evans threw light on where the uniform and the emblem had originated. Most of those in the FWA were ex-British army, he explained, they had simply dyed their uniform green. As for its emblem, it was one of the titles of the old Welsh royal family, whom, he added, were ‘murdered by the English’.

Unknown to Cayo Evans, another young Welshman, some ninety miles from Lampeter, had also taken to delighting the people of his home town by walking its streets adorned in his dyed green, ex-military uniform. It too, stated Toni Lewis proudly, was the uniform of the FWA. He had dyed his former RAF great coat in a bath, he revealed, keeping the flashings (collars and cuffs) bright red. A friend in Cwmbran, who worked in a factory, presented him with a metal, beautifully hand-crafted White Eagle insignia. It was immediately positioned in a place guaranteed to make the utmost impact. Lewis attached it to the front of his car. He had also organised the first Welsh nationalist club. The premises, a rented basement room below an Italian café in Cwmbran, soon attracted a number of like-minded thinkers; who were each intent on purchasing and wearing a khaki ex-military issue shirt. Within weeks, a number of organisations had flourished. The first was the Anti-Sais Front in South Wales. This was soon followed by the League of the South Wales Separatists. It was not long before each group united into the Patriotic Front. Its

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143 *WM*, 13 March 1965.
144 Interview between WT & Lyn Ebenezer, 16 June 2006.
ranks were soon filled by Gethin ap Iestyn. This was all, remarked Lewis, before he had even heard of Cayo Evans. More than aware of him however were the police. The reason, he revealed, for wanting to be part of the FWA had much to do with the flooding of Cwm Tryweryn, but it was the Aberfan disaster in 1966, which had confirmed his belief that the time had come for the nation to stand on its own two feet.146

The opening of Llyn Celyn

On being released from prison, Owain Williams returned to run his café in Pwllheli. Suffering the effects of his incarceration, six months later, he and his wife Irene parted. In March 1965, they divorced. Six months later, in an interview with the Western Mail, Williams recalled the sacrifices he had made in the name of Welsh nationalism. In spite of personal problems, he had ‘no regrets’. To do so would render him no more than a hypocrite. His action may not have caused a political impact, but he was sure it had resulted in a psychological impact. It had been intended as ‘a shock’...to ‘wake up the sleepers’.147 The slogans, the appearance of uniformed men and the actual explosions, all created a tense atmosphere. For the first time in the history of Wales, the threat of bomb-blasts became a familiar concern. At the National Eisteddfod on 4 August 1965, police raced to the Maes, having received an anonymous warning that a ‘bomb had been hidden in the packed Eisteddfod pavilion’. Police made a thorough search, but found nothing.148

One man about to answer his country’s call was Cayo Evans. In an interview with the Western Mail, Evans announced that the FWA intended to prevent the opening of the newly named Llyn Celyn;149 and that a last stand would be taken. An

146 Interview between WT & Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004. The shirts were purchased from an army and navy surplus store. Toni Lewis served as a painter in the RAF from 1955 - 57 and joined Plaid Cymru, 1 October 1959. Free Wales Army and Patriotic Front trial Exhibit 107. The various movements were established to combat the increasing Anglicization of south east Wales. Correspondence between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, January 2008.
147 WM, 2 September 1965. There was nothing to be gained from ‘spilling tears over hymn books’ added Williams.
148 WM, 5 August 1965.
149 LRO, Liverpool Corporation Water Committee Minutes, 352MIN/WTR/1/72. p.123; also, Llyn Celyn Cuttings, Hq352.6CUT; also, Einion Thomas, Capel Celyn (Llandybie, 2007), p.127. In September 1964, a final letter from the Tryweryn Defence Committee was sent to Liverpool Corporation, urging officials to name the reservoir Llyn Celyn and not, as it intended, Llyn Mawr Tryweryn (The Great Tryweryn Lake). For once, the English Authority agreed to the Committee’s request. The decision however was not taken for reasons of conciliation, but in order to avert regional confusion, as there existed a lake ‘called locally Lake Tryweryn at Cwm Prysor’. On 20 October 1964, the Liverpool Daily Post reported that the reservoir was to be named Llyn Celyn.
FWA spokesman also revealed that it had decided to make the occasion its ‘testing ground’; and that a ceremony to open the reservoir would ‘make the rape of Tryweryn complete’. It therefore planned to prevent those attending from reaching the dam site, by blocking approaching roads with cars and boulders. A card had been circulated to followers, urging them to act against ‘the oppressors’.150 It followed an earlier open letter from Gethin ap Iestyn, in which he implored nationalists to attend the reservoir’s opening.151 Furthermore, the FWA spokesman informed the *Western Mail*, as y Ddraig Goch was not represented on the Union Flag, it would be burned at the opening ceremony. One authority oblivious to the alleged threat posed by the FWA, was the Gwynedd Constabulary, which confirmed that no specific measure to safeguard the forthcoming event had been formalised, as the force was unaware of the group’s intentions.

On the same day, Plaid Cymru also announced that it planned to stage an organised demonstration, prior to and during the opening ceremony. It followed the rejection of a plea by Gwynfor Evans to Thomas Alker, the Liverpool Town Clerk, to reconsider the decision to officially open Llyn Celyn. By way of response, Alker claimed that it would be impractical and there had never been any question of the ceremony being a ‘flaunting of the victory forces’. On the contrary, it was being regarded as an opportunity to bury animosities and open the way to friendly cooperation, among all those involved in a venture which would bring mutual benefits to all. The statement cut little ice with Plaid Cymru, whose spokesman angrily compared the intended opening to that of ‘a person holding a public ceremony, to proclaim the fact that he had stooped so low as to grab the property of his neighbour’.152

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150 *WM*, 14 October 1965. Opposition to the opening, by members of the FWA ‘out in force’ would be taken, stated Evans. On one side of the card, the White Eagle of Snowdon was depicted, while printed on the reverse, were the words: ‘True Sons of Wales. For the last time in our history we ask you to raise the flag and call you to arms. This time we will not fail’.

151 Plaid Cymru Archive M599. NLW.wwww.uk. In an open letter dated 12 June 1965, Gethin ap Iestyn declared that not satisfied with having drowned Cwm Tryweryn, by insisting on a formal ceremony, Liverpool Corporation intended to rub the face of the Welsh people ‘deeper in the mud. In opening the floodgates, the Liverpool official’ would ‘be shovelling the last dirt on the coffin of Wales. The influx of English people into Wales’, he added, ‘and the drowning of its valleys would see the nation’s language and culture die. Yet, like a dead man, Wales’ would ‘feel no pain’.

152 *WM*, 14 October 1965. The Union Jack, meant nothing to its members, the FWA spokesman added. Thomas Alker was replying to Gwynfor Evans, who in a letter to Liverpool Council, had stated that an official opening of Llyn Celyn would be little more than ‘a distasteful flaunting of the victory of force in Welsh affairs’. *Guardian*, 8 October 1965. The leader of the Liberal group on the Liverpool City Council, Cyril Carr, also believed the council’s plans for the opening ‘showed a lack of sensitivity
A week before Llyn Celyn was opened, Cayo Evans and Lyn Ebenezer appeared on *Heddiw*, the BBC Wales Welsh language news programme. Interviewed by the formidable presenter Owen Edwards, against the format of the programme, Evans, elected to speak in English. While it was, 'very unexpected' Ebenezer recalled in 2006, it nonetheless exemplified Evans' lack of confidence to speak his native tongue in any formal setting. *Heddiw* had approached them in the knowledge that Ebenezer had no intention of attending the ceremony, while Evans thought differently. The programme was broadcast live and in the afternoon a rehearsal was arranged. Owen Edwards, believed Ebenezer, was determined to make a fool of the self-styled leader of the FWA. Where, he asked, had Evans got the 'ridiculous idea' of the White Eagle of Snowdonia? Referring to Owen M. Edwards’s academic studies of Welsh history, Evans replied markedly: ‘don’t you read your own grandfather’s books?’. The grandson of the Welsh historian, who had popularised the myth of the White Eagle sweeping freely through the mountain massif of north Wales was left for words. Unsurprisingly, it was a line of questioning not included in the live broadcast that evening. Despite having been ‘a little fairer’ during the televised programme, years later, Edwards allegedly admitted some guilt for having been so abrupt in his questioning of Cayo Evans.\(^{153}\)

Also that week, to the apparent annoyance and embarrassment of Liverpool Corporation, former Capel Celyn villagers publicly declined their invitations to attend the project’s official opening. If the decision of the former inhabitants of Capel Celyn left an uncomfortable taste in the mouth of Liverpool Corporation, the decision of Penllyn Rural District Council to also boycott the event, cemented the authority’s fears that local representation at the opening was going to be very thin on the ground. Its action, the Welsh council maintained, clearly reflected opinion in Wales: that the nation should have control over its resources and that Liverpool had a moral obligation to the people of Wales, to pay for the water it received. Nevertheless, the following day, it was reported that a dozen members of Meirionnydd County Council had accepted individual invitations to attend the scheme’s ceremonial unveiling.\(^{154}\)

\(^{153}\) Interview between WT & Lyn Ebenezer, 16 June 2006. Cayo Evans, revealed Ebenezer, was out of uniform during the programme. Ebenezer did not attend the opening, feeling to do so would add to the insult. He instead decided to ‘let the bastards carry on and ignore them’. It was view shared by others who stayed away like Owain Williams and Emyr Llywelyn Jones.

\(^{154}\) *WM*, 18 October 1965. Five years to the month after work at the site begun - and first damned on 1
On 19 October, Plaid Cymru released a statement declaring its protest would be ‘orderly, brief, concise and disciplined’. The dictum then turned its attention to the Free Wales Army. The group was not connected to Plaid Cymru in any way. It had not been invited by the party to attend its demonstration and the party neither yearned nor sought any involvement from it. In the years that followed, it was not to be the last statement that Plaid Cymru released in an effort to distance itself from the increasingly outlandish claims of the Free Wales Army. Nonetheless, with the opening of Llyn Celyn looming large and tension beginning to mount, a more profitable, if equally troublesome chapter in the life of Gwynfor Evans was about to begin.

Out of respect for the memory of Elizabeth Mrowiec, (nee Watkin Jones) the secretary of the Capel Celyn Defence Committee and David Roberts, the committee’s chair, an appeal was made to Goronwy Roberts, the Minister of State at the Welsh Office, to halt the proceedings. It was an entreaty Liverpool Corporation refused to entertain. With little over 24 hours to go, declared Frank Cain, the chair of the English authority, ‘any approach would be little more than futile’.156

On the eve of the opening, it was confirmed that there would be a number of notable absentees, among them, the Lord Lieutenant of Meirionnydd, Lieutenant-Colonel J. F. Wynne-Williams of Peniarth. None of the three Ministers in the Welsh Office had been invited to the ceremony, as the organisers had considered that the opening should be confined to those people both involved in the technical aspect of the project and those who had been closely affected by the work. More cynical observers considered the decision politically inspired. They maintained that the Labour administration recognised the enormous damage to its electoral standing in Wales, should it be seen to support the project. As a consequence, any attempt by Liverpool Corporation to receive government endorsement had been unofficially declined; as indeed it seemed was Royal approval.157

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September 1964 - Llyn Celyn was full to capacity and finally completed in August 1965. It was, proclaimed the *Wrexham Leader* on 28 August 1964, ‘a new wonder of Wales’.

155 *WM*, 19 October 1965.

156 *WM*, 20 October 1965. Frank Cain could not understand this ‘sudden flare-up’ of opposition to the opening ceremony. Liverpool enjoyed ‘cordial relations down there’, he stated. It was all down to ‘this fellow Gwynfor Evans’, trying to ‘upset the applecart’.

157 *WM*, 21 October 1965; also, *The Times*, 21 October 1965. During the Tryweryn Bill’s judicial passage, Frank Cain was Lord Mayor of Liverpool. Farmer Owen Jones, aged 65, who lost 55 acres in the flooding, reported that many facing eviction had suffered ill-health and that since the first boor holes were sunk in 1959, eighteen people had died. On 20 October 1964, the *Liverpool Echo* reported
On Thursday, 21 October 1965, the culmination of opposition to the opening of the Llyn Celyn ended, when the dam’s floodgates were officially declared opened. However, there was still time for one final protest. As the fleet of cars arrived, each was greeted with bare-fisted thumps and a wall of demonstrators. A number threw themselves into the path of the on-coming vehicles, or rocked them in an attempt to see them overturned. Other protestor’s hammered on windows with placards, which angrily declared that Liverpool had ‘stolen Welsh water’. All were hauled aside by police, who having cleared the road, linked arms in order for the cars to pass through. In the mêlée, damage was inflicted. Many cars were left badly marked; some had had side panels pushed in, while car aerials and wing mirrors lay strewn across the road.

Whether fuelled by defiance, frustration or misguidance, Gwynfor Evans attempted to hand David Cowley, the Lord Mayor of Liverpool, a letter which urged the Liverpool authorities to agree to a financial settlement. This would prove, argued Evans, their stated desire for amicable relations. He was assured by Cowley that the letter would be delivered into the appropriate hands.

From out of the crowd, three men appeared, dressed in something resembling a military uniform. They were, the crowd soon realised, members of the Free Wales Army. One rather elderly man stepped forward to greet the trio warmly. He was Robert Oliver Francis Wynne, from Garthewin Hall in Denbighshire. The encounter was to prove the re-emergence of a romantic link with Wynne and the struggle for ‘Welsh freedom’; and the belief that the nationalist movement was being financed by a wealthy benefactor. The suggestion however was disdainfully rejected by Emyr Llywelyn Jones in 2003. Wynne, he professed, belonged to the clique of people who admired Saunders Lewis; who saw themselves as ‘the gentry born to lead’. He had risen to prominence by claiming he was going to sponsor this and sponsor that; yet his comments belied the suspicion that he lacked real financial

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Frank Cain as having said ‘a member of the Royal Family may perform the opening ceremony’.

On 1 September 1965, the Liverpool Daily Post stated that Prince Philip was unavailable to do so; as was the Prime Minister and James Griffiths, the Minister of State for Wales. Those attending were asked to arrive by 11.15 a.m. LRO, Llyn Celyn Cuttings, Hq352.6CUT.

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159 LDP, 22 October 1965.

160 WM, 22 October 1965.

161 LDP, 22 October 1965; also, The Times, 22 October 1965.

clout.\footnote{Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 12 September 2003. The suggestion of Wynne’s financial support with regard the Tryweryn action was ‘nothing but crap’, stated Emyr Llywelyn Jones. Whether rich or not, he did not believe in Wynne’s sort of romanticism. He never met him and would not have accepted money even were it offered.}

As Gwynfor Evans appealed for calm, to the chagrin of the 500 protestors, positioned at the official entrance to the dam site, the main body of Liverpool dignitaries and invited guests were spotted arriving via the old road on the opposite side of the reservoir. As the buses began to empty, the angry crowd, defying repeated pleas by Plaid Cymru officials for restraint, poured down the side of the escarpment. Having swarmed down the shoulder of the reservoir, they massed on its end, overlooking the covered platform and the guests’ grandstand. Within a few minutes, following scuffles with uniformed and CID police officers, many of the demonstrators had jostled into the grandstand, and stood just yards from the platform. A non-stop barrage of booing and chanting reduced the occasion to a brief and barely-audible fiasco. To the continuous roar of protest, Liverpool officials attempted to make themselves heard as stones were hurled on to the platform, fireworks were set off and an attempt was made to burn the Union Jack.\footnote{\textit{LDP}, 22 October 1965.} Whether by accident of timing or not, the Plaid Cymru leader was captured by a television news crew, turning his back and sheepishly drifting away.\footnote{\textit{Unwaith Eto}, 1965. S4C Production. Screened S4C, September 2002.}

The barrage of jeers and catcalls rose to a crescendo, as David Cowley and Frank Cain, chair of Liverpool Corporation, walked onto the platform, accompanied by city officials. Those assembled stood shaken and embarrassed by the unexpected reception. After vainly waiting some minutes for the clamour to subside, Cowley was greeted with a number of badly aimed stones as he stood to make his speech. He raised his voice to challenge the din, but could only be seen silently mouthing his appreciation for the creation of the reservoir. His microphone lead had been cut.\footnote{Prompted by a protestor wielding a loudspeaker, the crowd kept up its continual chanting as Cowley continued in vain. The Liverpool Authority, he shouted, had nothing to feel ashamed of. It had put its case to the Welsh people and to parliament. It had been given the authority to undertake the project. Finally, after turning to the mass of demonstrators, he tersely concluded by declaring that it was ‘a privilege and a pleasure’ to pronounce Llyn Celyn open. He pressed a control button on the platform.}
table, releasing a huge jet of water from the reservoir outlet into the Tryweryn river below. It immediately drowned the singing of *Mae Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau*.\(^{167}\)

If this was meant to signal the end of the hostilities, it appeared only to make matters worse, as a further barrage of stones was thrown onto the platform. The Lord Mayor and his party quickly made their exit. The scheduled forty-five minute ceremony had lasted barely three minutes.\(^{168}\) A number of the 100 police officers, whom the *Liverpool Daily Post* noted, had ‘acted with restraint and good humour throughout’, stood plastered with mud and dirt as a result of the scuffles. One officer had received a black eye, the result of having been hit by a thrown placard. As the three uniformed men were escorted from the site by officers, owing to their ‘involvement in the mêlée’,\(^{169}\) members of the assembled media attempted to learn more about them. They were, they were soon informed, Cayo Evans, Owen Wyn Jones and Dafydd Elwyn Williams.\(^{170}\)

At the official luncheon, following the ceremony, Alderman Sefton of Liverpool City Council, declared to the waiting media that officials from the city’s Council and Water Corporation were ready to discuss fiscal proposals submitted by any ‘responsible body’ in Wales. Moreover, it was sincere in its desire to assist north Wales ‘in recompense for the neglect it had suffered in the past’.\(^{171}\) As for the demonstration, it was expected, David Cowley informed the *Daily Mail*. It had not been directed at Liverpool, added Sefton, but was rather borne of frustration that Wales was being destroyed.\(^{172}\)

\(^{166}\) Interview between WT & Dafydd Glyn Rowlands, 22 March 2004.

\(^{167}\) *LDP*, 22 October 1965.

\(^{168}\) *WM*, 22 October 1965.

\(^{169}\) *LDP*, 22 October 1965. Another casualty was project engineer, Roger Heatherington, who was struck on the shoulder by a 12oz piece of slate. He felt the blow, he later revealed, but it caused little discomfort.

\(^{170}\) *WM*, 4 November 1965. In a letter printed in the *Liverpool Daily Post* on 26 October 1965, Mair Cave of Machynlleth condemned the irresponsible activities and behaviour of her ‘fellow countrymen’ at Llyn Celyn’s opening. Those involved should have been ‘arrested and prosecuted’; a point of view, she added, expressed by many other Welsh-speakers she had met. LRO, Llyn Celyn Newspaper Cuttings, 1957 - 1971. Hq352.6CUT.

\(^{171}\) *WM*, 23 October 1965. In March 1966, an account of the opening ceremony appeared in the contractors, Binnie and Partners, *News Magazine*. The ‘Welsh nationalist elements gave the Liverpool City Councillors and their guests a really rousing reception’, it declared. ‘Some of the City Councillors, who represent the docks areas of Liverpool, are no strangers to insurgent behaviour and could scarcely be restrained from tossing the ringleaders into the stilling basin’. Thomas, *Capel Celyn*, p.126.

\(^{172}\) *DM*, 22 October 1965. Following the ceremony, David Cowley, the Lord Mayor of Liverpool, commented that ‘the Kop would have murdered them’, when asked to comment on protestors. *Liverpool Weekly News*, 28 October 1965. LRO, Llyn Celyn Newspaper Cuttings, 1957 - 1971.
The opening of the Llyn Celyn Reservoir was a day Toni Lewis never forgot. For one thing, it was the day he met Cayo Evans. As Lewis and members of his nationalist movement walked through the streets of Bala, approaching in the other direction was Evans and his followers. Each of the two groups were kitted out in their respective khaki or bottle green uniform. Together, they made their way to the Tryweryn site. To a man steeped in the injustice inflicted upon his nation home, the day’s events struck a defiant retaliatory chord. When television pictures of the opening were broadcast, ‘with the crowd rushing down the bank: that was us, you know’, later remarked Lewis proudly.173

Glyn Rowlands was also there that day. In the years that followed, he too rose to enjoy a position of prominence on the stage of militant Welsh nationalist thinking. In March 2004, Rowlands recalled how the events of the day had impacted upon his life. It was the first time he had seen Cayo and the FWA. After all the years of injustice, this at last, he believed, ‘was the real thing’. Just another angry protestors, he felt ‘sad’, not to be a member of the group and begun to ponder how he might contact members of the movement.174 Yet, in such a cauldron of animosity, rumours soon began to circulate that one or two of the protesters had over-reacted. In 1998, Elwyn Edwards, who in 1956 had marched through Liverpool alongside residents of Cwm Tryweryn, alleged that in response to one female Bala resident pulling down Welsh banners and trampling them into the mud, the trio of FWA had pulled her aside, kicking her angrily.175 It was a claim given short-shrift by Toni Lewis. Police officers had soon recognised Cayo Evans, he remarked. They had ‘corralled him and the other FWA in a corner’; keeping them under surveillance. However, the police had not bothered with him and his ‘lot in Khaki’.176

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173 Interview between WT & Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004. The demonstration against the opening was, declared Lewis, ‘bloody good’.
174 Interview between WT & Dafydd Glyn Rowlands, 22 March 2004. Rowlands did not speak to the FWA, as ‘it was all happening at Tryweryn that day’. It appeared to him the group ‘sort of appeared from nowhere’; before disappearing ‘as fast as they arrived’. As for the disruption, it was ‘brilliant’. The anger of the Welsh crowd ‘totally surprised’ the Liverpool dignitaries, who were ‘caught wholly unprepared’. This pleased Rowlands particularly. His most poignant memory was the cutting of the microphone cable. The mayor of Liverpool could be seen ‘mouthing away’ and yet nobody could hear a word. The whole thing ‘was an entire shambles’.
176 Interview between WT & Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004. Gethin ap Iestyn - who later paid a heavy price for his involvement in militant Welsh nationalism - failed to make the opening, stated Lewis. Having set off together to hitchhike from south Wales, all the group had got lifts. Outside Bala on the return journey, an oil tanker approached them. To their amused surprise, ap Iestyn could be seen sat on
For Cayo Evans, a page in his life had been turned. He believed that the arrival of the Free Wales Army at the opening ceremony had galvanised the crowd. Up until that point, it had been uncertain of whether to merely observe the event or to actively oppose it. Yet, led by Evans and the FWA, the crowd had proved only too eager to vent their frustration, he believed. The experience had left him convinced that from that day forth, the FWA must step into the limelight and be seen to lead the struggle for Welsh freedom.

Two days after the opening of Llyn Celyn, following a day-long search, a police statement refused to confirm or deny that explosives had been found at the site. Nevertheless, a workman confirmed that police activity had been confined to a rocky section adjacent to the dam’s massive earth and rock bank; furthermore, that security surrounding the dam wall had been stepped up, with extra police dog handlers patrolling the area. It was further reported, that Gwynfor Evans had accepted an invitation to meet with Alderman Sefton of Liverpool City Council to discuss a possible way forward. It was, declared Evans, a ‘very hopeful development’. The door, he added, seemed to be opening under nationalist pressure. It was the job of Plaid Cymru to open it further and to gauge how far Liverpool was prepared to go. This, he confirmed, was the first time that any suggestion had been received that the Liverpool authorities were willing to pay for the water.

On Friday, 5 November, police and legal experts stated that any future displays of the Free Wales Army insignia could lead to prosecution. The previously nebulous organisation now boasted membership in west Wales alone of some 500. Interviewed by the Western Mail, Cayo Evans proclaimed to having learnt a great deal from the hell that Ireland had suffered. Subsequently, he considered ‘militant nationalism as a matter not be taken lightly’. Another self-styled FWA volunteer was Maureen Huws of Anglesey, who euphemistically stated that ‘as a Christian’, she would use firearms to defend her home, were the circumstances justified. Quick to corroborate her remark, 15-year-old Gwenllian Wynne, the

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his ruck sack. Lacking a sense of direction, added Lewis, he ‘had gone the wrong bloody way’. Owing to money shortage, each hitchhiked everywhere. Besides, working on the buses, Lewis did not really need a car. It was sold and deemed ‘a luxury’ he could ‘ill-afford, with a wife and two children to support’.

177 Interview between WT & Gillian Mary Davies, 15 June 2006. It was not until the couple married in 1966, that Gillian Davies ‘seriously realised what he was about’ and that Evans was ‘inclined (politically) like his father’.

178 WM, 23 October 1965.
daughter of Robert O. F. Wynne, called for a realisation that not all Welsh nationalists were pacifists.

It was reported that since the opening of Llyn Celyn, the Free Wales Army had been investigated by both the North-West Regional Crime Squad and the forces of Gwynedd and Flintshire. It was also revealed that police had been reluctant to take action against the quasi-military organisation, for fear of making ‘martyrs’ of the group. However, it would in future, seriously consider invoking the Public Order Act, should any further uniformed demonstrations take place. In the opinion of ‘several police sources’, the three FWA members had already committed an offence against the Act, by wearing ‘political uniforms’, something outlawed since the Mosley troubles of the 1930s. Merely to wear a badge did not in itself constitute an offence, but distinctive clothing did come under the auspices of the Act. As a result of later public-order legislation, directed by Henry Brooke, members of the FWA risked fines of up to £500 and a year’s imprisonment, or indeed, both.180 Meanwhile, photographs, names of ‘army volunteers’ and all apparent adherents were being collated ‘for future reference’ by police.181 As a consequence, it was not the last time that leading members of the Free Wales Army were to be reminded of the Public Order Act.

Three days later, an article in the Daily Mail announced that the FWA had established links with the IRA. ‘Violence’, declared Cayo Evans was ‘the only way’; even if it did include ‘hurting innocent people’. Pacifism, he cautioned, had got ‘Welsh nationalists nowhere’. The Free Wales Army would strike when no one expected it and get Wales, the ‘second richest country in Europe’, out of the ‘hands of its English oppressors’. The time had arrived to give the Welsh people ‘a country to be proud of’. Intriguingly, Evans also disclosed that the group was marshalled by a solitary figure, whose identity was known to ‘a chosen few’. If a mobile police column in Lampeter was regarded by Cayo Evans as some sort of accolade, it was, a police source in Carmarthen declared, ‘nothing to do with Evans or the FWA’.182 If so, many wondered, what was it to do with?

Later that month, Gwynfor Evans refused to share a public platform with Cayo

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179 WM, 5 November 1965.
180 WM, 4 November 1965.
181 WM, 5 November 1965.
182 DM, 8 November 1965; also, The Times, 8 November 1965.
Evans at a meeting of young Welsh nationalists in Treorchy. One estimate put the number of Free Wales Army members present at 50. The warning by the police, that it would no longer tolerate the wearing of ‘political uniforms’, had not been heeded. Many of the group wore berets or ‘Glengarry’ style hats; while others wore khaki drill jackets, or civilian-type windcheaters emblazoned with FWA flashes. On taking the platform, the president of Plaid Cymru roundly condemned those on the extreme fringe of the nationalist movement, before reiterating the party’s rigid constitutional message.\textsuperscript{183}

Yet, even among a number of the nation’s police officers, employed to bring those responsible for using explosives at the Tryweryn site to book, the action and attitude of Liverpool Corporation had left an uneasy taste in the mouth. Had there existed ‘just a bit of understanding about Welsh society, as it existed in Tryweryn’, former detective-sergeant Glanmor Hughes opined in 2003, there would not have been ‘half the trouble’.\textsuperscript{184} To Emyr Llywelyn Jones, the fault lay firmly at the door of the British constitution. That was why he, Owain Williams and John Albert Jones had resorted to ‘a desperate tactic of blowing something up; because how else did one fight back?’ According to Jones, the state envelopes you: its power is total and its hold is absolute. Tryweryn was really about a community versus the modern state, with all its absolute power. Although he and his co-conspirators failed to save the valley, their action did nonetheless save other valleys: \textit{that} was the whole point of their protest. You can lose the battle, but you might win the fight in the long run.\textsuperscript{185}

However, blame could not be laid solely at the door of the British parliamentary system, Jones added. Plaid Cymru had betrayed Cwm Tryweryn. It had been sacrificed on the altar of the party’s electoral advance. Had the party leadership ‘gone there by day’, declared Jones, with regard Plaid Cymru’s failure to lead a sit-down protest at the site, ‘we would not have had to go there at night’. Yet, paradoxically, the Tryweryn issue had made the party stronger. The irony being that as a result of Tryweryn, there was an upsurge in nationalist feeling. Jones did not necessarily blame Gwynfor Evans, as possibly those close to the party leader had

\textsuperscript{183} \textit{WM}, 15 November 1965. Cayo Evans was invited to speak at the meeting, but Gwynfor Evans’ threat to boycott the event, led to the invitation being revoked. Yet, as if to mark the group’s attendance, a road bridge near the town’s railway station was daubed with FWA slogans. Plaid would ‘not consider adopting any other method’ declared Gwynfor Evans.

\textsuperscript{184} \textit{Terfysgwyr Tryweryn}, S4C Production. Screened S4C, 13 July 2003.

\textsuperscript{185} Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 12 September 2003.
given him ‘the wrong advice’.\textsuperscript{186} The opening of the Llyn Celyn reservoir ended an unhappy chapter in the political journey of Plaid Cymru. To many observers, the party’s political sterility had been starkly revealed. As if to confirm this, Huw T. Edwards brought what he later termed ‘the four-and-a-half unhappiest years’ of his political life to a close, by leaving Plaid Cymru and returning to the Labour Party. The nationalist party of Wales, he declared, “was not the answer for a Socialist”.\textsuperscript{187}

For one man watching ‘horrified’ from the wings of Welsh nationalism, the protracted Tryweryn issue had served only to demonstrate the inability of the British constitutional system, to recognise the United Kingdom’s unique cultural variegation. It seemed to John Jenkins that Tryweryn was squarely based on a false premise: that the UK was comprised of one people; all of whom abided by a single set of rules and all of whom ‘knelt before the same God’: the same ethnical people; existing with no single difference. Given that this premise was correct, then the flooding of Cwm Tryweryn was ‘perfectly understandable’. However, according to Jenkins, the premise was wrong. The British people were not ‘one people’ and any decent democracy allowed for diversity in its approach. He thought that the English idea of democracy could be traced ‘back to their Teutonic beginnings’. Jenkins quantified this by adding that a facet of the English and German mentality was a respect for ‘uniformity’: whereby everybody ‘wears the same, looks the same, does the same and says the same’. While confidently proclaiming to be both tolerant of diversity \textit{and} democratic, it nevertheless abhorred any effort by those under its control to stand alone. Yet, concluded Jenkins, unlike the Irish people, the Welsh had not suffered enough at the hands of the English. The conquest of the Welsh people had been ‘much more insidious’. They had been ‘seduced rather than raped’.\textsuperscript{188} It was this extreme nationalist view - at least as perceived by many - which fuelled Jenkins’ own bombing campaign in the years which followed.

\textbf{Conclusion}

The opening of the Llyn Celyn reservoir, marked the end of a controversial ten-year

\textsuperscript{186} Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 16 October 2005. Plaid Cymru would not have enjoyed later electoral success were it not for Tryweryn, stated Jones. It had earlier taken similar ‘sit-down’ protest action at Trawsfynydd.

\textsuperscript{187} Butt, \textit{Welsh Question}, p.92.
chapter in Welsh history - a period of banner parades, impassioned speeches and sporadic sabotage. Both nationalist and unionist opposition to the project had availed nothing. Yet, what lessons had been learnt? Had the Tryweryn furore prompted a more circumspect approach to water-seeking ventures in Wales and possibly more equitable methods for the future? At least the Labour Government appeared to be responding favourably to nationalist claims of generic political indifference to Wales, having created the post of Secretary of State for Wales in 1964. It was generally hoped, across much of the political divide, that this would ensure that resources were developed in a way that did not damage the interests of the Welsh nation. Only time would tell. With the second half of the 1960s approaching, the country prepared to turn another page of its often troubled history. To some, the decision to embark on the path of militant action was no doubt defensible. Had not fate contemptuously conspired time and again to humiliate the small, but proud Welsh nation? Surely the time had come to make a stand? To others however, the country had turned an uncertain corner.

Chapter 3

Fantasists, fanatics and kamikaze corgis
John Jenkins seizes control of MAC

Introduction

This chapter addresses the period from January 1966 to December 1967. It considers the re-emergence of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru as a militant political force in Wales. It focuses upon the first phase of its re-convened campaign, from its strike at the Clywedog reservoir construction site in March 1966, to the political fall-out following its explosion at the Temple of Peace in November 1967. It addresses the response by so-called ‘extremists’, to the perceived, regressive cultural dilution of Wales; so too, the Carmarthen by-election in July 1966, won by Plaid Cymru president, Gwynfor Evans. Moreover, it examines the rise to prominence of John Jenkins as the self-styled director-general of MAC. It identifies that hostility to the impending investiture of Charles Windsor as the Prince of Wales, instituted the increase in militant activity. The chapter also evaluates the continuing publicity-conscience Free Wales Army, clearly identifying that apart from one failed militant action in March 1967, the group was solely engaged in a ‘campaign of propaganda’.

On 3 January 1966, James Griffiths, the Secretary of State for Wales, announced that the Welsh Office proposed to construct a ‘new town’, stretching seventeen miles in mid Wales.1 Furthermore, Liverpool City Council unveiled plans to undertake a programme of industrial expansion in north Wales. This came in response to the meeting - ostensibly to combat the region’s increasing de-population - held in the city

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1 *Western Mail*, 3 January 1966. J. Griffiths agreed with the Economic Associated Ltd report. Six months to compile, it recommended ‘a development of industry and population along a linear pattern stretching for 17 miles from Llanidloes to Newtown and embracing Caersws’. It was opposed by nationalists on the grounds that the sprawling conurbation would become a dormitory suburb of the densely-populated west Midlands of England. The proposal was mischievously dubbed ‘Little Ireland’. *WM*, 12 January 1966. The plans were later shelved, with Gwynfor Evans being ascribed much of the credit for the government’s U-turn. *WM*, 16 March 1967.
the previous November between council representatives and the president of Plaid Cymru, Gwynfor Evans.² In a letter to the *Liverpool Daily Post*, R. M. Hughes of Cardiff, outlined what had stuck in the nationalists’ craw. The proposal, whereby a number of existing businesses would be transferred from Merseyside to north Wales, merely proved Liverpool City Council’s desire to anglicise the area still further. This was in order to exploit the region for its own financial gain. Its furtively cloaked avarice, flew fiercely in the face of its earlier pronouncement to ‘protect and safeguard the regions’ unique cultural and linguistic identity’. Should such a policy be approved, Hughes concluded, it would simply undermine the areas solidly Welsh-speaking status, thus rendering it little more than an English-speaking Liverpool ‘over-spill’.³

Such events did not go unnoticed by the Free Wales Army. In a press statement on 18 February, Cayo Evans, reaffirmed the group’s primary objectives. The announcement followed reports that 385 members of the organisation planned a ‘surprise spring offensive against Carmarthen’. The town had been targeted, owing to its ‘failure to support home rule for Wales’. Although Evans denied he was responsible for the FWA, he nonetheless disclosed the group did possess an ‘armoury’, which included ‘assault weapons’. However, both its whereabouts and the identity of those involved in the group he would not divulge. Unknown to Evans, with such talk of arms, the FWA had ultimately sown the seeds of its own destruction. The declaration, roundly dismissed as fantasy, followed skirmishes by female ‘army scouts’ over the flying of a Union Flag in the town; their intention to burn the flag, being described as ‘barbaric’ by one resident. With Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, expected to go to the country at any time, Gwynfor Evans was quick to distance Plaid Cymru from Cayo Evans’ remarks. The party, he announced, had no contact with the group ‘in any way’. Such comments failed to help the party achieve its aim of obtaining power for Wales through constitutional means and such deplorable

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² *Liverpool Echo*, 19 November 1965. Liverpool Record Office. Llyn Celyn Newspaper Cuttings, 1957 - 1971. Hq352.6CUT. During the meeting, some measure of fiscal payment for the water extracted from Llyn Celyn was discussed, as was the establishing of a trading estate for light industry and the payment for fishing rights. *WM*, 20 November 1965. Nevertheless, the meeting came the day after Gwynfor Evans received notice that the Secretary of State for Wales, had rejected calls from Plaid Cymru to establish a Welsh Water Board. *WM*, 19 November 1965.

activities adversely affected the party’s standing at the last election.\textsuperscript{4}

If Gwynfor Evans hoped his public repudiation of the FWA had seen them off, the thorn in his side was about to tweak again. The condemnation had given Cayo Evans an idea. In private, he now proposed a coalition. Did Plaid Cymru not realize by the time it succeeded in having one member returned to Parliament Wales would not exist? Time would not stand still to save the nation and time was fast running out. To Cayo Evans - and few besides - the way ahead was clear. The party’s ‘membership and potential support, together with the FWA, could easily win freedom for Wales within four years’.\textsuperscript{5}

The Clywedog reservoir construction site is attacked

Three weeks later, on 6 March, Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru re-emerged from the shadows. In a telephone call at 12.29 a.m. to the Gwynedd Constabulary at Caernarfon, a warning was received that a bomb was timed to detonate at the Clywedog reservoir, exactly 16 minutes later. As police from nearby Llanidloes raced to the construction site, on time, an 80-foot steel mast, connected to another mast by a three-inch thick, 110 foot-long cable, disintegrated, as four pounds of gelignite detonated. The explosion, which power station attendant, 28-year-old Harry Thomas likened to a ‘terrific clap of thunder’, blew a seven foot hole in the ground and ripped through the guy ropes supporting the mast. Both it and the cable, used for carrying buckets of concrete and equipment, cascaded down the hillside. The target had been deliberately chosen and the resultant damage estimated at more than £30,000. A Clywedog Reservoir Joint Authority spokesman declared that without the aid of the overhead cableway, work at the £4.5million site would be delayed for up to three months.

As speculation abounded as to whether the device was activated by a timer, or by way of sending a charge by battery down the telephone cable - which ran from the village of Bwlch-y-Gle to the dam site - a detective conceded the explosion had not been ‘an amateurish job by any means’.\textsuperscript{6} Immediately, regional crime squad police

\textsuperscript{4}Carmarthen Times, 18 February 1966. The FWA wanted to ‘safeguard the nation and its language and to ensure home rule for Wales’. Cayo Evans revealed that ‘the leader for the south Wales area’, which included Carmarthenshire, ‘lived in Cwmbran’.

\textsuperscript{5}Plaid Cymru Papers, B 1052, NLW. Undated letter from the FWA to Gwynfor Evans.

\textsuperscript{6}WM, 7 March 1966; also, TNA, DPP 2/5968; DPP 2/5969. The charge could have been sent down the cable by battery from any point along its length, the current detonating the explosives. The caller to
officers throughout Wales began their search for the saboteurs. Despite police admitting they had nothing to implicate the Free Wales Army, or any other organisation to the explosion, unsurprisingly, among those first to be interviewed were known members of the FWA. One immediate suspect was the perpetrator of an earlier attack at the Tryweryn reservoir site, Owain Williams, who having been roused from his bed in the small hours, annoyed officers by thanking them for bringing him the good news; adding had he been asked to assist in the ‘first-class operation’ he would have done so.\(^7\)

If those in militant nationalist circles toasted the success of the operation, many outside its ranks condemned it as ‘totally irresponsible’. It merely demonstrated that those prepared undertake such action were ‘hooligans’, lacking ‘all sense of proportion’. Furthermore, declared an outraged *Western Mail* editorial, those involved were the victims of a ‘perverted greed for adventure’. To a newspaper proud of its unionist traditions, the strike had been wholly unnecessary. Sabotage could, it was felt, be a justified political weapon where an effective tyranny barred all other means of expression. However, in spite of the inflated language of oppression, as erroneously voiced by nationalists, ‘everyone knew’ this barrier to political advance simply did not exist within the democratic British political system.\(^8\) Nevertheless, to Gwynfor Evans, as at Tryweryn three years earlier, blame for the explosion lay firmly at the door of the central political parties. It was their indifference to the destruction of Welsh-speaking communities and the continuing exploitation of Welsh water resources without material return, which symbolized how ruthlessly Wales had been treated. Time and again, stated Evans, the Government had ridden roughshod over Welsh constitutional opposition. What had happened, he asked, to the solemn promise of the Labour Party in its party manifesto to establish a Water Board for Wales? The Plaid Cymru representation had been ignored and while the party continued to be ‘hampered by suppression on television’, there was always going to

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\(^7\) *WM*, 9 March 1966; also interview between WT & Owain Williams, 24 March 2004.

\(^8\) *WM*, 7 March 1966. Plaid Cymru’s first political broadcast was in 1965. A proposal by the National Broadcasting Council for Wales to allow a series of local party broadcasts, including provision for Plaid Cymru was vetoed - with the connivance of the Labour Party - by the government in 1955. It decreed that a political party must contest 50 Parliamentary seats before it could be granted air time. As there were 36 seats in Wales, a solely ‘Welsh party’ did not qualify to broadcast. Dafydd Williams, *The Story of Plaid Cymru* (Aberystwyth, 2000), p.22. By 1970, the rules had been changed. Rhys Evans, *Portrait of a Patriot* (Talybont, 2008), p.271.
be those who would become ‘increasingly impatient’.9

Predictably, a stinging rebuke of Evans’ comments was quickly returned. The ‘childlike’ attempt of the Plaid Cymru leader to hive responsibility for the action onto others, remarked an angry Conservative Party spokesman, was ‘the most arrant nonsense yet to emanate from the nationalist party of Wales’. Moreover, if Evans himself did not ‘shoulder the blame’, then such a failure was indicative of the warring factions within the party ranks.10 James Griffiths, the Secretary of State for Wales, issued a statement declaring his ‘shock’ at what he termed ‘this stupid act of destruction’. He too felt certain such incidents did nothing but ‘harm’...particularly at a time when the Labour Government was ‘striving by every means to strengthen the economy of mid-Wales’.11 Nonetheless, not all were prepared to castigate those responsible. While it was reported that local reaction to the explosion was ‘strangely non-committal’, one notable exception was farmer William Philip Hughes. His only complaint was that the explosion had occurred ‘too late’. There might yet be another bomb, Hughes added, and, as with the first, it would be ‘a good thing’, in that it too would make the voice of Wales heard.12 It was a sentiment given some credence by the Welsh language media. A week after the explosion at Clywedog, Y Cymro, offered a chilling and prophetic warning. Despite the suggestion the action was contrary to Welsh popular opinion, there existed ‘a feeling of sympathy with those responsible for the explosion’ than was more widely supposed. If politicians continued to take no notice of simmering resentment in Wales, the paper proclaimed, ominously, ‘a very bloody chapter in Welsh history’ might yet unfold.13

That same day, police announced they were ‘anxious’ to trace the owner of an olive green Castro cap, bearing the FWA insignia and motif ‘Gorchfygwn’ (To overcome). It had been discovered some 30 yards from the scene of the Clywedog explosion. The police also revealed that between 200 and 300 persons across Wales, the usual suspects among them, had been interviewed in relation to the action.14 Yet, despite intensive and extensive house searches and the deployment of scientific

9 LDP, 7 March 1966.
10 WM, 8 March 1966.
11 LDP, 9 March 1966.
12 WM, 8 March 1966.
14 TNA, DPP 2/5968. In legend, the White Eagle of Snowdon, embossed on the FWA Castro cap, protects Wales from invaders.
testing, no arrests had been made. Attention now shifted to the more shadowy Meibion Glyndwr (The Sons of Glyndwr) who, as at Tryweryn, repeated their intention to poison the waters of the Clywedog reservoir.¹⁵

As the controversy raged, Maureen Huws a middle-aged mother of seven, from Brynteg, Anglesey, accused police of trying to make her turn ‘informer’.¹⁶ One man increasingly unsurprised by the ‘knock on the door’ was the president of Plaid Cymru. The police, Gwynfor Evans later revealed, had ‘more reason than usual’ for questioning him in the wake of the Clywedog strike. That evening, Evans had addressed a meeting in Caersws, less than ten miles from the construction site. The meeting had also been attended by Maureen Huws. Asked to try on the recovered cap for size, the police departed, satisfied Evans was not their man.¹⁷

One person who escaped questioning following the explosion was Glyn Rowlands. Although Rowlands was to rise to a position of some prominence in the so-called peripheral nationalist movement, it had taken him some time to make contact with the FWA, since having witnessed the group’s notorious attendance at the opening of Llyn Celyn five months before. Having sought a number of prominent nationalists in the north Wales area, he had eventually been given Cayo Evans’ telephone number. Finally, on 1 March 1966, five days before the action at Clywedog, Rowlands met other members of the group at a Saint David’s Day celebration in Ponthrydfendigaid.¹⁸ Toni Lewis, a renowned figure within the FWA, also attended. In a police statement, three days after ‘Clywedog’, Lewis described the events at the FWA rally. Approximately twenty members of the group gathered to discuss future policy, Lewis disclosed. Various topics had been considered, including the compulsory adoption of an FWA uniform. This motion had not been carried. Another, which suggested Information Officers be appointed was. Lewis himself was appointed I. O. for the south Wales region. Lyn Ebenezer had been likewise appointed for West Wales. At no time throughout the day, Lewis maintained, had any reference been made to the Clywedog reservoir. In the immediate aftermath of the explosion, the police statement concluded, Lewis wrote to Ebenezer. Asked to reveal

¹⁵ *The Times*, 10 March 1966; also, *WM*, 10 March 1966. It was also announced that the contractors employed in the construction of the Clywedog Reservoir - Reed Mallik - had a clause written into their contract indemnifying the company against ‘damage by nationalist elements’.
¹⁸ Interview between WT & Glyn Rowlands, 22 March 2004.
the letters' contents, Lewis conceded that while there was 'nothing to indicate the involvement' of the west Wales man, the letter contained 'words to the effect' that it had been a 'good show at Clywedog' and 'we'll beat the Sais yet'.

Under mounting pressure, police soon made an early morning visit to the home of Lyn Ebenezer. In 2006, Ebenezer threw light on the incident and why he believed his questioning over the Clywedog action had proved inevitable. In the early spring of 1966, he and Cayo Evans spent a night at Garthewin Hall, the manorial home of R. O. F. Wynne. Evans and Wynne had met at the opening of Llyn Celyn. Both men held right-wing political views, were fervent Welsh nationalists and each claimed lineage to the landed class of 'old Wales'. Unsurprisingly, they struck up a predictable rapport. Wynne also enjoyed a long-standing friendship with Saunders Lewis. Together, each man professed their support for the FWA. As a result of its association with Saunders Lewis, the Godfather of modern Welsh nationalism, the Free Wales Army was afforded some considerable gravitas: especially in its early years.

Nonetheless, having enjoyed the warmth of their hosts' hospitality, the two west Wales men departed for home. It was not long before adventure of a different variety came Ebenezer's way, as he felt the long arm of the law for the first time. Unaware that police had knowledge of the letter from Toni Lewis, he had, he believed, been 'picked out' for questioning over events at Clywedog, owing to his friendship with Cayo Evans. If that in itself was not incriminating, the 'present' given him by Evans and stored in a drawer in his bedroom wardrobe was. The self-styled spokesman for the FWA, Ebenezer explained, had visited him some weeks earlier and having nonchalantly remarked he had a 'present' for him, had casually placed a brown paper parcel on the kitchen table. Engrossed in conversation and Ebenezer unaware of the parcel's contents, the two men decamped to the Black Lion. On returning, Ebenezer opened the parcel and found to his surprise and considerable unease, twelve rounds of ammunition and an oiled and polished .38 hand gun. Believing to refuse the gift would 'hurt' Evans' feelings, he said nothing. It was not the first gun he received from Cayo Evans; some time earlier he was handed 'a very old Spanish .38'.

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19 Free Wales Army and Patriotic Front trial Exhibit 107. Toni Lewis was taken in for questioning, 9 March 1966.
20 Interview between WT & Lyn Ebenezer, 16 June 2006.
21 Interview between WT & Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004.
Lyn Ebenezer realized with the spring on the weapon broken the gun was obsolete; and so, largely unconcerned, he placed it in a down stairs cupboard. As from where Evans had acquired the firearms, Ebenezer had 'no idea'.

As news of the Clywedog explosion occupied news reports, during the early hours of one morning, Ebenezer's home was raided by police. Their reason: to discover anything which might link him to the explosion and/or Welsh militant nationalism. Having opened the door to the downstairs cupboard, to Ebenezer's astonishment, one of the police officers consigned to carry out the search failed to notice the antiquated Spanish gun positioned just feet before him. Such was position of the gun, Ebenezer later speculated whether the officer had indeed sighted the weapon, but chose to ignore it. Offering to help the officer in the search of his bedroom, in order to speed up the process, while the officers' attention was momentarily distracted, the suspect - having removed the drawer and placed it on the bed - concealed the recently received handgun under a coat, positioned alongside it. Having sifted through the drawer, the officer searched elsewhere in the room. Ebenezer returned the gun to the drawer and pushed it shut. Leading the raid was the man who would come to be regarded as the bete noire of the FWA, Detective Chief Inspector, John Owen Evans. About to leave, having failed to discover anything incriminating, 'almost as an afterthought', Evans asked the junior officer if he had checked Ebenezer's coat pockets. The officer replied that he had not and on doing so, discovered the twelve rounds of ammunition. Also found, was the letter from Toni Lewis. Ebenezer was arrested and transferred to police headquarters at Aberystwyth. There, outside his police cell, the incarcerated prisoner heard talk that fuses had been found and that 'Cayo Evans was singing like a bird'. It was, Ebenezer recognized, 'an old police trick'. In the dark as to events at Clywedog, he remained sure that officers had little with which to charge him. Expanding on the strategy adopted by the police during his questioning, Ebenezer remarked that Inspector Vivian Fisher - who was later to play a prominent role in the apprehension of the FWA - had played the 'hail, the fellow well met'; 'one of the boys': the confidante who could be trusted. Such an approach did not wash with Ebenezer. He dismissed it as devious. With the guns undetected and able to provide a water tight alibi for the night in question, Ebenezer returned to his community 'a hero'. It had been, he recalled with some amusement,
According to Denis Coslett, the FWA at this juncture comprised some twenty members "in uniform" with about forty others affiliated. If the movement had included more earnest figures, most notably, David Bonar Thomas, a common feature shared by those drawn to its ranks, Coslett added, was a heightened sense of mirth. In April 1966, the FWA accepted an invitation by Sinn Fein to march during the celebrations in Dublin to mark the 50th anniversary of the Easter rising. Acutely aware that a 'good Welsh representation' would reflect favourably on the movement, Cayo Evans contacted FWA members and sympathizers imploring them to attend. Despite his letter of invite, future FWA member Glyn Rowlands decided to make his own way to Dublin. His reasons for 'keeping a low profile', he later explained, was in order to evaluate the group and 'see what score was'.

It was not only Glyn Rowlands who wished to assess the weekend's events. Within a fortnight of his arrest and release without charge, Lyn Ebenezer was approached by a policeman who offered to pay all his expenses for the forthcoming trip. It was on the understanding he fed back what transpired on his return. Ebenezer had even thought to agree, believing it useful 'to have a foot in each camp'. Believing Cayo Evans would share his enthusiasm, Evans had instead taken a very dim view. Entreating his friend not to accept, he soberly professed: 'once you're in their hold they won't let go'.

One FWA man determined to make the trip to Dublin was Peter 'Goginan'. A renowned heavy drinker and dubbed by Cayo Evans the 'chaplain of the FWA', on the ferry crossing from Fishguard, 'Goginan' could be found holding court in the hospitality suite. At some point, with the harbour lights of Dun Laoghaire honing into view, 'Goginan' fell asleep under a table. He failed to disembark on arrival and returned to Fishguard having slumbered peacefully throughout the entire

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22 Interview between WT & Lyn Ebenezer, 16 June 2006. Ebenezer was able to prove that he had spent the evening socializing in Felinfach, some sixty miles from the scene of the Clywedog blast.


25 Telephone interview between WT & Glyn Rowlands, 20 February 2009.

26 Telephone interview between WT & Lyn Ebenezer, 25 April 2010. Ebenezer believes he was not charged regarding the bullets, as the police hoped he might turn informer. He is '90% sure' the policeman who carried out the search of his home deliberately ignored the gun. Having since got to know the retired officer well, neither he nor Ebenezer has ever mentioned it.
proceedings. To many observers, such antics only added to the belief that the FWA was unable to fully appreciate the seriousness of the nationalist struggle. The widening gulf between it and the more ‘orthodox’ movement was highlighted by events the evening before the scheduled procession. Having checked into the same hotel, Cayo Evans had been outraged to learn that prominent members of Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg planned to attend the official rally and turn their backs on the FWA and the unofficial march organised by Sinn Fein. Angrily, Evans had challenged Dafydd Iwan and his brother Hugh Caredig to ‘take one more step’ down the hotel stairs. Recognising discretion to be the better part of valour, the two men returned to their room.\

The following day, Cayo Evans, his cousin Eddie Griffiths and Lyn Ebenezer took their place alongside militant nationalist movements invited from across the globe. One member of the FWA, dubbed ‘Enrico’ owing to his swarthy appearance, spent the day sampling the Dublin brew. While this had been by no means unusual, as the day wore on, Ebenezer explained, ‘Enrico’s’ behaviour became increasingly erratic. Convinced the party had been assembled to re-storm the post office, the scene of the uprising fifty years before, Enrico had asked with increasing agitation, ‘when are they going to give us the guns?’ The Welshman was not the only visitor to Dublin infused with the spirit of revolution. In the Gresham Hotel, a favourite haunt of Michael Collins’ and the ‘illegal government’, an elderly American of Irish decent entertained guests in the art of guerrilla warfare. With the aid of furniture and the hotel bar, spectators enjoyed pristine manoeuvres and a faultless display of grenade launching. That night, sleeping six to a room, the excitement of the day returned to haunt ‘Enrico’. Jumping to his feet and screaming ‘they’re coming to get me’, the hapless Welshman was placated and returned to his bed where he slept soundly through what little of the night remained.

By coincidence, the commemorative celebrations had been organised to coincide with the bi-annual Five Nations Rugby International between Ireland and Wales. On the return ferry crossing, the mischievous streak of the FWA was evident

27 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 10 March 2001.
28 Interview between WT & Lyn Ebenezer, 16 June 2006. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Dafydd Iwan, the future president of Plaid Cymru, later described the FWA as ‘not really up to much’. Everyone Held Their Breath, 25 Years of the Prince of Wales. HTV Wales Production. Screened, 1994.
29 Interview between WT & Lyn Ebenezer, 16 June 2006. During the unofficial march, the IRA fired a volley of shots over Mountjoy Prison, where leaders of the uprising were executed in 1916.
once again. Having forcibly removed the *Union Jack* fluttering over the main deck, to cheers and applause *y Ddraig Goch* was hoisted proudly in its place. A little while later, having ‘stormed’ the captain’s office, an announcement was heard echoing over the ship’s tannoy system. The Free Wales Army, declared a west Wales voice, had taken control of the vessel. It would ‘now be heading for Patagonia’. The notice was greeted with a roar of approval from the thousands of returning Welsh rugby fans. A tour of the ships’ decks was then undertaken, where donations for Army funds was gratefully received. Yet, perhaps the highlight of the weekend Coslett disclosed in 2000, was his first encounter with the IRA. Introduced to his Irish contemporary by Cayo Evans, the three men were soon driving through the Dublin night *en route* to a destination unknown to the two unsuspecting Welshmen. On arriving at the British Embassy, the taxi driver was ordered to stop. Alighting from the vehicle, the IRA serviceman approached the building and launched a volley of stones, smashing a number of windows. He returned to the car and robustly ordered the driver to leave. ‘The taxi driver didn’t know what was happening’, smiled Coslett. Neither, he admitted, had he nor Cayo Evans.\(^\text{30}\)

The ‘Dublin weekend’, he later recalled had been ‘a hell of a laugh’. Yet, if such recollections were embraced with understandable warmth, feelings of regret blossomed in Coslett’s later years to overshadow what had been the most colourful period of his life. Speaking in 2003, the former west Wales commandant of the Free Wales Army, plaintively recognized that such antics merely provided ammunition to those willing to castigate the FWA as an embarrassing irrelevance. Despite the frivolities, both he and all those drawn to the FWA had been imbued with a deep and genuine love for Wales. They had each shared a longing to see their homeland throw off its shackles and stand alone. Moreover, they proudly believed that Wales’ unique cultural identity should be protected and this, Coslett added, had all too easily been lost in the fog of their notoriety.\(^\text{31}\) Although it was an opinion which Glyn Rowlands was ultimately to share, the Dublin commemoration had struck a chord. On returning to Wales, Rowlands made contact with Cayo Evans and joined the ranks of the Free Wales Army.\(^\text{32}\)

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\(^\text{30}\) Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000.

\(^\text{31}\) Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 20 November 2003.

\(^\text{32}\) Interview between WT & Glyn Rowlands, 22 March 2004.
As news of another bomb hoax reached the newsstands, Cayo Evans informed the nation’s media the ‘army’ was gaining both momentum and strength. Outlining the aims and ideals of the movement, Evans stated the FWA had drawn inspiration from the IRA and while principally a non-violent organisation, would approve militant measures to protect Welsh interests from, what he termed, ‘the incursions of the English’. The drowning of Welsh valleys to provide free water to English cities was ‘robbery of the nation’s natural resources and a travesty of justice’. Therefore, it was the ultimate aim of the Free Wales Army, he added, to gain ‘independence and sovereignty for Wales as a nation’. As for the Dublin march, it had been ‘one of the proudest moments’ of his life. It had been ‘a privilege to march alongside the IRA’...and his conscience had been stirred to see Easter lily wreaths laid on the graves of those Irish patriots ‘murdered by the English’. What those Irish comrades had achieved, ‘the FWA would achieve’. The Free Wales Army was comprised of columns as dispersed as Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool and Dublin. It totalled ‘about 2,000’ and would be mobilized to provide physical resistance when and if necessary. More intriguingly, and adding fuel to the notion the FWA was operating in tandem with the bombers, Evans added the militant nationalist movement comprised two groups: those prepared to identify themselves, and those who resolved not to reveal their association with the movement.

Having been galvanised by events in Dublin, the self-styled publicity spokesman of the FWA, remarked Lyn Ebenezer in 2006, was now in his pomp and seemingly unconcerned with ‘what he said’. Evans soon turned his attention to the nearly completed Severn Bridge. One morning over breakfast, Cayo Evans received a phone call from the *Western Mail*. Asked to respond to comments by an engineer employed in the Bridge’s construction, that only an ‘atom bomb would shift it’, unperturbed, Evans replied the FWA had such a weapon and that a pilot friend of his called Griffiths had been instructed to fly over the site and discharge it.

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33 *CT*, 29 April 1966. The caller, purporting to be a member of the FWA, stated that an explosive device was set to detonate during a busy Saturday lunchtime in the main Carmarthen Post Office. Denying all knowledge of the incident, Cayo Evans declared it ‘a damned silly thing to do’. Police revealed that it was the second such received hoax call within a week.

34 *Cardigan and Teifyside Advertiser*, 6 May 1966.

35 *CT*, 29 April 1966. Former Deputy Chief Constable John Owen Evans thought a more accurate figure of FWA affiliation was ‘50 throughout Wales’. Interview between WT & J. O. Evans, 19 February 2000.

36 Interview between WT & Lyn Ebenezer, 16 June 2006.

37 *WM*, 7 June 1966; also interview between WT & Gillian Davies, 15 June 2006.
If such statements made for ‘good copy’, as far as the Welsh media were concerned, such remarks did nothing to endear Evans to the Welsh police. Their efforts to apprehend those responsible for the explosion at Clywedog had reaped little harvest, as the identities of those responsible remained elusive. One man developing links with the actual culprits, was Sergeant John Jenkins of the British Army Dental Corps. Jenkins was then re-adjusting to life in the UK, having returned from a posting in Germany twelve months earlier. One of the purchasers of land, subdivided at the Clywedog site, he still possessed - albeit a depleting - faith in Plaid Cymru; believing the matter of the valley’s drowning might yet be resolved to the satisfaction of the nationalist community through constitutional channels. Jenkins did not have long to wait. On 5 May, the issue was raised in parliament by Geoffrey Lloyd, MP for Sutton Coldfield. In a written question to the newly appointed Secretary of State for Wales, Cledwyn Hughes, Lloyd asked to what extent recruitment of skilled men had been affected by the explosion at the Clywedog site? Furthermore, was Hughes aware that land required in connection with the reservoir had been purchased and subdivided so as to ‘delay the acquisition proceedings?’ In reply, Welsh Office spokesman, Ifor Davies assured the House that while recruitment had not been affected, the government further expected no delay due to ‘land acquisition difficulties’. To Welsh nationalists the message was clear: the government would simply override any constitutional attempt to prolong the process. This unilateral declaration of support for the construction of the reservoir, convinced John Jenkins that such changing of the statutable goalposts, within a British democratic framework, would always render Welsh minority opinion at a serious disadvantage. How, nationalists asked, could Wales ever protect its environmental and cultural concerns, when central government had sufficient influence to simply amend any legislation to advance its own political aspirations? The fact that police investigations in the wake of the Clywedog action, appeared wholly pre-occupied with targeting the entire nationalist community - whether constitutionally minded or not - did nothing to allay fears that anyone who expressed nationalist sympathies was now fair game. Nevertheless, the decision of the government to circumvent any attempts to hamper

38 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007.
39 Hansard, Vol’ 727, p.140. Davies reiterated the legal amendment of the Property and Law Act, which stipulated that leaseholders would no longer be entitled to attend a compulsory purchase enquiry.
proceedings at Clywedog was to have far-reaching consequences, as John Jenkins’
efforts to seize directional control of MAC received a significant fillip.

Speaking in 2008, Jenkins threw light on whom he understood to have
responsible for the explosion, while also revealing his thoughts as to the apparent
discovery of an FWA forage cap at the site. Although ‘very much a fringe member’
of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru at this juncture, Jenkins confirmed the action was
undertaken by members of the organization. David Walters, who four years earlier
was charged with criminal damage at the Tryweryn site along with David Pritchard,
later confirmed that Alf Williams, Trefor Beasley and Pritchard - all MAC members -
had indeed been responsible.41 As for the FWA emblazoned forage cap, it had been
deliberately discarded to wrong-foot investigating officers, Jenkins believed. Yet, if it
was dropped accidentally, it confirmed his suspicion the movement was riddled with
problems regarding issues of security, strategy and logistics. What was required, he
reasoned, was a complete re-assessment of the movement’s strengths and
weaknesses.42

John Jenkins was not the only one pre-occupied with matters of security. A
proposal by J. Fordham, Clerk of the Clywedog Authority, that the army be brought in
to safeguard the completion of the reservoir, was dismissed as ‘appalling’ by Home
Office and Whitehall officials. What was needed, they suggested, was for the site
authority to work more closely with both R. B. Thomas, the Chief Constable of Mid
Wales Constabulary and Montgomeryshire County Council.43

Despite continuing criticism of political bias in the undertaking of their
inquiries,44 and a vehement denial of such,45 the police investigation into the
explosion at Clywedog soon reaped reward. On 15 March, 23-year-old Owen
Pennant Hughes of Nebo, Caernarfonshire, was arrested after a search of his farm
recovered 9 lb of gelignite and 6 detonators. During subsequent questioning, Hughes
informed officers he had become immersed in the militant struggle, after being
contacted by Cayo Evans. Moreover, Evans had allegedly suggested Hughes’ remote

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41 Interview between WT & David Walters, 29 December 2008.
42 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 17 November 2008. It was widely felt within nationalist
circles at the time of the action, that the cap had been ‘planted’ by the authorities to incriminate the
FWA. Interview between WT & Glyn Rowlands, 22 March 2004.
43 TNA, BD 11/3947.
44 Sunday Mirror, 10 April 1966; also, Y Cymro, 7 April 1966.
45 TNA, BD 11/3947. Chief Constable, Mid Wales Constabulary, R. B. Thomas, to Arthur Thomas,
Montgomeryshire Plaid Cymru official, 12 April 1966.

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farm would be an ideal location to hold FWA meetings and exercises; most notably, in the use of explosives. It was a suggestion, Hughes admitted to police, he readily complied with. Charged with being in possession of explosives under suspicious circumstances, Hughes was granted bail and ordered to appear before magistrates at the town’s Assizes on 21 April. There, he was further granted bail and committed for trial at the same Assizes on 29 June.

At the commencement of the trial, Owen Hughes entered a plea of guilty to the charge against him. It was then revealed he had come to the attention of police as a result of two letters they had received. Each, admittedly written by Hughes, ‘connected him to the FWA’. One, addressed to ‘Llan’ was identified by police as 27-year-old David Robert Marcus Gale of Llangollen. The other was addressed to ‘Tony’. In this second letter, Hughes wrote that plans to recruit youngsters into the FWA, was gathering apace, following the success of ‘after school discussion groups’. Furthermore, he could arrange delivery of a radio transmitter, capable of receiving messages from a police mobile surveillance vehicle. What was more, he proposed the ‘sham’ and ‘steam blowing’ image of the FWA be maintained. This, the letter added, in order to perpetuate the belief, as held by the authorities, that the threat posed by the group was without foundation.

The court heard in the weeks prior to Hughes’ arrest, a meeting of FWA associates had been held at his farm. During this meeting, Marcus Gale demonstrated how an explosive device could be assembled. This had been achieved with the aid of ‘a clock, wires, a battery with detonators and gelignite’; of which it was also claimed, Gale had in his possession ‘a substantial quantity’. Also allegedly discussed during this meeting was the ‘blowing up of both completed dams and reservoirs under construction; the shooting of forestry workers and the burning of forestry’. This, the court heard, was in order to send a resounding signal to the Forestry Commission, that the forestation of Wales would no longer be tolerated.

In mitigation, Hughes’ defending council Eifion Roberts, informed the court that ‘any young man worth his salt’ was bound to ‘lament the passing of what he thought was best in his national heritage’. Should he to have ‘anything about him’, in all probability, an articulation of that protest would be made in some form or other. Loyalty and the desire to demonstrate that loyalty, had featured strongly in Hughes’ having embroiled himself in explosives. Nonetheless, the defendant accepted that while having been ‘on the periphery’ of the movement, he now saw ‘the error of his
ways’. He was no longer in contact with members of the organisation and ‘his wife and son meant more to him than anything in the world’. In his summing up, Judge Widgery declared he had ‘no interest for the politics of the accused’, other than when it brought him into contact with, what he termed, ‘the ugly, crude violence one associates with explosives’. He accepted police assurances that Hughes played no role in the Clywedog action and further accepted he had subsequently extricated himself from the Free Wales Army. Nevertheless, while recognizing such, he was ‘speaking as much to his former associates as to Hughes himself’, when he said were this not an isolated instance, he would be taking a very dim view. Furthermore, if it was seen that a pattern of this nature was emerging within this jurisdiction, then the court would be bound to use the power which it possessed; and that might result in the sending of persons found guilty of such activity to prison for up to fourteen years. Judge Widgery concluded with a dark and prophetic portent. Those who dabbled in explosives, he remarked gravely, always eventually injured one or more innocent persons. He then placed Owen Penannt Hughes on probation for three years.46

Following the questioning of Owen Hughes by police, the Director of Public Prosecutions was notified. He informed north Wales officers there was enough evidence to warrant the arrests of Marcus Gale and 25-year-old Harry Jones of Cefn Mawr, Wrexham. On 4 May 1966, both men appeared before Denbigh Assizes. Marcus Gale was charged with being in ‘possession of nine electrical detonators in suspicious circumstances’ and receiving and possessing six sticks of mining explosives, known to be stolen. Harry Jones was charged with stealing and possessing mining explosives, the property of the NCB. Crucially, despite their extensive inquiries, police were satisfied that neither defendant had any link to the Clywedog explosion. Having heard the charges before them, the defence council submitted that the two accused had no case to answer on the charge of being in possession of the mining explosives. This, it was maintained, was owing to no evidence having been offered which proved their possession was with an unlawful object in mind. Nonetheless, granted bail, Gale and Jones were committed for trial at Denbigh Assizes on 8 July.

At the commencement of the trial, both Marcus Gale and Harry Jones pleaded

46 TNA, DPP 2/4169; also, WM, 30 June 1966; also, LDP, 30 June 1966. The gelignite was buried in a field, the six detonators stored in a refrigerator in an out-building. Those the FWA intended to target in their recruitment drive were schoolboys between the ages of fourteen and sixteen.

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guilty. The court heard that while undertaking a search of Gale’s home, police discovered a notebook containing diagrams concerning the construction of petrol bombs, an extract removed from an encyclopaedia regarding explosives and political documents and literature of a militant Welsh nationalist nature. Whilst being questioned by officers, Gale allegedly claimed he had been given the explosives by a man from south Wales. Moreover, he had attended a meeting at a farm at Nebo, near Caernarfon, where the construction of explosive devices had been discussed. At a further meeting, Gale added, another man from south Wales brought a quantity of detonators with wire attached. He then proceeded to demonstrate to those assembled, how to combine detonators in a series from a battery. Throughout the demonstration, those gathered were instructed to make diagrams of the procedure. This, Gale informed police, was so that ‘the expertise was in place should the time ever demand it’. It was then disclosed that with the aid of a printing press, Gale had run off hundreds of cards bearing Free Wales Army slogans and further messages of an anti-English character. The court also heard that Harry Jones had stolen the explosive material when formerly employed at the Hafod Colliery near Wrexham. In pleas of mitigation, both men claimed they too had severed links with the FWA. In summing up, Judge Widgery repeated his earlier warning that future cases involving the use of explosives as a political tool, would result in a stern penalty for those convicted. Such activity, Widgery added, was ‘abhorred by all right-minded people’. Requesting his summing up be brought to the attention of any judge who might have cause to preside over such matters on any future circuit, Judge Widgery placed Marcus Gale and Harry Jones on two years probation.47

On 15 May, Parliament met in sombre mood, as the death of the Carmarthen MP, Lady Megan Lloyd George was announced. All sides of the political divide relayed messages of sympathy for its much-respected former member. Nevertheless, having expressed a genuine display of warmth for Megan Lloyd George, political eyes soon turned to the vacant parliamentary seat and the impending Carmarthen by-election.48

47 TNA, DPP 2/4169; also, WM, 5 May, 1966; also, LDP, 9 July 1966. Asked if ‘the man from south Wales with expert knowledge’ was David Pritchard, John Jenkins replied cautiously, ‘it might have been’; adding others from the south also had such knowledge. Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 13 December 2008.
A week later, it was reported that the House of Commons was to discuss the decision by the Severn River Authority to survey forty one prospective reservoir sites in Montgomeryshire.\textsuperscript{49} The announcement followed a meeting in Newtown on 20 March, during which - astonishingly in view of recent events - committee officials revealed the Clywedog project would not yield enough water to meet demand in the Midlands of England by 1976.\textsuperscript{50} Immediately, Plaid Cymru began the process to counter the measure. At a series of meetings, Gwynfor Evans led speeches condemning the attitude of the Severn River Authority; and other like-minded English municipal bodies who appeared to believe that Wales existed solely for their benefit.\textsuperscript{51}

The issue of ‘Welsh water’ had now become a divisive and cardinal political issue. A conviction held by Plaid Cymru, that it was the subject of disproportionate police interest following the Clywedog explosion, received a significant boost at the end of May. At the annual assembly of Welsh Methodists in Dolgellau, a motion was carried condemning police for the ‘unfair and one-sided’ nature of its investigation. The targeting of Gwynfor Evans, the party leader, it was felt, had been particularly insensitive.\textsuperscript{52} Two days later, Cledwyn Hughes, the Secretary of State for Wales, attempted to quell the simmering furore, when he announced to the Commons ‘there was no question of 30 or more reservoirs being constructed in mid-Wales’. Rather, he felt the number to be ‘much smaller’: perhaps ‘two or three in the next 20 years or so’.\textsuperscript{53} If Hughes’ pronouncement was intended to allay nationalist fears, it failed. At a rally the following evening, members of Plaid Cymru, the Union of South Wales Separatists and the Free Wales Army, were ‘vetted by police’ as they attempted to leave. Despite the delegates’ protests that the meeting had been ‘orderly’, arguments and scuffles broke out when a nationalist taking photographs of a police photographer at work was detained by officers and the film from his camera confiscated. The police action, remarked the veteran activist Pedr Lewis, had been ‘rather provocative’.\textsuperscript{54}

In readiness for the Carmarthen by-election, the wheels of political machinery began to turn. It wasn’t long before the central parties recognized a chink in the Plaid

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{49}WM, 23 May 1966.
  \item \textsuperscript{50}Y Cymro, 24 March 1966.
  \item \textsuperscript{51}Y Cymro, 21 April 1966.
  \item \textsuperscript{52}WM, 26 May 1966.
  \item \textsuperscript{53}WM, 28 May 1966.
  \item \textsuperscript{54}WM, 30 May 1966.
\end{itemize}
Cymru armoury, as the alleged link between it and the 'unsavoury element on the militant wing of the movement' became the subject of scrutiny once again. Right on cue, the FWA happily obliged those all too eager to point the finger. On 2 June, Cayo Evans was fined £40 after admitting unlawfully wounding 23-year-old research student Tudor Thomas. Although adamant that Evans had not instigated the affray, Hywel ap Robert, Evans' defence council, conceded his client had 'gone too far', in resisting the unprovoked attack against him with the aid of a knuckleduster. Tudur Thomas, the court heard, had been rendered unconscious and admitted to hospital in Aberystwyth, where he received 25 stitches to head cuts.55

Within days, Cayo Evans was back in the news. Once again, the focus of the nation's media was the Severn Bridge, scheduled to be opened in September. Although quick to distance himself from a threat to blow up the bridge,56 Evans revealed it had 'probably' been issued by 'one of the five or six FWA columns in south east Wales'. Its reason for doing so, he speculated, was in order to highlight dissatisfaction at the bridge's construction, whose real purpose, he added, 'was to bleed Wales dry'. Despite the widespread belief that 'the Bridge' was all but immune from terrorist activity, a spokesman for Gloucestershire county police conceded threats of this nature had to be 'taken seriously'.57 A fortnight later, with 'special undisclosed security measures' having been implemented, including an increase in patrols and the routine questioning of sightseers, to the acute embarrassment of police and security officials, the £8 million Severn Bridge was evacuated. A parcel, thought to contain a bomb was discovered on the span.58 Although the cylindrical object was later dismissed as harmless, the militant nationalists of Wales had more than proved their point.59

Gwynfor 'goes in' at Carmarthen

In west Wales, the Carmarthen summer by-election was hotting up. In an interview with Harlech Television, Cayo Evans eloquently outlined why he believed the day had dawned for Wales to stand aside from the United Kingdom. No other nation

55 TNA, DPP2 4455. Also, WM, 2 June 1966. The incident occurred in Aberystwyth on 22 May. Cayo Evans had been carrying the knuckleduster, the court was told, following a number of threatening remarks which had been made against him in the west Wales area.
56 The Times, 7 June 1966.
57 WM, 7 June 1966.
would tolerate a ‘foreign power’ destroying its communities through flooding, such as had happened at Tryweryn and Clywedog, Evans declared. And as an organization, the Free Wales Army had vowed to take a stand. Welsh independence was not merely a pipedream, added Vernon Griffiths, the fellow FWA member and farming cousin of Cayo Evans. ‘Economically, Wales was blessed with abundant resources to ensure future prosperity’. From a monitory perspective, the capital was there: Wales had both the industry and the agriculture. An autonomous Wales was wholly capable of being economically viable.

Yet, with feelings running high, others were quick to predict the disastrous consequences which would befall Wales, should Plaid Cymru realise its political ambitions and gain the nation its independence. Interviews on television, typified the fears - as harboured by some - that a Plaid breakthrough would be the first step in Wales to that akin to Ireland. It would ‘split the country from top to bottom’. In a series of articles published in the Welsh and UK media, Cayo Evans did little to allay the fears of those convinced that separatism would lead Wales careering over a precipice of division and disharmony. The integration of Wales into England must be prevented, he announced, and physical force used to defend the movement and the nation’s heritage. Furthermore, the doctrine of the Free Wales Army was spreading. The group was expanding rapidly, with membership of the movement ‘standing at upward of 2,000’. Moreover, while a Welsh Republic would be achieved in his lifetime, any degree of federalism would be opposed.

In an interview with John Summers, the freelance journalist whose relationship with the Free Wales Army was to prove decisive to its downfall, Cayo Evans informed the readers of The Sunday Times that the FWA was merely reacting to the demand of the Welsh public. The group, he alleged, having tested the waters of popular opinion to determine the extent of support for its objectives. The result had been a nationwide call to arms, with as many as 150 cells of the movement in his area alone. Nonetheless, the official spokesman of the FWA recognized that strategy was all-important. Certain factions within the group, he revealed, had called for guns to be used against the authorities at the opening of Llyn Celyn eight months previously.

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59 Interview between WT & Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004.
60 Day of Destiny, HTV Wales Production. Screened HTV Wales, 9 October 2006. The interviews were recorded at the time of the election.
‘but’, Evans added, ‘it was the FWA itself who needed martyrs’. Photographs of a policeman’s widow would adorn every newspaper and prove counter-productive. The decision therefore to demonstrate peaceably had been taken by the commanding officer - the identity of whom would remain a secret. Asked by Summers to comment on this apparent rise in militant fervour, the police were disparaging. The less encouragement the FWA received, a spokesman remarked, the shorter would be its revival. Not to be outdone, Cayo Evans then turned his attention to the wider nationalist movement. It was, he believed, too fragmented. Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg campaigned for the Welsh language to be afforded legislative status, but what, Evans argued, was to be gained by holding a mass sit-down in a Post Office? Far better, he believed, ‘to blow it up’. The benefit of direct action to the wider nationalist cause, he reasoned, had been demonstrated by events at Clywedog; and such acts of sabotage would continue.63

Speaking in 2003, Emyr Llywelyn Jones, the president of Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg at this juncture - and chief instigator of its committal to non-violence - suggested why such ‘nonsense’ had done nothing but undermine the serious efforts of the Welsh language society to advance the message of Welsh cultural identity. The so-called Free Wales Army, he declared, had been ‘a Dad’s Army farce’. Of those within its ranks, only Dai Bonar Thomas, he believed - and Thomas had been a notable member of Cymdeithas yr Iaith - had conducted himself with any degree of ‘discernment and dignity’. The rest had brought shame and ridicule on the nationalist movement. Such painfully absurd pronouncements - such as those outlined by Cayo Evans in The Sunday Times interview - did nothing to augment the Welsh nationalist message. Rather, it merely provided unionists within Wales and the English-based media, an opportunity to undermine all serious political and humanistic argument.64 It was a view vociferously shared by leading Welsh language campaigner Gareth Miles, who in 2008, also revealed that a proposal by language activist Neil Jenkins to join forces with the FWA had ‘thankfully, been rejected’. Moreover, at a meeting of the society at the Belvue Hotel at Aberystwyth, in 1966, Trevor Morgan, an English-

63 The Sunday Times, 10 July 1966. The article later appeared in the Belgium and Flemish edition of the weekly pictorial magazine De Post. Cayo Evans claimed to have served in the French Foreign Legion and that the FWA had received £500 from plane and film manufacturing magnate, Howard Hughes. Cardigan and Teifyside Advertiser, 28 October 1966.
64 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 12 September 2003.
speaker and very much opposed to the pacifism of Gwynfor Evans, had nevertheless spoken against using direct action. Yet, not all members of Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg, Miles added, supported Emyr Llywelyn Jones and the policy of non-violence. For instance, Geraint Jones, the vice-president of the society, had ‘wanted to use physical force in a restrained way’; as had others, such as Trefor Beasley. Emyr Llywelyn Jones, the society president, remarked Miles, ‘had been appalled’. Nonetheless, despite the adoption of non-direct action to further the cause of legislative recognition for the Welsh language, it was not the last time that members of Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg were linked to militancy, as John Jenkins, the former director-general of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru disclosed in 2008.

Yet, speaking in 2003, Denis Coslett, the commander of the FWA’s Llanelli Brigade, conceded that antipathy from Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg towards the Free Wales Army had not gone unnoticed. ‘We had respect for them’, he declared, ‘but they simply could not see what we were trying to achieve. The campaign of the FWA had been one of propaganda, yet they simply couldn’t see it’. Perhaps the academic background of the two groups offers some clue as to the apparent gulf between them. ‘I think they looked down on us’, revealed Coslett. ‘I think they thought us ill-educated and uncouth’. In contrast, he added, the FWA considered many of ‘Cymdeithas’ to be ‘spoilt little college boys’. Nevertheless, if many of the early FWA’s pronouncements were received with derisory indignation among Jones and his peers, there was worse to come before the decade’s end, as the FWA ship of dissemination sailed unerringly ahead, with Coslett at the helm, happy to indulge an imbibe media.

However, the campaigning in one of the most eagerly anticipated by-elections in years was finally over. Shortly after 1.00 a.m., amid scenes of near hysteria, Gwynfor Richard Evans was duly elected MP for Carmarthen. Addressing both the jubilant Plaid Cymru supporters in Carmarthen’s Guildhall Square and stunned opponents near and far, Evans proclaimed the result showed that Wales was ‘at last on

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65 Interview between WT & Gareth Miles, 13 January 2008.
67 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 20 November 2003.
The confluence of genuine warmth for Evans as a local family man, a protest vote at the worsening economic crisis, a strong student vote and the upsurge in national consciousness, all ensured the Welsh political landscape would never be the same again. Yet, not everyone in Guildhall Square was ready to celebrate. ‘Are we now going to have road blocks on the borders of Wales’, asked one man, ‘where everybody who doesn’t speak Welsh gets shot?’. Why, inquired one woman, did the nationalists of Wales assume ownership of the Welsh flag? It belonged to ‘the Welsh nation: to the whole of Wales’.

The Plaid Cymru machine had fought a slick, dogged, well orchestrated and relevant campaign. Firmly rooted in the importance of local issues, such as attracting inward investment to the area and the need to improve the region’s infrastructure, Evans had attracted support across the generational and political divide. The Labour Party candidate, Gwilym Prys Davies, dismissed Evans’ victory as a ‘protest vote’. Emrys Jones, the Labour party’s chief organiser in Wales went further still. Evans’ victory, he predicted, would spell the death knell for nationalist politics in Wales. With Evans’ a lone voice in parliament, the electorate would see ‘how useless’ it was ‘to support these types of policies’. He was partly right. But the downfall of Welsh nationalism? Far from it.

Nonetheless, having for so long wrestled with failure and ridicule, the nationalist party of Wales now found itself a respectable presence at the centre of the Welsh political arena. Those who argued Welsh nationalism was regressive and founded on a misconception as to the nature and function of the modern state, were now forced to think again. The militant wing within Plaid Cymru had also been silenced. A simply stated, though no doubt sincere congratulatory telegram from the Penyberth arsonists, Saunders Lewis, D. J. Williams and Lewis Valentine, arrived at Evans’ home the day following his election to parliament. In four words, it signalled the end of Saunders Lewis’ unofficial patronage over Plaid Cymru doctrine and conceded the party he had helped to create, now wrested firmly in the hands of his

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69 Day of Destiny, HTV Wales Production. Screened HTV Wales, 9 October 2006.
71 Day of Destiny, HTV Wales Production. Screened HTV Wales, 9 October 2006. Interviews conducted at the time of the election.
72 Day of Destiny, HTV Wales Production. Screened HTV Wales, 2006.
successor. Finally, Evans had won the battle over the future course of medial nationalist politics. After years of bitter in-fighting, his position as leader of a largely pacifist and rigidly constitutional Plaid Cymru was unassailable.

Saunders Lewis was not the only former ‘irritant’ in conciliatory mood. Within days of Evans’ victory, a letter arrived from Neil Jenkins apologising for having underestimated Evans’ constitutional message. Expelled from the party in 1962 for having dared state the unthinkable - that Evans was leading the party into oblivion - in 2006, Jenkins conceded the party president ‘had been right all along’. Another former activist prepared to recognise Evans’ achievement was Owain Williams. In March 2004, Williams admitted to having been ‘overjoyed’ on learning of Evans’ victory. However, like Neil Jenkins, the feeling of goodwill was short-lived, as he too began to question how great ‘a triumph’ the election victory truly was in the long-term.

Another question hung in the air. Had the policy of direct action, as adopted at Tryweryn and Clywedog, been a factor in Evans’ success? The drowning of Cwm Tryweryn had not been much discussed on the doorsteps of Carmarthenshire during Evans’ electoral campaign. Yet, in 2008, David Walters - fined in October 1962 for releasing oil from an electrical transformer at the Tryweryn reservoir construction site - was in no doubt the use of explosives in the defence of Wales and its resources had benefited Gwynfor Evans. Up until 1966, Plaid Cymru had been regarded within Wales as a ‘political non-entity’, revealed Walters. As a party activist in the industrial valleys, canvassing on the door step for electoral support prior to this period, he had been routinely and robustly asked, ‘what is Plaid Cymru?’ The explosion at Clywedog had changed this. The policy of direct action both highlighted the subjugated position of Wales and consequently transformed the party’s electoral fortunes, he believed. For the first time in perhaps a generation, a stand had been taken solely to defend the nation’s cultural homogeneity. Even among those who felt unease over the use of such tactics, an innate sense of patriotism had been aroused. Suddenly, Walters added, Welshmen and women could be seen standing up for Wales and its rights; and that alone, he felt, instigated a sense of togetherness and cultural

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74 Interview between WT & Neil Jenkins, 22 October 2006.
75 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004.
and political unity.\textsuperscript{77}

It was a sentiment shared by Emyr Llywelyn Jones. However, rather than Clywedog, Jones believed the drowning of Cwm Tryweryn proved the catalyst for change. It was ‘quite ironic’, he remarked, that Plaid Cymru, for fear of losing electoral support, steadfastly refused to ‘do anything’ over Tryweryn. Yet, the party’s fortunes had eventually prospered due to the ‘wave of sympathy’ which arose from its drowning; and this, Jones added, with Evans and the party leadership seemingly oblivious to the fact. It had been this groundswell of support, which ensured the party its subsequent electoral successes. ‘Indeed, had it not been for Tryweryn’, Jones insisted, the party would have remained a marginalized protest group. Yet, perversely, ‘the party leadership had done its best to dampen hostility to the flooding’.\textsuperscript{78} To others however, such detractive comment failed to recognise Evans’ considerable political acumen. If timing, opportunism and good fortune doubtless played a part in the advance of Plaid Cymru as serious political contender, it had nevertheless been Evans’ skilful political manoeuvring which proved its greatest asset. This was highlighted, they believed, in comments Evans made in an interview with \textit{The Times}, the day following his election victory. Rather than Plaid Cymru, Gwynfor Evans declared, the onus lay firmly with the Wilson administration to end the violence. The government, he added pointedly, did ‘not think anyone serious until people started blowing up things or shooting others’.\textsuperscript{79}

As Gwynfor Evans basked untroubled in the sunshine of his success, a familiar dark cloud hovered on the horizon. Asked to comment on Plaid’s breakthrough, Cayo Evans quashed rumours the Free Wales Army intended to call a truce to its activities in light of Evans’ victory. On the contrary, remarked the group’s self-styled publicity spokesman, ‘the election of a nationalist MP only proved Wales supported the call for independence. To suspend its campaign would be tantamount

\textsuperscript{76} Emyr Daniel, \textit{Cofia Dryweryn, Cambria} (Carmarthen, January/February 2006).
\textsuperscript{77} Interview between WT & David Walters, 29 December 2008. Plaid Cymru canvassers had been firmly instructed on no account to wear FWA uniform. Rhys Evans, \textit{Portrait of a Patriot} (Talybont, 2008), p.261.
\textsuperscript{78} Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 20 September 2005. It is a view shared by dismissed Plaid Cymru Organising Secretary Emrys Roberts. ‘Had Plaid taken a more aggressive stance over Tryweryn, had it used methods as later adopted by Cymdeithas yr Iaith, then maybe those who later undertook militant action would not have been driven to do so’. It was though, Roberts believed, ‘the wrong way to go about things’. Interview between WT & Emrys Roberts, 31 July 2009.
\textsuperscript{79} \textit{The Times}, 16 July 1966. Plaid Cymru doubled its membership within a year. For young party activists, it was little short of a religious revival. \textit{Gwynfor Evans: The Member for Wales?} BBC Wales Production. Screened, April 2005.
to defeat for the movement. Only when every Welsh parliamentary seat was held by a nationalist and home rule had been achieved would such a decision be taken. A colleague of Cayo Evans who refused to reveal his identity, other than to say he was commander of the Rhymney and Sirhowy Valleys column of the group, reiterated the message. If the FWA gave up now, he declared stoically, ‘it would be surrender’. It would, ‘carry on the fight’.

A Plaid Cymru statement attempted to put the FWA into context. As long as Plaid Cymru failed to make political ground, ‘the FWA had some ground to stand on’. However, the election of the party president had ‘taken the wind out its sails’. Dismissing the FWA comments as mere ‘bravado’, Plaid Cymru, the communiqué added, was not impressed by what it called ‘the last-ditch stand’ by a few extremists who thought themselves ‘Welsh Castros’.

It was an image, Cayo Evans was more than happy to perpetuate. During an interview with the Daily Mirror, Evans stubbornly refused to accept the increasing orthodoxy that the FWA was more of a hindrance than a help to the cause of Welsh independence. His only regret was the group’s attendance at the opening of Llyn Celyn the previous October. By demystifying the group’s ‘legend’, the police had been able to compile dossiers on all those drawn to its ranks. It was a mistake John Jenkins and the elusive Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru had more than recognized.

However, having fought on a broad local platform throughout the election campaign, on 20 July, Gwynfor Evans stood on another platform at Carmarthen railway station and boarded the newly dubbed ‘Evans Express’ to London. A new chapter in the political odyssey of Gwynfor Evans was about to begin; yet, this too would be no less difficult and no less solitary. If the newly dubbed ‘Member for Wales’ hoped the troublesome element within the nationalist movement was now safely off the radar, on arriving at Paddington station, the spectre of the FWA was there to greet him. Asked to comment on the group, Gwynfor Evans played a backhand volley worthy of any Wimbledon final. He had, he remarked, met ‘all three members of the FWA’. They were ‘nice lads’, but Plaid Cymru had nothing to do with them. Moreover, the party had been the victim of ‘a smear campaign by people in London’, intent on discrediting the nationalist movement of Wales, through

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80 WM, 18 July 1966.
81 The Times, 19 July 1966.
83 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007.
‘mischievously associating’ Plaid Cymru with the violent methods espoused by the extremists. The leading mud-slinger, Evans appeared to suggest, was the Labour MP for Pontypool, Leo Abse.

At a celebratory Plaid Cymru conference, Gwynfor Evans told hundreds of enthusiastic supporters the fate of the nation lay in its hands. Welsh freedom, Evans announced, in a calculated attempt to focus the collective vision, could be achieved in ‘about ten years’. Having urged what he termed ‘the radicals of Wales’ to unite, to a standing ovation, the party leader announced that Plaid Cymru would contest every parliamentary seat at the next general election. It was a decision which would send a chill wind whistling through the corridors of power and lead ultimately to the security services scuttling to seize control of an increasingly volatile situation. Toni Lewis attended the meeting. In 2004, Lewis alleged that Gwynfor Evans had made an even more startling admission. Addressing Lewis and the twenty or so uniformed FWA associates sat before him in the front row, Evans expressed his gratitude for their ‘efforts’ in securing his by-election victory. It was a pronouncement which had a profound effect on Lewis and also present Gethin ap Iestyn. Impressed by the party leader’s unexpected generosity, each declared that forthwith they would campaign for an independent Wales through non-violent means. Notwithstanding the party leader’s apparent endorsement however, their decision, Lewis added, coincided with an increasing doubt that the Free Wales Army alone could deliver their dream of a free Wales. Both he and Gethin ap Iestyn reasoned for the FWA to succeed, it must have a political wing running parallel to maximise its political appeal. To this end, Lewis and Gethin ap Iestyn formed the Patriotic Front.

The objective of the party, Gethin ap Iestyn later explained, was to provide a neo-political wing to all patriot/republican agencies in Wales. Furthermore, to lead a united patriotic effort in the struggle for Welsh independence, at all levels and in all fields of operation. Asked to assess Gethin ap Iestyn’s character at this juncture, Lyn Ebenezer remarked that the youthful ap Iestyn had struck him as contemplative

84 LDP, 21 July 1966.
85 South Wales Evening Post, 1 August 1966.
86 Interview between WT & Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004.
87 Correspondence between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, March 2008. ‘To unite within one organization all patriotic movements and societies, affiliated together in an alliance to form a truly national patriotic front. The object of this alliance will be to put pressure on the English government and native quisling institutions to reach agreement with the aims of this patriotic front. The aims being - an independent Welsh republic within a confederation of Free Celtia’. Front, vol.1,No.5, Aug. 1968; also, TNA, DPP

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individual; rather ‘serious and a thinker’: and the police, Ebenezer added earnestly
‘don’t like thinkers’. 88

Nevertheless, with the objective firmly established, both Toni Lewis and
Gethin ap Iestyn recognized that in order to give the fledgling party as much political
credence as possible, its first priority was to distance itself from the FWA - albeit
officially. On 31 July, both men, accompanied by five other Gwent FWA adherents,
entered Maesteg police station and ‘formally declared’ their dissociation from the so-
called Free Wales Army. 89 Lewis later conceded that while the strategy had been in
part to ‘cock a snook’ at the authorities, it had also lent gravitas to the belief that a
serious political movement was being orchestrated to take the armed struggle - which
would continue - onto a firmer political footing. 90

These were indeed heady days for the militant wing of the nationalist
movement. Just days later, an anonymous telephone call was made to the Western
Mail. The caller, purporting to be a member of the FWA, threatened to assassinate
the Secretary of State for Wales, Cledwyn Hughes, who was visiting the Eisteddfod in
Aberafan. 91 Unperturbed, in an interview to officially launch the Patriotic Front,
secretary of the party, Gethin ap Iestyn was in dogmatic mood. The Front, he
informed The Times, would ‘be out in force’ at the opening of the Severn Bridge
scheduled for 8 September. Toni Lewis was also buoyant: with the backing of the
FWA, he declared, the Patriotic Front would ‘soon be stronger than Plaid Cymru’. 92
As for Gwynfor Evans, he returned to parliament to be greeted with cries of derision
by Leo Abse. Why, demanded the Labour MP for Pontypool, had Evans not
‘condemned unequivocally’ the threat to kill Cledwyn Hughes? 93 The Plaid Cymru
president’s parliamentary honeymoon was over.

**John Jenkins enters the stage**

In addition to the arrival of the Patriotic Front on the Welsh political stage, another

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88 Interview between WT & Lyn Ebenezer, 16 June 2006.
89 FWA and PF Trial Exhibit 10.
90 Interview between WT & Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004.
91 The Times, 5 August 1966. The threat led to the cancellation of a planned rally by CyIG and an
angry rebuke of the FWA and the ‘weak headed individual’ responsible by E. Ll. Jones. No link with
the ‘army’, visible or otherwise, he added, was welcomed. D. Coslett later admitted making the
92 The Times, 29 August 1966.
crucial chapter in the history of the nationalist campaign unfolded at the Plaid Cymru summer conference in 1966. In 2004, Toni Lewis threw light on his first unpropitious encounter with Sergeant John Jenkins of the British Army Dental Corps. To Lewis and his associates, the mysterious taciturn figure, sitting impassively on his ‘bed’, while staring intently around the extemporary dormitory, bore all the hallmarks of a covert Special Branch police officer. Their suspicions were compounded by Jenkins’ catholic short hair and clean-cut demeanour. Finally, following increasingly audible threats of violence, Jenkins was approached and malevolently instructed to reveal his name, profession and thoughts on a militant offensive. Understandably reluctant to disclose his identity, Jenkins eventually placated the group by having his Plaid Cymru membership confirmed. He then quietly slipped away.\(^94\) Asked to confirm Lewis’ account of the incident, Jenkins revealed he had found the episode both amusing and somewhat ludicrous. Moreover, this solitary encounter with the unsuspecting FWA, all but confirmed his assumption the group was ineffective and wholly incapable of successfully carrying the fight to the British state.\(^95\) More significantly however, Jenkins concluded through his attendance at the Plaid Cymru summer school, that despite Gwynfor Evans’ election victory, the party’s umbilical link to constitutional campaigning undermined both its political advance and offered no resistance to that which threatened Wales and its unique identity. He was now certain that only a programme of militant action could both further prevent the cultural dilution of Wales and in addition, ensure its political preservation. Through discussions with those at the fore-front of the organization, Jenkins discovered he was not alone. Crucially, he also recognized that before any such action was undertaken, a complete over-haul of the movement was required.

If the preceding eighteen months had been somewhat tumultuous for Gwynfor Evans, John Jenkins’ life had also been subject to significant change. In the early spring of 1965, Jenkins submitted a written request to the War Office to be posted to a camp either in, or within proximity to Wales. It had, he believed, ‘blotted his copybook greatly’ as far as the army authorities were concerned. In order to ‘stake

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\(^93\) *WM*, 5 August 1966.
\(^94\) Interview between WT & Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004. It was also at the Aberafan Eisteddfod that Dafydd y Dug (David John Underhill) first cemented his interest in Welsh cultural matters. *Y Cymro*, 9 July 1969.
his claim’, Jenkins disclosed his reasons for wanting to return. The revelation that to do so would ensure his son received a Welsh-language education, more than indicated his cultural allegiance. Moreover, it both demonstrated that he was not an ‘Empire’ person and suggested he felt disdain for the jingoism which encompassed it. From that moment, Jenkins added, there was ‘a hint things were not as they should be’. Furthermore, any ambition to proceed his army career had been almost certainly been thwarted. Yet, unrepentant, Jenkins was delighted when informed the request had been accepted. In April 1965, he was transferred to Saighton Barracks, Cheshire. Two months later, Jenkins and his family moved to Wrexham, where his son, Vaughan, attended Ysgol Bodhyfryd.

Nevertheless, the posting did not merely address the educational needs of Jenkins junior, it also provided Jenkins senior an opportunity to further interests of his own. Prior to his return to the UK, John Jenkins begun to strengthen his contacts in the all but moribund Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru. In 2008, Jenkins confirmed that contact with David Pritchard had proved instrumental and the key to his access into MAC. Both from the industrial belt of south east Wales, Pritchard’s position within the movement had been ‘akin to a GP’: and as such, only with his endorsement had anything been possible. Having secured a foothold, on returning to the UK, John Jenkins began the process of establishing both his credentials within MAC and affirming its logistics and capabilities. He later disclosed how this had been achieved. Although a peripheral member of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru at the time of the Clywedog explosion, Jenkins had tentatively begun to assess what he believed ‘needed to be done to put things right’. In order to get a clear understanding of the movement’s structure, he traveled throughout Wales gathering information. One of the first to meet Jenkins to discuss the offensive merits of the movement at the close of 1965 was Marcus Gale. Gradually, it became clear to Jenkins ‘that MAC was not just a north Wales movement, but an all-Wales movement’. In addition, he was able to ascertain how many people were involved and crucially, the capacity of each

96 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007; also telephone interview 20 September 2010. Angered by Tryweryn, Clywedog and a ‘haughty, patronizing’ letter from British Forces Radio accusing him of ‘tribalism’, following Jenkins’ request to hear more Welsh related programmes, such as ‘Welsh hymn singing’, Jenkins met David Prichard and David Walters in a pub in Bargoed on returning from Germany. A discussion followed as to the movements’ dormant capabilities. ‘Coming from the next valley, it didn’t take long for us to meet’.

person’s affiliation. Although a degree of overlap existed, the movement, he further established, was nonetheless composed of two distinct groups. Each, acting in support of the other, was to prove essential to the success of the three-year campaign. The first group consisted of those prepared to undertake militant action ‘in the field’. The second group, of near equal importance to the first, comprised the ‘sleepers’.

These people not only proved a source of much needed revenue for the movement, they also provided, what Jenkins termed ‘safe-houses’; namely, food and shelter - often for a number of days - for evasive operatives. Furthermore, the term ‘sleeper’ also constituted those people providing invaluable ‘local knowledge’: an essential component when an action was undertaken in an area unfamiliar to those actively involved. The role played by the so-called ‘sleepers’ Jenkins stressed, could not therefore be overstated. Of critical importance from the outset in establishing himself, was ‘to be known and trusted’ by those at the vanguard of the militant community, Jenkins revealed. The movement, he recalled, had grown tired of those willing to do nothing other than ‘preach’ whilst under the influence of alcohol. Those who shared his belief that only through militant action could progress be made, had reacted favourably to his discerning, sober approach. As his reputation for being both trustworthy and pragmatic increased, to Jenkins’ satisfaction, word began to circulate that he was collecting ‘information and equipment’. Little by little, a picture emerged of how much ‘material or resources was available; where it was stored and the condition it was in’. It was at this juncture, Jenkins recalled in 2007, he realized he ‘was in business’. Finally, after many months of empathic yet careful ‘digging’, John Jenkins had all the information and the contacts necessary to orchestrate an efficacious underground movement.

Yet, a degree of fine tuning was still required, as a series of factors, essential to the protest’s success, stared Jenkins in the face. He firstly believed that only a constrained, considered campaign would win the hearts and minds of the Welsh public; without the support of whom, he reasoned, early detection was certain. Secondly, the newly established director-general of MAC had studied Irish Republican history. He was aware that movements such as his, had been routinely

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98 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007; also, telephone interview, 30 March 2009. Jenkins soon realized that meetings in secluded locations aroused suspicion, subsequently, it was ‘better to have meetings in busy supermarkets’, he opined.

defeated by paid infiltrators, spies and informers.\textsuperscript{100} To combat the problem, Jenkins and Owain Williams, earlier imprisoned for undertaking militant action over Tryweryn, devised the four man ‘cell-structure’.\textsuperscript{101} This, roundly based on the principle adopted to successful effect by the FLN in the Algerian War of Independence, comprised small teams with all members known to each other. Crucially however, only the lead member of the cell would be known to Jenkins. In order to further maximize the security of the movement, Jenkins’ identity would remain unknown: even to the cell leader. This, Jenkins believed, would ensure a team could operate effectively with the minimum fear of infiltration. Thirdly, and most sobering of all, Jenkins knew he himself would have to orchestrate any such campaign and that control of the organization could only be secured, if he alone assembled and distributed the explosive devices. Finally, Jenkins recognized it would be some time before the restructured Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru, would be ready to take the armed struggle with the British state to a new and unprecedented level.\textsuperscript{102}

**The FWA turns its attention to the Severn Bridge**

Despite MAC’s development, media attention continued to focus on the FWA. Following plans drawn up by ‘the General Army Council of the Welsh Army’ which outlined how independence for Wales might be achieved by 1980,\textsuperscript{103} in an extended article for *Tit-Bits* magazine, beneath the banner headline, *There’ll be a Welcome in the Hillside*, Cayo Evans was quoted by journalist John Roberts (actually journalist John Summers) as having said the group was ‘naturally’ comprised of ‘some hotheads’. Furthermore, added Evans gravely, who could tell what they might do if the Queen were to step on the Welsh side of the Severn bridge when it was opened.\textsuperscript{104} Cayo Evans was unaware that John Summers, to whom he made these comments, was

\textsuperscript{100} Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007; also, telephone interview, 30 March 2009.
\textsuperscript{101} Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 4 March 2008. John Jenkins was introduced to Owain Williams by David Pritchard. The cell structure, Williams explained, enabled the movement to ‘be more resilient’ to external pressure. He could not remember exactly whether it was his idea or John Jenkins’ idea, but it was something ‘we mutually agreed upon’. O. Williams’ claim to have been instrumental in establishing the cell structure was greeted with incredulity by John Jenkins. Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 November 2008. Algerian nationalists took the name Front de Liberation Nationale (FLN).
\textsuperscript{102} Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 25 March 2004 & 19 October 2007.
\textsuperscript{103} *Free Wales Army* Document Folder, pages 115 - 203. Part 2. Free Wales Army and Patriotic Front trial, exhibit 143.
\textsuperscript{104} *Tit-Bits*, 10 September 1966. TNA, DPP 2/4455.
a police informer. Denis Coslett later claimed the group had suspected ‘all along’ the journalist ‘was up to something’. Yet, whether refusing to take heed of their instincts, or blinded by the lure of notoriety which the report promised to deliver, as part of the article for Tit-Bits, the FWA invited Summers to attend an FWA exercise. Papers stored at the National Archives state that John Summers lived in Lulsgate, Somerset and was employed as a freelance journalist by the South West News Agency. The night before he left to rendezvous with members of the FWA, he contacted his police handler, Kenneth Clark, deputy coordinator, No.7 Regional Crime Squad, based in Bristol. On returning to the west country, Summers submitted a comprehensive report of his encounter with the Free Wales Army. During the two-day visit to Wales, declared Summers, Cayo Evans informed him of having, during the proceeding week, attended a meeting in Dublin with a leading figure in the Irish Republican Army. Moreover, Summers had joined some 10 members of the FWA at the Stag and Pheasant Inn, at Pontarsais, between Lampeter and Carmarthen. During the evening, talk had turned to the ‘destruction of the Severn Bridge’. It had been stated by a person unknown to Summers, ‘that the blowing of charges placed against supporting cables of the Bridge would cause the roadway to twist and buckle’. Convinced that none of those present had been involved in the destruction of the conveyor at the Clywedog Reservoir site, the following morning, Summers joined some five members of the FWA on an exercise in the mountains above Llandovery. The group, which included an Irishman thought to be employed as a foreman on a building site at Carmarthen, consented to having their photographs taken by Summers on condition their faces were concealed.

The group was photographed in possession of four 9mm Mauser-Parabellum machine pistols and what Summers described as a ‘Czechoslovakian machine gun’. This, the police later deduced, was ‘probably a machine carbine’. In addition, Summers alleged the group discussed being disposed of a relatively ‘insufficient amount of gelignite to make a suitably spectacular explosion’. Yet nevertheless, they were, he added, in possession of a ‘considerable quantity of 9 m.m. ammunition’. One spent cartridge, Summers claimed to have concealed in his shoe; having discovered it in a glove department of a car belonging to an FWA attendee. The cartridge, along with photographs taken of the exercise, he later handed to Kenneth

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105 TNA, DPP 2/4455.
Clark, his police handler. In a letter to the chief constable of Gloucester constabulary, which was circulated to every Welsh police force and also to No.8 Regional Crime Squad based in Cardiff, Clark drew attention to the fact that one of the prints contained an image of a ‘shoe pattern’ which ‘appeared to have been erased’. This, Clark seemed to imply, may have been to conceal the identity of the person involved. Why the FWA agreed to the article, was also the subject of some conjecture. The two most likely reasons, Clark suggested, was in order to obtain publicity for the organization, or for payment; a premise suggestion strongly denied by John Summers.107

The motives John Summers had for informing on the FWA are unknown. It is unrecorded whether information he passed to police was in receipt of payment. However, if the journalist considered himself to be an invaluable tool in the fight against crime, a confidential police report from the period paints an altogether different picture. It was widely held within journalistic circles, the report stated, that Summers ‘was prepared to say or do anything if it made a story’. He was furthermore considered ‘unstable’, likely to have ‘suffered mental imbalance’ and thought a ‘thoroughly unreliable type’. Nonetheless, he was ‘an intelligent, articulate’, if potentially ‘dangerous man’. As for his involvement with the FWA, his Welsh ‘middle name Owen’ the report added, was not perhaps ‘without significance’.108

Unaware of the police report into his background, John Summers’s article on the Free Wales Army appeared in Tit-Bits. Once again with its publication, the FWA demonstrated an uncanny knack for media manipulation. New recruits, once having successfully passed a rigorous security screening, proclaimed Cayo Evans, were ‘taken to secret training camps’, where they received lectures in how to ‘handle weapons and explosives’. The IRA, he added staunchly, had been ‘a great help’. Moreover, links between the FWA and the IRA were such that men from the Welsh movement had travelled to Ireland to receive training from their Irish counterparts. As for Plaid Cymru, the FWA ‘thought the world of Gwynfor’, and didn’t blame him for ‘disowning’ them. Yet, he and the party owed the Free Wales Army ‘a lot’. Unsurprisingly, it was not a view shared by Gwynfor Evans. Asked to comment on Evans’ remarks, the party president wearily apologised before adding he was ‘tired of

106 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 10 March 2001.
talking about the FWA’. He could not ‘take them seriously’ and the publicity they attracted ‘did no one any good’. However, if Cayo Evans was to regret comments attributed to him in the article, it was his cousin Vernon Griffiths, who was to rue the day more than most. He knew, he declared ‘how to use a gun’, and would not, he added earnestly, ‘hesitate to fire it if ordered to’.\footnote{\textit{Tit-Bits}, 10 September 1966; also, TNA, DPP 2/4455.} They were words which returned to haunt the unwitting FWA man. Yet, Summers’ involvement with the FWA did not end there. In his role as chief conduit for the organisation, the journalist penned a number of incriminating articles on the group throughout the next two years. Many of these articles were later cited by the prosecution as evidence against them in the trial of leading members of the group some three years later.

Just five days before the Queen was due to open the Severn Bridge, the \textit{Western Mail} reported that ‘200 members of the FWA’ had spent a weekend in the ‘mountains of north Wales’, undergoing ‘specialist training’ in the use of explosives. Reputedly organised by the ‘army’s northern command’, the manoeuvre had been ordered to prepare for an attempt to ‘blow up the Severn Bridge’. Contrary to Cayo Evans’ claim the weekend was ‘very successful’,\footnote{\textit{Tit-Bits}, 10 September 1966; also, TNA, DPP 2/4455.} speaking in 2006, Lyn Ebenezer, who attended the meeting, described a very different version of events. The training camp had been held on the farm in Snowdonia owned by Owen Pennant Hughes. Along with ‘ten or so members of the Free Wales Army’, the meeting had also been attended by Marcus Gale. Contrary to assurances made at their trial some six months before, that each had turned their back on militant activity, both Hughes and Gale remained steadfast in their belief that only through violent engagement could home rule for Wales be achieved. Introduced to the gathering by Cayo Evans as ‘the Barnes Wallace of Wales’, Marcus Gale proceeded to demonstrate how to assemble an explosive device. That night, Owen Hughes, Marcus Gale, Denis Coslett and Cayo Evans slept peacefully in the comfort of the farmhouse. The other attending FWA members spent an uncomfortable night in an outbuilding. They were not alone, placed in a Horlicks tin and left to rest on a table sat ‘the bomb’.

To a man happy to admit his lack of gallantry, Lyn Ebenezer found the whole sleepless experience ‘bloody scary’. He need not have worried. The following morning, the assembled throng huddled in anticipation behind a wall to see the bomb detonate. To the disappointment of many and the considerable relief of Lyn...
Ebenezer, ‘not a stone moved’ as the device failed to activate. Refusing to be downhearted, it was left to Cayo Evans to close the proceedings. It was merely a case, Evans remarked resolutely, of going ‘back to the drawing board’. The party then travelled to Caernarfon where, after a drinking session in the Conservative Club, Lyn Ebenezer and Peter ‘Goginan’ received their pre-signed FWA membership cards. The party then dissembled, returning to their various parts of Wales.\(^{111}\) Having decided that another source would be needed to provide the movement with its logistical expertise, the meeting also proved the parting of the waves between Marcus Gale and the FWA. On 8 September, threats to hamper the official opening of the Severn Bridge failed to materialize, as amid considerable security, the Queen opened the £8 million construction without incident. Nevertheless, whether merely a coincidence, or borne of concern for Welsh militant action, the official ceremony was held on the English side of the bridge.\(^{112}\)

Despite police reservations concerning the reliability of John Summers as an informant, remarks allegedly made by Cayo Evans of established links with the IRA did not go unnoticed. Acting on an anonymous tip-off that an IRA suspect was staying at Evans’ home, at 1.30 in the morning of 20 October, police visited Glan Denys where they interviewed an Irishman believed to be Rory O’Scanlon. Asked to confirm his name and profession, the suspect replied he was Eamon O’Higgins, a publicity agent for the Irish publication *Slant Publicity*. Unconvinced, later that morning, the chief constable of the Carmarthen constabulary wrote to the Commissioner of the Dublin Garda, requesting information concerning both O’Higgins and O’Scanlon.\(^{113}\) Unable to ascertain which of the two men was currently in Wales, the Garda’s reply nonetheless revealed that each was a known member of the IRA. Moreover, on the description given by the Welsh force, the Dublin Garda speculated that Evans’ mystery guest was Eamon O’Higgins. Yet, of equal interest to

\(^{110}\) *WM*, 5 September 1966.

\(^{111}\) Interview between WT & Lyn Ebenezer, 16 June 2006.

\(^{112}\) *The Times*, 9 September 1966. In the days before the official opening, unspecified FWA slogans appeared on walls near the bridge link road. *WM*, 8 September 1966. On the opening’s eve, four police officers sat in a parked squad car outside the Patriots Rest, the club ran by Toni Lewis and Gethin ap Iestyn in Cwmbran. Interview between WT & Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004. Troops from ‘Honiton in Devon’ protected the bridge. *Sunday Telegraph* Supplement, 6 September 1968.

\(^{113}\) TNA, DPP 2/4455. Letter from Chief Constable Carmarthen Constabulary to Commissioner of Dublin Garda, 20 October 1966. Cayo Evans informed the police that he was an ‘honorary Colonel in the IRA’. It was dismissed as spurious by Dublin Garda, as there existed no such rank in the IRA, honorary or otherwise.
the Welsh police force, the Garda chief superintendent disclosed that undercover Garda officers had followed an unsuspecting Cayo Evans from the ferry port of Rosslare to Dublin some two months before. On arriving in Dublin, the communique added, Evans had booked into a hotel, where for a period of some two hours, he was joined by Rory O'Scanlon. Cayo Evans had returned to Wales later that evening.\textsuperscript{114} The rendezvous only served to strengthen police suspicions the IRA was arming the Free Wales Army.

**Aberfan and the FWA**

The day following the police visit to Cayo Evans' home, spoil tip number 7 at Merthyr Vale Colliery, thundered down a mountainside in a tidal wave of coal waste and rock, onto the village of Aberfan. It first destroyed a farm cottage, killing all the occupants, before at 9.13 a.m., engulfing some 20 houses and Pantglas Junior School. Among the 144 killed, were 116 schoolchildren: all under the age of 11.\textsuperscript{115} For Patriotic Front founder and FWA sympathiser Toni Lewis, the disaster crystallized his belief that Wales must stand alone. 'It was an horrendous day', Lewis recalled. He had been unable to get to the disaster site, but one thing had struck him as forcefully as the sight of miners and police officers digging frantically to reach an entombed generation. What the country surely needed was an army of its own? That could be deployed to deal with such a tragedy: 'in uniform, as an army for Wales. To do the digging, or anything, you know'.\textsuperscript{116} As the nation mourned, countless numbers shared the sense of loss and bewilderment. One man traumatized by the tragedy was John Jenkins, whose childhood family home was destroyed in the disaster.\textsuperscript{117} That night, watching transfixed in Wrexham the grey, grim images from Aberfan, Jenkins was said to be 'insensate with grief'.\textsuperscript{118}

\textsuperscript{114} TNA, DPP 2/4455. Letter from Chief Superintendent Dublin Garda to Chief Constable Carmarthen Constabulary, 25 October 1966.

\textsuperscript{115} Ian McLean & Martin Johnes, *Aberfan: Government and Disasters* (Cardiff, 2000), pp.10, 23. Perhaps the most painful irony of all, was that the coal waste buried the decedents of those who had dug it out.

\textsuperscript{116} Interview between WT & Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004.

\textsuperscript{117} Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 25 March 2004. Teaching at nearby Pontypridd was the Welsh language activist, and mother of two, Eileen Beasley. Speaking later, she paused as if re-living momentarily the palpable horror of hearing the 'scream of the sirens' throughout the day. Interview between WT & Eileen Beasley, 20 April 2006.

\textsuperscript{118} LDP, 21 April 1970. Jenkins' wife later informed the probation service that her husband was 'a gentle person', who was 'particularly upset' by events at Aberfan. His 'political feelings', she disclosed, had 'dated from that time'. TNA, ASSI 84/577. Representing 'the oppression of Wales', a
Six weeks later, Toni Lewis organized the first Cilmery march to commemorate in 1282, the killing of the last native Prince of Wales, Llywelyn ap Gruffudd by a Norman/English invasion force. Among those attending was ‘Mandrake’ of the *Sunday Telegraph*. In an interview with leading members of the Patriotic Front, Gethin ap Iestyn revealed how far the party’s message had spread. He had, he revealed, recently received a representative from the Jewish Board of Deputies, questioning the group’s political aspirations. Informed that the Patriotic Front intended to model itself on the way ‘Israel had fought and gained its freedom’, the deputation had departed having voiced its support. Another attendee at the rally was R. O. F. Wynne of Garthewin Hall. He had, he declared, learned his nationalism from the two renowned ‘English writers, Belloc and Chesterton’. A self-professed ‘traditionalist’, Wynne adhered to the maxim that when all other means had been exhausted, it was necessary ‘to throw half a brick’ in the face of an oppressor in order to gain his attention. Although not an advocacy of violence, Wynne maintained, it was nevertheless ‘a fact. Sad, but true’. With the close of 1966, the nationalists of Wales reflected on a tumultuous year in the struggle for Welsh cultural and political advance. The year had seen the re-emergence of the militant campaign and the first Plaid Cymru member elected to Parliament. Yet for John Jenkins, the newly appointed operational-commander of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru, the fight was just beginning.

To close the Empire Games in Cardiff in July 1958, a recorded announcement by the Queen, stated that with immediate effect, she intended to ‘create’ her son ‘Charles, Prince of Wales’. At the turn of 1967, the date of the investiture had not been decided. However, it is clear from papers at the National Archives, that the Welsh Labour Party was keen for the issue to be resolved. Yet, the ebullience of the Secretary of State for Wales, was tempered by both the Queen and Prince Philip,
who were said to be 'very reluctant' the ceremony should occur until the prince completed his initial education. For the Welsh Labour Party, still reeling from the defeat at the Carmarthen by-election, such a golden opportunity 'to further strengthen the bonds that bind the Principality to the Royal Family', if not to say more cynically, its own political fortunes, was too great to ignore.

However, the Queen and Palace officials did recognize the importance of Charles being more informed as to the political and cultural background of his 'principality'. To this end, in February 1967, the Queen agreed to a proposal by George Thomas, the Minister of State at the Welsh Office, that Prince Charles be briefed as to what the Palace delicately termed 'some current problems of Welsh significance'. The timing of the briefing was prescient. Unaware that plans for the Royal investiture were underway, during the evening of 27 February, leading figures in the Free Wales Army placed an explosive device in the pipeline which carried water the 84 miles from Cwm Elan to Birmingham. The occurrence marked a transition - albeit temporary - in the behaviour of the FWA, whereby it actually undertook militant action, as opposed to merely intimating its responsibility. Throwing light on the operation in 2000, Denis Coslett admitted the site near Crossgates had been reconnoitred over a period of weeks. Furthermore, a manhole cover near the Fron Aqueduct had been removed and 40 taped sticks of gelignite attached to a mini-car inner wheel tube. The assemblage was then lowered by rope until it reached the water flowing below. The gelignite was wired to two torch batteries and a clock. These were placed on the stone surround of the man-hole cover. The rope, connected to the inner tube, was tied to a tree and the group, consisting: Denis Coslett, Dai Bonar Thomas and Peter Lambert made their escape. Primed to explode at 3.00 a.m. the following morning, in order to adorn the nations' front pages on St David's Day, the group eagerly awaited news the device had activated.

It failed to do so. Believing a news blackout regarding the explosion had been enforced, an anonymous and impatient Denis Coslett contacted the Western Mail on 8 March, demanding to know why the paper had failed to report the pipeline blast. Completely in the dark as to what the FWA activist was referring, the conversion

1965.
124 Dimbleby, Prince of Wales, p.144.
125 Dimbleby, Prince of Wales, p.144. Queen's Private Secretary, Michael Adeane, to the Permanent Under-Secretary at Welsh Office, 10 February 1967.
126 WM, 14 March 1967.
soon ended, with the journalist convinced he was subject to yet another - albeit increasingly transparent - Free Wales Army hoax call.127

Four days later, farmer Tom Powell discovered the device. Having contacted the police, the ‘bomb’ was removed by Captain Clive Green of Western Command Ordnance Depot. It was, he soberly proclaimed, the ‘most dangerous job’ he had ever tackled.128 Shortly after, an army order arrived at Saighton Barracks in Chester. It was marked ‘battle honours for an officer’ and read by John Jenkins. News that Clive Green had received the ‘GOC’s recommendation’, for bravery, added to Jenkins’ sense of alarm. The ‘wires had been so badly crossed’, that the dissembling of the device had taken no small degree of courage.129

Unknown to Denis Coslett and the FWA, the device had been assembled by John Jenkins.130 It had been handed to Cayo Evans by a senior figure in the militant movement from the Gwynedd area. In 2004, Jenkins revealed he had been approached by the intermediary, with the request to construct a device for an unspecified source. It was a little while later that Jenkins learned it was intended for the FWA. Having assembled and circulated the package, he too began the uneasy wait to hear news of its activation.131 Speaking in 2007, Jenkins summed up the sense of frustration he felt as the failure of the operation became known. It had been, he remarked ‘a dead easy job’, yet the group had ‘made a mess of it’. Jenkins had nonetheless, learnt a valuable lesson. The debacle had convinced him of the need for stringency. Never again would a group or individual operate outside the director-general’s absolute control. From that moment, Jenkins revealed, he held the movement in a ‘tight grip’. He would forthwith hold ‘all the resources’ so ‘nobody could do anything’. In a stroke, the ‘wild man business’ was ended. Only he had the wherewithal; and only he would decide when it could be used and whom would be entrusted to use it. It was, Jenkins deduced, the only way of ensuring discipline; and

127 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000. The intention of the FWA to ensure the safety of the local inhabitants by exploding the device along the pipeline, was dismissed by a former senior Welsh police officer as ‘very chivalrous’. Moreover, ‘any support or sympathy’ which might have existed within police ranks for the group and its objectives ‘would have been lost once explosives were used’. Through such action, ‘they upped the stakes and alienated themselves more and more’. Anonymous interview with WT, October 2000.
128 WM, 14 March 1967, p.1; also TNA, DPP 2/5971.
129 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007.
130 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 23 November 2003.
furthermore, he added somberly, ‘it worked’.  

In 2003, Denis Coslett revealed why the device failed to activate. In their haste to set the charge, he conceded, the group failed to prime it correctly. Moreover, he added, the episode was the only time the Free Wales Army undertook a militant operation in the name of Welsh Independence.  

How had he enjoyed the experience he was asked? To a ‘baby boomer’ such as himself, it had been reminiscent of a covert attack on the German wartime forces, Coslett announced. He had, he confessed, found it ‘really exciting’ and indeed, considered himself a ‘freedom fighter’ and an exponent of ‘guerrilla warfare’. Nevertheless, whether humbled by its own inefficiency, or grateful for having survived unscathed, the FWA subsequently decided to concentrate its efforts on its own inimitable ‘war of propaganda’. Yet, perhaps unsurprisingly, when questioned following the incident, Cayo Evans denied the responsibility of the FWA. Such an operation, he brashly informed police, would have been a formality for the group’s ‘qualified technicians’.  

In April 1967, the FWA heralded news that ‘sweeping changes’ had been made in its ‘high command’. While it was also announced that the Clywedog reservoir was to be denied an official opening due to the threat of a disturbance; and that the Anglesey home of Cledwyn Hughes had been threatened with a bomb explosion. It was all too much for the Western Mail which castigated the ‘minority’ whose ‘enmity’ had rendered Wales ‘a place of violence’. The Liverpool Daily Post went further still. It was time, the paper argued, to see James

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132 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007.
134 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000. Guerilla warfare was part of Welsh history, added Coslett, citing the Owain Glyndwr uprising.
136 Cardigan and Tivy-side Advertiser, 7 April 1967. It was also reported that an unnamed professor had been approached to translate the newly established FWA oath into a form of Welsh acceptable to the ‘different dialects of north and south Wales’. The oath read: I promise to dedicate my life to the cause of liberating my country from foreign domination and that I will uphold the discipline and honour of the Free Wales Army. I will honour the sovereignty and rights of my country, people and flag, its language, traditions and culture. I solemnly swear in the name of God and of our dead patriots, that I will never reveal any secrets of our organization, even if I am captured and tortured. If I betray this faith, I shall deserve the punishment of death as a traitor and may eternal contempt cover me.
137 WM, 19 April 1967.
138 WM, 5 April 1967.
139 WM, 20 April 1967.
Griffiths return to the political fold as Secretary of State for Wales. Cledwyn Hughes, though a ‘patient and understanding man’ lacked both the ability to counter the rise of Welsh nationalism ‘as a political force’ and the ‘mesmeric appeal’ of his predecessors platform oratory; who the paper believed, would have ‘demolished devastatingly’ the nationalists of Wales.140

To Gwynfor Evans, heartily sick of continued media and political speculation that Plaid Cymru and militancy were inextricably linked, the time had come to turn the tables. In a letter of reply to the Llanelli Star, Evans angrily questioned the ‘nature and purpose’ of the so called Free Wales Army, most notably, its relationship with what Evans termed ‘the Establishment’. The timing of many of its apparent actions, Evans declared, had routinely occurred during periods of political uncertainty. For instance, the explosion at Clywedog was just days before the General Election, while the apparent threat to target the Severn Bridge, which, if official sources were to be believed, had been received immediately prior to the Carmarthen by-election. Moreover, despite all his ‘condemnation of force’, events in recent weeks suggested that a programme of discrimination was still at work. To quantify the point, Evans cited the device discovered at Crossgates which coincided with the Rhondda by-election and the threat to demolish the home of Cledwyn Hughes, which was, he suggested, intended to coincide with County Council Elections. The very nature of these attacks raised the suspicion that ‘people working for the government’ may be responsible. Particularly, Evans concluded, ‘as the Establishment’ appeared to have no ‘convincing, rational case’ to combat Plaid Cymru’s policy of Welsh freedom.141

Intriguingly, the accusation made by Gwynfor Evans that an altogether different ‘rogue element’ might be a-foot, received some credence when ‘four English people’ were fined in Caernarfon for daubing Free Wales Army slogans on a disused building in the area. Despite rigorous checks by party officials, none were found to be members of any Welsh branch of Plaid Cymru or its London counterpart.142

Yet, unknown to Evans, the ‘establishment’ was about to play its most effective card to date. On 17 May, to the delight of Cledwyn Hughes and British unionists, it was announced that Charles Windsor was to be invested Prince of Wales.

140 LDP, 11 April 1967.
142 LDP, 11 July 1967.
at Caernarfon Castle on 1 July 1969. Responding to the announcement, Gwynfor Evans phlegmatically declared he was ‘unenthusiastic’ about the event.\textsuperscript{143} Equally unenthused was Gethin ap Iestyn. In a letter to Owain Williams, ap Iestyn stated it time Welsh militant nationalist action emulated the IRA and went ‘the whole hog’.

What was more, ‘complete aggression with England was required’, coupled with the adoption of a more ‘secretive outlook’. Existing groups, he discerned, such as Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru, the White Eagle of Snowdonia, Meibion Glyndwr and the FWA, operated mainly ‘on a regional basis and independent of one another’. Admittedly, this made it ‘more difficult for the authorities to clamp down on them’, but, ap Iestyn concluded, ‘if co-ordinated by a central office they could thrive’.\textsuperscript{144}

However, if the leader of Plaid Cymru had thrown down the gauntlet to the British state, he was also mindful that only by presenting a united front could the party’s ascendancy survive the expected unionist onslaught of a royal investiture.\textsuperscript{145} Consequently, it was decided to take the fight to those on the periphery of the nationalist movement. On 11 July 1967, Elwyn Roberts, the Plaid Cymru Organising Secretary, angrily attacked Cayo Evans and the FWA for having enabled the opposition parties to ‘discredit Plaid Cymru’. An executive committee motion, he announced, condemning in the strongest terms the Free Wales Army and its activities, would be debated at the party’s conference the following month. Should known figures within the group be recognized, or attempt to disrupt proceedings if in disguise, they would be asked to leave and forcibly removed by police if necessary.\textsuperscript{146}

Over the summer, Plaid Cymru’s assault on what it termed ‘the inimical FWA doctrine’ continued unabated.\textsuperscript{147} At the party conference in August, it was time for

\textsuperscript{143} \textit{LDP}, 18 May 1967. The first formal ceremony occurred in 1483, when the regicide Richard 111 saw the investiture of his son Edward, as an opportunity to entrench his parlous monarchical dynasty. The second investiture subject to a state occasion, took place in 1911. It was the brainchild of the Liberal Chancellor of the Exchequer, David Lloyd George; its intention, to stymie the growth of the Labour Movement in Wales. Perhaps in light of a prevailing wind, it witnessed some measure of dissent - although not on the scale of 1969 - with questions asked as to the historical validity of ‘an English Prince of Wales’. Both the political overtones of 1911 and the qualitative attempt by Lloyd George to present himself as the \textit{de facto} leader of the Welsh people, was not lost on the Queen, who considered each previous state occasion to be ‘not really good auguries’. Richard Weight, \textit{Patriots} (London, 2002), p.417; David Walker, \textit{Medieval Wales} (Cambridge, 1990), p.190; Emyr Price \textit{David Lloyd George} (Cardiff, 2006), pp.193,194; Observer Supplement, 22 June 1969, p.18; John S. Ellis, \textit{Investiture} (Cardiff, 2008), p.320; TNA, PREM 11/4441.

\textsuperscript{144} TNA, DPP 2/4471. Correspondence between Gethin ap Iestyn \& Owain Williams, 14 May 1967. The letter was later found by police when searching Williams’ home.

\textsuperscript{145} Telephone interview between WT \& Dafydd Evans, 9 February 2007.

\textsuperscript{146} \textit{LDP}, 11 July 1967.

\textsuperscript{147} \textit{WM}, 24 June 1967. It did so, as slogans stating: ‘Death to Prince Charles’; ‘Go Home English
the show-down. In their absence, the Free Wales Army and Patriotic Front were routed by a near-unanimous resolution of scathing excommunication. All Wales, stated Plaid Cymru vice-president Edward Millward, was ‘sick’ of the ‘effete publicity seekers and paper tigers’. In a blistering broadside launched by Barrie Cox of Cwmbran, the FWA were castigated for its contacts with ‘various fascist movements’ and ‘knife carrying, LSD and psychedelic activities’. It was a synchronic line of attack greeted with understandable derision by FWA spokesman Cayo Evans. Having utterly refuted the allegations, the group, Evans countered, had never criticized Plaid Cymru per se, only its capacity to pass fatuous resolutions.148

Nonetheless, as Gwynfor Evans and the Plaid Cymru hierarchy toasted its victory, the party was about to face an even greater challenge to its prestige as the great protector of Welsh cultural and political interests; and there to steel its thunder was the Free Wales Army. Within months of the Aberfan disaster, anguish had turned to bitterness. Despite the irreproachable stance of the National Coal Board, it was widely felt the tragic slaughter had occurred not from an act of God, but rather as a result of the greed and negligence of man. It was a sentiment shared around the world. Within months, £1.75 million had been donated to the appeal fund. Yet, such was the rage and controversy the distribution of money provoked, the issue was coldly entitled The Second Disaster.149 At an organized rally by the Aberfan Parents Association, placards denounced Plaid Cymru as ‘traitors to the Aberfan dead’, for having failed in its apparent pledge to secure a financial settlement through parliamentary and external pressure.150

Over the coming weeks the issue rumbled on. Typical of many, for one father the ‘torment’ was further heightened by the fact that those he now sought ‘justice’ from, were what he termed his ‘own people: a Labour Government, a Labour Council and a Labour-nationalized Coal Board’.151 Despite the Disaster Fund Management Committee’s protestation that it was constrained by precedent, the insensitivity of the National Coal Board’s insurance department was later revealed. Memorandums from

Bastards’ and the FWA emblem, appeared in north and west Wales. WM, 29 June 1967; also, TNA, DPP 2/4471.
148 The Times, 7 August 1967; also, WM, 7 August 1967.
150 WM, 14 August 1967. Placards also carried the slogan, ‘Plaid Cymru has let us down’.
151 McLean & Johnes, Aberfan: Government and Disasters, p.13. Claims by Lord Robens that an underground spring beneath the tip had been unknown to NCB surveyors, was angrily denied by the local community, who provided Ordnance Survey maps to prove its existence. pp.28,29.
1967 not only urged the president of the NUM, Lord Robens, to resist any increased demand, it also considered £500 to be ‘a good offer’. Moreover, it monstrously claimed that ‘only a hard core’ (of bereaved parents) were ‘trying to capitalize’. 152

Amid this atmosphere of angry recrimination, Fred Grey, the Secretary of the Aberfan Parents Association, approached Welsh language activist Neil Jenkins. A teacher at Merthyr Vale at this juncture, having heard firsthand the frustrations of the bereaved, Jenkins responded favourably to a suggestion the FWA be contacted and gave Grey, Cayo Evans’ telephone number. Evans had then, Jenkins claimed, issued an ultimatum stating that unless the money was released to the families within a week, explosives would be used to demolish Methyr Tydfil Town Hall and ‘all the councillors inside it’. 153

Con temporaneously, at a further meeting of the APA, a petition was launched demanding each bereaved family receive £5,000. 154 Later, Denis Coslett discussed the events which he subsequently came to regard as ‘the proudest achievement’ of his life. He had, he revealed, been contacted by Evans urging him to ‘go up to Aberfan and try to help the people get the money from the trust fund’. Consequently, having entered into exploratory discussions as how best to proceed, Coslett had agreed the FWA should attend an impending rally in Merthyr Tydfil. 155 Also contacted by Cayo Evans, imploring him to make use of his printing press as a means of informing FWA members as to the approach from Fred Grey, was Toni Lewis. 156 Papers later submitted as evidence in the trial of the FWA, reveal that journalist John Summers to be a factor in the group’s involvement. Having responded positively to assist, Summers declared in a letter to Coslett, the ‘stock of the FWA in Aberfan could not be higher’. Parents, he claimed, had offered themselves as tools in the militant struggle if necessary, while the attendance of the FWA at the forthcoming rally would

152 Ibid, p.161. Having received expert assurances the coal tip was ‘absolutely safe’, George Thomas then received a delegation from Aberfan. Their ‘un-manufactured and genuine fear’ resulted in him informing Harold Wilson he could not tell the community ‘it had to stay’. George Thomas, Mr. Speaker (London, 1985), p.101. Yet, it was later revealed that G. Thomas regarded the community’s angry insistence the coal tips should be removed as ‘irrational’. Aberfan, ITV Wales and S4C Production. History Channel, 1 December 2009.
153 Interview between WT & Neil Jenkins, 22 October 2006.
154 WM, 31 August 1967.
155 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000. Talks were held with Fred Grey and Harry Wiltshire, both of whom had lost children in the disaster.
156 Interview between WT & Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004.
ensure both its hero status and its perceived maturity in the eyes of the nation. Yet, despite later claims by those sympathetic to the Free Wales Army that a threat of militant violence had been issued and that members of the group had marched in support of bereaved parents and their demand for pejorative recompense, contemporary media coverage of the rally paints a somewhat different picture. Despite an appearance by Denis Coslett and ‘a dozen FWA men’, the march had been cancelled at the last minute due to an overall lack of attendance. Whether the ultimatum was indeed issued is also a matter of some conjecture. As with a number of actions credited to the FWA, a certain degree of mythology appears to envelope the incident. Yet, the fact remains that within a week of militant action having been allegedly threatened, following a four hour meeting of the funds management committee, it was announced that each family was to receive £5,000.

In gratitude for the support received from the Free Wales Army, the Aberfan Parents Association purchased ‘two gold watch chains’ with the intention of presenting one each to Cayo Evans and Denis Coslett. In 2008, Coslett’s wife Avril disclosed her husband had declined the gift on the grounds of sensitivity. He had considered accepting such an offering from those who had suffered so much to be morally reprehensible. Having perhaps reasonably deduced that to decline such an offer to be an insult to the memory of those who had perished, Cayo Evans, his son Rhodri revealed in 2009, had accepted his gift. Whether legislation and precedent did indeed tie the hands of the NCB remains unclear, as does the exact role played by the FWA in resolving the furore. Yet, nevertheless, to a nation often ready to castigate and deride the Free Wales Army, its apparent salutary involvement in one of the most shameful episodes in the nations’ recent history should at least be

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157 Free Wales Army Document Folder, pages 115 to 203. Exhibit 64. Despite assurances from former FWA combatants, that an ultimatum threatening direct action was forwarded to council officials and journalists, such a declaration (allegedly printed by Toni Lewis) is not included in the article written by John Christopher in the Daily Express regarding the bereaved parents’ demand for adequate recompense. 31 August 1967. Neither does such an ultimatum appear in the Merthyr Express, 1 September 1967.

158 WM, 28 August 1967.

159 WM, 9 September 1967. ‘What we achieved’, declared an unnamed father, ‘was from the Free Wales Army entirely’. Film entitled Welsh Nationalism. Compiled, September 1968. Exhibit 81. Trial of the FWA and anti-investiture campaigners.

160 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000. A letter from Mr. Grey expressing gratitude for the FWA’s support was viewed by WT at the home of Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000.

161 Interview between WT & Avril Coslett, 10 November 2008.

162 Telephone interview between WT & Rhodri Evans, 5 March 2009. It was also revealed that the watch had later been stolen in a burglary at Evans’ manorial home.

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Later that month, flushed with the success of its perceived endeavours at Aberfan, members of the Free Wales Army marched through Machynlleth to commemorate both Glyndwr’s War of Independence and to express dissatisfaction with the situation in Wales. They were joined by members of the Patriotic Front, its ancillary Young Patriots League, the Anti-Sais League and a number of more militant members of Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg. It was open to question how much these groups enjoyed shared objectives and a shared membership. Leading the procession, armed with a stave and his Alsatian Gelert at his side, was Denis Coslett. Planned as an all-Wales rally of ‘nationalists and patriots to show solidarity for the cause of Welsh freedom’, the event, despite significant media interest, was attended by just 30 people. One of those was Glyn Rowlands. In 2004, Rowlands explained that he had hoped a strong attendance would signal the dawn of republican support in Wales, akin to that in much of Ireland. Indeed, the principle within Irish Republicanism of establishing various distinct societies to nurture and advance its political message and traditions, had served as the blueprint for the Young Patriots League and other ad hoc organizations soon to be established. Yet, despite Rowlands’ anticipated optimism, he had been left to explain to the Welsh-language media the apparent lack of interest the event had generated. There was worse to come. Not only did the march fail to receive the support of the towns-people, later that evening, having congregated beneath the town clock to hear a series of speeches in support of independence, the marchers had been frequently heckled by a number of Saturday night revelers.

It was not a good weekend for the nationalists of Wales. On the same day as the Machynlleth march, the nations’ Secretary of State, Cledwyn Hughes, launched a febrile attack on Plaid Cymru. Having been stung by fierce criticism from both within his own party and the unionist media for having failed to combat the nationalist

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163 *The Times*, 20 October 1967.
164 *WM*, 18 September 1967; also TNA, DPP 2/5970. Denis Coslett was now styling himself Dafydd ap Coslett.
165 Interview between WT & Glyn Rowlands, 22 March 2004.
166 *Week In Week Out: The Story of the FWA*. BBC Wales Production. Screened 3 July 1969. Rowlands said that support for Plaid Cymru was growing and the more militant policies as espoused by those attending the rally would take time to develop and be understood, as had the constitutional message of Plaid Cymru.
167 Interview between WT & Glyn Rowlands, 22 March 2004.
threat with appropriate vigour, Hughes lambasted the party for its ‘anti-English, wicked and un-Christian’ doctrine.\textsuperscript{168} Determined to show clear water between it and the militant fraternity within Wales, Plaid Cymru responded to the charge by expelling Owain Williams from the party. It had done so, party secretary Elwyn Roberts revealed, for both comments expressed by Williams at the Machynlleth rally deemed ‘incompatible’ with party policy and his conviction in previous weeks for FWA slogan daubing.\textsuperscript{169} Nonetheless, the decision of Plaid Cymru came as much of a surprise to Owain Williams as anyone. He had, he retorted, ‘forestalled’ the party hierarchy, by having torn up his membership card some weeks before in protest at the party’s dilution of ‘true nationalism’.\textsuperscript{170}

John Jenkins, Frederick Alders and Llanrhæadr-ym-Mochnant

A fortnight later, the nation awoke to news that the militant struggle in Wales had taken a new and decisive turn. During the early hours of 30 September, an explosion ripped through one of the four pipes which emerged briefly above ground at Llanrhæadr-ym-Mochnant. Each carried water the 70 miles from Llyn Vyrnwy to Liverpool.\textsuperscript{171} Contacted within hours by both the nation’s media and police, figures from Welsh nationalist ‘extremist’ circles were immediately ruled out.\textsuperscript{172} Speaking some years later, John Jenkins described the events which saw him undertake a militant operation for the first time and his sense of sadness at having felt the protest to be necessary. He had, he revealed, reconnoitered the target area ‘alone extensively’. Its picturesque location had proved a factor in its choice as a target site, having perfectly enabled any such monitoring to be dismissed as sightseeing.\textsuperscript{173} Nevertheless, the laying of the charge had involved Frederick Ernest Alders, a 19-year-old, television aerial-rigger and Territorial Army cadet from Rhosllanerchrugog,

\textsuperscript{168} \textit{WM}, 18 September 1967.

\textsuperscript{169} TNA, DPP 2/4471. At Pwllheli Magistrates Court on 26 July 1967, Owain Williams was convicted on five counts of ‘spoiling property’, fined £25 pounds and ordered to pay £5.5.0d advocates fee. In a letter to Williams dated 28 July 1967, Gethin ap Lestyn suggested the following slogans be daubed in protest at his and FWA expulsions from Plaid Cymru: Gwynfor is not God; Bullets Not Words; Plaid Quislings; Pacifism - Cowardice and Up the Republic.

\textsuperscript{170} \textit{LDP}, 20 September 1967. At the Machynlleth rally, Owain Williams became the vice-president of the Patriotic Front.

\textsuperscript{171} \textit{The Times}, 2 October 1967; also, \textit{WM}, 2 October 1967; also TNA, DPP 2/5972. The explosion caused £10,000 worth of damage.

\textsuperscript{172} \textit{WM}, 3 October 1967; also, \textit{WM}, 2 October 1967. Those contacted included: Owain Williams, Neil Jenkins, Denis Coslett, Vernon Griffiths and Cayo Evans.

\textsuperscript{173} Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 February 2009.
near Wrexham. Jenkins recalled that since meeting the younger man some eight weeks prior to the action, they had enjoyed an often fractious connection. This had been owing, Jenkins added, to what he termed his playing ‘devil’s advocate’. He berated Alders in order to assess and determine his attitude to Wales, the nation’s perceived position of suzerainty within the ‘English’ political system and any considered opinion he may possess as to a retaliatory militant response. The two men had met owing to their shared interest and enjoyment of military music: Alders having become a member of the Drum and Fyfe Band in Wrexham, of which Jenkins was attached as drum instructor. Little did Jenkins realize how crucial this component was to feature in their detection and apprehension some two years later.

However, having finally established Alders’ worthy credentials as a ‘kindred spirit’, it was decided he should join Jenkins and strike a blow in the name of Welsh freedom. Yet, before any such action was possible, two more imperative pieces of the jigsaw needed to be addressed: how the objective might be achieved without risk of injury to either an individual or property of a local inhabitant; and how to obtain the necessary explosives. To Jenkins’ considerable satisfaction, information received from a ‘healthy’ local source ensured the first criterion was met. A house, situated within an uncomfortable distance of the target, he was informed, would be vacated at the end of September owing to a family holiday.

The second quandary was answered by David Pritchard. Days before the intended strike at Llanrhaeadr, Jenkins and Pritchard rendezvoused at Rhaeadr Gwy (Rhayader). There, Sergeant John Jenkins of the British Army Dental Corps was handed the device.174 It is believed it was assembled by Alf Williams.175 It comprised a Vennor time switch and 14.5 lbs of gelignite, the condition of which immediately caused Jenkins grave concern. It was, he later remarked, ‘dripping like hell’ and highly dangerous. Moreover, even innocuous physical contact with the explosives resulted in a violent headache.

Despite the obvious dangers, Jenkins was determined to press ahead. The time had arrived, he believed, to take militant action in Wales to an unprecedented and more adroit, dexterous level. He considered all actions previously undertaken in the name of Welsh extremism ‘very amateurish’. Self-sacrificial gestures, whereby

175 Anonymous interview with WT, March 2009. Ironically, Williams received instruction as how to
operatives handed themselves over to police in order to maintain the moral high
ground, had rendered such protests all but futile. Such a policy had, he suspected,
been greeted with derision by the authorities and lay in stark contrast to the response
afforded the IRA and its more ‘proficient’ approach. Whatever the truth, with the
logistics of the impending operation all but considered, Jenkins began to finely tune
its more subtle details. Uppermost in his mind was security. If, as Jenkins now
proposed, the Llanrhaiadr-ym-Mochnant action was to signal the start of a sustained
and well-orchestrated campaign of violence, their detection, he knew, must be
avoided.

A little before 8.30 p.m., Jenkins entered the sergeant’s mess, ordered a drink
and settled himself in a corner of the bar. Content his presence had been noticed, he
gingerly sipped at his pint before quietly getting up and leaving. Outside in the car
park, sat waiting in his car, was Frederick Ernest Alders. In the ever encroaching
darkness, they soon arrived at the site. As instructed by Jenkins, Alders parked the
vehicle on the wide grass verge near a gateway leading to the pipes. The two men
made their way across the field to the target area. Having handed Jenkins the bundle
of taped gelignite he had been carrying, Alders was instructed to move away, as
Jenkins wedged the gelignite between a concrete support pillar and one of the four 48
inch diameter pipes. He then inserted two detonators, tested both and connected each
to the clock. After also testing the timing mechanism, the charge - left to rest on the
concrete support - was set to detonate at 2.00 a.m. The entire operation had lasted
barely ten minutes.

On returning to Wrexham, Jenkins returned briefly to his home, removed the
sodden clothes he had been wearing - which he later burned - returned to the
sergeant’s mess and finished his pint: still placed, despite his near two hour absence,
where he had left it. In the days thereafter, Jenkins now confesses, he was consumed
with a tangible sense of sadness that it had ‘actually come to this’, that he had been
forced to act ‘in order to draw attention to a democratic deficit’, in Britain, Jenkins
stressed, ‘supposedly the mother of all democracies’. As a member of the British
armed forces, he was to all intents and purposes a ‘respected...establishment figure’.
Furthermore, the whole socializing process into which he had been immersed from
birth disappeared that day. Having struck against the state, he was forthwith, ‘an

assemble an explosive device while in the British Army.
outlaw’. Moreover, he did not like explosives and far from having found the experience exhilarating, he had found the entire episode wholly unnerving.\(^{176}\)

To many observers, the Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant action had been executed with laudable precision. Yet, papers held at the National Archives suggest perhaps a different view. Contrary to Jenkins’ claim that security had been uppermost in his mind and a clinical component to the success of the protest, a number of people interviewed - it must be acknowledged - after his arrest, purport to have been aware of Jenkins’ intentions prior to the operations’ enactment. One of them is Brian Richards, who along with Frederick Ernest Alders, joined the Territorial Army on 22 June 1967. Within weeks of doing so, states Richards, Alders became ‘very friendly’ with John Jenkins. This, he suggests, provided the stimulus for Alders’ increasing interest in ‘Wales and Welsh nationalism’. Sat one evening in the All Ranks mess, Jenkins had allegedly approached Richards and Alders and after some time asked Alders ‘if he would like to do something?’ When challenged as to what by Alders, Jenkins had remained tight-lipped, adding should they be caught they would be imprisoned. Alders and Jenkins had then sat at an adjoining table and appeared engrossed in a conversation unheard by Richards. When Jenkins left, Alders returned to join Richards. On being asked to divulge what they had discussed and the contents of a piece of paper he had been handed by Jenkins, Alders replied it involved ‘the Free Wales Army’. Some little while later, Jenkins returned and asked Richards if he too would be interested in involving himself in the matters he and Alders had discussed. Richards replied he would not.\(^{177}\)

An initial police statement by Frederick Ernest Alders also offers a somewhat conflicting view to that later provided by John Jenkins. It had been, he said, the tragic events at Aberfan which had ‘finally convinced’ him that ‘something should be done for the Welsh cause’. Following a later conversation with Jenkins in the all ranks mess at Wrexham Barracks, Jenkins had pressed him for opinion on the ‘aims of Welsh nationalists’. When told of his ambivalence, Jenkins had reputedly replied that he had expected such a reaction. However, Jenkins then added that he had observed

\(^{176}\) Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 25 March 2004; 19 October 2007; 17 November 2008; 13 December 2008 & 19 February 2009. He and Alders, Jenkins revealed, nearly came to blows as a result of his sustained ‘sniping’ and anti Welsh, pro unionist/royalist rantings. Furthermore, Alders was ‘absolutely amazed’ to learn of Jenkins’ true intentions. Only one pipe was targeted, as it was realised any increase would imperil the homes of the nearby villagers. Yet, it was reported that windows in five houses had been shattered. WM, 2 October 1967.

\(^{177}\) TNA, ASS 84/577. Witness statement by Brian Richards, 27 November 1969.
Alders closely for 'some weeks' and felt certain he felt more strongly for Wales than his outward appearance might suggest. From that point, Alders added, 'a common aim' had developed between the two men and a shared belief that only through 'political militancy' could independence for Wales be achieved.178

Nevertheless, in a later statement, Alders was more forthcoming. He had, he declared, been aware of Jenkins' 'strong Welsh nationalist views' just ten days after joining the Territorial Army, when he and other members of the Drum Corps took a trip to Rhyl. Whilst en route, 'four or five' passengers on the bus had engaged in a discussion regarding Welsh nationalism, during which, Jenkins had allegedly remarked that 'time bombs were the means by which most propaganda could be achieved'. A package positioned under Jenkins' arm had instigated 'a fleeting thought' it might be a bomb. As had a developing sense that 'there was something unusual' about Jenkins and that he might be involved in the Free Wales Army or some other like-minded movement. On arriving at Rhyl, Jenkins had asked Alders for directions to the Queen's Hotel, informing the younger man that he had arranged to meet a relative there. Alders then confirmed the series of events as outlined in the statement provided by Brian Richards. Of the conversation unheard by Richards, Alders disclosed that Jenkins had enquired whether he would like to join an 'organization', he had referred to as MAC. Despite having harboured some initial thoughts of incredulity, Alders had taken a sworn oath of allegiance to the movement. Written on a piece of paper produced by Jenkins, the oath had included an acceptance to carry out in secrecy, the orders of a senior operative 'on pain of death'.

The conversation had then turned to the impending protest Jenkins planned for the pipeline at Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant. Having assured Alders that he would take 'full responsibility' should they be apprehended, his involvement, Jenkins added, would be appreciated as his own mode of transport he considered 'too conspicuous'. Alders was then informed by Jenkins that gelignite would be used. Still apparently unsure as to whether he might be the unwitting victim of military style badinage, Alders asked 'for proof'. On vacating the Mess and arriving at Jenkins' garage, the boot of his car was opened to reveal some '20 half pound sticks' of what Alders immediately recognized - having worked at Gresford Colliery - to be gelignite. Finally convinced that Jenkins meant business, the two men agreed to meet outside

178 TNA, ASS 84/577. Witness statement by Frederick Ernest Alders. Exhibit 132.
the gates at the back entrance to the Barracks the following evening at 17.30. Incredibly, considering Jenkins’ later assertion that matters of security had been stringently enforced, having been asked by Alders how he might explain his absence that evening to his girlfriend, Jenkins had apparently replied that prior to any such action being undertaken, it was first necessary to fully inform her of his intentions. But that Alders should only do so, if he felt sure she would reveal nothing of his involvement.

According to Alders, the following evening at the pre-arranged time, Jenkins appeared ‘carrying a hold all’ and informed him they must leave early in order ‘to case’ the site. This, Jenkins added, was in order to verify the information he had received from a villager. *En route* to Llanrhnaeadr-y-mochnant in Alders’ black Austin A30, Jenkins revealed that the pipeline was being targeted in protest at Wales’ unjust economic position with regard the flooding of its valleys and the payment received for its water. As the car made its way through the wet, grey night, Jenkins also disclosed that Mudiad Amddifyn Cymru was headed by a south Wales man known simply as MAC. When asked as to the numbers involved and his own experience in such matters, Jenkins replied that while ‘there were hundreds’ involved in providing the necessary resources, most notably ‘colliery workers’, only a ‘handful’ were prepared to carry out such actions and that he himself had received training in the handling of explosives. On arriving at the village, Jenkins instructed Alders to follow the road on to the Pystyll Rhaeadr waterfall. Here, they remained until night fall, following which they returned to a position along the road near the position of the water pipes and carried out the protest. Despite having been passed by a car and a couple of walkers, the two men were confident their action had gone unnoticed. On returning to Wrexham, having ‘dropped Jenkins off at the Mess in the barracks’, Alders drove to the home of his girlfriend, Ann Woodgate. There, having stated that he would accept her decision to end the relationship if she so chose, he confessed his earlier conduct. Her reaction, he later declared, was one of anger, upset and disgust. Alders’ increasing candour requires some comment. It would appear that increasingly aware of his judicial position following his arrest, the cold realization he now faced the full weight of the law precipitated a need to shift much of the responsibility in the direction of Jenkins. His later actions during the trial of the two

179 TNA, ASS 84/577. Witness statement by Frederick Ernest Alders.
Yet, perhaps most revealing of all, is the witness statement of Ann Woodgate. Although, Alders’ girlfriend at the time of the Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant protest, crucially to his and Jenkins’ eventual detection, Woodgate was later to become Alders’ fiancé. She too retracted an earlier statement in which she denied prior knowledge of the incident. Alders had, she later admitted, informed her of having laid the charge on his return. She had remonstrated with him as to the likely consequences such a course of action might entail. He was, Alders had insisted, fully aware of the risks involved. The following day, she read news of the explosion in the *Liverpool Echo*. Asked to reveal the source of her partner’s nationalism, Woodgate stated his meeting with John Jenkins had apparently prompted Alders’ subsequent ‘extreme political views’ and belief in ‘direct action’.180

The witness statements provide a fascinating insight into the events surrounding the explosion at Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant. Furthermore, it must be acknowledged that this episode occurred over 40 years ago, during a period celebrated latterly as relaxed in ‘atmosphere’. With the horrors of Northern Ireland yet to unfold, it is conceivable that an awareness of security issues was not as stringently considered as might be expected. This may in part be owing to the rather elementary capabilities of the security forces at this juncture; certainly when compared to the technical advantages and forensic awareness it enjoys today. What also must be recognized is the timing of these statements: divulged a full two years after the explosion. However, whatever the truth, the security measures implemented by John Jenkins to re-convene the campaign of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru appear at least questionable. Yet, worse was to come.

Nonetheless, the explosion more than signaled Jenkins’ arrival onto the stage of militant action. From then on, he later revealed, he was ‘able to speak with much more authority’.181 Asked to comment on Alders’ disclosure to police, that he had regarded MAC operatives in south Wales to be ‘too irresponsible’,182 Jenkins confirmed he had indeed voiced such a concern. It had come in response to the suggestion that the movement should ‘kill politicians’ to advance its cause. Such ‘wild ideas’ had convinced him that while an understanding of ‘cause’ might be

180 TNA, ASS 84/577. Witness statement by Ann Woodgate.
181 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 February 2009.
182 TNA, ASS 84/577. Witness statement by Frederick Ernest Alders.
appreciated by MAC personnel, little was understood about the ‘political consequences’ of such action. It was however, Jenkins conceded, understandable: these were the ‘Young Turks’ and the injustice of Tryweryn had caused ‘bitterness and fury’. It had resulted in ‘all sense of reason’ being ‘lost’. Yet anger, Jenkins recognized, must be properly ‘challenged and directed’. Such was the extent to which Jenkins was forced to ‘rein in the hot-heads’, that his later portrayal, as maintained by the British media and security services, as ‘the callous extremist’ had caused him some wry amusement.

However, in contrast to the strangely ambivalent villagers of Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant, one of whom expressed support for the ideals of the militants, if not their methods, the nation’s media was quick to take an altogether hostile view of the incident. An editorial in the Western Mail angrily denounced the action as ‘a deplorable disservice to Wales’, which would only ‘ossify existing division’. The Liverpool Daily Post likened the ‘degenerate act’ to that akin to the mediaeval practice of poisoning the wells of one’s enemy. As for the water itself, as it fell from the heavens it was surely ‘more God’s than taffy’s’. Yet, with little to implicate any known figure or movement to the blast, the identity of those responsible became the focus of considerable conjecture. Moreover, recognizing that it would face the invariable question of its links to Welsh militancy, when approached for a statement in response to the detonation, Plaid Cymru quickly saw an opportunity to undermine the Free Wales Army. The ‘stupid action’, it believed, was the work of the IRA; the assumption being based on its ‘greater experience in such matters’.

The Free Wales Army steps up its publicity campaign
To the FWA, still humbled by the lack of attendance at the Machynlleth rally, the explosion at Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant was greeted with predictable garrulous cries of intimated responsibility. In a series of newspaper articles, the movement’s well-oiled publicity machine disgorged additional spurious claims. All water supplies to

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183 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 February 2009.
185 WM, 2 October 1967.
187 LDP, 2 October 1967; also TNA, DPP 2/4471.
188 WM, 3 October 1967.
189 WM, 2 October 1967.
England, declared Denis Coslett, would be ‘crippled’ within six months if a Welsh Water Board was not established to ensure adequate fiscal recompense for water piped from Wales. Moreover, dogs with primed magnetic explosives strapped to their backs, had been trained to destroy an approaching tank by affixing itself. Furthermore, armed to the hilt, the group now comprised ‘7,000 men, ready to fight to the death to win home rule’. Presumably, its stock of arms included the ‘four heavy machine guns’ delivered by trawler and landed near Aberaeron. Possibly one of a number of ‘secluded places’ where those who had broken the oath of allegiance to the movement were summarily executed. As for the Patriotic Front, it comprised ‘4,000 members, with branches in the US, Canada and Australia’, so stated its vice-president Owain Williams.

How, Denis Coslett was later asked, did he feel being the architect of claims so outlandish they stood little chance of surviving even the most nominal measure of investigative scrutiny? The campaign of the Free Wales Army, he replied trenchantly, had been one of ‘propaganda’. Indeed, he had been instructed by Cayo Evans to orchestrate such a campaign, owing to his recognized ability to embellish and cause reaction. The media, he added, had bent over ‘backwards to talk’ to leading figures within the movement. It had simply been a case of ‘lying to them’ in order to propagate the myth. With regard to perhaps Coslett’s’ most memorable utterance: that dogs harnessed with explosives would be used to destroy tanks, he was unapologetic. It had been, he stressed, ‘purely propaganda’. As a dog lover, he would never entertain the thought of actually harming an animal.

Nevertheless, despite his considerable ability to capture a headline, even within the ranks of the FWA, members had often bristled as another Coslett arrogance hit the newsstands. Speaking in 2004, Glyn Rowlands, while ready to acknowledge much that Coslett brought to the nationalist arena, conceded his ‘weakness’ for fabrication had been recognized. Moreover, while perhaps

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190 Herald of Wales, 7 October 1967. Trial of the FWA and PF. Report on the Activities of the Free Wales Army, Folder No.5. Press Cuttings.
191 The Sun, 9 October 1967. Trial of the FWA and PF. Report on the Activities of the Free Wales Army, Folder No.5. Press Cuttings.
194 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000.
195 Interview between WT & Glyn Rowlands, 22 March 2004. ‘We all enjoyed being in the limelight
oblivious to Cayo Evans’ directive, it was the manner in which Coslett had seemingly basked in the limelight which stuck in the craw of those nationalists who favoured a more understated approach. As for the claim that many thousands had swelled the ranks of the movement, it was likely, Glyn Rowlands thought, that senior members had included all those who had routinely gathered in various pubs to watch Cayo Evans play his accordion.

Wales and militancy was hot news. Quick to recognise their value as a newsworthy phenomenon was the ever-astute David Frost, who invited the FWA onto his weekly, late-night television show. If leading members of the group anticipated a stolid forum in which its ideals and intentions could be properly aired, they were to be very disappointed. Having been introduced by Frost as ‘one of the most celebrated armies’ in Britain, the host approached Denis Coslett and asked what the Free Wales Army symbolized. It was, Coslett replied, a non-pacifist ‘militant’ organization ‘prepared to fight’ for its ‘freedom’. Against whom, inquired Frost? ‘The imperialist government’, returned Coslett; who, along with Liverpool Water Corporation, was guilty of stealing - with no recompense - Welsh water. What action had the group taken in protest? It had damaged the pipelines, revealed Coslett. How had this been achieved? By having placed ‘plastics’ on the pipelines of the ‘establishment’ and ‘blasting away’, the Welshman declared.

Despite his misgivings, to Gethin ap Iestyn, earlier chastised by Coslett for not having an FWA uniform to wear for the occasion, the Llanelli man had ‘handled it pretty well’. Yet, to many others, an increasing sense that the group was being laid bare for the amusement of the nation had begun to dawn. One attendee, alarmed at the sight of Coslett in full FWA regalia was Glyn Rowlands. Following the broadcast, Rowlands confronted Frost as to why Coslett had come in for so much attention. It was, Frost replied with typical authoritative posturing, common

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196 Interview between WT & anonymous former FWA member, March 2006.
197 Interview between WT & Glyn Rowlands, 22 March 2004.
198 Interview between WT & Glyn Rowlands, 22 March 2004. The programme was recorded to commemorate the start of the El Alamein campaign in October 1942. Throughout the broadcast, Frost repeatedly referred to Coslett as Dai Dayan, owing to an eye patch he was wearing to protect his injured eye socket against infection. Coslett lost the sight in his right eye in 1963, as a result of an accident at a garage on which he was trespassing. The eye patch was an adornment favoured by Moshe Dayan, Israel’s Defence Minister and renowned army general.
200 Correspondence between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 26 January 2008.

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journalistic practice to ‘hone in on the weakest link’. Later asked to comment, Coslett conceded the decision to wear his FWA uniform had been a mistake. He had resembled, he stated comically, with no little degree of self-effacement, ‘Overmeister von-Reichenstein’. As for their host, he had shown the group ‘no respect at all’ and indeed, had ‘tried to lower’ their ‘moral’. Why, Coslett was asked, had Cayo Evans, renowned for his public speaking ability, remained a background figure, seemingly content to allow his second-in-command steal the limelight? In reply, Coslett confirmed that Evans had indeed said ‘nothing’. Yet, he had not objected and moreover had been unconcerned with the responsibility. It was, he added, necessary on such occasions to express ‘your opinion and anger’ and to defeat shyness and introspection.

One member of the FWA who did not attend the recording was Lyn Ebenezer. It was at this juncture, he disclosed in 2006, he had decided ‘enough was enough’. In agreeing to appear on the programme, the group had been at the mercy of a seasoned professional: quite capable of leading both the interviewee and its subject in any direction he chose. Watching the broadcast at home in west Wales, Ebenezer had felt pained watching men he both liked and admired reduced to derision on national television. It had been, he was sad to concede, ‘embarrassing’. It was a sentiment shared by an equally disconsolate Owain Williams who considered the group to be ‘out of its depth’. Yet, not all were prepared to take the insult lying down. In 2004, Toni Lewis revealed how some indignant and departing FWA attendees, in protest at the slight afforded the party, consoled themselves by tipping the grand piano belonging to the studio’s resident band off the stage. Nevertheless, also watching the broadcast was David John Underhill. Also asked for his thoughts in 2004, he had felt, he replied, ‘thoroughly ashamed’. It had been apparent that this was an organization not deserving of serious consideration. Moreover, the FWA had ‘allowed itself to be ridiculed’ by not demanding of Frost a more respectful attitude:

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201 Interview between WT & Glyn Rowlands, 22 March 2004.
202 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 12 December 2000; also, 21 March 2004. In payment for its appearance on the *Frost Show*, the FWA received £50; were reimbursed £120 for two nights accommodation and £154 travel expenses. *WM*, 25 April 1969.
203 Interview between WT & Lyn Ebenezer, 16 June 2006.
204 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004. Williams stated the broadcast left him ‘not happy’ with the FWA.
205 Interview between WT & Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004.
through physical threat if necessary. One man who missed the programme’s screening was the director general of MAC, John Jenkins. That night, Jenkins delivered a package to a contact in south Wales, which in the coming weeks, would resolutely announce the militant response to the investiture.

The attack on the Temple of Peace

While the FWA was basking in the media spotlight, in Wrexham, unbeknown to all outside the smallest of inner circles, John Jenkins had formulated the movement’s long-term strategy. Henceforth, in direct confrontation to the investiture, every time a member of the royal family, or those employed in planning the ceremony stepped into Wales, there would be an explosion. The inevitable overreaction from the authorities, Jenkins believed, would undermine both its prestige among the ‘ordinary’ populace and consequently lead erstwhile ambivalent members of the Welsh community to support his cause. The by-now overall-commander of the movement, did not have long to wait to test his theory.

On 10 November, the newly established Office for the Investiture of the Prince of Wales, sent a memorandum to Buckingham Palace seeking royal approval for the arrangements it proposed for the investiture. These, the directive added, were to be discussed at an inaugural conference of the organizing committee to be held at the Welsh National Temple of Peace and Health in Cardiff’s Cathays Park, seven days later. However, apparently unknown to Palace officials, also on 10 November 1967, Burke Trend, the Secretary to the Cabinet Office, wrote to Goronwy Daniel, the Permanent Under-Secretary at the Welsh Office, informing him that an assessment entitled: The Subversive Threat in the United Kingdom had been prepared by Dick Thistlethwaite, Director of F Branch, the counter-subversion division of MI5. The relevant extract, which Daniel was implored to bring to the attention of Secretary of State for Wales Cledwyn Hughes, was the ‘activities of Welsh extremists’ which had been considered ‘sufficiently important to rate a place’ in the summary.

207 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 25 March 2004. On meeting the contact, Jenkins was informed of the ‘hilarious interview’ broadcast earlier that evening involving the FWA.
208 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 25 March 2004; also, 19 October 2007.
209 TNA, PREM 13/2359.
210 TNA, CAB 164/389. The report was compiled by the Working Group on Countermeasures to Communism. Paragraphs 29-31 of the Subversion in the UK assessment concerned Welsh extremism. The report was also sent to Harold Wilson and George Wigg, the Paymaster General and Prime

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Nonetheless, news of the inaugural conference of the investiture committee had circulated. Three groups, all opposed to the ceremony, intended to protest the VIPs' attendance: Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg, the Patriotic Front and Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru. In 2004, John Jenkins discussed the events which sent a shock wave resounding through the corridors of the British Establishment. Following several days of surveillance, a MAC 'active unit' based in south Wales decided to act. A little after 22.30 on 16 November, the fifteen pound explosive device, which it is believed Jenkins delivered a fortnight before, was pushed to the rear of the lintel above the door of the Temple of Peace. At 4.04, it detonated, causing extensive damage. Immediately, roads out of the city were sealed off. Within an hour of the blast, known extremists throughout Wales had been roused from their beds for questioning. After a police forensic team had sifted through the debris, a frantic effort was made to prepare the building for the meeting; which, with the conference room unaffected, was scheduled to go ahead at 11.30. Having been appointed to co-ordinate the investiture, Lord Snowdon arrived at Cardiff Central Station to be informed that both he and the conference was the subject of a 'maximum police security operation'.

The royal party was escorted by police outriders to the Temple of Peace, where during the conference, the Secretary of State for Wales, Cledwyn Hughes, condemned the attack as 'deplorable'. The damage, he added, to a building 'dedicated to the cause of peace and international understanding' would cause 'deep distress throughout Wales'. He hoped that those responsible, whom he believed, to be 'a small element', would soon see 'the error of their ways'. At the close of the seminar, the delegates were greeted by a crowd of 250 chanting protesters. Many wielded placards denouncing the investiture and calling for Wales to be declared a Republic. Having declined to comment, or be drawn into the controversy, before reaching his waiting car to be sped away, Lord Snowdon was booed and heckled as he made his way through the crowd. Whatever the truth, later that afternoon, thirteen people appeared before Cardiff magistrates on charges relating to public order offences.

Minister Wilson's Downing Street security confidante.

211 The Times, 18 November 1967; also TNA, DPP 2/5973. The total estimated cost of the damage was put at £10,000. WM, 18 November 1967; also, Sun, 18 November 1967. It is thought among nationalist circles, that the action was carried out by a two man active unit.

212 WM, 18 November 1967; also, Sun, 18 November 1967. The officials were greeted by a small
Among those arrested were Emyr Llywelyn Jones, Toni Lewis and Gethin ap Iestyn. Charged with foul and abusive language, Emyr Llywelyn Jones later gave his version of events. As a prominent member of Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg, he had been approached by a police inspector who had robustly informed him that he had ‘got’ him ‘at last’. Turning to a reporter standing just feet away, Jones inquired as to whether the officers’ ribald tirade had been heard. Before receiving a reply, Jones was allegedly ‘thrown into the back of a Black Maria’. Such is the nature of the arrests, that Jones is adamant a deliberate policy to discredit the language movement in the eyes of the Welsh public was employed. It is an intriguing view. The charges against those arrested ranged from obstruction, assaulting the police and using obscene language. Might the charges have been chosen with prior calculation?

The thoughts of Emyr Llywelyn Jones are given credence by Gethin ap Iestyn and Toni Lewis, the founders and strategists behind the Patriotic Front. Arrested for both assaulting a police officer and using obscene language, ap Iestyn denied any such conduct in 2007: indignantly countering that police had been ‘heavy-handed’ and ‘provocative’. Nevertheless, he had, he affirmed, concealed eggs in his pocket, intending to throw them at departing officials. In the mêlée surrounded his arrest, the eggs were smashed. Having also been bundled into the back of a Black Maria, to the chagrin of arresting officers, ap Iestyn smeared across the van’s inner windows the eggs. This, he then used as a cohesive to attach anti-investiture posters. The situation soon descended into farce, with officers removing the posters as quickly as ap Iestyn could affix them.

As for Toni Lewis, notwithstanding his opposition to the investiture, he had attended the protest owing to his status within the organisation. That afternoon, he was due for interview at the Cardiff College of Music and Drama, in relation to a teaching post. It was an appointment Lewis failed to keep. Arrested on a charge of obstruction, he later complained this constituted his having allegedly ‘sat on a pavement’, something, which owing to the inclement weather and his wearing of a suit, Lewis vehemently denied. However, at a later court hearing, there occurred a very unexpected development. Police officers, Lewis maintained, admitted a list had

crowd of demonstrators on their arrival. The placards proclaimed that ‘Wales pays 2.5m for English Prince’, ‘Republic not Royalty’, ‘No Englishman as Prince of Wales’, ‘Not wanted Charlie’ and ‘Charlie the Greek go home’. Protestors chanted ‘No Prince’.

213 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 28 August 2004.
214 Correspondence between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 17 March 2008; also, 26 January 2008.
been circulated containing the names of those to be arrested should they attend. Irrespective, it seemed, of whether those individuals actually committed an offence.\textsuperscript{215}

Nonetheless, first in the dock to state his case was Emyr Llywelyn Jones. Confident the matter would be resolved in his favour, Jones was frustrated to learn media coverage of the protest, including video film apparently containing the voice of the arresting inspector, had been deemed inadmissible. Offered the chance to plead guilty, pay a £1 fine and see the matter ended, Jones accepted.\textsuperscript{216} Yet, Toni Lewis, angry at what he considered the injustice of the both the charge against him and the manner in which the police had marshalled the event, refused to accept the plea bargain. Moreover, he enquired as to whether police had been lawful in their demanding of him to clear, with the aid of his scarf, the egg smeared over the windows of the Black Maria by Gethin ap Iestyn. No explanation was forthcoming. However, informed by Magistrate John Rutter that he had ‘no doubt made a confounded nuisance’ of himself, the charge against Lewis was dismissed. Having been the sole arrestee to refuse the magistrates’ offer, only Toni Lewis was found not guilty. Nevertheless, it should be noted that such ‘fun and games’ did not extend solely to officers of the law. Arrested before 1.00 p.m., the detainees realised they were legally entitled to receive a meal. After the stratagem of such had been addressed: including the erecting of trestle tables, officers were informed the food was no longer required as all were now on hunger strike.\textsuperscript{217}

If the militants in Wales toasted the success of the operation against the Temple of Peace, even among many of the nation’s populace considered to be acquiescent in their support of the bombing campaign, the target of the attack had left an unpleasant taste in the mouth. The Temple of Peace, opened in 1938, was financed by Lord Davies, the grandson of the nineteenth-century industrialist David Davies. Considered ‘a gift to Wales’, it was also the first building in Britain to be ‘expressly dedicated’ to the cause of international harmony. The majestic Portland stone building housed the nations’ Book of Remembrance, which, kept on a black marble

\textsuperscript{215} Interview between WT & Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004. Lewis believes the case was deliberately protracted, in his case having to appear before Cardiff magistrates three times, in order to penalise so-called offenders through lost wages.

\textsuperscript{216} Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 28 August 2004.

\textsuperscript{217} Interview between WT & Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004. A response from those in support of the investiture was not long in coming. Such a condemnatory attitude, declared the Bosworth Society, was ‘a deplorable manifestation of an inferiority complex’. \textit{WM}, 24 October 1967. It was established in 1962 to commemorate Welshman Henri Tudor’s (later Henry VI) seizure of the crown of England,
pedestal, honoured those who had paid the ultimate sacrifice.\textsuperscript{218}

Yet, such was the location of the conference, that some have suggested its very sitting was deliberately chosen. This was in the belief that those spearheading the militant campaign would consider the venue’s target potential as ‘beyond reproach’. However, such supposition was greeted with caution by John Jenkins in 2009, who, while believing it was indeed possible, considered it ‘too cynical a view’. It was more likely he felt, that the Temple of Peace had been decided upon, owing to its convenient centre position within the capital. Nonetheless, of one thing Jenkins was certain: that the meeting was little more than a demonstration of English political and cultural oppression of Wales. By undertaking such action, the British Establishment had ‘thrown down the gauntlet’; subsequently, he and his colleagues in the militant movement had ‘picked it up’.\textsuperscript{219}

In 2007, John Jenkins remarked that the Temple of Peace operation - in strictly combative terms - to have been ‘a nice one’. The strike, he revealed, had been undertaken with two things in mind: to show the authorities that Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru ‘meant business’ and to make Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg realise what the Welsh nationalist movement was truly up against. Namely, the British state, which could be ‘very, very nasty when it wanted to be’, as had been revealed in its handling of the anti-investiture protest. Up until that point, Jenkins added, a lot of people had seen the campaign for Welsh nationhood as ‘more a squabble for the moral high ground’. Having witnessed, for the first time, police aggression: both verbal and physical, a realisation had dawned. The erstwhile policy adopted by Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg - of staging rather doleful if well-intentioned sit-down protests in Post Offices - had resulted in a relatively restrained response from police. Its response to the demonstration at the Temple of Peace, Jenkins added pointedly, ‘was different’.

Informed of the allegation made against the police inspector by Emyr Llywelyn Jones, Jenkins remained impassive. Many of those attending the protest had been accompanied by their parents, Jenkins declared, half of whom were Ministers of religion. These people, he believed, had been ‘utterly shocked’ by what had transpired, never having previously ‘seen anything like it’. An entrenched, warm premise of the policeman ‘as a friendly old bloke down the road’ who, with good

\textsuperscript{218} WM, 18 November 1967.
\textsuperscript{219} Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 30 March 2009.
humour, chastised children for ‘scrumping apples from trees’, had been ruthlessly dispelled. Never had respected members of Welsh society witnessed the police in such a polemic role. As a result of police action, both the offspring and more importantly their parents had been ‘politicized’. The demand for Welsh cultural and political recognition, they now recognized, was a game no longer.

In response to the speculation that the operation had been undertaken with considerable forethought, Jenkins confirmed this indeed to be the case. Primarily, a degree of uncertainty had existed as to whether the enterprise could be successfully achieved, owing to the size, weight, thickness and bronze adornments which constituted the ‘massive’ Temple of Peace doors. Blowing them up, Jenkins reasoned, ‘was going to take a bit of doing’. However, having recognized the enormity of the task, information received that Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg intended to hold a demonstration, had tipped the scales in favour of taking action. It was, Jenkins concluded, ‘too good a chance to miss’.  

Yet, contrary to the somewhat ‘efficient detachment’ of John Jenkins, many considered the militants of Wales to be dancing with the devil. Hours following the blast, Detective Chief Superintendent David Morris, head of Cardiff CID, declared his optimism that those responsible would soon be apprehended. Further announcing the inquiry into the explosion was making ‘satisfactory progress’. Two crucial pieces of evidence had been recovered and each it was hoped, would provide vital clues as to the identity of the perpetrators: the damaged canvas hold-all into which the device had been placed and the remains of the timing device. Although police sources quickly admitted ‘the time-switch’ used to be ‘very common’, having been hastily reassembled by forensic experts, the mechanism nevertheless proved to be of similar design to that deployed in the attacks at Clywedog, Crossgates and Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant. A stark pattern was now established. Nonetheless, despite the bomb damage and the insinuated involvement of its party members, Plaid Cymru held its Christmas Fair at the Temple of Peace the following day. Cited as ‘one of its most important financial events of the year’, its decision to proceed, announced party

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221 WM, 18 November 1967. Throughout the day of the explosion, Cardiff police dealt with a rash of bomb hoaxes. The sixth and last, occurred that evening during a banquet at the City Hall attended by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Cardiff South MP, James Callaghan. WM, 18 November 1967.
222 WM, 11 December 1967. In a searing attack, Merlyn Rees, the Under-Secretary of State for Defence, stated Plaid Cymru’s ‘narrow, inward-looking nationalism to be an anachronism’. It bred the
general secretary Elwyn Roberts, surely proved the party’s innocence.\textsuperscript{223}

In the years since the MAC campaign, the identity of those responsible for the Temple of Peace explosion has attracted considerable speculation. In 2007, a leading member of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru - during its first incarnation - expressed his belief that the blast ‘had all the hallmarks of a Dave Pritchard action’. Only Pritchard, it was stated, had ‘the capability of undertaking such a professional operation’.\textsuperscript{224} Approached to comment, both John Jenkins and David Walters, fined alongside Pritchard for damaging a transformer at the Tryweryn Reservoir, refused to be drawn.\textsuperscript{225} Likewise approached was Toni Lewis. He confirmed knowing the identity of one of the saboteurs, but similarly refused to divulge any further information.\textsuperscript{226} Yet, in 2009, an erstwhile leading figure in the Free Wales Army, while refusing to reveal the identities of others involved, confirmed that one of those responsible was a senior member of the Patriotic Front.\textsuperscript{227} Asked to express an opinion with regard the explosion, Gethin ap Iestyn, formerly at the vanguard of the Patriotic Front, refused to comment.\textsuperscript{228}

Nevertheless, as the events unfolded, the police and security services appeared resolutely in the dark as to whom was responsible. Within days of the explosion, Goronwy Daniel, the Permanent Under-Secretary of State at the Welsh Office, replied by letter to Burke Trend, the Cabinet Secretary, with regard the extract outlined in the subversion paper concerning Welsh militant activity. Daniel revealed that the Secretary of State for Wales, Cledwyn Hughes, had for some time felt ‘increasingly concerned’ with events in Wales; all the more sharpened by the ‘bomb outrage’ just days earlier at the Temple of Peace. Had the timing device functioned a few hours in arrears, Daniel added, ‘very serious loss of life’ might have occurred. Moreover, the fact a bomb was deployed to protest ‘a meeting arranged to prepare for the investiture of the Prince of Wales’ carried with it the threat the same means of protest would be used again as arrangements for the ceremony proceeded. The consequences of which,

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\textsuperscript{223} WM, 20 November 1967. Within days, 100 people had been interviewed in connection with the explosion.
\textsuperscript{224} Anonymous interview with WT, January 2007.
\textsuperscript{225} Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 October 2007; also, telephone interview, 30 March 2009; also, interview between WT & David Walters, 29 December 2008.
\textsuperscript{226} Interview between WT & Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004.
\textsuperscript{227} Anonymous interview with WT, March 2009.
\textsuperscript{228} Correspondence between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 26 January 2008.
could be ‘very serious indeed’. As for those responsible, whom Hughes hoped ‘every effort’ would be employed by the security and police services to detect, they appeared ‘to be a small group with expert (perhaps ex-Army) knowledge of bombs’. Furthermore, they appeared to have ‘access to explosives’. Contrary to the suggestion proffered in the subversive report, that Welsh mines appeared to be the source of the explosive material, as these were now few, large and subject to careful control, it was more likely the explosives derived from quarries. It was believed, the report concluded, that the ‘overwhelming majority of Welshmen would welcome news of the arrest, prosecution and imprisonment’ of those responsible; and that crucially, they would not remain ‘at large during the period leading up to and including the Investiture’.  

The report by Goronwy Daniel, soon found its way - via government departmental channels - to Box 500, the code name for MI5 and its anonymous chief of staff, Sir Martin Furnival Jones. He responded to fears raised, by stating police and security forces were ‘fully alive’ to the risk posed by Welsh militants to the investiture and ‘were taking all possible steps to anticipate it’. Yet, in a later letter to Burke Trend, Furnival Jones appeared more cautious: clarifying MI5’s position within the wider British internal security network. The ‘protection of members of the Royal Family’, he declared, was the responsibility of the police. As for MI5, it would give protective security advice to all the ‘appropriate authorities’ concerned and moreover, was willing to advise to this end, police forces involved with the investiture should it be approached to do so.

Martin Furnival Jones did not have long to wait. The perceived threat to the investiture and more succinctly, the safety of Prince Charles, was attracting considerable unease. Following a preliminary discussion between the Chief Constable of Gwynedd, Lieutenant Colonel William Jones Williams; the Earl Marshall - the Duke of Norfolk, appointed to oversee the investiture - and Eric St. Johnston, HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, a further covert inter-departmental memorandum confirmed a meeting of ‘chief constables in Wales and the Security

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Services' had been scheduled for 18 January. Convened in order to ensure 'an effective organization' was established 'to collect and sift intelligence', it was further stated that John Parkman, Head of the Regional Crime Squad in Cardiff, had been assigned to investigate those incidents which had already occurred and was diligently collating 'information about the activities of organizations' deemed possibly involved. One of those who attests to having been the focus of security interest at this juncture is Owain Williams. What is more, Williams is certain the security services were prepared to adopt latent means to safeguard the impending investiture. He quantified this by claiming that following the explosion at the Temple of Peace, he was approached by a tall Liverpudlian calling himself 'Parry', who purported to be a former French Foreign Legionnaire and impassioned Welsh nationalist. Imploring Williams to discuss disruptive measures, it was, the mysterious figure announced: 'time to plan for the investiture'. Owain Williams has little doubt that 'Parry' was in fact an undercover Special Branch or MI5 operative.

Nevertheless, seemingly oblivious to the machinations of state security, that same month, a feature on the FWA entitled *Who's At War With England?* appeared in the monthly pictorial *Town* magazine. Depicting a series of photographs of the group 'on exercise', it proved the organizations’ most inflammatory press article to date, with many of its claims reading like a litany of provocation. The group was credited with the explosions at Clywedog and Llanrhaeadr-y-Mochnant. Additionally, it had 'very nearly succeeded' in disrupting the water supply to Birmingham the previous March. Yet, most contentiously, Denis Coslett reportedly threatened the life of Secretary of State for Wales Cledwyn Hughes and Liberal Party MP for Montgomeryshire, Emlyn Hooson. Outraged at the group’s perceived assassination threat, Hooson raised in Parliament whether there existed grounds for possible proceedings under Section 2 of the 1936 Public Order Act. Horace King, the Speaker in the House, ruled the article had indeed ‘constituted a *prima facie* breach of parliamentary privilege’ and referred the matter to the Committee of Privileges for

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234 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004. Parry’s unlikely non-deplume of ‘Owen Glendower’ aroused Williams’ suspicions. He also believes that Parry, who disappeared when leading FWA men were on trial, later stole money from FWA funds.
235 TNA, DPP2/4455. Coslett claimed the FWA had ‘dossiers on all the traitors’ who had ‘sold Wales out to England’. The article appeared in the December edition of *Town* magazine. Alongside the photographs of the FWA exercise were dramatic strap-lines including, ‘the weapons are real’ and ‘IRA
Subsequently, the article came to the attention of Scotland Yard. Interviewed was Bryn Griffiths, the freelance journalist responsible for organizing the review. Following ‘some initial reluctance’, Griffiths gave what Sergeant Tucker of the Metropolitan Police Special Branch Division considered a ‘frank and free version of the events leading up to publication’. This included Griffiths’ uncertainty as to whether weapons used in the exercise were authentic and his disclosure that some of those involved had been recruited solely for the purpose of the feature. Asked to divulge his ‘general impression’ of the group and its leading figures, Griffiths believed the FWA warranted little serious attention and considered Cayo Evans, although equable, ‘anxious’ to garner publicity and money for both himself and the movement. However, Denis Coslett he considered more sinister: believing him ‘potentially dangerous’ and ‘given to outbursts of uncontrolled temper’ which might lead to his ‘indulging in acts of violence or sabotage’.237

Yet, with regard the content of the article, of the more arrant remarks attributed to the FWA, was an expression of anger from Denis Coslett for recently ‘enforced’ homosexuality legislation and his glowing support for Adolf Hitler, whom he regarded as having ‘all the answers’. As for the Fuhrer’s invective diatribe Mein Kampf, it was, Coslett believed, ‘a great book’. These were sentiments seemingly shared by Cayo Evans, who further stated the defeat of the German Military in 1945 to have been a ‘sad day for Wales’. As for the FWA’s ever-expanding armoury, it now reputedly included ‘a heavy machine gun’ smuggled from Dublin and a ‘3.5 rocket launcher’.

Acting on reports presented by the Metropolitan Police, a memorandum was compiled by the Director for Public Prosecutions, in response to the charge that the FWA had contravened the 1936 Public Order Act in the Town article. It considered two possible grounds for prosecution. The first concerned the wearing of military
tactics turn up in Wales’.236

The Times, 25 November 1967. The 1936 Act was introduced to combat the threat posed by Oswald Mosley and the British Union of Fascists.237

TNA, DPP2/4455. Metropolitan Police Special Branch report, 11 December 1967. Claims by Cayo Evans that membership of the FWA totaled 1,700 was dismissed by Griffiths as ‘absolute rubbish’.238

TNA, DPP2/4455. The persons responsible for the feature were Stan Gebler Davies, who penned the article; photographer Jurgen Schadeberg and researcher Bryn Griffiths. The latter had on previous occasions arranged press and television interviews with the Cayo Evans, including the FWA’s appearance on the Frost Show.
uniforms in a public place. However, this did not apply, as those attending the 'exercise' had worn fatigues - albeit adorned with FWA insignia - on private property: Cayo Evans' farm. The second point concerned the aspect of training. The FWA, it was felt, could have violated the act, if members were being 'organized and trained...for the purpose of enabling them to be employed for the use or display of physical force in promoting a political object'. Yet, this aspect was also thought to be 'somewhat sketchy' as the article was a staged show and that eight of the persons shown...had been recruited to pose for the photographs in uniforms loaned them for the purpose'. The findings therefore concluded against 'taking the organization’s activities too seriously'; adding to do so would lend it 'unmerited importance and publicity' which its leaders plainly desired. It seems likely the decision not to proceed with the charge against the FWA satisfied another motive: that through monitoring the group, the identity of those truly responsible might be revealed.

Nevertheless, it is intriguing to consider police reports concerning Evans and Coslett, collated to assist the inquiry undertaken by the Director of Public Prosecutions. Cayo Evans, it was thought, possessed 'an underdeveloped personality' and a mental age of 'about 12 years'. One of those instrumental in compiling the report was Detective Chief Inspector John Owen Evans. Through his having called at Evans' home routinely during this period, he had, he later revealed, been able to establish Cayo Evans' emotional make-up and the true extent of his militant involvement. J. O. Evans concurred with the belief the FWA commander was emotionally and intellectually callow, quantifying this by adding that Evans enjoyed firing pistols in order to watch the smoke dissipate above him. Nonetheless, the retired police officer added, Cayo Evans was approachable and not without charm and warmth. It is a view shared by many of those close to Evans throughout his life. One of whom, Lyn Ebenezer, considered himself extremely fortunate to have known the FWA figurehead. Despite some initial misgivings, owing to Cayo Evans' colourful reputation, having got to know the man, there was, Ebenezer remarked, 'no

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239 TNA, DPP2/4455. Memorandum by Sir Norman Skelhorn, Director of Public Prosecutions to Law Officers' Department, 25 January 1968.
240 TNA, DPP2/4455. Letter from Tony Hetherington, Law Officers' Department, 26 January 1968, to Sir Norman Skelhorn, Director of Public Prosecutions. The Attorney General, Sir Elwyn Jones QC, suggested that police monitoring of known FWA activists be stepped up.
241 Interview between WT and John Owen Evans, 19 February 2001.
one nicer and no one kinder’.\(^{243}\)

However, a police report regarding Denis Coslett suggests an altogether different character. Coslett, it declared, was ‘an unbalanced personality’: in the sense that ‘he is a crank and seems to have ideas of grandeur’. Moreover, he could be ‘violent’ and was an object of ‘derision and fun’ in Llangennech, where he received ‘little support’. Yet, most damning of all, Coslett was considered ‘cruel to his family’\(^{244}\). Contacted to respond to the charge was Coslett’s wife for over forty years, Avril. They had, she countered, ‘argued like any other family’\(^{245}\). Nevertheless, despite the stinging police appraisal, there are those ready to offer an alternative view. Denis Coslett, Lyn Ebenezer maintains, was ‘a hell of a character…extremely amusing’ and a man ‘you’d want alongside you in the trenches’.

Following the interview in Town magazine, media interest in the Free Wales Army subsided. Cayo Evans, declared Lyn Ebenezer in 2006, ‘had pushed it too far’,\(^{246}\) leaving few - if any - in little doubt the joke had worn irredeemably thin. Yet, with the investiture of Charles Windsor as Prince of Wales beginning to burn ever brightly on the horizon and the authorities no nearer to apprehending those truly responsible for the campaign of direct action in Wales, it would not be long before the media spotlight shone once again on the ever ebullient FWA.

**Conclusion**

The period between January 1966 and December 1967 was one of transience: both in a domestic context and on the wider international stage. It saw a rise in militant nationalism on a scale never before witnessed in Wales. The FWA had dipped its toe into the icy waters of militant protest with derisory consequences. It would henceforth concentrate its efforts on its ‘war of propaganda’. In comparison, Mudiad

\(^{243}\) Interview between WT & Lyn Ebenezer, 16 June 2006. Cayo ‘was a fantastic guy, much underrated…might have been the ‘Welsh Garibaldi’’. Correspondence between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 26 January 2008.

\(^{244}\) TNA, DPP2/4455. Denis Coslett, C.R.O. No.100762/65. Retired senior police officer John Owen Evans said of Coslett, ‘he was more of a worry…the more dangerous…and hot-headed…the one more likely to shoot you if he could; you just didn’t know what he was capable of…I wouldn’t want to turn my back on him’. Interview between WT and John Owen Evans, 19 February 2001.

\(^{245}\) Telephone interview between WT & Avril Coslett, 8 March 2009.

\(^{246}\) Interview between WT & Lyn Ebenezer, 16 June 2006. Having ‘got up’ his nose, ‘in the 60s for verity of reasons’, G. ap Iestyn admitted that on getting to know Coslett ‘post ’72’, he considered him ‘salt of the earth and true Gwerin’. Correspondence between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 26 January 2008.
Amddiffyn Cymru had reconvened its sabotage campaign with precision. Moreover, with the scheduled Royal investiture deemed an open sore by the country’s nationalist community, the situation was about to get decidedly worse; despite the efforts of the security forces to apprehend those responsible for the campaign of ‘direct action’. Yet, unbeknown to the nation’s law enforcement agencies, their militant Welsh nemesis was operating right under their noses, shielded to some considerable degree, within the unsuspecting world of the British army.
Chapter 4

Peace talks aboard a coracle.

The campaign of violence increases, as the FWA's downfall is assured

Even by life's fraught standards, 1968 was discordant. War raged in Vietnam. Religious bigotry looked set to ignite Northern Ireland. Czechoslovakia was invaded by the Soviet Union. There was an anti-war demonstration of unprecedented violence in London's Grosvenor Square and much of the Left Bank in Paris was left smouldering. To add to this misery, Enoch Powell delivered his inflammatory 'rivers of blood' speech in Birmingham, igniting a race relations crisis. In Spain, the Basque separatist movement ETA (Euskadi Ta Askatasuna) began its bloody struggle for independence. In the United States, Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy, each champions of the civil rights movement, were assassinated; and moreover, Richard Nixon - already presciently regarded by many as a 'crook' - was elected president. The world was a place of discord: capitalists and communists, nationalists and unionists, Americans and Viet-Cong, Protestants and Catholics, police and protestors. Amid this cauldron of national and international turmoil, Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru increased its campaign of direct action in Wales.

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the period from January to December 1968. It addresses the on-going campaign of so-called 'direct action' undertaken by Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru, highlighting what fuelled the group's militant activism. To this end, it considers the interview in May 1968, when three hooded figures, purporting to be leading members of the movement, held a clandestine meeting with three journalists near Chester. Most notably, it focuses on attempts orchestrated by the director-general of MAC, John Jenkins, to de-rail public support for the impending investiture of Charles Windsor as Prince of Wales. In addition, the paper looks at the re-emergence of the so-called Free Wales Army as a media interest. It also considers the
government’s response to the campaign of ‘direct action’ in Wales: demonstrating that the safety of Charles and the success of the investiture, ensured the responsibility of apprehending the perpetrators was taken out of the hands of Welsh police, to become an investigation co-jointly undertaken by the UK’s wider law-enforcement/security agencies; specifically with the formation of the renowned Shrewsbury unit.

The MAC offensive escalates

MAC did not wait long to re-emerge from the shadows. Five days into the new year, at 4.50 a.m., an active unit based in north Wales exploded a 4lb bomb at the Snowdonia Country Club at Penisarwaun; a village five miles from Caernarfon. It was undertaken to highlight the perceived ‘cultural rape’ of Wales, John Jenkins, the group’s enigmatic former leader revealed in 2004; and ‘to ensure’, the ‘culture vultures’ could see MAC was ‘on their side as well’; that the movement did not approve of ‘incomers’ purporting to be ‘getting away from it all’, while in fact, ‘bringing it all with them’. These people, a vexed Jenkins declared, ‘had come from Manchester and wanted to build a nightclub in the middle of a little Welsh village for God sakes: up in the foothills of Snowdonia’.

Yet, crucially Jenkins added, it was local opposition to the scheme which ensured MAC’s involvement. This came from a number of quarters, including the region’s Temperance Society and from villagers who considered both the local infrastructure to be inadequate and that such a venue would attract only existing incomers and additional migrants to the area. It was ‘deliberately decided’ that a relatively small amount of explosives would be used in the operation, owing to the proximity of the club to the owners’ house. Had ‘the usual size of bomb’ been deployed, Jenkins stated ruefully, the club ‘would have gone and so too the house with him in it’. That would have resulted in injuries which would have proved ‘very counter-productive’. The explosion, Jenkins maintained, ‘was a token: a symbol to show them that we (MAC) are about, we’re watching and we don’t like it’.  

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1 TNA, DPP 2/5975.  
3 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007; also, 20 November 2008; also, TNA, DPP 2/4471. The club was owned by 54-year-old Englishman Jack Nix, a successful wholesale fruiterer, who retired to Penisarwaun with his wife four years earlier. Witness statement by Jack Nix, 10 January 1968. 2-5 lbs of blasting explosives were used, activated by a Venner B43 5 amp time switch. The explosion caused £1,500 damage. Witness statement by Major C. M. Jeffries, Senior Ammunition Technical Officer, Western Command, Chester.
Nonetheless, Rona Rowlands, a villager of Penisarwaun and a prospective employee at the venue, dismissed the notion the explosion was politically motivated, claiming ‘some of those’ who had expressed support for the scheme in the area were Plaid Cymru members. However, ‘half’ the villagers had signed a petition of protest, she added; further conceding ‘the main objection was the likely road congestion’, upon a road system unsuited to the expected increase.\(^4\)

It was not just Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru who were determined to herald in the new year by grabbing the headlines. In an interview with the \textit{Sunday Express}, the Patriotic Front also reminded the country of its political ambitions. It would be ‘proved before the eyes of the world that Wales was a nation’, a prepared statement announced, ‘when they have to move in armed troops to invest Charles as prince of Wales’.\(^5\) The statement, in all its cloaked intention, could not have been clearer.

Nevertheless, the local rumour mill soon linked the explosion at the Snowdonia County Club to the Free Wales Army. Shortly into their inquiry, police arrested Edward Hope Wilkinson (43) and Robert Griffith Jones (37). Both were known in north-west Wales for holding views deemed in support of the Welsh militant struggle. Consequently, a search for incriminating evidence was executed at the home of each man. At the Llanllyfni home of Edward Wilkinson, police found 42 feet of slow fuse, a pistol, one round of .45 ammunition and 49 rounds of .22 ammunition. Also discovered, was a quantity of literature referring to the FWA. At the Groeslon (Caernarfon) home of Robert Jones, investigating officers found fourteen feet of slow fuse and a diary containing references to the FWA. It included an entry which read ‘Owie from Llithfaen is another one’.\(^6\)

Both Wilkinson and Jones were arrested and charged with ‘unlawful possession of explosive substances’. While in police custody, each gave a statement claiming the explosives had been supplied by quarryman Arfon Jones. This, their statements continued, they passed to Owain Williams, who five years earlier, had been imprisoned for undertaking protest action over the Tryweryn issue and whom Wilkinson and Jones now referred to as ‘the receiver’. If that was not incriminating enough, they further alleged that late one evening, a week before the explosion at Penisarwaun, they had accompanied Williams to the Snowdonia Country Club, where

\(^4\) \textit{Western Mail}, 6 January 1968.
\(^5\) \textit{Sunday Express}, 7 January 1968.
\(^6\) TNA, DPP 2/4471. The Queen against Owen Williams: Summary of Facts; also undated witness
he professed the venue ‘should be got rid of’. Moreover, just a few days before the blast, each handed Williams approximately ‘twelve sticks of gelignite and a match box full of detonators’. Also mentioned in the police statement by Edward Wilkinson was John Gwilym Jones. Brought in for questioning, J. G. Jones gave a written statement to the effect that ‘on instruction from Owain Williams’, he collected ‘thirteen sticks of polar-ammon gelignite from ‘Robin’(Robert Jones); this he alleged to have passed onto Williams on 3 November 1967. The following evening, Jones maintained that Williams introduced him to Gethin ap Iestyn at a party in Llangefni. Enticingly, if Jones’ statement is to be believed, this occurred just a fortnight before the explosion at the Temple of Peace in Cardiff. Asked in 2009 if he recalled the incident, Gethin ap Iestyn, claimed not to remember.

J. G. Jones had more to reveal. A week before Christmas, 1967, he took an FWA oath of allegiance at Wilkinson’s home. It was allegedly administered by Owain Williams, while Jones held ‘a point of a dagger’ to his own throat. Also reputedly present and similarly initiated were Wilkinson and Robert Jones. J. G. Jones also claimed that Owain Williams suggested a shot be fired through the car windscreen of Secretary of State for Wales, Cledwyn Hughes; following which, an anonymous phone call to Hughes’ home would cite Denis Coslett as responsible. It was hoped, J. G. Jones declared, that these chain of events would lead to Coslett being expurgated from the FWA, owing to his ‘undesirability’. Nonetheless, the idea, J. G. Jones added, ‘was abandoned’. The most intriguing and dramatic aspect of Jones’s statement, concerned remarks apparently attributed to Owain Williams, whereby he allegedly suggested a raid be undertaken at Saighton Army Barracks near Chester, in order ‘to procure arms for the purpose of the organization’. This, Jones added beguilingly, Williams had said was to be ‘an inside job’. Furthermore, J. G. Jones also claimed to have links to the IRA, via a friend of his within the movement named ‘Sean’. Yet, crucially, despite having admitted his involvement in supplying

statements from Edward Hope Wilkinson and Robert Griffith Jones.
7 TNA, DPP 2/4471.
9 Interview between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 19 May 2009.
10 TNA, DPP 2/4471. Witness statement from John Gwilym Jones, 11 January 1968; also 6 August 1968. As a result of the statement given by Jones, Denis Coslett was interviewed with regard the explosion. Asked if ‘Sean’, was prominent IRA figure Sean MacStiofain, with whom Owain Williams was to develop close contact, Williams replied: ‘Definitely not him. He would have been arrested had he arrived in Britain at this stage’. Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 7 April 2009.
explosive material to Owain Williams, John Gwilym Jones was not charged with any offence. This was owing to his incriminating Williams and his assurance to investigating officers that he would testify against him when Williams came to trial. Also unknown to Owain Williams however, having acted upon testimony provided by Edward Wilkinson and Robert Jones, police approached the proprietor of a hotel near Penisaurwaun. He gave a statement positively identifying the three men as having called for drinks during the evening the apparent reconnoitring of the club was undertaken.\footnote{11 TNA, DPP 2/4471. Witness statement from Maldwyn Parry.}

It was, a police report of the inquiry reveals, ‘abundantly clear’ that Owain Williams was ‘one of a small group of men behind the explosions in different parts of Wales’. Although not given to ‘parading in uniform’, he was considered ‘constantly active in a clandestine manner in support of his beliefs’. Subsequently, Owain Williams was regarded as ‘the most important’ of those questioned and charged. So much so, police suggested the charges against Wilkinson and Robert Jones be dropped, in return for their appearing as witnesses against him.\footnote{12 TNA, DPP 2/4471. Statement given by Detective Sergeant R. G. Owen, 18 January 1968.} Yet, perhaps fearing the two men might renege on their assurance to assist police when the case against Williams came to trial,\footnote{13 TNA, DPP 2/4471. The Queen against Owen Williams: Summary of Facts.} Wilkinson and Robert Jones were summoned to appear before Justice Lane at Caernarfon Assizes on 28 February. There, despite a police statement by Wilkinson professing to be ‘the leader of the FWA in the Caernarvon district’ and his intention to continue as a regional recruiting officer for the group, each man’s testimony - that the explosives and fuse wire were obtained to ‘poach salmon and smoke out rats’\footnote{14 WM, 29 February 1968.} - was accepted by the court. Both received twelve months’ imprisonment, suspended for two years.\footnote{15 TNA, DPP 2/4471. Summing up statement given by Judge Lane. Defence council for Wilkinson and Jones claimed their clients had disassociated themselves from the FWA. WM, 29 February 1968.} As for quarryman Arfon Jones, the source of the explosives obtained by Robert Jones and Edward Wilkinson, he admitted stealing the material from his place of work.\footnote{16 TNA, DPP 2/4471. Witness statement by Arfon Jones, 10 January 1968.} Nevertheless, satisfied his actions had not been politically inspired, police accepted his claim the theft was undertaken for financial gain.\footnote{17 TNA, DPP 2/4471. The Queen against Owen Williams: Summary of Facts.} In court on 15 February, Arfon Jones pleaded guilty

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and was fined £15.\textsuperscript{18} Considering the political climate, the three could consider themselves fortunate not to have received far more stringent sentences. It was borne of fear that a less restrained judicial response, might only serve to inflame an already unpredictable picture.

John Jenkins later adamantly denied that G. T. Jones, Edward Wilkinson or Robert Jones were members of MAC, the group actually responsible for the attack. Furthermore, contemporarily unaware of the nature of the police investigation, Jenkins also conceded to having felt increasingly uneasy the three men might be wrongfully implicated. Yet, any approach to the authorities to inform of their innocence, was, he recognized, not feasible. However, Jenkins also revealed a MAC sympathizer living in Penisaurwaun provided information the venue was being developed without villagers’ support. This information, he added, was acquired through extensive surreptitious monitoring of attitudes in places of communication, such as: the local pub and post office. Crucially, it was only when it was clearly established that locals opposed the venue, that the decision was taken to undertake the protest.\textsuperscript{19} John Jenkins confirmed that MAC activists George Taylor and Alwyn Jones from Abergele were responsible for the explosion at the Snowdonia Country Club.\textsuperscript{20} Nonetheless, despite Jenkins’ insistence, it is a suggestion fiercely dismissed as ‘absolute rubbish’ by George Taylor’s daughter Jennie Evans.\textsuperscript{21}

In 2004, Owain Williams revealed that the enigmatic John Gwilym Jones had ‘harassed’ him ‘for months wanting to do something for Wales’. This included numerous visits to Williams’ home, where he had divulged apparent knowledge of further individuals ready to take up arms against the British state; the whereabouts of an arms cache; and where guns could be appropriated from a military barracks on Anglesey. Such information soon convinced Williams that nineteen-year-old J. G. Jones was both mentally unstable and moreover, deliberately attempting to infiltrate the movement with the aim of imparting knowledge of the groups’ activities to police.

Questioned as to the events surrounding his arrest on 14 January 1968, Williams stated that four days earlier - and five days after the explosion at

\textsuperscript{18} TNA, DPP 2/4471. Wilkinson claimed to have paid an unnamed source, 1s.3d for the explosive fuse and a stick of gelignite, \textit{WM}, 29 February 1968.
\textsuperscript{19} Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 25 March 2004.
\textsuperscript{20} Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007.
\textsuperscript{21} Telephone interview between WT & Jennie Evans, 13 August 2009. Both G. Taylor and A. Jones were later killed when apparently planting an explosive device on the eve of the investiture.
Penisaurwaun - he parked his father's car at Rhyl railway station and journeyed by train to London with the intention of buying a red Volvo sports car. Before returning to Wales, he bought a copy of the *London Evening Standard*. Its front page bore news 'that three men had been arrested in north Wales on explosives charges'. An immediate phone call to his mother confirmed his fears: fourteen police officers, he was told, were positioned throughout the farm awaiting his return. Having purchased the vehicle, Williams drove back to Wales. On reaching the Rhyl area, he contacted Enys Roberts, a female acquaintance and stayed at her home in Henllan for a couple of days. He then spent a few days at Garthewin Hall near Abergele, the manorial home of R. O. F. Wynne, as guest of his daughter Gwenliian. Together, they travelled to Rhyl railway station where they discovered the wheels on Williams' father's car were deflated. Owain Williams is convinced that police officers were responsible. Early the following evening, he returned to his parents' deserted farm near Nefyn. There he was informed by his mother that John Hughes, the head of Gwynedd CID, 'wanted a word' with him. Owain Williams phoned Caernarfon police station. Advised to first eat his supper, he was asked to present himself for questioning later that evening. Williams did not return home for a month. He arrived at Caernarfon police station to find it in darkness and apparently empty. On calling out, the lights were switched on and a number of officers converged on Williams bundling him up the stairs where he was questioned.

He was thrown and pushed around the room from one shouting officer to another, Williams alleged. Having repeated they now had 'the big fish', Williams soon realized that investigating officers considered John Gwilym Jones, Edward Wilkinson and Robert Jones peripheral to their inquiry. It was *he*, Williams deduced, that police considered the principal player and their principal target. Having denied being a member of the FWA, refused to comment on the claim the group's oath of allegiance had been administered to J. G. Jones, Edward Wilkinson and Robert Jones 'at the point of a dagger', Owain Williams was asked to respond to the charge that along with Wilkinson and Robert Jones, he visited the Snowdonia Country Club prior to the explosion. He conceded having done so, but only as a preliminary measure to purchasing the premises, believing it to be shortly up for sale.

Before being transferred to Risley Remand Centre, Owain Williams was charged on three accounts of being unlawfully in possession of gelignite and detonators. Finally, after five court appearances, and five days into a hunger strike,
on 8 February, a weakened and shaking Williams was inexplicably granted bail, to
appear for trial at Caernarfon Assizes on 6 March. Legal advice attained from his
solicitor, that a guilty verdict would ensure a sentence of ‘at least ten years’
imprisonment, began to play feverishly on Williams’ mind. With the court date
approaching, he considered his options. A belief that nitro-glycerin samples, taken
from his father’s parked car in Rhyl, were obtained illegally by police - in order to
record a positive trace of gelignite - all but decided Williams’ next course of action.22

Nevertheless, it is necessary at this juncture to more fully consider the beguiling
witness statement given to police by John Gwilym Jones; certainly when viewed
through the lens of its impact on the liberty of Owain Williams. Crucially, Saighton
Barracks in Cheshire (the alleged site of a proposed arms raid and John Jenkins’ place
of employment) as mentioned by J. G. Jones, is a specific location; some 90 miles
from Owain Williams’ former home on the Llyn Peninsula. If contemporary opinion
is accepted,23 it seems abstruse that police did not probe more deeply into how such
intimate knowledge was acquired by Williams. Jones’ statement followed a number
of high-profile explosions in Wales, surely such information warranted at least a
nominal degree of further investigation; if only to determine if being fed from a
sympathetic ‘inside’ source. However, the belief that police failed to follow-up this
line of inquiry is dismissed as lacking credibility by Raymond Kendall, a junior
member of the Shrewsbury office; the police intelligence unit, later assembled to
ensure the safety of the royal party leading up to and during the investiture period.24

Yet, John Jenkins attests that only once prior to his eventual arrest in
November 1969 was he questioned at the barracks by investigating officers, and this
occurred some two months earlier, as police pieced together information being
received. Interestingly however, the link between Saighton Barracks and militant
activism at this juncture, was further highlighted in 2009, when a former south Wales

22 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 20 March 2004. Williams was charged with unlawful
possession of 13 sticks of gelignite on or about 3 November 1967; unlawful possession of gelignite
between 1 and 25 December 1967 and unlawful possession of twelve sticks of gelignite and an
unknown quantity of detonators between 25 December 1967 and 6 January 1968. Owain Williams’
father’s car was examined by Dr. J. D. Mullen from the North Western Forensic Laboratory, Preston.
Williams admitted exaggerating the effects of his hunger strike in order to draw sympathy from
magistrates. Williams’ last appearance in court before absconding was 29 February 1968. TNA, DPP
2/4471.
23 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 10 August 2009.
24 Written correspondence between WT & Raymond Kendall, 9 August 2009.
cell member of MAC revealed a covert IRA team had also during this period reconnoitred Saighton Barracks as a possible source for procuring weapons. Having gained access to the site with the aid of ‘inside assistance’ the proposal was apparently rejected - presumably by the IRA chief of staff - on grounds of security.\(^{25}\)

However, for all the ‘success’ of the Snowdonia Country Club action, a subsequent examination of the episode, most notably the disclosure that Saighton Barracks was now on police radar, suggests the earnest security measures implemented by John Jenkins may have inadvertently revealed a chink of light. Yet, it was not long before an opportunity to re-tighten his grip on the reins of the movement revealed itself. Within days of the explosion at Penisaurwaun, the director-general of MAC received news that the sale of Venner time switches (formerly used by Jenkins in assembling the devices) was being monitored by sales assistants and inconspicuous members of Special Branch. The importance of adapting an innovative time delaying mechanism, he realized, was paramount to the group’s continued ‘progress’. Following a series of prototypes, all fashioned with the aid of intricate technical drilling equipment at the Dental Centre at Saighton Barracks, an alarm clock time system was finally unveiled. Nonetheless, John Jenkins’ later assertion to have personally ‘worked that one out’\(^{26}\) conflicts with a police statement by senior MAC operative, Frederick Ernest Alders.

Approached by Jenkins to rectify the issue, the ‘problem’, Alders deduced, was one of ‘breaking and connecting an electrical circuit, by using a time delay’. This, he suggested, could be achieved with the aid of ‘a battery, clock, bell-push and bulb’. Having established what was needed, Alders then devised a means of producing an effective timing system. This was achieved, by removing the second hand from an alarm clock and threading wires through holes drilled in the clock face. An explosion could then be effected, when the hour hand made contact with the detonator wire. Altogether, Alders added, he and Jenkins assembled ‘eight or nine’ such timing devices.\(^{27}\) Crucially, Jenkins stated in 2007, prior to connecting the charge, a means of testing whether the circuit was functional was also devised. This,

\(^{25}\) Anonymous interview with WT, January 2009. Saighton Barracks was at this juncture ‘open’, with little, if any, security measures in place. Asked if the IRA personnel had included Sean MacStiofain, the interviewee replied: ‘Definitely not him. Well, not to my knowledge’.

\(^{26}\) Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007. At this juncture, retail outlets such as Woolworth’s sold Venner time switches. A similar mechanism could also be obtained from those lamp posts not yet upgraded by Electricity Boards.
'fail safety device', operated by way of first inserting a light bulb rather than the detonator. If the circuit was operational, the light would activate. Therefore assured the connection was 'there', the explosives could then be 'plugged in'.

Apparently flushed with the success of their enterprise, Jenkins and Alders now sought to remedy another problem: the movement's all but depleted source of gelignite. Having 'plenty of detonators', on 23 January 1968, the two men raided the explosives magazine at Hafod Quarry near Wrexham. This single acquisition - 'some ¼ of a ton' of materials - enabled the organization 'to carry on' until their ultimate detection nearly two years later. Jenkins later confirmed the operation was aided with 'inside' help, adding that an employee at the site provided both a map of the magazines' location and relayed information regarding its security. Namely, that when opened, the door to the explosive's stores activated an alarm, which both flashed and sounded in the quarry's main office. To obviate the problem, Jenkins declared, the 'sleeper' placed a rubber band between the circuit's contact points. This prevented the hammer striking the circuit, thus activating the alarm. Armed in the belief this information would prevent their detection, Jenkins and Alders gained access by breaking the door. They then relieved the magazine of much of its contents. Following the raid, the sympathetic employee returned and removed the rubber band. Jenkins had remained confident such 'inside information' would withstand the likely strenuous probing by police. 'The miners of Rhos', he stated emphatically, 'were not known for their pro-police activities'. Investigating officers, he felt assured 'would not have got much sense out of them, particularly in a matter like this'.

Yet, statements stored at the National Archives, suggest a conflicting version of events. Frederick Ernest Alders maintained he and Jenkins scaled a perimeter wall surrounding the explosives store and attempted to force open the steel door 'with a crowbar, hammer and chisel'. Having failed in their endeavours, Jenkins then placed a detonator between the door and its frame. It was inserted near the point of the lock; the location of which, the two men had partly prized open. Frustrated with the detonators' lack of success, the door was eventually accessed, by 'applying leverage' and a gradual inch by inch 'working of the lock'. Having gained entry, they were greeted with sight of the alarm system. Fearful police had been aroused, Alders alleged he and Jenkins retreated 'for about half-an-hour' until convinced their entry to

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27 TNA, ASSI 84/577. Undated witness statement Frederick Ernest Alders. Exhibit 132.
the store had gone unnoticed. They then returned and loaded into the back of Alders’
car, ‘about eight boxes of explosives’. The haul was immediately taken to Saighton
Barracks, where it was placed in the dark room within the Dental Centre.\textsuperscript{29} It was a
store room to which, ordinarily, only Jenkins had access.\textsuperscript{30}

Also questioned following the raid was Hafod Quarry employee William
Roberts, who at 12.35 the following afternoon discovered the break-in. Contrary to
John Jenkins’ claim that some 250lbs of explosives were taken, Roberts recorded that
‘100 lbs of Polar Ajaz and 50 lbs of Dynagex explosives’ were unaccounted for. The
total cost of the haul was £14.3.4d.\textsuperscript{31} On returning to Wrexham, Frederick Ernest
Alders - in what retrospectively appears a breathtaking disclosure and breach of
security - allegedly informed his partner and confidante, Ann Woodgate, of the theft.\textsuperscript{32}

The question of both the security measures exercised and the notable disparity
surrounding the recollection of events requires further comment. It is perhaps
inevitable that conflict should arise when numerous police witness statements are
accessed. For example - and somewhat intriguingly - Frederick Ernest Alders appears
to have been kept in the dark as to some of the operation’s finer details. Having
admitted to police that Jenkins informed him of having received a map bearing the
location of the Hafod magazine from a colliery worker, Alders denied knowledge of
the disengaged alarm system. This, police alleged, was revealed by Gordon Wyn
Jones, who crucially, later appeared in their inquiry.\textsuperscript{33} Asked to throw light on the
discrepancy, John Jenkins remained adamant the security alarm system had indeed
been de-mobilized, adding it was possible that Alders was either protecting the
individual concerned, or had not been party to this information.\textsuperscript{34}

Nevertheless, other than MAC’s on-going ‘success’, Frederick Ernest Alders
had another reason to celebrate in January 1968. That month, he and Ann Woodgate
were engaged. It was a development which some in the Welsh militant community -
most notably Owain Williams - believe had far-reaching detrimental consequences for
the militant campaign. Yet, whether burdened with the added responsibility of
preparing for married life, increasingly concerned by his involvement in MAC, or frustrated by the loss of his perceived ‘freedom’, the decision to advance their relationship appears have acted as the catalyst for change in Alders’ temperament. Shortly after the announcement, Woodgate later informed police, the attitude of the man she referred to as ‘Ernie’ changed towards her and he gradually became ‘more moody’.  

However, whatever the truth surrounding these events, unknown to John Jenkins, the week before the break-in at Hafod Quarry, the scheduled meeting of chief constables in Wales - and other interested parties - had gone ahead. A letter from Philip Allen at the Home Office to Burke Trend, Secretary to the Cabinet Office, outlined its outcome. A ‘sharp increase’ in the monitoring of known Welsh extremists had been proposed. To this end, John Parkman, the head of Cardiff Regional Crime Squad, was to continue to coordinate ‘a special unit’ assembled to collect and collate intelligence. This team was to be headed by an inspector, employed in this capacity on a full-time basis. Within each of the Welsh police forces, one officer was to be deployed - also on a full time basis - to sift through intelligence received at local level. Others assigned to ‘closely’ monitor events were the security services and the Metropolitan Police Special Branch. Assigned to act as a liaison officer between all concerned, was Eric St. Johnston, the Chief Inspector of Constabulary. Prime Minister Harold Wilson, was soon informed of developments by Sir Burke Trend; who, assured matters were in hand, proposed a meeting be held ‘in a few months’ to review the position. Nonetheless, both the lack of urgency and Burke Trends’ perceived circumnavigation of the Home Office did not go unnoticed by Downing Street civil servants. In response to Trends’ memo, the Prime Minister was reminded that responsibility of the investiture lay within the authoritative remit of the Home Secretary. As such, it was ‘important’ that ‘responsibility should properly lie and be seen to lie with him’. Moreover, in a further note of caution, if ‘anything were to go wrong’, Wilson was warned, the Home Secretary might ‘possibly take the

36 TNA, CAB 164/389. Letter from Philip Allen to Burke Trend, 26 February 1968. The meeting was held on 18 January 1968.
37 TNA, CAB 164/389. Memorandum from cabinet secretary Burke Trend, to Prime Minister Harold Wilson, 28 February 1968.
line' the Prime Minister had ‘assumed responsibility’ for security arrangements.  

Senior Downing Street mandarins were not alone in feeling matters were not moving quickly enough. In Parliament, on 15 February, James Callaghan, the newly appointed Home Secretary, was asked by the Conservative MP for Hereford, David Gibson Watt, if the police inquiry into the explosion at the Temple of Peace had resulted in criminal proceedings being taken against any individual. No action, Callaghan conceded, had yet been taken. It was not the only embarrassment for the authorities. A £30,000 appeal to finance renovations at the bomb damaged Temple of Peace also proved less than forthcoming. Despite the nation being ‘appalled by the wanton act of destruction’, two months after the appeal was launched, just £555 had been raised, mainly from industry. The nation’s outrage did not extend so far as to meet the cost of repairs it seemed.

During the evening of 1 March 1968 - arguably the most influential and cardinal date in the combative struggle in Wales - Owain Williams met John Jenkins at Loggerheads in north Wales. It was between two performances given by Jenkins’ military band to celebrate Saint David’s Day. There, Williams informed MAC’s director-general of his intention to abscond the following day. Yet, for all the apparent cordiality of the conference, it is a meeting enveloped in much conjecture and which more recently, has led to a degree of tension between the two men. This is owing to the fact that Jenkins attends this meeting led to his arrest 20 months later. It is a claim robustly challenged by Williams. However, the ramifications of the incident were yet to be felt, as six days later, Owain Williams failed to report to Caernarfon Assizes to face the charges against him. Magistrates responded to Williams’ absence by issuing a warrant for his arrest and instructing police forces throughout Wales to receive notice of his description. Unknown to the nation’s law enforcement agencies, Williams was in Brittany, where just days before he was

38 TNA, PREM 13/2903. Internal Downing Street memorandum to Harold Wilson, 1 March 1968. At the 1911 investiture, 20,000 troops and 2,000 police officers were deployed.
39 Hansard, vol 758, c400W. 15 February 1968. James Callaghan was appointed Home Secretary, 30 November 1967.
40 WM, 13 January 1968; also WM, 7 March 1968.
41 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 November 2008.
43 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 20 March 2004.
44 WM, 7 March 1968.
welcomed by the newly established FLB. In 2004, Owain Williams explained that while attempting to avoid detection or arouse suspicion, he journeyed by train from north Wales to London. There he took another train to Newport and the south west of England, from where he caught the ferry to Cherbourg. At this juncture, Harri Webb, the Plaid Cymru activist and covert MAC policy advisor, was in talks with the Breton movement as to possible collusion between itself and Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru. Following a series of proposals as to how this might be advanced however, all militant co-operation suggested was vetoed by John Jenkins on the grounds of security. Nevertheless, in 2009, Owain Williams denied that Harri Webb had acted as the liaison between himself and the Front for the Liberation of Brittany.

With Williams’ disappearance deemed a mystery, a fortnight later, during the early hours of Sunday, 24 March, a 10lb bomb exploded at an office of the Inland Revenue in Llanishen, Cardiff. The blast was heard half-a-mile away at Llanishen police station, from where, officers arrived within minutes to find debris and documents strewn across the area. Outraged by the explosion was the constituent MP, Ted Rowlands. This, he remarked, perfectly capturing the sense of anger apparently felt by many across Wales, was ‘Cardiff, not Chicago’. Quick to add its voice in condemning the action was the Western Mail. Such a ‘distorting effect’ on the climate of Welsh politics, it declared, undermined all legitimate political pressure to see further power devolved to Cardiff; while moreover, it raised doubt as to the nations’ readiness to assume such responsibility. Yet, the very fact that militant nationalists were engaged in a campaign of direct action owing to what they considered the ‘distorting effect’ of the centralist political agenda toward Wales, appeared to escape the nation’s ‘national newspaper’.

Used for the first time in the explosion, was one of the timing devices recently assembled by Frederick Ernest Alders and John Jenkins. Both Jenkins and Alders reconnoitred the site some weeks before. It was a journey to south Wales, the two

45 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 20 March 2004. On the train to London, Williams recognized a man from north Wales, who approached him to engage in conversation. Williams implored him not to mention having seen him. This, Williams added, he proceeded to do.
46 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007; also 20 November 2008.
47 Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 7 April 2009. The Front for the Liberation of Brittany was formed in 1967.
48 WM, 25 March 1968; also TNA, DPP 2/5976.
49 Ibid.
50 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 11 April 2009.
men undertook ‘three or four times’ over the coming months.\(^{51}\) John Jenkins later claimed he and Alders drove alone one Saturday morning from his mother’s home at Aberfan, where they had stayed the previous night, to the Cardiff home of Anthony John Hiscocks, an insubordinate in the Dental Corps based with Jenkins at Saighton Barracks, Cheshire. Moreover, living two miles from Jenkins in Wrexham, the two men and their wives, Jenkins revealed, had often socialized together. Crucially, both Hiscocks and Jenkins soon identified common ground. In particular, a shared belief that only through armed insurrection could Wales be granted Home Rule. Furthermore, he shared Jenkins’ angry despair for Aberfan. This proved not the only music to the ears of John Jenkins. He also learned that prior to joining the Army Dental Corps, Hiscocks was employed at the tax office in Llanishen; the site of which was a mere stone’s throw from his parent’s Cardiff home.\(^{52}\)

Nonetheless, in a statement to police, Alders suggests another series of events. Namely, that he and Jenkins collected - in his van - another man from ‘a village outside’ the Welsh capital. The three then travelled to Llanishen and the home of Hiscocks.\(^{53}\) Having there established the tax office was not subject to security patrols at the weekend, the four men, if Alders’ later testimony is to be believed, travelled the short distance to the rear of the premises. There, they parked the van and with Jenkins and Hiscocks leading the way, they walked across the undeveloped field to the tax offices’ perimeter fence. Having discounted accessing the site via this direction, Hiscocks suggested the group drive through the main gates and, while utilizing Ann Woodgate’s L plates which adorned the vehicle, purport to be engaged in a driving lesson. As learner drivers in the area made use of the premises for such a purpose, Hiscocks assured the party it would not arouse suspicion. As Alders practiced a series of vehicle manoeuvres, Hiscocks pointed out the Nissan hut in which he had worked prior to enlisting in the army. Having assured Jenkins the hut contained tax files, the party exited, dropping off first Hiscocks and then the fourth unidentified man.\(^{54}\)

In 2008, a former south Wales MAC activist during the period of the group’s

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\(^{51}\) TNA, ASSI 84/577. Undated witness statement by Frederick Ernest Alders. Exhibit 132. Alders later informed investigating officers that as the explosion dominated radio and television news bulletins, Jenkins impassively informed his junior insurgent the device had been ‘one of ours’.

\(^{52}\) Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 25 March 2004; also, 19 October 2007; 20 November 2008 and 11 April 2009.

\(^{53}\) TNA, ASSI 84/577. Undated witness statement by Frederick Ernest Alders.

\(^{54}\) TNA, ASSI 84/577. Undated witness statement by Frederick Ernest Alders. Alders stated that the reconnoitre had taken place ‘at the end of February’. Moreover, at the home of the unidentified fourth
inception, and crucially, prior to John Jenkins operational directorship, revealed Trefor Beasley - later identified as being involved in the explosion at the Clywedog reservoir site in March 1966 - to be the enigmatic ‘fourth man’. It was he, the source revealed, who both travelled with Alders and Jenkins to the home of Hiscocks; and Beasley who then perpetrated the operation. Nevertheless, it is a claim both stringently and routinely denied by John Jenkins; who further rejected the suggestion that he, Alders or Hiscocks, were responsible in later planting the device. As director-general of MAC, Jenkins - in visiting the site - ensured his unassailable authority and ‘rubber stamped’ the tax office as a ‘legitimate target’. Only having first deemed the target ‘viable’, had Jenkins handed over the explosive device.

John Jenkins revealed the explosion was undertaken by a south Wales active unit; one of whom gained access via an open window. The device - concealed in a rucksack - was then placed against an interior door. The window was not left deliberately unsecured in readiness for the strike, Jenkins added; but information received that - for what was assumed to be reasons of ventilation - a window at the rear of the hut was frequently kept ‘slightly ajar’, had been capitalized upon. This vital segment of information had been received from an employee, Jenkins stated, although not one connected with the attack. It did however, he continued, ‘accurately reflect the degree of intelligence’ that MAC was receiving at this juncture. The date of the strike was also significant, Jenkins revealed, as it was timed to coincide with the Wales/France Five Nations rugby international; at 2.00 a.m. (the time of the bomb’s activation) Jenkins added capriciously, officers would finally be settling down after one of the busiest dates in the Cardiff police’ calendar. Moreover, it would provide the MAC operatives responsible both ‘a good alibi’ and an opportunity to utilize the bustling city streets to make their escape. Yet, in conjunction with other discrepancies surrounding the MAC offensive, this factor was later denied by Frederick Ernest Alders as prefatorily reached, but rather, an aspect of the operation which Jenkins only mentioned in retrospect.

Asked whether her husband supported the combative struggle, retired school

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55 Anonymous interview with WT, January 2009. The two south Wales men had also reconnoitred the site alone, with only Beasley then allegedly involved in planting the device.
57 TNA, ASSI 84/577. Undated witness statement by Frederick Ernest Alders.
teacher Eileen Beasley affirmed her husband ‘believed in taking action’. Had this
included his personal involvement in militant activity, she was asked. It was a point,
Eileen Beasley felt unable to clarify. 58 Yet, an indication of the true extent of Trefor
Beasley’s contribution to the militant campaign, was later given added clarity by John
Jenkins, who confirmed that Beasley had acted as the group’s south Wales Quarter
Master. This extended to his having information and immediate control of the buried
arms dump ‘in woodland near his home in the Pontypridd area’. It was one of ‘three
or four’ underground depots, containing ‘in a safe condition’ the explosives and
materials buried across Wales. Crucially however, both knowledge of a particular
location and the authority to remove its stores, had resided strictly and solely with
John Jenkins. Trefor Beasley had not been party to the Llanishen Tax Office strike, or
indeed, any impending action; moreover, Jenkins added emphatically, he knew ‘better
than to ask’. Having first called at Beasley’s home prior to ‘collecting the necessary
material’, information as to why was neither sought nor offered. The whole structure,
the former operational commander of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru concluded, ‘was run
on the lines’ that ‘the fewer’ those informed ‘the better’. It was why, he declared
trenchantly, ‘we lasted so long’. 59

As for Anthony John Hiscocks, the once self-confessed ‘fiery patriot’, he later
shed light on the Llanishen action, in statements made to police after Jenkins was
arrested. Whether in an attempt to save his own skin, or by way of candid
assessment, Hiscocks claimed that John Jenkins was ‘a fanatic’, with both political
views tangential to his own and from whom he had endeavoured to distance himself
by way of a requested camp transfer. The damning disclosure assured him few
friends in the militant community. Particularly when it was further revealed that
Hiscocks had relocated to the first of a number of subsequent camps in England, a full
thirteen months before the Llanishen Tax office strike.

Yet, Hiscocks was not finished there. He further stated the mysterious fourth
passenger in Alders’ van had revealed his wife to be ‘a teacher’, thus implicating
Trefor Beasley. Furthermore, that Jenkins had instructed him to surreptitiously
ascertain - through conversation with pub regulars - the security arrangements and
number of personnel employed at the nearby water pumping station in Huntington,

59 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007; 20 November 2008; also, telephone
interview, 21 January 2009.
Cheshire. Also, that Jenkins endeavoured to get representation from the Free Wales Army to view a scaled model of the Huntington site, in order to detect its most vulnerable point; this with the aim of severing the water supply to Liverpool. Moreover, that a series of trips to the site had been undertaken by Jenkins, himself and a certain John Humphries, who despite not being regular army personnel, often visited Jenkins at the Dental Centre at Saighton Barracks. Also, having reconnoitred a building containing the generator at the Huntington site, Jenkins had declared it 'an easy place to knock over'. Furthermore, Hiscocks claimed that Jenkins had confessed to almost being apprehended, when police, having allegedly received information of buried gelignite and a description of a white Cortina, believed it might in fact be Jenkins' white Ford Taunus. In addition, Hiscosks said that a car he hired had been loaned to Jenkins in order for him and John Humphries to visit a farm on Lleyn named 'Guinness'. It was regarding 'activities' involving the FWA. Yet, and perhaps most accusatory of all, Hiscocks alleged that Jenkins attempted to reveal the workings of a timing device and had also instructed Hiscocks to be mindful of the word MAC should Jenkins contact him by telephone. This, Hiscocks was led to believe, was in order to demand a response as to whether the ability existed for the two men 'to talk freely' with regard the militant campaign.60

Needless to say, Hiscocks' somewhat evocative testimony was later greeted with palpable unease and disappointment by those in the militant fraternity.61 Nonetheless, if Jenkins himself harboured any annoyance toward his former underling, he masked its symptoms well. In 2008, when discussing these events, Jenkins greeted news of Hiscocks' revelations with typical sang froid. Three pieces of evidence demanded consideration, he declared. First, at the time of the Llanishen action, Hiscocks more than passed the Jenkins litmus test. He had, through articulate and reasoned debate, met the criteria deemed necessary to enter the elusive ranks of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru; albeit as a 'fellow traveller' rather than bona fide member

60 TNA, ASSI 84/577. Witness statement given by Anthony John Hiscocks, 16 December 1969. The Llanishen tax office action was the only time Hiscocks was involved in the militant campaign and this solely owing to his 'inside knowledge', confirmed John Jenkins. Hiscocks, Jenkins added, had certainly not gone through the same process of determination as had Alders. During a reconnoitre of the Huntington site, Jenkins and Alders were nearly apprehended when a police patrol car arrived as they walked across an approaching field. Dropping 'immediately to the ground', an 'uncomfortable three hours was spent face-down' in the increasingly dank grass. The plan to target the site was later abandoned. Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007; also, TNA, ASS 84/577. Witness statement Ann Woodgate, 15 December 1969.
of the group. Moreover, Hiscocks’ subsequent exposé occurred when the supreme commander of MAC was already arrested and facing almost certain conviction. Any attempt to ensure his own liberty had surely to be acknowledged and understood. Finally, much of the so-called disclosure, Jenkins suspected, was fabricated by Hiscocks ‘at the behest’ of investigating officers. This assumption, he remarked, being based on the fact that much of Hiscocks’ testimony was entirely without foundation. Such as, the apparent early inclusion of Jenkins’ car in the police inquiry and the additional claim that two boxes marked ‘gelignite’ were in Alders’ van. Yet, whatever the truth surrounding Hiscocks’ witness statement, not all shared Jenkins’ charitable quantification, particularly when it further emerged that Hiscocks, in the court-room at Ruabon Magistrates, positively identified Frederick Ernest Alders as having driven to Llanishen Tax Office.

However, by drawing attention to the timing of Hiscocks’ disclosure to investigating officers, Jenkins’ assertion - that only following his arrest did those linked to him impart information - holds water. Certainly when papers stored at the National Archives are scrutinized. Yet, what is not so transparent, is how and when those subsequently interviewed entered the inquiry? Were these statements given voluntarily, in a possible attempt to pre-empt an approach by police? Or were these individuals contacted by investigating officers, following discussion with Alders and most notably, Ann Woodgate, each of whom later provided officers with statements which proved paramount in Jenkins’ conviction. One factor which is certainly supported by available evidence at the National Archives, is that John Jenkins divulged nothing of the campaign during police questioning.

Nevertheless, why such little contemporaneous information reached the ears of investigating officers may be more complicated than perhaps first realized, with what Jenkins elusively terming ‘the threat of sanctions’ holding the key. John Jenkins offered the case of Anthony John Hiscocks by way of example. Hiscocks, Jenkins explained, was married: a situation immediately recognized by the director-general of

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62 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 29 December 2008, also, 14 January 2009. Asked to throw light on the identity of John Humphries, as mentioned by Hiscocks, Jenkins replied he was not in MAC, but a friend in the TA. Jenkins also confirmed he and Humphries had visited Owain Williams at his farm Guinis on Lleyn, but he and Williams had communicated in double entendres. Humphries, Jenkins felt assured, ‘would not have known the content of their conversation’. The journey was undertaken ‘about a year before investiture’, Jenkins added. From then on things ‘became really tight’.


MAC as advantageous; as those in such a position had ‘more to lose’ should their involvement in the campaign be identified. Furthermore however, such a predicament shifted the balance of power between Jenkins and the individual firmly in Jenkins’ direction, in that ‘a subtle degree of pressure’ could - if necessary - be exerted. This ‘pressure’ taking the form of a prior, mutual understanding of the home location of an operative’s family, Jenkins proclaimed; although at pains to further establish that such an implied threat existed only if a ‘worst case scenario’ of disclosure appeared imminent. As it transpired, Jenkins added genially, such a course of action was never called upon to be exercised. Nonetheless, such recognition of the apparent milieu, Jenkins believed, no doubt ‘helped someone be a bit circumspect about any double-crossing they might want to do’.65 Suffice to say, security amid the group appeared water-tight; an ipso facto, later identified by Raymond Kendall, a member of the hand-picked police Shrewsbury unit, as instrumental in ensuring the group’s longevity.66

Yet, what was also conspicuous by its absence at this juncture, was an assurance by Home Secretary James Callaghan, that those responsible for the Llanishen Tax Office strike, the most recent ‘deplorable and wanton act of violence’, would be quickly brought to book.67 The lack of success in pursuing the bombers, was now an aching source of frustration for both the police and the government; and for each, certainly within circles on the periphery of society - such as anarchist groups - an increasing cause for ridicule.

**MAC gives a press conference**

The news of another bomb blast in Wales was greeted with palpable alarm in Whitehall and the government looked for ways to stem the rise of Welsh nationalism. One solution was to replace Cledwyn Hughes, who was sympathetic to nationalist aspirations, with George Thomas, the Cardiff West MP, who was not, but sought promotion. Speaking in 2000, William Edwards, the former Labour MP for

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Hiscocks positively identified Alders on 28 November 1969.

65 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 29 December 2008, 14 January 2009 & 14 March 2009. Ann Woodgate claimed that both she and Thelma Jenkins were threatened with ‘sanctions’ should they divulge any operational information heard spoken by Jenkins or Alders. Each were routinely warned ‘someone would get us’. TNA, ASSI 84/577. Ann Woodgate witness statement 15 December 1969.

66 Written correspondence between WT & Raymond Kendall, 8 August 2009.

Meirionnydd, declared Thomas ‘a nasty piece of work’. His ‘story telling to Wilson that Cledwyn Hughes was pandering to nationalism’ was designed with calculation; so too, his fevered oratory in which he ranted his desire ‘to release the dogs of war’ on nationalists. Whatever the background circumstances, on 5 April 1968, George Thomas was appointed Secretary of State for Wales. It was a decision greeted with support by the Western Mail and Liverpool Daily Post, who each believed the plodding parliamentary approach of the albeit ‘respected’ Cledwyn Hughes had run its course. A more dynamic, scintillating and dogmatic advance was needed they attested; and George Thomas, they confidently declared, fitted the bill.

Nevertheless, the newly appointed government minister made a faltering start. In a television interview to announce his arrival to the nation, Thomas resolutely declared his belief ‘the period of violence’ had ended. If Thomas’ imprudence registered on the radar of the state, so too did it blink menacingly upon the screens of the south Wales cell of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru, who now determined the government minister should eat his words.

On 2 May 1968, just weeks after nouveau arrive George Thomas was informed by Harold Wilson he would forthwith be responsible for the investiture, three members of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru emerged briefly from behind the group’s smokescreen of anonymous subterfuge. In an interview with three journalists - Ian Skidmore, Emyr Jones and Harold Pendlebury - the incognito John Jenkins anatomized a political creed which sought to galvanize the Welsh electorate into recognizing its need for greater political autonomy. For those unable to fathom what fuelled Welsh militant action, it was a reactionary force, Jenkins declared, borne of desperate outrage for the disaster at Aberfan and Wales’ subjugated position within the union of British nations.

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69 WM, 6 April 1968.  
70 WM, 6 April 1968; also, LDP, 6 April 1968. Also telephone interview between WT & John Humphries, former editor of Western Mail, 10 November 2008.  
71 Sunday Telegraph Supplement, 6 September 1968.  
73 Telephone interview between WT & Ian Skidmore, 20 August 2008. At this juncture, Ian Skidmore operated on a freelance basis; Emyr Jones was employed by the Wrexham Leader and Harold Pendlebury by the Daily Mail.
In 2004, John Jenkins revealed that the press conference was designed to cultivate the belief that should the investiture go ahead, 'the safety of the prince could not be guaranteed'. The threat had no substance, Jenkins admitted, adding 'could you imagine the reaction from the mothers of Wales?'. Indeed, Jenkins had soon recognized that any degree of militant activity which remotely threatened the safety of both the prince and the royal party, would prove hugely 'counter-productive' in political terms. Rather, Jenkins added crucially, 'the idea was to send a signal to the authorities - via the journalists - that a threat nevertheless did exist'. MAC may have 'secretly lacked' the intention to harm Prince Charles, but nonetheless, Jenkins wanted it understood it had the 'means' and was 'willing and able' to do so. Further in line with MAC strategy, it was hoped this information would lead to an overreaction from the authorities: both in the build up to the investiture and on investiture day itself; turning Wales into what Jenkins hoped would resemble to 'an armed camp'. However, he also conceded that not all within the groups elusive 'inner circle' had considered 'restrained action' appropriate, with such persons, in contrast to the director-general, regarding a combative attack on the prince as entirely 'justified'.

Nevertheless, it was necessary for MAC, comprising for the occasion: John Jenkins, Frederick Ernest Alders and Alders’ step brother, John Roberts, to convince the journalists that those before them were indeed responsible for the militant campaign; and this had been established, Jenkins revealed, through disclosing hitherto unreported factors surrounding the wider bombing operation, such as, 'a cream coloured alarm clock was used as the timing mechanism during the Llanishen Tax Office action'. The official police record regarding the quantity of explosives removed from the magazine at Hafod Quarry some three months earlier was also highlighted. ‘You see’, Jenkins continued, ‘media sources greatly underestimated how much was taken. The figure we gave the journalists precisely matched that stated in the undisclosed police report’; the contents of which, Jenkins had come by through one of the two ‘friendly contacts’ within the north Wales police service. With Jenkins hoping the journalists would publish the true figure, its corroboration by police officers, he realised, would then be made. This, he predicted, would set alarm bells ringing through the corridors of power, by confirming the fears of Special Branch,

74 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 25 March 2004; also, 19 October 2007; 20 November 2008 & 21 January 2009. Jenkins wanted to convey to the journalists that MAC was 'a fully-fledged militant organisation'. TNA, ASSI, 84/577. Witness statement by Harold Pendlebury 5 December 1969; also,
that Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru was being fed invaluable information from at least one enigmatic source within the Welsh police force. The intention of which, Jenkins declared ruefully, he gleefully sought. These fraternal ‘contacts’ had not been personally known to him, Jenkins stated, but rather the information was relayed via a MAC sympathiser known to the officers.\(^5\)

However, having established why the meeting was convened, it is important at this juncture to establish how the conference came to be held. In a police witness statement, compiled a month after Jenkins’ and Frederick Ernest Alders’ arrest, John Richard Lewis Roberts (Alders’ step-brother) outlined his involvement in the ‘event’, later described by Sir Tasker Watkins QC, as ‘almost strange and rather macabre’.\(^6\)

Having been instructed by John Jenkins to collect and transport Emyr Jones from a Wrexham address to Chester, John Roberts then drove to Picton Hall.\(^7\)

Some three miles north-east of Chester, it was to be the venue of the meeting and was crucially the manorial home of Ian Skidmore; who later explained that Emyr Jones had met him and Harold Pendlebury at the Talbot Hotel in the city. In due course, Jones had taken a telephone call, following which, he had informed his contemporaries they were to make their way to Picton Hall.\(^8\)

Having been instructed by Jenkins to adopt a ‘business like’ demeanour, the balaclavad John Roberts and Frederick Ernest Alders greeted the journalists on their arrival by instructing them to ‘get out’ of the car and handover the keys. They then escorted the expectant journalists into the house. In the drawing room they were searched and asked to remove the contents of their pockets. This they did, placing keys, cigarettes and lighters on a table. Following a thorough search of the house, a call was put through to a telephone box in nearby Mickle Trafford. Some moments later, a car was heard in the drive and a man - later identified as John Jenkins - entered the room. The meeting, by the meagre light of a down-turned reading lamp, was then convened. Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru, the men were told, represented a complete cross-section of the community. It was governed by a ‘Supreme Council of five and an Executive Committee of three’. The man before them, he announced, was the

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\(^5\) Ian Skidmore, 17 December 1969.

Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007; 20 November 2008 & 21 January 2009. Interestingly, the figure stated in the official police report was ‘itself inaccurate’ Jenkins revealed. It too under-recorded the amount of gelignite removed by some 100 lbs.

\(^6\) WM, 9 April 1970; also, telephone interview between WT & Sir Tasker Watkins, 15 April 2007.

\(^7\) TNA, ASSI 84/577. Witness statement by John Richard Lewis Roberts, 5 December 1969.

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group's ‘Director of Operations’. Asked to crystallize the movement’s raison d'etre, it was, the mysterious figure proclaimed: ‘to re-awaken the national conscience of the Welsh people’. This it sought to achieve, ‘through propaganda and by action with explosives’. Although opposed to violence on the grounds of humanity, the group was nonetheless responding to the violence to which the Welsh nation had been subjected by a provocative and insidious English-dominated central system of government.

Yet, for all its ruthless efficiency, one proposed action was aborted, the spokesman announced, owing to the proximity of a targeted water installation to a village. The ‘Welsh people’ he discerned, ‘had suffered enough’. It was not the group’s intention to subject its people to added misery. The target, Jenkins later revealed, was the aqueduct over the village of Cnwclas in Radnorshire. As for English inward migration, only those who attempted to integrate into Welsh cultural life would be tolerated and considered a non target. Of the other groups in Wales similarly campaigning for autonomous Welsh political recognition, the Free Wales Army was derided as ‘top of the shit parade’. As for Plaid Cymru, it was chastised for being ‘too saintly’. Without an established militant threat to underpin its message, y Blaïd would achieve nothing; being forever rendered ‘naked’ within the ‘conference chamber’. On a more sinister note, the assembled party was informed that within MAC there existed an ‘assassination squad’, although the movement did not ‘propose wholesale armed insurrection’. Asked about the impending investiture, it was sombly announced that MAC intended to see ‘the bloody fiasco’ cancelled. Moreover, should it indeed go ahead, someone within the movement’s ‘lunatic fringe’, imbued with ‘patriotic ideals’, might perform a ‘Lee Oswald’, the spokesman ominously declared; referring to the tragic events in Dallas in November 1963, when President Kennedy was assassinated. It was time, it was chillingly announced, the Queen began to consider more responsibly ‘her duties as a mother’. As for the decision ‘to send Prince Charles to Aberystwyth University’ to prepare for the ceremony, it was, Jenkins attested, ‘the final insult...a mockery...and a nonsense’. The English prince was coming to Wales not ‘as its friend’, but rather ‘as a political

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78 Telephone interview between WT & Ian Skidmore, 20 August 2008.
80 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 November 2008. It was targeted in 1967 at the start of the re-convened MAC campaign, Jenkins confirmed.
Having discussed former protests, intended targets and outlined the group’s objectives, the anonymous Jenkins then concluded the interview with the tantalizing declaration that ‘MAC’ was in fact an older, male figure. Moreover, it was he who determined directional policy. In 2004, Jenkins confirmed the elusive figure was fictitious; merely introduced to propagate a desired mythology. It would, he believe, wrong-foot investigating officers into focusing their attention in a single direction, having all but confirmed the apparent perceived notion as harboured by Special Branch, that an elderly eponymous figure-head pulled the movement’s combative strings.

Contrary to speculation that he dismissed the interview as a half-baked political diatribe, he had, Ian Skidmore later confessed, ‘rather enjoyed’ the somewhat ‘bizarre’ four-hour colloquy. As a tenacious journalist, he had considered any opportunity to meet Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru as potentially ‘a bloody good story’. To this end, he had let it be known through media outlets - primarily in north Wales - that should the opportunity arise, he would be ‘thoroughly interested’ in speaking with the group. Subsequently approached by Emyr Jones with news MAC proposed a news conference, Skidmore had gratefully agreed to attend. Although clearly ‘a fanatic’, he had ‘liked Jenkins’, being particularly struck by his verve and sincerity. It was quite clear, Skidmore added, ‘they were genuine’. Furthermore, the hooded trio had indeed cut a plausibly menacing presence, he conceded. Yet, to a man also renowned for his comic dispensation, the occasion had not entirely lacked mirth. Forewarned he would receive the ‘ultimate penalty’ (death) should he contact

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81 TNA, ASSI 84/577. Witness statement by Harold Pendlebury 5 December 1969; also, Ian Skidmore, 17 December 1969. ‘Wales’ reportedly ‘cheered the announcement’ that Prince Charles was to spend the 1969 summer term at UCW Aberystwyth. WM, 2 November 1967; also, Observer, 29 October 1967; also, TNA, PREM 13/2359. While there, it was intended the prince should study ‘the history, language and problems of Wales’.

82 TNA, ASSI 84/577. Witness statement by Harold Pendlebury 5 December 1969; also, Ian Skidmore, 17 December 1969. Having put the call through to the telephone box in Mickle Trafford, Alders declared, ‘OK MAC, move in’. The movement, Jenkins stated, had taken its present form since mid-1967. The Tryweryn outrage had inspired the campaign. Yet, the group too closely resembled the ‘boy scouts’ initially. Moreover, MAC were ‘peaceful men’, as in the way of ‘an outraged father’. Only ‘extreme violence’ would ensure the authorities believed the group ‘meant business’. Jenkins dismissed the suggestion MAC received instruction from the IRA. Rather it was MAC whom the IRA ‘regarded with envy’. Of the MAC actions undertaken, the Penisaurwaun strike was to highlight the elevated status of Welsh cultural life in the face of the English-inspired ‘Blackpool and Bingo’ influx, Jenkins declared.


84 Anonymous interview with WT, January 2009.
the authorities, Skidmore protested on the grounds of having been ‘threatened with violence’ by his wife, but ‘never strangers’ in his ‘own drawing room’. Mildly disconcerted, Skidmore, who along with all those present had drunk several glasses of wine, asked to be excused to use the toilet. Instructed to accompany him was ‘Number 1’ (Alders). Momentarily realizing that before reaching their destination the two men would have first to navigate a glass vestibule in which his sleeping blood hound lay, Skidmore - more borne of a desire not to wake the dog than concern - nonchalantly advised his custodian ‘to be careful’. Alarmed at the news of the slumbering canine, Number 1 nervously enquired as to whether the dog might bite him. This, Skidmore colourfully proclaimed, was his ‘executioner’.

John Jenkins later claimed that Skidmore and Harold Pendlebury (who was the only journalist to take notes during the encounter) had encouraged the hooded figures to carry out further actions. Skidmore asserts he ‘encouraged them to talk’ because that was his job. They were ‘encouraged to boast and they boasted’. Yet, a certain degree of ‘banter’ had ensued, he admitted. Asked by Jenkins what he might like ‘blowing up’, Skidmore replied the Income Tax Office seemed a reasonable proposition. It was a suggestion endorsed by Jenkins, who assured his host the tax office in Chester would be targeted.

Emyr Jones was contacted in the first instance and instructed to liaise with Skidmore and Pendlebury, Jenkins revealed, owing to his burgeoning journalistic reputation of being ‘professionally sympathetic’ and prepared ‘to give all a fair crack of the whip’. Despite the suggestion that an increasingly seasoned and respected enquirer would have recognized the value to his own journalistic standing of landing such a ‘scoop’, Jenkins further confirmed the approach to Emyr Jones was undertaken in the knowledge that other journalists would need to be involved in order to loan the occasion a certain authoritative and consultative status. Nonetheless, seemingly unaware of Jenkins’ mandate, Ian Skidmore is convinced he was contacted by Emyr Jones for another reason: namely, ‘there was more money in it’. Owing to its greater audience area, inclusion within a national daily newspaper, Skidmore explained,

85 Telephone interview between WT & Ian Skidmore, 20 August 2008.
87 Telephone interview between WT & Ian Skidmore, 20 August 2008.
88 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 February 2009; also, 19 October 2007 and 20 November 2008. Emyr Jones was renowned for ‘recognizing there existed more than one side to a situation’, Jenkins stated.
would ensure increased payment when compared to a regional or weekly publication.

As for the veracity of the statement concerning the welfare of Prince Charles, it had not concerned him, Skidmore declared. If the interviewee elected to voice as much, it was his prerogative. The pronouncement, Skidmore added characteristically, 'was a bloody good line'. However, for all the readership potential surrounding the piece, a full detailed feature failed to materialize, as Skidmore was instructed by the news editor of the *Daily Mail* to forward his full transcript to Special Branch. If Jenkins had again deftly anticipated the reaction of the authorities to the conference, it was nevertheless an episode which had far-reaching consequences for Ian Skidmore. To his considerable alarm and displeasure, he was now considered 'a suspect' and interviewed robustly by officers who steadfastly refused to accept his denial of influence within the movement. It resulted in his 'agency' of contacts within the police and legal profession being decimated and his phone being 'tapped for at least eighteen months'. To add to his woes, failure to see the submitted article published resulted in non-payment for each journalist.89

Emyr Jones, the *Wrexham Leader* journalist, cut an uncomfortable figure during the conference; and was ‘upset’ over the lack of money which followed it. Both Pendlebury and Skidmore later revealed to investigating officers, that Jones had appeared ‘edgy and nervous’ throughout the meeting.90 This, Skidmore later disclosed, he attributed to the tone and nature of the interview, adding he felt Jones to have been ‘out of his depth’.91 Perhaps so, as Jenkins claims that Emyr Jones was subject to ‘black mail and sanctions’. It had been more than pointed out to him what would happen ‘should he contravene the agreement and contact the authorities’.92

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89 Telephone interview between WT & Ian Skidmore, 20 August 2008; also, TNA, DPP 2/5977. ‘An explosion at Picton Hall, Mickle Trafford on 8 May 1968’ is believed by Skidmore to have been carried out by MAC in frustrated response to the interview not being published. In 2009, John Jenkins denied all knowledge of it. Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 21 January 2009.
90 TNA, ASSI 84/577. Witness statement by Harold Pendlebury 5 December 1969; also, Ian Skidmore, 17 December 1969.
91 Telephone interview between WT & Ian Skidmore, 20 August 2008. In response to the meeting, the Home Office announced it was orchestrating ‘the biggest security network ever established in Wales. It was to be both the ‘most prolonged personal protection job ever undertaken in Britain’ and was intended, by its overwhelming size, to ‘discourage extremists from planning attacks’. *Daily Mirror*, 31 July 1968; also, Observer, 6 July 1969. ‘We should do all we can to identify the terrorists, their supporters, their sources of finance’...and (to ensure) the ‘security organisation’ ‘is tightened to the point of maximum efficiency’. TNA, PREM 13/2903. PM to Home Secretary, 1 August 1968.
92 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007; also, 20 November 2008. The interview ensured a vigorous response from the authorities, remarked Jenkins, especially those England-based members of the police and security services. ‘After this interview’, he remarked, ‘they came over in their droves’.

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Whatever the cause of Jones’ reticence, his failure to co-operate with investigating officers earned him the rebuke of Tasker Watkins QC during the trial of John Jenkins and Frederick Ernest Alders some two years later.\(^{93}\)

Yet, intriguingly, both Emyr Jones’s reservation and ‘upset’ may have been fuelled by reasons over and above a lack of financial recompense for the interview. Material stored in the National Archives suggests an altogether different reason; and moreover, reveal the security measures surrounding the interview may well have lacked the stringency later rigorously outlined by John Jenkins. For, not only did John Roberts collect Emyr Jones from Wrexham and transport him to the rendezvous point in Chester, following the conclusion of the meeting, Roberts later informed police, Jones returned to Wrexham in Alders’ van accompanied by Jenkins and Alders.\(^{94}\) Asked to reveal why Emyr Jones was not subject to the same degree of security imposed upon Skidmore and Pendlebury, John Jenkins conceded the lack of protective measures implied sanctions were not considered necessary. Could it therefore be deduced that Emyr Jones enjoyed a position of some confidence within the group, Jenkins was asked. Having refused to state whether Jones ‘was in MAC or not’, it may well, he replied beguilingly ‘have been the case’.\(^{95}\)

Whatever the truth regarding Emyr Jones’s involvement in the militant campaign, in the weeks after the conference, Frederick Ernest Alders implored Ann Woodgate to avoid all acknowledgement with the Wrexham Leader journalist. One evening at the cinema in Wrexham, Alders surreptitiously drew Woodgate’s attention to the man (Jones) sat some rows before them. He was, Alders informed her, being monitored by Special Branch and on no account was she to him engage in conversation.\(^{96}\)

Nevertheless, whatever the thoughts of central government and the authorities concerning the militant offensive, recruitment into the elusive ranks of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru had not proved difficult, John Jenkins professed; at least not in terms of those wanting to join. What had proved somewhat more problematic

\(^{93}\) LDP, 21 April 1970; also, Sir Tasker Watkins private papers.
\(^{96}\) TNA, ASSI 84/577. Ann Woodgate witness statement 15 December 1969. Asked by Alders if she knew Jones, Woodgate stated her employment duties included regular visits to the Wrexham branch of Lloyds Bank, there she had occasionally seen the man she knew to be a journalist on the Wrexham
however, was discerning if an individual possessed the necessary intellectual and emotional attributes. Explaining the process of selection, Jenkins revealed that ‘word would filter back’ to him of someone deemed ‘healthy’ in ‘social, cultural and economic terms’. After ‘much consideration and deliberation’, the decision would be reached as to whether contact should be made with this individual. If so, it occurred somewhere they felt ‘comfortable’; for instance, ‘their local pub’. Unaware of his status as the director-general of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru, Jenkins would then engage them in a passionate debate about Wales. He would, he later outlined, ‘play the Aunt Sally; the devil’s advocate’ and as such, ensure a reaction. John Jenkins wanted ‘to hear what sort of philosophy underpinned their attack’. If their sole conceptualism proved emotion based, such as, ‘we’re going to drive them into the sea’, he ‘did not want to know’. Rather, Jenkins desired an idealism which ‘burned much deeper than that; something with a bit more feeling; more analytical’. Having argued them ‘into the ground’, the operational-commander of MAC would gauge their response to determine their suitability. Only he, Jenkins stated, was involved in the recruitment process to this degree. ‘It was how’, he added, he had recruited ‘all those involved; it was the same sort of thing’.97

Nonetheless, it had occasionally, Jenkins admitted, proved a somewhat precarious induction strategy, whereby he and the potential target had ‘almost come to blows’. Yet, such a response registered positively with Jenkins, who then considered their ‘heart to be in the right place’. Left to ponder the verbal altercation, MAC’s principle strategist would get ‘back in touch in due course’. What must be remembered, Jenkins stressed, was this individual ‘knew nothing about me’. He had no knowledge of ‘where I was from, where I lived, or my profession...I’d simply said I was passing through on my way somewhere’. Consequently, even had the potential recruit been offered a financial incentive, he would have been unable to direct the authorities to the haughty, bellicose figure. This approach, John Jenkins realized early into his directorship of MAC ‘was the safest, indeed, the only possible way that recruitment into the organization could work’. It had to be run on such autonomous grounds; a democratic system was perilous. In fact, Jenkins added peremptorily, its ‘strength was its weakness’: in that - with no other combatant capable nor possessed of the ‘wherewithal to assemble and distribute the devices’ -

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97 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 10 May 2009.
his arrest ensured the demise of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru. Yet, as the bombing campaign intensified, questions were asked as to whether a less scrupled rogue element was also ‘in the field’.

However, if it was decided to proceed, the new addition would be instructed ‘to remain anonymous’. Moreover, what awaited them, they were informed soberly, was ‘either death or imprisonment. There are’, Jenkins added, ‘not many who subscribe to that brochure. But there are some; there are always some. And in those people lay the future’. A factor which John Jenkins recognized as essential for the campaign of combative action to succeed, was the need to position trusted and effective units ‘in each corner of Wales’. Those directing operations, ‘could not of course be everywhere’, so it was vital there existed individuals who could be entrusted to deliver a message, or deliver materials, in order that those instructed could undertake a particular action. Nevertheless, had these ‘cell units’ not proved susceptible to potential breaches in security, Jenkins was asked. The cell leader - whom Jenkins had appointed - would only recruit ‘a very select number: say one or two’, Jenkins disclosed; ‘and only those he trusted implicitly’. Such as, close personal contacts who had expressed - over a sustained period - similar misgivings regarding Wales’ cultural and economic position. Only towards ‘the end of the campaign, when things were really bad’, Jenkins conceded, had he ‘cut a few corners’. Although at pains to add this breach in the erstwhile ‘water tight’ approach to security did not lead to his detection, but rather ‘the corners that somebody else cut’. Nonetheless, this lax had only transpired when the matter of orchestrating a conflict of militant subterfuge was ‘really getting on top’ of him. Asked to clarify when this occurred, Jenkins confessed towards the conclusion of the campaign, when he was subjected to ‘degree of pressure’ hitherto and subsequently unprecedented in his life.

Yet, for all John Jenkins’ earnest, if legitimate, pronouncements regarding insular cell structures, there are those convinced the MAC campaign - as marshalled by Jenkins - comprised only him and David Pritchard. ‘They were acting in tandem’, a former prominent figure in the militant struggle declared in 2004: ‘there was nobody else; nobody. Simply Jenkins operating in the north and Pritchard in the

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99 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007. There was no age restriction of those in MAC, stated Jenkins; as long as ‘the necessary criteria was met’. Nonetheless, the ages suggested of
south’. What is more, Pritchard, he believed, ‘was more responsible than Jenkins in many ways’; which if perhaps ‘inaccurate’, was certainly his ‘impression’.100 Asked to comment, Pritchard’s former close associate David Walters stated ‘as far’ as he was ‘aware, those involved in the Llanishen Tax Office explosion were responsible for all’ protests undertaken in Cardiff. However, Walters refused to be drawn as to whether this cell comprised David Pritchard, Trefor Beasley, Alf Williams and a senior figure in the Patriotic Front.101 Claiming not to ‘have a clue’ as to the veracity of those suggested, the former General Secretary of the PF, Gethin ap Iestyn, moreover refused to confirm his personal involvement.102 Also reticent when approached to discuss MAC membership was John Jenkins. To reveal the identity of those involved, Jenkins declared, would ‘open the floodgates’. Furthermore, it would ‘undermine’ his ‘reputation for not being a grass’ and compromise his ‘ability not to divulge’. There ‘may well have been’ a degree of overlap between MAC, the Patriotic Front and the Free Wales Army, Jenkins remarked, ‘but to what extent’, he was not ‘prepared to say’.103

Yet, just how far MAC’s reputation for radical activism had spread, was highlighted in the weeks following the press interview, when an unlikely alliance was proposed by the then notorious ultra-Marxist German agitator Rudi ‘Red’ Dutschke. In London to attend a student political conference, Dutschke eluded his British security surveillance team and boarded a train for Swansea. Word soon reached John Jenkins that should he agree to Dutschke’s proposals, MAC would be assured almost limitless financial assistance from the East German administration to further its cause. However, in return, members of MAC would travel to East Germany to receive innovative technical instruction. Despite any benefits such a policy might exact, it was an approach rejected out of hand by Jenkins. One did not, he later postulated, ‘exchange a master in London for one in Moscow’. It was not the only disappointment Dutschke experienced on his visit to Britain. On returning to

20-50, was ‘not too wide an age range’.
100 Anonymous interview with WT, August 2004. John Jenkins utterly refuted the assertion that only he and David Pritchard were responsible for the bombing campaign. ‘If anyone seriously believes just two people could carry out all that lot they need their head examined’, he remarked. Moreover, within south Wales was positioned ‘more than one cell’, he declared; adding ‘there was one in the north, south, east and west of Wales’. Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 November 2009.
101 Interview between WT & David Walters, 29 December 2008.
102 Interview between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 19 May 2009.
103 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 February 2009.
London, his application for political asylum was rejected and Dutschke deported.\footnote{Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 25 March 2004. The approach to MAC by the secret East German police, the Stasi, was similar to the patronage of succour and shelter the regime later extended to terrorist organizations Bader-Meinhoff and the Red Army Faction. In 1968, Dutschke survived an assassination attempt. T. Ali & S. Watkins, 1968: Marching in the Streets (London, 1998), pp.77,78.}

Nonetheless, Rudi Dutschke was not alone in trying to locate the elusive Jenkins. Desperate for a breakthrough, investigating police officers compelled Ian Skidmore and Harold Pendlebury to provide any clue as to the identity of the group’s enigmatic spokesman. Duty bound to assist, Ian Skidmore informed them that he had spoken ‘in a pedantic voice; rather like a schoolmaster; or at least someone used to instructing others’. Of ‘medium height’, bearing ‘fair and even features’ and inclined to blow smoke rings when emphasizing a point, he had furthermore appeared ‘very self-possessed’; being ‘very much in command of the situation’.\footnote{TNA, ASSI 84/577. Witness statement by Harold Pendlebury 5 December 1969; also, Ian Skidmore, 17 December 1969.} It proved an impressive supposition. In 2008, Skidmore was asked to elaborate. Both he and Harold Pendlebury, Skidmore remarked, had each deduced the mysterious figure - owing the manner in which he conducted himself - must have had ‘a military background; perhaps an ex-squaddie’. Nevertheless, he had been astonished to learn the accuracy of his conjecture on Jenkins’ arrest. Despite the negative impact on his professional efficacy, Skidmore bore Jenkins no ill will; nor indeed did he regret becoming embroiled in the controversy. On the contrary, he and Jenkins had exchanged ‘friendly nods’ when he later attended Jenkins’ trial.\footnote{Telephone interview between WT & Ian Skidmore, 20 August 2008; also, John Jenkins, 20 November 2008.}

John Jenkins however remains unconvinced. His position within Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru - and what the group sought to achieve - had ‘nothing’ to do with his ‘military experience’, he protested. Others, he continued, had also incorrectly drawn a parallel: citing the use of explosives for example. Yet, he had no experience of explosives in the army, nor for that matter had he received instruction concerning ‘sabotage’ or subversion. The British army, he added sardonically, ‘was the last place’ one would receive such efficacious intelligence.\footnote{Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 November 2008.} The army had however, instilled ‘the usefulness of punctuality, discipline and organization’.\footnote{Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007.} That said, Jenkins added pensively, he was certain these attributes he honed before joining the
More bombs are planted by MAC

Following the announcement that another Welsh valley was being proposed for flooding by an English water authority, on 25 May, the Cardiff cell of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru made good its vow to clip the wings of the new Secretary of State for Wales. At 3.28 a.m. - despite police patrols in the area having been increased following the blast at the Temple of Peace six months earlier - an explosion rocked the main administrative block of the Welsh Office in Cathays Park, Cardiff. The choice of venue - Thomas's headquarters - did not go unnoticed. The following day, the hapless head of Cardiff CID, David Morris, confirmed that six minutes before the explosion, police officers at Cardiff central station received a telephone call informing them of a 'shooting' in another part of the city. It had, the anonymous voice exclaimed with austere solemnity, resulted in 'murder'. Moments after officers were hurriedly dispatched to the scene, the device at the Welsh Office activated.

Also speaking in response to the explosion the following day, a furious George Thomas declared 'the nationalists of Wales' had 'created a monster' they could 'not control'. If indeed this proved the most effective charge in Thomas' tenure as Minister for Wales, his prodigal reassertion that no plan existed 'to seek the help of Scotland Yard' to capture the saboteurs, nonetheless earned him a mild rebuke from Prime Minister, Harold Wilson. Apparently alarmed at Thomas' sweeping obduracy, Burke Trend, the Cabinet Secretary, was instructed to quietly 'indoctrinate the Secretary of State for Wales' as to the 'activities of the police and security services' deployed to combat the militant Welsh nationalist threat. A better understanding, it was hoped, might prevent Thomas uttering a comment 'inadvertently unhelpful'. As for Gwynfor Evans, Thomas's rush to castigate the entire nationalist community was a blatant attempt to exploit the explosion 'for party

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110 WM, 6 May 1968. Considered 'one of the county's outstanding beauty spots', Cwm Dulais, in Montgomeryshire, was targeted by the Severn Water Authority.
111 LPD, 27 May 1968. 'It was not the nationalists of Wales who created a monster they could not control, but an English 'controlled' UK political system'. Interview between WT & Eileen Beasley, 29 July 2004. It is believed some 15lbs of gelignite were used in the attack. The devastation resulted in £5000 worth of damage.
112 WM, 27 May 1968.
political ends'. Moreover, while it 'sounded fantastic', such activity was not beyond the realms of the British security services. Asked to provide evidence to support his premise, Evans conceded that with the Caerphilly by-election just weeks away, it was based on little more than empiricist 'deduction' on his part.\textsuperscript{114} It was an avenue of supposition which proved ultimately fruitless for the leader of Plaid Cymru and one which provided easy ammunition for his political detractors. Yet, the nationalist party president's assertion that George Thomas was intent on a course of pre-determined circumstantial assumption, for reasons of party political self-aggrandizement, was a view, which to the surprise of many, received a degree of countenance from the unionist leaning \textit{Western Mail}. It was time, the paper attested, the Labour Party recognized its own culpable contribution to the resurgent rise of nationalism, both in Scotland and in Wales.\textsuperscript{115} Even Thomas' erstwhile platform the \textit{Liverpool Daily Post} urged the Secretary of State 'to play it cooler'. There 'was no purpose', its editorial declared, 'in aggravating the situation' through comments likely to have been uttered 'in the heat of the moment'.\textsuperscript{116} It was an appeal for restraint echoed by the \textit{South Wales Voice} who urged both sides to end the 'hysterical mud slinging'.\textsuperscript{117}

Nevertheless, at 2.45 a.m. on 27 May, a further explosion rocked the base of a stone and concrete support carrying an emergency water pipeline from Llyn Vymwyy in Montgomeryshire to Liverpool. The seat of the explosion was some 20 yards below the dam and immediately above the village of Llanwddyn. Later that day, in the House of Commons, the Secretary of State for Wales once more vented his spleen. It was clear, George Thomas declared, the explosions were committed for 'political reasons'. Both the House and the people of Wales, he felt assured, would 'roundly condemn this attempt at political terrorism'. Keen to distance the Labour Party from the failure of the police and intelligence services to apprehend those responsible, Thomas appealed for vigilance from the public. It was an appeal greeted with loud cries of derisory laughter from opposition benches, who delighted in the mental image of the Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, with deer-stalker, curved pipe and magnifying glass in the role of Sherlock Holmes. Yet, in no mood for frivolities, Thomas reproved opposition MPs for what he considered their unfathomable deriving of

\textsuperscript{114} \textit{WM}, 27 May 1968.
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{116} \textit{LDP}, 28 May 1968. Prior to his appointment, G. Thomas wrote a weekly column for the paper.
\textsuperscript{117} \textit{South Wales Voice}, 8 June 1968. For his comments, Evans had revealed himself 'a silly man',
amusement over the issue.\textsuperscript{118} Attitudes within the House, would certainly have been sharpened had the explosions occurred in England, Denis Coslett later suggested.\textsuperscript{119}

It was however, to Gwynfor Evans and Plaid Cymru on whom Thomas turned to full throttle his accusatory attention. The party’s historic suggestion, that those responsible for the bombing campaign had ‘merely tried to express the wishes of the Welsh people’, had ‘laid the foundation’ for the ‘perpetration of these outrages’. Talk of separatism, Thomas remonstrated, had both fostered ‘anti-English hatred’ and created an atmosphere in which violence was more likely. Having countered that it was in fact the Labour Party which had ‘brought havoc to Wales’, the belief that anti-English propaganda had induced the young people of Wales to undertake such action was a line of attack angrily repudiated by Gwynfor Evans as utter ‘nonsense’. Yet, next in line to attack the solitary political figure of Gwynfor Evans, was the flamboyant Labour MP for Pontypridd, Leo Abse. Reflective claims that MI5 might be responsible for the spate of bomb attacks in Wales, he spat, were the suggestions of a ‘lunatic’.\textsuperscript{120}

Later asked to discuss the explosions which rocked the Welsh political landscape in May 1968, John Jenkins stated the first action had been undertaken by an active cell unit based in the greater Cardiff area. It had been carried out as way of providing a ‘welcoming committee’ to George Thomas. In essence, an invitation to the newly appointed minister which said “‘hello, we’re still here, now what do you intend to do about it?’”. Moreover, with Jenkins’ two-reason approach ever to the fore-front, information received that Princess Margaret - accompanied by George Thomas - was to officially open the newly constructed glass-fronted civic centre in Mold, more than ensured the existence of a vital second criteria.\textsuperscript{121} Yet, for all Jenkins’ headline grabbing acumen, it was not to be. What is more, following reports that perplexed detectives speculated why the ‘expert’ gang of saboteurs used both an insufficient amount of explosives and had appeared to target the wrong water pipe,\textsuperscript{122} Jenkins admitted the Vyrnwy ‘action’ was ‘botched’.

\textsuperscript{119} Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000.
\textsuperscript{121} Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007; also, 20 November 2008. The Welsh Office action was \textit{not} undertaken by the Swansea MAC unit, he confirmed.
John Jenkins admitted that an uncustomary ‘communications mix-up with the south Wales MAC cell’ to have been responsible for undermining the protest. A ‘spectacular’, he added was planned, whereby the two simultaneous explosions would ensure Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru maximum publicity following the interview with the three journalists some three weeks earlier. However, the explosion at the Welsh Office occurred two days in advance of the original schedule. A reconnaissance trip to Mold later that Saturday afternoon confirmed Jenkins’ fears: ‘the place was crawling with Special Branch and regular police officers’. It was his intention, Jenkins explained, for he and Alders - during Sunday afternoon - to adorn workman’s overall’s and travel to the target area in a van decorated for the occasion with flowers and shrubs. There, having previously established the buildings lack of security, the director-general’s intention of casually depositing either side of the civic centre’s main entrance two shrubbery pots - each containing a concealed and primed device - was thwarted by the daunting spectacle which now greeted him. The operation aborted, it was decided to alternatively target the pipeline at Llyn Vyrnwy. This, Jenkins later confessed, was a target ‘very much down the list’ of MAC objectives. John Jenkins also admitted to having been ‘annoyed’ by the confusion. ‘Imagine what a coup it would have been’, he mused. It was certainly ‘a missed opportunity’, MAC’s former operational-director lamented.\textsuperscript{123}

Llyn Vyrnwy was reconnoitred by Alders just weeks before the protest. One Sunday evening, under the auspices of a driving lesson, he and Ann Woodgate drove the 40 or so miles to the site. There, on noticing the two large pipes emerging from the base of the reservoir, Alders had remarked he would have to inform Jenkins. Certain she had ascertained Alders’ true reason for visiting the area, Woodgate rounded on her fiancé and the couple had argued. On later hearing of the explosion, Woodgate again challenged Alders. His reaction, one of disappointment at the failure of the action, had left her decidedly uneasy.\textsuperscript{124}

\textsuperscript{122} The Times, 28 May 1968; also, WM, 28 May 1968; also TNA, DPP 2/5978.
\textsuperscript{123} Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007; also, 20 November 2008. Jenkins also disclosed that while ‘local conditions’ dictated the exact timing of an attack, it was nonetheless intended the joint action would occur during the same night. Asked to comment on the charge that having planted the device at the Welsh Office, the three MAC operatives responsible (the planters of the device and the getaway driver) took refuge in the home of a Cardiff sympathizer for two days until the ‘hullabaloo’ subsided, John Jenkins stated ‘while that may well be true’, he did ‘not wish to comment’. Suffice to say, ‘it would have been extremely foolhardy to try and leave the city straight away’.
\textsuperscript{124} TNA, ASSI 84/577. Ann Woodgate witness statement 15 December 1969.
Questioned in 1969 as to his involvement in the militant campaign, 24-year-old John Richard Lewis Roberts stated he and Frederick Ernest Alders had met some five years earlier when his father married Alders' mother. The two men had often discussed Welsh politics and a burgeoning belief that Plaid Cymru through 'democratic means' could ensure 'some measure of self-government', resulted in Roberts joining the party. He had realised a constitutional approach was 'the proper course', following a subsequent encounter with John Jenkins.\textsuperscript{125} Introduced by Alders 'in mid-April' 1968,\textsuperscript{126} Roberts was surprised to learn that Jenkins and his step-brother were actively involved in the militant campaign. Apparently funded by 'wealthy Welshman who now lived in south America', MAC, he was told, was 'highly organised' and comprised 'many men' throughout Wales. In addition, Jenkins and Alders now proposed to target the water pipeline at Llyn Vyrnwy and needed a driver. Apparently borne of fear for his family should he refuse, Roberts had felt compelled to agree.

Having been instructed to drop the box-carrying Jenkins and Alders at a point pre-determined, Roberts continued along the road towards Llanwddyn in Alders' van, before turning around, waiting 'a few minutes' in the darkness and returning along the road just travelled. Presently, he came across Jenkins and Alders walking towards him. The entire operation had taken barely 10 minutes. It was not the first time Roberts agreed to support the militant campaign, weeks earlier he had played a prominent role in the meeting with the three journalists. It was however, despite Jenkins' later efforts to utilize Roberts, the last occasion Alders' step-brother actively partook in illicit protest in the name of Welsh freedom.\textsuperscript{127} It was a summary of events endorsed by Alders' in a later police interview, save one subtle discrepancy. Alders considered his step-brother 'ideal' recruitment potential, owing to his enthusiasm for the bombing campaign and the impression he presented of wishing to be involved. Obliviously expressed to a disparaging Alders, it was \textit{this}, Alders revealed, which resulted in Roberts being approached by Jenkins.\textsuperscript{128}

Nonetheless, for all Jenkins' admission of failure at Llyn Vyrnwy, the explosions ensured the re-emergence of media interest in the Free Wales Army. On the ITN late evening news, Denis Coslett and the commander of the Swansea Brigade,

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnote{TNA, ASSI 84/577. Witness statement of John Richard Lewis Roberts, 5 December 1969.}
\footnote{TNA, ASSI 84/577. Undated witness statement by Frederick Ernest Alders.}
\footnote{TNA, ASSI 84/577. Witness statement of John Richard Lewis Roberts, 5 December 1969.}
\footnote{TNA, ASSI 84/577. Undated witness statement by Frederick Ernest Alders.}
\end{footnotesize}
the intractable Vivian George Davies, once more garrulously intimated the group’s responsibility. In a written statement, Coslett began by announcing that ‘unless negotiations’ were made ‘for self-government for Wales within three weeks’, there would be ‘more violence and possibly insurrection’. The matter of whether this might be yet be averted, rested solely with Harold Wilson. Wales, Coslett added, was a nation, which would not rest until the centre of gravity was within itself. There would be ‘a lot more explosions’ announced a resolute Davies. Moreover, the deliberate targeting of civilians, he added portentously, was a development he favoured in the militant struggle.¹²⁹ Unsurprisingly, news of the interview was soon relayed to the Attorney General, who pledged a transcript of the interview would be given the appropriate attention. As for George Thomas, the country he informed the Commons, would have ‘noted with concern’ the remarks.¹³⁰

It was not only elected political figures outraged by the FWA’s posturing. In an unpublished letter, Gethin ap Iestyn implored the Western Mail to highlight the ignominy felt within the militant community. Such pernicious utterances, as voiced by Coslett and Davies, remarked the General Secretary of the Patriotic Front, could ‘only do great harm to the cause of Welsh freedom’.¹³¹ Nevertheless, it was not only senior Labour Party figures such as George Thomas who suspected the nationalist movement in Wales took the form of Cerberus throughout the 1960s. Speaking in 1999, Royston Jones, a former FWA sympathizer, stated many in Wales believed a three tier system was in place: with Plaid Cymru providing the political thrust; Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg being the cultural wing and an intertwined MAC and FWA orchestrating militant action and the propaganda campaign. Indeed, evidence of such was provided by frequenting ‘any Plaid Cymru function’, Jones continued, where, despite predictable denials voiced by the party leadership, many attendees supported ‘unconstitutional methods’ to further the nationalist agenda.¹³²

¹²⁹ Trial of the FWA, PF and Anti-investiture lobbyists. Exhibit, 63. Denis Coslett papers.
¹³⁰ Hansard, HC Deb, 27 May, 1968, vol 765, cc 1229-34. An attempt by the Labour MP for Abertillery, Clifford Evans, to quote directly from Coslett’s statement, was over-ruled by the Speaker on the somewhat judicious grounds that ‘no quotation was allowed in a supplementary question’. Hansard, HC Deb, 27 May, 1968, vol 765, cc 1229-34; also TNA, DPP 2/5974. Later asked to comment on the apparent interjection, it was, Coslett believed, more likely fuelled by a desire to prevent the group being afforded publicity, owing to its mention in parliament. Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000.
¹³² FWA: I’r Gad! Zenana Production. Screened S4C, 1999; also correspondence between WT & Royston Jones, 20 February 2010. According to Greek mythology, the three-headed dog Cerberus
Whether such ‘methods’ included the lengths that Vivian George Davies appeared prepared to go however, was an entirely different matter. When later discussing the notorious Vivian George Davies, Denis Coslett declared the Swansea scrap metal worker to be ‘crazy’. Even within the ranks of those considered on the edge of political extremism in Wales at this juncture, Davies, had cut an alarming presence. He and Cayo Evans, revealed Coslett ‘had a hell of a job holding him back’; prepared to ‘do anything’, it had been necessary to ‘rein him in all the time’.133 In answer to those who suspected that a fair degree of bravado might have been at work, a former member of the FWA speaking in 2009 thought not; further adding that Vivian George Davies with a bomb ‘didn’t care thinking about’.134 Approachèd to comment on whether Davies was a member of a south Wales cell of MAC responsible for any of the actions undertaken in the region, John Jenkins categorically denied his involvement. Moreover, of all those affiliated to the Free Wales Army, most of whom he did ‘not trust’ as far as he ‘could throw’, only Glyn Rowlands and Gethin ap Iestyn had impressed him as being somewhat possessed of the necessary attributes required for militant activism; yet, Jenkins added, nether ‘were involved’. Nonetheless, both men - along with Dai Bonar Thomas, Toni Lewis and Dafydd y Dug - had been ‘wonderful publicists’; although quite ‘what they were publicizing’ Jenkins was still unsure.135

Contrary to later claims by Cayo Evans,136 there was ‘no contact whatever’ between Evans and he during the MAC campaign, Jenkins declared. Furthermore, he resolutely rejected the suggestion the campaign of propaganda, as undertaken by FWA, had ensured vital resources and man-power was diverted from those truly involved in militant activism.137 Did anyone seriously believe the authorities considered the Free Wales Army responsible? Jenkins proclaimed.138 It is a view sanctioned by former Shrewsbury unit member Raymond Kendall. Nevertheless,

133 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 10 January 2001. In 1981, the West Glamorgan coroner returned a verdict of suicide on Vivian George Davies, after an inquest heard he shot and killed his wife Ann, before turning the gun on himself. The Times, 20 October 1981. Despite stating ‘trespassers will be filled in’ on the Davies garden gate, Denis Coslett remained convinced the charge against V. G. Davies was groundless. This he based on the eye-witness account of the incident, as given by the couple’s son Dylan.
134 Anonymous interview with WT, August 2009.
135 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007.
137 Interview between WT & David Walters, 29 December 2008.
Despite the FWA being considered 'pretty much of a joke', there was still the possibility, Kendall added, that 'one or two of those within its ranks had feet in both camps.\textsuperscript{139} Such conjecture ensured those at the vanguard of the FWA - in line with the recommendations outlined following the meeting of senior police and security personnel four months earlier - now became the focus of routine surveillance. The measures had not gone unnoticed by Denis Coslett. It had been common knowledge within FWA circles, he revealed, that certain individuals were subject to covert monitoring. As to the extent this had been evident, telephone lines, he added, were 'tapped', postal mail intercepted and opened, and car journey's regularly accompanied by a tailing unmarked police car. Not uncharacteristically, such attention soon proved the source of much levity, with Coslett and Evans peppering telephone conversations with meaningless dates and locations. He and Evans, recalled Coslett, had enjoyed sending eves-dropping officers on 'a merry goose chase'.\textsuperscript{140}

However, it was not only prominent members of the FWA police were interested in. On returning by train to New Tredegar the day following the explosion at the Welsh Office, at a point in the journey which afforded a view across the valley, David Pritchard observed with alarm a significant police presence outside his home. Alighting from the train at the next stop, Prichard re-boarded the train to Cardiff where he remained for the next few days. He was not alone: the man arrested alongside Pritchard at Cwm Tryweryn in September 1962, also recalled how increasingly chagrined officers targeted those 'with form'. Approached as he and his wife sat in the cinema in Bargoed, David Walters was taken in for questioning. It was a pattern which soon took a predictable course, Walters added, with officers demanding he reveal his whereabouts following every explosion. Similarly interviewed, Pritchard, Alf Williams and Walters, soon decided upon a strategy designed to hinder the police inquiry. Fortwith, they would refuse to co-operate by divulging any information as to where they had been at any given time. In future, the three men reasoned, the police would have to establish the facts themselves.\textsuperscript{141}

\textsuperscript{138} Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 9 May 2009.
\textsuperscript{139} Correspondence between WT & Raymond Kendall, 6 August 2009.
\textsuperscript{140} Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000; also with Glyn Rowlands, 22 March 2004. 'Cayo had a fondness for saying “we led them a merry dance” and it was true'. Telephone interview between WT & Rhobert ap Steffan, 9 August 2009.
\textsuperscript{141} Interview between WT & David Walters, 29 December 2008.

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Security procedures are revised, as the MAC offensive continues

Yet, one man noticeably un-amused by the antics of the FWA, was the Secretary of State for Wales, George Thomas. Having been apparently brought up to speed by the Secretary to the Cabinet Office, Burke Trend, as to the security effort underway to combat the bombers, it was reported that chief constables in Wales were to hold a summit meeting to discuss the recent explosions.\textsuperscript{142} If it was hoped a breakthrough might be imminent, the wider Welsh public may have been surprised to learn the attempt to apprehend those responsible was being hampered by existing police practice and a somewhat \textit{laissez-faire} approach to police matters by central government. It was a problem Shrewsbury unit member Raymond Kendall was soon to become all too familiar with. For at this juncture, he explained, chief constables throughout the UK enjoyed considerable independent autonomy. As if to demonstrate their fiercely guarded position, many - as earlier instructed - had failed to appoint the liaison officer so essential to the success of the anti-sabotage team headed by John Parkman at the Regional Crime Squad.\textsuperscript{143}

The situation had indeed proved problematic, conceded a retired senior officer in the Dyfed Powys Constabulary, having resulted in a widespread reluctance to share intelligence. This apparently debilitating practice - which permeated police \textit{operandi} at this juncture - was fuelled not merely by competitive resentment for a neighbouring force, but also as it was deemed possible adjacent officers may themselves have been sympathetic to the nationalist agenda; and as such, it was feared any disclosed development in the inquiry might find its way to those perpetrating the bombing campaign.\textsuperscript{144} It was not merely the wider Welsh police force with whom a reluctance to cooperate was rife however. It also extended to MI5 and Special Branch, with neither prepared to divulge its security concerning the investiture with the Welsh, for fear their sources might be compromised.\textsuperscript{145}

Following the four hour meeting at Cardiff Law Courts on 31 May, of chief constables, Special Branch and the heads of investigating CID and Regional Crime

\textsuperscript{142} \textit{WM}, 29 May 1968.
\textsuperscript{143} Correspondence between WT & Raymond Kendall, 9 August 2009. ‘Officers’, stated Kendall, were perfectly entitled to hold nationalist views’.
\textsuperscript{144} Anonymous interview with WT, February 2009.
\textsuperscript{145} HO, 325/119. Letter from Sir James Waddell, Deputy Under-Secretary at the Home Office, to Home Secretary, James Callaghan, 10 June 1968.

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Squads, the Home Office recognized little alternative but to ensure its own instrumental and volitional presence in Wales. Henceforth, the appointee, Frank Williamson, HM Inspector of Constabulary (Crime), would report directly to the Home Secretary. Days later, following another top level review of the investigation by MI5 and Special Branch operatives in London on 7 June, Waddell advised Callaghan to stamp his authority on the recalcitrant Welsh forces, even if it touched 'on a number of delicate relationships' and aroused 'the susceptibilities of some Welsh chief constables'; it was surely time to take the matter 'in hand'.

Nonetheless, despite the apparent and somewhat astonishing paralyzing effect of inter-police politic on the security effort to apprehend the saboteurs, even within the higher echelons of Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg, the identity of those responsible was a mystery. Speaking in 2008, Gareth Miles, the former leading language activist, recalled his first inauspicious encounter with John Jenkins. The night following the Llyn Vymwy action, Miles attended a meeting of the local branch of Plaid Cymru in Wrexham. Having traversed its rather typically tedious course, the meeting’s end had been enlivened by a man unknown to school master Miles standing up and being sure all present ‘had read the Liverpool Post that day’, announcing that ‘we as a party’ should ‘dissociate ourselves from explosions and the destruction of property’. Somewhat taken aback by the strangers pompous and assured effrontery, an irritated Miles enquired after his identity. It was, he was informed, ‘sergeant John Jenkins of the British army’. To his animated surprise, Miles later learned that Jenkins had in fact ‘planted the bloody thing’. He was, Miles conceded with no small degree of admiration, ‘a very cool customer’. Nevertheless, in the short-term, ‘that little outburst’ confirmed Miles’ increasing belief that Plaid Cymru ‘was wholly ineffectual in its political campaigning’. He thought, ‘my God, if it’s attracting people like that!’. It was a revelation which may well have proved instrumental in deciding Miles’ subsequent avenue of protest, as archival material stored at the National Archives suggests their paths were yet again to cross, with Miles and Jenkins soon apparently singing harmoniously from the same hymn sheet.

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146 WM, 1 June 1968. No statement was later released of what transpired.
147 HO, 325/119. Letter from Sir James Waddell, Deputy Under-Secretary at the Home Office, to Sir Philip Allen, Permanent Under-Secretary at the Home Office, 10 June 1968; also, Waddell to James Callaghan, 28 June 1968.
148 Telephone interview between WT & Gareth Miles, 13 January 2008.
149 TNA, ASSI 84/577. Undated witness statement by Gordon Wynne Jones; also, witness statement
A prime suspect in the bombing campaign and a figure police were desperate to locate was Owain Williams. On the run since failing to appear at Caernarfon Magistrates court on 6 March, Williams had travelled by ferry from Weymouth to Brittany, before reaching Eire by fishing boat some days later.\textsuperscript{150} Before travelling on to Kinsale, Williams stayed in Navan, County Meath, at the home of prominent IRA figure Sean MacStiofain. Williams later confirmed he and MacStiofain discussed the introduced MAC cell structure, having debated the merits of ‘such a cell system as opposed to a battalion type pattern’.\textsuperscript{151} The association between Welsh militants and the IRA at this point is open to speculation, with Pedr Lewis admitting the link was established when he spent eighteen months in Stafford Prison with renowned IRA activists Cathal Goulding and Sean MacStiofain.\textsuperscript{152} Although possible, it is a suggestion denied by Williams as being instrumental to his own connection; with Williams having garnered his own IRA contacts during his numerous visits to Eire.\textsuperscript{153} Interestingly, despite Owain Williams’ lack of clarity, there are those in the former Welsh militant community who steadfastly believe Pedr Lewis proved the necessary bridge.\textsuperscript{154} Yet, asked to comment, John Jenkins also rejected the claim, adding to the best of his understanding, rather than Lewis, the connection was established by David Pritchard.\textsuperscript{155} It is a theory endorsed by Prichard’s confidante David Walters, who confirmed Pritchard had journeyed to the Republic ‘a number of times’; receiving ‘information and expertise’ from the IRA.\textsuperscript{156} It now appears likely, that along with those contacts established by Cayo Evans, Welsh and Irish militants were actively engaged. The extent of this collaboration was revealed in 2009, when a former Welsh insurgent confirmed that a number of IRA sympathizers in Wales had played a


\textsuperscript{150} Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004.

\textsuperscript{151} Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 7 April 2009. It ‘did seem plausible’ Williams and MacStiofain discussed the cell system, John Jenkins later stated. He could ‘not speak with certainty’ because he ‘wasn’t there’ and he and Williams ‘never discussed it as such’.

\textsuperscript{152} Interview between WT & Pedr Lewis, July 2009. On 14 May 1953 at Caernarfon Assizes, Peter (Pedr) Lewis was imprisoned for being ‘suspiciously’ in possession of 200 high explosive detonators. While imprisoned, Lewis and Goulding ‘worked together making mats’, during which they routinely discussed Welsh and Irish Republicanism. Cathal Goulding, Lewis remarked, ‘didn’t think much us’. (Welsh Republican Movement). On his release from prison, Lewis delivered a letter from Goulding to an address in Belfast.

\textsuperscript{153} Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 7 April 2009.

\textsuperscript{154} Interview between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 19 May 2009.

\textsuperscript{155} Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 9 May 2009.

\textsuperscript{156} Interview between WT & David Walters, 29 December 2008. Wishing to discuss these visits to Ireland without being understood, Pritchard and Walters commonly referred to the IRA as ‘snowmen’.

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significant minor role during the early years of the ‘Troubles’, delivering ‘messages and other materials’ to and from Eire.\textsuperscript{157} However, while conceding that ‘Welsh extremists’ \textit{had} approached them for ‘training and technical instruction’, the IRA later denied having assisted on the grounds that ‘co-operation might endanger its security’.\textsuperscript{158}

Nonetheless, such was the resolute police effort to find Owain Williams, that officers from Interpol searched the home of Cayo Evans’ mother, in the Spanish resort of Marbella.\textsuperscript{159} Its officers also approached the Columbian hacienda of Welsh expatriate and fervent nationalist Hywel Hughes. Despite the conjecture, in a letter to \textit{Y Cymro}, Hughes denied Williams was his guest. He had ‘never heard of the man’, he declared. However, ‘if Mr. Williams did happen to drop in at anytime’, he would be made ‘most welcome’\textsuperscript{160} Officers also considered Williams might be in ‘Canada’ and crucially as events transpired ‘Ireland’.\textsuperscript{161}

When later discussing the period he absconded, Owain Williams revealed that having reached Kinsale in County Cork, he spent much of his time in a tent on the beach. Yet, having grown a beard, fashioned ‘quite a cultured Cork accent’ and purporting to be ‘Phil McBryde of Irish descent’, he returned to Wales ‘two or three times’; on one entertaining occasion ‘disguised as a female’.\textsuperscript{162} Despite its comic value however, his reason for returning was devoid of humour. On Y Mynydd Ddu in Carmarthenshire, Williams met the Welsh insurance millionaire, Trefor Morgan, to discuss the trial he now recognized as inevitable. Asked to assist, Morgan assured Williams he would finance his legal costs.\textsuperscript{163} It has long been suggested that Trefor Morgan, the founder of Cwmni Undeb, the Aberdare-based company, financed Welsh militant activism. It was a claim given considerable credence by Cayo Evans, who

\textsuperscript{157} Anonymous interview with WT, July 2009.  
\textsuperscript{158} \textit{The Times}, 4 January 1982.  
\textsuperscript{159} Interview between WT & Rhodri Evans, 25 July 2000.  
\textsuperscript{160} \textit{Y Cymro}, 9 May 1968. Despite Hughes claiming not to know Williams, in 1963 he forwarded a significant amount of money to Williams’ wife Irene during Williams’ period of imprisonment. It followed his protest at the flooding of Cwm Tryweryn. In 2009, John Jenkins, irrefutably denied that Hywel Hughes funded MAC. He had ‘never had any dealings with him’, he declared. Telephone interview with WT, 19 February 2009. Yet, it flew in the face of intimations made to investigating officers by Alders’ step brother John Richard Lewis Roberts in December 1969.  
\textsuperscript{161} Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 28 December 2008.  
\textsuperscript{162} Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004. Williams claimed to be a Rhodesian fugitive, wanted by the UK authorities for supporting Ian Smith’s Unilateral Declaration of Independence.  
\textsuperscript{163} Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 28 December 2008.
earlier informed the *Western Mail* the Free Wales Army was controlled by ‘a wealthy businessman’. Later asked to confirm, John Jenkins denied Morgan had dealings with the FWA or MAC.

Whatever the truth surrounding Trefor Morgan’s involvement in the militant offensive, if the Vyrnwy action was deemed an irksome failure by John Jenkins, the group’s next target unequivocally re-established MAC’s credibility as a combative force to be reckoned with. Just days after the Home Secretary was urged to call for a police report on the whereabouts of Owain Williams, two bomb hoaxes were reported; it was announced that George Thomas was to receive a bodyguard when he opened the newly constructed Abergele by-pass, and the FWA was derisorily denounced as ‘the Vietcong of the valleys’, following its reported declaration to ‘blow up Caernarfon castle’ when ‘the German prince’ took ‘the panoply of the principality’ the following year, John Jenkins turned his recalcitrant attention to the Hapsford pipeline in Cheshire and the impending royal visit to Wales.

Following reassuring reports by the journalist John Christopher, that those believed responsible for the Cardiff attacks were being systematically monitored with arrests expected ‘in the next few weeks’, on 28 June - accompanied by his father, the Duke of Edinburgh - Prince Charles arrived for what was billed his ‘first royal tour’ of Wales. To those at the vanguard of the anti-investiture campaign, the opportunity to protest the prince’s arrival was an opportunity too good to ignore. As the prince left the Welsh Office in Cardiff, he was greeted by a crowd of 300; a section of whom were vocally inimical. Leaving his police escort and exercising what George Thomas later professed to be ‘a great deal of moral courage’, the prince approached those bearing anti-royalist banners and placards. Pointing to one which

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166 *WM*, 29 May 1968.  
167 Ibid. The first telephone hoax delayed the Swansea to Paddington train by some 25 minutes. The second resulted in the evacuation of the Board of Trade and Industry in Cardiff.  
168 *WM*, 31 May 1968.  
169 *Wolverhampton Express and Star*, 7 June 1968. ‘Someone may be killed…a political assassination perhaps…But whose fault’ would ‘it be’?, stated Cayo Evans. ‘All nations’ were ‘agreed what a traitors death should be’.  
170 *Daily Express*, 24 June 1968. The article entitled: *Royal Bomb Alert*, confirmed police had five persons under surveillance, claimed Christopher.  
171 *WM*, 29 June 1968. During one demonstration, Welsh language activist Ffred Francis knelt before Prince Charles in a mock gesture of reverence. He was later allegedly informed by a police officer, ‘it was lucky you didn’t do anything, we had you in our sights’. Telephone interview between WT &
recalled the death of 'Llywelyn the Last', Charles enquired as to its significance. He was informed by Welsh-language activist Murray Jenkins, that it urged the Welsh to remember their last true prince, who was 'massacred by the English' in 1282. Having replied he 'knew nothing about that', owing to his being 'not too well up on Welsh history', he was further informed by Jenkins this revelation he would accept, on the grounds the prince was 'not very brilliant'. Quick to champion his charge, a hastily arrived George Thomas remarked that to be untrue, on the basis the prince attended Cambridge University. It was a riposte the unabashed Jenkins returned with interest. 'Yes', he agreed. 'He got in on two poor A levels'. Whether in an attempt to salvage something from the encounter, or genuinely in the dark, the prince, having apparently noticed that 'Llywelyn was spelt in various ways', enquired as to whether Jenkins was 'quite sure' about the spelling. Before he had time to respond, two smoke bombs exploded nearby as scuffles broke out between demonstrators and loyalists. One was thrown by Gethin ap Iestyn.

In 2009, ap Iestyn discussed the events which saw him arrested a second time for protesting against the forthcoming investiture. He had been part of a three-man-unit, comprising Philip Jeffries and his wife, Gwenllian; the daughter of R. O. F. Wynne of Garthewin Hall. Intending to disrupt Charles’ departure, the three had each put a smoke bomb down their trousers. Immediately targeted by Special Branch, the diminutive ap Iestyn lit its fuse with the aid of a cigarette and hurled it in the direction of the prince. Equally successful in reaching their target were his co-conspirators. Robustly seized by the burly officer positioned behind him, ap Iestyn, while allegedly being 'thumped like hell' by a score of officers, returned 'one punch' before being unceremoniously hurled into a Black Maria. Charged under the Public Order Act, (1936), with 'using threatening behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace', all

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Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 19 September 2010.

172 *WM*, 29 June 1968. On arriving in Cathays Park, the first car in the royal motorcade was hit by an egg. A 16-year-old boy was charged and later fined for the offence. 'Never', later declared George Thomas, had he 'felt more ashamed of someone with a Welsh accent' for having 'spoken so regretfully to a young man who politely approached him'. He was certain 'ninety-nine-point-nine per cent of the Welsh people' would repudiate such 'rudeness'. *WM*, 1 July 1968; also, *WM*, 5 July 1968. The fact there existed in Wales those who regarded the prince’s ignorance of such a pivotal figure in Welsh history as diaphanously tragic, seemed entirely lost on the 'appalled' Mr. Thomas. Letters 'of disgust' at the 'shoddy...abusive behaviour' of the 'louts' and 'irresponsible oafs' who protested Prince Charles’ visit, were printed in the *WM*, 8 July 1968.

173 Interview between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 19 May 2009.

174 *WM*, 1 July 1968.
three were later fined. Nonetheless, the ‘successful episode’ had taught ap Iestyn a valuable lesson concerning street agitation. He now ‘focused much thought on causing “chaos Caernarfon”’. Yet, the strong-arm tactics allegedly adopted by police when arresting Gethin ap Iestyn at the Welsh Office, may have been partly fuelled by events some thirteen hours earlier, as John Jenkins and Frederick Ernest Alders, successfully targeted a section of the water pipeline which emerged above ground at Helsby near Hapsford in Cheshire. Crossing the main rail route between Chester, Liverpool and Manchester, the activation of 171bs of Polar Ammon dynamite ensured a ‘twelve inch gash in the pipe’, ‘a jet of water’ was ‘shot 300 feet into the air, five million gallons’ cascaded down the railway embankment and Liverpool’s water supply was ‘cut by half’. Jenkins later disclosed that the target - essentially because of the rail link - was diligently considered before the operation was undertaken. Its subsequent success, he later opined, was particularly satisfying on three accounts: first, the pipeline was part of the network constructed following the flooding of Cwm Tryweryn; second, it had been announced the crossing was afforded ‘round the clock’ security surveillance; and furthermore, it was posthumously admitted the pipe - comprising two inch solid steel - was deemed un-breachable. Indeed, such was the confidence of Liverpool engineers, the concrete abutment positioned to secure the bank during the crossings completion - and on which the device was ‘perfectly placed’ - was left following the construction’s completion. Nevertheless, for all those ready to marvel at the dexterous audacity of the attack, there were many more eager to castigate those responsible. Especially when it was revealed just four minutes elapsed between the saturated embankment

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175 WM, 16 July 1968. Arrested ‘partly for his own safety’, ap Iestyn pleaded guilty and was ordered to pay £20. Jeffries and his wife were penalized £5. Called a ‘silly girl’ by the magistrate, it was, stated Gwenllian Wynne, ‘a typically English remark’. Daily Mail, 9 July 1968; also, Observer Supplement, 22 June 1969.

176 Correspondence between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 20 August 2009. In part, this comprised ap Iestyn and Lewis forming the Anti-Investiture Campaign Committee.

177 WM, 29 June 1968; also, TNA, DPP 2/5979. Following the blast, David Summerton, Liverpool’s deputy water engineer appealed for city dwellers to ‘use as little water as possible’. The explosion occurred at 2.45 a.m. The 25 mile, 60 inch pipe, carried 30 million gallons of water a day from a treatment works on the river Dee at Huntington, three miles south of Chester, to the Liverpool pumping station at Prescott. WM, 29 June 1968.

178 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007; also, 20 November 2008. The target was allegedly discussed in the presence of Alders’ step-brother. TNA, ASSI 84/577. Witness statement by John Richard Lewis Roberts, dated, 5 December 1969. ‘There was a driver who transported me and Alders’, declared John Jenkins, ‘but it was not Roberts’. Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 November 2009.
slipping and blocking the track and a goods train passing along the route. An official response to the recent events was not long in coming, as it was announced surveillance along water pipelines from Wales to England was to be increased with the aid of a police helicopter. Nonetheless, despite the ‘deep unease’ felt by many within the Labour movement following the Caerphilly by-election, and its ‘irrefutable proof that all-Wales was finally awakening to the call for independence’, the Labour party recognized the ace within its axiomatic unionist pack was yet to be played: the impending investiture of Charles as Prince of Wales. However, in readiness for the ceremony, a collective - if conflicting - nationalist response was already underway. If notice were needed of the intent of those on the periphery of the Welsh political divide to disrupt the ceremony, literature, produced and distributed by the Anti-Investiture Campaign Committee, intercepted by Special Branch and forwarded to the Home Secretary, James Callaghan, made it crystal clear. Ominously declaring: ‘The Pretender...Charles Windsor Shall Not Pass’, Whitehall bureaucrats, wishing to avoid the noxious hot potato of ‘political interference’, sought to reassure Welsh chief constables that Frank Williamson, HM Inspector of Constabulary (Crime) would have no operational responsibilities. Williamson’s appointment, it was affirmed, was purely in an intermediary/liaison capacity between the Home Office, the security services and constabularies and regional crime squads in Wales.

Yet, remarkably, despite the ‘special circumstances’ (explosions) which necessitated the introduction of these ‘exceptional arrangements’, (Williamson’s

179 WM, 29 June 1968. The difficulty in both establishing the identity of those responsible and repairing the damage, was compounded by the heaviest rainfall in 40 years the following day. Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007.

180 WM, 1 July 1968; also, WM, 5 July 1968.


182 Interview between WT & David Walters, 29 December 2008. Much of the credit for Plaid’s success was afforded The Miners Support Group for Plaid, which successfully targeted colliers who, increasingly sympathetic with the nationalist agenda, were also disaffected by the Labour Party’s ‘distrusted, communist’ candidate.


184 HO, 325/119. Sir James Waddell, Deputy Under-Secretary, Home Office, to Colonel William
mandate) the decision to appoint Williamson continued to be a source of onerous resentment; most notably by the chief constable of Gwynedd, Colonel William Williams, renowned for being intensely suspicious of any attempt to usurp his authority. In a letter to the august chief constable, Sir James Waddell, Deputy Under Secretary at the Home Office, delicately urged Col. Williams to accept and support Williamson’s appointment. Five days later, Sir James Waddell received a reply from Colonel William Williams, the chief constable with the nineteenth century attitude to twentieth century policing. He would ‘of course meet and brief Williamson’. However, it was not the ability of the Gwynedd Constabulary in question, but rather, Col. Williams believed, the lenient way in which the regional Assize Courts had dealt with those brought before them on explosives charges. Had more ‘sterner measures’ been adopted, Williams confidently concluded, ‘we would not have this trouble today’. If it was a opinion with which many in Wales subscribed, for those people and ‘the old man of the Welsh mountains’ there was more of the exasperating same to follow.

Nonetheless, at a meeting in Cardiff on 16 July, attended by Ferguson Smith (Commander Metropolitan Special Branch), Tom Roberts (MI5), Charles Simkins (MoD, Security Division) and E. Brampton (F2, Home Office Police Division), Frank Williamson submitted his findings. The only way to crack the conspiracy, he opined, was to establish a special unit with its operational headquarters just over the border in England. It would be led by officers from the Metropolitan Police experienced in counter-terrorism and be accountable only to him. For the Welsh police service,

Williams, Chief Constable of Gwynedd, 28 June 1968. Williamson was instructed to take control; and ascertain what how best to apprehend the saboteurs in order to ensure the safety and success of the investiture.

188 HO, 325/119. Letter from Neil Galbraith, HM Inspector Constabulary Wales, to Sir Eric St. Johnston, HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, 17 June 1968. ‘The old man of the Welsh mountains’, wrote Galbraith, was inordinately conscious of any apparent attempt to ‘subordinate the autonomy of the Chief Constable to external influence, Home Office or otherwise’.
189 HO, 325/119. Frank Williamson, HM Inspector (Crime), to Eric St. Johnston, HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, 17 July 1968; also, Waddell to Home Secretary, 19 July 1968. The meeting was held at Hayes House, Cardiff. Raymond Kendall, seconded to the unit, also suggested Shrewsbury was deliberately chosen for reasons of security, the risk of antagonizing Welsh officers by insinuating their inadequacy and to prevent it being viewed as an alien force of occupation.
the decision to form the unit and to locate it free from the undermining influence of inexpedient Welsh chief constables, was, few could dispute, a humiliating realization their efforts to apprehend the saboteurs had failed. Moreover, their chastened indignity was complete, with knowledge the security services would forthwith be primarily entrusted to combat nationalist agitation in Wales.

Unaware of these developments, at an anti-investiture meeting on 6 July, in the Glyndwr Hall at Machynlleth, campaigners congregated to hear a succession of speakers denounce the forthcoming event as a ‘charade and insult to Wales’. Billed its ‘principal speaker’, the highlight of the afternoon was a tape recorded message from Owain Williams. Having apologized for his absence and reaffirmed his innocence, Williams called upon those gathered to ‘organise an effective campaign to combat this circus which the English Establishment’ intended to foist ‘on the people of Wales’. Asked where his clarion call was committed to tape, Williams confirmed it had been achieved while ‘crouched behind a tree in woodland’ on his father’s farm. It was then handed to Glyn Rowlands, who ensured its safe delivery the following day.

One man ‘suitably unimpressed’ by the days proceedings - and Owain Williams’ ‘battle cry for freedom’ - was freelance journalist Ian Skidmore. He was ‘all but instructed to attend the meeting by police’; in order to verify if the recorded voice matched any of those heard during the clandestine meeting with MAC two months earlier. This was owing, Skidmore added, to the absolute conviction held by the authorities, ‘that Owain Williams was behind the bombing campaign’. Yet, it was the sight of Cayo Evans ‘and the other idiot Denis Coslett’, vying with each other to see ‘who was the biggest terrorist’, when interviewed ‘by Linda Blandford for the 24 Hours programme’ which, he believed, summed up the occasion.

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190 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 20 November 2003.
191 WM, 8 July 1968. It was rumoured that Williams was to attend and then give himself up to police. However, attendees were informed Williams was ‘out of the country’.
192 Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 19 December 2008. Despite being under surveillance, Guinis Farm ‘was quite big, 420 acres’. This, Williams added, enabled me ‘to hide’. Furthermore, ‘technology at this time’, he declared, lacked the sophistication it now enjoys. Both his parents, he conceded ‘were aware’ he was there at the time.
193 Telephone interview between WT & Glyn Rowlands, 20 October 2008. When in Eire, Williams, the vice-president in absentia of the Patriotic Front, also wrote a letter which was collected and read out by Gethin ap Iestyn during a PF meeting in Wales.
194 Telephone interview between WT & Ian Skidmore, 20 August 2008. Skidmore gained entry to the meeting by claiming to be a journalist for the Daily Mirror, dispatched to cover the story. Following the Machynlleth meeting, the FWA undertook manoeuvres for a TV crew in the surrounding hills.
It was a sentiment shared in some measure by others who attended that day. Certainly, such vainglorious posturing did little to assuage Glyn Rowlands’ increasing doubt he had ‘joined the wrong group’. Although comprised of a ‘great bunch of boys’, the risible antics of the Free Wales Army and more specifically their ‘love of the limelight’ sat uneasily with the more earnest Rowlands. The decision to adorn the uniform of the FWA had also, he realized, curtailed any hope of joining the covert ranks of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru. Rowlands - the man memorably dubbed by Cayo Evans ‘the lone wolf of Corris’ - was, he now plaintively recognized, ‘too exposed’.195

Owain Williams is arrested, tried and acquitted

It was at this juncture, with the police ‘desperate’ to discover Williams’ whereabouts, that an attempt to compromise Glyn Rowlands’ involvement in the nationalist campaign was allegedly fostered. Approached by R. G. Owen of Gwynedd CID, Rowlands was asked how he would respond if Owain Williams arrived on the doorstep of his Corris home. He would, Rowlands replied emphatically: ‘put a meal in his belly, a pound in his pocket and help him on his way’. Adopting another tactic, R. G. Owen then allegedly handed Rowlands a number of pre-addressed envelopes and a postal order for 10 shillings. This was done with the tacit understanding that any information regarding Williams’ whereabouts would be sent through the post. In 2004, Rowlands confirmed he knew Williams was travelling back and fore to Eire. Although information ‘only a small circle’ was privy to, through ‘word of mouth’ he had received this information ‘from the north’, which, in turn, he in mid-Wales ‘passed on to those in the west’.196

However, somewhat surprisingly, news of this fiscal advance by police caused distrust and even suspicion within the ranks of the FWA, leading to whispered accusations that Rowlands was an informant. ‘We thought why him? Why have the police only contacted him this way?’, remarked Toni Lewis in 2004. ‘He kept telling us to be on our guard, but...I don’t know...there were other things as well which didn’t add up’.197 It was however a charge dismissed out of hand by Cayo Evans’ son Rhodri. A lot of this ‘nonsense began when Glyn Rowlands’ son joined the police

195 Telephone interview between WT & Glyn Rowlands, 20 October 2008.
196 Interview between WT & Glyn Rowlands, 21 March 2004; also, 16 October 2008.
197 Interview between WT & Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004.

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force', countered Evans, 'but his son is as much a nationalist as his father'.

Asked to comment on the charge that some had questioned his commitment to the cause, Rowlands replied he would 'not be surprised if the police' circulated the rumour. Such tactics were common within its practice. ‘They were’, he added, ‘always trying to stir animosity between us’.

Yet, retired Deputy Chief Constable and Shrewsbury unit figure John Owen Evans, quickly refuted the allegation that officers routinely paid for such correspondence. Unlike other forces, he stated, no fund existed within the Gwynedd Constabulary Special Branch for such purposes. Furthermore, information received via such channels was notoriously unreliable and ultimately counter-productive. Consequently, intelligence was gathered on an individual only through transparent means.

Glyn Rowlands was not alone in claiming that lucrative benefit awaited those prepared to divulge information however, with both Denis Coslett and Toni Lewis, each stating that Avril Coslett had been assured a new bungalow in return for communication leading to her husband’s arrest in relation to the bombing campaign. If indeed these claims are accurate, the increasingly vacillate Welsh political climate and the desperation of investigating forces to detect the saboteurs, was surely not aided by Saunders Lewis, who precariously announced during a BBC interview that ‘the only language the English government’ understood was ‘violence’.

Nonetheless, contrary to the swashbuckling FWA, someone very much involved in the bombing campaign was Frederick Ernest Alders. Later asked by investigating officers how her fiancé responded to news of the explosions, Ann

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198 Interview between WT & Rhodri Evans, 28 February 2006.
199 Telephone interview between WT & Glyn Rowlands, 18 September 2006. Glyn Rowlands confirmed his son to be a proud Welsh patriot. ‘Rumours’, he added, ‘were rife at the time. Nobody knew anything about anybody else did they?’.
200 Telephone interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 10 April 2009. ‘We did not pick up anybody like that’, stated Evans. ‘There was no bargaining; we just collected information on lifestyle. That’s how we would determine if they were involved. If they were ‘spouting’. Glyn was someone whose name was coming up’.
201 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000; also, between WT & Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004. Lewis claimed he was offered ‘a car, phone, house’ and ‘money in the bank’ on the condition’, a senior police officer remarked, ‘you move where we want you to move to’. Lewis declined. ‘Some people’, Lewis believed, accepted similar police offers. Following the Machynlleth anti-investiture rally, C. Evans and D. Coslett alleged officers assured each £10,000 if they revealed Owain Williams’ whereabouts. Coslett also claimed he was approached by an MI5 operative with a cheque made out for the same figure, if he ‘gave up the FWA and revealed names’. Each suggestion was dismissed by a west Wales detective as ‘rubbish’. WM, 8 July 1968.
Woodgate revealed Alders’ reaction had ranged from ‘laughter’ and ‘unconcern’ to the angry retort ‘that he was doing it for Wales’. Moreover, for the twelve month period up to Christmas, 1968, she and Alders had often baby-sat for John Jenkins and his wife Thelma. These visits had often involved Jenkins and Alders studying ‘maps of Wales’ and their discussing various topics. These ranged from: Welsh history, their opposition to the water pipeline issue, preventing the investiture by killing Prince Charles and Wales gaining independence. The latter, an eventuality they had proclaimed, which would result in ‘Jenkins becoming Prime Minister and Alders Minster of Defence’. On one occasion, they had also attempted to acquire ‘a timing mechanism from the light in a telephone kiosk’; returning to Jenkins’ home empty handed, their efforts curtailed by the volume of traffic.

Whether deliberately basking in the introverted knowledge of his nocturnal activities, or genuinely unable to mask his pleasure that Wales was ‘taking revenge against England’, Alders’ behaviour had also caught the benevolent attention of his work and TA colleague, Brian Richards. Yet, crucially, it was only after Jenkins’ and Alders’ arrest that he too informed investigating officers that a ‘half-smiling’ Alders, gave the impression of being ‘somehow involved’; this, based upon the somewhat ‘boasting’ manner in which Alders discussed the explosions.

Nevertheless, in July 1968, both the general public and indeed the police and authorities, were still roundly in the dark as to the identity of those truly responsible. If any of the nation’s populace believed the explosions to be the work of the FWA, N. H. Taylor, in a letter to the *Western Mail*, provided something by way of solution. Why, Taylor enquired, was Denis Coslett not charged for contravening the Public Order Act (1936) by wearing the uniform of the FWA at the Machynlleth meeting? A reply, by a certain ‘Revd. Idwal Lloyd-Price’, sprang to the defence of Coslett by quoting with convincing eloquence nothing less than Article 17 of The Geneva Convention and The United Nations Charter. The *au courant* prose, dripping with well-crafted sentiment, ensured the commencement of a healthy exchange in the *Western Mail* letters page and a lighter moment in the continuing saga of the Free Wales Army. For, unknown to all but a select few, the enigmatic and unlikely Revd.

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204 TNA, ASSI 84/577. Undated witness statement by Ann Woodgate.
206 TNA, ASSI 84/577. Witness statement by Brian Richards, 27 November 1969.
The police operation to apprehend those responsible for the bombing campaign - and the nagging inference of its tangible incompetence - was given a considerable fillip on 27 August, when Owain Williams was arrested at Birmingham airport. He had arrived from Cork accompanied by Kathleen Quaid, the ‘supervisor’ at the Trident Hotel in Kinsale and with whom he had begun a relationship. Attempting to explain to a customs officer their dearth of luggage, Williams’ infelicitous attention was drawn to two furtive, yet intently staring faces. Eventually, having apparently convinced the airport official they were in Britain ‘to attend a conference’, the two travellers were approached by Detective Constable, Geoffrey Allman and Detective Sergeant, James Cuthbert.

Asked if he was ‘Owen Williams’ Williams replied to the affirmative. Immediately, there was a noticeable police presence. Pushed against a wall, frisked for a firearm and informed an arrest warrant had been issued in response to his failure to ‘appear before Caernarvon (sic) Magistrates’ on 6 March, on a charge of ‘unlawfully possessing explosives’, Owain Williams was then arrested and cautioned. Protesting his ‘moral’ innocence, he was transferred to Hobs Moat, Police Station in Solihull. *En route*, officers claimed Williams soberly remarked: ‘it will be six months in a few days since I left. I had enough and wanted to come back to face what’s coming. I would rather that than be persecuted all the time. I was going to hand myself in after first seeing my children’. It is however, an allegation fiercely refuted by Owain Williams as ‘utter rubbish. As if’, Williams added, he ‘would return after such a length of time and say that’. He believed that anticipating his judicial position, police fabricated the remark, recognizing - through Williams having discerned he could not escape the long arm of the law - it would ‘sound better for

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207 *WM*, 10 July 1968.
208 *WM*, 15 July 1968. Also, interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 13 December 2000; also between WT & Rhodri & Dalis Evans, 28 February 2006. Legend has it a cub reporter was dispatched to west Wales to interview Revd. Lloyd Price. On arriving at the address, he discovered the house dilapidated; a tree growing out of the chimney and it home to a family of owls.
209 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 24 March 2004. Owain Williams chose Birmingham airport believing it would be ‘OK’. Having befriended Williams, Kathleen Quaid proved a source of much welcome hotel food, including chicken, bread and wine.
them' when he stood trial. The evidence against Owain Williams was soon processed. He held, north Wales detective Robert Gwynne Owen opined, 'strong militant views'...which supported 'the use of force' to establish a 'Welsh Republic'. Furthermore, Williams had 'adversely influenced' a 'number of young men' in north Wales, who, it was felt, were both fearful of him and the 'organization' he represented.

Speaking in 2004, Owain Williams claimed that he was arrested while carrying a 'little diary...all in code...with addresses and numbers', which was intercepted by officers as he 'passed it' to Kathleen Quaid. The notebook, he later conceded, by way of clarification, had merely contained the names - admittedly encrypted - of 'one or two girls' he had met since absconding. He did not want 'anyone knowing' his 'business, never mind the police'. Did anybody 'really think' he 'would put telephone numbers of IRA and/or MAC contacts in a pocket book?'. He would not, Williams added, 'be walking free today' had he done so. Moreover, the police would have been 'round the next day to mop up' those listed. To prove his point, Owain Williams drew attention to subsequent events: with his arrest having occurred some 'fifteen months before the arrest of John Jenkins'. Whatever the accuracy surrounding this episode, the next day - following the release of Kathleen Quaid - officers from Caernarfon arrived and within a convoy of three cars, Owain Williams was conveyed to north Wales. There, on 29 August, he appeared in court. Owain Williams was remanded in custody, his bail application denied.

The manner of their co-agitators unexpected arrest, had indeed raised a quizzical eyebrow among the nationalist periphery, admitted Glyn Rowlands. It was even thought before leaving Ireland, Williams 'tipped off the authorities as to where he was going'. Rowlands quantified this by adding: 'it would have made a big difference to his sentence. In the climate of the time, it was expected he would get hit very hard, if found and brought to trial'. No one - at least to Rowlands' knowledge -

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211 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 24 March 2004; also, telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 19 December 2008.
213 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 24 March, 2004; also, John Humphries, Freedom Fighters, p.91. Williams' 'precious codebook' contained 'the names of contacts'.
214 Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 19 December 2008; also, TNA, DPP 2/4471. According to archival material, the notebook, Exhibit 5, contained only a poem entitled: I Came as a Stranger to the Land of the Free, written in Williams' hand.
215 WM, 30 August 1968.
confronted Owain Williams with these suspicions. To do so would have raised the uncomfortable speculation that Williams was ‘a coward’. Yet, Rowlands ruminated, ‘it did seem odd he flew into Birmingham; and a policeman just recognized him out of the blue’. 216

Owain Williams now believes it likely he was subject to a surveillance operation. In the bar at the Trident Hotel, ‘there was’, he recalled, a ‘stocky, middle aged, bespectacled guy, always propped on a bar stool reading a Times newspaper’. Without being able to put his finger on it, ‘something about him’, Williams added - along with a ‘number of others’ who frequented the bar - all but convinced him he was being monitored. He was certain the police had suspected his whereabouts. After all, Williams pondered, ‘Ireland was rather an obvious choice...Interpol’, he felt sure, ‘would have found’ him ‘eventually’. Asked what he believed transpired, Owain Williams thought the phone in the bar was tapped: more specifically, ‘a phone call’ he made on the eve of his return to ‘an acquaintance in Wales’ was ‘intercepted’. 217 Whatever the circumstances surrounding his detention, Owain Williams rejected as ‘ridiculous’ the suggestion he ‘tipped off’ the authorities as to the specifics of his return in a pre-arranged plea-bargain to reduce his sentence. ‘That’ he added trenchantly, was ‘not’ his ‘style’. 218

Whatever the truth surrounding these events, beginning 5 November and culminating three days later, Owain Williams stood trial at Caernarfon Assizes on a charge of illegally possessing explosives. 219 He had been charged with such, following his arrest in the aftermath of the Penisarwaun explosion ten months earlier. Despite incriminating testimony from John Gwilym Jones and police forensic results, 220 Owain Williams was acquitted. He later explained why the police evidence

216 Telephone interview between WT & Glyn Rowlands, 18 September 2006. ‘We were surprised when he just turned up’, remarked Rowlands. It was believed, he had earlier ‘informed’ the authorities ‘where he was going to go and what was he going to do’.
217 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 24 March 2004. Williams believes the man was an MI5 agent. He was returning to keep abreast of his defence campaign.
218 Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 22 September 2006. On 13 September, at Caernarfon Assizes, Owain Williams was further remanded in custody and committed for trial. WM, 14 September 1968.
219 WM, 5 - 9 November 1968. Williams claimed his only contact with the IRA was when he met an unnamed member in a Dublin pub. WM, 8 November 1968; also, Caernarfon and Denbigh Herald, 15 November 1968.
220 TNA, DPP 2/4471. Witness statement by J. G. Jones, dated 6 August 1968; also witness statement by J. G. Jones, dated, 11 January 1968; also undated witness statement by J. G. Jones. Also, witness statement by Superintendent Islwyn Jones, dated, 18 January 1968. On 15 January 1968, positive traces of nitro-glycerin ‘were found on various parts’ of Williams’ ‘Vauxhall car’ by Doctor J. Mullen,
- so crucial to the prosecution - fell apart. Throughout the period he absconded, Williams remained confident police acted illegally in obtaining positive nitro-glycerin samples from his car. This, he attributed to an over-heard conversation between Detective Chief Inspector John Hughes and a junior officer. On being informed that traces of explosives had recorded a negative reading, Hughes, Williams alleged, robustly instructed a further sample to be taken until the desired reading was achieved. Moreover, in the apparent expectation of locating traces of explosives, rags containing nitro-glycerin were smeared upon the car’s door handles, horn, windows, boot and steering wheel. Yet, remarkably, officers failed to take a sample from the handbrake or the indicator. The oversight proved decisive, as Williams was cleared of the charge against him.\footnote{221}  

Kathleen Quaid, Williams’ travelling companion at the time of his arrest at Birmingham airport, failed to hear the verdict. Having instructed two female jurors she approached in the toilet to find Williams not guilty, she was ordered not to attend.\footnote{222} Owain Williams was non-committal when later asked if was actively involved in the militant campaign. On the grounds he was not prosecuted for any such charge, he would remain tight-lipped.\footnote{223}  

Abergwesyn  

Three days after Owain Williams’ apprehension at Birmingham airport, over the August bank holiday weekend, some 50 members of the FWA attended a training exercise near Abergwesyn. Jointly organized by Gethin ap Iestyn and Cayo Evans, in 2009, ap Iestyn outlined why the decision had been reached to ‘undertake manoeuvres in the Welsh mountains’. It was, he declared, two fold: ‘to draw volunteers together’ and to hopefully ensure ‘in the very least, a cadre’ would be equipped to ‘undertake disruptive and wrecking’ measures at the investiture the following July. Asked to develop the point, ap Iestyn added that attending combatants had received instruction regarding the basic principles of urban warfare. This had included how to assemble and successfully launch missiles such as stones, bottles and smoke and petrol bombs.  

\footnote{of the Forensic Science Laboratory, Prestatyn.}  
\footnote{221 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 24 March 2004.}  
\footnote{222 WM, 6 November 1968.}  
\footnote{223 Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 7 April 2009. On leaving court, Williams approached Det. Chief Inspector John Hughes his hand extended in a gesture of conciliation. It followed an earlier pronouncement by Hughes, that whoever won the case, the other should accept the decision. To his credit, Williams remarked, ‘Hughes shook my hand’. A junior colleague refused to do likewise.}
Yet, of one thing Gethin ap Iestyn remained steadfast: the focus of this agitation would be the procession itself and not members of the public.\textsuperscript{224} The principle was roundly endorsed by another prominent figure in the anti-investiture lobby, Dafydd y Dug. Having been instrumental in organising Cymdeithas Llywelyn (The Llywelyn Society), y Dug nevertheless considered ‘violence against the person’ to be wholly ‘unjustifiable’.\textsuperscript{225}

However, despite his best intentions, Gethin ap Iestyn failed to arrive. This, he remarked witheringly, had been the fault, he believed, of his co-organiser. Having temporarily put aside his scepticism for the FWA, he had suggested Cayo Evans make the necessary arrangements and surreptitiously contact those likely to be interested in attending. Evans had set about his task with military zeal, so much so, that he might ‘as well have placed an advert in \textit{Y Cymro}\textsuperscript{V},’ ap Iestyn discerned sardonically. His energy’s had ensured an inevitable heavy police presence in the area. A fact, ap Iestyn soon recognized, when picked up hitchhiking \textit{en route} for Abergwesyn by two men he quickly established were inconspicuous Special Branch officers. Wishing to wrong-foot his hosts as to his true reason for being in mid-Wales, ap Iestyn asked to be dropped off some ten miles beyond Llanwrtyd. There, he had intended to take the mountain road to Abergwesyn. Forced to retrace his journey, he arrived to observe from the vantage point of a pub window, ‘loads of uniformed officers being picked up in the town square’. When ‘the coast was clear’, he walked in the direction of the camp site, before, ‘lost in the dark’, he abandoned the idea and ‘slept rough’. The following morning, having hitchhiked to Cayo Evans’ home, Gethin ap Iestyn was regaled with ‘the epic tale’ of the FWA’s ‘retreat from the camp site’ while followed in hot pursuit by police.\textsuperscript{226}

Later, Denis Coslett revealed an attempt to infiltrate the gathering had been made by under-cover police officer Jack Lavery. Pristine camping gear had immediately aroused the suspicion of the FWA, who had inimically enquired after the

\textsuperscript{224} Correspondence between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 24 January 2008; also, 20 August 2009. The group held an earlier exercise in the Brecon Beacons.

\textsuperscript{225} Interview between WT & Dafydd y Dug, 20 May 2004.

\textsuperscript{226} Correspondence between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 24 January 2008; also, 20 August 2009. Cayo Evans distributed notices imploring ‘prepared...volunteers of the Army to report to Llanwrtyd Wells on Saturday, 31 August...at 12 noon’. They were instructed ‘to walk along the Abergwesyn road...on which they would be approached by ‘Special pick-up drivers’...Attendees would be asked ‘the way to Abbey Cwm Hir’, to which they would reply: ‘Llewelyn rest in peace’. Above all, volunteers were urged ‘not to arouse suspicions or draw attention’ to themselves. Anti-investiture literature received by WT from Gethin ap Iestyn. The group’s retreat from the camp, was, ap Iestyn declared, arguably ‘the
strangers’ identity. He was, they were informed, ‘from Cardiff’ and ‘in Geth’s column’. As talk around the camp fire turned to hanging the unfortunate Lavery, he made good his escape by claiming he would leave and return with ap Iestyn in order to authenticate his presence. Not unsurprisingly, he failed to return. Indeed, the next time, Coslett and the FWA saw Jack (dubbed by Cayo Evans ‘Lavatory’) Lavery, was the following April, when the police officer appeared as a prosecution witness during the so-called ‘Free Wales Army trial’.  

The Abergwesyn training course was dismissed as ‘a farce’, by attendee Dafydd y Dug, while Glyn Rowlands ‘stayed away’, having ‘finally decided to distance’ himself. Another who declined his invitation to attend was Lyn Ebenezer; who in 2006, explained he was ‘no longer running around’ with the FWA at this point. His decision was fuelled by a prior realization that the ‘atmosphere had changed’. Where once, he believed, the FWA had been indulged and tolerated as an ineffectual oddity, the impending investiture had sharpened attitudes. Henceforth, the authorities, he suspected, were more than willing to remove from the nation’s streets, any perceived threat to its likely success. His subsequent efforts to draw Cayo Evans’ attention to the ever expanding hole the group was digging for itself was robustly rebuffed. Consequently, the collision course between the Free Wales Army and the British Establishment was set for its inevitable conclusion. Moreover, all the evidence required to take leading figures of the group to trial, was provided by an article in the Sunday Telegraph. ‘It was all there’, Ebenezer exclaimed ebulliently. Its publication ensured the arrest of prominent FWA figures was ‘just a matter of time’.  

In the Sunday Telegraph feature, compiled by attendee John Summers and entitled Time Bomb Ticking in Wales, the FWA demonstrated its ability to construct bombs and trotted out its hackneyed threats and claims. Nonetheless, there was new material to add to its ever-expanding police dossier. It now belonged to the International Celtic Army, with links to the IRA, the Quebec Liberation Front, the Breton Liberation Movement and ETA. Furthermore, with the advent of its sophisticated ‘Hurricane Bomb’, no government office or installation - including

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FWA’s greatest moment’.  

227 WM, 30 April 1969; also, interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000.  
229 Interview between WT & Glyn Rowlands, 22 March 2004.  
those ‘in Whitehall’ - was ‘safe’. Those politicians intent on ‘killing Wales’, warned a foreboding Denis Coslett, would be ‘assassinated’. As for the investiture, the Free Wales Army, Summers was grimly informed, had ‘plans’ which would ‘make the whole world hold its breath’. However, unable to conclude the interview with John Summers without a modicum of frivolity, Denis Coslett called upon Harold Wilson ‘to hold peace talks aboard a coracle on the river Teifi’.²³¹ Unknown to Coslett, or the FWA, a police surveillance team photographed the training manoeuvres. A comprehensive record of the weekend’s events later appeared as evidence for the prosecution at their trial.²³²

Approached to comment on the police enquiry, an un-named senior Welsh Crime Squad officer cited the Welsh public as posing the ‘greatest difficulty’; having continually failed to provide invaluable ‘evidence’ as to ‘the movements of known extremists on the night of a bomb outrage. It did not’, the officer declared sombrely, ‘auger well for a guilty conviction, should those responsible be tried before a Welsh jury’.²³³

It was a claim given significant credence by John Jenkins, when in 2007, he recalled on returning with Alders to Wrexham following a militant operation, their car had unexpectedly ‘stalled to a halt’. Their increasing anxiety was heightened when a young couple stopped to assist them. However, to their surprise and considerable relief, the couple failed to come forward when police subsequently appealed for information regarding strangers or noteworthy incidents in the area. Moreover, Jenkins added, although ‘never reported; at least in Wales’, he and Alders were ‘seen on a number of occasions’ when undertaking reconnaissance missions.²³⁴

Following media reports of the Abergwesyn training weekend, concern was raised at the very echelon of government administration as to how the FWA might be legally addressed. Yet, as Home Office advisers began to scour judicial precedent as a means to discover how an assault on the group might be deployed, a key event about to unfold in the campaign of Welsh militant activism ensured its inevitable down-fall.

²³¹ *Sunday Telegraph* Supplement, 6 September 1968.
²³³ *Sunday Telegraph* Supplement, 6 September 1968.
²³⁴ Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007.
Pembrey

If a solitary event all but ensured the demise of the Free Wales Army, it occurred Monday, 9 September 1968, at RAF Pembrey in Carmarthenshire; when forty-two-year-old Warrant Officer William Hougham, received significant injuries, while attempting to remove a suspect device. Placed in a shoe-box on the table in a ground floor radio room, it was found by twenty-one-year-old, Senior Aircraftsman, Marshall Grey. Having telephoned his superior officer to inform him of his discovery, Grey directed Officer Hougham to the package, before declaring his intention to leave the room. As he reached the door, the silence was shattered, as the device activated on being picked it up by Officer Hougham. Despite sustaining appalling injuries to his hands, face and chest, William Hougham was fortunate, declared retired Deputy Chief Constable, John Owen Evans, ‘in that as he picked it up, he held it upside down and the explosion went away from him’. Nevertheless, admitted to hospital in Carmarthen, surgeons admitted it unlikely any more than ‘two fingers might be saved’.

As police appealed ‘for help’ and conceded the attack appeared ‘well planned’, it also speculated the bomb was planted by a couple who walked across the sands from the direction of Cefn Sidan, before breaking a window to gain entry. If some questioned the logic of removing by hand such a device, many more recognised the airman’s bravery and the connection - albeit unproven - of the link between the explosion and Welsh nationalism.

The perpetrators, denounced George Thomas, were ‘a cowardly bunch’, who crept ‘up in the night to do their dirty work’. Yet, the decision of the Secretary of State to both embark on a helicopter flight from St. Athan to the RAF station, just

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235 WM, 10 September 1968.
236 Telephone interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 10 April 2009. ‘To my knowledge, it (explosion at Pembrey) was nothing to do with the FWA’. Telephone interview between WT & Vernon Griffiths, 23 June 2009.
237 WM, 10 September 1968. In the explosion, doors in the ground floor of the No.2 Control Tower were ripped from their hinges and windows, furniture and radio equipment shattered.
238 Telephone interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 10 April 2009.
239 WM, 10 September 1968. The station was closed at the weekend. ‘It was almost impossible for anyone to see them’ declared a police source.
240 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000. Despite regretting Hougham’s injuries, they were Coslett added, ‘his fault’.
241 WM, 10 September 1968. ‘He must have realized the dangers’, remarked a police spokesman; ‘only a brave man would attempt to take it out of the building’. Also, The Times, 12 September 1968. Plaid Cymru feared ‘the connection will be fairly soon established’, between the blast and nationalism, claimed The Times editorial.
hours after the unfortunate William Hougham sustained his injuries and to later visit him in hospital, was greeted with derisory calls of 'repugnant' hypocrisy by nationalists. How often, later remarked a disdainful Gwynfor Evans, had Thomas taken it upon himself to visit the home of a miner injured underground? But then, Evans added pointedly, in such circumstances the Labour Minster was unable to 'blame Plaid Cymru'. Nonetheless, for all the predictable political detraction, extremists shared their revulsion at William Hougham's tragic predicament.

As an official Plaid Cymru statement declared ‘all responsible’ Welsh people would ‘react with disgust’ to the explosion at Pembrey; that those responsible were attempting to ‘rule by terror’ and should be ‘turned over’ to the authorities within hours of the blast, several members of the FWA were questioned by police at Carmarthen. On his release, in an interview with the BBC, Cayo Evans attempted to distance both himself and the broader nationalist movement from the incident. The explosion, he believed, was ‘non-political’ in nature; the entire aspect of the incident was completely at odds with any action previously undertaken; including, as far as Evans could ascertain from media reports, the construction of the device itself. He was subject to such a lengthy interview by police, owing to the position he enjoyed of knowing the ‘pattern of nationalism’ and the contemporary ‘political feeling’ in Wales. Notwithstanding, less sympathetic observers opined, the fact that Evans had hitherto appeared happy to take much of the credit for erstwhile attacks. Nevertheless, the police, Evans added reposefully, established from the earliest stages of the questioning that neither he nor his ‘organization’ was involved.

What Cayo Evans failed to mention, was that he had been interviewed by Jock

242 *WM*, 10 September 1968. Both in the UK and when stationed in Aden, William Hougham had 'handled unexploded bombs'. *WM*, 13 September 1968. George Thomas refused to contemplate the suggestion the investiture might be marred by violence. 'We must not let this situation develop', he announced. 'Violence will not determine policy...the investiture must go on'. There was 'growing evidence', Thomas declared earnestly 'the investiture was popular with the overwhelming majority of Welsh people'. If so, others appeared less certain. 'Opposition', declared the Mayor of Cardiff, 'should not be underestimated'. TNA, PREM 13/2360. Minutes of Investiture Committee Meeting (3rd), 9 October 1968. Despite William Hougham's misgivings, a fund orchestrated by the mayor of Kidwelly reached £100. *CJ*, 4 October 1968. Warrant Officer Hougham was discharged from hospital over the weekend, 20 October 1968. *CJ*, 25 October 1968.


244 Carmarthen Times, 11 September 1968.

245 BBC News, 10 September 1968; also, *CJ*, 11 September 1968. 'It is a senseless act...which we deplore'. Evans told journalist Richard Whitmore. 'The FWA was as surprised as anyone when news of the explosion broke'.

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Wilson, the head of the newly convened Shrewsbury unit. Although the decision to assemble the squad had been taken two months earlier, following the proposal by Frank Williamson, HM Inspector of Constabulary (Crime) - which called for a hand-picked police unit with its operational headquarters just over the border in England, to be led by officers of the Metropolitan Police experienced in counter-terrorism - the need to implement Williamson’s recommendations were brought sharply into focus by the explosion at RAF Pembrey. It was, the authorities were painfully aware, the ninth sabotage incident to rock Wales in the past two-and-a-half-years.

Asked to identify the Shrewsbury unit’s ‘terms of reference’, Raymond Kendall, the squads junior officer, declared its main objective - with the forthcoming investiture very much in mind - was to establish, collate and evaluate centrally, information and intelligence being received concerning individuals considered likely involved in militant activism. To this end, Welsh-speaker John Owen Evans had primarily liaised with Welsh-speaking colleagues throughout Wales. However, Raymond Kendall also believes it was the explosion at Pembrey, which first saw John Jenkins enter the police inquiry. The Shrewsbury unit, Kendall revealed, received ‘from an informant, information that this guy existed and that he was connected to the military; because up until then we didn’t really know’. Yet, ‘on the basis of that information it didn’t seem significant. Of course, as we now know’, Kendall added ruefully, ‘later on that was not the case’. If it appears that Jenkins’ military credentials ensured he was ‘above suspicion’, his emergence in the police inquiry at this juncture is nonetheless a suggestion disputed by John Owen Evans. He claims police suspected nothing of Jenkins’ involvement until after the investiture; remarking that only then was Jenkins ‘on police radar’.

246 Correspondence between WT & Raymond Kendall, 9 August 2009. ‘Unlike the Welsh regional crime squads, the Shrewsbury unit’, Kendall added, ‘did not have an independent investigative role’. Furthermore, the number of personnel did not permit it. Consequently, it performed more of a ‘support’ function. Despite Jock Wilson being granted ‘certain powers in relation to incidents’, he did not have ‘total authority for all investigations’.

247 Interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 19 February 2001; also, telephone interview, 23 March 2006. ‘I was’, remarked Evans, ‘the senior Welsh-speaking officer in Shrewsbury. I would act as a liaison officer with the forces involved in the interest of a particular person. For instance, I might go and speak to someone in North Wales police about a particular individual on their patch. Shrewsbury was in essence a collating centre. If a particular region wanted or had information on a particular individual, we would analyse the information and pass it on to the force concerned’.

248 Correspondence between WT & Raymond Kendall, 2 August 2009. According to his ‘recollection’, it was following ‘the Pembrey (sic) incident’ that information was received ‘from an informant’ that Jenkins ‘was possibly of interest’.

249 Telephone interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 10 August 2009.
Two days after Cayo Evans was questioned at Carmarthen Police HQ with regard the explosion at RAF Pembrey, police divers from the Glamorgan Police sub-aqua team recovered arms and munitions from Maesllyn near Tregaron.\textsuperscript{250} Surprised at their discovery, Denis Coslett was informed by Cayo Evans that he had ‘made a deal with Jock Wilson about the Pembrey bomb’. Evans claimed that Jock Wilson had threatened unless he co-operated and gave up the group’s weaponry, ‘he would be put in jail for life’ and ‘everything’ taken ‘off him including his farm and his children’. In a bid to save face, it was allegedly agreed the FWA’s leading spokesman would ‘place the arms in plastic bags and throw them in the lake’. In return for doing so, despite Evans not knowing ‘anything’ about the blast, he was allegedly assured the Free Wales Army would not be ‘charged’ or considered ‘responsible’ for the explosion. It was, Coslett informed his friend and co-conspirator: ‘a silly thing to do’; the authorities, he continued gravely, would ‘be coming one morning to arrest’ them ‘all’. Quietly, Evans responded that he was aware of the likely outcome of his action. They now had, Coslett added, ‘all the evidence to commit us to trial’. The decision by Cayo Evans to undertake this strategic course, did not cause ill-feeling between them, but Evans ‘shouldn’t have done it’. On the other hand, by doing so, Coslett declared, it ensured the group’s arrest and its ‘place in history’. The issue of a ‘deal’ was later to play a pivotal role in the trial of the FWA, with Jock Wilson dismissing out of hand Coslett’s claim he ‘went back on his word’.\textsuperscript{251}

Unsurprisingly, the suggestion of plea bargaining is rejected as fanciful by former Shrewsbury Unit figure, John Owen Evans. Present when Cayo Evans was questioned, the ‘story’ had evolved, he believed, because ‘a day or two’ following Evans’ interview, ‘a telephone call was received stating if we looked in a certain lake we would find the arms’. However, John Evans added, ‘there was no ‘deal as such; because that implies you give something in return, like not to prosecute’. The location of the weapons was of obvious importance, but officers were unaware who ‘made the call’. There were, the former detective thought, ‘two or three others who knew where the arms were, so any one of them might have’. It was possible Cayo

\textsuperscript{250} The Times, 13 September 1968; also, WM, 13 September 1968. The weapons included: a Sten sub-machine gun, a Mauser Parabellum machine pistol, a Service-type .38 revolver, plus 31 rounds of ammunition.

\textsuperscript{251} Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000; also, 10 March 2001. Allegedly dubbed by Cayo Evans and Jock Wilson, Operation Arthur, Evans had thrown ‘the weapons in the lake as Arthur threw his sword in the lake’. It was, Coslett believed, ‘the Celtic way’.
Evans had instructed one such confidante to do so. As the call was also made from a kiosk, it was impossible to establish the identity of the person responsible. It was likely it had been declared ‘anonymous’ within police records.

In answer to the claim that Cayo Evans was subjected to a degree of ‘pressure’ when questioned, John Owen Evans was again disparaging. It was well established in police circles, Evans declared, ‘that Cayo and Denis Coslett would make up stories afterwards, bravado that sort of thing, about how they’d been treated’. Regarding the interview following the Pembrey explosion, Cayo had been ‘interviewed as any other criminal would be interviewed’. As serving officers, it was their duty to ask:

“where are the arms?” It is possible Jock Wilson said: “come on now Cayo, you’ve had a good run; stop now before someone gets hurt or killed”. But there would be no point in leaning too heavily on a suspect, because if you made ‘threats’, you could not produce the evidence.

It was essential to the inquiry, Evans continued, ‘to recover evidence in a fair way’. Photographs of the weapons had been included in the Sunday Express article just weeks before. Despite his initially denying the group possessed weaponry, during his interview with investigating officers, Cayo Evans had been shown these photographs. The fact ‘we located the arms then became evidence’, Evans explained, although, he could not recall if it was ultimately ‘proved the arms did belong to the Free Wales Army’.252

Subsequently embroiled in the incident was Lyn Ebenezer. The age-old Anglo/Norman policy of ‘divide and rule’ was alive and well, as police, Ebenezer maintained, in an attempt to fragment opinion and undermine trust, circulated rumours that he notified officers of the weapons whereabouts. Knowing ‘full well that Cayo had done it’, he did not give ‘a damn’.253 Yet, if some sympathized with Cayo Evans’ unenviable position, to others, FWA claims of an apparent Quid Pro Quo ‘deal’ with Jock Wilson, simply exemplified the group’s naive failure to grasp the full implications of its actions and to understand how the machinations of state policing functioned. Interestingly however, it was not only those sympathetic to the FWA who alleged shadowy compromises, as the Sunday Telegraph reported a ‘secret

252 Telephone interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 23 March 2006. ‘I don’t know if it was Cayo who telephoned to say about the arms. I don’t think it was’, Evans remarked. One photograph in the Sunday Express article featured a tree J. O. Evans recognized as being at Strata Florida. It was this which ensured the link.

253 Interview between WT & Lyn Ebenezer, 18 June 2006. He too believed ‘Wilson stitched them up’. Cayo Evans later claimed Jock Wilson’s exact words were: ‘if you throw the guns in the lake we won’t
deal’ was reached.\textsuperscript{254} It was a development in the investigation into Welsh militanism, which John Owen Evans later regarded with unease. This was because all subsequent suggestions of ‘a deal’ and speculation of ‘a fix’ abounded, due to the establishment of the Shrewsbury unit and Jock Wilson’s secondment and involvement in the inquiry. On reflection, John Owen Evans surmised, ‘it might have been better if the local force had taken it on’.\textsuperscript{255}

Also apparently in the dark as to the precise chain of events was the FWA’s Swansea commandant, Vivian Davies. In an interview with BBC Radio Wales, the impetuous Davies announced an ‘enquiry’ would be held to determine the identity of the person responsible for ‘giving up’, the movement’s arms. If found guilty, he would be ‘brought to Justice’ and dealt with accordingly. As to the degree of disciplinary action to be employed, it would, Davies added solemnly be ‘instant death’. Furthermore, this threat extended to ‘all members’ of the group, irrespective of seniority.\textsuperscript{256}

Asked to throw light on his father’s actions, Rhodri Evans declared it possible that Cayo was ‘frightened; scared what they (authorities) might do. He always said he threw them in the lake to show their strength. That such was the quantity they possessed, ‘they could throw that lot of old stuff away’. Nevertheless, his father’s interest in guns had perhaps been a factor. He liked to ‘do them up’ Rhodri Evans disclosed. ‘It was a hobby he had’.\textsuperscript{257} It was an interest which soon caught the eye of roving detective John Owen Evans. A regular visitor to Gian Denys, ‘just to have a little chat about how the army was progressing’, John Owen Evans also revealed that Cayo Evans enjoyed repairing and firing ‘starting pistols, just to see the smoke go up’. It was a fascination which led the police officer to deduce that ‘in many ways’, Cayo Evans possessed ‘a lower mental age’ than his 31 years might suggest.\textsuperscript{258} As for his

\textsuperscript{254} \textit{Sunday Telegraph}, 29 September 1968.
\textsuperscript{255} Interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 19 February 2000. Intimating that Welsh police had discounted a link between the blast and the FWA, regional officers, Evans added, ‘had spoken to these people (C. Evans and D. Coslett etc) before’. Yet, the Shrewsbury unit’s involvement enabled ‘people to jump to conclusions’.
\textsuperscript{257} Interview between WT & Rhodri Evans, 28 February 2006.
thoughts on the matter, interviewed shortly before his death, Cayo Evans comically declared the weapons to be ‘so old, any museum would have been glad of them’. However, the calibre and potency of the arms suggests something more serious. Certainly, events in Northern Ireland at this juncture may provide an explanation. On 21 September 1968, the *Belfast Telegraph* published a report that arms stolen from depots in the Irish Republic were smuggled into Wales. Moreover, two recent bank raids in Eire were also undertaken to finance the FWA. Later commenting that ‘links’ between the two groups did exist and the IRA was ‘very generous’, Denis Coslett nonetheless did not ‘think’ this generosity extended to arms and weaponry, but had rather taken the form of financial support.

During the war, RAF Pembrey played an important role as a fighter station. By 1968, it was used for target and dive-bombing practice by trainer aircraft from RAF Chivenor in Devon. In recent years, it was the focus of considerable consternation from local farmers and the townspeople of Kidwelly, owing to the number of ‘low flying’ exercises. This, officers soon determined - irrespective of the arms cache discovered in Maesllyn - held the secret for the militant action. In 2000, Denis Coslett revealed the RAF was warned it ‘would have a problem to think about’ unless the low-flying exercises were halted. The ‘hearing of children was being affected’; the elderly ‘were frightened’ and ‘cattle were aborting’ due to the sudden, piercing noise. Yet, despite an initial admission that ‘a bomb was put there’

260 *Belfast Telegraph*, 21 September 1968. The article was entitled *Special Branch investigates IRA/FWA liaison*. Cathal Goulding, the Official IRA chief of staff, was reported as having given the FWA the guns held in store by the IRA. In May 1969, as passions threatened to ignite a powder keg in Northern Ireland, IRA leaders in Belfast visited Dublin to seek from the army council ‘large supplies of arms without delay’. The request was not granted. The IRA was discovered to be almost demilitarized. This was due to most of its weapons having been sold to Welsh nationalists and a chronic lack of funds. Tim Pat Coogan, *I.R.A.* (London, 1993), p.333.
261 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000; also, 10 March 2001 and, 21 November 2003. In response to whether the claim of activist collusion had substance, Denis Coslett chuckled and while slightly shaking his head and shrugging his shoulders declared, ‘No...I don't think so...I don't know’. Also, *FWA: Ir Gad*, Zenana Production. Screened S4C, 1999. ‘The IRA spread the rumour it had armed the FWA, but whether it was started by the ‘Officials’ or the ‘Provos’, not to mention why, is anyone’s guess’. Interview between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 23 October 2010.
262 *The Times*, 11 September 1968; also, *WM*, 12 September 1968. Police considered ‘a local man with a grudge against low-flying jets’ responsible. Having initially included the midlands and the west country, police soon concentrated on the immediate west Wales area. Owing, Jock Wilson announced, to the indication the saboteurs had ‘considerable local knowledge’. *WM*, 11 September 1968. Yet, in 2004, resident Stella O’Brien claimed investigating officers were informed townspeople harboured no animosity for the exercises. This, despite a plane having crashed near Kidwelly twelve months before the explosion. TNA, AIR 2/18360. Local reactions to RAF use of Pembrey Range. 1968 - 1971.
and the Royal Air Force was contacted informing it of such, Coslett later amended his statement, conceding the FWA ultimatum was not acted upon. Asked if he might illuminate the matter, John Jenkins categorically denied MAC’s involvement. Furthermore, during its campaign of militant action, the movement used gelignite, not gun-powder. Frederick Alders was deeply disturbed by the explosion at RAF Pembrey. On arriving at Jenkins’ home to formally renounce all further involvement in the militant campaign, Alders was placated by Jenkins and assured it was ‘not one’ of their ‘crowd’. What was more, MAC activists, Jenkins insisted, were ‘expert’ and rigorously ensured no innocent party suffered physical harm.

However, speaking in 2009 about the Pembrey blast, Gethin ap Iestyn was more circumspect. Having denied any personal involvement, he nonetheless believed it an operation foolhardily undertaken by rogue nationalists. Moreover, the perpetrators ‘made a stupid mistake’. It was not a view shared by the FWA’s leading apologist, R. O. F. Wynne of Garthewin Hall. During an interview on the BBC’s late-evening television programme 24 Hours, Wynne was asked to comment on whom he believed responsible. While no prosecutions had been achieved concerning the explosions for some three years, he declared, to intimate a group’s responsibility was prejudicial. Nevertheless, ‘history’ suggested a subject people who attempted to attain their ‘rightful status’ through ‘constitutional methods’ alone ‘failed in their endeavours’. It was necessary to ‘throw half a brick at John Bull’s top hat’ before he took ‘the least notice’. As to whether he was prepared to plant a bomb for Wales, he was, R. O. F. Wynne believed, ‘too old for that sort of thing’. If however he felt it ‘his duty’, he would have ‘to pull up’ his ‘socks and do something’.

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263 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000.
264 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 10 March 2001. Efforts to receive the official account of the blast were curtailed in 2009, when an attempt to invoke the Freedom of Information Act proved unsuccessful. So too did contact with the National Archives, Ministry of Defence and Dyfed Powys Police, which maintained a retention policy of ‘seven years’ existed with regard ‘incidents’. Correspondence from Heather Hughes, Head of Data Protection, Dyfed Powys Police to WT, dated, 6 May 2009. The application also failed to meet Section 7 of the D. P. Act, which allowed ‘the release of personal data of which that individual is the data subject’. The National Archives and Ministry of Defence claimed not to have the official account.
266 TNA, ASSI 84/577. Undated witness statement by Frederick Ernest Alders.
267 Interview between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 19 May 2009. Denis Coslett also believed ‘nationalists’ responsible. There was one thing for sure, he added, he ‘didn’t do it’, nor ‘give the command to do it’. However, he was not prepared ‘to say any more’. Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000.
268 24 Hours, BBC Production. Screened 10 September 1968; also, CT, 13 September 1968.
Despite the overwhelming denouncement which followed Wynne’s remarks, not all joined increasing calls for his expulsion from Plaid Cymru. On being informed of Wynne’s comments, Saunders Lewis wrote congratulating him on his ‘courageous speech’. In the October edition of Barn, outraged at the decision of the party hierarchy not to formally oppose the investiture, Lewis went further still. Plaid Cymru’s failure to prevent Tryweryn and Clywedog, wrested solely at the door of the party leaders’ pacifism. Furthermore, its parliamentary ‘pointlessness’ and reverence for ‘England’s constitution’ would ensure Plaid Cymru’s quiescent demise. To inform the Welsh electorate that independence could be achieved through ‘painless voting’ was self-deceptive and mendacious. You could not, Lewis added mischievously, ‘make an omelette without breaking eggs’. Even for Saunders Lewis, it was remarkably provocative. Yet, there was worse to come. ‘The only way forward’, he declared portentously, ‘was to make the governance of Wales too expensive and too liable to provoke anger and mockery across the world’. It was a summation comprehensively embraced by republican militants across the Irish Sea. Not surprisingly, for the remarks, Saunders Lewis was roundly condemned by Plaid Cymru, but toasted by the Cayo Evans as ‘the greatest man alive in Wales’.

Having established the explosion at Pembrey was caused by black gunpowder and not ‘eight sticks of gelignite’ as initially thought, the investigation into the blast took a dramatic and unexpected turn when a cache of identical material was discovered in the chimney flute of a derelict house in Bynea (near Llanelli).

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269 WM, 12 September 1968; also, LDP, 12 September 1968, p.1. Having asked for a transcript of the interview, the Plaid Cymru leadership later decided to take no action.


271 Y Cymro, 26 September 1968. The resolution was ‘left on the table’ in order to avoid tension and so that Gwynfor Evans could ‘claim party unity’. For the party’s reasons, see also, Gwynfor Evans, For the Sake of Wales (Cardiff, 2001), p.194.


273 WM, 10 October 1968. Lewis had no ‘active part in practical politics for over a quarter of a century’, stated Edward Millward; also, WM, 7 November 1968. Lewis should ‘not look to England as an enemy’, declared Dr. Gareth Evans.

274 Film entitled Welsh Nationalism. Compiled September 1968. Exhibit 81. Trial of the FWA and anti-investiture campaigners. Lewis, added Evans, was ‘worthy of a better country and a prouder people’.

275 CT, 13 September 1968; also, WM, 12 September 1968. The error had resulted in the explosive black powder being siphoned into eight paper tubes, in preparation for the assault.
Weighing between ‘one and two pounds’, it was placed in several small cloth bags and wrapped in ten of the fourteen pages of a copy of the *Western Mail*, dated 5 September. In a bid to seek shelter, a tramp entered the house and was about to light a fire, when he noticed the package protruding. As he groped inside the flute, the bags fell into the grate.²⁷⁶ It was soon determined the copy of the *Western Mail* was among ‘one of the first 10,000 copies of the West Edition’; this was established, owing to a slight difference in ink intensity. Police immediately contacted all newsagents in the area which received the paper, hoping a lead might be provided.²⁷⁷ It was to no avail. Later, as ‘a high level security conference was held in north Wales’,²⁷⁸ the gunpowder was traced to explosive materials produced at a Royal Ordnance Factory, which, until its closure four years earlier, had been sighted two miles from the RAF station at Pembrey.²⁷⁹

Despite this apparent breakthrough, the perpetrators remain unknown. The failure of the authorities to apprehend those responsible has led to much conjecture. RAF Pembrey was in comparative proximity to the home of at least one prominent peripheral nationalist figure. Nonetheless, it remains possible that a disgruntled local or rogue militant was responsible. It has also been suggested that there existed an internal RAF feud, with Denis Coslett citing the unsubstantiated claim that William Houghman was having an affair with a colleague’s wife.²⁸⁰ The identity of the tramp who discovered the gunpowder in Bynea is un-established, as is his apparent pattern of behaviour. A number of former militants allege that the device might have been planted by the security services at the behest of the British state, both to ensure the arrest of the FWA and to discredit the wider nationalist community before the investiture.²⁸¹ Asked whether he believed intelligence agents might deploy such a

²⁷⁶ *Carmarthen Journal*, 20 September 1968; also, *WM*, 18 September 1968. The house near Loughor Bridge had been empty for six weeks. Following the discovery, it was visited by Jock Wilson. Had the package ignited, the consequences, a police spokesman remarked, would have been ‘fatal’.
²⁷⁷ *WM*, 19 September 1968.
²⁷⁸ *WM*, 26 September 1968. More than 5,000 people were interviewed regarding the Pembrey explosion. *CJ*, 11 October 1968.
²⁷⁹ *CJ*, 27 September 1968; also, *WM*, 25 September 1968. At the height of its operation, 3,350 were employed at the Ordnance Factory. Police believe a former employee smuggled out the materials before its closure. *CJ*, 4 October 1968, p.1. A further cache of the explosive powder was later discovered at the disused factory. *WM*, 1 October 1968.
²⁸⁰ Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000.
²⁸¹ Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000; also, 10 March 2001; also Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004. Pembrey was close to the Llanelli home of known nationalist and Abergwesyn attendee, Dai Bonar Thomas. In a search at his home, following his arrest, police discovered a timing device. Thomas was never charged with its possession.
strategy, a retired former senior police officer candidly declared he did not know.\textsuperscript{282} Once instrumental in the search for the saboteurs, John Owen Evans also veraciously claimed not to ‘think so’. Moreover, there was ‘no contact’, Evans maintained, ‘with MI5 as far as ‘Shrewsbury’ was concerned’.\textsuperscript{283} Yet, if intelligence operatives were responsible, as a number of former militants suggest,\textsuperscript{284} why did they not use gelignite? It would have heightened, rather than diminished, a possible connection to Welsh activism. It was, after all, well established by September 1968, that gelignite was the bombers ‘preferred’ choice of explosive material.

Despite the tantalizing supposition, the episode did not end there. In the weeks after the explosion at RAF Pembrey, Gwynfor Evans twice received correspondence from a vicar in the Midlands alleging the guilt of a parishioner. Unable to remain silent at the unjust manner with which the Welsh nationalist fraternity was being tarnished for the incident, the vicar felt compelled to contact the president of Plaid Cymru to inform him that a cadet, both known for being obsessively interested in explosions and fires - and crucially stationed at the RAF station at the time of the blast - was now an in-patient at an RAF psychiatric facility.\textsuperscript{285} Yet, would the unnamed English airman - if only stationed at the airbase for four days prior to the blast - have acquired such a degree of local knowledge?

Despite another potential breakthrough in the enquiry, efforts undertaken by Gwynfor Evans to raise the issue in parliament with the Secretary of State for Wales proved fruitless. Without compelling proof, George Thomas comfortably countered any possible link. What is more, he roundly condemned the suggestion as ‘the monstrous slur of an innocent man’.\textsuperscript{286} Possibly so, but nationalist claims of a ‘done deal’ may have been averted, had George Thomas responded favourably to Gwynfor Evans’ request to throw light ‘on the interrogation’ of the cadet by police. Such speculation was hardly undermined, when contacted by Evans and invited to his Llangadog home to discuss the matter further, Jock Wilson - having looked at the

\textsuperscript{282} Anonymous interview with WT, December 2008.
\textsuperscript{283} Telephone interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 10 August 2009. ‘I’ve no information of that’, stated J. O. Evans.
\textsuperscript{284} Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 25 March 2004; also with John Jenkins, 19 October 2007 & 20 November 2008; also, with Glyn Rowlands, 20 March 2004
\textsuperscript{285} Correspondence between WT & Gwynfor Evans, 20 August 2003. The length of time the unnamed cadet was at Pembrey, was also relayed to Gwynfor Evans by the cleric.
\textsuperscript{286} Hansard Vol’ 774. Columns, 706 -707. 28 November 1968.
letter - conceded mysteriously to knowing 'all about it'.\textsuperscript{287} Whatever the truth, despite Jock Wilson’s beguiling, if terse admission, no one has yet been convicted, let alone tried, for the Pembrey blast. It remains, in common with many of the explosions which characterized this period in the nation’s past, an unresolved enigma.

Nevertheless, the forces required to obliterate the FWA were assembling. Notified of the \textit{Sunday Telegraph} article, an increasingly concerned Harold Wilson - having earlier heeded advice that a prosecution might martyrize the group - contacted the Director of Public Prosecutions, demanding to know why action under the 1936 Public Order Act, which proscribed the wearing of uniforms and the carrying of firearms, had not been taken.\textsuperscript{288} Days later, the final piece in the judicial jigsaw was provided with the discovery of the weapons in Maesllyn. Finally, the authorities had all it required to make a \textit{prima facie} case against the Free Wales Army.

\textbf{Speculation emerges that the state has ‘a card up its sleeve’}

Despite the best efforts of the police, those responsible for yet another explosion had escaped detection. Consequently, members of the FWA became the focus of almost unprecedented police surveillance. Speaking in 2000, Denis Coslett remained convinced that officers assigned to the group ‘loved it’. Both the ‘overtime’ and the ‘prestige’ of monitoring individuals having proved seductive. Nonetheless, it was Detective Chief Inspector, John Owen Evans, the FWA regarded as its nemesis.\textsuperscript{289} Assigned to arrest Denis Coslett in September 1968, for firearms offences unconnected with the weapons discovered in Maesllyn, Coslett refused to comply until adorned in the uniform of the Free Wales Army.\textsuperscript{290} On returning resplendent to the living room, Coslett observed Evans ‘hunting through’ Avril Coslett’s handbag. With all the force he was renowned for, Coslett punched John Owen Evans in the face. Remarkably, no action was taken against the FWA man.\textsuperscript{291}

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\item \textsuperscript{287} Correspondence between WT & Gwynfor Evans, 20 August 2003.
\item \textsuperscript{288} TNA, DPP/4455. E. Brampton (F2, Home Office Police Division) to J. F. Claxton, Department of the Director of Public Prosecutions. Letter dated, 10 September 1968. On 7 October 1968, Gwynfor Evans wrote to Home Secretary, James Callaghan, also calling for the FWA to be proscribed. Rhys Evans, \textit{Portrait of a Patriot} (Talybont, 2008), p.296.
\item \textsuperscript{289} Interview between WT & Denis Colsett, 14 December 2000. Further claims by D. Coslett that three officers were dismissed for providing the FWA ‘information’ was refuted by J. O. Evans. A small number of officers were ‘reprimanded for fiddling their expenses’, he retorted. Interview with WT, 19 February 2001.
\item \textsuperscript{290} Interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 19 February 2001.
\item \textsuperscript{291} Interview between WT & Denis Colsett, 14 December 2000; also telephone interview between WT
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1968, Denis Coslett, the ‘hot-headed, eccentric extremist’, was sentenced to three months imprisonment, on being found guilty of ‘uttering a forged document and making a false statement for the purpose of obtaining a firearm certificate’. Yet, of somewhat added surprise when considering the political climate, magistrates declared the sentence ‘to run concurrently’ and be ‘suspended for two years’. It was the second occasion in which Coslett found himself in the dock in 1968. He was not alone. In July, Andrew John Morgan, known affectionately as the gorilla and Denis Coslett’s ‘bodyguard’, was fined £50 and given a three months suspended prison sentence on charges relating to the illegal possession of a firearm.

Following the announcement the FWA was now part of a Celtic conspiracy, and the group’s notable appearance in Sweden’s leading newspaper Dagens Nyheter, the ‘cat and mouse’ game with the authorities continued. In the October/November edition of Y Ffrynt, the Patriotic Front’s mouthpiece publication, accusations of police aggression toward Denis Coslett and fellow ‘combatant’ Rhobert ap Steffan were alleged. In 2002, Coslett responded to the charge that police officers physically assaulted him in custody, by conceding with a wry smile the experience had not been ‘too bad’; while furthermore, on reflection, he ‘probably asked for it’. Whatever the truth, having been arrested on 9 May for assaulting a police officer, Coslett was later fined £25. A charge of wilfully damaging a police station window was dropped.

In 2009, Rhobert ap Steffan described an altogether more invidious
encounter. Arrested in Aberystwyth, not for urinating in public as the article in *Y Ffrynt* suggests, but for allegedly tipping sand into the petrol tank of a police car, ap Steffan was arrested at his lodgings and escorted to the station. There, police claimed a sample of sand was discovered beneath his finger nails. Having denied all responsibility for the offence, ap Steffan continues to utterly refute this. What ap Steffan claims next transpired, cannot be corroborated. Yet, he vehemently maintains to have been ‘beaten black and blue’ during a ‘sustained beating’. Quick to establish ‘local Aber’ Bobbys were not responsible, but rather detectives unknown to him; they were, ap Steffan added incongruously ‘also drunk’.

When the case came to trial, Rhobert ap Steffan produced photographs of his injuries. The bruises were dismissed by legal council for the police as merely ‘mascara’. Called to give evidence on ap Steffan’s behalf was Cayo Evans. He and ap Steffan were together when the alleged offence occurred. Launching into a ‘political speech’ from the witness box, Evans’ attention was caught by a mirror positioned to his flank. Unable to resist the temptation of ‘looking at himself’, Evans, ‘ever the showman’, with ‘one finger in his belt and another held aloft’, produced a ‘grandstand’ performance. ‘Despite the seriousness of it all’, it was, ap Steffan added, ‘very funny’. Nonetheless, it cut no ice. Found guilty, magistrates fined Rhobert ap Steffan for the offence. No charge was brought against the officers.²⁹⁹ Rhobert ap Steffan received some good news that Autumn. At the end of October, confronted by the ‘menacing’ rise of nationalism throughout the UK, the Wilson cabinet appointed a Royal Commission on the Constitution.³⁰⁰

Despite the claim that the government took the decision to appoint the Commission, owing to the applied pressure from the nationalist movement,³⁰¹ on 2 November, the Patriotic Front terminated its affiliation with the Free Wales Army. It did so in response to the failure of the group to appoint a democratically elected governing body, the on-going manner with which unnamed members courted self-promotion and publicity and as a means to condemn those who entered into a pact regarding the discovery of the group’s arms.³⁰² Once the FWA had stood shoulder to

²⁹⁹ Telephone interview between WT & Rhobert ap Steffan, 9 August 2009.
³⁰¹ Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000.
³⁰² Gethin ap Iestyn private papers. The letter, dated 2 November 1968 from Toni Lewis and addressed to Cayo Evans, declared no evidence of the ultimatum issued three months earlier, whereby
shoulder; it was now riddled with division and enmity. Derided as ‘in it for themselves’ Denis Coslett and Cayo Evans took the brunt of the disdain. ‘It was all right for him’, one former Llanelli member remarked of Evans in 2006, ‘up there in his big house; how do you think the rest of us lived’.303

On 14 December, following the annual Cilmery rally, Gethin ap Iestyn informed a BBC news team that Welsh persons who accepted an honour or award for organizing the investiture, would ‘automatically receive the death penalty’ when the Patriotic Front was elected to government.304 Later asked if the threat had substance, ap Iestyn remarked he was merely ‘upping the ante’; just saying ‘anything and everything off the top’ of his head. He and others opposed to the investiture ‘were saying all sorts of atrocious things…just to raise the temperature’.305 That evening, as marchers carrying flaming torches burned a Union Jack outside Builth police station, Cayo Evans was arrested for allegedly assaulting an officer.306 In court on 14 January, despite having ‘gone berserk’ when ‘attacking’ a detective sergeant - a conviction of which routinely carried a term of imprisonment - Cayo Evans was sentenced to four months in prison suspended for two years.307 For giving evidence on his behalf, Cayo Evans gave Toni Lewis ‘a mandolin’. It was, Lewis recalled, a typical act of generosity, if a little disproportionate.308 Despite the apparent fortunate outcome however, the decision of the court was greeted with a certain degree of incredulity, as many began to wonder if the authorities had bigger ‘fish to fry’. Did they want Evans, Denis Coslett and other leading figures amid the FWA charged and tried together, in order, if - or when - convicted, to send a resounding signal the state had crushed the collective Free Wales Army? It is a suggestion given added credence by FWA member Glyn Rowlands, who claimed a police officer informed him in the weeks before his arrest - despite his customary habit of driving when ‘probably’ over the legal alcohol limit - they wanted

volunteers would elect a governing body, had been adhered to. It is believed that Lewis was referring to Denis Coslett and Vivian Davies.

303 Anonymous interview with WT, October 2006.
305 Interview between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 19 May 2009. It was the third anti-investiture rally that Autumn, following a march and demonstration in Caernarfon 16 November and Cardiff 30 November.
306 WM, 16 December 1968. The 40 protestors allegedly chanted Sieg Heil, Nazi’s and Gestapo.
307 WM, 15 January 1969. Cayo Evans, it was claimed, accused officers of being ‘traitors’.
308 Interview between WT & Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004. 
him ‘for something bigger’.\textsuperscript{309} It was all too much for Glyn Rowlands. The day following Evans’ arrest at the Cilmery rally, in a letter to President Tony Lewis, Rowlands officially resigned his post as General Secretary of the Patriotic Front.\textsuperscript{310}

**MAC targets the pipeline at West Hagley**

It also proved an eventful end to 1968 for Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru. On 2 December, at 1.48 a.m., a MAC active unit based in mid-Wales sabotaged the water pipeline from Cwm Elan to Birmingham at West Hagley in Worcestershire.\textsuperscript{311} The four man unit, based in the Newtown/Llandrindod area, drove to the site; on arrival, two carried out the attack. When later discussing the logistics of the operation, John Jenkins stated those directly involved in planting the device ‘were dropped off and collected ten minutes later’. A ‘parked, waiting car in a lonely lane’ he added, would invariably ‘attract interest’ and so it was precipitately agreed the car would return to a designated ‘place at ten minute intervals’. The attackers emerged from behind ‘a fence or hedge’, got in and left. Knowledge of this adopted strategy was passed to cell members, by the cell leader, via Jenkins. The delivery of the device had not run so smoothly. *En route* to mid Wales, with ‘sixty pounds of explosives under the driver’s seat’, Jenkins’ car had a puncture. At such moments, he declared, in a bid to appear unduly troubled, it was necessary ‘to be a bit of an actor’ and retain a façade of normality. It was a ‘performance’ Jenkins was called upon to exercise, when later approached to ‘sign over dental mirrors to military police’. On rods, they enabled the ‘observer to look around corners’ without disturbing the mechanism. Following an inconspicuous attempt to discover their purpose, Jenkins was sententiously informed the matter was ‘very hush-hush’. With capacious irony, Jenkins soon deduced the mirrors were acquisitioned to ascertain the structure of any unexploded device he had assembled.\textsuperscript{312}

\textsuperscript{309} Interview between WT & Glyn Rowlands, 22 March 2004. Rowlands claimed the encounter, whereby he asked why he was never stopped, occurred in a pub after crossing the border one Sunday from ‘dry’ Meirionnydd to ‘wet’ Powys.

\textsuperscript{310} Trial of FWA and anti-investiture campaigners. Exhibit, 99. Denis Coslett private papers.

\textsuperscript{311} *WM*, 3 December 1968. The explosion, at a point where the pipelines cross the Kidderminster to Stourbridge railway line, fractured two of the four pipes. No one was injured. The resulting damage caused water capacity to Birmingham to fall by a 1/3. The week before, police called off a twice-nightly patrol of the site. The attack was undertaken as Prince Charles was in Wales to chair the inaugural meeting of the Countryside Committee for Wales.

\textsuperscript{312} Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 10 April 2009; also, interview between WT & John Jenkins, 25 March 2004. When the red caps left, Jenkins ‘started to assemble some more’.
It was decided to target the pipeline at West Hagley, Jenkins revealed, both to highlight the pipeline issue and to ensure the authorities believed Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru was an all-Wales movement; comprised of units throughout the nation.\textsuperscript{313} Just how many comprised MAC membership at this juncture, was later given consideration by Owain Williams. He believed - in terms of those actively involved in the militant campaign - ‘about twelve’.\textsuperscript{314} Yet, it is a figure somewhat refuted by John Jenkins, who, while refusing to be pinned down, confirmed a higher figure was accurate. As sole provider of the necessary weaponry, the potential difficulty of delivering the devices, was circumvented by Jenkins’ position of inspector of supplies and performance in Western Command. Crucially, Jenkins later explained, it always ensured a reason for being in a particular location. Moreover, MAC’s operational-director timed these visits with prior calculation, making ‘damn sure’ his presence could be explained.\textsuperscript{315}

The head of West Mercia CID claimed the attack was undertaken by the ‘lunatic element’ of Welsh nationalists from the English/Welsh border; an accusation slammed by Plaid Cymru as unfounded ‘political assassination’. Nonetheless, the police commended the perpetrators for the ‘expert’ manner in which the operation was achieved: both with regard the quantity of explosives deployed and the ‘effective’ positioning of the device.\textsuperscript{316} In parliament, the House united to ‘deplore’ the ‘outrageous’ incident.\textsuperscript{317} Days later, as police anxiously appealed for ‘two men seen a few hours’ before the blast ‘near a grey or green mini-van’ parked in a lay-by some 400 yards from the scene, intelligence reports indicated another attack along the supply route was imminent.\textsuperscript{318} It was not forthcoming, but the announcement more

\textsuperscript{313} Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 25 March 2004; also, 19 October, 2007; also, 20 November 2008. The location was suggested and reconnoitered by the mid-Wales MAC unit; Jenkins then sanctioned the attack. A peripheral member of the mid-Wales MAC unit was Peter Barnes. He was, Jenkins alleged, ‘an advisor, not an activist...Peter moved in circles useful to us, like the police. Any information received he then fed back to me’.

\textsuperscript{314} Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004.

\textsuperscript{315} Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 25 March 2004; also, 19 October 2007; also, 20 November 2008. Jenkins stated the figure of MAC ‘active’ members was ‘not much higher’ than Williams’ suggestion.

\textsuperscript{316} WM, 3 December 1968. Army Disposal Technician, Major Clifton Jefferies discerned that ‘just enough’ explosives were used.

\textsuperscript{317} Hansard, HC Deb, 2 December 1968, vol.774, cc 1035-8.

\textsuperscript{318} WM, 4 December 1968. Birmingham City Council was informed by Dr. Louis Glass, chair of the city’s Water Committee, that another explosion was expected ‘tonight or tomorrow night’. John Roberts claimed Jenkins planned three extensive and simultaneous explosions. TNA, ASSI 84/577, witness statement by J. R. L. Roberts, 5 December 1969. ‘During 1968’, Ann Woodgate later informed police officers, F. E. Alders ‘took John Jenkins to South Wales in his mini van’. TNA, ASSI 84/577,
than revealed the state of high tension which now existed.

Conclusion

1968 was a milestone in the militant campaign in Wales. What had been considered and largely dismissed as a parochial and bewildering irritation became a cause of national alarm as a result of the impending royal investiture of Prince Charles. If the authorities were in any doubt as to the veracity of the MAC offensive, it was dispelled by the interview three leading figures within the movement gave to three journalists in May that year. The Welsh militant campaign, all now reasoned, was a serious business. The establishment of the Shrewsbury unit to apprehend the saboteurs was the result.

If it appeared that the tide had turned against the insurgents, Owain Williams' acquittal at Caernarfon Assizes, satisfied neutral observers that the letter of the law was still being adhered to, despite increasing calls that the state was prepared to adopt fair means or foul to ensure the success of the investiture; and more succinctly, the safety of the Royals. Just how far the British state was prepared to go however, was about to be revealed.

witness statement by Ann Woodgate, dated 15 December 1969; also TNA, ASSI 84/577, witness statement by John Roberts, dated 15 December 1969, in which he claimed two late night visitors who implored him to undertake militant activity departed in a 'grey mini van'.
Chapter 5

‘A menace to everyone’.

MAC and the Investiture

Introduction

This chapter addresses the period from January 1969 to April 1970. It highlights the efforts of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru to initially prevent and subsequently undermine the royal investiture; the efforts of the security forces to ensure the success of the ceremony; and the factors which led to the arrest, trial and sentencing of the leading members of both the Free Wales Army and Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru.

Despite the real and serious threat which Welsh militants posed to the 1969 royal investiture, there exists no analytical study which comprehensively addresses this factor. For example, in 2008, *Investiture: Royal Ceremony and National Identity in Wales, 1911 – 1969*, by John S. Ellis, was published. Although a study which extensively focuses upon each state occasion, it also fails to make substantive analytical comment with regard the threat to the success of the subsequent ceremony, as represented by Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru and to a lesser extent the Free Wales Army. Nonetheless, it should be noted that Ellis does consider each group and other subordinate organisations to some notable degree. However, where Ellis does consider this threat, he employs no oral testimony and is often guilty of supposition and factual inaccuracy.¹ For example, he claims that on the eve of the investiture, the Royal Train halted ‘under armed guard at a secret destination near Abergele’.

1. J. S. Ellis, *Investiture: Royal Ceremony and National Identity in Wales, 1911 – 1969* (Cardiff, 2008), pp.209, 210, 211, 212, 225, 235, 236, 240. Ellis erroneously claims that while in the army, John Jenkins was trained in explosives; that MAC carried out the failed Crossgates action in March 1967; that the Vymwy protest was in September 1967; that Cayo Evans founded the FWA and attended the opening of Llyn Celyn with his two cousins; that Owain Williams was arrested in September 1968; that a bomb was discovered on the A5 as Prince Charles journeyed to Caernarfon; and that the day after the investiture and crucially minutes prior to the prince passing over, a biscuit tin packed with explosives was discovered beneath a bridge near Betws-y-Coed. Yet, perhaps Ellis’s most contentious appraisal, concerns Robert Trigg and the unattributed Cardiff explosions. His description that ‘all were...but a prelude to the plans being laid by the MAC for Caernarfon’, leaves the reader under the somewhat inaccurate assumption that these protests were undertaken by MAC.

2. Ibid. p.233. Ellis sources: TNA, PREM 13/2903, 14 April 1969, Home Secretary to Prime Minister;
However, archival evidence does not support this. John S. Ellis further states that ‘although reputedly members of a MAC cell, the bomb planted by Alwyn Jones and George Taylor was not among the three actions recognized by John Jenkins as official MAC operations during the Investiture’. Yet, this revelation contradicts all that John Jenkins has revealed about the protest, both in private and ‘on the record’. Nonetheless, in a wider sense, Ellis’s study does address the extent to which hostility for the ceremony - whether for reasons of financial extravagance or nationalist sentiment - was expressed.

**Both preparations and the security operation surrounding the investiture increase**

On 2 January 1969, in what was regarded as an attempt to amass incriminating evidence against the Free Wales Army, detectives led by Jock Wilson - the head of the police unit assembled in Shrewsbury to ensure the success of the investiture and the safety of the Royal party - raided FILMLINE studios near Covent Garden and removed documentary film evidence of the group undertaking ‘military’ manoeuvres. Entitled *Do Not Go* and directed by Israeli Gideon Haendler, it was shot mostly in the Black Mountains some weeks earlier. It was lavishly endowed with contrived scenes of pipeline explosions and some ten FWA stalking alongside a wall in emulation of a nocturnal guerrilla advance on the enemy. It later transpired the explosion - as performed by a furtive-looking and fatigue adorned Denis Coslett - was in fact achieved by igniting two cans of petrol. Nevertheless, the case against the group was gathering apace, as prominent figures were interviewed regarding various media appearances. One notable interview allegedly occurred between members of the ‘Shrewsbury squad’ and Gethin ap Iestyn. In 2008, ap Iestyn maintained he was...

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26 June, B. Cubbon to M. Halls; 27 June, J. F. Mayne to A. N. Halls; also, *The Sun*, 1 July 1969.

3 Ibid, p.234. Ellis also states that G. Taylor and A. Jones were killed by their own bomb apparently while transporting it to the railway line the Queen was due to arrive upon the following day. Moreover, ‘the Daily Mail repeated erroneous rumours that the Abergele men’ were ‘killed on their way to blow up a social security office’, p.286. Yet, the device activated while being placed at the bottom of the Social Security building. It did not detonate while being carried or at half body height.

4 Trial of FWA and anti-investiture campaigners. Exhibit, 89. Denis Coslett private papers. For refusing to show officers more than an eighth of the four hour film, G. Haendler alleged that Jock Wilson threatened to confiscate it, he also apparently instructed him not to sell it to TV companies.

5 *Western Mail*, 25 April 1969. Evidence of G. Haendler. To resemble a tommy-gun, one of the FWA ambushers allegedly carried a car-jack. To increase the visual impact, a shot-gun was placed on a mantelpiece and the book *Total Resistance* on the arm of a chair at Glyn Rowlands home as props.

threatened with electrocution at Bridgend police headquarters, as a means to ensure he put a halt to his anti-investiture activism. His interrogation comprised a ‘darkened room, a low lamp positioned to reveal half of Wilson’s face’, and a descending ‘electrical lead from the over-hanging light bulb cable’.7

It was not only Gethin ap Iestyn who received a shock that month, as Ann Woodgate allegedly ended both their twelve month engagement and terminated the three-year relationship with MAC insurgent Frederick Ernest Alders. She had, Woodgate later informed police, repeatedly implored Alders to end his involvement in the militant campaign, especially she added, ‘in the latter part of the courtship’.8 How Alders reacted to Woodgate’s decision to end their relationship is unrecorded, but whatever his immediate response, the extent of its impact on the life and the liberty of the covert Welsh militant was yet to be felt.

Despite the formation of the Shrewsbury Unit six months earlier, the ‘security position’ in Wales, PM Harold Wilson informed James Callaghan, the Home Secretary, still ‘gave cause for concern’. It was, he added, necessary to ‘advise the Queen that in the government’s opinion, the investiture ‘programme’ could ‘go forward without significant risk of any untoward interruption’. To substantiate the governments’ position, Callaghan was asked to provide assurances the protection of the prince, while at Aberystwyth, was being addressed; and that all ‘obstacles’ for ‘maintaining law and order in the principality’ had been removed.9 In a letter of reply, James Callaghan spelled out the increasing security position - but refused to be drawn. An assurance of ‘complete protection’ could not be ‘guaranteed’, Callaghan demurred, as the ‘most elaborate precautions’ would not ‘prevent a determined extremist’ from undertaking ‘some mischief’. Nevertheless, the endeavours of the Shrewsbury Unit, the Home Secretary added, were ‘undoubtedly of value’. Its position as a centrally-based intelligence organization had already paid dividends; with the ‘flow of intelligence’ it had provided Welsh chief constables.10

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7 Correspondence between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 26 January 2008. He did not ‘swallow’ the threat ‘for a moment’ and was, ap Iestyn conceded, ‘more worried about the heavies standing behind’ him ‘in the dark’. He was not physically assaulted, but informed he would ‘be taken care of’ and ‘rounded up before the investiture’. An officer who attended the ‘interrogation’, later informed ap Iestyn he was ‘embarrassed and uncomfortable’ throughout.

8 TNA, ASSI 84/577. Witness statement by Ann Woodgate, dated, 15 December 1969. She had ‘on several occasions, nearly every night…pleaded with him to wash his hands of the whole thing’.

9 TNA, PREM 13/2903. Memorandum M6A/69, from Harold Wilson to James Callaghan, 4 February 1969. Secretary of State for Wales, George Thomas, also received a copy.

10 TNA, PREM 13/2903. Letter from James Callaghan to Harold Wilson, 12 February 1969. Tracts of
Yet, whatever the value of the Shrewsbury unit to the investigation into Welsh militancy, only the Prime Minister's personal interjection brought the case against the Free Wales Army to a head. Having written to the Attorney General - following the explosion at RAF Pembrey - seeking an explanation as to why the 'scurrilous' FWA had not been brought to book for contravening the Public Order Act,\textsuperscript{11} Harold Wilson finally received the news he was waiting for. Against earlier fears such action would only martyrize those arrested, the Attorney General now 'decided a number of Welsh nationalists should be prosecuted for wearing uniforms and carrying arms; and in one or two cases, for possessing explosives'. The proceedings should 'in the least establish' that those in Wales who contravened the Act could 'not expect to go scot-free'. As for a time scale: arrests were 'expected in a few days'. It had also been decided that 'special surveillance' of known extremists would be undertaken during the investiture period. With regard co-ordination between various chief constables in Wales - through whose regions the royal party would travel - and other 'organizations concerned with security', the picture, James Callaghan opined, was 'satisfactory'. Nonetheless, a determined activist could strike at 'water pipelines, railways or roads at a considerable distance from Caernarvon'. Consequently, 'a survey of vulnerable points' had been 'drawn up by the Security Services' and distributed to all concerned 'agencies'.\textsuperscript{12}

Recognising the political capital at stake, the success of the ceremony now appeared uppermost in Wilson's mind. On 17 February, the Duke of Norfolk was asked to Downing Street to discuss how 'arrangements for the investiture were proceeding'. Whether pre-occupied with more ascetic considerations, the Duke of Norfolk failed to make any substantive comment about the security threat, appearing more concerned about the risk of inclement weather.\textsuperscript{13} Four days later, the Duke of Edinburgh was asked if he harboured any doubts as to whether his son should be exposed to the controversy surrounding the ceremony. The Duke was

\textsuperscript{11} TNA, DPP/4455. E. Brampton (F2, Home Office Police Division) to J. F. Claxton, Department of the Director of Public Prosecutions. Letter dated, 10 September 1968.

\textsuperscript{12} TNA, PREM 13/2903. Letter from James Callaghan to Harold Wilson, 12 February 1969. The 'security arrangements for the investiture ceremony', were 'in the hands of the Col. Williams, chief constable of Gwynedd'...It was hoped the questioning of those charged under the Public Order Act and searches at premises would ensure a 'good deal of information' regarding the bombing campaign would emerge.

\textsuperscript{13} TNA, PREM 13/2903.
characteristically forthright. The only doubts he and the Queen possessed ‘was to what extent the virtually mediaeval revival was relevant’.  

**The arrests of the FWA and anti-investiture campaigners**

At 6.00 a.m. on 26 February 1969, nine prominent figures within the Free Wales Army and the anti-investiture movement were simultaneously arrested. If, as widely supposed by sympathetic and non-sympathetic observers, the arrests were in anticipation of the investiture, the manner in which they were undertaken suggested more purge than protection. During the mêlée which surrounded the arrest of Cayo Evans, a pet rabbit died. Despite the accusatory suggestions of hard-nosed campaigners, Dalys Evans, aged just two at the time of her father’s arrest, believes nothing sinister transpired. Yet, it was undoubtedly an event replete with emotion. Moments before being escorted handcuffed to a police car, Cayo Evans, no doubt fearful of what lay ahead, solicitously instructed his crying children to ‘remember’ the occasion ‘and learn to hate’. With no credible or established link to the bombing campaign, Denis Coslett later dismissed any ambiguity as to the motive which precipitated the timing of the arrests. ‘The authorities’, he declared adamantly, ‘wanted us out of the way; well out of the way, before we could use any more propaganda against them’. It is a view shared by FWA sympathizer, Lyn Ebenezer.

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14 *WM*, 22 February 1969. The ‘final governing factor’ which ‘tipped the scales’, was that ‘a large proportion of Welsh opinion favoured it’, the prince added.
15 *WM*, 27 February 1969. Claims that one arrestee - on being transported to Carmarthen - asked if ‘Owain’ was among them was rejected by Denis Coslett as a police undermining tactic. Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 23 November 2003.
16 Correspondence between WT & Gwynfor Evans, 20 August 2003. Within hours of magistrates issuing warrants, the ‘arresting party’ gathered at Carmarthen and smaller groups assigned an arrestee. Each was timed to arrive simultaneously. The procedure was acted upon immediately to prevent ‘information getting out’. Interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 19 February 2000.
17 Interview between WT & Dalis Evans, 28 February 2006. The arrest was ‘traumatic’ stated Toni Lewis. His children ‘were taken from their beds’ as the house was searched. It was left ‘in a mess’. Interview with Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004. ‘Police took everything, including our wedding presents; they even dug up the garden: it needed doing’. Mair Griffith (wife of G. ap Iestyn). *Guardian*, 9 July 1969. When police arrived at the home of Glyn Rowlands, the occupants assumed another explosion had occurred and Rowlands was to be questioned. Rowlands’ children were also allegedly removed from their beds as officers searched for evidence. Having implored officers not to disturb his elderly and infirmed parents, Dafydd y Dug’s mother - who had recently suffered a stroke - was allegedly instructed to get out of bed. She was informed her son would ‘be back in a few days’. *Y Cymro*, 9 July 1969.
18 *WM*, 7 March 1969; also interview between WT & Rhodri Evans, 28 February 2006. Expecting to be arrested, ‘a lot of the boys left’, revealed Coslett. ‘Some went to Patagonia; some to work on a kibbutz in Israel. Others went to Ireland - a lot of them; and Turkey’. Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000.
19 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000.
Contrary to the archival evidence which appears to ‘legitimise’ the police action, Ebenezer proclaimed the arrests ‘a sham’. Moreover, his opinion was contemporaneously shared by ‘a number of serving police officers’, who also considered the arrests - in a criminal context - to be ‘unwarranted’.

From all parts of Wales and backgrounds as diverse as their professions, the nine arrested - all charged with various offences under Public Order, firearms and explosives laws - were: William Edward Julian Cayo Evans, horse breeder, aged 30; Denis Coslett, rabbit breeder, aged 29; Vivian George Davies, metal merchant, aged 27; David Bonar Thomas, plumber, aged 46; Keith Griffith (aka Gethin ap Iestyn), labourer, aged 22; David John Underhill (aka Dafydd y Dug), lorry driver, aged 29; Anthony Harold Lewis, bus driver, aged 31; William Vernon Griffiths, farmer, aged 35 and Dafydd Glyn Rowlands, forester, aged 31.

From Carmarthen - the rendezvous and charging point - the ‘nice lads’ were taken in buses with white-washed windows to Llanelli. The next morning, they were transported to Cardiff, where that same afternoon, they appeared before stipendiary magistrate John Rutter. In court, having been informed by Det. Supt. Vivian Fisher there existed ‘a distinct possibility of interference of witnesses if granted bail’, all were remanded in custody. The timing of the arrests - with the authorities having ‘struck much earlier’ than expected - curtailed plans established by Gethin ap Iestyn that many of those ‘picked up’ would go to safe houses in Scotland. It was then the intention, ap Iestyn revealed, they would return shortly before the investiture to undertake a campaign of disruption. The evening before his arrest, Gethin ap Iestyn collected a consignment of anti-investiture literature delivered aboard a ferry from Ireland. It was, he later explained, ‘part of a major misinformation/propaganda push’. The idea being to leave the leaflets in places of public assembly, such as: toilets, pubs, phone boxes and libraries. Cayo Evans was actively engaged in this process. Despite later accusations of inaptitude, Evans, ap Iestyn maintained, fulfilled a mission to engage the ‘international media’ in a way

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20 Interview between WT & Lyn Ebenezer, 16 June 2006. Ebenezer admitted to being fearful of arrest, believing his ‘friendship with Cayo’ to be ‘enough of a reason’. Not having attended Abergwesyn, he felt, was decisive.
22 Y Cymro, 9 July 1969.
23 WM, 28 February 1969.
only he’ was capable of.24 He was not alone in utilizing the press to establish a political or legal viewpoint. The day after the FWA arrests, a letter by Owain Williams was published in Y Cymro. It reaffirmed the Anti-Investiture Campaign Committee’s ‘non-violent’ pledge.25

Between 6 and 12 March, the nine arrested FWA and anti-investiture campaigners appeared again before Cardiff Magistrates. Seven of the nine faced five counts under the Public Order Act 1936 which prohibited quasi-military organizations. They were charged with the control and management of an organization called the Free Wales Army which existed in the county of Carmarthen and elsewhere between 22 October 1965 and 31 December 1968. Through the display of physical force, the members and adherents of the said association, were organized and trained in such a manner as to arouse reasonable apprehension it was for the purpose of promoting a political object.26

Moreover, Cayo Evans, Denis Coslett and William Vernon Griffiths together faced three charges under the 1965 Firearms Act of unauthorized possession of a Sten machine-gun, a Mauser self-loading pistol and a .38 revolver. All three offences were alleged to have been committed at Lampeter in October 1967. Denis Coslett was further charged, under the 1883 Explosive Substances Act, with having illegal possession of sticks of Unigel, detonators, a battery, electric wire and a timing device at Llangennech on 20 July 1968; and with having unauthorized possession of a Mauser self-loading pistol, a revolver, a Sten machine-gun and unlawful possession of an explosives timing device on various dates in 1966 and 1968. Cayo Evans was further charged with having unauthorized possession of a Sten machine-gun between 1 January and 23 August 1966; and with possession of a Luger pistol at Lampeter on 14 July 1968. David Bonar Thomas was charged with having unauthorized possession of a revolver at Lampeter on 14 July 1968 and Vivian George Davies of having unauthorized possession of a Mauser self-loading pistol at the same time and location.27

24 Correspondence between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, August 2009. Scottish Resistance groups agreed to provide ‘safe houses’. On Investiture Day, D. Coslett and V. G. Davies planned to ‘storm’ the Welsh Office. Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 23 November 2003.
26 Liverpool Daily Post, 7 March 1969. The training received enabled the men to be employed for the use - or in the display - of physical force. A contravention of the law could result in a maximum sentence of two years imprisonment and a £500 fine.
27 WM, 17 April 1969.
Following a succession of evidence - including: uniforms, letters, newspaper cuttings and transcripts of television and radio interviews, books concerning urban/guerrilla warfare, diagrams illustrating how an explosive device was assembled, and the testimony of numerous witnesses - the accused were remanded in custody and committed to stand trial at Swansea Assizes the following month. The location itself caused controversy. On the grounds that 'most of the offences' were alleged to have occurred in west Wales and it was 'fit and proper for a Welsh-speaker to be tried by his peers', defending council asked that the impending proceedings be held at either Cardigan or Carmarthen Assizes. The claim that such a venue was 'in the interests of justice' was rejected by the Magistrate, who remarked the accused would 'suffer no hardship' if tried in Swansea. The decision to hold the trial in the 'more anglicized atmosphere' of Wales' second city was greeted with uproar, as shouts of 'fascist' echoed from the public gallery; Cayo Evans shouted derisorily 'British justice' and Denis Coslett demanded to know, in Welsh, 'what right an Englishman' had 'to sit in a Welsh court?'. Yet, it was not simply the venue of the trial which raised an eyebrow. Remarkably, all accused were committed to be tried within a fortnight of being arrested, when a period of several months was more typical for most criminal proceedings.

Such accusatory speculation that political rather criminal factors had ensued, was not helped by the fact the nine men were committed for trial in Swansea, on the very day it was announced in Aberystwyth, that Prince Charles was to begin his eight week course in matters pertaining to Wales on 21 April. The news was greeted by 150 protestors outside Pantycelyn Hall of Residence and a flurry of confetti from a few open windows ‘to symbolize the marriage of Welsh educational life to the royal family’. By way of retaliation, pro-Royalist students - congregated on the building’s rooftop - launched water upon the demonstrators from filled waste-paper baskets. They were emboldened with news that 76% of the Welsh public now supported the investiture; even if on closer inspection, the figure dropped to 60% for those surveyed

29 Anonymous interview between WT & retired Carmarthen based police officer, November 2002.
30 *WM*, 13 March 1969. It was also claimed - and denied by college officials - that MI5 officers would masquerade as students during the prince’s visit which was scheduled to end on 27 June.
under the age of 45.  

The trial of the FWA and anti-investiture lobby

Whether dismissed as ‘comic opera’, or the state-inspired judicious sledge-hammer smashing of a Welsh demimonde patriotic nut, the 53 day trial of the FWA and anti-investiture campaigners, largely hinged on the dossier of media material amassed by Det. Supt. Vivian Fisher throughout the preceding six years. Despite this being the bulk upon which the prosecution case wrested, the trial was so lengthy, that it raised accusations from sympathizers that the entire proceedings were merely to ensure the nine men were safely under lock and key during the final preparations for the royal ceremony. Nonetheless, there are those, most notably retired Deputy Chief Constable John Owen Evans, who remains confident the trial - although surprisingly lengthy - did run its natural course and that the defendants were tried correctly on presented criminal evidence. However, Sir John Mortimer, who acted as Defence Counsel for Denis Coslett, held a contrary view. He believed the trial was both ‘politically governed’ and ‘deliberately spun out’.

On the other hand, Sir Tasker Watkins, who acted as Crown Prosecution Council, adamantly stated not. Furthermore, Judge Thomson, declared Sir Tasker, was a man held in high regard, who would not have allowed any degree of outside political interference to sully his jurisdiction. Asked how the accused considered the...


32 *WM*, 18 April 1969. The trial ran from Wednesday, 16 April 1969 to Tuesday, 1 July 1969.

33 *WM*, 20 June 1969.

34 Interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 19 February 2001; also, *WM*, 2 July 1969; also TNA, DPP 2/5980; DPP 2/5981; DPP 2/5982; DPP 5983; DPP 2/5985; DPP 2/5986; DPP 2/5987.


36 Interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 19 February 2001; also, 10 August 2009.

37 Telephone interview between WT & Sir John Mortimer, 10 April 2004. The trial, declared Sir John was ‘hilarious’. Judge Thompson had also, he believed, appeared ‘a little nervous’, as indeed, all felt a ‘little wary’. Mortimer was ‘pleased’ with Coslett’s sentence and like Coslett, believed it would have been more severe if later coinciding with the IRA campaign. J. Mortimer felt those on trial were ‘absolutely justified’ in the wider aspect of their protest to safeguard the Welsh language and culture.

38 Telephone interview between WT & Sir Tasker Watkins, 13 March 2003; also 15 April 2007. The
proceedings, Denis Coslett also opined ‘it was political’.\textsuperscript{39} So too Glyn Rowlands; who later remarked that despite Judge Thomson’s insistence to the contrary, when later he ‘decided to sue for wrongful arrest’, he was implacably informed by his local county court: ‘sorry; political trial, can’t help you’.\textsuperscript{40}

Whatever the truth, of the 73 prosecution witnesses called to give evidence, the majority were journalists who appeared either willingly, or were subpoenaed to do so in order to maintain the façade of protecting their sources. Only a handful who gave evidence were police officers, adding to the belief that those in the dock were there owing to an inability to resist media attention, rather than the culmination of astute detective investigation.\textsuperscript{41}

The trial, which soon degenerated into a traverse of somnolent boredom for Denis Coslett,\textsuperscript{42} was certainly not without its moments: funereal or otherwise. Along with the oath of allegiance to Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru, a further document discovered at the home of Gethin ap Iestyn, called for a ‘full-time campaign against the occupational forces of the enemy’. To be undertaken during the immediate investiture period, it proposed a hitherto un-witnessed escalation in the violence ‘to weaken the English grip on Wales’.\textsuperscript{43} Following the refusal of one witness to speak,\textsuperscript{44} and a report that Det. Sgt. John Lavery had received a parcel bomb the day he gave evidence at the trial,\textsuperscript{45} it was announced a ‘general plan’ had been formulized, whereby a state of war would ‘exist between Free Wales forces and England unless an ultimatum to get out of Wales’ was heeded. Found at the home of David John Underhill (Dafydd y Dug), the ultimatum was to be issued ‘to England’ in 1975.\textsuperscript{46}

\textsuperscript{39} Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 November 2008.
\textsuperscript{40} Telephone interview between WT & Glyn Rowlands, 2 August 2009. ‘It was a show trial specifically because of the investiture; undertaken for no other reason’, stated Dafydd y Dug. Interview with WT, 20 May 2004.
\textsuperscript{41} WM, 20 June 1969. In the course of the trial, more than 130 exhibits were used and 1 million words recorded.
\textsuperscript{42} Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December, 2000.
\textsuperscript{43} The Times, 19 April 1969; also, WM, 19 April 1969; also, trial of FWA and anti-investiture campaigners. Exhibit, 48. Denis Coslett private papers.
\textsuperscript{44} WM, 24 April 1969. In the witness box, 19-year-old David Price refused repeated requests to take the oath or give his name. He was eventually dismissed by Judge Thompson with the words: ‘Let him go away’.
\textsuperscript{45} WM, 2 May 1969; also TNA, DPP 2/5988. It is believed the culprits, who posted the device to police HQ, intended to unsettle John Lavery before he gave evidence.
\textsuperscript{46} WM, 3 May 1969. The day after, Dr. W. Ogwen Williams, one of Prince Charles’s Aberystwyth
Called to give evidence, Det. Ch. Insp. John Owen Evans, believed Denis Coslett talked of ‘violence and aggression simply to get his name in the papers’. As for Keith Griffith (Gethin ap Iestyn), he was ‘a great propagandist’, who threw ‘ideas in the air like little balls’. Nevertheless, he denied the FWA was regarded ‘as a joke and a publicity stunt’ by 1968. Described as ‘wedded to violence’ by leading prosecution council Tasker Watkins, Gethin ap Iestyn, denied being a ‘fanatic’, but admitted advocating violence against the investiture and the taking of human life to further the cause of Home Rule for Wales. Under mounting evidential pressure, ap Iestyn re-entered a guilty plea to the charge of ‘organizing members and adherents’ of the FWA. However, he reiterated his innocence regarding the alleged charge of ‘control and management’ of the group.

Part of the evidence against ap Iestyn involved a series of letters. One to Cayo Evans, warned that ‘heavy fines or even prison terms’ awaited those who opposed the investiture. It also stated that he was becoming ‘more and more ashamed’ of the FWA and that Denis Coslett and all his posturing was making the ‘army look stupid’. Would he still ‘be in this game’ were it not for the media attention, ap Iestyn ruminated? ‘Probably yes’, he conceded, but the army ‘lived on a legend of newspaper cuttings’. There was, ap Iestyn declared in further correspondence, ‘nothing substantial behind us at all’. Even he speculated whether the bomb attacks were the work of the security services. Yet, without the explosions ‘the FWA was not worth two pence’. If the group was not responsible for the militant campaign, the past would ‘catch up’ with it and it would not require the authorities to destroy the Free Wales Army, Gethin ap Iestyn grimly pronounced, the ‘jackals’ of the media would ensure it.

A figure Gwynfor Evans was desperate to see give evidence - both to witness the destruction of his journalistic reputation and the credibility of the FWA - was the journalist John Summers. Despite Summers’ initial efforts to support the defendants

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47 WM, 6 May 1969. During his testimony, J. O. Evans was interrupted by Justice Thompson who chastised Denis Coslett for making ‘trigger gestures’ at the officer. Interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 19 February 2001.
48 WM, 7 June 1969.
49 WM, 10 June 1969. Both pleas were accepted by the prosecution.
50 WM, 7 May 1969. ‘Eight of the nine individuals arrested were innocent’, stated Dafydd y Dug in an interview with WT, 20 May 2004.
51 WM, 6 June 1969. Cayo Evans wrote back to ap Iestyn stating Coslett was ‘a good nationalist’, but he would ‘have a word with him’. Denis Coslett private papers. Letter dated 24 July 1968.
by offering to appear for the defence, Evans believed the prosecution was determined to prevent it. This was on the grounds that Summers’ testimony would cast serious doubt on the veracity of allegations, that those in the dock represented an authentic threat to the investiture and the state. The subsequent failure to call Summers - for whatever reason - appeared particularly unjust in light of John Owen Evans’ testimony, whereby he suggested the journalist had enjoyed ‘a two year association’ with the FWA. It had, John Gower QC for David Bonar Thomas attested, ‘left a generally nasty’ ‘prejudicial’ ‘smell’ upon the nine accused. Yet, it was not solely the prosecution which undermined John Summers. Aubrey Myerson QC, for Vernon Griffiths, declared him a ‘shadowy creature’ who exploited the group for his own ends. As for Summers’ claim the threat of violence from the FWA ensured bereaved Aberfan parents received £5,000, it was, countered Myerson, ‘undiluted rubbish’.

On a lighter note, Denis Coslett’s earlier claim that dogs were trained to attack approaching ‘English tanks’ was given consideration by Judge Thompson. How, he enquired, were they to remove the pins? To laughter in the public gallery and a smile from Judge Thompson, Coslett replied with typical aplomb: ‘damn, you’ve got me there sir’.

Despite the trial demonstrating the FWA’s limitation, the accusation that the proceedings were subject to predetermined political manoeuvring refused to subside. During cross-examination, Det. Supt. Vivian Fisher angrily resented the suggestion he was a ‘political policeman’ engaged in ‘political policing’. The FWA, although possessed of an ‘exhibitionist side’ comprised a deeper philosophy. As for the pervading issue of ‘a deal’ allegedly struck between Cayo Evans and Jock Wilson over the discovery of arms, the head of the Shrewsbury unit dismissed the charge as

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52 Trial of FWA and PF: Free Wales Army Document Folder, pages 115 to 203. Part 2. In a telegram to ‘Kayo (sic) Evans, Swansea Jail’, dated 19 April 1969, John Summers stated that despite his ‘sincere efforts’ to assist in Evans’ defence, his advances had been ‘entirely rejected by defence council...They alone’, he concluded, ‘must bear responsibility for any sentence or outcome in the trial’. Two days later, Arnold Davies solicitors in Lampeter received a telegram, in which Summers stated he had ‘just been’ visited by ‘Bristol Special Branch’ and told he was ‘not required by the prosecution’ either. On 29 May, Summers sent another telegram to Arnold Davies Solicitors, in which he said he was not prepared to be ‘pilloried by the defence’. It was, he believed, ‘a trap Wilson’ (Jock) had ‘prepared’.

53 Correspondence between WT & Gwynfor Evans, 20 August 2003.

54 WM, 7 May 1969.


56 WM, 2 July 1969; also, interview between WT & Lyn Ebenezer, 16 June 2006.

57 WM, 14 May 1969.
On 28 May, following the death of his mother and his attendance at her funeral under prison guard, David John Underhill (Dafydd y Dug) returned to court and was acquitted on all charges. Justice Thompson also directed the jury to return not guilty verdicts against the other six accused - although not Cayo Evans and Denis Coslett - on the Public Order charge alleging they participated in the training of the FWA. It was a decision welcomed as indicative of the Crown’s intention not to arbitrarily penalise those in the dock, despite considerable evidence proving their willing involvement. Nonetheless, all six still faced other charges. It was not the only dramatic moment of the day. In refusing to give evidence, Cayo Evans read from a prepared statement in which he thanked Justice Thompson for the ‘courtesy and patience’ he had ‘extended’ to the defendants. Nevertheless, Evans added, he did not recognise the tyrannical ‘regime’ ‘symbol’ which adorned the wall behind Justice Thompson. As for the trial, the state was using it as an instrument to oppress Wales for its own political ends.59

The following day, Vernon Griffiths gave testimony concerning his involvement in the Free Wales Army. Despite photographic and transcript evidence suggesting active participation, Griffiths countered the claim by declaring he involved himself in the group believing it akin to ‘the Salvation Army’.60 It was a line of defence which aroused the ire of Denis Coslett. Amid cries of ‘take him down’, Coslett was ordered to remain silent. The years did little to dampen his annoyance. Griffiths, he declared robustly in 2000, had brought embarrassment on himself.61 It was a sentiment supported to some degree by Lyn Ebenezer, who believed in view of the fact he was Cayo Evans’ cousin, Vernon Griffiths might have pursued a different avenue of explanation.62 Yet, contrary to Coslett’s stinging appraisal that Griffiths sold this co-conspirators down the river, Gethin ap Iestyn was more charitable.

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59 WM, 29 May 1969. Contrary to strict Home Office guidelines, on the tacit understanding he would ‘not make a run for it’, accompanying prison officers removed the handcuffs Dafydd y Dug was wearing. Interview between WT & Dafydd y Dug, 20 May 2004.
60 WM, 30 May 1969. Among other declarations, Vernon Griffiths informed Tit-Bits in September 1966, that he knew ‘how to use a gun’ and would not ‘hesitate to fire it if ordered to’. In his defence, Griffiths claimed he believed the FWA to be like the ‘St. John’s Ambulance’ brigade.
61 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000. Coslett declared to having ‘forgiven’ V. Griffiths his remarks, but subsequent programmes (FWA: I’r Gad!) in which he ‘talked up his involvement’ and his failure to mention his defence in court had angered him.
Vernon Griffiths, he later remarked, ‘is a very decent guy’. He held nothing against him. ‘It was daft what he said’, ap Iestyn remarked, ‘but for Christ sake, he was a country lad trying to get out of a hard situation’.  

Vernon Griffiths was understandably forthright when later commenting on he episode. While awaiting trial, his legal counsel arranged for the RSPCA to undertake the farm work. His father had died and there was nobody else to do it. To be ‘truthful’, declared Griffiths, ‘they did not do a very good job...but they did their best’. Vernon Griffiths feared he might lose the farm his father built up. Moreover, he was instructed as to the best way to proceed, namely: to distance himself from the organization and/or any suggestion he supported militant activism. He defended his interests as best he could. Had those who criticized him ‘prospects’, they too might have avoided a custodial sentence. His cousin, ‘just had horses’. It was not what might be termed ‘farming’...or ‘heavy work’. In that sense, he believed, Cayo Evans’ family had ‘managed OK without him’. Nonetheless, he did not believe any of those sentenced should have received prison terms. Yet, in recognizing they made a stand for their beliefs - as had he - they did not defend themselves adequately.  

As for the Frost Show, in which he appeared two years previously, it proved the ‘last straw’ in his affiliation with the FWA. ‘Hoping for serious discussion’, he returned to Wales ‘disappointed and disillusioned in every way’. To his credit, at the close of his testimony, Vernon Griffiths refused to buckle to judicial pressure and speak in favour of the investiture. It was, he proclaimed, an ‘outmoded and archaic ritual’. The money could be far better deployed to establish ‘Welsh agricultural and veterinary centres’.  

Despite the refusal of Cayo Evans, Denis Coslett and Vivian Davies to give evidence in their defence, Vernon Griffiths was not alone in challenging the remaining charges against him. In taking the stand, Dai Bonar Thomas denied ‘organizing’ the FWA, or possessing a revolver. Furthermore, the journalist Join Summers had ‘baptized’ him ‘Dai Bomber’, recognizing its increased impact in journalistic terms. It was a claim rejected by the irked Summers, who in a letter to Cayo Evans’ solicitor, maintained the term was generically and consensually...
introduced to represent the background and opinions of the militant Welsh. Called to give evidence on behalf of Glyn Rowlands, Dr. Cyril Lewis, the family GP, declared him ‘a perfectly decent man in every way’. Nevertheless, a book: *The Use of Explosives in Mines and Quarries*, discovered the morning he was arrested proved a harder delivery to field. Asked how the volume came to be ensconced beneath a carpet at his home, Rowlands could only improbably declare he did ‘not know’.  

In summing up the case for the prosecution, Tasker Watkins drew the jury’s attention to the ‘extraordinary license’ which allowed the British people to ‘express their views; however odd or unusual’, both publicly or privately. Yet, violence was ‘detestable and the preaching of it odious’. Moreover, a society which did not ‘keep peace with itself’ and ‘keep order’ was in an ‘unhappy state’. Those on trial had referred to the police as ‘Gestapo’, which - for many involved in the proceedings - was an ugly word with ‘sinister meaning’. Much attempt had been made to present the defendants as ‘comic figures’, worthy of little attention. Yet, was there anything frivolous about men who assembled arms, or were ‘prepared to use violence for political purposes’?  

Asking in 2003 for his thoughts on the Free Wales Army, Sir Tasker Watkins, decorated with the VC for storming a German machine-gun post during the Normandy Landings, thought the group possessed little substance. He may have harboured ‘a certain sympathy for what they hoped to achieve, but certainly not the manner in which they set out to achieve it’. The FWA did not compare to other Welsh nationalist protest groups, in terms of intelligent and considered campaigning. John Owen Evans, the former Shrewsbury unit member and pivotal figure in the demise of the FWA, also admitted to having felt *some* empathy for those on trial. He acknowledged the wider campaign for Welsh cultural recognition and was himself ‘proud to speak the Welsh language’; furthermore, he had informed Cayo Evans as much. Nonetheless, the former investigating officer did ‘not believe in

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67 Trial of FWA and PF: Free Wales Army Document Folder, pages 115 to 203. Part 2. Letter from John Summers to Arnold Davies Solicitors, 4 May 1969. Despite Jock Wilson’s accusatory testimony concerning the authentic threat posed by the FWA, Summers claimed that Wilson ‘sneeringly’ informed him before the trial, that he had ‘been conned’ when photographs of weapons held by FWA members were proved to be harmless.

68 WM, 14 June 1969. The book was concealed beneath the stairs carpet. Another book in Rowlands’ possession was *Total Resistance*. It contained diagrams outlining how to construct small underground bunkers. It was intended that Glyn Rowlands would build one in the slate tips near his home in Corris and place within it the FWA’s stock of weapons. Before this was possible, they were found in Maeslynn. Interview between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 23 October 2010.

69 WM, 17 June 1969.

70 Telephone interview between WT & Sir Tasker Watkins, 13 March 2003.
anybody breaking the law to further their aims’ and this had resulted in him asking Cayo Evans, ‘why the FWA’ had ‘to go so far?’.

However, the case against those in the dock was not water-tight. James Mulcahy, council for Cayo Evans, questioned both the timing of the arrests and why none of the interviewing journalists was questioned by police until 1969. Additionally, ‘none of the accused’ was charged with involvement in the militant campaign. The alleged offences occurred under the media glare. It was ‘not very often’, Mulcahy added incredulously, that ‘a man’ was ‘charged with a criminal offence’ having committed it on ‘television or to a team of journalists’. Another ‘extraordinary feature’ concerned the piece of legislation under which the accused stood trial. Only once prior to these proceedings had charges under this section of the Public Order Act 1936 been brought. It was a line of defence taken up by John Mortimer QC for Denis Coslett. His client had shown nothing more than ‘a misguided flash’. Moreover, the cause with which the accused had aligned themselves, was ‘dear to the hearts of hundreds’ in Wales. It was the political birthright ‘like the air we breathe’ that UK citizens could freely express their views. This extended to ‘Cabinet Ministers and statesmen’ and men of ‘little education’. As for the evidence against the accused: should any connection exist of involvement in acts of violence or sabotage, ‘the proper charges would have been levelled long before’.73 Apparently suggesting they were ‘planted’, the discovery of the arms at Maesllyn was challenged by John Gower QC, for David Bonar Thomas, as ‘a stratagem’; and a ‘golden opportunity to hamstring the FWA’. Furthermore, the ‘rigorous 23 hours a day confinement’ of men un-convicted was ‘cruel’ and ‘inhuman’. If a means to lower ‘the spirit and mental condition’ it succeeded.

In his summing up, Justice Thompson directed the jury to dismiss all suggestion the trial was politically inspired, or that a ‘deal’ was hatched between Jock Wilson and Cayo Evans.76 Moreover, in response to James Mulcahy’s point

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71 Interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 19 February 2001.
72 WM, 19 June 1969. The Act was passed to combat the ugly scenes of public disorder in the Metropolis and large cities in Britain in the pre-War period, when groups of fascists, under Mosley’s direction, fought fiercely with other sections of the community.
73 WM, 20 June 1969.
74 WM, 24 June 1969.
75 WM, 26 June 1969.
76 WM, 27 June 1969. It was ‘truthfully denied’ by Jock Wilson, claimed Justice Thompson. The discovery of the arms, he declared, was more the result of ‘cold feet and wise repentance’ by persons
concerning the Public Order Act, it did not legislate against ‘political objectives’, but ‘against certain methods of obtaining them’. Changes in government or status, must only be ‘achieved through constitutional means’ Justice Thompson added, not through ‘violence or intimidation’. 

Having threatened to clear the public gallery if further interrupted, the verdicts were returned and Justice Thompson summoned Glyn Rowlands and David Bonar Thomas. Rowlands was cleared of organizing the FWA and Bonar Thomas of controlling, managing and organizing the group and possession of a revolver. Both men, along with David John Underhill (Dafydd y Dug) were asked for their co-operation in keeping ‘the temperature’ in Wales ‘down’. There was ‘too much violence in Wales’, Judge Thompson declared; it was not positive.

The following day, as the six remaining accused climbed the stairs into the court, many in the public gallery rose to their feet and sang Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau. Those in the dock, announced a solemn Justice Thompson, were ‘not the only people with violent ideas’ in Wales. Maybe it was correct, he added, that a Judge discouraged those yet to be tried. He had, nonetheless, taken into account that all before him - however misguided the manner in which expressed - loved Wales. Consequently, he intended to treat them leniently; certainly more so than many would believe appropriate. He hoped he understood ‘patriotism, love of one’s country and liberty’. He further understood ‘the desire’ to ‘improve the conditions and the values’ of Wales. Yet, the ‘Welsh way of a life’ was ‘civilized’ and ‘cherished’ and ‘crime had no place’ in it. Some of the defendants had caused ‘anxiety and alarm’ by their ‘claims and boastings’; others by their ‘weapons and explosives’. All however, had ‘served Wales ill’.

While it was true no evidence existed connecting the accused with the explosions in Wales, what was not known, was the degree of encouragement and influence their actions had on others. Taking into account time in custody, the length of the trial, the ‘strain’ to which all had been ‘subjected’ and signed assurances by all - save Gethin ap Iestyn - as to their future conduct, Judge Thompson then

unknown.

77 The Times, 26 June 1969.
78 WM, 28 June 1969.
79 WM, 2 July 1969.
80 The Times, 2 July 1969.
81 WM, 2 July 1969.
82 WM, 1 July 1969. The FWA, Justice Thompson pronounced, ‘was not brought into existence for the investiture’.
83 The Times, 2 July 1969. Had he confessed the extent of his involvement, Justice Thompson
handed down his sentences.

Found guilty on five charges, three under the Public Order Act alleging control, management, organizing and training of FWA members, along with two firearms charges, Cayo Evans, ‘the prime mover and stimulator of others’ was sentenced to fifteen months in prison. Found guilty on each of the eight Public Order Act, firearms and explosives charges, Denis Coslett received the same sentence. Keith Griffith (Gethin ap Iestyn), was sentenced to nine months on a charge of organizing FWA members or adherents. For the same charge, Toni Lewis was sentenced to eight months, suspended for two years. For possession of a Mauser self-loading pistol, Vivian Davies was gaoled for six months, suspended for three years. For unauthorized possession of a Sten-gun, Vernon Griffiths was sentenced to three months, suspended for two years.84

Before being taken down, Denis Coslett made an impassioned speech from the dock. It has since entered militant Welsh folklore. He had, he declared, been brought before the court on the charge of using ‘force to promote a political object’ and that much mention was ‘made of the word violence’. Yet, he was instructed and trained in the use of violence in the British Army’. That was ‘to promote an English political object’ and therefore ‘honourable’. Across Wales there were ‘military camps, bombing schools and rocket stations’. ‘During the investiture, warships’ would be ‘witnessed on the Menai Straits’ and ‘battalions of armed soldiers on the streets of Caernarfon’ and ‘warplanes over Eryri (Snowdon), all ‘to safeguard English security’. Moreover, it would be ‘perfectly legal’: ‘English violence’ was virtuous, yet ‘Welsh violence a terrible crime’. Justice Thompson instructed John Mortimer QC to ‘stop’ his client. Mortimer informed Coslett it might affect his sentence if he continued. Coslett carried on. On the table before Thompson lay a piece of paper on which Coslett’s sentence was written. Infuriated by the defendant’s perceived insolence, Justice Thompson slammed his fist onto the paper.85 Having spoken of the ‘terrible

84 WM, 2 July 1969. Cayo Evans and Denis Coslett agreed not to take part in any military-like activity, or handle weapons illegally; not to associate with those engaged in military-like actions; not to advocate or use violence for a political cause; not to form or attempt to form a military-like organization: not to use or advocate the use of violence and not to associate with anyone doing so: and not to take part in an illegal military-like organization. V. Griffiths, T. Lewis and V. G. Davies signed smaller undertakings. A police officer later told G. ap Iestyn that he and colleagues respected his refusal to sign the pledge. Interview between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 20 May 2009.

85 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000; also 13 March 2001. ‘Expecting more’ Coslett was ‘pleased’ with his sentence; he had ‘practically run down the stairs in case Thompson
morning’ when the nine were arrested by the ‘political police’, Denis Coslett declared he would forget neither ‘the look of fear and horror on the faces of his children’, nor ‘Wales’ in his ‘lonely cell’. He prayed God would give ‘Wales the strength to cast off its fetters’. Much of the courtroom erupted in tumultuous applause and cries of support. It was cleared, apart from his sobbing wife, as Denis Coslett received his sentence. The trial cost the British taxpayer £130,000: between £8 - £10 a minute. It was £70,000 less than the investiture.

In court to hear the sentences handed down was Lyn Ebenezer. It was an experience, he later confessed, he would never forget. ‘Expecting to be dismissed’, Cayo Evans fixed his gaze on his friend from west Wales. His tear-filled expression of fear, shock and frustration, brought forth an equally emotional response from Lyn Ebenezer. In stark contrast, on receiving his judicial chastisement, Denis Coslett refused to reveal his feelings, staring impassively ahead. Emotions were running high. For refusing to attend the trial and support those who derived ‘fun provoking and outraging the respectable, peace-loving Plaid Cymru’, Saunders Lewis ‘never forgave’ Gwynfor Evans.

Later describing his subsequent prison term, Denis Coslett admitted matters became decidedly worse on being convicted. A ‘category A’ prisoner, with the customary yellow patches sown onto his uniform, Coslett was segregated and even exercised for half-an-hour-a-day on his own, while surrounded by barbed wire fences, dogs and the obligatory two guards. Escort whenever visits were taken to the toilet or library, his cell - with the light on day and night - was stripped bare each day. Coslett remained convinced his food was poisoned with human excreta, blaming the step-son of the Swansea-based *Express* journalist John Christopher, who was in prison

changed his mind’. Justice Thompson remarked witheringly, ‘just go’.

86 *The Times*, 2 July 1969; also, interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000. The speech was written largely by David Bonar Thomas and Toni Lewis during trial recesses during its latter stage. Interview between WT & Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004.
87 *WM*, 2 July 1969; also, *Y Cymro*, 9 July 1969; also *New Statesman*, 4 July 1969; also *NS*, 11 July 1969. During the trial, the wives of the accused stayed at the home of a sympathetic lady in Llanelli.
88 Interview between WT & Lyn Ebenezer, 16 June 2006. Evans looked as if he had been ‘horse whipped’, Ebenezer stated. Coslett, he was later told, had looked unfazed and could have taken news of ‘20 years’.
89 Interview between WT & Avril Coslett, 5 March 2009.
for embezzlement. The FWA had threatened Christopher’s life, following his refusal to acknowledge the group’s salutary involvement in the Aberfan parent-payment issue. Employed in the Swansea prison kitchens, Christopher’s step-son, allegedly exacted his revenge. Yet, perhaps surprisingly - or perhaps not - it was the Welsh guards who reserved the greatest animosity towards Coslett, rather than their English counterparts, who, Coslett believed, ‘were pretty good’ to him. The effect of Dafydd y Dug’s relatively short incarceration had nonetheless left its legacy; he later explained his eye sight was permanently damaged owing to prolonged spells amid artificial lighting.

Anti-investiture demonstration, Gordon Wyn Jones enters the picture and MAC targets the Chester Tax Office

Despite the trial of the FWA and anti-investiture lobbyists having attracted considerable attention, events outside Swansea Assizes continued unabated. At an anti-investiture rally in Caernarfon attended by 5,000, on 1 March, the Welsh language activist Emyr Llywelyn Jones was approached by a man - unknown within the nationalist movement - ‘wanting to do something for Wales’. He had, he further announced, ‘already planted a device in a shoe box on Anglesey’. The stranger, called Gordon Wyn Jones from Holyhead, was quickly informed that ‘Cymdeithais yr Iaith Gymraeg was non-violent’. Basically ‘trying it on with different people’, it would not, Jones added, ‘have taken much for Wyn Jones’s intentions to get back to John Jenkins talking like that’. How the connection between Gordon Wyn Jones and John Jenkins was established, remains unclear. For his part, Emyr Llywelyn Jones

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92 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 13 March, 2001. The yellow patches were to indicate the prisoners were ‘in danger of escaping’. Y Cymro, 9 July 1969.
93 Daily Express, 31 August 1967. No mention of the FWA ultimatum threatening direct action was included in the article written by John Christopher.
94 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000; also, Coslett’s book of prose entitled Rebel Heart, contains Within the Walls, p.44. His ‘time inside’, he remarked, ‘was hell’. Coslett left prison eight stone. Contrary to the English warders, the Welsh guards were ‘horrible bastards’. It was a view similarly expressed by Dafydd y Dug, Y Cymro, 9 July 1969. G. ap Iestyn and C. Evans were held in Cardiff prison.
95 Interview between WT & Dafydd y Dug, 1 March 2004; also, Y Cymro, 9 July 1969. In an interview, Mair Griffiths and Gillian Evans discussed how neighbours, family, friends, sympathizers and the vet had supported them financially (along with social security payments) since their husband’s imprisonment. ‘Only the Celts’, declared journalist Mark Bourke, ‘could get themselves in such a jam’. Only they ‘solve it with such divinity’. Guardian, 9 July 1969.
96 LDP, 3 March 1969. The march was led through Caernarfon by a car which relayed Dafydd Iwan’s satirical song Carlo. Other sources claimed the attendance was 3,000. WM, 3 March 1969.
rigorously denies any involvement. Yet, evidence at the National Archives suggests Gordon Wyn Jones soon met fellow rally-attendee Gareth Miles, another leading figure within CylIG; and that - in turn - Miles then arranged for the ‘seaman, or liner-worker’ G. W. Jones to meet John Jenkins. Commenting on the degree of contact between the two groups, John Jenkins admitted senior members of Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg and Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru ‘were known to each other’. Responding to the charge, Gareth Miles audibly sighed and remarked if Jenkins had stated such, then so be it. Yet, it is a suggestion refuted as spurious by Emyr Llywelyn Jones. Interestingly however, Ann Woodgate informed investigating officers that during the final stages of her relationship with Frederick Ernest Alders - which ended in January 1969 - he and John Jenkins regularly visited Miles at his home in Wrexham. John Jenkins further revealed his combined status within the British Army and as director of operations of MAC, was a situation recognized within ‘certain circles’. One such person ‘in the picture’ was David Walters. Although far from being ‘common knowledge’, within the south Wales ‘inner sanctum’ Walters disclosed, it was ‘well known’. Nevertheless, just how problematic was the fear of infiltration, was illustrated by Owain Williams. Approached at this juncture by ‘lots of people’ with ‘plans to disrupt the investiture’, he did not know if they were ‘MI5, MI6 or genuine’. Yet, one thing he quickly discerned: he could ‘only trust people’ he ‘really knew’.

Amid such an atmosphere of suspicion and intrigue, at 2.15 a.m. on 10 April, following a three month lull in its campaign, designed, John Jenkins later revealed, ‘to

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97 Telephone interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 20 February 2009. Two days after the rally, a package containing a timing device and a liquid substance was discovered in a control building at RAF Mona on Anglesey. It did not contain explosive matter. WM, 3 March 1969. ‘I believe Gordon Wyn Jones was allowed by the authorities to plant the device in the RAF station, in order to obtain credibility in the eyes of John Jenkins, whom it was hoped he (Jones) would then meet’. Anonymous interview with WT, August 2010.
98 TNA, ASSI 84/577. Witness statement by Gordon Wyn Jones.
99 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007.
100 Telephone interview between WT & Gareth Miles, 14 October 2008. Gareth Miles denied being in MAC.
101 Telephone interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 20 February 2009.
103 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 10 January 2009. Jenkins admitted his confidante and ‘adviser’ Harri Webb had known.
104 Interview between WT & David Walters, 29 December 2008.
105 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004.
give the authorities a sense of false security', \textsuperscript{106} Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru activated a device containing 5-10lbs of explosives at the offices of Chester Inland Revenue. It caused, a secret memo to the Prime Minster declared, ‘considerable damage’, \textsuperscript{107} with virtually every pane of glass at the back of the building destroyed. \textsuperscript{108} ‘Directed by the Shrewsbury unit’, the resulting police enquiry included ‘house-to-house’ searches and interviews with ‘persons known to hold extreme views’. \textsuperscript{109} If the authorities required conclusive evidence the bombing campaign was not the work of the FWA, then this - with the most prominent members of the organization behind bars awaiting trial - was surely it. Watching the news unfold, journalist Ian Skidmore was convinced the action was undertaken at his behest. This, he perceived, having casually replied that the Chester Tax Office seemed a reasonable proposition, when asked by Jenkins what he would like targeted at the conclusion of the MAC press conference some twelve months earlier.\textsuperscript{110} Yet, the reason for targeting the site, John Jenkins later divulged, was - as ever - two fold. The timing of the blast - coinciding with the visit to Chester of the Duke of Norfolk - did not go unnoticed by either the Home Office, or precipitately, John Jenkins.\textsuperscript{111}

Acting alone, Jenkins climbed onto the flat roof of a garage adjoining the building to plant the device. Was he happier to ‘work independently’ at this point, Jenkins was asked. ‘Well’, he replied with typical candour, ‘some people are able to bear pressure better than others, let’s put it that way’. He had not really felt that ‘to be the case with Alders, but he was to marry in a matter of weeks’. However, he was not pleased with the ‘strike’. The ‘main object of the exercise was to get the Duke of Norfolk (responsible for all state ceremonial involving the monarchy) to castigate the Welsh people’, he explained. It was targeted, partly owing to its status ‘as a

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\textsuperscript{106} Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 8 November 2009.

\textsuperscript{107} TNA, DPP 2/5993; also PREM 13/2903. Memo from James Callaghan to Harold Wilson, 14 April 1969. ‘The Security Services and the Shrewsbury Unit’, Callaghan declared, had each concluded, Prince Charles ran more the risk of ‘personal embarrassment than physical harm’, by attending Aberystwyth University. Yet, it was ‘never possible to rule out the activities of a determined fanatic’.

\textsuperscript{108} WM, 11 April 1969. The bomb shattered over 200 windows and tore a hole through a six-inch-thick reinforced concrete wall. Hundreds of tax forms cascaded through the broken windows into the street.

\textsuperscript{109} TNA, PREM 13/2903. Memo from James Callaghan to Harold Wilson, 14 April 1969. Plans by Welsh extremists to ‘disorganize selected railway junctions and de-rail trains’ on, or just before, the investiture had been received.

\textsuperscript{110} Telephone interview between WT & Ian Skidmore, August 2007. The anonymous Jenkins allegedly replied: ‘yeah, we can do that for you’.

\textsuperscript{111} TNA, PREM 13/2903. Memo from James Callaghan to Harold Wilson, 14 April 1969. The Duke was scheduled to speak at the army headquarters in the city, on the role of the armed services during
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government tax office’, but also because the Duke was to attend ‘a highly secret engagement’ where the security arrangements for the ceremony were to be discussed. ‘Nobody’, Jenkins added, ‘knew anything about it; but we did, via a sympathetic police source; and we also knew the Duke was ‘highly coloured’ with ‘a very bad temper and that he hated Welsh people’. Furthermore, he ‘was a drunk’ and when ‘in his cups or angry’, would let fly irrespective of who might be listening. From a MAC perspective therefore, the Duke, Jenkins declared, ‘was exactly what we were looking for’. It was hoped, when he arrived in Chester the following morning, the Duke would be greeted with the sight of ‘the tax office in absolute bloody chaos’. It was then expected, with the press in attendance, he would ‘start shouting and bawling’ and deriding the Welsh as a ‘bunch of ungrateful bastards’. Did they not know, Jenkins demanded with mock similitude, ‘what was being done to give them the Prince of Wales?’

Jenkins felt sure the Duke of Norfolk would have reacted this way, but unfortunately for MAC, ‘the authorities realized this as well, and as soon as he arrived, they ‘shoved him straight into a helicopter and he was gone’. And how was this reported, Jenkins asked with deliberate incredulity? By saying ‘the Duke was so impressed with the security arrangements being put in place at Caernarfon, that he left to inspect what was happening personally’. The decision to remove him was merely to prevent him commenting to the press, Jenkins believed. By the time he returned, ‘because he did not land in Caernarfon, he’d settled down’. So, John Jenkins added ruefully, the operation was a partial success, yet the most important aspect was denied them. Responding to why such a ‘loose cannon’ had been put in charge of arrangements for the investiture, Jenkins stated it was owing to the authorities’ failure to anticipate ‘outrages’ like a tax office ‘being blown up’ the night before he arrived.

Despite the ‘huge’ security operation, the director-general of MAC waited on the garage roof until ‘the coast was clear’. However, his journey to Wrexham also proved eventful, as the car - possibly as a result of ‘wrong petrol’ - ‘kangaroo jumped’ all the way.112 If Jenkins was aware the Shrewsbury unit had received information the

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112 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007. The press, Jenkins declared, deduced why the Duke was removed from Chester. Moreover, as the tax office was closely positioned to the city police headquarters, the area ‘was bloody crawling’ because of the Duke’s impending arrival. The ‘one or two’ police contacts, although not directly known to Jenkins, ‘were feeding information of things they thought might come in useful’. The officers were not subsequently discovered or reprimanded.
group responsible for the bombing campaign comprised ‘a policy director...and six-highly trained saboteurs’,\(^{113}\) his return home might have been even more nerve-wracking. Nonetheless, news that ‘windows in a hospital half-a-mile-away were shattered’ in the blast,\(^{114}\) was allegedly greeted with incredulous amusement by Frederick Ernest Alders,\(^{115}\) and palpable alarm in Downing Street. In a further memo to the Home Secretary, James Callaghan, six days later, Harold Wilson ruminated whether ‘we might be wiser to cancel Aberystwyth’.\(^{116}\) The prince, Wilson was curtly informed, was already there.\(^{117}\)

**More attacks in Cardiff**

However, with a ‘crack army bomb disposal unit’ in Aberystwyth and ‘the most elaborate security operation’ Wales has ‘known’,\(^{118}\) on the eve of what the press was indolently referring to as ‘the Free Wales Army Trial’,\(^{119}\) a \(\frac{1}{4}\) lb device blasted Cardiff’s new police headquarters.\(^{120}\) Denying responsibility for the action, John Jenkins has nevertheless now revealed the Cardiff MAC cell discovered the primed device, when they themselves attempted to target the exact central-heating duct in the early hours of the same morning. Having ‘no idea’ who planted the explosives and in recognition it detonated at 1600, it ‘might well’, Jenkins believed, have ‘been a Special Branch operation’. Asked to expand the point, Jenkins added that had its

\(^{113}\) *WM*, 12 April 1969. The information was received following a public appeal.

\(^{114}\) *WM*, 11 April 1969.


\(^{116}\) TNA, PREM 13/2903. Memo dated 16 April 1969.


\(^{118}\) *WM*, 19 April 1969. For MI5 and Special Branch infiltration of students and staff, see: TNA, CAB 164,386; Ellis, *Investiture*, p.230; *WM*, 13 March 1969. Dr. T. Parry, the college principal, dismissed speculation agents would masquerade as students as ‘merely rumours’. ‘Charles was protected by a unit of fifteen some of them armed’. *Wales: The Prince and the Plotter*, BBC *Timewatch* Production. Screened July 2009.

\(^{119}\) *WM*, 17 April 1969. ‘I cannot stress enough’, stated Gethin ap Iestyn, ‘it was neither a show trial or just the FWA. It was about disrupting and stopping the anti-investiture campaign. Full stop’. Correspondence with WT, 26 January 2008. For anti-investiture material including posters proclaiming ‘If You’re Welsh You’re Watched’, ‘Charles Windsor Shall Not Pass’ and emotive depictions of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd’s death, see: ‘Seize the Time’, Penderyn, Ty Cenedl 1 AI4; AI5. NLW.

\(^{120}\) *The Times*, 16 April 1969; also *WM*, 30 April 1969. The device was planted at the rear of the building in a central-heating duct. The explosion shattered three windows and dislodged a boundary wall and coping stones. ‘With 70 or 80’ employed at the station, ‘the two damaged rooms may well have been occupied at the time’ stated an ‘appalled’ George Thomas on arriving at the scene.
activation caused ‘death or serious injury’, the authorities would have been provided ‘the moral high ground’, it desperately sought. Moreover, ‘Special Branch’ at this juncture ‘literally’ had ‘a blank cheque’ to act as it saw fit; the group was ‘an absolute law unto itself’.121

Yet, following police speculation that the far from infallible timing mechanism had ‘triggered twelve hours later than intended’,122 speaking in 2004, Toni Lewis, the former leading figure within the Patriotic Front, threw new light on what transpired. Some years later, during a ‘march against unemployment’ through Cardiff civic centre, two men approached Lewis near the point the rally passed Cardiff City Police Headquarters. As the conversation turned to the bomb which exploded in the central heating duct, the verbal exchange further meandered toward the MAC unit which discovered the already installed device. Unexpectedly, one of the two men announced that having received explicit instruction from John Jenkins as to where and when the device was to be planted, he had received ‘the shock of his life’ on discovering the already positioned explosive ensemble. Asked if he might identify the two anonymous activists, Toni Lewis disclosed the apparently more senior and reticent of the two was ‘from south Wales, no longer alive and a little bit older’ than himself. Despite his subsequent efforts, Toni Lewis was unable to corroborate the admission.123 The identity of the would-be MAC operatives remains a mystery.

So does the identity of the person or persons who did plant the device which exploded at Cardiff City Police HQ. Despite John Jenkins’ trenchant assurance only he possessed the wherewithal to orchestrate the campaign of militant activism, might a dissident republican have been operating? Or indeed, was it perhaps the inevitable emergence of a politically - and morally - less-inspired copy-cat? Whatever the truth, the explosion sent shock waves through Whitehall. On being informed of the blast, Sir James Waddell, Deputy Under-Secretary at the Home Office, convened an urgent meeting with James Callaghan and his Private Secretary. There, despite the establishment of the Shrewsbury Unit and the appointment of Frank Williamson, all conceded the hunt to apprehend the militants was leading nowhere. Asked to respond, Frank Williamson informed the Home Secretary that the militant campaign

121 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007. Special Branch, Jenkins believed, covered up its actions ‘whichever way it could’. Jenkins contacted the cell leader to be informed the MAC unit had ‘discovered a device already there’.
122 WM, 16 April 1969.
123 Interview between WT & Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004. One of the two men stated: ‘our lot did that’.

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in Wales was indeed more precarious than first considered. Furthermore, the threat posed by Welsh extremists was not confined to the impending investiture. What Wales required, Williamson suggested, was a ‘central intelligence agency’. It was a proposal accepted by the seven Welsh chief constables.\textsuperscript{124} It also received the endorsement of government security advisors, who - in response to increased activity in the build-up to the investiture - proposed an anti-terrorist organization be permanently established to combat the menace of Welsh extremism. Moreover, when operational, English police forces would share full responsibility for policing Welsh nationalist agitation.\textsuperscript{125}

The decision to implement such a drastic measure in how the country was policed, was given considerable impetus by explosions - all steadfastly denied by Jenkins as undertaken by MAC - which rocked the Welsh capital during the 53 day trail of the FWA and anti-investiture campaigners. On 23 April, a device was discovered in a locker at Cardiff’s Queen Street railway station. Noticing a surcharge was payable on a briefcase placed inside the locker four days earlier, the booking clerk, Bernard Wall, slightly opened it. Had he opened it any further, army disposal officer Terence Keane announced on arrival from the unit’s temporary base at Aberystwyth, the device - as perhaps intended - would have activated and Wall almost certainly killed. The explosive material was ‘entirely different’ from devices used in previous sabotage incidents, a police spokesman revealed.\textsuperscript{126} Three days later, as British Rail announced the closure of its left luggage facility in Wales and further bomb hoaxes were reported,\textsuperscript{127} police arrested 20-year-old Robert William Trigg in connection with the locker-room incident. He was remanded in custody until trial.\textsuperscript{128}

In July, the Sheffield University Physics and Metallurgy student was found guilty of possessing an explosive substance and theft of such materials. The jury

\textsuperscript{124} HO, 325/122. Report by James Waddell, Deputy Under-Secretary at the Home Office, to Philip Allen, Permanent Under-Secretary of State, Home Office, 20 May 1969. The proposal was also endorsed at the same meeting by the chief constables of Gloucestershire, Cheshire, West Mercia and the security services.
\textsuperscript{125} HO, 325/122. Dennis Trevelyan, Home Office Division F2 (counter terrorism), 26 June 1969. In the meantime, the Shrewsbury Unit would perform the function.
\textsuperscript{126} WM, 25 April 1969. The device was detonated on waste ground near the railway station. Rather than gelignite, it contained ‘15 \(\frac{1}{4}\) oz of RDX/TNT, a propellant powder; a No.107 detonator; a .22 ball cartridge and a magazine of a fuse’.
\textsuperscript{127} WM, 26 April 1969.
\textsuperscript{128} WM, 7 May 1969; also, WM, 7 June 1969. R. W. Trigg lived at Heol Poyston, Ely, Cardiff. He admitted stealing two anti-tank grenades, smoke-grenades and possessing explosives. He denied intending to harm anyone. Had the device activated, it would have had the same force as between six -
nonetheless failed to agree if this was with intent to endanger life or damage property. Despite his established links to the British Anarchist Movement and sympathies for Welsh Republicanism, Trigg claimed he perpetrated the incident as a hoax. This, he proposed in mitigation, by claiming to have deliberately disabled the device. He further claimed he was not politically inspired, but wanted ‘to make the police and Establishment jittery’. Although Howard Yallop, principal scientific advisor to the Home Office, admitted the bomb’s assembly rendered it ‘unreliable’ as an explosive instrument, Trigg was imprisoned for four years.\textsuperscript{129} Watching events unfold in Wrexham, John Jenkins declared Trigg’s action to be a ‘worrying development’ and discerned the young man was ‘mentally unstable’.\textsuperscript{130}

Despite R. W. Trigg’s arrest, in the early hours of 29 April, an explosion ripped through the Central Electricity Generating Board offices in the Gabalfa area of the city. The device was planted in a flowerbed and encased with ‘nuts and bolts’. On detonating, it shattered windows and caused extensive damage to the buildings interior. The device, police admitted, was similar in design to that which caused damage at Cardiff Police Headquarters a fortnight earlier. No one was injured in the Gabalfa attack and no one has been convicted of the crime.\textsuperscript{131} The following day, contrary to previous press statements, police announced the latest upsurge in militant activity was not thought to be the work of Welsh extremists, but rather a group ‘jumping on the publicity bandwagon’. Moreover, both the police station and Electricity Board explosions were significantly smaller. In each, a $\frac{1}{4}$ lb of explosives were used, with both employing a wrist watch to activate the charge rather than a sophisticated time mechanism.\textsuperscript{132} Investigating officers drew the same conclusion, when a device inserted in a letter box exploded outside the postal sorting office in Victoria Park, at the end of June.\textsuperscript{133} It followed the discovery of two sticks of twelve hand grenades.

\textsuperscript{129} \textit{WM}, 24,25,26,29 July 1969. Cardiff’s Peter Geoffrey Raymond of the Anarchist Movement tentatively agreed to deposit the device, but ultimately did not. Trigg considered it too pacific an organization. Trigg’s sister discovered him assembling the device when she returned from babysitting at 2.00 a.m on Saturday, 19 April. Some hours later, he placed the device in locker C10 at Queen Street Station. He was arrested in Sheffield seven days later.

\textsuperscript{130} Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 25 March 2004; also, 19 October 2007; also, 20 November 2008.

\textsuperscript{131} \textit{WM}, 29 April 1969. 75-year-old night-watchman, Frank Hill, walked past the site of the blast minutes before.

\textsuperscript{132} \textit{WM}, 30 April 1969.

\textsuperscript{133} \textit{WM}, 30 June 1969. The explosion at 1.40 a.m. was heard throughout the city. It blew a three-foot square metal casing 30 feet across one of Cardiff’s main roads.
gelignite at Taf Fechan Reservoir near Merthyr Tydfil. Here too, John Jenkins denies any MAC involvement.

The ‘unrest’ in Wales was now a news item of global proportions. As a result of the ‘political turmoil’ sweeping the nation, a package holiday, aimed to coincide with the investiture and arranged for 300 Americans and Canadians was cancelled. Dismissed as an over-reaction, it nonetheless coincided with the announcement that an ‘eighteen-vessel armada’, including minesweepers, submarines and naval ships, would patrol the Welsh coastline during the investiture period.

MAC targets the Mackenzie Pier monument

On 26 June, a MAC active unit placed a 6lb device at the foot of a monument in Holyhead. The plinth, which commemorated the ‘first visit of the Prince of Wales on 9 August 1938’ was ‘near the Mackenzie Pier’. It was from there, the Home Secretary, James Callaghan was informed in a report of the incident, that Prince Charles was ‘to board the royal barge to take him out to the royal yacht’ Britannia following the investiture. Placed within a ‘blue’ canvass hold-all ‘with one side completely cut out’, the unexploded device was discovered shortly before 7.00 a.m. Interviewed following its discovery, 50-year-old crane-driver James Crookston, revealed he peered inside the bag, heard ticking and saw ‘ten sticks of weeping gelignite’. In such a perilously unstable condition, the safety of four boys who slept the night in a tent ‘only a few yards’ from the hold-all raises serious questions. Also interviewed the following morning, one of them, 16-year-old Paul Gregory, recalled he and his companions were disturbed by ‘footsteps crunching in the sand and gravel’ as they chatted at 1.00 a.m. Believing a walker was enjoying the night air, they attached no importance to it.

Later discussing the Holyhead action, John Jenkins admitted it was ‘a protest laden with symbolism’. Moreover, despite those who suggest the intention was to prevent Prince Charles from utilizing the pier, Jenkins added that from what he was

134 WM, 26 May 1969.
135 WM, 20 June 1969. From the ramparts of Caernarfon Castle, with its imposing view of the Menai Straits, the coastal minesweeper Anglesey cut a reassuring presence throughout the ceremony.
136 TNA, PREM 13/2903; also, DPP 2/5994. J. Crookston was accompanied by two colleagues as he walked to work on the jetty being built in Holyhead harbour. Believing the bag was left by a tourist, on discovering its contents, he flung it down and shouted a warning to ‘run like hell’. WM, 26 June 1969.
137 WM, 26 June 1969. The device was removed by Major Clifton Jeffries, head of Western Command’s bomb disposal unit. Had the bomb detonated, the plinth would have been ‘blown to bits',

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told’, it was indeed ‘quite some distance between the pier and the monument’. Asked to quantify its symbolic relevance, it was, Jenkins replied, ‘symbolic in the sense that MAC wanted to demonstrate its willingness to kill’; it had of course, ‘no intention of doing so’. Nevertheless, desperate to take the armed struggle to the state in protest at the investiture, John Jenkins’s behaviour became increasingly cavalier in the immediate pre-investiture period. During a visit to the home of Alders’ step-father John Roberts, Jenkins enquired as to whether Roberts would steal gelignite from the Hendre Quarry where he was employed. On the grounds that security was ‘tight’, Roberts refused to cooperate. He further refused to draw Jenkins a map locating the Quarry’s magazine. John Jenkins then suggested either he, or his son, collect a ‘man from Abergele’ and travel to Holyhead. This, Jenkins revealed, was in order for an explosive device to be planted at the Prince of Wales monument. Both John Roberts and his son refused. John Jenkins later confirmed that MAC activist Alwyn Jones was to be collected from Abergele to undertake the action.

Steadfast in his belief the monument in Holyhead should be targeted, John Jenkins turned his attention to Gordon Wyn Jones. In accusatory and incriminating statements, which Jones and his wife later gave to investigating officers, each described how John Jenkins entered their lives. Six weeks after the anti-investiture rally in Caernarfon, during which he approached Emyr Llywelyn Jones voicing intent to engage the militant struggle, Gordon Wyn Jones received a letter from Gareth Miles requesting they meet. He would, Miles stated, meet Jones off the train in Chester. On arrival, Jones was eventually approached by a man, who while travelling to Wrexham by car, informed him he was called ‘John’. Having each declared their displeasure at the investiture, they arrived at Jenkins’ home. There, Jones asked his host if he was in the army. Asked how he knew, Jones replied that he noticed Jenkins’ cap as he entered the building. For the next ‘two hours’, a ‘trance-like’ Jenkins discussed MAC stratagem for achieving Home Rule for Wales. This involved escalating the militant campaign, which, in turn, would ensure an increased British military presence in Wales. As a means of ‘antagonizing the local populace’, Welsh

He stated.

138 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 8 November 2009.
women were to be raped by MAC personnel wearing British Army uniforms.\textsuperscript{142}

On returning Jones to Chester railway station, having first visited Gareth Miles, John Jenkins asked G. W. Jones if he would ‘consider’ ‘getting rid of the stone on Mackenzie Pier’. Informed he would, Jenkins then asked Jones to take the MAC oath of allegiance. As Jones alighted from the car, John Jenkins, G. W. Jones alleges, formally introduced himself. A ‘month later’, Jones returned from work to discover the director-general of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru had visited his home in Holyhead and placed in his garden shed, an explosive device within a ‘tartan bag’.\textsuperscript{143} Jenkins had left instructions with Jones’ wife as how to activate the charge, and that her husband should plant the device ‘as near as possible to the date of the investiture’\textsuperscript{144}.

Commenting on the apparent abandonment of his erstwhile strict adherence to security matters, the former director general of MAC conceded that all aspects of the encounter with the wife of Gordon Wyn Jones was ‘a gross breach of security’. He, Alders and his fiancé, arrived expecting to find Gordon Wyn Jones at home. To learn that Jones was ‘at sea’ had set Jenkins upon a chain of conduct he recognized in security terms to be highly improper. Yet, with the investiture drawing ever nearer and the pressure mounting, Jenkins felt he had no choice.\textsuperscript{145}

The ceremony now impending, G. W. Jones noticed campers near the monument. Deciding not to carry out the attack, he was ‘most surprised’ to learn an explosive device was located at the base of the monument some days later. Gordon Wyn Jones later told police that on the Saturday prior to the investiture, he ‘accidentally met’ John Jenkins in Caernarfon. Asked by Jenkins ‘what went wrong at the Mackenzie Pier stone’, Jones - not wanting to admit he was not responsible - replied he disabled the device, fearing its activation might endanger the lives of those camping nearby.\textsuperscript{146}

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\item Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 5 July 2009.
\item TNA, ASSI 84/577. Witness statement by Gordon Wyn Jones.
\item TNA, ASSI 84/577. Witness statement by Gordon Wyn Jones. Jenkins is alleged to have said: ‘By the way, my name is John Jenkins’. Jones claimed he ‘hid the hold-all containing the explosives ‘by a disused farm on Holyhead mountain’.
\item TNA, ASSI 84/577. Witness statement by Mary Elizabeth Jones, dated, 13 March 1970. Jenkins was accompanied by Alders and his fiancé Rowena. When explaining how to assemble the device, Rowena assured Jenkins she and Alders would return him again, if G. W. Jones had difficulty. On being asked what would happen if her husband was caught, Jenkins allegedly informed Mary Jones that it was he the authorities were ‘trying to catch’, but they would be unsuccessful as he was ‘too clever for them’.
\item Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 14 January 2009.
\item TNA, ASSI 84/577. Witness statement by Gordon Wyn Jones. The Jones family was in
\end{romanlist}
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Asked who he believed responsible, John Jenkins, having denied personal involvement, replied firmly ‘MAC’ and more specifically, ‘Gordon Wyn Jones’. G. W. Jones subsequently distanced himself from the incident, Jenkins believed, on the prior understating that no action would be taken against him in return for giving evidence at his and Alders’ trial. John Jenkins also vehemently challenged other inclusions in Jones’ written testimony: most notably, Jones’ claim to have visited Jenkins at his home in Wrexham. He and Gordon Wyn Jones, Jenkins protested, only ever met in Caernarfon. Moreover, renowned for his fastidious appearance, Jenkins’ uniform was always diligently placed in a bedroom cupboard when not being worn. Furthermore, while the sexual assault of Welsh woman was discussed at senior MAC level, it was rejected as immoral and ineffective. Nevertheless, asked what other tactical avenues were explored, Jenkins revealed that Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru had considered ‘capturing the Lord Lieutenant of Caernarfon and threatening his life unless the investiture was cancelled’. It was thought an ‘appropriate member of MAC’ would lure the ‘homosexual into woods’. This proposal was also rejected, Jenkins declared, on the grounds ‘it sounded too much like Sicily’. Intriguingly, Jenkins added, the Lord Lieutenant was removed from his post in the weeks before the ceremony, ‘possibly because the authorities realized he was a weak link’.  

The arrest and trial of the ‘Mackenzie Pier three’

However, within 24 hours of the device at Mackenzie Pier being discovered, John Allan Jones (20) of Ty Croes, Anglesey, William Glyn Jones (22) of Trearddur Bay, Anglesey and Dewi Jones (22) of Porthmadoc - all three assistants in the architects and county planning department at Anglesey County Council - were arrested on a charge of conspiring to cause an explosion. Released within hours, all were re-arrested the following day, when examination results for explosives - which involved taking ‘scrapings’ from finger nails - were returned. The tests revealed a positive reaction to substances similar to nitro-glycerin on Dewi Jones and William Glyn Jones. The latter also responded positively to traces of ammonium nitrate and chloride. All three were further charged with possessing a quantity of materials required to assemble an explosive device, such as: gelignite, wooden trips, batteries,

Caernarfon, staying at the home of Mary Jones’ mother.

147 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 25 March 2004; also, 19 October 2007.
an alarm clock and a copper detonator. Having not submitted a bail application, the three remained in custody until after the investiture.\textsuperscript{149} They were then released on bail until their trial in October.\textsuperscript{150}

At Flintshire Assizes, four months after their arrest, the three council assistants - despite the apparent wealth of incriminating evidence - pleaded not guilty to the charges against them. This included planting the device found at Mackenzie Pier, Holyhead. Nonetheless, during the court proceedings, details were heard of \textit{The Organization} which William Glyn Jones purported to belong to. The underground movement, Jones allegedly informed police, pledged to destroy symbolic, inanimate objects such as water pipes and other items associated with the ‘established regime’. Asked how it functioned, Jones declared the group was comprised of small units which received instruction from ‘a link man’. The mysterious figure would supply the explosives and identify the target. Interestingly, unlike Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru explosive ensembles, the pier device was set to activate at 2.00 p.m., a senior bomb disposal inspector revealed.

During police questioning, Dewi Jones disclosed that a week before the Holyhead device was located, he and W. G. Jones travelled to Graig Farm, at Llandegely, Radnor. He received notice the farm was involved in the militant campaign through Michael Lewis, whom he met earlier at Aberystwyth University. On arrival, they apparently received instruction regarding the assembling of a timing device from a Scot called Ron Curtis. Asked by police to explain the diagram handed them by Curtis, Dewi Jones initially claimed to have discarded it. He later stated that the ‘sinister’ hand-written instruction simply outlined the procedure required to install under-floor heating. It was not the only instruction the two Joneses received at Graig Farm. Later handed to John Allan Jones and found in his car, was a sheet of paper on which a second unnamed man at Graig Farm had written ‘Seamus O’Thannagh, University College, Dublin’. Implored by investigating officers to reveal the Irishman’s identity, J. A. Jones revealed he was ‘connected to the IRA’. Yet, although a meeting was organized between his co-defendants and O’Thannagh, the north Wales men failed to attend, owing to having had ‘cold feet at the last minute’.

It was a line of defence which failed to convince the jury. Following the

\textsuperscript{149} \textit{LDP}, 30 June 1969. During the committal hearing, Inspector Tecwyn Williams alleged that ‘all three made statements admitting being involved with explosives’. It was a charge denied by Dewi Jones, who interjected claiming he made no such admission.
revelation that fibres from Dewi Jones’s clothing matched those from the hold all in which the Mackenzie Pier bomb was placed, Dewi and Glyn Jones were found guilty of having jointly conspired with persons unknown to unlawfully cause an explosion. It was considered likely this would endanger life, or cause serious injury to property. Each was imprisoned for eighteen months. Crucially, neither they, nor John Alan Jones, were found guilty of planting the Mackenzie Pier time-bomb. J. A. Jones was nonetheless found guilty of ‘having possession of, or control of, explosive substances’ and sentenced to six months. This was suspended for two years.\textsuperscript{151}

After John Jenkins’ later arrest, Dewi Watkin Powell, the senior Plaid Cymru figure and defence lawyer for the two imprisoned men, approached Jenkins in prison. John Jenkins believes his subsequent statement that none of the three were in MAC, was instrumental in Dewi and Glyn Jones’ period of incarceration being reduced from eighteen months to nine months on appeal. Asked in 2007 to re-visit speculation that at least one of the three had links to MAC, Jenkins declined to comment; before adding that he was opting to do so as might a politician respond; ‘neither stating yes, or no’.

However, the arrests of the three Joneses resulted in a harvest of suspicion within the Welsh militant community. Did he believe Gordon Wyn Jones to be an agent provocateur, John Jenkins was asked;\textsuperscript{152} and instrumental in the arrests of the three planning assistants, as Gareth Miles and Emyr Llywelyn Jones opined?\textsuperscript{153} He did not. Further adding the three had only themselves to blame for their predicament, having been ‘far too vocal about their intentions’. Jenkins believed ‘they very quickly came to the notice of the authorities’. What is more, he had neither heard of Michael Lewis nor a Ron Curtis from the Llandrindod area, nor indeed Graig Farm. Certainly the MAC unit based in mid Wales was not in any way connected to it. Rather, Jenkins was convinced ‘that either Curtis or Lewis, or indeed both, was an agent provocateur’. Such people who ‘shouted loudly their intent to strike a blow for Wales, were easy pickings for agents’. Their ‘subsequent arrest could then be used to

\textsuperscript{150} WM, 19 July 1969.
\textsuperscript{152} Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 5 July 2009. ‘None’ of the Anglesey employees ‘were in MAC’, Jenkins affirmed.
\textsuperscript{153} Telephone interview between WT & Gareth Miles, 14 October 2008; also telephone interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 22 October 2008.

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demonstrate the efficiency of Special Branch, to show it was on top and causing holy hell’, which, Jenkins added derisorily ‘was absolute nonsense of course’.154

The importance of Ron Curtis to the police investigation is supported by Gwynfor Evans, who also suggests the ‘Radnorshire connection’ proved the Joneses undoing. Through his enquiries, Dewi Watkin Powell soon established the enigmatic Ron Curtis was from Hamilton near Glasgow. Contacted by Gwynfor Evans, Winnie Ewing, the Scottish nationalist MP, visited the address in her constituency, where ‘Curtis’s mother swore an affidavit her son’s room was full of police equipment’. Determined the matter should be brought to wider notice, the president of Plaid Cymru contacted The Times. Renowned at this juncture for undertaking such investigative journalism, it dispatched two enquirers to investigate further. Refusing them entry into the house, Ron Curtis’s mother steadfastly declined to discuss the matter.155

In October 2008, Gareth Miles revealed that following the arrest of John Jenkins, he was questioned over his having introduced Gordon Wyn Jones to the operational-commander of MAC. During the interview, police asked him to ‘sign a statement’. As to what the statement outlined, Miles refused to comment, adding he nevertheless ‘refused’ to cooperate. Having declared their disappointment at Miles’ decision, officers ‘threatened to contact the Director of Public Prosecutions, so as to compel’ Miles ‘to give evidence at Jenkins’ trial’. Refusing to be intimidated, Miles impassively challenged the officers to do so. He remains unsure whether the Director of Prosecutions was contacted, as he ‘heard no more about it’. Yet, strangely, considering the degree of evidence Gordon Wyn Jones provided the police with regard John Jenkins, he also failed to appear as a prosecution witness. Responding as to why, Miles declared to his knowledge, Jenkins’ trial coincided with seaman Jones being ‘on a boat bound for South Africa and put there by Special Branch’.156 Did he consider such a course of action credible, Jenkins was asked. Remaining steadfast in his belief that Gordon Wyn Jones was neither an agent provocateur, nor pivotal to the arrest of the so-called ‘Mackenzie three’, Jenkins rather believed the authorities ‘turned Jones’. Having done so, they embarked on a course of ‘damage limitation’.

154 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 5 July 2009.
155 Correspondence between WT & Gwynfor Evans, 20 August 2003.
156 Telephone interview between WT & Gareth Miles, 14 October 2008. Asked to verify if Gordon Wyn Jones visited his home in Wrexham, as Jones later informed police, Gareth Miles stated he would ‘rather not comment’. Telephone interview between WT & Gareth Miles, 8 November 2009.
Au fond, Jenkins proclaimed, the authorities ‘sacrificed’ Jones - merely ‘a pawn’ - ‘to get to’ him.157

Efforts increase to safeguard the investiture as Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg are ‘warned’ and troops confined to barracks

Amid this febrile atmosphere, the security surrounding the investiture left little to chance. Recognizing the importance of radio communication throughout the ceremony - and the Prince’s subsequent three-day tour of Wales - a complex information network system was established. Such was the perceived militant threat, radio stations were protected by a cordon of barbed-wire. Nonetheless, in the event of attack, the Civil Defence would provide emergency fixed radio contact. Motorcycle police officers were also issued with mobile radio sets which linked to regional crime squads and Special Branch.158 In another attempt to prevent telephone links being sabotaged, manhole covers throughout Caernarfon were ‘sealed’.159 As for Caernarfon Castle, closed circuit television was installed. This afforded views both within its walls and surround.160 All the stops were now pulled out. Frustrated by the ponderous procedure in establishing traces of nitro-glycerin on the hands of a suspect, laboratory technicians devised a mobile testing kit. Henceforth, the results would be revealed to officers within minutes.161

Having established the royal party was most vulnerable as it journeyed, helicopters began 24-hour surveillance patrols along each yard of their route. In the event that roads, bridges or rail track was impaired, a company of Royal Engineers was placed on standby.162 Even these measures failed to allay the escalating trepidation of Harold Wilson. In a memo from Downing Street to the Home Office, the Prime Minister ‘assumed’ among ‘the special precautions’ to be implemented, that troops would be deployed to safeguard ‘vital and vulnerable’ installations during the

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157 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 5 July 2009.
158 HO, 325/124. Memorandum entitled The Prince at Aberystwyth and Caernarfon, by W. P. Nichol, Director of Communications, 22 April 1969; also New Statesman, 30 May 1969.
159 WM, 30 June 1969.
162 TNA, CAB 164/389. Letter from J. F. Mayne Assistant Private Secretary to Denis Healey, Minister of Defence, to Michael Halls, the Prime Minister’s Principal Private Secretary, 27 June 1969.
investiture period. In a letter of reply, Brian Cubbon, the Private Secretary to James Callaghan, ‘assured’ the Prime Minister that troops had indeed been mobilized. Yet, he urged Wilson ‘not to underestimate the difficulties’. It was, he declared, ‘not possible to guard every vulnerable point’. Nevertheless, those ‘the Security Service’ had ‘identified’ would receive ‘suitable precautions’; this included ‘frequent’ monitoring by police. As for Caernarfon, the Castle had been closed to public access from 1 June, and teams of detectives were inspecting ‘premises along the processional route’. However, alarming intelligence reports continued unabated. In the midst of an escalation in bomb hoaxes, information was received regarding the safety of the prince and that attempts to disrupt the ceremony were likely.

Yet, notice that military servicemen were protecting key installations came as news to the Ministry of Defence. Troops would be involved in ‘street lining’ at Caernarfon, stated J. F. Mayne, and instruction had been issued as to the course of action soldiers should take, if ‘various situations arise’. However, ‘no troops’ were assisting in the guarding of ‘vulnerable’ sites. Nonetheless, 2,500 military personnel from the three armed services were deployed to Caernarfon. Each was warned to be mindful of ‘subversive activity’ and any approach ‘by subversive elements’. They were not alone; as 2,755 police officers and an undisclosed number of special constables joined them from across the UK. As it transpired, the stringent security arrangements proved justified. The belief, as maintained by Gwynfor Evans, that MI5 might be responsible for the bomb attacks in Wales, had not gone unnoticed in Moscow. In 1992, Russian dissident Vasili Mitrokhin handed details to MI5 of Operation Edding. Formulated by the KGB, it proposed a bridge be destroyed between Porthmadog and Caernarfon a month before the investiture. An anonymous letter was then to be forwarded to Gwynfor Evans at Westminster, stating agents of British Intelligence as responsible. It was further hoped, that Evans would

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164 TNA, PREM 13/2903. Letter from Brian Cubbon to Michael Halls, 26 June 1969. Two three-hour checks, morning and night, were made throughout the castle.
165 WM, 30 June 1969.
166 TNA, CAB 164/389. Letter from J. F. Mayne Assistant Private Secretary to Denis Healey, Ministry of Defence, to Michael Halls, the Prime Minister’s Principal Private Secretary, 27 June 1969. Regiments assigned to Caernarfon, received training in Cyprus to find ‘Barabbas the bomb’, a fictitious saboteur reputedly trained in Wales. WM, 1 May 1969.
167 WM, 26 June 1969. Against Wilson’s proposal to increase the figure, Denis Healy, the Secretary of State for Defence, declared to do so might resemble ‘an invading force’. Wales: The Prince and the Plotter, BBC Timewatch Production. Screened, July 2009.
then censoriously raise the matter in Parliament. For whatever reason, presumably concern the Soviet intelligence service might somehow be implicated, the idea was abandoned.\textsuperscript{169}

Of especial concern to the Prime Minister however, was the safety of both the Royal Train and another which would carry VIP attendees to and from Caernarfon. Just three days before the investiture, Wilson suggested ‘a small pilot train’ traverse the track in advance of each train destined for the ceremony. This ‘particular precaution’, would ensure ‘any untoward incident’ was suffered by the decoy and not for those it was presumably intended.\textsuperscript{170} Within hours, a reply was received. Having contacted British Rail, both the Royal and VIP train, the Home Office informed Downing Street, would be immediately preceded by either a passenger or pilot train. The same precaution would be taken when the prince left Cardiff at the conclusion of the post-investiture Royal Progress on 5 July.\textsuperscript{171} Yet, perhaps most sobering of all the security measures implemented, was the bullet-proof vest manufactured for the prince to wear beneath his regalia. Interwoven into fabric, the carbon-fibre plastic, it was confidently declared, would ‘stop bullets at close range’.\textsuperscript{172} One person prepared to draw militant gunshot was the custodian of Caernarfon Castle and coordinator of the ceremony, Lord Snowdon. Apparently unconcerned, while undertaking organizational business, he drove around the town in his ‘open-top Aston Martin’ or on his ‘motorbike’. If they so desired, Lord Snowdon remarked in 2009, ‘the terrorists could practice’ on him. He was ‘unimportant’.\textsuperscript{173}

Despite Lord Snowdon’s characteristic deprecation, Owain Williams later disclosed how stringent the security effort was to safeguard the ceremony. ‘A few weeks before the investiture’, revealed Williams, a friend of his was taken from his place of work in north Wales, driven to the offices of the Shrewsbury unit and told to relay to Owain Williams that if ‘within 50 miles of Caernarfon on investiture day’ he

\textsuperscript{168} WM, 2 May 1969. The population of Caernarfon was under 10,000.
\textsuperscript{169} The Times, 13 September 1999. Verification of Operation Edding was not provided until files were discovered deep in the KGB’s archives in Moscow.
\textsuperscript{170} TNA, PREM 13/2093. Letter from Michael Halls to Brian Cubbon, 27 June 1969.
\textsuperscript{171} TNA, PREM 13/2093. Letter from Brian Cubbon to Michael Halls, 27 June 1969.
\textsuperscript{172} WM, 30 June 1969. The Leicester design and development centre produced five other such vests. Might other Royal attendees have worn one? A Buckingham Place official denied a vest was destined for Prince Charles, angrily contacting the design company to know why ‘the project had been given publicity without Palace clearance’.
\textsuperscript{173} Interview between WT & Lord Snowdon, 11 November 2009. See also, Cambria (Carmarthen, December 2009).
would ‘meet with a nasty accident’. Already the focus of ‘heavy security surveillance’ at his parents’ farm, Williams considered the threat genuine. Weeks earlier, the brake cable on his car was allegedly sawn through. The investiture now imminent, Owain Williams caught the Holyhead ferry to Ireland. Contacted to respond to the charge, John Owen Evans retorted that Owain Williams was untrustworthy and a man ‘with his own agenda’. What is more, added the former Shrewsbury unit figure, ‘no one’ in the immediate investiture period received a warning of ‘any description’ to his knowledge. Yet, despite having been instructed by the Daily Mail to ‘cover’ the event, Ian Skidmore was also allegedly contacted by Special Branch. He would, he was informed in no uncertain terms, ‘be arrested if within a mile of Caernarfon’ during the ceremony.

Asked what ‘disruptive measures’ were planned for the investiture, Patriotic Front member Gethin ap Iestyn disclosed a veritable stratagem. As a means to convince the authorities that fires were raging throughout the town, a significant number of industrial ‘plumbers’ smoke bombs (drain testers) had been amassed and stored on ‘Forestry Commission land in mid Wales and among a slate slag heap in north Wales’. Once activated, these would be placed in public toilets, in drains - from where smoke would surge from outlets - and in empty buildings with their windows ajar. As a means of disrupting the procession, marbles were to be discarded beneath the hooves of horses to ‘bring them and the rider down’. Barricades were to be established: petrol bombs, stones and even potatoes embedded with razor blades were to be thrown. Recognizing that to truly affect the proceedings - and ensure world reaction - some measure of assault upon the ceremony was required, model airplanes

174 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004. Police wrongly suspected Bryn Williams was involved, regarding him ‘a weak link they could threaten’. Working as a carpenter weeks before the investiture, ‘he was bundled into a car and driven to Shrewsbury to meet Jock Wilson; all the bigwigs involved were there’. Apparently told ‘you’ll listen to advice, but your friend won’t ’til he’s six feet under’; he was instructed to relay the message: ‘Bring your war over the border and look out’.

175 Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 10 February; also 4 April 2009. Williams confessed he ‘was scared’ for his ‘life’. Knowing IRA activists had been ‘taken out’ he slept with a gun under his pillow. The ‘almost sawn through brake lead’ was discovered by an English mechanic (who lived locally) when working on another part of Williams’ car. He had ‘no doubt’ who was responsible. ‘The council even built a lay-by for the armed SB’s to park in!’. Telephone interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 10 April 2009. Telephone interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 10 April 2009. To indicate Williams’ weak character, J. O. Evans stated he returned to Britain from Canada ‘after only a few months’ with a heavy ‘American accent’. Owain Williams remained in Canada between May 1958 and December 1959. TNA, DPP 2/4471. Witness statement by Detective Robert Gwynne Owen, 22 October 1968.

177 Telephone interview between WT & Ian Skidmore, 23 August 2007.
replete with smoke canisters and/or horse excrement was contemplated; all to no avail. His active participation - with his arrest and prison sentence - now curtailed, Gethin ap Iestyn instructed ‘all groups to stand down’. One person very much hitting the ‘right tone’ at this juncture was Prince Charles. Having ‘put Aberystwyth on the map’, at the end of his ‘endurance test’ at the Welsh university, the prince scored an impressive PR victory in a televised interview. Asked to reflect upon his time at Aberystwyth, the prince declared if he had ‘learnt anything’, it was about Wales, its problems and the strength of feeling its populace attached to the Welsh language and culture. It was, he added, ‘very unique and special’ and worthy of preservation. It went some considerable way to ensuring Prince Charles did not again face the degree of heckling protest which marked his first public speech in Welsh at the national Eisteddfodau a month earlier.

Ten days before the investiture, Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg held a rally in Cilmery denouncing the ceremony. Both its distance from Caernarfon and its

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178 Interview between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 19 May 2009; also, correspondence with WT, 26 January 2008; also correspondence with WT, August 2009. Numerous proposals were rejected as most activists ‘were against personal violence’. One potential protestors who later held a position of some influence in Welsh society, told ap Iestyn he was ‘sorry’, but having started a new job, he now had his ‘career to think of’. ‘There were four of these 2/3 member groups, all based in the south…members were divided into two sections; one covert, one overt’. All were ‘100% dedicated to causing the maximum amount of “circus day chaos”’. Also, see Meic Stephens (ed.), *A Most Peculiar People* (Cardiff, 1992), p.141.


180 Jonathan Dimbleby, *The Prince of Wales* (London, 1994), pp.149, 147,167; also, Holden, *Prince of Wales*, p.143. Prince Charles does not appear to have greatly enjoyed life away from Cambridge - where he enjoyed a far greater degree of anonymity - apparently regarding the Aberystwyth experience ‘as an unwelcome interruption’ to the real matter of his education. Despite the ‘incredibly warm and reassuring’ welcome…the difference from ‘this place and Cambridge is very marked’, wrote the prince to a friend. The ‘contrast’, he later declared, being ‘so great that one might be living in another world’.

181 BBC/ITV interview. Screened, 26 June 1969. Earlier claims by Francis Jones, the Wales Herald Extraordinary, that Prince Charles was descended from none other than the very doyen of Welsh medieval history ‘Llewellyn The Great’. (Llywelyn ab Iorwerth) and the ‘first princes of Powys and Dehubaruth’ were also sensitively addressed. *WM*, 16 July 1968. ‘Any Herald worth his salt’, he remarked disarmingly, ‘could trace a member of the Royal Family back to anybody’.

182 *WM*, 2 June 1969. Speeches by Prince Charles were greeted with unease by George Thomas, who feared they might prove ‘useful’ for nationalists. Thomas implored the PM to ask the Queen to have ‘a discreet word’ with the prince. TNA, PREM 13/2907. Letter to Harold Wilson, 22 July 1969. Asked to comment on the charge he gave succour to the political growth of Welsh nationalism during the investiture period, Prince Charles’s office declared ‘it would not be appropriate for His Royal Highness to comment personally on the matter’. Correspondence to WT, from Manon Williams, the Deputy Private Secretary to HRH The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall, 28 October 2009.

183 *WM*, 30 June 1969. Amid a considerable police presence, a recorded message from Professor J. R. Jones was heard and a police helicopter hovered briefly overhead. At CyIG’s 1967 AGM, a resolution was passed opposing ‘this little pantomime’, on the grounds that it was ‘an insult to the people of
apparent decree which implored members to obscure with paint ‘English-only investiture signs, but to ignore those in Welsh’, crystallized the group’s inability to elevate its protest to a more practical and less farcical plateau, believed Gethin ap Iestyn. Moreover, while he acknowledged the ill-treatment suffered by leading activist Dafydd Iwan, who, it is alleged, received excreta through the post, he nonetheless questioned how far senior Cymdeithas figures ‘rolled over’ under external authoritarian pressure. Expanding the point, ap Iestyn revealed he was reliably informed that leading figures were threatened the group would face the full wrath of the state, if its members disrupted the ceremony.\(^{184}\) Responding to the charge, Gareth Miles, the chair of Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg at this juncture, declared activists were urged to obfuscate ‘all English language road signs’, irrespective of whether ‘connected to the investiture’. Furthermore, it was the first he heard of any such ‘understanding’ between the group and the authorities.\(^{185}\) Nevertheless, society members had suspected all along what ‘the Establishment was up to’, Miles added, but even so, he ‘welcomed the investiture really; it divided people and focused the mind’.\(^{186}\)

Asked if he was tempted to re-enter the pantheon of militant Welsh protest over the investiture issue, Emyr Llywelyn Jones disclosed to having been the subject of routine and systematic surveillance as the ceremony approached. Moreover, the campaign of militant action, as orchestrated by John Jenkins, greatly troubled him. He was, he confessed, ‘very afraid’ of it.\(^{187}\) To what degree Jones was subject to police monitoring, was highlighted one morning when his car refused to start. Subsequently, rather than being followed as was customary, school teacher Jones was

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\(^{184}\) Correspondence between WT & Gethin ap Iesyn, 24 January 2008; also interview with WT, 19 May 2009. D. Iwan’s satirical view of the investiture ‘Carlo’ sold 15,000 copies; impressive for a Welsh-language record. Taith yr Iaith. S4C Production. Screened, 4 October 2007.

\(^{185}\) Telephone interview between WT & Gareth Miles, 8 November 2009. Emyr Llywelyn Jones also denied any such ‘deal’. Yet, questioned following an explosion in the months before the investiture, Jones was allegedly ‘offered a car’ in exchange for an assurance he would not campaign against the ceremony. They would, a police officer added, ‘deny any such offer was made’ should Jones go public. Telephone interview between WT & E. LI. Jones, 19 September 2010.

\(^{186}\) Telephone interview between WT & Gareth Miles, 14 October 2008. About ‘one hundred protesters’ were removed by police from outside Caernarfon Castle on the eve of the ceremony. South Wales Evening Post, 1 July 1969.

\(^{187}\) Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones 12 September 2003. To the pacifist Jones, fear the campaign of militant action might escalate was sobering. ‘Well, who’d have been the number 1 suspect?’ Jones replied, when asked about his involvement. ‘It was possibly because I was viewed as such’ he added, ‘that the authorities took so long to catch the people who were involved’.
graciously transported to work in a police car. Yet, despite this gesture of ‘good will’, the contemporaneous tension which necessitated Jones’ surveillance soon caught the eye of Saunders Lewis, who declared the atmosphere in the days before the investiture to have resembled ‘something close to open warfare between the government’s police and young people of Welsh Wales’. Whether concerned they might prove susceptible to infiltration by activists, or borne of fear they might get into fights with Covies, (town inhabitants) on the eve of the ceremony, troops were consigned to their temporary barracks positioned outside Caernarfon.

Abergele and the deaths of William Alwyn Jones and George Francis Taylor

Wales awoke on Investiture Day, to news that two men had been killed when apparently planting an explosive device in Abergele. As news of the explosion disseminated through those congregating in Caernarfon, the deaths of Alwyn Jones (22) and George Taylor (37) was relayed to John Jenkins by a fellow serviceman, who, on opening the flap of his tent, piquantly remarked: ‘we’ve got two of the bastards’. Recognizing that any visible adverse reaction, or effort to establish details of the incident was ‘a gross breach of security’, Jenkins - who was in Caernarfon in the event of army personnel requiring dental attention - spent the day feigning both disinterest and mild amusement. He was, he later conceded somberly, ‘secretly in agony’. Moreover, for years following, the former director-general of MAC was haunted by the belief ‘it should have been’ him. Owain Williams received notice of the Abergele explosion ‘in Cork’. News that ‘two freedom fighters had been killed in Wales’, adorned a billboard outside the city’s Sinn Fein office, above which, the

188 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 23 August 2005. Jones was monitored by a ‘team of eight’ 24 hours a day. He also believes CyIG was ‘infiltrated with police officers and informers’. For further information regarding surveillance, see Ellis, Investiture, pp. 224,225.
191 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 15 November 2009. ‘All leave for those in the medical services was cancelled due to the expected rush of casualties resulting from public disturbances. As it transpired, there were only a few casualties’.
192 WM, 1 July 1969. (Late edition). A massive security operation sealed off Abergele after the blast, with motorists stopped and questioned. Also that evening, a television cable in Anglesey was cut. It is believed it was designed to prevent the investiture being broadcast. It was however repaired and service not affected. WM, 2 July 1969.
party’s flag flew respectfully at half mast. 194

It was not until ‘late afternoon’ on investiture day that television news announced the deaths had occurred outside the social security office in Abergele. Only then, John Jenkins later revealed, could he ‘deduce who was involved’. 195 Heard throughout the town at 23.45, arriving police officers were greeted with a scene of unimaginable horror. 196 Passionately convinced her father was not involved in the militant campaign, or a member of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru, Jennie Evans, George Taylor’s daughter, has undertaken her own investigation into the tragic events which transpired that night. 197 Contrary to reports in the Western Mail that following a game of darts in the Castle Arms, Alwyn Jones and George Taylor left together when it ‘became too crowded’, 198 the former licensee (Ron Corris) revealed a conflicting account. He informed Jennie Evans that Alwyn Jones exited the pub a good ten minutes before George Taylor; and before doing so, the two men appeared to quarrel. Having approached the reputedly affable Taylor to enquire if all was well, Taylor allegedly informed the licensee that Alwyn Jones was ‘off his bloody head’; and that he (Corris) knew what ‘Alwyn’ was ‘like with his stupid ideas’. 199

Jennie Evans, in accordance with other members of the Taylor family, also maintains that on returning home ‘relaxed and cheerful’ from the Castle Arms at 22.50, George Taylor enquired after Jennie, entered her bedroom to ruffle her hair and ‘about half an hour later’, made his excuse to leave on the pretext of having forgotten his cigarettes in the pub. Stating that ‘Alwyn might have them’, the Taylor family believe their father caught up with Alwyn Jones and desperately implored him to ‘see sense; go home and forget the whole thing’. That Alwyn Jones’ Jamaican-born wife Marie had just months previously given birth to their first daughter, was a development they feel sure George Taylor would have highlighted to dissuade the

194 Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 4 April 2009; also, 23 November 2009. G. ap Iestyn was informed by an inmate on being escorted into Cardiff Prison that ‘two of your boys have died’. Interview between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 20 May 2009.
196 Interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 19 February 2001. The explosion occurred along a passageway off Market Street, outside what is today the town library.
197 Correspondence between WT & Jennie Evans, 3 August 2009.
198 WM, 2 July 1969. As he was leaving the Castle Hotel, it was claimed Alwyn Jones cheerfully complemented the landlord’s wife on her ‘kinky earrings’. Yet, the licensee (Ron Corris) was also reported as saying they left separately. Sun, 2 July 1969.
199 Correspondence between WT & Jennie Evans, 3 August 2009.
The police interpretation of the appalling episode, as relayed by John Owen Evans, is that he and other crime scene officers deduced that George Taylor had indeed stood some way back from Alwyn Jones. This assumption was based on the position of the two bodies. The force of the blast inflicted horrific facial injuries and stripped George Taylor’s body of its clothing. Yet, Alwyn Jones, who was presumably within inches of the device when it activated, was thrown some 40 yards by the blast and mutilated beyond appropriate description.

Asked how police linked her father to the explosion, Jennie Evans revealed officers were informed by the attending fire crew, that inexplicably, George Taylor did not ‘answer the fire call’ to his home. The bell-ring had earlier sounded at the Taylor residence, on the understanding that - as was customary - George Taylor would contact the fire station and receive further instruction. Some two hours after the blast, police officers led by Jock Wilson arrived at the Taylor home. Having established George Taylor was not there, they undertook an extensive search. Nothing incriminating was discovered. George Taylor was identified by dental records and finger prints retrieved from items in the house. Alwyn Jones was identified by a ring on his finger which bore his initials.

Yet, further explaining why she remains adamant her father was not involved in Welsh militant extremism, Jennie Evans stated that as a respected fireman, her father was appalled by such acts of violence. Furthermore, had her father not been killed on the eve of the investiture, the following day - although ‘a proud Welshman’ - he would have been placing celebratory bunting throughout the town as an active member of the Abergele Investiture Committee. Not once did he express support for...

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200 Telephone interview between WT & Jennie Evans, 15 August 2009; also, telephone interview between WT & Jennie Evans, 19 August 2009; also, correspondence between WT & Jennie Evans, 17 August 2009. Aged three in July 1969, Jennie Taylor had been babysat by her fourteen-year-old sister Elaine. Their mother was out tending elderly grandparents. On returning, G. Taylor mildly rebuked Elaine for letting the ray-burn go out; backed it up, had a cup of tea, asked after and kissed Jennie, and left. Having said he would be ‘about 10 minutes’, moments after leaving, unknowingly watched by Elaine, he lit a cigarette. Having not returned, Elaine realized her father ‘had wanted to get out of the house’ and imaginatively considered he was having an affair. Her anxiety was disturbed by an explosion which woke and upset Jennie. Elaine comforted her claiming it was ‘a gas explosion’ and telling her ‘not to worry’.

201 Telephone interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 8 July 2009. G. Taylor’s body was discovered fifteen minutes after the blast. An hour later, A. Jones’s body was discovered in a nearby garden. WM, 1 July 1969.

202 Telephone interview between WT & Jennie Evans, 19 August 2009.

203 Telephone interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 8 July 2009. One elderly resident near the scene of the blast, awoke to discover a human hand on her bed. It had entered the open bedroom window in her bungalow. ‘They were so badly mutilated we didn’t even realise there were two of
the nationalist agenda, less still, the militant campaign. However, to some degree, this is challenged by contemporary media reports, which quote Kathleen Jones, a ‘friend and neighbour for thirteen years’ as stating George Taylor was ‘a nationalist’ who told her he ‘objected to an Englishman becoming Prince of Wales’. It was a claim dismissed by the Taylor family in 2010, on the grounds that ‘no one of that name lived near’ them.

Nevertheless, Jennie Evans also questioned her father’s assumed close friendship with Alwyn Jones, claiming that while the two men were certainly known to each other as Abergele Urban Council employees, they did not - as their varying ages might suggest - enjoy a notably amiable acquaintance. It is a claim supported by licensee Ron Corris, who remarked they ‘had their own circle of friends’, seldom spoke to each other and had not done so that evening. Of particular angst to Jennie Evans, is that her father’s alleged membership of MAC is only sanctioned by the word of John Jenkins and he concedes he was only aware of George Taylor’s involvement, solely because Alwyn Jones informed him so. Moreover, contrary to Alwyn Jones, who was well known in Abergele for espousing republican sympathies, according to one former retired north Wales police officer Jennie Evans has spoken to, George Taylor did not feature to any degree in police intelligence regarding involvement in militant activism: either through active participation or through having voiced Republican sensibilities.

Nonetheless, despite the claim of the retired north Wales officer, this account is questioned by John Owen Evans. He believes that both Alwyn Jones and George Taylor ‘were known to police in north Wales’. Furthermore, if George Taylor was not involved in the bombing campaign, why did he leave his house and join Alwyn Jones? That he did so to try and talk his friend and junior work colleague out of them’, declared Evans. ‘That and the fact we only found one pair of shoes on the wall’.  

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204 Telephone interview between WT & Jennie Evans, 15 August 2009.
205 Sun, 2 July 1969. Kathleen Jones also declared George Taylor to be ‘a quiet, gentle man’.
206 Correspondence between WT & Jennie Evans, 6 October 2010.
207 Telephone interview between WT & Jennie Evans, 19 August 2009.
208 Sun, 2 July 1969.
209 Telephone interview between WT & Jennie Evans, 15 August 2009; also, telephone interview between WT & Jennie Evans, 19 August 2009. Alwyn Jones was employed as a labourer, George Taylor a painter. ‘They were more acquaintances than friends. They’d known each other for about eighteen months to two years, having met through work’, explained Evans. ‘They were in the darts team together with five or six others…but as a fireman my father could not guarantee he’d always be available, so he was on the reserve team. So they were not bosom buddies, as alleged’.  

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undertaking the protest did 'not add up'. John Owen Evans' apparent incredulity requires further examination. A full hour had passed since the two men were together in the Castle Arms; how did George Taylor know the exact time Alwyn Jones would either be walking towards the 'target', or had arrived there presumably moments earlier? Did a prior understanding exist between the two men? Yet, it is a point unendorsed by Jennie Evans, who argues that Alwyn Jones - as typified by his renowned espousing of nationalist principles - may very well have informed George Taylor of his intentions and the specific time he intended to plant the device. However, an acceptance of such, she contests, still fails to provide inconclusive proof of her father's active association.

Yet, in accordance with John Owen Evans, John Jenkins also believes that little importance can be attached to George Taylor's reticence regarding his involvement in MAC. 'I did not want my family knowing of my involvement', Jenkins protested; 'and I was in the middle of it all'. It was simply preposterous of the Taylor family to deny their father's affiliation purely on the basis he did not discuss his actions with them. It was 'not', Jenkins added bluntly, 'something discussed over the breakfast table'. It is a claim given correlation by Owain Williams, who confidently professed both George Taylor's membership of MAC and his inclusion in the militant struggle.

In August 2009, John Jenkins offered by way of intriguing contrast, a contrary series of events with regard the Abergele action. After repeatedly and contentiously maintaining he was 'on duty in Caernarfon' the evening before the investiture, and yet despite this, delivered the device to Abergele 'an hour before the explosion', Jenkins conceded the handing over of the device to Alwyn Jones actually transpired a week before the blast. It was then, Jenkins added, he 'saw George Taylor' for the first and only time. The encounter occurred when having entered the Abergele British

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210 Telephone interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 8 July 2009.
211 Telephone interview between WT & Jennie Evans, 19 August 2009.
212 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 August 2009.
213 Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 November 2009. 'He was a member of MAC', stated Williams, 'I know he was'. However, while Williams admitted having met Alwyn Jones through their mutual involvement in the Patriotic Front, it was 'possible' that he never met George Taylor, he conceded.
214 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 25 March 2004; also, 19 October 2007; also, 20 November 2008. His account was fiercely challenged by Jennie Evans who queried how John Jenkins was able to make the 80 mile-round trip if 'on duty'. Jenkins maintained that he was not constrained to that degree and could 'pop out' to stroll around the town. It was then he claimed to have delivered the device.
Legion, he momentarily made eye contact with Alwyn Jones. Moments later, as predetermined, Jones joined Jenkins in the car park where the explosive device - including the fail-safe mechanism - was handed over.\textsuperscript{215} Jenkins recognized George Taylor, he later revealed, adding: ‘he was known to me by name...he didn’t know me, but I knew him’. It was partly owing to George Taylor’s involvement in the Snowdonia Country Club action in January 1968, declared Jenkins; but so too was it ‘more than that’. Jenkins ‘knew Alwyn had recruited him’ but he never spoke to George Taylor, ‘then or at anytime’.\textsuperscript{216} George Taylor’s alleged participation in the Snowdonia action remains fiercely contested by the Taylor family.\textsuperscript{217}

This account of the episode is further challenged by a subsequent police interview with John Jenkins. Six weeks after his arrest, Jenkins refused to comment when asked if he and Owain Williams - in the garden shed at the home of John Roberts - handed Alwyn Jones a quantity of explosives and a time delay. They then, officers claimed, demonstrated to the Abergele man ‘the principles of the timing mechanism’. The chronology in which this incident was placed, officers suggested, was crucial: having transpired ‘a week or so before the investiture’;\textsuperscript{218} a few days after Jenkins implored John Roberts or his son to collect and return a man from Abergele to undertake the Holyhead strike and days before Owain Williams departed for Ireland. Owain Williams stated he could ‘not remember it at all’, when asked to comment on the alleged meeting. It was, he declared, ‘utter nonsense’. Moreover, he had no prior knowledge of the Abergele action, until learning of the explosion in Cork.\textsuperscript{219} John Jenkins also dismissed the meeting’s alleged occurrence as ‘absurd’.\textsuperscript{220}

Interestingly however, a police witness statement later given by Frederick Ernest Alders, appears to support the police account of events. Alders claimed that while on holiday in Rhyl, he delivered notice to Alwyn Jones that rather than investiture day itself - as John Jenkins had earlier directed - the explosion should occur ‘the day before’ the ceremony. The message, Alders added, he passed to Jones

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\textsuperscript{215} Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 August 2009. It was essential that Jenkins knew where a MAC operative was at any given time: ‘he stayed in on a Monday evening, played darts on a Tuesday, etc’.
\textsuperscript{216} Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 22 August 2009; also, telephone interview with John Jenkins, 8 November 2009.
\textsuperscript{217} Telephone interview between WT & Jennie Evans, 13 August 2009. Jennie Evans dismissed the suggestion her father was involved in the Snowdonia action as ‘absolute rubbish’.
\textsuperscript{218} TNA, ASSI 84/577. Police interview statement by Richard William Evans, 16 December 1969.
\textsuperscript{219} Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 4 April 2009.
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at his home in Abergele 'two or three days before the investiture'. Even more beguilingly, Alders also maintained that having undertaken the short journey from Rhyl to Abergele, he was greeted by a somewhat agitated Alwyn Jones, who handed him, along with other bomb-making equipment, 'one of the two batteries', which Jones announced 'was flat'. Nonetheless, it is a suggestion countered by John Jenkins, who claimed that not once did Alders undertake any such communication unless accompanied by him. Furthermore, it was vehemently understood by Alders, that any such action was 'unacceptable'. It is a statement supported by Ann Woodgate. During a subsequent police interview, she informed officers that following her engagement to Alders in January 1968, her fiancé embarked on a series of visits 'to the Abergele area in his van'. Although she could not state with certainty if John Jenkins accompanied him, Woodgate nevertheless ascertained from Alders' 'conversation' that 'somebody' had.

The authorities had 'no idea' as to the identity of MAC's operational-director at this juncture, John Owen Evans attests; and what is more, were it remotely suspected Jenkins was responsible, 'he would not have been within a hundred miles of Caernarfon, let alone on duty there'. It is a belief resolutely shared by John Jenkins, who also states that he spent the evening before the ceremony - while constrained to some degree by his dental duties in Caernarfon - 'popping out' every so often to walk around the town. It was during such time, that he was verbally abused 'by a car full of local lads on account of the British Army uniform' he was wearing. Looking suitably 'non-plussed', he was, he admits, secretly 'thrilled'. In addition, the experience further 'convinced' him that contrary to contemporary and subsequent reports claiming the investiture was roundly supported by the people of Caernarfon and Wales, his own understanding through 'keeping an ear to the ground' vehemently

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220 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 8 November 2009.
221 TNA, ASSI 84/577. Undated witness statement by Frederick Ernest Alders. Alwyn Jones apparently handed Alders 'pieces of a timing device, clock, bulb, piece of wire and the two batteries', one of which was flat.
222 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 8 November 2009.
224 Telephone interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 7 July 2009. 'We didn't know about John Jenkins at the time of the investiture. He had not been seriously identified. The police did not have hard facts about him. His name might have been on the books as a sympathizer from south Wales, but there were many people from south Wales whose names were cropping up. Had there been any stronger information on Jenkins, he wouldn't have been anywhere near Caernarfon'.
225 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 August 2009.
suggested otherwise. The Secretary of State for Wales also received a less than genial greeting on arriving at Caernarfon by car. ‘Slowed to a snail’s pace’ by the ‘throng of excited visitors’…‘two tough-looking young men leaned in through the car’s open window and spat “Bradwr - Traitor” George Thomas later alleged.

Owing to the fact the rail line to Caernarfon passes through Abergele, much speculation has since abounded as to the true target of the action. Some, such as former Shrewsbury Unit figure Raymond Kendall, have suggested the explosives were intended for the rail-track, in a pre-emptive attempt to either sabotage the Royal Train, or at least prevent it passing through en route. John Humphries, the former Western Mail journalist appears to concur with this view. In his study Freedom Fighters, Humphries - in an uncorroborated and contested assertion - claims that the device which exploded in Abergele on the eve of the investiture, comprised ‘a fifty stick gelignite bomb’ and was ‘the largest ever assembled’ by MAC. It was, Humphries tantalisingly intimates, ‘clearly intended for a major target’. Yet, historians and political figures also seem content to allow the conjecture to stand.

Nevertheless, either scenario is dismissed by John Jenkins, who strenuously insists the target was ‘a government installation in the town’. It was, he added, ‘romantic nonsense to say the track itself’. Moreover, ever mindful of the ‘hearts and minds’ philosophy which underpinned MAC doctrinaire code, Jenkins was contemporaneously aware that any attack on the Royal party would prove ‘massively counter-productive in political terms’; as would injury suffered by police officers, who, Jenkins was further informed through a police contact, were ‘patrolling the rail line in Abergele searching for devices throughout the evening’. This same police contact, Jenkins maintains, could have provided information as to the time the Royal Train was passing through Abergele, if this information Jenkins so desired. Yet, it

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226 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 25 March 2004; also, 19 October 2007; also 20 November 2008.
227 Thomas, Mr. Speaker, p.120. Thomas also claimed that at this point he ‘received almost weekly threats’ to his life and his mother was ‘frequently awakened’ by anonymous threatening phone calls. Mr. Speaker, p.118.
228 Correspondence between WT & Raymond Kendall, 2 August 2009.
229 John Humphries, Freedom Fighters (Cardiff, 2008), pp.123,124. Each aspect of Humphries’ account is dismissed by John Jenkins. Conceding that Alwyn Jones, the cell leader, ‘orchestrated the action’, Jenkins nonetheless questioned Humphries’ claim that Jones and Taylor transferred the device by way of a paint pot tied to a ladder. Moreover, he had ‘no idea’ where Humphries acquired this information. Nor Humphries’ assertion that it was the biggest device MAC had assembled. It was ‘normal size’ countered Jenkins. Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 August 2009.
was not requested, as it was utterly superfluous to his intentions.231

That the target was not in any way connected to either the Royal party or the railway track, is supported by a police witness statement later given by Frederick Ernest Alders. Asked to reveal all he knew regarding the Abergele explosion, Alders claimed that John Jenkins earlier informed him ‘there was to be an explosion at a Government Office’ in the town.232 However, this lack of tangible evidence concerning the target of the operation, has remained a source of lingering resentment for Jennie Evans. What has ‘annoyed me most about John Jenkins in the years since my father died’, she stated in 2009, ‘is that he has allowed the press to speculate the railway track was the intended target’. This, she believes John Jenkins has contrived ‘as a way of glorifying the MAC cause’.233 It is an accusation John Jenkins dismissed as lacking ‘credibility’.234

One of the first officers at the scene was John Owen Evans. He also believes the ‘explosive device was deliberately placed at the base of a social security building’. Furthermore, in response to those who suggest otherwise, ‘there was’, Evans added, ‘nothing to stop them walking the mile or so further and planting the device on the railway track’. Yet, having stopped at the site of the intended target, what did he believe next transpired, Evans was asked. As the ‘clock on the device was being set’, he replied, some ‘error’ on the part of the saboteur resulted in the ensemble activating.235 It is an explanatory view shared by Evans’ former Shrewsbury unit colleague, Raymond Kendall.236 John Jenkins thinks it ‘possible they tested the device after it was primed’, thus causing its activation. However on the basis that Alwyn Jones - and John Jenkins believed George Taylor - was responsible for the Snowdon Country Club explosion eighteen months earlier, error on their part seemed

231 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 August 2009; also, interview between WT & John Jenkins, 25 March 2004; also, 19 October 2007; also, 20 November 2008. ‘The order I gave’, declared Jenkins, ‘was any government building in the town itself. There was no ambiguity at all... Anything (target) which threatened the safety of the police - or anyone else for that matter - I was against. Not everyone shared my view, but that’s how it was: a political not a military objective at all time’.

232 TNA, ASSI 84/577. Undated witness statement by Frederick Ernest Alders.

233 Telephone interview between WT & Jennie Evans, 19 August 2009. Although ‘wholly wretched’, there were in Wales those prepared to find significance in the fact two Welshmen, five and three quarter centuries after the Glyndwr Rising, had ‘died for Wales’. Davies, History of Wales, p.671.

234 Telephone interview with John Jenkins, 24 August 2009.

235 Telephone interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 8 July 2009. ‘I think what happened, was that they probably messed about with the clock; they tried to set it at the scene, rather than before’, J. O. Evans opined.

236 Correspondence between WT & Raymond Kendall, 9 August 2009.
unlikely, Jenkins added.

Such conjecture has led John Jenkins to wonder if the device was ‘deliberately tampered with by the intelligence services’, as a means to ensure it detonated prematurely. Not surprisingly, it is a suggestion angrily renounced by John Owen Evans, who remarked that John Jenkins had much to lose at this juncture should his identity be revealed. Who could say with certainty, Evans declared, ‘that Jenkins didn’t set the time mechanism to explode early?’ Such action, Evans suggested, the operational-commander of MAC might deploy as a ruthless means to prevent his detection. It is an accusation dismissed by John Jenkins as ‘pathetic’. Moreover, it merely demonstrated the failure of the legal authorities to understand both Welsh extremism and the militant community.

At the inquest into the explosion at Abergele, E. Talog Davies, the West Denbighshire coroner, returned verdicts of accidental death. He too believed the explosion occurred at the target site. ‘These men’, he sombrely announced, ‘had no business...handling explosives’. Someone who knew more about such material than they, gave ‘either one or both of them a substantial quantity...the greatest responsibility’ for their deaths, therefore lay with those ‘people’. The coroner felt he could state ‘quite clearly’ ‘they were not intent on inflicting personal injury’...‘It would have been extremely unlikely anyone would have been walking along that passageway at that time’...The ‘two men without any reason’ known, ‘decided they wanted to cause an explosion at that point’. Having ‘set up the explosive’...‘one wire might have touched another’. He imagined ‘something like that happened’. It was improbable, Talog Davies added, the device activated ‘because the explosives were in a poor state’, but rather because it was ‘incorrectly handled’.

It was further revealed that Alwyn Jones enjoyed a somewhat colourful reputation in Abergele, where his Republican and anti-investiture views were both ‘well known’ and a source of amusement. Having boasted of being in possession ‘of

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237 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 August 2009; also, interview between WT & John Jenkins, 25 March 2004; also, 19 October 2007; also 20 November 2008. It could ‘neither be proved nor disproved that MI5 was responsible...The authorities were desperate for casualties; for someone to be killed, either on the MAC side or the other side: any one’. Furthermore, Jenkins believes MI5 would ‘go to any lengths at that time; they were desperate’.

238 Telephone interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 23 August 2009.

239 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 8 November 2009.

240 WM, 15 October 1969. ‘A more futile exercise was hard to imagine’, declared the coroner. Farm worker Vernon Jones donated his £8 recitation Eisteddfodau prize to the fund established for the families of Alwyn Jones and George Taylor. WM, 9 August 1969.
something which would go off' at the time of the investiture, interestingly, some 'eighteen months before' the explosion which killed him and George Taylor, Jones revealed to his cousin Wyn Roberts, a quantity of 'some 50 sticks of gelignite, a timing device akin to an alarm clock and a press-button battery switch'. The ensemble was 'kept in a biscuit tin and stored in the garden shed' at the home Jones shared with his mother. Asked by the coroner why he did not challenge Jones or inform the police of the bomb-making equipment, Roberts replied: 'it was Alwyn's business'.241 As a regular contributor to the letters page of the region's newspaper, where his republican views were eloquently espoused,242 Alwyn Jones's correspondence and his apparent suitability to the militant cause, soon came to Jenkins' attention through 'the efforts of a sleeper in the Abergele area'.243

Having contentiously disclosed that Alwyn Jones and George Taylor were responsible for the Snowdonia Country Club action, John Jenkins nonetheless resolutely rejected the suggestion of Wyn Roberts, that his cousin, Alwyn Jones, had possessed such a stash of explosives; or indeed had acted as a Quarter Master for MAC. Had he done so, quantified Jenkins, it would have provided Jones 'the ability to use it without my jurisdiction'. Which, the former director-general of MAC added, 'went against' the movement's 'ethos' and Jenkins' own strategic control.244 Yet, the inquest was further informed that following his departure from the Castle Arms, Alwyn Jones returned to the home he shared with his wife Marie and announced he was 'going to have a bath'. She remained apparently unaware Jones had left the house until later notified by the authorities of his death.245

Whatever the truth regarding George Taylor's involvement in the Snowdonia Country Club action, or the appalling Abergele episode, no such ambiguity surrounds the manner in which the community of Abergele vilified the Taylor family following

241 Ibid. Alwyn Jones 'had tattoos over his body which said 'freedom for Wales' and the like' stated Jennie Evans. 'He wrote articles supporting Welsh nationalism in the local press...He was very proud of Wales and stated often that he wanted 'Welsh freedom'...He was proud of 'spraying slogans to further the cause and so on'. Telephone interview between WT & Jennie Evans, 13 August 2009.
242 Telephone interview between WT & Jennie Evans, 13 August 2009.
243 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 24 December 2009. 'The sleeper was involved in letting me of anyone local who'd strong support for us. I wanted someone in the area, because it was on the route of the Royal Train. Not that the train or tracks were targeted'.
244 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 8 November 2009.
245 WM, 15 October 1969. As Jones played darts, his wife entertained Catherine Brazier and Michael Hassett. When another friend of Alwyn Jones, Alan Barton, out walking his dog heard the explosion, he called at Jones' home enquiring after him. He twice received 'vague explanations' from Marie Jones regarding her husbands' whereabouts. Finally, he and Hassett left to discover the source of the
the death of the much-loved father and husband. Once respected as community minded with regard his fire service and active participation in the town’s under 14’s football team, George Taylor’s family was systematically subjected to invective and profane taunts that he tried ‘to kill the Royal Family’. Forced to place ‘seven pairs of net curtains across the windows to prevent people peering in’, Jennie Taylor’s mother Mary, struggled bravely to protect her three children from the emotional onslaught of having slogans daubed across the walls of their house and a dead rat and excrement pushed through the letter box.246

**Investiture Day, MAC and other dissenters**

Speaking in 2009, Lord Snowdon revealed that while news of the explosion in Abergele had ‘naturally been noted’, the authorities were determined ‘to play it down’.247 Nevertheless, as reports were received that overnight Union Jack bunting had been ‘ripped down in Bethesda’,248 ‘celebratory flowerbeds vandalized in Aberystwyth’ and the vicar of Caernarfon ‘had urged Welsh extremists to observe a truce over the investiture period’,249 the threat posed by the militant fraternity remained ‘serious’. Revealing police concerns, Jock Wilson conceded ‘a bomb could be in any one of a million places’.250 Later discussing the extent of the planned disruption, Owain Williams declared a ‘storming of Caernarfon Castle was genuinely considered’.251 It is a notion dismissed by John Jenkins as ‘fanciful’.252 Whether fanciful or no, the Shrewsbury unit deemed it ‘unlikely’ a physical assault on ‘any individual’ might be attempted, Raymond Kendall remarked, but those employed in the protection of the Royal Family nonetheless recognized their ‘reputations were on the line’.253

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246 Telephone interview between WT & Jennie Evans, 19 August 2009. Jennie Evans was also systematically bullied by her head teacher. When a new pupil or member of staff joined the Comprehensive school, Jennie Evans was forced to stand on a chair and inform the new arrival her father had ‘tried to kill the Prince of Wales’. Such a malevolent and unverifiable accusation ‘gave the green light’ for a number of pupils to bully and intimidate her.


249 *LDP*, 30 June 1969.

250 *WM*, 27 June 1969. ‘The first indication we have’, Wilson added, ‘is when a bomb has indeed exploded’.

251 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004.


253 Correspondence between WT & Raymond Kendall, 2 August 2009.
As the motorcade containing Prince Charles passed along the A5 from Holyhead to Caernarfon - where he would meet the other Royals waiting aboard the Royal Train - police received notice that ‘cables’ were protruding suspiciously from a manhole cover in the road. Despite their initial fears, bomb disposal officers and telecom engineers, soon deduced the ‘device’ was ‘part of the GPO system’.\(^{254}\) It was nevertheless a tense moment and followed the discovery of another suspect package - although ultimately discovered to be harmless - beneath a railway bridge in Chester the previous evening.\(^{255}\)

Having arrived safely, at 14.00 the Royal Train drew slowly to a standstill adjacent to the Ferodo brick factory on the outskirts of Caernarfon. To announce its arrival, the BBC’s esteemed broadcaster Kenneth Baker informed viewers he could ‘now confirm’ the Royal Train had ‘halted for the night near Menai bridge’.\(^{256}\) If this supports a belief the Royal Train passed over the England/Wales border at 16.00 the day before,\(^{257}\) it nonetheless conflicts with an account proffered by George Thomas, who later revealed the Royal Train was delayed in Crewe just hours before the ceremony, ‘because the signalling wires had been cut’.\(^{258}\) Whatever the truth surrounding the train’s clandestine journey, a little while later, twenty-year-old Prince Charles - adorned in the uniform of Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Regiment of Wales - disembarked and the Royal carriage began the journey to Caernarfon Castle.\(^{259}\)

At 14.25, the remaining royal party alighted.\(^{260}\) As the horses jostled and the Queen, Prince Philip and Princess Anne began the 200 yard journey to the castle, an explosion was heard in the distance. Unsure if it was part of the ceremonial welcome,
or something altogether more sinister, the Queen, with what appeared resigned apprehension, failed to return her husband’s wry smirk. Rather, she fixed her uncomfortable gaze downwards while straightening the grey warming blanket placed across her knees.\textsuperscript{261} In the preceding carriage, a quizzical Prince Charles enquired as to the cause of the blast. It was, he was informed by the Secretary of State for Wales, ‘the Royal Salute’. If so, it was ‘a peculiar Royal salute’, remarked the prince. ‘There are peculiar people up here’, returned George Thomas.\textsuperscript{262}

The retort coincided with television images of a man being chased across open ground by uniformed - and what was assumed to be - plain clothed police officers. As he was apprehended, Richard Baker announced that moments before he too heard a single explosion. It was, he assumed, ‘a cannon going off’.\textsuperscript{263} One man in no doubt as to the cause of the blast was John Jenkins. The activated device, designed to undermine the status of the traditional 21 Royal Gun Salute by adding a 22nd, was planted in Love Lane by a MAC active unit the previous evening. Close to the home of the Chief Constable of Gwynnedd, Colonel William Williams, it was, Jenkins later proclaimed, ‘the first time the Queen heard a shot fired in anger’.\textsuperscript{264} The following day, it was reported that police discovered ‘a hole in the ground and scorched trees on wooded hilly ground’ above the town.\textsuperscript{265} With two of the four devices planted on the eve of the investiture having detonated - one with tragic repercussions - John Jenkins knew that moments later, as the procession neared Caernarfon Castle, another was set to explode; it did not.

As the Royal procession made its way to the castle, Prince Charles was greeted with ‘heart-warming enthusiasm’. Yet, moments after, several loud boos were heard before being all but drowned out by sudden increased voluble cheering. Several minutes later, amid more noticeable though measured jeers, an egg appeared to be thrown in the direction of the Queen’s open-topped carriage. Smashing on the road beside it, the incident did not go unnoticed by the royal party, who exchanged

\begin{footnotes}
\item[260] \textit{WM}, 1 July 1969.
\item[261] \textit{The Investiture of HRH the Prince of Wales}. BBC Parliament, 28 June 2009.
\item[262] Thomas, Mr. Speaker, p.120. Shortly after the blast, a youth was seen ‘to throw a parcel’ onto the railway track near the Royal Train before disappearing. \textit{WM}, 2 July 1969.
\item[263] \textit{The Investiture of HRH the Prince of Wales}. BBC Parliament, 28 June 2009. ‘The crowd thought it was part of the 21 gun salute’. \textit{Sun}, 2 July 1969.
\item[264] Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 25 March 2004; also, 19 October 2007; also 20 November 2008.
\item[265] \textit{WM}, 2 July 1969.
\end{footnotes}
further glances of combined concern and amusement.\textsuperscript{266}

Nevertheless, having arrived within ‘the comforting security’ of Caernarfon Castle,\textsuperscript{267} the Queen followed the ‘age old’ tradition and invested her eldest son Prince of Wales.\textsuperscript{268} Prince Charles swore fealty to the Crown and received the symbols of office. With both his and the nation’s loyalty assured, George Thomas then delivered the Letters of Proclamation in what was later described as ‘his execrable Welsh’.\textsuperscript{269} As George Thomas approached the conclusion of his speech, shouting could be heard beyond the castle walls. The newly invested prince appeared to inform his father he ‘heard something coming in’. The Duke of Edinburgh returned his son’s uneasy gaze with his customary wry smirk.\textsuperscript{270} If the prince harboured any concern, it did not show, as he delivered - in both Welsh and English - a speech in which he outlined his ‘pride and emotion’ at the ceremony. For those involved in the security operation, the most dangerous aspect of the entire proceedings was imminent. The pageant was to end with an echo of Edward I mythical gesture,\textsuperscript{271} as the Queen presented Charles to his subjects from a balcony above Queen Eleanor’s Gate. Overlooking the town square, it proved a near heart-stopping moment for Shrewsbury Unit figure, Elfyn Williams. Having earlier received ‘a pistol and twelve rounds’; from his own position on a nearby internal rampart, the prince’s vulnerability

\textsuperscript{266} The Investiture of HRH the Prince of Wales. BBC Parliament, 28 June 2009. As the procession approached the castle, Special Branch officers led away a man, having turned out the pocket linings of his coat and trousers and checked his camera. After the ceremony, a ‘special court’ was convened in Caernarfon to preside over ‘a number of prosecutions’. Two were for indecent exposure. Two 18-year-old males and a 21-year old male, were fined £5 for ‘making V-signs at the Royal Carriages’ and holding aloft a placard bearing an anti-investiture slogan. Two further youths were fined £5 for ‘being in possession of offensive weapons’. (A sheath knife and a sock containing a lump of lead). A 16-year-old male was remanded in youth custody for throwing ‘a banana skin’ under horses hooves. Caernarvon and Denbigh Herald, 4 July 1969; also, WM, 2 July 1969; also, New Statesman, 18 July 1969.

\textsuperscript{267} Thomas, Mr. Speaker, p.120

\textsuperscript{268} The Investiture of HRH the Prince of Wales. BBC Parliament, 28 June, 2009. Lord Snowdon later conceded that swathes of the proceedings had little, if any, historical legitimacy. Interview between WT & Lord Snowdon, 11 November 2009.


\textsuperscript{270} The Investiture of HRH the Prince of Wales. BBC Parliament, 28 June 2009. During the ceremony, two rafts containing RAOC bomb-disposal men and police dragged the river Menai alongside the halted Royal Train.

\textsuperscript{271} John Davies, A History of Wales. (London, 1993), p.179. In 1284 - or so legend alleges - in an attempt to legitimate the annexation of Wales, Edward I held aloft his native-born son at Queen Eleanor’s Gate at Caernarfon Castle and declared triumphantly to those assembled below he was ‘their prince’. In 1301, in a ceremony at Lincoln, Edward I granted his son the title Prince of Wales. The legend he was presented as an infant to the people of Wales, was not recorded until 1584. At 20.00 for 800 years, the Curfew Bell echoed across the royal borough of Caernarfon. Perhaps due to its evocative imperial overtones, the tradition ended in the months before the investiture.
raised the uneasy question of whether he might ‘return alive’. Yet, Elfyn Williams’ claim of being armed, is challenged by two of his former colleagues in the Shrewsbury Unit: John Owen Evans and Raymond Kendall, with each declaring their surprise that any of those involved in the security arrangements were issued firearms.

The investiture’s historical legacy

The invitation to attend the Royal Investiture, was extended to all MPs and Peers in Wales. Only Gwynfor Evans declined to accept. Evans’ anti-royal stance proved decisive in his losing the Carmarthen seat at the General election twelve months later, he believed. Among those apparently content to do so was Elystan Morgan, the Labour MP for Ceredigion. Since his election to Westminster three years earlier, the former Plaid Cymru party leader presumptive had risen steadily through the ranks of governmental influence. As ‘Junior Minister at the Home Office, involved in police matters’, Morgan received a number of threats to his life. He later confessed to feeling somewhat uncertain as to the degree of importance he should attach to them. Elystan Morgan was certainly a figure held in much contempt by the Free Wales Army. ‘No one turned the screw more tightly on the imprisoned FWA than that turn coat’, angrily spat Denis Coslett in 2000. All ‘the undermining tactics’ available to the state, Morgan readily and happily helped to deploy. Nonetheless, asked in 2009 to outline his feelings towards the investiture, Elystan Morgan remarked a little disconcertedly, that the ceremony ‘dealt specifically with Wales not

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272 Wales: The Prince and the Plotter, BBC Wales Production. Screened July 2009. Elfyn Williams received the gun and bullets the day before at a Church-owned ‘missionary building’ in Caernarfon. ‘Because George Thomas did not trust the Welsh police’, he and the chief constable of Gwynedd were the only ‘two Welsh policemen on duty’, Williams later declared. BBC Wales Today, 1 July 2009.
273 Telephone interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 7 July 2009; also, correspondence between WT & Raymond Kendall, 2 August 2009. Elfyn Williams’ ‘talk of having a gun in a suitcase during the ceremony’, was Evans stated, ‘a farce’. He had ‘a question mark on that’. While it was possible, such action merely ‘undermined the security. You might as well’, Evans continued, ‘hand a gun to the person standing next to you and hope he knows how to use it’. While ‘it was possible’, declared R. Kendall he ‘was not aware of the issuing of firearms in Caernarfon’. ‘The police may not have been armed, but Mi5 were’. Telephone interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 19 September 2010. No televisual evidence supports an FWA anecdotal claim that the Laughing Policeman was played as Prince Charles waved ceremoniously to the crowd.
275 Correspondence between WT & Gwynfor Evans, 20 August 2003.
as a country, a nation’, as he ‘would have wished’, but rather ‘as a principality’; which ‘is a status a notch or two down from that’.²⁷⁸

Lord Snowdon’s opinion that the investiture was ‘a resounding success’²⁷⁹ cut little ice with John Jenkins, who declared intelligibly:

On the day, police lined the route along the streets in Caernarfon and behind each policeman was a man turned around facing the crowd. This was in case the crowd started getting nasty. Well, that takes a bit of doing. This was no Mardi Gras or carnival with people dancing in the streets, not by a long chalk. It was a charade, an insult and we wanted to show it as such. So we (MAC) succeeded in that.²⁸⁰

Unsurprisingly however, it is not a view universally endorsed. Discussing Jenkins’ assertion, John Owen Evans expressed both his disapproval and disappointment at ‘some of the programmes’ broadcast to coincide the Investiture’s 40th anniversary. ‘All seem to have been based upon the premise there was hostility and opposition to the ceremony and that there was this great threat to the prince’. Evans did not concur with this view. ‘It was’, he added, ‘supported by people across Wales’.²⁸¹ It is a belief roundly challenged by John Jenkins. In his ‘capacity within Western Command’, he used ‘to drive around Wales’. While undertaking these trips, he gauged, what he termed, ‘grass roots reaction’. Subsequently, MAC’s director-general discerned that ‘a minority, but a considerable minority, felt disenchanted and resentful toward the whole thing. These people regarded the ceremony as ‘the stamp of the conqueror...Therefore’, he added, ‘it was our objective to stop the sweetness and light attitude, which the state was happy to perpetuate, and to give that disenchantment a voice’.²⁸²

It was certainly ‘a voice’ worthy of ministerial and monarchical concern. ‘We would be untrue to history’, George Thomas declared magnanimously in 1994, ‘if we did not say that everyone - including the Royal Party - held their breath until the thing

²⁷⁹ Interview between WT & Lord Snowdon, 11 November 2009. ‘It didn’t matter actually if you believed in the monarchy. It was a celebration and a very happy occasion. Look’, Lord Snowdon added a little impatiently, ‘it was bloody good for Wales and being Welsh I’m very proud of it. I don’t know if it will ever happen again...I think things have moved on, but it was good for that time’.
²⁸⁰ Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 15 November 2009. It is estimated that security personnel stood every 2.3 yards on either side of the route. Ellis, Investiture, p.232. G. ap Iestyn came to regard MAC’s investiture offensive as counter-productive. ‘It led to an inevitable response from the authorities’, he later opined. Interview between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 21 August 2010.
²⁸¹ Telephone interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 5 July 2009.
²⁸² Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 23 June 2009.
was over’. Yet, asked to comment on the perceived seriousness of the militant threat, Lord Snowdon appeared less troubled. ‘We weren’t worried about them’, he later remarked insouciantly. Nonetheless, if Lord Snowdon was unduly concerned, the BBC took the necessary steps to greet any eventuality, preparing an obituary: ‘just in case’.  

Gwynfor Evans was not the only Welsh Republican absent from Caernarfon on Investiture Day, so too were the ‘30 or so nationalist sympathizers’ placed under police surveillance. ‘Some’, John Owen Evans, later revealed, ‘disappeared to Ireland’. Yet, the monitoring of these individuals begged a question: if apparently known to north Wales police, why were George Taylor and Alwyn Jones not similarly the focus of police attention? By way of response, J. O. Evans declared each were known as ‘vocal sympathizers’, with the true ‘extent of their involvement’ not known. ‘What the police had on them was not enough to warrant that degree of attention’, Evans added. ‘You can’t simply monitor people for holding a strong view’.  

Ian Skidmore’s Investiture Day proved somewhat surreal, as two senior policemen arrived at his home, each armed with a bottle of whisky. They were there ‘to watch the ceremony’ with him, Skidmore was informed. At this juncture a prodigious drinker and the time already 10.30, he could not find his ‘way to the kitchen let alone Caernarfon’, Skidmore retorted. Having established he was subject to ‘a civilized form of house arrest’, Skidmore ‘took one look at the whisky’, deduced discretion to be the better form of valour and extended his hand in welcome.  

However, on reflection, was the investiture a success for the Royals and the British State? As a spectacle of Royal pageantry, the investiture was a success. So too did it appeal to ‘mainstream’ Welsh public opinion. It also succeeded largely in

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283 Everyone Held Their Breath. ITV Wales Production. Screened, July 1994. The Queen ‘practically danced’ as she thanked George Thomas for ‘a wonderful day’. Every detail of ‘the complicated procedure went like clockwork’, he later declared. Thomas, Mr. Speaker, p.121.  
284 Interview between WT & Lord Snowdon, 11 November 2009.  
286 Telephone interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 5 July 2009. ‘They were under surveillance for about a week’. The exploits of one group who went to Dublin during the investiture period, were later colourfully recalled in Cambria. It comprised: Royston Jones ‘Swansea Jack’, Rhobert ap Steffan ‘Castro’, Peter ‘Gun’ Williams and Jimmie ‘Cnwc’ Evans. Cambria (July/August 2009); also, telephone interview between WT & Royston Jones, 27 April 2010.  
287 Telephone interview between WT & Ian Skidmore, 20 August 2008. Was he, David Pritchard or Alf Williams placed under surveillance or subject to systematic ‘house arrest’, David Walters was asked. ‘They didn’t come to me’, Walters replied, ‘and I don’t think they went to Dave or Alf. But that’s not to say we weren’t being constantly watched’. Interview between WT & David Walters, 29
sending the political message that Wales ‘rightfully’ belonged in the union of British nations. The apparent warmth shown by the people of Wales towards Prince Charles as he toured the country following the ceremony - despite reports on Moscow radio which claimed ‘bombs were exploding and cars burning along the entire route’\textsuperscript{288} - suggests the investiture had struck a chord and that the prince was held in some fair degree of affection.\textsuperscript{289} Nevertheless, it did not attract the number of visitors to Caernarfon previously expected.\textsuperscript{290} Crucially, it was not the ‘jamboree’ organizers and royal and government officials hoped for. The security/police presence and the explosions on the day, were enough to ensure the militants could claim with some justification, to having undermined the prestige of the occasion.\textsuperscript{291} Further evidence of the apparent discontent was the plethora of anti-investiture and FWA slogans reportedly daubed throughout the country. Also on investiture day - presumably in protest at events in Caernarfon - Bangor Post Office was subject to a bomb-hoax and a 2,000 ft marquee in Pwllheli burned down.\textsuperscript{292}

Yet, despite bewildered unionist reaction throughout Wales (and the apparent complexity of the situation), many wondered what fuelled this level of hostility. In essence, nationalists opined, opposition was simple: were Wales not conquered by an Anglo/Norman invasion force in 1282, then Charles would not today be invested Prince of Wales. This, they argued, was not an extreme view, but rather an historical fact. Who, nationalists ventured, in the month which saw man walk upon the moon, clasped such anachronistic, unconstitutional nonsense to their hearts? Surely no true Welsh person, who recognised the ceremony as nothing more than an imperial act of conquest? Consequently, however amiable, however well-intentioned, however much the Buckingham Palace spin machine legitimizied his credentials historically; however much Charles himself was the unwitting victim of political opportunism, the rigid fact remained that Charles Windsor was not, nor indeed would he ever be, the rightful

\textsuperscript{288} \textit{Guardian}, 3 July 1969. Police were reportedly ‘run off their feet defusing mines owing to the anti-monarchist feeling’. ‘Social problems’ in Wales were said to be at ‘boiling point’.

\textsuperscript{289} Thomas, \textit{Mr. Speaker}, p.121. The ‘triumphant tour’ across Wales, ended in Cardiff three days later. Gwynfor Evans’s decision not to attend the investiture, but to meet Prince Charles at Carmarthen, was dismissed by Thomas as ‘humbug’.

\textsuperscript{290} \textit{WM}, 2 July 1969. Estimates declared between 70,000 and 90,000 attended. Organizers had expected 200,000. Officially, the televising of the event was regarded as the reason numbers were down. Somewhat tenuous evidence also suggests the crowd was comprised of a sizeable English, rather than Welsh presence. \textit{Everyone Held Their Breath}. ITV Wales Production. Screened, July 1994.

\textsuperscript{291} Interview between WT & David Walters, 29 December 2008.
Prince of Wales.

Nonetheless, if it was felt by nationalists the investiture was politically inspired, such outrage was hardly assuaged when the trial of the FWA and anti-investiture activists culminated on its very day.\textsuperscript{293} This, they attested, was too convenient; too neat and too packaged. Suspicions were further roused, when images on the evening news adorned the nation’s flickering television screens. First the jubilant scenes from Caernarfon and then prison vans taking those convicted to begin their sentences. Surely this was no accident of timing, but rather a calculated attempt to send a resounding signal of what awaits those prepared to challenge the might of the British State.

\textbf{A soldier is killed, MAC targets Llandudno pier and John Jenkins blames Plaid Cymru}

However much these events were contrived, eight hours after the ceremony, a soldier was killed when a military police van he was sitting in outside Caernarfon Castle exploded into flames. Despite the initial journalistic speculation that Army Driver, Ronald Anthony Berry (21), died as a result of militant activity,\textsuperscript{294} a later inquest returned a verdict of ‘accidental death’. Tragically, it appears ‘a discarded lit match, or a spark caused by a heel plate on the ground’, ignited petrol which had seeped from two containers positioned ‘behind the driver’s seat’ alongside Berry in the rear of the van. It was claimed that prior to the combustion, the petrol was observed ‘flowing from the back of the vehicle onto the ground and down a drain’.\textsuperscript{295}

The following morning, despite police denials to the contrary, John Jenkins attests that an explosive device was located at Llandudno pier. The location and the

\textsuperscript{292} WM, 2 July 1969. One included: ‘Pechod dros Gymru’ (Shame over Wales).
\textsuperscript{293} Interview between WT & David Walters, 29 December 2009. Having sardonically commented on the timing of the arrests, Walters added his belief the trials conclusion was ‘a simple political message’. Televised across the world, the government did not want demonstrations or any hint of discord on the streets of Caernarfon. Rather, a message of constitutional unity was sought.
\textsuperscript{294} WM, 3 July 1969. Berry was arrested at 23.59. The explosion occurred at 12.20. Despite the subsequent conjecture, Jenkins resolutely ruled out MAC involvement. ‘How could we have done?’. Jenkins protested. ‘It would have required a different approach and target altogether in our campaign’. Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 24 March 2004.
\textsuperscript{295} LDP, 30 July 1969; also, WM, 30 July 1969. During the inquest, military police (despite being exonerated) were criticized by members of the public for the manner in which they arrested the intoxicated Berry of Kirkby, Merseyside. This allegedly included punching him in the stomach. Further unease was raised as to how Berry apparently opened the ‘secure’ petrol cans (which against regulations were in the van), why he was left alone for some ‘15 minutes’ and how the fuel ignited. Despite not having initially searched Berry, he was not found to have ‘matches or a lighter’ after the
objective of the operation was paramount. Having been planted by ‘one of the four
groups out on the eve of the investiture’, it was hoped the bombs’ activation ‘would
destroy the pier’, thus preventing the Prince from being able to moor. Nevertheless, it
was not be. The operation, Jenkins believed, was probably ‘rushed owing to the
twenty four hour surveillance’ the site was subject to. Whatever the reason, the
device failed to detonate.296  Sometime later, Prince Charles came ashore from the
Royal Yacht and began his four-day tour of Wales.297

In the days following the investiture, Lord Snowdon received a telegram from
Prince Charles. Thanking both his uncle and his assistants for ‘all their hard work’, it
just went to show, the prince added, perhaps a little mischievously, ‘what the British’
could ‘achieve with a little help from the Welsh’.298 Yet, if the prince toasted the
success of the ceremony, speaking in 2009, John Jenkins remained certain at whose
door Welsh nationalists should lay the blame. ‘Had Plaid Cymru been less ‘Brit’
about it and called for people to protest at Caernarfon; had it said it was going to lead
a mass sit-down in the town, it may well have been cancelled’. In the event, ‘the
party’s directive, whereby it was left to the conscious of each individual to decide
whether to vocally protest or not, was seen as merely a ‘cop out’. It actually ‘caused a
lot of ill-feeling at the time’, Jenkins added. However,

had the authorities feared an outbreak of militancy as routinely expressed by the French
populace to protest hostile government legislature, then I’m sure it would have been stopped.
They’d have claimed that Charles had a terrible cold; anything which offered a diplomatic
way out.299

Possibly so, but while Plaid Cymru may have provided leadership in opposing the
ceremony, those intent on undertaking civil disobedience in Caernarfon, would surely
have done so irrespective of whether orchestrated by Plaid Cymru or not. Nonetheless, Jenkins has a point: the authorities appeared alive to the possibility of an

296 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007; also, 24 December 2009. ‘It was
definitely there. They couldn’t admit how great a danger Prince Charles was in. They’d have been
sacked for not saturating the whole area and checking everywhere. When it failed to activate’, added
Jenkins, ‘a MAC operative told them where it was’.
297 WM, 2 July 1969. The Britannia followed the prince around the coast throughout the visit. It
provided a safe haven should events turn sour. Following the investiture, Prince Charles was driven
back to Holyhead, as the Royal party returned to London.
298 Lord Snowdon papers, viewed by WT, 11 November 2009.
299 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 9 August 2009. ‘People have said that the
military won because the investiture went ahead. But these people’, remonstrated Jenkins, had ‘simply
missed the point. To cancel the ceremony was never our objective: it would have been the ‘icing on the
cake’, but as the situation was (Plaid Cymru’s refusal to protest) that was never going to happen’. 331
outbreak of militancy; certainly if the security operation in Caernarfon to combat its potential outburst is any indication.

**Ian Cox**

If MAC had notched up some notable ‘successes’ during its preceding two-year campaign, the events of 5 July 1969 was its nadir. News that a holidaying ten-year-old boy from England was injured on activating a MAC explosive device in Caernarfon brought John Jenkins - seemingly possessed of an almost fanatical degree of controlled detachment - near the point of inner devastation. Himself a father of two young boys, as with the deaths of Alwyn Jones and George Taylor, the injuries to Ian Cox would return to haunt Jenkins. Speaking about the incident in 2008, John Jenkins remained wrapped within a blanket of self recrimination and guilt. When news of the explosion broke, the director-general of MAC consoled himself in the knowledge ‘the press had greatly exaggerated the boys’ injuries’.

Speaking in 2007, Ian Cox - today the landlord of a pub in Buckinghamshire - finally dispelled all ambiguity as to the extent of the injuries he sustained. Having ‘jumped over a wall’ to retrieve his football, Cox saw it had come to rest near a pile of ‘old junk’. Disguised within ‘a hollowed out bit of concrete, in what he believed was ‘once an old lamp stand’ was the device. Cox ‘trod on it and it activated’. The injuries he received included: ‘an amputated right leg, severe burning’ to his ‘left leg’ and ‘flash burns to most’ of his body. This included his ‘face and left hand’. For having inadvertently and tragically become enmeshed in the struggle for Welsh independence, Ian Cox endured ‘about 10 years of painful plastic surgery’. As for the perpetrators of the explosion, he had neither time for ‘them nor their cause’, Cox added robustly. Having heard the horrific extent of the injuries sustained, John Jenkins quietly and unreservedly apologised for the suffering Ian Cox endured. It was, he conceded plaintively, ‘one of the greatest regrets’ of his life.

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300 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007; also, 20 November 2008.
301 Telephone interview between WT & Ian Cox, 15 November 2007. Ian Cox was ‘on a family holiday to Caernarfon’, ‘timed to coincide with the investiture’. Cox’s ‘grandmother was Welsh; from the Rhymney Valley’. A fund established for Ian Cox raised £4,300. One undisclosed contributor was Prince Charles. WM, 6 October 1969.
302 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 November 2008. ‘I am truly sorry for the injuries that little boy suffered, more than I can express’. As with George Taylor and Alwyn Jones, ‘it should have been me’, stated Jenkins. First on the scene was a 10-year-old Elin Rhys from Bangor. On investiture day she was part of the procession. Having observed the extent of Ian Cox’s injuries, Roberts consequently suffered nightmares for years. Wales: The Prince and the Plotter, BBC Wales
The device, Jenkins revealed, was one of the four planted on the eve of the investiture and meant to detonate as the royal procession went by. It was intended, he affirmed, ‘to serve as a disruption’. Moreover, while he accepted ‘it would have frightened the horses’, it was merely ‘a symbolic protest’ and not designed to cause ‘harm, injury or damage’. Nevertheless, contemporary media reports state the device was planted beneath two large oil storage containers,\textsuperscript{303} which fortuitously happened to be empty; it certainly suggests the likelihood of something more grave than ‘a disruption’ might have occurred. Later discussing the logistics of the operation, Jenkins declared ‘to the best’ of his ‘knowledge a local MAC group planted it’. As for its location, he ‘was not aware it was positioned beneath oil containers’\textsuperscript{304}

Responding to the charge that MAC failed to contact the authorities to inform them of the device, Jenkins emphatically replied that numerous phone calls instructing officers of the bombs location were relayed. Yet, for whatever reason, no action was taken. In the days following his ultimate conviction, Jenkins asked police why they failed to retrieve it. He was informed that ‘thousands’ of such phone calls - the overwhelming majority bogus - had been received during the investiture period. It would have been, Jenkins was told by way of explanation, ‘impossible to investigate them all’. Having informed the authorities, Jenkins added, any attempt by MAC operatives to retrieve the device was thus prevented, owing to the likelihood the site was being watched.\textsuperscript{305}

Despite Jenkins’ candour, it is an explanation many in Wales regard as insufficient. Even if caught in the act of retrieving the device and sentenced to a period of imprisonment - having established before the court the individual acted alone - surely this was better than what transpired? While ‘that may well be true’, one former activist on the extreme periphery of Welsh militancy later countered, there is ‘little room for such idealism’ in ‘a campaign of militant activism’. Moreover, such apologetic reasoning is sentimental, irksome and a hindrance to the political advance of a ‘cause’. However unpalatable, an effective militant campaign can only be undertaken with ruthless, emotional, insensibility. The injuries sustained by Ian Cox -

\textsuperscript{303} Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 15 November 2009. One of the two oil containers was dented and blown over in the blast. The device was planted at the back of an ironmongers in Bangor Street.

\textsuperscript{304} Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 November 2008.
and this is not a view shared by John Jenkins – amounted to ‘unfortunate collateral
damage’, the former militant declared. Yet, it is the entire panoply of the
Establishment ‘with blood on its hands’, having foisted ‘for its own political ends’, a
ceremony of imperial conquest on a largely unsupportive, or at best, indifferent Welsh public.306

For many observers however, such comments are incomprehensible. Such
injuries to a ten-year-old boy, they argue, can never be justified: whatever the political
cause.307 Furthermore, the unfortunate Ian Cox reflected a grave and portentous truth:
that the militant campaign of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru had derailed itself morally
and was now spiralling ominously out of control. As to the suggestion that warnings
from MAC had been deliberately ignored in the hope that an innocent party might
suffer injuries,308 though John Jenkins considered it ‘possible’, it was, he believed,
‘too cynical a view’.309 Whatever the truth surrounding arguably the most shameful
episode in the long and often painful odyssey of Welsh nationalism, the police now
re-doubled their efforts to bring the ‘feckless’ Welsh extremists to book. Explosives
on remote pipelines in the Welsh mountains was one thing; blood on the streets quite
another.

**The intractable chief constable of Gwynedd, Lt.-Col. William Williams**

Determined to wrong-foot media intrigue into the explosion which injured Ian Cox,
was the Chief Constable of Gwynedd, Lt.-Col. William Williams. Immediately after
the blast, officers were instructed to release a statement which ‘ruled out’ the
possibility ‘a bomb’ was involved. This, despite the discovery of detritus commonly
located at the site of such an action.310 It was not until the Meirionnydd MP, William
Edwards, asked in Parliament why conflicting accounts were emanating from the
Gwynedd Constabulary in relation to the blast, that it was confirmed ‘a timed
explosive device’ was responsible. In an attempt to engage public concern, the Chief

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306 Anonymous interview with WT, January 2009. ‘When’, it was argued, ‘has the British military
ever apologized for the deaths of civilians in Iraq or Afghanistan?’. Following the blast, angry prison
inmates thrust newspaper photos of Cox into D. Coslett’s hand. He returned with pictures of Aberfan
shouting ‘what about these then?’.

307 Telephone interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 5 July 2009.


310 **WM**, 7 July 1969. The tin foil and ‘other small objects’ included a PP6 battery, pieces of twisted
metal, an electric flex and detonator wire and the remains of a tin.
Constable urged the community of Caernarfon to be vigilant. In the belief other devices may lie undiscovered along the processional route, any ‘unusual package or container’ should be approached with ‘caution’ and the authorities notified immediately.\footnote{WM, 8 July 1969. Days after the investiture, Lt.-Col. William Williams was honoured with the OBE; so too was Jock Wilson. The head of Gwynedd CID, Det. Supt. Allan Clarke, appealed for public support, declaring: ‘it would be impossible for us to search everywhere along the route’.

\footnote{WM, 12 July 1969.}

It was not however, enough to satisfy Frank Williamson, the Home Secretary’s appointee in Wales. Following reports an explosion had occurred near the International Eisteddfod pavilion at Llangollen,\footnote{HO, 325/124. Report by Frank Williamson to Sir James Waddell, (Home Office) on extremist bombings in Wales. Dated, 16 July 1969.} Williamson received instruction to investigate the explosion which injured Ian Cox. To his chagrined astonishment, Frank Williamson discovered further evidence of the recusant obstructionism which so frustrated the efforts of the Shrewsbury unit to apprehend the saboteurs.

During a meeting on 12 July, Williamson implored the indomitable Chief Constable to be more circumspect when releasing further press statements. Such conflicting and speculative declarations merely intensified and inflamed the position. Yet, despite the sobering catalogue of militant activity in Wales, Lt.-Col. Williams’ contempt for the intrusive Shrewsbury Unit remained unabated. With the investiture a memory, it was time, he believed, the unit disbanded and its members returned to their respective constabularies. The suggestion directly confuted with Frank Williamson, who saw no evidence that with the investiture over, ‘the activities of extremists’ would ‘decline’.\footnote{WM, 12 July 1969.}

His misgivings were further endorsed, when on contacting the Preston Forensic Science Laboratory, Williamson was informed that components of the apparent timing device which were recovered from the scene of the explosion in Caernarfon, had tested positive for nitro-glycerin. This, and the circumstances surrounding the bomb’s very location, compounded his increasing certainty the operation had been undertaken by Welsh militants.

It was not the only conflict of interests Frank Williamson discovered during his inquiry. In stark contrast to the assurances given by Lt.-Col. Williams prior to the investiture, no Special Branch officer within the Gwynedd Constabulary had been appointed to liaise with the Shrewsbury unit. Moreover, contrary to the Home Secretary’s directive that any occurring incidents during the investiture period should be accurately recorded, it was further revealed the incident room at Caernarfon police
headquarters had failed to do so. A damning, if cloaked report to James Callaghan, the Home Secretary, was soon on its way.314

On receiving the report, James Callaghan endorsed its findings. In the bid to ‘counter Welsh extremism’, nothing would be implemented which might ‘weaken the police security forces now available to counter Welsh extremism’. Simply stated, the Shrewsbury unit would remain. Furthermore, anyone deemed involved in militant activity, however tenuous the charge, would now likely be the focus of explicit surveillance. It was all too much for Lt-Col. Williams, who discerningly retired. It was not the only change in the fight to combat Welsh extremism, as Jock Wilson - citing personal reasons - requested a transfer back to the Metropolitan Police.315

Nonetheless, the mode in which the state policed its provinces had changed utterly. It was not long before whispers of the ‘secret policeman’ blew uneasily in the Welsh wind. Such was the concern, that the president of Plaid Cymru denounced the proceedings in which the FWA were convicted as a political ‘show trial’. Despite its failure, he declared, its purpose was to discredit the ‘growing nationalist movement’. A ‘dangerous precedent’ had been set, whereby Welshmen and others who cherished ‘freedom of speech must be on their guard’. What was more, Evans added, ‘the police-state manner’ in which the nine were arrested was ‘repugnant’ and the degree of their subsequent solitary confinement ‘abhorrent’.316

If the condemnation of the state’s modus operandi was intended to dampen reactionary ministerial flames, Gwynfor Evans was wrong. Unknown to the president of Plaid Cymru, the party’s decision to contest every Parliamentary seat at the forthcoming General Election had rung alarm bells in Whitehall.317 Fearing what it termed ‘repercussions’, the Home Office proposed the Shrewsbury Unit continue its function as an intelligence-gathering centre. It was a resolution roundly endorsed by Ferguson Smith, Commander of the Metropolitan Special Branch and Dennis Trevelyan, a former Principal Private Secretary to the Leader of the House of Commons. The Welsh police forces, the latter opined, had failed ‘completely to establish an intelligence organization of their own’. Moreover, they were

314 Ibid.
315 HO, 325/124. Report by Sir Brian Cubbon, Private Secretary to Home Secretary James Callaghan, regarding meeting between Callaghan and the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, 29 July 1969.
316 W/M, 2 July 1969.
demonstrative and appeared wholly unacquainted with the nature of Special Branch activity.\textsuperscript{318}

**John Jenkins targets further MAC actions**

With Jock Wilson’s return to London and *Operation Cricket* (the security operation around the investiture) deemed a success, it was decided a hand-picked squad of senior detectives from the Gwynedd and Cheshire constabularies would spearhead the hunt for the elusive MAC. Chosen as the focal point in the initial investigation was Abergele.\textsuperscript{319} Unknown to officers, John Jenkins had decided upon a fresh stream of targets, among them the South Stack Relay Station on Holyhead Mountain. It was, Jenkins realised, the main communications network between the British mainland and Northern Ireland. Furthermore, with the province on the threshold of sectarian civil war, ‘the attack’ was sanctioned in order to ‘show the IRA that we (MAC) did not appreciate what the British Army was doing in Ulster’.\textsuperscript{320}

Chosen by Jenkins to undertake the action was Gordon Wyn Jones. In a later statement to investigating officers, Jones claimed ‘some weeks after the investiture’, he received a letter from Jenkins suggesting they meet. This they did, Jones added, in Chester. Having left the Jones family in a café, he and Jenkins, it was alleged, departed for Saighton Barracks to discuss the logistics of the impending operation. There, G. W. Jones declared, he was both informed of the target and witnessed Jenkins remove a quantity of explosives from a locked room in the Dental Centre. Placed in ‘a parcel’, Jenkins allegedly handed the package to Jones on returning to Chester.\textsuperscript{321} John Jenkins utterly refutes such a series of events transpired.\textsuperscript{322}

Whatever the truth, in the early hours of 14 August 1969, the protest was successfully


\textsuperscript{320} Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007. Jenkins was unable to confirm if the IRA was notified of this explosion, but affirmed he and the group were at this juncture in ‘some contact, but not much’. Published intelligence reports stated saboteurs planned fresh targets. *Sunday Telegraph*, 6 July 1969.

\textsuperscript{321} TNA, ASSI 84/577. Witness statement by Gordon Wyn Jones, 15 December 1969; also by Mary Jones, 18 March 1970.

\textsuperscript{322} Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 November 2009.
undertaken. Despite Gordon Wyn Jones later admitting his guilt to investigating officers, he was not charged with the South Stack protest. The decision not to prosecute Jones, John Jenkins believes, was in return for the wealth of incriminating evidence G. W. Jones provided officers, as they sought to establish a water-tight case against Jenkins before going to trial.

It was not the only target in Jenkins’ sights that August. Three days later, an explosive device was discovered on the doorstep of a council health office in Chester. It had failed to detonate, media sources revealed, owing to a loose wire in the timing mechanism. The device was ‘deliberately disabled’ by Frederick Ernest Alders, revealed Jenkins, who had received instruction to undertake the action independently. Yet, the operational-commander of MAC had underestimated a crucial factor: Frederick Ernest Alders now harboured serious misgivings as to the legitimacy of the campaign. Moreover, he was increasingly fearful of how Jenkins ‘and the Organisation’ might respond to news he now wished to terminate his affiliation to MAC. The deaths of Alwyn Jones and George Taylor profoundly affected the ‘highly engaged’ Alders. Having been informed by John Jenkins ‘they probably connected up before testing the circuit’, thus activating the device when they ‘pressed the bell push’, Alders was appalled at their apparent ‘inexperience’. He quickly deduced ‘there might be others like them’ who were ill-prepared and in grave danger. If Alders’ testimony is correct, officers might have had a third device to contend with, as the Pay Office at Saighton Barracks, was, Alders declared, Jenkins’ next intended target. It is a claim dismissed by John Jenkins.

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323 LDP, 15 August 1969, p.l; also, WM, 15 August 1969, p.l. Despite damage to ‘windows, doors, guttering and the entry point of the cables’, the GPO claimed the ‘stations work was not affected’ by the blast and it remained ‘fully operational’.
324 TNA, ASSI 84/577. Undated witness statement by Gordon Wyn Jones. Exhibit, 145. G. W. Jones initially claimed he discovered the explosion as he walked near the site during the early afternoon of 14 August. He had then notified the police, he also stated.
325 WM, 18 August 1969; also, LDP, 18 August 1969. Officers from the Shrewsbury unit were quickly deployed to Chester. That Welsh nationalists were responsible for the recent attacks, was a theory ‘at the back’ of their ‘minds’, they admitted. The city was targeted ‘because Prince Charles is the Earl of Chester’. LDP, 14 April 1970.
326 TNA, ASSI 84/577. Witness statement by Frederick Ernest Alders. Exhibit 132.
327 TNA, ASSI 84/577. Undated witness statement by Frederick Ernest Alders. Along with preventing activation by placing a wire between the contact points, Alders claimed he also deliberately used the flat battery returned to him by Alwyn Jones in the St. Martin’s House action. The device was discovered beneath an anorak at 6.55 a.m., by hospital porter William Blythin (57) as he walked to work.
328 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 November 2009. One target ‘considered feasible’, owing to intelligence received that access to the clock tower was possible, was Big Ben. ‘It
At this juncture, Raymond Kendall attests, people began 'to talk'. Indeed, Kendall maintains that immediately prior to the investiture, the Shrewsbury unit 'received information that he (Jenkins) was a sergeant in the dental service in the military and based at a barracks near Chester'. It is however, a point questioned by John Jenkins and John Owen Evans. Whatever the true timing of this disclosure - and Jenkins remains convinced no information of the MAC offensive was ever disclosed to the authorities - with the considered opinion that Jenkins, if indeed involved, was likely undertaking the action independently,329 in August 1969, the investigation 'switched to Wrexham'330 and focused its attention on the regimental dental technician.

Following an explosion - not accredited to MAC - at Llandudno Junction in August,331 a little over a month later on 18 September, at the Dental Centre at Saighton Barracks, John Jenkins received a visit from two detectives. Cordially asked if he sympathized with Welsh extremism, Jenkins was emphatic: 'good heavens no', he exclaimed, they 'are a menace to everyone'. Moreover, he would 'most certainly' inform the police should he receive 'any information' as to the identity of those involved in 'extremist activities'. Asked why he was being interviewed with regard the matter, Jenkins was informed he was one of several persons similarly approached in the course of the enquiry'.332 Yet, not included in the officers' statement at the National Archives, is an account of a suggestion also allegedly made to John Jenkins during the same encounter. In 2007, Jenkins declared he was asked to undertake a trip to Bargoed, where at a hotel he was known to frequent, he should 'encourage people to talk about Welsh nationalism'. He was then, he was told, to 'report back' the response of revellers. Having replied he ‘might’ undertake the request on the condition he received a signed declaration of his instruction, Jenkins heard 'no more about it'. Explaining his thoughts as to the motive of the officers, Jenkins felt certain the interview was 'being recorded'. What is more, with the intention of it being

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329 Correspondence between WT & Raymond Kendall, 14 December 2009.
330 WM, 21 April 1970. It did so, after police learned Alwyn Jones and George Taylor had contacts in the Wrexham area.
331 WM, 18 August 1969. ‘It was not MAC: there was nothing there of interest to us’. Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 24 December 2009.
332 TNA, ASSI 84/577. Record of interview by Det. Sgt. Christopher V. Moorcroft, dated, 18 March 1970. He was accompanied by Det. Constable. Owen. Jenkins denied knowing the identity of the perpetrator of the Chester Health Office action, or anyone involved from 'the Wrexham/Mold area'. Moreover, he firmly denied being 'in MAC'.

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played to Ian Skidmore, in the hope he might recognize his voice as that heard during the encounter with the enigmatic MAC in May 1968. Whatever John Jenkins’ suspicions, Ian Skidmore denies ever hearing a recording of the encounter.

Following Jenkins’ police interview at Saighton Barracks, the director-general of MAC - convinced a full-scale search of the Dental Centre and his home was imminent - decided to remove the remaining stock of gelignite to another location. Having no reason to suspect Frederick Ernest Alders was also subject of the police investigation, it was decided Alders should take the supply and store it at his forthcoming marital home at Rhosllanerchrugog. The two cases, containing 39 sticks of gelignite, Alders placed in ‘a built in cupboard next to the fireplace’ and covered with strips of linoleum.

Yet, Alders’ decision to accept the stores, somewhat contradicts his later claim that following the Abergele explosion, he became increasingly convinced Jenkins ‘was mad’ and deaf to reason and blind to logic. Alders later provided evidence for this assumption at his and Jenkins’ trial; when, as a key witness for the prosecution, he disclosed that Jenkins had suggested the militant campaign should increase in potency; to this end, proposing MAC purchase ‘guns and cross bows’. However, despite his acceptance that such weaponry was discussed, John Jenkins remains adamant that he ensured such proposals were not implemented. ‘What people don’t seem to understand’, Jenkins intoned in 2009, ‘is that I am a moderate sort of person at heart. There were people in MAC who were not moderate; and who wanted to do all sorts of strange things, but I vetoed them and put a stop to it’.

It is a claim given certain credence by F. E. Alders; who asked MAC’s director-general - despite his apparent unease with regard Jenkins’ alleged mental health deterioration - to perform his duties as ‘best man’ when he married on 18 October 1969. The irony of Alders’ decision to ask Jenkins, was not lost on

333 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007.
334 Telephone interview between WT & Ian Skidmore, 23 August 2008.
335 LDP, 16 April 1970.
336 TNA, ASSI 84/577. Undated witness statement by Frederick Ernest Alders; also exhibit statement 132. Assured by Jenkins the gelignite was ‘safe’, Alders informed officers he told his wife not to enter the cupboard as it ‘was full of stuff from work’.
337 LDP, 16 April 1970.
338 LDP, 14 April 1970.
340 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 November 2009.
Jenkins’ barrister, Peter Thomas QC, who during their trial six months later, not only queried Alders’ paradoxical reasoning, but raised the point that he appeared intent on ‘trying to shift as much blame as possible’ for his involvement in MAC onto Jenkins. Nevertheless, such acrimony was not evident that October Saturday, as both the groom and his attendant, bedecked in the same ceremonial uniform: (no.1 dress, regimental scarlet and bearskin) appeared resplendent. It was the same ornamental regalia which Jenkins alleges proved instrumental in their ultimate detection.

By November 1969, the campaign of militant violence in Wales exhibited an autumnal quality; a sense that, like the decade, the end was in sight. And so it proved to be. Just a few days after learning from a junior dental employee that unaccountable footsteps were heard along the corridor of the dental offices one night, during the morning of 2 November, the Jenkins’ family Sunday was disturbed by two police officers. Informed a discrepancy had arisen concerning an amount of money in the cadet band funds, Jenkins was asked to accompany them to the station in order to get the issue resolved. Assured it would take ‘no more than ten minutes’, it was in fact, he declared ruefully in 2004, ‘ten years before I was released’.

The events surrounding the arrest of John Jenkins have long been the cause of considerable conjecture in Welsh militant circles. For the most part, Jenkins’ account of what transpired has proved the most enduring. Throughout the intervening period, Jenkins has remained adamant his arrest was due to ‘an error of judgment’ on the part of Owain Williams. Moreover, that Williams contravened MAC’s established security framework, by taking along a female acquaintance to the meeting at Loggerheads, near Mold, on 1 March 1968. Although Williams, Jenkins concedes, did park some distance from the rendezvous point, his companion - in the glare of a passing car headlights - caught sight of the incognito Jenkins adorned in distinctive ‘regimental rig’. Jenkins further explained the St David’s Day meeting was arranged between two ‘eating the leeks’ ceremonies. Consequently, he was wearing the ‘full uniform, including head dress’. However, following the events at Abergele, the female approached the authorities with news of the encounter, aware that Williams -

341 LDP, 15 April 1970.
342 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 25 March 2004; also, 19 October 2007. Jenkins realised only ‘someone official’ could obtain a key to gain entry. It was, he believes, a police officer checking store rooms for hidden explosives.
her former partner - was somehow involved. The distinctive ornamental dress, added Jenkins, worn by just four people throughout Wales on the night of 1 March 1968, proved easy fodder for a coterie of detectives desperate for a breakthrough. Later asked to identify Williams’ companion, Jenkins conceded ‘it was Enys Roberts’. Yet, speaking with regard the incident on numerous occasions since March 2004, Owain Williams remained steadfast in his utter refutation that any blame for Jenkins’ arrest lay at his door. The accusation, Williams angrily professed, was ‘utter rubbish; utter nonsense’. The former director-general of MAC was just ‘covering up for his own mistakes and his own naivety’, he declared. It was Ann Woodgate, Alders ex-fiancé, who provided the necessary information which led to Jenkins’ arrest and conviction. Jenkins, an irritated Williams continued,

chose and recruited Alders. As the senior member, he should have been far more stringent in ‘laying down the law’ in telling Alders not to mention anything to anyone...What the hell was he doing allowing this person, Ann Woodgate, into his home to baby-sit for God sake? All that was needed was for her and Alders’ relationship to end and the potential existed for the floodgates to open. And what happened? Exactly that!

Owain Williams then outlined what he believed transpired. After the explosion at Llanrhaeadr-yrm-Mochnant, Alders boasted to Woodgate that he and Jenkins were responsible. Following the explosion at Abergele, an anguished Woodgate informed her father of her ex-fiancé’s involvement in the bombing campaign. He implored her to notify the authorities. ‘Well, you just don’t do it’, Williams remonstrated. ‘He’s using me as a scapegoat. I admire and respect John Jenkins very much, but he should not apportion blame’. Williams knew what Jenkins was ‘insinuating’ and he resented it. ‘It was incompetence on his part. I made mistakes during the period’, confessed Williams, why did Jenkins ‘not have the grace to admit his own?’ Asked to comment on the degree of incriminating evidence provided by Ann Woodgate, John Jenkins pensively replied he had ‘no idea’, why she disclosed so much.

344 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 25 March 2004; also, 19 October 2007; also 20 November 2008; also, telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 August 2009.
345 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 November 2008. Jenkins has also claimed Owain Williams’ companion was ‘in fact also named Williams’ and ‘took up’ with a detective after her and Williams’ relationship ended. To this detective, some sixteen months later, Jenkins maintained, she gave the incriminating evidence of the encounter at Loggerheads. Like Enys Roberts, Jenkins added, the lady was also from Henllan. Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 24 December 2009. Both this account and Enys Roberts’ culpability were dismissed by Owain Williams as ‘ridiculous’. Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 28 January 2010.
347 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 November 2009.
Woodgate’s motives, it appears it was her information which began the escalation in the police inquiry, whereby Gordon Wyn Jones and others were subsequently approached.

Owain Williams’ ardent account is certainly supported by Raymond Kendall, who reacted with surprise when it was proposed the breakthrough in the inquiry came as a result of information received regarding the rendezvous at Loggerheads. As for John Owen Evans, he denied any knowledge of an ‘Enys Roberts’, but somewhat confusingly, believed it was Alders’ girlfriend, ‘who was both at the meeting and also involved’, who provided the key information. This occurred, Evans added, ‘following the investiture’, when Jenkins ‘entered in the picture’. Having made the decision to ‘mark time on him and Alders’, investigating officers contacted this person (identified as Ann Woodgate), who subsequently notified them of Jenkins’ and her ex-fiancé’s involvement. Yet, for those who share Jenkins’ assertion that Enys Roberts was crucial to his detection, Owain Williams also considered it possible that when later visited by police, Enys Roberts ‘got cold feet’ and disclosed certain information. Her immunity from prosecution being assured, Williams suggests, in return for the incriminating statements consequently provided by her brother and father. It is suppository chain of events indubitably given correlation by archival evidence.

Nonetheless, of one thing Williams was in no doubt: while Enys Roberts did accompany him to Loggerheads, not only was it ‘physically impossible’ for her to see Jenkins, such was the distance between Williams, Jenkins and her, ‘she was involved in the campaign’ and ‘well known’ to Jenkins anyway; as was her father. For John Jenkins ‘to say that he was identified because of pips, or whatever else he has said, is ridiculous’. Certainly material stored at the National Archives would meet with Williams’ approbation. It appears the overwhelming evidence obtained to convict John Jenkins, came from those who - to whatever degree - were enmeshed in the

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348 Correspondence between WT & Raymond Kendall, 11 November 2009.
349 Telephone interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 5 July 2009. The relationship between Alders and his step-sister Enys Roberts, was not highlighted by police during Alders’ questioning.
350 Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 November 2009.
352 Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 November 2009. Enys Roberts ‘was sat in the car which was about 100 yards away or something ridiculous’. She drove Williams to the appointment, owing to his ‘certainty’ he would be stopped by police if driving his own car at this juncture.
Welsh militant campaign. Of those who provided compelling testimony from the witness box were: Ann Woodgate, Frederick Ernest Alders, John R. L. Roberts - who admitted driving Jenkins and Alders to Llyn Vyrnwy to plant the device - and journalist Harold Pendlebury. Yet, others also proved instrumental in establishing Jenkins’ and Alders’ guilt through police witness statements. These included former TA and army colleagues: Brian Richards, John Hiscocks and George Wood; Alders’ step-father, John G. Roberts and the MAC activist Gordon Wyn Jones.

Archival testimony reveals that George Wood, a junior colleague of John Jenkins’ in the Dental Corps, was asked by officers to identify the author of a discovered handwritten ‘Statement by MAC’. Having first verified an undisputed sample of Jenkins’ handwriting, the ‘statement’, Wood confirmed, was also in Jenkins’ hand. Wood further informed the investigation team that in the summer of 1968, he and Jenkins travelled in Jenkins’ car to New Street railway station in Birmingham. *En route*, he was allegedly informed they were to meet ‘someone’ off a train and that on no account should he mention to anyone the events about to transpire. Nevertheless, their journey proved ultimately unexceptional, as the mysterious visitor failed to disembark. John Jenkins later admitted he and Wood did undertake the journey to Birmingham and that it was with the intention of meeting someone. As for whom, or why, Jenkins declined to comment. Yet, the former operational-director of MAC strenuously denied having implored Wood to remain silent regarding subsequent events. Having asked if he could accompany him, Jenkins agreed, recognizing to refuse might not only seem ‘suspicious’, but that Wool’s presence provided a necessary ‘ballast’ should Jenkins’ reason for undertaking the journey ever be questioned. Strangely however, having conceded he did intend to meet someone, Jenkins questioned the apparent motives of the investigating team. Suggesting they ‘put words in Wood’s mouth’, merely to both strengthen the case against him and to provide spurious evidence which countered the officers’ hitherto

353 *LDP*, 13-17 April 1970. Despite his involvement in the protest, Roberts was not prosecuted. ‘I am of the opinion that Jenkins was more of a boss than Alders’. He would ‘simply agree when Jenkins spoke’. TNA, ASSI 84/577. Witness statement by John Richard Lewis Roberts, 5 December 1969.

354 TNA, ASSI 84/577; also, *The Times*, 11 April 1970.

355 TNA, ASSI 84/577. Witness statement by Lance Corporal Colin George Wood, 16 December 1969. Apparently found ‘in a sideboard’ in his living room, Jenkins denies writing the ‘Statement by MAC’ (Exhibit JBP.9). The author referred to the ‘results of the investiture’ being ‘three dead and one child maimed’. Wood identified it as written in Jenkins’ hand 6 November 1969. Jenkins also denies Raymond Kendall’s claim that he admitted keeping gelignite in the dental offices fridge. Correspondence between WT & Raymond Kendall, 11 November 2009; also, telephone interview
woeful investigation. Jenkins illustrated the point, by dismissing a claim by police sergeant George Bernard Atkinson. In a police statement, Atkinson alleged that on being escorted to the toilet the day following his arrest, Jenkins ruminated he would ‘not have been caught had it not been for informers; at least not as quickly’. Nonetheless, within hours of his arrest on Sunday, 2 November 1969, Frederick Ernest Alders was questioned by police with regard a series of meetings. They were attended, officers believed, by John Jenkins, Owain Williams, Enys Roberts, Alders and a number of others embroiled - whether innocently or otherwise - in the campaign of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru. Although somewhat initially reluctant to divulge information, following the discovery of the store of explosives at his home, Alders became more circumspect. During a police interview, John Jenkins was asked to throw light on the crucial meeting at Loggerheads twenty months earlier. He declined to comment when asked if, along with Owain Williams, he also met Gethin ap Iestyn and Philip Jeffries. Jenkins remained adamant that no such encounter occurred, when discussing these events some time later; declaring he ‘would never have told two men from the south’ where he was ‘at any particular time’, owing to the security risk. Yet, further to apparent police suspicions he was involved in the militant campaign, ap Iestyn also declined to comment when asked if he attended the enigmatic meeting; adding nonetheless beguilingly, with regard the investigation which led to Jenkins’ conviction, ‘the police knew everything’. Whatever the truth regarding the Loggerheads incident, the timing of police statements is intriguing. The witness statement of Det. Chief Inspector, Richard

between WT & John Jenkins, 20 November 2009.
356 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 10 December 2009.
359 TNA, ASSI 84/577. Statement by police Det. Chief Inspector Richard William Evans, 16 December 1969. Jenkins was also asked about meeting Owain Williams and Enys Roberts at Nant-y-Garth Pass in February 1968; being handed ‘a small package’ by Enys Roberts on Market Square in Wrexham ‘shortly after’; being handed a letter from her in late June 1969 at the Bull Hotel, Abergele; the alleged visit to the home of John Roberts when Jenkins allegedly implored him to steal explosives and deliver ‘a man’ from Abergele to carry out the Mackenzie Pier action; and the alleged meeting days later in Roberts’ shed with Alwyn Jones and Owain Williams. Throughout, Jenkins declined to comment.
360 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 21 January 2009.
361 Interview between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 20 May 2009. Owain Williams also denied that Gethin ap Iestyn or Philip Jeffries were present. Telephone interview between WT & Owain Willaims, 23
William Evans, was compiled retrospectively, on 16 December 1969, a full six weeks after Jenkins’ and Alders’ arrest. Might it be that officers were informed of these meetings by Alders and others and then compiled statements to suggest progress in the investigation into the bombing campaign was more advanced than was truly the case? It is certainly a suggestion accepted by John Jenkins; who attests a number of those who gave implicating statements such as George Wood, John Hiscocks and indeed Gordon Wyn Jones were not called to give evidence against him during the trial. This is because, Jenkins maintains, their testimony would not have withstood the rigours of cross-examination and judicial scrutiny. It also explained, Jenkins added, although it is a suggestion contested by Raymond Kendall, why police appeared content to sweep many leads under the investigative carpet on his being sentenced.

The charges are increased

Yet, prior to Jenkins and Alders standing trial, there was much work for the police to do. At 22.45 on 2 November, John Jenkins and Frederick Ernest Alders were jointly charged with breaking and entering the magazine at Hafod quarry and stealing explosives. The following day at Ruabon Magistrates, they were remanded in custody. Four days later, they appeared before Wrexham Magistrates and were charged with conspiring ‘with persons unknown’ to cause various explosions in Cheshire and Denbighshire between 1 January 1968 and 2 November 1969. A fortnight later, Jenkins and Alders appeared again before magistrates in Wrexham. They now faced a third charge of ‘attempting to cause an explosion at the Health Offices in Chester’ some three months earlier. On each occasion, applications for bail were denied. Three days after ‘hearing of Jenkins’ arrest’, Gordon Wyn Jones detonated MAC’s final stores of gelignite. Their activation was timed to coincide

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362 Correspondence between WT & Raymond Kendall, 11 November 2009.
365 LDP, 4 November 1969. On the day Jenkins was arrested, 6lbs of gelignite were discovered in bushes near Gladestry in Radnorshire. WM, 3 November 1969. It was not to my knowledge', stated Jenkins, ‘to do with MAC’. Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 24 December 2009.
366 LDP, 8 November 1969. The explosions caused by ‘explosive substances and devices’, were of a nature deemed ‘likely to endanger life or cause serious injury to property’.
367 LDP, 22 November 1969.
with the annual Guy Fawkes celebrations.  

Six days later in Shrewsbury Prison, having been advised it was in his judicial interests to cooperate, John Jenkins attended a meeting with a number of individuals he quickly determined were from the Home Office, Special Branch, British Intelligence and the Diplomatic Core. Their objective: to ascertain ‘who was really behind MAC’. Jenkins was repeatedly asked if when in Cyprus had he dealings with EOKA; or the communist Red Brigade when in Berlin. Had these, or indeed any such militant group, ever tried to recruit him? ‘They simply could, or would not believe, that MAC was an indigenous organization’, Jenkins declared indignantly. ‘There had to be an organization which was feeding us policy, strategy, tactics and all the rest of it. A Welsh militant campaign would need, these people believed’ Jenkins added, ‘white settler officers; we’d then be alright. But on our own, the Welsh were incapable’. The verbal claim and counterclaim concluded, the mysterious party departed, ‘still unconvinced’.  

John Jenkins attended another meeting at this juncture with his probation officer. Asked if he believed he was being followed in the weeks before his arrest, Jenkins replied he was certain of it. Despite archival evidence which endorses Jenkins’ ‘gut feeling’, the MAC commander’s intractability served only to convince the probation officer that Jenkins was exhibiting clear patterns of delusional paranoia.

One afternoon at Risley Remand Centre, Jenkins’ contemplation was interrupted by Frederick Ernest Alders, who shouted from a neighbouring cell he had been offered ‘a deal’. Asked how he should he respond, Jenkins implored his quondam junior confederate to accept the plea-bargain, if it guaranteed a reduced sentence. He should however, Jenkins cautioned, ‘be careful’ what he said. It was a decision which ultimately prompted Jenkins to change his plea to guilty and conclude in nine days a trial expected to last weeks.

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368 TNA, ASSI 84/577. Undated witness statement by Gordon Wyn Jones. Exhibit, 145. G. W. Jones hoped ‘the fireworks would cover the noise’. On 12 March 1970, Jones showed Det. Chief Supt. Clarke the location of the blast and handed him the ‘tartan bag’ in which Jenkins allegedly delivered the explosives intended for the Mackenzie Pier action. The device was actually discovered in a blue bag.

369 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007; also, telephone interview, 20 November 2009; also, Sir Tasker Watkins private papers, transcript of interview, dated 11 November 1969. There were ‘about 20 of them in dark suits and ties’. Refusing to believe Jenkins had no contact with another group, they repeated: “but you must have known or met them?”. And I said: ‘No, I never…well I might have met them’, I said, ‘who knows who I was meeting’. And then they said, “well did they try to recruit you”?’. They would not believe it.

370 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 26 June 2010.
At the commencement of the trial of John Barnard Jenkins and Frederick Ernest Alders at Flintshire Assizes on 9 April 1970, Jenkins pleaded not guilty to all nineteen charges against him. Fifteen of the charges he faced jointly with Alders. Having pleaded guilty to eight charges, Alders’ plea of not guilty to seven more, was accepted by the prosecution in exchange for his testimony. First offered by the prosecution was compelling forensic evidence. This included swabs from Jenkins’ car which tested positive for traces of nitro-glycerin; so too a hold all and various items of their clothing. If that were not incriminating enough, the explosives located in Alders’ house were traced to Saighton Camp.\(^{371}\) Significant evidence was then heard from ‘key witness’ Ann Woodgate.\(^{372}\)

Next to give testimony against John Jenkins was Frederick Ernest Alders.\(^{373}\) Recognizing Alders ‘was beginning to turn Queen’s Evidence’ against him, Jenkins admitted he failed to anticipate ‘that most essential of all things: once people open their mouths to say something, the floodgates open and everything starts tumbling out’. In a bid to ensure further details of the campaign were not revealed - including the identities of those involved - Jenkins informed his council he now proposed to change his plea to guilty and accept all the charges against him.\(^{374}\) Nonetheless, despite John Jenkins’ assertion his endorsement of ‘the deal’ between Alders and the authorities at Risley Remand Centre precipitated the younger man receiving a softer sentence for his guilty plea, police statements suggest Alders began to divulge much incriminating evidence against himself and Jenkins, within just hours of their arrest, most notably, when he was informed of the discovery of the gelignite at his home at Rhosllanerchrugog. He was ‘not disappointed with Alders’ actions’, Jenkins later remarked benevolently. Naturally, it was with some sadness he viewed Alders’ decision to turn Queen’s Evidence against him, but he felt no ‘bitterness’; such ‘is the way of life’.

Yet why, Jenkins was asked, did he plead ‘not guilty’ initially; surely some indication of the compelling prosecution’s evidence was relayed to him? Having declared that with the proceedings imminent he ‘didn’t give a damn one way or

\(^{371}\) TNA, ASSI 84/577. Witness statements by Major Clifton Melville Jeffries, 15 December 1969; also, undated witness statement by Frank Skuse.

\(^{372}\) LDP, 17 April 1970.

\(^{373}\) LDP, 13 April 1969. Justice Thompson informed Alders he need not give evidence and that it would not influence the sentence of the court should he do so.

\(^{374}\) Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 24 March 2004; also, 19 October 2007; also, 20 November
another’, Jenkins nevertheless revealed he was both advised and implored to plead not guilty by his Defence Council, led by Peter Thomas QC. Moreover, ‘knowing how the state works’, as he did, he would not be surprised if his barrister had advised him to follow such a course of action, in order for as much information as possible regarding the MAC assault to emerge during trial. However, recognizing that he too made ‘mistakes’ while orchestrating the MAC campaign, Jenkins countenanced the notion there existed a Freudian desire to be apprehended following a prolonged campaign; that clues are deliberately left to assist in a person’s detection. It was certainly a suggestion he ‘understood’, Jenkins conceded, but the need to continue the protest had been uppermost in his mind throughout the action, so he ‘did not want to get caught from that point of view; on the other hand’, Jenkins added reflectively, ‘the tension was pretty horrific’.

On 21 April 1970, following Tasker Watkins QC’s summing up for the prosecution, in which he proclaimed MAC an organization ‘wedded to the use of violence’ and whose members scorned ‘the ordinary peaceful methods of achieving political objectives’, John Jenkins, (37) ‘the clever, ruthless fanatic’ was sentenced to ten years imprisonment. Frederick Ernest Alders, (21) received six years. ‘Wales’, declared Justice Thompson, would ‘not approve nor applaud’ what they had done. On the contrary, it would ‘condemn the terror’ they contrived to spread among its people with their ‘wicked deeds’...Wales would ‘disclaim and disown such methods of promoting’ its ‘interests’. Furthermore, the nation would expect Jenkins and Alders ‘to be punished’ for their ‘offences of the utmost gravity’ and ‘to discourage others who might be disposed to imitate’ them. He had no ‘desire to pass crushing sentences’, but nonetheless he had ‘a duty to perform’. Having recognized each was ‘intelligent’, of ‘hitherto good character’ and not prompted to undertake

2008; also, WM, 18 April 1970.

375 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007. He did not ‘blame’ Alders, stated Jenkins. ‘He was very young, only 21 and just married; they’d run him ragged...In the field he was very good and he deserves full credit for how he conducted himself’. Jenkins agreed that Peter Thomas QC may have received notice from senior political or judicial figures, imploiring him to advise Jenkins to plead not guilty.

376 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 November 2009. Within months of Jenkins trial, Peter Thomas, by now Conservative MP for Hendon South, was appointed Secretary of State for Wales.

377 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007; also 20 November 2008.

378 LDP, 9 April 1970. Police received an anonymous telephone call that a bomb was planted in court. A search revealed nothing. In Ireland during the trial, Gethin ap Iestyn asked his wife Mair Griffiths to attend on his behalf. She reported back her disappointment that so few nationalist figures were present.

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their action for ‘personal gain’, it was rather, Justice Thompson, added, ‘a misguided
notion’ they were ‘patriotically promoting the interests of Wales’. Having
recognized Alders’ testimony and apparent attempt to ‘break free of his involvement’
prior to his arrest, the same could not be said of Jenkins, who did ‘not appear to have
relaxed his determination or resolve’.379

Whatever the thoughts of Justice Thompson and British Judicial
Establishment, quick to champion her husband was Thelma Jenkins. He was ‘not a
violent man’. His only fault might be that he cared ‘too much for Wales’. She
thought the ‘world of him’. Jenkins was ‘a kind husband and father who would not
harm anyone’. He was ‘terribly upset when it was said he did not care if people lost
their lives’. Approached to give her response to the verdicts, outside Flintshire
Assizes, Rowena Alders was said to be ‘too upset to talk’.380 Had his former wife
known the extent of his involvement Jenkins was asked in 2004. He had, he
explained, placated her increasing fears he ‘was having an affair somewhere’, by
informing her he was ‘running errands’ for those involved in the campaign against
the investiture.381 Yet, this contradicts the testimony of Ann Woodgate, who not only
informed the court she broke off her engagement to Alders ‘because of his activities
in blowing up pipelines’, but that Jenkins had informed his wife ‘he would not dream
of giving up’ when similarly encouraged to stop his militant activism.382

**Questions remain**

John Jenkins’ guilty plea to eight charges and the jury’s acceptance of not guilty on
those out-standing, ensure a number of tantalizing questions endured. The files ‘may
have closed’ on Jenkins and Alders, but they remained ‘open on a large number of
Welshmen and a few women’, police believed they were within an ace of bringing to
book. Most notably, the elusive ‘phoenix’, who media sources opined, ‘was the
crucial link man between the shadowy figures within the Free Wales Army and the
strong-arm group of MAC.383

This apparent development in the inquiry followed Ann Woodgate’s

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379 *WM*, 21 April 1970. Before hearing his sentence, John Jenkins was approached in his cell and asked
if he would accept ‘10 years’. He agreed. Moreover, Alders had been assured he would receive five
years for his cooperation. Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 November 2008.
380 Ibid.
381 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 24 March 2004; also, 19 October 2007.
condemning testimony. Specifically, her intriguing recollection that Jenkins ‘often received coded letters’ from ‘certain persons from south Wales’. One of whom he termed ‘Falcon’. Other (coded) names which Woodgate claimed to have heard Jenkins mention, included ‘Black Eagle’ and ‘Phoenix’. As to whether the elusive ‘phoenix’ was the prolific letter writer from south Wales, Gethin ap Iestyn, John Jenkins refused to comment; as did ap Iestyn, when similarly questioned, adding the only ‘phoenix’ he knew was ‘an Irish beer’. Nevertheless, ap Iestyn’s declination does not support documentary evidence stored at the National Archives, where - in a letter to Owain Williams - he referred to himself as ‘phoenix’. The Shrewsbury unit appears to have had its suspicions who ‘phoenix’ was; certainly if the spectacle which greeted ap Iestyn on his release from Cardiff prison in October 1969, of squad members staring intently in his direction from across the road is any indication. Yet, it should be noted that despite the initial confidence of the press, that further arrests were imminent, no other person has ever stood trial, let alone been convicted, for their involvement in the MAC offensive.

However, the extent of the authorities’ belief that Jenkins and Alders did not act alone, was highlighted just a fortnight into Jenkins’ sentence, when as a Category A prisoner, he was assured the status of solitary confinement would be lifted if ‘he gave just one name which implicated the involvement of another’ in the MAC campaign. John Jenkins remained intransigent. It was a standpoint earlier outlined

385 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007; also, 20 November 2008.
386 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 21 January 2009.
387 Interview between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 20 May 2009.
388 TNA, DPP 2/4471. Correspondence from Gethin ap Iestyn to Owain Williams, 28 November 1967. The letter was discovered by officers at the home of Owain Williams following the Snowdonia Country Club action in January 1968. The letter was removed from file DPP 2/4471, when viewed by WT in April 2010. A stamp, clearly placed on top of other stamps, also claimed the file was closed until 2009. Yet, it was viewed by WT in December 2008.
389 Interview between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 20 May 2009. G. ap Iestyn was ‘surprised’ and alarmed ‘to see members of the Shrewsbury Squad staring’ at him. He had earlier refused to answer questions regarding the bombing campaign, when visited in prison by members of the unit. Despite expecting ‘a hand’ on his ‘shoulder at any moment’ as he walked away, it did not come. Having lived on Anglesey prior to his arrest, on his release, Gethin ap Iestyn went to live in Eire.
390 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 October 2007. ‘Just give us one name’ Jenkins was urged and the Category A status would be lifted. The officers were probably ‘getting castigated’ for
by Peter Thomas QC, when the barrister summed up the case for the defence at Jenkins' trial. His client did 'not intend to disclose the identity of others involved', Thomas declared. To do so, Jenkins had told him, 'would be contemptuous'.

Despite facing a lengthy prison term, Jenkins’ trepidation for what lay ahead was tempered with knowledge he had survived. ‘I was grateful I suppose’, he candidly confessed in 2009. ‘I had been involved in quite a number of incidents and under the law of averages, I didn’t have much longer to go. So I was relieved in one sense to be out of the firing line; so I wasn’t too upset’. However, had six-and-half years in solitary confinement taken an emotional toll? Given ‘some of the characters in prison’, Jenkins replied, ‘it’s not such a bad idea at all’. Yet, more seriously, his ‘belief’ and ‘faith’ in the cause he had directed, ‘reduced the damaging impact’. Also, the degree of support he received in the form of cards and letters from ‘the outside’ and the extent to which this ensured prison officers were warily cautious in not subjecting him to the same ‘regime as other inmates’. All contrived to make the passage of time that bit more bearable.

Did he nonetheless harbour any regrets? ‘I have great regrets that two men were killed and a little boy injured’, Jenkins replied intently, ‘but apart from that no. I think from now on, they will not take us for granted’. Yet, parallel to Jenkins’ intelligible feelings of relief, David Walters, earlier fined for undertaking protest action at the Tryweryn reservoir site, ‘was shocked’ at the length of Jenkins’ sentence. He ‘didn’t think he’d get ten years’. Rather, a lesser custodial term would be handed down, borne of fear a more substantial period might ‘make a martyr’ of MAC’s operational-director. It was ‘a threat and a warning to others’, Walters believed, and ‘with the investiture over they could afford to do it’. It may also have reflected the authorities’ realisation that contrary to earlier fears, there existed no extensive clandestine movement to retaliate their leaders’ imprisonment.

Nevertheless, by looking more closely at the situation following the

their inability to unmask another MAC activist, he stated. Having rejected the proposal, Jenkins thought ‘we’ve won; they can’t get anybody else’.

391 WM, 21 April 1970.
392 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007; also 20 November 2008. Prison officers were aware political prisoners ‘could get back at them in a way criminal prisoners could not’. This was highlighted when irritated at one warden who ‘bawled’ at him, Jenkins spoke to the governor stating his fears he might - ‘owing to the pressure’ he was under - inadvertently mention it to a contact on the outside. The officer apologised and the ‘disdain’ not repeated. Jenkins also undertook an OU degree.
393 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 5 July 2009.
394 Interview between WT & David Walters, 29 December 2008.
sentencing of John Jenkins and Frederick Ernest Alders, a far from manifest picture emerges. The two former MAC activists were only convicted on three accounts - and all of their own admission - of causing explosions at: Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant, Llyn Vyrnwy and at Hapsford, in Cheshire. They furthermore pleaded guilty to procuring and counselling persons unknown, to attack with explosives the Llanishen Tax Office and with supplying the explosive material used, unsuccessfully, to target the Mackenzie Pier at Holyhead. The remaining charges, regarded the Hafod Colliery break in and the all-encapsulating one of conspiring to cause explosions between January 1966 and November 1969. So who was responsible for sabotaging the Clywedog reservoir site in March 1966? Who carried out the explosions in Cardiff: at the Llanishen Tax Office, the Welsh Office, Police Headquarters, the Central Electricity Board Offices and Postal Sorting Office? Moreover, along with the device which activated in Abergele, who planted the three others which comprised the investiture day action? These and other questions, such as, who was behind the West Hagley pipeline blast and the extent of a number of individuals’ true involvement, will perhaps never be answered.

**Luck and good fortune played their part**

 Nonetheless, for all Jenkins’ understandable - if misplaced - confidence that no one, whether enmeshed within the movement or on its periphery, divulged information which led to his arrest, luck and good fortune certainly appear to have favoured the MAC leader; a feature which proved instrumental in the campaign continuing for so long. Of one thing there is little doubt: Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru was effectively led by the charismatic John Jenkins. Under his direction, the movement’s cogence magnified and blossomed. A Sergeant in the British Army, Jenkins was well hidden for some considerable time; partly because the authorities appeared disinclined to countenance the view that a member of Her Majesty’s forces would orchestrate such a campaign of violence against the British State.\(^{395}\) It is a mistake unlikely ever to be repeated. Yet, with the admitted luxury of 40 years hindsight, by focusing on a number of avenues and potential breakthroughs, it is possible to deduce that the knowledge and information which could have led to Jenkins’ detection was indeed

\(^{395}\) Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 November 2009. ‘John Jenkins was protected to some considerable degree because of where he was. Had he not been in the army, I wonder whether he would have lasted as long’. Also: ‘They won’t make the same mistake again’.
available. For instance: in the early spring of 1965, John Jenkins submitted a written request to the War Office to be posted to a camp either in, or within proximity to Wales. His reason for doing so, he frankly disclosed, was in order for his son to receive his secondary education through the medium of Welsh. With John Jenkins apparently alive to the possibility, surely the authorities were also aware that such a decision for wanting to return indicated Jenkins’ cultural allegiance? Furthermore, Jenkins’ re-structuring and evaluation process of MAC’s capabilities, prior to his undertaking the Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant action in September 1967, took some twelve months. Mercifully from Jenkins’ perspective, none of those he approached informed the authorities.

Just ten days after joining the Territorial Army, Alders and other members of the Drum Corps took a trip to Rhyl. Whilst en route, ‘four or five’ passengers on the bus engaged in a discussion regarding Welsh nationalism, during which, Jenkins allegedly remarked that ‘time bombs’ were ‘the means by which most propaganda could be achieved’. If such a disclosure in itself reveals little, TA member Brian Richards was aware two days before the Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant action, that Jenkins had approached Alders in the All Ranks mess, proposing both he and Richards involve themselves in an unspecified, but imminent militant strike.

Two months later, immediately following the explosion at the Temple of Peace, Cledwyn Hughes proffered the suggestion that those responsible appeared ‘to be a small group with expert (perhaps ex-Army) knowledge of bombs’. Such supposition surely ensured the ‘Army factor’ entered the equation? Hughes’ earlier speculation might have set alarm bells ringing, when following the explosion at Penisaurwaun in January 1968, officers on Anglesey were informed by John Gwilym Jones, that a raid with help ‘on the inside’ was to be carried out at Saighton Barracks in Cheshire, in order to procure arms for the impending militant struggle. Stationed at Saighton Barracks at this juncture was John Jenkins. It appears inconceivable that this degree of specific information - some 80 miles from Anglesey - was not acted upon. At the very least a study of personnel employed at the Barracks and any nationalist sympathies they may hold - openly or otherwise - might have been established.

Nevertheless, of arguably primary significance to the police inquiry, was the disclosure jointly reached by Ian Skidmore and Harold Pendlebury. Following their

Anonymous interview between WT & retired senior police officer, December 2000.
conference with the elusive MAC in May 1968, the two journalists informed officers that the mysterious spokesman appeared 'used to instructing others', a person with 'a military bearing...perhaps an ex-squaddie'. Three months later, John Jenkins was accompanied to Birmingham New Street Station by Colin George Wood, a junior member of the Dental Corps. *En route*, Jenkins allegedly implored Wood 'not to mention to anybody else' any events which may transpire. If indeed a true reflection of Jenkins' behaviour, considering the political climate, did Wood not at least consider *something* underhand might be afoot?

In December 1968, a MAC active unit successfully targeted the Cwm Elan to Birmingham water pipeline at West Hagley, near Stourbridge. Press coverage of the incident reported an account that 'a grey or green minivan' was parked near the scene of the explosion just hours before. Surely a comprehensive investigation of all such registered vehicles in the UK, would have identified one such grey model in the name of a Frederick Ernest Alders. Moreover, it further suggests the operation was in fact undertaken by Jenkins and Alders and there was *no* MAC mid-Wales active unit. Or more charitably - and contrary to John Jenkins' assertion of responsibility - if there *was* an operational unit in the area, it was *not* responsible for the Stourbridge action. Information such as that outlined, when received in isolation, reveals comparatively little. Yet, when collated and evaluated a profile emerges. Had this information been cross-referenced - admittedly at a juncture when the process relied on a timely and complex manual card system - a clear identifiable pattern may have resulted. As such, it is *perhaps* likely that John Jenkins would have come to the attention of investigating officers, some considerable time sooner.

However, this appears not the only example that the Gods were smiling on John Jenkins. How might matters have changed had John Hiscocks, the *ad hoc* MAC operative, contacted the authorities with his revelations or suspicions, following his recruitment and utilization with regard the Llanishen Tax Office action? Or indeed if others had approached the authorities, such as John Roberts - both senior and junior; not forgetting Enys Roberts, Ann Woodgate, Thelma Jenkins, and conceivably, others besides.

Fortuity certainly appears to have featured prominently in the campaign of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru. Or perhaps not. John Jenkins used his finely honed intellectual charms to inveigle his way into the confidence of would-be MAC subordinates. Presumably through intellectual reasoning, Jenkins possessed an
uncanny ability to gain the trust of these potential apostles. Yet, might the threat of ‘sanctions’ have also proved instrumental in ensuring that only after his arrest was information received en masse? Whatever the truth, other questions remain unanswered also. How involved in the militant campaign was journalist Emyr Jones; so too the ‘sleeper’ who placed a rubber band between the Hafod Quarry’s alarm circuit’s contact points, thus preventing its activation when broken into by Jenkins and Alders in January 1968?

The campaign’s conclusion receives a mixed response

Asked for his thoughts on the bombing campaign orchestrated by John Jenkins, Patriotic Front figure Toni Lewis declared it ‘wonderful’. Furthermore, he remained throughout, completely in the dark as to Jenkins’ identity. Nonetheless, if some raised a toast in honour of MAC’s brilliant strategist for having fought and coordinated a dogged and to many an inspired insurge, others heaved a collective sigh of relief the campaign of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru had reached its ‘ignominious’ end. Of such mind is Raymond Kendall. ‘He had no remorse whatsoever’, Kendall declared, when later recalling Jenkins’ steadfast refusal to both assist the inquiry or explain his actions. To Kendall - and all those who applaud his pronouncement - ‘it indicated the kind of dangerous individual Jenkins represented. Who knows’, he added portentously, ‘what he might have gone on to do had he not been stopped’. 397

Yet, with John Jenkins behind bars, the dissident remnants of MAC, bereft of leadership, apparently ignorant of know-how and fearful of arrest, lost it would seem the stomach to continue. Since his release from prison in August 1976, John Jenkins - in line with his earlier conduct - has refused to implicate any other person involved in the campaign of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru. As for Frederick Ernest Alders, Jenkins has neither spoken to, nor seen him, since the day they were sentenced.

396 Interview between WT & Toni Lewis, 20 May 2004.
397 Correspondence between WT & Raymond Kendall, 11 November 2009.
Conclusion

[Wales] is not a beautiful young girl after whom I lust, or an old Duchess whose money and status I desire; she is old, well past her best, decrepit, boozy, and has taken strange bedfellows without the saving grace of desperation... She has given nothing to me, in fact by denying her I could be better myself... [Yet] I owe her my love and my loyalty, she is my mother. She may be a liability, but is the sort of liability that a crippled child is in the eyes of its parents. If I ignore her in her hour of need, no one will ever know or condemn, except myself, and I have the sort of conscience that stops functioning the moment I stop breathing.

So wrote John Jenkins from H.M. Prison, Wormwood Scrubs, one year into his ten year prison term. Yet, if as Byron declared: ‘it is in solitude, we are least alone’, what - if anything - can be gleaned from Jenkins’ plaintive poignancy? And crucially, with the former director-general of MAC behind bars and the campaign of so-called ‘direct action’ at an end, how many in Wales shared Jenkins’ defiance and assured reasoning? How pivotal to the rise of militancy was the flooding of Cwm Tryweryn? Might ‘direct action’ have been avoided, had the Plaid Cymru hierarchy adopted a more acicular stance, when first faced with the judicial process to drown the valley, or indeed, ten years later, when the British state responded to the rise of political nationalism, by staging the royal investiture, with all the Ruritanian grandeur it could muster? What is the political and historical legacy of the MAC campaign? Was it really ‘the revolution which fainted at the sight of blood’? These are just a number of questions which require attention if a full appraisal of the militant campaign which rocked Wales between 1963 and 1969 is to be made.

The causes of militancy

The decision to flood Cwm Tryweryn is one of the significant milestones in the development of the Welsh nation. It crystallized cultural attachments and revealed national anguish. Nowhere in the nation’s recent history was its vulnerability in political, linguistic and cultural terms more exposed. The ‘battle’ to save Tryweryn, provided the symbolic focus for the genesis of more populist programme of nationalist action; becoming, for many, the starting point on the journey to self-

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2 Telephone interview between WT & Ian Skidmore, 20 August 2008. The sentiment was expressed by John Charges of The Times to Ian Skidmore following John Jenkins being sentenced.
Its political impact on the lives of those who later played a prominent role in nationalist politics is well documented; if not universally endorsed. It was also a central influence on those who led and carried out the militant campaign.

Yet, if Tryweryn was ‘a gift to Welsh nationalism’, as Patrick Hannan alleged in 2006, before adding, ‘which has always been crowded with prospectors panning for nuggets of English oppression’, so too was the former Secretary of State for Wales, George Thomas, whose invective antipathy towards all things nationalist throughout his period in office descended to the farce of a McCarthy ‘witch hunt’. Nevertheless, for those on the militant wing of the nationalist movement, it is the political direction upon which Plaid Cymru embarked under Gwynfor Evans’ presidency, which requires most comment. The party leader’s re-moulding of Plaid Cymru, they believe, rendered it little more than an ersatz English Labour party. This was a

\[\text{Campaign, p.170. The growth of nationalist sentiment in Wales and Scotland, compelled Harold Wilson to set up on 29 October 1968, the Crowther Commission. Following the death of its first chairman, it was renamed the Kilbrandon Commission after the next incumbent. The Scottish Liberal peer was a lifelong advocate of ‘Home Rule’. The Commission eventually returned its findings in support of devolving government to Britain’s ‘historic nationalities’ in September 1973. This led to the referendum in Wales on 1 March 1979. The proposed modicum of devolved administration was rejected 4-1.}\]

\[\text{BBC Radio 4, The Lake That Stirred Nationalism. Broadcast, 19 October 2005. Owain Williams believed it was ‘the turning point in the battle for Wales to gain self-respect as a nation’. It ‘re-kindled a national awakening’.}\]

\[\text{Western Mail, 14 June 2006. The drowning of Cwm Tryweryn is seen as the key event in the politicisation of former Plaid Cymru President Dafydd Wigley. So too, the Plaid Cymru MP for Meirionnydd Nant Conwy, Elfyn Llwyd. He recalled his late father taking him to the condemned site during the destruction of the village of Capel Celyn, remembering ‘how visibly upset’ he was and thereafter imploring his son ‘never to forget that shameful episode. Like many people in Wales’, Llwyd had ‘never forgotten’. WM, 21 June 2006.}\]

\[\text{WM, 14 June 2006. Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas’s attitude to the flooding of Cwm Tryweryn is more circumspect and in particular, its place in the development of Plaid Cymru. Apparently, so stated Patrick Hannan: ‘snorting with impatience at the suggestion a political party can be constructed on a series of complaints and resentments’. Moreover, ‘he is’, continued Hannan, ‘caustically unsympathetic to the refrain in some strands of nationalist politics, that the Welsh have been in some way the victims of the English down the ages and continue to be so. The idea that most of the problems of Wales stem from gleeful English malevolence, Hannan concluded, ‘is something he seems to regard as juvenile folly’.}\]

\[\text{WM, 14 June 2006. On 19 October 2005, Liverpool City Council released a statement in which having realised ‘the hurt...when the Tryweryn Valley was transformed into a reservoir to help meet the water needs of Liverpool’...it apologised ‘for any insensitivity by our predecessor council at that time’. Crucially for many, it did not apologise for actually drowning the valley.}\]

\[\text{Taith yr iaith, Bont Production. Screened S4C, 4 October 2008. George Thomas was a virulent opponent of nationalism, the very pronunciation of which he delivered with all the disdain he could muster. Nonetheless, speaking shortly before his death in 1997, with regard Prince Charles’s eight week period at Aberystwyth University, Thomas remarked he was ‘unhappy about it’. The decision he also felt was ‘unwise’, 'a bit patronizing to Wales and unnecessarily provocative'. Thomas, Mr Speaker (London, 1985), p.118. John Jenkins was later conciliatory when considering George Thomas’s 1960s ‘centralist’ assessment of Welsh nationalism. ‘He did after all’, state Jenkins, ‘have to secure his power base’. Interview with WT, 19 October 2007.}\]
synthetic, chameleonic, 'all things to all people' view of nationalism, undertaken in a desperate bid to attract the political mainstream. In so doing, Plaid Cymru regressed. It became a substitute, a dilution and mere understudy to that which might be achieved by adopting a more aggressive, less constitutional approach.

However, in particular, it is the perceived conception of Gwynfor Evans' and the Plaid Cymru hierarchy's toothless appeasement over the Tryweryn issue and its nebulous opposition to the Royal Investiture, which sticks most in the militant nationalist's craw. It is this 'failure', which they consider instrumental in ensuring that gelignite became an all too familiar presence upon the geopolitical landscape of Wales. And it should be noted, that since the campaign of so-called 'direct action' ended in 1969, while a small number of Welsh valleys have been flooded, none have involved the 'drowning' of a community.

**The impact of militancy**

The former Welsh militant community (which the Free Wales Army can fit within to some degree) is an interesting phenomenon. It comprised a disparate group of men and women, of different ages, from various educational and socio-economic backgrounds, who against their natural instincts as parents and in many cases as respected members of Welsh community life, collectively regarded themselves to be in conflict with the British state; and a central government, it considered indifferent, if not hostile, to Welsh cultural identity and interests.

Remarkably however, seemingly at a loss as to why these people had taken up arms, 'police', John Jenkins later alleged, claimed he exercised 'a certain control over insubordinate MAC cell members'. Namely, they were either afraid of him, or they 'were engaged in homosexual activity' which provided Jenkins a position of 'compromise'. 'They just could not grasp', exclaimed an exasperated Jenkins, 'that it was purely an intellectual meeting of minds. The authorities had to assume there existed an unsavoury motive or element'.

It is an interesting point, because MAC was not the amalgam of society's

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9 Interview between WT & David Walters, 29 December 2008.
10 Interview between WT & John Davies, 28 March 2011. 'The reservoir at Llys-y-fran was completed in 1972 and those at Brianne and Alaw in 1973. They had been planned before 1969, but that at Brenig was not planned until 1972'.
11 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 November 2008. 'They would not accept' Jenkins remarked witheringly, 'that the movement comprised men, who, with considered foresight, had embroiled themselves for reasons of principle'.
neglected cast offs and John Jenkins not the Mephistophelean guru expected by the authorities. On the contrary, Jenkins was intelligent, articulate and a brushed, polished and highly respected member of Her Majesty's forces, and as such - despite later denials - apparently 'above suspicion'. It is a degree of 'protection' not likely to be repeated. Following Jenkins' imprisonment, 'all' became considered a possible suspect: no one it seems, irrespective of age, gender or social status, deemed beyond reproach. Merely the espousing of nationalist sympathies proved enough to warrant the diligent attention of Special Branch.

Writing some 20 months into his period of incarceration, John Jenkins considered his 'greatest achievement' not to be the £7 million estimated cost to the state of the MAC campaign, nor indeed that only two MAC cells were 'destroyed: one by accident and one by betrayal', but that only the intervention of an informant had resulted in his apprehension and - more importantly - that the complete system of safe houses, dumps, dead letter boxes, active supporters and sleeping sympathizers had escaped detection'. It was not therefore 'a matter of waiting for Arthur to wake', Jenkins added portentously, but rather the reactivation of an existing machine which had already proved its worth 'under fire'. It is all the more startling, in view of the somewhat established fact that a number of those involved in the campaign of MAC, later played a prominent role in the second home arson protest, as predominantly undertaken by Meibion GlynDwr.

One thing which is clear, is that the MAC campaign was not fuelled by

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12 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 10 April 2009.
13 Anonymous interview with WT, December 2000. It was a lesson put into dramatic effect some ten years later when on Palm Sunday, 1980, sweeping arrests were made during what became known as Operation Tan: the search for the Meibion GlynDwr arsonists. The arson protest, during which over 200 homes and business across Wales and England were targeted, began 13 December 1979 and is thought to have ended in 1992. It was principally undertaken to draw attention to the fact there existed in Wales some 30,000 second-homes and a council-house waiting list of over 50,000. John Osmond, *Police Conspiracy?* (Talybont, 1984), pp.37-40; also, John Humphries, *Freedom Fighters* (Cardiff, 2008), p.160.
15 John Osmond, *Police Conspiracy?* (Talybont, 1984), pp.37-41. Despite an earlier pronouncement that he had 'played his part and on his release he should be 'be put out to graze', during an interview with BBC *Nationwide*, broadcast 12 March 1980, John Jenkins outlined the aims and determination of those undertaking the holiday homes arson protest. A transcribe of the interview later proved crucial during the 1983 Explosives Trial, involving alleged members of the Workers' Army of the Welsh Republic, where the prosecution case wrested upon the belief the bombing campaign against political targets - ie, Conservative party offices and the home of Nicholas Edwards, the Conservative Secretary of State for Wales - was inextricably linked with the holiday-home arson campaign. So much so, that the same people were involved. A written statement, handed to a BBC journalist with regard the arson campaign, was signed Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru; which he was informed, 'was one of the two main groups' responsible.
bravura. It was a sophisticated, considered action. The authorities suffered at the hands of Jenkins. The British State and its security network emerged from the fight bloodied and exposed as hopelessly ill-equipped to meet a dogged, determined and intelligent opponent. Lessons were quickly learned. Such is the technological advance currently enjoyed by the police and security services, it is questionable whether in this age of ‘prevent thinking’ and 28 day detention of suspects under anti-terrorist legislation, if a similar campaign of direct action would ever be so sustained.

Throughout the three-and-a-half year offensive, John Jenkins believes ‘support for MAC throughout Wales was 50/50’, although predominantly acquiescent in nature. To Jenkins’ credit, the MAC bombing campaign did unite, to some degree, those from different political and cultural backgrounds. The bombers were seen by some - rightly or wrongly - as ‘standing up for Wales’. This appears to have created, Jenkins claimed, a certain degree of pride and unity throughout the nation, which, former militants allege, manifested itself in electoral endorsement for the nationalist political agenda, via support for Plaid Cymru.

By consulting the election results for the period, it is apparent that Plaid Cymru’s share of the vote certainly did increase: from 61,071 (4.3%) at the 1966 General Election, to 175,016 (11.5%) at the 1970 General Election. This rise was partly because the Labour Party’s vote in Wales was affected by its mishandling of the Aberfan financial settlement issue and the tip clearance controversy. Subsequently, when the more acute memories of the Aberfan disaster began to fade, the Labour Party’s electoral fortunes in Wales were revived. However, why Plaid Cymru ‘broke through’ the central party’s hegemony in Wales at this juncture is far more complex; and it should also be noted that support for the party was already falling in the months before the militant campaign ended. While militant activism was arguably a factor in Plaid Cymru’s electoral success - in that it propagated a sense of Welshness - it was not central to its advance and indeed, may well have

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16 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007.
18 Ibid, p.115; also, Dafydd Williams, The Story of Plaid Cymru (Aberystwyth, 1990), p.27. The 1970 General Election, held 18 June, saw Plaid Cymru contest every Welsh seat for the first time. It remains the highest vote the party has received. For a brilliant synopsis of the MAC offensive, as written by John Jenkins, including its effect on Welsh ‘voting patterns’, see: Cambria, January/February 2009.
19 K. O. Morgan, The People’s Peace: British History Since 1945 (Oxford, 1999), pp.288,289. ‘As in Scotland, there were signs in 1969 that Plaid Cymru was passing its peak and that the Welsh Language Society - through its strident, aggressive campaign - was annoying more people than it was converting to its cause’.

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proved a double edged sword. For example, Gwynfor Evans believed the explosion at RAF Pembrey alone cost him between 1,000 - 2,000 votes.\textsuperscript{20} Rather, Plaid Cymru profited from disillusionment with the Labour Party’s economic record; frustration for which saw it lose votes across the UK. Moreover, the 1970 General Election saw Plaid Cymru contest all 36 constituency seats in Wales; surely this alone ensured an overall increase in the party vote. Nonetheless, while the militant ‘threat’ placed Plaid Cymru in a difficult constitutional position, it necessitated a serious reaction to its presence within the wider British political system; placing Welsh nationalism on the agenda and the newsstands from Knighton to Knightsbridge.

The episodic three-year-long MAC campaign against the British state attracted polemic comment: being vilified as craven by many and yet considered quixotic by others. For those in Wales prepared to countenance that type of action, John Jenkins is the forgotten Godfather of Welsh dissidence, passed by and ignored on the wayside of mainstream historical analysis, which appears content to see the episode swept forever beneath the carpet of unionist disharmony. Furthermore, for those sympathetic, Jenkins remains the litmus test of Welsh republican and historic virtue, a potent symbol of Welsh militant capability, built upon guile and cunning, against overwhelming military and financial odds. Yet, it must be acknowledged that at no time, either prior to, or following Jenkins’ arrest and imprisonment, did the green shoots of armed insurrection against the British state materialize, while latterly, many are unaware of either John Jenkins or the campaign of violence he effectively led.

Crucially, even within the nationalist community, support for John Jenkins and MAC was far from universal, either during its conflict period, or immediately following Jenkins’ detention. Writing in the \textit{Welsh Nation}, Plaid Cymru’s English-language monthly magazine throughout the spring of 1973, R. C. Kennard and W. S. Parry questioned the efficacy of MAC’s policy of ‘direct action’. Moreover, Parry censoriously denounced Jenkins as ‘a mad anarchist’, who had been afforded the opportunity to moralize owing to his incarceration. If that were not clear enough, Jenkins’ directorship of MAC, Parry averred, had ‘failed in its bid for public support’. A rebuke by John Jenkins was not long in coming. He challenged W. S. Parry’s failure to understand and appreciate ‘the objectives of the exercise’, and - having not been personally involved in the militant action - to adequately ‘query the tactics,
strategy or the results of the campaign'. However, despite any harboured sense of frustration with Plaid Cymru’s constitutional sensibilities, or irritation with the party’s *Welsh Nation*, or indeed, his increasing leanings towards socialism, John Jenkins remained ever the pragmatist. In 1974, he declined the approach made to him by the republican group Mudiad Gwerin Cymru, to stand as its candidate in either Caerphilly, or Brecon and Radnor at the forthcoming General Election. To do so, Jenkins recognized, would split the nationalist vote to the detriment of either group’s electoral chances, most notably, he realised, Plaid Cymru.

Yet, why have no populated valleys in Wales been drowned since Jenkins was imprisoned in April 1970? The inspectors report, published eight months later, rejected the proposal of the River Severn Authority to construct a reservoir in Cwm Dulais near Llanidloes, on the grounds that the case in favour of doing so had ‘not been justified against all alternatives’. It further cited ‘the consequences for agriculture and particularly the community’ which comprised 300, as instrumental in its failure. Finally, it appeared that the intangible qualities of a living community had been considered and valued. Yet, how much more susceptible and appreciative of these factors were the authorities as a consequence of the campaign of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru and the threat posed by militant nationalism? Did any such correlation exist? Of no doubt that protest did prove crucial is Emyr Llywelyn Jones, who remarked in 2003, that he ‘definitely’ believed ‘further sites would have been flooded had a stand not been taken at Tryweryn’. Not unsurprisingly, it is a sentiment echoed by John Jenkins and others at the vanguard of the militant struggle. John Jenkins wrote from Wormwood Scrubs, that the ‘tender approach’ of

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22 Ibid, p.115. Letter to Robat Gruffudd, 1 May 1975. Jenkins hoped to create an egalitarian Wales, devoid of the rigid social class distinction he deemed prevalent in English society.
24 *The Times*, 2 December 1970; also, *The Times*, 4 March 1971. It was noted that the Cwm Dulais Defence Committee based its case on the assurance given in 1966 by Secretary of State for Wales Cledwyn Hughes, that he would not authorize the development of sites which involved the drowning of villages, the disruption of entire communities or the use of first class land. Following a campaign of disruption and non-access to surveyors by residents of Cwm Senni in Breconshire, the Usk River Authority announced in 1971 its intention to locate an alternative reservoir site. It was hoped the establishing of the Welsh Water Authority in 1974 would address many of the issues.
25 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 13 September 2003. ‘The drowning of Tryweryn and the resulting bombing campaign, threatened the very stability of the Welsh nation’, declared Jones.
26 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007; also between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004. Jenkins nonetheless questioned the wisdom of ‘handing oneself over to the authorities’ in order to maintain ‘the moral high ground’. A philosophy he believed endorsed by Emyr Llywelyn...
the Severn River Authority to submerge Cwm Dulais, was not owing to ‘the leaders of Plaid Cymru and the deacons singing hymns in the streets of Liverpool’, but because ‘force is to diplomacy what bullion is to banknotes’.27

By way of explanation, MAC’s former director of operational policy, considered the movement for Independence for India, in the immediate pre and post-war period. ‘Gandhi’s pacifism’, declared Jenkins, could and only did succeed, because Nehru’s more militant campaign was running parallel with it...both systems appeared diametrically opposed to one another, yet each worked tangentially...and the authorities knew this...one campaign could not have succeeded without the other. They lived and needed each other; and they could do it in the same way that Plaid Cymru and MAC could have lived together; except Plaid Cymru would not entertain the idea, because the party did not know what politics and power was all about.28

John Jenkins is not alone in believing that Plaid Cymru failed to appreciate the importance of Nehru and Gandhi’s two pronged approach and ‘implied threat’; Owain Williams also feels much might have been achieved had Gwynfor Evans recognized the ‘golden opportunity’ of uniting the constitutional and non-constitutional wings of the nationalist movement. Furthermore - and to add insult to injury - the ‘crachach cultural nationalists’, declared Williams, had since been ‘beatified for doing nothing’. He ‘truly’ felt Plaid Cymru would not today enjoy the position of comparative electoral success were it not for the actions of the former militant community. What is more, Gwynfor Evans’ success at the Carmarthen by-election in 1966, would not have occurred ‘without the threat posed by direct action’, opined Williams; and moreover, he added, Evans ‘knew it’.29

Yet, for all John Jenkins’ and Owain Williams’ enticing condemnation of Plaid Cymru, it was not the party leadership’s constitutional adherence which flooded Cwm Tryweryn. The valley and the village of Capel Celyn were submerged by

Jenkins.

27 Jenkins, Prison Letters, p.27.

28 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007. ‘Wales is not India and what might work there would not work here and it’s as simple as that...the decision in prison of Emyr Llywelyn Jones to adopt the pacifist policies of Gandhi was a cop out...Had Plaid Cymru known what politics and power was’, added Jenkins, ‘if it was a political party in the accepted sense of the word, in 1979 when its policies failed miserably and utterly, heads would have rolled. How many heads rolled following the debacle of the devolution vote in ’79? None! All that proved to me was that Plaid Cymru was merely a cultural group. Were it a political party it would have followed established political rules which say, when the chief says we do this and its proved to be wrong, then the chief is gone and replaced’.

29 Telephone interview between WT & Owain Williams, 24 February 2009. Gwynfor Evans, Williams added, ‘could never have stated that publicly of course. Also, the national consciousness which you find in Wales today, would not be where it is without our action. We re-kindled those feelings of nationhood’.

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Liverpool Water Corporation. Its ‘act of corporate greed’, legislatively aided and abetted by an English dominated Parliament, with perhaps little understanding or respect for Welsh cultural expression or the nation’s landscape.30

Nevertheless, with regard both the flooding of Cwm Tryweryn and the Investiture, Plaid Cymru claims it responded as well as it felt able, certainly when considering its observance of pacifist constitutionalism. Continually denounced, by most notably George Thomas, as ‘the two heads of the same coin’, how catastrophic might events have proved, had Gwynfor Evans openly declared support for militant protest? Speaking in 1961, at a time when ‘direct action’ entered the party agenda and Evans and the party hierarchy demurred from endorsing such a policy, Elystan Morgan made a valid point: a party which embraces illegal action is thus rendered little more than a protest group and not a bone fide political party which campaigns along accepted constitutional lines.31 No one was more aware than Gwynfor Evans how precariously stood the party’s electoral tree. It may fallen irredeemably, if later expected to ‘validate’ the horrific injuries sustained by 10-year-old Ian Cox, when the militant campaign’s moral ascendancy - if indeed it ever existed in the collective mind of the Welsh people - was lost.

Having established that MAC and the FWA proved something of a ‘thorn in the side’ of Plaid Cymru, in later correspondence, Gwynfor Evans nonetheless declared Jenkins ‘an honest person’, who had ‘sacrificed’ much ‘for a cause he believed in’. Furthermore, Jenkins’ ‘writings had substance…seemed rational and fair’ and were ‘by no means mere froth’.32 In telephone interviews with his son Dafydd, it was further revealed that Gwynfor Evans did privately acknowledge the benefit of some degree of direct action to both the political advance of Plaid Cymru and the nationalist agenda, but these feelings had been tempered with fear of ‘where it might end’ and the realization that even the mildest utterance of public support for

30 Drowning of a Village. SALEMfilms Productions, 2006. Screened BBC2W, 13 March 2006. 2003 saw the population of Liverpool rise for the first time in seventy years. Living in Liverpool, Real Estate TV. Sky, 7 October 2007. Ironically, as industry suffered a sharp decline on Merseyside, Liverpool had no use for all its newly acquired water provision; the down-turn in demand having even begun by October 1965, when the dam was comically declared open. Consequently, the city now has too much water. In 1955, Liverpool had a population of over 750,000. In 2006, its population had fallen to under 450,000, its total residential and industrial needs being some 49,000,000 gallons of water a day.


32 Correspondence between WT & Gwynfor Evans, 20 August 2003. At a meeting in Swansea some time later, Jenkins and Evans were alone waiting to address a meeting. Neither made the initial introduction, with Jenkins later stating he ‘was not going to speak first’. Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007.
militant protest would have proved electoral suicide. As it was, Gwynfor Evans believed, militancy had certainly played its part - along with the investiture and the campaign undertaken by Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg - in his losing the Carmarthen seat at the 1970 General Election.

When might constitutional campaigning, along with - albeit covert - militant protest action have proved crucial

However, in the collective mind of those angered at what they considered Wales’ subjugated position at this juncture, by not acting at the appropriate time and in the appropriate manner, Plaid Cymru ensured a militant response was inevitable. Had the Plaid Cymru hierarchy led a sit-down protest at the proposed reservoir site, it is argued, the Tryweryn valley’s fortunes might have been avoided. There is good reason to believe that many hundreds, possibly more, would have aligned themselves to the cause of preventing the Bill’s judicial passage through parliament. This assumption is based upon the fact that no single issue in post-1945 Welsh history has attracted such support across political, denominational and generational lines. Nonetheless, at what point might such a strategy have proved instrumental? It appears on reflection, that a sit-down protest - as exercised at Trawsfynydd in 1952 - might have proved decisive at Capel Celyn, if undertaken the weekend before the 2nd reading in the Commons of the Tryweryn Reservoir Bill, on 3 July 1957. Certainly before villagers began to leave and critically, not after the Bill was legally endorsed. For another problem which drastically undermined the prospect of a united protest was that villagers of Capel Celyn left in dribs and drabs. Whether this was an accident of timing is unclear - the first leaving just days after the third and final parliamentary endorsement of the Bill. Yet, this ensured no mass departure; and

33 Telephone interview between WT & Dafydd Evans, 19 October 2005. ‘I think he felt there was no alternative, that the party would suffer if direct action was adopted...At times it did make the party look weak, at least in the short-term’.

34 Correspondence between WT & Gwynfor Evans, 20 August 2003. Gwynfor Evans believed his ‘indifference’ to the investiture proved crucial. During the election campaign, even within the cultural heartlands of Brynamman and more understandably perhaps, Llansteffan, there was animosity expressed on the doorstep towards the party for what was seen as its hostility to the ceremony. Plaid lost the seat due to its inability to organise itself and entrench its position, stated former language activist Gareth Miles. Interview with WT, 31 July 2009. Evans re-won the Carmarthen seat in 1974.

35 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 12 September 2003. Emyr Llywelyn Jones was the only MAC activist to attend university. There is, he maintains, a clear distinction between the first conception of MAC, to which he belonged and the second as directed by John Jenkins.

36 Telephone interview between WT & Eurgain Prysor Jones, 29 June 2006.
crucially, prevented the need for mass removal.

Regarding the investiture, John Jenkins may well be correct in believing that history may have recorded a different outcome, had Plaid Cymru orchestrated a sit-down protest in Caernarfon a week or so before the ceremony. It is unlikely, if not however inconceivable, that if supported by Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg and all those hostile to the ceremony, an ‘unfit’ prince might have provided the authorities a face-saving ‘get out clause’ were the threat of militant action deemed credible.

Nevertheless, the fear, as held by Gwynfor Evans as to where the militant campaign might have ended, has sat uneasily on the shoulders of the nation also. Despite an acceptance that ‘civilians were not deliberately targeted’ a policy which if deliberately undertaken crossed ‘the line of acceptability’, the appalling injuries sustained by Ian Cox and Flight Officer William Hougham - although responsibility for Hougham’s unfortunate injuries has never been directly linked to Welsh nationalist activity - indicates that such a development was all too real.

So too, the emergence of the as-yet unidentified militant group responsible for the Cardiff explosions not attributed to MAC; and the actions of Robert Trigg who was not a member of the group and was apparently acting alone. Each suggests that fear the bombing campaign might have escalated is neither unreasonable, nor without foundation. As for John Jenkins, while conceding in 1973 that ‘no one wants to see another Ulster’, a view later roundly endorsed by Gethin ap Iestyn, Jenkins nonetheless recognized that if the alternative was ‘deracination and cultural genocide’, he would ‘always take the way’ which would leave his children ‘no reason to regard him in the bitter way’ in which he himself regarded his ‘expedient ancestors’. However, the fear that Wales stared dangerously over the precipice of a Northern Ireland nightmarish scenario, led many to thank Providence that John Jenkins was arrested before escalation threatened to result in near catastrophe.

However, to leave aside Jenkins’ romanticism, it is clear that the former director-general of MAC is held in considerable esteem by the IRA, even to the extent of receiving the moniker ‘the general’ by Republican prison inmates. Yet, this

37 Telephone interview between WT & Robert ap Steffan, 9 August 2009.
38 Interview between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 20 May 2009.
40 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 19 October 2007; also 20 November 2008. One notable Jenkins confidante during the earlier period of his incarceration was Micky Gaughan, who died on hunger-strike at Parkhurst Prison on 4 June 1974, from injuries inflicted through force feeding. AN
regard is not merely confined to Irish militants. If it appears that former members of the militant family consider it a sense of duty to speak in awe of Jenkins, under closer scrutiny, approbation and reverence for him does indeed appear genuine and heartfelt. For example, speaking in 2004, Owain Williams declared John Jenkins ‘very competent and capable’; a man who stood ‘head and shoulders with any revolutionary of the twentieth century’. It is an opinion echoed by David Walters. Jenkins, he remarked in 2008, ‘was held in great respect by those who knew him’. The only people who ever condemned him were ‘those who didn’t really know the guy’. As for Jenkins’ orchestration of the MAC programme, and its failure to continue following his arrest, there was, Walters thought, ‘nobody else to take over’. Might it therefore - from a purely militant perspective - have been better had Jenkins ‘retired’ from frontline activity following the investiture protest, avoided detection and therefore have left this great question mark? It was a hypothetical chain of events, Walters endorsed. However, that was not to criticize Jenkins, Walters added, but rather ‘a condemnation of the people of Wales’ in that no suitable successor was evident.

There is no type of sympathetic background or support in Wales for the type of nationalist action undertaken by either MAC or the FWA. Despite increased cultural awareness, most people in Wales throughout the 1960s saw themselves in a wider British political context. Each respective campaign was therefore swimming against the tide of moderate political thinking. And this is perhaps the sticking point; for while John Jenkins is justified in believing the campaign of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru has its place among anti-colonial movements, as history is rife with similar such actions which led to the fall of a colonial powers, Jenkins’ greatest stumbling block - despite his undeniable intellect and formulation of a political doctrine - is that MAC action ran so much against the grain of mainstream popular

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41 Interview between WT & Owain Williams, 23 March 2004. He ‘sacrificed a lot’. Moreover, Williams knew for a fact that Jenkins ‘was well respected in Ireland’.
42 Interview between WT & David Walters, 29 December 2008.
43 Edwards E., Tanner D., ‘Opinion Polls, Welsh Identity and Devolution, 1966–1979’. Contemporary Wales 18 (2006), pp.57, 59. In 1966, nearly two-thirds of the Welsh population described themselves as Welsh rather than British; 70% felt it important to preserve Welsh cultural identity. Two years later, even among Welsh nationalists, only 52% believed Wales could, or should, run its own affairs.
44 Telephone interview between WT & Hywel Teifi Edwards, 10 March 2008. Even during the period of Chartist and Rebecca unrest, when the social conditions were dreadful - certainly for those who comprised the preponderance of 19th century Welsh society - there was great reluctance within the populace to orchestrate what might later be regarded - and termed - a ‘militant nationalist campaign’. The response of the Welsh miners in the First World War is a case in point. Despite riots at Tonypandy
opinion in Wales.

Yet, John Jenkins believes that ‘popular support’ in Wales also failed to materialize, owing to one crucial factor: the people of Wales - and more pertinently, the proletariat - did not incur the wrath of the British Army.

Had the people of Wales been made to feel rather than just think, things might have been different. You don’t want to see your people suffer, but had an escalation in the MAC campaign led to strong-arm tactics been used against the people of Wales, in the way they were in Cyprus and Northern Ireland, things might have taken a different course. Had there been assassinations and God knows what, this might have occurred; but it may well have proved counter-productive against us.°

A policy of ‘sacrifice’, as deployed by Republican inmates at the Maze Prison in 1981, may also have proved decisive. The deaths of the ten ‘martyrs’, through self-imposed starvation, was regarded as a prime opportunity to mobilise a sense of collective grief and victimhood, as well as a call for revenge.° The ‘dilemma’ was not lost on John Jenkins. ‘It is such a balance’, he declared, ‘between active campaigning and maintaining the moral objective’.° It is point well made. Yet, acts of rebellion and political theatre played with the lives of innocents, both to subvert ones democratic electoral enemies and - in this case - in order to exact the wrath of the British state on the somnolent Welsh masses, is a dangerous game.

Nonetheless, the ‘legitimacy’ of MAC’s protest remained uppermost in Jenkins’ mind. Writing in prison, Jenkins identified the paradox of being deemed ‘heroic’ for killing ‘political undesirables’ while on active service in Cyprus for the British Army, yet, castigated as an ‘evil criminal’ for undertaking action in the name of Wales. ‘Was legality’ Jenkins queried, ‘the sole ‘measure of morality and duty?’°

How pertinent Jenkins’ composition in an age in which the nomenclature whereby one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter remains as evocative as ever.

In more recent years, John Jenkins has demonstrated a dignified acceptance of life’s vicissitudes. Asked if he harboured any regrets, MAC’s former brilliant

and elsewhere, miners later enlisted to fight for the Crown in their tens of thousands.

° Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 24 November 2008.
° Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 24 November 2008. On arriving in Cyprus, Jenkins was ‘astonished at the behaviour of the troops’. Where a short time before, ‘a soldier found drunk in a Cypriot village would have woken up in a bed, having been helped up and looked after’, due ‘to the attitude and strong-arm tactics of the British Army, all that changed very quickly’. In ‘searching for a believed suspect, soldiers would enter a village, roughly treat villagers, damage their homes and to get a reaction from the men, even touch their wives breasts. It was’, Jenkins declared ‘appalling: pure thuggery and totally counter-productive’.

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strategist was typically candid. From what he could gather, Alders' life had been 'ruined' by the campaign. For instance, his marriage did not survive. For that, Jenkins was 'truly sorry...It ruined a lot of lives', he added plaintively. 'George Taylor's family's life for instance', and so too 'for that matter', his own. While 'not complaining', Jenkins had nonetheless come to see from his own 'perspective', that 'what goes up must come down'. It is, he realized, 'the liability of leadership: you have to carry the responsibility'. But he was 'sorry for the disruption it caused.' In further expanding the point, Jenkins added:

as it was an army house, my wife and our two children were put on street. They were given time until the trial, because the army could not discharge me until I was convicted, however much they wanted to. A fortnight after my conviction, I was discharged and the family told to leave. She went to her parents in south Wales. Also, to leave before my conviction would have intimated my guilt, so she had to stay.

Yet, perhaps the greatest repercussion of the MAC campaign in Jenkins' life, is the impact its legacy had on the relationship enjoyed with his sons. To this day, owing to the fact John Jenkins was 'away' for much of his childhood, Jenkins' son Vaughan refuses to call his father 'Dad'.49 It is a situation not lost on Glyn Rowlands. Speaking in 2004, Rowlands recalled how his involvement in the anti-investiture movement affected him: 'I lost my home, my marriage and family life, which included life on a day-to-day basis with my three sons. We (FWA) sacrificed everything. What did Charles sacrifice for us?'.50

It is point worthy of further comment, for despite the appalling litany of alcohol abuse, divorce, suicide and premature death which proliferate the former peripheral nationalist community, perhaps no-one more than George Taylor's daughter Jennie Evans has suffered. Nevertheless, for all she has endured: poverty, bullying and the ostracizing of her family by the Abergele community, Jennie Evans still recognizes that much of the blame for the escalation in violence which Wales witnessed in the 1960s, rests at the door of those, who with ruthless detachment, determined the fate of Cwm Tryweryn. 'What they did to that valley', she later remarked 'was terrible'.51

Yet, to Jennie Evans and her family, the headstone bearing the inscription

48 Jenkins, Prison Letters, pp.122,123.
50 Interview between WT & Glyn Rowlands, 22 March 2004.
51 Telephone interview between WT & Jennie Evans, 15 August 2009.
George Taylor ‘died fighting for Wales’ is an on-going source of frustration and anger. Vehement in their belief that George Taylor was not involved in the campaign of Mudiaid Amddiffyn Cymru, the Taylor family was ‘surprised’ to receive a visit by John Jenkins and Owain Williams on Jenkins’ release from prison in August 1976. They were surprised still further, by the angry manner in which John Jenkins allegedly castigated the family for not having erected a headstone in Taylor’s honour. An emotional response that a lack of funds had prevented such was greeted with the assurance a headstone would be purchased by sympathetic observers. Asked to respond to these charges, John Jenkins resolutely denied he was anything less than congenially greeted; while furthermore, George Taylor’s wife Mary both welcomed the placing of the headstone and its inscription, in her husband’s memory.

The Free Wales Army
What however of the Free Wales Army? Was it merely a hot-headed, neo-fascist band of dissolve attention seekers, drunk with rhetoric and concupiscence? Was it an effete hindrance to the advance of the nationalist message, with its garrulous cries of intimated responsibility for the bombings? Can it be dismissed as ‘a nuisance’ and little more than ‘a Dad’s Army farce’, as Emyr Llywelyn Jones argued in 2003? Or will history view its actions more kindly? Perhaps not surprisingly, opinion is still divided and still heartfelt. Within certain nationalist circles, there is

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52 Telephone interview between WT & Jennie Evans, 19 August 2009. Jennie Evans has repeatedly implored organizers to respect her family’s wishes and not visit George Taylor’s grave during the annual Abergele martyr’s rally. Moreover, to a proud fire-fighter, the spectacle in the 1980s of those purporting to be Meibion GlynDwr arsonists at the graveside would have outraged her father. As would the sight of some attendees ‘sitting on headstones’ and ‘urinating and smoking’. Evans was also told by one organizer, she ‘should be ashamed’ of herself, for denying her father’s involvement in the militant campaign. Attempts to have the stone removed have been thwarted by correspondence from the Church in Wales, which states this can only be realized if the stone is either vandalized or removed by those who placed it.

53 Telephone interview between WT & John Jenkins, 24 December 2009. Of the six years and four months John Jenkins was imprisoned, he served all but the final fourteen months in solitary confinement as a Category A prisoner. Considerable credit was afforded the Welsh Political Prisoners Defence Committee and the MP for Meirionnydd, Dafydd Ellis-Thomas, whose representations to the Home Office proved significant in the campaign for Jenkins’ removal from Category A status. John Jenkins was released from HM Prison Albany on 15 August 1976. Throughout the period of incarceration, Jenkins demonstrated a degree of stoicism and courage worthy of respect, even undertaking a one month ‘quite horrific’ ‘water only’ hunger strike. It was in protest at the Home Office’s refusal to allow him access to his children’s educational welfare, which as their sole custodian, he was entitled to. It was highly unusual for a Category A prisoner to be granted custody of their children.

54 Telephone interview between WT & Gareth Miles, 13 January 2008.

55 Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 12 September 2003.
an increasingly warmer view. Allied to those who have always maintained the FWA was essentially involved in a ‘campaign of propaganda’, the prevailing orthodox is that the Free Wales Army did have its role to play within the militant arena: it was visual, vocal and did succeed in diverting attention and resources away from the real bombers.56

Asked in 2003 for an evaluation of the group, Gwynfor Evans was forthright. ‘The copy which the so-called Free Wales Army provided some journalists and photographers, brought them easy money’, he wrote, ‘but it also brought ridicule upon the Welsh national movement. They had no connection with Plaid Cymru and yet its opponents never lost an opportunity of suggesting an association’. Yet, despite his apparent contemporaneous frustration, Evans had developed a ‘respect’ for the way in which Cayo Evans later cared for his sister and a liking for Denis Coslett, whom he considered ‘a friend’ and ‘true eccentric’.57 For his part, Coslett too regarded the former Plaid President favourably. He believed that Evans had privately harboured a certain benevolence for the group and its methods, but - as with militant action - had been constrained by electoral pressures from publicly stating as much.

However, even more illuminating, was Coslett’s angry repudiation of militancy as exercised by John Jenkins. While the FWA had operated a campaign of propaganda and supported the attacks on remote pipelines, it had rejected undertaking action which might threaten the welfare of innocent people. ‘Jenkins’, added Coslett pointedly ‘could have killed civilians’. Nevertheless, despite Coslett’s protestations, he also conceded to later feelings of irksome indignation that the FWA had not been afforded the respect and recognition he felt it deserved. Consequently, he had come to ‘sometimes wish’ it had undertaken an effective ‘militant strike’. It would, he remarked tellingly, ‘have stopped all the back-biting and sneering: we could have looked them in the eye’. Yet, Coslett also revealed the FWA had collectively viewed with outrage the Forestry Commission’s planting of conifers

56 Interview between WT & David Walters, 29 December 2008.
57 Correspondence to WT from Gwynfor Evans, 20 August 2003. ‘The FWA provided the English media all it needed to further perpetuate the Welsh as music hall figures of ridicule’. The group was an inconsequential ‘oddity: a curiosity got up by the press and made something of’. Fishlock did not however ‘doubt their love for Wales’ and their sincere belief and anger at ‘what was happening’. Yet, history would ‘show they were a spark thrown off’ by contemporaneous nationalist feeling. If the FWA warranted any inclusion within the pages of Welsh historical analysis, it was merely as ‘a rather small footnote in the history of that period’. Interview between WT & Trevor Fishlock. 18 November 2008.
upon vast swathes of upland Wales, during and beyond, the immediate post-war period. It perfectly exemplified, Coslett believed, the systematic erosion of Welsh rural society, cultural exploitation and English insensitivity to Wales and its landscape. From his prison cell, the order was issued to set areas of forestry ablaze. Coslett’s admission is supported by press reports in 1969, that ‘250 acres of valuable forestry plantations had been destroyed in south Wales’ in ‘suspected arson attacks’. ‘I didn’t perhaps do as much as some people think’, Coslett remarked, ‘but that was one thing I was responsible for’. 58

Speaking in 2003, Denis Coslett sought to dispel the whispered inference that MAC and the FWA had worked together. ‘In all honesty’ he declared with commendable candour, ‘no contact existed between us and Jenkins’. Although aware of the name MAC, it had been ‘frowned upon to discuss the group’, even between him and Cayo Evans. At the time, Coslett admitted, he had ‘no idea who Jenkins was, or what he looked like’. 59 It is an admission endorsed by John Jenkins. Having returned to Britain from a posting in Germany in April 1965, Jenkins had embarked upon a fact-finding mandate to ascertain the degree of both weaponry and support for a reconvening of a campaign of hostilities against the state. ‘The only group’ he did ‘not make contact with’, Jenkins later revealed, ‘was the FWA’. 60 Nonetheless, while former FWA member Lyn Ebenezer believed Jenkins was ‘far too clever to associate himself with such public figures. Unwittingly’, he felt, the Free Wales Army ‘had done exactly the right thing for him’, by presenting perhaps ‘the perfect smoke-screen’. Yet, not ‘for one minute’ did Ebenezer support Cayo Evans’ later assertion the two groups had acted in tandem. Jenkins, adding Ebenezer squarely, was ‘a different kettle of fish altogether’. 61 It was a view identically expressed by fellow peripheral activist Dafydd y Dug. 62

However, claims of FWA opacity are rejected by John Jenkins. ‘Did anyone truly think the police were fooled by them? Really? Not for a moment’, he declared.

2002.
58 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 24 November 2003. See WM, 12 March 1969. Such was the media interest in the pipelines protest, that in 1968, an episode of Softly Softly, the BBC police drama concerned the issue.
59 Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000.
60 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 25 March 2004. ‘I wouldn’t have anything to do with them’, stated Jenkins.
61 Interview between WT & Lyn Ebenezer, 16 June 2006.
Rather, Jenkins added, ‘they were arrested because the pressure was on the authorities to arrest somebody, so they arrested them’. It was simply because ‘they were handy’. The fact that police not once questioned him about FWA involvement proved to Jenkins that not even speculation of their responsibility existed. As for links between the FWA and MAC, he did not meet any of its members until being released from prison in 1976. Had he felt irritated by the FWA basking in his ‘reflected glory’ Jenkins was asked. ‘Well’, he replied intently, ‘they were knats on an elephants back’. He wasn’t bothered by them and had thought ‘let them get on with it’. He never ‘took them seriously’; and doubted ‘anybody else did’. As for the conviction Cayo Evans was a ‘master of propaganda’, it lacked credibility. ‘The point is’, Jenkins proclaimed: ‘you’ve got to do something; have something behind you before you can start strutting around’. If any doubt still exists, such a pronouncement certainly endorses the view that agitation in Wales was not a single, orchestrated movement.

However, convinced of the importance of the FWA to the wider nationalist programme throughout the era was Cayo Evans. Speaking during his last public appearance in 1995, Evans was adamant the FWA was ‘the conscience of the nation’; despite those who now ‘poked fun’. Moreover, it had ‘put Wales on the map of the world’. Despite the calculated treatment it had suffered at the hands of the British state, the FWA had emerged with dignified triumph. As for his involvement, he had ‘no regrets whatsoever’. Cayo Evans might have been emboldened by the results of a survey published in 2004, which placed him at number 33 in an all-time Welsh 100 heroes poll; even more so when it was alleged that the vote for the FWA’s self-styled leader, had been deliberately and fraudulently reduced in order to prevent him from appearing in the top twenty. Denis Coslett did not feature in the poll, nor did John Jenkins; more notably however, neither did the former Secretary of State for Wales, George Thomas.

Nevertheless, Cayo Evans’ understandable lack of ‘repentance’ was a

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64 Only Yesterday, HTV Wales Production. Screened, 1995. On being arrested, the group was subjected, Evans believed, to deliberate attempts to criminalize it in the collective mind of the Welsh public. ‘If you want people to think someone’s guilty, stick him in overalls covered in yellow patches. Make him look like a clown. They’ll think he’s guilty’.
65 Culturreney Cymru, 100 Arwyngyd Cymru/Welsh Heroes, 2004, p. 80; also, WM, 14 July 2004. For the interview with the computer programmer who made the allegation, see: http://walesontheweb.blogspot.com/2004/09/culturenet-not-quite-right.html.
sentiment similarly shared by Denis Coslett, who felt ‘every nation’ had the right to determine ‘its own destiny’. What is more, Coslett had ‘no doubt’ the group’s actions ‘furthered the likelihood of devolution’ and prevented the drowning of other Welsh valleys.⁶⁶ Asked for his thoughts, Glyn Rowlands also reflected ‘with pride’ upon both his own and the FWA’s contribution to the advance of Welsh political nationalism.⁶⁷

Yet, for those who remain unconvinced, it was not the desire of the FWA for self-determination *per se* which saw it liberally disowned by Welsh society, but rather its widely embellished claims and inability to formalize a mature and efficacious political programme. If it is acknowledged the FWA was prepared to stick its head above the Welsh political and cultural parapet for the betterment of the nation, it nonetheless comprised, its critics maintain, young men for whom notoriety, if not perhaps sought, was no doubt enjoyed. Subsequently, the joke soon wore tiresomely thin. Nevertheless, these were men of particular character and substance, if only they had channelled their considerable intellectual efforts in another direction to further the advance of Welsh nationalism. However, might posterity yet reward the Free Wales Army the same honour more recently bestowed upon Iolo Morgannwg: himself once derided and denounced, yet, now deemed a national treasure? The FWA was surely part of the enigma of the 1960s: part of its colour and pulsating charm. Perhaps Wales needed it; perhaps not.

In 2000, Denis Coslett angrily dismissed the charge the FWA used violence to further its political ambitions. It was ‘not violence, but hostilities’, he argued. ‘It was propaganda; we had them going for four years for God sake’. Nonetheless, Coslett was aware that the authorities were all too willing to level the emotive term ‘terrorist’ at him and his fellow FWA adherents.⁶⁸ Owain Williams later highlighted the paradoxical disdain when called upon to consider his protest ‘an act of terrorism’. The authorities used ‘terrorism’ to ‘remove the inhabitants of Cwm Tryweryn. Explosives were used to blow-up their homes. So who’, Williams asked, ‘were the

⁶⁶ Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000. ‘For the first time, an opinion needed to be formed: were you British or Welsh. I believe that both the FWA and MAC campaigns raised these questions among people for perhaps the first time’. Telephone interview between WT & Rhobert ap Steffan, 9 August 2009.
⁶⁷ Interview between WT & Glyn Rowlands, 22 March 2004. ‘We were ridiculed then, but on reflection, media interest in the FWA still exists over 25 years later. So I don’t believe we could have been so ridiculous’.
⁶⁸ Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 14 December 2000.
terrorists? As for the efficacy of the militant action: ‘we were all revolutionary novices’, declared Gethin ap Iestyn in 2008; adding, ‘we lacked the great revolutionary tradition of the Irish; it was all trial and error’.

**Does terrorism work and is it ever justified?**

The question of the FWA’s terrorist credentials raises the further question of whether a nation can advance its political standing by strictly adhering to constitutional means. And more succinctly, can a militant campaign of indiscriminate and potentially catastrophic action, be considered an effective tool for achieving political ends? Is ‘militant protest’ merely ‘terrorism’ by another name? One notable feature of the terrorist ‘phenomenon’ is that it appears to exist in two distinct forms: so-called ‘rational’ terrorism, as undertaken by Palestinian insurgents and militant Irish Republican groups; and ‘apocalyptic’ terrorism, as was witnessed in New York on 11 September 2001.

However, considerable evidence supports the belief that violence as a political strategy invariably does reap constitutional reward; certainly if the Palestinian and Irish Republican struggles are considered. Moreover, each campaign also highlights another factor: territorial or political concessions are especially pronounced, within demographic groups which are traditionally ‘right-wing’ in their political expression, such as Israel, the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and Spain. In contrast, terrorist action appears less inclined to achieve a political objective, when prosecuted against a country more rigid within its political and historical framework. This is clear in Russia, where despite the peaceful fall of the Soviet Union, insurgencies to establish independent Islamic states in the north Caucasus Emirates: Chechnya, Dagestan and Kalmytskaya, have proved both fruitless and costly.

Nevertheless, contrary to the prevailing view that terrorism is an effective means of political coercion, there remain those fiercely opposed to the notion that political capital results from terrorist action. Of such mind is Max Abrahms. In his

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70 Correspondence between WT & Gethin ap Iestyn, 25 January 2008.
article *Why Terrorism Does Not Work*, Abrahms claims that militant groups which
attack civilian targets in greater number than military targets, ‘do not tend to achieve
their political objectives’. Furthermore, ‘the poor success rate’, Abrahms states, ‘is
inherent to the tactic of terrorism itself’. Countries therefore, in which the civilian
population is the primary target, are ‘reluctant’ to make policy concessions.\(^\text{72}\)

And this leads to the final point: if terrorist action is indeed successful as a
political tool, do the ends still justify the means? Probably not; but any nation ‘worth
its salt’ will react with anger when confronted with political and cultural oppression
by another state, such as was exercised at Tryweryn; as was well expressed by Emyr
Llywelyn Jones: ‘if we’re going to die, we’re going to die fighting’.\(^\text{73}\) Such
sentiments may well reflect the nation’s response to the referendum vote for increased
political autonomy for the Assembly in 2011. Should the ‘yes’ vote prove the greater,
it may well appear that the campaign of militant activism as undertaken by MAC, and
to a lesser extent the propaganda campaign of the FWA, were *indeed* part of the
onward march to Welsh independence. However, no such endorsement may leave the
picture less certain.

**Was the Welsh militant campaign a success?**

John Jenkins declared in 2009:

> Considering what our objectives were it was a success. It was to draw attention to a
democratic deficit, through a hearts and minds approach: a political objective at all time.
Despite what was said, it was not about stopping the people of Liverpool *per se* from
receiving water, but to draw attention to the unfairness of what was happening. Dramatic
action, namely, a campaign of direct militancy, proved to be the answer. The media - even
the English media - could not ignore it; and this press attention raised questions among the
Welsh populace. It was not a call for ‘armed revolution’, as was alleged, but rather the first
step on the slow, incremental road to constitutional change’.\(^\text{74}\)

It is a view given countenance by Denis Coslett of the Free Wales Army. He also
believed the pathway to the National Assembly began - to *some* degree - with the
campaign of propaganda undertaken by the FWA.\(^\text{75}\) However, it is a view received
‘with cynicism’ by John Jenkins. As for the future, while Jenkins deemed it probable

\(^{73}\) Interview between WT & Emyr Llywelyn Jones, 10 October 2005.
\(^{74}\) Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 5 July 2009.
\(^{75}\) Interview between WT & Denis Coslett, 24 November 2003. ‘He’d think his time in prison was not
in vain’ remarked Rhodri Evans, when asked how his father might have regarded the positive 1997
- with increasing legislative status bestowed upon the Welsh Assembly - that Wales will ultimately be independent, owing to the lack of affordable housing, further cultural dilution and uncontrolled inward migration, 'it will', he added, 'not be the Wales we want'.

Whatever the future holds, the campaign of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru is regarded in certain Welsh circles as a ‘sacred cow’. A brilliantly marshalled strategy above reproach; and in strictly combative terms - despite the appalling deaths and injuries - it did prove a worthy opposition. It achieved notable successes, including, the breaking of an apparently un-breachable steel water pipeline in May 1968. Yet, there is evidence that after the investiture, one senior MAC official wanted to take the struggle to a higher level of militancy. And for all but the most ardent advocate, this is the problem. For, although John Jenkins can claim with justification that the militant campaign received a fair degree of acquiescent support throughout Wales, the ever present spectra of escalation casts an uneasy shadow.

John Jenkins is a man of integrity and intelligence, but an explosive device in the hands of one lacking his scruples does not bear thinking about. A campaign of militant action is - by its nature - a process of augmentation. Certainly history would suggest so; a series of increasing responses, either from the state or the militants. Such a campaign of violence therefore, ultimately destroys - or at least threatens to destroy - the very community it seeks to protect. If indeed, militancy is ‘totally in keeping with the Christian teaching on the right to resist oppression’, it is also true that ‘an eye for an eye leaves everybody blind’, as Martin Luther King espoused. Why? Because, as another 1960s icon declared: ‘violence begets violence’.

Nevertheless, despite being castigated by former senior detective John Owen Evans as ‘criminals’, whose undertaken campaign was ‘all part of policing at that time’, the MAC protest, as archival evidence demonstrates, did not go unnoticed in

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76 Interview between WT & Rhodri Evans, 25 July 2000.
79 John Lennon, Montreal, May 1969.
80 Interview between WT & John Owen Evans, 19 February 2001.
Whitehall. Consequently, will it ensure, as John Jenkins decrees, that 'never again will the authorities take Wales for granted'. Time will tell. However, for all Jenkins’ commendable candour, there are few in Wales who believe there is any place in modern Welsh life for a similar campaign of militant activism. It belongs to history. It belongs in the 1960s.

81 Interview between WT & John Jenkins, 20 November 2008.
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Central Figures of Thesis

Political figures:

Gwynfor Evans: (1 September 1912 - 21 April 2005). Born in Barry, assumes the presidency of Plaid Cymru on 6 August 1945. Holds the position until 31 October 1981. Throughout his political career, Evans refuses to advocate militancy as a legitimate form of political expression - certainly with regard to any displays of violence towards the person. Considered by some to be ‘too nice for politics’, Evans’ failure to lead what detractors deem to be ‘effective opposition’ over the Tryweryn issue, is tempered somewhat by his decision to fast in 1980, in protest at the Conservative Governments decision to renege on its manifesto pledge to establish a Welsh-language television service. The stand sees Evans ‘redeem himself as a leader’ in the eyes of many; including Emyr Llywelyn Jones. Having been elected as the MP for Carmarthenshire at the by-election in July 1966, Gwynfor Evans loses the seat at the General Election in June 1970. He wins the seat again at the 1974 General Election, but is defeated in the May 1979 General Election. Having failed to re-win the seat at the 1983 General Election, Evans never stands for parliament again.


Henry Brooke: (9 April 1903 - 29 March 1984). Appointed Minister for Welsh Affairs by Harold Macmillan on 13 January 1957. Antipathy for Brooke, across the Welsh political divide, for what is as regarded as his ‘incongruous’ support for the Tryweryn Reservoir Bill, is revealed when he is asked not to attend the National Eisteddfod at Llangefni on Anglesey just days after the Bill is ratified in Parliament. In 1961, also during Macmillan’s premiership, is appointed Chief Secretary to the Treasury. In 1962, Brooke reaches the pinnacle of his political career, being appointed Home Secretary. Along with a number of politicians of the day, Brooke receives unprecedented criticism in the BBC TV production, That Was The Week That Was, in the years 1962-3; on which he was much satired and famously dubbed, ‘the most hated man in Britain’.

Emrys Roberts: Persuaded in January 1959 to join Plaid Cymru’s staff as deputy secretary; Gwynfor Evans further requests that Roberts organise direct action to try and prevent the drowning of Cwm Tryweryn. Promoted to the position of Party Organising Secretary in November 1963, following J. E. Jones’s retirement due to ill-health. Roberts is sacked on 14 November 1964, officially owing to an extra marital affair; although speculation abounds that the true reason lies in the contents of the so-called ‘Bradwr’ (Traitor) letter and the position of threat to Gwynfor Evans, that Roberts enjoys among the youth of the party, the militant wing and throughout the predominantly English-speaking south east industrial region of Wales. Having rid himself of his turbulent Organising Secretary, Roberts subsequently confesses to harbouring respect for the party leaders’ political manoeuvring. This, despite being angered and disappointed by the party hierarchy’s deployment of ‘dirty tricks’ to ensure his removal. Roberts later claims that Gwynfor Evans and the Plaid Cymru leadership, deliberately failed to support his candidature at the 1970 General Election.
for the Merthyr Tydfil seat. When party support is eventually received, just a fortnight before the 1972 by-election, it proves ‘too late’. Roberts’ poll at each election is nevertheless impressive.

Elwyn Roberts: Succeeds Emrys Roberts as Organising Secretary following his removal from post in November 1964.

Dr. Huw T. Edwards: (1892 - 1970) One of the nation’s foremost political figures during the post-war era. Edwards acquires the title of Wales’s unofficial Prime Minister, as chair of the Council for Wales and Monmouthshire. He holds the position from 1949, until his resignation nine years later, in protest at the Conservative government’s refusal to implement the Council’s proposals calling for a Secretary of State for Wales and other administrative reforms. In 1959, Edwards leaves the Labour Party for Plaid Cymru. He rejoins the Labour Party in 1965, declaring the nationalist party of Wales ‘was not the answer for a socialist’.

David Elystan Morgan: Born, 7 December 1932. Stands as the Plaid Cymru candidate twice for Wrexham in 1955 and 1959 and once for Meirionnydd in 1964. Following a ‘rumour’ in November 1956, that Morgan - in protest over the Tryweryn issue - plans to undertake an explosion on the Vyrnwy to Liverpool water pipeline, at the Plaid Cymru annual conference in Llangollen in August 1961, he declares that a programme of direct action over Tryweryn would ensure the party remained little more than a ‘pressure group’. Having aligned himself to constitutional political campaigning, in the summer of 1965, now regarded as the dauphin of Plaid Cymru, Elystan Morgan leaves to join the Labour Party. He does so, believing Plaid Cymru has reached its political plateau. Owing to an unworkable majority of four MPs, PM Wilson calls a General Election in March 1966. Labour wins with a majority of 96. The newly elected Labour MP for Ceredigion is Elystan Morgan. It is intriguing to speculate what might have happened had Wilson not called the March election. Would Morgan have stood against Gwynfor Evans as the Labour candidate at the Carmarthen by-election four months later? Elystan Morgan serves as a junior Home Office Minister from 1968 - 1970. He loses the Ceredigion seat in February 1974 to the Liberal candidate Geraint Howells. In 1981, Morgan is made a life peer, as Baron Elystan Morgan of Aberteifi.

James Griffiths: First Secretary of State for Wales, October 1964 - April 1966. Having been devolved no actual power, on 19 November 1964, following Griffiths’ threat to resign, the Secretary of State for Wales is granted devolved authority for housing, local government, road transport and some aspects of local planning. Perhaps predictably, the decision is not greeted with universal approval in Wales. For many on the political fringes of Welsh nationalism, the decision to establish the Welsh Office and the appointment of the respected Jim Griffiths as the nation’s first Secretary of State, smacks of little more than meandering political pussy-footing. Furthermore, among the fading ranks of the Welsh Republican Movement, for what is seen as both his sanctimonious manner and his belief that Wales should be seen within the context of ‘the country as a whole’, Griffiths is ‘reviled’.

Cledwyn Hughes: Second Secretary of State for Wales, April 1966 - April 1968.

George Thomas: Third and most controversial Secretary of State for Wales.
Appointed 5 April 1968; holds the post until 20 June 1970. If some felt Thomas’s arriviste reputation confirmed by his appointment, others - including Thomas - considered it both appropriate and necessary. Loved and detested in near equal measure throughout Wales. A month after Thomas’s death on 23 September 1997, just a fortnight after the country votes to accept devolution, Robert Rhodes James, the former Conservative MP, alleges that while Speaker in the Commons, Thomas was loathed by civil servants as ‘an arrogant, sanctimonious, deceitful and malicious bully’. Moreover, some regarded him ‘a fraud and a charlatan, eager to bend the knee to anyone above his station and thinly contemptuous of anyone deemed to be below it’. Yet, there is a contrary view: ‘George did a lot for Cardiff West; we thought the world of him’, declared one former constituent in 2002 during a radio phone in. ‘It upsets me to see how some have tried to tarnish his memory’. Gwynfor Evans also acknowledged Thomas as ‘one of the best Speakers in the history of Westminster’.


**Liverpool Corporation and city officials:**


Frank Cain: Chair of Liverpool Corporation.

David Cowley: Lord Mayor of Liverpool at the time Llyn Celyn is opened.

Alderman Sefton: Leader of Liverpool City Council.

**Cwm Tryweryn inhabitants:**

Martha Jane Roberts: Last head teacher at Ysgol Capel Celyn. Later admits the experience of teaching through the community’s destruction had ‘changed’ her. She recalls ‘one official from Liverpool’ who periodically visited the school, remarking ‘with a sneer’ that ‘the work’ was ‘coming along well’. The employee’s officious detachment is best exemplified prior to the community leaving for Liverpool in November 1956, to appeal to the city council. ‘You can protest as much as you like’, he allegedly informs Roberts, ‘we’re drowning this place’. The day before Ysgol Capel Celyn closes seven years later, he revisits and reminds Roberts that he had ‘told’ her ‘what would happen’. By way of reply, M. J. Roberts remarks that she hopes he and his colleagues have ‘made a good job of it; a thorough job of it. Because in the very near future all this’ will ‘belong to people of Wales’. Admitting to feeling ‘extremely angry’, at the injustice of the valley’s submersion, it nonetheless ‘provoked this feeling of rebellion’; and instilled a subsequent determination to support Welsh nationalism.

Eurgain Prysor Jones: Member of the last family to leave Capel Celyn and today Bala school teacher. After living in a static caravan for eighteen months, in the spring of 1965, E. P. Jones’s new family home is finally complete. One afternoon, her father receives a telephone call from Liverpool’s water engineer J. H. T. Stilgoe, who is
undertaking surveying work on a stream running into Tryweryn. Eurgain Prysor Jones later recalled what happened next. ‘He said that he wanted to come to see if the house was “up to Liverpool standards”, whatever that meant. He walked around and was saying “you’ve got a nice view from this window and a nice view from that window”...Then, as he was leaving, he said, “you do realise don’t you, we don’t drink your water, all we do is flush our toilets with it”. We couldn’t even understand why he was there; they hadn’t given us a penny to rebuild our house’.

Protest movements and personalities:

Mudiad Gweriniaethol Cymru (the Welsh Republican Movement): Established in Neath in September 1949 by Clifford Bere, the group quickly comes to the attention of MI5. On 20 October 1952, the group targets the Fron Aqueduct near Llandrindod, in protest at the flooding of Cwm Claerwen, the last project in Birmingham Corporation’s water storage programme in Cwm Elan. On 13 March 1953, at Cardiff Magistrates court, Beriah Gwynaf Evans pleads guilty to ‘having in his possession two sticks of gelignite and fifty detonators with intent to cause serious injury to property in the United Kingdom’. He is placed on probation for two years. On 14 May 1953 at Caernarfon Assizes, Peter (Pedr) Lewis is sentenced to eighteen months imprisonment for being ‘suspiciously’ in possession of 200 high explosive detonators. Despite maintaining his innocence and the prosecution offering no direct evidence of Lewis’s involvement in the Fron Aqueduct incident, it is believed the ‘savage sentence’ imposed is owing to his ‘established’ Welsh Republican sympathies. Leading members of the WRM include: Ithel Davies, who stands as the party’s candidate in Ogmore at the 1950 General Election, polling 613 votes (1.3%); Gwilym Prys Davies, who as the Labour candidate is defeated by Gwynfor Evans at the 1966 Carmarthen by-election; and Harri Webb, the editor of the group’s spirited newspaper the Welsh Republican (1950 –57).

Harri Webb: Educated at Oxford, the former navy serviceman advises John Jenkins as to MAC’s directional policy and acts as the liaison between MAC and the Front for the Liberation of Brittany. Following a series of proposals as to how this might be advanced, all militant co-operation suggested is vetoed by John Jenkins on the grounds of security. Nonetheless, Jenkins later confirms the two groups did share a degree of information and discuss how best each might forward their respective campaign. In 1952, while living in Cheltenham, Webb devises the White Eagle of Snowdonia, a symbol later adopted by the FWA. It was from Webb’s home in Merthyr Tydfil that Radio Free Wales, the Plaid Cymru pirate radio station was often broadcast. The librarian and poet also acquired a reputation for political journalism.

Gwilym Prys Davies: Active in Plaid Cymru in the mid 1940s. In 1948 Davies is instrumental in establishing Mudiad Gweriniaethol Cymru (the Welsh Republican Movement). He severs links with Plaid Cymru in 1949 and joins the Labour Party in 1954; standing as its candidate at the 1966 Carmarthen by-election won by Gwynfor Evans.

Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg: The Welsh Language Society formed in October 1962. It follows the lecture by Saunders Lewis entitled Tynged yr Iaith (the Fate of the Language) which is broadcast on BBC Radio Wales eight months earlier. The group’s most successful undertaking in its campaign to ensure equal legislative status
for the Welsh language, is its controversial defacing of English-only road-signs, which begins 1 January 1969.

Gareth Miles: Senior member of Cymdeithais yr Iaith Gymraeg. It is under Miles’ chairship, that the official defacing of English-only road signs action is undertaken. In 1964, an unofficial action targets ‘Trevine’ (re-named Trefin) in Pembrokeshire. Miles and other members of the CyIG subscribed to a Breton language magazine. There, they read accounts of Flemish language supporters in Belgium after WW2, painting out French and German road signs. Inspired by its success, a similar policy is adopted in Wales. It too proves successful. Miles enjoys a close friendship with John Jenkins when both live in Wrexham prior to Jenkins’ arrest. In 2008, Gareth Miles categorically denied being a member of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru.

Gwilym Tudur Jones, Dyfrig Thomas and Geraint Jones: All college friends and close associates of Emyr Llywelyn Jones; the latter of whom was also the second secretary of Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg. For refusing to tax his car, owing to the taxation forms only being available in English, on 28 April 1966, Geraint Jones - soon followed by Neil Jenkins - becomes the first member of the society to be imprisoned. Requesting a Welsh Bible in order to take the oath, it is discovered that a Koran is available, but not a Welsh Bible.

John Saunders Lewis: Born 1893 in Wallasey, Wirral. Died 1985 in Penarth. President of Plaid Cymru 1930 - 1939, although party leader 1926 - 1939. Succeeded by Jack E. Daniel until 1943, when Abi Williams becomes president. On 6 August 1945, at the party’s Llangollen summer school, 31 year-old Gwynfor Evans is elected president. Imprisoned in 1936 - along with D. J. Williams and Lewis Valentine - to nine months in Wormwood Scrubs. It follows an arson attack on an RAF bombing school at Penyberth, Gwynedd. Ostracised by Welsh academia for the protest, Lewis loses his teaching appointment at Swansea University. He is however later ‘canonized’ for his action by the so-called militant wing of Plaid Cymru. On 13 January 1962, BBC Radio Wales broadcasts a radio lecture written by Lewis entitled Tynged yr Iaith (Fate of the Language). It leads to the formation of Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg eight months later. Lewis is remembered for this and for a prolific literary talent of depth and variety.

Trefor and Eileen Beasley: Miner and school teacher respectively, in 1952, the Beasleys refuse to pay their rate demand from Llanelli Rural District Council unless the demand is received bilingually. Despite all the councillors and ninety percent of the local population speaking Welsh, the council refuses; and so begins a nine year battle in which the Beasleys appear in court sixteen times for non-payment. Their furniture is removed three times from their home in Llangennech. Finally, in 1961, the council agrees to their request. For their stoic stand, the Beasleys receive many plaudits, most notably from students and others drawn to the ranks of Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg. Eileen Beasley is today regarded by many as the ‘Rosa Parks of Wales’.

On St David’s Day 1967, 48-year-old Trefor Beasley is released after seven days from Swansea prison, for non-payment of a fine received for failing to display a road fund licence on his vehicle. If the authorities ascertain that recognition for the Welsh language to be the extent of Beasley’s nationalist interests, revelations by John
Jenkins and another former militant paint an altogether different picture. One of those at the vanguard of the militant movement at the time of Jenkins’ re-structuring of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru, Beasley later plays a prominent role with regard to the movement’s storage of gelignite. Moreover, with Jenkins busily establishing a list of intended targets, Beasley’s involvement in the explosion at Llanishen Tax Office, is believed - by some - to have been invaluable. John Jenkins, who denies Beasley’s participation in the Llanishen protest, is a bearer at Trefor Beasley’s funeral.

Neil ap Siencyn (formerly Neil Jenkins): In November 1962, Jenkins is expelled from Plaid Cymru following a letter criticising Gwynfor Evans. Jenkins becomes one of the first members of Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg to be imprisoned (April and September 1966) over the issue of bilingual forms being made available. Neil Jenkins is the link between the Aberfan Parents Association and the FWA.

Robert Oliver Francis Wynne: (1907-1993). Owner and resident of Garthewin Hall in Denbighshire, Wynne rises to prominence as friend of Saunders Lewis and supporter of the militant struggle. Greets the FWA on their arrival at the opening of Llyn Celyn in October 1965. Subsequent visitors to his home included: Cayo Evans, Denis Coslett and Lyn Ebenezzer. Wynne often stands bail for defendants, including Owain Williams. Father of Gwennllian, the wife of Philip Henry, both, along with Gethin ap Iestyn, are arrested for discharging smoke bombs near Prince Charles during his visit to Cardiff in June 1968. Maintaining a claim to the princes of Gwynedd, R. O. F. Wynne is at the centre of the Patriotic Front’s Welsh Monarchy Society.

Hywel S. Hughes: Born in Corwen. Hughes was the millionaire owner of Ganaderia El Triunfo Ltd, a cattle export and ranching company at Bogota in Columbia. During Owain Williams’ trial in 1963, it is alleged that Hughes, in a letter postmarked to ‘Bill Jones’, The Espresso Cafe, Meifod, Pwllheli, sends a cheque intended for Williams for $280. The claim that the letter was not produced as evidence in court is later dismissed by Williams, who remains adamant that it was. Following their release from prison, it is alleged that Hughes instructed an emissary to present Cayo Evans and Denis Coslett with a Columbian Hundred Peso gold coin.

Owen Pennant Hughes of Nebo, Caernarfonshire, David Robert Marcus Gale of Llangollen (later killed falling downstairs at his home) and Harry Jones of Cefn Mawr, Wrexham: all receive probation in the summer of 1966 for explosives charges. Police are satisfied none are the Clywedog saboteurs.

Edward Hope Wilkinson, Robert Griffith Jones, Arfon Jones and John Gwilym Jones: all are arrested following the Snowdonia Country Club explosion on 5 January 1968. Wilkinson and R. G. Jones later receive twelve months imprisonment, suspended for two years, for ‘unlawful possession of explosive substances’. Arfon Jones is fined £15 for stealing and then supplying them with the explosives. For implicating Owain Williams and assuring police he will testify against him in court, no charges are brought against J. G. Jones.

Sean MacStiofain: Born John Edward Drayton Stephenson in Leytonstone, east London, the son of an English father and Irish mother from Belfast. Following a period in the RAF, Stephenson marries a lady from Cork and joins the IRA. In 1953, he leads a raid on the armoury at the British officers training corps in Felsted, Essex,
for which he is sentenced to eight years imprisonment. MacStiofain later leads the break-away Provisional IRA. It is at MacStiofain's home in Navan in County Meath, that Owain Williams stays, having absconded in March 1968. There, it is believed he and MacStiofain discuss the insular cell structure adopted by MAC. It later proves instrumental to the IRA's 'successful' campaign.

Trefor Morgan: A pivotal figure in the 1950s Welsh Republican Movement and an English-speaker of considerable eloquence, Morgan is often at odds with Gwynfor Evans and the party hierarchy owing to its adherence to constitutional pacifism and fixation with rural Welsh culturalism. It leads to his being all but ostracized by Plaid Cymru, even to the point of Evans allegedly prohibiting party members from accepting Morgan's offer of affordable insurance. Long suspected of supporting the militant struggle, Trefor Morgan - the millionaire founder of the Aberdare insurance company Cwmni Undeb - finances Owain Williams' 1968 defence costs. Following his release from prison in 1976, John Jenkins lives for a period with Morgan's daughter Lowri. Moreover, his wife Gwyneth, supports Jenkins' family during his imprisonment.

Robert William Trigg: On 23 April 1969, an explosive device is discovered in locker C10 at Cardiff's Queen Street railway station. It had been left four days earlier by Trigg, a 20-year-old Sheffield University Physics and Metallurgy student. Arrested seven days after leaving the device, in July, Trigg is sentenced to four years imprisonment after being found guilty of possessing an explosive substance and theft of such materials. Trigg claims he perpetrated the incident as a hoax.

Among the more prominent nationalist societies prevalent during this period are: the Patriots League Committee, Young Patriots League, Confederation of Welsh Workers, Llywelyn Society (formed in September 1967 and principally led by Dafydd y Dug, while ably assisted by Emyr Llywelyn Jones), Cymdeithas GlynDwr, Owain GlynDwr Memorial Committee, Patriotic Press, Patriotic Enterprises, Eagle Publishing, Cymru ein Gwlad and the Welsh Monarchy Society. It is open to speculation how much these groups shared the same objectives and the same membership.

Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru, members and associates:

Owain Williams: Born, 10 August 1933 at Pistyll, near Pwllheli, Caernarfon. Marries in May 1957 and a year later leaves for Canada where he works on a ranch near Vancouver and as a warehouse hand in New Westminster. Returns to Wales at the end of 1959, and with his savings and financial support from his father, opens a café in Pwllheli. A renowned espouser of Welsh militancy and passionate believer in a Welsh Republic, Williams undertakes protest action at the Tryweryn reservoir site with Emyr Llywelyn Jones and John Albert Jones on 11 February 1963. Arrested along with J. A. Jones in April 1963, following an explosion on an electrical transformer, Williams is sentenced to one year's imprisonment in July. On 14 January 1968, he is arrested at Caernarfon police station, having earlier returned from London following the explosion at Snowdonia Country Club nine days earlier. On 8 February 1968, Williams is inexplicably granted bail at Caernarfon Assizes; the order is continued on 29 February. Due to appear in court four days later, on 2 March 1968, he absconds to Brittany and Eire. Williams is arrested at Birmingham airport on 27
August 1968. On 8 November 1968, Owain Williams is acquitted at Caernarfon Assizes of unlawful possession of explosives. Owain Williams remains active within Welsh politics, both in the wider and regional sense. A Gwynedd councillor, he is also the chair of both Llais Gwynedd and the Independent Wales Party. He lives today in Llanllyfni near Caernarfon.

Emyr Llywelyn Jones: The eldest son of T. Llew Jones, at that time, only the second man in the history of the National Eisteddfod to be chaired Bard two years in succession, in 1958 and '59. At the time of his arrest in February 1963, E. Ll. Jones is a fourth-year post-graduate student in the education dept at Aberystwyth University. The previous summer he worked as a sub-editor and translator with Wales West and North TV Ltd in Cardiff. Jones is also editor of the student newspaper Llais y Lli (Voice of the Sea). When not writing Welsh plays or taking part in discussions on radio and television, E. Ll. Jones is a leading member of the University's Welsh Society. He is sentenced to one year's imprisonment for his part in the protest at the Tryweryn Reservoir site on 11 February 1963 along with Owain Williams and John Albert Jones. A pivotal figure within Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg; Jones is largely influential in establishing Adfer (Restore) in 1971. This seeks to provide affordable housing for Welsh-speakers in the Welsh heartlands, where property value is affected by more affluent incomers; the preponderance of whom are English. Adfer further appeals for Welsh-speakers to leave Anglicised regions of Wales to settle in these sustainable Welsh communities. E. Ll. Jones remains widely respected for the earnest and intelligent manner in which he has expressed his support for Welsh nationalism.

David Walters, David Prichard, Alf Williams, Trefor Beasley, O. M. Roberts and Dai Bonar Thomas: Admitted by David Walters as being responsible for the action at the Tryweryn Reservoir construction site in September 1962. Walters, Pritchard and Beasley were from Glamorgan; Alf Williams from Maesycwmmer in Gwent; Dai Bonar Thomas from Llanelli and O.M. Roberts from Meirionnydd. The group is assembled by Pritchard, who through his position on the Plaid Cymru executive, has decided the dissenting voices should merge to undertaken a single action. O. M. Roberts is also a senior figure on the Plaid Cymru executive. Later chairman of Gwynedd County Council, Roberts is also one of the team involved in the burning of the Penyberth bombing school in September 1936. Bonar Thomas later rises to some prominence within the FWA; while Trefor Beasley, David Pritchard and Alf Williams, are considered by some to have been responsible for the Clywedog reservoir action in March 1966 and subsequent members of the Cardiff MAC cell.

John Barnard Jenkins: Born, 11 March 1933 in St. David's Hospital, Cardiff and raised in Aberfan and Rhymney. Attends Bargoed Grammar School from 1944. Following a period as an apprentice at Newport Steel works, enlists in the Army Dental Corps on 30 November 1950; remaining in the post until a voluntary discharge on 29 November 1955. Following periods as factory worker; at Cardiff steelworks; as an underground collier and trainee nurse, on 8 July 1958, Jenkins rejoins the Royal Army Dental Corps. Marries Thelma in October 1958; has two sons, Vaughan and Rhodri. Receives postings to Germany and Austria and in 1959 Cyprus. In 1962 returns to Germany. Returns to the UK in April 1965 and is posted to Saighton Barracks near Chester. In June 1965, Jenkins moves his family to Wrexham. He immediately begins establishing the strengths and capabilities of the Welsh militant threat. As Sergeant Instructor to the Corps of Drums of the Royal Welch Fusilier
Cadet Force, Jenkins meets Frederick Ernest Alders in the summer of 1967. On 30 September 1967, along with Alders, Jenkins - now director-general - re-convenes protest action in the name of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru. Following the two year campaign, both are arrested on 2 November 1969. John Jenkins is sentenced to ten years imprisonment in April 1970. Released in August 1976, Jenkins remains hugely respected within the militant nationalist community. He lives today in Ruabon, near Wrexham.

Frederick Ernest Alders: In the summer of 1967, Alders, a 21-year-old ariel-rigger and Territorial Army Cadet from Rhosllanerchrugog, meets John Jenkins. Following a somewhat, initial, fractious connection - in which Jenkins allegedly ‘sounds Alders out’ - in September 1967, the two recommence the campaign of direct militant action in the name of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru. Two years later, after a string of attacks on water pipelines and various government installations, Alders and Jenkins are arrested. Alders accepts a plea bargain of five years and turns Queen’s Evidence against John Jenkins. In the event, Alders receives a six year sentence. Magnanimously, Jenkins is more saddened than angry at Alders’ action, believing the recently married younger man to have ‘more than played his part’ and perhaps understandably, to have succumbed to the obvious pressures of his arrest and undetermined custodial sentence.

Anne Woodgate: Alders’ girlfriend and fiancé for a year until January 1969. Woodgate appears to have been privy to a remarkable degree of knowledge with regard the campaign of MAC. Apparently distraught after the incident at Abergele - and fearing for the safety of her former partner - Woodgate divulges much of this information to her father. According to one theory as to Jenkins’ detection, they subsequently approach the police and Alders’ and Jenkins’ downfall is assured.

Brian Richards: Close friend of Frederick Ernest Alders and fellow member of the Territorial Army. Allegedly approached by John Jenkins immediately prior to the Llanrhaedr-ym-Mochnant protest in September 1967 and obliquely asked if he too would like to be involved in the militant campaign. Richards refused.

Anthony John Hiscocks: Junior member to Jenkins in the Army Dental Corps and ad hoc member of MAC with regard the Llanishen Tax Office action in March 1968. It is Hiscocks’ ‘inside information’ which leads to the strike being undertaken. Later gives much information to the police regarding Jenkins and Alders; even identifying Alders as the driver during the reconnaissance of the Llanishen target site. It is likely Hiscocks was not charged for his involvement in this operation, in return for this information.

Colin George Wood: Junior member to John Jenkins in the Army Dental Corps. Undertakes a trip with Jenkins to Birmingham New Street railway station in the summer of 1968, en route to which, Jenkins allegedly informs him ‘not to mention to anybody else any person whom he may meet or speak to at Birmingham’. Wood later gives what he claims to be a full account of the day’s events to police. Four days after John Jenkins’ arrest, Lance Corporal Wood is shown three sheets of paper entitled ‘Statement by MAC’ by investigating officers. He positively identifies it as written in Jenkins’ hand. Although in typical Jenkins prose, the former director general of MAC denies having written it.
John Richard Lewis Roberts: 24-year-old step-brother of Frederick Ernest Alders, along with Alders and Jenkins, is involved in the press conference with journalists Ian Skidmore, Harold Pendlebury and Emyr Jones on 2 May 1968. Also drives Jenkins and Alders to undertake the Llyn Vyrnwy action at the end of May 1968. It is not thought that Roberts was further involved in the campaign of MAC, despite John Jenkins imploring him to transport Alwyn Jones to Holyhead in June 1969, to undertake the Mackenzie Pier action.

John Roberts senior: Employed as a stone crusher at Hendre Quarry. Married to Frederick Ernest Alders’ mother and father of Enys and John R. L. Roberts. Informs investigating officers that two men ‘from Wrexham’ who referred to themselves as ‘Dai’ and ‘Jack’ arrived at his home late one evening and asked him to steal a quantity of explosives from the quarry’s magazine. This, Roberts refuses to do, along with drawing a sketch of the magazine’s location. Roberts also claims to have refused a request to transport a man from Abergel (Alwyn Jones) to undertake the Mackenzie Pier action in June 1969. Roberts further reveals that ‘Dai’ and Jack’ depart ‘in a grey mini van’ ‘driven by the younger man in his early twenties’. Despite Roberts’ failure to provide officers more substantial evidence, it is a matter of conjecture just how involved John Roberts was in the MAC campaign and how much unavailable ‘evidence’ he gave officers in exchange for protecting his son and daughter.

Enys Roberts: The sister and daughter respectively of the above, it is believed that Roberts drove Owain Williams in her car to Loggerheads on 1 March 1968. Enys Roberts’ involvement in the militant campaign remains a matter of scrutiny, as does the extent of the information she later provides police. John Jenkins remains adamant that Roberts was the ‘informer’ who ensured his detection. Others, most notably Owain Williams, vehemently maintain that while Enys Roberts may have imparted some information when approached by officers after Jenkins’ arrest, it was F. E. Alders’ ex-fiancé Ann Woodgate who was instrumental in ensuring his and Jenkins’ apprehension and conviction. Both Woodgate’s testimony during their trial and evidence stored at the National Archives, supports this latter version of events.

Emyr Jones: Journalist on the Wrexham Leader who organized the press conference with MAC in May 1968. The extent of Jones’s involvement in the militant campaign is open to conjecture, with John Jenkins admitting the lack of security measures surrounding Jones and the meeting, may well indicate their lack of necessity. Certainly the role played by Jones was raised during the subsequent trial of Jenkins and Alders, with Tasker Watkins QC criticizing him for his failure to co-operate with investigating officers.

Gordon Wyn Jones: On 1 March 1969, ‘seaman, or liner-worker’ G. W. Jones approaches Emyr Llywelyn Jones at an anti-investiture rally in Caernarfon and having stated he is responsible for a protest action at an RAF station on Anglesey, further declares his intention of ‘wanting to do something for Wales’. Reproved by E. Llew. Jones and informed that those gathered are non-violent, according to his later police statement, G. W. Jones is then allegedly introduced to Gareth Miles. Some weeks later G. W. Jones claims to have received a letter from Miles asking to meet him at Chester Railway Station. Having disembarked, some time later Jones is approached by John Jenkins. During the subsequent meeting - the details of which are challenged by Jenkins - Jones agrees to target a plinth sited at Mackenzie Pier in Holyhead. ‘At
sea' when the device to be used in the strike is delivered to his home by Jenkins, G. W. Jones informs Jenkins in Caernarfon days before the investiture, that he failed to undertake the protest, having discovered a group of campers near the monument. G. W. Jones is therefore 'most surprised' when the monument is targeted by persons unknown. There is a belief that G. W. Jones was in fact an agent provocateur who intimated to the authorities that the three Anglesey council employees - all called Jones - were responsible. None were convicted of the attack. In August 1969, Jenkins contacts G. W. Jones again, instructing him to place an explosive device at the South Stack Relay Station on Holyhead mountain. On this occasion, G. W. Jones claims he visited Saighton Barracks with John Jenkins, where he was handed the device to be used in the protest. Jones later admits to investigating officers that he is responsible for carrying out the attack. Moreover, having failed to hear in news bulletins that the device has activated, that he walked to the site and on observing that an explosion had occurred, contacted the police fearful that other walkers might report his presence. The last of the MAC munitions are activated by G. W. Jones on 5 November 1969. It is believed that Jones was not charged for his alleged involvement in the militant struggle, owing to the incriminating information he provided officers regarding Jenkins.

Mary Jones: Wife of the above. One Saturday evening, in June 1969, Mary Jones is visited at her home in Holyhead by John Jenkins, F. E. Alders and a lady with 'ginger hair, a very pale complexion and blue eyes' whom Jenkins introduces as Alders' 'fiancé'. On discovering her husband is not at home, Jones claims she took receipt of a 'hold all' from John Jenkins and placed it in the garden shed. It is believed that this contained the Mackenzie Pier device. John Jenkins also attempted, so Mary Jones later alleged, to demonstrate the workings of a timing device which Alders produced from another package. She later claims to have met John Jenkins in Caernarfon on the Saturday before the investiture and again in Chester a month or so following the ceremony. John Jenkins denies the meeting in Chester took place, or that while she and her family waited in a café, he and her husband went to Saighton Barracks where Jones was handed an explosive device to be used in the targeting of the South Stack Relay Station.

Mackenzie Pier three: Within days of an explosive device being discovered at the Mackenzie Pier monument on 26 June 1969, John Allan Jones (20) of Ty Croes, Anglesey, William Glyn Jones (22) of Trearddur Bay, Anglesey and Dewi Jones (22) of Portmadoc are arrested. At Flintshire Assizes, three months later, all three plead not guilty. This, despite a positive reaction to substances similar to nitro-glycerin being found on the hands of Dewi and William Glyn Jones. The latter also responds positively to traces of ammonium nitrate and chloride. All three are further charged with possessing a quantity of materials required to assemble an explosive device. Dewi and Glyn Jones are found guilty of having jointly conspired with persons unknown to unlawfully cause an explosion and are imprisoned for eighteen months. Crucially, neither they, nor Alan Jones, are found guilty of planting the Mackenzie Pier time-bomb. Allan Jones is found guilty of 'having possession of, or control of, explosive substances'. He is sentenced to six months imprisonment, suspended for two years.

Alwyn Jones: Prominent Welsh nationalist in the Abergele area and member of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru. Thought to have undertaken the Snowdonia County Club
action in January 1968. Is killed on the eve of the investiture, when the device he is apparently placing outside the town’s Social Security Office detonates.

George Taylor: Respected fireman and much-loved husband and father of three. It is a matter of considerable contention whether George Taylor was a member of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru. While family members are adamant that he was not (see below), former activists insist that he was. G. Taylor is killed alongside Alwyn Jones in Abergale on the eve of the investiture.

Jennie Evans: Daughter of the above. J. Evans is the victim of wide-spread community intimidation and head-teacher bullying as a result of her father’s alleged involvement in the Abergale action on investiture eve. In 2010, it is confirmed that Lord Roberts of Llandudno has agreed to lead the Taylor family in their quest to receive an official explanation as to their father’s role in the campaign of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru. Contrary to accounts from former militants that George Taylor actively participated in the militant struggle, Jennie Evans and other Taylor family members, remain utterly convinced of their father’s innocence.

**Free Wales Army:**

William Julian Cayo Evans: (22 April 1937 - 28 March 1995). Educated at the prestigious Millfield Public School in Somerset, on leaving, Evans attends the Royal Agricultural College in Cirencester. Conscripted into the South Wales Borderers in 1955 as Private 23164555. From 1965, Cayo Evans quickly rises to prominence as the self-styled leader of the Free Wales Army. Admired with genuine affection, the gifted harpsichordist and raconteur enjoyed life in the spotlight. Dismissed by some - notably strangers - as conceited and dissolute, speaking in 2007, close friend and fellow FWA enthusiast Rhobert ap Steffan declared Evans: ‘a giant of a man, a genuinely magnetic personality. The kind you don’t often find in today’s bland consumerist Wales’. Perhaps the most heartfelt tribute was paid by Evans’ former wife Gillian, who in 2006, declared him: ‘the greatest influence’ on her life. There was, she stated tearfully: ‘no one like him’. Yet, praise is not universal, even among former senior members of the FWA, as some, with disquiet, have raised Evans’ ability to orchestrate militant action, while having maintained a perceived safe judicial distance himself.

Denis Coslett: (12 September 1939 - 20 May 2004). Quick witted, fearless and considered by friends and many observers as extremely knowledgeable regarding Welsh cultural matters, Coslett was renowned for speaking an articulate form of the Welsh language. In the years before his death, the frustration, anger and sense of injustice, so prominent in the early years of his adulthood, had to the greater degree abated, with Coslett able to look back with some degree of equanimity and perspective. ‘I’m a lot calmer these days than when I was younger’, he remarked in 2003. ‘I take my time more; I’m far less likely to fly off the handle. You change as you get older’.

David (Dai) Bonar Thomas: Considered cheery, knowledgeable and well read; robust, yet well groomed and dapper. He was, so described retired police Assistant Chief Constable, John Owen Evans, ‘a very, very solid fellow...The mature presence among the others’. Nevertheless, D. Bonar Thomas was no shrinking violet. At the
Eisteddfod in Swansea in 1964, a journalist from the *Western Mail*, who had been drinking whisky, became abusive about the FWA. He had, he informed assembled members, ‘fought in the war and waded knee high in Japanese blood’. ‘If you’re not careful’, remarked Bonar Thomas, ‘you’ll be wading knee high in your own’. It was the end of the matter. It is believed that D. B. Thomas died in the late 1990s.

Lyn Ebenezer: Former journalist, close friend of Cayo Evans’ and FWA sympathizer. Marched alongside Evans during the Dublin Easter Commemoration rally in 1966. By the Autumn of 1967, Ebenezer had distanced himself from the group. Today lives in west Wales, where he writes critically acclaimed books on Welsh history and Welsh sporting figures.

Rhobert ap Steffan (Castro): (4 February 1948 - 11 January 2011. FWA sympathizer and close friend of Cayo Evans. The gifted artist and photographer is instrumental in later years - among other Welsh nationalist and historical commemorations - for establishing the annual St. David’s Day rally in Cardiff.

Vivian George Davies: Physically strong and considered highly strung by others within the militant wing. Committed suicide in 1981, after allegedly killing his wife.

Vernon Griffiths: Cousin of Cayo Evans. Received criticism from most notably Denis Coslett, for what he considered Griffiths’ ‘betrayal’ of the group during the trial of leading nationalist figures in 1969 and subsequent media interviews in which he apparently ‘played up’ his involvement in the FWA campaign. It is a view roundly challenged by others however, including Gethin ap Iestyn, who regards V. Griffiths as ‘a very decent guy’. Today farms at Cwrt-newydd, in Ceredigion.

Patriotic Front:

Gethin ap Iestyn (Keith Griffiths): Considered a ‘thinker’, impassioned and intelligent. Disseminated propaganda on behalf of the militant wing of Welsh nationalism with real aplomb. Speculation abounds as to whether ap Iestyn attended the crucial meeting with John Jenkins at Loggerheads on 1 March 1968 (along with Philip Henry), was the enigmatic ‘phoenix’ and member of the Cardiff MAC cell. All suggestions are rejected by ap Iestyn, who denies any involvement in the MAC action or indeed to having known Jenkins during the period of militant protest. Has since fallen out with latter day ‘movement’ owing to its failure to embrace militancy in its opposition to what ap Iestyn regards as English political domination. This has led to uncorroborated conjecture from certain quarters, that Gethin ap Iestyn is in the pay of the British security services. It is a claim dismissed as risible by those close to him.

Dafydd Glyn Rowlands: Died 22 August 2009 aged 71. Arguably considered the most approachable and upstanding of all those on the peripheral wing of Welsh nationalism during the 1960s. Possessed of an easy manner, Rowlands was nonetheless renowned for his intelligence, fighting spirit and sense of fair play.

David John Underhill (Dafydd y Dug): Leading figure within Cymdeithas Llywelyn, one of the anti-investiture movements which appeared prior to the ceremony. On returning to court following his mother’s funeral, y Dug is released without charge during the so-called Free Wales Army trial. Commonly regarded as ‘a hell of a
character. Lives today in Pontypridd.

Anthony (Toni) Lewis: (15 April 1937 - 8 November 2005). Extremely gifted musician and craftsman, specializing in Celtic silverware. Lived for many years on the Isle of Man before returning to Barry. Later claimed to have becoming aware of his Welsh cultural identity, due to being routinely teased and called ‘Taffy’ while in the RAF during National Service.

Media:

David Frost: Born April 7 1939 in Kent, the son of a Methodist minister. A keen schoolboy footballer, Frost is offered professional terms with Nottingham Forest, but declines in order to concentrate on academic study at Cambridge. Like many of his peers who later become prominent figures in broadcasting, Frost is part of the Cambridge University Footlights set. It is the satirical, ground-breaking That Was the Week That Was, on which he first makes his name, cultivating a reputation as a hardnosed, erudite commentator and journalist. He later cements this reputation on his own programme, The Frost Report, which runs from 1966 to 1967. It is also on The Frost Report, that in opening the programme, Frost introduces the nation to his signature phrase: ‘Hello, good evening and welcome’. Throughout a largely distinguished career, David Frost interviews leading politicians on both sides of the Atlantic. Arguably his greatest moment in broadcasting came in 1977, when he interviews the disgraced - and ultimately candid - former President of the United States, Richard Nixon. Having interviewed the FWA in 1967, Frost might have been referring in part to the group, when he famously declared: ‘television is an invention that permits you to be entertained in your living room, by people you wouldn’t have in your home’.

John Summers: As journalist and chief conduit for the political philosophy of the Free Wales Army, Summers pens a number of incriminating articles concerning the group between 1966 and 1968. Many of these articles are later cited by the prosecution as evidence against the FWA at their trial in 1969. Although there is evidence that Summers attempted to appear for the Defence in order to undermine the prosecution’s case, material stored at the National Archives later revealed that Summers was also a police informer.

Police:

John ‘Jock’ Wilson: As head of Special Branch in Brixton, 46-year-old Wilson is appointed to lead the nine strong Shrewsbury Unit, owing to his knowledge of Cold War intelligence matters. Following the investiture he is decorated with the OBE.

John Owen Evans: As a Welsh-speaker, Evans is appointed to the Shrewsbury Unit to liaise with Welsh-speaking colleagues throughout the Welsh police force. Retired as Assistant Chief Constable. Lives today in Penparcau, near Aberystwyth.

Raymond Kendall: As the junior member of the Shrewsbury Unit, Kendall later becomes the head of Interpol. Lives today Villefranche-Cedex, France.

Lt. Col. William Jones Williams: Chief Constable of the Gwynedd Constabulary and
fiercely resistant to efforts by the Home Office to undermine his autocratic control. Jones Williams is decorated with the OBE following the investiture; resigned position as chief constable shortly after.

Frank Williamson: HM Inspector of Constabulary and instrumental in establishing the Shrewsbury Unit.


Army:

Major Clifton Jeffries: HQ Western Command Ammunition Inspectorate, Royal Army Ordnance Corps, Chester.

Judiciary:


Sir John Mortimer QC: (21 April 1923 - 16 January 2009). Respected in both judicial and literary worlds, John Mortimer began work as a barrister in 1948 and is appointed QC in 1966. Appears as Defence Counsel in a series of high-profile obscenity cases in the 1960s and 1970s. These included the Oz magazine trial and the Sex Pistols album cover trial. Appointed Defence Counsel for Denis Coslett in 1969. Mortimer is perhaps best remembered for his Rumpole books, about the eponymous Old Bailey criminal defence barrister; the first of which was published in 1978. Mortimer is made a CBE in 1986 and is knighted in 1998. Also father of successful actress Emily, one of his four children.

Peter John Mitchell Thomas QC: (31 July 1920 - 4 February 2008). Serves in the RAF during WW2, spending 1941 - 45 imprisoned as a PoW in Germany. Following the war, trains as a barrister; called to the Bar in 1947. In February 1964, Peter Thomas, the Conservative MP for Conwy, writes to Edward Heath, the rising star of the party, suggesting he meet Gwynfor Evans to discuss future party co-operation. This, Evans later reveals, relates to 'regional development' and most notably, the need for an Economic Authority for Wales to be established. Peter Thomas is the Conservative MP for Conwy from 1951 until 1966. He is appointed Defence Counsel for John Jenkins at his trial in April 1970. Thomas re-enters Parliament following the General Election two months later, when he wins Hendon South for the Conservatives. He is immediately appointed Secretary of State for Wales by Prime Minister Heath. He is preceded by George Thomas and succeeded in 1974 by John Morris. Peter Thomas remained the MP for Hendon South until 1987.

Justice Thompson: A proud Scot, Thompson is sixty one when he presides over the Free Wales Army and John Jenkins. Months earlier, Thompson presided at the trial of Bruce Reynolds, considered the mastermind behind the Great Train Robbery in Buckinghamshire in August 1963. In stark comparison to the sentences imposed on the Welsh defendants, Thompson sentences Reynolds to 25 years imprisonment.

Civil servants:

Blaise Gillie: Senior civil servant within the Welsh Housing and Local Government department. Following Gwynfor Evans’ interview on BBC Wales television in February 1963, Gillie recognises Plaid Cymru as a potential Conservative Party ally, in the fight against the electoral threat posed by Harold Wilson and Labour.

Goronwy Roberts: Permanent Under-Secretary of State at the Welsh Office.

Sir Burke Trend: Secretary to the Cabinet Office.

Sir James Waddell: Deputy Under-Secretary of State, Home Office.

Sir Philip Allen: Permanent Under-Secretary of State, Home Office.

Brian Cubbon: Private Secretary to James Callaghan, Home Secretary.

E. Brampton: F2 (Home Office Police Division).

Michael Adeane: Queen’s Private Secretary.

J. F. Mayne: Assistant Private Secretary to Denis Healey, Ministry for Defence,

Michael Halls: Principal Private Secretary to Harold Wilson, Prime Minister.

Intelligence services:

Sir Martin Furnival Jones: Head of MI5.

Dick Thistlethwaite: Director of F Branch, counter-subversion division of MI5.

Dennis Trevelyan: Home Office Division F2 (Counter terrorism).

Royalty:

Lord Snowdon: Former husband of Princess Margaret, Anthony Armstrong-Jones, the personable son of a north Wales GP, is appointed Constable of Caernarfon Castle
and requested to organise the pageant of the Royal Investiture of Prince Charles in July 1969. A pivotal figure, along with his wife, on the 1960s London ‘scene’, photographer Snowdon takes to his task with commendable zeal. Received much respect for the dignified compassion he extended to the villagers of Aberfan, during a visit hours after the disaster. Lives today in London.

Bernard Duke of Norfolk: Responsible for all state ceremonial involving the monarchy. Considered gruff, Edwardian and possessed of an arid dry wit.
Time Line

1888 - earlier proposed as the site for a ‘monster reservoir’ to supply London with drinking water, Cwm Llanwddyn is instead flooded by Liverpool Corporation. At the time of Lake Vyrnwy’s completion in 1888, it is Europe’s largest man made lake. The dam wall being 100 feet high with a length of 400 yards across. The distance to Liverpool is 68 miles.

1892 - despite poet Percy Bysshe Shelley’s belief that ‘nature is here marked with the most impressive characters of loveliness and granduer’, Birmingham Water Corporation secures legislation permitting it to construct a series of reservoirs in Cwm Elan in mid Wales. The process is undertaken to build four dams (Caban-coch, Garreg-ddu, Penygarreg and Craig Goch) between 1894 and 1904. The final reservoir Claerwen, is constructed between 1946 and 1952. An attempt by Welsh militants to prevent Queen Elizabeth from opening the structure in October 1952, by blocking the route, is made by way of a half-ton granite boulder blasted from the rock above the road.

8 September 1936 - Saunders Lewis, D. J. Williams and Lewis Valentine commit arson at an RAF bombing facility at Penyberth. Having handed themselves in at the local police station, a jury at Caernarfon later fails to return a verdict. The case is transferred to the Old Bailey, where each receives a nine month prison term. It is the first use of ‘direct action’ in Welsh political history.

11 January 1947 - Plaid Cymru holds a rally on the slopes of Llyn y Fan in Carmarthenshire to protest army ‘land grabs’.

May 1949 - the Labour Government establishes the Council for Wales and Monmouthshire. It follows an announcement by Herbert Morrison seven months earlier, that the Attlee administration intends to set up a ‘nominated advisory council’.

30 August 1951 - hostile to the proposed military expansion in the area, Plaid Cymru stages a sit down protest at Trawsfynydd. Another rally is held to protest the same issue on 29 September.

October 1951 - the Conservative administration establishes the Minister for Welsh Affairs. It falls under the auspices of the Home Secretary. It follows the ‘vague promise’ of R. A. Butler, who announced in the ‘Welsh Day’ debate in the Commons on 26 January 1948 that the Conservatives would appoint a minister to act as ‘a watchdog’ or ‘ambassador’ on behalf of Welsh interests. A promise he confirmed at the party conference, held that October in Llandudno. The first incumbent is the Scotsman, Sir David Maxwell Fyfe, known with derisory affection throughout Wales as ‘Dai Bananas’. This is ‘because of the ‘Fyfe’ connection with the company which conducted its banana trade through Barry Docks’. In 1952, Maxwell Fyfe (who in March 1946 brilliantly cross-examined Herman Goering at the Nuremberg trial) succeeds in preventing the Forestry Commission’s planned expansion in Carmarthenshire; in addition he also prevents the War Office from acquiring a further 10,000 acres in Pen Llyn. As a result, he is renamed Dai Chwarae Teg; Dai ‘fair play’. Nevertheless, his appointment as Minister for Welsh Affairs is greeted with much initial hostility, owing to his not being Welsh. Maxwell Fyfe is succeeded in
1954 as Minister for Welsh Affairs, by Gwilym Lloyd George, son of former Liberal Prime Minister, David Lloyd George. The last Minister for Welsh Affairs is Keith Joseph, who later becomes a leading and respected voice on economic policy in Margaret Thatcher’s early government.

20 October 1952 - Mudiad Gweriniaethol Cymru (the Welsh Republican Movement) target the pipeline carrying water from Cwm Elan to Birmingham. The action, at the Fron Aquaduct near Crossgates, is undertaken in protest at the flooding of Cwm Claerwen; the last project in Birmingham Corporation’s water storage programme in Cwm Elan.

1955

March 1955 - to undertake confidential surveys on behalf of Liverpool Water Corporation, a secret delegation arrives in Cwm Tryweryn, Meirionnydd.

September 1955 - following reports recording hostility to Liverpool Water Committee’s alleged proposal to flood Cwm Dolanog in Montgomeryshire, Plaid Cymru issues a declaration that it will oppose ‘Liverpool aggression wherever it occurred’. It is widely felt within nationalist circles, that the Dolanog proposal is merely an attempt by Liverpool to ‘draw Welsh fire’, and to show its magnanimity by locating a site elsewhere. Whatever the truth, it is believed that ‘there never was any intention to drown Dolanog at all, and that choosing Capel Celyn as a second choice, was part of the deception to weaken any opposition expected from Cwm Tryweryn’.

20 December 1955 - it is announced in the House of Commons by the Minister for Welsh Affairs, Gwilym Lloyd George, that Cardiff will be the capital city of Wales. The climax to a controversy which has simmered for decades, follows a conference in May 1954, which, when the result is declared two months later, indicates overwhelmingly (by 90%) the vote in favour of Cardiff. It is awarded the nomenclature against Swansea, Aberystwyth, Caernarfon and Machynlleth.

22 December 1955 - the Liverpool Daily Post carries the headline: ‘Big new dam near Bala planned’. The report further outlines Liverpool Corporation’s plan to augment the city’s water supply, by promoting a Parliamentary Bill so as to receive the legal authority to dam the Tryweryn river and valley.

1956

March 1956 - the Capel Celyn Defence Committee and its Liverpool branch, the Tryweryn Defence Committee are formed.

April 1956 - following a five year campaign, a petition of 240,000 signatures calling for a Parliament for Wales is presented to parliament.

30 September 1956 - under the banner ‘Hands off Tryweryn’, Plaid Cymru leads a procession through the streets of Bala. Four thousand attend. Without a single dissentient, a resolution is passed calling on Liverpool Corporation to abandon its scheme.
13 October 1956 - a motion to oppose Liverpool Corporation’s measure, on the
grounds that it might adversely affect the towns existing supply from Llyn Arenig, is
opposed by Bala Town Council.

7 November 1956 - accompanied by R. Tudur Jones and Councillor Dafydd Roberts,
Gwynfor Evans, the president of Plaid Cymru, attempts to address Liverpool City
Council. The three-man Welsh delegation is shouted down by councillors led by
Bessie Braddock.

21 November 1956 - all but three of the community of Cwm Tryweryn march with
banners through the streets of Liverpool to protest the proposal. Gwynfor Evans
addresses Liverpool City Council for a quarter of an hour. Nonetheless, the council
votes in favour to support the measure to flood Cwm Tryweryn by 95 votes to 1.

November 1956 - within Plaid Cymru circles, rumours abound that influential party
member, Elystan Morgan, plans to undertake an explosion on the Vyrnwy to
Liverpool water pipeline, in protest over the Tryweryn issue.

17 December 1956 - at a civic meeting, where support for Liverpool City Council’s
proposed Bill is first required before it can pass through Parliament, on a vote by
show of hands, 262 favour the Bill’s promotion and 161 vote against. Accusations of
bias and underhand tactics on the part of Liverpool Water Corporation abound.

18 December 1956 - Liverpool City Council vote 160 to 90 in support of the proposal
to flood Cwm Tryweryn.

1957

January 1957 - Henry Brooke is appointed Minister for Welsh Affairs. It is also
announced that the office of Minister for Welsh Affairs will be held jointly with the
post of Minister for Housing and Local Government.

30 January 1957 - a statement is released to the effect that Liverpool Corporation’s
Private Bill has cleared its first parliamentary hurdle and had been granted its first
formal reading in the House of Lords.

25 April 1957 - the community of Cwm Tryweryn receives an unexpected visit from
the Minister ‘with the joint portfolio’ Henry Brooke.

1 May 1957 - the Tryweryn Reservoir Bill comes before a select committee of the
House of Lords. Lasting for nine days, the Hearing decides ‘the Bill should be
allowed to proceed’.

3 July 1957 - by 166 to 117, the House of Commons passes the Second Reading of
Liverpool Corporation’s Tryweryn Reservoir Bill. Twenty-four of the thirty-six
Welsh MPs vote in opposition, the rest either abstain or were not present. Those
absent include: Aneurin Bevan, Megan Lloyd George, Iori Thomas and the
Conservative member for Cardiff North, David Llywellyn, who was the only Welsh
MP vocal in his support for the measure. Claiming that ‘a callous indifference to
Merseyside’ existed, and opposition to the Bill was fuelled by ‘misguided romantics
and professional Welshmen', his endorsement brings a lively squib from Harri Webb, who derides Llywellyn as 'the traditional Welsh version of what Moses said to the Pharaoh'.

17 - 25 July 1957 - the Tryweryn Bill receives another nine day Select Committee Hearing. It concludes by endorsing the measure.

31 July 1957 - following its Third Reading before the Commons, Liverpool Corporation’s Tryweryn Reservoir Bill is passed by Parliament by a majority of ninety six. The next day in the House of Lords, the Bill receives its Royal Assent and so becomes law.

August 1957 - ‘in view of the likelihood of disturbance’, Henry Brooke, the Minister for Welsh Affairs, is asked not to attend, as scheduled, the National Eisteddfod, held that year at Llangefi on Anglesey. A joint statement, agreed by both the Minister and the Eisteddfod Council, declares it ‘undesirable to proceed with the original programme’.

15 October 1957 - David Cole, editor of the Western Mail, writes to Henry Brooke warning that ‘the seeds of an Irish problem’ have been sown in Wales

25 October 1957 - a national conference is called by Alderman J. H. Morgan, the mayor of Cardiff, to discuss a motion proposed by Gwynfor Evans. In this alternative proposition, Evans, to widespread consternation from within the ranks of Plaid Cymru, endorses the drowning of Tryweryn, but crucially proposes to safeguard the village of Capel Celyn; with assurances made to the Liverpool authority that it will receive the same amount of water as stipulated in the original Bill. It is agreed that a delegation will go to Liverpool led by Huw T. Edwards. They meet with Liverpool Corporation officials on 16 December 1957. The alternative proposals are rejected at a Liverpool Corporation Committee meeting, held in the city on 21 January 1958.

15 November 1957 - in a memorandum, Henry Brooke states that politically speaking, Wales is ‘presently, very disturbed’; yet nevertheless, his decision to advise parliament to support the Liverpool Tryweryn Bill had been ‘quite unavoidable’. Truth to tell, Brooke adds, ‘many people in Wales’ were inclined to say that the Prime Minister may have chosen ‘a well-intentioned man to be the Minister for Welsh Affairs’, but that since his appointment, ‘things had turned out badly for Wales’.

1958

1 April 1958 - preliminary work begins at the Cwm Tryweryn reservoir site.

May 1958 - Owain Williams leaves for Canada.

15 October 1958 - Huw T. Edwards angrily declares that ‘Liverpool’ has asked for ‘whatever was coming to it’. The Tryweryn issue would ‘not be forgotten in Wales’. Edwards is ‘convinced that many thousands of Welshmen will be prepared to make sacrifices, including imprisonment’, if it might prevent Liverpool from ‘getting away’ with its action...Threats made against the Mersey Tunnel should not be taken lightly’. That same month, Edwards resigns his post as chairman of the Council for Wales and
Monmouthshire.

3 November 1958 - Plaid Cymru president Gwynfor Evans embarks on a seven week speaking tour of North America. He returns invigorated and prepared to accept measured militant protest over the Tryweryn issue.

1959

5 January 1959 - the Plaid Cymru executive supports a resolution calling for ‘passive resistance at Tryweryn when the time comes’. Emrys Roberts is appointed to consider methods and preparations for direct action.

21 January 1959 - Gwynfor Evans receives a letter from Dewi Watkin Powell, stating that Plaid Cymru has a ‘pathetic, pathological fixation’ with the Tryweryn issue.

29 January 1959 - a device comprising ‘powerful blasting material’ is discovered at the Federation of Building Trades Employers in Liverpool. The ‘home made bomb’ is planted in a hollowed out loaf of bread and placed within a case containing two bottles of petrol. The following evening, police in the city receive two hoax bomb warnings.

31 January 1959 - following the decision by Gwynfor Evans to reject all forms of direct action, at a meeting of the Plaid Cymru sub-committee in Dolgellau - without the wider party’s consultation - it is decided to support the U-turn taken by Evans.

24 February 1959 - it is announced that the Queen has directed that forthwith, Y Ddraig Goch, and not ‘the flag carrying the augmented Royal Badge’, used since March 1953, will be flown on government buildings in Wales and ‘where appropriate’ in London.

December 1959 - Owain Williams returns from Canada.

1961

August 1961 - at the Plaid Cymru annual conference in Llangollen, Elystan Morgan declares that a programme of direct action over Tryweryn would ensure the party remained little more than a ‘pressure group’.

Autumn 1961 - Saunders Lewis is visited at his home in Penarth by Emyr Llywelyn Jones and Gwilym Tudur Jones. The two students attempt to ‘sound Lewis out’ as to his view on undertaking a peaceful protest at the Tryweryn site. A number of students, Lewis is told, have decided ‘to do something at Tryweryn’, and that its impact might be increased, should more respectable, ‘older’ people, also be involved. Despite, over the proceeding years, having directed a near constant barrage of criticism at Gwynfor Evans for failure to undertake imprisonable action over the issue, having listened in silence, Lewis declares any such action to be futile. He informs them ‘to go back to college: that it would be a pity to waste’ their ‘young lives’ over ‘Tryweryn’. It is nevertheless intriguing to consider how great, or not, the impact might have been, had a protest been carried out by a talisman such as Lewis, while aided and abetted by Emyr Llywelyn Jones, one of the sharpest cultural and
political minds of his generation.

1962


August 1962 - at the Plaid Cymru annual conference at Llangollen, as two opposing factions emerge: the Gwynforiaid and the self-styled activists, a compromise is reached. It is agreed that no one is ‘to take action in the name of Plaid Cymru’, but members can undertake specific action if a matter of conscience or conviction.

22 September 1962 - shortly after 10.00 p.m., David Pritchard and David Walters release oil from electrical generator at the Tryweryn reservoir construction site. They appear at Bala Shire Hall Assizes on 3 October and are each fined £50, ordered to pay £26 costs and given three months in which to pay. Their fines are paid by sympathetic spectators on their emergence from court.

October 1962 - at the White Horse in Aberystwyth, Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg is formed. Its title is taken out of respect for a society of the 1880s, which bore a similar name.

10 October 1962 - in a letter to Gwynfor Evans, published in the *Western Mail*, Neil Jenkins criticises the Plaid party president for what he regards as the lack of support Evans has espoused for the protest undertaken at the Tryweryn reservoir site by David’s Pritchard and Walters.

15 October 1962 - breaking two locks to gain access, Owain Williams, Robert Wyn Williams and Edwin Prichard raid the explosives magazine at Crofts Quarries, Llithfaen. They steal nearly 4,000 detonators and 15 fuses.

19 November 1962 - following the letter critical of Gwynfor Evans, Neil Jenkins is expelled from Plaid Cymru.

19 December 1962 - an attempt by ‘two men’ to disrupt work at the Tryweryn reservoir construction site is attempted. A small fire in a ‘fitters shed’ is started and before allegedly being startled by a watchman, an attempt is made to set ablaze ‘the timber compressor house’.

1963

2 February 1963 - Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg undertakes its first action: a sit-down protest at Trefechan Bridge in Aberystwyth.

11 February 1963 - Emyr Llywelyn Jones, Owain Williams and John Albert Jones undertake militant protest at the Tryweryn reservoir site.

18 February 1963 - Emyr Llywelyn Jones is arrested at his student lodgings in Aberystwyth by Detective-inspector Humphrey Jones, the head of Gwynedd CID, while accompanied by Detective-sergeant Glanmor Hughes.
29 March 1963 - at Carmarthenshire Assizes, Emyr Llywelyn Jones is sentenced to twelve months imprisonment, for planting an explosive device at the base of a transformer at the Tryweryn reservoir construction site on 11 February.

31 March 1963 - Owain Williams and John Albert Jones target an electrical pylon at Gellilydan, Maentwrog, Trawsfynydd.

7 and 8 April 1963 - Owain Williams and John Albert Jones are arrested in connection with the Tryweryn and Gellilydan protests.

13 April 1963 - as members of the British media attend an open day in Cwm Clywedog, the Plaid Cymru executive announce a new tactic. With subscriptions raised by party members, it intends to take out a 25-year-lease on 2.6 acres of land at the heart of the threatened valley. Over the coming weeks, the land is sub-divided into 75 units and rented to some 200 people from Wales; and others from as far afield as Australia, Canada, Germany and the United States hostile to the plan. The reason behind the action, is a legal stipulation as outlined in the Property and Land Law, which states that any person in possession of land, or property on land desired by a corporation, whether occupied/inhabited or not, has to be allowed to voice his or her opinion, either for or against a takeover, to a public enquiry; irrespective of the owner’s place of residency. Nonetheless, having adhered to the letter of the law, an amendment is issued declaring that no longer will there be any need to call witnesses and interested parties to the enquiry. The decision causes outrage among the nationalist community.

14 June 1963 - John Albert Jones is placed on probation for three years at Dolgellau Assizes.

1 July 1963 - Owain Williams receives a twelve month imprisonment term at Ruthin (Denbighshire) Assizes.

28 July 1963 - following a party at the school three days earlier, Ysgol Capel Celyn is closed.

31 July 1963 - the Clywedog Reservoir Bill is passed by Parliament. With the Bill’s Royal Assent a mere formality, work begins to ready the valley for flooding.

28 September 1963 - a dissolution service is held in the chapel at Capel Celyn.

1964

26 October 1964 – the Hughes Parry Report proposes equal status for Welsh and English with regard judicial, business and administrative affairs in Wales.

17 October 1964 - following its election victory two days earlier, Harold Wilson’s newly appointed Labour administration honours its election pledge and establishes both the Welsh Office and with the Llanelli MP Jim Griffiths (1890 - 1975) its first incumbent, the office of Secretary of State for Wales. Although a passionate socialist, as a first language Welsh-speaker, Griffiths is equally vocal in his support for Welsh cultural matters, believing the nation enjoys an unique, singular identity. The position
comes into effect on 11 November 1964. The party’s endorsement of the proposal is only possible following Aneurin Bevan’s acceptance. Having been absent at its Second Reading, Bevan abstained when the Tryweryn Reservoir Bill received its Third and final Reading. In 1892, the National Institutions Bill sought to establish a Secretary of State for Wales. The Bill fails, but the notion receives renewed support between 1918 and 1922. In 1946, D. R. Grenfell leads a deputation to the government advocating the establishment of such an office.

14 November 1964 - at the Belle Vue Hotel in Aberystwyth, following what has since been described as a brutal and tempestuous meeting, Emrys Roberts is dismissed from his post as Organising Secretary after losing a vote of confidence.

19 November 1964 - following James Griffiths’ threat to resign, the Secretary of State for Wales is granted devolved authority for housing, local government, road transport and some aspects of local planning. In 1969, the Welsh Office is further devolved health and agriculture; in 1970, education.

1965

12 July 1965 - Elystan Morgan, Gwynfor Evans’s heir apparent, leaves Plaid Cymru and joins the Labour Party.

August 1965 - five years to the month after work at the site begun, the Llyn Celyn reservoir is full to its limit and finally completed. The water is first damned on 1 September 1964.

21 October 1965 - Llyn Celyn is officially opened.

23 December 1965 - Roy Jenkins is appointed Home Secretary; he holds the post until 30 November 1967.

1966

6 March 1966 - saboteurs cause £30,000 damage at the Clywedog reservoir construction site.

15 March 1966 - 23-year-old Owen Pennant Hughes of Nebo, Caernarfonshire, is arrested after a search of his farm recovers 9 lb of gelignite and 6 detonators.

31 March 1966 - Harold Wilson is re-elected Prime Minister. James Griffiths, the Secretary of State for Wales, announces his retirement from office. Elected Labour MP for Ceredigion, is former Plaid Cymru ‘dauphin’ Elystan Morgan.

5 April 1966 - Cledwyn Hughes, the 49-year-old Labour MP for Ynys Mon is appointed Secretary of State for Wales.

10 April 1966 - over the weekend of 10 April, the FWA accept an invitation by Sinn Fein to march during the celebrations in Dublin to mark the 50th anniversary of the Easter Rising.
4 May 1966 - as a result of the police inquiry into Owen Pennant Hughes, 27-year-old David Robert Marcus Gale of Llangollen and 25-year-old Harry Jones of Cefn Mawr, Wrexham appear at Denbigh Assizes. Marcus Gale is charged with being in 'possession of 9 electrical detonators in suspicious circumstances' and receiving and possessing 6 sticks of mining explosives, known to be stolen. Harry Jones is charged with stealing and possessing mining explosives, the property of the NCB.

29 June 1966 - at Caernarfon Assizes, Owen Pennant Hughes pleads guilty to being in possession of explosives under suspicious circumstances and is placed on three years probation. It follows an earlier discovery by police of 91b of gelignite and 6 detonators at his north Wales farm.

8 July 1966 - at Denbigh Assizes, having each pleaded guilty to the charges heard at the same Assizes on 4 May, David Robert Marcus Gale and Harry Jones both receive two years probation.

14 July 1966 - following the death of Megan Lloyd George two months earlier, a by-election is held in Carmarthenshire. It is won by Gwynfor Evans, the Plaid Cymru president.

8 September 1966 - threats to hamper the official opening of the Severn Bridge fail to materialize, as amid considerable security, the Queen opens the £8million construction without incident. However, to the amusement of the FWA, the official ceremony is conducted on the English side of the bridge.

21 October 1966 - the Welsh mining village of Aberfan is engulfed by tons of coal spoil, which cascades down a surrounding hillside. Warnings that an underground spring lies beneath the coal waste have been ignored. 144 are killed, 116 are children under the age of 11.

1967

12 March 1967 - a gelignite device is found in the water pipeline at Crossgates, near Llandrindod. The pipeline runs from Cwm Elan to Birmingham. It has remained undetected since being placed by the Free Wales Army on 27 February. The date of its placing coincides with the passing of the Welsh Language Act, which extends the use of Welsh to certain legal proceedings.

8 September 1967 - it is announced that each bereaved family affected by the Aberfan disaster is to receive £5,000. It is believed, in some circles, that the involvement of the FWA in the financial settlement issue is responsible for the decision.

30 September 1967 - an explosion blasts the pipeline from Llyn Vyrnwy to Liverpool at Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant. It is later established that John Jenkins and Frederick Ernest Alders are responsible.

17 November 1967 - explosion at the Temple of Peace, Cardiff.

30 November 1967 - James Callaghan is appointed Home Secretary; he holds the post until 19 June 1972.
5 January 1968 - explosion at Snowdonia Country Club at Peniarwaun, near Caernarfon.

8 January 1968 - following the Snowdonia Country Club blast, Edward Hope Wilkinson and Robert Griffith Jones are arrested and charged with ‘unlawful possession of explosive substances’. While in police custody, each give a statement claiming the explosives were supplied by quarryman Arfon Jones. Also mentioned in the police statement by Edward Wilkinson is John Gwilym Jones. Brought in for questioning, J. G. Jones gives a written statement implicating Owain Williams.

14 January 1968 - Owain Williams is arrested at Caernarfon police station having earlier returned from London.

23 January 1968 - ‘having plenty of detonators’, John Jenkins and Frederick Ernest Alders raid the explosives magazine at Hafod quarry near Wrexham. Some 300 lbs of explosives are stolen. This single acquisition enables MAC to continue its campaign of direct action, until Jenkins’ and Alders’ ultimate detection nearly two years later.

January 1968 - Frederick Ernest Alders and Ann Woodgate are engaged. The engagement lasts until January 1969.

8 February 1968 - a weakened and shaking Owain Williams is inexplicably granted bail at Caernarfon Assizes.

15 February 1968 - at Caernarfon Assizes, quarryman Arfon Jones pleads guilty to stealing explosive material from his place of work and is fined £15. This is the source of the explosives obtained by Robert Jones and Edward Wilkinson.

28 February 1968 - Robert Griffith Jones and Edwin Wilkinson each receive twelve months imprisonment, suspended for two years, for unlawful possession of explosives. It cannot be proved if either man undertook the Snowdonia Country Club action. For having implicated Owain Williams and assured police he will testify against Williams when he stands trial, J. G. Jones is not charged with any offence. This, despite confessing to collecting explosive material from Robert Griffith Jones and passing it onto Owain Williams.

28 February 1968 - with media interest in Wales increasing, the BBC news programme 24 Hours features apparent anti-investiture sentiment in Caernarfon. The programme causes a storm of controversy with its reference to Prince Charles as ‘Charles Windsor’; its claim that in spite of the cost of staging the ceremony ‘many of the town’s terraced houses’ are ‘without bathrooms, indoor toilets, electricity, hot water, or even a cold tap outside’; and footage of an investiture mug being allegedly smashed by disgruntled children. On seeing a received transcript of the programme, Harold Wilson declares its contents ‘fantastic’ and the programme’s description of the prince as ‘extraordinary’. In letters to Lord Hill, the director-general of the BBC, George Thomas accuses programme makers of ‘mischief making’ and not conforming to the BBC’s policy of impartiality. The Welsh Secretary may have had a point, as it is later revealed that Caernarfon District Council had ‘condemned or demolished over 330 houses’ and improved ‘more than 167’. As for the mug smashing incident, it
transpires that a mug was decorated with an unflattering picture of the prince and smashed by at least one child possibly paid to do so. See TNA, PREM 13/2505.

29 February 1968 - Owain Williams is further released on bail from Caernarfon Assizes.

1 March 1968 - John Jenkins meets Owain Williams at Loggerheads, near Wrexham. It is alleged that Gethin ap Iestyn and Philip Henry also attend.

2 March 1968 - Owain Williams absconds to Brittany and Eire.

6 March 1968 - Owain Williams fails to appear in court in Caernarfon, on the charge of being in unlawful possession of explosives with regard the explosion at the Snowdonia Country Club.

24 March 1968 - explosion at the Inland Revenue Office, Llanishen, Cardiff.

5 April 1968 - George Thomas is appointed Secretary of State for Wales; he holds the post until 20 June 1970.

2 May 1968 - journalists Emyr Jones, Harold Pendlebury and Ian Skidmore hold a press conference with three hooded figures purporting to be Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru. The three are later identified as John Jenkins, Frederick Ernest Alders and John Roberts.


27 May 1968 - explosion at Llyn Vyrnwy, Montgomeryshire.

31 May 1968 - Welsh chief constables, Special Branch and the heads of investigating CID and Regional Crime Squads, hold a summit in Cardiff to discuss escalating militancy in Wales. Believing it has little alternative, the Home Office, in order to ensure its own instrumental presence in Wales, appoints Frank Williamson, HM Inspector of Constabulary (Crime), to report directly to the Home Secretary. Williamson is instructed to consider the options and suggest a proposal.

7 June 1968 - following another top level review of the investigation by MI5 and Special Branch operatives in London, Home Secretary James Callaghan is advised by a senior civil servant to stamp his authority on the recalcitrant Welsh police forces, even if it touched ‘on a number of delicate relationships’ and aroused ‘the susceptibilities of some Welsh chief constables’; it is surely time to take the matter ‘in hand’.

27 June 1968 - explosion on the Liverpool Corporation aqueduct at the Chester-Warrington railway crossing.

28 June 1968 - accompanied by his father, the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Charles arrives for what is billed his ‘first royal tour’ of Wales. During a melee with some anti-investiture campaigners, Gethin ap Iestyn, Philip Henry and Gwenllian Wynne are arrested for discharging smoke bombs.
6 July 1968 - at an anti-investiture rally held at Machynlleth, a recorded message by Owain Williams is heard. Following its conclusion, the FWA undertake a series of manoeuvres for the media in the surrounding hills.

16 July 1968 - Gethin ap Iestyn is fined £20 for ‘disgraceful behaviour’ during the visit to Cardiff of Prince Charles on 28 June.

16 July 1968 - at a meeting in Cardiff attended by many of the UK’s senior security officials, the decision is taken to establish a special unit with its operational headquarters just over the border in England. It will be led by officers from the Metropolitan Police experienced in counter-terrorism and be accountable to Whitehall’s ‘man in Wales’ Frank Williamson, HM Inspector of Constabulary (Crime). The idea to establish the unit is proposed by Frank Williamson. The humiliation of the Welsh police service is complete, with news the security services will forthwith be primarily entrusted to combat nationalist agitation in Wales.

Summer 1968 - John Jenkins is accompanied to Birmingham New Street Railway Station by Colin George Wood, a junior member of the Dental Corps. *En route*, Jenkins allegedly implores Wood ‘not to mention to anybody else’ any events which may transpire.

27 August 1968 - Owain Williams is arrested at Birmingham airport.

30 - 31 August 1968 - the FWA and anti-investiture activists hold a training exercise at Abergwesyn in mid-Wales.

9 September 1968 - explosion at RAF Pembrey in Carmarthenshire. 42-year-old Warrant Officer William Hougham receives injuries to his hands and face.

12 September 1968 - a police sub-aqua team recover an arms cache from Maesllyn near Tregaron.

9 November 1968 - Owain Williams is acquitted at Caernarfon Assizes of unlawful possession of explosives.

2 December 1968 - a mid Wales cell of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru is thought responsible for planting a device which explodes on the Cwm Elan to Birmingham water pipeline at West Hagley, near Stourbridge.

1969

26 February 1969 - during dawn raids, Cayo Evans, Denis Coslett, Toni Lewis, Vernon Griffiths, Glyn Rowlands, David John Underhill (Dafydd y Dug), Gethin ap Iestyn (Keith Griffiths), Vivian George Davies and David Bonar Thomas are arrested.

1 March 1969 - Owain Williams addresses an anti-investiture rally in Caernarfon. Gordon Wyn Jones is introduced to Gareth Miles; he in turn allegedly puts Jones in touch with John Jenkins.

6 - 12 March - the nine arrested FWA and anti-investiture campaigners appear before
the Cardiff Stipendiary Magistrate, John Rutter.

10 April 1969 - explosion at the Inland Revenue Office in Chester.

15 April 1969 - Minor damage is caused by an explosion at police HQ in Cardiff.

16 April - 1 July 1969 - the FWA and anti-investiture campaigners are tried at Swansea Assizes by Justice Thompson.

20 April 1969 - Prince Charles arrives in Aberystwyth to begin his eight week study course in matters pertaining to Wales.

23 April 1969 - a device is discovered in a locker at Cardiff Central Railway Station.

26 April 1969 - Robert William Trigg is arrested in connection with the above.

29 April 1969 - an explosion rips through the Central Electricity Generating Board offices in the Gabalfa area of Cardiff.

2 May 1969 - a parcel bomb addressed to Detective Sergeant Lavery is intercepted at police HQ, Cardiff.

25 June 1969 - a device is discovered at the base of the Prince of Wales monument at Mackenzie Pier in Holyhead.

June 1969 - following the above, William Glyn Jones, Dewi Jones and John Allan Jones are arrested. They are soon dubbed ‘the Anglesey three’.

30 June 1969 - a letterbox explodes outside the postal sorting office at Victoria Park, Cardiff.

30 June 1969 - shortly before midnight, Alwyn Jones and George Taylor are killed in Abergele, when planting a device outside the town’s Social Security Office. They are each allegedly members of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru.

1 July 1969 - at the conclusion of the so-called Free Wales Army trial at Swansea Assizes, Cayo Evans receives fifteen months imprisonment; so too Denis Coslett and Gethin ap Iestyn nine months. Acquitted on all charges are: Dafydd Glyn Rowlands, David John Underhill (Dafydd y Dug) and Dai Bonar Thomas. Toni Lewis is sentenced to eight months, suspended for two years; Vivian Davies is gaoled for six months, suspended for three years; and Vernon Griffiths is sentenced to three months, suspended for two years.

1 July 1969 - investiture of Prince Charles as Prince of Wales in Caernarfon.

1 July 1969 - bomb explodes in Love Lane, Caernarfon. Designed to undermine the status of the 21 Royal Salute of welcome, it is close to the home of the Chief Constable of Gwynedd, Lieutenant Colonel William Jones Williams.

2 July 1969 - a device is allegedly discovered at Llandudno pier; Prince Charles is due
to come ashore from the Royal Yacht Britannia to begin a Royal Progress of Wales minutes later.

5 July 1969 - ten-year-old Ian Cox is injured in Caernarfon when activating a device planted five days earlier by a cell of Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru.

28 July 1969 - Robert William Trigg is sentenced to four years imprisonment, in connection with the device found in a luggage locker at Cardiff Central Railway Station three months earlier.

14 August 1969 - explosion at the South Stack Relay Station near Holyhead on Anglesey.

17 August 1969 - a device is discovered on the doorstep of a Council Health Offices in Chester. It is later established that Frederick Ernest Alders planted the device, having deliberately de-activated it, prior to doing so.

18 September 1969 - John Jenkins is interviewed at Saighton Barracks. He removes the remainder stock of explosives - stored in a locked cupboard within the Dental Centre - to the home of Frederick Ernest Alders.

2 - 15 October 1969 - trial of so-called ‘Anglesey three’ is held at Mold Assizes.


20 October 1969 - following the conclusion of the trial of the ‘Anglesey three’, William Glyn Jones and Dewi Jones receive eighteen months imprisonment; John Allan Jones receives six months, suspended for two years.

2 November 1969 - John Jenkins and Frederick Ernest Alders are arrested at their homes in Wrexham.

5 November 1969 - the last of MAC munitions are detonated by Gordon Wyn Jones near Holyhead, on Anglesey.

1970

9 - 20 April 1970 - trial of John Barnard Jenkins and Frederick Ernest Alders at Mold Assizes. Jenkins receives ten years imprisonment; Alders six years.

1976

15 August 1976 - John Barnard Jenkins is released from H. M. Prison Albany, on the Isle of Wight.

2006

25 July 2006 - The Queen signs the Government of Wales Act. Clause 100 theoretically enables the Secretary of State to override any Assembly measures in Cardiff, which affect water provision in England.