CYLCHLYTHYR YR

ARCHIF WLEIDYDDOL GYMREIG
WELSH POLITICAL ARCHIVE

NEWSLETTER

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KEEPING ELECTION PROMISES

Over two million electoral addresses and assorted leaflets were sent out to voters throughout Wales during the 1987 General Election Campaign. Almost all of them have doubtless already been discarded but it is pleasing to report that the Welsh Political Archive, in an exercise similar to that conducted in 1983, has assembled a near complete collection of the leaflets distributed during the campaign in Wales. All these provide a wealth of information in candidates—their opionions, policies and promises. In addition, brightly coloured posters and placards, even rosettes and stickers, have found their way to the Archive.

Some agents also sent on internal documents such as reports of committee meetings, memoranda on campaign strategy, returns of election expenses, and even post-election reports, which help build up a picture of the Campaign in certain constituencies. In Newport West, for example, Labour needed to win a key marginal seat and leaflets and papers sent to the Archive by the Labour Party's agent illuminate the efforts made to secure a Labour victory.

A similar campaign was conducted by Plaid Cymru in Ynys Môn and the Archive was given a large collection of leaflets and ephemera carefully assembled by Plaid Cymru's press officer who commented in a covering letter : ' . . . roeddwn yn gwybod bod rhywbeth hanesyddol yn mynd i ddigwydd!' *(I knew that something historic was going to happen!).*

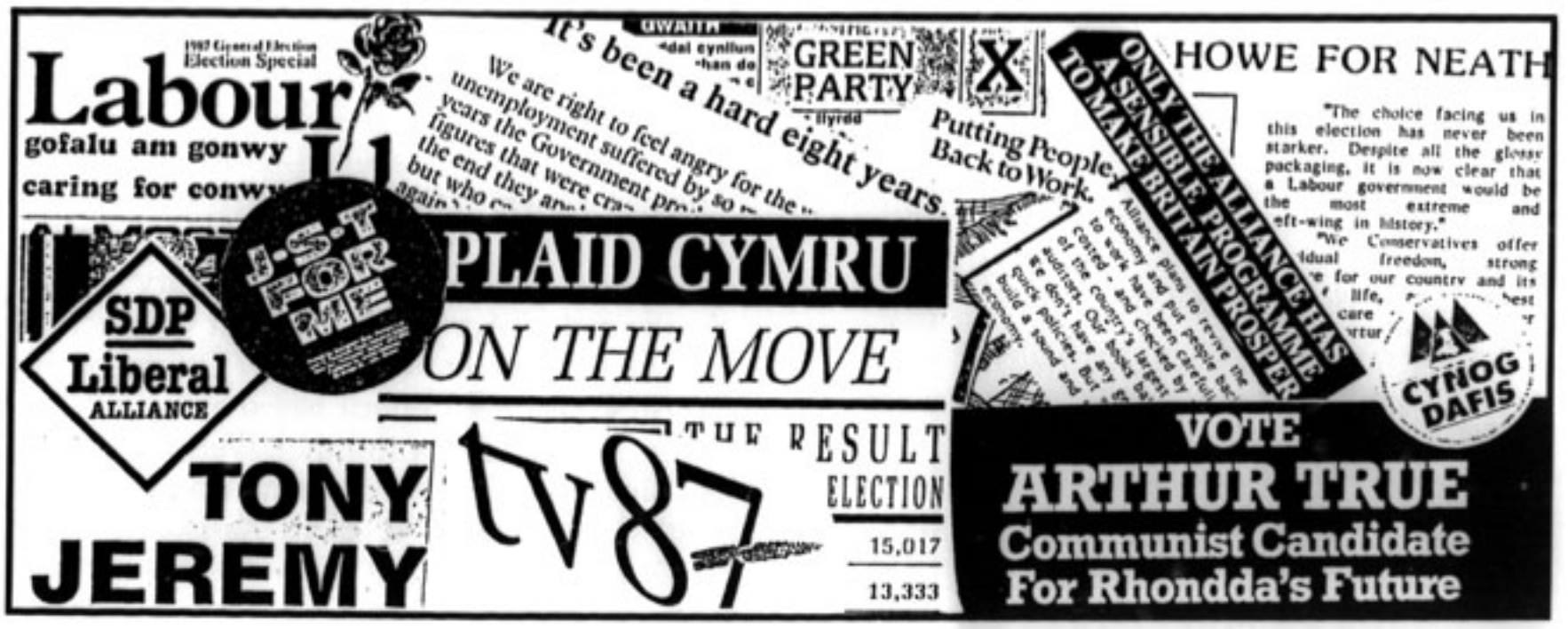
The Archive has also received copies of the public opinion poll reports conducted prior to the Election. These reports provide useful data on certain key Welsh constituencies and will no doubt continue to arouse controversy in some quarters. A new feature of the campaign was the formation of the 'TV 87' Campaign and the leaflets and press-releases of the Campaign in Wales have been received.

Diolch

Dymunwn ddiolch i bawb a anfonodd llenyddiaeth etholiadol i'r Archif Wleidyddol Gymreig yn ystod Ymgyrch Etholiad Cyffredinol 1987. Gwerthfawrogwn eich cydweithrediad.

Thank you

We wish to thank all those who sent election literature to the Welsh Political Archive during the 1987 General Election Campaign. We appreciate your co-operation.



The Advisory Committee

The Welsh Political Archive's Advisory Committee, which was set up in 1985 to assist the Archive in fulfilling its objectives, met again in April 1987.

Four new members of the Committee attended their first meeting: Dr Deidre Beddoe, Mr John Clement, Mr David Melding and Mr Gareth Price.

The major topic of discussion was the setting up of a public lecture under the auspices of the Archive. It was agreed to recommend to the National Library's Council that the lecture should be held annually in October each year and that Mr John Grigg, who is writing a multi-volume biography of Lloyd George, should be invited to deliver the Inaugural Lecture. Subsequently, the Library's Council agreed to implement these recommendations and the Welsh Political Archive's Inaugural Lecture will be held on Friday 16 October 1987.

The Committee also discussed the possibility of setting up an automated database of Welsh election results which would include the results of all District, County, Parliamentary and EEC Elections.

It was with regret that the Committee accepted the resignation of Mr Geraint Talfan Davies from the Committee. Mr Davies has been appointed Head of Programmes with Tyne-Tees Television and the Committee expressed its appreciation of his work on behalf of the Archive. On Mr Davies's recommendation, it was decided to invite his successor as Deputy Head of Programmes at HTV, Mr Emyr Daniel, to join the Committee.

The present members of the Committee are:

The Librarian, Dr Brynley F Roberts (Chairman)
Dr Denis Balsom, UCW, Aberystwyth
Dr Deidre Beddoe, The Polytechnic of Wales
Mr John Clement, formerly Under-Secretary at the Welsh Office
Mr Tom Ellis (The Social Democratic Party)
Lord Hooson (The Welsh Liberal Party)
Dr Deian Hopkin, UCW, Aberystwyth
Mr D Elwyn Jones, Conservative Party agent
Mr Jon Vaughan Jones, Research Officer, Labour Party Wales
Mr David Melding, Research Officer, Conservative Central Office for Wales
Dr Kenneth O Morgan, The Queen's College, Oxford
Mr Gareth Price, Controller, BBC Wales
Mr Ted Rowlands, Member of Parliament (The Labour Party)
Mrs Lorna Schärer (The Welsh Liberal Party)
Dr Dafydd Elis Thomas, Member of Parliament (Plaid Cymru)
Professor Gwyn A Williams, UC Cardiff

Embargoes

It is often the case that recent political papers contain sensitive material such as personal correspondence or diaries with the potential to cause offence or controversy. Consequently it is sometimes desirable to apply an embargo on such papers and the Welsh Political Archive is quite happy to do this at the request of a donor or depositor. Since confusion often arises when access to papers is restricted, it is appropriate here to briefly describe the Archive's policy on embargoes.

Public records are of course, in general, subject to the 'thirty year rule' but any restriction of access to personal papers is a matter of agreement between the Library and the donor or depositor. A recent example of this is noted on page 4. Mr Keith Best has donated his papers to the Archive but they remain under an embargo of 25 years from the date of the document. Anyone wishing to see papers dating less than 25 years could only do so with the prior written permission of Mr Best.

The major political parties in Wales have all agreed on a fixed-term embargo on their records. Both the Conservative and Labour Parties apply the standard embargo as recommended by their London headquarters, 20 and 15 years respectively, while both the Welsh Liberal Party and the SDP Council in Wales have agreed on a ten year embargo. Plaid Cymru now also applies a ten year embargo on its extensive Archive. All these embargoes may be subject to variation with regard to specific papers.

Paul O'Leary

At the end of 1984 the Welsh Political Archive was fortunate in being able to appoint its first Research Assistant, a post funded by the National Library of Wales's 75th Anniversary Appeal Fund. The first holder of the post, Paul O'Leary, proved an excellent appointment, being conversant with the complexities of political history and possessing the tact and cataloguing skills which the job calls for. His wit and candour made him a popular and respected member of staff in the National Library.

At the end of April 1987, Paul left the Archive on his appointment as Publicity Officer of the Welsh Consumer Council based at Cardiff. All those connected with the Welsh Political Archive wish him well in his new post.

Paul's successor as Research Assistant, Hefin Williams, began work at the end of August on a three-year appointment.

SOUND AND VISION

In the last issue of the *Newsletter* it was reported that the National Library had reached an important agreement with S4C whereby the Library's Audio-Visual Unit receives videotapes of all the programmes broadcast by S4C in Wales. Over the years the A/V Unit has acquired a considerable amount of a/v material relating to Welsh political history. The following is an interview with Mr Iwan Jones who has over-all responsibility for the A/V Unit.

Q. When was the Library's A/V Unit set up and what were its objectives?

A. *The Library set up an interdepartmental committee in 1980 with the brief to collect audio and visual material that might otherwise be lost. The aim was (and remains) to establish a Welsh Archive covering sound recordings, television and films.*

Q. What are the major collections of a/v material held by the Unit at present?

A. *The largest collections are recordings of programmes broadcast on television and radio. The Welsh broadcasting authorities have been particularly helpful and we recently arrived at a very important agreement with S4C. We also try to collect copies of everything of Welsh interest published, whether video cassettes or sound recordings such as records, compact discs or old wax cylinders. We are also particularly glad to safeguard original collections of privately recorded tape recordings, although we do not have the resources to go out and record ourselves. We also have a small but growing collection of films.*

Q. Is there any particular effort to acquire or record a/v material on Welsh politics and political history?

A. *We try to collect material recording all aspects of Welsh life and political activity is obviously a very important aspect. Gwyn Jenkins, who has over-all responsibility for the Welsh Political Archive, is also a member of the A/V Unit's committee and he has always emphasised the need to acquire and record a/v material relating to Welsh politics. As a result, we record all Welsh current affairs programmes such as 'Wales this Week', 'Y Byd ar Bedwar' and 'Week In Week Out' and from 1985 on we have a near complete collection of HTV's 'Wales at Six' news programmes. Of course, with the new agreement with S4C, all the 'Newyddion Saith' bulletins are also preserved.*

Q. What about the recent General Election?

A. *As in 1983, we recorded the vast majority of the election programmes broadcast in Wales during the 1987 Campaign, including most of the party political broadcasts.*

Q. Apart from news and current affairs programmes do you have any other videotapes or audio tapes on Welsh politics?

A. *Yes. We buy videotapes of a political interest such as the video on Welsh women's history 'I'll be here for all time', produced by Boadicea Films, and 'The Great Depression', made for the British Universities Film Council, which contains fascinating footage of conditions in the South Wales valleys during the inter-war years and even a clip of a speech by Lloyd George. As the Welsh Political Archive holds an extensive collection of the papers of George Thomas, Viscount Tonypandy, it was appropriate that the A/V Unit purchased a video on George Thomas made by CTVC during the period when he was Speaker of the House of Commons.*

Although we are unable to go out to interview people, we have been able to acquire interviews of a political interest, for example, interviews with the first four Secretaries of State for Wales, James Griffiths, Cledwyn Hughes, George Thomas and Peter Thomas, made in 1974 by Mr Lynn Owen-Rees.

Of course, when resources are forthcoming, we would like to be able to go out to interview prominent Welshmen and women 'in the field'.

Q. What about the future?

A. *In retrospect, the birth of the unit in 1980 was particularly badly timed! The Welsh Office has given its blessing to the work we are doing but has withheld financial recognition, although even the recent Welsh Office Policy and Financial Management Review conceded that we deserved consideration as a separate department. Our collections are still growing but we will not be able to say that we have established a Welsh National Archive until we are properly staffed and financed. We are trying to preserve for posterity material that costs millions to produce. The annual cost of preservation is a very small fraction of the amount of money spent on production every day. To an archivist it seems hideously wasteful to let such historic material disappear forever.*

DERBYNIADAU / ACQUISITIONS

Keith Best Papers

Shortly after his resignation as Conservative MP for Ynys Môn, Mr Keith Best donated to the Archive a large group of the papers which had accumulated at his office in the House of Commons since he was first elected to Parliament in May 1979.

The collection divides naturally into two groups: the correspondence addressed to Mr Best by his constituents, relating mainly to local issues; and papers concerning specific subjects of national importance. They therefore cast invaluable light on the issues which arose in Ynys Môn during the years when it was represented by a Conservative MP and provide a local dimension to the policies of the Conservative administrations of 1979–87.

A twenty-five year embargo has been placed on these papers during which time the donor's permission is required before access can be granted.

Cardiff Conservatives

The City of Cardiff Conservative Associations recently deposited at the Library some thirty minute books of the various local associations within Cardiff and the neighbouring constituency of Llandaff and Barry.

The minute books, which span the years 1918 to 1983, derive from some eight local Conservative associations and throw light on party organization and parliamentary candidate selection in a group of highly marginal divisions in which success was regarded as essential to the formation of a majority government at Westminster.

The minute book, 1918–30, of the Glamorgan Unionist Labour Committee, a Conservative group within the trade union movement, is also of particular interest.

Records less than twenty years old are subject to an embargo.

Private Secretary to Lloyd George

Miss Gwyneth Vaughan Jones of Barry has donated to the library the papers and correspondence of her brother, Gareth Vaughan Jones (1905–35), a linguist and journalist who served as private secretary and researcher to D Lloyd George in the early 1930s, and was a member of the editorial staff of the *Western Mail*. The son of Dr Edgar Jones, Gareth Jones met his death at the hands of Chinese bandits in August 1935.

Papurau Dr Noëlle Davies

Ymhlith grŵp ychwanegol o bapurau Dr Noëlle Davies a'i gŵr Dr D J Davies a ddaeth i law yn ddiweddar, ceir nifer o lythyron a dogfennau pwysig yn ymwneud â hanes Plaid Cymru yn yr 1930au a'r 1940au, yn enwedig â'r ymgais i lunio a datblygu polisïau economaidd a diwydiannol. Ymhlith y gohebwyr y mae J E Jones, Saunders Lewis a Kate Roberts.

(An additional group of the papers of Dr Noëlle Davies and Dr D J Davies include many important letters and documents reflecting the history of Plaid Cymru in the 1930s and 1940s).

District Council Elections

Although no specific appeal was made by the Archive for leaflets produced during the 1987 District Council Elections, many such leaflets have been sent from all parts of Wales to the Archive. Prominent among these are numerous leaflets from the elections for Cardiff City Council which produced several closely fought contests.

Along with local election leaflets, the Archive has received a number of local newsletters, notably issues of *Focus* (the Aberafon Liberal Newsletter) and *Plasnewydd Labour News*. Single issues of similar newsletters such as *Labour Herald* (Uplands Ward, Swansea) and *Mumbles Viewpoint* have also been acquired and the Archive would be pleased to receive a full set of these and other newsletters distributed by local branch and consitutency parties.

Conservative Women

Through the good offices of Mr D Elwyn Jones, the minute book of the North Wales Women's Group of the Conservative Party, 1951–85, has been received. The minutes of meetings reflect social and political events organized by the party and preparations made for local government and parliamentary elections in a group of marginal constituences. The volume is now designated NLW ex 917.

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Llyfrgell Genedlaethol
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