

**THE DOGS THAT DIDN'T BARK: POLITICAL VIOLENCE
AND NATIONALISM IN SCOTLAND, WALES AND
ENGLAND**

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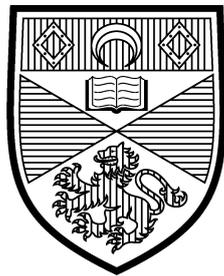
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The Dogs That Didn't Bark: Political Violence and Nationalism in Scotland, Wales and England

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This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of PhD at
the University of St Andrews

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Abstract

The literature on terrorism and political violence covers in depth the reasons why some national minorities, such as the Irish, Basques and Tamils, have adopted violent methods as a means of achieving their political goals, but the study of why similar groups (such as the Scots and Welsh) remained non-violent, has been largely neglected. In isolation it is difficult to adequately assess the key variables behind why something *did not* happen, but when compared to a similar violent case, this form of academic exercise can be greatly beneficial. This thesis demonstrates what we can learn from studying ‘negative cases’ - nationalist movements that abstain from political violence - particularly with regards to how the state should respond to minimise the likelihood of violent activity, as well as the interplay of societal factors in the initiation of violent revolt.

This is achieved by considering the cases of Wales, England and Scotland, the latter of which recently underwent a referendum on independence from the United Kingdom (accomplished without the use of political violence) and comparing them with the national movement in Ireland, looking at both violent and non-violent manifestations of nationalism in both territories. I argue no single factor can determine whether or not a national movement will adopt violent methods, but that key to this outcome is the way in which national identity is constructed. Additionally, I suggest that states can decrease the likelihood that nationalist movements will turn to violence by ensuring non-violent means of political mobilisation are perceived as legitimate and viable alternatives, and that the absence of precipitating factors (such as an overly aggressive state response or an existing precedent for violent revolt) will further reduce the risk.

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It is to all these individuals that this project is dedicated.

List of Acronyms

APG - Army of the Provisional Government of Scotland
BNP - British National Party
CRA - Cornish Republican Army
EDL - English Defence League
FWA - Free Wales Army
GUSNA - Glasgow University Student Nationalist Association
IRA - Irish Republican Army
IRB - Irish Republican Brotherhood
MAC - Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru (Movement for the Defence of Wales)
MG - Meibion Glyndŵr (Sons of Glyndŵr)
MK - Mebyon Kernow (Sons of Cornwall)
NAVSR - National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights
NICRA - The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association
NF - National Front
NPS - National Party of Scotland
PC - Plaid Cymru (Party of Wales)
RUC - Royal Ulster Constabulary
SDP - Social Democratic Party
SHRA - Scottish Home Rule Association
SLA - Scottish Liberation Army
SNLA - Scottish National Liberation Army
SNG - Siol nan Gaidheal (Seed of the Gael)
SNP - Scottish National Party
SRA - Scottish Republican Army
SRSL - Scottish Republican Socialist League
SP - Scottish Party
UKIP - United Kingdom Independence Party
WLS - Welsh Language Society (Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg)

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1. Introduction

On the 14th of July 1966, Gwynfor Evans became the first Westminster Parliamentarian for the Welsh nationalist party, Plaid Cymru (The Party of Wales), when he won the seat of Carmarthen, in South-West Wales, from the Labour Party in a by-election. It was reported that Evans' triumph was greeted with "wild scenes"¹ and Evans himself described the victory as "an historic day for Wales and the Welsh nation", claiming that "for the first time Wales will have a direct voice at Westminster and I intend to make that voice heard".² His defeated opponent, Gwilym Prys-Davies did not view it as an historic triumph, remarking "it has been a protest vote and not a positive one... Carmarthen will return to Labour at the next general election".³ Although Evans lost Carmarthen in 1970, as Prys-Davies predicted, the victory was just the start for Plaid Cymru - it was a political breakthrough, an emergence onto the national scene. More generally it was evidence that many in Wales felt that Welsh issues were not being adequately addressed by the pan-British parties: the Labour Party, the Conservatives and the Liberals, and were turning to nationalism for a solution.

On the 2nd of November 1967, Winnie Ewing won a by-election in Hamilton for the Scottish National Party (SNP) defeating the incumbent Labour Party. In similarly jubilant scenes, it was reported that "fireworks flared through the dimly wet night... hundreds of young nationalists stood outside the counting hall in pouring rain, cheering, singing, playing the bagpipes and chanting 'we want Winnie'".⁴ She was not the first Scottish nationalist Member of Parliament,⁵ but the scale of her triumph (overturning a Labour majority of 16,576) meant that her triumph was the most remarkable moment in the history of the SNP up to that point. This result, following on from Plaid Cymru's triumph the previous year, was "a clear warning that Scotland and Wales are increasingly impatient about Westminster's total failure to solve their

¹ Dennis Johnson, "Plaid Cymru wins Carmarthen from Labour", *The Guardian*, 15 July 1966.

² *ibid.*

³ "Welsh Party Win First Seat", *The Times*, 15 July 1966.

⁴ "Fireworks Night is Early", *The Times*, 3 November 1967.

⁵ That honour belongs to Dr Robert McIntyre who won a by-election in Motherwell in 1945, but only held his seat for a few months before losing it in the General Election later that year.

special problems”.⁶ Her supporters were convinced that Ewing would be an influential presence at Westminster, claiming she “would put a bomb under Parliament”.⁷

On the 12th of August 1969, rioting broke out in the Bogside area of Londonderry/Derry, Northern Ireland. There had been sectarian tensions in the province for at least a year, as Catholic civil rights campaigners had clashed with the state, and with mobs of Protestants, over the perceived unequal distribution of social services and employment opportunities in favour of the Protestant community. This outbreak of violence occurred in the wake of a Protestant march through the (overwhelming Catholic) Bogside area of the city, and the police were forced to use tear gas and an armoured car in an attempt to clear the streets of rioters and hastily erected barricades.⁸ A day later the situation escalated as “widespread fighting and instances of burning and looting were reported” from other parts of Northern Ireland.⁹ *The Times* reported that gangs of youths armed with “home-made petrol bombs” were targeting police stations, as women and children fled across the border into the Republic in search of refuge.¹⁰ For those on the British mainland it was inconceivable that the pictures in the newspapers and on television of rioters clashing with police came from another part of the United Kingdom. The Prime Minister of the Republic of Ireland urged the United Nations to intervene in the crisis, and the leaders of Northern Ireland and the United Kingdom were in constant contact as the situation unfolded.¹¹ The rioting lasted until the 17th of August, but by that time the devolved government of Northern Ireland had lost control of the province.¹²

These three events in three different parts of the United Kingdom represent a snapshot of the political situation in these countries in the late-1960s. Common to these events is the demonstration of public displeasure at the existing political structure - in Wales and Scotland at the Westminster government, and in Northern Ireland at the Stormont

⁶ Robert Brown, “‘History made’ in Scotland”, *The Guardian*, 3 November 1967.

⁷ “Fireworks night is early”, *The Times*, 3 November 1967.

⁸ Harold Jackson, “Police in Derry use tear gas and armour”, *The Guardian*, 13 August 1969.

⁹ “Shooting in Ulster as rioting spread”, *The Times*, 14 August 1969.

¹⁰ “Children turn their milk bottles into petrol bombs”, *The Times*, 14 August 1969.

¹¹ *ibid.*

¹² J Bowyer Bell describes the events of August 1969 (100-115) and the gradual decreasing effectiveness of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) as a “police state running out of police”. (J Bowyer Bell, *The Irish Troubles: A Generation of Violence 1967-1992* (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1993), 103.

devolved assembly, established after the partition of Ireland, and the subsequent creation of Northern Ireland, in 1921. These three events are also symbolic of what was to follow for these countries. In Scotland and Wales, political nationalism had emerged as a serious political force and both the SNP and Plaid Cymru were able to make further gains in Westminster in the 1970s, and by the end of that decade the people of Scotland and Wales were asked to vote on the devolution of political power to national assemblies in Edinburgh and Cardiff. What followed in Northern Ireland was a sustained period of inter-communal violence (commonly referred to as ‘The Troubles’) between the nationalist (almost entirely Catholic) population of Northern Ireland, who favoured re-unification with the Republic of Ireland and the unionist (almost entirely Protestant) population who favoured Northern Ireland remaining in the United Kingdom. The third party to this conflict was the British Army, whose deployment to keep the peace in Northern Ireland had drawn them into the fighting.

Roughly thirty years after these events, on the 11th of September 1997, the Scottish electorate voted to support the establishment of a devolved parliament by an overwhelming majority. Exactly one week later, Wales followed suit, although the margin of victory was very narrow.¹³ Thirty years after their first political successes, the SNP and Plaid Cymru could point to tangible evidence of their political progress. On the 22nd of May 1998, voters in Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland were asked to vote on the Belfast Agreement (more commonly referred to as the Good Friday Agreement) a set of accords between the United Kingdom, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland that made provisions for the governance of Northern Ireland. More importantly, this agreement was a crucial step in the process of bringing peace to Northern Ireland, and ending the inter-communal violence that had torn the province apart for thirty years. The devolution referenda of 1997 created devolved assemblies for Scotland and Wales, but no provision was made for the most populous nation of the United Kingdom, England. Somewhat ironically, these votes coincided

¹³ Wyn Jones and Lewis report that the overall majority in support was overall majority was “only 6,721 votes out of a potential electorate of 2,218,850” (Richard Wyn Jones & Bethan Lewis, “The Welsh Devolution Referendum”, *Politics* 19 (1999), 37).

with an awakening of English national consciousness¹⁴ and the first flickers of an English nationalism.

These series of events, thirty years apart, chart the different paths taken by nationalist movements in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. In Northern Ireland, members of the Republican movement, most notably the Provisional IRA,¹⁵ had taken up arms in defence of their community and to force the British to leave Northern Ireland for good. They may not have had universal support amongst Northern Ireland's Catholics, but no solution to the political impasse in Northern Ireland could have been achieved without their involvement. In Scotland and Wales, political violence was largely absent from the nationalist campaigns. Groups such as the Tartan Army and the Scottish National Liberation Army (SNLA), the Free Wales Army (FWA) and *Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru* (MAC - Movement for the Defence of Wales) mounted violent campaigns, but these groups were far less active, had far fewer members, had far less popular support and were, resultantly, far less important than the Provisional IRA was in Northern Ireland. Why was this the case? Why was political violence a feature of the nationalist movement in Northern Ireland, but not in Scotland, Wales, or even in England?

The relative absence of Scottish, Welsh or English nationalist political violence is even more surprising when it is considered that these political movements have much in common. They emanate from broadly similar cultures, and fight for broadly similar political means: the decentralisation of power from the British state to the national level. There are deep historical connections between these countries (most notably membership of the British Empire), and migration across the British Isles has been on-going for millennia. Additionally, their political opponents were establishment political parties that adopted similar messages on the benefits of Union. That said, there are undoubtedly differences between the groups. They seek different territorial

¹⁴ This has been attributed to England's hosting of the 1996 European Championships and the outpouring of emotion following the death of Diana, Princess of Wales (for example, by Arthur Aughey, *The Politics of Englishness* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007).

¹⁵ For future reference I will use the acronym IRA to refer to the actions of the original post-1916 IRA, and will refer to the Official IRA and the Provisional IRA when discussing the post-1969 events in Northern Ireland.

ends,¹⁶ and there are differences in the way in which membership of the national group is conceived, as I go onto discuss. Yet these differences should not take away from the fact that these three political movements are in many ways alike. How then can we explain the wildly divergent paths nationalism has taken in these countries? How can we reconcile the use of political violence by those in Northern Ireland against the comparative absence of political violence by Scottish, Welsh and English nationalists? These questions have yet to be considered in the academic literature, and so this thesis will address this discrepancy and explain why political violence has not been a significant feature of the national movements in Scotland, Wales and England.

Perhaps another significant question is - why should we, as researchers, be interested in this phenomenon? More crudely, why should we care? I will show that these cases can inform a variety of academic debates. My central focus, the study of terrorism and political violence can learn from contrasting violent and non-violent cases.¹⁷ By doing so, it should be possible to isolate enabling factors and societal conditions of violent action within a nationalist context, adding to the debate on the 'root causes' of terrorism initiated in contributions by authors such as Martha Crenshaw,¹⁸ and in edited volumes by Tore Bjørgo¹⁹ and Louise Richardson.²⁰ Additionally the study of nationalism can also benefit from identifying the correlating factors between the emergence and make-up of a national movement and the adoption of violent methods by these movements. I believe that this case will clearly illustrate that nationalism is not an inherently violent political phenomenon, building on the evidence presented by authors such as David Laitin²¹ and Siniša Malešević.²² Finally, I believe that this study will be of interest to students of non-violent political protest, as I discuss the potential benefits of non-violent protest if it is perceived to be viable, building on

¹⁶ Those in Northern Ireland seek reunification with the Republic of Ireland. The Scottish nationalists argue for the creation of an independent Scottish state; and until as recently as 2011, Plaid Cymru had not formally committed to pursuing Welsh independence.

¹⁷ As I discuss in my literature review, this is an endeavor already undertaken by a number of authors.

¹⁸ Martha Crenshaw, "The Causes of Terrorism", *Comparative Politics*, 13:4 (1981): 379-399.

¹⁹ Tore Bjørgo, *Root Causes of Terrorism: Myths, reality and ways forward* (London: Routledge, 2005).

²⁰ Louise Richardson, *The Roots of Terrorism* (London: Routledge, 2006).

²¹ David Laitin, *Nations, States and Violence* (Oxford: University Press, 2007).

²² Siniša Malešević, "Is Nationalism Inherently Violent?", *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 19 (2013): 12-37.

existing academic literature from Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan²³ and Adam Roberts and Timothy Garton Ash.²⁴

The central contention of this thesis is that political violence was largely absent from these nationalist campaigns due to the interaction of a variety of social and political factors in Scotland, Wales and England. The first of these was the successful integration of these peoples into a pan-British identity in the centuries before the rise of nationalist movements in these countries through shared religion, economic prosperity and civil institutions. I also argue that the viability of non-violent alternatives to the minority nationalist movements in these countries eliminated the need, in the eyes of the vast majority of these populations, for physical force to be used to obtain nationalist progress. The result of these, and other secondary factors, was that Scotland, Wales and England lacked the communal polarisation on the national question present in Ireland: thus the societal conditions were inhospitable to militant nationalists, who were unable to gain popular support for their groups, or their actions. Popular support, we are told, is the lifeblood of any covert subversive group.²⁵ Without it, militants find themselves financially and logistically constrained, and constantly on the run to avoid detection, without a consenting community to shelter them. It was this lack of popular support that inhibited the growth of militant nationalism in Scotland, Wales and England.

Research Project and Parameters

Understanding why something *did not* happen is not a straightforward endeavour. Some have questioned why anyone would attempt this - Niall Ferguson, in *Virtual History*, asks this very question - “why concern ourselves with what *didn't* happen? Just as there is no use crying over spilt milk, runs the argument, so there is no use in

²³ Erica Chenoweth & Maria J. Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011).

²⁴ Adam Roberts & Timothy Garton Ash, *Civil Resistance and Power Politics: The Experience of Non-violent Action from Gandhi to Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

²⁵ Louise Richardson, *What Terrorists Want: Understanding the Terrorist Threat* (London: John Murray, 2006), 31; Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism [Revised Edition]* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 225.

wondering how the spillage might have been averted”.²⁶ There is a branch of historical enquiry that studies how events could have differed had a notable event or innovation not occurred, described as counterfactual history.²⁷ Ferguson tells us that two forms of counterfactual history exist. The first kind is “essentially [a] product of the imagination”.²⁸ Works of literary fiction frequently employ alternative narratives to consider how different things could be - for example, Ferguson cites the novel *Fatherland* by Robert Harris, set in a Europe shaped by a Nazi victory in the Second World War.²⁹ Hollywood has also played on the public’s fascination with alternative narratives - films such as *It’s a Wonderful Life*,³⁰ *Sliding Doors*,³¹ *Back to the Future*³² and *Run Lola Run*³³ all employ the examination of an alternative future to demonstrate how subtle changes in the present can produce a vastly different sequence of events.

The second type of counterfactual history “designed to test hypotheses by (supposedly) empirical means, which eschew imagination in favour of computation”³⁴ is more relevant to my work here. Some historians have scorned this kind of endeavour: Michael Oakeshott claimed that counterfactual history is “pure myth, an extravagance of the imagination”,³⁵ and in his work on the growth of counterfactual history, Richard J. Evans argues the vast majority of counterfactual history is “of little real use in the serious study of the past”.³⁶ However, this form of research has gained in popularity in the last two decades - a direct result, Evans postulates, of the

²⁶ Niall Ferguson, *Virtual History: Alternatives and Counterfactuals* (London: Penguin, 2011), 2.

²⁷ Ferguson’s edited volume *Virtual History* and Richard J. Evans’ *Altered Pasts* both examine the emergence of counterfactual history and its potential benefits. The authors in *Virtual History* consider a variety of plausible alternative narratives involving the First and Second World Wars, the Irish Home Rule Bill and the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Evans is less convinced of the merits of this form of speculation, suggesting that the historian considering the folly of Napoleon or Hitler would not make the same mistakes they did as they operated with the benefit of hindsight, and suggests that it becomes an exercise in ‘wishful thinking’. (Ferguson, *Virtual History*; Richard J. Evans, *Altered Pasts: Counterfactuals in History* (London: Little Brown, 2014)).

²⁸ Ferguson, *Virtual History*, 18.

²⁹ Robert Harris, *Fatherland* (London: Hutchinson, 1992).

³⁰ Frances Goodrich, Albert Hackett, Frank Capra, *It’s a Wonderful Life*, directed by Frank Capra (1946, New York: Liberty Films, 2009), DVD.

³¹ Peter Howitt, *Sliding Doors*, directed by Peter Howitt (1998, Los Angeles, CA: Paramount Pictures, 2010), DVD.

³² Robert Zemeckis & Bob Gale, *Back to the Future*, directed by Robert Zemeckis (1985, Los Angeles, CA: Universal Pictures, 2005), DVD.

³³ Tom Tykwer, *Run Lola Run (Lola Rennt)*, directed by Tom Tykwer (1998, Los Angeles, CA: Sony Pictures, 2000), DVD.

³⁴ Ferguson, *Virtual History*, 18.

³⁵ In Ferguson, *Virtual History*, 7.

³⁶ Evans, *Altered Pasts*, 176.

econometrical use of history to measure the impact of certain decisions.³⁷ An example employed by both Evans and Ferguson is R.W. Fogel's study of railways and American economic growth, and how economic development might have differed without the expansion of the railroad network.³⁸ By carrying out this form of counterfactual history, we can identify the contribution an individual element made to a system and analyse the benefit (or cost) that followed.

I will adopt a similar approach; although it is not possible to be entirely certain why a certain chain of events did not transpire, I believe it is possible to identify the existence of certain conditions that can help to explain why political violence was a marginal feature of the nationalist movements in Scotland, Wales and England. To do so, I consider the historical development of the Scottish, Welsh and English nations to explain the form that the national movement took in these three countries. Therefore, I will provide detailed narratives in each of these cases to demonstrate clearly which historical developments are important and the role they play. Central to my argument will be the construction of national identity and its direct relation to the form the national movement took. Issues of language, and religion dating back centuries to the creation of the United Kingdom through political unions, and the split in Christianity caused by the Protestant Reformation, are thus crucial to why twentieth century political movements operated in the manner that they did.

Following this, I compare these three cases with the case of Ireland - looking at the development of the national movement in the eighteenth and nineteenth century Imperial Ireland and the impact that this had on the Republican causes in both pre-partition Ireland and post-partition Northern Ireland. By comparing these cases I identify key differences, and having done so I discuss the potential impact their presence, or absence, had in Scotland, Wales and England. I do not believe that any individual factor can explain why these national movements took such divergent paths - instead I contend that a combination of societal factors can account for the differing levels of political violence throughout the United Kingdom.

³⁷ *ibid.*, 37.

³⁸ Evans, *Altered Pasts*, 37; Ferguson, *Virtual History*, 17.

Before continuing, it is necessary to clarify some of the parameters of this research, allowing me to move forward with clearly defined boundaries. Firstly, this will not be a historical account of the activities of militant nationalists in the United Kingdom, as these (to some extent) already exist.³⁹ Whilst their activities will be considered, the central aim of this work will be the analysis of their emergence, behaviour, and decline, and why there was not further militancy.

It is also beneficial to establish chronological parameters. As I have said it is important to examine the factors in the development of Scotland, Wales, England and Ireland as nations, and the expressions of national identity that followed. However, I do not intend to delve this far back into history in my search for evidence of the use of nationalist political violence, and instead my focus will be on political violence in the twentieth century onwards for two primary reasons. Firstly, the modern political nationalist movements in these countries emerge in the 1920s: in Wales, Plaid Cymru emerges in 1925⁴⁰ and the National Party of Scotland emerges in 1928, before becoming the Scottish National Party in 1934.⁴¹ Neither of these parties was able to achieve any sort of meaningful electoral success until the late 1960s, so it is legitimate to argue that *political* nationalism on the mainland United Kingdom is a feature of the latter half of the twentieth century, thus we should not expect to find nationalist political violence before this period.

The second reason for limiting this research to the twentieth & twenty-first century is that political violence (in the modern sense of the expression) is not encountered in the United Kingdom until the late nineteenth century, and even then it is limited.⁴² The majority of terrorist activity recorded in the United Kingdom occurs in the twentieth century, and in the case of Scotland and Wales, only a handful of acts that could be termed political violence occurs before 1960, as I demonstrate in Chapters 2 and 3. In short, the history of political violence in Scotland and Wales is limited to a brief period in the late twentieth century and therefore it is most appropriate to focus

³⁹ See works mentioned in the literature review section.

⁴⁰ John Davies, *A History of Wales* [Revised Edition] (London: Penguin, 2007), 531.

⁴¹ Peter Lynch, *SNP: The History of the Scottish National Party* (Cardiff: Welsh Academic Press, 2002).

⁴² The nineteenth-century terroristic actions of Irish Republican groups are discussed in further detail in Chapter 5.

from the start of the twentieth century up to the present day in order to take modern developments into account.

I believe that the present political environment is the perfect time to undertake this study for a number of reasons: chief among them the impact that the referendum on Scottish independence in 2014 has had on increasing interest on nationalism in Scotland, and enlivening the debate on the constitutional future of the United Kingdom. As a result of this, Scotland has, as a country, been involved in a period of intense political discourse about its past and its future with which academics, journalists, politicians and other cultural figures have engaged.⁴³ Additionally, nearly two decades after the successful referenda on Welsh and Scottish devolution in 1997, the introduction of devolved authorities in 1999, now is an ideal time to examine the impact that this important constitutional change has had on national movements in Scotland and Wales, as well as the subsequent effect that it has had in England. In Scotland, the victory of the SNP in 2007 Scottish Parliamentary elections gave the party the chance to govern, on a national level, for the first time and Scots have seen government policy diverge from the path taken south of the border on issues such as health and education, providing clear examples of the impact of devolution.

In Wales, further powers were devolved to the Welsh Assembly in the wake of a successful referendum in March 2011, bringing it closer in line to the Scottish Parliament in terms of powers. Considering the narrow margins by which Welsh devolution proceeded in the first case,⁴⁴ the fact that more than 60% of Welsh voters supported further devolution indicates that support for home rule has risen.⁴⁵ Although Plaid Cymru have not had the chance to govern independently as the SNP have, they have formed part of a coalition government with the Labour Party in Wales in June 2007, offering the party similar experience of governing on a national level.

⁴³ Works such as *Blossom* by pro-nationalist Scottish journalist Lesley Riddoch looked forward, and examined how Scotland could change in the event of independence, whereas other works such as *Acts of Union and Disunion*, by Linda Colley, looked back to understand how the United Kingdom had reached this important juncture (Lesley Riddoch, *Blossom: What Scotland Needs to Flourish* (Edinburgh: Luath Press, 2013); Linda Colley, *Acts of Union and Disunion: What has held the UK together and what is dividing it?* (London: Profile Books, 2014).

⁴⁴ “only 6,721 votes out of a potential electorate of 2,218,850” (Wyn Jones & Lewis, “The Welsh Devolution Referendum”, 37).

⁴⁵ Roger Scully & Richard Wyn Jones, “The Public Legitimacy of the National Assembly for Wales.”, *Journal of Legislative Studies* (forthcoming) (2015).

The establishment of devolved assemblies for Scotland and Wales had the effect of increasing the political saliency of English national identity and has raised questions about the constitutional and political arrangements of the United Kingdom. Most notably, devolution created the West Lothian Question, an anomaly of the devolved systems that allows Scottish and Welsh MPs to vote on issues that have no *direct* impact on their constituency, as the issues in question are directly controlled by the devolved government. Additionally, it has been claimed by media personalities and politicians that Scotland is subsidised by the English taxpayer and this has led to demands for the Barnett Formula to be reconsidered.⁴⁶

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the timing is ideal because the violent activities of the groups in question have been substantially reduced. In Northern Ireland, the peace process has mostly eradicated violence on both sides of the divide - although dissident Republican groups do remain active.⁴⁷ In the case of Wales, the most sustained period of political violence came to an end with the arrest of leading militant figures in 1969. Arson attacks on English-owned holiday cottages in Wales did continue until the early 1990s, but no nationalist violence has been recorded for more than two decades, the last incidence being in 1992.⁴⁸ In Scotland, however, the picture is a little less clear. The period of heaviest activity was the early 1980s, but sporadic acts of political violence linked to the SNLA have occurred as recently as 2009.⁴⁹ Whilst the activities of the SNLA may not be at an end, the frequency of their attacks is significantly reduced from their high point in the early 1980s. Therefore in all three cases we have the benefit of hindsight, allowing for a more complete and objective picture of the growth, relative success, and decline of political violence in

⁴⁶ The Barnett formula (named for Joel Barnett who devised it) is a mechanism used by the Treasury to calculate how much tax revenue should be provided to the devolved governments in Scotland and Wales. It has been used since the first referendum on Scottish and Welsh devolution in 1979, but there have been suggestions that it financially benefits the Scots (see, for example Simon Heffer, "What sort of democracy treats losers like they're winners?", *The Telegraph*, 10 May 2011; Richard Littlejohn, "Stop the referendum - I am declaring myself independent", *Daily Mail*, 9 September 2014).

⁴⁷ For more on dissident Republicanism see John F. Morrison, *The Origins and Rise of Dissident Irish Republicanism: the role and impact of organisational splits* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013); Martyn Frampton, *Legion of the Rearguard: Dissident Irish Republicanism* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2011); John Horgan, *Divided we stand: the strategy and psychology of Ireland's dissident terrorists* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Max Taylor & P. M. Currie, *Dissident Irish Republicanism* (London: Continuum, 2011).

⁴⁸ John Humphries, *Freedom Fighters: Wales's Forgotten War, 1963-1993* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008), 230.

⁴⁹ "Scottish separatist group leader Adam Busby to be extradited", *BBC News*, 31 July 2013.

these three countries. As a result of these factors, the present time is the ideal time to undertake this study.

Before examining the existing literature on the topic, I feel it is necessary to clearly define the terminology I use throughout my work. Terrorism is an over-used, confused and almost meaningless term. There is no single recognised definition of terrorism - in fact Schmid and Easson have collated more than 250 definitions in active use.⁵⁰ The term terrorism is so polluted that it would be preferable to avoid using it, primarily because it is now seen as a pejorative term. In his work on the act of 'naming' and the deep meaning that emotive terms hold, Michael Bhatia argues "the description or 'reduction' of a revolutionary movement to that of an insurgency removes the political or anti-occupation core of its actions, relegating it to a position of lawlessness and proposing it as an agent of disorder".⁵¹ In *What Terrorists Want*, Louise Richardson argues "terrorism is something the bad guys do... if you can successfully pin the label 'terrorist' on your opponent you have gone a long way towards winning the public relations aspect of any conflict".⁵² In the case of nationalist terrorism, this action de-legitimises the pursuit of an independent state and treats this endeavour as immoral, and those involved as criminals. When I refer to those involved with violent nationalist groups I do not challenge the legitimacy of their ends, only the means by which they would achieve it.

Given that no widely accepted definition of terrorism exists, I have for simplicity adopted the definition proposed by one of the field's key scholars, Paul Wilkinson - "Terrorism is the systematic use of coercive intimidation, usually to service political ends. It is used to create and exploit a climate of fear among a wider target group than the immediate victims of the violence and to publicise a cause, as well as to coerce a target to acceding to the terrorists' aims".⁵³ I believe that this definition captures the key essence of terrorism; the duality of publicity and coercion through action. Where

⁵⁰ Alex P. Schmid & Joseph E. Easson, "Appendix 2.1: 250-plus Academic, Governmental and Intergovernmental Definitions of Terrorism", in *Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research*, ed. Alex P Schmid (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), 99-148.

⁵¹ Michael V. Bhatia, "Fighting words: naming terrorists, bandits, rebels and other violent actors", *Third World Quarterly* 26 (2005), 14.

⁵² Richardson, *What Terrorists Want*, 19.

⁵³ Paul Wilkinson, *Terrorism Versus Democracy: The Liberal State Response* [Second Edition] (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), 15.

possible, when referring to the act of terrorism I will attempt to avoid using the term, and instead will use synonyms such as ‘political violence’ or ‘militancy’.

Geographically, it is also beneficial to clarify terminology. In the case of Ireland, I discuss events from the late eighteenth century to the present day - encompassing imperial Ireland and post-partition Northern Ireland (referred to as ‘Northern Ireland’ or ‘Ulster’). I refer to pre-1921 Ireland as ‘Ireland’ and, post-1921, as either the ‘Irish Free State’, or later the ‘Republic of Ireland’. When discussing Londonderry/Derry I refer to it by both names unless directly quoting from a source that does not. Finally, I refer to those who advocate an independent unified Irish state as ‘nationalists’ or ‘Republicans’ and those who oppose this as ‘unionists’ or ‘Loyalists’. These terms are used without any value judgements on the respective political aims.

Nationalism is another controversial term, here I use Ernest Gellner’s definition: “nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent”.⁵⁴ One element crucial to concept of nationalism is struggle, as proposed by Richard English in his work on nationalism in Ireland.⁵⁵ It is the need to struggle for the nation, to struggle against an out-group for whatever reason, which turns patriotism into nationalism. Finally, I also agree with John Hutchinson assertion in *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism* that two entirely different ‘types’ of nationalism exist⁵⁶ - cultural and political; I believe that this study will prove this assertion to be correct, by comparing the cases of Scotland and Wales. When discussing these cases I often refer to the physical manifestations of nationalism as ‘national movements’ (e.g. the Scottish national movement), to distinguish them from ‘nationalism’ – the political ideology (e.g. Scottish nationalism).

⁵⁴ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), 1.

⁵⁵ Richard English, *Irish Freedom: The History of Nationalism in Ireland* (London: MacMillan, 2006), 454.

⁵⁶ John Hutchinson, *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism: The Gaelic Revival and the Creation of the Irish Nation State* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1987).

Literature Review

The existing historical accounts of Welsh and Scottish nationalist violence are limited - both in breadth and in quality. I will briefly discuss the existing literature on these topics and the limitations of the few works that exist. I also consider how militant nationalism in Scotland and Wales has been treated in the wider literatures on the nationalisms and histories of these countries. Additionally, I examine similar comparative works on variations in levels of violence between comparable locales and discuss how their findings relate to my work.

In the case of Scotland, the first published monograph on the activities of violent nationalists was Andrew Murray Scott and Iain MacLeay's *Britain's Secret War: Tartan Terrorism and the Anglo-American State*. This book examines various plots and exploits of the militant fringe of the Scottish nationalist movement. In total, the author's claim that violent Scottish nationalists were responsible for "79 bombing incidents, 40 armed 'political' bank raids and numerous hoaxes and bomb-scares since 1968" and that "52 Scottish terrorists [received] a total of 286 years in jail".⁵⁷ The book makes a number of conspiratorial claims about British and American state involvement in the suppression of Scottish nationalism to "secure political stability in Scotland",⁵⁸ because "'the Anglo-American Defence Community' and NATO Chiefs of Staffs believed that an SNP victory would destabilise the West's defences".⁵⁹ This alarmist tone detracts from the book and weakens the text as a whole.

Scott and MacLeay's work has been criticised by both academics and members of the militant nationalist fringe. Murray Watson claims that the work "was less than rigorous", highlighting one example that Macleay and Scott had misattributed to the militant fringe and leading Watson to suggest the narrative account of the book is "questionable".⁶⁰ However he does preface this assertion by highlighting the difficulty faced trying to find reliable sources when researching terrorism.⁶¹ Further to these

⁵⁷ Andrew Murray Scott & Iain Macleay, *Britain's Secret War: Tartan Terrorism and the Anglo-American State* (Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing, 1990), 201.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*, 207.

⁵⁹ *ibid.*, 12.

⁶⁰ Murray Watson, *Being English in Scotland* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), 13.

⁶¹ *ibid.*, 13.

criticisms, the *Scottish Separatist*⁶² - a journal produced by the Scottish Separatist Group (the supposed political wing of the SNLA) - claims that the book contains “literally thousands” of factual errors and disinformation, and that “the authors are a pair of downright liars in this, and in numerous other regards”.⁶³ The group claims that the authors fabricated interviews and smeared members of the nationalist fringe. The journal goes on to libel both individuals, alleging that they were members of the Scottish Republican Socialist League (SRSL), and Siol nan Gaidheal (SNG) - two fringe nationalist groups that emerged in the 1980s - and that MacLeay was “one of the League’s leaders, actually an elected office-bearer”.⁶⁴ The Scottish Separatist Group also claims that the book was motivated by the desires of the authors to “return to the respectability of the SNP fold” following their involvement in “fringe politics”.⁶⁵ If, as alleged, the authors were involved in the Scottish nationalist fringe this would give them a unique insight into the activities of the groups and individuals involved. However, their withdrawal from, and denunciation of, these groups does make their objectivity questionable. The language employed suggests a personal connection between the author (or authors) of *the Scottish Separatist*, and Macleay and Scott, and the context implies that it ended on bad terms.

The authors are also criticised in Andrew Leslie’s *Inside a Terrorist Group: The Story of the SNLA*, in which it is claimed that members of the SNLA refer to *Britain’s Secret War* as the ‘Black Book’,⁶⁶ and that they believe it to be “state-inspired propaganda...[and] largely inaccurate nonsense”.⁶⁷ Leslie’s work, *Inside a Terrorist Group*, also covers the activities of fringe nationalist groups. The full text of Andrew Leslie’s work is available online, but it would seem that paperback copies of the work were only available through the website of a republican group *Saor Alba*, which ceased operations in 2007. That it has never been published is noteworthy itself, but it has been made freely available on *ElectricScotland* - a website dedicated to Scottish history, genealogy and hosting Scottish content - and it is claimed within the text that

⁶² Scottish Separatist Group, *The Scottish Separatist* 1 (1996): 3.

⁶³ *The Scottish Separatist*, 3.

⁶⁴ *ibid.*

⁶⁵ *ibid.*

⁶⁶ David Leslie, “Inside a Terrorist Group: The Story of the SNLA”, *ElectricScotland*, last modified 27 March 2014, <http://www.electricscotland.com/books/snla.htm>.

⁶⁷ *ibid.*

it has been hosted in the past by the website of the Russian Maoist Party.⁶⁸ The text itself focuses (as the title suggests) primarily on the SNLA, but does cover other groups whose membership overlapped. Similar to *Britain's Secret War*, Leslie provides a narrative account of the SNLA, the flight of the group's leaders to the Republic of Ireland and the group's subsequent actions.

Previously a journalist for the Scottish edition of the *News of the World*, Leslie claims his first interaction with the group occurred in March 1995 when a member of the SNLA contacted him directly regarding a story he had written about the group.⁶⁹ His direct access to SNLA communiqués means that Leslie was party to information (or, at least, claims) that was not made public. Additionally, he claims to have had an anonymous source within the group, to whom he applies the moniker "Alec". The text often reads like a tabloid newspaper article in tone, and the author even alludes to his colleagues suggesting that his claims were "speculative and alarmist".⁷⁰ The overall tone of the book is sympathetic to the group's members who he believes are "highly intelligent revolutionaries and terrorists" and claims their activities have "forced the highest authorities in the British State to engineer an elaborate cover up in order to avoid a political scandal which threatens the integrity of the state itself".⁷¹

Another work available online on *ElectricScotland* is *The Tartan Army*,⁷² authored anonymously by someone with close knowledge of the two key figures in the Tartan Army,⁷³ a militant Scottish nationalist group active in the 1970s, responsible for a handful of bomb attacks against oil pipelines, a radio tower and an electricity pylon. The narrative focuses on the activity of this group, examining their use of political violence and their role in the theft of the Wallace Sword,⁷⁴ as well as their eventual arrest and trial. Similar to the other works on militant Scottish nationalism, the text

⁶⁸ Leslie claims that the SNLA maintained a relationship with the Russian Maoist Party, who would release statements in their name, (Leslie, "Inside a Terrorist Group").

⁶⁹ Leslie, "Inside a Terrorist Group".

⁷⁰ *ibid.*

⁷¹ *ibid.*

⁷² n.a. "The Tartan Army." [Online] (1996) Available at:

http://www.electricscotland.com/history/tartan_army.htm [Accessed August 2014]

⁷³ Such as the level of detail about the two individuals, one could speculate that the author is one of the individuals themselves, however the website where the work has been hosted was not prepared to divulge any further details about the author.

⁷⁴ It is claimed that the sword was once owned by William Wallace, a key figure in the Scottish Wars of Independence in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.

portrays those involved favourably and argues that their actions “achieved what millions of words, meetings and argument had failed to achieve”.⁷⁵

None of these texts are academically rigorous, as illustrated by the suggestions that *Britain’s Secret War* contains deliberate inaccuracies and misinformation. The small scale of the violent nationalist fringe in Scotland has meant that the subject has been largely overlooked by academia, and only touched upon by the media when individual members are in court. The result of this is that no single core text covering the actions of violent Scottish nationalists exists, considering the chronological limits of the existing works.

Academic contributions on political Scottish nationalism don’t refer to the militant fringe in any particular depth. Christopher Harvie’s *Scotland and Nationalism* notes that “on the fringe of nationalism there was a fair amount of violence”, and refers to a number of court cases involving those accused of political violence, describing the groups involved as “crazy”.⁷⁶ Meanwhile, Jack Brand’s *National Movement in Scotland* refers to paramilitary organisations that emerged in the 1930s associated with maverick nationalist Wendy Wood,⁷⁷ pointing out that “apart from a few attempts at sabotage there never was any violence” and “the more militant organisations... were all tiny”.⁷⁸ He summarises his thoughts on violent Scotland nationalism by concluding:

There has been talk of the Scottish Republican Army, a Tartan Army, a Border Clan and so forth. It is never clear that such organisations really exist or whether they are a fiction created by some policemen, isolated individuals or the imaginings of popular newspapers. The most important point in this respect is that, apart from these rather questionable and very unimportant groups, violence has never been an aspect of Scottish nationalism.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ “The Tartan Army”, *ElectricScotland*.

⁷⁶ Christopher Harvie, *Scotland and Nationalism: Scottish society and Politics, 1707-1988* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1977), 250.

⁷⁷ Jack Brand, *The National Movement in Scotland* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), 233.

⁷⁸ *ibid.*, 234.

⁷⁹ *ibid.*, 252.

T. M. Devine's *The Scottish Nation* notes briefly the emergence of *Siol nan Gaidheal* (SNG - Seed of the Gael), who "posed as a kind of nationalist militia and were fond of the ritualistic public burning of Union Jacks".⁸⁰ Devine asserts that their "militaristic image pleased some supporters who were in despair at the collapse of the SNP's electoral fortunes".⁸¹ Journalist Andrew Marr also comments on SNG's emergence in *The Battle for Scotland*, describing the group as "a bizarre organisation... militaristic in image... hardline, romantic, even fantasist, and obsessed with Celtic culture."⁸² Yet he claims:

It is one of the more cheering aspects of Scottish public life that (so far) even militant nationalists have shown little inclination for violence of any sort. And the very few who have shown even less aptitude: a recent account of 'tartan terrorism' is mainly a record of minor explosions at remote sites, failed letter bombs and captured bank robbers.⁸³

Murray Watson also refers to SNG in *Being English in Scotland*, primarily in relation to their campaign to stop the 'colonisation' of Scotland by English settlers,⁸⁴ alongside similar anti-English migration groups, such as Scottish Watch and Settler Watch, and the Scottish Separatist Group.⁸⁵ He claims that these groups have been "small, their activities... short-lived, and they failed to have an impact on the lives of the contributors [English migrants living in Scotland] - many of whom were not ever aware of their existence".⁸⁶ In *The Road to Independence*, Murray Pittock alleges that the SNP were "smeared" for their sympathy for "quasi-paramilitary and terrorist groups such as the 'Tartan Army' and 'Border Clan', who attempted to attack pylons and pipelines", he concludes that groups like these were "no help to the cause they claimed to support".⁸⁷

⁸⁰ T. M. Devine, *The Scottish Nation: A Modern History* (London: Penguin, 2012), 600.

⁸¹ *ibid.*

⁸² Andrew Marr, *The Battle for Scotland* [Third Edition] (London: Penguin, 2013), 187-188.

⁸³ *ibid.*, 188.

⁸⁴ Watson, *Being English in Scotland*.

⁸⁵ *ibid.*, 140.

⁸⁶ *ibid.*

⁸⁷ Murray Pittock, *The Road to Independence: Scotland Since the Sixties* (London: Reaktion Books, 2008), 71.

The pattern that emerges from reading these texts is that most authors note the existence of these groups on the nationalist fringe and spend a few paragraphs discussing their activities, before concluding that they are not representative of the wider nationalist movement and consist of merely a handful of impatient individuals. Some of the groups considered in this study took to producing their own journals to raise their profile. The most notable is *The Scottish Separatist*, published in 1996, which refers to itself as “the Organ of the Scottish Separatist Group”,⁸⁸ and contains an explanation of the groups *raison d'être* and information on the activities of the SNLA, and personal attacks on authors (as noted above), other members of the nationalist fringe, and journalists. At the present time only two issues of the journal have been published.

Another publication along the same lines was *Skian Dhu/Sgian Dubh* (hidden knife)⁸⁹ a long-running nationalist journal published from 1963 - 1976 and produced by Major F. A. C. Boothby, whose involvement with the Army of the Provisional Government of Scotland (APG) resulted in his imprisonment. In the first few years of publication, *Skian Dhu*, contained information about the ‘Scottish Liberation Army’, as well as suggestions for individuals who wanted to demonstrate public support for the group. Whether a group with that name ever existed, it is not clear, but the group are not mentioned from the third volume onwards. The tone of the journal could be described as revolutionary - the author refers to Scotland’s status as an oppressed nation, and is confident that this situation will be rectified, often suggesting that direct action may be needed to obtain this goal. It is contradictory in its treatment of the English who are the subject of ridicule and vilification in some issues, despite the claim that the author(s) “bear no animosity to either England or the English”.⁹⁰ The journal also targets figures from the entire spectrum of Scottish politics, contains poetry and other cultural contributions and regularly refers to the activities of the nationalist fringe in Wales.

⁸⁸ The Scottish Separatist Group, *The Scottish Separatist* 1 (1996), 1.

⁸⁹ Issues from the first volume was misspelled *Sgian Dubh* as *Skian Dhu* (Gaelic for hidden knife, worn with traditional Highland dress). In the first issue the author claims that this was deliberate because Gaels were committing cultural and political suicide, but the spelling was corrected for Volume Two (*Skian Dhu* 1 (1963), 7).

⁹⁰ *Sgian Dubh*, 3 no. 12 (1966), 8.

While some attention has been given to the violent fringe of Scottish nationalism it has not been academically rigorous and has tended to focus on the actions and actors of the groups involved rather than the root causes of their motives. When violent Scottish nationalism is discussed in the wider literature it is usually to highlight the insignificance of the groups involved, and the works that focus specifically on these groups do not do so objectively. Welsh militancy, on the other hand, has received greater attention, likely because militant Welsh nationalists - as well as non-violent direct action campaigns in support of the Welsh language - were more professional and received greater attention. Three published works exist on the emergence of a violent fringe of Welsh nationalism - Roy Clews's *To Dream of Freedom*,⁹¹ John Humphries's *Freedom Fighters*⁹² and Wyn Thomas's *Hands off Wales*.⁹³

The first released, *To Dream of Freedom*, is dedicated to Cayo Evans, one of the leaders of the Free Wales Army⁹⁴ and the foreword is written by Evans' daughter. Both details should allude to the authorial slant of the work. Clews covers the violent fringe of Welsh nationalism from the flooding of Tryweryn valley and the drowning of Capel Celyn in 1962 to the arrest of John Jenkins, leader of *Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru* (MAC - Movement of the Defence of Wales) after the Investiture of the Prince of Wales in 1969. The strength of the text is that it contains detailed testimony from key figures within militant nationalist groups - both MAC and the Free Wales Army (FWA), one trait of the work is that the author will often quote his subjects at great length, only making the occasional comment when the narrative requires. The result is hugely beneficial as it ensures the reader is getting first-hand accounts from those at the centre of the action. The author is sympathetic to his subjects and critical of the state, but refrains from overdramatising events. The author's decision to allow his interviewees to tell the story themselves works well.

John Humphries' *Freedom Fighters* takes an entirely different approach.⁹⁵ The author's insight comes from his career as a journalist for a Welsh newspaper, the *Western Mail*. In his foreword, he hopes his work will "rehabilitate Welsh freedom

⁹¹ Roy Clews, *To Dream of Freedom: The Story of MAC and the Free Wales Army* [Third Edition] (Talybont: Y Lolfa, 2004).

⁹² Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*.

⁹³ Wyn Thomas, *Hands Off Wales: Nationhood and Militancy* (Llandysul: Gomer Press, 2013)

⁹⁴ Clews, *To Dream of Freedom*.

⁹⁵ Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*.

fighters into the mainstream history of Wales”.⁹⁶ This claim, and other emotional statements about Wales he makes in the same chapter, immediately calls the objectivity of the book into question. Throughout the book he makes his nationalist allegiances apparent with statements such as “perfidious Albion has always been a skilful propagandist, wilfully and wickedly presenting primarily English interests as ‘British’, a deception that has reduced Wales to an economic and social dependency”.⁹⁷ However, it is rich in detail and engaging, and the coverage of *Meibion Glyndŵr* (MG - Sons of Glyndŵr: a group that was allegedly responsible for the arson of more than one hundred English-owned holiday cottages in Wales between 1979 and 1992), makes it unique in the literature.

At times, the book is written from his perspective, as he recalls his interaction with members of the nationalist fringe he is discussing. Similar to Clews’s work, the narrative is very detailed and starts at roughly the same point: the flooding of the Tryweryn valley. However, *Freedom Fighters* goes beyond the arrest of John Jenkins in 1969 and the collapse of MAC that resulted from his arrest, and discusses the actions of *Meibion Glyndŵr*. Of the three works covering the activities of the Welsh nationalist fringe, *Freedom Fighters* is the only one that covers MG’s campaign, but Humphries’s work cannot be described as objective, nor did he intend it to be.

The final work, published most recently is Wyn Thomas’s *Hands Off Wales*.⁹⁸ Like Clews’s work, *Hands off Wales* both covers the same time period - the 1960s - and details the author’s lengthy conversations with key actors from the Welsh nationalist fringe. However, he also supplements oral testimony with archival research that, at times, contradicts his sources. The book’s concluding chapter, covering the historical legacy on the militant campaign analyses the root causes and effectiveness of the groups involved. Overall, *Hands off Wales* is the most academically rigorous work.

These three texts cover the same period in Welsh history, and all do so in depth and with respect for their subjects. Even though one can question the objectivity of Clews and Humphries, their work is detailed and adds something unique to the literature on

⁹⁶ *ibid.*, vii.

⁹⁷ *ibid.*, 191.

⁹⁸ Thomas, *Hands Off Wales*.

the Welsh nationalist fringe. As a result, this literature is far more developed than that concerning such movements in Scotland. The existence of Welsh militant nationalism is also mentioned in key texts on Welsh history, and on Welsh nationalism generally; for example, John Davies's comprehensive *A History of Wales* covers the emergence of violent Welsh nationalism briefly, suggesting that it was borne out of frustration felt by Plaid Cymru supporters, without passing comment on those involved.⁹⁹ Geraint Jenkins, on the other hand, describes the Free Wales Army as "a gimcrack outfit with a reputation for flamboyant gestures rather than military prowess" whose antics were "risible",¹⁰⁰ but pays neither the FWA nor MAC any further attention.

Gwynfor Evans's *The Fight for Welsh Freedom* also touches on the existence of this violent fringe. His position as the leader (and first MP) of Plaid Cymru means that the focus is the extent to which the actions of the nationalist fringe impacted upon his party. Evans claims that the trial of the Free Wales Army "did serious harm" to Plaid Cymru,¹⁰¹ but suggests that *agent provocateurs* were operating within the nationalist fringe at this time.¹⁰² Whilst he is careful not to directly claim that their involvement was intended to smear Plaid Cymru, he certainly implies it. Although Evans does not pass comment on the actions of the Free Wales Army in his own text, Thomas records that Evans felt that the group was an "inconsequential oddity"¹⁰³ that "brought ridicule upon the Welsh national movement".¹⁰⁴ At the time, he publicly opposed direct action, but was not prepared to condemn those involved. Despite this, in *The Fight for Welsh Freedom*, he praised the "heroic ten-year struggle" of *Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg* (The Welsh Language Society - WLS), and their use of direct action tactics in pursuit of a Welsh language television station.¹⁰⁵ He would himself later go on to engage in a hunger strike to aid this pursuit.

⁹⁹ Davies, *A History of Wales*, 640.

¹⁰⁰ Geraint H Jenkins, *A Concise History of Wales* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 294.

¹⁰¹ Gwynfor Evans, *The Fight for Welsh Freedom* [Third Edition] (Ceredigion: Y Lolfa, 2006), 154.

¹⁰² *ibid.*, 147.

¹⁰³ Thomas, *Hands Off Wales*, 373.

¹⁰⁴ Gwynfor Evans. "Foreword." Foreword to *Wales: A Nation Again!*, 7 – 10 (London: Tandem, 1968).

¹⁰⁵ Evans, *The Fight for Welsh Freedom*, 157-159.

In *Wales: A Nation Again!*, Berresford Ellis discusses Welsh history and the rise of Welsh nationalism, and again touches on Welsh nationalist militancy.¹⁰⁶ Additionally he devotes a short chapter to the Free Wales Army, examining the activities and motivations of the group, as well as including some of the wild claims the group made over the years. In the foreword by the aforementioned Gwynfor Evans, he is critical of the group, and of the continued claims made of an association between the Free Wales Army and Plaid Cymru.¹⁰⁷

Another work that refers to the existence of violent action in the name of Welsh nationalism is Ned Thomas's *The Welsh Extremist*, an emotionally charged work on the Welsh language and its place in Welsh culture. In it Thomas discusses the accidental deaths of two men in Abergele, killed when laying explosives the day before the Investiture of Prince Charles, as "the first deaths in the name of the Welsh national movement", although he describes their motives as "misguided".¹⁰⁸ He proceeds to argue that the use of violence is indicative of a group put under extreme pressure, and suggests that concessions to the Welsh nationalist movement have been most frequent "in the period of multiplying bomb incidents".¹⁰⁹ The title of the book comes from his suggestions that the explosions carried out by Welsh nationalists resulted in the tarring of the entire nationalist movement with the extremist brush - "looked at from London, all Welsh demonstrators merge and are written off as nationalist extremists".¹¹⁰ This suggestion is made elsewhere in the literature - Chris Williams's article *Non-Violence and the Development of the Welsh Language Society*, supports Thomas's assertion. Williams opines, "the ensuing bomb blasts damaged the image of the Language Society for some time afterward" and claims that it was assumed that members of the Language Society were involved with the Free Wales Army.¹¹¹

In sum, the coverage received by the violent nationalist fringe in works on mainstream Welsh nationalism is similar to that received by their Scottish

¹⁰⁶ P. Berresford Ellis, *Wales: A Nation Again!* (London: Tandem, 1968).

¹⁰⁷ Evans, "Foreword to *Wales: A Nation Again*".

¹⁰⁸ Ned Thomas, *The Welsh Extremist: A Culture in Crisis* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1971), 16.

¹⁰⁹ *ibid.*, 18.

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*, 55.

¹¹¹ Colin H. Williams, "Non-Violence and the Development of the Welsh Language Society, 1962-c. 1974", *Welsh History Review* 8:4 (1977), 426-455.

counterparts. When these groups are considered, it is usually in relation to other elements of the national movement in Wales (either Plaid Cymru or the Welsh Language Society), and the impact they had on the success, and respectability, of the movement as a whole. Interestingly, the differences between the Free Wales Army and MAC are never explained and the two groups are often treated as analogous, or the actions of the latter are attributed to the former. Considering that the Free Wales Army sought and received substantially more publicity than MAC, this is perhaps unsurprising.

Political violence in Ireland, on the other hand, is a subject that has received a great deal of academic attention, and it would be folly to try to consider all of it in detail. For example, the campaigns of some of the earliest practitioners of political violence in Ireland have been extensively covered. One such work, *The Dynamiters*,¹¹² by Niall Whelehan looks at the Skirmishing campaign – a series of dynamite attacks carried out by members of Clan-na-Gael and the United Irishmen in the second half of the nineteenth century, and the links between European anarchist ideologues and the Irish diaspora in America. The Fenians - and principally the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) are also studied in detail in McGarry and McConnel's edited volume *The Black Hand of Republicanism*,¹¹³ in which the authors examine the 'Fenian tradition' in Ireland and try to uncover some of the nuances of the IRB that have been overlooked in the histories of the organisation. In this work it is argued that the IRB were important in shaping Irish history, nationalism and identity, but suggest that the association with political violence polluted the legacy of Fenianism. The academic literature on these groups is deep,¹¹⁴ and far more attention has been paid to one era on Irish republican political violence than has to the entirety of Scottish and Welsh political violence combined.

¹¹² Niall Whelehan, *The Dynamiters: Irish Nationalism and Political Violence in the Wider World, 1867-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

¹¹³ Fearghal McGarry & James McConnel, *The Black Hand of Republicanism: Fenianism in Modern Ireland* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2009).

¹¹⁴ See also: R. V. Comerford, *The Fenians in Context: Irish Politics and Society, 1848-82* (Dublin: Wolfhound, 1985); Leon Ó Broin, *Revolutionary underground: the story of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, 1858-1924* (Dublin: Gill & MacMillan, 1976); Owen McGee, *The IRB: The Irish Republican Brotherhood from The Land League to Sinn Féin* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2005).

Charles Townshend's *Political Violence in Ireland*¹¹⁵ also examines these groups in his study of the relationship between Irish nationalism and violent resistance. In this work he examines the correlation between British laws (especially the land laws) and violence in Ireland, focusing on the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The author examines the correlation between the representatives of the British state in Ireland and the perpetuation of forms of violence in the run-up to the Irish War of Independence. Two of Townshend's other works on Irish history: *Easter 1916*¹¹⁶ and *The Republic*,¹¹⁷ are also of great value in the study of militant nationalism in Ireland. In these books, he considers two key chapters in the history of militant Irish Republicanism, and of Ireland more generally - the Easter Rising, and the Irish War of Independence and subsequent civil war that followed, as the formative years of the Irish Republican Army (IRA). On the subject of the IRA, *The Secret Army* by J Bowyer Bell,¹¹⁸ and *Armed Struggle* by Richard English¹¹⁹ both provide comprehensive accounts of the group, its development and key personnel.¹²⁰ The first examines the IRA throughout the twentieth century - focusing on the Irish War of Independence and (in later editions) the Troubles, but does not ignore the altered role they played in the intervening years.¹²¹ In *Armed Struggle*, English examines the IRA throughout the twentieth century - looking at the Easter Rising and the formation of the IRA thereafter, the lean years, and the birth of the Provisional IRA when the Troubles erupted in the early 1970s. In his conclusion he argues that their defensive role in the Catholic community could be justified, but highlights their role in sustaining the conflict - directly and indirectly - far longer than it needed to last.¹²²

Conversely, there has been no literature on English nationalist political violence, because none has occurred. Indeed, the very existence of an English national movement at all has been questioned, yet the phenomenon of political Englishness has

¹¹⁵ Charles Townshend, *Political Violence in Ireland: Government and Resistance since 1848* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983).

¹¹⁶ Charles Townshend, *Easter 1916: The Irish Rebellion* (Plymouth: Ivan R. Dee, 2005).

¹¹⁷ Charles Townshend, *The Republic: The Fight for Irish Independence: 1918-1923* (London: Allen Lane, 2013).

¹¹⁸ J. Bowyer Bell, *The Secret Army: The IRA* [Revised Third Edition] (Dublin: Poolbeg, 1989).

¹¹⁹ Richard English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA* (London: Pan MacMillan, 2003).

¹²⁰ These are just two works on the IRA, for further reading see for example Rogelio Alonso, *The IRA and Armed Struggle* (London: Routledge, 2007); Ed Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA* [2nd Edition] (London: Penguin, 2007); Peter Taylor, *Provos: The IRA and Sinn Féin* (London: Bloomsbury, 1997).

¹²¹ Bowyer Bell, *The Secret Army*.

¹²² English, *Armed Struggle*.

been studied by a number of authors. In *The Politics of Englishness*,¹²³ Arthur Aughey talks about the distinction between British and English identity and argues, among other things, that English culture is overwhelmingly in line with Protestant, Conservative values. He suggests that many of the things that would define England have been applied, and shared, to the entire United Kingdom. Aughey proposes that the ideas of Britishness and Englishness have overlapped to such a great extent that is only recently that the English have ‘awoken’ and realised that they lack a distinct identity of their own. However, Aughey suggests that this identity *has* begun to emerge, however, and suggests that it has done so through sport: the outpouring of national support for the English football team at the 1996 European Championships¹²⁴ leads him to suggest that this identity emanated from the people and was taken up by the establishment, rather than being a state-direct endeavour. Michael Kenny’s *The Politics of English Nationhood*¹²⁵ considers English identity and its increasing political salience since the 1990s (noting, as Aughey and others did, the importance of the 1996 European Championships), as well as the role Scottish and Welsh devolution had on this phenomenon and how this newly emergent salience has manifested. He suggests that if English nationalism has emerged it has done so as a voice of “discontent on a disparate range of issues, such as welfare, Europe and immigration”.¹²⁶ Finally, in *The Making of English National Identity*,¹²⁷ Krishnan Kumar adopts a historical approach to this topic, examining how English identity was shaped by contact with their British neighbours and continental rivals, the correlation between Englishness and Britishness, and how Englishness has re-emerged as an identity in the wake of the decline of Britishness in the latter part of the twentieth century.

The most detailed debates on the subject of nationalism surround the historicity of nationalism as a political force, with authors such as Ernest Gellner¹²⁸ and Eric

¹²³ Aughey, *The Politics of Englishness*.

¹²⁴ This is an argument also made by Simon Heffer, who remarks that the proliferation of the English flag “was like bringing a long-forgotten ornament out of a long-closed room. That flag has been somewhere in the collective memory; we all knew it was up in the attic somewhere, but we could not quite remember what it was for, or what its point was.” (Simon Heffer, *Nor Shall My Sword: The Reinvention of England* (London: Phoenix, 1999).

¹²⁵ Michael Kenny, *The Politics of English Nationhood* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

¹²⁶ *ibid.*, 233.

¹²⁷ Krishnan Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

¹²⁸ Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*.

Hobsbawm¹²⁹ arguing that nationalism is a construct of the industrial age. The evidence in the United Kingdom indicates that national groupings were quite clearly defined by the twelfth or thirteenth century. It would be wrong therefore, to suggest that the nations for which modern actors struggle were thought into existence in the last two centuries. Whilst I will show that there is a long history of fighting to defend one's nation in Scotland, Wales and Ireland, the relatively short history of the national movements in Wales and Scotland indicates that nationalism, as a political force, is a modern phenomenon. I believe that the most appropriate understanding of nationalism's modernity, for the study of the United Kingdom, is the one proposed by Anthony Smith in his work *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era*, often termed 'ethno-symbolism'.¹³⁰ This approach draws from both primordial and modernist schools, proposing that an ethnic community exists with deep historical roots,¹³¹ and argues that it is from these roots that nationalism derives its popular force in modern society.¹³² This approach provides the most convincing explanation for the emergence and ideological success of nationalism in the United Kingdom.

Similar comparative studies of differing levels of violence employed in comparable locales have been conducted, examining a wide array of countries. Daniele Conversi's excellent *The Basques, The Catalans and Spain*¹³³ examines Basque and Catalan nationalism, and more specifically why Catalan nationalism was far less violent than the Basque nationalist movement. Conversi studies the differing geneses of the two movements, their growth during the fraught political situation of twentieth century Spain, their reaction to dictatorship and how they mobilised support, focusing on language, culture and voluntarism. The author argues that Catalan nationalism has focused heavily on a shared culture - in this case a surrogate for language - allowing Catalan nationalism to integrate incomers, even when the language was proscribed under General Franco. Additionally, Conversi argues that the nationalist movement in Catalonia was able to unite with workers' rights movements, presenting a wide-ranging coalition seeking regional devolution as a means to achieve basic democratic

¹²⁹ Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780s: Programme, Myth, Reality* [2nd Edition] (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

¹³⁰ Anthony Smith, *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995).

¹³¹ Smith adopts the term *ethnie* to describe this grouping.

¹³² Smith, *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era*, viii.

¹³³ Daniele Conversi, *The Basques, The Catalans and Spain: Alternative Routes to Nationalist Mobilisation* (Reno, NV: University of Nevada Press, 1997).

rights. Conversely, Conversi argues that Basque nationalism was heavily influenced by one individual (Sabino Arana) whose focus on race and ethnicity left Basque nationalism culturally fragmented and exclusionary.¹³⁴ The author concludes that the cultural fragmentation of the Basque country, and the limited diffusion of Euskara (the Basque language) left the founders of modern Basque nationalism requiring a unifying element, and action against the state became this element. However, for this to be effective, state repression was requisite to generate the necessary response to Basque nationalist action. Conversi's work demonstrates how this type of study can be carried out, and the benefits of doing so comparatively. I find Conversi's argument persuasive and directly relevant to this study, as I show how national identity in Scotland and Wales, like in Catalonia, has been defined in a less exclusionary way than Irish (or Basque) national identity was.

A similar comparison of the Basque and Catalan cases has been carried out by Juan Medrano, whose work focuses less on the comparative non-violence of the Catalan case, but on the broader differences between the two nationalist movements of which the use of political violence is one important factor.¹³⁵ Medrano proposes that different patterns of economic development in the two regions (a focus on capital goods in the Basque Country, but consumer goods in Catalonia) led to very different social structures, attitudes towards capitalism and membership within the Spanish state.¹³⁶

Another study comparing levels of violence in two similar locations is Timothy Wilson's *Frontiers of Violence*.¹³⁷ This book compares the violence in Ulster and the formerly German Upper Silesia, Polish since 1945. Wilson seeks to explain why violence in the latter was more frequent and more brutal, focusing on the early twentieth century. The author thematically examines a number of potential factors to explain the difference, ruling some - such as external interference - out, before

¹³⁴ For further reading on this form of cultural fragmentation in the face of linguistic diversity, see Laitin's *Identity in Formation*, examining the case of national identity formation in the former Soviet states in Eastern Europe (David, D. Laitin, *Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1998)).

¹³⁵ Juan Diez Medrano, *Divided Nations: Class, Politics and Nationalism in the Basque Country and Catalonia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995).

¹³⁶ *ibid.*

¹³⁷ T. K. Wilson, *Frontiers of Violence: Conflict and Identity in Ulster and Upper Silesia, 1918-1922* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

focusing on the role of identity. The author notes that the main societal cleavage in Upper Silesia was language; something which one can acquire many of, and could thus be claimed to be non-national. By comparison, in Ulster, the main division was religion, which is exclusivist and clearly set the boundary between the two communities. His primary argument follows that the violence in Upper Silesia was committed by paramilitaries to create boundaries, while clearly defined boundaries in Ulster meant the violence was more restrained as neither side sought to create new boundaries but merely to maintain the existing ones. Additionally, identities in Ulster were primarily communal, whereas in Upper Silesia they were much more personal, and Wilson suggests that this made the conflict in Upper Silesia much more personal in turn.

The case of Wales has similarities with that of Wilson's more violent case, Upper Silesia, in that the cleavage between social groups was linguistic. In Wilson's study, he postulated that the lack of clearly defined boundaries between the language communities led to the use of violence to polarise the communities and create these boundaries. I find this argument persuasive, but do not encounter a similar phenomenon in Wales. However, I do not believe this discrepancy means that the two arguments are contradictory – in the case of Upper Silesia, the two linguistic communities were associated with competing national identities, however in Wales, the competition was between a national identity and a state identity. As I will discuss in Chapter 4, British and Welsh identities were viewed by the overwhelming majority as complimentary, thus eliminating mutual competition between the language groups.¹³⁸

Discrepancies between violent and non-violent conflicts are further considered in Jeremy Weinstein's *Inside Rebellion*.¹³⁹ In this text, the author addresses the questions of why rebellions target non-combatants in some conflicts and not in others. He focuses on the resource endowments (either material or social), and argues that the initial endowments available to a rebellion will influence the organisation and membership of a group – in turn, these two factors will influence the level of violence

¹³⁸ There was undoubtedly antagonism from the Welsh language community towards the English language, but this was borne out of frustration at the strain this put on the Welsh language.

¹³⁹ Jeremy Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

that rebels commit against non-combatants. Weinstein believes that material-rich rebellions will attract those searching for short-term gains, and this leads to a disregard for civilian support as well as violence, and looting. Rebellions that take place without material resources, but with social endowments tend to lead to less violence as 'activist rebellions' require the support and resources of the populace. He adopts four cases (two from Peru and the others from Mozambique and Uganda) - two material-rich, two material-poor - to demonstrate this argument, however his focus on rebellions means that his findings are not directly relevant to this work.

Lee Dutter's article *Why Don't Dogs Bark (or Bomb) in the Night?* is not comparative, but does examine the 'non-development' of violent nationalism in the Canadian province of Quebec.¹⁴⁰ In it, Dutter explains the origins of the distinct Québécois identity, and the development of the *Front de Liberation du Québec* (FLQ). He argues that ethnic political activity evolves in five stages, starting with the emergence of potential leaders, whose entrepreneurial ability allows them to make political capital out of the historical experience of an ethnic group, and potentially going as far as organised political violence. He then tries to identify why violent Québécois nationalism was unlikely to gain popular support, identifying a specific miscalculation by the group - the murder of kidnapped government minister Pierre Laporte, and the public revulsion that followed - as the primary reason that the FLQ did not sustain a campaign of political violence. In his conclusion, the author suggests that it may be able to tell us more about ethnically based political activity in other contemporary contexts, and references Scotland and Wales specifically. However his findings are not directly relevant to this case, as militant nationalists in Scotland and Wales did not commit any acts of deliberate killing,¹⁴¹ and thus committed no acts that would elicit a similar response.

'The struggle made me a nonracialist', by Jeff Goodwin, is similar, as he seeks to ascertain why the South African anti-apartheid movement largely refrained from a sustained campaign of political violence. Goodwin argues that the African National

¹⁴⁰ Lee E. Dutter, "Why Don't Dogs Bark (or Bomb) in the Night? Explaining the Non-Development of Political Violence or Terrorism: The Case of Quebec Separatism", *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 35:1 (2012), 59-75.

¹⁴¹ Two men were to die as the result of an accidental detonation of a MAC bomb, as discussed in Chapter 2.

Congress's policy of non-racialism and a fear of alienating potential allies, both within and outside South Africa, led those at the head of the campaign to focus their attention on greater utility of non-violent protest.¹⁴² David Laitin has also studied the puzzling phenomenon of why some ethnic conflicts are violent and others are not. In *Nations, States and Violence* - a study of the relationships between nationalism and the state, as well as nationalism and ethnic conflict - Laitin notes that there is a tendency to focus "far more on the few cases of communal violence than on the normal situation of ethnic peace".¹⁴³ Laitin has also written extensively on the relationship between ethnic cleavages and conflict, in a jointly authored article with James Fearon, *Ethnicity, Insurgency and Civil War*,¹⁴⁴ as well as another article titled *National Revivals and Violence*.¹⁴⁵ In this article, Laitin examines why some nationalist groups use violence and others don't, looking at the examples of Basque Country and Catalonia, and Ukraine and Georgia. He argues that "nothing inherent in nationalism leads to violence",¹⁴⁶ but draws attention to the important roles a rural social structure, a region-wide shift in allegiance, and sustaining mechanisms had in his case studies. His argument is predicated on the 'tipping-game' phenomenon, whereby an individual is forced to choose between two alternatives. I do not believe that the vast majority of individuals in Scotland and Wales have been in a position in which they were forced to choose between their national and state identities, until the referendum on Scottish independence in 2014. However, the associated notion of ethno-national polarisation associated with this model is directly relevant to this thesis, as I will demonstrate in Chapter 5.

The state of the literature on Scottish and Welsh militancy is comparatively limited, more so in the case of Scotland than Wales. Nevertheless, there are similarities in the treatment of the violent fringe of both national movements in the literature on the histories and nationalisms of both countries. When these works do discuss these groups, it tends to be for only a page or two, and usually only to discuss their effect on the success of the SNP or Plaid Cymru. It is common for the names of violent groups

¹⁴² Jeff Goodwin, "'The struggle made me a nonracialist': why there was so little terrorism in the anti-apartheid struggle". *Mobilization: An International Quarterly Review* 12:2 (2007), 193-203.

¹⁴³ Laitin, *Nations, States and Violence*, 23.

¹⁴⁴ James D. Fearon & David Laitin. "Ethnicity, Insurgency and Civil War", *The American Political Science Review*, 97 (2003), 75-90.

¹⁴⁵ David Laitin, "National Revivals and Violence", *European Journal of Sociology* 36 (1995), 3-43.

¹⁴⁶ *ibid.*, 41.

to be used interchangeably - resulting in the misattribution of violent actions - and for authors to denounce the antics of these groups and describe them as a tiny minority. I believe that this work will go a long way to explaining some phenomena that have not been examined academically. Studies that compare differing levels of violence in similar political conditions have also been undertaken and have demonstrated the potential benefits of conducting this form of research. However, none of these studies discussed have considered the cases included in this thesis.

Additional Sources

In addition to the academic literature on nationalism, identity, political violence and history of the relevant countries (which will be the primary source for this research) I draw heavily from news sources, primarily British newspapers. In the case of Wales and Ireland, a great deal of information about the attacks carried out by groups in these states is available in the aforementioned literature discussed above, but there is no single reliable text on violent Scottish nationalism that provides the complete picture. It is therefore necessary to access this information elsewhere, and the most obvious source is the media, specifically in this instance newspaper sources from the British media. There is a further advantage to drawing from media sources: before the advent of the Internet and the option for terrorists to self-publish their statements became an option, the news media was the primary outlet for terrorist groups to communicate with the public. As Leslie's work makes clear,¹⁴⁷ the SNLA frequently sent communiqués to the Scottish media, even though they felt their message wasn't being transmitted. Additionally, the literature on terrorism in Wales details the Free Wales Army's constant pursuit of media attention, as well as the kidnap of journalists by MAC in order to allow those journalists to interview them. This connection between terrorist groups and the media means that the latter are often the best source for information on terrorist activity.

Another supplementary source of not just information but justifications for violent nationalism were those involved in the groups, and I have spoken with two

¹⁴⁷ Leslie, "Inside a Terrorist Group".

individuals jailed for their role in militant Welsh nationalism in order to learn more about their motivations, their conception of identity, and exactly what it was they wanted to achieve, as I feel these topics were not covered sufficiently in other works. The foremost figure in the Scottish National Liberation Army has recently been extradited to the United Kingdom from the Republic of Ireland on terrorism charges, and with legal disputes on-going I have been unable to speak with him about his actions. This is one of the primary difficulties of conducting terrorism research: the sensitive nature of sources. That said, I do not believe my understanding of the group has been vastly limited by these factors.

Chapter Outline

This thesis consists of four chapters (excluding this introduction). In the first two chapters I examine the cases of Wales and Scotland and both chapters follow a broadly similar structure. I consider the historicity of these nations, the roots of national identity and the key motivating factors behind the emergence of the national movements in these three countries. These deep historical accounts of identity in Wales and Scotland demonstrate that to understand why a national movement did or did not use political violence, one first must understand why the national movement came into existence at all and consider how nationalists would construct the roles of self and other. Having laid this groundwork I discuss the growth of political nationalism in these two countries, as well as the use of non-violent civil resistance tactics by nationalists in both. Following this, I move on to discuss the emergence of militant nationalism, the key figures involved and detail the use of political violence in both Scotland and Wales. To conclude the chapter I analyse the extent to which these violent groups were able to attain ‘success’ and the extent to which these groups were ‘important’ to the national movements.

In the third chapter, I examine the case of England and discuss why a distinct national identity and, subsequently, nationalism have failed to emerge in England. To do this I discuss the history of England and the extent to which England’s primacy in the British Empire discouraged the ruling elite from constructing Britishness as purely English. I consider how the decline of the Empire (and the internal breakdown of the

United Kingdom) have led to a re-evaluation of political identity in England and the impact this has had in the last twenty years. Having done this I consider the emergence of Cornish nationalism and the use of political violence by nationalists in Cornwall. I conclude this chapter by arguing that English nationalism has not emerged, and thus, there has been no English nationalist political violence.

I have not included a chapter on the national movement in Ireland, because (as I have already discussed) it has been covered in great detail in the academic literature. Instead, in my fourth and final chapter, I compare the accounts of militant nationalist groups in the United Kingdom, and explain why political violence has been a feature of the national movement in some countries, and not others, focusing on key factors such as non-violent alternatives and national identity. To do this I examine key historical aspects of the national movement in Ireland and the development of nationalist (or Republican) militant groups in Ireland (covering both the early twentieth century, and post-partition Northern Ireland in the 1960s) and attempt to identify the societal conditions that led Irish nationalists to adopt political violence. I then compare the cases of Ireland, Scotland and Wales to examine whether the absence of these key factors (the construction of national identity, a historical precedence of violent revolt, the availability and viability of non-violent alternatives, the importance of religious difference and the British state's response to nationalism) in Scotland and Wales can account for the variance in the use of political violence by nationalists.

2. Cultural Militancy - Welsh Nationalism and Political Violence

How do Welsh sheep differ from English sheep? It was this rhetorical device that Welsh Labour MP Aneurin Bevan employed to pour scorn on the prospect of Welsh home rule, in a debate on the matter in 1944.¹⁴⁸ His argument was that Wales differs little from its larger neighbour, but he was not the only commentator to make this claim. Indeed, the Encyclopaedia Britannica entry for Wales in 1888 infamously read, “For Wales, see England”, a trivialisation that “goad[ed]... generations of nationalists in Wales”.¹⁴⁹ In the past century, nationalist efforts to sustain and support Welsh culture, have led to the introduction of Welsh language broadcasting, the use of Welsh in official documents and on road signage, and the introduction of a devolved assembly. Where, in the past, diversity may have been seen as an impediment to development, it is now celebrated and actively supported by the devolved government in Wales.

In this chapter, I examine the development of nationalism in Wales, the brief history of Welsh nationalist militancy, and consider to what extent Welsh nationalist militancy could be defined as ‘successful’. To do this, I consider the origins of Wales as a conceptual national unit, the development of a Welsh national movement, and the birth and growth of Welsh political nationalism, with focus on the unifying factors behind Welsh nationalism and with reference to the Welsh language, Wales’ distinct culture and way of life and the Welsh non-conformist tradition. Doing this allows me to explain the foundations on which nationalism in Wales operated and highlight distinct aspects that impacted the adoption of political violence by nationalist actors in Wales.

Having done this, I discuss the militant fringe of Welsh nationalism by analysing three phases of nationalist violence in Wales, looking at the aforementioned militant Welsh nationalist groups. When discussing these groups I examine their target

¹⁴⁸ Kenneth Morgan, “Welsh devolution: The past and the future”, in *Scotland and Wales: Nations Again?*, eds. Bridget Taylor and Katarina Thomson (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1999), 199-220.

¹⁴⁹ Lindsay Paterson & Richard Wyn Jones “Does civil society drive constitutional change?” in *Scotland and Wales: Nations Again?*, eds. Bridget Taylor and Katarina Thomson (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1999), 169-199.

selection, goals, and rationale, and analyse the extent to which they achieved their goals. I conclude the chapter by considering the impact their actions had on the national movement in Wales.

The Concept of Wales

Wales, as a nation, has a long history. Kenneth Morgan notes that a “sense of difference between the Welsh and the Anglo-Saxons” was discernible as early as 597.¹⁵⁰ It is at this time that the name *Cymry* was adopted as a term to describe one’s fellow countryman within Wales, and by 790 the territorial limits of Wales had solidified with the construction of Offa’s Dyke, a landmark still associated with the English border today.¹⁵¹ It took until 1057 for Wales to be ‘united’ as one kingdom, a feat finally achieved by Gruffudd ap Llywelyn, who achieved a period of unity that lasted seven years, until his death in 1063.

There is some disagreement about where the word ‘Wales’ derives from - Evans claims that it was from the Teutonic language, meaning “a foreigner who has been under Roman rule”;¹⁵² Pritchard and Morgan suggest that it “derives from *Wealas*, Anglo-Saxon for foreign”.¹⁵³ Davies dismisses the ‘foreign’ element, and argues that it meant ‘Romanised’, and can be seen in other border regions in Europe.¹⁵⁴ The Welsh name for Wales, *Cymru*, is also still in popular usage. Thus it is a “land of two names”, according to Thomas, who believes that they represent “two different places - linguistically, literally and certainly figuratively”.¹⁵⁵ Both names for the nation as well as the border with England have persisted over fifteen centuries, through changing political and cultural pressures.

¹⁵⁰ Kenneth Morgan, “Welsh Nationalism: The Historical Background”, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 6, (1971): 153 - 172.

¹⁵¹ Davies, *A History of Wales*, 1.

¹⁵² Evans, *The Fight for Welsh Freedom*, 17.

¹⁵³ Annette Pritchard & Nigel J Morgan, “Culture, Identity and Tourism Representation: Marketing Cymru or Wales?” *Tourism Management* 22 (2001), 167-179.

¹⁵⁴ Davies, *A History of Wales*, 69.

¹⁵⁵ Dafydd Elis Thomas, “The Constitution of Wales”, in *National Identities: the Constitutions of the United Kingdom*, ed. Bernard Crick, 57-67 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 58.

The vast majority of these pressures have come from the east. Much in Wales has been shaped by its relationship with its neighbour - Lindsay Paterson and Richard Wyn Jones contend that “little in Welsh history can be understood without reference” to this “often complex and uneasy, always unequal” connection.¹⁵⁶ For hundreds of years, battles were fought between Norman and Welsh rulers, with land and castles frequently changing hands, until Wales came under English rule in 1283, when Edward I conquered the last of the Princedoms. This rule was not accepted gently, and over the following centuries rebellions broke out at various points - the most notable of these risings occurred in 1400, when Owain Glyndŵr successfully led a remarkably broad spectrum of Welsh society in revolt, and was proclaimed Prince of Wales. Glyndŵr was able to claim authority over large swathes of the country within two years, and by 1404 he controlled the castles at Aberystwyth and Harlech, and held a parliament at Machynlleth. Glyndŵr has been treated by some in the national movement as a national hero, and his name was even invoked by a group of violent nationalists who styled themselves *Meibion Glyndŵr* (Sons of Glyndŵr). His rule, however, came to an end within a decade and he was the last native Welshman to be Prince of Wales.

The Law in Wales Acts of 1535 and 1542, passed without any form of Welsh consultation or approval,¹⁵⁷ extended English legal rule to Wales, abolished Welsh law, and debarred those who conversed in the Welsh language from public office. These were not Acts of Union, as were offered to Scotland - these were Acts of Dominion. After this point Wales and England were, to all intents and purposes, one country. Very few of the independent institutions that existed in Wales, within which Welsh culture and language could be incubated, survived the incorporation of Wales into England.¹⁵⁸ The result of these impositions was that the Welsh ruling class adopted the traits and speech of their English counterparts.

Despite this, Linda Colley states that Welsh distinctiveness did survive through folk customs, music, poetry, and most importantly, language.¹⁵⁹ Despite the passage of legislation to ensure the primacy of English in official contexts, the desire to

¹⁵⁶ Paterson & Wyn Jones, “Does Civil Society”, 171.

¹⁵⁷ Davies, *A History of Wales*, 226.

¹⁵⁸ Morgan, “Welsh Nationalism”, 154.

¹⁵⁹ Colley, *Acts of Union and Disunion*, 79.

guarantee the success of the Protestant Reformation in Wales ensured parliamentary support for the translation of the Bible and Book of Common Prayer into Welsh.¹⁶⁰ Having worked hard to ensure the Reformation was a success in England, figures in London were keen to spread the faith in Wales as well.¹⁶¹ Initially treated by some in Wales as ‘the English religion’, the spread of a myth¹⁶² (alleging that the original Celtic Church had been a Protestant Church whose adherents had been led astray by the wicked practices of Catholicism) allowed Protestantism to be portrayed as a return to Welsh roots.¹⁶³ Diarmaid MacColloch also points to the appointment of native Welshmen to prominent positions within the church, and the establishment of a new college in Oxford University that would become “a seedbed for Protestant Welsh clergy and gentry” as contributing to the success of the Reformation in Wales.¹⁶⁴ In 1553, Westminster instructed Welsh bishops to ensure Welsh versions on the Bible and Prayer Book were available in all churches within four years.¹⁶⁵ Even though it took more than thirty years, a complete Welsh-language Bible was available by 1588, commonly referred to as the William Morgan Bible,¹⁶⁶ and Protestantism took hold in Wales.¹⁶⁷

The success of the Protestant Reformation in Wales is central in shaping how Welsh society and identity interacted with the British state over the centuries to follow. Reformation was crucial for the survival of Welsh, as both a written and spoken language, and ensured further generations would have a reason to learn it. “From the earliest dawning of the Welsh nation,” it has been claimed “Christianity has played an integral part in its life and culture”.¹⁶⁸ It is no coincidence that when Welsh

¹⁶⁰ Colley, *Acts of Union and Disunion*, 79.

¹⁶¹ For further information on the Reformation and the processes of societal change it initiated in Europe works by Diarmaid MacCulloch and Euan Cameron consider the phenomenon in great detail. (Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Reformation: Europe's House Divided: 1490-1700* (London: Penguin, 2003); Euan Cameron, *The European Reformation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991)).

¹⁶² The spread of this myth was made possible by its inclusion in the Welsh translation of the New Testament.

¹⁶³ Davies, *A History of Wales*, 235.

¹⁶⁴ MacCulloch, *Reformation*, 395.

¹⁶⁵ Davies points out the irony of Parliament instructing the use of Welsh in spiritual matters so soon after prohibiting it from official use (Davies, *A History of Wales*, 236).

¹⁶⁶ Interestingly, Davies suggests that Welsh was the only non-state language in Europe into which the Bible was translated within a century of the Reformation (*A History of Wales*, 238).

¹⁶⁷ The Anglican Church would later lose its position as the primary Protestant church, as the rise of Methodism and other non-conformist sects displaced it.

¹⁶⁸ E. Wyn James, “‘The New Birth of a people’: Welsh Language and Identity and the Welsh Methodists” in *Religion and National Identity: Wales and Scotland c. 1700-2000*, Robert Pope, ed. (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2001), 14.

nationalism arose, one of the primary organs through which it developed was the Welsh Church.

Sir Reginald Coupland,¹⁶⁹ Vernon Bogdanor¹⁷⁰ and Linda Colley¹⁷¹ all agree that this action secured the future of the Welsh language. John Davies is more cautious, suggesting the claim has “little substance” but he does concede that it ensured that Welsh survived as more than just a *spoken* language.¹⁷² The production of the Welsh Bible ensured that the language was used in chapels throughout the country every Sunday, and vitally secured its future as a written language. Thus linguistic uniformity was sacrificed to ensure the demise of Catholicism in Wales.

The success of the Protestant Reformation in Wales is a crucial component in understanding why the Welsh were receptive to a British identity, but the resulting survival of the Welsh language helps to explain why nationalism emerged in Wales and why it took the shape it did. It is one of the great ironies of history that the instrument used to ensure Welsh allegiance to Protestantism, and thus to Britishness, was also the instrument that ensured the survival of the single most important national attribute on which a future national movement could be constructed.

It was still hoped in London that the official promotion of English for administrative matters would eventually secure the status of English as the primary medium of communication in Wales (and it did), but ensuring the success of the Reformation was seen as more important. This sustained the primary cleavage in Welsh society; the one between Welsh-speaking natives and English-speaking incomers. That other cleavages (class and denomination) would map themselves neatly onto the existing linguistic division would further cement the importance of the language as a differentiating factor.

Kenneth Morgan makes the claim that Welsh nationalism arose as a result of two societal forces in nineteenth-century Wales: the first was the growth of industry in Wales, providing a “safety-valve” for the “surplus population of the impoverished

¹⁶⁹ Reginald Coupland, *Welsh and Scottish Nationalism: A Study* (London: Collins, 1954), 58.

¹⁷⁰ Vernon Bogdanor, *Devolution in the United Kingdom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 7.

¹⁷¹ Colley, *Acts of Union and Disunion*, 80.

¹⁷² Davies, *A History of Wales*, 238.

countryside”, reducing the need for emigration;¹⁷³ the second factor was the rise in religious non-conformism. Hempton argues that Methodists and Evangelical non-conformists took advantage of the “religious market” that the Established Church in Wales had created “through education and catechisms” but had been unable to capture itself due to its “establishmentarian assumptions”.¹⁷⁴ This left as many as 80% of Welsh churchgoers outside the Anglican Church by 1851.¹⁷⁵ Philip records that the growth in Methodism “counteracted anglicisation, and changed the national, social, and moral consciousness of the people”.¹⁷⁶ Nonconformity divided the vast majority of Welsh people from the Anglican, English-speaking, ruling classes.

During the nineteenth century, another change was visible in Welsh society – the increasing popular support for the Liberal party. There is a relatively simple explanation for this; the extension of the voting franchise in 1867 and 1884 opened the ballot booth to Welsh working class voters who had previously been unable to make their voices heard.¹⁷⁷ This group was comprised of mine workers, small tenants (of primarily anglicised landowners), and non-conformists.¹⁷⁸ It was along these lines – on issues of land, religion and language - that Wales was split in the nineteenth century, and those who sought redress on these matters aligned with the Liberal Party. Davies argues that the alliance between non-conformists and the Liberals (and before them, the Whig party), was “a central feature of Welsh politics”,¹⁷⁹ and Jones suggests that the success of the Liberals in Wales was built on “a marriage of farsighted liberalism with hard-headed nonconformity”.¹⁸⁰

Standing opposed to this alliance were the structural representations of England’s influence in Wales, in the form of the anglicised ruling class, and the Anglican Church. Jones proposes that the “Welsh liberal-nonconformist assault” on these targets was “central to the defining credo of the Welsh people”.¹⁸¹ Welshness was

¹⁷³ Morgan, “Welsh Nationalism”, 155.

¹⁷⁴ David Hempton, *Methodism: Empire of the Spirit* (London: York University Press, 2005), 18-19.

¹⁷⁵ Morgan, “Welsh Nationalism”, 156.

¹⁷⁶ Alan Butt Philip, *The Welsh Question: Nationalism in Welsh Politics, 1945-1970* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1975), 2.

¹⁷⁷ Philip, *The Welsh Question*, 3.

¹⁷⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁷⁹ Davies, *A History of Wales*, 286.

¹⁸⁰ R. Merfyn Jones “Beyond Identity? The Reconstruction of the Welsh”, *Journal of British Studies* 31:4 (1992), 335.

¹⁸¹ *ibid.*

shaped and defined by this group, and it is no surprise that when the national movement in Wales was born, its parents were the Liberal Party and the non-conformist sects. Morgan suggests “the national movement in Wales was to be cradled in the [nonconformist] chapels, while the Anglican Church was to appear isolated from it, and even to be its enemy”.¹⁸²

The spark to ignite the national movement in Wales was the publication of a report (later referred to as the ‘Blue Books’) on the state of education in Wales in 1847. An examination of Welsh education was ordered by Westminster following the lawlessness that erupted in Wales during the ‘Rebecca Riots’ between 1839 and 1843, a period of working class agitation over the perceived inequality of taxation. It was believed, Coupland writes, that the riots resulted from the “ignorance of the working class”, to which the “remedy for unrest... was not repression, but more and better education”.¹⁸³ To this end, three English gentlemen - Ralph Lingen, Jellynger Symons, and H.R. Vaughan Johnson - were tasked to report on the state of Welsh education. Being English, and speaking no Welsh, they carried out their study by speaking with English-speaking Welshmen, the majority of whom were from the ruling elite, or the Anglican clergy. As a result, their report was highly critical of the Welsh language, describing it as “a vast drawback to Wales and a manifest barrier to the moral progress and commercial prosperity of the people”.¹⁸⁴ Along with the language, the final report was scathing about Welsh education, the morality of the Welsh people, and religious non-conformism. Coupland argues that the outrage caused by the report made the Welsh people appreciate how proud they were of their language and their faith, and “made the Welsh more conscious of their nationhood”.¹⁸⁵

Unlike other nationalists of the era, the fledgling Welsh national movement was not striving for an independent state. Rather they simply sought equality in the United Kingdom and the Empire.¹⁸⁶ Britain, and Britishness as an identity, remained a valuable resource for Wales. This is not unique to Wales; in Scotland, nationalist

¹⁸² Morgan, “Welsh Nationalism”, 157.

¹⁸³ Coupland, *Welsh and Scottish Nationalism*, 187.

¹⁸⁴ *ibid.*, 188.

¹⁸⁵ *ibid.*, 195.

¹⁸⁶ Morgan, “Welsh Nationalism”, 165.

figures demanded better union, not less of it. Morgan believes that this results from the centrality of liberalism, rather than nationalism, to the national movement in Wales, and the lack of an influential, unifying nationalist figure such as Ireland's Charles Parnell.¹⁸⁷ The first nationalist group to achieve significant strength in Wales was *Cymru Fydd* (Young Wales) who rose to prominence in Wales in the 1890s. Originating in Welsh expatriate communities in London and Liverpool in the mid-1880s,¹⁸⁸ the group gained momentum when Lloyd George took the helm, and brought with him half of Wales's MPs with him to join the ranks, but failed when the group could not agree a merger with the Liberals.

The Arrival of Plaid Cymru

The decline of *Cymru Fydd* did not dispel the nationalist sentiment that existed in Wales, nor did it dissuade those in the Liberal movement who had advocated *Cymru Fydd*, but it was more than two decades, and a World War, before an equivalent movement emerged. *Plaid Genedlaethol Cymru* (the National Party in Wales, later contracted to *Plaid Cymru*) emerged in August 1925 as an endeavour of H R Jones, the leader of the Army of the Welsh Home Rulers, and Saunders Lewis, who would go on to become arguably the most important figure in twentieth century Welsh nationalism. The founders were intent on operating independently of the Liberal Party, fearing that too close a relationship with the Liberals would see this new entity go the same way as its predecessor.¹⁸⁹ Understanding the form Plaid Cymru took, the political ideologies it adopted and the efficacy of their form of political action is important in understanding why some in the national movement adopted violent methods. I show that incidences of political violence directly follow the failures of constitutional methods to achieve political change.

By the time Plaid Cymru emerged, Wales had changed politically; the Labour Party had usurped the Liberals as the party of Wales following the First World War, and the Welsh Church Act of 1914 had ended the ascendancy of the Anglican Church,

¹⁸⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁸⁹ Davies, *History of Wales*, 454.

addressing the principle non-conformist demand. However, by this time their hegemony in Welsh society was ending and organised labour movements were taking their place,¹⁹⁰ and thus it was into a different political environment that the new movement emerged. Labour's position of strength, built on their support in the coalfields, has been a feature of Welsh politics for the last century – and the relationship between Labour's socialist ideology and mining was a significant part of the Welsh identity and Welshness during this time,¹⁹¹ yet it was a unionist identity at its core - more concerned with the pursuit of workers' rights throughout the United Kingdom, than demanding separate treatment for those in Wales. Similar to the Liberals, Labour contained home rulers within their ranks who, while nominally in favour of devolution, but were unwilling or unable to follow up their pledges with action once in power.¹⁹² For Labour and the Liberals - both pan-British parties - the Welsh national question was arguably of secondary importance prior to the late 1960s, and to some extent, the lack of support for Plaid Cymru demonstrates that the Welsh public held it in similar regard. Both the Liberals and, more recently, the Labour Party, strengthened the connection between Wales and the rest of Britain: maintaining that Wales could play an important role in the success of Britain as a whole. Since the decline of the British Empire, the Labour Party has arguably been the key institution of Britishness in Wales.

Morgan argues that for the early part of the group's existence, Plaid Cymru was primarily “a pressure group of intellectuals and *litterateurs* campaigning on behalf of the Welsh language”.¹⁹³ From its outset, the principal aims of the party were linguistic ones – they sought to make Welsh the official language and widen its use as a medium of education.¹⁹⁴ One of their first campaigns was to withhold the licence fee paid to the BBC in protest at the lack of Welsh language radio broadcasting.¹⁹⁵ The policy of self-government was not part of the agenda until 1932, and even then it was only a measure to help ensure the survival of Welsh; the issue of language has been key to Plaid Cymru from its inception and has remained central to the party's agenda

¹⁹⁰ Philip, *The Welsh Question*, 10.

¹⁹¹ Jones, “Beyond Identity”, 340.

¹⁹² Philip, *The Welsh Question*, 13

¹⁹³ Morgan, “Welsh Devolution”, 206.

¹⁹⁴ Philip, *The Welsh Question*, 14.

¹⁹⁵ Davies, *History of Wales*, 573

ever since. This focus on language has shaped the nationalist movement, and how others in Wales see it.

In a famous radio address, Saunders Lewis made the claim that the survival of the Welsh language “is this only political matter which it is worth a Welshman’s while to trouble himself about today”.¹⁹⁶ In a pamphlet outlining the policies of Plaid Cymru, it was claimed that:

The English government has destroyed practically all the bases of our national unity... but there still remains one heritage, in whose bonds North and South are one - the Welsh language. This is our possession; it needs not to be regained but only to be safeguarded. It is the proof of our nationality, and our right to a place in the society of nations. It is the rampart behind which the nation may gather its strength for the reconquest [*sic*] of the lost territories.¹⁹⁷

The national movement has focused so heavily on the protection of the language because it is akin to their property; the symbol of the distinctiveness of the Welsh people, and of their history as a national group. To converse in Welsh is to partake in the kind of ‘imagined community’ that Benedict Anderson writes of,¹⁹⁸ one that is both present, but stretches far back into history. Colin Williams argues that language is often treated as synonymous with the nation’s culture, and posits “there are instances... where language becomes both the symbol and the instrument for a group’s cultural survival in an otherwise assimilatory environment”.¹⁹⁹ In short, the Welsh language is the reason that Wales is not West England. However, to treat language as a surrogate for Welsh culture in general is misrepresentative, as one can partake in one without the other. Nonetheless, the language has long been the unifying factor around which Welsh culture has been centred.

¹⁹⁶ Saunders Lewis, *The Fate of the Language* (1962).

¹⁹⁷ *The New Wales: Synopsis of the Policy of the Welsh Nationalist Party* (Caernarfon: Swyddfa'r Blaid, 1943), 5.

¹⁹⁸ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* [2nd Edition] (London: Verso, 1991).

¹⁹⁹ Williams, “Non-Violence and the Development of the WLS”, 426 - 427.

The existence of a distinct language, however, is insufficient to generate a national movement - in isolation language cannot induce a great deal of political capital. This only occurs when there is a threat to the language; it has been the pressures exerted on the language, and the associated Welsh way of life, that have generated the national movement. In his work on Irish nationalism, Richard English emphasises the importance of struggle to nationalism, as a societal force.²⁰⁰ Nationalist struggle, he argues, “ involves the rectification of what is wrong: the replace of an unfortunate ‘is’ with a desired ‘ought to be’ ”.²⁰¹ It has been the need to struggle against the pressures placed on the Welsh language and culture that generated and sustained the national movement.

These pressures have been twofold: the first, as I have discussed at length, is the existence of a rival, state-supported language; the second has been modernisation, a force that seeks to extinguish diversity in the drive to achieve maximum economic efficiency, and one that has both brought incomers in to Wales and forced natives to look outward the country for work. In his famous radio address Saunders Lewis claims that this latter force - that of emigration for employment - was mediated in the nineteenth century by the industrial revolution, highlighting the importance of the coal-mining valleys.²⁰²

In their early days, the party was unable to make much of an impression electorally, although the group’s earliest members saw the establishment and survival of the infant party as an achievement in itself.²⁰³ It took until well after the Second World War before Plaid won their first seat – winning the Carmarthen by-election in 1966. The Labour Party reacted to the success of the nationalists by claiming that it “was a protest vote and not a positive vote”.²⁰⁴ The party rose in prominence after this success and, with the SNP flying high in Scotland, the early 1970s was politically dominated by the threat nationalists posed to the mainstream parties. This secured a referendum on Welsh self-government in 1979, but the plans were overwhelmingly rejected throughout Wales by the 80% of the Welsh electorate. The severity of the

²⁰⁰ English, *Irish Freedom*.

²⁰¹ *ibid.*, 15.

²⁰² Lewis, “Fate of the Language”.

²⁰³ *ibid.*, 532.

²⁰⁴ Berresford Ellis, *Wales: A Nation Again*.

defeat did not end the issue though, and less than two decades later, Welsh voters were again polled on devolution, this time approving it by the narrowest of margins.²⁰⁵ Labour has dominated the Welsh Assembly since its opening, although the use of proportional representation has forced Labour to enter into coalitions with both the Liberal Democrats and Plaid Cymru on separate occasions, in the latter's first experience of governing at a national level.

During Plaid Cymru's history, the issue of how Wales is governed has been a thorny one. As discussed above, the party moved to support self-government in 1932, a year after it published a pamphlet arguing that the only way "the economically depressed and exploited Wales" could be transformed was through devolution.²⁰⁶ In 1943, the party elaborated on the form they wished this to take, arguing that Wales should have Dominion Status, with membership of the League of Nations.²⁰⁷ This demand was tailored, over time, to match the political conditions, but it was always been couched in terms of Wales continuing within the United Kingdom or the British Empire. This continued until 2011, when the party voted to support independence as party policy.²⁰⁸ Thus until very recently, the principal medium of Welsh nationalism was committed to remaining within the United Kingdom, differing from the nationalist movement in Scotland, for whom independence was seen as the ultimate goal. Instead, Plaid Cymru have focused on addressing Welsh problems with Welsh solutions and ensuring the maintenance of their language and identity.

Despite the growth of the SNP in Scotland, Plaid Cymru has been unable to perform a similar electoral feat and remain a minor party in Wales. Despite calling themselves the *Party of Wales*, the real party of Wales is the Labour Party, which has won the most Westminster seats in Wales at every General Election since 1922, and has held the most seats in the Welsh Assembly since it was established in 1999 (albeit not

²⁰⁵ Evans and Trystan argue that the 1997 referendum only succeeded because the Labour Party were enjoying a honeymoon period in British politics and was (unlike in 1979) fully behind Welsh devolution. Additionally, the success of the 'Yes' campaign in Scotland one week before Wales voted is thought to have boosted support for devolution in Wales (Geoffrey Evans and Dafydd Trystan, "Why was 1997 different" in *Scotland and Wales: Nations Again?*, eds. Bridget Taylor and Katarina Thomson (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1999), 95-119).

²⁰⁶ D. J. Davies. *The Economics of Welsh Self-Government*. (Caernarfon: Swyddfa'r Blaid Genedlaethol, 1931), 32.

²⁰⁷ "The New Wales"

²⁰⁸ Adrian Browne, "Plaid Cymru conference calls for independence for Wales", *BBC*, 10 Sept 2011.

always as a majority). By contrast Plaid Cymru has never won more than 4 seats at Westminster and has even regressed in the Welsh Assembly: dropping from 17 seats (of a total 60) in 1999 to 11 today. Balsom et al. argue “the Labour Party is not simply the party of the working class in Wales, but is also strongly Welsh in its support... the chosen vehicle of Welsh sentiment has been, for fifty years now, the Labour Party”.²⁰⁹ As such, Plaid Cymru has been “cheated of what might seem its natural constituency”.²¹⁰

The Welsh Labour party remains the dominant political force in Wales, but the case of Scotland (as I discuss in Chapter 3) where the SNP have displaced the Labour Party as the party of Scotland demonstrates that this dominance cannot be taken for granted. However, unless Plaid Cymru can expand its appeal outside its traditional heartland, it seems unlikely they will usurp Welsh Labour in the immediate future. It is possible to make the case that Plaid Cymru has been unable to challenge Labour in Wales as the SNP have challenged Labour in Scotland, because of Plaid Cymru’s focus on the Welsh language community and a sense to which English-speaking Welsh voters feel excluded by this.²¹¹

Throughout their history, Plaid Cymru tended to avoid direct forms of political protest. Following the arson of a proposed RAF bombing school in a culturally important part of Wales in 1936 (later known colloquially as the ‘Fire at Llŷn’ – discussed in further detail below), however, a motion was passed urging the leaders of Plaid Cymru to use direct action to further its aims, and one such protest occurred in September 1951.²¹² Yet, at key times in the following two decades, the party was ambivalent and even hostile to those veering from the constitutional path. As a result, other nationalist groups were prepared to use more direct means of making their point arose and occupied a role many believed Plaid Cymru should have filled.

²⁰⁹ Denis Balsom, P. J Madgwick & Denis van Mechelen. “The Red and the Green: Patterns of Partisan Choice in Wales”, *British Journal of Political Science* 13 (1983), 299-325.

²¹⁰ *ibid.*, 323.

²¹¹ *ibid.*, 315.

²¹² Philip, *The Welsh Question*, 80.

Direct Action and Welsh Nationalism

Direct action methods of political protest can be described as an intermediate point between constitutional politics and political violence, as direct action protest can involve the commission of an illegal act. However, these acts are rarely violent in nature; when they are, the target of the violence is rarely another human being. Understanding the use of direct action protest in Wales can help us understand why militant Welsh nationalism took the limited form that it did, as individuals who would likely be tempted to adopt a covert campaign of political violence would be equally likely to undertake non-violent protest, if the latter was shown to be efficacious. In this section I cover some prominent acts - and actors - of Welsh nationalist direct action.

In 1935, the British Government announced plans to construct an RAF training facility situated at Penyberth, near Pwllheli on the Llŷn peninsula. It was claimed that this was an area of cultural significance to Wales – containing a farmhouse that was historically a resting-place for Welsh pilgrims, and had associations with Owain Glyndŵr.²¹³ Additionally, it was home to a vibrant Welsh language community. Objections were also raised on religious,²¹⁴ as well as pacifist and environmental grounds.²¹⁵ Following the announcement, Plaid Cymru (and others) raised formal objections to the plan.²¹⁶ The nonconformist church also played a key role providing, Saunders Lewis claimed, “a lead to the whole country in the matter”.²¹⁷ Despite receiving a great deal of popular support and a petition signed by almost every resident of Llŷn,²¹⁸ the construction went ahead.

The building of the bombing range started in June 1936. On the night of 8th September 1936, Saunders Lewis, president of Plaid Cymru, along with two fellow nationalists -

²¹³ Saunders Lewis & Lewis Valentine, *Why We Burnt the Bombing School*. (Llandyssul: Gomerian Press, 1936), 7 – 8.

²¹⁴ Jenkins, *A Nation on Trial*, 17.

²¹⁵ Davies, *A History of Wales*, 575.

²¹⁶ At this stage, Plaid Cymru was still in its obscurity, and did not have sufficient support to make enough of an impact itself.

²¹⁷ Lewis, *Why We Burnt the Bombing School*, 9.

²¹⁸ Davies, *A History of Wales*, 575; Lewis, *Why We Burnt the Bombing School*, 9-10.

Reverend Lewis Valentine and D. J. Williams²¹⁹ (later referred to collectively as the ‘Three’) - set fire to buildings and materials at the site, having first ensured that there was no risk to human life.²²⁰ Soon after, they gave themselves up to the police and admitted their guilt. Arguably, the court cases that followed were as important to the legacy of the arson, as the fire was itself; the defendants used the trial as an opportunity to exercise their right to speak Welsh in court, in an effort to ensure Welsh was afforded equal status with English.²²¹

During their defence, the trio sought to portray both the act of building the bombing range, and the trial itself, as an assault on Wales by a “foreign government”,²²² to whom Wales was just “a region on the map”.²²³ The ‘Three’ couched their arguments in religious language, referring to themselves as “leaders of the crusade”;²²⁴ comparing the actions of the “English Government” to the “new Anti-Christ”;²²⁵ claiming the support of other religious leaders;²²⁶ and arguing that “the moral law of Christian tradition” was of greater importance than “the law of the English State”.²²⁷ Finally, they maintained that their actions had been non-violent and moral, but did warn “had we wished to follow the methods of violence... nothing could have been easier than for us to ask some of the generous and spirited young man of the Welsh Nationalist Party to set fire to the aerodrome and get away undiscovered. It would be the beginning of methods of sabotage and guerrilla turmoil”.²²⁸

The jury in Caernarvon failed to agree on a verdict, and the trial was moved to the Old Bailey in London; a move later described as “the most significant victory of the whole campaign”.²²⁹ At the conclusion of the trial they were found guilty, and sentenced to nine months imprisonment. In the immediate aftermath of the trial, and the imprisonment of the ‘Three’, Davies suggests there was evidence that Welsh

²¹⁹ It was later revealed that they had the help of four others (Jenkins, *A Nation on Trial*, 119).

²²⁰ Whilst giving evidence, the watchman at the site claimed that he had been assaulted by the arsonists, a claim vehemently denied by those involved.

²²¹ At this time, the speaking of Welsh in court was still not permitted unless the defendant was prepared to pay for a translator.

²²² Referred to constantly as England, rather than the United Kingdom.

²²³ Jenkins, *A Nation on Trial*, 85

²²⁴ *ibid.*, 81

²²⁵ Lewis, *Why We Burnt the Bombing School*, 17

²²⁶ Valentine, *Why We Burnt the Bombing School*, 23

²²⁷ Lewis, *Why We Burnt the Bombing School*, 17

²²⁸ Jenkins, *A Nation on Trial*, 77.

²²⁹ *ibid.*, vii.

nationalism could emerge as a mass movement, but attempts to build on the momentum created over the period failed to elicit anything other than a slight boost in support for Plaid Cymru.²³⁰ Nevertheless, the ‘Fire at Llŷn’ and the subsequent trial compose an important chapter in the development of Welsh nationalism in the twentieth century. It was claimed that the burning of the bombing school represented “the first time in five centuries that Wales had struck back at England with a measure of violence”,²³¹ and it has been treated as “something of a turning point” in relation to both the “revival of the Welsh national consciousness” and the status of the Welsh language.²³²

During their defence, Lewis and his co-defendants claimed that they had resorted to unlawful methods only after exhausting constitutional options.²³³ It is precisely this form of exclusion from democratic politics that leads actors to adopt more direct forms of protest.²³⁴ In his concluding remarks, the judge in the Caernarvon trial later suggested that the British government might have been guilty of treating the protests with contempt.²³⁵ As we shall see this was not the first time in the twentieth century that decision-makers in Westminster ignored Welsh voices. The campaigners’ attempts to address the matter through constitutional channels were ignored, despite the level of local sentiment on the matter, and it took an act of defiance to raise awareness of the issue outside of Wales. This important chapter in the history of Welsh nationalism was crucial in setting a precedent for the forms of political protest that were to follow.

Cymdeithas yr Iaith

Saunders Lewis’s role in Plaid Cymru and his involvement in the burning of the bombing school made him one of the most prominent figures in the national movement, and in 1962, he was invited by the BBC to give a radio address in which he chose to speak about the Welsh Language. His address - ‘*Tynged yr Iaith*’ (The

²³⁰ Davies, *A History of Wales*, 576.

²³¹ Dafydd Glyn Jones in, Davies, *A History of Wales*, 575.

²³² Jenkins, *A Nation on Trial*, xiii-xiv.

²³³ Thomas, *The Welsh Extremist*, 54.

²³⁴ Jeff Goodwin, *No Other Way Out: States and Revolutionary Movements, 1945-1991* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); John Schwartzmantel, *Democracy and Political Violence* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 2001).

²³⁵ Jenkins, *A Nation on Trial*, 88.

Fate of the Language) - would have a monumental impact on Welsh politics over the next decade. In it, he argued that the English Government had nearly achieved the aim they set out with in 1536 of extinguishing the Welsh language, and suggested that it would be extinct by the beginning of the 21st century.²³⁶ Lewis argued passionately that, rather than external factors, it was the apathy of the Welsh that was to blame for this decline, and suggested that “nothing less than a revolution” would be able to save the language.²³⁷ For Lewis, the Welsh native tongue was “the only political matter which it is worth a Welshman’s while to trouble himself about today”, and even self-government would be unable to save it unless the language was given equal status to English first.²³⁸

The revolution Lewis talked of had already begun. In his speech, he referred to the actions of a Welsh couple living in Llangennech who had refused to pay local rates until the demand came in Welsh, and had fought at great personal expense to achieve this. Lewis asked the listeners to “make it impossible for the business of local and central government to continue without using Welsh”.²³⁹ He asked the people of Wales to challenge the authorities and make sacrifices for the future of their language. It was the younger generation that answered his call, with the creation of a group called *Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg* (the Welsh Language Society - WLS; often shortened to *Cymdeithas*).²⁴⁰ The group was formed in the summer of 1962 by young members of Plaid Cymru dissatisfied by the party’s campaign to protect the language²⁴¹ and unhappy that the party’s leadership were interfering with their original policy platform.²⁴² The early goal of the movement was to achieve official status for the language, and whilst this aim differed little from those of Plaid Cymru, members of the new group were prepared to go to greater lengths to achieve it.

²³⁶ Saunders Lewis, “Fate of the Language”.

²³⁷ *ibid.*

²³⁸ *ibid.*

²³⁹ *ibid.*

²⁴⁰ Incidentally, a previous incarnation of *Cymdeithas* had arisen in 1885, led by Dan Isaac Davies, a deputy inspector of schools in Merthyr. His campaign did elicit some concessions on the matter of the use of Welsh in schools, but they only came after he had passed away (Davies, *A History of Wales*, 443).

²⁴¹ Williams, “Non-Violence and the Development of the WLS”.

²⁴² Philip, *The Welsh Question*, 240.

Philip argues that it is impossible to view the development of *Cymdeithas* without considering the global political context of the time.²⁴³ The 1960s was a time of student protest movements and radical politics among the younger generation, who had become disillusioned with democratic politics, and *Cymdeithas* offered a generation of Welsh youngsters “a chance to be an organised deviant minority, mobilised behind a counterculture”.²⁴⁴ Key to informing and educating this generation was a wave of Welsh pop music that emerged during this period, headed by singers such as Dafydd Iwan,²⁴⁵ who delivered a sentimental and political message that referred to past injustices suffered by Wales.²⁴⁶ Once again, nonconformists were shaping Wales, although this time it was *political* nonconformity that was leading the way.

The first campaign *Cymdeithas* were involved in concerned a summons received by one of the group’s founders, after he was caught giving his girlfriend a lift on the handlebars of his bicycle. The group argues that he had the right to receive the summons in Welsh, and when this was refused, an organised protest (the group’s first) resulted in a sit-down on Trefechan Bridge in Aberystwyth.²⁴⁷ Aside from bringing traffic to a halt, the protest was unsuccessful, but Williams argues that it came to represent the starting-point of the campaign.²⁴⁸ Further campaigns on the issue of bilingual road fund licenses and signage for Welsh Post Offices followed, with those involved using civil disobedience tactics such as sit-ins, hunger strikes and refusal to pay fines to make their point,²⁴⁹ with many facing imprisonment for their actions.²⁵⁰

Campaigning dipped in the wake of Gwynfor Evans’s by-election victory in 1966 and the introduction of the Welsh Language Act in 1967, but soon after it was felt that the legislation was insufficient, and the campaign of non-violent civil disobedience resumed, and increased in militancy. Following this, *Cymdeithas* ran a number of campaigns: drawing attention to the issue of Welsh language broadcasting, by

²⁴³ *ibid.*, 232.

²⁴⁴ *ibid.*, 243.

²⁴⁵ Iwan was chairman of the Welsh Language Society at one stage, and was imprisoned for his role in a direct action protest.

²⁴⁶ Thomas, *The Welsh Extremist*, 86.

²⁴⁷ Philip, *The Welsh Question*, 232.

²⁴⁸ Williams, “Non-Violence and the Development of the WLS”, 434.

²⁴⁹ Philip, *The Welsh Question*, 232-233.

²⁵⁰ Williams, “Non-Violence and the Development of the WLS”, 439.

invading BBC studios in Wales²⁵¹ and climbing transmission masts;²⁵² protesting the Investiture of the Prince of Wales by playing a prominent role in organising protests and heckling the Prince when he appeared at public events;²⁵³ and protesting the payment of the road license, with the support of the magazine *Barn*.²⁵⁴ This latter protest was especially successful as it was able to draw older, more respected figures in Wales into their campaign, and the authorities quickly made a bilingual tax disc available. This success, which could be seen as a symbolic victory by outsiders, was evidence nonetheless that non-violent forms of protest could reap rewards.

The most prominent campaigns²⁵⁵ (or at least the two that received the most attention) were the sabotage of road signs with anglicised Welsh place names, and concerted action for the establishment of a Welsh language television station. The road sign campaign elicited “strong emotional reactions”, but the “immediate reaction was for the most part unsympathetic”.²⁵⁶ Davies goes further; claiming the protests were “wildly unpopular”,²⁵⁷ and it was even claimed (by the party) that this activity damaged Plaid Cymru’s showings in local elections.²⁵⁸ By 1971, over a hundred protesters were in jail for offences related to the Language Society’s campaigns.²⁵⁹ In court, campaigners would admit technical guilt, but put forward a case on moral grounds,²⁶⁰ similar to that used by the ‘Three’ in their trial two decades previously. The issue of Welsh language broadcasting later came to a head in the wake of the 1979 election, when the Conservatives announced they were reneging on a pledge to establish a Welsh language television station. This reversal forced the WLS and Plaid Cymru into life, and led Gwynfor Evans (whose personal misgivings about the use of non-violent protest had led Plaid Cymru to avoid such action in the 1960s) to announce he would undertake a hunger strike unless the Government fulfilled its

²⁵¹ Philip, *The Welsh Question*, 235.

²⁵² Williams, “Non-Violence and the Development of the WLS”, 445 - 446.

²⁵³ Philip claims that the group suffered as a result of their involvement, with many in Wales assuming that protesters were also hostile to the monarch (*The Welsh Question*, 238).

²⁵⁴ Thomas, *The Welsh Extremist*, 85.

²⁵⁵ Williams provides a detailed table of the group’s protests, the form of action used, state response and resulting action, between 1963 and 1973 (Williams, “Non-Violence and the Development of the WLS”, 451).

²⁵⁶ Williams, “Non-Violence and the Development of the WLS”, 442.

²⁵⁷ Davies, *A History of Wales*, 644.

²⁵⁸ Philip, *The Welsh Question*, 234.

²⁵⁹ Williams, “Non-Violence and the Development of the WLS”, 447.

²⁶⁰ Thomas, *The Welsh Extremist*, 85.

original promise. It has been shown that this threat directly led to the change in government policy on the issue.²⁶¹

Following the end of the broadcasting campaign, *Cymdeithas* began to move away from symbolic violence; a result of either fears that the severity of their actions would lead to public condemnation, or of the success of Plaid Cymru in the elections of 1974.²⁶² The group, nearly three thousands members strong by this point, continued to campaign through direct action on the issue of the Welsh language, and it has been argued that their actions have successfully led to a “vast increase in visible Welsh”,²⁶³ but possibly at the cost of “deepen[ing] and exacerbat[ing] the linguistic cleavage that exists in modern Wales”.²⁶⁴

There can be no doubt that *Cymdeithas* has formed an important part of the Welsh national movement since their inception, and has at times been able to make progress where Plaid Cymru has not. During this time, its relationship with Plaid Cymru has been tumultuous. While it was widely acknowledged that, during the group’s formative years, the majority of *Cymdeithas* members were also Plaid Cymru members,²⁶⁵ at times Plaid Cymru claimed to have been embarrassed by their actions, and the editor of their magazine suggested their activities were “sheer hooliganism”.²⁶⁶ Gwynfor Evans later claimed they were an “important wing” of the national movement, who engaged in an “heroic struggle” led by “men and women of extraordinary commitment”.²⁶⁷ Yet there were occasions, especially at the height of the group’s militancy, that Plaid Cymru felt the need to distance itself from the actions of a youth movement over which it had no control. However, their actions raised an awareness of the issue, and made progress at a time that Plaid Cymru appeared politically irrelevant. The importance of Evans’ hunger strike in ‘forcing’ the Thatcher government to fulfil its commitment on Welsh language broadcasting demonstrates how effective the use of non-violent protest can be.

²⁶¹ “New papers reveal hunger strike secret of S4C's birth”, BBC, 30 December 2010.

²⁶² Williams, “Non-Violence and the Development of the WLS”, 454.

²⁶³ Davies, *A History of Wales*, 703.

²⁶⁴ Philip, *The Welsh Question*, 245.

²⁶⁵ *ibid.*, 232.

²⁶⁶ *ibid.*, 244.

²⁶⁷ Evans, *The Fight for Welsh Freedom*, 151-158.

At times, the nature of their protests led to assumptions that members of *Cymdeithas* must be involved with the Free Wales Army.²⁶⁸ Considering that both groups were seen to adopt similar forms of protest, through the use of sabotage, this is not entirely unexpected. Thomas, however, writes that ‘key figures’ in the Language Society treated the FWA with disdain, although there were some within the group who were more supportive of the FWA’s methods.²⁶⁹ Meanwhile, the FWA, according to one of the group’s leaders, respected them, but still thought that they were “spoilt little college boys” who considered the FWA in turn “ill-educated and uncouth”.²⁷⁰ When questioned about the relationship between *Cymdeithas* and MAC, the leader of the latter group, John Jenkins, claimed that senior members of both groups were known to one another, alluding to a measure of collaboration between the groups.²⁷¹

Sitting between Plaid Cymru and the FWA and MAC on a hypothetical nationalist spectrum allowed *Cymdeithas* to appear more radical and pro-active than Plaid Cymru, but more reasoned and principled than the violent groups. That groups existed on either end of the scale thus worked to their advantage, as they could portray themselves as occupying the middle ground. Whilst Thomas argues that they weren’t a political group in the sense that they didn’t seek office or power, their purpose was political - to turn speaking Welsh into a “revolutionary act”.²⁷²

Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg emerged at a key point in both Welsh history and the global political climate. That they emerged at all demonstrates that elements within the national movement in Wales no longer believed political methods alone could work. Frustrated young people in Wales took the lead from protesters in other Western countries, becoming the “principal protest movement for the youth of Wales”.²⁷³ Yet they also took a lead from closer to home: from Saunders Lewis. His passionate plea for a revolution to defend the language, and his experience as a nationalist ‘martyr’ energised a disillusioned generation into action - action, that bore the hallmark of the ‘Fire at Llŷn’; principled non-violence, but only after

²⁶⁸ Williams, “Non-Violence and the Development of the WLS”, 444.

²⁶⁹ Thomas, *Hands Off Wales*, 126 - 127.

²⁷⁰ *ibid.*

²⁷¹ Thomas, *Hands Off Wales*, 283.

²⁷² Thomas, *The Welsh Extremist*, 89.

²⁷³ Philip, *The Welsh Question*, 241.

constitutional methods were seen to have failed.²⁷⁴ Like Lewis, and his co-defendants, the protesters used court appearances to plead a moral case, despite technical guilt.

In his work on the different types of nationalism, John Hutchinson argues that cultural nationalism is often seen as “a regressive force, a product of intellectuals in backward societies, who, when confronted by more scientifically advanced cultures, compensate for feelings of inferiority by retreating into history”.²⁷⁵ Tom Nairn argues that, to some extent, this applies to Welsh nationalism, proposing that it was “a reaction to the anglicising capitalist invasion of the South”.²⁷⁶ The industrialisation of Wales was led from outside, by the English,²⁷⁷ and although it largely prevented the exodus of a significant portion of the language community, this brought with it additional pressures on the Welsh culture and way of life. Since that time, the Welsh national movement has been on the defensive, protecting their language and the national consciousness from the outside world. It has been the pressures imposed on a fragile national community that have generated and sustained nationalism in Wales.

The connection between language and national identity goes beyond this rhetoric though - members of *Cymdeithas* went to prison and incurred harsh financial costs to demonstrate their commitment to the survival of the language, and Gwynfor Evans even threatened to starve himself to death over the issue of Welsh language broadcasting. Language was a key component of nationalism in the minds of the early European cultural nationalists, such as Johann Herder, and many twentieth century nationalism scholars accept that it remains a prominent indication of communal difference, and, whilst it is not the only element necessary for a nationalist movement, can be an important one.²⁷⁸ Nationalism, however, is not a monolithic concept - no two national movements will be completely alike. To the brand of nationalism that emerged in Wales, language has been central. That it has survived into the twenty-first

²⁷⁴ Thomas, *The Welsh Extremist*, 82.

²⁷⁵ Hutchinson, *Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism*, 30.

²⁷⁶ Tom Nairn, *The Break-Up of Britain* [2nd Edition] (London: Verso, 1981), 210.

²⁷⁷ *ibid.*, 209.

²⁷⁸ For Benedict Anderson, print languages “laid the basis for national consciousness” and play an important role in the genesis of imagined communities (Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 44). Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm and Anthony Smith contend that language is not as central to nationalism as others had proposed, but all agree that it is an important aspect of national cohesion (Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 44; Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780s*, 58 - 61; Smith, *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era*, 66).

century is remarkable, given the pressures exerted upon it; it arguably, should not have.

That said, other factors which merit attention have contributed to the shape of Welsh nationalism; the religious cleavage that emerged following the sweeping wave of nonconformity, the class-based divisions that have derived from an anglicised Welsh ruling class, and finally, a sense that Wales had suffered insensitive treatment. Whilst religion may not have provided guidance to *Cymdeithas*' generation in the way it had to Lewis's generation, the nature of the protests still followed moral principles set out by 'the Three'. The 'Fire at Llŷn' provided a precedent for principled non-violence to be used, by the national movement, in defence of the language and the Welsh way of life; when the younger generation undertook direct action in the 1960s, it was at the direction, and following the example, of Saunders Lewis. Even the political violence undertaken in the name of Welsh nationalism was infused with moral character - the individuals involved wanted to make a symbolic protest, not cause harm. Whilst religion has lost its saliency as a societal force as a result of the rise of secularism, I have argued that the prominent role religious non-conformism played in Welsh nationalism shaped both the character of the movement, and the type of activities undertaken by those involved.

Another key factor in the moulding of the Welsh national movement has been the division between the anglicised ruling class in Wales, and the rest of the country. This has manifested itself in a number of ways as the centuries have passed; Hechter argues that the social distance between the Welsh gentry and their tenants was as if "there had been actual absenteeism".²⁷⁹ When the industrial revolution took hold in Wales, it was English capital and entrepreneurs that drove it, so, the issues of land reform, and of workers' rights were fought along the already established cleavages, as an - albeit intermittent - "theme of national protest" in Wales.²⁸⁰

Nevertheless there has been little desire among the national movement to be politically separate from the United Kingdom, until very recently. Why has this been

²⁷⁹ Michael Hechter, *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development, 1536 - 1966* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975), 182.

²⁸⁰ Morgan, "Welsh Nationalism", 160.

the case? Ultimately, because unionism as a political force, and Britishness as a layer of national identity, have been widely accepted in Wales. As I go on to argue, I believe that this is because Britishness provided the Welsh people with a social and economic utility, and was not incompatible with a Welsh national identity. Whilst there can be no doubt that Wales has a distinct ‘political identity’, it is an overwhelmingly unionist identity. Electorally, the Welsh people consistently display support for unionist parties - even when campaigning for the Welsh Assembly, Plaid Cymru struggle to gain more than one fifth of the votes in Wales.

Earlier I posed the question, ‘why is Wales not West England?’ How is it that, despite being legislatively bound to England for more than eight centuries, Wales has retained a distinct identity? I have argued that the Welsh language has acted as a clear indicator of difference, separating the natives from the anglicised ruling class. When further cleavages have emerged in Welsh society, whether they have been religion or class-based, they have followed the language divide, and given it new salience, sustaining the Welsh identity. When this identity was threatened, the national movement emerged to defend it, and when the pressure has been most intense, members of this movement lashed out at symbolic representations of this cultural insensitivity, but only when constitutional methods failed. Yet ‘lashing out’ has largely been achieved through principled, non-violent methods that focus on raising awareness of an issue. Welsh nationalism has been cultural, not political, and has manifested itself as a pursuit of cultural equality, rather than political separation. However, some in the national movement viewed non-violent tactics as insufficiently viable and sought to escalate the issue through other means.

Violent Nationalism in Wales

In this section I examine the emergence of violent nationalist groups in Wales, looking at three phases of Welsh terrorism, each relating to a different stage of the nationalist campaign. Following that I will examine the violent groups that emerged in Wales, looking at *Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru* (Movement for the Defence of Wales, MAC), the Free Wales Army (FWA) and *Meibion Glyndŵr* (Sons of Glyndŵr, MG).

Having done this I look at these groups' goals, targets and rationales, and finally evaluate how 'successful' this form of nationalism has been.

The Flooding of Tryweryn

In the course of history there are notable events that, in hindsight, precipitated a certain course of action. In the case of Welsh militancy, this event was the flooding of the Tryweryn valley. A proposal to flood the valley was made in 1955 by the Liverpool Corporation, as part of an endeavour to increase the city's water provision. It was a proposal that had some precedent; previous schemes at Lake Vyrnwy and the Elan Valley - to provide water to Liverpool and Birmingham respectively - had been approved, despite the need to relocate people living on the land.²⁸¹ Like these schemes, the flooding of Tryweryn would require the drowning of a village, Capel Celyn, to make way for the reservoir. Plaid Cymru immediately opposed the scheme, a 'Capel Celyn Defence Committee' was formed, and local councils across Wales adopted resolutions that criticised the decision.²⁸² In November 1956, as Liverpool City Council prepared to vote on the decision, almost the entire population of the Tryweryn valley community marched through the streets of Liverpool protesting the plan. Despite this, it was approved and became law on August 1st 1957.

The national movement exhausted all of the constitutional avenues available to prevent the flooding of Tryweryn, all to no avail; it was approved despite the overwhelming opposition of the majority of Welsh MPs,²⁸³ and the efforts of campaigners led by Plaid Cymru. As a result, the campaigners were left without a non-violent means of preventing the flooding, and, as I go onto discuss, it is the inefficacy of non-violent methods of protest that give rise to more violent forms of protest. Plaid Cymru and its leader, Gwynfor Evans, were "met with some hostility" for failing to make a stand in the way Saunders Lewis had done.²⁸⁴ After much indecision, and a direct challenge from Lewis on the issue, Gwynfor Evans privately indicated his support for direct action, only to have a change of heart, and publicly

²⁸¹ Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 12 - 13.

²⁸² Thomas, *Hands Off Wales*, 1 - 4.

²⁸³ *ibid.*, 9.

²⁸⁴ *ibid.*, 11.

reject it.²⁸⁵ Dismayed by the inaction of Plaid Cymru, individuals within the national movement took matters into their own hands; in September 1962, six months after Saunders Lewis's now famous radio address, a transformer at the construction site at Tryweryn was sabotaged, and another attempt to access the site was made a month later.²⁸⁶ The perpetrators of the sabotage were apprehended and fined for their actions, thus becoming the first Welsh nationalists to be arrested in protest at the Tryweryn decision.

Having heard about the Tryweryn proposal whilst working in Canada,²⁸⁷ Owain Williams returned home and took it upon himself to make a stand. It was from his café that he formed *Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru* (MAC),²⁸⁸ and planned operations against the Tryweryn site.²⁸⁹ Along with two accomplices, Williams proceeded to acquire explosive material and, in February 1963, accessed the site, and damaged one of the transformers. However, one of his accomplices was identified and sentenced to a year in prison. On the day he was sentenced, Williams, along with the other accomplice, targeted an electricity pylon in protest. However, both were arrested within a week for their involvement in this attack. These acts represented the first attacks carried out by MAC.

Aside from slogan daubing, purportedly by the (hitherto mythical) Free Wales Army, no further activity occurred before the opening of the dam. As the official opening of the dam approached, the *Western Mail*²⁹⁰ was informed that the FWA intended to disrupt the opening, a ceremony that would - it was argued - "make the rape of Tryweryn complete".²⁹¹ On the day itself, protesters greeted the unveiling delegation by damaging cars, disrupting speeches, hurling stones, setting off fireworks, and even attempting to burn the British flag.²⁹² Amidst the chaos of the ceremony, three men in military uniforms announced themselves to the crowds as representatives of the FWA,

²⁸⁵ *ibid.*, 17.

²⁸⁶ Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 19.

²⁸⁷ Clews, *To Dream of Freedom*, 27.

²⁸⁸ The name, according to one of the founding members, derives from an oath taken by the four men involved (Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 48). Both Clews and Thomas report that the presence of Harold MacMillan in Downing Street made the acronym MAC attractive to those involved (Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 48; Clews, *To Dream of Freedom*, 27).

²⁸⁹ Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 24.

²⁹⁰ The largest, Welsh-produced newspaper at this time.

²⁹¹ Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 91.

²⁹² *ibid.*, 96.

led by Julian Cayo Evans,²⁹³ who informed the assembled media that he was the *Commandant* of the FWA.²⁹⁴ Here, before the protesters, stood proof that the FWA was more than just a fantasy.

The genesis of the FWA is not clearly outlined in the literature. Thomas claims that Cayo Evans (the future leader of the FWA) was inspired to join it when he saw a slogan daubed on the wall in Aberystwyth,²⁹⁵ and according to a former member of the FWA, Evans was a “natural leader”.²⁹⁶ Despite this, Evans was not the sole founder of the group, as Thomas informs us that other wings of the group sprung up independently in other parts of the country. After their grand arrival on the Welsh nationalist scene the group became media darlings, conducting interviews with the *Western Mail*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Daily Mail*, *Town* magazine, and even a televised interview with David Frost. In these interviews, Cayo Evans and his second-in-command Dennis Coslett made a number of wild claims, including that the group had seven thousand members,²⁹⁷ trained with the IRA,²⁹⁸ had taught Alsatians to carry out ‘kamikaze’ attacks²⁹⁹ and had an atom bomb that they would use to destroy the Severn Bridge.³⁰⁰ Despite the comical nature of their statements, Thomas claims that the group had an “uncanny knack for media manipulation”.³⁰¹

Whilst the Free Wales Army was taking the battle to the enemy in the media, the construction of another dam, this one at Clywedog, had commenced. As with Tryweryn, Plaid Cymru and local opposition had been unable to prevent the flooding of the valley, and so - once again - MAC sabotaged the building site. This time they did enough damage to delay construction by as much as three months.³⁰² This was the first attack carried out by the second iteration of MAC,³⁰³ although the man who was

²⁹³ Known as Cayo. Clews discusses Evans’s background at length, describing Evans as “a throw-back to the warrior Celts of antiquity” (Clews, *To Dream of Freedom*, 42-53).

²⁹⁴ Clews, *To Dream of Freedom*, 41.

²⁹⁵ Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 87-90. Despite this, Evans was not the sole founder of the group, as Thomas informs us that other wings of the group sprung up independently in other parts of the country.

²⁹⁶ Gethin ap Iestyn interviewed by the author in Swansea, 7 October 2013.

²⁹⁷ Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 47.

²⁹⁸ *ibid.*

²⁹⁹ *ibid.*, 49.

³⁰⁰ Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 116.

³⁰¹ *ibid.*, 140.

³⁰² *ibid.*, 106.

³⁰³ As I will go on to discuss, MAC has been treated a discontinuous entity that has existed in a number of phases by John Jenkins & Humphries.

to go onto lead the group, John Jenkins, was not involved with this attack. Left at the site was a green cap, bearing the insignia of the FWA, deliberately placed by the perpetrators as a red herring.³⁰⁴

It was common for the FWA to claim responsibility for attacks carried out in Wales, yet despite these bold boasts, the Free Wales Army did not conduct any of the acts that they claimed. In fact, Humphries claims that the only attack that the FWA attempted was a bombing of a pipeline in the Elan Valley. The device, prepared for them by members of MAC, was placed in the correct location, but they had accidentally forgotten to attach the detonator.³⁰⁵ The perpetrators fled, the device wasn't discovered until much later,³⁰⁶ and the group attempted no further action. Meanwhile, MAC was carrying out further attacks; in September 1967 they blew a hole in a Liverpool Corporation pipeline at Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant, once again targeting a structure associated with the flooding of Welsh valleys. By now the group was under the direction of John Jenkins, a dentist serving in the British Army, who had risen to the position of leader due (in his opinion) to his technical expertise.³⁰⁷ Although two further attacks were carried out relating to Welsh water, by now another issue had come to the fore in Wales: one that was to change the focus of both MAC and the FWA.

The Investiture Campaign

It had been announced in 1958 that Prince Charles, heir to the British throne, was to receive the title of Prince of Wales, but by 1967 nothing further had come of this. The award of this title, given to the heir to the British throne, had not been always been accompanied by a ceremonial investiture, but in 1911 the investiture of Prince Edward (later Edward VIII) as Prince of Wales was accompanied by a lavish ceremony at Caernarvon Castle, under the direction (and invention) of then Chancellor, David

³⁰⁴ Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 50.

³⁰⁵ *ibid.*, 6.

³⁰⁶ There is some disagreement between the sources here, Thomas claims that it was found within a fortnight, but Humphries suggests that it was a period of months. (Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 146; Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 50).

³⁰⁷ John Jenkins, Interviewed by the author, Ruabon, 5 September 2013.

Lloyd George.³⁰⁸ In February 1967, it was announced that the ceremonial investiture of the Prince was also to take place in Caernarvon, on the 1st of July 1969.³⁰⁹ This was a proverbial red rag to Welsh nationalism's bull – the perceived reinvention of Welsh history as British history (despite the 1911 precedent) - and was treated by militant groups “as an abhorrent imposition of an alien regime”.³¹⁰ *Cymdeithas* played a prominent role in the public campaign to prevent or disrupt the Investiture, but covertly MAC was campaigning against it in their own way.

In November 1967, the Temple of Peace in Cardiff was due to host the first meeting of a committee organising the Investiture of the Prince of Wales. The morning of the meeting, a device, assembled by Jenkins but delivered by another member of group,³¹¹ exploded hours before the invited dignitaries arrived. This became part of Jenkins's long-term strategy of staging an explosion every time a member of the Royal family visited Wales, targeting the Chester Inland Revenue when the Duke of Norfolk was visiting,³¹² and the Welsh Office in Cardiff to coincide with a visit from Princess Margaret.³¹³ By this time, MAC was operating a cellular structure, inspired by the FLN in Algeria,³¹⁴ with between four and seven cells operating throughout Wales, allowing the group to spread attacks out geographically.³¹⁵ As the Investiture drew closer, further attacks were carried out with increasing frequency, leading to the creation of a special unit to bring the culprits to justice, referred to as the ‘Shrewsbury Unit’.³¹⁶ This unit was led by officers from the Metropolitan Police, indicating both the authorities' unease at the continuing campaign by Welsh extremists and their lack of faith in Welsh police to apprehend those involved.

³⁰⁸ Edward, Duke of Windsor, *A King's Story: The Memoirs of H.R.H. the Duke of Windsor* (London: Cassell and Company Ltd, 1951), 78-79.

³⁰⁹ Thomas notes that the Welsh Labour Party were pushing hard for the ceremony to go ahead, despite reluctance from Buckingham Palace, and speculates that Labour wanted it to take place to strengthen the bond between Wales and the Royal Family, as well as to “further their own political ambitions”. (Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 144-145).

³¹⁰ Clews, *To Dream of Freedom*, 145.

³¹¹ Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 167.

³¹² *ibid*, 284.

³¹³ *ibid*, 216.

³¹⁴ *ibid.*, 137.

³¹⁵ Thomas claims MAC comprised fifteen activists in cells of three or four people (suggesting as few as four cells; Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, ix), Humphries suggests as many as seven cells were operating (Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 154).

³¹⁶ Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 200.

The creation of this unit, and their investigation that followed led to the arrest of nine figures from the Free Wales Army in February 1969, four months before the Investiture was due to take place and “widely supposed” to be in anticipation of the upcoming event.³¹⁷ Their downfall was entirely of their own making; the evidence used to justify the arrests came largely from the press attention that the FWA had actively coveted. The arrests were conducted even though police remained unaware of the identities of those behind the bombing campaign,³¹⁸ and considering that the conclusion of the trial of the FWA coincided with the Investiture ceremony, it seemed to some of those involved that the timing of the court case was politically managed.³¹⁹

As a result, the FWA’s campaign against the Investiture was at an end. MAC carried on, however, by targeting the new police headquarters in Cardiff in April 1969, demonstrating (if any doubt remained) that the bombing campaign was not the work of the Free Wales Army. In the week before the ceremony was due to take place, a bomb was positioned at Mackenzie Pier, where the Royal Yacht Britannia was to meet Prince Charles following the Investiture. However, the device failed, and the individuals involved were arrested within 24 hours.

On the 30th of June 1969, the day before the Investiture, two men (both allegedly members of MAC) Alwyn Jones and George Taylor³²⁰ died in Abergele, when the device Jones was preparing to place at a government office in the town detonated prematurely. Abergele had supposedly been chosen since the train carrying the Royal family was due to pass through the town on the way to Caernarvon the next day. The two were later described as ‘martyrs’,³²¹ and were the only people to die as a result of Welsh political violence. The Investiture ceremony passed off without note, although a bomb placed at the bottom of the Chief Constable’s garden did detonate to coincide with the 21-gun salute.³²² Thomas alleges that the explosion was heard by Prince Charles, who remarked that it was a “peculiar royal salute”, and the Duke of

³¹⁷ *ibid.*, 265.

³¹⁸ Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 100.

³¹⁹ Gethin ap Iestyn interviewed by the author in Swansea, 7 October 2013.

³²⁰ The family of George Taylor dispute claims made by Owain Williams and John Jenkins, that he was a member of MAC (Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 310).

³²¹ Humphries himself uses the term, *Freedom Fighters*, 123.

³²² *ibid.*, 131.

Edinburgh, who gave a wry smirk.³²³ Whilst the ceremony took place, the defendants in the case of the FWA were being sentenced; the two leaders Cayo Evans and Dennis Coslett received fifteen-month sentences, jailed alongside another defendant, Gethin ap Iestyn.

Following the events at Abergele, another tragedy was to result from MAC's efforts; on the 5th of July, after the media circus had left Caernarfon, a young boy was badly injured when he accidentally activated a device that had failed to detonate. In subsequent interviews, Jenkins has displayed remorse for the two deaths in Abergele, and the injury caused by his actions.³²⁴ After the Investiture, the rate of attacks decreased, and only two more were to follow before John Jenkins was arrested, along with another key figure in the group, Frederick Alders. How exactly the authorities came to suspect Jenkins and Alders is, "the case of considerable conjecture in Welsh militant circles", and various former girlfriends of the group members are blamed for passing information about the pair to the police.³²⁵ Regardless, within three days of their arrest, a member of the group, presumably acting on contingency plans, destroyed the remaining equipment.³²⁶ For their involvement in the campaign, John Jenkins received ten years imprisonment, and Frederick Alders received six years; a sentence reduced after he agreed to testify against Jenkins.³²⁷ This brought to an end the most sustained violent nationalist campaign in Welsh history; a period that had seen twenty explosions, as well six failed attacks, and had tragically left two men dead. This last point - the loss of two husbands, brothers, sons and fathers - should not be forgotten.

The Cottage Arson Campaign

Despite the imprisonment of Jenkins and Alders, and the presumed demise of MAC as signalled by the destruction of their remaining munitions, the campaign of violent nationalism in Wales had not ended. The name *Meibion Glyndŵr* (The Sons of

³²³ Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 319.

³²⁴ Jenkins, interviewed in Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 328.

³²⁵ Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 338.

³²⁶ Clews, *To Dream of Freedom*, 260.

³²⁷ Jenkins claims that he encouraged his young accomplice to take the plea deal (Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 140).

Glyndŵr, the last native Prince of Wales) had been evoked during the MAC bombing campaign, when a letter was sent to the Birmingham Corporation, threatening to bury bottles of poison at the site of the proposed Clywedog reservoir.³²⁸ Nothing more was heard of it until 1979, when a fire at a holiday cottage in the Llŷn Peninsula was attributed to the group.³²⁹ The fire was the first of approximately 200 attacks against Welsh holiday cottages, predominantly English-owned, and English estate agents involved in the sales of holiday properties in Wales.³³⁰

Those behind the campaign believed that the process of anglicisation that followed the arrival of holiday homeowners was having a highly detrimental effect on the way of life in these communities. They, and others across the spectrum of Welsh nationalism, argued that it priced locals out of the property market, meaning that the younger generation were forced to look elsewhere to live, thus breaking up language communities. A further issue was the temporary occupancy of these properties, resulting in the creation of ghost towns during the quiet periods of the year. Eric Hobsbawm, writing from personal experience of affected areas, suggests “the community of incomers lived side by side with the indigenous Welsh, but divided from them, not only by language, but perhaps even more, by class, lifestyle and the growing separatism of the locals.”³³¹ The locals, he argued, “turned inwards because they felt themselves to be in that most desperate situation, that of a beleaguered, hopeless, and permanent minority.”³³²

Initially, the devices used a crude time-delay technique that involved wax and sulphuric acid, but as the campaign progressed so did the sophistication of the incendiary devices.³³³ Interestingly, the Provisional IRA was reportedly using a similar form of improvised device: Oppenheimer refers to it as “the Durex bomb” and suggests that it originated from Derry.³³⁴ The inspiration for this device may have

³²⁸ Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 44.

³²⁹ Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 159.

³³⁰ Humphries includes a comprehensive list of 197 attacks carried out, in an Appendix of his book (Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 217 - 221); however subsequent media sources have suggested that the number of attacks was over 200 (Helen Carter, “Police take a fresh look at Sons of Glyndŵr”, *Guardian*, 11 March 2004).

³³¹ Eric Hobsbawm, *Interesting Times: A Twentieth-Century Life* (London: Abacus, 2002), 241.

³³² *ibid.*, 242.

³³³ Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 159.

³³⁴ A. P. Oppenheimer, *IRA: The Bombs and Bullets: A History of Deadly Ingenuity* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2009), 250.

come from an earlier form of ‘balloon bomb’ used by the IRA in the 1930s, which Dillon reports were primarily used in Liverpool and London.³³⁵ Considering the similarities between the devices, it is possible that militants in Wales were drawing inspiration from the Provisional IRA, but this cannot be substantiated.

The geographical spread and simultaneous nature of the attacks led police to believe that the campaign was perpetrated by a number of discontinuous, well-organised cells, similar to the structure used by MAC, and it later suggested that the attacks were carried out by 12 people.³³⁶ In a communiqué, MG justified their attacks as “an act of despair”, at the economic situation in rural Wales that inflated the property market to such an extent that local people couldn’t afford to buy into it.³³⁷ The spate of arson attacks led to a famous parody on *Not the Nine O’Clock News*³³⁸ of an advert from the British Coal Board, whose slogan had been “come home to a real fire”, to which the comedians added the suffix “buy a cottage in Wales”. Humphries claims that those involved in the cottage arson campaign “won widespread public support by defending Wales’s cultural identity” in a way that those involved in the bombing campaign never had.³³⁹ The campaign spawned copycat attacks, with a group called the Workers Army of the Welsh Republic responsible for attacks on Conservative Clubs and the home of the Welsh Secretary. These attacks had little to do with the Welsh housing market and more to do with the overthrow of the state.

The cottage arson campaign perturbed the authorities sufficiently that, in March 1980, the police initiated ‘Operation *Tân* (Fire)’,³⁴⁰ arresting scores of known Welsh nationalists. Not one of those arrested was involved in the campaign, although evidence acquired during the sweep did later lead police in the right direction. Even so, the only individual caught and imprisoned for the campaign was Dafydd Ladd, an anarchist that John Jenkins had befriended whilst in prison, and the campaign was to continue for more than ten years after this. Another man was jailed for sending letter

³³⁵ Martin Dillon, *The Enemy Within* (London: Doubleday, 1994), 27.

³³⁶ David Connett, “Welsh firebomb conviction is first in 12 years”, *Independent*, 10 March 1993.

³³⁷ Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 163.

³³⁸ Sean Hardie and John Lloyd. “The Outrageously Expensive Not the Nine O’Clock News Show” *Not the Nine O’Clock News*, series 2, episode 1, aired 31 March 1980. (London: BBC Television, 1980), Television broadcast.

³³⁹ Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 162.

³⁴⁰ Detailed in Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 166-168.

bombs linked to the cottage arson campaign,³⁴¹ police were unable to make any further arrests. The case was re-opened in 2004, but no further arrests were made.³⁴² As the campaign entered the 1990s, it fizzled out, and (according to Humphries³⁴³) the last attacks took place on the 1st of November 1992. It was reported that in October 1992 a number of English property-owners in North Wales received letters - in Welsh - warning “the families to leave Wales by St David’s day... or be burned out”.³⁴⁴ These acts, occurring just a little over thirty years after the first attack on Tryweryn, were the last acts carried out by militant Welsh nationalists.

Over thirty years those who claimed they were defending the ‘Welsh way of life’ waged a campaign of sabotage, symbolic violence, arson and propaganda. The methods of attack varied little, and the targets could all be described as symbolic. The campaign spanned Wales, and attacks were even carried out in England. Despite the efforts made by police to identify those involved, only a handful of those responsible for the bombing and arson campaigns were identified. In the next section I discuss the groups involved, consider their structure and preferred method of attack, targets, rationales, aims and the extent to which they achieved success. For the purpose of clarity, I will treat MAC, the FWA and MG as separate entities, despite the overlap in personnel between some of these groups.

Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru

Conceived by Owain Williams in his café in Pwhelli, MAC went on to commit twenty successful attacks over the course of ten years, targeting pipelines, construction sites, pylons, government offices, and locations connected with the Investiture and royal visits. Yet, it was not as a continuous entity. John Jenkins, who helmed the group during the Investiture campaign claims that there have been four stages of MAC: the first was under the direction of Owain Williams, and the second was during his own time in charge; the third stage of MAC in fact being, *Meibion Glyndŵr*, a group that included former members of MAC; and the fourth and final stage is yet to come.

³⁴¹ Connett, “Welsh firebomb conviction is first in 12 years”.

³⁴² Carter, “Police take a fresh look”.

³⁴³ Media sources suggest that campaign persisted until the “mid-90s”, but no precise date is given (Carter, “Police take a fresh look”).

³⁴⁴ Peter Dunn, “Ethnic cleansing the Welsh Way”, *Independent on Sunday*, 7 February 1993.

Jenkins is convinced that it will emerge once a flashpoint, like Tryweryn or the Investiture, occurs, although he believes “it’s going to be a long time before they give us another”.³⁴⁵ When you take this into account, the vast majority of attacks attributed to Welsh nationalists can be traced back to MAC cadres.

The first iteration of the group, headed by Williams, was likely only one cell, comprised of three or four individuals, and by the time Jenkins had taken over, the group had adopted a geographically dispersed cellular structure. Humphries attributes the move to this network to Jenkins, and even speculates that the Provisional IRA borrowed this innovation from MAC.³⁴⁶ This development helped the group in two respects: by increasing security, which Jenkins suggests was lacking before his arrival,³⁴⁷ and by giving the group a wider geographical reach. This latter feature allowed the group to carry out simultaneous attacks - a signature aspect of the cottage arson campaign - demonstrating the sophistication of the group. Additionally, MAC employed quartermasters - members of the group whose sole role was to hold on and maintain equipment - throughout Wales to ensure their munitions weren’t stored in the same location.³⁴⁸ Jenkins claims he was the only person who knew the cell leaders, and this ensured that he could not be given up if a cell member were to be arrested.³⁴⁹ Overall, at the height of its activities MAC probably consisted of between twelve³⁵⁰ and fifteen activists.³⁵¹

This sophisticated cell network allowed MAC to operate unobstructed at a time of heightened security around the Investiture, to the extent that a special unit had to be set up to apprehend those involved. The sophistication - both in structuring the group, and with explosives - was likely the result of Jenkins’s military background; Jenkins was serving as an army dentist whilst involved in the MAC campaign. Frederick Alders, another key member of the group, also had experience as a Territorial Army cadet. As I go on to show, key figures in Scottish and Welsh militant groups often had military experience, and whilst it is difficult to judge the extent to which this

³⁴⁵ John Jenkins, Interviewed by the author, Ruabon, 5 September 2013

³⁴⁶ Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 66

³⁴⁷ Jenkins interviewed in Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 75.

³⁴⁸ Jenkins, Interviewed by the author, Ruabon, 5 September 2013.

³⁴⁹ *ibid.*

³⁵⁰ Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 260.

³⁵¹ *ibid.*, ix.

experience directed the individuals towards militancy rather than more constitutional nationalism, it is worthy of further consideration, considering the proportion of leaders of these groups who had such experience.

MAC's preferred weapon of choice was the bomb, employing explosives in every attack conducted under the MAC name. Owain Williams, who had some experience of explosives, constructed the devices for the first MAC campaign, against Tryweryn, and John Jenkins became the group's principal bomb-maker after joining the group. The vast majority of the explosives used were acquired by stealing from quarries. The targets of the attack varied with the times, but there was a common thread to the choice: the exploitation of Wales, and the threat to its culture. The attacks against Tryweryn and Clywedog construction sites, as well as water pipelines, were in protest at the insensitive treatment of the Welsh communities that were displaced to allow for their construction, and the perceived 'theft' of Welsh resources. The attacks during the Investiture campaign against government buildings were symbolic attacks against physical manifestations of the British state in Wales, and attacks around or during the ceremony itself were directed at the imposition of a non-native Prince on Wales, and the inherent cultural insensitivity. All of these attacks were against threats to Welsh culture, and the Welsh way of life.

It is often forgotten in the era of mass-casualty attacks that many terrorist groups operating in the twentieth century often tried to avoid casualties. The now famous statement, "terrorism is theatre... terrorists want a lot of people watching, not a lot of people dead",³⁵² applies to the actions of MAC. Throughout its various iterations, the group maintained a policy of avoiding casualties at all costs, operating late at night or creating diversions to ensure that explosions would not cause harm. This leads to the question, how different was MAC to those involved in the 'Fire at Llŷn' and *Cymdeithas*? Ultimately they shared very similar ideological beliefs, and both believed non-violent protest was the only way to publicise the insensitive treatment of the Welsh way of life, and influence decision makers. Arguably, the main difference between these two forms of nationalist protest was that MAC operated covertly, used

³⁵² Brian M. Jenkins, *Will Terrorists Go Nuclear?* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1975), 8.

explosives, and those involved were not prepared to step forward to take responsibility for their actions.

It is, however, worth noting that suggestions were made in MAC circles that the campaign would need to be escalated if it was to be successful. Thomas records that Jenkins proposed escalating the campaign, and even discussed buying guns and crossbows.³⁵³ In response, Jenkins claimed that he was a moderate and prevented more radical measures being adopted by MAC.³⁵⁴ If we only consider attacks that took place, it is clear that MAC did not escalate their campaign in terms of lethality, even though potential clearly existed for more deadly form of militancy. In the conclusion of his work, Thomas argues that had MAC been controlled by a man “lacking [John Jenkins’] scruples” the consequences “do not bear thinking about”.³⁵⁵ However, it is worth remembering that the use of explosives will always carry an unavoidable risk, and two men died and a child was seriously injured as a direct consequence of MAC’s actions.

The group hoped that their campaign would achieve a number of goals. Owain Williams stated that the Tryweryn attack was intended to “do something about the situation... at least show that the spirit of Wales was still alive”.³⁵⁶ Jenkins’ intention was that “Wales would never again be taken for granted”.³⁵⁷ He wanted to “change the nature of the Investiture”, in the way that the FWA had at the opening of Tryweryn, to “present it to Wales, and the World, as an armed camp”.³⁵⁸ The Investiture was targeted as “an imposition... [by] a mighty state flaunting its power”.³⁵⁹ Jenkins hoped that through his choice of target, the authorities would overreact and this would “undermine both the prestige of the Investiture among ‘ordinary’ people and lead formally ambivalent members of the Welsh community to support his cause”.³⁶⁰ Interestingly, Jenkins later claimed that he never intended to stop the Investiture, just to disrupt it.³⁶¹ To what extent this was a *post facto*

³⁵³ Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 337.

³⁵⁴ Jenkins interviewed in Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 337.

³⁵⁵ Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 379.

³⁵⁶ Williams interviewed in Clews, *To Dream of Freedom*, 26.

³⁵⁷ Jenkins, interviewed by the author, Ruabon, 5 September 2013.

³⁵⁸ *ibid.*

³⁵⁹ *ibid.*

³⁶⁰ Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 166.

³⁶¹ Jenkins, interviewed by the author, Ruabon, 5 September 2013.

justification, we cannot be sure, but it is clear that the actions of Jenkins and his accomplices did raise some form of external awareness about opposition to the ceremony by some within Wales.

Both Williams and Jenkins acted out of a belief that their actions would give Wales a voice, and restore some of the agency they believed had been eroded. Jenkins also spoke of his affinity for the national identity of Wales, which “was not only being threatened, but was in the last stages of survival”.³⁶² The goals and rationale of these two key MAC figures mirrored sentiments expressed by other actors in the Welsh nationalist scene who adopted direct action. Like these groups, Jenkins cited the failure of constitutional options as a reason to turn to militant tactics.³⁶³

Yet Williams and Jenkins also attribute the emergence of Welsh militancy to the failure of Plaid Cymru over Tryweryn,³⁶⁴ with Jenkins suggesting that “Plaid Cymru were so backward, unresponsive and insensitive to what was happening in Tryweryn, [that it] led to the birth of the FWA and the rebirth of MAC... without Plaid Cymru being like they were, toothless and gutless there would have been no need for us”.³⁶⁵

There can be little doubt that the constitutional path advocated by Plaid Cymru with regards to Tryweryn (and the bombing school at Penyberth previously) had proved inefficacious. I propose that it was the lack of a viable non-violent political alternative that encouraged actors within the national movement in Wales to adopt more violent methods. Had the state demonstrated a willingness to acquiesce to the protesters concerns it is possible that the violent campaign would not have taken place.

Wyn Thomas traces the birth of Welsh militancy to Gwynfor Evans’s refusal to adopt direct action when the Tryweryn proposal was first made public.³⁶⁶ Evans, leader of the party at the time, bears the brunt of militant frustration with Plaid Cymru, despite the non-violent action he personally took in 1980. Although he displayed sympathy with those arrested and claimed that the British state was to blame for the bombing campaign, he was unwilling to come out in support for non-constitutional methods for

³⁶² Jenkins interviewed in Clews, *To Dream of Freedom*, 117.

³⁶³ Jenkins, Interviewed by the author, Ruabon, 5 September 2013.

³⁶⁴ Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 23.

³⁶⁵ Jenkins, Interviewed by the author, Ruabon, 5 September 2013.

³⁶⁶ Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, x.

fear of losing votes. Somewhat ironically, Plaid Cymru won a greater share of the votes, and their first seat, during the first period of sustained Welsh militancy,³⁶⁷ and Thomas claims that Gwynfor Evans privately admitted that Plaid Cymru had benefited from the militant campaign.³⁶⁸

Jenkins's enemy, he claimed, was both the state and the apathy of his countrymen,³⁶⁹ and not the English as a race; his issue was not with incomers per se, but with those who were unwilling to assimilate, imposing their own culture and damaging the Welsh way of life in the process.³⁷⁰ MAC's militant campaign was borne out of frustration: frustration that constitutional methods to protect the Welsh identity were fruitless; frustration that Plaid Cymru was unwilling to change their approach, despite overwhelming evidence that it had failed, frustration that Welsh culture and national identity were being eroded. Was *Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru* successful? The group's leader, John Jenkins, believes that it was. He claims that as a result of MAC's campaign, the British authorities "would never again take [Wales] for granted" as they had in the past, and would not ignore further "efforts to try and stop them constitutionally".³⁷¹

A further indicator of 'success' was the lengths that the security services were forced to go to in their pursuit of Jenkins and his colleagues. The establishment of a special unit demonstrated Westminster's lack of faith in the Welsh police to apprehend the perpetrators themselves, but also suggested that they were taking the threat posed by MAC seriously. Furthermore, along with *Cymdeithas* and others, they were able to raise awareness of a number of issues affecting Wales during the period, in a way that Plaid Cymru's brand of constitutional nationalism was unable to. The actions of MAC, combined with the non-violent action adopted by *Cymdeithas*, helped to politicise the Welsh identity, and the language, in a way that it hadn't been before, as demonstrated by a surge in support for Plaid Cymru in the decade that followed.

³⁶⁷ That said this rise in support occurred at a period that Welsh national consciousness had been heightened by Tryweryn, and the actions of *Cymdeithas*. Thomas also highlights that the Aberfan tragedy played a role in the Carmarthen by-election success (Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 361).

³⁶⁸ Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 366.

³⁶⁹ Jenkins, Interviewed by the author, Ruabon, 5 September 2013.

³⁷⁰ *ibid.*

³⁷¹ *ibid.*

However, MAC was unable to prevent either the construction of dams at Tryweryn and Clywedog, or the ceremonial Investiture of the Prince of Wales. Ultimately, they failed in their primary objectives. The most they were able to achieve was to disrupt these events and send a message that they would treat any further impositions on Wales in the same manner. What MAC did achieve was to make life difficult for the authorities in Wales during the 1960s, causing disruption and making the security services look weak. Even though the drowning of Tryweryn and the Investiture went ahead, their actions demonstrated to Westminster that there were those in Wales who would not stand idly by if their culture, or way of life, was threatened again.

The Free Wales Army

During their campaign, spanning from its emergence at Tryweryn to the incarceration of its leaders on the day of the Investiture in 1969, the FWA, carried out no successful attacks. The only attack they even attempted failed because they forgot to attach the detonator: a mistake so elementary one wonders whether this failure was deliberate.³⁷² The targets they claimed they were going to attack, such as the Severn Bridge, fitted the symbolic pattern of attacks carried out by MAC. If MAC's weapon of choice was the bomb, the FWA's weapon of choice was the reporter's notebook.

Helpfully for students of Welsh militant history, the FWA released a statement detailing the rationale and aims of their group.³⁷³ Its objectives, the text proclaims, were to "safeguard the freedom of the homeland" from foreign interference and "defend and fight for Wales" when threatened as it had been at Tryweryn.³⁷⁴ They also include the statement that it would "not tolerate any sort of aggression or authority upon the Welsh nation and people by alien rulers and native quislings".³⁷⁵ They include the establishment of an independent Welsh republic, and maintaining the Welsh heritage, language, traditions and interests.³⁷⁶ Missing from this statement, but expressed elsewhere was a desire to prevent the exploitation of Welsh resources,

³⁷² Humphries treats this as a comic affair, highlighting the ineptitude of the group when it came to militancy (Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 50).

³⁷³ The statement is reproduced in Clews, *To Dream of Freedom*, 66 - 69.

³⁷⁴ Clews, *To Dream of Freedom*, 67.

³⁷⁵ *ibid.*

³⁷⁶ *ibid.*

such as water, compared, by Humphries, to Scottish oil.³⁷⁷ On an individual level, Dennis Coslett joined the FWA because “the future of the Welsh language and nation looked bleak... there was no possibility of achieving a free and independent Wales by constitutional means... it was for this reason we turned to a violent extreme nationalism”.³⁷⁸ Cayo Evans, inspired into action by his fascination with the Irish nationalist history of the early twentieth century, wanted to be involved in the “militant resurgence of the Welsh soul”, and spoke passionately of the paradox of Wales’ vast resources (both cultural and physical), yet lack of a nation.³⁷⁹

The group craved media attention, making louder and brasher claims every time a new media outlet offered them a podium. Their interaction with journalists wasn’t limited to interviews; the group invited the media to observe training exercises, demonstrating their knowledge of weaponry, and the ability to throw grenades.³⁸⁰ The FWA’s members did their best to live up to their name, acting as though they were a real army by wearing military-style uniforms in public,³⁸¹ styling themselves with military titles, and even creating a political wing, the Patriotic Front.³⁸² Interestingly - given the correlation between the Welsh language and nationalism - they chose to adopt an English language name, and most of the Army’s members were English-speaking.³⁸³ Like MAC, they also had former military personnel among their ranks in Cayo Evans, who had spent time in Malaya during his National Service.³⁸⁴ They modelled themselves on the IRA, who it is claimed they had links with,³⁸⁵ and the most notable moment of the group’s existence came when they were invited by the IRA to take part in a march to commemorate the Easter Rising in Dublin. Marching alongside groups such as the IRA gave the group an air of equivalency, elevating its status far beyond what its members’ actions justified. Those actions, their bold claims and their comic value - Humphries highlights one particularly amusing episode when a note was found on a car at a proposed meeting point stating “FWA: Gone for a

³⁷⁷ Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 201.

³⁷⁸ Coslett interviewed in Clews, *To Dream of Freedom*, 64.

³⁷⁹ Cayo Evans interviewed in Clews, *To Dream of Freedom*, 46-47.

³⁸⁰ Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 54.

³⁸¹ Uniforms were adopted both “for propaganda purposes” but also, it was claimed, to ensure fair treatment under the Geneva Convention (Clews, *To Dream of Freedom*, 72).

³⁸² The Patriotic Front had about 80 members, 30 of who could be described as activists (Gethin ap Iestyn interviewed by the author in Swansea, 7 October 2013).

³⁸³ Gethin ap Iestyn interviewed by the author in Swansea, 7 October 2013

³⁸⁴ Clews, *To Dream of Freedom*, 44.

³⁸⁵ Gethin ap Iestyn interviewed by the author in Swansea, 7 October 2013.

drink”³⁸⁶ - ensured that they were never short of an outlet through which to air their views. They were skilful propaganda artists who never missed an opportunity to raise their favourite issues.

In this regard, the FWA did play a significant role, both in the national movement, and for MAC. By constantly taking credit for MAC’s actions,³⁸⁷ the FWA were able to provide something of a smokescreen, which Jenkins and his cohorts used to their advantage,³⁸⁸ although he claims that this was not a deliberate ploy.³⁸⁹ MAC had adopted entirely the opposite approach to the media,³⁹⁰ and was prepared to let the FWA take credit for their endeavours, with Jenkins calling the FWA “gnats on an elephant’s back”.³⁹¹ Conversely, the FWA were totally reliant on MAC to continue their campaign, to give weight to their claims.

Although their claims grew in absurdity, the FWA stuck rigidly to the tactic of propaganda. Yet there are claims that members of the group wanted to escalate their activities: one member of the group, Vivian Davies, who was seen as extreme even within the FWA, made troubling statements;³⁹² and Dennis Coslett, who had made comments during an interview about shooting traitors and the merits of Adolf Hitler’s ideology,³⁹³ was regarded by the police as a violent man.³⁹⁴ Speaking decades later, Coslett claimed that - although he wished the FWA had been able to carry out an attack³⁹⁵ - the group’s threats were merely rhetoric, “not violence, but hostilities... it was propaganda”,³⁹⁶ and even suggested that Jenkins’ actions were overzealous, and put innocent lives at risk.³⁹⁷ The FWA eventually fell foul of the law of diminishing marginal returns, as they were forced to make more elaborate and controversial statements to gain the media attention they so desperately sought. Additionally, they

³⁸⁶ Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 51.

³⁸⁷ It is suggested in letters between Gethin ap Iestyn and Cayo Evans that the FWA were unsure who exactly were behind the bombing campaign (Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 98).

³⁸⁸ Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 374.

³⁸⁹ *ibid.*

³⁹⁰ Although MAC did, very carefully, hold a ‘press conference’ with a handful of journalists on one occasion (Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 201).

³⁹¹ Jenkins interviewed in Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 375.

³⁹² Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 218-219.

³⁹³ Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 55.

³⁹⁴ *ibid.*, 49.

³⁹⁵ Coslett interviewed in Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 373.

³⁹⁶ *ibid.*, 376.

³⁹⁷ *ibid.*, 373.

had to hope that the MAC bombing campaign would continue to give the group an air of authenticity.

The common themes of protecting a threatened culture, protesting against cultural insensitivity, and taking a more direct approach when constitutional methods fail, link the FWA with Saunders Lewis and *Cymdeithas*. Earlier, I compared MAC to the likes of *Cymdeithas*, and proposed that what differentiated one from the other was the covert nature of MAC's operations. Conversely, the FWA acted in the open, to the extent that they invited the nation's press to witness as they played out their military farce. What's more, apart from one botched attack, the group did not actual commit a single act of violence. One must therefore ask: why is it that the FWA has been treated as a terrorist group? The answer to this lies in their statements; the dramatics they employed to advance their ambitions of restoring the nation to former glory. Their possession of firearms, exhibited as if they were commonplace, contributed to this reputation.

It was this reputation that was to be their undoing; like Icarus, the FWA fell to earth after reaching too far. Such was a fear that Gethin ap Iestyn had expressed to Cayo Evans in letters later found by police,³⁹⁸ within these he reminded Evans "the FWA is living on a legend of news-paper cuttings" and warned "the past will catch up with use one day and then we are going to look like complete idiots".³⁹⁹ Thomas argues that when the FWA did face a trial, it was "due to an inability to resist media attention, rather than as the result of an astute police investigation".⁴⁰⁰ The downside of claiming responsibility for the illegal actions of another group was that it left the FWA open to accusations of illegality. That the trial happened to strengthen the image of the security services in the run-up to the Investiture, and ensured the FWA could not disrupt the ceremony were probably seen by the authorities as a welcome bonus, as the continued ability of MAC to evade detection raised questions about the ability of the security service. Jenkins suggests that the FWA "were arrested because the pressure was on the authorities to arrest somebody".⁴⁰¹

³⁹⁸ Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 98.

³⁹⁹ Letters reproduced in Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 98.

⁴⁰⁰ Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 270.

⁴⁰¹ Jenkins, interviewed in Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 375.

To what extent could the campaign of the FWA be described as a success? The answer would seem obvious, when asking if a militant group modelled on the IRA were successful despite their failure to carry out a single attack. Yet, there can be little doubt that their skilful manipulation of the media raised awareness, although one could argue that it simply raised awareness of their colourful personalities, and ludicrous conspiracies. That they could capture the media's attention was definitely beneficial to other elements within the militant wing of Welsh nationalism; Thomas argues that they were able to draw attention away from MAC, and towards the uniform-wearing gun-toting rebels, helping Jenkins and his colleagues remain undetected.⁴⁰² Jenkins himself was less convinced that they acted as an effective smokescreen, suggesting that they didn't fool many people.⁴⁰³

There is also a strong case to be made that the publicity they received cast them - and the national movement by association - in a negative light. The interview with David Frost was seen, within the FWA, as having brought ridicule upon the group,⁴⁰⁴ and in his letter to Cayo Evans, Gethin an Iestyn claimed that Dennis Coslett was "making the Army look stupid".⁴⁰⁵ Prominent figures throughout the national movement also condemned them: Emyr Jones, president of *Cymdeithas* during the FWA's campaign, described the group as a "Dad's Army farce... [who] had brought shame and ridicule on the nationalist movement";⁴⁰⁶ Gwynfor Evans wanted nothing to do with the group professionally and told Thomas that they "brought ridicule upon the Welsh national movement".⁴⁰⁷

With hindsight, it is very difficult to treat the FWA as a serious terrorist group. At the time, with a bombing campaign underway and no idea who was behind it, the group that claimed responsibility and adopted aggressive rhetoric seemed possible suspects. Certainly, one can understand why so many descriptions of the militant campaign in Wales attribute the actions of MAC to the FWA; as a publicity machine they were

⁴⁰² Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 373.

⁴⁰³ Jenkins, Interviewed by the author, Ruabon, 5 September 2013/

⁴⁰⁴ Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 165.

⁴⁰⁵ Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 98.

⁴⁰⁶ Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 126.

⁴⁰⁷ *ibid.*, 373.

very successful,⁴⁰⁸ but the attention they received was often at the expense of their credibility, as well as the larger national movement in Wales. They did not achieve their goals of liberating Wales, and they did not prevent the Investiture that they campaigned against, but they did highlight Welsh opposition to institutional insensitivity. The existence of the Free Wales Army is probably best summed up by a quote from a *Western Mail* journalist, who described them as a “comic opera affair”.⁴⁰⁹ Despite this, it would be wrong to conclude that they didn’t play a role in the Welsh nationalist fringe at the time.

Meibion Glyndŵr

The final group I will discuss, *Meibion Glyndŵr*, only came into existence ten years after the campaigns of the FWA and MAC had ended. We can learn a great deal about this group from their decision to name themselves after Owain Glyndŵr. The choice of the last native Prince of Wales, who rose up against the English and brought a sense of sovereignty back to Wales, is echoed in what the group hoped to achieve. To John Jenkins they were the third stage of MAC, and considering that they operated with a similar cellular structure, and exhibited similar covert techniques to those used by MAC under Jenkins’ leadership, it is likely that there was at least some overlap in membership, although police have never apprehended those behind *Meibion Glyndŵr*. The principal targets of MG were English-owned holiday cottages in rural Wales; later, the perpetrators switched targets, towards businesses serving the tourism industry, and the premises of estate agents in England who were selling Welsh properties as holiday homes.

The group’s modus operandi was apparent from their actions; the selective targeting of English-owned properties communicated a very clear message, both to the owners of the property, but to prospective owners as well: they wanted to discourage the purchase of Welsh rural properties as second homes. Whether these attacks are

⁴⁰⁸ Sufficiently successful that the Free Wales Army recently featured in an episode of the American animated spy parody *Archer*: however once again the FWA were attributed with attacks carried out by MAC, indicating that the group’s embellished renown lives on (Adam Reed & Mike Arnold. "Achub Y Morfilod" *Archer*, series 6, episode 11, aired 19 March 2015. (Irving, TX: FX, 2015), television broadcast.

⁴⁰⁹ Patrick Hannan quoted in Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 51.

evidence of Anglophobia is unclear; even though it is plainly obvious that it was the property owner's English nationality that was fundamental to the targeting of their property, the attacks were not directed at the English simply because they were English. Instead it is because they were incomers, perceived to be damaging the rural way of life in these parts of Wales. It was not any particular feature of the incoming social groups that was the cause of these attacks - it was their supposedly destructive actions.

Another potential factor in the emergence of MG according to Humphries was disaffection resulting from the failure of the devolution referendum in 1979.⁴¹⁰ Given the timing of the resumption in militant activity, it is possible that the rejection of devolution was the kind of 'flashpoint' that John Jenkins believed was necessary to incite militant activity in the national movement. Certainly in Scotland it is the case that militancy increased as a direct result of the manner in which the 1979 referendum on home rule failed.⁴¹¹

Similar to MAC, *Meibion Glyndŵr* did not seek out publicity in the manner of the FWA, allowing their actions to communicate its message. Throughout the campaign, it was never front-page news outside of Wales, operating as it did against the backdrop of the far more lethal terrorist groups in Northern Ireland, as well as the miners' strikes and the Falklands War. Yet, they, like their militant predecessors, were able to raise awareness of the issue the campaigned over, in large part because of the BBC sketch show *Not the Nine O'Clock News*, and the slogan they coined: "come home to a real fire: buy a cottage in Wales", a clever parody that will be their epitaph. However, this did not immediately arrest the increase in the number of Welsh rural properties purchased as second homes; Humphries reports that registrations of Welsh houses as second homes increased despite the arson campaign.⁴¹² Thus, again like their predecessors, while they were unable to achieve the change they desperately sought, their actions did draw attention to the damage they believed was being done to the Welsh way of life.

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹¹ For more on this, see the chapter on Scottish nationalism.

⁴¹² Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 165.

Welsh militancy: A success?

This section has covered the three main groups operating on the militant fringe of Welsh nationalism between 1960 and 1992. These three groups overlapped in personnel, rationale and aims, but they differed with regards to methodology: one group focused on attaining the maximum possible publicity for their cause, even if the only way they could achieve this was to behave in an outlandish and comical fashion; another operated covertly, conducting a bombing campaign against symbolic representations of England's cultural insensitivity and exploitation of Wales; the final group drew on the techniques of their predecessors, but focused instead on the damage that was being done to the Welsh way of life by inflation of the rural property market by English holidaymakers. Their use of political violence was primarily defensive; those involved were not seeking personal gain, but cultural equality.

Overall, whether one judges Welsh militancy as a success depends on how you measure it. In simple terms, the groups universally failed in their goals – they did not stop the flooding of Capel Celyn or Clywedog, the Investiture of Prince Charles, or the transfer of Welsh property to English holidaymakers - yet, John Jenkins himself admitted they were not realistic goals, and that on their own, MAC could not hope to stop the Investiture, just disrupt it.⁴¹³

When you take into consideration the size of the groups involved, it is not at all surprising they failed to change the minds of the British government. What they were able to achieve was publicity; all three groups were able to raise awareness of issues affecting Wales by conducting (or at least claiming to conduct) a campaign of symbolic violence against representations of the state throughout the country. Publicity has been highlighted as a key strategic goal of terrorist groups; Bruce Hoffman writes: “for the terrorist, success is... most often measured in terms of the amount of publicity and attention received... in this respect, little distinction or discrimination is made between good and bad publicity”.⁴¹⁴ Along with the likes of *Cymdeithas*, the direct approach taken by the militant groups raised the profile of the national movement at a time when Plaid Cymru was stationary. There is also an

⁴¹³ Jenkins, Interviewed by the author, Ruabon, 5 September 2013.

⁴¹⁴ Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 247.

argument that the direct approach was beneficial to the constitutional approach to Welsh issue, demonstrating to Westminster that if they weren't prepared to deal with the silk glove of Plaid Cymru, the mailed fist of Welsh militancy would be waiting in the wings. Arguably the most important impact that Welsh militant groups had was as a pressure group.

They also played a role in the elevation of Welsh language, culture and identity to *political* issues in a way that they had never been before. By demonstrating their willingness to fight for Wales' cultural 'soul', they raised the issue throughout Wales, and inspired others to demand change. Militancy has not been a feature of Welsh nationalism for more than twenty years now, and since the establishment of the Welsh Assembly has given Wales the authority to safeguard its language and culture, it is unlikely that the militant campaign will resume in the near future.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I examined Welsh national identity, the national movement that emerged to safeguard this identity when threatened and the violent wing of the national movement who were spurred into action by injustice. I have argued that Wales as a concept has a long history, and key to maintaining the sense of difference between Wales and her neighbours has been the Welsh language; for more than a millennium, the linguistic cleavage identified Welsh-speaking natives from the other. I discussed the importance of the Protestant Reformation for the maintenance of the language in Wales, as well as the role this played in harnessing the survival of Welsh to the chapels, as well as the important role religious non-conformism played in shaping Welsh national identity in the nineteenth century. The growth of liberalism in Wales was also touched upon, and it was from three strands of the nineteenth century Welsh experience - nonconformity, liberalism and language - that the national movement was born.

That movement emerged as a result of the threat posed to Welsh culture and the language. It has been at its most defensive when legislation or decisions have been imposed upon Wales without Welsh consent and at odds with Welsh culture.

Examples of this include the ‘Treachery of the Blue Books’, the construction of the Penyberth bombing school, the flooding of Capel Celyn in the Tryweryn valley, and the Investiture of the Prince of Wales. When one considers the cultural insensitivity of these acts, one can understand why the belief developed that Welsh culture - and by extension Wales itself - was being mistreated.

Today’s Welsh national movement operates in an entirely different socio-political environment: religious non-conformism - even religion in general - has lost its saliency; the Liberal Party is no longer the party of Wales; threats to the primacy of the language have meant that Welsh is only spoken by roughly one in five living in Wales today. The modern Wales is overwhelmingly English-speaking, Labour-voting and unionist. These are less than ideal conditions for *political* nationalism to operate in, as the strength of Britishness in Wales can be attributed to the continued electoral strength of the Labour party and other shared institutions, and it has been the integration of the Welsh into Britain that has prevented the national question from achieving greater political salience. Instead I have argued that Welsh nationalism is of the *cultural* variety, focused on preservation of difference within the United Kingdom, as opposed to the secessionist ambitions of movements in nearby nations. The rise of Plaid Cymru was discussed, as were notable incidences of direct action undertaken by those in the national movement who felt that Plaid Cymru was impotent. I argued that when the members of the national movement have undertaken direct action it has been as a reaction to cultural insensitivity, and as a last resort. Finally, I have considered the emergence of nationalist militancy in Wales, the issues that motivated those involved and the demise of these groups as the 1960s drew to a close.

The militant fringe of Welsh nationalism during the 1960s was something of a paradox: on the one hand, there were some very capable individuals conducting a covert bombing campaign, operating a sophisticated cellular structure, making the authorities look feeble as they continued to evade capture; on the other hand, a theatrical troupe was masquerading as a vicious band of guerrilla warriors, threatening to overcome the perfidious English with thousands of IRA-trained fighters and some unfortunate Alsatians, yet unable to successfully assemble an explosive device. Nevertheless, the two groups somehow complemented one another perfectly. The re-emergence of MAC cadres under a new name as the 1970s drew to an end served to

remind Wales, and Westminster, that there were those who would not sit idly by if they perceived their culture to be threatened again. In the end, this has been the legacy of Welsh militancy: a reminder that culture and identity are the soul of a nation, and there are those prepared to fight to preserve it.

3. Tartan Terrorism? - Scottish Nationalism and Political Violence

*Without bombs or bullets, riots or rampage (a few rammies maybe), in four days we will decide our future with pencils and a few million ballot papers. We should be proud of that, not afraid. We should be proud, nervous, excited but, above all, hopeful.*⁴¹⁵

This headline greeted Scottish voters just days before they headed to the polls on the matter of independence from the United Kingdom in September 2014. Conveyed by this headline is a sense of pride that Scots had been able to achieve peacefully a process that had rent other countries asunder with conflict, as well as a sense that Scotland was setting a precedent that others may follow. In the end, the nationalists achieved a most typically Scottish result: defeat, but only after they had been given hope of success in the form of opinion polling.⁴¹⁶ That the margin of defeat was less convincing than early opinion polls had predicted the year before⁴¹⁷ (although nowhere near as close as was predicted by opinion polls), gave nationalists hope that this result represents only a misstep on the road to independent statehood, rather than a dead end.

It will not have escaped the attention of nationalists across the Irish Sea that without firing a shot, their Scottish counterparts came far closer to achieving the goal of an independent state than they did to reunifying Ireland.⁴¹⁸ It is this phenomenon that my research examines, and in this chapter I will discuss how such a scenario has arisen, by focusing on the growth of the nationalist movement in Scotland, the successes of political nationalism, and the futile attempts of violent nationalists to make their voices heard.

⁴¹⁵ *Sunday Mail*, 14 September 2014.

⁴¹⁶ Two opinion polls in the run-up to the referendum put the Yes campaign ahead (*The Sunday Times* by a score of 51:49, 7 September 2014; and the *Telegraph* by a score of 54:46, 13 September 2014); and the majority of polls (UK Polling Report, 2015) put the result within the margin of error, but on the day 44.6% of Scots backed independence against 55.4% supporting the retention of the union (just over two million Scots).

⁴¹⁷ One poll had the Yes campaign polling 32 points below the No campaign ("UK Polling Report", accessed 2 April, 2015, <http://ukpollingreport.co.uk/scottish-independence-referendum>).

⁴¹⁸ English notes that support for reunification with Ireland has decreased in the North. By 2010, fewer than one in six people (16%) in Northern Ireland supported reunification and interestingly, only 33% of the province's Catholic population supports the measure (English, *Armed Struggle*, 399).

To do this, I concentrate on the development of Scotland as a distinct national entity, and how key events in its history have shaped modern Scotland and Scottish identity and thusly what ingredients the Scottish national movement has had to work with. I do not intend to reiterate what others have already thoroughly covered and delve too far back into Scottish history,⁴¹⁹ but it is important to understand how Scottish identity and the Scottish nationalist movement have been shaped by important junctures in the country's past. Additionally, I establish why Scots were receptive to the British identity that developed following union between Scotland and England.

Once I have established this, I discuss the growth of political nationalism and the emergence of the SNP as a political force in Scotland in the 1960s, as well as looking at the 'civic' form of nationalism that the SNP have advocated; this section examines the political options that have been available to Scottish nationalists, and assesses their viability. Having achieved this I examine the use of non-violent protest by Scottish nationalists, and why those at the forefront of the Scottish nationalist movement have largely shunned these methods. Finally, I discuss the use of political violence for the cause of an independent Scotland, covering the apparent multitude of groups that emerged during the 1970s, including the most notable of those: the Scottish National Liberation Army. For this final section I consider the goals, rationale, target selection and the extent to which the actions of violent nationalists could be described as successful. I conclude by examining what impact, if any, they had on the wider national movement.

The Concept of Scotland

Scottish history before 1000 “[focuses] on the question of the ‘making of the kingdom’, the complex process by which a cluster of different people - Britons, and even some Scandinavians as well

⁴¹⁹ For more on the history of Scotland: Houston and Knox's edited volume, and Lynch's *Scotland* provide detailed historical accounts of Scotland; T. M. Devine's *The Scottish Nation*, focuses more narrowly on Scotland's 'modern' history - from 1700 onwards ((Michael Lynch, *Scotland: A New History* (London: Pimlico, 1991); R. A. Houston and W. W. J. Knox, *The New Penguin History of Scotland: From the Earliest Times to the Present Day* (London: Penguin Press, 2001); Devine, *The Scottish Nation*).

as Picts and Scots - came in the ninth and tenth centuries to owe allegiance to a single king, 'of Scots'.⁴²⁰

Legend tells us that the first holder of this grand title – 'King of Scots' - was Kenneth MacAlpin, who came to power between 839 and 844.⁴²¹ Houston and Knox argue that a more accurate reflection of MacAlpin's role was that of "the founder of the dynasty of the king of Scots", and point out that the 'Scotland' that he governed was far smaller than the geographical entity that it is today.⁴²² For our purposes, however, this allows us to situate a notion of Scotland as a coherent unit as early as the ninth century CE.

This may have created Scotland as a geographical expression, but what created Scotland - as a nation - was the "centuries-old struggle to defend the kingdom from English aggression".⁴²³ In popular culture, the Scottish Wars of Independence are often treated as the zenith of Scottish military achievement, such as the tale of William Wallace's Scotland, given a global audience by the Hollywood epic *Braveheart*,⁴²⁴ and pitting the Scottish David against an English Goliath. For Colin Kidd, this period of Scottish history was crucial to establishing a "*Scotic* identity of the nation"⁴²⁵ and even future generations of unionists boldly claimed that the success of Wallace and Bruce was actually a positive outcome for Scotland - as it "allowed Scotland to join with England as an equal", rather than through subjugation.⁴²⁶ It was the success of King Robert that ensured Scotland was not forcibly incorporated into the English fold in the way that Wales was during the same period. Kidd opines that the retention of independence was a vital component in the development of a distinct notion of Scottish ubiquity, different from the rest of Great Britain.⁴²⁷

⁴²⁰ Lynch, *Scotland*, 13-14.

⁴²¹ *ibid.*, 40.

⁴²² Houston and Knox, *The New Penguin History of Scotland*, xvi.

⁴²³ T. M. Devine. *Scotland and the Union: 1707 to 2007* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 3.

⁴²⁴ Randall Wallace, *Braveheart*, directed by Mel Gibson (1995; Hollywood, CA: Paramount), DVD.

⁴²⁵ Colin Kidd, *British Identities Before Nationalism: Ethnicity and Nationhood in the Atlantic World, 1600-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 124.

⁴²⁶ Graeme Morton, *Unionist-Nationalism: Governing Urban Scotland* (Edinburgh: Tuckwell Press, 1999), 180.

⁴²⁷ Colin Kidd, *Subverting Scotland's Past: Scottish Whig Historians and the Creation of An Anglo-British Identity, 1689-c. 1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 25.

Six years after the Scottish victory at Bannockburn in 1320, Scotland formally requested acknowledgement of their independence, through the Declaration of Arbroath. This document, described by Michael Lynch as the “most celebrated document in Scottish history”,⁴²⁸ not only set out Scotland’s independence from England, but was also an early form of popular sovereignty:

Yet Robert himself, should he turn aside from the task that he has begun, and yield Scotland or us to the English King and people, we should cast out as the enemy of us all, as subverter of our rights and of his own, and should *choose another King* to defend our freedom.⁴²⁹ [emphasis added]

Whilst one could argue that this was a very progressive concept for the fourteenth century, the “we” refers not to the wider population of Scotland, but to a handful of noblemen. Nonetheless, this stipulated that the loyalty of the Scottish nobles lay not with the man but with the position, implying that Scottish kingship was conditional upon the protection of Scottish independence. To what extent could this be described as nationalism? Harvie proposes that the wars of independence had “produced a type of popular nationalism rarely encountered in Europe before the French revolution”.⁴³⁰ However, in his work on Irish nationalism, English argues that evidence of pre-eighteenth century ‘nationalism’ is more likely to be evidence of a ‘proto-nation’, rather than of a nation inspired by nationalism.⁴³¹ What we can say with certainty is that the Declaration of Arbroath represents not only an expression of patriotism, but more importantly for this study, an expression of difference.

The notion that a Scottish king could be replaced in the event of yielding Scotland to the King of England was rendered meaningless with the ascension of James VI of Scotland to the throne of England (becoming James I in the process) in 1603, thus occupying both positions simultaneously. This ‘Union of the Crowns’ brought Scottish and English interests into alignment, and put both parties on the path to

⁴²⁸ Despite this Lynch claims that the document lapsed into obscurity thereafter and has only acquired its status as a “surrogate Scottish constitution” in the last two centuries (Lynch, *Scotland*, 111).

⁴²⁹ Reproduced in Agnes Mure MacKenzie, *On the Declaration of Arbroath* (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1951), 19.

⁴³⁰ Harvie, *Scotland and Nationalism*, 23.

⁴³¹ English, *Irish Freedom*, 492.

formal political union. Alvin Jackson suggests that James himself was an advocate of immediate union between his two kingdoms,⁴³² however, James was thwarted by both Scottish and English opposition to the plan, and Jenny Wormald claims that in the early phase of the union it was “a marriage of distaste and distrust”, further suggesting that it was an achievement simply to keep the union together throughout this difficult period.⁴³³

Regardless of his ambitions, one immediate impact of this union was that James moved his court south, shifting the centre of Scottish power from Edinburgh to London. By this point, lowland Scotland and England had become very similar in character; English was now the common language throughout the Scottish Lowlands,⁴³⁴ and, crucially, both had adopted the same faith in Protestantism. The Protestant Reformation in Scotland had drawn inspiration from the Reformation in England, and Diarmaid MacCulloch notes that John Knox, the central figure in Scotland’s Reformation, had been heavily involved in the English Reformation, and “never lost his admiration for the forward Protestants of England”.⁴³⁵ Despite this, the Scottish Reformation took a different course – led by prominent nobles and relying on mob violence, rather than being directed by the Crown as it was in England – and ended with a slightly different form of Protestantism: Presbyterianism.⁴³⁶

The success of the Reformation in both countries, despite these ecclesiastical differences,⁴³⁷ left the two countries allied against continental Catholic enemies, but in spite of these similarities, and of the joint monarchy, the Scottish Parliament pursued policies to deliberately provoke their English counterparts. The Darien expedition was intended to give Scotland a trading presence in the Caribbean in direct competition with the English colonies, and the passing of the *Act Anent Peace and War*⁴³⁸ in 1703

⁴³² Alvin Jackson, *The Two Unions: Ireland, Scotland and the Survival of the United Kingdom: 1707-2007* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 40.

⁴³³ Jenny Wormald, “The Union of 1603”, in *Scots and Britons: Scottish political thought and the union of 1603*, ed. Roger Mason. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 37- 40.

⁴³⁴ This can be traced to the Reformation according to Kidd (Colin Kidd, *Union and Unionisms: Political Thought in Scotland, 1500-2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 50-51).

⁴³⁵ MacCulloch, *Reformation*, 292.

⁴³⁶ *ibid.*, 291-295.

⁴³⁷ These differences would come to a head during the English Civil War when Scottish Presbyterians entered into an agreement with English Parliamentarians called the ‘Solemn League and Covenant’ to reform Protestantism in England and Ireland.

⁴³⁸ This set out the right of the Scottish Parliament to pursue a distinct foreign policy.

threatened the Hanoverian Succession in Great Britain, and may even have opened the door for the restoration of the Stuarts.⁴³⁹

The Act of Union

The situation came to a head in 1705 when representatives of both parties agreed to meet (following some prompting from Queen Anne) to discuss a treaty of union, which was agreed upon a year later and put into effect in 1707 with the Act of Union. This process was carried out without any public consultation and was opposed by elements of the population in Scotland, leading to riots in Glasgow and Edinburgh as rumours spread that preparations were being made for an armed uprising.⁴⁴⁰

Despite Robert Burns' assertion that the Scottish Parliamentarians who had approved the union were a "parcel o' rogues", who had been "bought and sold for English gold"⁴⁴¹ the reality of the situation was that the settlement addressed a number of pressing concerns faced by both countries. Scotland was in a dire economic position; partly a result of English trading aggression, and partly the cost of the failure at Darien. The union settlement included modest compensation for the English role in the latter, referred to as the 'Equivalent'.⁴⁴² Furthermore, it has been claimed that, had Scotland retained its independence, English eyes would have been focused firmly on Edinburgh in fear of a Stuart restoration, and that a far less complicit union may have followed.⁴⁴³ Keith Brown argues that, whilst the decision to accept a settlement was less than popular with sections of the Scottish people, it indicated that Scotland had reached a "new level of political maturity".⁴⁴⁴ Some modern-day Scottish nationalists choose to overlook these stark political realities and maintain that the 'parcel o' rogues' narrative still has some resonance.

⁴³⁹ Murray Pittock, *The Invention of Scotland: the Stuart Myth and the Scottish Identity, 1683 to the Present* (London: Routledge, 1991), 25.

⁴⁴⁰ Karin Bowie, "Popular Resistance, Religion and the Union of 1707", in *Scotland and the Union*, ed. T. M. Devine (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 45.

⁴⁴¹ And there is little doubt that the union was facilitated with financial incentives and patronage to those who were in need of the requisite persuasion (Jackson, *Two Unions*).

⁴⁴² Jackson, *Two Unions*, 95.

⁴⁴³ Harvie, *Scotland and Nationalism*, 29.

⁴⁴⁴ Keith M Brown, *Reformation to Union, 1560-1707*. In R. A. Houston and W. W. J. Knox (eds) *The New Penguin History of Scotland: From the Earliest Times to the Present Day* (London: Penguin Press, 2001), 266.

The means by which union was achieved were both underhanded and unpopular, and included the loss of the Scottish Parliament, but Scotland did not entirely surrender her autonomy; the agreement was only possible because the independence of the Church of Scotland (also known as the Kirk), and the Scottish education and legal systems was guaranteed. Moreover, it would be naïve to treat the loss of Parliament in the early eighteenth century such as we would today's Parliament; the Scottish state was not sufficiently developed that it had achieved pervasive influence on everyday life, and in its place a far more important national forum was retained in the form of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. The protection of the Church of Scotland was especially important in the development of a distinct Scottish identity, and came to symbolise the development of the wider Scottish identity - distinct difference within a wider group.

Despite the loss of the Scottish Parliament in 1707, powers over the day-to-day affairs of Scottish life continued to reside in Edinburgh. Graeme Morton's work on unionist Scotland elaborates on the role of Scottish 'managers' whose role was to "keep Scottish MPs and peers in line in the lobbies and keep Scotland itself quiet".⁴⁴⁵ To achieve this, the Scottish 'manager' had a "free hand in the distribution of patronage within Scotland",⁴⁴⁶ and as a result Scotland was largely self-governing during the first century of union.⁴⁴⁷ The most famous occupant of the position was Henry Dundas, who acquired the nickname 'Harry the Ninth' due to the almost regal power he held.⁴⁴⁸ Although Morton argues that this system was effective,⁴⁴⁹ it was not always widely popular with the Scottish people; John Brims reports that anti-Dundas riots took place in 1792,⁴⁵⁰ led by protesters demanding political reform.

⁴⁴⁵ Morton, *Unionist Scotland*, 11.

⁴⁴⁶ Michael Keating, "Scotland in the UK: A dissolving union?" *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 2, 2 (1996), 232-257.

⁴⁴⁷ Morton, *Unionist Scotland*, 13.

⁴⁴⁸ Colley, *Acts of Union and Disunion*, 90.

⁴⁴⁹ Morton, *Unionist Scotland*, 12.

⁴⁵⁰ John Brims, "From Reformers to 'Jacobins': The Scottish Association of the Friends of the People", in *Conflict and Stability in Scottish Society 1700:1850: Proceedings of the Scottish Historical Studies Seminar University of Strathclyde 1988-89*, ed. T. M. Devine (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1990), 32.

The loss of Parliament had not led to a loss of control for Scotland, and for the first century of Union, Scotland was largely run by Scots.⁴⁵¹ In areas of Scottish life in which the government played no part (e.g. poor relief), the vacuum was filled by civil society and by members of the local bourgeoisie.⁴⁵² One event that did briefly threaten the peace, however, was the Jacobite Rising in 1745. Like the Scottish Wars of Independence, this event is often misunderstood in popular culture, treated as a direct confrontation between the Scots and the English, yet such a narrative entirely disregards the internal divide within Scotland and the extent to which this was in fact a civil war. A more appropriate way of approaching the Jacobite Rising would be to discuss the ‘two Scotlands’ that existed up until that time: Protestant Lowland Scotland, which was overwhelmingly anglicised by this point; and Highland Scotland, which had largely avoided this process, maintaining its original Gaelic culture and Catholicism.⁴⁵³ Whilst Bonnie Prince Charlie was able to attract support in the latter, the able-bodied men of the former largely stayed at home and waited to see which way the wind blew.⁴⁵⁴

The eventual defeat of the Jacobites at Culloden in 1745 arguably led to the death of a distinct Highland Scotland. Following their victory, Westminster “devised legislation to undermine the cultural, political and economic distinctiveness of the Scottish Highlands”,⁴⁵⁵ by outlawing the wearing of Tartan⁴⁵⁶ except by military personnel, banning the playing of bagpipes and diminishing the power of clan chiefs. The Highland way of life was systematically dismantled and reimagined in a way that the rest of the United Kingdom could accept, and this process was aided and abetted by Lowlands Scots; key to the rehabilitation of the Scottish Highlands were Scottish cultural figures, led by Sir Walter Scott, whose work helped to make “Jacobitism acceptable - and, even more... romantic and appealing”.⁴⁵⁷ Their work helped to

⁴⁵¹ Work by Kidd, Morton and Jackson go into great detail about this period in Scottish history (Kidd, *Union and Unionisms*; Morton, *Unionist Scotland*; Jackson, *Two Unions*).

⁴⁵² Morton, *Unionist Scotland*.

⁴⁵³ Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation: 1707-1837* (London: Pimlico, 1992), 14-15.

⁴⁵⁴ *ibid.*, 309.

⁴⁵⁵ *ibid.*, 119.

⁴⁵⁶ Hugh Trevor-Roper contends that Tartan and the Highland dress were, in fact, invented traditions, and claims that “the whole concept of a distinct Highland culture and tradition is a retrospective invention. (Hugh Trevor-Roper, “The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland, in *The Invention of Tradition*, eds. Eric Hobsbawm & Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 15.

⁴⁵⁷ Devine, *The Scottish Nation*, 238

cultivate a positive image of the Highlands and its inhabitants, but this new vision was created for, and by, proponents of the union. One way Highlanders could maintain their way of life was to join the British Army, and many chose to do so.⁴⁵⁸ Devine argues that the military prowess and loyalty of the Highlanders was admired and the ‘rehabilitation’ of the Highlands was aided through their exploits in the imperial army.⁴⁵⁹ The British Royal Family bought heavily into the reimagined vision of the Highlands - most famously Queen Victoria who was rumoured to have declared that she too was a Jacobite.⁴⁶⁰

It is often said that history is written by the victors, but in the case of the Scottish Highlanders, not only was their history written by the victors, their present was altered too; their entire way of life was recalibrated in way that suited Lowland Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom. Two key imperial institutions - the military and the monarchy - harnessed the newly created imagery of the once-rebellious Highlands, that of the loyal soldier and the idyllic scenery respectively, to the unionist cause. The Jacobite Rising and the pacification of the Highlands that followed ended up unifying the ‘two Scotlands’ and embedding Highland imagery⁴⁶¹ into a new pan-Scottish identity. The travails of the Jacobites were reimagined in a way that made them glamorous but not threatening to the wider British public, and the most serious challenge to the union in the eighteenth century was repackaged as though it had been done by Walt Disney: the main figures were glamorised, the revolutionary content removed, and the iconography and imagery of the Highlands became the colourful merchandise that enthralled the rest of Britain.

The Jacobite Rising of 1745 was followed less than a century later by another popular uprising in Scotland, but one that has received far less attention: the 1820 Insurrection, or the Radical War, a brief period of unrest primarily located in the West of Scotland, in Glasgow and Paisley. Involving strike action amongst some members of the working class demanding reform, the rising failed when the military were called in to deal with the unrest, preventing the protests from spreading. In their

⁴⁵⁸ Jackson, *Two Unions*, 169.

⁴⁵⁹ Devine, *The Scottish Nation*, 236-240.

⁴⁶⁰ Devine, *Scotland and the Union*, 10.

⁴⁶¹ Devine argues that this ‘Highlandism’ was “quite literally an invention of a tradition”, echoing the sentiments of Trevor-Roper (Devine, *The Scottish Nation*, 233; Trevor-Roper, “The Invention of Tradition”).

detailed study of the uprising, Berresford Ellis and Mac a' Ghobainn highlight the important role that *agents provocateurs* played in encouraging some of the activities of the Radicals,⁴⁶² and there is evidence that there were nationalist sentiments to the Radical message – some banners with depictions of William Wallace were unfurled,⁴⁶³ another carried the message “Scotland Free - Or a Desert!”⁴⁶⁴ - as well as a grounding in republican ideology. Yet Harvie argues that whilst there were “some separatist slogans - along the lines of the Irish radicals... [they] were increasingly unrepresentative”.⁴⁶⁵ It seems, that whilst there may have been some patriotic content to this message, it was not the primary concern of the Radicals - they were as concerned about the treatment of Scotland by other Scots, as they were by the treatment of Scotland by the English. Thus, the nationalist content of this rising was a secondary concern – an indication that the national question simply was not an issue in Scotland at this point. In neither the case of 1745 or 1820 could those leading the uprising rouse the support of the wider Scottish population - why this was we cannot say for certain, but it could be seen as evidence that Scots were not displeased with the union settlement, and the benefits that arose from it.

Empire and the First Nationalists

The benefits of union had a huge impact on Scottish identity, and preventing the development of Scottish nationalism. As a “junior partner in the new Rome”⁴⁶⁶ Scotland thrived.⁴⁶⁷ Scots found themselves disproportionately represented in the administrative class of the East India Company and the officer class of the British Army,⁴⁶⁸ and “achieved a much greater share of the imperial spoils” than those from other parts of the United Kingdom.⁴⁶⁹ Scotland’s cities were also reaping the rewards of Empire: Glasgow and the heavy industries based on the Clyde and the just manufacturers of Dundee were exporting products throughout the world. Further

⁴⁶² Peter Berresford Ellis & Seumas Mac a' Ghobainn, *The Scottish Insurrection of 1820*. (London: Victor Gollancz, 1970).

⁴⁶³ *ibid*, 124.

⁴⁶⁴ *ibid*, 187.

⁴⁶⁵ Harvie, *Scotland and Nationalism*, 31.

⁴⁶⁶ Nairn, *The Break-Up of Britain*, 129.

⁴⁶⁷ For more on Scotland’s role in the British Empire, see Devine, *The Scottish Nation*.

⁴⁶⁸ Jackson, *Two Unions*, 164.

⁴⁶⁹ Devine, *Scotland and the Union*, 104.

afield, Scottish capital was driving mining, farming and railway projects in the United States, Australia and Asia⁴⁷⁰ and Scotland's great minds were making medical and technological advances in one of the world's finest education systems.⁴⁷¹

As a result, Scotland as a nation was able to punch further above its weight in terms of global impact than would have been possible without the union. Scots found employment throughout the British Empire, and the Scottish economy boomed. Equally, Robert McCreadie argues, a sense of solidarity emerged between the Scots and the other Britons, borne by the British labour movement.⁴⁷² Considering the substantial benefits of union it is little wonder that there was little appetite for Scottish independence during this time, and when the first 'nationalist' movement did emerge in the form of the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights (NAVSR), the demands were for *more* union, not less.

Formed in 1853, the NAVSR was a short-lived pressure group whose members represented a wide variety of political approaches. The central message of the group was that Scotland was not receiving a proportionate share of public expenditure, and that the governance of Scotland was being neglected due to Parliament's focus on the Ireland, the insufficient number of Scottish MPs and lack of a Scottish Secretary.⁴⁷³ Morton suggests that the rise of this movement was also partly the result of the centralising tendencies of the British state at this period, a process the NAVSR viewed as antithetical to the terms of union.⁴⁷⁴ Their motives were to ensure that powers that were gradually being centralised were kept at the local level, and to encourage Westminster to pay more attention to Scottish matters. Although they held public meetings and petitioned the Houses of Parliament, without any popular support they folded soon after their foundation. The NAVSR are often treated as the first 'nationalist' movement to emerge in Scotland, but politically they were firmly unionist.

⁴⁷⁰ Harvie, *Scotland and Nationalism*, 108.

⁴⁷¹ Devine, *The Scottish Nation*, 295.

⁴⁷² Robert McCreadie, "Scottish Identity and the Constitution", in *National Identities: The Constitutions of the United Kingdom*, ed. Bernard Crick (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 42.

⁴⁷³ Kidd, *Union and Unionisms*, 270.

⁴⁷⁴ Morton, *Unionist Nationalism*, 152.

The successors to the NAVSR were the Scottish Home Rule Association (SHRA), who, though emerging in 1886 during the height of interest in the Irish Question, varied from their counterparts across the Irish Sea in their nationalist demands.⁴⁷⁵ Like their predecessors, they fully supported the union and wanted to improve the union. In the hope of achieving this, the SHRA sought support for home rule from key figures in the Liberal and Labour parties,⁴⁷⁶ but the group was sidelined as the Liberal Party in Scotland chose to ignore it.⁴⁷⁷ Independently of the rise of the SHRA, the Liberals adopted a policy of ‘home rule all round’ under the leadership of William Gladstone, who declared that he wouldn’t give Ireland anything “that is not upon equal terms offered to Scotland and to the different portion of the United Kingdom”.⁴⁷⁸ As a result Scottish home rule was “carried along in the slipstream of Irish home rule”.⁴⁷⁹ Harvie writes that were it not for the First World War “Scotland would very likely have been presented with a parliament”, although, he adds, “whether the Scots knew what they wanted to do with it is another matter”.⁴⁸⁰

Morton has classified the ideology of groups such as the NAVSR and the SHRA as ‘unionist nationalism’⁴⁸¹ - an idea that would have been treated as a paradox during the 2014 referendum campaign. There was little question at the time that the union was overwhelmingly a positive thing for Scotland, but those involved believed that with some minor changes, it could be even more beneficial. It has been argued that Scottish interest in home rule was largely precipitated by events in Ireland, yet there seems to have been little consideration of adopting similar demands of self-government for Scotland.

The Union of the Crowns and the Reformation were key factors in the process of integrating Scots with the English, advancing the spread of the English language and uniting the peoples in, if not a common church, then very closely-aligned ones. The union of the parliaments brought Scotland into coalition with England as equal partners, whilst institutionalising a subtle sense of difference. History is an important

⁴⁷⁵ The Irish Home Rule movement will be considered in greater detail in Chapter 5.

⁴⁷⁶ H. J. Hanham, *Scottish Nationalism*. (London: Faber and Faber, 1969), 93.

⁴⁷⁷ *ibid.*, 120.

⁴⁷⁸ Jackson, *Two Unions*, 242.

⁴⁷⁹ Harvie, *Scotland and Nationalism*, 35.

⁴⁸⁰ *ibid.*, 41.

⁴⁸¹ Morton, *Unionist Nationalism*.

part of shaping the collective identity of a nation, and in the case of Scotland, a sense of difference is evident throughout: United, but distinct. Equally important for Scots, however, have been the shared successes that have occurred since the Act of Union, both economic and military. Thus Scots were able to complement their national identity with a shared sense of Britishness, and this concept was evident in the early nationalist movements that emerged in Scotland, as they called for a reformed Westminster to ensure Scots were able to take full advantage of the benefits of union.

The Birth of the National Party

Following the First World War, with the Irish Question reformulated by the events of 1916 and the Liberal Party in disarray, parliamentary interest in Scottish home rule faded. Although the Labour and Liberal parties remained supportive of home rule, it was always a secondary concern and it was left to dedicated nationalist parties to take the issue up. The failure of either party to follow through on their lukewarm support for devolution led to the emergence of political movements set up to campaign specifically on the matter.⁴⁸² The first post-war movement was, in fact, a revival of a previous organisation; the Scottish Home Rule Association had faded into obscurity following the deaths of its key figures in the early 1910s, but it was revived in 1918 by Roland Muirhead.⁴⁸³ In its new form, the SHRA pursued a broad measure of devolution for Scotland,⁴⁸⁴ and to achieve this end, the organisation sought to affiliate itself with trade unions and labour movements, distributing manifestos, petitioning parliament and holding meetings, but to little reward.⁴⁸⁵

During these events of the early 1920s, Scotland was going through something of a literary revival led by Hugh MacDiarmid, who was vocal in his support for Scottish home rule. Hand-in-hand with this cultural renaissance came the development of an “increasingly separate political culture... articulated by artists, nationalists and journals”.⁴⁸⁶ From this section of Scottish society sprung another national movement -

⁴⁸² Devine, *Scotland and the Union*, 15.

⁴⁸³ Hanham, *Scottish Nationalism*, 121.

⁴⁸⁴ Lynch, *SNP*, 25.

⁴⁸⁵ *ibid.*, 29-32.

⁴⁸⁶ Pittock, *The Invention of Scotland*, 145.

the Scots National League, focusing heavily on Scots Gaelic culture, thus making comparisons with elements of the Irish national movement obvious. By the end of the 1920s, another nationalist grouping was emerging from an entirely different section of Scottish society - the Glasgow University Student Nationalist Association (GUSNA). Formed in 1927, the GUSNA was fronted by John MacCormick, who was to be vital to the movement over the next thirty years.

The common ground brought these groups together (largely by the hand of John MacCormick) and, together with other members of the national movement, they formed the National Party of Scotland in 1928.⁴⁸⁷ Formed specifically as a political party, the NPS contested their first seat in 1929 (Midlothian and Peeblesshire), achieving 4.5% of the vote. When another home rule party was formed (the Scottish Party), MacCormick reached out to this new movement in the belief that enticing the prominent figures involved would give something the NPS it lacked: gravitas within the Scottish political establishment.⁴⁸⁸ The NPS and the Scottish Party differed on two levels: on a political level the former was left-wing, linked to the Liberals and Labour, and the latter was aligned with the Unionists; and on constitutional matters the SP advocated a less powerful version of home rule.⁴⁸⁹ Eventually agreement was reached despite their differences and the Scottish National Party was formed in 1934.

Following this merger, the cultural nationalists associated with the SNL and Hugh MacDiarmid were purged from the party, and ever since the SNP has focused far less on the cultural forms of nationalism they espoused, leading cultural nationalists to accuse the SNP of neglecting Scotland's cultural heritage.⁴⁹⁰ The absence of a cultural aspect to their nationalist agenda has shaped the types of policies that the SNP have advocated throughout their history, eschewing a focus on language, culture or history (as one may expect from a nationalist party) in favour of economic rejuvenation and administrative decentralisation. This is crucial to the various forms the national movement would take in Scotland.

⁴⁸⁷ Peter Lynch's history of the SNP details the formation of the party in great depth (Lynch, *SNP*)

⁴⁸⁸ Lynch, *SNP*, 39.

⁴⁸⁹ Brand, *The National Movement in Scotland*, 218.

⁴⁹⁰ Pittock, *Invention of Scotland*, 146.

In its infancy, the SNP struggled. Peter Lynch argues that for much of its history it battled just to survive and stay relevant,⁴⁹¹ and Brand has described the SNP between 1928 and 1960 as a “fringe party”.⁴⁹² Arthur Donaldson, chairman of the SNP during the 1960s, once claimed that during its early years, the entire ensemble of SNP activists would have filled a passenger aircraft - and had it crashed, the cause of Scottish nationalism would have been lost for a generation.⁴⁹³ These statements are testament to the minor nature of the national question in Scotland during the early twentieth century: a direct result of the strength of the union. Furthermore, for much of its early existence, the SNP was unclear about what it wanted to achieve and how to achieve it: there was disagreement about whether the party should cut across social classes or whether it should focus on attracting the votes of the working class;⁴⁹⁴ the party were ambiguous about the form of home rule they were advocating, varying between support for devolution or independence within the British Empire;⁴⁹⁵ and MacCormick, a key figure in the SNP, advocated multiple strategies to achieve their goals, seeking alliances with other parties as well as contesting elections.⁴⁹⁶ Part of the problem was that members of the SNP did not have to be exclusive, and could join other political parties if they so wished.

The culmination of these internal disagreements was a schism in 1942, leading MacCormick to leave the party and focus on the Covenant Association. At this time, although the Nationalists were in an uncomfortable situation, anxious not to be seen as undermining the war effort.⁴⁹⁷ They were, however, able to make political gains out of the war; by disregarding the wartime pact between the major parties not to contend by-elections, Dr Robert McIntyre won the 1945 by-election in Motherwell to become the SNP’s first MP.⁴⁹⁸ Despite this success, the SNP was not at the forefront of the national movement at this time; John MacCormick’s new venture, the Covenant

⁴⁹¹ Lynch, *SNP*, 26.

⁴⁹² Brand, *National Movement in Scotland*, 3.

⁴⁹³ William Wolfe, *Scotland Lives: The Quest for Independence*, (Edinburgh: Reprographia, 1973), 17.

⁴⁹⁴ James Mitchell, Lynn Bennie & Rob Johns. *The Scottish National Party: Transition to Power*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

⁴⁹⁵ Lynch, *SNP*, 10.

⁴⁹⁶ *ibid.*, 45.

⁴⁹⁷ During this time, one strand of nationalist opinion argued loudly against conscription (both of men to the military and women to war effort south of the Border), and Douglas Young became something of a nationalist darling after he was jailed for refusing to register for military service.

⁴⁹⁸ The manner of his victory and his short stay at Westminster (he lost his seat in the General Election that followed twelve weeks later) mean that McIntyre’s success is often forgotten, and the 1967 success of Winnie Ewing treated as the SNP’s first victory instead.

Association, had taken that role, with a petition calling for home rule that attracted two million signatures, as well as the support of the Church of Scotland,⁴⁹⁹ and a number of prominent figures.⁵⁰⁰ Yet as with previous nationalist ventures, this endeavour did not result in any measure of constitutional change, and the Covenant Association folded upon MacCormick's death.

MacCormick himself has been described as the founder of modern political nationalism in Scotland,⁵⁰¹ and his energy and commitment were crucial in getting the early NPS off the ground, yet one wonders whether his penchant for employing multiple strategies diluted the purpose of the early Nationalist Party away from fighting elections, and down avenues that were unlikely to reap any serious gain; it has been argued that once MacCormick had left the SNP in 1942, it began to function more like a political party than it had before⁵⁰². Since that time the SNP have principally stuck to electoral politics and have left others in the nationalist movement to adopt extra-parliamentary means by which home rule could be achieved.

During the 1950s, it would seem that the SNP could take heart from the popular expression of nationalism harnessed by the Covenant Association, and from the patriotic fervour aroused by the theft of the Stone of Destiny⁵⁰³. Yet the SNP were struggling during this period; H. J. Hanham suggests in his authoritative study on Scottish Nationalism that it was a great achievement for the SNP to simply have survived between 1942 and 1964.⁵⁰⁴ That they did was testament to the hard work of a handful of individuals, and as they entered the 1960s, this hard work was to pay off.

During the 1960s, the hastening economic decline was wiping once dominant industries from the map, leaving vast areas of lowland Scotland with little prospect of employment. As a result of this, the British Government had to involve itself in the Scottish economy to a far greater degree than it had ever needed to in the past, and this put pressure on the government to address "Scotland and the needs of

⁴⁹⁹ Brand, *National Movement in Scotland*, 131.

⁵⁰⁰ Christopher Harvie, *No Gods and Precious Few Heroes* (London: Edward Arnold, 1981), 107.

⁵⁰¹ Bogdanor, *Devolution in the United Kingdom*, 120.

⁵⁰² Lynch, *SNP*, 59.

⁵⁰³ *Ibid.*, 65.

⁵⁰⁴ Hanham, *Scottish Nationalism*, 179.

Scotland”.⁵⁰⁵ The continued stagnation of the economy during the 1960s and the inability of the Conservatives and Labour to arrest this decline despite numerous initiatives fuelled popular discontent with these parties during the 1960s.⁵⁰⁶ Looking back, we can identify this period as the point at which the union was no longer providing utility for a section of the Scottish population.⁵⁰⁷

Meanwhile, the SNP had recovered from their difficult period following the Second World War and had begun to grow again. Key to this period of growth were three factors: a marked improvement in the organisation of the party; an influx of new talents; and a steady stream of income. The vast improvement in the organisation of the SNP has been attributed to Ian MacDonald,⁵⁰⁸ who sold his family farm and used the proceeds to tour Scotland, spreading word of the SNP and helping to establish new branches. William Wolfe, later leader of the SNP, wrote of him: “history will certainly record the value of [MacDonald’s] efforts in building up the organisation and strength of the Party throughout Scotland in this crucial period”.⁵⁰⁹ Alongside greater organisation, the SNP were also able to rely on a steady stream of income - generated by the *Alba Pools*, a weekly sweepstake - that funded MacDonald’s expansion of the party and allowed the party to fight elections effectively. Finally, an influx of personnel who were to take on key roles within the party, such as William Wolfe and Margo MacDonald, brought fresh blood and leftist ideas into the party.⁵¹⁰

These factors combined meant that the SNP were ideally placed to take advantage of the loosening of not only traditional political attachments in the 1960s, but changes in the very nature of Britain. Against this political backdrop, the SNP’s breakthrough success came in 1967 when Winnie Ewing won the Hamilton by-election, achieving a remarkable 38% swing from Labour in the process. Coming only a year after Plaid Cymru had achieved their first seat in Wales, these results announced political

⁵⁰⁵ Brand, *The National Movement in Scotland*, 84.

⁵⁰⁶ For the Conservatives, this period marks the start of the decline in their share of the vote from which they have yet to recover as a serious political force in Scotland, a phenomenon discussed in greater detail in p. 116-117.

⁵⁰⁷ Harvie, *Scotland and Nationalism*, 221; Ewen A. Cameron, “The Politics of the Union in an Age of Unionism”, in *Scotland and the Union: 1707 to 2007*, ed. T.M. Devine (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 136; Pittock – *The Road to Independence*, 54.

⁵⁰⁸ Lynch, *SNP*, 100; Brand, *The National Movement in Scotland*, 259; Wolfe, *Scotland Lives*, 36.

⁵⁰⁹ Wolfe, *Scotland Lives*, 48.

⁵¹⁰ Lynch, *SNP*, 13.

nationalism as a force in British politics, and the established Westminster parties made serious efforts to counter it. The Conservatives announced a Royal Commission on the issue and Labour and the Liberals considered similar measures to attempt to relieve the threat to their Scottish seats. In the decade that followed their victory in Hamilton, the SNP followed up their initial success with gains at local and general elections, achieving one seat in 1970, seven in the February election of 1974, and eleven seats in the October election of that year, achieving 30.4% of the vote.

The rise and rise of the Scottish nationalists - aided by the discovery of North Sea oil - terrified the established Westminster parties, especially the Labour party whose electoral dominance of Scotland was threatened by the SNP. Following the first election of 1974, Lynch claims that “Scotland suddenly became very important to Labour and Scots voters found themselves lavished with attention”.⁵¹¹ To stem the tide, Labour announced support for a Scottish assembly, but this policy was imposed on the Scottish Labour party by their superiors in London to widespread anger amongst Scottish MPs and members,⁵¹² who sought to undermine the passage of the legislation. Marr opines that because the proposals were “born out of weakness... devolution was a slippery concept”.⁵¹³ The tiny majority and internal opposition meant that when the legislation was introduced into the House of Commons, the government lost control of the bill to its backbenchers and the opposition.⁵¹⁴

This allowed MPs of both sides to engage in spoiling tactics to wreck the bill - one of the most active of which was Tam Dalyell, “Scots Labour’s most determined unionist” who “seemed determined to immolate himself, as well as the Bill, on a pyre of amendments”.⁵¹⁵ The most famous of the amendments was introduced by George Cunningham (a Scottish-born Labour MP who held a seat in London), and was clearly not intended to improve the quality of the legislation; it required the Nationalists to win not only a majority of the popular vote, but carry the support of 40% of the eligible voters in the proposed referendum on the matter, for the final result to be valid. The SNP underwent an internal debate on whether or not to accept a measure

⁵¹¹ *ibid.*, 129.

⁵¹² Marr, *The Battle for Scotland*, 121.

⁵¹³ *ibid.*, 122.

⁵¹⁴ Lynch, *SNP*, 146.

⁵¹⁵ Harvie, *Scottish Nationalism*, 269.

that fell short of their preferred option, but reluctantly did so.⁵¹⁶ With hindsight, one could argue that the Nationalists were naïve to support a process and settlement that was so evidently flawed and driven by political motivations. The 40% rule was crucial; a narrow majority of Scots voted for devolution (51.6% to 48.4% against) but the turnout of 63.7% left the Yes campaign with only 32.9% of eligible voters supporting the measure.

It might be strange to suggest such a crushing defeat could represent progress for the nationalists, but the truth is that it did. In just twelve years, the SNP had moved from winning its first seat to the brink of home rule. Only the internal dynamics of the Labour Party and the weakness of party authority in Westminster prevented the measure from succeeding. Additionally, the SNP had made the national question an issue of primary importance, and altered popular expectations of how Scotland should be governed. Even though the failure of 1979 and its repercussions were to do severe damage to the SNP, it did represent an anomalous form of political progress, and established the SNP as a serious player in Scottish politics.

The political fallout from the devolution debacle, following a brief but unsuccessful ‘Scotland Said Yes’ campaign, ended with the SNP bringing down the Labour Government, poignantly paving the way for Margaret Thatcher to take power. Gallagher suggests the SNP felt “it was double-crossed by a party that briefly stole its nationalist clothes on espousing devolution and then was able to avoid the electoral retribution” that fell on the SNP.⁵¹⁷ The failure of the devolution referendum, and the backlash the party received for allowing the Conservatives to take power hit the Nationalists hard, leading to internal disputes about how to move forward. This led to the emergence of splinter groups: examples being the 79 Group,⁵¹⁸ who were small but contained a core of personnel who would later occupy key roles in the SNP; and Siol nan Gaidheal (SNG - *Seeds of the Gael*) - a cultural nationalist group who gained prominence for some of their perceived ‘militaristic’ activities.⁵¹⁹

⁵¹⁶ Marr, *The Battle for Scotland*, 148.

⁵¹⁷ Tom Gallagher, *Nationalism in the Nineties*, (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1991), 16

⁵¹⁸ The 79 Group argued that the SNP should take a left-wing stance, and took its name from the year of the referendum.

⁵¹⁹ Lynch covers the emergence of these two groups in detail (Lynch, *SNP*, 169-177); Whilst *Siol nan Gaidheal* displayed militaristic tendencies, there is no evidence that they ever attempted a campaign of political violence.

The consequence of the SNP's decision to bring down the Labour government was that the Conservative Party, helmed by Margaret Thatcher, won the subsequent General Election. Thatcher herself was perceived to be antagonistic towards Scotland in her policies and rhetoric, and became something of a hate figure in Scotland, leading McCrone to suggest that she was "the midwife of Scottish home rule".⁵²⁰ David McCrone argues that the new political ideology advanced by Thatcher was British nationalism "under a new set of political and economic ideas [that were]... distinctly at odds with new alternative variety north of the Border".⁵²¹ Modern Conservatism, he argued "spoke overwhelmingly with a southern English voice".⁵²² Thatcher's attack on the state, and on aspects of civil society were amplified due to the importance of both in Scotland; Michael Keating claims that "this was seen in Scotland as an attack on the remnants of informal self-government, and the installation of placemen was seen as a return to patronage".⁵²³ Scotland's response was to vote for other parties, primarily the Labour party, but despite consistently voting against Thatcher and the Conservatives, the Tories were able to continue on the strength of their vote in England, leaving Scotland "doomed to perpetual Tory policies".⁵²⁴ This situation has come to be described as a democratic deficit, and has been a key feature of nationalist arguments in Scotland since.

The dominance of the Conservative Party at Westminster without a democratic mandate from the Scottish people led the other parties in Scotland to an "anti-Conservative consensus which encouraged the SNP to move comfortably to the Left and Labour to become more nationalist and supportive of self-government".⁵²⁵ Locked out of power by the Conservative hold on England, the Scottish Labour and Liberal Democrat Parties began to examine options for a devolved assembly for Scotland. Unlike the 1970s, the pressure building in the Labour Party to support devolution was coming from Scottish activists rather than the leadership.⁵²⁶

⁵²⁰ David McCrone, *Understanding Scotland: Sociology of a Stateless Nation* (London: Routledge, 1992), 214.

⁵²¹ *ibid.*, 172.

⁵²² *Ibid.*, 173.

⁵²³ Keating, "Scotland in the UK", 245

⁵²⁴ Richard J. Finlay, "Thatcherism and the Union", in *Scotland and the Union: 1707 to 2007*, ed. T. M. Devine (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 157-174.

⁵²⁵ Lynch, *SNP*, 162.

⁵²⁶ Marr, *Battle for Scotland*, 223.

With support from other sections of Scottish society - such as the Kirk, local authorities, and trade unions - a Constitutional Convention was formed in 1989 from the non-partisan Campaign for a Scottish Assembly. Although the SNP were invited to participate in the Constitutional Convention, they were reluctant to do so unless the independence was considered as a constitutional option, and without this, they withdrew to widespread condemnation. It has since been argued, however, that this was the correct strategic move, allowing the party to support devolution without being bound to its success.⁵²⁷ By this point the SNP had come through their period of internal strife and, a year later elected Alex Salmond as leader of the party. This can be seen as evidence that the majority of party members favoured Salmond's gradualist approach to independence - one that advocates taking any powers on offer whilst working towards full sovereignty.

In 1995 the Convention announced their proposals for a Scottish Parliament that were put into effect when Tony Blair and Labour swept to power in 1997. Once again a referendum was held on the matter, but this time Labour and the nationalists worked together, and the result was a resounding victory for the Yes campaign. The (re)convening of the Scottish Parliament in 1999 was tangible evidence of the huge progress the Scottish nationalists had made since the 1960s; even though they have never directly held power, the nationalists moved the issue of Scottish governance from fringe to mainstream by threatening the electoral dominance of Labour in Scotland. Still more progress was to be made though and in 2007 the SNP won their first election in the Scottish Parliament, forming a minority government.

During this term, the party reneged on the promise to hold a referendum on independence and instead focused on establishing the SNP as a party of government. At this they were successful; when they won a majority government in 2011, to widespread astonishment, they did so by overcoming the electoral system that had been designed to prevent just such an outcome, and were able to hold a referendum on the issue. Following a two-year campaign, the nationalists were defeated, despite seeing support for independence rise from an average of 25% to 45%.⁵²⁸ The election of 2011 had already seen the SNP sweep through Labour's traditional heartlands in

⁵²⁷ Pittock, *The Road to Independence*, 77.

⁵²⁸ "UK Polling Report", 2015.

the West of Scotland, and this part of the country now showed some of the highest support for the Yes campaign, with the voters of Glasgow bucking the national trend and voting for independence

Despite the referendum defeat, membership of the SNP rose to over 100,000 - making it the largest political party in Scotland - and the SNP took 56 of Scotland's 59 Westminster seats in the General Election of 2015 (a substantial increase on their previous high of 11 in 1974), achieving exactly 50% of the vote, and becoming the third largest party in the Westminster Parliament. Combined, these factors may signal a change in the balance of power in Scottish politics from the Labour to the SNP. Part of the reason behind this change has been the SNP's adoption of left-of-centre policies that once would have been the hallmark of the Labour party; thirty years after having their clothes briefly stolen by the Labour party, the nationalists have returned the favour.

The main reason, I believe, for the SNP's growth has been their domination of a distinct Scottish political arena created by the establishment of the Scottish Parliament that has given the party an increased relevance. Even though the Scottish Labour Party held power for the first eight years of the Parliament's existence, the vast majority of Labour's high profile Scottish politicians, the likes of Gordon Brown, Alistair Darling, Robin Cook and Douglas Alexander, remained at Westminster. By sending their best talents south, the Labour Party has been represented at Holyrood by less talented politicians, and accordingly, less talented leaders.

The progress of Scottish nationalism is testament to the viability of constitutional politics to such a political movement; it has been this viability, this opportunity to effect political change through non-violent means, that has expelled political violence to the periphery of the national movement in Scotland. Even though voters rejected independence in 2014, the fact that it was achievable at all was sufficient to persuade the overwhelming majority of nationalists that constitutional methods were worth pursuing.

The rise of the Scottish National Party has been the central feature of Scottish politics since the 1960s: their presence has led to a greater attention on the governance of

Scotland from Westminster; ensured mainstream support for Scottish devolution; and led to a referendum on independence. In response, the Conservatives, Labour, and Liberal Democrats have repeatedly sought to accommodate the growth of political nationalism with varying measures of home rule. In fifty years, the Westminster consensus has moved from a position of rejecting devolution outright to supporting a high level of devolution to the Scottish Parliament. This has been achieved despite the SNP not holding reins of government until some years after devolution was achieved.

In this section I examined the rise of Scottish nationalism from the aftermath of the First World War and the birth of nationalist political parties, to the referendum defeat in 2014. The nationalism that has been advanced by the SNP has increasingly been of a civic variety,⁵²⁹ with a focus on economics and social democracy at the expense of cultural features that are prevalent in other nationalist movements throughout the world. During this period there have been arguments about what form of constitutional redress the nationalists would accept, but the ‘gradualist’ approach that advocates working with the unionist parties on a mutually acceptable solution has largely won through. These features of the SNP - a narrow focus on electoral politics, a civic definition of Scottish nationality and a pragmatic approach to devolution - have shaped the entirety of the national movement and bolstered the attractiveness of the SNP to the Scottish people.

Before moving on to discuss other forms of nationalist political activity in Scotland - encompassing direct action as well as violent nationalism - I will briefly examine the key components of the Scottish nationalist message - considering the importance of identity politics, economics, and the democratic deficit.

⁵²⁹ Leith and Soule reject the purely civic nature of Scottish nationalism, instead suggesting that it relies on imagery and ideas that are non-civic and exclusive, although they do conclude that the SNP is unlikely to adopt a primarily ‘non-civic’ approach in the future (Murray Stewart Leith & Daniel P.J. Soule, *Political discourse and National Identity in Scotland* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011)).

The Core Tenets of Political Scottish Nationalism

Earlier in this chapter, I argued that the Act of Union had a colossal effect on Scottish identity. First and foremost, the access it provided to the British Empire afforded Scots opportunities both at home and abroad, that they would not otherwise have had. Additionally, the union allowed for greater migration throughout the United Kingdom, bringing the Scots into closer contact with the rest of the peoples that share their island. This migration has been facilitated by a shared language and religion throughout Great Britain, and these factors helped to create a sense of commonality: a sense of Britishness. This shared identity has been solidified, according to Colley, by conflict with enemies from Continental Europe, firstly Catholic France - emphasising the importance of Protestantism - and then twentieth century Germany.⁵³⁰

Yet despite these processes, there was no comprehensive assimilation into a single British nationality. Whilst the United Kingdom has been able to inspire patriotic fervour and loyalty, it has never been able to create a homogeneous national group; as Keating points out “the UK, indeed, is one of the few countries in the world which lacks an adjective to describe its citizens”.⁵³¹ Colley supports this, suggesting “no one has ever proudly and seriously referred to himself or herself as a ‘UKanian’”.⁵³² The most commonly-used term, British, does a better job, but it fails to account for Northern Ireland; a somewhat ironic omission given the importance of Britishness to the Protestant community in Ulster. In Scotland, a distinct identity was retained, closely linked with the preserved independent institutions, and it was this that early Scottish nationalism was built on - a sense of difference, a sense that Scots should (at least to some degree) control their own affairs.

Identity is a core feature of nationalism; it defines who ‘we’ are, and by extension who ‘they’ are. Scholars of nationalism often postulate that it can be built on a shared culture, language, or ethnicity, yet modern Scottish nationalism has largely eschewed these traditional aspects of identity and focused on what has been described as ‘civic nationalism’, based on common values and institutions, shared memories and

⁵³⁰ Colley, *Britons*.

⁵³¹ Keating, “Scotland in the UK: A Dissolving Union”, 248.

⁵³² Colley, *Acts of Union and Disunion*, 6.

territory.⁵³³ Why, then, has Scottish nationalism developed in such a way? Primarily because modern Scotland largely lacks the social cleavages upon which the binary identities of ‘us’ and ‘them’ are based; while one could argue that at the start of the twentieth century the sectarian divide so potent in Ireland was resonant in Scotland at the start of the twentieth century, it largely diminished as the century progressed.⁵³⁴ In fact, there is only one other out-group that Scottish nationalism as a whole could be said to have emerged against: the English.

Watson claims that “the dominant theme in Scottish history is the relationship between England and Scotland”⁵³⁵ and Devine argues that “Scotland’s emergence as a nation out of miscellaneous tribal groupings in the medieval period was in large part the result of a centuries-old struggle to defend the kingdom from English aggression”.⁵³⁶ As mentioned above, the Declaration of Arbroath, signed in 1320, includes a passage that states “if [the King of Scotland] were to abandon this task, wishing to subject us or our realm to the King of England or the English, we should instantly set ourselves to expel him as the betrayer of his own rights and ours”.⁵³⁷ It is therefore apparent that, throughout Scottish history, England has played the role of the ‘other’.

Since the union of 1707, however, co-operation and migration between Scotland and England has largely healed old wounds; Watson notes that English incomers represent the largest migrant group in Scotland⁵³⁸ - a claim confirmed by the 2001 census, which shows that one in ten Scottish residents were born in England. Watson believes that this fact is often overlooked as a result of the ‘invisibility’ of English people in Scotland, whose only defining feature is an English accent.⁵³⁹ In his study of the

⁵³³ Michael Keating, *Nations against the State: The New Politics of Nationalism in Quebec, Catalonia and Scotland* (London: MacMillan Press, 1996), 6-7.

⁵³⁴ This issue is discussed in further detail in Chapter 5. For further reading on this, Walker considers the role that key Scottish institutions played in helping to integrate the Catholic community (Graeme Walker, *Intimate Strangers: Political and Cultural Interaction Between Scotland and Ulster in Modern Times* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1995)), and for further debate about sectarianism in Scotland, T. M. Devine’s edited volume *Scotland’s Shame* continues a wide array of opinions on the matter (T.M. Devine, *Scotland’s Shame? Bigotry and Sectarianism in Modern Scotland* (Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing, 2000)).

⁵³⁵ Watson, *Being English in Scotland*, 9.

⁵³⁶ Devine, *Scotland and the Union*, 3.

⁵³⁷ Brand, *The National Movement in Scotland*, 12.

⁵³⁸ Watson, *Being English in Scotland*, 5.

⁵³⁹ *ibid.*

English migrant community in Scotland, Watson does refer to two anti-English migration groups that emerged in Scotland in the 1990s: Scottish Watch and Settler Watch. Both of these organisations held meetings and issued anti-English material, but the media attention they gained was far greater than their level of public support warranted.⁵⁴⁰ James Kellas reports that the SNP expelled any members who joined these organisations,⁵⁴¹ and their chief executive took steps to have them closed down,⁵⁴² and Keating argues that any “diffuse anti-English sentiment [that] does exist within Scottish society ... tends to be aimed at the structures of the British state rather than English people as individuals or a race”.⁵⁴³ Despite the sizeable English-born population in Scotland, Anglophobia is low; Watson reports that 94% of English respondents had not experienced anti-Englishness.⁵⁴⁴ There are undoubtedly times that the Scottish identity has been defined in reference to their southerly neighbours, but the evidence suggests that modern Scottish nationalism has not been driven by hatred of the English.

Thus the form of nationalism employed by the SNP, certainly since the 1980s, has been “more open, more European and progressive... more self-confident and less defensive” while earlier nationalists were “nostalgic, defensive and parochial”,⁵⁴⁵ and Scottish nationalists would argue that modern nationalism is based on making progress, rather than returning Scotland to a glorious past. In their survey of SNP members, Mitchell, Bennie and Johns contend that SNP members “do not so much endorse a civic identity as endorse a pluralist conception of belonging” that can involve a combination of civic and ethnic factors,⁵⁴⁶ leading them to conclude that “there are many ways of being Scottish”.⁵⁴⁷ As a result, support for the SNP has not been wholly incompatible with Britishness (even if it is incompatible with unionism), although SNP supporters are far more likely to reject a British identity than supporters of other political parties.⁵⁴⁸

⁵⁴⁰ *ibid.*

⁵⁴¹ James Kellas, “The Scottish Political System Revisited.” In *Scotland and Wales: Nations Again?* B. Taylor and K. Thomson, eds. (Cardiff: University of Wales Press), 223.

⁵⁴² Watson, *Being English in Scotland*, 132.

⁵⁴³ Keating, *Nations against the State*, 181.

⁵⁴⁴ Watson, *Being English in Scotland*, 143.

⁵⁴⁵ *ibid.*, 253.

⁵⁴⁶ Mitchell, Bennie and Johns, *The Scottish National Party*.

⁵⁴⁷ *ibid.*, 143.

⁵⁴⁸ *ibid.*, 104.

In place of cultural or linguistic content to stimulate the patriotism of voters, the SNP has focused on less emotive topics: how Scotland is governed and who it is governed by. Since the 1960s the SNP has focused on the distinct economic needs of Scotland, and has made this the centrepiece of their message. The discovery of oil off the north-east coast of Scotland gave this message added resonance in the 1970s, and the SNP have used this discovery ever since to make the claim that an independent Scotland would be more prosperous than it could be in the union. The party has based a core strand of its economic policy on the ‘strength’ of oil revenues ever since.

Another core tenet of the SNP’s argument has been the democratic deficit; considering Scotland’s size and the number of representatives that it sends to Westminster, it has always been perfectly feasible for Scotland to vote for one party and be governed by another. McCrone argues that as long as Scotland maintained the same voting behaviour as England, this was unlikely to be an issue.⁵⁴⁹ However, in the aftermath of the Second World War, voting patterns in Scotland and England began to diverge, and Scottish support for the Conservative Party declined. Considering the Conservatives were able to win a majority of votes in Scotland in 1955, their rapid decline has been as important to the development of a distinct political arena in Scotland as the rise of the SNP.⁵⁵⁰

Since that point, the Conservatives have primarily targeted English voters, often at the expense of their electability in Scotland and Wales, and the notion of ‘democratic deficit’ entered the Scottish political lexicon, seized upon by the SNP during the premiership of Margaret Thatcher to suggest that she lacked a popular mandate to govern in Scotland. A prominent example was the Poll Tax; according to Lynch, the

⁵⁴⁹ David McCrone, “Scotland Out the Union? The Rise and Rise of the Nationalist Agenda”, *The Political Quarterly* 83 (2012), 73.

⁵⁵⁰ Three chapters in T. M. Devine’s edited volume *Scotland and the Union*, consider key factors behind the decline of the Conservative/Unionist Party in Scotland: Cameron tracks important changes in Scottish society and suggests the “social and institutional background to their electoral success was becoming less secure” by the start of the 1960s. Finlay examines the policies, specifically the “unapologetic” economic policies, of Margaret Thatcher and the extent to which Thatcher’s government failed to consider a specific Scottish dimension to their actions. Finally, remaining with Mrs Thatcher, Miller notes the importance of Margaret Thatcher’s redefinition of unionism in direct opposition to Scottish nationalism, allowing opponents to depict the Conservatives as foreign. (Cameron, “The Politics of the Union in an Age of Unionism”; Finlay, “Thatcherism and the Union”; W. L. Miller, “The Death of Unionism”, in *Scotland and the Union: 1707 to 2007*, ed. T.M. Devine (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 175-194.

“great symbol of the Conservatives’ democratic illegitimacy to govern Scotland”.⁵⁵¹ A new charge levied by local councils and trialled in Scotland, based on a fixed rate rather than means-tested, the SNP took a prominent role in the popular opposition to the introduction of the Poll Tax and it was eventually replaced, but not before further damage was done to the Conservatives’ popularity in Scotland.

Central to the SNP’s message since the 1970s has been the economy and political legitimacy; rather than basing their argument on emotion, the SNP’s message has been focus on economics and administrative issues. However, not all in the nationalist movement have eschewed emotive protest, and below I discuss the use of other forms of political action by Scottish nationalists, starting with non-violent direct action.

Non-Violent Direct Action

One of the most notorious acts of Scottish nationalist direct action was the theft of the Stone of Destiny (also known as the Stone of Scone) - a stone used in the coronation of Scottish monarchs - from Westminster Abbey on Christmas Day 1950, by a group of four students who were members of John MacCormick’s Covenant Association.⁵⁵² The Stone was eventually returned to the authorities, but the audacity and symbolism of the act and the manhunt that followed gave Scottish nationalists a publicity boost.

Another symbolic act undertaken by Scottish nationalists could easily fall under the rubric of violent nationalism as it involved explosives, but as the purpose of the act was vandalism it feels more appropriate to discuss it here: following the coronation of Queen Elizabeth in 1953, she adopted the royal style of Elizabeth II, and this angered some in the Scottish nationalist movement who (correctly) asserted that she was in fact Elizabeth I of Scotland, decrying this oversight as an example of how some in England treated the United Kingdom as a continuation of English history.⁵⁵³ The

⁵⁵¹ Lynch, *SNP*, 183.

⁵⁵² Ian Hamilton, one of the perpetrators of the theft describes how they accomplished the feat (and broke the stone in the process) in great detail (Ian Hamilton, *A Touch of Treason* (Moffat: Lochar Publishing, 1990), 48-66).

⁵⁵³ John MacCormick was sufficiently angered that he (along with Ian Hamilton) brought action against the Crown to prevent her from using this title. Although they failed, the judge did highlight “the principle of the unlimited Sovereignty of Parliament is a distinctively English principle which has no

insignia of the monarch was carried on post boxes nationwide, so some Scottish nationalists took to vandalising them, even going so far as to use a small amount of explosives to destroy them. Again, Harvie says that this type of symbolic action was damaging for the constitutional nationalist movement - “these japes unfortunately coincided with an IRA offensive [the Border Campaign], and did little to enhance the respectability of the home rulers”.⁵⁵⁴ As I show, the damaging equation of nationalism with violence was one that some unionist politicians would publicly espouse when future generations of Scottish nationalists adopted similar tactics.

Key to this type of non-violent nationalist activity in Scotland were dedicated individuals prepared to pursue it as a means to an end. One such individual was Wendy Wood, who, despite being involved with the SNP in its early days, believed that electoral activity was unlikely to lead to progress, and claimed that she felt “impatient” with the party’s propaganda.⁵⁵⁵ Instead she took to making symbolic gestures; one of the most notable occurring in 1932 when she led supporters to Stirling Castle and removed the British flag, replacing it with a Lion Rampant.⁵⁵⁶ She also claimed to be involved with a Scottish Defence Force,⁵⁵⁷ a small paramilitary organisation,⁵⁵⁸ and later set up her own movement called the Scottish Patriots which, according to Gavin Bowd, was largely a “vehicle for her extremely forceful and attractive personality and her ability as an open-air speaker”.⁵⁵⁹

Wood was also allegedly interviewed by the police about the theft of the sword of William Wallace in May 1972,⁵⁶⁰ supposedly carried out by two men who would later become involved in more violent nationalist activity.⁵⁶¹ Wood rose to national prominence again in December 1972 when she announced she would go on hunger

counterpart in Scottish Constitutional law... I have difficulty in seeing why it should have been supposed that the new Parliament of Great Britain must inherit all the peculiar characteristics of the English Parliament but none of the Scottish Parliament”. For those involved this represented a symbolic victory (Hamilton, *A Touch of Treason*, 88-89).

⁵⁵⁴ Harvie, *Scotland and Nationalism*, 237.

⁵⁵⁵ Wendy Wood, *I Like Life* (Edinburgh: Dunedin Press, 1938), 239.

⁵⁵⁶ Brand, *The National Movement in Scotland*, 232.

⁵⁵⁷ *ibid.*, 233.

⁵⁵⁸ Bowd reports that they limited their activity to “drilling in the Pentland Hills” and were infiltrated and smashed by Special Branch (Gavin Bowd, *Fascist Scotland: Caledonia and the Far Right* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2013), 140-156).

⁵⁵⁹ *ibid.*, 253.

⁵⁶⁰ “The Tartan Army”, *ElectricScotland*.

⁵⁶¹ A first-hand account of the theft is provided in the book *The Tartan Army* (“The Tartan Army”, *ElectricScotland*).

strike until home rule was delivered, an event that was later cited as motivation for explosions carried out by members of a nationalist group, as I shall discuss below. After six days of hunger strike, it was announced that the Government would prepare a Green Paper on the topic of Scottish devolution, and this was sufficient to persuade her to call off the protest.⁵⁶² However, she was reported to have told a journalist “we’ll only get independence if there’s a threat behind it... the SNP is after votes, it can’t threaten - that’s why there are others”.⁵⁶³ Her behaviour earned her the respect and support of those from the extremist fringe of Scottish nationalism⁵⁶⁴, and led to suggestions that she may have been an *agent provocateur*.⁵⁶⁵

Following the referendum defeat in 1979, key figures in the SNP - led by a small faction in the party called the 79 Group - advocated a campaign of civil disobedience, taking the lead from the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) whose Scottish membership overlapped with that of the SNP.⁵⁶⁶ The first use of the tactic, led by 79 Group leader Jim Sillars, occurred in June 1981 when members of the party occupied job centres in Scotland in protest at high unemployment figures.⁵⁶⁷ This was followed by a rally held on Calton Hill in Edinburgh in October 1981, much to the apprehension of the SNP leadership.⁵⁶⁸ During this event an attempt was made to gain access to the Royal High School, which would have been the Scottish Assembly had the referendum in 1979 been successful. They were denied access and held a brief sit-down protest outside instead, but the undeterred Sillars and five other members broke into the building and intended to read out a symbolic declaration, but were arrested before they could do so. Following this “farce”, the campaign collapsed and another bout of infighting began within the SNP.⁵⁶⁹ Sillars himself says that the conditions were never right for non-violent direct action; when asked what he would have changed with the benefit of hindsight, he stated that he would not have attempted the

⁵⁶² Pittock, *The Road to Independence*, 59.

⁵⁶³ Bowd, *Fascist Scotland*, 253.

⁵⁶⁴ Major F.A.C Boothby who was later involved in the APG praised her actions in his journal *Skian Dhu*, (*Skian Dhu*, 10, 3 (1972), 1); and in the account of the actions of the Tartan Army, the author (the narrative suggests that it was one of those involved) goes as far as to dedicate the book to her and suggest that her actions were crucial to securing a Scottish Parliament (“The Tartan Army”, *ElectricScotland*).

⁵⁶⁵ John Herdman, *Poets, Pubs, Polls and Pillar Boxes: Memoirs of an Era in Scottish Politics and Letters* (Kirkcaldy: Akros Publications, 1999), 37.

⁵⁶⁶ Jim Sillars, interviewed by the author, Edinburgh, 12 November 2014.

⁵⁶⁷ Douglas Lowe, “SNP occupies job centres as protest campaign starts”, *Herald*, 30 June 1981.

⁵⁶⁸ Lynch, *SNP*, 168.

⁵⁶⁹ *ibid.*

campaign at all.⁵⁷⁰ Despite the failure of this campaign, the SNP did engage in civil disobedience again when faced with the controversial Poll Tax, which had led to “suspicions that the Scots were being used as guinea-pigs”.⁵⁷¹ The party adopted a stance of refusing to pay the charge, although Devine suggests that it was anger in England rather than the role of the SNP that ensured the policy was scrapped.⁵⁷²

Despite all this, neither civil disobedience nor non-violent direct action have been major features of Scottish nationalist campaigning in the twentieth century. In their study of nationalism in Scotland and Wales, Studlar and McAllister express their surprise that nationalist groups in both countries did not utilise methods of protest more than they did.⁵⁷³ One factor that they identify behind this is the cautious nature of the SNP leadership,⁵⁷⁴ but this alone does not explain why those outside the SNP largely chose not to engage in these types of activities. For a variety of reasons, non-violent protest has largely been overlooked as a means of achieving political change by the nationalist movement, but there were still some who viewed non-violent protest as insufficient and went further still.

Violent Scottish Nationalism

In this section I will discuss the use of political violence by Scottish nationalists, covering a litany of groups that sprang up and quickly disappeared. As I discussed in the introduction to this thesis, there has not been an objective comprehensive study of Scottish nationalist terrorism to draw from, so the primary source for this section will be newspaper articles detailing the acts of those involved, as well as court cases of those caught. In the previous section I noted that Wendy Wood claimed to be involved with a paramilitary group called the Scottish Defence Force in the 1940s, but there is no evidence that the group ever carried out any incidents of political violence.

⁵⁷⁰ Sillars interviewed by the author, Edinburgh, 12 November 2014.

⁵⁷¹ Devine, *The Scottish Nation*, 603.

⁵⁷² *ibid.*

⁵⁷³ Donley T. Studlar and Ian McAllister, “Nationalism in Scotland and Wales: a post-industrial phenomenon”, *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 11 (1988), 58.

⁵⁷⁴ *ibid.*

The first incidence of a group that did carry out an act of political violence was the Scottish Republican Army (SRA), whose name first appears in February 24th 1953 after an Edinburgh councillor had written to a local newspaper, condemning an attack on a pillar-box in the city.⁵⁷⁵ In response to this, the councillor alleges that he received a telephone call threatening that the SRA would “take care of him”.⁵⁷⁶ Further threats were made to a Conservative MP, as well as shopkeepers who sold memorabilia displaying the royal insignia of Elizabeth II,⁵⁷⁷ and the first recorded attack committed by the group was a small bomb attack on a shop in Glasgow whose proprietor had refused to remove the insignia from his shop window.⁵⁷⁸ Later that year it was alleged that they had stolen guns from a Territorial Army hut,⁵⁷⁹ and explosives from a quarry in Milngavie (although the material was later recovered).⁵⁸⁰

In November 1953, four individuals were arrested and faced trial at the High Court in Edinburgh, during which an undercover police officer claimed he had been asked to source explosives for the group, and that their intention was to “blow up all communications, railway and road bridges, pylons carrying electricity from Scotland to England, and to terrorise the nation”.⁵⁸¹ Yet when the individuals involved took the stand they claimed that the SRA did not exist, that their actions were a “hoax” and that the police officer had attempted to entrap young nationalists.⁵⁸² At the conclusion of the trial, the four accused were each sentenced to one year in jail for unlawful possession of explosives, but as police officers left the court they were subjected to the anger of a gathered crowd who claimed they were, among other things, “traitors”.⁵⁸³

After their imprisonment a journalist from the *Times* claimed to have met SRA members in a café in Glasgow, where he was apparently asked to supply building

⁵⁷⁵ Given the modus operandi of the group, it is possible that the SRA were involved in this act.

⁵⁷⁶ “Letter-box bomb critic threatened”, *Guardian*, 24 February 1953.

⁵⁷⁷ “‘Anti-Cosh’ bill through commons”, *Guardian*, 27 March 1953; “‘Scottish Republican Army’ threats continue”, *Herald*, 25 March 1953; “More E I R Threats to Shops”, *Herald*, 31 March 1953.

⁵⁷⁸ “Bomb Shatters Shop Window”, *Herald*, 23 March 1953.

⁵⁷⁹ “‘SRA’ call after arms theft”, *Herald*, 5 June 1953.

⁵⁸⁰ “Explosive stolen from quarry”, *Guardian*, 28 August 1953.

⁵⁸¹ “Scottish ‘Terror’ plot alleged”, *Herald*, 18 November 1953.

⁵⁸² “Scottish Republican Army ‘does not exist’”, *Guardian*, 21 November 1953; “Scottish nationalist’s court plea”, *Guardian*, 24 November 1953.

⁵⁸³ “Prison for Scots nationalists”, *Guardian*, 26 November 1953.

plans for Glasgow City Chambers and Holyrood Palace.⁵⁸⁴ Despite this claim, little is heard from the group, although the name does appear again in relation to threats made to blow up a chemical plant and to send “poisoned pies to an enemy of Scotland”,⁵⁸⁵ and the burning of an English flag.⁵⁸⁶ They were not heard from again.

Following the imprisonment of those involved in the SRA, no group emerged as successor and the violent nationalist scene lay dormant for nearly two decades, illustrating a complete lack of support for a militant Scottish nationalism at that time. It wasn't until the start of the 1970s, as Scottish nationalism was developing as a political force, that a multitude of groups emerged to supplement the electoral activity of the SNP; in their study of violent nationalism in Scotland, Scott and MacLeay identify the Army of the Provisional Government of Scotland⁵⁸⁷ as the first group to materialise at this time. The aim of this group was “to take over the government of Scotland when the majority of the Scottish people decided they wanted to be independent”.⁵⁸⁸ Emerging out of the 1320 Club,⁵⁸⁹ it was suggested that the group was started as one of the key figures involved, William Murray, believed the SNP was faltering.⁵⁹⁰ To arrest this decline, the APG supposedly planned to seize and hold a Scottish town in the hope of leading a nationalist uprising.⁵⁹¹ To fund this plan Murray planned a bank robbery, however police gained wind of the plan and intervened before it could take place; Murray and two accomplices were jailed for a total of 12 years in 1971.⁵⁹²

Another group who targeted banks to raise funds operating around this period were the Workers Party of Scotland (WPS), who came to light after a spate of bank robberies in Glasgow in 1972 were traced to the group.⁵⁹³ They were eventually

⁵⁸⁴ Liam Regan, “Scottish Republicans are on the warpath”, *The Times*, 12 December 1953.

⁵⁸⁵ “Poisoned pies”, *Herald*, 12 January 1956; “Bomb ‘warning’ to I.C.I.”, *Herald*, 11 November 1957.

⁵⁸⁶ “‘English flag’ burned”, *Herald*, 12 July 1954.

⁵⁸⁷ The group's name is possibly a reference to the Provisional Government of the Irish Republic declared in the 1916 Easter Rising in Ireland.

⁵⁸⁸ “Scot says he would die for cause and country”, *Guardian*, 26 June 1971.

⁵⁸⁹ The 1320 Club was a nationalist society who took their name from the year the Declaration of Arbroath was signed, with some prominent figures - including Hugh MacDiarmid, amongst their ranks.

⁵⁹⁰ Ian Bell and William Hill, “Tunilla admits taking part in APG plot”, *The Scotsman*, 17 May 1975.

⁵⁹¹ Scott and MacLeay, *Britain's Secret War*, 33.

⁵⁹² “Bank was to be robbed ‘for cause’”, *Guardian*, 29 June 1971.

⁵⁹³ Scott and MacLeay identify six robberies conducted in the Glasgow area and claim that the group earned £31,000 for their troubles (*Britain's Secret War*, 40-44).

sentenced to a total of 81 years in prison for their actions,⁵⁹⁴ “putting them in the same league as the Great Train Robbers and the worst of the IRA terrorists”,⁵⁹⁵ intended as a deterrent to others with similar ideas. Considering the severity of these sentences, it is somewhat surprising that this did not inflame nationalist opinion in Scotland. However, the motivation behind these robberies would appear to be the overthrow of capitalism, rather than the overthrow of the British state,⁵⁹⁶ and the nature of the crime (armed robbery) was more criminal than political in nature. Thus the actions of the WPS sit uneasily alongside nationalist groups, yet they are often treated as part of the same category.⁵⁹⁷

Nine months after the imprisonment of four members of the WPS, another group emerged, launching a bomb attack against an electricity pylon in Wamphray, Dumfriesshire on 10th December 1972. In a book published online detailing the actions and motivations of the two men behind the group, the author (who remains anonymous, but claims to have an intimate knowledge of the topic) states this attack was carried out in support of Wendy Wood, who was carrying out a hunger strike in pursuit of a Scottish assembly at this time,⁵⁹⁸ with a secondary motivation to prevent the export of electricity from Scotland to England.⁵⁹⁹ Behind it were the individuals who had already carried out an act of nationalist protest described above: the theft of the sword of William Wallace. The attack was claimed by the Border Clan, but the group also used the name 100 Organisation,⁶⁰⁰ before settling on the name Tartan Army.⁶⁰¹

The individuals behind this attack followed it up with attacks on a BBC relay pylon at Wester Glen, Falkirk in January 1973,⁶⁰² and multiple attacks against oil pipelines at

⁵⁹⁴ James Murphy, “Glasgow bank robbers given heavy sentences”, *Herald*, 21 March 1972.

⁵⁹⁵ James Freeman, “The crime and punishment of Matt Lygate” *Herald*, 17 September 1983.

⁵⁹⁶ “Political theorist who turned bank robber”, *Herald*, 21 March 1972.

⁵⁹⁷ Scott and MacLeay include a chapter on this group in *Britain’s Secret War*, and a newspaper article on the leader of the WPS compares his sentence with that of other violent nationalists around that time, (Freeman, “The crime and punishment of Matt Lygate” *Herald*, 17 September 1983).

⁵⁹⁸ Tartan Army, *ElectricScotland*, Ch. 2.

⁵⁹⁹ *ibid.*

⁶⁰⁰ Derived from the line “as long as but a hundred of us remain alive, never will we on any conditions be brought under English rule” from the Declaration of Arbroath. These groups are sometimes treated as if they were distinct entities, rather than different names for the same group.

⁶⁰¹ The name ‘Tartan Army’ was later appropriated by the fans of the Scottish national football team and is now synonymous with its supporters.

⁶⁰² Allegedly in “defence of freedom of speech” (Tartan Army, *ElectricScotland*, Ch. 3).

Bridge of Earn in August 1973, Bo'ness in July 1974, and two separate locations in Perth - Crook of Devon and Kinfauns - in September 1975.⁶⁰³ These attacks were allegedly to stop Scottish oil going to England, at a time when the SNP were running a high-profile campaign proclaiming 'It's Scotland's Oil',⁶⁰⁴ but the extent to which the Tartan Army was operating on the back of this campaign is unclear. Members of the group were eventually arrested outside the French Consulate in Edinburgh in May 1976,⁶⁰⁵ leading to claims that they were to carry out an attack on behalf of Breton nationalists.⁶⁰⁶

In September 1976, five individuals appeared in court charged with involvement in the bombings and in a wider conspiracy. However, a large number of the initial charges had been dropped, and the jury found two of the five not guilty, with a third receiving a non-custodial sentence.⁶⁰⁷ Two men, Donald Currie and Gerard McGuigan, were found guilty and given prison sentences of five years and one year (later reduced to three years and four months) respectively,⁶⁰⁸ but the judge had serious reservations about the case, suggesting that the "army... so far as the evidence goes seems to only have one member",⁶⁰⁹ and raising concerns about the role of the police.⁶¹⁰ Furthermore, following the conclusion of the trial it was claimed, "the trial produced no convincing evidence of any tight knit para-military group".⁶¹¹ Once again, it was claimed that the police had overstepped the line in the pursuit of violent Scottish nationalists; although the group claim that one of their guiding principles was that "no-one should be hurt",⁶¹² any use of explosives carries with it a degree of risk to human life. They established a pattern of action - targeting oil infrastructure, a symbol of the 'theft' of Scotland's material wealth - and though the targets they chose undoubtedly had symbolic value to the perpetrators, to what extent the symbolism resonated among the people of Scotland we cannot measure.

⁶⁰³ Tartan Army, *ElectricScotland*.

⁶⁰⁴ Jim Freeman, "'I helped to steal Wallace's sword'", *Herald*, 28 September 1976.

⁶⁰⁵ *ibid*.

⁶⁰⁶ Jim Freeman and Ray Duncan, "I caused pipeline blast", *Herald*, 25 September 1976.

⁶⁰⁷ Jim Freeman, "Tartan Army myth shattered", *Herald*, 2 October 1976.

⁶⁰⁸ Tartan Army, *ElectricScotland*.

⁶⁰⁹ Tom McConnell, "Judge talks of 'army of only one member'", *Herald*, 1 October 1976.

⁶¹⁰ "It was also a matter of grave concern that the police... perhaps became over-enthusiastic [and]... spread the net even further - not only catching the big fish, but any other little fish who happened to be swimming about anywhere near the pond where the big fish were" (*ibid*).

⁶¹¹ Jim Freeman and George Forbes, "Tartan Army - was it a one-man organisation?", *Herald*, 2 October 1976.

⁶¹² Tartan Army, *ElectricScotland*.

The perpetrators themselves believed their actions had played an important part in the nationalist movement, suggesting that their actions contributed to “the White Paper, the referendum and the new Parliament building”,⁶¹³ but following the trial, the group was not heard from again and it is claimed that the individuals went their own ways.⁶¹⁴ The gaoling of three members of the APG in 1971 meanwhile, had not led to the break-up of this particular group; it had continued to exist, planning their next move, and in a surprise development, they were able to convince General Idi Amin, President of Uganda, to send a telegram to the leader of the SNP in 1974, supporting Scottish independence and proposing to support the Scottish cause at the UN General Assembly.⁶¹⁵ Unsurprisingly, the leader of the SNP chose not to take him up on this offer. Another attempt by the APG to publicise their cause was to meet with journalists from the *Daily Record*: announcing plans for a summit of the leading Scottish terrorist groups, and revealing logistical support from the Provisional IRA.⁶¹⁶

Again, plans were drawn up for another bank robbery to raise funds for APG’s proposed actions. The robbery was carried out by a member of the group, Michael Fairlie, along with two accomplices who were not involved in the APG, on January 21st 1975. In total they took £8040, of which £2400 was given to the group,⁶¹⁷ but the robbery itself is described in farcical terms by Scott and MacLeay, who contend that the ineptitude of the criminals (describing it as “one of the most botched bank raids ever carried out”) made it easy for the police to apprehend them.⁶¹⁸ In addition to arresting those involved in the bank robbery, the police also arrested a number of other members of the APG on conspiracy charges, leading to two trials in April and May 1975. In the first trial, the trio involved in the robbery received a total of 30 years in prison, with Fairlie receiving 12 years.⁶¹⁹

⁶¹³ *ibid.*

⁶¹⁴ *ibid.*

⁶¹⁵ “Amin and the Scottish revolt”, *Guardian*, 16 May 1975.

⁶¹⁶ It was later admitted in court that these were untrue and simply intended to gain publicity - the individual involved, William Murray, confessed his wild claims were all exaggeration and that he preferred a peaceful resolution (Robert McNair and Peter May, “Major Boothby denies mastermind charge”, *The Scotsman*, 20 May 1975).

⁶¹⁷ “Bank robber raised money for Scottish terrorists”, *Guardian*, 9 April 1975.

⁶¹⁸ Scott and MacLeay, *Britain’s Secret War*, 55-56.

⁶¹⁹ “Tartan Army bank robber gets 12 years”, *Herald*, 9 April 1975.

The second trial, on the wider conspiracy of the APG, led to a number of revelations about the group's plans: during the trial it was claimed that they were to raid quarries, barracks and banks for weaponry and funds, and would attack an American nuclear base and a monument to the Duke of Sutherland.⁶²⁰ This information came from a document called "Guerrilla Operations of the Scottish Provisional Government", which also detailed how internal discipline was to be maintained (deserters were to face death), and plans to implement a decentralised cell structure.⁶²¹ It was claimed that this document was "a guide to guerrilla operations in the event of a peace-keeping operation by the English upon our country",⁶²² but that the group were only intended to be reactive, rather than to proactively advance the cause of Scottish nationalism through violence.⁶²³ Yet again the counsel for the defence criticised the role of the police in the surveillance of those involved, suggesting that the suspects were followed for great periods of time in the hope they would commit a more serious crime.⁶²⁴

At the conclusion of the trial, five of the defendants received prison sentences totalling 34 years, with the longest individual sentence of 12 years, but in his concluding remarks the judge commented that the APG were "very loose" if the group did at all exist.⁶²⁵ Indeed, even one of the defendants, Major Frederick Boothby,⁶²⁶ decried the "activities carried out by some of these gangsters under the cloak of patriotism"⁶²⁷, and described one of his co-defendants as "illiterate, violent and a trained killer".⁶²⁸ From this evidence it would seem that the APG was comprised of a mix of criminals and radical ideologues brought together through perceived mutual opportunity. In the wake of these sentences, a member of the APG did release a

⁶²⁰ Robert McNair and Ian Bell, "Court hears of plans to steal BAOR supplies", *The Scotsman*, 10 May 1975.

⁶²¹ Kevin Done and Ian Bell, "First targets were military, court told", *The Scotsman*, 15 May 1975.

⁶²² Peter May, "Violent Men in APG trial", *The Scotsman*, 20 May 1975.

⁶²³ Robert McNair and Peter May, "Major Boothby denies mastermind charge", *The Scotsman*, 20 May 1975.

⁶²⁴ Ian Bell, "Crown case in APG trial ridiculed", *The Scotsman*, 23 May 1975.

⁶²⁵ Ian Bell, "34 years for five of APG conspirators", *The Scotsman*, 24 May 1975.

⁶²⁶ Major Boothby is a much-discussed figure in works on violent Scottish nationalism, although there were claims that he was an *agent provocateur* (James Freeman, "Real-life world of a fantasist", *Herald*, 15 March 1997).

⁶²⁷ Robert McNair and Peter May, "APG is just another weed, court told", *The Scotsman*, 21 May 1975.

⁶²⁸ Peter May, "Violent men in APG trial", *The Scotsman*, 20 May 1975.

statement claiming that Scotland “need never doubt its readiness and ability to answer the nation’s call”,⁶²⁹ but there is no record of any further action by the APG.

The APG never claimed credit for an act of political violence, but the plans they had drawn up for a guerrilla war, and the lengths it went to raise funds and gain publicity, mean that it was treated as a terrorist group in the media. As in 1971 their plans were thwarted at the fundraising stage, and on both occasions police were well aware of their activities, but waited to see what would come of their schemes before taking action.⁶³⁰

Following the imprisonment of members of the APG and the Tartan Army, there was a three-year lull in violent nationalist activity in Scotland before the next group was to emerge; the Scottish Republican Socialist League (SRSL).⁶³¹ Breaking away from the Scottish Republican Socialist Party (a minor extreme-left party), who had arrived onto the scene after the unsuccessful devolution referendum in 1979, the SRSL was reportedly formed following an SNP rally at Bannockburn in September 1979 and aimed to achieve self-government for Scotland through violent means.⁶³² As others had done before them, they took to criminal endeavours to raise funds, targeting a Post Office on Oxford Road, Glasgow in October 1979 before hitting a £100,000 jackpot in April 1980 when they raided a Post Office van in the Gorbals.⁶³³ Like their predecessors, they mishandled both robberies; in the first raid one of the individuals was identified when his mask slipped, and in the second the culprits managed to lock themselves into the van with the money, although they were able to escape by forcing the driver to disable the automatic alarm.⁶³⁴

The group used this injection of capital to rent properties, and buy guns, ammunition and bomb-making equipment. To assist with their bomb making preparation, members of the group attempted to bug an explosives depot, but accidentally put the firm’s phone network out of operation instead.⁶³⁵ Nevertheless, assisted by a copy of

⁶²⁹ *ibid.*

⁶³⁰ Scott and MacLeay, *Britain’s Secret War*.

⁶³¹ Scott and MacLeay allege that they also went by the name ‘Army of the Scottish People’ (*ibid.*, 93).

⁶³² Charles Gillies, “A Comedy of terrorists”, *Herald*, 15 October 1980.

⁶³³ *ibid.*

⁶³⁴ *ibid.*

⁶³⁵ “Six are guilty of Scots bomb plot, *Guardian*, 15 October 1980.

the *'Anarchist Cook Book'* they were able to build a number of crude devices.⁶³⁶ Two members of the group also visited one of the leaders of the APG - William Murray - in prison.⁶³⁷ In June 1980, the group decided to blow up the Scottish Assembly building⁶³⁸ on Calton Hill, but called off the attack after they caught the attention of a group of bystanders.⁶³⁹ Shortly after this, they were apprehended when "a member of the group called firemen after a device had burst into flames in a rented Glasgow flat".⁶⁴⁰ Once again, violent Scottish nationalists faced the High Court for the two robberies in Glasgow, an attempted attack on the Glasgow Stock Exchange (for which the charges were later dropped⁶⁴¹), the attempted attack on the proposed Assembly building, and the illegal possession of a "considerable arsenal".⁶⁴² Of the nine men who were initially charged, six were found guilty, receiving a combined total of 72 years in prison.

The nationalist agenda featured heavily in Scottish politics in the 1970s, and the Westminster parties tried to outbid one another to stave off the nationalist threat to their seats. Despite this, a number of nationalists sought to take a short cut to victory, and three separate groups emerged to this end. The APG and the SRSI bungled their way through robberies to finance their idealistic schemes, and although neither group were able to carry out an attack, both acquired finances and weapons, and showed the willingness (if not the nous) to use force should the need arise. The Tartan Army were a slightly more professional outfit, carrying out six attacks over the space of four years, yet they too were eventually apprehended.

The four conspiracy trials (two including the APG) of those involved have a number of commonalities: the actions of the accused were always presented as a "farce" or "comedy", whether for their ineptitude or the grandiose plans they had drawn up; the suggestion that the supposed terrorist groups did not really exist, or contained one solitary member; and concern about the actions of the police in investigating and apprehending the suspects. Thankfully, however, despite general incompetence

⁶³⁶ Charles Gillies, "A Comedy of terrorists", *Herald*, 15 October 1980.

⁶³⁷ "Former terrorist tells of jail visit by accused", *Herald*, 24 September 1980.

⁶³⁸ The former Royal High School building was the proposed site of the Scottish Assembly had the 1979 referendum been successful.

⁶³⁹ Gillies, "A Comedy of terrorists", *Herald*, 15 October 1980.

⁶⁴⁰ "Six are guilty of Scots bomb plot", *Guardian*, 15 October 1980.

⁶⁴¹ "Bomb charges dropped at tartan terror trial", *Herald*, 14 October 1980.

⁶⁴² "Terror trial told of arsenal", *Herald*, 1 October 1980.

combined with the use of explosives, the handful of attacks that had been successful carried out led to no loss of life. In total, between 1950 and 1980, 18 men received 154 years in prison for their roles in financing, planning or carrying out acts of political violence in the name of Scottish nationalism.

The Emergence of the SNLA

The most serious violent nationalist group to emerge was the Scottish National Liberation Army, whose leader had been a member of the Scottish Republican Socialist League.⁶⁴³ The genesis of the group, they claim, was the result of the failed devolution referendum in 1979, “the final signal that there was no constitutional way forward”.⁶⁴⁴ According to a timeline in Leslie’s profile of the SNLA, the group came into existence in December 1980,⁶⁴⁵ although the group didn’t carry out their first official attack until March 1982.⁶⁴⁶ Thankfully neither this attack, nor any of their subsequent acts, led to any deaths. The group’s first attack was a letter bomb sent to the Defence Secretary, John Nott - allegedly in response for the announcement of the Trident missile programme.⁶⁴⁷ The group claim that this initial attack was intended to “kill or main” the target, but when they learned that the package had been opened by an office secretary (who was unharmed) they switched to less dangerous devices.⁶⁴⁸ This apparent moral *volte-face* is early evidence of the inconsistency of the group with regard to human life.

They followed up these initial attacks with letter bombs to the offices of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) in Glasgow, the Queen at Buckingham Palace, the industry secretary Patrick Jenkin, and the headquarters of the Conservative Party in London and Edinburgh, and claimed to have placed an incendiary device in the Scottish Assembly building.⁶⁴⁹ This pattern continued throughout 1983 with attacks targeting

⁶⁴³ Leslie, “Inside a Terrorist Group”.

⁶⁴⁴ *ibid.*

⁶⁴⁵ *ibid.*

⁶⁴⁶ Both Scott & MacLeay and Leslie describe the actions of the Dark Harvest Commando of the Scottish Civilian Army, as an early name for the SNLA. Both sources suggest that the Dark Harvest Commando deposited ‘anthrax-contaminated soil’ from a remote Scottish island at the Conservative Party conference in Blackpool in 1981 (Leslie, “Inside a Terrorist Group”; Scott and MacLeay, *Britain’s Secret War*, 106-112).

⁶⁴⁷ Leslie, “Inside a Terrorist Group”.

⁶⁴⁸ *ibid.*

⁶⁴⁹ “Police in check on 10 bombs claim”, *Guardian*, 24 November 1982.

the visit of Princess Diana to Glasgow, the Prime Minister, Coulport nuclear base, Conservative ministers, and the party chairman.⁶⁵⁰ Leslie writes that the group planned to place a bomb at the venue of a talk given by Margaret Thatcher, then Prime Minister, but this plan had to be aborted.⁶⁵¹ In December 1983, a bomb exploded at The Royal Artillery Guardhouse at Woolwich Barracks in London, injuring three soldiers. Shortly after it went off, the SNLA claimed credit for the attack⁶⁵² - Scott and MacLeay suggest that the IRA had prepared the device for the SNLA and had decided to “let the SNLA claim the ‘credit’”, but were disappointed by the behaviour of the SNLA in the aftermath of the attack.⁶⁵³ However, the IRA claimed credit for the attack a short time later, calling Scott and MacLeay’s claim into question.⁶⁵⁴

In January 1984 one of the group’s members, Thomas Kelly, was jailed for ten years after pleading guilty to making and sending letter bombs.⁶⁵⁵ The arrest and conviction of Kelly was largely thanks to the actions of an associate who offered to report on the SNLA and other extremist nationalist groups because he was afraid of the violent tendencies creeping into the nationalist movement.⁶⁵⁶ Once again, the defence tried to claim that Special Branch had planted the individual, but in this case the accusation carried far less weight than in previous ones.⁶⁵⁷ By this point, the group’s two key figures (and possibly its only members⁶⁵⁸), Adam Busby and David Dinsmore, had absconded to the Republic of Ireland, with Dinsmore facing charges for his role in the letter-bomb campaign, and Busby for daubing “Brits out” and “Free Scotland” on a Naval lorry.⁶⁵⁹ In October 1984, Busby was able to avoid extradition back to the United Kingdom after a court in Dublin accepted that his actions were “political”,⁶⁶⁰

⁶⁵⁰ Scott and MacLeay, *Britain’s Secret War*, 140-150.

⁶⁵¹ Leslie, “Inside a Terrorist Group”.

⁶⁵² Gareth Parry, “Army blames IRA for attack despite Scottish group’s claim”, *Guardian*, 12 December 1983.

⁶⁵³ Scott and MacLeay, *Britain’s Secret War*, 151.

⁶⁵⁴ Gareth Parry, “Bomb Unauthorised says IRA”, *Guardian*, 19 December 1983.

⁶⁵⁵ “10 years for extremist who made letter bombs”, *Herald*, 26 January 1984.

⁶⁵⁶ “Scottish letter bomber gaoled for 10 years”, *Guardian*, 26 January 1984.

⁶⁵⁷ James Freeman, “Threat to ‘supergrass’”, *Herald*, 26 January 1984.

⁶⁵⁸ James Freeman, “Real-life world of a fantasist”, *Herald*, 15 March 1997.

⁶⁵⁹ Allan Laing and James Freeman, “Scot wins Dublin fight against extradition”, *Herald*, 17 October 1984.

⁶⁶⁰ *ibid.*

but Dinsmore absconded again, first to Spain and then to Brazil.⁶⁶¹ Busby, who had served in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, and was a member of the SNP at a young age, before later joining the Scottish Republican Socialist Party,⁶⁶² has been the key figure in the SNLA since the group's inception. Throughout the thirty years of operations, Busby has been at the centre of the group's activity - leading Paul Wilkinson to suggest that he was possibly the group's only member by 2002.⁶⁶³

Despite the gaoling of one member and the flight of two key figures, the SNLA continued operations, once again targeting a political figure, Roy Jenkins, one of the founders of the SDP. Leslie tells the story of the attempted murder of Jenkins, in which petrol was poured through the letterbox of his tenement flat and set alight - fortunately no one was hurt, and it transpired that the attacker had targeted the wrong flat.⁶⁶⁴ Once again, this style of attack represented an escalation from previous attacks: a direct attempt to murder, rather than a letter bomb, though the fact that the group's leaders were awaiting their extradition hearing in Dublin at the time might explain why the group deviated from their previous approach. The letter-bomb campaign was resumed in November 1984 with another package sent to the Prime Minister,⁶⁶⁵ before the group claimed responsibility for a fire in a disused Ministry of Defence building in London in April 1985,⁶⁶⁶ three letter bombs to the Scottish Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind; British Steel and British Airways in April 1986,⁶⁶⁷ and another to Home Secretary, Douglas Hurd,⁶⁶⁸ in July 1986.⁶⁶⁹

Between 1982 and 1986, the SNLA were responsible for at least thirty attacks: primarily letter bombs against a range of targets, albeit targets usually associated with the British state: the monarchy, key figures in Westminster and the military - which represented a deviation from the attack pattern of the Tartan Army, who targeted oil and energy infrastructure. After this, the group lay dormant until 1989, when they re-

⁶⁶¹ Dinsmore returned to Scotland in the early 1990s and served community service for his actions in the SNLA ("His home is where the heat is on for David Dinsmore", *Scotsman*, 13 February 1994).

⁶⁶² James Freeman, "Real-life world of a fantasist", *Herald*, 15 March 1997.

⁶⁶³ "Who are the Tartan Terrorists?", *BBC News*, 2 March 2002.

⁶⁶⁴ Leslie, "Inside a Terrorist Group".

⁶⁶⁵ "Scottish terrorist group claims it sent letter bomb to PM", *Guardian*, 1 December 1984.

⁶⁶⁶ "Terror Blaze", *Guardian*, 28 April 1985.

⁶⁶⁷ Scott and MacLeay, *Britain's Secret War*, 162.

⁶⁶⁸ Douglas Hurd had actually written a novel, *Scotch on the Rocks*, about the activities of a fictitious Scottish terrorist group, although there are no indications that this was the motivation behind the attack.

⁶⁶⁹ "Fire bomb addressed to minister", *Guardian*, 17 July 1986.

emerged to claim a bomb attack on a quarry near Oban that was to be used for nuclear waste,⁶⁷⁰ although police have firmly rejected this, and said that the fire was accidental.⁶⁷¹ This period represents the first stage of the SNLA's campaign, and when action resumed in the 1990s, it has been claimed that Adam Busby was directing the group's activities from Dublin.⁶⁷²

In December 1991, the *Sunday Mail* reported that the group had planted a bomb in the grounds of Holyrood Palace (later denied by police⁶⁷³), only for the mission to be aborted when the perpetrators were spotted.⁶⁷⁴ In December 1993, a member of the SNLA appeared at the High Court in Aberdeen, charged with a series of letter bomb attacks, as well as sending hoax devices.⁶⁷⁵ It was a source of much amusement that the hoax bombs were made from marzipan,⁶⁷⁶ but they were sufficiently convincing to bring Edinburgh "to a standstill".⁶⁷⁷ In court it was claimed that he had admitted to being a "cell commander" and a "volunteer soldier" of the SNLA, and had targeted oil company offices in Aberdeen in protest against the theft of Scottish oil.⁶⁷⁸ He was jailed for 12 years for his actions, but not before the SNLA issued a communiqué "through its self-styled commander-in-exile Adam Busby" claiming that their violent campaign would continue.⁶⁷⁹

At some time in the early 1990s, the strategy of the SNLA shifted and they began to focus on the disruption that could be achieved through hoax threats.⁶⁸⁰ To what extent this was a strategic decision, and how far it reflected an inability to produce real devices is unclear. To this end, a group called "Flame" emerged in early 1994 and made a series of hoax threats and menacing phone calls,⁶⁸¹ and the SNLA continued to make threats - under their own name - against the Scottish Secretary, Ian Lang,⁶⁸²

⁶⁷⁰ "Nuclear dump claim denied", *Guardian*, 15 May 1989.

⁶⁷¹ Callum Macrae, "Murky world of tartan terror", *Guardian*, 23 July 1989.

⁶⁷² James Freeman, "The campaign conducted by letter", *The Herald*, 15 March 1997.

⁶⁷³ "Royal alarm story doubted", *Guardian*, 16 December 1991.

⁶⁷⁴ Chris Mullinger, "Scots tried to kill the Queen", *Sunday Mail*, 15 December 1991.

⁶⁷⁵ Frank Urquhart, "Charge of plotting state's overthrow", *Scotsman*, 10 December 1993.

⁶⁷⁶ "Bitter taste of marzipan", *Scotland on Sunday*, 8 September 1996.

⁶⁷⁷ "Hoax bombs were like real thing, terrorist trial told", *Scotsman*, 16 December 1993.

⁶⁷⁸ "Man said he was cell commander, High Court told", *Scotsman*, 17 December 1993.

⁶⁷⁹ "Scots terrorist given 12 years", *Guardian*, 23 December 1993.

⁶⁸⁰ Leslie, "Inside a Terrorist Group".

⁶⁸¹ Denis Campbell, "Dirty campaign as nationalists 'misbehave'", *Scotsman*, May 8 1994.

⁶⁸² "SNLA in 'death threat' to Lang", *Scotsman*, 30 January 1995.

and his Labour Shadow George Robertson,⁶⁸³ “prominent Highland figures”,⁶⁸⁴ and shopping centres in Birmingham.⁶⁸⁵ In May 1995, the Press Association (the usual recipient of their communiqués) received a parcel containing a small bomb - with a Belfast postmark, demonstrating that the SNLA had found a way to circumvent airport security, and threatened to use this style of device against British aircraft unless measures were taken to “curtail English immigration”.⁶⁸⁶

After this wave of hoax attacks and threats, a number of SNLA personnel were arrested and faced trial for these incidents. In August 1995, two men were jailed for their role in this campaign,⁶⁸⁷ having claimed to a journalist that the SNLA “wanted Scotland to be free, to be a nation on its own, without the shackles of England and without the English being here, having our jobs”.⁶⁸⁸ During the trial, one of the defendants had claimed that Adam Busby directed their actions from Dublin,⁶⁸⁹ indicating that Busby was still closely involved in the actions of the group. Busby himself was jailed for two years in Dublin in March 1997 for sending death threats by fax,⁶⁹⁰ and the following year, another member of the group received a three-month sentence for sending threats whilst imprisoned on another charge.⁶⁹¹ In 1999, another Dublin-based member of the SNLA received a two year suspended sentence for claiming he had left a device on the Kessock Bridge near Inverness.⁶⁹² Once again it was alleged that a SNLA cell in Dublin was “controlled by one man”.⁶⁹³

Throughout the 1990s, the SNLA - seemingly directed by Adam Busby – had been responsible for a series of hoax threats against a variety of targets, primarily politicians. Following his release from prison in 1999, Busby was once again implicated in a hoax threat, this time of a more serious nature: in July 1999 he was arrested again after he threatened to contaminate the water supply in England unless

⁶⁸³ “Labour on watch after letter-bomb threat by SNLA”, *Scotsman*, 13 March 1995.

⁶⁸⁴ “Two given protection”, *Scotsman*, 12 January 1995.

⁶⁸⁵ Leslie, “Inside a Terrorist Group”.

⁶⁸⁶ *ibid.*

⁶⁸⁷ “Nationalist terror plotters jailed”, *Scotsman*, 26 August 1995.

⁶⁸⁸ Severin Carrell, “Court hears anti-English terrorism claims” *Scotsman*, 22 August 1995.

⁶⁸⁹ Severin Carrell, “Scot in Dublin was ‘terrorist leader’”, *Scotsman* 24 August 1995.

⁶⁹⁰ “Busby gets two years for fax death threats”, *Scotsman*, 15 March 1997.

⁶⁹¹ “Prisoner admits ‘tartan terror’ threats”, *Scotsman*, 23 October 1998.

⁶⁹² “‘Tartan Terrorist’ admits bomb hoax role”, *Scotsman*, 19 May 1999.

⁶⁹³ *ibid.*

“British troops were pulled out of Northern Ireland”;⁶⁹⁴ a change from the primary focus on Scotland, and possible evidence of the impact that time spent in Dublin had had on Busby. This threat, precipitated a series of more colourful hoaxes, including a number of suspicious packages sent to the University of St Andrews in 2001, when Prince William was due to start his studies and said to contain anthrax.⁶⁹⁵ This was followed up in 2002 with their most widely publicised attack: a number of prominent political figures, including the wife of Prime Minister Tony Blair, received bottles pertaining to be samples of aromatherapy oils, but actually containing caustic soda. On this occasion the attack was not a hoax, and in 2003, a 17 year-old pled guilty to sending these, and 44 hoax letters, on the instructions of an anonymous ‘handler’ he had conversed with via email.⁶⁹⁶

In terms of publicity, the caustic soda hoax threat was successful in that it yielded the group a great deal of media attention, yet they failed to build on it and little was heard of the SNLA until 2007. Caustic soda was employed again, this time in miniature bottles of vodka, sent to an English councillor from Blackburn and the former *Scottish Daily Express* news editor, accompanied by a letter claiming: “we want to demonstrate our intent to kill English people at random and with no discrimination or compunction”, unless “the English” completely withdrew from Scotland.⁶⁹⁷ In January 2008, however, two men were jailed for six years each for their role in this latest attack, and during the trial, the court was told that one of the defendants acted under instructions “from a man who claims to lead the SNLA”⁶⁹⁸ - a reference, one can assume, to Adam Busby. In June 2009, Busby’s son Adam Busby Junior was jailed for six years for making hoax threats against First Minister Alex Salmond⁶⁹⁹ and other political figures - which he claimed was to draw attention to his father’s plight.⁷⁰⁰ At this point, Busby Senior was awaiting trial for threatening to target transatlantic flights in 2006, for which he was jailed for four years in 2010. At the time of writing, Adam Busby is currently facing terrorism charges in Scotland

⁶⁹⁴ “Scots extremist held over mass poison plot”, *Scotsman*, 11 July 1999.

⁶⁹⁵ “Sinister hue to hoaxes which spread mass fear”, *Scotsman* 17 October 2001.

⁶⁹⁶ Sam Lister, “Schoolboy sent hoax poison to Prince William”, *The Times*, 6 September 2003

⁶⁹⁷ David Ward, “Would-be poisoners jailed for six years over Scottish plot”, *Guardian*, 26 January 2008.

⁶⁹⁸ *ibid.*

⁶⁹⁹ The targeting of Salmond, whilst evidence of the antipathy of the SNLA towards the SNP, was likely because he was a prominent figure.

⁷⁰⁰ “Son of ‘tartan terrorist’ jailed for six years”, *Herald*, 19 June 2009.

following his extradition from the Irish Republic, for making threats to attack shopping centres, the Forth Road Bridge, near Edinburgh and the Erskine Bridge, near Glasgow, in addition to the threat to poison supplies of drinking water in England.⁷⁰¹ It is not clear whether the campaign of the SNLA is at an end, but with the group's self-professed leader in failing health⁷⁰² and facing further criminal changes, it is reasonable to assume that the activity of the SNLA is unlikely to reach the heights of the early 1980s again. In summary, their campaign lasted over thirty years and consisted of at least forty tangible attacks and hundreds of hoax threats,⁷⁰³ with their attacks coming mainly in two different forms: letter bombs and hoaxes. The first stage of the SNLA's campaign began in 1982, and attacks were at their most frequent between 1982 and 1985; it was during this period that the vast majority of the group's actual attacks were carried out, and the lull in attacks after this point is likely a result of the flight of the group's two principal figures to the Republic of Ireland. Although sporadic letter bombs continued until the early 1990s they were less frequent, and it would appear that sometime in the middle of that decade the group adopted a new strategy, intent on causing maximum disruption. Since that point the vast majority of the group's activities have been hoaxes, but the genuine threat posed by some of their actions - most recently the caustic soda packages - means that their threats cannot be idly dismissed.

The targets of their attacks varied to some extent, but the vast majority had a direct connection with the British state, with Adam Busby stating, "we believe it's necessary to overthrow the British state so that the people themselves can achieve state power."⁷⁰⁴ The principal victims of their actions have been politicians, either in positions of authority, or English-born MPs of Scottish constituencies. Additionally, threats or attacks were carried out against the military - barracks, the Ministry of Defence and recruiting offices - another symbol of the British establishment, and the British monarchy; letter bombs were sent to Buckingham Palace, timed to coincide

⁷⁰¹ Severin Carrell, "Man in court charged with threatening to bomb Scottish bridges and hotels", *Guardian*, 13 June 2015.

⁷⁰² Severin Carrell, "Scottish separatist Adam Busby to be extradited over terror charges", *Guardian*, 30 July 2013.

⁷⁰³ Leslie claims that the number of anthrax hoaxes alone was into the hundreds (Leslie, "Inside a Terrorist Group").

⁷⁰⁴ "Salmond leads attacks on Robertson smear", *The Scotsman*, 21 September 1995.

with Royal visits, sent to protest against Prince William's education at St Andrews, and the group even claimed to have broken into Holyrood Palace.

A secondary, far more general target has emerged for the SNLA since the late-1990s: the English. Threats to poison water supplies of England, demands for a halt on English immigration, and a claim that English people were to be targeted at random indicate that elements within the group perceived the very presence of English people in Scotland as a further cause of Scotland's subjugation. In his work on the experiences of English people in Scotland, Watson discusses anti-English migration groups Scottish Watch and Settler Watch, and reports that whilst some English migrants faced some nuisance, the vast majority of his interview subjects had not suffered from Anglophobic abuse.⁷⁰⁵

Another noticeable pattern in the activity of the SNLA has been the imitation of other terrorist groups; in the early 1980s their attacks were similar to those of the IRA, and the SNLA have played up suggestions of collusion between the two groups although it is unclear whether there was any genuine connection. Additionally, in the last decade they have made threats against transatlantic flights, which play on the fears created by the attacks of September 11th, 2001. These have ensured that the group's words resonate more strongly, even if they cannot deliver on the threats themselves.

It would appear that the SNLA has survived for as long as it has due largely to the continued endeavour of Adam Busby. Following a failed extradition attempt in 1984, police in the United Kingdom have had their hands tied in their attempts to deal with Busby, although Busby himself claims that no effort was made to extradite him at all,⁷⁰⁶ leading to suggestions that he was "deliberately left there, watched but unharmed, because his antics were damaging to the image of Scottish nationalism".⁷⁰⁷ However, Court testimony of SNLA members based in Scotland shows that Busby has been able to keep the SNLA active by convincing others to carry out attacks in the United Kingdom in his absence. Indeed, his status as a political refugee allowed him to operate relatively undisturbed until the mid-1990s. Altogether, considering Busby's

⁷⁰⁵ Watson, *Being English in Scotland*, 140.

⁷⁰⁶ James Freeman, "Real-life world of a fantasist", *Herald*, 15 March 1997.

⁷⁰⁷ *ibid.*

drive to keep the group going, and ability to convince others to undertake illegal action, we can identify in him some of the traits of a ‘terrorist entrepreneur’, as suggested by Petter Nesser in his work on the structure of Jihadi terrorist cells.⁷⁰⁸ When the group emerged it was in response to the handling of the 1979 devolution referendum, yet the successful referendum of 1997 did not seem to dissuade them from carrying out further attacks. The threats have continued primarily because little effort has been made to stop them. I believe it is likely that the group will cease to exist when the group’s leader is no longer able or willing to continue it.

It is important, however, not to exaggerate the importance of the SNLA: whilst they have been by far the most active and professional violent Scottish nationalist group, the bar was set very low by the group’s predecessors. Despite brief flashes of publicity the group have struggled to maintain relevance (assuming they ever had it), and Freeman argues, “without the media, without propaganda coups, they simply did not exist other than on Special Branch intelligence files”.⁷⁰⁹ Their actions have swung from supposedly earnestly threatening mass murder to deliberately restricting their actions to hoax threats, but they have always focused on a narrow range of targets.

Thankfully, during their violent campaign nobody was killed, and the greatest harm done was a handful of minor injuries. Before concluding this chapter, I examine the impact of these groups, how their actions have influenced the SNP, the similarities between the groups and finally the extent to which their actions have been successful by their standards.

The Impact of Violent Scottish Nationalism

Historically averse to non-electoral forms of politics, the SNP was always unlikely to support political violence in any form, keen to avoid any association between their brand of constitutional nationalism and violent acts that would dissuade unconvinced potential voters. Nationalist parties in other countries have used violent campaigns as

⁷⁰⁸ Petter Nesser, “Joining Jihadist terrorist cells in Europe: exploring motivational aspects of recruitment and radicalisation”, in *Understanding Violent Radicalisation: Terrorist and Jihadist Movements in Europe*, ed. Magnus Ranstorp (London: Routledge, 2010), 92-93).

⁷⁰⁹ James Freeman, “The campaign conducted by letter”, *Herald*, 15 March 1997.

way to exert power on the state they are campaigning against, presenting themselves as the moderate option the state can negotiate with. The SNP have not taken this route; instead, they have continually rejected the actions of violent nationalists: in the wake of the jailing of five members of the APG in 1975, Margo MacDonald condemned those involved as “a loose group of disillusioned, over-emotional, misguided men... [with a] very warped version of how the national movement in Scotland was likely to progress”;⁷¹⁰ following the trial of the Tartan Army an SNP spokesman “condemned... any form of non-constitutional action in the pursuit of the aim of Scottish independence”⁷¹¹ after Gordon Wilson, then party leader, had declared the group “Scotland’s enemies” during their campaign;⁷¹² finally, and most equivocally, following the wave of caustic soda packages in 2002, John Swinney (then SNP leader) said “every right-thinking person will unreservedly condemn this pathetic attack... these people have no interest in Scotland or the welfare of the Scottish people... they are not nationalists; they are criminals plain and simple”.⁷¹³

Despite their vehement denunciations of political violence, the SNP’s opponents have nevertheless attempted to link them to actions of violent nationalists. In a sitting of the House of Lords following a pipeline bombing by the Tartan Army in 1975, Lord Kirkhill, then Minister of State for Scotland suggested, “the Conservative and Unionist Association, the Liberal Party, and the Labour Party - are in no way involved”⁷¹⁴ making the SNP notable by their omission. More recently in 1995, a memo written by George Robertson (later Lord Robertson) was leaked to the press suggesting that the Labour Party could make political capital out of the “darker side of nationalism”,⁷¹⁵ and indeed opposition politicians have, at times, attempted to present the violent nationalist groups and the SNP as two branches of the same tree. In recent years, the actions of ‘cybernats’,⁷¹⁶ which have included anonymous abuse and violent

⁷¹⁰ Ian Bell, “34 years for five of APG conspirators”, *Scotsman*, 24 May 1975

⁷¹¹ Tom McConnell, “Political undertones ran through the trial - Anderson”, *Herald*, 2 October 1976.

⁷¹² Scott and MacLeay, *Britain’s Secret War*, 67.

⁷¹³ “Politicians on guard as ‘tartan terror’ packages still circulating”, *Scotsman*, 4 March 2002.

⁷¹⁴ House of Lords, Parliamentary Debate, vol. 364, 1975, cc 461- 463.

⁷¹⁵ Peter MacMahon and Severin Carrell, “Salmond leads attacks on Robertson ‘smear’”, *Scotsman*, 21 September 1995.

⁷¹⁶ ‘Cybernats’ (*portmanteau* of cyber nationalists) is a term applied to nationalists who maintain a vocal presence on social media. It is often used in a derogatory sense by those opposed to Scottish nationalism, and the actions of the most extreme minority have been attributed to the wider nationalist movement.

threats to opposition politicians and activists, as well as journalists, have allowed the SNP's opponents to renew these claims.⁷¹⁷

Interestingly, the SNLA themselves believe that their actions actually benefited the SNP; in the journal of the Scottish Separatist Group, who have ties with the SNLA, it is suggested that the “spectacular publicity” the group are able to elicit highlights Scotland's plight.⁷¹⁸ However, their denunciation of the SNP in the same journal leads one to suspect that this was not intentional. It certainly has been the case that members of the SNP have also been active participants in violent nationalist groups; Adam Busby was a member during his youth, and the SNP launched an internal inquiry in the wake of the Tartan Army trial amidst party fears about the increase in violent nationalism.⁷¹⁹ This is no real surprise - it is natural for a Scottish nationalist to be a member of the SNP - but the overlap between the two cannot be taken to demonstrate any sort of established connection. Throughout their history, the SNP have remained as far removed from violence as possible, and have repeatedly vocalised their rejection of political violence.

In this chapter, I covered the actions of five violent nationalist terrorist groups: the Scottish Republican Army in the early 1950s; the APG in the early 1970s; the Tartan Army (also Border Clan; 100 Organisation) in the early 1970s; the Scottish Republican Socialist League in the late 1970s; and the SNLA from the early 1980s to the present.

There are a number of similarities between the groups in terms of target selection, choice of weaponry and the methods of financing their operations, but one particular parallel that emerged during the course of this research is particularly noteworthy: the military background of many of those involved. Some of the foremost figures from violent nationalist groups had served in the British military before they turned their acquired talents against the state; at least one of the four defendants in the SRA case in 1953 was an army reservist; of the six men found guilty in the APG trial in 1975, three had military experience; two men convicted of SNLA offences in the 1990s had

⁷¹⁷ Iain MacWhirter, *Disunited Kingdom: How Westminster won a referendum but lost Scotland* (Glasgow: Cargo Publishing, 2014), 89.

⁷¹⁸ Scottish Separatist Group, *Scottish Separatist*, 1 (1996), 5.

⁷¹⁹ Parliamentary Debate, House of Commons, vol. 917, 1976, cc 405-406.

also served in the army;⁷²⁰ and finally and most significantly Adam Busby had experience in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. Furthermore, considering that the majority of violent nationalists group operated in the 1970s is it likely that some of those involved had undertaken national service. Though it is difficult to prove, it is possible that these individuals held the belief that political change would only be delivered as a result of military struggle, and thus viewed the SNP as inadequate.

Of further interest is the manner in which a number of the groups employed military terminology: of the five groups I referred to, the name of four include the word 'army'; the APG employed military ranks to refer to one another and spent a great deal of time discussing "saluting, the provision of honour guards and exhaustive systems of military discipline";⁷²¹ the SNLA have also adopted military ranks: the trial of Andrew McIntosh heard that he referred to himself as a "volunteer soldier" and "cell commander"⁷²² and in a subsequent communiqué from Adam Busby he referred to himself as the "commander-in-exile".⁷²³

The adoption of military structure and terminology is relatively common for terrorist groups seeking to present themselves as a legitimate authority, as they attempt to ape the state they are fighting against. However none of the groups studied could genuinely present itself in such a manner, so the adoption of army ranks and protocol was purely an aesthetic decision, likely made to engender a sense of camaraderie among group members. The adoption of military terminology by many of the groups covered does lead to accusations that those involved were taking part in a "military fantasy",⁷²⁴ but I believe there is an interesting correlation between the emergence of violent nationalist groups and the military history of those involved.

Another interesting pattern to emerge during the course of this research has been the role of the police in deterring, pursuing and arresting those involved in violent nationalism; in the case of SRA in the 1950s, the APG in 1971 and 1975 and the SRSL in 1980, the police were either aware of the groups' plans, or received

⁷²⁰ "The tip off that put detectives on the bomber's trail", *Scotsman*, 23 December 1993; "Three on bomb hoax charges", *Scotsman*, 13 September 1994.

⁷²¹ George Hume and Colin Bell, "12000 James Bondian hours for police", *Scotsman*, 24 May 1975.

⁷²² "Man said he was cell commander, High Court told", *Scotsman*, 17 December 1993.

⁷²³ "Scots terrorist given 12 years", *Guardian*, 23 December 1993.

⁷²⁴ George Hume and Colin Bell, "12000 James Bondian hours for police", *Scotsman*, 24 May 1975.

information about the group's plans from an internal source. Only in the early 1980s were a violent Scottish nationalist group able to mount a sustained campaign against the state, and even that was cut short by the intervention of the police in 1983. Since 1984, their ability to deal with the SNLA has been mostly hampered by the protection afforded to Adam Busby by the Republic of Ireland.

As a result, the police were able to ensure that most of the groups operating at this time were unable to get off the ground, but persuading group members to give evidence against their colleagues led to accusations that the police had placed *agents provocateurs* in these groups.⁷²⁵ In the trials of the APG in 1975 and the Tartan Army in 1976 there were also concerns about the role the police had played, and the extent to which they had tried to entrap defendants, although it could be argued that these were simply gambits made by defence lawyers. In both trials, a number of the charges were dropped due to insufficient evidence, and three of the five defendants in the Tartan Army trial were found not guilty. The police in Scotland have clearly played an important role in preventing the outbreak of violent nationalism, but there are questions to be asked about their infiltration of nationalist groups in Scotland during the 1970s.

Have the actions of violent Scottish nationalist groups reaped any reward? Violence has had no directly observable impact in the successes of the nationalist agenda in the last 50 years, but assessing the direct impact of terrorism is often difficult, unless it reaps instant policy changes.⁷²⁶ However, in the case of Scottish nationalism, there have been no political developments that correspond with a campaign of political violence.⁷²⁷ A secondary demand of actors who employ political violence is publicity for their chosen cause, but there can be no question that Scottish nationalism did not need publicity at the time these groups were operating; the Scottish nationalist agenda was already front-page news. On the contrary, it is plausible that the actions of violent nationalist groups were more likely detrimental to nationalist progress; operating at the height of the Troubles in Northern Ireland, any association of Scottish nationalism

⁷²⁵ MacLeay and Scott, *Britain's Secret War*; Pittock, *The Road to Independence*, 71.

⁷²⁶ Two such examples would be the removal of US military forces from Lebanon in 1983, or the withdrawal of Spanish troops from Iraq in 2006, both in response to terrorist attacks.

⁷²⁷ In fact, the period of greatest violent nationalist activity in the early 1980s was when nationalist progress was further away than ever before.

with the type of political violence displayed by the IRA was only likely to deter non-nationalists from the cause.

Conclusion

Scottish nationalism developed as a force when the effects of union began to lose their utility to Scots in the second half of the twentieth century. At this point, Scotland's distinct identity and specific needs became politicised. Since their emergence as a serious political contender in 1967, the SNP have shaped Scottish politics, often indirectly, into the distinct political sphere that they dominate today, and while this would not have been achieved without the change in outlook of the Labour Party, the SNP can take the credit for bringing Scottish nationalism into the mainstream. Nationalists would argue that the majority SNP government at Holyrood, the party's success in the 2015 General Election, and the resonance the Yes campaign had during the independence referendum campaign validates their claim that the SNP is now the central force of Scottish politics, and the level of support for independence now means it plausible that it will happen in the not-too-distant future.

The successes of primarily non-violent Scottish nationalism are in direct contrast with nationalists around the world who have taken up arms and achieved far less. This is not to say that Scotland should be a model for other regions - unique societal and political conditions in Scotland have made this possible. The success of the No campaign, however, demonstrates that the British identity that served many Scots so well still has resonance among the Scottish people. There can be no doubt that while Scots are less likely to self-identify as British,⁷²⁸ Britishness and support for the union remain powerful political forces in Scotland. As I will go onto discuss, I believe that the strength of this British identity, as well as the viability of the political process in Scotland have been central to the inconsequential role political violence has played to Scottish nationalism.

When violent nationalist groups did emerge they failed to win any popular support and brought condemnation from all sides of the political spectrum. Some of the

⁷²⁸ Andrew Grimson, Rachael Jolley, Sunder Katwala, Peter Kellner, Alex Massie & Richard Miranda "This Sceptred Isle: Pride not prejudice across the nations of Britain", *British Future*, (2012), 13

groups displayed comic ineptitude in their actions, and others who have been able to maintain low-level campaigns have, for the most part, caused little more than disruption, nuisance, and a handful of minor injuries. We can be thankful that there has been no loss of life throughout this campaign, but that is not through lack of trying in some cases. Of all the groups to emerge, the SNLA demonstrated the greatest resilience, but the group's longevity should not be mistaken for aptitude.

The last two years in Scotland has demonstrated that non-violent electoral politics can deliver the kind of political progress that ethno-nationalist terrorist groups in other countries could not hope to achieve. Now, more than ever, with a broad nationalist political movement in Scotland, there is simply no space that a violent group could occupy.

4. The Bulldog that Didn't Bark - England and Nationalism

I am a great admirer of the Scots. I am quite friendly with the Welsh. I must confess to some sentiment about Old Ireland. But there is a forgotten, nay, almost a forbidden word, which means more to me than any other. That word is 'England'.... Today we are scarcely allowed to mention the name of our country. Winston Churchill⁷²⁹

In previous chapters, I considered how Scottish and Welsh nationalism arose out of the distinct national identities that had been retained despite union with England, and the extent to which these identities and subsequent national movements were shaped by contact with Britain and a shared British identity. This chapter focuses on English national identity and English nationalism, and the extent to which the English have been able to maintain a distinct sense of themselves in the face of the pervasive development of Britain and Britishness. England's political and numerical domination of Britain has led to assumptions that the two terms are virtually synonymous. As we see below from two recent cultural examples, the overlap of the two terms has made it difficult to distinguish between the two:

Britain. We may be a small country, but we're a great one, too. The country of Shakespeare, Churchill, the Beatles, Sean Connery, Harry Potter. David Beckham's right foot. David Beckham's left foot, come to that.⁷³⁰

This passionate defence of Britain comes from arguably the most popular Prime Minister in recent times, as portrayed by Hugh Grant in the romantic comedy *Love Actually*. One can find clear evidence of the confusion between Britain and England in this list: William Shakespeare is England's national poet; the Beatles are associated with Liverpool; Winston Churchill may have been the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, but it could be argued that he is more associated with Englishness than any

⁷²⁹ Sir Winston Churchill & Jack Fishman, *If I Lived My Life Again* (London: W. H. Allen, 1974), 11.

⁷³⁰ Richard Curtis, *Love Actually*, directed by Richard Curtis (2003; Universal City, CA: Universal Pictures), DVD.

other twentieth century figure; and David Beckham was the captain of the English national football team. No more need be said.

Perhaps the only fully un-English inclusion on that list is Sean Connery, a Scottish actor who portrayed another British cultural icon: Ian Fleming's James Bond. In the most recent (at time of writing) film starring the iconic British secret agent, *Skyfall*, the protagonist engages in a game of word association, during which Bond is asked to respond immediately to a series of single-word prompts. When prompted with the challenge "country?" Bond declares proudly "England".⁷³¹ This answer is problematic because James Bond is not canonically English;⁷³² he is the son of a Scottish father and a Swiss mother, travelled extensively as a child, and spent only a brief spell of his childhood in England. Moreover, he works for the British state and (due to the nature of his work) rarely lives in England.

I have included these two references to popular culture to emphasise the extent to which the confusion of the two terms has become part of everyday life. Much of the misunderstanding derives from the fact that England is the largest nation in the United Kingdom, with 84% of its population, and 53% of its land mass, but also because many English people have, until recently, treated the concepts as interchangeable. As I discuss, the use of one term as equivalent to the other has been described as a bad habit, but one that tells us a great deal about the confusion surrounding English national identity. This chapter is shorter than the previous two, largely because there has been no political English nationalism⁷³³ and resultantly there is very little to write about with regards to the emergence of a violent component of such. Instead of this, I examine the development of English national identity and consider some of the arguments about why English nationalism has yet to emerge, but why it may be about to do so. Additionally, I cover separatist movements in English regions, looking

⁷³¹ Neal Purvis, Robert Wade and John Logan, *Skyfall*, directed by Sam Mendes (2012; California, CA: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer), DVD; Bond's declaration of English allegiance was not the only continuity error to raise the shackles of Scottish viewers, who witnessed 007 being told to take the A9 to his Scottish destination, only to stop at Glencoe on the A82.

⁷³² Although as David Cannadine points out in his discussion of Ian Fleming's work and the national imagination, for the literary Bond, Britain and England were used interchangeably. (David Cannadine, *In Churchill's Shadow: Confronting the Past in Modern Britain*. London: Allen Lane, 2002).

⁷³³ In fact, there are those who would argue that English nationalism itself does not exist - Richard English, "Is There an English Nationalism?" (London: IPPR, 2011); Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, 18.

specifically at the case of Cornwall. I start by examining the history of the territorial unit that is England, examine the point at which English national consciousness emerged, consider the importance of neighbouring groups to English national identity, and conclude by examining the relationship between English and British identities.

England and National Identity

The early history of England is a series of invasions, followed by a long period of relative stability; the Roman, Vikings, Anglo-Saxons and Normans all crossed the sea at various points in history to claim modern-day England. The unification of England occurred around the tenth⁷³⁴ or eleventh century,⁷³⁵ although the English monk Bede⁷³⁶ wrote of the English as a unified people as early as the eighth century,⁷³⁷ prior to which, the territory had been split between a patchwork of kingdoms.⁷³⁸ Norman Davies argues that unified England was the “resultant fusion of the Danish and of the Wessex-led Anglo-Saxon elements”, and stresses that the Viking invasions were as vital for the creation of England as the Anglo-Saxon invasions.⁷³⁹ Colin Kidd examines the modern-day national myth that has developed around the creation of England and highlights the popular tendency to focus on the Anglo-Saxon heritage, despite the importance of the ancient Britons to the Church of England.⁷⁴⁰ The invasion of William the Conqueror in 1066 “put the seal on the unification of England” and by the end of the eleventh century the English state was “one of the most, if not the most, integrated and centralized states in Europe”.⁷⁴¹

Following unification, it becomes a little more difficult to separate English from British history. By the 13th century England had conquered Wales and had nominal

⁷³⁴ Colley, *Acts of Union and Disunion*, 44; Robert Colls, *Identity of England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 380.

⁷³⁵ Kenny, *Politics of English Nationhood*, 17; Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, 43.

⁷³⁶ Bede has been described as the father of English history (Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, 46).

⁷³⁷ Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, 41.

⁷³⁸ Colley, *Acts of Union and Disunion*, 44.

⁷³⁹ Norman Davies, *The Isles: A History* (London: MacMillan, 1999), 226.

⁷⁴⁰ Kidd, *British Identities Before Nationalism*, 90-100.

⁷⁴¹ Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, 42.

control of Ireland, which was formally added to the fold in the mid-16th century,⁷⁴² and in 1606 England entered into a regal union with the Scots, with full political union following in 1707. Even the story of the ‘English’ Civil War cannot be told without drawing attention to the important roles played by both Scotland and Ireland in the conflict, and these factors combine to make it difficult to mark clearly where English history ends and British history begins.

Although we can situate the emergence of England as a distinct territorial unit in the 11th century at the latest, this did not necessarily equate to the emergence of an English national identity at the same time. In his work on English national consciousness, Krishnan Kumar examines various claims from the literature that evidence of English national consciousness has been found as early as the eighth century, and in almost every century that followed.⁷⁴³ He argues that, despite the emergence of an English state in the 11th century, there is no clear evidence of an English nation at the same point, especially when one takes into account the continued use of French as the court language in the centuries that followed the Norman invasion.⁷⁴⁴

Kumar himself situates the emergence of an English identity in the 14th or 15th centuries, and argues that contact with England’s nearest neighbours was crucial in the development of a separate unified identity.⁷⁴⁵ Liah Greenfeld, meanwhile, contends that the emergence of England, as a nation rather than just a territorial expression, took place in the early 16th century.⁷⁴⁶ Her thesis situates the emergence of an English national consciousness parallel to the English Reformation, and asserts that the concepts of rationality and individualism advocated by Protestantism were deeply embedded in the construction of English nationality.⁷⁴⁷ Furthermore she posits that the translation of the Old Testament into English provided the “language in which... the

⁷⁴² Even if large parts of Ireland remained outwith English control: an oversight that would later hinder the spread of the Protestant Reformation, as well as the machinery of the British state in Ireland.

⁷⁴³ Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, 43.

⁷⁴⁴ *ibid.*, 53.

⁷⁴⁵ *ibid.*, 59-62.

⁷⁴⁶ Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge: MA, Harvard University Press, 1992), 14.

⁷⁴⁷ *ibid.*

novel consciousness of nationality” could be expressed, and helped inspire literacy and the spread of English literature.⁷⁴⁸

In the chapters on Scotland and Wales, I examined the importance of interaction with the ‘other’ to identity formation, and argued that, for the pre-modern Welsh and Scots, their primary ‘other’ was the English. However, it is less clear who or what England’s ‘other’ was during the same period. Floriane Reviron-Piégay suggests that the primary candidates are “the Continent, Catholicism, the Celtic fringe, Empire, [and] the colonies”.⁷⁴⁹ The ‘Celtic Fringe’ of Wales, Scotland and Ireland are certainly the closest geographically, and English national identity has undoubtedly been shaped by centuries of close contact with the British nations. However, I don’t believe any of these could be considered England’s primary adversary at any point, as they were far smaller and key sections of their ruling elites were either English or heavily anglicised. However, one could argue that the Catholic Irish represented a potential ‘fifth column’ that continental Catholic powers – specifically France and Spain – could attempt to draw upon during a potential invasion of England, and this fear has been cited as one of the reasons behind the 1801 Act of Union.⁷⁵⁰

France and the other continental powers represented more serious opponents, and performed the role of primary strategic rivals in the centuries following English unification. Reviron-Piégay opines that “the Continent is the main entity against which Englishness developed and still does”,⁷⁵¹ a point of view supported by Kenny⁷⁵² and Kumar.⁷⁵³ In a similar vein, Linda Colley argues that, following the Reformation, Catholicism acted as the primary ‘other’ for England, helping to solidify the relationship between the Protestant English, Welsh and Scots, and uniting them as “Britons”,⁷⁵⁴ against both the French and Irish.

⁷⁴⁸ *ibid.*, 52-53.

⁷⁴⁹ Floriane Reviron-Piégay, ‘Introduction: The Dilemma of Englishness,’ in *Englishness Revisited*, ed. Floriane Reviron-Piégay. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 1-27, 6.

⁷⁵⁰ Stephen Howe, *Ireland and Empire: Colonial Legacies in Irish History and Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 36.

⁷⁵¹ *ibid.*

⁷⁵² Kenny, *The Politics of English nationhood*, 22.

⁷⁵³ Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, 38.

⁷⁵⁴ Colley, *Britons*.

Krishnan Kumar proposes that if English nationalism has existed, it has been in the form of what he terms, “missionary” or “imperial” nationalism,⁷⁵⁵ suggesting that English identity was bound up in their civilising mission to “educate and elevate the human race”,⁷⁵⁶ and argues that “empire offered an identity that lifted them above ‘mere’ nationalist self-glorification”⁷⁵⁷. For Kumar, the English were the *Staatsvolk* of the British Empire who were “careful not to stress their ethnic identity; rather they... stress[ed] the political, cultural or religious mission to which they have been called.”⁷⁵⁸ Whilst Scottish and Welsh national identities were formed in relation to one primary ‘other’, English identity formed in reference to a variety of ‘others’.

Kumar’s hypothesis - namely that the English identity was an inclusive national identity - would help to explain the success of the British Empire, which was predicated on creating an identity that allowed those involved to take ownership of a joint endeavour. The emergence of a British national identity was a state-led endeavour that constrained national identities in favour of the shared ‘British’, even going so far as to refer to Scotland and England as ‘North Britain’ and ‘South Britain’ respectively.⁷⁵⁹ In her influential study on the ‘creation’ of Britain, Colley argues that British identity was “superimposed over an array of internal differences in response to contact with the Other, and above all in response to conflict with the Other”.⁷⁶⁰ This bond was strengthened through shared institutions, such as the monarchy and the army,⁷⁶¹ and in service to the British Empire. Yet, despite official efforts to promote a shared British identity, the national minorities in the United Kingdom were also allowed to retain their individuality and encouraged to adopt a dual identity. Colley argues that Britishness was not just the imposition of English culture on the Celtic periphery, and that British identity developed in such a way as to be compatible with other identities.⁷⁶²

⁷⁵⁵ Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*.

⁷⁵⁶ *ibid.*, 191.

⁷⁵⁷ *ibid.*, 193.

⁷⁵⁸ Krishnan Kumar, “Nation and Empire: English and British national identity in comparative perspective”, *Theory and Society* 29 (2000): 579.

⁷⁵⁹ Bernard Crick, “An Englishman Considers His Passport”, *The Irish Review* 5 (1988): 6.

⁷⁶⁰ Colley, *Britons*, 5-6.

⁷⁶¹ Jackson, *Two Unions*, 163-169.

⁷⁶² Colley, *Britons*, 6.

Previously I discussed the institutions, both political and cultural, that acted as incubators of national identity in the face of the pervasive spread of Britishness in Scotland and Wales. It is however, less clear to what extent the English were able to retain a distinct identity during this time. Some would argue that an English national identity was suppressed as energies were poured into the creation of a homogeneous British identity for purposes of unity and stability.⁷⁶³ Kumar suggests that the English were conscious about labelling their achievements as such, as they feared that “by stressing English superiority, and reminding the other British peoples of their more dependent role, it would have threatened the unity and integrity of the very structures that the English had so painfully constructed”.⁷⁶⁴ As a result, English identity had to “find objects other than the English nation on which to fasten”,⁷⁶⁵ and the British state refrained from celebrating events associated with England, such as St George’s Day, instead opting to promote key British institutions and fly the British flag. For the English, the banal nationalism⁷⁶⁶ they were exposed to was the iconography of union.

Tellingly, as Aughey points out, it was poor form not to treat the Scots, Irish and Welsh as distinct nationalities, but it was bad manners to treat the English as a race apart,⁷⁶⁷ and yet this delicate balancing act is not always well received by the national minorities in the United Kingdom; indeed these endeavours are often viewed as patronising and even subconsciously antagonistic. The English did not expect that the peoples of the other nations would renounce their own identities and assimilate into an English or British identity,⁷⁶⁸ yet it seems that despite providing a level of cultural autonomy for the national minorities to define themselves distinctively, there was little consideration for how they should define themselves outside of the context of Britishness.

An alternative narrative tells us that Britishness and Englishness were two sides of the same coin to many English people. The literature on English national identity highlights the frequency with which the terms are misapplied,⁷⁶⁹ and Kenny argues

⁷⁶³ Aughey, *The Politics of Englishness*, 68.

⁷⁶⁴ Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, 179.

⁷⁶⁵ *ibid.*

⁷⁶⁶ Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: Sage, 1995).

⁷⁶⁷ Aughey, *The Politics of Englishness*, 187.

⁷⁶⁸ Colls, *Identity of England*, 377.

⁷⁶⁹ Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, 1.

that this has led to confusion about where Britishness ends and Englishness begins;⁷⁷⁰ something that Colley suggests is due to the lack of official definitional clarity about the two terms.⁷⁷¹ Bernard Crick suggests that this problem arose because the English “infused ‘everything that is English into the common property of Britishness’”;⁷⁷² and thus the distinction between Englishness and Britishness became blurred,⁷⁷³ making it more difficult for the English than other Britons to retain what made them distinctive.⁷⁷⁴ One potential reason that the English were unable distinguish between their own identity and a British identity was that England and Britain were governed almost identically up until devolution in 1997, and as a result England’s political institutions were also Britain’s political institutions.⁷⁷⁵ Scots had the Kirk, the Welsh had their language, but there was no institutional bearer of English identity.

For some, Englishness and Britishness represented the same thing and there was no need to celebrate or sustain a separate Englishness, or even think about what either entailed. As the *staatsvolk* of Britain, they took the lead in shaping this identity, and thus were not alienated by its content. For those in the Celtic Fringe, Britishness (however close to Englishness it may have been) presented almost no barriers to entry⁷⁷⁶ and offered opportunities that Welshness or Scottishness alone could not at that time. But as the British Empire began to falter, both at home and abroad, Britishness, even Britain itself, began to lose its appeal, and those in the Celtic Fringe slowly began to shift their principal allegiance from British to their national identity. It is only as the other nations in the United Kingdom began to organise politically around their national identity in an attempt to “escape from the final stages of a shipwreck”,⁷⁷⁷ that the English began to realise that they have paid scant attention to theirs.

⁷⁷⁰ Kenny, *The Politics of English Nationhood*.

⁷⁷¹ Colley, *Acts of Union and Disunion*, 60.

⁷⁷² Bernard Crick, ‘The English and the British’ in *National Identities: The Constitution of the United Kingdom*, ed. Bernard Crick. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 104.

⁷⁷³ English, *Is there an English nationalism?*, 6.

⁷⁷⁴ Aughey, *The Politics of Englishness*, 199.

⁷⁷⁵ *ibid.*, 107

⁷⁷⁶ The main barrier would have been knowledge of the English language, which had spread pervasively throughout the British Isles through interaction, migration and trade with the English, and was thus widely spoken.

⁷⁷⁷ Nairn, *The Break-Up of Britain*, 90.

The promotion of Britishness, both instead of and as a surrogate for, Englishness has severely restricted the growth of the latter. For the English, this was of little concern, and they remained content to champion Britishness, often treating the two identities as the same. However, after three hundred years of not dwelling on the differences between Englishness and Britishness, there are signs that the English have begun to take their identity seriously. In the next section, I will examine English nationalism, why no political movement has emerged to represent it, and consider to what extent that has changed since the 1990s.

Nationalism in England

The phrase “English nationalism” is something of a paradox, Kumar noting that it has become commonplace to query English nationalism, and to deny that such a thing exists.⁷⁷⁸ Nationalism, he argues, is something that others have:⁷⁷⁹ the French, the Germans, the Irish, eventually the Scots, but not the English. In this section, I will discuss the emergence (or absence) of English nationalism by considering why it did not develop at the same time as it was emerging as a political force in Scotland and Wales, and evaluate claims that it has finally emerged in the past two decades.

The emergence and growth of Welsh and Scottish nationalisms have led to a modification of the constitutional arrangements and political system of the United Kingdom. As the SNP and Plaid Cymru moved rapidly from lost deposits, to by-election victories, to parliamentary kingmakers in the mid-1970s, it is somewhat surprising that no English equivalent emerged to add to the nationalist threat to the two (and a half) party system. I believe that there are three primary reasons behind this. Firstly, as I have already discussed, the degree of overlap between English and British national identities meant for many English voters, the relevant nationalism was British nationalism, represented by the mainstream political parties. There are two further reasons that prevented the emergence of English nationalism: that England simply didn't need a national movement, and that there was no single England that a national movement could coalesce around.

⁷⁷⁸ Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, 18.

⁷⁷⁹ *ibid.*

Nationalism does not emerge out of a vacuum; it is a reaction to a perceived threat to a minority national grouping from a larger group within the state, however such a threat did not emerge for the English, nor were they even a minority in the first place. Neither did they suffer oppression,⁷⁸⁰ or occupation by a foreign enemy, or face any attempt to extinguish their national culture.⁷⁸¹ In the period following the English Civil War up until the present day, the British state has been remarkably stable. Unlike France, England did not suffer a popular revolution, and the British Isles have not been militarily occupied by a foreign power. Additionally, there has been noticeable absence of militarism/political violence on mainland Britain, and when political violence has been adopted it was rarely carried by British actors, for example whilst the suffragette movement did make use of political violence and sabotage tactics alongside their political and civil resistance campaigns,⁷⁸² and communist agitation was notable by its absence.⁷⁸³ Andrew Thorpe argues that British success in the First World War, geographic dislocation from Europe and the (relatively) strong economy were all factors behind this,⁷⁸⁴ and additionally, is convinced that there is a “decency” about the British public that makes them unreceptive to political violence.⁷⁸⁵ Regardless, the stability of the British state has ensured that the official bearers of British national identity have remained in place without significant upset, ensuring there has been little consideration of what a British identity stood for.

A common complaint among Welsh and Scottish nationalists was that their interests were not adequately represented at a Westminster-based Parliament that was mismanaging the governance of their respective countries. Yet the English did not perceive England as a political unit in the same way, nor could they claim to be underrepresented at Westminster, so similar concerns could not have arisen. Put simply, the conditions for nationalism have not emerged in England; English voters had no need for a nationalist alternative as they were not threatened, and saw no

⁷⁸⁰ *ibid.*, 184.

⁷⁸¹ Jeremy Paxman, *The English: A Portrait of a People* (London: Penguin, 2007), 19.

⁷⁸² Raeburn’s detailed chronology of militancy in the Suffragette movement discusses the use of explosives, arson and the destruction of property (Antonia Raeburn, *Militant Suffragettes* (London: Michael Joseph, 1973).

⁷⁸³ John Stevenson, “The Politics of Violence”, in *The Politics of Reappraisal 1918-1939*, eds. Gillian Peele and Chris Cook, 146-164 (London: MacMillan Press, 1975).

⁷⁸⁴ Andrew Thorpe, *The Failure of Political Extremism in Inter-war Britain*. Exeter Studies in History (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1989), 5-8.

⁷⁸⁵ *ibid.*, 9.

potential utility in the devolution of governance to a sub-national level. As Kumar points out, the emergence of an English nationalism would have been somewhat extraordinary when you consider there was no threat to English identity.⁷⁸⁶

The final factor precluding the emergence of a single unified English national movement is that there was no single unified England. The level of divergence between competing visions of England by the time nationalism was emerging as a political force in Scotland and Wales meant that it was unlikely they could be reconciled into a single political entity, with a cleavage not of language or religion, but of class. One vision of England was based heavily on the romantic imagery of the countryside, and the rural lifestyle associated with country living; Kenny argues that for some, the “spirit of England lies in the countryside”,⁷⁸⁷ and Colls suggests that England has often been depicted as a garden, even if just a small plot of grass on an allotment.⁷⁸⁸ The countryside represented a defence against the relentless onslaught of modernisation, industrialisation and urban dwelling,⁷⁸⁹ an idyllic refuge from the stresses of modern life, albeit one that has been heavily strained in the last century. Bound up with this identity were a number of institutions associated with rural England: the Church of England, the foxhunt, and the Conservative Party.

This portrayal of England chimed with the upper class, as well as those who aspired to join them, but this form of Englishness has not been readily accessible to those who live outside what would be called ‘Middle England’; namely the residents of ‘the North’ and those of London. The rapid expansion of London in size, importance, and the insularity of the quasi-city-state have led to the creation of a distinct London identity “imaginatively disconnected from the rest of England”.⁷⁹⁰ London has come to represent the antithesis of the Middle England ideal - it is progressive, secular, diverse and urban.

⁷⁸⁶ Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, 239.

⁷⁸⁷ Kenny, *The Politics of English nationhood*, 12.

⁷⁸⁸ Colls, *Identity of England*, 205.

⁷⁸⁹ Kenny, *The Politics of English nationhood*, 51.

⁷⁹⁰ *ibid.*, 111.

As for the North,⁷⁹¹ Colley argues that disparity between the North and South of England has existed for centuries, and attributes the neglect of the North to “metropolitan mental distancing”.⁷⁹² Aughey even goes as far as to propose that parts of the North have come to fulfil the role of England’s “internal other”.⁷⁹³ In Dave Russell’s thorough examination of the North in British popular consciousness he argues “the North of England has ultimately held a marginal and often problematic place within the national culture”,⁷⁹⁴ but that “only the North with its large ensemble of supposed characteristics and associations, has been imagined on a grand and complex enough scale to generate something close to an alternative or, probably more accurately, a complementary Englishness”.⁷⁹⁵

Traditionally, this region has been heavily associated with industry and manufacturing, as well as the institutions that accompany these sectors; the trade unions and the Labour Party.⁷⁹⁶ With the dismantling of much of Britain’s heavy industry, and the decreasing political power of the labour movement, the perception of the North of England has shifted away from the traditional working-class image towards what Kenny describes as ‘chav’ culture - “a pejorative embodiment of the venality, vulgarity and criminality associated with the poorest strata of the working classes”.⁷⁹⁷ Increasingly this vision is correlated with the politics of immigration. Following the Second World War, due to a shortage of labour, the British government adopted an ‘open-door’ policy on immigration, and since that point, authors like Tom Nairn have suggested a link between the issue of immigration and political Englishness.⁷⁹⁸ In 1968, Conservative MP Enoch Powell delivered a, now infamous, speech in which he claimed that mass immigration was “like watching a nation busily engaged in heaping up its own funeral pyre”.⁷⁹⁹

⁷⁹¹ Colley defines the dividing line between the North and South as “an imagine line running from where the River Severn meets the sea on the western side of England, across to the Wash on the coastline of eastern England” (*Acts of Union and Disunion*, 66); In a chapter focused on this topic, Russell makes a strong case that actually defining ‘the North’ is a difficult task, with the author arguing the benefits of a minimalist approach (Dave Russell, *Looking North: Northern England and the national imagination*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004).

⁷⁹² Colley, *Acts of Union and Disunion*, 66-67.

⁷⁹³ Aughey, *The Politics of Englishness*, 145.

⁷⁹⁴ Russell, *Looking North*, 267.

⁷⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 268.

⁷⁹⁶ Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, 169.

⁷⁹⁷ Kenny, *The Politics of English Nationhood*, 108.

⁷⁹⁸ *ibid.*, 282.

⁷⁹⁹ Enoch Powell, 1968.

Powell was not alone in vocalising these opinions: the previous year, in February 1967, the National Front had been established through the union of a number of smaller right-wing parties.⁸⁰⁰ This group proclaimed a strongly anti-immigrant message that matched the mood of a certain element of the population in England, and the tension that built up between the ‘natives’ and the migrant community often erupted in riots, especially in working class areas in the 1970s and 1980s. Race riots in Oldham and Bradford in the mid-1990s fuelled fears that parts of the North were becoming increasingly associated with right-wing anti-immigrant politics.

Thus three competing incompatible versions of English exist, and Kenny argues that notions of Englishness that were until recently defined in relation to traditional ‘Middle England’ have increasingly shifted towards the working-class English identity associated with the North.⁸⁰¹ Overall, English nationalism has not emerged because there has been no need for it, nor is there a conceptual English national and political identity around which it could mobilise popular support. The continued salience of a British identity, which prioritises defence of the Union, is a further inhibiting factor. The majority position of the English within the British state has negated the need for sub-national governance, and the perceived lack of a threat to national identity or culture mean that the conditions for nationalism simply do not exist in England.

The Arrival of Englishness as a Political Force

There is widespread agreement in the literature on English national identity that something changed in the 1990s.⁸⁰² It was as if English national consciousness suddenly awoke from a long, deep slumber, disturbed not by the end of winter or the immediate threat of danger but by the Three Lions of the England national football team. It was football, we are told, that reminded the English that they are a nation too. In this section I consider the emergence of Englishness as a political identity, the

⁸⁰⁰ Nigel Fielding, *The National Front* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), 19.

⁸⁰¹ Kenny, *The Politics of English Nationhood*, 123.

⁸⁰² Kenny, *The Politics of English Nationhood*, 48; English, *Is there an English nationalism*, 1; Aughey, *The Politics of Englishness*, 1.

impact of devolution on England and the correlation between Englishness and the simultaneous rise of far-right political parties in the United Kingdom.

Association football is one of the few institutions in the United Kingdom organised along national lines. As a result, Wembley Stadium was one of the only crucibles in which the national identity celebrated was English, not British; after all it was England that won the 1966 World Cup, not the United Kingdom, and as the European Championships were held in England in the summer of 1996, there were claims that football was ‘coming home’. Many commentators on English identity situate the emergence of a new English consciousness around the tournament: Clive Aslet describes it as “exceptional as a moment when almost all the nation... were doing the same thing at once: following the match”,⁸⁰³ recalling the kind of imagined community that Benedict Anderson proposed.⁸⁰⁴ Kenny reports that “flags festooned with the Cross of St George became ubiquitous, and the Union Jack, the traditional symbol of national pride, all but disappeared from view”.⁸⁰⁵ This explosion of passion was undoubtedly helped by the (relative) success of the English team, as well as the fact that England faced off victoriously against the ‘Auld Enemy’, Scotland. For many, this moment sparked the arrival of Englishness as a collective identity that was socially acceptable.

The sudden adoption of St George’s Cross was seized upon by the tabloid press and retailers who quickly jumped on the bandwagon and began to celebrate this new Englishness.⁸⁰⁶ The flag emerged as a symbol of national pride⁸⁰⁷ and the associated iconography took a prominent role, with the celebration of St George’s Day increasing in popularity. A further example of the changing mood of the English public was the unprecedented and unexpected outpouring of grief in the wake of the death of Diana, the Princess of Wales. Aughey notes that, for some commentators, it

⁸⁰³ Clive Aslet, *Anyone for England? A search for British Identity* (London: Little, Brown and Co, 1997), 14.

⁸⁰⁴ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

⁸⁰⁵ Kenny, *The Politics of English Nationhood*, 42.

⁸⁰⁶ Paxman, *The English*, 21.

⁸⁰⁷ Kumar asserts that shortly after Euro 1996, the St George Cross was adopted by racist elements of the far-right, and was thus lost as an accept symbol of English (*The Making of English National Identity*, 263)

was the death of Diana and the public's rapid canonisation of the 'people's Princess', that sparked a shift in national consciousness, rather than the football.⁸⁰⁸

The political backdrop against which this 'new Englishness' had emerged was the final death throes of Conservative rule, and the ascension in their place of Tony Blair and New Labour. Central to their political platform was devolution to Scotland and Wales, and some have argued that it was, in fact, devolution that created Englishness as a political identity;⁸⁰⁹ commentators often touch on two key idiosyncrasies of devolution - the West Lothian Question⁸¹⁰ and the Barnett Formula⁸¹¹ - as evidence that the English received a raw deal from the home rule settlement. The passage of controversial legislation on the casting vote of Scottish MPs led to increased anger about the constitutional arrangements, as did the prominence of many Scottish MPs in the cabinets of Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, who himself was the subject of ire as he sat in a Scottish seat.⁸¹² Arthur Aughey has suggested that the West Lothian Question is now the "England in Britain question", and argues that the future stability of the United Kingdom depends greatly on the way the issue is resolved.⁸¹³ Polls have shown that English voters are increasingly dissatisfied by the constitutional arrangements and the apparent institutional bias demonstrated towards Scotland and Wales.⁸¹⁴

One potential solution to the West Lothian Question is a policy often described as 'English votes for English laws' – excluding all non-English MPs from voting on matters that are devolved to the devolved assemblies. Polls show that there is a popular support for such a measure,⁸¹⁵ although a number of concerns have been raised about the concept. Harding et al. argue that if the policy was enacted it would

⁸⁰⁸ Aughey, *The Politics of Englishness*, 71.

⁸⁰⁹ Bogdanor, *Devolution in the United Kingdom*.

⁸¹⁰ A phrase coined by (or for) anti-devolutionist Labour MP Tam Dalyell (who was the MP for West Lothian), this refers to the ability of Scottish MPs to vote on matters that would not affect their constituencies as the matter was devolved to a separate assembly

⁸¹¹ Named for the economist who designed it, the Barnett Formula was intended to be a temporary solution to address the funding of local autonomy. It has "increasingly come to symbolize the state's purported bias towards Scotland" in England (Kenny, *The Politics of English Nationhood*, 225).

⁸¹² T. M. Devine dismisses the emergence of a "Scottish Raj" in British politics "as simply the latest variant in a trend which goes back for many generations" (T.M. Devine, "The Break-Up of Britain: Scotland and the End of Empire: The Prothero Lecture". *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Sixth Series* 16 (2006): 174).

⁸¹³ Aughey, *The Politics of Englishness*, 190.

⁸¹⁴ Kenny, *The Politics of English Nationhood*, 84-92.

⁸¹⁵ *ibid.*, 91

create a Parliament within the current Parliament and might discourage Scottish and Welsh MPs from attending,⁸¹⁶ and Bogdanor points out that it could lead to the situation where the government of the day found itself in the minority on devolved matters due to their electoral strength in the devolved regions.⁸¹⁷

The rise in support for a constitutional rebalancing in favour of England is evidence that English voters are increasingly aware of their governance,⁸¹⁸ and that Englishness has taken on a new political salience in British politics.⁸¹⁹ Yet in the short term, it seems unlikely that a nationalist party will emerge to contest elections on these issues, and the party best placed to engage and benefit from this phenomenon is the Conservative Party. As Kenny shows, the by-product of Conservative electoral success in England is that the party is more in touch with English issues than their rivals,⁸²⁰ and Kumar argues that, out of necessity, they have increasingly sought to portray themselves as an ‘English Party’.⁸²¹ Considering the potential electoral benefits of this strategy, Hayton, English and Kenny suggest that the lure of English nationalism may prove too strong to a Conservative Party increasingly squeezed by others on the right-wing of British politics.⁸²² It is these relatively new parties who represent the best-placed challengers to the Conservatives’ monopoly on the politics of Englishness.

The emergence of English nationalism, such as it is, has in the past been associated with support for the far-right. In his influential and controversial study on the ‘collapse’ of the United Kingdom, Tom Nairn declared that Enoch Powell was the father of an English nationalist movement he believed took “the obscene form of racism”,⁸²³ which had developed in response to an internal enemy: “the foreign body in our own streets”.⁸²⁴ In recent years, the supposed connection between political

⁸¹⁶ Alan Harding, Robert Hazell, Martin Burch, James Rees, “Answering the English Question”, in *Constitutional Futures Revisited: Britain’s Constitution to 2020*, ed. Robert Hazell (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), 78.

⁸¹⁷ Bogdanor, *Devolution in the UK*, 231.

⁸¹⁸ Harding et al, “Answering the English Question”, 73.

⁸¹⁹ Richard Hayton, Richard English and Michael Kenny, “Englishness in Contemporary British Politics”. *The Political Quarterly* 78 (2009): 125

⁸²⁰ Kenny, *The Politics of English Nationhood*, 179.

⁸²¹ Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, 263.

⁸²² Hayton, English and Kenny, “Englishness in Contemporary British Politics”, 125

⁸²³ Nairn, *Break-Up of Britain*, 269.

⁸²⁴ *ibid.*, 282

Englishness and right-wing politics has re-emerged with the rise of anti-EU, anti-migration groups, the most prominent of which - the British National Party, the English Defence League and the UK Independence Party - Kenny has examined in depth.⁸²⁵ The EDL are the only one of these groups to actually identify with England officially, but they are not a political party; the BNP - the ideological successors of the National Front - latched onto popular discontent with state-led multiculturalism policies, and took an aggressive anti-immigration stance that won the party both publicity and seats in the European Parliament in the mid-2000s, but struggled to expand beyond their core voters and were eventually pushed out by the rise of the UKIP.

Unlike the BNP and the EDL, the primary concern of UKIP was not migration, but European integration and the perceived relentless erosion of cultural and political power by the expansion of the EU's remit. Their profile has been strengthened by the defection of two Conservative MPs to UKIP in 2014, and the rising profile of the party leader, Nigel Farage, however in the 2015 General Election they received nearly four million votes (12.6% of the total votes cast), but only won one seat. Polls show that a strong correlation has emerged between an English identity and voting for UKIP has emerged,⁸²⁶ and their lack of popular support in Scotland and Wales has meant that, like the Conservatives, they have crafted their political message to appeal to an audience in England.

The increased interest in issues of migration and European integration has been scathingly described as a "retreat into the defensive laager of whiteness",⁸²⁷ and the "last-ditch stand of Little Englanders".⁸²⁸ Yet there can be little doubt that multiculturalism has not been wholly successful in England; the race riots in the 1970s and 1980s were a precursor to similar riots in Bradford and Oldham in the 1990s. In the wake of the latter, a report suggested that white and ethnic minority communities led separate lives, and claimed that there was a lack of a common civic identity.⁸²⁹ Additionally, the lack of public consultation about the transfer of power to

⁸²⁵ Kenny, *The Politics of English Nationhood*, 90-100

⁸²⁶ *ibid.*, 200.

⁸²⁷ *ibid.* 15.

⁸²⁸ Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, 241.

⁸²⁹ *ibid.*, 259.

the EU has raised concerns that crucial decisions about the governance of the country are being taken without public consultation. Kenny proposes that the association between English nationalism and this stable of issues has arisen because Englishness has served as a suitable vehicle and language for popular mobilisation.⁸³⁰ These issues have become entangled with what Kenny describes as the “vernacular of populist grievance”⁸³¹ on issues surrounding devolution, the result being that the arguments against both issues emanate from the same band of the political spectrum, and are often articulated by the same voices.

To clarify, I do not accept the argument that the rise of a populist right-wing agenda represents the emergence of English nationalism simply because this political movement is based in and aimed towards England. Firstly, these groups have only gained popularity among a certain spectrum of English voters, and they have not restricted their campaigning to English constituencies. As Richard English points out, the anti-EU vote has gone, not to *English* nationalists, but to *British* nationalists.⁸³² Whilst there is clear evidence that the English are increasingly political aware of their national identity, this is not necessarily evidence of the emergence of English nationalism, and without this there has been no English nationalist political violence to study. In the next section, I examine a region of England that has experienced the emergence of a national movement, and the attempts by individuals in this movement to adopt violent methods.

Cornwall

Cornwall, or *Kerno* in the Cornish language, is somewhat unique in the United Kingdom as, despite having a long, rich heritage distinct from England that stretches back to the Ancient Britons (like Wales, Ireland and Scotland), it is widely seen as an English region. Cornwall is the only part of England’s ‘Celtic Fringe’ that was ever wholly subsumed into England, and to some extent it is therefore not surprising that a national movement has emerged there.

⁸³⁰ Kenny, *The Politics of English Nationhood*, 233.

⁸³¹ *ibid.*, 166,

⁸³² English, *Is there an English nationalism*, 6.

The River Tamar, separating Cornwall from the rest of England, acts as a physical and psychological frontier,⁸³³ and meant that Cornwall remained a Celtic kingdom long after the Saxons had conquered the rest of England,⁸³⁴ even by the start of the 13th century remaining an “overwhelmingly Celtic society”.⁸³⁵ The Cornish language, derived from Brythonic,⁸³⁶ was still widely spoken in the 16th century.⁸³⁷ When it was finally ‘absorbed’ into the English fold Cornwall was made a Duchy, recognising the distinct character and history of the territory and marking it out from other parts of England. Additionally, Cornwall retained its ‘Stannary Parliament’ and was made exempt from central taxation, in recognition of the importance of the mining industry.⁸³⁸

It was the revocation of these privileges that sparked one of the most notable periods in Cornish history; the popular uprisings in 1496/7 and 1548, which Stoye argues were as important to the development of Cornwall as the Jacobite risings of 1715 and 1745 were to the Scots.⁸³⁹ In 1496, the powers of their Parliament and the exemption from taxation were rescinded resulting in popular revolt.⁸⁴⁰ Led by Michael Joseph, who acquired the nickname *An Gof* (Blacksmith), 2,000 men were rallied and marched on London, but were defeated and the leaders executed.⁸⁴¹ Half a century later Cornwall revolted again, this time against the imposition of the English language Prayer Book. The rebels demanded the right to continue to use Latin prayer books, which Davies argues was a mechanism to protect the use of the Cornish language.⁸⁴² Once again the revolt failed and with it went the “chance of bolstering the Cornish language with official policy”.⁸⁴³ The Cornish had failed where the Welsh succeeded; the translation of the Bible into Welsh may explain why that language did not die out whilst Cornish did.

⁸³³ Mark Stoye, *West Britons: Cornish Identities and the Early Modern British State* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2002), 2

⁸³⁴ *ibid.*, 67.

⁸³⁵ *ibid.*, 68.

⁸³⁶ Davies, *The Isles*, 49.

⁸³⁷ Bernard Deacon, Dick Cole & Garry Tregidga, *Mebyon Kernow and Cornish Nationalism* (Cardiff: Welsh Academic Press, 2003), 5.

⁸³⁸ Davies, *The Isles*, 404.

⁸³⁹ Stoye, *West Britons*, 4.

⁸⁴⁰ *ibid.*, 405.

⁸⁴¹ Davies, *The Isles*, 405.

⁸⁴² *ibid.*, 419.

⁸⁴³ *ibid.*, 420.

With Cornish supplanted as the language of everyday life, its utility and coverage began to decline. By 1700 it was restricted to a string of coastal towns,⁸⁴⁴ and by the end of the 18th century the last native Cornish speaker had died.⁸⁴⁵ Despite this, the language has lived on in placenames and a sense of Cornish distinctiveness continues to exist. Key to this was the significance of tin and copper mining and the pervasive influence of these industries in Cornish daily life and local economy.⁸⁴⁶ Furthermore Methodism, widely adopted in Cornwall, led to a sense of “collectivist solidarity”,⁸⁴⁷ and a natural affinity toward the Liberal Party.⁸⁴⁸ The importance of these two institutions leads to natural comparisons between Cornwall and Wales, and to a large degree the national movements that have emerged in both have taken a similar path.

At the start of the twentieth century, following the lead set by other national movements, *Cowethas Kelto-Kernuak* (CKK - Celtic-Cornish Society) was established. This organisation was primarily focused on the revival of the Cornish language, but also sought to preserve local architecture and provide support for local entertainments.⁸⁴⁹ Rather than use the term ‘nationalist’, they adopted the term ‘revivalists’,⁸⁵⁰ a move partly explained by the fact that the CKK did not advocate home rule for Cornwall; instead they focused on maintaining and promoting Cornish culture, again in parallel with the national movement in Wales. It took another fifty years before a Cornish movement advocating home rule emerged in 1951, and even then, when Mebyon Kernow (MK - *Sons of Cornwall*) was established, home rule was not initially included on the group’s agenda. In the early years of the group’s existence they were unable to act as an effective pressure group for the Cornish national movement, hamstrung by limited membership and the lack of a clear sense of direction.⁸⁵¹

The group’s first political success occurred in 1967 when they won a council seat for St Day & Lanner. This victory was to MK what Hamilton and Carmarthen were to the

⁸⁴⁴ Deacon et al., *Mebyon Kernow*, 6.

⁸⁴⁵ Davies, *The Isles*, 608.

⁸⁴⁶ Stoye, *West Britons*, 68.

⁸⁴⁷ Kerry Husk & Malcolm Williams, “The Legitimation of Ethnicity: The Case of the Cornish.” *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 12:2 (2012), 249 - 267.

⁸⁴⁸ Deacon et al., *Mebyon Kernow*, 10.

⁸⁴⁹ *ibid.*, 15.

⁸⁵⁰ *ibid.*, 16.

⁸⁵¹ *ibid.*, 37-39.

SNP and Plaid Cymru respectively.⁸⁵² However, unlike their counterparts, MK were unable to consolidate their success and have struggled to poll more than 4% at Westminster elections. One of the primary factors behind their electoral plight has been the dominant role the Liberal Party have played in Cornish politics. As a result, many within MK maintained close ties with the Liberal party with dual membership common (despite measures taken by MK to limit this) as the Liberals were seen as a more viable conduit for achieving political progress on Cornish issues.⁸⁵³

The efforts of groups such as MK have led to a resurgence in the use of Cornish as a spoken language - as many as 2,000 people are able to speak it today⁸⁵⁴ - and have raised the profile of issues affecting Cornwall. Despite the aforementioned campaign against the construction of housing to handle London ‘overspill’, immigration from other parts of the United Kingdom has been responsible for a 26% rise in the population,⁸⁵⁵ and the sale of Cornish property to the second- and holiday-home market has priced the locals out, leading to a “more vigorous rhetoric of ‘Cornishness’”.⁸⁵⁶ Having lost its staple industries, the Cornish economy now lags far behind the national average⁸⁵⁷ and there have been complaints that Cornwall pays far more in taxes than it receives in benefits.⁸⁵⁸ Despite these issues, MK has not been able to make any political progress, and this has led some in the national movement to adopt non-constitutional tactics. The first modern case of Cornish political violence was something of a false start. In 1974, a communiqué was issued by a hitherto unknown group called the Free Cornish Army, claiming to have conducted training exercises with as many as 40 members in preparation for a violent campaign,⁸⁵⁹ a message that received great media attention, but was revealed to be a student prank rather than the start of an armed insurrection.⁸⁶⁰

⁸⁵² *ibid.*, 51.

⁸⁵³ *ibid.*

⁸⁵⁴ Simon Osborne, “The Big Question: Is there really a Cornish culture, and does it deserve promotion?”, *The Independent*, 16 September 2008.

⁸⁵⁵ Deacon et al., *Mebyon Kernow*, 60.

⁸⁵⁶ Husk & Williams, “Legitimation of Ethnicity”, 256.

⁸⁵⁷ GDP in Cornwall was 75% of the national average in 1997 (Deacon et al., *Mebyon Kernow*, 95).

⁸⁵⁸ Deacon et al., *Mebyon Kernow*, 108.

⁸⁵⁹ *ibid.*, 62.

⁸⁶⁰ *ibid.*

In 1980 an explosion at a courthouse in St. Austell marked the first use of force by Cornish nationalists. This attack was claimed by a group adopting the moniker *An Gof*, in tribute to the leader of the 1496 revolt, who warned that attacks targeting symbols of ‘English imperialism’ would continue, and over the course of the decade took credit for two acts of arson, the harassment of members of MK and others in the national movement, and even claimed to have placed broken glass under the sand at Portreath beach.⁸⁶¹ Key figures from MK, such as chairman Richard Jenkin, viewed the group as a “hindrance”,⁸⁶² declaring that the individuals involved were “anti-Cornish vandals, not nationalists”.⁸⁶³ Following this episode the group were not heard from again, although their reputation and name lived on, sprayed on walls throughout Cornwall.⁸⁶⁴

In 2007, a second generation of violent Cornish nationalists emerged, calling themselves the Cornish Republican Army (CRA).⁸⁶⁵ Their arrival was announced through threats made to celebrity chefs Rick Stein and Jamie Oliver, both of whom had restaurants in Cornwall,⁸⁶⁶ and were targeted because they were seen as incomers who had alienated locals.⁸⁶⁷ Additionally, in an interview with the group published on an online forum, they claimed that they firebombed an old brewery, set property showrooms in Truro and Penryn alight, damaged cars displaying the English flag, and removed flags bearing St George’s cross from campsites around Cornwall.⁸⁶⁸

The justification for these attacks was that the message conveyed by moderate Cornish nationalists was being ignored by Westminster, and that violent action was the necessary next step; a justification adopted by a number of groups in this study. Like their predecessors,⁸⁶⁹ MK denounced the new group; the party’s leader, Dick

⁸⁶¹ *ibid.*, 78-79.

⁸⁶² *ibid.*, 78.

⁸⁶³ *ibid.*

⁸⁶⁴ *ibid.*

⁸⁶⁵ Originally the group had called themselves the Cornish National Liberation Army, but in a statement, the group announced they had changed their name to distinguish the group from a number of copycats.

⁸⁶⁶ Patrick Foster, “Celebrity chefs told ‘get out of Cornwall’ by separatists”, *The Times*, 14 June 2007.

⁸⁶⁷ *ibid.*

⁸⁶⁸ “Cornish Republican Army Please Contact Me”, last modified November 12, 2007,

<http://www.cornwall24.co.uk/discussion/topic2867-15.html>.

⁸⁶⁹ CRA claim to be continuation of *An Gof*, and another group called the Cornish Liberation Army.

Cole, described the group as “pseudo-terrorists”⁸⁷⁰ and decried the attention given to “couple of misguided individuals with access to a computer and a penchant for graffiti” by the British press.⁸⁷¹ Another activist from the national movement took a slightly different tone: condemning the threats as “outrageous”⁸⁷² but suggesting that the underlying causes behind the outburst needed to be addressed.

The CRA claimed to operate a two-man, decentralised cell structure, have contacts with the ‘Welsh Republican Army’ as well as members of ETA, upon whom their organisational structure was modelled, and be financially secure.⁸⁷³ In a statement placed on an open-access web source claiming to be from the group, the CRA announced that they had a member “prepared to pay the ultimate price in the battle for *Kernow*”,⁸⁷⁴ yet also said they wanted to avoid injury and limit any damage caused.⁸⁷⁵ They tore down and destroyed English flags, then claimed they were not racist, but simply campaigning for parity and self-government.⁸⁷⁶ Like the Free Wales Army, it would be fair to suggest that the CRA were publicists rather than terrorists, yet they have been unable to present a consistent message.

Later that year, the group announced that they were shifting operations away from threatening Stein and Oliver, to focus on English-owned property in Cornwall,⁸⁷⁷ yet no further attacks were carried out by the group. Two years later, the group (or at least the name) re-appeared in a series of anti-student slogans daubed on the walls of Falmouth during an open day for the local university.⁸⁷⁸ The message “Penryn has had enough of students”, signed by the group, expressed their anger at the construction of new property for the student rental market. The principal concern of the CRA was the damage done to Cornish culture and society by the sale of Cornish properties to non-

⁸⁷⁰ Foster, “Celebrity chefs”.

⁸⁷¹ Dick Cole, “Letter to London Press from Cllr Dick Cole concerning CNLA coverage”, last modified June 15, 2007, <http://web.archive.org/web/20070820075807/http://www.mebyonkernow.org/Public/Stories/268-1.shtml>.

⁸⁷² Nigel Hicks, “Cornish independence is back on the menu”, *The Telegraph*, 15 June 2007.

⁸⁷³ “Cornish Republican Army Please Contact Me”, last modified November 12, 2007, <http://www.cornwall24.co.uk/discussion/topic2867-15.html>.

⁸⁷⁴ Cornish Republican Army, “Cornish Republican Army Public Information Release”, last modified May 9, 2011,

http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Cornish_Republican_Army_Public_Information_Release.

⁸⁷⁵ “CNLA: the writing on the wall”, *Cornish World Magazine*, 2007, 50–53.

⁸⁷⁶ *ibid.*

⁸⁷⁷ CRA, “Public Information Release”.

⁸⁷⁸ Nick Collins, “Cornish ‘terrorists’ declare war on students”, *The Telegraph*, 13 October 2009.

permanent residents, and the creeping anglicisation that accompanied this. As in Wales, this process is viewed in highly detrimental terms by nationalists, who argue that it is damaging to the small, rural communities that act as a stronghold of local culture and language.

The emergence of the CRA was met with bemusement and parody; the group were described as “political freaks”,⁸⁷⁹ likened to the revolutionary organisation in the *Life of Brian*,⁸⁸⁰ and were nicknamed the “Ooh-Arr-A” and “Farmer bin Ladens”.⁸⁸¹ Yet the local community took the issues they highlighted very seriously and it cannot be denied that their actions gained the sort of attention that MK had been unable to. Many parallels can be drawn between the cases of Cornwall and Wales, most notably with regard to targeting holiday homes. These attacks sparked a highly exaggerated level of publicity and raised the ire of MK who viewed their actions as an unhelpful, even damaging, distraction. The two Cornish physical force organisations studied committed a handful of acts that would typically be categorised as vandalism. There is no evidence of widespread support for either group, or to back up the wild claims made by the CRA. Like the Free Wales Army, it is difficult to judge the extent to which *An Gof* and the CRA can be accurately described as terrorist groups without devaluing the term.

The limited nature of violent Cornish nationalism reflects the limited impact of Cornish nationalism overall as a political force. For most of the twentieth century the national movement in Cornwall focused on maintaining and promoting Cornish language and identity, in the face of the pervasiveness of Britishness and British culture, and this has led to accusations from some within the national movement that MK and Cornish nationalism was obsessed with the past.⁸⁸² As MK matured as a political organisation they began to highlight a number of issues that were detrimental to Cornwall and Cornish society, and Deacon et al. propose that there has been “some seepage from the cultural to the political spheres”,⁸⁸³ but in spite of encouraging signs for the group, they cannot claim to have been an effective political party beyond

⁸⁷⁹ John Harris, “Fighting them on the beaches”, *Guardian*, 15 June 2007.

⁸⁸⁰ Mike Sagar-Fenton, “Huer’s Call: Cornish ‘independence’ remains on the agenda”, *Western Morning News*, 18 August 2014.

⁸⁸¹ Collins, “Cornish ‘terrorists’”.

⁸⁸² Deacon et al., *Mebyon Kernow*, 114.

⁸⁸³ *ibid.*, 116.

council level. When members of the national movement have adopted more direct methods, it was claimed that MK's ineffectiveness was central to their decision to escalate matters; the emergence of these groups represents the frustration felt by some within the Cornish national movement, but they too achieved little success and even less public support.

Conclusion

Few states could be said to have influenced the course of human history as much as England has, certainly since the War of the Roses. The position of the English language as the global *lingua franca* is testament to this, yet for much of recent history the successes of England were the successes of Britain. The spoils of Empire were shared amongst the peoples of Britain and the English were comfortable in allowing the national minorities to retain their own culture, language and institutions. When the Empire began to wane and the usefulness of Britishness as an identity diminished, the Scots and Welsh sought refuge in their own national identity and began to organise politically along national lines to petition Westminster for self-government. Even regions within England sought to highlight their distinctiveness as a gradual process of anglicisation eroded their culture and way of life.

In these distinct areas of the United Kingdom this process led to the emergence of nationalist movements, elements of which adopted violent methods to achieve political change. England, however, lacks a national movement and subsequently there has been no nationalist political violence. Accordingly there is little to be gained from comparing England to the other cases in this study in the next chapter. That no national movement, violent or otherwise, has emerged in England is the direct result, in my opinion, of the strength and stability of the British identity and its utility to the English, just as Britishness delayed the emergence of Scottish and Welsh nationalism. However, devolution for Scotland and Wales demonstrated to the English the benefit of a national movement, and has led to greater interest in the construction of English national identity. It is widely agreed that the 1990s saw the birth of a new form of Englishness, and since then voices calling for a redress of the constitutional balance in favour in England have become more audible. The foundations for an English national

movement have been laid in recent years, but there is as of yet no political vehicle to build on this.

5. Inhospitable Conditions for Political Violence

In *Silver Blaze*, Sherlock Holmes and his companion Dr Watson are summoned to investigate the disappearance of a renowned racehorse and the murder of the horse's trainer. Holmes is quickly able to deduce that the stolen racehorse has not been taken by a stranger, but the culprit must in fact have been a person known to frequent the stables. When he comes to explain his reasoning to the police, he draws their attention to "to the curious incident of the dog in the night-time", namely that "the dog did nothing".⁸⁸⁴ Drawing on the case of Holmes' dog, MacCulloch argues,

"Conan Doyle reminds us that often one of the most significant scraps of evidence to illuminate a particular historical question is what is *not* actually done or said... silence, then, is a vital part of what is missing in history, a necessary tool to help us make sense of the written and visual evidence that we possess".⁸⁸⁵

In comparison to national movements for whom political violence has been a key strategy, the national movements in Scotland, Wales and England have been notable by their allegorical silence: they are the dogs that didn't bark. Having recognised the absence of noise, the task it now to follow Holmes' example and deduce why.

Thus far I have examined nationalism in Scotland, Wales, and England, while considering the emergence of the national movements in these countries, and the use of political violence by militant elements in these groups. Building on this, the next step is to examine the reasons why there has not been further political violence. As I said in the conclusion to my previous chapter, the case of England will not feature in this chapter as there has been no English national movement to become violent. Instead I focus on the cases of Scotland and Wales, both of which have seen vibrant, but slightly different, national movements emerge in the last century. To achieve this, I compare the case of nationalism in Ireland, which I have yet to examine in detail,

⁸⁸⁴ Arthur Conan Doyle, "Silver Blaze", in *The memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 23.

⁸⁸⁵ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Silence: A Christian History* (London: Allen Lane, 2013), 1 - 2.

and consider the differences between the three cases to understand how they contributed to the discrepancy in the level of nationalist political violence.

In this chapter, I consider the validity of a number of potential reasons why political violence was a marginal feature of nationalism in Scotland and Wales, but first I examine the historical development of the national movement in Ireland, to demonstrate the key factors and trajectories in the proliferation of political violence by nationalists there. I focus on the period between the lead-up to the Act of Union in 1801 and Easter Rising in 1916, and also the period between partition of Ireland in 1921 and the start of Troubles in Northern Ireland in the late 1960s, allowing me to draw on the lessons on Irish history and compare them directly to the cases of Scotland and Wales. Following on from this, I consider the validity of a number of potential reasons why political violence was a marginal feature of nationalism in Scotland and Wales. I consider the reaction of the British state, the importance of societal cleavages, the construction of national identity, the role of non-violent alternatives and the importance of a precedent for political violence.

Nationalism in Ireland

Part of Britain's 'Celtic Fringe', the conquest of Ireland began in 1169, although it was not until 1199 that the Irish and English states were formally linked.⁸⁸⁶ Even then the conquerors did not wield power over the entire island, as the natives governed much of the territory.⁸⁸⁷ This led to the arrival of a number of English settlers, who seized lands and maintained English rule in Ireland. In 1541, Henry VIII designated Ireland a Kingdom,⁸⁸⁸ and the ideology of the Protestant Reformation that was underway in England was exported to Ireland in order to sever the connection between the Irish - both the natives and the English settlers - and Henry's enemy at the time, Rome. The Reformation failed to take hold in Ireland, however, and with its failure Catholic Ireland became aligned against the Protestant British mainland and her representatives in Ireland.

⁸⁸⁶ Davies, *The Isles*, 340.

⁸⁸⁷ English, *Irish Freedom*, 43.

⁸⁸⁸ Previously it had been a Lordship.

In his extensive examination of the Protestant Reformation, Diarmaid MacCulloch remarks that its failure in Ireland - and the success of the Counter-Reformation - is curious; “in no other polity where a major monarchy made a long-term commitment to the establishment of Protestantism was there such a failure”.⁸⁸⁹ Richard English states that the failure of the Reformation can be attributed to four factors: “a lack of will, a lack of power and resources, a lack of sufficient guile, and a distinctive religious setting against which to work”.⁸⁹⁰ Unlike in Scotland, where the Reformation was perceived to be an indigenous movement led by a Scot, the Irish Reformation was placed in the hands of planted allies who were seen as “alien, hostile, foreign and negative” by the locals, and attempts encouraged by Elizabeth I⁸⁹¹ to spread Protestantism in Gaelic, were “too late and too feeble”.⁸⁹² This was a complete contrast from the Reformation movement in Wales, which operated in the native tongue.

Since that point, Ireland has been a country divided, comprising two races and two religions, on one island.⁸⁹³ Power was concentrated in the hands of the much smaller Protestant community, with Catholics (as well as some Protestant sects) discriminated against, and religion operated as a dividing line between the Protestant community - whose dominance in Ireland was closely tied to the power of the English - and the Catholic community who fought against the Protestant ascendancy. Marianne Elliott argues that the political divide in Ireland between unionist and nationalist was a consequence of this religious divide, not the cause of it,⁸⁹⁴ and Timothy Wilson claims that the roots of the conflict in Northern Ireland can be traced to the failure of the Reformation.⁸⁹⁵ The failure of the Protestant Reformation in Ireland is a key juncture in British history, and we cannot understand the rise of nationalism in Ireland without understanding the reasons the Reformation failed and the social processes it unleashed. Equally important was the consolidation of power in Ireland in the hands of the Protestant community; it was this power imbalance that made the religious cleavage in Ireland so contentious.

⁸⁸⁹ MacCulloch, *Reformation*, 394.

⁸⁹⁰ English, *Irish Freedom*, 51.

⁸⁹¹ MacCulloch, *Reformation*, 398

⁸⁹² English, *Irish Freedom*, 54

⁸⁹³ Bogdanor, *Devolution in the United Kingdom*, 57.

⁸⁹⁴ Marianne Elliott, *When God Took Sides: Religion and Identity in Ireland - Unfinished History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 4.

⁸⁹⁵ Wilson, *Frontiers of Violence*, 22.

During the Glorious Revolution that swept the Stuarts from power in Britain, Ireland became an important battleground between the Protestant supporters of William and the Catholic supporters of King James II. The Siege of Derry and the Battle of the Boyne in the late 17th century (both triumphs for the Protestant army) have taken on colossal historical importance to Ireland's Protestant population. A century later in 1798, with limited political progress achieved in the pursuit of equal rights for Catholics, and with the popular revolutions in America and France fresh in the world's collective memory, a popular uprising to seize control of Ireland began. The uprising - led by the United Irishmen, (co-founded by Theobald Wolfe Tone, who became, in the words of Richard English, "a nationalist hero in Ireland of almost unrivalled stature"⁸⁹⁶) and the Defenders - was able to draw on a great deal of popular support,⁸⁹⁷ but were defeated despite French assistance. The failure of the rebellion was "a devastating experience – a short but bloody civil war, which involved the explosive release of pent-up economic and sectarian pressures",⁸⁹⁸ and led directly to the formal incorporation of Ireland into the United Kingdom with the 1801 Act of Union.

The mechanism that bonded Ireland to Britain was similar to the political project undertaken between Scotland and England a century previous, but Alvin Jackson in his comparison of these two unions argues that the Irish union was mishandled. Union, he claims, "was identifiable with impoverishment, religious persecution and slaughter",⁸⁹⁹ and unionism was associated with "an alien nationality, alien interests, an alien history, and alien religious convictions".⁹⁰⁰ In Scotland, the union bargain had left key institutions untouched in local control, and these institutions were crucial in shaping Scotland's sense of self as part of the United Kingdom. Similar institutions in Ireland, meanwhile, were "in the hands of the 'enemy'",⁹⁰¹ giving the impression that the union was intended to maintain the Protestant ascendancy. Just as damaging was the failure of those negotiating the union to include Catholic emancipation in the

⁸⁹⁶ Despite this, English argues that Wolfe Tone's fame has "exaggerated his contemporary importance" (English, *Irish Freedom*, 103).

⁸⁹⁷ Jackson reports that in Ulster alone 27,000 people joined the rising (Alvin Jackson, *Ireland: 1798-1998: War, Peace and Beyond* (Chicester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 17).

⁸⁹⁸ Jackson, *Ireland: 1798-1998*, 20.

⁸⁹⁹ Jackson, *Two Unions*, 48.

⁹⁰⁰ *ibid.*, 221.

⁹⁰¹ *ibid.*, 114.

measure,⁹⁰² and further evidence of the status of the Catholic community as second-class citizens was to come in the perceived inaction of the British state regarding the Irish Potato Famine of the 19th century, although Richard English argues that this perception is unfounded.⁹⁰³

This is not to say that the Irish didn't take advantage of the British Empire; Jeffery's edited volume considers the various ways the Irish served in the Empire, as well as how it Empire was represented in Ireland,⁹⁰⁴ and Rafferty writes that the Catholic Church in Ireland made great use of the international connections and British support for their missionary endeavours throughout the world.⁹⁰⁵ Jackson records that the British army recruited extensively in Ireland, but suggests that, for Irish soldiers, "taking the King or Queen's shilling certainly did not automatically induce loyalism".⁹⁰⁶ Colley opines that these benefits "helped to render the Union rather more palatable".⁹⁰⁷ Although Catholics were prepared to engage with (and benefit from) the British Empire, this did not automatically translate into acceptance of a British identity or love for the British state and monarch.

As discussed earlier, Linda Colley argues that British identity was bound up closely with Protestantism,⁹⁰⁸ and the Catholic Irish represented an out-group to the peoples of Scotland, Wales and England in a way that these three national groups never saw each other because of their shared faith.⁹⁰⁹ Britishness, as an identity, was unlikely to be adopted wholeheartedly by the majority of Ireland's population, in the same way as the Scots and Welsh had.

This is a vital difference between Ireland and Scotland or Wales - the rejection of a British identity and othering of those who accepted it by, what would become, the nationalist community. For many among the Irish, the British were the other, and even

⁹⁰² English, *Irish Freedom*, 118.

⁹⁰³ *ibid.*, 163.

⁹⁰⁴ Keith Jeffery, *'An Irish Empire?': the aspects of Ireland and the British Empire* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996).

⁹⁰⁵ Oliver P. Rafferty, "The Catholic Church, Ireland and the British Empire, 1800-1921", *Historical Research* 84:224 (2011), 288-309.

⁹⁰⁶ Jackson, *Two Unions*, 197.

⁹⁰⁷ Colley, *Acts of Union and Disunion*, 99.

⁹⁰⁸ Colley, *Britons*, 5.

⁹⁰⁹ Linda Colley, Britishness and Otherness: Who Are the British Anyway? *The Journal of British Studies*, 31:4 (1992), 309-329.

(at times) the enemy; for the majority of the Scots and Welsh, the British were part of their in-group. They were ‘us’. As I go onto discuss, this difference is crucial in helping to explain why political violence was far less of a feature of Scottish and Welsh nationalism.

Britishness - and as a result unionism - was enthusiastically adopted by the Protestant community in Ireland, especially those in Ulster (a result, partly, of the 19th century industrialisation of Ulster⁹¹⁰), and became an important part of their identity. In an article examining the importance of British identity to Ulster Protestants, Neil Southern claims that Irishness was neither accessible - attached as it was to “political, religious and cultural positions which Protestants feel to be not only alien but rivalrous”⁹¹¹ - nor was it desirable. In its place they have “treasur[ed] their Britishness as an alternative to the embarrassment of their Irishness”.⁹¹² Furthermore, English argues “the fear of betrayal, the sense of being under siege, and the dread of massacre - the legacy of their seventeenth-century experience” explain the “sense of insecurity characteristic of the Protestant community in Ulster”.⁹¹³ Moloney echoes this sentiment, claiming, “unionism was an ideology that thrived on a sense of siege... fear of retribution from their downtrodden and disenfranchised Irish Catholic neighbours was possibly the most potent single factor in their political makeup”.⁹¹⁴ Thus for many in the unionist community, Britishness was a guarantee of liberty and security in the face of the latent Catholic existential threat.⁹¹⁵

At the start of the 19th century, progress on the issue of Catholic emancipation was painfully slow, but although immediate change was not forthcoming, the gradualist approach of Daniel O’Connell and his colleagues reaped some rewards with the 1829 Catholic Relief Act, which extended the voting franchise to propertied Catholics. However, there were elements within the Catholic Irish population for whom

⁹¹⁰ McAllister argues that the process of industrialisation in Ulster cemented a link between the commercial prosperity of the area and the British mainland. Additionally, he suggests that the industrialisation process “formed a further barrier with the rest of Ireland”. (Ian McAllister, “Territorial differentiation and party development in Northern Ireland”, in *Contemporary Irish Studies*, ed. Tom Gallagher (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983), 37-64).

⁹¹¹ Neil Southern, “Britishness, “Ulsterness” and Unionist Identity in Northern Ireland”, *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 13 (2007): 76.

⁹¹² Conor Gearty, *Terror*. (London: Faber, 1991), 115.

⁹¹³ English, *Irish Freedom*, 60.

⁹¹⁴ Moloney, *Secret History of the IRA*, 39.

⁹¹⁵ Walker, *Intimate Strangers*, 170.

constitutional methods were unacceptable, the very act of engaging in British parliamentary democracy being a tacit acceptance of British authority. A collection of groups, commonly classified under the umbrella label of the Fenians (from the Gaelic *Fianna*, legendary warriors of Irish mythology⁹¹⁶),⁹¹⁷ applied new technology and an alternative strategy that came to be described as ‘skirmishing’, but would be considered terrorism today.⁹¹⁸

The most important of these groups - the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) - emerged in 1858 but remained a clandestine conspiratorial society. McGarry and McConnel contend that Fenianism differed from constitutional nationalism in the belief that Ireland’s geography⁹¹⁹ and unique culture meant that its natural condition was to be united and free, going on to suggest that Fenians saw England as motivated by ill-will, and nationalist politicians as self-serving and morally corrupt.⁹²⁰ The IRB believed that Ireland’s freedom would be achieved through armed insurrection and were not persuaded of the alternative strategy of skirmishing advocated by *Clan na Gael*. Townshend writes that they became “accidental terrorists” when they inadvertently destroyed a tenement building whilst attempting to rescue Fenian prisoners from Clerkenwell jail in 1867.⁹²¹ The influence of the IRB, McGarry and McConnel argue, has been substantial: “by shaping popular perceptions of the Irish nation and how its struggle for independence from Britain should be conducted it influenced not only political developments but notions of national and cultural identity”.⁹²²

As the 19th century drew to a close, the Irish Question had become the most pressing issue in British politics. A further extension of the voting franchise had allowed Home Rulers, led by the “darkly charismatic” Charles Parnell,⁹²³ to capture the vast majority

⁹¹⁶ Paul Bew, *Ireland: The Politics of Enmity 1789-2006* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 246.

⁹¹⁷ The term ‘Fenian’ is now often used as a pejorative term, but in the 19th century members of these groups self-identified as Fenians.

⁹¹⁸ These groups, and the tactics they used, have been discussed extensively in Whelehan’s *The Dynamiters* and McGarry and McConnel’s edited volume *The Black Hand of Republicanism*. (Whelehan, *The Dynamiters*; McGarry & McConnel, *The Black Hand of Republicanism*).

⁹¹⁹ The simple equation that Ireland should be one nation because it is one island. It is unlikely Scottish or Welsh nationalists would be too keen on a similar ideology.

⁹²⁰ McGarry and McConnel, *Black Hand*, xv.

⁹²¹ Townshend, *Easter 1916*, 5.

⁹²² McGarry and McConnel, *Black Hand*, xi.

⁹²³ Alvin Jackson, *Home Rule: An Irish History, 1800-2000* (London: Phoenix, 2004), 6.

of Westminster seats in Ireland (peaking in 1885 when they won 85 out of 103), and the strength of this bloc gave the nationalists a considerable voice at Westminster. Demands for Irish home rule found a sympathetic ear with William Gladstone, who committed his Liberal party to achieving this goal, believing that the measure would lead to “the reconciliation of Irish nationalism to the British state”.⁹²⁴ As the prospect moved closer to reality, the Protestant Unionist community in Ireland began to fear that home rule would result in their abandonment by the British, drawing them together in a “defensive stand against what was perceived to be a threat to their way of life”.⁹²⁵ In 1905, the Ulster Unionist Council was set up to resist home rule and in September 1912, 250,000 Protestant men signed a declaration that they would resist the measure by force if necessary,⁹²⁶ leading to the creation of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) the following year. These are the actions of a community fearful of their continued existence: Tom Nairn has compared the Protestants of Northern Ireland to the Jewish population in Israel, suggesting that both exhibit the “religiously-based national ideology of unusual power, derived from a history of being under siege”.⁹²⁷

Alarmed at this development, the nationalist community responded in kind with the formation of the Irish Volunteers in 1913, the group that would later indirectly become the IRA.⁹²⁸ Townshend notes that this moved militant republicanism “from the sidelines to the centre of events” and “for the first time since 1867, [gave] the Fenians... something like an army”, as republicans dominated the executive of the new volunteer militia.⁹²⁹ This development was symptomatic of the tit-for-tat relationship that developed between the two communities, whose intransigence was based on a fear that any sign of weakness would serve to strengthen their opponent.

With political progress on Irish home rule halted by the outbreak of the First World War, a group of Irish rebels took matters into their own hands when they stormed the Dublin Post Office in Easter week 1916. Although, the rebellion itself was “suppressed with some efficiency”, as the British military took control of the situation within a day, it was the events that followed that ensured the rebels’ actions were

⁹²⁴ *ibid.*, 4.

⁹²⁵ Walker, *Intimate Strangers*, 11.

⁹²⁶ Wilson, *Frontiers of Violence*, 25

⁹²⁷ Nairn, *The Break-Up of Britain*, 249.

⁹²⁸ English, *Armed Struggle*, 10.

⁹²⁹ Townshend, *The Republic*, xviii.

significant; the summary trials and executions of those involved in the rebellion, carried out under martial law, were seen as an unnecessarily strict punishment. John Dillon, the deputy leader of the nationalists, condemned the executions in the strongest possible terms; the actions of the British military in Ireland, he said, were “washing out our whole life work in a sea of blood” and “poisoning the mind of Ireland”.⁹³⁰

Jackson argues that there is a consensus that “it was these executions, rather than the rebel action, which nudged public opinion from outright hostility towards a degree of sympathy for the insurgents and their idealism”.⁹³¹ The sympathetic response they generated ended the possibility of a constitutional settlement on the Irish question, and instead a bloody conflict followed,⁹³² leading to an agreement creating the Irish Free State, at the expense of the partition of Ireland. This measure was grounded in the strength of opinion in Ulster, as well as from their supporters in Westminster, but the immediate impact of the settlement was an increase in sectarian violence in Ulster,⁹³³ as well as a bloody civil war between those who were prepared to accept partition and those who were not in the new Irish state.

Conor Gearty writes that “the borders of [Northern Ireland] were determined not by history, tradition or geography, but by the imperatives of sectarian demography”,⁹³⁴ and English argues that Ulster’s unionists “built a state largely in their own image” in which Catholics were made to feel unwelcome.⁹³⁵ This was made possible by the removal of proportional representation in local government elections in 1929, consolidating Unionist strength and ensuring their monopoly of political power in Northern Ireland.⁹³⁶ Stormont - the devolved assembly tasked with running Northern Ireland - “institutionalised the relative powerlessness of Nationalists” and “served the short-term and local purposes of a Unionist elite”.⁹³⁷

⁹³⁰ Dillon, quoted in Townshend, *Easter 1916*, 281.

⁹³¹ Jackson, *Home Rule*, 178.

⁹³² For further details see Townshend, *The Republic*.

⁹³³ Wilson, *Frontiers of Violence*, 33.

⁹³⁴ Gearty, *Terror*, 115.

⁹³⁵ English, *Armed Struggle*, 39.

⁹³⁶ Bogdanor, *Devolution in the United Kingdom*, 77-78.

⁹³⁷ Jackson, *Two Unions*, 324.

When the apparatus of local government was established in Northern Ireland, the proportional representation voting method was adopted for elections to Stormont. Yet by achieving a majority, the Unionists were able to remove this, and with some skilful gerrymandering, and by convincing Protestant voters voted in a uniform manner, they were able to secure a permanent Unionist majority in the assembly. This allowed the unionist community to ensure that the Protestant community, or at least Protestant areas, received favourable treatment and a disproportionate share of local government spending; Frank Wright records that “government ministers in Northern Ireland delivered public speeches encouraging and legitimising systematic discrimination against Catholics”.⁹³⁸ The Catholic community in Northern Ireland was heavily under-represented in skilled labour sectors, reliant on construction and agriculture;⁹³⁹ were under-represented in the senior ranks of the civil service and all ranks of the police;⁹⁴⁰ had a median income 15% below that of the Protestant community, with twice the level of unemployment;⁹⁴¹ and were “frequently and seriously disadvantaged” when it came to the allocation of housing.⁹⁴² The true nature of discrimination has been examined by John Whyte; he studies the various claims and counter-claims about the issue and contends that whilst there can be no doubt that imbalances in Northern Ireland were “systematic and deliberate” the level of discrimination has been exaggerated.⁹⁴³

Following the creation of Northern Ireland, the Catholic minority largely refused to accept the legitimacy of the new state, an attitude that helped feed Protestant beliefs that “this was ‘our’ state, tolerating an ‘ungrateful minority’”.⁹⁴⁴ Despite this, Rose suggests that there was little appetite for violent rebellion in Ulster, as the majority were keen to avoid a repeat of the violence of the early 1920s,⁹⁴⁵ although that did not prevent the IRA from launching further campaigns in the North as it became clear that partition was not a temporary measure.

⁹³⁸ Frank Wright, *Northern Ireland - A Comparative Analysis* (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1988), 148.

⁹³⁹ *ibid.*, 146.

⁹⁴⁰ Jackson, *Home Rule*, 258.

⁹⁴¹ *ibid.*, 189.

⁹⁴² English, *Armed Struggle*, 66.

⁹⁴³ John Whyte, *Interpreting Northern Ireland* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 165-167.

⁹⁴⁴ Elliott, *When God Took Sides*, 247.

⁹⁴⁵ Richard Rose, *Northern Ireland: Time of Choice* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1976), 21.

Faced with certain electoral defeat, and unwilling to formally accept the legitimacy of the Northern Irish state, the nationalist community treated local government elections with a mixture of abstention and resignation; in many seats the representative of the dominant community ran unopposed, and when nationalist candidates did win they refused to accept the position of official opposition in the assembly. Non-sectarian parties did contest elections but they were never able to challenge the dominance of the two major positions. Northern Ireland's Catholics were effectively excluded from politics and reacted to this by refusing to engage with the entire process. As John Schwartzmantel has argued, it is this exclusion from democracy that can incite the use of political violence.⁹⁴⁶

The other democratic body that Catholics could appeal to was the Westminster Parliament, which technically retained jurisdiction over the province. However, the same principles applied to Westminster that applied to Stormont; the nationalist representatives were too few to make an impact and had no desire to grant Westminster the legitimacy they vociferously maintained it did not have in any part of Ireland. For many walking the halls of Westminster, the creation of Stormont had absolved MPs of responsibility for a region that had caused their predecessors much grief. The knock-on effect of this attitude was that the British government failed to adequately oversee the actions of Stormont, allowing the discrimination of the Catholic community to proceed unchecked.

At the start of the 1960s, there were signs of a shift in the mood in Northern Ireland. Bob Purdie argues that the historic feud between the communities was dying out and efforts were being made by both sides to reach across the sectarian divide and work together.⁹⁴⁷ The Catholic community, Elliott notes, was “abandoning decades of negativity” in response to the changed climate,⁹⁴⁸ and Moloney suggests that a growing Catholic middle class showed willingness to participate in a political system they had long rejected.⁹⁴⁹ More importantly, Jackson records, “the [nationalist] community was growing, was better schooled and, in the context of world-wide civil

⁹⁴⁶ Schwartzmantel, *Democracy and Political Violence*, 6.

⁹⁴⁷ Bob Purdie, *Politics in the Streets: The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement in Northern Ireland*. (Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 1990), 16-20.

⁹⁴⁸ Elliott, *When God Took Sides*, 249.

⁹⁴⁹ Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA*, 62.

unrest in the 1960s, was able to exploit an international language of protest”.⁹⁵⁰ Evidence of the increased involvement of nationalists in the Stormont political system can be found in the decision of the Nationalist Party to take up their position as the opposition in Stormont, effectively an act of recognition.

Across the political divide, Prime Minister Terence O’Neill demonstrated a public willingness to reform Northern Ireland and improve conditions for the Catholic community. As a result, O’Neill was able to gain the support of some of Northern Ireland’s Catholic middle class, but faced problems from elements within his own party. Coalescing around ‘ultra-Loyalists’ like the Reverend Ian Paisley,⁹⁵¹ Unionist opposition to O’Neill’s reform was based on the zero-sum calculus that any measure that strengthened the Catholic community was detrimental to theirs. For Purdie, the growth of Paisley’s brand of ‘not an inch’ intransigent unionism had two effects: it limited O’Neill’s options with his own party and constituency, and it undermined trust in O’Neill among those in Catholic community seeking reform.⁹⁵² In the end, O’Neill was faced by a Catholic community concerned that his reforms were insufficient to alleviate the inequality in Northern Ireland and a vocal element within the Protestant community who regarded his actions as a sell-out to Popery. Even though some significant reforms were achieved surrounding housing allocation and local government, it would cost him his premiership.

Concerned by the slow progress of political change, and inspired by the American civil rights movement, a number of non-violent direct action groups emerged in Ulster, the foremost of which was the Homeless Citizens’ League, who adopted squatting as a tactic to raise awareness of housing and homelessness problems in the province.⁹⁵³ Out of this group and others the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) grew, whose political message differed from nationalist movements that had come before it in that it wasn’t seeking Irish unity, but instead made the case that - if the Catholic community *were* British citizens - they should

⁹⁵⁰ Jackson, *Home Rule*, 258.

⁹⁵¹ Steve Bruce’s *God Save Ulster* considers the rise of Ian Paisley from “a prophet crying in the wilderness to the centre of the unionist stage”, and the social conditions that allowed him to take on a position of such prominence (Steve Bruce, *God Save Ulster: The Religion and Politics of Paisleyism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986)).

⁹⁵² Purdie, *Politics in the Streets*, 33.

⁹⁵³ *ibid.*, 82-88.

enjoy British rights like their Protestant counterparts.⁹⁵⁴ NICRA, acting as an umbrella body for an array of civil rights groups in Northern Ireland,⁹⁵⁵ organised a protest march from Coalisland to Dungannon to raise awareness of their campaign in 1968.

A second march was held in Derry on October 5th 1968 in direct defiance of Stormont who had banned the march.⁹⁵⁶ As the march got underway, protesters were attacked by the police, who drew them into the Bogside area of Derry (a heavily Catholic area), initiating a running battle with locals. The importance of this development was magnified exponentially due to the television coverage it received, raising awareness of this civil rights movement worldwide, and demonstrating to the British government the necessity for reform in Northern Ireland. This reaction “probably did more to politically mobilise large sections of the Catholic community than did any of the other grievances”,⁹⁵⁷ and many Catholics joined NICRA as a result. Furthermore, the event placed the unionist community - and their conduct in Stormont - under a spotlight. Bowyer Bell argues that the unionist reaction to Catholic ‘agitation’ had been perfected over the years: use the police to suppress the rioters with force and blame the unrest on the IRA.⁹⁵⁸ In NICRA’s case, the Unionist leadership found that “the RUC could not beat it into the ground or Paisley intimidate it or O’Neill placate it - and given the nature of the Unionist machine, compromise was out of the question”.⁹⁵⁹

Aspects of the Protestant community viewed the civil rights movement with intense suspicion; Roy Foster argues that for many Protestants “civil rights demonstrations meant that the republican fifth column was on the march again”.⁹⁶⁰ For Ian Paisley and his acolytes, the reforms proposed by Terence O’Neill were already an outrageous betrayal of the loyal people of Ulster, but O’Neill dismissed Paisley and his

⁹⁵⁴ Rose, *Northern Ireland*, 52.

⁹⁵⁵ In his work on the civil rights movement, Simon Prince cautions against treating NICRA as a single cohesive body, noting that those involved were engaged with a variety of struggles, often with one another, and suggests that some of the groups involved in the campaign used it for their own ends (Simon Prince, *Northern Ireland’s ’68: Civil Rights, Global Revolt and the Origins of the Troubles* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2007)).

⁹⁵⁶ It had been routed through a Protestant area of Derry, and there were concerns of a violent confrontation.

⁹⁵⁷ Niall Ó Dochartaigh, *From Civil Rights to Armalites: Derry and the Birth of the Irish Troubles* [Second Edition] (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), 291.

⁹⁵⁸ Bowyer Bell, *The Secret Army*, 355.

⁹⁵⁹ *ibid.*, 357.

⁹⁶⁰ Roy Foster, *Modern Ireland: 1600-1972* (London: Penguin, 1988), 588.

movement as “a fascist organisation masquerading under the cloak of religion... deluding a lot of sincere people... hell-bent on provoking religious strife in Northern Ireland”.⁹⁶¹ For the ultra-loyalists, the movement was seen as a cover for the IRA,⁹⁶² and the marchers were “treated like the rebels that they had always been told about”.⁹⁶³ Whilst, it is clear there were members of the civil rights movement who had previous connections with the IRA, but they in no way directed the campaign.⁹⁶⁴ Elliott writes that many unionists simply refused to believe that the Catholic community was disadvantaged in any shape or form, and viewed “every overdue reform... as Popery closing in”.⁹⁶⁵

Following the ‘success’ of the Derry march, more followed, despite regular police mistreatment, and these allowed Paisley to adopt a leadership position in the counter-demonstration movement that followed the nationalist street demonstrations everywhere. In January, a student group within the civil rights movement, People’s Democracy, announced a march between Belfast and Derry, in direct defiance of NICRA.⁹⁶⁶ There can be no doubt that the route taken by the marchers was deliberately provocative and led those taking part through strictly Protestant areas, where they were regularly attacked, most infamously at the Burntollet Bridge near Derry. Here they were engaged by a waiting Protestant mob - as well as by members of the police force (drawn almost exclusively from the Protestant community) - who used this as an excuse to go on a rampage in Derry, attacking shoppers, breaking windows and singing sectarian songs.⁹⁶⁷ For the nationalist community, the attacks on marchers confirmed suspicions that the security apparatus in Northern Ireland was a repressive instrument controlled by the unionists,⁹⁶⁸ and following these events, the “police had been more seriously compromised than ever before in the eyes of Derry Catholics”.⁹⁶⁹ Paul Bew suggests that, as a result, Terence O’Neill lost the faith of the

⁹⁶¹ Bruce, *God Save Ulster*, 93.

⁹⁶² *ibid.*, 33.

⁹⁶³ Elliott, *When God took Sides*, 250.

⁹⁶⁴ Purdie, *Politics in the Streets*, 149-150.

⁹⁶⁵ Elliott, *When God took Sides*, 250.

⁹⁶⁶ Purdie, *Politics in the Streets*, 213.

⁹⁶⁷ *ibid.*, 215.

⁹⁶⁸ Alonso, *IRA and Armed Struggle*, 27.

⁹⁶⁹ *ibid.*

Catholic community who felt that he wasn't doing enough to protect Catholic protesters from Protestant attack, thus sealing his fate.⁹⁷⁰

Immediately following the events of Derry, another march was held in Newry and again violent confrontation between the protesters and the security forces erupted, although Purdie suggests that the instigators may have been the demonstrators in this case.⁹⁷¹ This pattern continued in Northern Ireland throughout 1969, with brief respite for a general election and the subsequent departure of Terence O'Neill, until the fateful events of August 12th. On that day, an Orange March through Derry exploded into chaos as representatives of both communities clashed violently in the Bogside area of the city. The result was the total breakdown of civil society in Northern Ireland and descent into inter-communal conflict. The inability of the police to stop the violence led both communities to take up arms in defence, thus breaking the state's monopoly of the use of force in Northern Ireland.⁹⁷² Within days the British Army was forced to intervene in an attempt to defuse the situation, but their presence and perceived bias only succeeded in turning them into a third party in the conflict.

The eruption of violence ended the possibility of a peaceful mediation of grievances and set Northern Irish politics back nearly 30 years. The civil rights movement carried on, but it was clear that street demonstrations would achieve little in the face of widespread violence. It also signalled the end to the rapprochement between the two communities that had been underway and led to a "sudden awareness of the different religion of friends, neighbours, girlfriends and boyfriends".⁹⁷³ The conflict that followed only widened the gap, both figuratively and physically, as Northern Ireland saw the "biggest forced population movement in Europe since the Second World War",⁹⁷⁴ as 60,000 Belfast residents were intimidated out of their homes and sought refuge in areas dominated by their co-religionists, including many who left for the safe haven of the Republic.⁹⁷⁵

⁹⁷⁰ Bew, *Ireland*, 492.

⁹⁷¹ Purdie, *Politics in the Streets*, 217.

⁹⁷² Rose, *Northern Ireland*, 23.

⁹⁷³ Elliott, *When God took Sides*, 252.

⁹⁷⁴ Moloney, *Secret History of the IRA*, 68.

⁹⁷⁵ Elliott, *When God took Sides*, 252.

Blame for the breakdown of the civil rights movement must lie at the feet of both communities, as well as the Westminster government. Purdie and English both agree that reform was possible but “avoidable events”⁹⁷⁶ derailed the process. Clearly the mistreatment of protesters by the police and security forces, and by Protestant mobs, ranks as a key reason the movement broke down. The unionist community simply could not trust the intentions of those behind it, nor believe that it wasn’t a Trojan horse, but the naiveté or deliberate provocation of key figures in the civil rights campaign must also be considered. Purdie concludes that the historical importance of marches in Northern Ireland made the model of protest marches implemented in the United States unsuitable for Northern Ireland,⁹⁷⁷ and suggests that NICRA’s claim to be non-sectarian was undermined by its origins in the nationalist community,⁹⁷⁸ an assertion supported by Simon Prince who writes, “as had happened during 1798, Ireland’s secular revolutionaries found themselves saddled with sectarian followers”⁹⁷⁹.

Additionally, both English and Purdie argue that elements within the movement were deliberately provocative; People’s Democracy in their choice of route,⁹⁸⁰ and individual protesters who threw stones at the police and clashed with loyalists.⁹⁸¹ Finally, the lack of oversight from the British government to Unionist governance in the province meant that when they were finally forced to take an interest in the affairs of Northern Ireland the chance to achieve reform politically had passed. That being said, there is also an argument to be made that reforming the Northern Irish state was an impossible task; as Rose points out, there was no possible constitution in Northern Ireland that would be mutually agreed upon by the most intransigent (and the most powerful) elements present in both communities.⁹⁸²

⁹⁷⁶ Purdie, *Politics in the Streets*, 4; Richard English, “The Interplay of Non-violent and Violent Action in Northern Ireland”, in *Civil Resistance and Power Politics: The Experience of Non-violent Action from Gandhi to Present.*, ed Adam Roberts and Timothy Garton Ash. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 77.

⁹⁷⁷ Purdie, *Politics in the Streets*, 244.

⁹⁷⁸ *ibid.*, 139.

⁹⁷⁹ Prince, *Northern Ireland’s ’68*, 212.

⁹⁸⁰ Purdie, *Politics in the Streets*, 213.

⁹⁸¹ English, “Non-Violent and Violent Action in Northern Ireland”, 83.

⁹⁸² Rose, *Northern Ireland*, 64.

The events that followed started as communal defence rather than violent revolution, but the failure of the civil rights movement, and the intervention and missteps of the British Government, made the direct methods advocated by the Provisional IRA far more acceptable to many in the nationalist community in Northern Ireland. It took nearly thirty years for non-violent actors to convince both sides that violence would not bring about the change they sought and for the British state to contain paramilitary violence. Even now there are dissident Republican splinter groups that reject the terms of the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, and who believe armed struggle should continue.⁹⁸³

The Dogs That Didn't Bark

In Ireland as a whole, and then in Northern Ireland, armed struggle became a central feature of nationalist strategy in the 20th century, yet the precedent set by the IRA was not followed by nationalists in Scotland and Wales, and in this section I will examine a number of key differences that can be observed between the cases of Ireland, as well as Scotland and Wales, and assess the extent to which these differences can help us account for the differing levels of political violence in these territories.

I will consider the perceived mistreatment of Irish nationalists by the British state, the existence and salience of societal cleavages, the importance of a unifying cosmopolitan identity, the role of constitutional nationalism and historical precedence in violent uprising, and assess the extent to which these differences help to explain the relative lack of political violence in Scotland and Wales.

⁹⁸³ For further see above, p.17, n. 47.

State Response

One of the core purposes of terrorist activity, the literature suggests,⁹⁸⁴ is to provoke the opponent into overreacting; in *What Terrorists Want*, Louise Richardson presents the argument that terrorists are seeking “to exact revenge... to acquire glory and... to force their adversary into a reaction”.⁹⁸⁵ They wish to induce a response that validates the terrorists’ argument about the state’s illegitimacy or repressive nature, in an attempt to generate public sympathy, elicit support for the militant group, and weakening support for the state. In her work on clandestine political violence, Della Porta claims that one of the “political preconditions identified as explaining high levels of political violence is the weakness of the state in terms of repressive capacity and even territorial control”.⁹⁸⁶ Notable groups have made the pursuit of this overreaction central to their tactics; for example, ETA’s ‘action-repression-action’ strategy was intended to engage the state in a spiral of violence that would demonstrate its brutality to the Basque people and position the group as the legitimate defenders of the Basque Country.⁹⁸⁷

The IRA certainly benefitted from the overreaction of the British government in their campaign against British rule; English argues that the repressive response to the Easter Rising, intended to undermine the rebel cause “helped to achieve what the rebellion itself had not - an intensification of nationalist feeling well beyond the rebel ranks”.⁹⁸⁸ In Northern Ireland, the policy on internment has been described as “the biggest political miscalculation of the entire conflict”,⁹⁸⁹ which “effectively declared war on many Catholic areas, aligned British power with union and massively increased support for the IRA”.⁹⁹⁰ Worse still were the events of Bloody Sunday (the

⁹⁸⁴ Wilkinson, *Terrorism Versus Democracy*, 7; Martha Crenshaw, *Explaining Terrorism: Causes, processes and consequences* (London: Routledge, 2011), 9.

⁹⁸⁵ Richardson, *What Terrorists Want*, 14.

⁹⁸⁶ Donatella Della Porta, *Clandestine Political Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 34.

⁹⁸⁷ For further reading on the conflict in the Basque Country see Conversi’s *The Basques, the Catalans and Spain*, Clark’s *The Basque Insurgents and Negotiating with ETA* and Zulaika’s *Basque Violence* (Conversi, *The Basques, the Catalans and Spain*; Robert P. Clark, *The Basque Insurgents: ETA, 1952-1980* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984); Robert P. Clark, *Negotiating with ETA : obstacles to peace in the Basque country, 1975-1988* (Reno, NV: University of Nevada Press, 1990); Joseba Zulaika, *Basque violence: metaphor and sacrament* (Reno, NV: University of Nevada Press, 1988).

⁹⁸⁸ English, *Armed Struggle*, 5.

⁹⁸⁹ Richardson, *What Terrorists Want*, 228.

⁹⁹⁰ Wright, *Northern Ireland*, 204.

shooting of 14 unarmed civilians by the British Army during a march in Derry on the 30th of January 1972): Patrick Magee, a member of the Provisional IRA responsible for the Brighton hotel bombing in 1984, argues that the deaths caused that day “probably led more young nationalists to join the Provisionals than any other single action by the British”.⁹⁹¹ The British Army tried to defend their actions on that day by blaming the IRA for firing first, but, as Bew says, “it is a denial which has never been accepted in nationalist Ireland”.⁹⁹² Events such as these help to explain why one member of the Provisional IRA claimed, “the British Army, the British government, were our best recruiting agent”.⁹⁹³ As Richardson reminds us, the military is a “very blunt instrument when deployed in a civilian context” whose “very physical presence, complete with weaponry and armoured vehicles, cannot but instil fear, incite resentment, and intimidate”.⁹⁹⁴

By contrast, the counter-terrorism efforts of the British state in Scotland and Wales were far more successful. In the case of Wales, the police may have looked weak in the face of a sustained MAC bombing campaign (especially when the Free Wales Army were in court), but they were able to apprehend John Jenkins and Frederick Alders eventually, and thus prevented the MAC campaign from escalating. In Scotland, the police were consistently ahead of the game when fledgling Scottish nationalist terrorist groups emerged, and have only been thwarted in their attempts to prosecute Adam Busby for his involvement in the SNLA because of his escape to the Republic of Ireland and the problematic extradition process. In both Scotland and Wales, those accused of planning terrorist actions were prosecuted as criminals, largely resulting in substantial custodial sentences. The only misstep came in Wales when a large number of Welsh nationalist activists were arrested in a concerted “round-up” in an attempt to track down those involved in the cottage arson campaign, on Palm Sunday 1980.⁹⁹⁵ There is a marked difference between the approaches taken by the British state to violent nationalism in Ireland compared with similar phenomena in Scotland and Wales.

⁹⁹¹ Magee quoted in English, *Armed Struggle*, 151.

⁹⁹² Bew, *Ireland*, 507.

⁹⁹³ *ibid.*, 122

⁹⁹⁴ Louise Richardson, “Britain and the IRA”, in *Democracy and Counterterrorism: Lessons from the Past*, Robert J. Art & Louise Richardson eds. (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2007), 77.

⁹⁹⁵ Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 166-170.

The repressive actions of the British government with regards to Irish nationalist political violence consistently backfired and strengthened a movement they sought to undermine. However, we must consider a key aspect of the law enforcement structure that differed between Ireland, Scotland and Wales: the extent to which the personnel tasked with maintaining law and order were drawn largely from just one community. Originally, it was planned that the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC - the lead police agency in Northern Ireland) would draw one third of its strength from the Catholic community, but despite being able to gain “some grudging degree of acceptance” from the Catholic community in the province,⁹⁹⁶ it remained “an overwhelmingly Protestant force” with “strong Orange influences”.⁹⁹⁷ The Ulster Special Constabulary - the reserve police force better known as the B Specials - that operated from the establishment of Northern Ireland until March 1970, was also drawn almost exclusively from the Protestant community, so overwhelmingly so that Purdie notes that “membership of the B Specials in [one area] was roughly co-terminous with the status of adult, able-bodied male Protestant”.⁹⁹⁸ As a result, the two key agencies in the Northern Ireland security apparatus were dominated and directed by the unionist community and state, a situation with no equivalent in Scotland or Wales.

Can the different approaches by the British state taken in Ireland, Scotland and Wales help us to explain the differing levels of violence? Initially, we need to take into account that the approaches differed between Ireland and the mainland because the contexts in which the state was forced to act were markedly different; the Easter Rising occurred whilst Britain was distracted elsewhere by the First World War, and the response must be placed within the context of wartime decision-making. Furthermore, Townshend reports that the British government was uneasy with the executions that followed, and the Prime Minister personally intervened to prevent further executions.⁹⁹⁹ Additionally, when British troops were brought in to quell the sectarian tensions ignited by the onset of the Troubles, they were faced with a situation that required an immediate and substantial response.

⁹⁹⁶ Jackson, *Ireland*, 335.

⁹⁹⁷ *ibid.*

⁹⁹⁸ Purdie, *Politics in the Streets*, 215.

⁹⁹⁹ Townshend, *Easter 1916*, 279-286.

The more measured reaction of the state in Scotland and Wales reflects the fact that the form of political violence they faced in these two countries was far less threatening. Compared to the carnage of early 1970s Belfast, Welsh and Scottish nationalist political violence was far less of an immediate threat: a police source reportedly claimed that “Scottish nationalist terrorism was low on MI5's list of priorities with the IRA and foreign terror groups active. Really, on a scale of one to ten, it was a two. It was viewed with low-key interest really ... it was a gnat in an elephant's ear”.¹⁰⁰⁰

Whilst it is possible to conclude that the missteps of the British state in 1916 and during the Troubles increased support for nationalist militancy exponentially, it could not be described as the *root cause* of the violence. At best, it was what Crenshaw describes as a precipitant factor, “specific events that immediately precede the occurrence of terrorism”,¹⁰⁰¹ rapidly bolstering support and sympathy among the wider population for militant nationalism at the expense of those who advocated non-violent methods. Although the restraint of the British response ensured that violent nationalists in Scotland and Wales did not receive the same sort of boost that the IRA did, the absence of this factor in Scotland and Wales does not - by itself - explain why the vast majority of those nationalists implicitly rejected political violence. Instead we must ask why the situation in Ireland became so heated that the military were forced to intervene, and why this wasn't the case in Scotland and Wales.

Social Cleavages

The construction of identity is central to understanding the causes of political violence. In his work on the relationship between identity and violence, Amartya Sen makes the case that identity construction is a multi-layered approach, and that one can consider themselves members of many different social groups.¹⁰⁰² Violence emerges, he claims “by the imposition of singular and belligerent identities on gullible people, championed by proficient artisans of terror”,¹⁰⁰³ by reducing a whole community to a single binary attribute it is far easier to construct a clear line of division between two.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Severin Carrell, “A most unlikely terrorist”, *The Scotsman*, 9 February 1994.

¹⁰⁰¹ Crenshaw, “The causes of terrorism”, 381.

¹⁰⁰² Amartya Sen, *Identity and Violence: The illusion of destiny* (London: Allen Lane, 2006).

¹⁰⁰³ *ibid.*, 2.

The reductionism discussed by Sen is clearly evident in Ireland: the religious cleavage is undoubtedly the key feature of the Irish conflict. Therefore, it is necessary to relate the existence of a similar ethnic cleavage to the comparative non-violence of the Welsh and Scottish nationalism movements.

In Wales, the existence of a separate language, and the need to preserve the language and the culture associated with it, was the basis for nationalist mobilisation in the early part of the 20th century. However, membership of the Welsh national movement was not exclusively limited to Welsh speakers, and English speakers were more than welcome. Thus the social boundary between the two communities could be described as 'soft' - there was no forced choice between the two languages: one can choose to speak both English and Welsh. By contrast, what's notable about the religious cleavage in Ireland is the binary nature of the divide: as Wilson observes, one cannot be both Protestant and Catholic,¹⁰⁰⁴ and given the social and political saliency of the religious divide it was difficult to adopt a 'none of the above' approach. This created a division between the two communities that was very clearly demarcated in Ireland.

Scotland also had the same religious cleavage as present in Ireland; from the 17th century onwards, Scotland was the recipient of a large number of migrants from Ireland, and by the 1930s, 2.5% of the Scottish population was comprised of Irish-born citizens.¹⁰⁰⁵ Of these incomers, many were Catholics, and tensions emerged over the provision of housing and welfare they received. As a result, cleavages within Scottish society formed along denominational lines; Clayton argues that "Scottish Catholicism has often been seen as the Other which may be compared to and exteriorized [sic] by a stable Protestant norm"¹⁰⁰⁶ and Reilly claims, "Scot equals Protestant, Catholic equals alien: upon these equations Scotland conducted its business".¹⁰⁰⁷ Furthermore, one of the key institutions in Scotland - the Kirk - publicly

¹⁰⁰⁴ Wilson, *Frontiers of Violence*, 69

¹⁰⁰⁵ Walker, *Intimate Strangers*, 111

¹⁰⁰⁶ Tristan Clayton, "'Diasporic Otherness': racism, sectarianism and 'national exteriority' in modern Scotland." *Social & Cultural Geography* 6 (2005): 109.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Patrick Reilly. (2000) "Kicking with the left foot: Being Catholic in Scotland." In *Scotland's Shame? Bigotry and Sectarianism in Modern Scotland* (29 - 40), T.M. Devine ed. (Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing, 2000), 32.

decried the threat posed by the influx of Catholic Irish, describing them as a “menace”.¹⁰⁰⁸

By the 1970s, the sectarian divide had lost some of its relevance in Scotland, as the Irish Catholic population in Scotland began to assimilate. Walker and Gallagher agree that the Labour Party was key to the integration of the Catholic community,¹⁰⁰⁹ and Finn points to the importance of Catholic schools in Scotland, claiming that they have been “one of the main reasons for the advance towards Catholic socio-economic equality”.¹⁰¹⁰ However, it has been suggested that sectarian violence between the two communities was unlikely to emulate the level of violence in Belfast. Mark Doyle posits that the different relationships both communities had to the imperial centre meant that the “sorts of thing that were capable of causing violence in Belfast - evangelical anti-Catholicism, Tory populism, Catholic secret societies, heavy-handed policing, even residential segregation - were either greatly diluted or completely absent [in Scotland]”.¹⁰¹¹ As a result, aside from colourful displays of sectarian triumphalism during commemorative marches and in the Old Firm derby,¹⁰¹² sectarianism is far less of a feature in Scottish society than it was less than a century ago. Thus, the existence of a religious cleavage by itself is insufficient to generate nationalist political violence, and we therefore need to consider what is exceptional about the societal cleavage in Ireland, and why it led to a much more violent form of nationalism.

There are two aspects that differ between the cases that I believe can explain the discrepancy: the uniquely binary nature of the divide between the two communities in Ireland, and concentration of power in the hands of one of these two communities in

¹⁰⁰⁸ Stewart J. Brown, “Church-state relation in Scotland after the Union” in *The Challenge to Westminster: Sovereignty, Devolution and Independence*. H. T. Dickinson, & Michael Lynch, eds. (East Linton, East Lothian: Tuckwell Press, 2000), 79.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Walker, *Intimate Strangers*; Tom Gallagher, “The Catholic Irish in Scotland: in Search of Identity” in *Irish Immigrants and Scottish Society in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: Proceedings of the Scottish Historical Studies Seminar University of Strathclyde 1989-90*, T. M. Devine, ed. (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1991), 27.

¹⁰¹⁰ Gerry P T Finn, “prejudice! prejudice! prejudice!” In *Scotland’s Shame? Bigotry and Sectarianism in Modern Scotland*, T.M. Devine ed. (Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing, 2000), 76.

¹⁰¹¹ Mark Doyle, *Fighting Like the Devil for the Sake of God: Protestants, Catholics and the origins of violence in Victorian Belfast* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), 195.

¹⁰¹² The ‘Old Firm’ is a term used to describe Scotland’s two largest football teams: Celtic and Rangers. Both based in Glasgow, Celtic are associated with Catholicism and Rangers with Protestantism. Matches between the two have, in the past, led to violent clashes between fans.

Ireland in a way that it didn't in Scotland and Wales. It is the existence of a binary societal cleavage on which the balance of power is based that is specific to the case of Ireland. Thus a situation emerged, as described by Sen, wherein the people of Ireland were reduced to a single attribute to determine their 'loyalty' to the British state, and accordingly, their worth. To reconcile this discrimination, the Catholic Irish turned to nationalism, and the correlation between religious identity and support for Irish independence was born, creating what Wright describes as the 'ethnic frontier': a territory consisting of natives and incomers, divided by the national question.¹⁰¹³ An irreconcilable societal cleavage developed between those loyal to the British state and those loyal to a Catholic Irish identity.

By itself, the existence of a social cleavage in a given polity does not explain the emergence of political violence; otherwise, as David Laitin says, we would expect to see a great deal more political violence through the world.¹⁰¹⁴ In Wales, the existence of a linguistic divide has been the basis for a national movement, but crucially, English speakers have not been excluded from membership. In Scotland, the religious divide was the basis for discrimination, but it did not overlap with the national question. What Ireland demonstrates is the fusion of communal polarisation with a macro-dispute over national sovereignty. One was forced to take a position on the national question in Ireland (even unwittingly) in a way that did not happen in Scotland or Wales until 2014. Furthermore the religious divide between the communities made the conflict all the more bitter; as Richardson says, "once grievances are expressed in religious terms the conflict becomes altogether more difficult to solve".¹⁰¹⁵ Therefore what we need to understand is why a similar binary cleavage between those loyal to Britain and those loyal to Scottish or Welsh identities did not develop in those two countries. To understand this, we need to consider how British identity developed in our three cases.

¹⁰¹³ Wright, *Northern Ireland*.

¹⁰¹⁴ Laitin, *Nation, States and Violence*, 23.

¹⁰¹⁵ Richardson, *The Roots of Terrorism*, 12.

Cosmopolitan Identity

As I have discussed throughout this thesis, as Great Britain began to emerge through a series of conquests and unions, those at the heart of the new multi-national state sought to create an over-arching pan-national identity that would encourage loyalty to the new geographic entity. Central to this new identity was the shared foundation of the Protestant faith,¹⁰¹⁶ and defence against the common threat of Catholicism.

Thus, in Ireland, support for the union and the British identity associated with it was the sole preserve of the minority Protestant community, who had “every incentive to discover and then emphasise their Protestantism in a land-grabbing scheme backed by Protestant money from the city of London”.¹⁰¹⁷ The content of both Britishness and the union became antithetical to Irish Catholic identity and made a dual British-Irish identity less likely. Although there were many in Catholic Ireland who took advantage of the British Empire, the emotional connection to the British state was far less strong than among the Scots and Welsh. The pervasiveness of symbols of British rule and the concentration of power in the hands of the Protestant minority, helped Irish nationalism grow as a popular force by fusing Catholicism with nationalism. It is in this sort of polarised fractious environment that we commonly find inter-communal violence.¹⁰¹⁸

The divide locked the two communities in a zero-sum game, unable to reconcile their differences with one another. During the debate about the future of Ireland’s future in the United Kingdom, the uncertainty led the Protestant population to organise a defensive militia, an escalation that the Catholic community had to match to maintain the balance of power. When violence was initiated in the late 1960s, the spiral of reprisal and revenge dragged Ulster into a bloody conflict that lasted 30 years.¹⁰¹⁹

The development and intensity of unionist identity by Ireland’s Protestant population is quite unlike the development of a unionist identity in Scotland and Wales. In fact,

¹⁰¹⁶ Colley, *Britons*.

¹⁰¹⁷ MacCulloch, *Reformation*, 398.

¹⁰¹⁸ Adrian Guelke, *Politics in Deeply Divided Societies* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012).

¹⁰¹⁹ For further reading on the Troubles, see for example Bowyer Bell’s *The Irish Troubles* or McKittrick and McVea’s *Making Sense of the Troubles* (London: Penguin, 2001).

scholars would be unlikely to use the term to apply to advocates of the union in either country before the early 1960s, as it would have been applicable to the vast majority of the general public, and would thus be meaningless as a conceptual term. As Colin Kidd has convincingly articulated, until the rise of the SNP, unionism¹⁰²⁰ was so dominant in Scottish politics as to be hardly worth commenting upon.¹⁰²¹ As a result, there was no need to develop and encourage the spread of unionism in these countries, and no need to identify oneself as a unionist. Aside from politicians, there were very few self-defined ‘unionists’: it was simply assumed everyone was unionist. The national question was thus far less polarising than in Ireland, meaning that individuals were free not to express a preference, or to opt for an intermediary approach.

In Scotland, a distinct Scottish identity was retained despite the union with England, fostered by its independent institutions and civil society, and this identity was able to operate concurrently with a British identity. In Wales, the Welsh language played an important role in the retention of distinctiveness, nurtured by the nonconformist movement. It cannot be denied that aspects of Britishness have chafed for both the Scots and the Welsh, but the majority of both nations’ citizens have accepted Britishness as a part of their national identity, even if it not the most important one.

The union allowed the Scots and Welsh to be successful without compromising their identity. As a result many adopted a dual identity, with allegiance to their nation but also to the British state. This identity has been strengthened through increased interaction between the groups, defence from a common threat and shared institutions, and the result is a fluid, complex, layered identity that persists in Britain to this day. I have argued that Britishness has lost its unifying content in the last fifty years, and as a result nationalism - the political expression of national identity - has become an increasingly important political force in the United Kingdom. However, as was demonstrated in the referendum of 2014, a British identity is still a powerful emotional agent.

¹⁰²⁰ Kidd differentiates between lower-case u unionism, articulating support for the maintenance of the union and upper-case U Unionism, indicating support for the Conservative Party. In his opinion, this latter definition that is too often mistake for the former; (Kidd, *Union and Unionisms*, 10).

¹⁰²¹ Kidd, *Union and Unionisms*.

In Scotland and Wales, Britishness was far more malleable and could be mapped onto previous allegiances, most notably the Protestant faith.¹⁰²² Additionally, Britishness did not stifle national identity in Scotland and Wales, although the success of the British Empire did help to constrain the development of nationalism as a political force in these countries. The long-term impact of this is crucial in understanding why members of the Scottish and Welsh national movement never adopted political violence to the same extent as their Irish counterparts. The primary impact of the acceptance of a shared British identity being that the British state had legitimacy in Scotland and Wales in a way that it could never achieve in Catholic-dominated areas of Ireland.

The zero-sum nature of the interaction between nationalists and unionists in Ireland is quite unlike the same interactions that took place in Scotland and Wales for two reasons: firstly, the successful adoption of a British identity by the Scots and Welsh meant that they were able to be loyal to the British state, *and* to their national identity, preventing the emergence of a social cleavage on the basis of state loyalty; secondly for 'unionists' in these two countries, nationalist progress has not been coterminous with their defeat, and has actually been encouraged as a means of strengthening or, at least, prolonging the political union by unionist parties.

As a result when the national movement did finally emerge in Scotland and Wales, society did not polarise into nationalists and unionists. For the best part of the twentieth century, this cleavage was less contentious and far less politically important than the socio-economic cleavages that have dominated British politics since the extension of the franchise. Furthermore, they weren't even of secondary importance, with language and religion being of far greater significance in Wales and Scotland respectively.

Additionally, the primary out-group for nationalists in Scotland and Wales - namely unionists - was also part of their British in-group. It has only been in the last two years that one's position on the national question has taken on real social saliency in Scotland. Even then, in both Scotland and Wales, unionists are not a coherent,

¹⁰²² Colley, *Britons*, 5.

organised group¹⁰²³ and within the broad pro-union coalitions that nominally exist, party allegiance is of greater importance. As such, there was no visible unionist community against which the nationalist community could antagonistically contend, but more importantly there was no unionist community in whose hands power was placed.

Without a unionist out-group to target, Scottish and Welsh nationalists' violent efforts instead targeted instruments of the British state and the positions associated with its maintenance. Attacks against the royal family, members of Parliament and pro-union political parties were attacks directed at the office they held rather than the individual. Further attacks were directed at infrastructure deemed responsible for the subjugation or financial mistreatment of these two countries, with water and oil pipelines the principal target of this type of violence.

In Ireland, violent actors had a far larger array of targets to consider; Frank Wright proposes that many of the victims of the conflict in Ulster were chosen for their representative value as members of their community,¹⁰²⁴ contending that any member of either side could be 'punished' for the transgressions of their respective demographic. Everyone was a potential target, a situation made possible by the well-established boundaries between the two communities. In Northern Ireland the unionists were a coherent body whose perceived antagonism towards nationalists made them a legitimate target. In addition to attacking members of the rival community, violent nationalist groups in Ireland would also target actors of the British state, perceived by many in the nationalist community as alien and aggressive; most notable of these was the British Army following their introduction into Northern Ireland, as their actions towards the nationalist community have been widely interpreted as inflammatory and sowed suspicions of collusion between the army and the unionist community.¹⁰²⁵ Conversely, for the vast majority of the Scots and Welsh, the British government was *their* government. Likewise for the key instruments of the

¹⁰²³ Even in the run-up to the independence referendum in Scotland there were divisions with the pro-union campaign.

¹⁰²⁴ Wright, *Northern Ireland*, 11

¹⁰²⁵ Cochrane argues that many instances of security can be traced to deep relationship between the security forces in Northern Ireland and the Protestant community, although concludes that a number of the claims were exaggerated (Mark Cochrane, "Security Force Collusion in Northern Ireland 1969–1999: Substance or Symbolism?", *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 36 (2013), 77-97).

state: the British army was *their* army, and the British royal family was *their* royal family. That the British state was treated as the legitimate authority in Scotland and Wales is evidence of the success of the integration of these countries into the concept of Britain, and the successful implementation of Britishness as a national identity, and thus for the vast majority of Welsh and Scots, the British state was not a legitimate target for nationalist violence.

The successful dissemination of a pan-British identity, bolstered by a shared Protestantism among those on the British mainland, is central to our understanding of why political violence was not a major feature of Scottish or Welsh nationalism; whilst those who used political violence in the pursuit of nationalist progress may not have accepted such an identity, the wider constituency - whose support these groups were attempting to gain - did. The direct result of the unifying power of Britishness was that the Scots and Welsh had an emotional connection to both their national and state identities, and as such the vast majority of Scots and Welsh did not see Westminster governance as illegitimate, in the way that many in Ireland did. This deprived Scottish and Welsh violent nationalists of both a plethora of potential targets, and also of any sort of popular support or legitimacy. For the general population of Scotland and Wales, the principal means of advancing the nationalist agenda was constitutional politics.

Non-Violent Alternatives

Goodwin writes, “ordinary people joined or supported revolutionary movements when no other means of political expression were available to them”.¹⁰²⁶ This sentiment has given credence to claims that political violence represents the ‘last resort’ of a community whose non-violent attempts have been unsuccessful. Louise Richardson, discussing the application of this statement by Osama bin Laden, argues that this *post facto* justification is easily refuted, and whilst many groups do attempt political change before adopting political violence, they do not always fully exhaust the political options available to them.¹⁰²⁷ Paul Wilkinson also believed that a non-violent

¹⁰²⁶ Goodwin, *No Other Way Out*, 292.

¹⁰²⁷ Richardson, *What Terrorists Want*, 35.

alternative to terrorism exists, whether that is “moral resistance, civil disobedience [or] well-planned concerted economic and political action”.¹⁰²⁸

In their work on civil resistance movements, Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan¹⁰²⁹ also critique the ‘last resort’ thesis and reach a similar conclusion, suggesting that nonviolent and violent campaigns can coexist: an indication that the nonviolent options have not been conclusively explored. The central argument of Chenoweth and Stephan’s work is that non-violent movements are more likely to succeed, primarily because they can attract more support as there are fewer barriers to participation in non-violent movements: whereas violent movements often require new members to commit illegal acts as a rite of passage,¹⁰³⁰ non-violent alternatives do not, and can overcome such dissuasions as fear of legal repercussions and moral apprehension. Jeff Goodwin presents a similar case – arguing, “ordinary people joined or supported revolutionary movements when no other means of political expression were available to them, or when they or their families were the targets of the violent repression”.¹⁰³¹ Democracy, he believes, offers ways of resolving conflict in a civil manner “in which popular protest can win concessions from economic and political elites”.¹⁰³² Finally, John Schwartzmantel suggests that a campaign of violence within a democratic state may not be an attempt to subvert the political process, but a method of “gaining membership in a political community for those who are denied a voice”.¹⁰³³ It is his belief that “violence occurs as a response to exclusion and lack of recognition”.¹⁰³⁴

Whilst it would be reductionist to equate democracy with reduced political violence, there is a large body of scholarly literature that suggests that viable non-violent means of social conflict resolution will have that effect. In my discussion of the development of the civil rights movement in Northern Ireland and the lead-up to the Troubles, I alluded to the misuse of political power by the Unionist community following the establishment of Northern Ireland and the creation of the Stormont Assembly. The breakdown of the civil rights movement was the latest in a line of thwarted non-

¹⁰²⁸ Wilkinson, *Terrorism Versus Democracy*, 193.

¹⁰²⁹ Chenoweth and Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works*,

¹⁰³⁰ Crenshaw, *Explaining Terrorism*, 84.

¹⁰³¹ Goodwin, *No Other Way Out*, 292.

¹⁰³² *ibid.*, 302.

¹⁰³³ Schwartzmantel, *Democracy and Political Violence*.

¹⁰³⁴ *ibid.*, 6

violent political campaigns, the most notable of which was postponement of Irish home rule before the outbreak of the First World War.

This narrative may fail to take into account the victories that were achieved through non-violent methods: the Relief Act of 1829 extended the franchise to include Catholics; the home rule bill had been agreed before its implementation was prevented by the outbreak of war; and the civil rights movement in the North was able to achieve reform on issues such as housing and the gerrymandering of constituency boundaries. Yet equally, these successes should not be overstated; the Catholic population were the overwhelming majority in Ireland, but political progress on achieving equality for this community was blocked by intransigent political opponents, preventing progress by any means possible.

The nationalists' political opponents were not the only ones disinclined to cooperate with constitutional nationalism in Ireland, for they also had to deal with a militant Republican tendency for whom political negotiations with Britain, and the tacit acceptance of British authority that this entailed, were unacceptable. Whilst the two should not be treated as distinct entities, as we have to accept that the home rule movement "united constitutional politicians with those whose faith lay in violence, but who were willing to suspend their disbelief in the efficacy of parliament",¹⁰³⁵ the events of Easter 1916 are evidence that not all were convinced of the merits of parliamentary democracy. Thus, constitutional nationalists faced an opponent steadfastly refusing to acquiesce to any sort of reform externally, and internally, an extreme flank calling on a tradition of armed insurrection that would take any blockage as the sign that politics had failed, and this made nationalist progress through parliamentary democracy far less likely.

By comparison, I believe that in the case of Scotland and Wales, political nationalists have not faced these problems to the same extent as their counterpart in Ireland did; for nationalists in Scotland and Wales, progress was relative to the scale of the groups involved and could just mean recognition, reform or token victories, and non-violent alternatives have been sufficiently viable to render violent methods unnecessary. That

¹⁰³⁵ Jackson, *Home Rule*, 11.

the methods were viable did not mean they would instantly reap success, but simply that they presented a realistic opportunity of nationalist progress; the influence that Scottish and Welsh nationalism had on British politics in the period between their first electoral successes in 1966/7 and the advent of Margaret Thatcher's government in 1979 - with the establishment of a Royal Commission on devolution, and the Labour-supported referendums that followed - was evidence of the progress that could be made through constitutional methods. Furthermore, the success of direct action Welsh language campaigns in relation to local government paperwork and broadcasting demonstrated that when political action was unsuccessful, non-violent alternatives could succeed where politicians failed.

The integration of the Scots and Welsh into the British political system was aided by the strength of the Labour and Liberal parties in both countries. Additionally, the upper echelons of British government were open to the Scots and Welsh, and the likes of Ramsay MacDonald and David Lloyd George demonstrated that political progression to the top was possible. These factors meant that for the vast majority of Scottish and Welsh voters, the British government and the political process had legitimacy, and for most nationalists, politics was a viable means of achieving change. The legitimacy and viability of the political process is highly prohibitive to the emergence of terrorist groups for two reasons: it limits support for political violence, and it denies violent actors of legitimacy in the eyes of the group's potential constituency.

Chenoweth and Stephan's work on non-violent alternatives demonstrates this first point clearly. They contend that non-violent movements will be able to attract a far larger and far broader level of support than violent groups,¹⁰³⁶ as the clandestine nature of terrorist organisations requires a tremendous individual commitment to the cause. Furthermore, the use of violence raises moral objections and the vast majority of the general public react negatively to the use of violence, regardless of the context. Political violence, especially when there is loss of life, is widely abhorred and the perpetrators are viewed as criminals or murderers. For those involved in violent campaigns, their actions are intended to create fear and anger amongst the general

¹⁰³⁶ Chenoweth & Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works*.

public, but also to elicit support and raise morale in their constituent community. However, when non-violent methods are perceived to be viable, the vast majority of the target community would reject the need for political violence, and would see the use of violence as inappropriate or damaging. Accordingly, they would be more likely to turn against the perpetrators than praise them. In Scotland and Wales, the viability of non-violent alternatives, to which the barriers for participation and support were far lower, starved violent groups of the potential support of the nationalist community.

I believe that in Wales and Scotland, the existence of (relatively) successful non-violent nationalist movements was sufficient to persuade all but the most fundamental nationalists that violence was unnecessary in the pursuit of political change. There was less incentive to involve oneself in violent actions when non-violence could succeed, even if progress was slow. It is interesting to note that there were spikes in violent nationalist activity in Scotland and Wales in the immediate aftermath of blocked nationalist political progress. In Wales, the failure of non-violent methods to prevent the flooding of Capel Celyn led to the resurrection of MAC, and the failure of British government to implement Scottish devolution in 1979 was cited as one of the primary motivations by the SNLA for their actions. In both situations, neither group was able to gain mainstream support, but the commission of violent acts was evidence that the exhaustion of non-violent alternatives could lead individuals within the national movements to turn to violence.

Martha Crenshaw argues that the existence of a dissatisfied minority or majority is not a necessary precursor or sufficient cause of terrorism, but the lack of opportunity for political participation will create conditions that motivate individuals to adopt terrorism.¹⁰³⁷ In Northern Ireland, political progress was impeded and direct action campaigns were violently suppressed by intransigent elements of a unionist community who mistook the redress of the power balance in Northern Ireland in favour of the Catholic community as an attempt to subjugate of the Protestant community, or unify Ulster with the Republic of Ireland. In Scotland and Wales, the unionist parties were less fearful of nationalist gains, and in the case of the Liberals and Labour, willing to accept a moderate form of devolution. Thus political progress

¹⁰³⁷ Crenshaw, *Explaining Terrorism*, 38.

in Wales and Scotland was possible because the opponents of the national movement were willing to allow it to make progress, demonstrative of the less emotionally-charged nature of the national question in these countries, and not leading to the sort of communal polarisation that occurred in Ireland.

It has been suggested that engaging in a political process with parties supportive of terrorist groups, or even the groups themselves, can help in efforts to eradicate terrorism, by encouraging splits in the groups, undermining their message and eliminating the need for their actions.¹⁰³⁸ One of the simplest ways to prevent the emergence or spread of a terrorist group is to establish a political process through which the concerns of their community can be heard and through which progress can be achieved. Nothing is more damaging to a terrorist group than denying it popular support, and offering a non-violent alternative can achieve this.

Historical Precedence

The physical force tradition of Irish nationalism is well covered in the literature of that topic; Whelehan opines, “rebellion in Ireland is often viewed as something handed down through generations, part of an unbroken tradition”,¹⁰³⁹ and Charles Townshend adds that “the tradition of violence is unmistakably important... violent acts or threats continued for so long to be an acceptable supplement to, if not an actual substitute for, political change”.¹⁰⁴⁰ Thus instances of political violence have been portrayed as a regular feature in the history of Irish nationalism - in the Proclamation read out by Patrick Pearse at the Easter Rising he reminded his audience that “in every generation the Irish people have asserted their right to national freedom and sovereignty; six times during the past three hundred years they have asserted it in arms.”¹⁰⁴¹ So established was this tradition, nurtured by the IRB and other like-

¹⁰³⁸ Audrey Cronin, *How Terrorism Ends: Understanding the Decline and Demise of Terrorist Campaigns*. (Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009), 35-40.

¹⁰³⁹ Whelehan, *The Dynamiters*, 1

¹⁰⁴⁰ Townshend, *Political Violence in Ireland*, VIII

¹⁰⁴¹ in English, *Armed Struggle*, 4

minded organisations, that Rose asks, “whether electoral politics or the politics of coercion has been ‘normal’ in Ireland”.¹⁰⁴²

Republicans have built on this tradition what Alonso describes as a “martyrology”, an attempt to obtain the support and sympathy on the nationalist community by drawing on the memories of the glorious dead.¹⁰⁴³ The IRA, he argues, made use of the “continued legacy of sacrifice and martyrdom” for recruitment purposes and to justify their actions.¹⁰⁴⁴ Most notable of the Republican martyrs were the leaders of the Easter Rising, whose execution ensured their prominent place in Irish Republican history, and more recently the hunger strikers, of whom Bobby Sands received the most attention. The IRA, Alonso argues, made use of the “continued legacy of sacrifice and martyrdom” for recruitment purposes and to justify their actions.¹⁰⁴⁵ The comparative ‘normality’ of violent revolution in Ireland made the adoption of violent methods far less unusual than it would be in other societies, and furnished violent nationalists with a collection of historical figures to draw inspiration from.

Wales and Scotland do not have the same physical force tradition as Ireland. If one was to look far back into the history of both countries, one could, of course, find examples of the demonstration of Scottish and Welsh nationhood in arms - the Battle of Bannockburn, and the heroic figure of William Wallace being celebrated examples, as is Owain Glyndŵr, who proclaimed himself Prince of Wales and led a revolt against English rule, but both historical episodes took place far too long ago to be considered part of recent tradition.

A more recent example is the 1745 Jacobite Rising, led by Charles Edward Stuart, which sought to reclaim the British throne with the support of Highland clans. However, this too is unsuitable to cast as historical precedent for Scottish nationalist violence, as the close connection between support for the Stuarts and Catholicism in the United Kingdom, meant drawing on the legacy of Bonnie Prince Charlie (who didn’t even have the decency to die as a martyr) would have been uncomfortable for the vast majority of Presbyterian Scots. Additionally, in the aftermath of the Jacobite

¹⁰⁴² Rose, *Northern Ireland*, 14.

¹⁰⁴³ Alonso, *The IRA and Armed Struggle*, 81.

¹⁰⁴⁴ *ibid.*, 15

¹⁰⁴⁵ *ibid.*, 15

defeat at Culloden, the British state took a number of steps to co-opt Highland culture and imagery - everything that had been antithetical to the British state during the revolt – and repurpose it in favour of the union. Devine notes that Sir Walter Scott was central to the process of making Jacobitism “acceptable... romantic and appealing”,¹⁰⁴⁶ and this image was solidified by the association created between the Scottish Highlands and the British Monarchy by Queen Victoria. Those who found themselves on the wrong side of history were allowed to retain important aspects of their culture in the service of the British Army, and this persuaded many to join up.¹⁰⁴⁷ In these ways, the memory of the Jacobites and the rebellious Highlands, potential building blocks for a revolutionary Scottish nationalism, were harnessed to the union. Scottish regiments, such as the Black Watch made a “remarkable impact on Scottish consciousness” and helped sustain “a martial national tradition”, albeit one that emphasised the benefits of union.¹⁰⁴⁸

The ability to draw on a historical precedent and a pantheon of martyrs allowed political violence in Ireland to be presented as a continuation of the past, and as traditional and honourable. Equally, the use of violence was, to some extent, normalised in a way that it never was in Scotland or Wales. The tradition, or precedent, of militant nationalism in Ireland became self-sustaining, as each generation drew on the example set by previous generations. Whilst this can help us explain why political violence was a feature of Irish nationalism, it does not by itself explain why it was far less common in Scotland and Wales; the absence of a similar tradition represents the different relationships the Scots and Welsh had with the British state. However, similarly to the differences in state response, the absence of a physical force tradition may help to explain why there were fewer prepared to take up arms for Scottish and Welsh freedom (or support those who did) to begin with.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Devine, *The Scottish Nation*, 238.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Jackson, *Two Unions*, 169

¹⁰⁴⁸ Devine, *The Scottish Nation*, 626

Conclusion

I have argued that societal conditions in Scotland and Wales were ill-suited to the emergence of a sustained campaign of political violence in support of a national minority. When taken in isolation, a number of these factors fail to fully explain this discrepancy; for one, the existence of societal cleavages by themselves has not impacted the emergence of violent nationalism: it is only when these cleavages have corresponded to a power imbalance, leading to the polarisation of the community on the issue of sovereignty, that this has been a factor. I argue that this polarisation did not occur in Scotland or Wales until very recently, and even when it has in Scotland, it has not been as binary as in Ireland. Secondly, the more measured response to violent nationalism in Scotland and Wales ensured that the state did not unwittingly fan the flames of nationalist rebellion, although we must understand that the British state was confronted with a far more chaotic situations in Ireland than they ever faced in Scotland or Wales

Finally, the precedent for political violence - the existence of a Republican physical force tradition - may help to explain the violence in Ireland, but its absence by itself cannot account for the lack of violence in Scotland or Wales. The existence of this tradition and the overreactions of the British state in Ireland could both be described as precipitants rather than preconditions, in Crenshaw's typology of the causes of terrorism,¹⁰⁴⁹ generating sympathy and support for militant Irish nationalists. The absence of a similar enabling factor in Scotland and Wales undoubtedly contributed to the failure of militant Scottish and Welsh nationalism to get off the ground, but does not in isolation explain why political violence was less of a feature of these national movements.

I believe that the success of Britishness as a unifying national identity in Scotland and Wales has been a greater contributing factor to this phenomenon. The successful dissemination of a shared identity in Scotland and Wales meant that the peoples of both countries could express a dual loyalty, to their nation, and to wider state. This lent the British state the legitimacy it could not fully achieve in Ireland due to the

¹⁰⁴⁹ Crenshaw, "The causes of terrorism", 381.

exclusion and discrimination of the Irish Catholic population. Finally, and just as importantly, I believe the viability of the political process, making direct nationalist progress - or indirect progress with the support of rival unionist parties - possible, as well as the political utility of non-violent direct action campaigns, made political violence unnecessary. Both of these factors made it vastly more difficult for violent nationalists in Scotland and Wales to gain public support, without which terrorist groups cannot fully operate.

That Britishness failed in Catholic Ireland, associated with a minority community empowered by a foreign power that the vast majority of the natives perceived as illegitimate, helps to explain why political violence was a feature of nationalism in Ireland, and could - along with the absence of political progress - be described as a “precondition” of political violence - “factors that set the stage for terrorism over the long run”, if we return to Crenshaw’s terminology.¹⁰⁵⁰ I believe that the two most important factors in the absence of political violence from nationalist campaigns in Scotland and Wales were the legitimacy of the British state and the viability of the political process. Central to both of these factors was the successful integration of the national minorities in Scotland and Wales into a pan-British identity, a process that can be traced back to the success of the Protestant Reformation and the utility of the British Empire in these two countries, preventing communal polarisation along national lines.

Taken together, these factors meant that militant members of the nationalist movements in Scotland and Wales were operating in highly unfavorable conditions in which their opponents had political legitimacy amongst the vast majority of their potential constituency; the viability of non-violent alternatives further restricted their ability to draw support from the nationalist community, and there was no tradition of armed rebellion against the state. Considering the evidence, it is clear that political violence was not well-suited as a form of nationalist protest in Scotland and Wales, and those individuals who attempted to do so anyway were severely constrained by their inability to gain public support or sympathy.

¹⁰⁵⁰ *ibid.*

When this research project was first proposed, the intention was to provide an answer to the question “why has there been no violent Scottish, English or Welsh nationalism?”. To some extent this is evidence of the comparative invisibility of the Scottish and Welsh terrorist groups that did emerge, but equally it is evidence of the insignificance of political violence in Scotland and Wales, and the inability of those who did adopt violent tactics to achieve lasting renown. As a result, the research question was modified to examine why political violence was such a marginal feature of these national movements.

The cases studied - Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales - were chosen primarily for geographic reasons, but they complement each other well, as there have been varying degrees of political violence in these countries: Ireland has witnessed the most nationalist political violence, fuelled by the sectarian divide that has directed national identity there for centuries; by contrast, nationalist political violence has been far less prevalent in Scotland and Wales, but it has not been entirely absent; finally, the absence of English militant nationalism results from the lack of English nationalism generally. Furthermore, the nationalist movements that have emerged in Scotland, Wales and Ireland have all drawn on different energies and have taken on different forms: nationalism in Ireland has been inextricably bound with Catholicism; Welsh nationalism has concentrated on culture and language at the expense of territorial demands; and Scottish nationalism has been advocated by a civic nationalist party appealing as much to the head (and the wallet), as the heart. Finally, they have all reaped differing degrees of success, although they would be unlikely to agree on a definition of “success”.

The violent nationalist groups that did emerge in Scotland and Wales were small, primarily used unsophisticated methods, and were usually short-lived. Even the periods of greatest activity (the prolonged campaign of MAC and the cottage arson campaign, as well as the early-1980s actions of the SNLA) relied on the ‘expertise’ of a small number of individuals. Yet in comparison to the actions of the IRA, these actions were minor - a nuisance rather than a real threat - and it is for this reason these terrorist campaigns consistently received little publicity. Instead, the media have often

treated violent nationalists in Scotland and Wales as a parody: I mentioned earlier the dismissive descriptions of the Free Wales Army as “a Dad’s Army farce”¹⁰⁵¹ and a “comic opera affair”.¹⁰⁵² During the trial of the Army of the Provisional Government, the lawyer for the defence played on an alleged connection between the group and Idi Amin to “conjure up a spectacle of co-accused Major Frederick Boothby and General Idi Amin of Uganda marching side by side at the head of a piebald army of ebony Highlanders in tartan tiger skins to the sound of jungle drums and bagpipes to capture Achnashellach”.¹⁰⁵³ The comic ineptitude of some of these groups reinforced the belief that they were not to be taken seriously.

To journalists covering their court cases, and readers learning about the trials in the newspapers, the japes of the FWA and the APG were amusing. It would not have been difficult to construct a narrative of the two as ‘comedy terrorists’. It is important, however, to remember that there is often only a small step between farce and tragedy; as Jackson reminds us, at the beginning of the Easter Rising it “looked like an extremely foolhardy, not to say comic, venture”.¹⁰⁵⁴ It is not unimaginable that one of these groups could have carried out a far more deadly campaign. If we return to the sort of counterfactual history discussed in the introduction, it does not bear thinking about what could have happened if the violent elements in the Scottish and Welsh national movements had had the capabilities of the Provisional IRA. Additionally, it should not be forgotten that two men lost their lives in Wales as the direct result of their involvement in political violence, and others had their lives changed by the injuries they suffered. As tempting as it is to laughably dismiss these groups as misguided charlatans, we should be relieved that the violent nationalist campaigns in Scotland and Wales did not escalate further.

So why was political violence such a marginal feature of the nationalist campaigns in Scotland and Wales? The truth is that there is no simple answer. It is impossible to be certain about why something so substantial does *not* happen, and nor it is viable to speculate about every potential factor. Nevertheless it would seem that two factors are the most pertinent: the process of identity formation in Scotland and Wales, and the

¹⁰⁵¹ Thomas, *Hands off Wales*, 126.

¹⁰⁵² Patrick Hannan quoted in Humphries, *Freedom Fighters*, 51.

¹⁰⁵³ Ian Bell, “Crown case in APG trial ridiculed”, *The Scotsman*, 23 May 1975.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Jackson, *Home Rule*, 178.

viability of non-violent alternatives. I have argued that these campaigns did not escalate because the groups involved were unable to gain popular support, without which a terrorist campaign simply cannot hope to succeed. Without financial support, Scottish nationalists were forced to turn to crime, instantly raising their visibility to the security services and often ending campaigns before they had even begun. They were denied this support because the British state they were attacking had legitimacy with the vast majority in Scotland and Wales. This legitimacy is, as I have discussed, the direct consequence of the successful integration of the Scots and Welsh into a shared British identity.

Additionally, the lack of communal polarisation in Scotland and Wales on the issue of the national question allowed a dual loyalty to both one's nation and the British state. Whilst it would be wrong to suggest that there are not those in Scotland and Wales who reject a British identity (although the majority of people in Scotland and Wales now prioritise their national identity¹⁰⁵⁵), Britishness has been widely accepted in Scotland and Wales, although the proportion of those who do so is now in decline. Central to the longevity of the British identity in Scotland and Wales have been pan-British institutions such as the Labour Party, the welfare state, the military, and the monarchy all of which have played a part in advertising the benefits of continued union. As the pan-British nature of these institutions is called into question, the unifying potential of these institutions declines, but until recently, the success of these institutions in integrating the Scots and Welsh restricted the development of the national movements in both countries, meaning that when they did emerge they were in the minority, and presently remain so.

Despite being in the minority, both national movements have been able to achieve progress. The supposed viability of political alternatives could be somewhat contentious; after all, Scottish nationalists failed to achieve independence in 2014 despite their political endeavours. Additionally, Plaid Cymru has struggled to break through in Wales in the way the SNP have in Scotland, but I do not believe the absence of political violence is the direct result of the *success* of constitutional methods, merely the *viability* of these methods: the attainment of nationalist demands

¹⁰⁵⁵ Grimson et al. "This Sceptred Isle", 13.

does not have to be immediate; it simply needs to be achievable. Furthermore, this progress does not have to be achieved by nationalist parties alone; it can be and has been the result of collaboration with other non-nationalist parties or social movements.

As long as there was evidence of progress - whether that be legislation to protect and encourage the Welsh language, or the prospect of devolution of further power to the Scottish and Welsh devolved assemblies - it was sufficient to dissuade the vast majority of nationalists of the need for violent methods to advance their cause. I have argued that the most intensive periods of nationalist violence in Scotland and Wales followed the failure of non-violent methods to address nationalist concerns, such as the construction of the Tryweryn reservoir and the failure of Westminster to implement Scottish devolution in 1979.

I have also highlighted other factors that were unique to Ireland and Northern Ireland, such as the existence of a physical force tradition in Irish Republicanism and the heavy-handed treatment of nationalists by representatives of the British state in Ireland. These precipitant factors help us understand why political violence became a feature of the national movement in Ireland, eroding the legitimacy of the British state and ensuring a wider array of support for those who would adopt violent methods. However, their absence does not directly explain the lack of an equivalent violent campaign elsewhere. The social and political conditions in Scotland and Wales were less hospitable to nationalist political violence, but they did not preclude the use of violence entirely. There will always be intransigent members of the nationalist community for whom non-violent methods are too slow or insufficient, or who believe that the nation needs to be 'awakened' through a revolutionary uprising, but those who attempted such an endeavour in Scotland and Wales found a population overwhelmingly unreceptive to their message and methods, and this was a barrier that they could not overcome.

What does the future hold for nationalism in the United Kingdom? In Scotland, the division between nationalist and unionist has definitely hardened as a result of the referendum, but this can partly be attributed to the lack of any clear unionist constituency before the campaign. If this division is reinforced, it is possible that this

could lead to a more bitter form of Scottish politics. The independence referendum campaign has had a knock-on effect in the rest of the United Kingdom, and if further devolution is delivered, it is likely that the issue of English governance will become increasingly salient. In Wales, Plaid Cymru remain a minor party, but fifteen years of devolution have demonstrably increased support¹⁰⁵⁶ for devolved government that was only supported by 24% of Welsh voters in 1997.¹⁰⁵⁷ The declining utility of the British identity in the United Kingdom has had the effect of making national identity more politically relevant, but this has not translated directly into a rise in support for nationalist parties, as the pan-British parties have adjusted their message to take advantage of the increased salience of national identity.

It is difficult to assess the extent to which these findings are applicable to other conflicts, but I believe that these cases provide further evidence to the burgeoning literature on the efficacy of non-violent protest, and the ability of democracy to limit the utility of political violence. In terms of further research, I believe that the cases of violent nationalism in Welsh and Scottish raise two further research areas worthy of consideration: the first is the study of negative cases - the 'why not' questions. As I stated in my introduction, the growth of counterfactual history allows us to consider the utility (or disutility) of certain behaviour or choices, and I believe that studying events or phenomena that realistically could have happened, whilst difficult, offers immense potential benefits. From such research we can begin to develop remedies or policies that prevent negative outcomes. This study will never be a perfect science - it is not easily testable, and the findings may not be transferrable - but these drawbacks do not mean that it is not beneficial.

Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, is the study of failed terrorist groups. There are numerous monographs and journal articles about the IRA, the Basque separatist group ETA, and Al Qaeda, yet the Global Terrorism Database lists a wide variety of groups responsible for a small number of attacks: these include the Caribbean Revolutionary Alliance, responsible for 25 attacks in the 1980s; the Breton Liberation Front responsible for 30 attacks over 30 years; and the National Front for the

¹⁰⁵⁶ Scully & Wyn Jones, "The Public Legitimacy of the National Assembly for Wales".

¹⁰⁵⁷ Wyn Jones & Lewis, "The Welsh Devolution Referendum".

Liberation of Belgium - responsible for one attack (that killed one) in 1983.¹⁰⁵⁸ These groups, and the reasons their campaigns were (relatively) limited, have yet to be adequately examined. Studying the absence of noise is far more difficult than studying noise itself, but it is the study of failed cases, and the reasons behind these failures that will help us uncover further ways in which the outbreak of political violence can be prevented.

I introduced this thesis by examining three dates in the late 1960s and I shall conclude with two further important dates in the history of nationalism in Scotland, Ireland and Wales. On the 7th of May 2015, voters across the United Kingdom voted in a general election for the Westminster Parliament, and following on from the momentum they gained in the aftermath of the referendum on independence in 2014, the SNP were able to win 56 of Scotland's 59 seats, achieving exactly 50% of the popular vote. This was the first time that the Nationalists had 'won' a Westminster election in Scotland, and clearly established the SNP as the main party in Scotland. In Wales, nationalism remains a secondary political force, and Plaid Cymru were unable to draw from the energy and vitality of the SNP, holding their three seats without making any gains, polling 12.1% of the total votes cast. These two vastly different results demonstrate the different paths the nationalist parties have taken in Scotland and Wales since those first victories one year apart in the late 1960s.

In Northern Ireland, less than two weeks after the election, on the 19th of May 2015 an equally momentous event took place. During the visit of Prince Charles, heir to the British throne, to the National University of Ireland Galway, the Prince shook hands with Gerry Adams, leader of Sinn Féin. This relatively benign interaction was an historic moment in the peace process and came the day before Prince Charles visited Mullaghmore, on Ireland's west coast, where the Provisional IRA had killed his beloved great-uncle Lord Mountbatten, in August 1979. For both parties this represented another important step on the path to reconciliation.

The political violence that wrought Ireland asunder is a lesson in what *can* go wrong. During the Troubles, more than half the population of Northern Ireland knew

¹⁰⁵⁸ "Global Terrorism Database", *National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START)*, Accessed February 2015, <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>.

someone who had been killed or injured as a result,¹⁰⁵⁹ and for many in the province, dealing with the threat of terrorism was a daily fact of life. I have argued that the reason violence has been such a marginal feature of nationalist campaigns in both Scotland and Wales was that conditions were never conducive to prolonged violent campaigns of the type seen in Northern Ireland, and while we must be thankful, we must also remember that this was in large part a result of good fortune stemming from decisions taken long ago, that others have not been so lucky and, that continued careful study of these matters can be the difference between life and death.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Bernadette C. Hayes & Ian McAllister, "Sowing Dragon's Teeth: Public Support for Political Violence and Paramilitarism in Northern Ireland", *Political Studies* 49 (2001), 909.

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